



# Dennis Historical Society

## Newsletter

### December 2019

#### Volume 42, No12

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**Board Meeting Tuesday, December 10, 2 pm, Jacob Sears Library, 23 Center Street, East Dennis**

**Please bring an hors d'oeuvre to share!**

**Members Welcome!**

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

The Dennis Historical Society's 2019, Annual Meeting/Luncheon was held on October 26th, at *Encore Bistro & Bar* in Dennis Village. The meeting was attended by forty-six members and guests. Concluding a very enjoyable half hour of socializing, President Dave Talbott welcomed everyone, lead us in the *Pledge of Allegiance* and announced that our brief Annual Meeting would occur while dessert was being served.

After calling the meeting to order, Dave delivered the President's report on the year's activities, citing in particular, the absolutely amazing job done by the DHS Board and all the volunteers whose efforts were making 2019 such a success! Of particular note is the tremendous amount of planning and hard work that is necessary on the part of the committees which are responsible for the operation of the three museums owned by the Town of Dennis. These museums house most of our Society's collections, and without the dedication of the volunteers, these treasures of our history could not be shared with the public! We are indeed, true to our mission to *preserve, protect and promote the history of Dennis*. Dave's report concluded with the words "thank you for making my job so easy!"

Next, Clerk/Secretary, Bonnie Hempel gave her report which highlighted special Society accomplishment in 2019, including the Strategic Plan, Newsletter, Website, participation with HSOY in Plymouth 400 activities and the Town funding for work on the West School House and the Captain Baker House & Barn.

Larry Symington followed with the Treasurer's Report on the DHS finances. Cited in his report were gains which came from interest, both short term and from a ladder of CDs in Fidelity and TIAA accounts. Both the Secretary's and the Treasurer's Reports were accepted as presented.

Betsy Harrison then gave the Nominating Committee's report with its recommendation for the slate of Officers and Board, which were as follows:

#### **2019-2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**PRESIDENT, Dave Talbott**

**TRANSITIONING PRESIDENT, Diane Rochelle**

**VICE PRESIDENTS, Terri Fox and Betsy Harrison**

**CLERK/SECRETARY, Bonnie Hempel**

**TREASURER, Larry Symington**

**ASSISTANT TREASURER, June Howes**

**CORRESPONDING SECRETARY, Ruth Derick**

#### **ELECTED DIRECTORS**

**Bill Collins\*, Pat Corcoran, Ann Croston,**

**Phil Catchings, Kathy Dorshimer, Bo Durst,**

**Mary Kuhrtz, Bob Poskitt, Jan Ward\*\***

(\* New Board member. \*\*Candidate for re-election)

#### **APPOINTED DIRECTORS**

**HISTORICAL COMMISSION, Bob Poskitt**

**JERICO & MEMBERSHIP, Dawn Dellner**

**JOSIAH DENNIS MANSE, Terri Fox**

**WDGS, MARITIME MUSEUM, Phyllis Horton**

**CURATOR/ARCHIVIST, Phyllis Horton**

**DIRECTOR AT LARGE, Patty Sakellis**

**LIBRARIAN, Ruth Derick**

**ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN, Paul Lapense**

**PROGRAMS, Betsy Harrison**

**PUBLICITY, Kevin Keegan**

**TECHNOLOGY, Jan Ward**

**The slate was approved by unanimous vote.**

Then, wearing her Program Committee Chairman's hat, Betsy introduced our guest speaker, Nat Arata, Director of Development, Plymouth 400....a bit about our speaker: *Nat has been working in non-profit fundraising for over 17 years, with a strong focus on history and the humanities. He recently led the capital campaign at Mystic*

*Seaport to restore and sail the CHARLES W. MORGAN, and he spent seven years in Chicago as the lead fundraiser for the Chicago History Museum. He began his career in the 1990s at Old Sturbridge Village and as an officer for the Annual Fund at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University. Nat earned his MA in Humanities from the University of Chicago and a BA in English Literature from Hamilton College in Clinton, NY.*

How does a speaker make events that don't begin until the *Opening Ceremony* on April 24, 2020 in Plymouth relate to our Society and more specifically to Cape Cod? By sharing with his audience how connected we are to the upcoming events in Plymouth and across the Commonwealth; by having us think about the four nations involved in this 400 year commemoration...the United States, Great Britain, the Netherlands and the Wampanoag; by enumerating the activities of the official four day tour, *Commemorating the 400th Anniversary of America's Founding Story*; by telling us about the national and international news coverage and the dignitaries expected, or already planning to attend; by discussing the economic and cultural benefits which would result from the 2020 calendar of events; but especially, by conveying the building excitement about the upcoming year!

Presenting with PowerPoint slides, but rarely referring to notes, the enthusiasm flowed easily from our speaker, and all were caught up in the exciting aspects of the myriad programs to be offered in 2020. For every event on the Plymouth 400 calendar, there will be dozens and dozens of similarly themed events in communities large and small across the Commonwealth. The forecast, a busy one for Cape Cod, already has DHS and the three museum committees working on programs which will appeal to visitors and reflect the events and excitement associated with Plymouth 400. At the conclusion of his talk, Nat turned the floor over to Board member, Bob Poskitt, who spoke with equal enthusiasm about the plans of the Historical Society of Old Yarmouth for the December 2020, Sail on By (SOB), commemoration of the circumstances which might have had the Pilgrims land in Barnstable Harbor instead of at Plymouth Rock.

After Nat's talk concluded, Dave accepted a motion for adjournment. That motion brought to a close, a very enjoyable combination of business, our Annual Meeting, and pleasure, a delightful lunch, socialization, and a fascinating presentation by a terrific speaker. On the way out, members and guests were invited to take a copy of the memoirs of Lucy Lord Howes Hooper, *Privateers, Pirates and Beyond*. In addition, attention was drawn to the upcoming talk by our own Joshua Crowell, *Dennis Reminiscences* which was to be held 2:00 pm, November 16th at Dennis Memorial Library. Those fortunate enough to attend on the 16th, know what a terrific program it was!

## **It's a Small World!**

I love docenting at the Josiah Dennis Manse. Although I wasn't lucky enough to go to school here, I spent every summer of my life in my great, great grandfather's house (Capt. Prince S. Crowell) in East Dennis. Therefore, my whole history is here—starting with people who came on the Mayflower, and those who settled Yarmouth (& the East Precinct of Yarmouth—later Dennis!)--John Crowe and Thomas Howes, as well as Richard Sears.

On June 27, 2019, I appeared for duty at The Manse. Dave Talbott's wife, Chris, told us about an inquiry Dave had received in the morning on the DHS website. A woman, Susan Elliott, was asking if it would be possible to arrange a tour of the Manse at 1 p.m. that day. Dave told her that she was in luck and had picked the right day, as the Manse would be open from 1 to 4 p.m. Susan works at Dean College in Franklin, MA. She told Chris that they have an antique house in Milford and were most anxious to see the Manse.

I was at my appointed station in the Maritime Room. It's my favorite room, as most of my ancestors were sea captains. I am always amazed at the number of people, even locals, who have no idea we had a big shipyard down in our Sesuit Harbor from about 1815 through roughly 1862. (But they ALL know of the Sesuit Harbor Cafe!!) Of course, I grew up surrounded by the tales of the ships and the shipyard. It was just part of where my heart is! Susan and her husband came in, and as I was sharing the story of the Wild Hunter and her Captain, Joshua Sears, Susan said she had been reading letters, etc, from a girl at Dean Academy (as it was known then) who lived in Dennis and was valedictorian in 1873. She decided to find out where Dennis, MA, is located and thus discovered our Manse. I asked her if the girl's name was by any chance Louisa, as my great grandmother had attended Dean Academy. Lo and behold, the girl was indeed Louisa Sears (1852-1951), daughter of Captain Joshua Sears (1817-1885). I told her how Lulu had her papa wrapped around her little finger when she was 4, and he had a lean-to built behind the cabin and Lulu took her pony with her around the world on the maiden voyage of the Wild Hunter! I don't suppose the sailors cared much for having a pony on board (in addition to other animals!) as I'm willing to bet that Lulu didn't clean up after her pony! Indeed, it IS a small world!

This wonderful article written by DHS Board member and Manse volunteer docent, Bo Durst...thank you Bo!

## "This Unknown House"



(Photo & information from the Dennis Historical Society)

This month's mystery house is made possible by a gift to our Society by Henry Kelley. Earlier this year, Henry was visiting the *Packet Galleries* and the owner showed him some boxes of glass plate negatives he was certain would be of interest to him. He was correct. Henry promptly purchased them. There are 29 recorded on the paperwork which accompanied them. They all appear to have been taken in East Dennis and fortunately, most are labeled! This one was not. If anyone can help with the identification of the house, or the people in the picture, please email me at: [info@dennishistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@dennishistoricalsociety.org). There will be more of these remarkable pictures appearing in future newsletters. Thank you Henry from a grateful Society!

### Here are some tantalizing examples!



"Mrs. H. Chapman at house"



"John Sears cottage"

Although these pictures were labeled as quoted, there is absolutely no information about them. Each, undoubtedly has a story to tell. If any readers can share some family history or knowledge about of these pictures, please email me. It would be so terrific to know the *who, what, when, where and why...*thank you!

***Looking for the Perfect Gift for this Holiday Season? Visit the newly updated DHS Website.***

Type [www.dennishistoricalsociety.org](http://www.dennishistoricalsociety.org) in your browser and click on **Bookstore**. You will find a great selection of books which will make a very special gift for a very special person!

### **The 2019 DHS Annual Appeal**

Soon, members will receive their Society's annual appeal letter asking for support for *wish list* items for each of our three museums.

*Please* give generously! Your contribution will greatly assist our museum volunteers in fulfilling our Mission Statement.

**To Preserve, Protect & Promote the the History of Dennis, Massachusetts**

(For some, it may still be tax deductible)

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South Yarmouth, MA  
02664

*Wishing everyone a Joyous Holiday Season!*

## CHRISTMAS AT THE MANSE

Sunday, December 8, Noon - 3:30 pm



As part of the Dennis Village Stroll, enjoy natural holiday decorations and sweet Yuletide treats at the home of the town's namesake minister

Whig Street at NobsCUSsett Road  
FREE ADMISSION (donations gladly accepted)



## CHRISTMAS

AT THE 1801 CAPTAIN BAKER HOUSE & BARN  
AT JERICO HISTORIC CENTER

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1 - 4 PM  
(as part of the West Dennis Stroll)

90 Old Main Street, West Dennis

Join the holiday fun!  
**CHRISTMAS  
OPEN HOUSE**  
at the Dennis  
Maritime Museum  
at the West Dennis  
Graded Schoolhouse

Saturday, December 14,  
as part of the West Dennis Stroll

Open 11am - 4pm  
67 School Street, West Dennis  
Wheelchair Accessible

*Don't miss these wonderful holiday events!*