



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 25 Number 10

October 2002

Calendar of Events

Sunday, October 20 Beneath This Stone

Don't miss this guided walk through the historic Dennis Village Cemetery exploring 18th and 19th century gravestones, how they were decorated, who were the artists, what the symbols meant, and who lies beneath them.

2:00 PM

**Route 6A, Dennis
by the Village Green**
Rain date, October 27

Thursday, November 21 Joe Lincoln's Cape Cod

Join us for a narrated slide show by Cape historian Jim Coogan who tells how this popular early 1900's Chatham author described the Cape Cod characters of his day.

7:30 PM

Carleton Hall in Dennis
Refreshments

Sunday, December 8 DHS Christmas Open House at Jericho

also

**Visions of Christmas at
the Manse**
1:00-4:30 PM

1797 Committee to Lay Out Dennis Burying Ground

by Phyllis Horton

When our town was settled in 1639 the church was located in what is now Yarmouth Port, and a burying ground was established next to it. Many of the families who lived in present Dennis decided to have family burial sites located on family-owned land rather than farther away, so while some of our ancestors were interred at the church in Yarmouth, seven of those little private family burying grounds in Dennis bear testimony to the family's desire to have their loved ones near at hand.

When we became the East Parish with our own church in 1721 a burial ground was set off by the church and is the oldest part of Dennis Cemetery. The meeting house was enlarged and repaired in 1762 and again in 1795. However, in the last addition it was necessary to enlarge the burying ground. A committee to lay out the bounds was appointed and the esteemed gentlemen did a proper job of establishing bounds that still serve us today. The following is a profile sketch of the men on the committee. Good citizens all and pleased to be of service to their parish and town.

Judah Paddock was born 9 May 1749 to Samuel and Thankful (Howes) Paddock in Yarmouth (now Dennis), the 2nd of 3 children. Judah was married to Bethia Gray of Harwich on 24 November 1774 in Harwich by Rev. Isaiah Dunster. They had 9 children between 1778 and 1795. Captain Judah was Master of the Schooner *Five Sisters*, built at the Crowell Brothers Shipyard, Dennis. The cargo most frequently carried to Boston was salt and corn. Judah died 7 August 1825, age 76, and Bethia died 7 June 1829. Both are buried in the Paddock Cemetery in Dennis.

Peter Sears was born 29 July 1743 to Zachariah and Mehitable (Crowell) Sears in Yarmouth (now Dennis), the eldest of 8 children. Peter was married to Thankful Howes of Yarmouth (now Dennis) on 12 January 1769 by Rev. Nathan Stone. In his will dated 4 April 1802 it says, "Having no children of their own, they adopted Peter Sears, son of Roland S. (Peter's brother) of Ashfield." Captain Peter Sears lived in East Yarmouth (now Dennis) and after he retired from the sea, kept store there, dealing in rum, salt, sulfur, molasses, tea, sugar, etc., "and a little more rum." He also manufactured salt. On 20 March 1794 he was on the committee to repair the meeting house, and to provide Rev. Mr. Stone's wood and hay. He appears to have removed to Ashfield, MA and probably lived with his adopted son Peter until his death on 22 July 1802 at age 59. Young Peter was executor and heir to both Peter

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1797 Committee to Lay Out Dennis Burying Ground

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and Thankful. Records show that “Thankful, wife of Peter Sears was dismissed from Ch., Dennis, to church Ashfield 16 December 179-.” (between 1797-1799)

Jeremiah Howes was born 26 December 1743 to Lott and Thankful (Smith) Howes of Yarmouth (now Dennis), the 1st of 4 children. (Lott was married to Thankful on 19 March 1743 by Rev. Josiah Dennis.) Jeremiah was a Lt. in Col. Dike’s Regiment in Massachusetts during the American Revolution. He was elected as Yarmouth Selectman for 11 years and was one of the first three selectmen of Dennis, serving for 11 more years. In the Dennis Vital Records he is called Jeremiah Howes, Esq. when he recorded returns of marriages. Jeremiah married Priscilla Hall of Yarmouth (now Dennis) and they had 7 children from 1768-1781. Priscilla died 6 July 1783 and Jeremiah married 2nd Tempa (Thacher) Hedge, widow of Capt. John Hedge. Tempe died on 17 May 1805, the same year Jeremiah lost his son, Jabez, at sea in the Straights of Belail, and his daughter, Martha. In March 1793 a Town Meeting was held in the East Meeting House for the purpose of separating the West and East Parishes of Yarmouth, and it was so voted. Lt. Jeremiah Howes was named Moderator of a committee appointed to appeal to the General Court for approval of the separation. It was passed by the Massachusetts Legislature on 18 June 1793 and signed the next day by Governor John Hancock. Jeremiah was known in his later years as “Squire Jeremy” and was much esteemed. Jeremiah died in Dennis on 17 November 1824 at the age of 81 and is buried in Dennis Cemetery.

Daniel Eldredge was born 3 July 1769, the 8th (a twin) of 11 children of Samuel and his second wife Lydia (Hall) Eldredge. Daniel went to Ashfield, MA in the large migration of Dennis people to Ashfield c. 1775. Dennis American Revolution veterans were given land grants in Ashfield and Hawley in lieu of wages for serving in the war. Daniel accompanied his brothers Levi, Eli and Samuel. Thomas Prince Howes described the exodus as it had been told to him by his grandfather, Jeremiah Howes (Squire Jeremy). He said whole families walked from the old homesteads in the East Parish accompanying their loved ones to the border of Yarmouth and Barnstable. There they said their last goodbyes—those staying here making a tearful walk back to the old home place, with those going onward perhaps just as tearful as they traveled to an unknown wilderness. For most of the emigrating families it proved to be a permanent move. Daniel, however, returned home. He was married to Dinah Hall of Dennis on 3 June 1794 by Rev. Nathan Stone. They had 8 children from 1795-1809. At present not much else is known of Daniel. He died 25 October 1833 in his 65th year and is buried in Dennis Cemetery.

Daniel Howes was born 5 July 1767 to Daniel and Sarah (Collins, of Chatham) Howes, the 1st of 7 children from 1767-1780. Daniel married Lucy Hedge of Dennis 19 January 1797 and they had 4 children 1805-1817. Captain Daniel Howes was one of the town’s earliest mariners to sail to foreign ports. He carried cargos to Europe as early as 1792 on his schooner *Harriet*. His descendants have letters which he sent home from ports in Portugal, Spain and Russia. In 1802 Rev. Dr. James Freeman wrote a report which described the shore one mile north of the Nobscusset meeting house as being favorable to building a pier that would form a good harbor. A group of Nobscusset (Dennis Village) men eventually moved on that idea and in 1814 had applied to the Massachusetts Legislature for permission to form a corporation to be known as the Nobscusset Point Pier Company. Captain Daniel Howes was one of the incorporators along with four other neighbors. A stone and timber wharf about 600 feet long was built and named Corporation Wharf. The packet boat to and from Boston used the wharf along with the growing fishing fleet. Daniel was one of the luckier mariners who retired from a long career at sea and went on to a productive retirement at home. He was a Dennis selectman for 10 years, starting in 1805. Lucy died 25 November 1847 at age 70 and Daniel lived on to 20 November 1865, expiring from old age at 98 ½ years. They are buried in Dennis Cemetery.

Perhaps all five men intended to be buried in the place they had laid out, but as we all know, plans

change. Three of them found their final resting place in Dennis Cemetery, and the other two in our "sister town" of Ashfield. Rest well, gentlemen. You did a fine job!

Report of the Annual Meeting

It was voted at the Annual Meeting to meet the deficit in the General Fund, which is used for our operating expenses, by raising the dues from \$10 for an Individual Membership to \$15; from \$15 for a Family Membership to \$25; and to eliminate the Student Membership category as well as Life Membership. The By-laws will be changed to reflect this vote. Those who renewed or joined by the Annual Meeting 2002 were able to take advantage of the old rates and categories. The following officers and directors make up the Executive Board for the coming year:

DHS Executive Board 2002-2003

Elected Officers

President

Raymond Urquhart, 151 Old Bass River Rd., S. Dennis, 02660, 398-0376

Vice-President

Virginia Devine, 65 Hippogriffe Rd, Dennis, 02638, 385-4441

Treasurer

Joan Martin, 51 Church St., W. Dennis, 02670, 394-9303

Assistant Treasurer

Lura Crowell, 138 Sesuit Neck Rd, Box 216, E. Dennis, 02641, 385-2625

Recording Secretary

Bonnie Hempel, 52 Wild Hunter Rd, Dennis, 02638, 385-2366

Corresponding Secretary

Ruth Derick, 51 Searsville Rd, S. Dennis, 02660, 398-3183

Elected Directors

Until 2005:

Sarah Kruger, Dr. Lord's Rd, Box 733, Dennis, 02638, 385-2868

Terri Fox, 162 Center St., S. Dennis, 02660, 760-0433

Until 2004:

Brendan Joyce, 4 Sea St., Box 428, E. Dennis, 02641, 385-6492

Susan Kelley, 730 Airline Rd., Box 343, E. Dennis, 02641, 385-3300

Until 2003:

Nancy Howes, 29 Corporation Rd., Box 904, Dennis, 02638, 385-3528

Burt Derick, 51 Searsville Rd., D. Dennis, 02660, 398-3183

Appointed Directors

Dennis Historical Commission

Richard Howes, 29 Corporation Rd., Box 904, Dennis, 02638, 385-3528

Josiah Dennis Manse

Phyllis Horton, 1 Gage's Lane, Box 275, Dennis Port, 02639, 394-0017

Sunday, August 4, 2002 was the 275th anniversary to the day of the Reverend Josiah Dennis' first sermon here. He was the first pastor of what was then the East Parish of Yarmouth and the man for whom our town was later named. Fourteen ladies and Burt Derick, all docents at the Josiah Dennis Manse, along with three children attended the 9 AM service dressed in colonial outfits, much to the delight of the congregation. It was a very hot day and one could not help wondering how the women in Josiah Dennis' parish could bear to sit through services in woolen skirts and many petticoats. The Reverend Alex Gondola delivered a wonderful sermon about the Reverend Mr.

Dennis Historical Society

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The Way We Were *Nancy Howes*

Dennis—so good that Muriel Hanger invited him to be a docent at the Manse if he ever has any spare time. He also used the silver chalice that Reverend Dennis had purchased for the church in 1763 in the communion service.



Front row: Muriel Hanger, Ruth Derick, Margie Wheeler, Nancy Howes, Emily Smith, Chrysella Thacher, Jean Goheen, Phyllis Horton and in front of them, Melissa Hoeft and Emily San Clemente. Second row: Sarah Kruger, Bonnie Main, Terri Fox, Jean Twiss, Chris Talbott, and Burt Derick.