



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 37 No. 10 Send letters & stories to Dennis Historical Society, Box 607, S. Dennis 02660 or to pjhowes@verizon.net **December 2014**
Internet: www.dennishistoricalsociety.org Copyright 2014 - Dennis Historical Society E-Mail info@dennishistoricalsociety.org
The next Board Meeting: is **Tuesday December 16 @ 2:00 P.M., Jacob Sears Memorial Library, 20 Center St. East Dennis**

A Special Christmas Celebration

The 1801 Jericho Museum is hosting the annual DHS Christmas Open House. The house will be beautifully decorated, as usual, the refreshments will be sumptuous, as usual, and the unusual will be a superb display of Currier & Ives prints from a private collection. It will include some rarely-seen lithographs.

Nathaniel Currier and James M. Ives formed a partnership in 1857 and described their firm as "Publishers of Cheap and Popular Prints". In seventy-two years of operation they produced at least 7,500 lithographs. Their artists made two to three new images every week for sixty-four years publishing over one million prints.

Every phase of American life was depicted by their artists. A home in the Victorian Era would be considered quite proper if they had a number of Currier & Ives prints on their walls. Their popularity waned in the early 1900s and many were discarded as being passé. However, a resurgence in the last forty years has once more found them scarce and desirable. Come to Jericho on Saturday, December 6th for a cup of punch and a feast for the eyes.

To this day I remember the conversation and atmosphere of enrolling a certain Mr. Greenleaf. He was 80 years old and had been an old bachelor all his life, smoked a very ripe pipe, burned a wood stove and obviously had had few baths along the way. To say his 'presence preceded him' is putting it mildly. I dispensed ration books in all five villages and Mr. Greenleaf is the only one that remains in my memory.

Worden Hall eventually became an art gallery and home for Donn and Nancy DeVita. Donn was the art teacher at Wixon Middle School in South Dennis for many years. Nancy created paintings of all the Shiverick clipper ships built in East Dennis in the 1850s. This old hall now enters a new phase. It will be a private residence in the back and available for small functions in the front.

Our old landmark will continue to nurture and entertain the Cape's residents. May it do so for many years.

Phyllis Horton

If You Can't Do The Time -¹

"The Barnstable Jail (nee: House of Correction) has a long history. There has been a jail in that area since at least 1690, it moved a couple of times before settling down on the hillside between the two County Court houses facing the Barnstable harbor. The inmates were there awaiting trial, or serving time for such crimes as not supporting the minister, to spying during the Civil War, to murder. The spy, (according to "Cape Cod Confidential" by Even J. Albright) was also General Custer's mistress, one Annie Jones and although sent to Barnstable to serve her sentence, she really spent her time in a rented room in the village. There were no facilities for a woman prisoner in 1864. Mostly, though, the Barnstable jail housed naughty local boys, middle aged misdemeanor-ites, and aging drunks who disturbed the peace. I get the feeling being incarcerated in Barnstable was not usually considered 'hard-time'. In fact, persons who had experienced compulsory stays at the facility often referred to it as "the Country Club". In fact, as far back as 1897, a Legislative Committee on Prisons found that it was "...A prison in name only." (From the Boston Evening Record, from research by Even J. Albright). Nobody seemed to get too excited about it.

Item: A regular user of the "club", Benny (not his name), managed to be found obnoxiously drunk and disruptive every winter and get sent to Barnstable for a short sentence, usually lasting out the remainder of the cold season, when sober Benny was a friendly and sociable soul, and was well liked in and out of the jail. One colder than normal winter Benny didn't show up on the arrest sheets, and consequently was not in his usual spot on the prison roster when the hard chill of January came around. Fearful of his well being, the SHERIFF went

¹ Thacher, Ben, "Whose Boy Be You", pp71, 72

personally to Benny's home. Benny 'lloed as how he had been falling down drunk and laid outdoors in a snow drift over night early in the winter. Lost some of his toes to frost- bite, so he had been laid up, and didn't get up town drinking this winter. Pretty good now, though, and probably see you next year. The Sheriff said he was glad it hadn't been worse, and they missed him over at the farm.

The Farm was just down the street a piece from the jail. It was tended by inmates, and the produce, both garden and dairy, helped supply the needs of the prisoners. One "regular," Henry, was particularly good with the dairy herd, and when one of the cows became sick. The Sheriff noted Henry was not currently serving time, so he made another visit. Henry thought he could get the cow, a favorite, up and running again, and would the Sheriff give him a lift over to the farm. He would, and Henry stayed at the farm for about a week, nursed the cow back to health, and left with thank you, and I'll see you later.

In a thinly populated and informal area such as the Cape was, justice sometimes tended to be a bit on the personal side. John, who was in trouble, and in jail a good bit of the time, was being sentenced for a small infraction.

"Three Months in the House of Correction," toned the judge.

"Three Months," sneered John, in what he assumed was a voice inaudible to the Judge, "That won't give me time to take off my shoes."

"Six Months," snapped the judge, "That should give you time to take your socks off, too!"

Proving, I suppose that Justice may be blind, but is not deaf. One chronic offender complained that his three month sentence would set him free in February, which was cold and as work was just about non existent in the deep winter, he would probably be arrested again. The judge 'lloed as how he might just as well stay in until May when it was warmer. He agreed, and the sentence was changed to six months to accommodate him."

Thanks from Caleb Chase

The Caleb Chase Trustees are grateful to the DHS members who generously made a donation to the fund when they paid their membership dues. Every cent donated to the fund is distributed to elderly needy Dennis residents. \$450.00 was added to the fund by these members.

William and Jane Bacon

Richard and Janet Colby

C. Naomi Costa

Mary Ann Cotting

William E. Crowell, Jr.

Sharon Fitzmaurice

Ben and Lynne Jacoby

Marie Kraus

Brendan and Maureen Joyce

Shirley Loud

Robert and Mary Jane Mahoney

Barbara Verney

Martha E Weilbacher

Judith E. Williams

Sarah Kruger

Thank you, one and all!

Phyllis Horton, Chair For the Trustees

Betty, Buckle, Grunt, Pandowdy, Slump, Cobbler...

It's that time of year when the cold descends like a thief in the night robbing us of energy and natural Vitamin C. As the temperature drops and we feel the cold enter our bones, our thoughts race toward the coming Holiday Season arriving all too soon. We remember the wonderful smells wafting through every room, the children laughing in anticipation of what's to come and to the loved ones we no longer see but live on in our hearts.

Perhaps this is the year to try something "new that's old" in your kitchen. The following two recipes are from The Old Farmer's Almanac, "Colonial Cookbook", First Edition, 1976:

APPLE PANDOWDY

white bread 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
melted butter 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
4 large green cooking apples

Line the bottom and sides of a baking dish with fingers of bread (crusts removed) which have been dipped in melted butter. Fill the center with the apples, peeled, cored, and sliced. Sprinkle the apples with a mixture of the sugar and cinnamon. Add 1/2 cup of water and cover the top with a layer of well buttered fingers of bread. Sprinkle top with additional sugar. Cover and bake 1 hour in a 350 deg. oven. Serve hot with whipped cream. Serves 6

CRANBERRY ROLY-POLY

2 cups sifted flour 2/3 cup milk
3 teaspoons baking powder 2 tablespoons melted butter
1/2 teaspoon salt 2 cups whole cranberry
4 tablespoons shortening sauce, drained

Sift together the dry ingredients and cut in the shortening. Add milk and stir until the mixture forms a soft biscuit dough. Roll out on a lightly floured board to 1/4-inch thickness. Brush with melted butter and cover with cranberries. Roll up like a jelly roll and place, seam side down, on a buttered pan and bake in a hot oven (425 deg.) for 25-30 minutes. Serve warm with hard sauce or lightly whipped cream. Serves 6

June Howes

Sunday School and Dancing School

My Sunday school teacher in 1935-40 at the West Harwich Baptist Church, on Rt. 28, was Mrs. Chappel. We had wonderful loose-leaf Bible notebooks with fill-in sheets and fill-in maps. Mrs. Chappel, whom I considered elderly, but I really have no idea how old she was, would tell us a Bible story and then we would be handed worksheets to take home. We'd have to use the Bible to find the answers to fill in the blanks. The maps were great fun as my own Bible had wonderful maps in it to use as a reference. We'd then add the filled-in sheets to our three-ring notebook. I learned a great deal about the Bible and just where the stories took place in those Sunday school sessions.

I had no idea how valuable that training was until I decided to go to college when I was fifty. All those Sunday school lessons when I was an elementary school kid gave me a superior background of information when I began to take college literature classes.

My sister Priscilla Dean had Ellen M. B. Shaw for a Sunday school teacher, another fine teacher. Priscilla also appreciated her Bible knowledge when she went to college in her fifties. We both finally earned our Masters degrees. It only took me 14 years of part-time study. I finished when I was 64. I went nights to Salem State College after work I was a temp at GE.

Priscilla finished before I did, as she took a full year and just went to school. She took the bus to Boston and attended Cambridge College, which gave her access to the Harvard Library. She stayed in Boston during the week and went back to Cape Cod on weekends. She earned a BA and MA that year.

We Dean kids went to that Baptist Sunday school because it was about a quarter of a mile away, and close enough for us to walk. Our family were Congregationalists, but the Congregational church was four miles away in Harwichport. We'd each have a little money for a church donation and often stopped at Perkins Store across the street from the church and spent a penny or two of our Sunday School donation money on penny candy!! Naughty, naughty. Our parents never knew.

Lisa Famham had a dance studio on Rt. 28, not quite as far as Harwichport, so maybe it was still West Harwich. We three Dean girls took tap lessons there for several years in the mid-1930's. We three were in our own class, just the three of us. I only remember one tap number which we danced to "By Heck", kind of a hayseed-bucolic number. We wore rust and white striped overalls with a big handkerchief hanging out of the back pocket, and we wore straw hats. I even remember some of the steps we learned.

Oldest sister Sally Dean was in Lisa's recital when she was about three, 1929. She had a lovely big silk scarf dyed in shades from yellow to orange-red. She danced to "Ritual Dance of the Fire." That year Priscilla was two and I was one, so we weren't old enough for dancing school.

We loved Lisa's dance recitals. The recitals were at the Exchange Building in Harwich Center, and after the recitals there was music for dancing. Records and amplified music was provided by our Dad, Louis E. Dean, a very early disc jockey. He had the radio and record store in Dennisport.

We had free tap dancing lessons on Saturday mornings at a hall in West Harwich, at the junction of Depot and Bell's Neck roads, near the Baptist Church. These lessons were provided by the WPA, Works Projects Administration, in those depression days.

Betty Dean Holmes August 2011

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THE WINTER SEASON IS APPROACHING

Nancy Thacher Reid

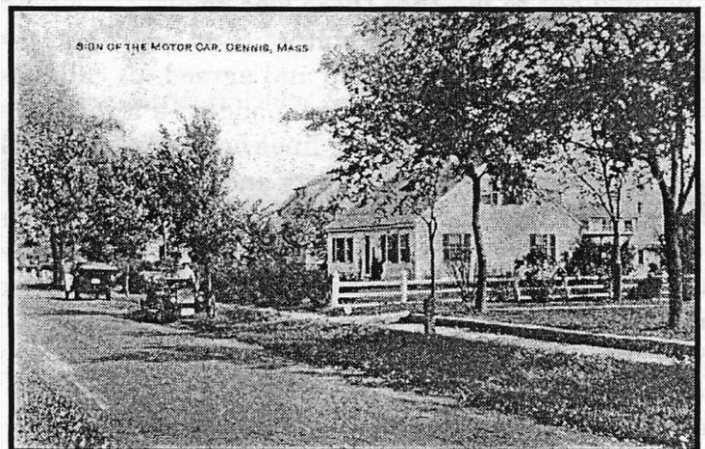
In 1927, the well-known American poet Alfred Kreymborg spent the summer at the home of Dr. and Mrs. George B. Wilbur in South Dennis. that home still stands, directly across from the South Dennis Meeting House. It was built in 1730, and harbors a great deal of the history of the south side of Dennis within its walls. Mr. Kreymborg published a volume of sonnets in 1928, which he entitled *The Lost Sail A Cape Cod Diary*. Most of the poems are romantic sonnets. A few, however, do have some local flavor. As we wind down from the summer of 1999, you might be interested in this verse reflecting Kreymborg's interpretation of the reaction of a Cape Cod native in that year to the doin's on the Old King's Highway.

Stranger and Stranger

I've seen 'em pass in limousines an' Fords,
Strangers an' strangers, drivin' like lunatics.
I've felt 'em smash the summers an old man hoards—
The fewer they are the more the memory ticks.
Before the Old King's Highway turned macadam—
While this was just a lane that needed weedin'—
A man could take a walk like he was Adam
The girl beside him Eve, an' these trees Eden.

None of us had machines inside the heart.
None of us cared which one of us won a race.
Along Route 6A The Old King's Highway
We loved an' lived an' died an' had to part.
It's hard for a man like me to change his pace.
The old all need the summer as they grow older.
long for the lonely winter, though it's colder.

November 1999



*Answer to our Back-to-School Trivia Question...
We were told, on good authority, that Dennis Port was
the only village that did not have a church with a clock.
Therefore, the clock was put on the school!*