



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 37 No. 4

Send letters & stories to Dennis Historical Society, Box 607, S. Dennis 02660 or to pjhowes@verizon.net June 2014

Internet: www.dennishistoricalsociety.org

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E-Mail info@dennishistoricalsociety.org

Next Board Meeting: 2:00 P.M., DHS Library, upstairs @ West Dennis Library, Rt. 28, West Dennis

REVEREND JOSIAH DENNIS ORDAINED!! (1727)

“June 11th A letter was read from Deacon Joseph Hall & Joseph Howes in the name of other brethren of the Chh. in Yarmouth inhabiting in y^e Eastern Precinct of s^d Town, about to embody into a Chh. State & elect & have ordained over them M^r Jospheh Dennis for their Pastor on Thursday June 22 — to invite the presence and assistance of the Elder and some Messangers. The Church voted to comply with the request and to send to them.

June 22 Voted also Deacon Lewis and Deacon Bacon Messangers. The Elder and Messangers chosen went down to the Eastern Precinct in Yarmouth & joined in Council with the Elder & Messangers from the Church in Harwich, the Church in Chatham, the Church in Ipswich, and the western Church in Barnstable. Mr. Stone chosen Moderator.

The Church was gathered and M^r Josiah Dennis was ordained Pastor over it by prayer & imposition of the hands of the Presbytery.”

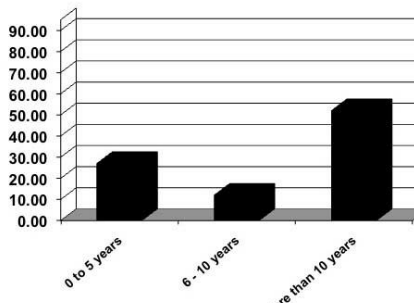
From the records of the East Parish Church in Barnstable

DHS Survey

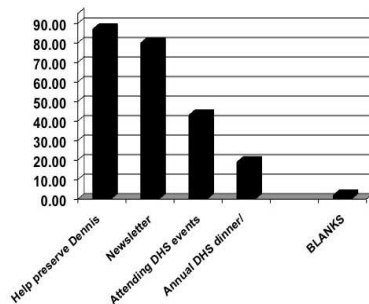
Your Board is and will be working it way through the large volume of helpful suggestions received while seeking to implement many. Our great thanks to Larry Symington for his many hours of preparing the survey and summarizing the results. We will present these summaries bit by bit in this newsletter. There were several folks who are willing to volunteer their time, and if you have not been contacted yet, you certainly will be! The next two articles are in response to requests for more information from the surveys.

Ninety-one surveys were received from eighty-one households, an excellent response rate.

1. How long have you been a member
N = 91



2. What do you particularly value about your DHS Members
(Check all that apply) N = 91



RELATED TO #2 – What do you particularly value about your DHS membership?

- Positive comments (3)
- Being involved on Board/as Docent (3)
- Social contacts (2)

RELATED TO #3 – Is there anything DHS could do better?

- Publicity/advertising (6)
- Already doing a good job (5)
- Recruit (5)
- Be more open/welcoming (5)
- Programs/Events (3)

Website

For those who have not visited our website, while the address is above (*the www thing*) just enter “Dennis Historical” into your favorite web browser (Google, Safari, etc.) and you will get there. And yes, we will be adding a Rose Victorian section. All of our 2014 Events are listed there as well. Please check it out, send comments and content!

Digital Archive

Over the past few years DHS has been engaged in a largely Community Preservation Act-funded program to digitize letters, photos, vessel log books and all other historic material that has been acquired by gift or loan. This Program continues to build a public, fully searchable on-line archive of the written and pictorial history of Dennis and its inhabitants for use by students, researchers and interested parties world-wide. As of this writing, 8,831 items on-line, and you type in what you want in the search box. At the present time, all effort

to input material from our voluminous backlog, patiently digitized by Burt Derick, has ceased for some time due to lack of funding, for the funds proposed a year ago have yet to be authorized to be spent. We hope that this will be remedied in the near future. We have received several notes

You can access our Digital Archive site by searching for "Dennis Archive" or it may also pop up when you search for DHS, above, or you can click on the Archive link on the DHS website.

As a corollary to this, the Woods Hole Historic Museum has a very considerable quantity of digital material that they wish to share with us. I have not seen it, but several of our Shiverick ship captains moved to Woods Hole, and there is a long mutual history between our two towns. We should have a copy before the next Newsletter goes to press. Stay tuned.

Our Sincere Thanks to our Benefactor

We offer our most sincere thanks to Harry Van Iderstine, who has funded not only our Vault in the Manse, but also the earlier preservation of our antique dresses. The vault, known as the Van Iderstine Room, and has a plaque that states "*Dedicated in Loving Memory of Raymond and Mildred Van Iderstine by Harry, Pamela and Megan Van Iderstine*". In the front entry of the Manse, our visitors immediately see the plaque that states: "*Preservation Of The Antique Dresses In The Collection Was Made Possible By A Generous Donation From Harry And Megan Van Iderstine In Memory Of Beloved Wife And Mother Pamela Van Iderstine*".



During this past spring I was fortunate to have met with Harry in his home in New Smyrna Beach Fla. and present him with a collection of photos of the results of his investment, aided by photos supplied by Dave Talbott, Project Manager for the vault.

Harry was a Dennis native, having been born in a home on the corner of Whig Street and Corporation Road, a home that his parents Raymond and Mildred purchased upon their arrival from Prince Edward Island. His father was the head gardener at the Cape Playhouse where the gardens were a destination themselves, as recounted by Phyllis Horton. Raymond perished as the result of a propane heater explosion in the actor's cottage where he was working, and from then on Mildred supported her family through domestic work and hooked and braided rugs that she sold to tourists. Harry did odd jobs for Theoline Filley Chaffee who lived near the Manse and grew up with affection for the house. He graduated from Yarmouth High School in 1948, and after working as an auto mechanic for Arthur Sears, he moved to Long Island where he married Pamela, a West Virginia Native. Harry ran a very successful foundry in West Virginia until his retirement to Florida.¹ His experience as an auto mechanic stood him in good stead when he bought a 1932 Duesenberg Model J dual-cowl phaeton "in many pieces," built for Hollywood producer Howard Hawks, and spent nine years restoring everything but the chrome and the upholstery, winning the 2011 Automobile Magazine Driving Enthusiast Award.

What is DHS???????????????

There have recently been several questions, comments and opinions about what DHS is, what it does, who owns the artifacts and the like, so it's time to review this for the benefit of all.

The Dennis Historical Society, Inc., (DHS) was incorporated in the State of MA on or about June 14, 1966. It is a not-for-profit MA corporation that is subject to the laws for and protections granted to MA corporations. According to our Articles of Organization registered with the State, the purpose for which it was formed is: "*To accumulate, collate, preserve, promote and develop historical assets of the Town of Dennis and from time to time exhibit same to stimulate public interest in the historic development of the Town of Dennis, to conduct researches for places of historic value in and of the Town of Dennis, and to acquire by gift, purchase, grant, devise, lease or otherwise, the fee or lesser interest in real or personal property of significant historical value to the Town of Dennis and to manage same.*"

¹ Parts reprinted with permission by Nicole Muller and the Register from her 02/19/07 article.

DHS owns most of the artifacts (except those on permanent lease) that are exhibited in the three Town-owned buildings, the 1736 Josiah Dennis Manse, the Jericho Historical Center and on the second floor of the West Dennis Graded School

DHS Board Meetings are *open to everybody*, DHS member or not.

DHS annually conducts cemetery walks, and other activities for free or for a minor donation. These are listed on our website, by the Chamber of Commerce, posters, and (usually) on Facebook.

DHS was gifted the Rose Victorian in West Dennis and operates the seasonal Gift shop at that location.

All museums and the Rose Victorian are staffed and operated by volunteers that form the committees for each building and that are *open to all, member or not*, to participate. YES- all are very, very welcome to join and help wherever they want!! If you feel that you **have not** had a response to your offer to help – PLEASE CALL ME – 508-385-9308 or e-mail us or come by any of the museums when open and say something or do all of the above!! Or if you want to join the Board of Directors. Or if you want to write a newsletter article. Or anything else to help.

DHS, through an agreement with the West Dennis Library, maintains its library containing its own books and other printed materials on the second floor of that building, with access available as accorded by volunteers or their librarians during regular library hours.

Please feel free to e-mail us with any questions or comments that you have.

The Rose Victorian

Due to the unsettled weather during April and early May, our original plan of being fully open by Memorial Day weekend went astray. Our gift shop is after all, located in a two story “Carriage Barn” which makes it an uncomfortably large area to heat for human comfort. Other matters kept us occupied elsewhere at times. With the weather improving we should be opening in mid June.

With the returning help of our wonderful volunteer staff we can look forward to being open *at least* four days each week. Our volunteer manager, Rebecca, will be returning from Italy in late June and I’m sure will be filled with wonderful stories and ideas.

Please remember that the gift shop is not the only way to help your Dennis Historical Society maintain this most unusual, generous bequeath. We have many small but necessary tasks to be done in the main house which will not require selling or standing, e.g.: drawers to be emptied, sorted and inventoried; linens to be checked over &/or laundered, labeled and inventoried for selling in the shop; the list goes on and you are invited to help discover the treasures not yet uncovered. I wish to share with you:

“The Legend of the Pineapple.”

“Expressing a sense of welcome, good cheer and family affection, the pineapple signifies hospitality. New England sea captains traditionally placed a pineapple outside of their homes as a symbol of a safe return.

Today the Pineapple is a symbol to treasure friendships, celebrate homecomings, and encourage good times.” The Rose Victorian house was built by West Dennis Sea Captain Calvin Baker in 1877 and I’m sure this legend was well known to him. Let us honor Capt. Calvin Baker; Sea Captain Theophilus Baker who built Jericho House in 1801 and the Rev. Josiah Dennis who built the 1736 Josiah Dennis Manse, by stepping forward and volunteering to support the future of *at least one* of these edifices. Let’s keep in mind “The Legend of the Pineapple” and it’s meaning to our forefathers and how it can apply to us in the DHS.

Your response will be appreciated and your phone call returned. Phone: 508-385-9308 Thank you.

June Howes, Acting Chairperson for The Rose Victorian

<p><i>Saturday, June 7, 10:30 A.M.</i> Walking Tour of Historic Quivet Neck With <i>Brendan Joyce.</i> Meet at the Jacob Sears Library, 23 Center Street, East Dennis. Rain date June 8, 1:30 P.M.</p>	<p><i>Saturday, June 21, 1-4 P.M.</i> Manse Opening Reception Tour the home of Rev. Josiah Dennis, led by costumed interpreters. 1736 Josiah Dennis Manse Museum 77 Nobscussett Rd., Dennis Village</p>	<p><i>Sunday, June 22, 1 -4 P.M.</i> Opening Tea at Jericho & “The 1800’s Jet Set” Tea & our unique collection of intricately adorned garments. Visit the Barn & historic tools. 1801 Jericho Historical Center 90 Old Main Street, West Dennis</p>	<p><i>Friday, June 27, 1-4 P.M.</i> West Dennis Graded School Open House Period School Room & Dennis Maritime Museum West Dennis Graded School 67 School Street, West Dennis</p>
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(As a tribute to Lu (Lura) Crowell, our former and longstanding newsletter editor, selections from her "The Way We Were" will occupy this space all year.) From the June, 2001 Edition

THE WAY WE WERE...

Wearing her Grandmother Blanche (Howes) Crowell's wedding gown, Nancy (Crowell) Allen appeared in the Pageant of Brides in May of 1954. First she modeled Grandma Blanche's gown, and later, because she was the newest bride in Dennis, she appeared in her own wedding dress.

Captain Marcus Lafayette Howes (father of Blanche) was in Calcutta when another sea captain told him that a baby daughter had been born. He purchased a bolt of pineapple silk, which was set aside to make his daughter's wedding gown.

[After the pageant, Richard Aldrich (husband of Gertrude Lawrence) came up to Nancy and said any time she got tired of her new life, he could find her a job in Hollywood. That has to make a girl feel good!]



Nancy (Crowell) Allen
modeling Grandma Blanche's gown