



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

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Picnics, Parades, and Seeing Family and Friends Celebrating the Fourth of July!

Whether you are celebrating the Fourth of July or looking back on fond memories, **there's no better time to inspire hope, healing, and self-confidence** in those who are serving, served and have sacrificed so much for our freedoms. We give thanks to those brave servicemen and servicewomen.

And it's always a great opportunity to spend time with family and friends, showcase your grill skills at the family picnic, reclaim your lost horseshoe throwing title, catch the local July 4th parade in your town, and **close the day with a bang - fireworks!**

So this year **turn a few heads and impress a few family and friends by sharing your knowledge of July 4th history:**

A double ration of rum...

In 1778, General George Washington marked the fourth of July with a **double ration of rum for his soldiers** and an artillery salute.

Who cracked the Liberty Bell...

The Liberty Bell was originally ordered by the Assembly of the colony of Pennsylvania from a foundry in England. **In 1752, the first time the new bell was struck, it cracked.** Recast twice since then... In 1835, it cracked again when being struck to announce the death of John Marshall, the Chief Justice of the United States. In 1846, it cracked after being struck to mark the birthday of George Washington. And in 1915, it was retired and placed on the ground level of what is today called Independence Hall.

54 hot dogs and buns in 10 minutes...

Since 1916, **Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest** in Coney Island, Brooklyn, New York City started as a way to settle a dispute among four immigrants as to who was the most patriotic. Now a world-famous, annual event, watched on ESPN, **Joey Chestnut, three-time defending champion,** successfully defended his 2010 title by eating 54 hot dogs and buns in 10 minutes.

Some kind of 'Declaration...'

America celebrates July 4 as Independence Day because it was on July 4, 1776, that members of the Second Continental Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, adopted the final draft of the Declaration of Independence.

Museum Updates

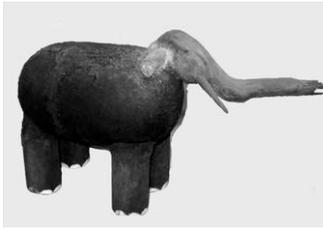
We are now in *Museum Season*, and here are some activity updates in case you missed the Opening Days.

The **West Dennis Graded School House** exhibits likewise opened on June 24. The display "Captain Levi Howes, Civil War Prisoner", will be there for your pleasure all summer, together with copies of this latest DHS book for your purchase. We have already had a passel of schoolchildren on their annual visit, and the early schoolrooms, Indian artifacts and other displays are awaiting the public. The building is getting a fresh coat of paint and other needed maintenance to restore its attractiveness.



The *1736 Josiah Dennis Manse Museum* commenced its second season following the renovation on June 23rd. The new summer exhibit, “Dennis in the War of 1812” is in the Maritime Room, and all is in readiness in anticipation of another very busy tourist season.

Amanda Maguire is one of the new junior docents at this Museum. In keeping with historic tradition, her mother, Nancy, made Amanda's dress especially for the Manse. Nancy, Amanda and Nancy's father, Dick Hammond, all came to our docent training in April. We heartily welcome Amanda to our Junior Docent Staff.



1801 Jericho Historical Center opened on June 24, as you read last month in Peggy's article, the critter creatures from the Driftwood Zoo are being lovingly cleaned and restored and brought out of the barn cellar for your enjoyment. Here



are a couple of our zoey inhabitants. Now, perhaps we need a critter naming contest? Or a Naming Party when all are done? (“Woody” is not allowed!)

Please see our Web Page for our summer schedule and upcoming events.

“MEMORIES OF THE PAST” by Joshua Eldredge Howes¹ (An Excerpt)

“I made my way forward to the domicile of Mr. Dunham^[2], the Ship's Doctor – so called – to view the surroundings of that little dark and dingy place, used not only for a cook room but as a sleeping place for some of the crew as well. Now to all greenhorns I would advise – that unless your stomachs are bomb proof and your sense of smell is impervious to the most disagreeable and sickening odors that one can imagine keep out of the forecabin – for the first day on board at any rate. I had remained but a short time listening to the conversation passed between the occupants of that little cluttered up cook room before a strange sensation, together with a sort of light headedness, seemed to take possession of me. Making my way to the deck to get clear of that disagreeable odor I again made my way to the lazy seat which I had left but a few minutes before; I now imagined that I saw a smile and a twinkle of the eye on the face of my father as he sat at the wheel, not knowing at the time its real meaning – neither do I know now – but surmising that he could see by my looks and appearance that Neptune was beginning to perform his tricks. My father was naturally a quiet man, not given to overmuch talk – only when aroused to earnestness on particular occasions when circumstances connected therewith may or seem to require it. He merely asked how I felt and cautioned me in a few words not to go below deck too often as the open air would be a better place for some time to come.

This obnoxious and disagreeable odor is not a freak seldom witnessed, for in all the different craft that I have ever sailed the same cause will produce the same effects. The cause is this: there is hardly a vessel that sails but what has some leak somewhere – some more and some less. Now

¹ Transcribed and annotated by Burton N. Derick

² Frederick Dunham is not found in the Harwich nor Dennis vital records, nor in census records of this time for either town. However, we find that he is a native of Nantucket, having been born there 17th 2m 1826, s/o George F. & Dianna (Dauson) Dunham; his wife was Elizabeth C. Folger, d/o Moses & Phebe Folger of Nantucket.

when the leak is small and trifling there is no notice taken of it and therefore a marine railway bill is avoided and money saved for the owners. Then the amount of water lying still and dormant in the hold of any vessel in any harbor where there is no motion will become stagnant, and all it needs (like an old rain barrel) to test its purity is a good shaking up. This is what is called bilge water and those that are used to the like do not mind it, knowing that it is of short duration, but to a green boy right from the clover fields of new mown hay it is very different.

We have passed the point leaving the comparatively smooth waters of Vineyard Sound^[3] behind. The broad Atlantic is now before us and as we proceed we begin to feel the effects of what the sailor terms an “Old Ground Swell”. I am now feeling sick and hardly able to retain my seat; not a word of pity or encouragement did I receive from Father, but I think his eye was upon me however and that he knew as it were what the end would be from the beginning. At this critical moment there appeared to me like an angel of mercy one whom from the very start like a faithful watchdog had noticed my every move and was there ready to act in time of need. This benefactor and friend was my brother^[4], being three years older than myself, and this being his second season on the water, he felt well able to take me under his care. I had another brother^[5] somewhat older than the one that took me in his keeping that would have gladly done the same for my comfort and safety, and in fact I do believe that there was not one for the crew from the cook up or down but what would readily have cared for me if occasion required it. Well the most critical time had come and my brother, beholding my pre-dicament, placed one hand on my forehead, the other to the collar of my homespun jacket, and with a grip that bespoke firmness for him and safety of me said “Let her go, I’ll hold ye”, raising my head slightly above the quarter rail as he spoke; the safety valves of my stomach were thrown wide open, and so was my mouth, and a torrent of solids and liquids was deposited on the bosom of old ocean, until there were no more remaining. I fell back, or rather was lain back, in as easy a position as circumstances would allow, and with a weak and mournful cry was heard to say “Oh how I wish I could be at home”. A few encouraging words were given by some of the crew and my brother, but not a word from Father that I can remember, and we were now making our way from the land at quite a good clip. The last episode being passed and I still alive there seemed to be, if anything, a change for the better, and my brother perceiving this gently but firmly conducted me forward to the main hatch upon which lay the staysail and spreading out the sail as best he could made for me quite a comfortable bed for the time being. He then left me for a short while and I must have fallen asleep, as soon he returned requesting me to try and set up for, said he, I have something for you that will make you feel better. To this I objected, asking him to leave me, as I was already on the mend, and refused with considerable stubbornness, but no I must sit up and take my medicine, which consisted of quite a large piece of salt meat (a remnant of our early dinner), a hard cracker slightly soaked in warm water, and with a mug of strong tea to keep it down on my empty stomach. I tried my best to evade the issue but he (my Doctor) being persistent at last prevailed, and to my surprise I was brought to a realizing sense that he knew better than I what was best, as now a great change had been wrought in a short time. Being now on the mend – and that quite speedily – I began to feel something like my former self.”

(This excerpt is one of the items that I mentioned last month, and I hope to keep including more bits from this and other material in our archives. Pete Howes)

3 Modern usage places Vineyard Sound as that body of water between the Elizabeth Islands and Marthas Vineyard. He is referring to what we now call Nantucket Sound, but when that name came about is not known to your transcriber.

4 Ezra Howes – b. 1836 (Great-grandfather of your Newsletter Editor!)

5 Early along Joshua states that his 3 elder brothers and Father were with him on this voyage.

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July Events

Old Fashioned Pie Sale on the Green
to benefit the Dennis Manse Museum
Monday, July 2 @ 5 p.m. (New Time)
Village Green at
Rt. 6A & Old Bass River Rd.



Walk with Terri Fox through
The Sea Captain's Cemetery and also
Tour their House of Worship
Friday, July 13 @ 10 a.m.
South Dennis Congregational Church
210 Main St., South Dennis
Rain Date: Sunday, July 15 @ 2 p.m.

