



WINTER LUNCHEON POPULAR

Always a bright spot in the otherwise dull month of February, our Winter Festivity lived up to it's reputation. A record number of our members heard Alan Cavanagh speak on Abraham Lincoln's remarkable life. He showed us Lincoln as a runner for political office, a raconteur, and as a radical--with thought provoking characterizations, and entertainingly presented. The luncheon was excellent, and as expected, the company terrific! Thanks to our many business friends, the following door prizes added to the fun: Gift certificate to Christine's for Luncheon, won by Doris Baines; flower arrangement from Positively Depot, Jerrold Lloyd; fruit basket from Purity Supreme, Hughson Hawley; flowers from Chase House of Flowers, Dot Beck; gift certificate from Dennis Mercantile, Marge Bullivant; gift certificate, Brass Kettle, Howard Webster; bottle of cheer from Harney's, Polly Kennedy; wine from Dennis Port Liquors, Mary Heyleger; and a cup from Scarge Stonewear Pottery, Phyllis Horton. Congratulations to all the winners and thanks to our business friends.

And now--that moment you have all been waiting for--answers to last months trivia questions. 1. In addition to Washington and Lincoln, William Henry Harrison and Ronald Regan have February birthdays. 2. There are no presidential birthdays in June and 6 in October. 3. President U. S. Grant paid an official visit to Dennis in August 1874, shaking hands from the rear of his train at a whistle stop in South Dennis. P. S.--We learned of several of other presidents who had visited Dennis, although not during their terms as chief executive. More on Presidents later.

MEET JOHNNY KELLEY NIGHT

"A legend in his time". That trite expression is the best way I know to describe John Adelbert Kelley. Anyone who has had even the slightest interest in the annual Boston Marathon knows just who Johnny Kelley is. He is Mr. Marathon! As a young man he was selected three times to be a member of a U. S. Olympic team. Twice a winner of the Boston race, he has finished in the top ten nineteen times. This April he plans to start his 57th (yes 57th) race from Hopkinton to the Hub. This remarkable, witty, handsome octogenarian has been a resident of this town for fifteen years. Don't you think it's time you met Johnny Kelley? I had the opportunity to meet him and his lovely wife, Laura, in their home recently, and I can assure you it was a pleasure to make their acquaintance. John and Laura will be our guests at the March 28th meeting of D. H. S. at the Wixon School Auditorium at 7:30 P.M. He will relate some of his running experiences, including participating in the 1936 Olympic games in Berlin. Runners from our schools and their families have a special invitation to attend. A feature of the evening will be an exhibit of a few of John's paintings, which he loves to work on when he isn't running. Won't you come to meet our neighbors John and Laura Kelley on March 28th? The public is welcome and there is no admission charge.

"I DIDN'T KNOW THAT" DEPARTMENT

D. H. S. has redesigned the date boards which we will present to the owners of old homes. In addition to the date when the house was built and the initials of the Society, the new signs will also give the historical name for the house. This is usually the name of the man who built the house--or more correctly, "for whom the house was built", as few of the first owners were actually housewrights. However, when placing dateboards on some of the houses researched by the Southside Study Committee, we will be using the name of the man who actually, physically, did build the house! In a day when houses were simpler in construction and money was scarce a young man approaching marriage could elect to build his own house. Given a 12 hour, six day work week, one must wonder how even a young man would have the energy to even attempt such a project. But it was not uncommon. Having completed his twelve hour work day, the prospective bridegroom must have prayed fervently for pleasant evenings, for it was only on bright moonlit nights that significant progress could be made on his new home. Thus, these "moonlight houses" were completed only on the whim of nature. One must wonder what the neighbors thought of all this "Moonlight activity". This might be why families tended to stay in neighborhoods, for it would be easier to forgive a brother or cousin his evening pounding than an unrelated fellow townsman. As you may have already guessed, our modern term "moonlighting", a term which means supplementing one's income by performing a job after one's primary job hours are over, has evolved. "I'll bet you didn't know that"!

CAN YOU HELP US?

"We need a few good men" (or women).....to help us to transcribe two collections of letters before we attempt to deacidify and encapsulate them.....We also need anyone who can assist with the many typing chores which we face day to day.....or, do you have a pair of candlesticks which are appropriate to the Manse, (brass preferably, or pewter)? D. H. S. has lots of needs, and we hope to involve more of you in meeting them. Stay tuned.

CALENDAR

Mar. 22 7:30 Board meets with Sarah at the Old Paddock Place
Mar. 28 7:30 Wixon School Auditorium MEET JOHNNY KELLEY
Apr. 28 7:30 West Dennis Community Building
Williston Holbert speaks on "Cape Cod and the Cape Verde Islands"

OUR ANNUAL IRISH STORY

Most of my "Irish Month" stories have to do with descendants of David O'Kelia, later Kelley. He was among the first settlers on the shores of Bass River, near the present Kelley's Bay. The members of his family have been prominent; productive of this and other nearby towns since David bought his Welsh bride, Jane Powell, to dwell among the predominantly--almost totally--English Protestant population. But this story begins in Ireland in 1725 or 1729--my sources differ. It was an unhappy time for the people of that country. English Protestant interests had been granted most of the land, and Catholics were forbidden to own any. Many landlords even refused to rent to them. And so, many Irish people decided to cast their lot in the New World in the hope of finding freedom and prosperity. Among these prospective immigrants was the family of James Delap. In May of 1725 (or 1729) he and his family took passage on the vessel, George and Ann, bound for the colonies in America. He and his wife, four daughters, and son James, carried with them their life savings and provisions for a two month passage. But unbeknownst to them, the master of the vessel, Captain Ryman, was a scoundrel. He contrived to extend the voyage for nearly two extra months, during which time the passengers' supplies were exhausted and starvation and disease began to take it's toll. Whenever the remains of a deceased Irishman were committed to the sea, the possessions of that poor person were confiscated by the Captain. The passengers were helpless, until one fortunate day when they were "spoken" by another vessel, and were able to explain their plight. Captain Ryman, now fearful of discovery and punishment, agreed to set the passengers ashore. They were off the coast of Eastham, only half of them still alive, when he ordered the boats lowered and cast them ashore on the lonely beach. Then the rascally Captain sailed away, but you will be glad to know that in time he received due punishment for his deeds. Of the Delap family, only young James remained alive, and he was so weakened that he could only crawl ashore. The group was soon discovered and compassionate Cape Codders did what they could to nurse them back to health and find indentures to secure them all a livelihood. Young James became the ward of James Bacon of Barnstable and apprenticed to a blacksmith. When his apprenticeship was completed he had made fast friends in the mid-Cape area and decided that he would make Cape Cod his home. He married Mary O'Kelia, the granddaughter of our David, and as time went on they became the parents of 10 children. James broadened his experiences by serving as a crew member of the Boston packet. He soon had enough experience to buy shares in a vessel of his own, and as Captain Delap, joined the fishing fleet in summer and did some coastal trading in the spring and fall. Then, in 1775, when threatened rebellion of the colonies became inevitable, James and Mary and 8 of their children moved to Nova Scotia. My research fails to reveal the reason for the move. Some of the Bacons were Loyalists. Could it be that James shared a love for the crown that had driven his family from their home? The Kelleys were mostly Quakers. Was it pacifism that made him uproot his family? Or was the move purely economic, giving him an opportunity to fish and trade unmolested in safer waters? Probably I will never be able to answer those questions. But I can tell you that James and Mary Delap have left an everlasting legacy to Cape Cod. Daughter Rose, who remained here, married Amos Otis. Their grandson, also Amos, was a thorough historian and genealogist whose work has preserved the history of many of our early families. He was also responsible for planting the beautiful elm trees along the King's Highway in Barnstable, which inspired Yarmouth and Dennis to do the same. Although few remain today, the U. S. Constitution Bicentennial has plans to replant a hardy elm along this route soon.

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