



Dennis Historical Society

Newsletter

October-November 2017

Volume 40, No7

Dennis Historical Society – copyright 2017 Internet: www.dennishistoricalsociety.org E-mail: info@dennishistoricalsociety.org

Board Meeting Tuesday, October 10, 2 pm, Dennis Memorial Library, 1020 Old Bass River Road, Dennis

Annual Meeting/Luncheon, October 21, 11:30 am, Riverway Lobster House, 1138 Rt. 28, S. Yarmouth

Board Meeting Tuesday, November 14, 2 pm, Dennis Memorial Library, 1020 Old Bass River Road, Dennis

Board Meeting Tuesday, December 12, 2 pm, Jacob Sears Library, 23 Center Street, East Dennis

Members Welcome!

Please send information & stories for the newsletter to Dave Talbott at the DHS Website email address: info@dennishistoricalsociety.org

How to use the Dennis Historical Society Digital Archives

Most of us are aware of our digital archives project, but many have never accessed our archives and taken advantage of the wealth of information available about the Town of Dennis. Most of the history is in the form of old photographs, documents, even town reports which have been scanned from the originals and converted into digital images. Note: There will be a future article about the history, the people and the funding mechanism which made this entire project happen. That, in itself, is an amazing bit of Dennis History! For now, however, we will examine how to access the archives and take a look at what is available. Each "click" in the steps below is a single left mouse click, unless otherwise noted. Please start by following the steps below.

- Type dennis historical society into your browser search box. A browser is a search engine such as Google or Internet Explorer. You will see that we have top billing on the page which appears. Alternately, you can type www.dennishistoricalsociety.org in the internet browser address line.
- Put your mouse pointer on Dennis Historical Society and click. You are now at the website.
- Put your mouse pointer on Digital Archive and a drop down menu will appear.
- Put your mouse pointer on Archive Access and click.
- When the page opens, click on "[please click here >>](#)" at the top center of the page.
- When the page opens, you will see something very familiar, or should be, the historical periods of Dennis history as delineated in Nancy Thacher Reid's definitive volume of our Town's history, *Dennis, Cape Cod*. **Note:** Ignore the "Login" at the top right; none is needed.
- If you click on any of the historical periods, menus will open which allow further exploration by clicking on any of the numerous categories.
- When you click on any photo or document, information(metadata) about it will open; also related items show at the bottom. Under the photo/document, you will see View/Open. Under that you will see a page number .pdf (file size). Clicking on this line opens the .pdf file and affords you the opportunity to read, print or save the file.
- As you click and explore categories of interest, remember, you can continuously return to your previous page by clicking on the back arrow in the top, left corner of the browser.
- This is also the case whenever you open a pdf. Don't X out of the pdf, use the back arrow here too, or you will go back to the beginning and have to start over.
- At any time, you can search a specific topic which you want to research by using the "Search" in the upper right corner. Using this method will take you to all items for all time periods containing the word you typed in the box.

A Fun Bit of Detective Work using the Archives

Let's try an example. Recently, a picture, "hall+house+dennis", was emailed to DHS. It had been found on ancestry.com by a person researching the genealogy of the *Hall* Family. The person who sent the email was aware of his *Hall* Family roots in Maine, but had only recently become aware that there was a *Hall* Family connection to Dennis. That was the reason DHS was contacted. He wanted to learn more about the house.



"hall+house+dennis"



"Hall House"



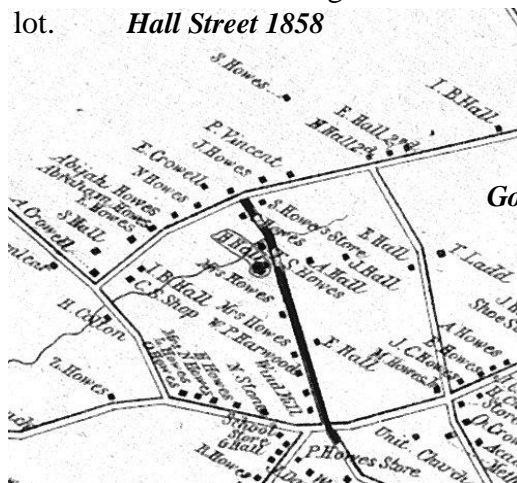
"Old Hall House, Hall St., Dennis"

Fortunately, the title of the picture sent to us provided a great place to start! The picture in the middle, "Hall House" was found in our digital archives by searching "hall house". The arrow was added to the photo at sometime in the past. I included this picture, because of the road and other houses, which helped to later confirm the location. The next picture, captioned "Old Hall House, Hall St., Dennis" was found by typing that in the search box. When I found it, I thought the one from ancestry.com was a mirror image...printed in reverse. The one from our archives had to be correct, however, as it matched the panoramic view above. Additional searching by typing "Old House" in the search box yielded the picture below. Interestingly, the front and back sides of the house are almost identical! It matched the side of the house in the picture on ancestry.com. Also of interest, the entry in the "Old House" picture is more formal than the one on the other (back) side and has "lites" above the door. There were no dates for the photos from the digital archives, but the ID of the picture of a Hall House on Hall St. seemed certain. Next, to put things in perspective and to identify, if possible, other landmarks in the photos, a 1858 map from *The 1858 Map of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, & Nantucket*, page 60 was consulted and appears below.



"Old House"

Hall St. on the 1858 map has been darkened in and is the dark line going southeast off of what is now New Boston Rd. The third house on the left, in from New Boston Rd., is labeled "H. Hall" on the map. To the right is an image from Google Earth, converted to black & white showing New Boston Rd., Hall St. and the H. Hall property which is now an empty lot.



Google Earth #1



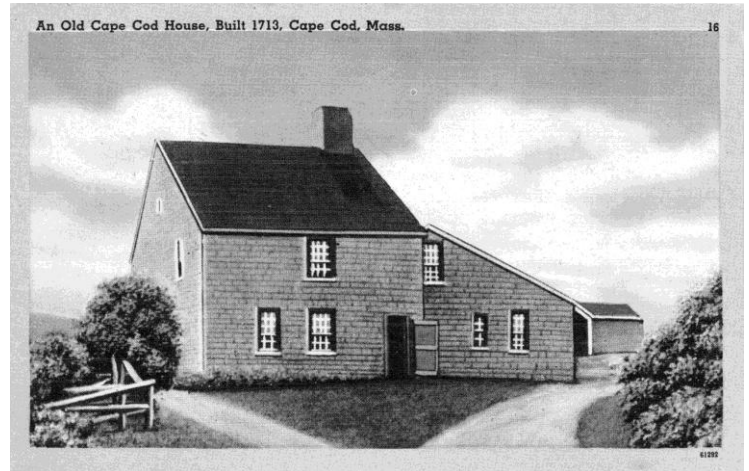
In the next Google Earth picture, one can make out the foundation of what was the H. Hall House. (circled in black)

The picture emailed to DHS has taken us to the digital archives, to an 1858 map book, to the internet and Google Earth, then back to the archives again.

This postcard, from our archives, was under the title "Old Cape Cod House". It is 1 of some 25,000 postcards produced by *Tichnor Brothers* of Boston between 1930-1945. It is definitely the Hall House on Hall St., even though it is identified as being a "Howes House" on the postcard. That labeling is in the metadata in our archives, gleaned from the postcard's publisher. If the name is wrong, possibly, the "1713" is wrong too. If "H. Hall" is Henry Hall (1761-1850), then the 1713 is incorrect. There is nothing in *Dennis, Cape Cod* about an earlier Hall with the first initial "H". The postcard is in color in the archives. Was the postcard picture done while the house still stood, or was it done from a photograph? The plantings, especially the big bush on the gable end match those in the "Old House" pictured earlier. This might mean that the house still existed as late as 1945...maybe longer. Did the house burn down; fall down; demo by neglect? It does appear quite neglected in the picture "hall+house+dennis" which is on ancestry.com.



Google Earth#2



"An Old Cape Cod House, Built 1713 Cape Cod, Mass"

Question for our membership and our readers.

What happened to the house and when?

Please email your answer to Dave Talbott at info@dennishistoricalsociety.org

When I asked our own Roger Sullivan to comment about using the digital archives, he said,

“spend time browsing the archives – before you know it, hours will have passed without notice as you explore this fascinating collection of Dennis history.”

**The Dennis Historical Society's Annual Meeting/Luncheon
will be held at 11:30 on October 21, 2017 at the
Riverway Lobster House
1138 Rt. 28, South Yarmouth, MA
Luncheon will be served at 12:00 pm
A mailing about this event will/has occur(red).
Please have your reservations in no later than
October 14, 2017**

(There is a chance the meeting will have been held before you receive this in which case, this notice is out of date. The one on the final page will then be in the correct sequence)

Dennis Historical Society
P.O. Box 607
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South Yarmouth, MA
02664

A Note to the DHS Membership

Our Annual Meeting/Luncheon was held on October 21st. (Much more on that event in our next newsletter!) If you did not receive an invitation and would like to receive one next year, please email us at:

info@dennishistoricalsociety.org

Send your name and address and a note requesting that you be added to next year's mailing. Thank you!

Christmas at the Manse
Sunday Dec. 10 from Noon to 3:30 pm
1736 Josiah Dennis Manse Museum
61 Whig Street, Dennis

Enjoy natural holiday decorations and refreshments in our festive colonial home. Part of the Dennis Village Stroll, a trolley whisks you from the Village Green Gazebo to the Manse.

No admission, donations appreciated

