

### THE MEMORIES LINGER ON

The last in our memory days series for this year has ended, but the memories we have gathered live on - not only in the minds of those who were there, but also on electronic tape, where the stories and information about life in our villages years ago can be retrieved and relived. Thanks to all who have made this series a success, and especially to Ben Thacher, whose expertise and excellent equipment have produced quality tapes. Promised and hoped for - "The Best of Memories Days", a composite tape containing the choicest stories which we have gathered, edited by Ben.

### DENNIS IS 191 YEARS OLD .....

.....Incorporated on June 18, 1793 by an act of the legislature, which was signed into law the following day by Gov. John Hancock. It has become the custom for D.H.S. to celebrate the Town's birthday with a luncheon and this year the party will be at Lighthouse Inn. The menu: Cup of chowder, choice of Chicken Salad with fruit or Seafood Quiche with tossed salad, bread, coffee, tea or milk, and birthday cake. There will be entertainment in the form of songs from musicals, sung by Peggy Carver Shad, accompanied by Ann Hawkins. There will also be door prizes, a trivia quiz on Dennis history, and some short presentations by the Board. Social hour will begin at 12 noon with luncheon at 1. The cost is \$8 per person. Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your check to: Joshua Crowell, P.O. Box 963, Dennis, MA, 02638. If you cannot honor your reservations, please let Josh know and he will try to resell your ticket.

### A MINI COURSE AT WIXON

Student teacher Theresa Jordan and Mrs. Pamela Lockhart decided to give their fifth grade a mini-course in Dennis History. The students chose subjects to research and write about. D.H.S. loaned the colored posters on the Town's history which were prepared by Ann Guiliani to accompany the slide show, and planned a guided tour to historic sites for the class at the conclusion of their unit. Sarah Kruger, Pauline Derick and Nancy Reid spent a very pleasant day with these great young people, and a good time was had by all. We were impressed with the carry-over from former field trips displayed by some of the comments of the youngsters. We hope other classes will want to have a similar unit next spring.

### D.H.S. LOGO

The Board has received a number of very good suggestions, but we are reluctant to choose a symbol which we hope will be used for many years, without careful consideration. We are narrowing down the choices and will display those which seem most adaptable to our use at the June luncheon. Thanks to those who have submitted designs, all of which have shown real thought and talent.

### SOMETIMES THE BEST MAN FOR THE JOB IS A WOMAN

Town election of 1984 has placed a woman in one of the Selectmen's seats. Only once before in the Town's history, as far as I know, has a woman served in this office, and that was in 1971 when Sarah Caverly was elected. Other major town jobs have been filled by a member of the "gentler sex", but although other towns have regularly had women on their Boards, Dennis has lagged in this area. It is a bit ironic that this is true, for women entered the public arena in this town many years before Women's Suffrage was popular. The first women to serve the town in an official capacity were elected to the school committee in 1872. The first woman to be ordained into the Methodist ministry in this country was at that time filling the pulpit of the East Dennis and Dennis churches. So Dennis was accustomed to women in town affairs long before they were given the right to vote on school affairs, which was about 1879. At that time Bourne, Sandwich and Chatham proudly proclaimed the election of women to the school committees in their towns - "decisively and gallantly," declares the Sandwich reporter - while Provincetown women remained by their firesides, "not one woman availing herself of the privilege to vote on school matters." There is some suggestion that all of this public activity on the part of females was not always enthusiastically endorsed by the men. A Referendum question on the ballot of a special town meeting, Nov. 5, 1895 - "Is it expedient that municipal suffrage be granted to women?" - received 201 nays to 85 yeas. And in 1876, William Frederick Howes, in a letter to the editor of the Yarmouth Register, on the involvement of the women of Dennis in activities about town, comments "These innovations crowding thick and fast upon us of the sterner sex leave us but little to do in a public way except to take care of our politics and whether we can much longer maintain our supremacy in that line is, to say the least, problematical. Ah, me!" Ah, me indeed, Capt. Howes. Congratulations to our two new Selectmen. Or should Mrs. Sears be called a Selectwoman? Or maybe a woman Selectman? I hope we don't have to start calling them all Selectpersons!

### EZRA H. BAKER SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

For me, this is one of the high points of the year. 300 of our school children spend several hours of a school day over the course of a week at one of the town's two historic centers, and get a chance to taste of life in the 18th and 19th centuries. Costumed guides help them to realize the great contrasts between Colonial and modern life. They literally get "a taste" at both houses, as they make butter to try on freshly baked bread at the Manse and churn ice cream by hand at Jericho. Children, teachers and volunteers go away from this activity with an increased historical perspective and an appreciation of the two houses and their contents.

CALENDAR

June 2 10 A.M. Town Hall Parking Lot. Lady Slipper Walk.  
 June 4-8 Ezra H. Baker School Field Trips  
 June 14 7:30 P.M. Board Meeting home of Nancy Reid.  
 FLAG DAY  
 June 17 12 noon Social Hour. 1 P.M. Birthday Luncheon. Lighthouse Inn.  
 June 18 10 A.M. Volunteers Tea. Josiah Dennis Manse.  
 June 29 2-4 P.M. Opening Tea. Jericho House.

THE SECOND MINISTER OF THE EAST PARISH

Usually in June I tell you something about the Rev. Josiah Dennis, for whom the Town was named. Mr. Dennis served the East parish of Yarmouth from 1727-1763, so he never knew that his former parishoners had honored his memory by naming their town for him. But the Rev. Nathan Stone, who succeeded him, lived to see the birth of the new town, and is said to have been the one who suggested the name to his fellow townsmen. Nathan Stone was born in 1736 and was educated for the ministry at Harvard College. He came to the East Parish in the last years of Mr. Dennis' ministry and after his death was called to fill the pulpit. He lived in the Manse with the widow Dennis until his house was completed in 1765, the same home on New Boston Road which is still occupied by his descendants. The East Parish, which in 1793 became the town of Dennis, had but one established church in those days, which stood approximately where the white brick tomb stands in the Dennis Union Cemetery today. Sunday Worship and Town Meetings were conducted in that meeting house, and the militia drilled on training days on the green just west of the site. It was the center of town, and families who lived on the south side had a long walk to get to town activities. It was while Mr. Stone was pastor that the South Meeting House was built (1795), approximately where the present South Dennis Congregational Church now stands, and every third Sunday Mr. Stone would ride to that meeting house to conduct worship. His extensive and very interesting diaries show that he faithfully ministered to that part of his flock which lived in the South Parish, despite the distance he must travel to offer comfort and blessing. Because of his education and his close acquaintance with all of the citizens of the East Parish, he was extremely influential in establishing the new town. He was a man of whom it can be truly said, 'He lived beloved and died lamented.' At his death, April 26, 1804, however, the influence of his family did not end, as was the case with Josiah Dennis. For Rev. Mr. Stone left a son, Nathan, a man of many talents, most visibly remembered today as the town's first trained housewright, responsible for building several of the lovely Cape style houses along Route 6A. He was also the town's first Postmaster, and was active in all of the new town's affairs. Stone descendants have remained involved citizens over many generations. They have pursued a wide variety of occupations - cranberry growers, innkeepers, mariners - and have served the nation in war and the town in peace. It would be impossible for me to name their many contributions to the life of this town. For example, Wm. Murray Stone donated the park in front of the Dennis Union Church, now owned by the V.I.S. John Murray Stone, Jr. contributed generously to the Dennis Memorial Library, and his portrait can be seen there. Mr. William Stone has recently given the town a fine piece of conservation land containing a cranberry swamp which is presently being restored. We have included a picture of John Murray Stone, Jr. in the slide show about our town's history, with his champion trotting horse Leola. The Rev. Mr. Nathan Stone was a blessing to the East Parish and the new town of Dennis in his lifetime, and his descendants have continued to bless our town through many generations.

LADY SLIPPER WALK

Join us on June 2nd at 10 A.M. in the parking lot of the Town Hall, and walk with us out onto the Indian Lands to view the spectacular display of Lady Slippers. There are few places in New England where they grow in such profusion. As we walk, our guides, historian Pauline Derick and botanist Dr. Norton H. Nickerson, Jr., will relate some interesting facts about the past use of this land. It will be a morning to remember.

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization U. S. POSTAGE PAID Permit No. 2 So. Dennis, MA 02660
--