



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 25 Number 11

November 2002

Calendar of Events

Dennis Historical Society Board Meeting

The Board of Directors will meet on the second Saturday morning of the month from November through March. The next meeting will be on

**Saturday, November 9th
10:00 AM**

Josiah Dennis Manse
Interested members are welcome.

Thursday, November 21st Joe Lincoln's Cape Cod

Narrated slide show by Cape historian, Jim Coogan, tells how this popular early 1900s Chatham author described the Cape Cod characters of his day.

7:30 PM

Carleton Hall, Dennis Village

Sunday, December 8th Dennis Historical Society Christmas Open House

Celebrate the season at the beautifully decorated 1801 Jericho Historical Center. Sample seasonal refreshments as you enjoy the decorated rooms.

1:00 – 4:30 PM

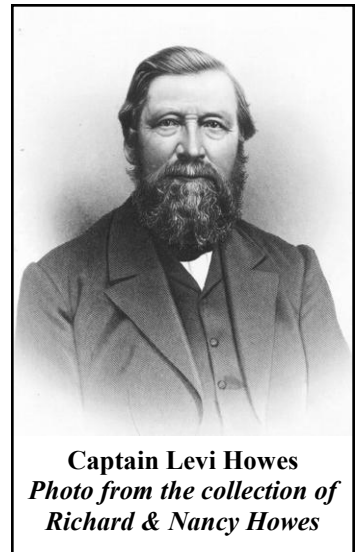
After visiting Jericho, enjoy Visions of Christmas at the Manse

Join the holiday festivities at the 1736 Josiah Dennis Manse Museum. Stroll through the house and enjoy the lovely holiday decorations.

1:00 – 4:30 PM

About Ships and Family Meetings:

In May of 1862 two brothers met in Calcutta. They were sons of Captain William Howes (1781-1869) of East Dennis. **Levi Howes** was captain of the clipper ship *Starlight*, 190 feet in length, launched in East Boston for Baker & Morrill in 1854. She was homeward bound. Also in the harbor was the *Belle of the West*, which was designed by Samuel Hartt Pook of Boston for the Shiverick Shipyard in East Dennis. Launched in 1853, she was considered the sleekest of the eight clipper ships built there. Under the command of **Captain Allison Howes**, she was also heading for Boston. Not only were the two captains from Dennis, but there were Dennis men in both crews. A race was on! The *Starlight* left Calcutta 12 hours before the *Belle* and reached Boston just 12 hours ahead of the *Belle*—a dead heat!



Captain Levi Howes
*Photo from the collection of
Richard & Nancy Howes*



Captain Allison Howes
Courtesy of Milton Howes

In the morning of October 3, 2002, **Austin Preble Haller**, who is a descendent of Captain **Levi Howes** arrived at the Manse with his wife, Rochelle. They had brought some family pictures and documents for Burt to scan into the computer for our records. Burt called Nancy Howes to ask her to show them around the Manse while he worked on the records. Coincidentally, Nancy had arranged to meet late that same day with **Milton Roy Howes**, his wife, Karen, and their 12 year old daughter, Alicia, who would be in town only briefly to see the Howes Burial Ground and to visit the Manse. Milton's great-great grandfather was Captain **Allison Howes**. Though the two "cousins" never met, it also turns out that Austin's wife is from Boise, Idaho, where Milton and his family live. Even more coincidence brought Marjorie Wheeler into the picture. This is her story:

My parents bought the Captain Levi

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

Howes house on the corner of Sea and Pleasant Streets on Quivett Neck in the early 1970's upon the death of Captain Howes' granddaughter, Helen Lorana Howes Haller. Helen and her dentist husband, William M. Haller, had three sons, Austin, William, and Theodore, and at the time of the sale of the home, only Austin and Theodore (Teddy) were alive. Austin had a busy medical practice in California, and though Teddy was a busy physician also, he came East to dispose of their mother's considerable property. The house contained an amazing collection of antiques and some unusual items that Captain Howes brought home from his adventures around the world. Bob Eldred held an auction on the Sea Street property and the fine old treasures were sold one by one. My mother attended the auction and purchased Helen's beautiful monogrammed wedding china, which I still have today. When my parents took possession of the house, left behind were boxes of family memorabilia, photos, financial ledgers, and personal letters that Teddy had decided were not important enough to haul back to California. I can remember all that first summer they were in that house my mother and Aunt Joan poured over those documents and on visits, I did, too. We came to know the Haller family almost as well as our own. We knew the births, the deaths, the minor and major tragedies, the hopes, the dreams, the quarrels, the reconciliations, the personalities of each and every member, and yet we had never met them. We saw the photos of Helen on her Grand Tour of Europe in 1905; we "attended" Helen's wedding through her magnificent photos of the event in 1907; we saw Teddy's baby book; we delighted in her scrap book from her college days at Lasalle College; and we read her canning journal (14 pints of beets, 4 pints of beans, and 6 pints of pickles today). In short, we felt we knew the family. My parents sold Captain Levi's house a few years later but my mother packed up the Haller family memorabilia and moved it to their Corporation Road home where the documents rested until my mother passed away a few years ago.

Until the day before yesterday, I had the boxes stored in my basement. Why were they still being moved from house to house, generation to generation, you may ask. They just seemed too precious to throw away, but what to do with them was a problem that I didn't have to face with the boxes safely tucked away under the cellar stairs.

Then, the evening before last, out of the blue, I received an email message from Nancy Howes mentioning that she was going to go to the Manse on the following day to entertain a certain Austin Haller while Burt Derick scanned some Howes family documents in Mr. Haller's possession. When I read the email, I was stunned! Here, after all these years, was Austin Haller, the son of Helen that I "knew" so well. On second thought I realized it was unlikely that it was THE Austin, he would be over 90 by now, so it must be his son, little "Buzzy," that I remembered reading about in the letters. I called Nancy, who had known nothing of the existence of these documents, and told her I'd see her at the Manse the following morning with my Haller family boxes.

I packed up everything and, as a last minute thought, wrapped up a cup and saucer from Helen's wedding china with the HLH monogram on it (Helen Lorana Howes), and couldn't wait to get to the Manse to meet Buzzy the next morning. Buzz (he must have dropped the "y" when he went to school) and his wife Rochelle were surprised to learn that I had so much of their own family history in my possession. Turning over the family documents was a relief, first to Burt for scanning, and then to the Hallers. And Buzz brought a wonderful assortment of Howes birth and wedding certificates as well as other documents for Burt to scan.



**Helen Lorana Howes Haller
July 29, 1907**

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

The biggest surprise, I think, was the wedding china. Buzz had seen photos of it but didn't remember ever having seen it. Since Rochelle so obviously fell in love with the cup and saucer, I couldn't resist offering it to her to take back to their California home. So enamored was she with the pattern and it's history, she asked if I would allow her to purchase the remainder of the set. I guess that means that there is just one more Howes-Haller box for me to pack...

In Memorium:

It is with deep sadness that we record the passing of **Marjorie Mantell** who died at her home in Dennis Port on September 27 after a long illness. She was vice president of the Dennis Historical Society for the past two years and representative to the Board from Jericho where she was a docent. In spite of her illness she remained active and was also a past vice president and president of the South Dennis Free Library.

Marge met her husband Eli while she was attending Bard College in upstate New York. He was a B-17 bomber pilot with the U.S. 8th Air Force in Europe in World War II and on the day he was discharged in August, 1945, he was invited to a party at Marge's family home in Stamford. The rest, it has been said, is history. In June, 1948 Marge graduated with a major in history from the University of Southern California, and Eli, initially a music major at the University before leaving for flight training, graduated eight months later. Both then returned to Stamford where they acquired the clothing store which had been operated for over 100 years by Marge's father and grandfather. Later, while living for a number of years in Florida, Marge became president of the Highland Beach Library Association. Marge and Eli moved to Cape Cod in 1996.

We extend our sympathies to their family-- a daughter, Patti Mantell Broad in West Hartford, another, Lisbeth Mantell in Newton Center, and a son Henry F. Mantell who is a professor at the University of Southern California. There are five grandchildren. A service was held in Stamford on September 30.

We also note the passing of members **Rita J. Chase** (Mrs. Mahlon Chase, Sr.) of Bellevue, Nebraska, **Norman W. Badger** of East Dennis, **John F. Monbouquette** of West Dennis, **James Martin** of West Dennis, and **Peter November** of Dennis. Sad news for those who remain!

Acquisitions:

Since our last recording we have purchased an early American 40" bed for the borning room at the Manse and an iron griddle for the open fireplace, thanks to **Henry and Susan Kelley**. Also purchased was an old cranberry box which belonged to Jacob Sears of East Dennis. Twenty-eight glass plate negatives were donated by **Peggy Eastman**. **Joshua Crowell** (Jay) found among his father's things a ship's log from the Shiverick ship *Webfoot*, Seth Crowell, Captain and John Paddock Howes, first mate, with entries from voyages from San Francisco to Hong Kong and San Francisco to Australia. The **Jacob Sears Library** has offered us the original minutes from the 1830s recording the formation of the East Dennis Library Association. The first library was located in a house, then Worden Hall, and at last the Jacob Sears Library building. Thanks to the **Mantells** for giving us several copies of the *Barns of Dennis* book. We have received photographs from the collections of **Jane Chase** and **Phyllis Horton**. **Brendan Joyce** has given us a display case. **Douglas N. Bingham** presented DHS with his research and files concerning the mystery surrounding the loss of the *Crossrip Lightship # 6* and the legend of Henry Joy. Mr. Bingham represents the American Lighthouse Association and is historian for the USCG Lightship Sailors Association. A donation was received in memory of **Marion P. Baker**. Earlier we had received photos of Captain Allison Howes, and most recently photos from Austin P. Haller of California and Marjorie Wheeler. (See lead story.)

Member news:

The DHS Board confirmed the appointment of **Joan Monteiro** as representative from Jericho. A special commendation goes to **Gregory Urquhart** from both the 1867 West Dennis Graded School and the Josiah Dennis Manse Committees for excellence in maintenance work and painting. His care for our historical buildings has been impressive. **Susan Kelley** has completed work on the weaving for the bed hangings at the Manse, and **Terri Fox** is nearly done with transferring the design to the fabric. The embroidery committee is set to begin!

Lemon bread with thyme! Biscotti with rosemary! Pumpkin bread and herb butters! Sounds like

Dennis Historical Society

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The Way We Were

the perfect ending to a tour of the Manse interpretive herb gardens!

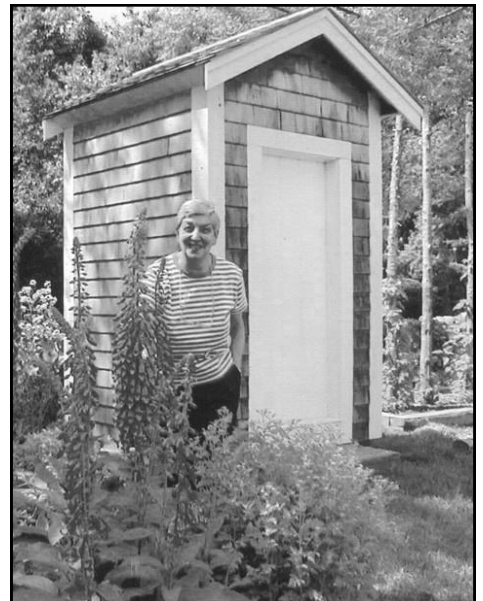
On Wednesday, September 18, a beautiful sunny day, about 20 Village Garden Club members were greeted by Mary Raycraft, Nancy Howes, Sandra Tatsuno and Jean Twiss. They learned how the gardens have evolved over a two-year period, and how the plants were cultured and used by the early settlers. Nibbling was allowed, and several ladies tried herbs unfamiliar to them. Garden Club members seemed interested in some of the wild plants, such as chicory and mullein, which the colonists used for both medicinal and culinary purposes. The tour ended with herbal refreshments approved by all.

While we can't promise goodies with every visit, you are welcome to tour the Manse gardens any time you are in the neighborhood.

In last month's group picture, docents in the back row should have read:

Sarah Kruger, Bonnie Main (unseen behind Nancy), Kathleen San-

Clemente, Jean Goheen, Chris Talbott, Terri Fox, and Burt Derick.



Nancy Howes
in the Manse Garden
photo courtesy of Ruth Derrick