



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter January 2025

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As is our January custom, there will be no Board Meeting this month.

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

In the Heart of the Village

They may not have been the *Roaring 20s* in Dennis, but thanks to the research of the Dennis Memorial Library's Recording Secretary Chris Talbott, we have a wonderful feel for what life was like in the Village!

During the summer of 2024, the library celebrated the 100th anniversary of the dedication of its original building. As part of the four days of celebration, a series of posters done by Chris was on display in the upstairs meeting room. They continued on display throughout the summer and into the autumn. Library patrons and visitors saw them. The many groups, including the DHS Board which use the meeting room saw them. And, because of the glimpse back 100 years into our past which it provides, I am pleased to share a portion of the poster exhibit with you!

Dennis Memorial Library



1924

"The Little Library that Grew"

In 1876, a group of enthusiastic Dennis women who were actively collecting and sharing books in the community founded the Dennis Library Association. They met in front parlors of private homes and then in a small room in Carleton Hall to share the joy they found in books. Unbeknownst to them, this small room was adjacent to land which would later be gifted for the site of The Dennis Memorial Library.

The land for the building was contributed by William H. Bain of Boston and Dennis. In 1923, The Memorial Library Association, Inc. of Dennis was formed for the purpose of building and maintaining a library for the benefit of the people in the village of Dennis. Article #10 of the Bylaws reads: "The Library shall be free to all residents of the Village and non-residents and visitors may take books by complying with the rules of the Library".

Architectural plans and specifications were done and by Mr. E. H. Janes of New York City and Dennis. W. T. Nickerson was awarded the contract to build the library for a cost of \$3,350.00. The building was paid for by donations and various fund raising benefits.

When completed in 1924, it was dedicated as a memorial to the Dennis veterans of the Great War. The names of these men, from all five Dennis villages are on the large plaque in the foyer. The plaque was commissioned and given by the Dennis Grange.

In **1958**, the library needed to grow and the two wings were added through the generosity of Miss Esther W. Howes and Mr. John M. Stone. The wings were constructed by W. T. Nickerson. The palladium windows from the original building were moved to the ends of the additions leaving the arched interior pass-throughs. Another added attraction was the cupola given in memory of Mr. Willis Nye.



Again the library needed to grow.

In **1968**, a wing was added to the east side to be used to house the fiction section. The "Friends of the Library" helped with the funding. It is known as the Alma Symington Wing, and today this is the children's room.



In **2005** the Dennis Memorial Library added its third addition. In the late 1990s the Board of Trustees realized the need for a meeting room, rest room facilities and more space for its collections. This led to the building of the two story structure we're standing in today. The *Continue the Legacy* campaign was a true community project from donations to fund raising events to work in kind. Thanks to the support of the generous citizens of Dennis, on opening day it had been paid for in full.

Please wander around "the little library that grew". It's quite a story!

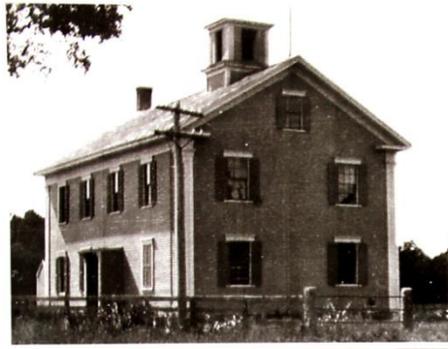
The Post Office and The Town Pump

Postcards of two necessary parts of daily life in the 1920s.



100 years ago, in the 1920s, the C.L. Goodspeed Store and Post Office was the hub of Dennis Village life. Mr. C. Lovell Goodspeed was the Postmaster for 33 years, 1915 to 1948, and continued operating the grocery store until 1955. The building still stands today and is a candy store, continuing the tradition of selling boxes of candy as were once offered at Goodspeed's.

Goodspeed Store, Dennis Village
Originally on the other side of the street, the building was built in 1847 by Francis L. Agoston and used as a grocery store. In 1874, 1887 and 1902, Agoston and his son-in-law Luther kept the Post Office in the village store. Edmund C. Crowell (Luther's son) took over the business and was appointed Postmaster in 1915 and moved the building to its present site. Long-time residents of Dennis Village remember Mr. Goodspeed as a workhorse and postmaster for many years in the building.



The North Dennis Graded School

The Dennis Elementary School, built in 1859, was the first of five two story "graded schools" built in the town, one for each village. It was located next to what was the Methodist Church at the time, now the Dennis Union Church. Converted to a firehouse in 1931, it was razed by the town in 1955, almost one hundred years from the time it was built.



Today, you can see the school bell and plaque directly across the street from the library.



The Town Pump was an essential part of village life. Whether it was watering one's horse, grabbing a thirst quenching drink on the way home from school or drawing water to prime the pump in a summer cottage, it was there for everyone who needed it. The pump still exists in the same location at the corner of the Village Green and is maintained by the Village Improvement Society.



1929
8th Grade Graduation Day
The students are standing in front of Carleton Hall with the North Dennis Grammar School in the left hand side of the picture and the chimney of the library between the girl and boy to the right.



Carleton Hall

Carleton Hall was built in 1830 as a "small praying house" for the Reformed Methodist Society. In 1847, it became Union Academy and remained as such until 1859 when the Graded School was erected across the road. By 1865, Captain Carleton Howes, brother of Moses, Jr. (see his portrait in this room), organized a group of citizens to purchase shares in the building to use it as a community center, a home for the Ladies Social Circle, Lyceum events, balls, dancing schools, and most importantly for this display, a small room was made available for the Dennis Library Association. The hall was named for Captain Carleton Howes after his death in December 1871. In April 1954, the shareholders gifted the hall to the Town of Dennis.

The photograph to the left is the only pre-1950 one we were able to find, and that was after considerable searching. Please see the page from the Dennis Historical Society's archives.

Does anyone have an old picture of the hall? DHS would love a copy.



Share Holders

[Undated 03 - List of shares 1900:]

- Nathan Howes
- Elisha Crowell
- Zachariah Howes
- Franklin Howes East
- Philip Vincent
- Thomas Hall
- Joseph Hall
- Henry F. Howes
- Jessie Hall
- Reuben Hall
- Wm. Crowell
- Abijah Howes
- Jeremiah Hall to C.
- Joshua C. Howes
- Nelso S. Chapman
- F. G. Hall
- Jeremiah Howes
- Hoses Chapman
- Albert Howes
- Hiram Hall
- Oren Howes
- David Howes
- Thomas P. Howes
- Edward Hall 2
- Joshua Nickerson
- Luther Hall
- Asa Hall
- Geo. H. Hall
- Nathan Hall
- Jos N. Hall
- Alfred Howes
- Warren Hall
- Augustus Hall
- Harvey Howes Jr.
- Uriah Crowell
- Eliza Howes
- Hiram Whittemore
- Zebina Howes Jr.
- Darrabas S. Downs
- David P. Howes
- Cyrus Howes
- Joshua Crowell Jr.

Consist of that below of Carleton Hall

Handwritten list of names and shares, including: Nathan Howes, Elisha Crowell, Zachariah Howes, Franklin Howes East, Philip Vincent, Thomas Hall, Joseph Hall, Henry F. Howes, Jessie Hall, Reuben Hall, Wm. Crowell, Abijah Howes, Jeremiah Hall to C., Joshua C. Howes, Nelso S. Chapman, F. G. Hall, Jeremiah Howes, Hoses Chapman, Albert Howes, Hiram Hall, Oren Howes, David Howes, Thomas P. Howes, Edward Hall 2, Joshua Nickerson, Luther Hall, Asa Hall, Geo. H. Hall, Nathan Hall, Jos N. Hall, Alfred Howes, Warren Hall, Augustus Hall, Harvey Howes Jr., Uriah Crowell, Eliza Howes, Hiram Whittemore, Zebina Howes Jr., Darrabas S. Downs, David P. Howes, Cyrus Howes, Joshua Crowell Jr.

Dennis Historical Society

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Keyword Search | Photo Record

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Archives | Description

Photos | Title

People | Place

Date: undated

Provenance: From Jean Trave, 10 February 2004. Album of Clara E. (Nichols) Twiss, Worcester, MA, ca. 1910

Collection: Clara E. (Nichols) Twiss

Search Terms: photos

Classification: Photos, People and Events; Photos of Dennis

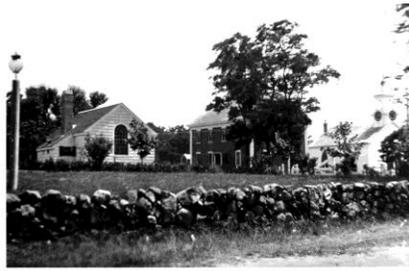
Attachments: [image001_eb8572d4-7d7f-4c0d-b714-9d1e11e11e11](#)

Screenshot of a search in the DHS Digital Archive

Our Little Corner of the World in the 1920s

which includes

Our Neighbors on Main Street & Old Bass River Road



Dennis Memorial Library Dennis Graded School Dennis Union Church



Main Street (6A) looking East, Post Office is on the left



*Looking toward the site of the future
Dennis Memorial Library*

Yarmouth Register, Saturday, January 16, 1926; Page: 5 - Mr. Gerard Chapman has had his house wired for electric lights. The current will be supplied by the Dennis garage.

Yarmouth Register, Saturday, February 05, 1927, Page: 5

Among those who have had their houses wired recently in anticipation of having electric lights in the early spring are the following: Earl Whittmore, Benjamin Walker, William Bain, James Hallett, Raymond Van Iderstine, Mrs. E. C. Hall, Miss Hettie H. Howes, F. W. Lovell, George M. Howes, Frank E. Howes, Charles S. Goodspeed. Carleton hall is also being equipped for electricity. The work of setting the poles and stringing the wires for electric lights along the highway is progressing as rapidly as weather conditions will permit.

Yarmouth Register, Saturday, November 28, 1931, Page: 5

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Wallace Howes have had electric lights installed in their home.

Home of Captain Moses and Jerusha Howes



The portraits hanging above are of Captain Moses Howes, Jr. and his wife Jerusha (Sturgis Hall). If you look closely at the right side of Jerusha's painting, you will see a house, and if you look out the window to the corner of Route 6A and Hope Lane, you will see that house as it stands today. Jerusha is placed on this wall so that she can see her home. It was common for a captain's wife to accompany her husband on his voyages, but rather than attending Captain Moses on his last deep sea voyage in 1850-1851, she stayed behind and oversaw the construction of their home. The house is typical of a retired sea captain's mansion. Ed. note – this poster was positioned below where the Moses and Jerusha's portraits hang in the library.

After retiring from the sea, Captain Moses Howes, along with his brothers Carleton and Almond, became prominent in village affairs. In 1876, Moses led a drive to raise the money to build a second tower of wood after the first Scargo Tower blew to the ground in a gale. Jerusha was very active in the Ladies Aid Society and known for her kindness and generosity.



All images of the Dennis Memorial Library are courtesy of the library, all others are from the DHS Digital Archive

Thank you Chris!

Happy New Year!



May 2025 be a great year for all of us!!



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2024 ***DHS Annual Appeal***

Last month, you all received your Society's 2024 Annual Appeal letter asking for support for wish list items for each of our three museums and the Pauline Wixon Derick Library

Please give generously! Your contribution will greatly assist all of our of volunteers in fulfilling our Mission Statement:

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

If you have already given
Thank you!

Looking for a Special Present?

Have you visited the DHS online Bookstore?

Type www.dennishistoricalsociety.org in your browser and then click on Bookstore.

You will find a great selection of what might be the perfect gift for a birthday, graduation, or to tuck away for the next holiday season.

Highly recommended is ***Dennis, Cape Cod***, the definitive volume of Dennis History!

