



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TOWN OF DENNIS AND COUNTY OF BARNSTABLE

Thanks to the gracious hospitality of Bob, Mary and Jonathan Stone and the staff at the Lighthouse Inn, and also to the planning of the D.H.S. Board, especially Jean and Bill Taylor, we had a wonderful luncheon, and a very special celebration of the town's 192nd and the county's 300th anniversary. The Upper County Homesteaders had livened up the social hour preceding the meal with some genuine bluegrass music which had us all toe-tapping. Dick Reid gave a most meaningful invocation, and Joshua Crowell proposed a very appropriate and well-worded toast. Following the luncheon, door prizes were won by the following: A lovely heart-shaped basket, hand made by Gertrude Lailey as a student of Esther Shules, to Pauline Kennedy. Dinner for 2 at Lighthouse Inn, Joshua Crowell. An evening at the Sand Bar, Betty Gibson. (Both compliments of Bob and Mary Stone). Cape Cod Remembrances, by Marion Crowell Ryder, to Kendall Foster. A tile of the Salt Works, to Mr. Gibson. A beautiful hanging fern courtesy of Harborside Gardens, to Hazel Kingston and a copy of the 1858 map of Dennis and East Dennis to Dean Garfield. Our gratitude to the donors, and congratulations to the winners. Phyllis Horton was the winner of the trivia quiz on Dennis and Barnstable County history. Our champagne toast was courtesy of the Stones.

### IF ONLY THIS HOUSE COULD TALK.....

.....I would dearly love to listen to the memories it would share. The house I am speaking of stands on the easterly corner of the intersection of New Boston Road at Beach Street, in the traditional Howes neighborhood. New Boston Road was somewhat of a village center at one time. The Old West Schoolhouse, now on the grounds of the Josiah Dennis Manse, and open for viewing every Tuesday and Thursday in July and August (except July 4th) from 2-4 P.M., was built about across the street and a little to the east of this house. A grist mill was located where the present playground is, and across the highway was another mill - the south mill - with a Howes as a miller. The house with which I would enjoy having a conversation was built in 1700 for Ebenezer Howes, and is one of the few "narrow houses" on the Cape (only one room deep) which has not been altered by the addition of a "lean-to" or salt box extension. Old-timers used the second story windows of this house as a yardstick to recount the depth of the Great Snow of 1717 when, after 21 days of snowfall, the Howes family ran out of food and had to leave their house through these windows. Ebenezer's son, Samuel, married Jerusha Sturgis, who was born in the middle of this memorable blizzard. Generations of Howes who grew up in this house must have heard the story of that remarkable winter over and over again. "Great Sam", as he was called to distinguish him from several other Samuel Howes of that generation, is said to have kept a tavern in this house - in which he was born, and his children and grandchildren after him. The tavern, or as sometimes called the ordinary, was the meeting place for the men of the village in these early colonial days. This old house is one of the few buildings left in town which overheard our ancestors discussing the business of shore whaling, the trials and expenses of the Indian Wars, the division of the mother town of Yarmouth, the calling of its first minister. If only this house could relate these tales, how much richer would be our history.

### THESE HOUSES DO TALK

They are the two town-owned Historic Centers: The Jericho House and Barn Museum at Trotting Park Road in West Dennis, and the Josiah Dennis Manse at Nobscusset Road and Whig Street in Dennis. The Manse will speak to you of a day when families in Dennis subsisted by the work of their own hands, raising their food and the raw stuffs for their clothing, making their furniture, chopping wood for fuel and producing candles, soap, salt and nearly everything else they needed, around the huge fireplace in the keeping room. Jericho speaks of a later time, when many of our men were engaged in maritime activities, which brought goods from afar, and gave the ladies time for decorative art and fine needlework. The houses will speak to you through the voices of dedicated volunteers who show visitors around the historic centers on the days and times listed at the top of this month's calendar. And, may I add, the houses will also speak to you in the language of flowers, through the kindness of the Village Garden Club and the West Dennis Garden Club. Through the years, their members have provided appropriate arrangements at both houses and we should be grateful to them for this additional bit of beauty in our lovely old houses. This summer the Manse has a special exhibit on the Shiverick Shipyard, a romantic and economically important activity in East Dennis in the mid-1800's. Many of the art works and articles exhibited are on loan and this may be your only chance to see them. Admont Clark, literally "the man who wrote the book" on the Shiverick Shipyard, will be there in person on Thursday, July 11th and 18th. He has also prepared an information sheet on the exhibit, which you will enjoy. All members of D.H.S. should make a special effort to visit both Historic Centers this summer, and bring your guests.

### THOSE DAYS ARE GONE FOREVER DEPARTMENT

From the Harwich Independent, March 24, 1891 -

"Not a single house has been built in South Dennis for a dozen years." Not even a supermarket!

## CALENDAR

OPEN JULY AND AUGUST - Jericho House, Mon., Wed., Fri. 2-4:30  
Josiah Dennis Manse, Tues. & Thurs. 2-4

July 11 & 18 Admont Clark at Shiverick Exhibit. The Manse, 2-4 P.M.  
July 29 7:30 Nancy's house. Board meets.  
August 25 -  
Sept. 1 DENNIS FESTIVAL DAYS. Details next time.  
August 27 10 A.M. Bike Ride, Dennis Port. Meet at Rte. 28 Cinema.  
August 28 7:30 West Dennis Community Building. Talk by Kathy Swegart. See article.  
Coming in September - ANNUAL MEETING. Sept. 17, Senior Center.

### KEEPER OF THE LIGHT

Last summer I told you something of the history of the Bass River Light itself. Today I would like to tell you something about one of its keepers, Samuel Adams Peak. Born in the keeper's house on Great Island, he was the third generation of his family to be a lighthouse keeper. The progenitor of the Cape Cod Peak family, John, was a Baptist minister who twice served the Hyannis Baptist Church, as its second pastor for 1801 to 1806 and as its fifth pastor in 1818 to 1828. Elder Peak was a strict Calvinistic preacher and a vociferous proponent of Baptism by immersion. It is said that he also placed a certain amount of faith in the convivial qualities of other spirituous liquids. Howsomever, he was highly regarded by the deep-water mariners of his parish and they took his young son John under their wings. When the stone lighthouse, still standing, was built on Point Gammon in West Yarmouth, he was appointed its first keeper, and installed with his young family in the stone keeper's house adjoining it. He served in that post until his death, in 1824, at the age of 42, and was succeeded by his son, John, then 19 years of age. John and his wife raised their family of nine children on this spot, the children walking four miles to attend the district school in West Yarmouth and returning to help their father with his cattle and duties with the light. The isolation in which they grew up did not appear to dampen their interest in the sea, for two of the sons of this John Peak became lighthouse keepers. Our Samuel first went to sea, making several voyages to the Mediterranean and Adriatic, the last few as Captain. When he came ashore in 1881, he was appointed keeper of Bass River Light and served at that post until his death in 1906. He and Mrs. Peak and their son Samuel, who in later life also followed a life at sea, were popular members of the West Dennis community, and I know of at least one lady who still remembers Mrs. Peak's excellent cooking. Captain Peak died much lamented by all who knew him and respected his many years of faithfully keeping Bass River Light as a beacon of home and safety for the large fleet of vessels who anxiously watched for its beam.

### THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

"From ghoulies and ghosties and leggety beasties and things that go bump in the night, Good Lord, deliver us!"

An ancient Scottish verse, from the tradition of my husband's ancestry, but not inappropriate for Cape Cod, for there are many ghostly fables, tales, and haunted houses here on Cape Cod. Kathy Swegart has studied a few of these houses where things go "bump in the night", and she will relate some of these stories at the evening program during Dennis Festival Days, at West Dennis Community Building, on Wednesday, August 28, 7:30 P.M. Bring a flashlight - that parking lot is very dark!

### HOUSE DATING CLASS

Held at Jericho House, through the kindness of that Committee, a number of interested members as well as interested guests heard about the process whereby houses are dated, thoroughly outlined by Pauline Derick. Two people who attended the class, Agnes and Walter Malinowski, were so inspired that they have expressed a willingness to start dating some of the houses on Route 6A which have not as yet been surveyed. We deeply appreciate this offer! It is the aim of D.H.S. to have every building in the town of Dennis which is 100 years old, or older, surveyed and dated. Anyone who is able and willing to help in this effort, please step forward and join the Malinowskis. (Thanks, Polly Derick, for another fine job.)

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