



# Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 35 No. 10 Send letters & stories to Dennis Historical Society, Box 607, S. Dennis 02660 or pjhowes@verizon.net November 2012

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## It's November--- (Again!)

Our well-attended annual meeting has passed, and I am pleased to included the list of Board members with the reports presented at the meeting. As we discussed with the meeting attendees, your Society continues in its role of collecting and preserving Dennis history and involvement in the three Town of Dennis Museums. We heartily welcome our members to become involved in our activities and to help shape and guide the future directions on this valuable organization. You will see new members on our Board of Directors, and I sincerely hope that next year our Board will again be able to introduce more new folks. All are welcome to our meetings, to just observe or to become involved to any degree that they wish. We would love to receive your comments and suggestions at any time. Your ideas for the Society to pursue or for future Newsletter articles are always greatly appreciated.

Pete Howes

## Annals of South Dennis

We have a gem in our DHS Bookstore. *Dennis Source Records, Vol. 2: Annals of South Dennis* by Burton N. Derick contains an absolutely wonderful collection of letters, poetry, journals and other material that depicts how much life has changed in a century and more. The range of material and detail is amazing. As these are letters, the amount of personal details and living experiences is, in some cases, almost voyeuristic to read. You will read the letters sent home by ship captains; missives between close friend; rants and rages; and even a bit of ribaldry, such as that which follows. This book truly belongs in the collection of any folks who are interested in the personal happenings of a century or more ago.

Ed.

*Excerpt from a letter from Augustus Hallet to Obed Baker - Nov 5, 1875*

"The most exciting news current in South Dennis about these times is the reported marriage of Mr. Judah Baker to Mary Whelden<sup>1</sup>. Every woman in the place is as mad as a march hare about it old and young. Well sir, we might as well say fare ye well and put out our hand to him for a last shake and advise him to get his two suits together his wooden suit and wedding suit. Poor man his days are short but then it is pleasant to shuffle off this [page] mortal coil in trying to meet such a body half way as that of Mrs Marys isnt it. Good Lord they say, they say the old fellow has been wearing in the seat of his pantaloons about a pound of Cow itch in order to irritate his outer man to such a pitch that there shall be no such thing "for the first night at any rate" of failing to do to her proud. How much better it would be for him to ask either you or me to relieve him of that duty wouldnt it say the first going off. However if you read of an earthquake about in this part of the Country any where you may make up your mind now what the caus of it was. Report says that he has settled \$10000 on her. I would give the old fellow all I had for that pile or enough to wipe him out if I was she wouldnt you. If he dont say he is sorry he begin in less then a week I am deceived in Mary. what do you say?

Yours Truly  
O Baxter"

Burton N. Derick "Dennis Source Records Volume 2: Annals of South Dennis", pp141

## "TOILERS OF THE SEA AND THEIR RELIGION"

An address, in part, by Prof. Henry C. Kittredge, delivered from notes, at East Dennis Sunday morning, Aug. 4, 1935:

<sup>1</sup> The Dennis Vital records show that the marriage took place in East Dennis on 11 Nov 1875, Rev. Nathan Chapman officiating, between Judah Baker (b. & res. Dennis, age 72y, Carpenter, 3<sup>rd</sup> marriage, son of Gorham & Bethiah Baker) to Mary F. Whelden (b. & res. Dennis, age 46y, 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage, daughter of Nathan & Eliza H. Chapman). She was the widow of Capt. Miller Whelden Jr.

“When in search of material concerning the *Shipmasters of Cape Cod*, a visit to Mr. Joseph Hedge, Mrs. Mary E. Crowell, Mrs. Minerva Wexler and others revealed a mountain of material concerning these Toilers of the Sea and Their Religion. For I regard their honorable work as honest prayer and their good deeds as an expression of their religion; broad as a result of the schooling of travel and experience; full of courage, faith and honor.

Such a man was Christopher Hall; a fine example of a Christian, cheerful in adversity, generous to his neighbors and considerate in his dealings with his captains.

His successor as owner and manager was Prince S. Crowell, whose tactful dealings are shown by a letter to Capt. Milton P. Hedge of the Shiverick built clipper Webfoot who had written of a tough passage round the Horn and to whom he wrote: “Yours at hand together with the bill of repairs, etc. If you get in a bad scrape its no use to feel so thundering bad, as that does not mend the matter. In regard to your proceedings we are satisfied.”

Joshua Sears of East Dennis was trained, in part, by Capt. James B. Crocker, who considered that seamen's souls were to be cared for as well as their bodies, and that Sunday was Sunday, when he invited all hands aft to attend divine service, reading a chapter of the New Testament, interpreting it according to his own ideas, and concluding with prayers from the Seaman’s Devotional Assistant. Capt. Joshua Sears became a fast driver of ships and made record voyages; on four successive days he drove the Wild Hunter 268, 265, 280 and 272 miles, drawing 21 feet 3 inches of water and carrying 1500 tons of coal, yet he wrote “Oh for a cot down by the sea side where we could dig clams.” Once amid light airs he wrote in his log: “Patience. Put your trust in God.” Again: “Slow getting along. Thy ways, O Lord, are inscrutable.” Later: “The Lord is my Shepherd; He'll guide me safe through.”

“Toilers Of The Sea” And Home Coming Week At East Dennis, Mass. July 28 - August 4, 1935 Pp11

### **Dennis Historical Society Annual Meeting**

#### *Elected Officers - Annual*

President: Peter Howes	Assistant Treasurer: Mary Kuhrtz
Vice Presidents: David Talbott, Terri Fox	Recording Secretary: Bonnie Hempel
Treasurer: Robert Hunter	Corresponding Secretary: Ruth Derick

#### *Elected Directors*

Until 2015	Kathy Dorshimer, Larry Symington
Until 2014	Virginia Devine, Nancy Howes
Until 2013	Betsy Harrison, Pat Corcoran

#### *Appointed Directors*

Dennis Historical Commission: Joshua Crowell	Jericho Historical Center: Peggy Eastman
Josiah Dennis Manse: Terri Fox	West Dennis Graded Schoolhouse: Roger Sullivan
Curator/Archivist: Phyllis Horton	Membership: Dawn Dellner
Audio/Visual: Brendan Joyce	Photographer: Richard Howes

### **Josiah Dennis Manse 2012**

Our 2012 season began with the four third grade classes from Ezra H. Baker School taking part in our hands-on school program. Following the opening reception on June 23 the Manse was open on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons through August and every other Saturday afternoon through September. Our July 2 pie sale was very successful as was our Colonial Open house on August 18. The cooper from Sturbridge Village, spinning, rug hooking, candle dipping and pie making were enjoyed by many visitors. The Village Garden Club of Dennis’ flower show on August 21 also brought many guests. People have visited the Manse this summer from 25 states, Canada and Italy. We are grateful for the help of friends and committee members and welcome any others who would like to join us.

Nancy Howes, Committee Chair

## **Jericho Historical Center**

This year Jericho was open for special events and private tours only, due to low attendance during weekly museum hours last year. We welcomed between 40 to 50 visitors at our Opening Victorian Tea, Summer Fun Day, and Autumn Open House. As in past years, several families enjoyed private tours during the summer.

This spring, pieces of the Driftwood Zoo were rescued from the depths of the barn's basement. They were cleaned, repaired, and displayed on the main floor of the barn to the delight of all our visitors this summer, especially the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders from The Ezra Baker School. Several summer visitors came specifically to re-visit this exhibit, sharing their memories of visits to the original Driftwood Zoo and its creator, Sherman Woodward.

2012 has been a year of transition for the Jericho Committee, leaving us short-handed, and less than organized, at the beginning of the season. However, we are ready to move forward with enthusiasm. We welcome any of you to join us as we take a fresh look at the displays in the house and barn, and honor our charge to preserve and promote the history and culture of Cape Cod and the town of Dennis.

Dawn Dellner, Committee Chair

## **1867 West Dennis Graded School**

- The exterior painting has been completed. The building looks beautiful.
- Our various open house hours resulted in about one hundred visitors to the WDGS throughout this season. Most of these visitors came during days where there were joint events with Jericho and the Manse.
- We were able to resume the hosting of the Dennis school children. The Dennis Selectmen were very instrumental in ensuring that transportation funding was secured for this important activity.
- We look forward to 2013 with more special events.

Roger Sullivan, Committee Chair

## **DHS Library**

The DHS Library is located on the 2nd floor of the West Dennis Library and is open whenever the Library Building is open.

During the past year we experienced a security breach when an individual was caught trying to abscond with some genealogical books. This has resulted in plans to place all DHS holdings under lock and key, to be opened only when DHS people are in attendance, or by a Librarian so authorized to open them.

During the past year we accomplished the following:

- Added 31 GB of digitized data to the holdings, bringing the total to 194 GB.
- The added data was primarily from one collection, the Barry Homer Collection, which had much Dennis Port information concerning Alonzo Capron's Lumber Business, accounts and letters of Job Chase's wharf, and accounts of the Dennis Port Fishing Company accounts at J. K. Baker's Wharf. All were digitized and transcribed.
- We have compiled an additional two photo albums, bringing the total to 16 Albums. Three of the earliest albums have been rebuilt to allow the format to be easily placed on-line.
- About 30 queries on history have been answered. Most answers were by e-mail but some required shipments of documents by the postal service.
- 5 volumes of different town records have been digitized and transcribed, and the program continues with additional records. The records done had to do with schools, population records, and town orders.
- Obtained about 10 new volumes for the library collections, dealing with maritime matters, antique houses, and Cape Cod families.

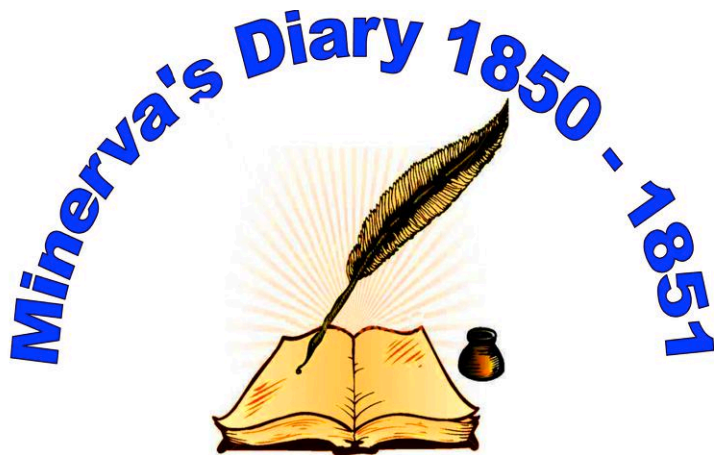
Burt Derick

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**Sunday Nov. 4, 2012 ~ 2:00 p.m.**

At Jacob Sears Library  
23 Center St. East Dennis

*Historian Burt Derick will narrate excerpts from the fascinating diary of Minerva (Handren) Sears, written while voyaging with her husband Capt. Joshua Sears of East Dennis.*

**Happy Thanksgiving  
From DHS & "Annie's Crannies"**

**Cape Cod Cranberry Bread**

A Cape Cod tradition in many homes and the top request for bake sale donations.

- 4 cups flour
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1-teaspoon salt
- 1-teaspoon baking soda
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup hot water
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1 tablespoon grated orange rind
- 2 cups chopped cranberries (fresh or fresh frozen)
- 3/4 cup chopped nuts

- 
1. Combine all dry ingredients in a large bowl
  2. Mix eggs, orange juice, hot water, butter and orange rind; stir into flour mix
  3. Fold in cranberries and nuts
  4. Spoon batter into two greased loaf pans
  5. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour and 10 minutes
  6. Remove from pans and cool on racks
- Makes 2 bread loaves

*Recipe courtesy of Betsy Walker (Annie's sister-in-law)*