



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter May 2020

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**The next Board Meeting will be held WEDNESDAY, May 13, 2:00 pm at the 1867 West Dennis Graded School
67 School Street, West Dennis**

Members Welcome

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

There were Photographers on the Southside too!

It may appear from recent newsletters that all the photographers in Dennis were on the northside, East Dennis in particular. Thank you Ruth Derick for providing a new perspective! Ruth is the librarian of the *Pauline Wixon Derick Library*. This library, home of the DHS physical archives is located on the top floor of the *West Dennis Free Public Library*. Ruthie, as she is often affectionately called, is a member of the DHS Board. Attending our March 2020 meeting, she had with her a binder entitled *Jericho Photo Prints from Attic Barn, 31 OCT 2009* to loan to me to peruse and select pictures to share in the newsletter. This work, and I don't use that word "work" lightly, represents the salvation of hundreds of photos discovered in the Barn at the *Jericho Historical Center* in West Dennis. The images were saved by Burton N. Derick (Burt), Ruth's late husband who spent hundreds of hours scanning, identifying, saving and printing them.



Main Street, West Dennis looking west, ca. 1905

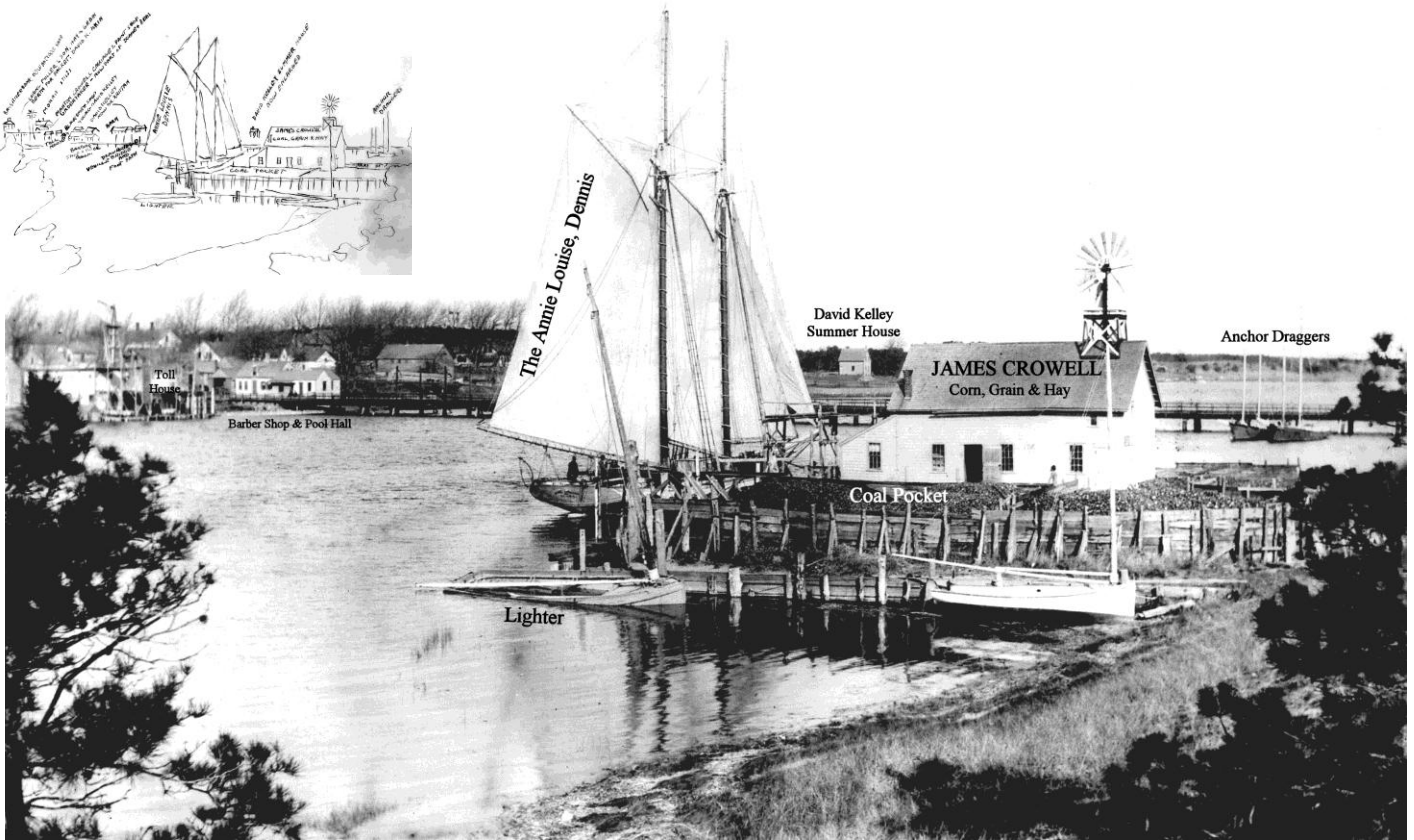
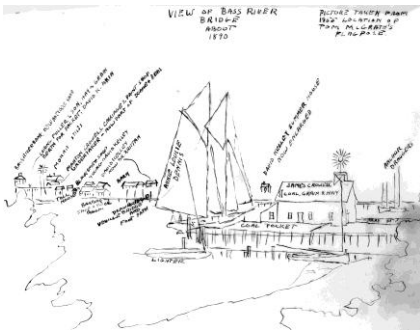


Second Bridge over Bass River looking east from South Yarmouth



First Bass River Bridge

This remarkable image of the first Bass River Bridge, ca. 1893 is from the "loose and framed photos" found in the Jericho Barn. It was taken from the Dennis side of river looking west to South Yarmouth. Note the horse drawn buggy crossing the bridge, the schooner at anchor and across the river, a water pumping windmill and a second larger schooner tied to its dock. If one visits the spot from where the photo was taken at the corner of Route 28 and Uncle Barney's Road, there are a number of structures, both north and south of the bridge on Union Street and Pleasant Street, which are identifiable, either directly, or by their roof lines.



"View of Bass River Bridge about 1890"

"Picture taken from 1855 location of Tom McGrath's flagpole"

The most amazing thing about this image is that it was accompanied by the hand-drawn key which is superimposed (much smaller) in the upper left. It allowed the identification of the objects, many of which I have added to the original picture. The print was made from a glass plate by "J. E. Fairbank" who also sketched the hand-drawn key.



"Main Street, West Dennis, postcard found at Jericho"

"Main Street, West Dennis, photo found at Jericho"

Imagining life in Dennis at the end of the 19th and early 20th century is a time machine experience available to anyone who pages through this remarkable volume. And, it's only one of many such volumes which are available to peruse and enjoy at the *Pauline Wixon Derick Library*. The images and the accompanying annotations are absolutely fascinating. I strongly encourage you to visit when the library reopens...fingers crossed, it's in June!

How Did Anyone Survive Childhood?

There probably isn't a reader who doesn't remember playing *dodgeball* during recess in elementary school. The class would divide into two teams. One team would form a big circle; the other would get inside the circle. The object was to eliminate the team in the middle by throwing a basketball and hitting them. It was banned throughout the US

starting in 1999, because it was viewed as dangerous and encouraging aggressive behavior and bullying. Studying the next picture, can you see anything which might be conceived as dangerous behavior for school children? Wow, how times have changed!

Here stood the
South Dennis Graded School 1867-1931
Also Dennis High School 1915 - 1931
Thereafter used as
The first town fire Station 1932 - 1949
Highway Department Garage 1949 - 1956



South Dennis Graded School

The South Dennis Graded was located on Main Street. The plaque which is superimposed in the corner is located on a stone marker on the right of the road, heading south, between Gooseberry and Farm Lanes. The caption in the album, *Jericho Photo Prints from Attic Barn, 31 OCT 2009* reads - "School, South Dennis, 1888? Third girl left (hand on hat) Alice Baxter Lewis born 1872 So. Dennis, mentioned in book 'Cape Cod is a Number of Things,' by Allan Neal as 'Aunt Alice.'" It was one of four such schools in Dennis. Only one, the West Dennis Graded School survives. There will be more about these schools in a future newsletter.

Southside Unknown

As is the case with many of the photos in the *digital archives*, there are pictures in the albums, such as this one, merely labeled "House." The image, from the "S. William Baxter Collection," has a very distinctive "P" on the middle chimney. If anyone can provide information about this house, please contact Dave Talbott, via the DHS email. Thank you!

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If ceremonies even occur this year, they may only be virtual with the diploma arriving in the mail. Therefore, there will be an even bigger reason to celebrate with something special...think presents! If you are looking for the perfect graduation gift, visit the DHS Website.

Type 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 graduate!



Membership Renewal Reminder

When you renew your membership, give a membership to a family member, or friend, too. What a great gift!

Not only will that membership be appreciated, it will help us grow! Please include a note with the name and mailing address of the gift recipient along with your payment.

You can do so online using **PayPal** at [http://www.dennishistoricalsociety.org/Get Involved/Become a Member](http://www.dennishistoricalsociety.org/GetInvolved/BecomeaMember)

After making your payment, email us at **info@dennishistoricalsociety.org** to send the name and mailing address of the lucky recipient.

Thank you!