



A DIFFERENT ANNUAL MEETING

Members have been duly notified that the annual meeting of the Society will be held at 7:30 P.M. on September 17 at the Dennis Senior Center. Perhaps the thought of an annual meeting connotes boredom to you, but let me assure you this meeting will be anything but dull. The Board and committee chairmen have been asked to make their reports lively, and from what I hear, they have done just that. You will "see" these reports as pictures, demonstrations and slide presentations, and we think you will find it not dull at all. Refreshments will be served. We won't tell you the menu, except to say that it is part of one of the reports. You will have to sit through a very brief business meeting and election, then you will see the audio-visual committee's report, a slide and sound production on the cranberry industry, past and present. The slides are narrated by R. Lincoln Thacher, who gave us technical advice, and the sound is by Ben Thacher, who has done such fine work for us in our oral history collection. Please come and give the Board and officers of your Society a vote of thanks for their hard work over this past year. Please note that both this meeting and the August 28 meeting are to be held in buildings that are handicapped accessible. We're trying! P.S. Don't forget your dues.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL

Pre-festival events have already begun for this 27th Dennis Festival Week, thought by many to be the best and most fun of any of the town celebrations in the county. Last month's calendar listed the events at the Historic Centers and those sponsored by D.H.S. In addition, please note that there will be an historic display at the South Dennis Homecoming Lawn Party on Sunday, the 25th, and also please note the benefit house tour on Saturday, the 24th, sponsored by the Dennis Friends of Hospice. There will be thirteen houses and one barn open on that afternoon, and the proceeds will be donated to a most worthwhile organization. Advance tickets are \$10, or \$12 on the day of the tour. There will also be a chowder luncheon served at Carleton Hall, tickets \$3 for advance sale, \$4 day of the luncheon. See your pink Dennis Festival Days program for details. D.H.S. will have an exhibit at the Endris barn on School Street as part of this tour.

'GREAT YEARS, GREAT EVENTS, GREAT MEN'

I used this quotation last month to headline the article about the special Shiverick exhibit at the Manse. It is from the pen of Thomas Franklin Hall, an East Dennis man whose life is in many ways typical of the full lives of so many of our local master mariners. Thomas was the son of Capt. Christopher Hall and Betsey Crowell. His father had made several highly successful voyages as the Master of sailing vessels, before he came ashore and invested his money in vessels of his own. These, too, proved to be profitable and Capt. Hall decided to reinvest his profits in his own home town. He became the principal financier of the Shiverick Boatyard. He provided most of the capital for the Shivericks to enlarge their shipbuilding enterprise and build the eight clipper ships that were launched in East Dennis. The Hall sons grew up with the sound of the shipwright's hammer ringing in their ears. Thomas Franklin's parents wanted their sons to receive a good education, and so his first voyage was postponed until he was 15. How he must have envied his friends, many of whom took to the sea at the tender age of nine or ten. When he finally was allowed to pursue his nautical career, he learned that his education had only begun. He sailed from Boston before the mast on the Shiverick ship Wild Hunter, under the command of his neighbor, Capt. Joshua Sears. The crew was made up of East Dennis men and on the surface it would appear that this would be an easy berth for the shipowner's son. Not so, however, for Capt. Sears ran a tight ship, and the crew spent long hours scouring, tarring, and keeping the vessel in tip-top shape. Whatever port she entered, she was considered to be the model of maritime beauty and order. Perhaps the pressure of Capt. Sears' orderliness was a bit much for Tom, for he jumped ship in San Francisco, but soon returned and continued on the voyage around the world. His second assignment was on the Belle of the West, on which he served as third mate, then as first mate. It is his description of her which was the basis for the artistic likeness of that vessel which was so kindly loaned for display this summer at the Manse. He continued his maritime career, achieving the rank of Master Mariner, but the success of sailing vessels was fast waning, giving way to steam. Thomas needed to adjust his life accordingly, and he and his brother Charles headed West. He established himself in Omaha, Nebraska, heading a company which distributed machinery. He lived out his life in the West, but each summer as long as he was able he travelled back to East Dennis to visit with the other old salts and to reminisce about those Great Years. He contributed much to our knowledge of the glorious sea days of our town by his writings, recalling his own memories of East Dennis in its heyday of maritime activity.

CALENDAR

August 25 to Sept. 1 27th Annual Dennis Festival Days
See last month's Newsletter, or your pink Festival Days Flyer,
available at Town Hall or the Post Office.
September 17 7:30 P.M. Dennis Senior Center.
The best darned annual meeting you'll ever go to!

ONE MAN'S TRASH IS ANOTHER MAN'S TREASURE

I heard something the other day that I think those of you who have grandchildren will appreciate. It seems that the chairman of our Board of Selectmen, Mr. William Shanahan, is called "Oscar" by his grandchildren who watch Sesame Street. It's not because he's a grouch - not by any means. Bill is just as much of a cream puff with his grandchildren as most grandfathers are. But, if you know your Sesame Street characters, Oscar loves trash! And trash and its environmentally safe disposal have taken up a great deal of Mr. Shanahan's time and energy just lately as he ably represents us on the regional committee trying to solve the immense problem of what to do with the huge amounts of trash we generate. Bill is the champion and spokesman for the regional solution known as SEMASS, and if you are not familiar with that proposal, you should be. Town Meeting will certainly have to consider this matter soon.

Early dwellers in our fair town had little or no problem with trash disposal simply because they had little or nothing that they could afford to throw away. Later, each family dug its own trash hole in back of the barn, and these holes have become popular digging grounds for bottle collectors. The town began to be involved in trash problems in the early 1900's, when we begin to see small expenditures for land for dumps in each village, as well as small amounts paid out for the "repair" of town dumps. About 1920, as people had better transportation, there was a northside dump and a southside dump. In 1931, we began to get it all together. That year there were five separate articles in the Town Meeting Warrant, dealing with the dump problem. The voters decided to raise and appropriate \$2,000 to buy land for a dumping ground, build a small shelter for shovels and rakes, and hire a man to tend the one town dump. (Yes, that's the right number of zeros!) This was the dump many of us remember, located on Route 134, and I will not remind you how much we had to pay this year to buy it back. What I am trying to tell you is that under many homes in town, there is an ancient dumping ground. You may be sitting on a fortune in medicine bottles or other collectibles. So why not go to the Registry of Deeds and see if one of the town's old dumps is under your house? And while you're there, maybe you can date your house as well. No use to waste all that good research time.

A GHOSTLY EVENING IS PLANNED

Our Festival Days evening program will be a talk by Kathy Swegart about a few of the haunted houses on Cape Cod that she has researched. Kathy is a delightful young lady and you are sure to enjoy her presentation. Join us at 7:30 at West Dennis Community Building on August 28.

BICYCLE TOUR OF OLD DENNIS PORT

You will look at Dennis Port a little differently after touring through some of its streets with an eye towards history. An easy ride is planned, meeting at the parking lot of Cinema 28 at 10 A.M. on Tuesday, August 27. Those who do not bicycle are welcome to follow in their cars.

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