

PATSY KITTREDGE CHARMS ALL

A large group of members and guests heard Patsy Kittredge tell Tales of Old Cape Cod and Cape Codders right out of Joseph Lincoln's books; she has known most of these characters personally in her long and interesting life. We are most grateful to this gracious lady, who, in her nineties, manages to combine her wit and story-telling ability with her remarkable memories of a Cape Cod and Cape Cod characters who have all but disappeared. Our thanks also to Georgia Ferguson, who put the program together, and shared this delightful evening with D.H.S.

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

Members of the Dennis Historical Society are hereby notified that the annual meeting and election of officers will be held on Monday, September 14, 1981 at 7:30 P.M. at Liberty Hall, South Dennis. Dues for the year 1981-1982 are due on or before this date. Individual dues remain at \$3 and family dues \$5.

ABOUT MEMBERSHIP

If you are receiving this newsletter and are not presently a member of D.H.S., it is because someone feels that you might be interested in becoming a member. You may do so by paying the appropriate dues to Elinor Slade, Box 607, S. Dennis, MA 02660, or by paying them at a meeting of the society. Membership entitles you to a year's subscription to our monthly newsletter, advance notice of all activities, and first opportunity to attend events at which we must limit numbers, as well as occasional discounts on events for which admission must be charged (see article below). You will also be supporting one of the most active local historical societies in the Commonwealth. Our major purposes are education, and preservation of our heritage as residents of an area of unique historic interest. Welcome aboard!

FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

A sincere thank you for your response to mail your dues, with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Your efforts will save the society a considerable sum of money, but also makes the very time-consuming job of dues collection a little easier. You still have time to mail your dues before the annual meeting, or plan to pay them when you attend that meeting on September 14.

NAUTICAL CHARTS A GIFT TO D.H.S.

Through the generosity of Mrs. Margret Murphy, we have received the gift of a number of old nautical charts, which were used on voyages made by Capt. Moses Howes, aboard the Ship Belvedere and the Bark Lennox from 1840 to 1860. Captain Howes was a native of Dennis and his career was typical of many of our mariner sons. He began his seafaring life at the tender age of 10, as cook aboard a fishing boat owned by Capt. Christopher Howes. After but one season at Mackereling, he determined that he would pursue a life of deep-water sailing. He journeyed to Boston, where he signed aboard an outwardbound vessel before the mast at the age of only 11 years. From that day on, until he "swallowed the anchor" in 1870, he travelled the seven seas, first as a crew member, then as an officer, and at last as Master, sailing for Thomas B. Wales and Co. of Boston. On a shore leave in 1841, he married Jerusha S. Hall, and for five years she accompanied him aboard ship, to California, Asia, and Mediterranean ports. Captain Moses boasted that he never lost a vessel, nor had to make emergency port. After the Captain's death in 1887, it was reported that Jerusha cherished the logs which he had kept of his many voyages. Has any one of you any knowledge of what might have become of these books? It would be exciting to match up the brief notations on our charts with the log notations. You may see these charts on display at the annual meeting in September. And our deep gratitude to Margaret Murphy.

OLD HOME WEEK

The reoccurrence of Dennis Festival Days reminds us of another week-long festivity which once was part of the summer calendar in our town. Old Home Week was celebrated annually in East Dennis, from 1931-1946, under the enthusiastic leadership of Dr. Ray Atwood. Old Home Week was a custom originated in Maine, and popular in many towns and villages in New England in the first half of the century. It was an effort on the part of the town fathers to entice members of the younger generation who had left their home areas seeking employment, to return and renew acquaintances in their native town. Like Festival Days, the week was chock full of activity ranging from boat races to clam bakes. Special Church services were held, and in East Dennis, it was not uncommon for four generations of Sears or Crowells to share a pew. One prominent feature of the local jubilation was the annual historic lecture. Subjects ranged from the history of salt making to Whaling, and were researched by townspeople as well as by well-known historians. Perhaps we should revive this aspect of Old Home Week and make it an addition to our celebration of Dennis Festival Days.

CALENDAR

August 29 - Sept. 5 DENNIS FESTIVAL DAYS
(Week's schedule available at Post offices. See below for events of special interest.)

Sept. 14 7:30 Liberty Hall ANNUAL MEETING

THE STREETS OF OUR TOWN

There are two streets named "Hall Street" in our town. The one in North Dennis is named in honor of the family of that name, which was established in old Nobscussett in 1651 by the arrival of Old John Hall and his many sons. But the Hall Street in Dennis Port, which runs from Main Street to Division, at Willow in West Harwich, was so named because it led to a large social hall. We have mentioned that neighborhood halls were important to the social and educational life of the villages in the nineteenth century. While this hall at the end of Hall Street is actually in West Harwich, being on the East side of Division Street, it nevertheless served as the social center for both villages for many years. Built by carpenter Bartlett White in 1865 at a cost of \$7,000, in 1878 it was sold by its private builders to the trustees of Mount Horeb Lodge of Masons and of the Ocean Hall Co. This impressive structure, which was called for many years Ocean Hall, has three stories. The first floor originally served as public rooms, the second as the Masonic Chamber and the third as a dining room. Temperance groups were among those presenting lectures in the public part of the hall. In 1879 the West Harwich and Dennis Port Lyceum met there for talks on such subjects as the admission of Chinese immigrants to the U.S. (this particular lecture attracted 250 people!) I have found a report of an evening in 1884 during which the Harwich Band played for the skating rink at Ocean Hall, "a large crowd attending." Old timers today can remember when the Hall was used to show "moving pictures." Today it is the home of the Harwich Junior Theatre. May I just say that what the Cape Playhouse is to summer theater in general, the Harwich Junior Theatre is to children's theater. If you should have the opportunity to go with a child you love to one of their productions, I guarantee you will spend a most delightful evening. And as you leave the theater, and walk away toward your car, you will join the company of thousands, who over the course of 120 years, after a pleasant evening, have left Ocean Hall to stroll home along Hall Street, one of the Streets of Our Town.

DENNIS FESTIVAL DAYS

Be sure to get a program for this fun-packed week at your Post Office or the Chamber of Commerce. The D.H.S. is sponsoring three very interesting events, beginning with a bike tour on Tuesday, Sept. 1, starting at Town Hall at 10 A.M. On Thurs. Sept. 3 at 7:30 in the South Dennis Congregational Church we will sponsor an organ and oboe concert, which will feature Donald Enos and Elizabeth Doriss, both musicians of note. This is an opportunity to hear the historic rosewood organ in this equally historic church, reportedly the oldest pipe organ in regular use in the United States. Built in Europe in 1762, it has been in the Captain's Church since 1850 and is lovingly preserved by the congregation. Admission is \$2 to the general public, \$1.50 to D.H.S. members with your membership card. Our third event will be informal, and fun. On Friday Sept. 4 at Jericho House at 4 P.M. you are invited to an informal chanty sing. You will hear about sea chanties, some local sea stories, and can join in a "Sea Chanty Sing-a-long." Of course, both historic centers will be open during the week, as they are each week in July and August, the Manse on Tues. and Thurs. from 2-4, and Jericho on Wed., Fri., and Sat. from 2-5.

Dennis Historical Society
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