



### A SOCIABLE SOCIAL

It was obvious from the start that playing games in the late 1800's and early 1900's was a different "game" than today. Take the jigsaw puzzles as an example. Cut from wood in fanciful shapes, no two alike and picturing a blushing maiden and her beau, we discovered that the pieces were not interlocking, but had to be nestled together with the greatest of care. That reminded some that they had in their family wooden frames in which the puzzles were constructed. In fact, we had one puzzle in a frame, but no one volunteered to take it apart. I would estimate it contained 1500 pieces or more, not one over  $\frac{1}{2}$  an inch wide. Clearly, it was designed to while away the time on a long winter's night - or maybe week. In addition to the jigsaws, other games were in play, but the real fun was in the kitchen. We had genuine marble boards to work on and the young people were surprised at how quickly that gooey hot mass became candy. I noticed a few band-aids on some fingertips at the Board meeting the next week, but all agreed, a good time was had by all.

### MID-WINTER FESTIVITY

Our social hour will be a little more exotic than usual, as we will be serenaded by Ted Stevens, playing classical guitar. The Colonial House Inn has planned a fine menu for this, our most popular regular event. So if you haven't made your reservation yet (see last month's letter for details), better call Josh at 385-3689. As usual, Jean and Bill Taylor have rustled us up some nice door prizes and we know it will be a pleasant day, especially if you are there!

### DOINGS OF THE BOARD

Several Board members recently attended a series of seminars at Cape Cod Community College, meetings which were designed to teach volunteers who are interested in historic preservation the tools they need to accomplish this. Subjects ranged from preservation of documents to house dating. They will share what they have learned as we attempt to organize, preserve, and catalog our growing collection.....The Board will host the next meeting of the Cape and Islands Association of Historical Organizations at V.I.C. Hall on Thursday, February 13 (storm date Feb. 27 at West Dennis Community Building). All members are welcome to attend. This group is also emphasizing archival organization and preservation, and hopes to compile a union list of the materials owned by all historical organizations in this area.....Memorial gifts have been received in memory of Dean S. Sears and Byron Pierce, and we are grateful to the donors.....The ugly problem of finance rears its head once again as mailing and printing costs are catching up with our present dues scale.....More about that at the next meeting.....We have had requests for back issues of the Newsletter and will make this available at future meetings. All Newsletter editions for the current month from 1978 to present will be available at our meetings for 50¢ a copy. Check your collection to find out what you are missing.....We welcome as our newest life member Priscilla Sprunt, whose mother and father, Mr. & Mrs. Leon D. Perry, were charter members and organizers of D.H.S.

### PRESIDENTS DAY

As far as I can determine, George Washington never slept here. Nor did Abraham Lincoln, although he did get as far as Taunton and Fall River on one New England visit. Several of our town's citizens met General Washington when his headquarters were in Cambridge. I don't know how the vote went when he was elected our country's first President, but Mr. Lincoln was overwhelmingly supported in both of his campaigns. The candidate seemed to draw support both from Abolitionists and Unionists in this town, perhaps because, with first-hand knowledge of the crisis in the South through their contact in shipping, it could be seen that Lincoln was both sides' best hope. During the first campaign, a group of young men were organized in Dennis Village. They were called "The Wide Awakes" and they campaigned vigorously for Lincoln. On the night of his election, they held a Victory parade, wearing red caps and capes and carrying lighted torches. It was this group of youths who throughout their manhood gave this town its strong Republican majority. For many years it was the custom for the schools to observe Lincoln Day with carefully planned programs. Parents and friends were invited to attend, to hear recitations and songs in honor of the martyred President. Schoolchildren competed for the honor of reciting the Gettysburg Address, usually as the final offering of the day. Then school was dismissed and the children had a mid-winter holiday, which may account for the fact that Lincoln remained one of the favorite Presidents of all time. I wonder how many of today's schoolchildren can recite the Gettysburg Address, or any other of either President's writings. Here's my favorite quote from Abraham Lincoln: "Die when I may, I want it said by those who knew me best that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower wherever I thought a flower would grow."

## CALENDAR

- February 11 7:30 P.M. Phyllis' home. Board will meet.  
February 13 10 A.M. V.I.C. Hall. Cape and Islands Association of Historical Organizations. All welcome. Topic: Organizing our Archives. (Snow Date Feb. 27, at West Dennis Community Building)  
February 15 MID-WINTER FESTIVITY Colonial House Inn  
Social hour at noon. Luncheon at 1 P.M. \$9.25 Reservations required.  
March 9 3 P.M. V.I.C. Hall. Men and Whales - Talk and slides by Mr. Winslow Weeks, Massachusetts Maritime Academy

### THE CROWELL AND STUDLEY SHIPYARD

This summer, the Manse Committee arranged a fine exhibit for the pleasure of visitors to the Josiah Dennis Manse, an exhibit that centered on the Shiverick Shipyard at Sesuit Harbor, in the mid-1800's. Hopefully, another Dennis maritime exhibit will be arranged this summer, for as interesting and romantic as the Shiverick story is, it is not the only chapter in a history rich in sea lore. Fishing, coasting, the packets, saltmaking - all are chapters in this story. And, although the Shivericks were the only Cape builders with clipper ships to their credit, they were by no means the only shipbuilders in this town. We can find reference to several shipwrights at other sites, and continue to try to ferret out information about them. One yard about which a fair amount of information is known is the Crowell and Studley yard. It was located on the West Dennis side of Bass River, just a bit south of the town landing off Uncle Barney's Road. Capt. Elisha Crowell and Captain Luther Studley had been neighbors and friends for a while, both men going to sea and becoming Master Mariners. Perhaps they preferred the quiet neighborliness that they enjoyed at home in West Dennis, to the busy and unpredictable life of a seaman. At any rate, in about 1854 we find each of these men is taxed for one-half of a shipyard. The atlas of 1858 clearly shows its location. Documenting the vessels which were built there is an ongoing puzzle. From newspaper accounts and other sources, I can say with certainty that they built several fishing schooners, ranging in size from 60 Ton to 320 Ton. They also built the coasting schooners West Dennis and Sylvanus Allen, and a brig, the John Freeman. Neva O'Neil, writing in 1938, states that in 1855 \$100,000 was spent in building schooners in South and West Dennis. No doubt a large part of that building took place on the banks of Bass River in this boatyard. Unlike the Shivericks, Elisha and Luther had no problem launching their relatively small vessels into the river. I have found one description of the launching of the 300 Ton, two-masted schooner West Dennis on October 23, 1855. The launching came off "in fine style, with a large crowd in the concourse", according to the Yarmouth Register reporter.

Both Capt. Elisha and Capt. Luther were Masons in Mount Horeb Lodge and staunch and generous members of the Methodist Church. They each raised a large family to continue to bless their native village. When the Civil War period saw a sharp decline in the demand for wooden boats, the shipyard also declined. I have found no record of further activity after the death of Capt. Studley, December 1861. If anyone has any information to add, I would be happy to hear from you.

### A TRAGIC RELATIONSHIP

Researching the earliest period of our town's history reveals that whaling was more important to the economy than I had previously thought. Our March speaker, Mr. Winslow Weeks, will talk on what he terms "a tragic relationship", which has long existed between man and his gentle neighbors in the sea, the whales. His program can be seen at V.I.C. Hall on March 9 at 3 P.M., and will cover the whaling industry from its often-romanticized past to its survival-threatening present. Please come and bring a guest.

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