



# Dennis Historical Society Newsletter March 2025

Volume 48, No.03

Dennis Historical Society – copyright 2025 Internet: [www.dennishistoricalsociety.org](http://www.dennishistoricalsociety.org) - E-mail: [info@dennishistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@dennishistoricalsociety.org)

**The next Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 pm at the Dennis Memorial Library  
1020 Old Bass River Road, Dennis Village  
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)

## *In the Heart of the Village, Part 2*

Recapping what we learned in the January issue of the newsletter - during the summer of 2024, the Dennis Memorial Library celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of its original building. As part of the four days of celebration, a series of posters done by the library's recording secretary Chris Talbott was on display in the library's upstairs meeting room. Patrons and visitors saw them; many groups, including the DHS Board, which use the meeting room saw them. The series entitled *Our Little Corner of the World in the 1920s* provides a wonderful glimpse 100 years back into Dennis Village's past. I am pleased to present the remaining exhibit's posters for those who might have missed them.

# *Celebrating 100 Years*

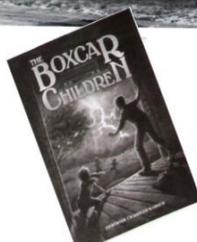


*From the minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Memorial Library Association of Dennis, Inc. November 17, 1924*

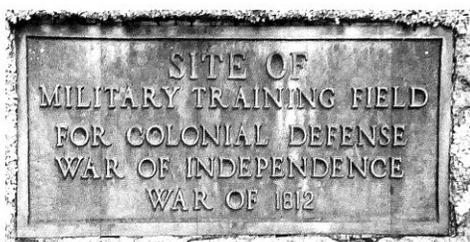
*The Lib. was dedicated on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June at 2 o'clock P.M. The Rev. E. A. Chase, Mr. Leslie Smith, and Mr. Caleb Crowell. There were about 200 people present and at the close of the exercises a luncheon was served by the Grange in Carleton Hall. The Grange also bore the expense of having Mr. Smith as one of the speakers.*



The Library was dedicated on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June at 2 o'clock P.M. Speakers Capt. Lawrence Barry, Rev. E. A. Chase, Mr. Leslie Smith, and Mr. Caleb Crowell. There were about 200 people present and at the close of the exercises a luncheon was served by the Grange in Carleton Hall. The Grange also bore the expense of having Mr. Smith as one of the speakers.



# The Training Field and Village Green



The long stretch of grass between the cemetery and Route 6A is known as the Training Field. It is an area dating back to the American Revolution where troops actually practiced in preparation for war. At the eastern end, in front of the Dennis Union Church, is the Village Green where the Bandstand built in 1993 stands. The Village Improvement Society of Dennis owns and maintains these two properties amongst others.

You can see the Dennis Memorial Library through the trees to the right at the far end of the above picture.

Above: Veterans of World War I and Boy Scouts at the side of the Dennis Union Church

To the right: School children enjoying making a human pyramid on the green in front of the church.



## The Dennis Garage

Photo dated circa 1927. The sign says Socony Gasoline and Dunlop Tires. The wrecker is a Packard. Far left is the former residence of Town Clerk, Gerard Chapman, now the Scargo Cafe. The white building in the distance on the far right is Carleton Hall, Old Bass River Road. The entrance to the Homestead Condos is where the gas station sign once stood. The garage and the Whittemore House, along with some smaller structures were torn down. Today the Cape Cod Farms Gas Station sits on the property.



*Dennis Garage 1927*



## The Whittemore House

The Whittemore House, torn down in the mid 1960s was a popular choice of people involved with the productions at the Cape Playhouse. Ethel Whittemore ran a coffee shop which served breakfast to the "stars".



The young girl pictured to the left, most likely a member of the Goodspeed family but unidentified, is standing in the side yard of Goodspeed's Store. Behind her, across Main Street, you can see the Whittemore House and, off to the right of the picture, the Dennis Memorial Library.



## The Dennis Union Church and Dennis Village Cemetery

Based on the recommendation of members of The East Precinct Church of Yarmouth to build a second location closer to where most members lived, the church was formed in 1722 or 1723.

Rev. Josiah Dennis, a young, 1725 graduate of Harvard College was called to serve the new parish, assuming his position in 1727. He served 36 years until his death in 1763. Bearing his name since 1793, the town was once the East Precinct of Yarmouth.

The present church building was constructed in 1838 by a Trinitarian splinter group. It was later used by the Methodists. In 1864, it took on a new life as a village church by incorporating various religious groups to be jointly known as the Dennis Union Church.



Located next to the fence just beyond the receiving tomb, there is a simple engraved stone marking the gravesite of the Reverend Dennis and his family.  
*"On June 18, 1793, by act of the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the East Precinct of Yarmouth became a separate town and was named Dennis in honor of the Rev. Josiah Dennis, the town's beloved pastor from June 22, 1727 until his death, August 31, 1763. The Act of incorporation was signed by the illustrious John Hancock."*



### The Receiving Tomb

Constructed in 1875, the Receiving Tomb temporarily housed the bodies of those who died during the winter months when the ground was too frozen to allow burial.

# Dennis Memorial Library's Documentation

## Granting of the property to the Memorial Library Association, Inc. of Dennis August 23, 1923

know all men by these presents, That I, William H. Bain of Dennis Barnstable County, Massachusetts, in consideration of one dollar and other good and valuable considerations to me paid, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, do hereby give, grant, bargain, sell and convey to the Memorial Library Association Inc. of Dennis, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, so long as land shall be used for the purpose set fourth in the Charter and articles of Incorporation of said corporation, or for other charitable purposes, subject the conditions and limitations named below, a certain parcel of land in Dennis, Barnstable County, Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows:

On the south by Carleton Hall lot,  
On the west by the road which runs from North to South Dennis, and  
On the north and west by land formerly owned by Howes Chaoman.  
Containing about one-fourth of an acre more or less, and being the same premises conveyed to me by deed of Jonathan F. Ellis dated July 25, 1912, recorded with Barnstable County deeds Book 316 page 504. This conveyance is made subject to taxes, assessments, encumbrances and restrictions if any there be, and is upon the strict and express condition that a library shall be erected upon the premises within two years, and that said land and any buildings erected thereon shall always and forever be maintained for public purposes and for no other purposes, and that each inhabitant for the time being of that part of said Dennis called North Dennis shall have equal rights to the use of said land and any buildings erected or maintained thereon, and in the event that any of the forsaidd conditions or limitations are not carried out and if the grantees shall fail to keep and perform said conditions or any of them, then in that event this deed shall become and be absolutely null and void, and all and singular the above described premises and all improvements and betterments thereon shall revert and reinvest in me and my heirs and assigns forever, free and discharged from all trusts as fully and effectually as if these presents had not been executed. This conveyance is made without any covenants whatever.

To have and to hold to the said The Memorial Library Association Inc. of Dennis, its successors and assigns to their use and for the purposes as herein set fourth and for none other whatsoever.

In witness whereof, I the said William H. Bain, being unmarried, hereunto set my hand and seal this twenty third day of August 1923.

W.H.B.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of  
T.H.B.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Boston, August 23, 1923.

Then personally appeared the above named William H. Bain and acknowledged the foregoing instrument by him subscribed to be his free act and deed, before me.

T.H.B. Notary

RECEIVED

JUL 13 1923

SECRETARY'S OFFICE

CORPORATION FOR CHARITABLE AND CERTAIN OTHER PURPOSES

Memorial Library Association Inc. of Dennis Fee \$5.00 p.d.  
Certificate of Organization

[FULL FORM]

GENERAL LAWS, CHAP. 150, SECT. 7

Filed in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth,  
July 26, 1923

I hereby certify that it appears, upon an examination of the within written certificate and the records of the corporation duly submitted to my inspection, that the requirements of sections one, two and three of chapter one hundred and eighty, section nine of one hundred fifty-five, and sections six, eight, nine, ten, eleven, and twelve of chapter one hundred fifty-six of General Laws have been complied with, and I hereby approve said certificate, this 13th day of July, 1923.

A.D. 1923

COMMISSIONER OF CORPORATIONS AND TAXATION

Commissioner of Corporations and Taxation.

JUL 18 1923

COMMISSIONER OF CORPORATIONS AND TAXATION

WITH FEE OF \$ 5

JUL 18 1923

CORPORATIONS AND TAXATION

W.H.B. to Frank Willis Howes  
Secy. 7/19/23

## Transcription of the minutes of the Memorial Library Association Meeting August 20, 1923

Dennis Mass Aug 20-1923

Meeting of Directors at Bleak House at 8 o'clock P.M.

Moved by Mr. B.C. Hall that the Secretary get in touch personally with Mr. W<sup>m</sup> H. Bain and get the deed for the land or find out why the delay.

Moved that we accept bid of W. T. Nickerson of \$3,350.<sup>00</sup> for building.

Moved by Mr. Frank E. Howes that the plans by Mr. Janes be accepted subject to any changes he and contractor and building com. (committee) may agree upon.

Moved by Mr. Gerard Chapman that the building com award the contract to W. T. Nickerson and that they supervise the erection of the building.

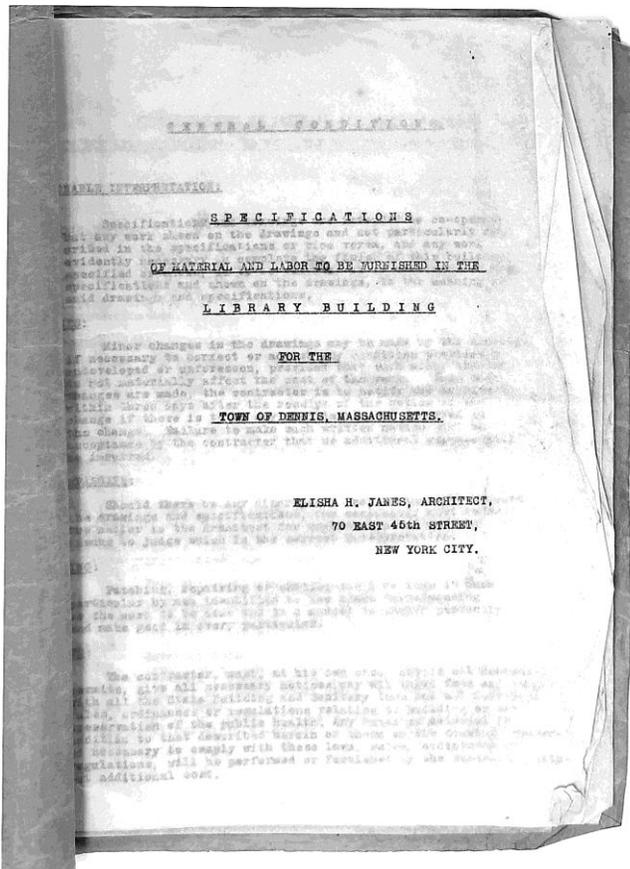
Moved that the Assoc. pay the expenses of Secy to Boston.

24

Meeting adjourned at 9:00,

Frank Willis Howes  
Secy.

Dennis Mass Aug 20-1923  
Meeting of Directors at Bleak House at 8 o'clock P.M.  
Moved by Mr. B.C. Hall that the Secretary get in touch personally with Mr. W<sup>m</sup> H. Bain and get the deed for the land or find out why the delay.  
Moved that we accept bid of W. T. Nickerson of \$3,350.<sup>00</sup> for building.  
Moved by Mr. Frank E. Howes that the plans by Mr. Janes be accepted subject to any changes he and contractor and building com. (committee) may agree upon.  
Moved by Mr. Gerard Chapman that the building com award the contract to W. T. Nickerson and that they supervise the erection of the building.  
Moved that the Assoc. pay the expenses of Secy to Boston.  
The meeting adjourned at 9:00.  
Frank Willis Howes  
Secy.



Thank you again Chris!

## The Library's Light of Literacy

When the Dennis Memorial Library opened its doors in 1924, there was no electricity to the building. Ed. note – please be sure to read the reprint from the *Yarmouth Register* below.

If one consults the original construction documents issued by Architect Elisha H. Janes of New York City in 1923, no specifications for an electrical service, electric panel or wiring are found. Photos of the library taken at the time of its dedication show no wires to the building.

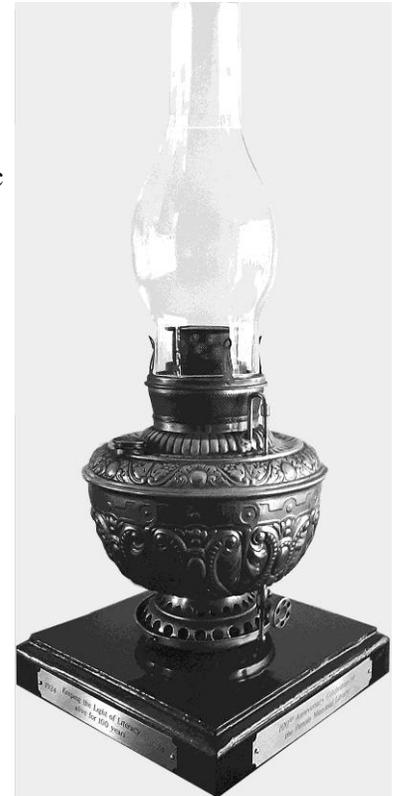
The library's original illumination was provided by nickel plated kerosene lamps manufactured in Meriden, Connecticut by the Edward Miller & Company. The following information about these lamps is provided by the Illawarra Museum, NSW, Australia – known as the 'Juno Mammoth' lamp, it was made about 1896 for use in public places such as schools and halls. The lamp produces the equivalent of 300 candle power. Stamped on the oil reservoir is 'The Juno Lamp Made in USA'. The wick mount is stamped 'EM & Co.'. The Juno lamp has a special mechanism that allows the glass to be raised without removing the glass chimney. The height of the wick is controlled by a knob at the bottom of the lamp. A full reservoir of kerosene enabled the lamp to operate for about 12 hours at medium light.

Amazingly, 100 years later, this lamp has survived three major library expansions and will remain on display in the original library building as a constant reminder of our link to our past!

**Thank you Dave!**

*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 Whittemore, 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.*

**Thank you Ann Croston for the excerpts!**



**Thank you Randall Wallin for restoring the lamp and making the display base.**

## Unknown House

We wrap up the March issue with this image from the DHS Digital Archive. It was located by doing a *Keyword Search* using the words *unknown house*. Little is known about the picture except that it is a print made from a glass plate negative and was taken between 1910 – 1915 by Warren T. Wigginton. It is from the collection of Richard Howes. The image is entitled *Large House* and it is purportedly in Dennis. If anyone recognizes this house and can provide any information about it, please email [info@dennishistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@dennishistoricalsociety.org). I will look forward to hearing from you!



*DHS Digital Archive*

**Dennis Historical Society  
P.O. Box 607  
South Dennis, MA 02660-0607**

**Non-profit Org.  
US POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 24  
South Yarmouth, MA  
02664**

**2024  
*DHS Annual Appeal***

**There's still plenty of time! If you have not yet responded to your Society's 2024 Annual Appeal letter asking for support for each of the three museums and library, please do it now!**

**Give generously! Your contribution will greatly assist our volunteers who are working hard to fulfill our Mission Statement:**

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

**If you have already given  
*Thank you!***

***Membership Renewal***

**March is membership renewal month. It's a time to think about what your membership means to you, and what it means to your Society!**



**When your renewal arrives, respond quickly and mail a check in the enclosed envelope. DHS depends on its members!**

***Please help!***

**Or, you can renew online using PayPal  
<http://www.dennishistoricalsociety.org/>**

**Click on the tab Get Involved,  
then click on Become a member**

***Thank you!***