



# Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 40, No 1

Send letters & stories to Dennis Historical Society, Box 607, S. Dennis 02660 or to [pjhowes@verizon.net](mailto:pjhowes@verizon.net)

January-February 2017

Internet: [www.dennishistoricalsociety.org](http://www.dennishistoricalsociety.org)

Copyright 2016 - Dennis Historical Society

E-Mail [info@dennishistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@dennishistoricalsociety.org)

The next Board Meeting is Tuesday, February 14 @ 2:00 P.M., 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Dennis Memorial Library, Old Bass River Road, Dennis Village



Phyllis Horton was honored by the Dennis Historical Commission and Board of Selectman Tuesday night for her 31 years as a commission member and contributor to many important projects in the town. From left are selectmen John Terrio and Wayne Burgeon, Historical Commission Chairman Diane Rochelle, Phyllis Horton, Selectman Paul McCormick and Selectmen Sheryl McMahan and Cleon Turner. Photo by Bob Poskitt

## Phyllis Horton honored for historical work in Dennis

December 22, 2016

By Susan Vaughn

Phyllis Robbins Horton, a Dennis native who has contributed to preserving the history of the town in many ways, was honored Tuesday night for her 31 years of service on the Dennis Historical Commission.

Dennis selectmen accepted her resignation from the commission with regret and immediately voted her as a member emeritus of the commission. "She is a treasure for the town of Dennis," selectman Chairman Paul McCormick said after reading her resignation letter in which she said she needs "to free up time for other things."

In making the commendation, Diane Rochelle, chairwoman of the Historical Commission, noted Horton's long link to the town's history as a native who is related to the town's first settlers. After marrying an Air Force officer, she raised four children on military bases, then returned to her pre-Revolutionary War homestead in Dennis.

Since then, Horton has devoted much of her life to exploring and preserving the town's history. She has been curator and archivist for the historical commission, and chairwoman of the Josiah Dennis Manse Committee for 15 years, where she began a successful interpretation of Dennis history, Rochelle said.

Horton has also served on various town and regional organizations, including the Cape and Islands Historical Association and the Caleb Chase Fund. She helped renovate the West Dennis Graded Schoolhouse and make it into a museum. Rochelle noted Horton's special expertise in maritime history having researched more than 600 sea captains. She created an exhibit of some of those sea captains last year at the Graded Schoolhouse Museum and is planning one on "Blue Water Wives and Mothers" during Maritime Days in May.

"I admire her passion and dedication to the history of Dennis," Rochelle said in presenting a certificate of appreciation to Horton for her service to the commission.

"I love this town and being on the commission has been one of the biggest pleasures of my life," Horton said. "I met many people who became good friends. It was a great way to spend my time in Dennis."

Horton then gave the selectmen and the historical commission members and friends a history lesson on a new finding that the Josiah Dennis Manse was built much earlier than its previously designated date of 1736.

The new date of 1694 was the result of research that showed a manse and similar English style homes were built in the area around Hope Lane in Dennis Village about that time, she said.

The research found that Jeremiah Howes Jr. married in 1693 and "likely built the house in 1694," Horton said. Tests also determined the age dating to 1693. Josiah Dennis arrived at the village in 1727 and moved into the manse to serve as the town's minister for many years.

Horton said she often worked in the manse until midnight for 20 years and was convinced the house was older than supposed, but she said the new date needed to become official. She asked the selectmen to correct the date. McCormick offered the selectmen's help, but the approvals also must come from state and national historic channels first, because the house is on the National Historic Register. Commission members are working on that change.

*Reprinted From Wicked Local Cape Cod.*

## **THIS OLD HOUSE—JOB CHASE'S SHIP CHANDLER STORE**

A query to the DHS Website has prompted another in our long run of "old house" stories.

This house is at 5 Depot Street in Dennis Port and started out as a ship's chandler store. In 1834 Job



Chase of West Harwich and three other local men received permission from the Massachusetts Legislature to build a rock island platform 600' out into Nantucket Sound for ships to unload or pick up cargo that was ferried back and forth from the platform to the beach by small boats.

In 1848 the Mass. General Court gave Job permission to build a wooden pier connecting the stone platform with the beach and wagons took the place of the small boats. Business really took off.

In 1842 Job had built a ship's chandler store where mariners could buy supplies, mostly replacing gear that had been damaged in a storm. The entire area became a thriving seaport devoted to maritime trade.

Job had two wives who produced seventeen children—five girls and twelve boys. One boy was handicapped and only lived eighteen months and one boy decided to go into business. The other ten boys went to sea. Each one became captain of one of Job's schooners—each one with Hope in the name—Royal Hope, Hope and Polly, Lady Hope, Hope Returns,

New Hope and many more. Job's mother was named Hope as was his first daughter. Job's youngest, #17, was son Caleb Chase who preferred to go into business instead of going to sea. He worked at the store until age twenty-three when he moved to Boston to improve his fortune. Caleb became a successful coffee merchant and soon joined with the Sandborn Coffee to become Chase and Sandborn Coffee Co., a name known around the world by 1900.

Job Chase became a very successful shipmaster/merchant. It is believed some of his vessels were built in the Pound Pond Shipyard in Dennis Port. He liked to keep his touch on all aspects of his business. One thing he could not control was Fate. Seven of his mariner sons died at sea or in a foreign port, which must have been heartbreaking for him and his family.

The wharf and store passed out of the Chase family in 1875 to the Dennis Port Fishing Co., mostly owned by New Bedford investors whose agent was Jonathan P. Edwards of Dennis Port. There was a canning company on the pier that lasted until the clams had been fished out of Dogfish Bar and then the mackerel fleet had dwindled. The railroad that had come to the Cape in the 1860/70s was taking its toll on commerce by sea. The store was converted to a house in 1914 by J.P. Edwards and sold to Edwin Tripp who then sold it to Sarah (Snow) Shaughnessey and her mother-in-law, Mary in 1919. They named it Ocean View Lodge and ran it as a boarding house for many years.

This old house appears to be in good condition and will celebrate 175 years this year. What would Job think if he could see the area now?

P.S. Caleb Chase, #17, is the benefactor who gave a trust fund to the Town of Dennis to help our elderly needy homeowners. DHS has been involved in raising money for the fund when members pay their dues and it is surely appreciated.

*Phyllis Robbins Horton*

*And, apropos to the season:*

### **The Candy Heart**

The windows of the little red school house were wide open to the cool spring wind with its tang of the sea mingled with the fragrance of earth and growing things. At a desk among the oldest pupils at the back of the room Reliance sat with her chin cupped in her hand and soft eyes dreaming, as she watched a blue bird on the topmost branch of a nearby apple tree. She was completely unconscious of the scuffing and buzzing of the school-room where the youngest scholars were droning through a spelling lesson, while the older boys and girls scratched on their slates or ruffled the pages of books. Her thoughts were far out on the blue waters of the Atlantic, seeking the Good Fortune, homeward bound with a certain blue-eyed young sailor aboard, making his first voyage as mate. It seemed that the vessel had been away a long, long time! When Thomas returned — at the very thought of the delight- some possibilities of that home-coming, fortunately coinciding with the end of her school days, a deeper pink tinged her cheeks and a smile curved her lips.

A slight sound outside the window caught her attention and brought her gaze back to the sill near her desk. A hand, very tanned and muscular, was cautiously reaching up to the ledge!

Reliance darted a quick look around to see if anyone else had noticed the movement outside, but the other boys and girls were busy whispering together behind the covers of their books, or dutifully attending to their lessons. Her heart pounded as she swiftly looked back to the window. The hand had disappeared but something white lay upon the ledge. Very slowly her fingers stole out to the window-sill and, capturing the white object, slipped it quickly into her lap.

A careful study of her near neighbors assured her that no one had seen her cautious action so she dared investigate her find. A blush crept up to the edges of her smooth brown hair when she saw, lying in her hand a white candy heart with "I love you" in red letters across its center!

Her glance flew back to the window. It framed only the spring sky and the apple boughs, but Reliance needed no further evidence to tell her that Thomas was home from sea! Her heart quickened as she realized that he would be waiting outside for her when school was over, but a glance at the wooden clock, ticking with maddening deliberation, told her that there was still a whole hour of the afternoon session.

When Reliance, with the six other boys and girls in the graduating class, went to the front of the room to practice their pieces for the last day of school, she floundered so hopelessly through the first few lines of hers that Miss Eliza Berry said tartly, "Reliance, you appear to have been very remiss in applying yourself to this task. Endeavor to memorize at least the first two stanzas and speak them for me after school tomorrow."

Back at her desk Reliance took refuge behind the cover of her Natural Geography to hide her discomfiture but quickly forgot such a minor trouble as she kept darting impatient glances at the clock. As the time for dismissal finally drew near she patted her hair into place and smoothed down her dark blue print dress. When the moment actually came she walked out demurely with the other girls who were too busy laughing and chattering to notice her burning cheeks and sparkling eyes.

In front of the Post Office across the way Squire Nickerson was leaning from his buggy to talk to a tall, young man who was instantly hailed by the boys and girls hurrying out of school — "There's Tom Crowell! The Good Fortune musta' made port. Hello, Tom!"

They swarmed across the road to ply him with questions but Reliance hung back shyly until the laughing groups began to disperse and Thomas could step to her side. Their eyes met in a long, smiling look as she said, "Oh, Thomas, how'd you ever think of it? I knew 'twas you the moment I saw it."

**Dennis Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 607**  
**South Dennis, MA 02660-0607**

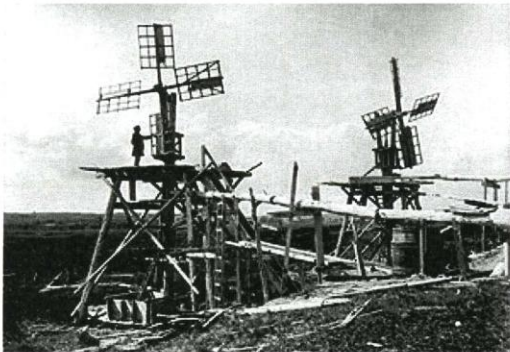


**Non-profit Org.**  
**US POSTAGE PAID**  
**Permit No. 24**  
**South Yarmouth, MA**  
**02664**

02660022298 R002



**Saturday, March 25, 2:00 P.M.**  
**Saltworks in Dennis and Yarmouth During the**  
**Federal Period (1775-1825)**



Local historian, Bob Kelley, will share his latest research and findings about our area's saltworks. Co-sponsored with the  
**Dennis Memorial Library**  
1020 Old Bass River Road, Dennis Village.  
\$5.00 Donation

**8th Grade Final Exam:**  
**Salina, KS - 1895**

**Arithmetic ( Time,1 hour 15 minutes)**

1. Name and define the Fundamental Rules of Arithmetic.
2. A wagon box is 2 ft. Deep, 10 feet Long, and 3 ft. Wide. How many bushels of wheat will it hold?
3. If a load of wheat weighs 3,942 lbs, what is it worth at 50cts/bushel, deducting 1,050 lbs for tare?
4. District No 33 has a valuation of \$35,000. What is the necessary levy to carry on a school seven months at \$50 per month, and have \$104 for incidentals?
5. Find the cost of 6,720 lbs. Coal at \$6.00 per ton.
6. Find the interest of \$512.60 for 8 months and 18 days at 7percent per annum.
7. What is the cost of 40 boards 12 inches wide and 16 ft long at \$20 per metre?
8. Find bank discount on \$300 for 90 days (no grace) at 10 percent.
9. What is the cost of a square farm at \$15 per acre, the distance of which is 640 rods?
10. Write a Bank Check, a Promissory Note, and a Receipt.