

Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 29 Number 8

Send letters and stories to Lura Crowell, Editor, Box 607, S. Dennis 02660 or sesuetfarm@verizon.net

August 2006

Calendar of Events

Saturday, August 5

10:00 A.M.

Children's Lawn Party

A lawn party will be held for children of all ages featuring the stories of Jim Coogan, local author of books such as

Clarence The Cranberry Who Couldn't Bounce.

Face painting by Terri Fox.

Lemonade and cookies too!

Held inside in case of rain.

S. Dennis Library

389 South Main Street

Saturday, August 19

10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Colonial Open House at the Manse

Enjoy a 1700's reenactment as costumed interpreters demonstrate early American skills: dyeing, candle dipping, cooking, children's games. Visit the

1745 one-room school house and see the Colonial Militia Encampment.

**77 Nobscussett Road,
Dennis Village**

Sunday, August 20

11A.M.-2 P. M.

Old Fashioned Skills Day

at Jericho Costumed guides demonstrate skills needed for 1800's life.

Refreshments.

**1801 Jericho Historical Center, Old Main St.
West Dennis**

Everybody Talks About the Weather

This past week of July 16 we had a humdinger of a thunder storm here on Cape Cod. In East Dennis power was knocked out for about five hours while the lightning flashed and the thunder roared. With all the talk about global warming and weather changes we went back for a look into the past to see what was new. From Rev. Nathan Stone's Diaries, published in *Dennis Source Records, Volume 1* compiled by Burton Nathaniel Derick in 2004, we found that in July of 1787 it was "hot, hot, hot, and hot" (July 2-7) and on July 16 there was an "abundance of rain with thunder and Lighting" The next year in 1788, July 4 "PM-abundance of rain," 5th "muggy hot" and 6th "rained plentifully towards ye latter part of Last Night and this morning" On July 13 Rev. Stone wrote, "preached at Yarm Hot day, thunder and lightning in ye night rain in ye morn.

On July 5, 1908 the *Yarmouth Register* recorded in the West Dennis section an account "STRUCK BY LIGHTNING"

During the severe thunder storm which visited our village on Saturday night, the residence of Mr. James H. Jenks, Jr. was struck. The bolt entered the house by one of the chimneys, blowing the flues out of the chamber and sitting-room beneath and scattering the soot through the rooms. It continued its erratic course, completely circling the sitting room, dining-room and parlor, scorching and blackening the mouldings and scattering a shower of fine particles of gilt over carpets, furniture and draperies. In the guest chamber two sections of plaster were partly removed and blown to the other end of the room.

Not content with the interior destruction, the electric fluid shattered the clapboards in several places, also splintering the ornamental woodwork on the front and back porches.

Mr. and Mrs. Jenks and niece, Miss Elizabeth Haswell, were in an apartment on the second floor, which...had been surrounded by electric current, and it seems little short of a miracle that they escaped serious injury. Mrs. Jenks and Miss Haswell were greatly effected by the shock, but Mr. Jenks escaped the unpleasant effects experienced by them. The house is one of the most attractive and well kept in our section and we are glad that it still remains as an ornament to our main thoroughfare.

The house of Mr. Munsell Gage felt the force of Saturday night's storm. The chimney was struck, necessitating it having to be pulled down, and some other slight damage was also incurred.

Everybody talks about the weather, but there's still little we can do to change it, when all is said and done.

Coming soon...

As one of the main attractions at the Josiah Dennis Manse Museum's Colonial Open House on August 19 from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. the Heaney family will be instructing us in the ways our forefathers and mothers cooked over an open fire. Notice the chicken which is spinning on a string cooking over the fire. There will also be



demonstrations of dyeing yarn using plants and other natural materials to make the dyes. Learn how to dip candles and even give it a try.

The Colonial Militia will be on hand with **Jan Rollins** (left) in charge of their encampment. The spinners will be hard at work turning fleece into yarn. There will be colonial games for children and the chance to see what it would be like to attend a one-room school. Docents will be on hand to take visitors through the old Manse, and in case you were wondering, there will be cookies and lemonade for all.



Anna & Len Heaney with Stephanie and Nick
Photos by Richard Howes

Member News

Just a reminder that our membership year runs from September 1st to August 31st, which means that those of you who are not Life Members will be soon receiving a renewal notice. Several of you who joined us during the summer months are considered paid through 2007. Because postage costs have increased we hope to send this one notice and spare you constant reminders. Last year our Life Members were most generous with donations for mailing and office expenses as well as the costs of supplies for Burt's library work. As always, we are grateful for your support.

There are donations of other kinds which we are happy to receive. **Elinor Slade** has donated the colonial costume she wore for the Dennis Bicentennial in 1993. One of our Manse docents can now dress in style! Thank you, Elinor.

We were sad to learn of the death of member **Verna Sethares** who was born and raised in Dennis Port. Some may remember her when she was a soda jerk at her father's pharmacy.

Back in December 2003 we told you about Terri Fox's gift of a "mob cap" to her elderly friend, **Anna Hannum** of East Dennis. She wore the cap as protection from the air conditioned chill of the Pavilion rehab in Hyannis and, even when she came home again, she continued with this fashion statement. After we learned of her death at 99 years of age, we also learned from Terri that this sweet lady chose to be buried in her mob cap.

On July 22 there was a memorial get-together for Terri's mom, **Sherry Sparrow**, at her home on Judy Drive. Even if you couldn't be there, remember her with a smile and a toast!

Reserve today!

Make a reservation soon to have a place at the very first "Tea at the Manse" on Sunday, September 10. For a donation of \$10, the finest teas, treats and sweets will be served by our costumed docents. Since seating is limited, call Terri Fox at (508) 760-0433. Choose either the 1:30-2:30 P.M. or 3:00-4:00 P.M. seating. All reservations are required by Friday, September 1.



By 1670 Boston was becoming aware of the popularity of tea drinking. In New York, once a Dutch colony, they were already aware of the delights of tea and served this fashionable drink in tea gardens. By 1720 tea had become a staple of trade between England and the Colonies and soon became a favorite of colonial women.

According to Linda Stradley, on the web site "What's Cooking America", there are rules of tea etiquette:

Pick up your cup and saucer together—holding the saucer in one hand and cup in the other Hold the cup lightly, by the handle—your pinky doesn't have to be extended. (Contrary to popular belief, the ring and pinkie fingers should not be extended, but should rest by curving gently back toward your wrist.) Hold the saucer under your cup while you sip your tea (lest you should spill or dribble.)

No matter how you take your tea, we won't be critical. **Just come and enjoy!**

More Acquisitions

We are fortunate to receive so many wonderful gifts and donations from members and friends. Here are a few we haven't mentioned so far:

Hinged wooden box in image of book containing 1930 manuscript "West Dennis Yesterdays" written by Marion Crowell Ryder with reminiscences by Mrs. Bernard Sheridan, Miss Bessie Howes, Mrs. Howard Tracey and retold by Mrs. Ellen M. B. Shaw.

Donor: Nelson S. Cook

1965 Calendar from West Brewster Package Store on Dennis/Brewster town line.

Donors: Ruth and Burt Derick

1932 Plans drawn by Lewis Derick for the renovation of South Dennis School House to the Dennis Fire Station #1.

Donor: Elbert O. Derick

Copy of Inventory of Estate of Isaac Crowell of East Dennis, October 12, 1847.

Donor: Mrs. Henry Parker

Ephemera collection including many old Dennis Town Reports, Old Home Week pamphlets, 1879 store account book of David W. Sears, and other papers.

Donor: David S. Sears

Circa 1890 women's shirt waist.

Donor: Marilyn McClune

Three records of stories by Capt. Leon Nickerson who was a tug captain in Narragansett Bay and a resident of Dennis Port. Originally recorded by Droll Yankee. Transferred to disc and returned to

Franklin Estey.

Unopened tin of World War I hardtack

On loan from William and Jane Bacon

One Circa 1890 trade card from Otis E. Kelley Store in Dennis Port and one Dennis Port post care.

Donor: David Rodrigues

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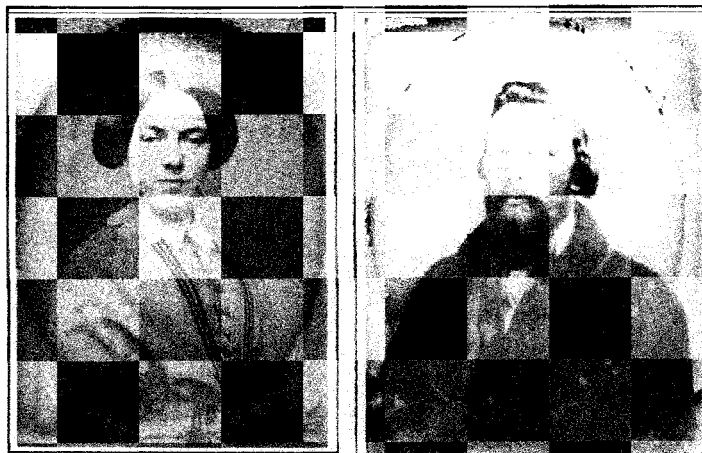
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The Way We Were

When you visit the 1801 Jericho Historical Center this summer, be sure to include a tour of the Fairbank's Room to learn about our special connection to this famous family. Take note of Jericho's collection of old daguerreotypes and photographs showing scenes of West Dennis and South Dennis as well as some of the village's famous people. Summer hours are

Wednesdays from 2 to 4 P.M. and Fridays from 10 A.M. to Noon. If you fall in love with this old sea captain's house and would like to become a docent, call Joan Martin (508) 394-9303 or Peggy Eastman (508) 398-8592. If you really want to get involved, you could fill out a "green card" at the town hall and work first hand with the Jericho Committee. Don't miss the Old Fashioned Skills Day at Jericho on Sunday, August 20 from 11 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. See you there!



Mr. & Mrs. Fairbank
Daguerreotypes from the Jericho Photograph Collection