

GHS



The life and times of: Karen (Casella) Shea

After high school I received a BS in interior design from UCONN... first job was an engineer assistant at United Technologies Research Labs working with a theoretical chemist and a physicist on laser research and ramjet design (hah...Dad worked there and told me to get a real job). Soon married Jay Shea...together we designed, built, opened and ran Sadler's Ordinary restaurant in Marlborough...divorced (sadly) and at age 36 went back to UCONN for three semesters to complete my BFA in graphic design with a minor in sculpture.

While my much younger classmates went to Europe, I spent the next summer on a solo trip around the US and Canada...15,000 miles in three months in a little red VW GTI with camping gear, and a list of friends of friends to crash with. The journey was probably the most satisfying and empowering event of my life. There are many, many wonderful places and things in this incredible country— Going to the Sun Highway in Glacier National Park, Point Lobos, Big Sur, California and the diverse Americans I met along the way — it's amazing how everyone wants to take care of you when you are a woman camping and hiking alone.



Upon returning from my trek, I knew it was time to get out of Dodge...actually out of Hebron Connecticut and I moved to Beverly, Massachusetts, an ocean city on the Boston North Shore. After a few job offers in Boston I realized that after having been an entrepreneur with the restaurant, I could no longer work for someone else...I began freelancing to other designers and soon opened my own studio. Monserrat College of Art is here in Beverly so I have a ready supply of interns to keep me young and contemporary and a wide variety of clients. I have no website, no business card, no brochure...acquiring all my clients by referral...the best kind to collaborate with.

During this time I was in an 18-year relationship with a wonderful, creative free-spirited man who died in 2004. I have three sort-of stepchildren and two fantastic grandchildren from that liaison.

I live a block from the ocean in my pink, Gothic Carpenter Victorian house that looks like Hansel and Gretel once lived here. When I walk down to the beach and look at the horizon I know I am home.