



### THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!

A large group of people heard about Ben Thacher's collection and toured his unique museum for our program last month. In fact, his little auditorium was loaded to the scuppers with the lively, interested people who came out. Beats Sunday afternoon football! We are again indebted to Ben for a great program. Do you all know that Ben donates many hours of service to D.H.S.? He has taped each of our Memory Days and he also tapes and mixes the sound tracks for our slide presentations, all of which have brought us "rave reviews". We should all be grateful to him for helping us to preserve and teach our town's history by sharing his talent so generously. Good Show, Ben!

### AN INVITATION FROM EAGLE POND

We have received an invitation to hold our March meeting at Eagle Pond Nursing Home, where members and residents can both share in the enjoyment of the timely program which friend and cousin Joe Nickerson of Chatham will bring to us, entitled 'The Birds of Monomoy'. Don't know how to get there? Follow me, or check next month's newsletter for very explicit directions. That's scheduled for Sunday, March 15 at 2 P.M.

### ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE MID-WINTER FESTIVITY

Our annual winter pick-me-up is set for Valentine's Day, and romance will definitely be the theme. Be sure and get your reservation to Josh right away (see last edition for coupon and details) or call Josh at 385-3689 or Phyllis at 394-0017. The Medieval Carollers come to us very well recommended, as presenting a very unique and fun program. And the food at Christine's is good. A special feature of the afternoon will be a presentation to the representative of the owner of Basketville in West Dennis for their effort in saving the Dr. Kelley house and using it as the focal point for their development. Our menus will show Dr. Kelley's house years ago. It is a copy of a photo given to the Society by Mrs. Helen Vial, who will also be present. Do come.

### THE STORY OF ANOTHER OF DENNIS' MEDICAL MEN

Horatio S. Kelley, Jr. was the son of a fishing boat captain. He was born in 1855 in the house still standing at the northeast corner of Upper County Road and Telegraph Road. When his father was away fishing, young Horatio tended his father's store which stood beside the house. Western Union had established a telegraph office there in the year of Horatio's birth and Horatio and his sister Annie became proficient operators. Early in life, he had decided not to pursue the life of a fisherman, but instead he went to college at New York University, where he graduated from the college of Physicians and Surgeons in 1884. He met and married a New Hampshire girl, Annie S. Sanborn, who was his companion and friend throughout his life. The young couple came to his home town to set up practice. Dr. Hurlburt of South Dennis was happy for the assistance in his busy life, and the two doctors established a drug store in West Dennis. Here Dr. Kelley dispensed patent medicines, prescriptions and good advice. Among the products available were some compounds of the doctor's own invention. The most famous were Cedarosa soap and Dr. Kelley's headache compound. As Dr. Hurlburt aged, Horatio bought out his interest and also established another store in Dennis Port. In 1892 he and his popular young wife had built for them the fine house on Route 28 in West Dennis, now Basketville. They were not blessed with children, but were beloved by neighbors and patients. Animal lovers both, they had a cat or a dog always, in addition to fine horses kept in their fashionable carriage house. Of Dr. Kelley we have many testimonials, not only about his skills in healing, but also about his generosity and interest in his village. But, tragically, the man of healing was himself to become a victim of disease for which there seemed to be no help. Before his new home was ten years old, Dr. Kelley began to show symptoms of an illness, the exact nature of which we may never know. He was experiencing difficulty in walking, and in two years time was confined when awake to a wheelchair. Still he continued to oversee his practice and the drug store, keeping up professionally through contacts with more active colleagues and by his reading. He remained interested in the welfare of his patients and the good of the community even as his own health deteriorated. He and Mrs. Kelley went off Cape to consult with well-known specialists, but none could find a cure for his increasing disability. In 1912, at the age of 57, Dr. Horatio Kelley died, his beloved wife at his bedside. His mourning neighbors were bereft at hearing the sad news. The cause of his death is listed as "hardening of the spinal column", and had he lived today, his death may not have come so tragically soon. He was for many years remembered and fondly spoken of by those who knew him.

### MARCH SEMINARS AT THE 4 C'S

Those of you who would like to be helpful in the work of the Society, but don't feel you have the skill, will be interested to know about a series of talks and demonstrations to be held at the community college. There will be four workshops on each Monday in March, the last Monday being reserved as a snow day. For \$5 registration fee you can attend one or all of the workshops on any Monday. We are honored that five of the members of D.H.S. will be leading workshops. Admont Clark and Nancy Reid, Researching and Writing Local History, Lynne Horton, Cataloging Museum Articles, Eileen Kraus, Simple Card Cataloging, and Trudy James, Dating Old Houses. If you are interested in knowing about any of the workshops, call Charlotte Price, Nickerson Room, Cape Cod Community College, 362-2131. She will send you information.

## CALENDAR

- February 14 MID-WINTER FESTIVITY at Christine's in West Dennis. Sociability from 12 noon, luncheon at 1 P.M. Entertainment by the Medieval Carollers. See article. Reservations are necessary.
- February 17 7:30 P.M. Board meets at Phyllis'.
- March 15 2 P.M. Eagle Pond Nursing Home, South Dennis. "The Birds of Monomoy", Joseph Nickerson.
- March 2-9-16-23 Workshops at Cape Cod Community College. See article.

### THE WINDS THEY ARE ABLLOWING

We have started the year off with quite a wintry blast. Some blamed the high destructive tides of early January on the syzygy, which sounds to me like a word invented by a Scrabble player. But whether the cause was the alignment of the planets, or just the force of a no'theaster, a lot of change can be seen along our north shore. My son and I drove to the Corporation parking lot to watch the surf turn the beach into ocean. While there, glancing over to the left, we could see something of an historic restoration taking place - the return of the Peat Quay of the 1830's.

Most of you know that the sunny beach at the end of Corporation Road was once a busy commercial waterfront. As is true today, Dennis had no natural harbor on the north side. Sesuit Creek has been developed into a boat basin in recent years, but never was a harbor of great proportions even in the days of the Shiverick Shipyard. The village of Nobscussett had even less of a natural harbor, only the slim shelter of Nobscussett Point, long since disappeared. This lack became an increasing source of frustration to the farmers-turned-mariners of the early nineteenth century town, for they could foresee that their economic future lay in sea-related activities. In the early 1800's a group of master mariners received permission from the General Court to see what they could do to provide the growing maritime interests with a safe landing place. They built a long stone-and-piling pier out into the bay as a beginning to provide wharfage and service facilities for the many sloops and schooners which were fishing and coasting from the village's shores. Soon business was thriving. But then, as now, winter no'theasters were destructive to property along the bay shore. A winter shelter for the fleet was needed. So the enterprising proprietors of the corporation which owned and managed the port took advantage of a peat hole on the west side of their harbor. They cleared the hole and cut a narrow passage to allow the sea to come in, and thus created a quay for the shelter of their precious vessels. Thus the port was complete, and our sloops and schooners could be protected from winter's storms, safely moored in their peat hole. For many years the corporation maintained these facilities, but as maritime activities declined locally in favor of ports with better harbors, the wharves and buildings were abandoned and the peat hole allowed to close. The quay reverted to an unimpressive wet place, but last month due to our wild storm of January 2nd, the peat hole was filled to the brim with sea water. My son and I stood there on that wind and spray-filled day and could easily see that little pond with 30 or more sail or fishing vessels, bobbing about, no doubt, but quite safe from the storm's fury. By summer, I'm sure all will be restored and the summer visitors will never see that glimpse of history which, because of syzygy, or whatever, we have been privileged to see.

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