



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

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Thanks Bob!

Robert C. Eldred, Jr., CEO of R. C. Eldred Co. and lifelong friend of Dennis Historical Society has retired. We will miss his advice, his corny jokes and his commitment to keep Dennis artifacts in Dennis just as his father did.

Bob, Sr. was on the first Advisory Committee for Jericho when it was given to the Town of Dennis in August 1962 and he donated an oil painting of Capt. William Frederick Howes who lived where the auction house is now. Capt. Howes was the first master of the Shiverick-built *Belle of the West*.

When Bob, Sr. died his family asked that he be honored by donations to the newly established DHS Maritime Fund. That fund has prospered over the years and is responsible for many fine maritime artifacts now in our collection.

Bob, Jr. led a committee formed in 1983 to start a maritime museum in Dennis as we all felt Dennis had a great maritime heritage, a good collection of artifacts and a central Cape location. We made great plans but couldn't overcome the 1983 recession when sponsor money evaporated.

On a personal note: On several occasions Bob arrived at the back door (Cape Codders *always* arrive at the back door) after work with a special Dennis artifact scheduled for an upcoming auction announcing, "You need to get this", then reciting the provenance of the piece. Of course we were there and mostly managed to acquire it. At one

memorable auction one person was bidding against me and the purchase price kept escalating. Finally Bob stopped, looked at the other bidder and asked, "Do you realize you are bidding against the Dennis Historical Society? This really should stay in Dennis!" The gallery applauded, the other bidder lowered his paddle and Bob said, "Sold to Dennis Historical Society". With a friend like that how could we fail?

Bob will remain on the Board of Directors and do some consulting. We wish him well in his retirement and are truly grateful for his direction in preserving Dennis history.

Phyllis Horton

Cold

When the temperature dropped to zero, I thought about what it was like in our house in Dennisport, on Cape Cod, way back in the 1930's. The farm house we lived in was built about 1840, with a tiny Cape Cod cellar, no insulation, and no central heat or no running water. The walls were clapboards over rough boards and the inside walls were lath and plaster. The dead air space between the walls did not do much to keep out the cold. We packed leaves around the foundation tightly for the winter. The floors were still cold.

In winter we kept only two rooms warm. The kitchen had a small oil burner on one side of the electric range, and the living room had a big square oil burner stove, about the size of a small refrigerator. Dad kept a big barrel of kerosene in the garage, which was a separate building. When more fuel was needed for the stoves, one of us

DHS EVENTS

REVISED DATE

Saturday, March 8, 2:00P.M.
Taylor-Bray Archeology
Craig Chartier, will present discoveries of a Native American Settlement and the original farm house in Yarmouthport
\$5.00 Donation
Dennis Memorial Library,
1020 Old Bass River Road,
Dennis Village

Saturday, April 12, 2:00P.M.
"Old Houses of Dennis"
An illustrated lecture on our old houses, both still standing and long gone - a part of our history
Creatively presented by
Burt Derick and
Phyllis Horton.
\$5.00 Donation
Dennis Public Library
5 Hall St., Dennis Port

Saturday, April 26, 2:00P.M.
"Underground Railroad, Indenture, Slavery and Abolition on Cape Cod"
Jim Coogan presents a look at what very quietly happened back in the early and mid-19th century.
\$5.00 Donation
Jacob Sears Library
23 Center St., East Dennis

would go to the garage, taking the stove's removable fuel tank along to re-fill. We had our stoves in an open area of the room, away from any combustibles, such as curtains or furniture. In the kitchen the oil burner at the end of the range, sat in a clear area of the room on legs of about nine inches. And in the living room, there was plenty of clear space around the stove, which sat on a large fireproof square. The square was our boundary. A little kid could get burned, so we all were taught to stay away from the stoves.

When I was three years old, in 1931, we were the first on our street to have inside plumbing and running water installed. Dad knew he had to keep the water barely running so the pipes would not freeze on bitter cold nights. The bathroom had a gas hot water heater at the end of the old claw foot tub. It heated the water for our baths, and it made the bathroom warm. So the bathroom was only heated at bath time. We did not spend much time there in cold weather, though in warmer weather, we three girls spent more time at the bathroom mirror.

With four little kids to keep warm, and unheated bedrooms, our parents bought flannel sheets and woolen blankets for our double bunks. On very cold nights we piled on knit afghans. We dressed for bed in Dr. Denton footed pajamas and on very cold nights, we wore wool sweaters and hats to bed. Plus, we each had our own hot water bottle. I always put my hot water bottle at my feet. When my feet were warmed up and the hot water bottle cooled off, I kicked it away for the night.

On snowy days, we played outside and our house always smelled of wet wool as our mittens dried on top of the living room stove. On stormy days we played inside, in the two warm rooms. Dad put up a swing between the kitchen and living room. We drew chalk circles on the wool living room rug to play marbles. We played games on a marble topped table and did puzzles and listened to the radio. We often had an extra person who boarded with us, so seven of us would share the two warm rooms all winter long.

Mom and Dad both smoked cigarettes and the boarder smoked a pipe. The air in our house was a lot less than healthful all winter. But the house was not at all air tight, so maybe the air circulated through.

In my house today, I am grateful for insulation, thermopane windows, and central heat.

On very cold days I simply turn up the thermostat.

Betty Dean Holmes

Kathy's Ghost

It was about a week before Christmas when I got the note on e-mail from Pete Howes – I was number 4 on the list for calls if there was any trouble at the Rose Victorian. If an alarm sounds (fire, cold, heat, burglary), three other folks get the call to follow up before me. I blessed him – the odds of my phone ringing was nil.

Fast forward.

It is a minute before midnight on Christmas Eve. Santa is expected any moment. Ruth and I had done our traditional chocolate fondue for the kids, and the cleanup was completed. It was bed time, and we were turning out the lights.

At the stroke of midnight, like Marley's ghost, the phone rings. Certainly it's one of the relatives calling to wish us a Happy Christmas! No such luck! It's the security company calling to report a low-temperature alarm in the east upstairs bedroom at the Rose Victorian! The preceding three calls did not answer, and the gal on the other end of the line was thankful I did.

It's a cold night – temperature in the teens – Ruth and I bundle up and head out to the Rose. We get inside – it was chilly in the house – and I punch in the security codes. Didn't work! Phone rings and the security company begins their interrogation before they call the cops. Fortunately, through the haze of the evening's bottle(s) of wine, I did remember the password. Phew! Now to search out the problem.

Checked all the thermostats, couldn't find the one of interest until we searched behind a door. Checked all the heat vents. Definitely no heat. To the basement we go, Ruth leading the parade. At the foot of the basement stairs is an antique valve on a water line, spurting a stream of water in two directions with great vigor! Ruth runs for buckets, I run to the cupboard to find some tape or wrenches or something. We find some Chinese knock-off duct tape, which refuses to stick even to itself, and this does nothing more that direct the water in different directions. Ruth starts gathering the water, we look for the shutoff amongst a veritable jungle of pipes and valves, and find nothing obvious. I head for the phone.

Pause. This burst fitting was really putting out a lot of water. But the extent of the flooding was

really minor when we got there. A portion of the antique Cape cellar was wet, but not enough to cover the soles of our shoes, and the dampness was yards away from the furnace, and could have no effect on the heat problem. What was the connection between the heat being off and the alert to the alarm people, and the sudden leak? No doubt there was a ghost at work!

Have you ever tried to find a HVAC or plumber guy at 1 in the morning on Christmas Day? My first connect was with an HVAC answering service. Yes, they had someone available and he'd be there in an hour. No plumbers in sight, anywhere.

The HVAC guy arrived, did a check and found the heating problem was a blown fuse! He also found the water shut-off for us, so we were able to stop lugging buckets and shut the leak down. The heat was restored, and he left. I told him to send the bill!

Still trying to find a plumber. I must have made 10 calls, each one getting an answering machine, but no warm body. I was near giving up when I got an answer – a young lady on an answering service. I gave her the address, explained the problem, but did not give her my name. Her question was, "is this Burt Derick?" [How does this anonymous person know my name? I'm not using a cell phone, so there's no caller ID!] "Uh, Um, yeah!" "Hi Uncle Burt!" It was my niece Mary, operating an answering service on the night shift, including this plumber! This is a crazy night!!!

We discussed the issue and agreed that, with the water shut off, and the furnace working OK, we could leave the issue until daylight. Mary would get a plumber to call me at home when he was available the next morning and I would meet him at the Rose.

Ruth and I did a clean-up and bailed out, arriving home at 4 AM. The plumber called at 8 AM, and we met him at the Rose at 9. We cut out the offending and very corroded valve, capped both ends, checked to see that water was being supplied to every critical portion of the house, and that was it. Home at 11.

Now – it wasn't Marley's ghost! It was the spirit of Kathy Roche looking down and assisting us to properly care for the treasure called the Rose Victorian. She blew that fuse because she knew that pipe was going to soon burst. I am convinced of this explanation! There seems to be no other!

Thank you, dear Kathy! Please, keep watch on we poor mortals and help us to keep your Rose Victorian a pillar of the Dennis Historical Society!
Burt Derick

Members Who Joined in 2013

We heartily welcome these now DHS Members!

Marilyn Bemis	Concord, MA
Elaine Cooper	Yarmouth Port, MA
Rebekah Derick & Colby Hancock	South Yarmouth, MA
John S. Dernoga, Jr.	South Dennis, MA
Marsha Finley	South Dennis, MA
Mary Ellen Flanagan	White River Junct. VT
Sally Flagg	West Dennis, MA
Rebecca & William Gallerizzo	South Dennis, MA
Richard & Margaret Golden	Dennis, MA
Carolyn Hall	North Harwich, MA
Mary Ann Hall	Harwich, MA
Charles Handren	Northfield, MA
Mike Howes	Sioux Falls, SD
Ron & Linn Jacoby	South Dennis, MA
Sarah Kellogg & Russ Martin	Hermitage, PA
Sharon Kelly & Dick Ammann	Rochester, WI
Judith Kunze	South Dennis, MA
Peggy & Ken McAllon	South Dennis, MA
Gordon & Jane McGinnis	Dennis, MA
Elwin C. Nickerson	Taunton, MA
Peter & Constance Rosenberger	Winchester, MA
Dorothy Scanlon	Dennis, MA
Eleanor L. Sears	South Dennis, MA
Janet & Raymond Ward	Dennis, MA

Kap'n Kezzie's Komments

THE SENILITY PRAYER :

Grant me the senility to forget the people
I never liked anyway,
the good fortune to run into the ones I do,
and the eyesight to tell the difference.

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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 March, 2006 Edition

The Way We Were

Here's our answer to March Madness and the Final Four! On February 21, 1957 it was the Dennis Firemen vs. the Dennis Policemen at Ezra Baker School. The final score was Firemen 20, Police, 13. Front row (left to right) shows Cliff Ellis, Dan Walker, Bud Foster, Leo Babineau, and Joe Walker. Standing (left to right) are Dave Hodsdon, Paul McDowell, Stuart Wixon, Earl Eaton, Bill Hodsdon, Ernie Babineau, and Roy Nyberg. (Thanks to Carole Bell of Beach Street, Dennis for the photograph!)

