



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 39, No 7

Send letters & stories to Dennis Historical Society, Box 607, S. Dennis 02660 or to pjhowes@verizon.net

Aug 2016

Internet: www.dennishistoricalsociety.org

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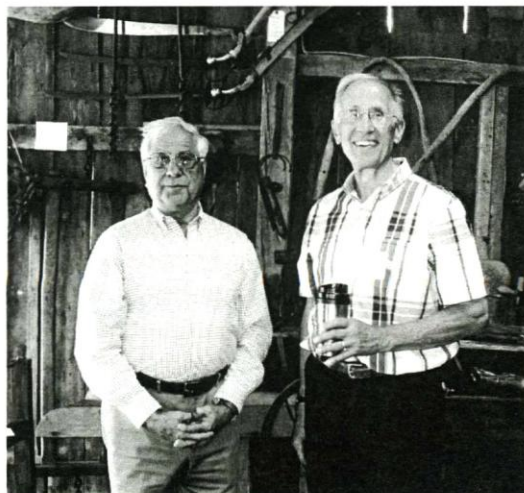
The next Board Meeting is Tuesday, Aug 9 @ 2:00 P.M., 2nd floor, West Dennis Graded School, School St. West Dennis

Opening Day at “Jericho”

It was a beautiful summer day for the opening of Captain Theophilus Baker’s House and Barn at Jericho last month. Thanks to the hard work of loyal volunteers, the museum was ready to show off its new facelift!



Anne Walker presenting the history of Cape Cod Cranberries



Henry Kelly and Bob Poskitt in the restored Barn Museum

The focus is on farming; the tools and equipment necessary to life in 19th century Dennis. The general store is a reminder of the important role such gathering places played in the community’s economic and social life. The main attraction this year is the cranberry exhibit which tells the 200-year-old story of cranberry cultivation and the industry that began in Dennis in 1816!

Thanks to these Folks:

Barn hands: Bob Poskitt, Ray Ward, John Driscoll, Dave Clark

Friends of Jericho: Phyllis Horton, Jinny Devine, Bo and Ken Durst, Jill Casey

Jericho Committee: Pat Corcoran, Ruth Derick, Peggy Eastman, Marsha Finley

Dawn Dellner, Chairlady

A Fearful August Hurricane

Diary of part of the voyage sent by Augustus Hallet to Seth T. Whelden]

Outer Roads Montevedio
South America Oct 13 / 73¹

Dear Father Whelden I wrote Hannah yesterday (Sunday) and I intended to go on shore this morning. But the wind is blowing a perfect gale to day and Sea So rough that I cannot get on Shore yet. So I though I would employ my time this morning in writing you. Well we arrived here a few days ago. after a rough passage of 65 days rather a long passage. but I find it is the best of any vessell for the past two months. And I consider 65 days from Pascagoula fully equal to 45 from Boston. We passed through the center of a most fearfull Hurricane an account of which you will see on the opposite side of these sheets, copied from Mates Log Book:

“Sunday 24 August / 73 (sea time) Lat 36.44 N Long 66.46 W (off of the Carolina coast: Ed.) Comes in increasing breeze and weather looking bad handed light sails. 4 PM took in U Topsail and close reefed M sail and

¹ Days at sea, usually figured noon to noon. Note the discrepancy-which under the circumstances is understandable.

Spanker a very high sea and Barometer falling weather looking threatening. 6 P.M took in Foresail Wind South to S.S.E. increasing Bark on a starboard tack high sea from S.E. 10 P.M heavy squalls with much rain took in the Lower Topsail and Spanker and hove too under close reefed M Sail wind increasing to a fearful Hurricane and veering round to S.S.W. a heavy cross sea Bark labouring hard and straining badly. All hands constantly at the Pumps shipping large quantities of water. 2 AM. burst M sail Bark now lying under bare Poles 3 AM shipped a heavy sea filled the decks full raised the deck load and cast it entirely adrift floated and stove water Casks and Bulwarks Bark making water fast and could not free her pumping 6000 strokes pr hour about $\frac{1}{3}$ deck load thrown overboard continued getting as much off deck as possible Sea most fearful and making a complete breach over the vessel and rolling rails two feet under. Wind howling with its utmost fury 5 AM Wind suddenly died out to a dead calm^[2] and in 15 minutes was blowing if possible harder than before from N.W. got Bark before the wind and now heading the S.E. sea scudded under bare Poles for four hours sea now from N.W. had become so heavy that there was great danger of boarding over the stern and would but Kept one man dripping Oil^[3] that kept the sea from breaking.

At 9 AM brought Bark to the wind on port tack with great danger but successfully. Wind gradually veering to the westward but blowing with unabated fury. Mate went down aft and could see water in the lower hold and it was thought vessel would fill. Latter part of day wind unabated and sea at times coming on board on both sides filling the decks and washing the men from the Pumps breaking everything movable adrift. Estimated that $\frac{1}{2}$ the deck load has been thrown over board. Day ends with a tremendous heavy irregular sea vessel labouring hard the weather looking a little better.

Monday 25th August / 73 (sea time)

Comes in with wind commending to moderate 5 PM with all hands at the Pumps succeeded in freeing her for the first time in 12 hours. Wind now abated to a moderate gale set the Foresail

and kept before the wind. 6 PM set the Lower Topsail Middle part strong breeze and large sea

Daylight weather looking better kept the Pumps steadily going and find that we are gradually gaining on the leak Find that all our dry provisions are wet and mostly spoiled there not having been a dry place in the vessel. Latter part more moderate made sail found the Bobstay had parted its Bolt on Bowsprit and that all the thick work in the Bow was started adrift also that cheeks on Foremast had settled.

Tuesday 26th August / 73 (sea time)
Comes in fresh breeze and fine weather with passing rain squalls. Employed repairing Bobstay and other damages and securine ballance of Deck Load.”

Seth T, Whelden Collection, p.129 *Annals of South Dennis V2*, Derick, Burton

Get Out and Get Under

As soon as they got some of the main roads paved, (they were still work- ing on that in the thirty's) the auto seemed to be just what the doctor ordered. Things on the Cape were so far apart, and horses walked so slowly. Many of the early cars were Ford Model "T's".

The "Tin Lizzie" of joke and story. (When one Model "T" passes another Model "T", what time is it? Tin past Tin.... F.O.R.D.= Found On Road Dead, or, I named my Ford after my wife...After I got her, I couldn't do a thing with her!). They were sometimes funny, finicky machines that Henry Ford said you could order in any color you liked...as long as it was black.

The "T's" had a "planetary" transmission, no clutching and shifting gears, just stop, step on the other pedal, and start off in the other direction. One cute trick of the "T", in cold weather, heavy grease kept the gears from disengaging, so start it at your peril. If you cranked, and the motor caught, your Lizzie might just knock you down, run you over, and proceed until she came up against a large tree. To forelay against that, one had to jack up one of the rear wheels, then start 'er up, and wait until the jacked up wheel stopped spinning, lower the wheel, pack up your jack, climb in, and drive off. Even with the precaution of a jacked up wheel, starting the "T" was quite a chore. There were spark and fuel settings, ether to put into cups by the plugs, then, around in front to crank and turn engine over. Re-set the spark and fuel, and crank for effect. If you didn't flood the engine, it might fire off, (be careful she doesn't kick, those cranks

² The "eye" of the hurricane; this was, no doubt, a true hurricane and not just another storm.

³ "Spreading oil on the waters" was an old method of calming the seas.

have broken many an arm). If it fires, you run around to the steering side, re-set the spark and fuel intake, around front again to remove the crank and put it away, get aboard, and, if you stepped on the correct pedal, fine, you backed out of the barn, stopped, pressed the forward pedal, and off you go!

Elnathan Fisk, who lived just up the street from Father's boyhood home, was in a hurry, as he often was, one morning and did every thing right, until it came to stepping on the pedal. He tromped on the forward pedal, and instead of backing out of the barn, he crashed out through the back of the barn. Elnathan did not stop, (he was late, remember?) but drove around the barn out to the road, and off to work. About noon, two workmen drove up in a wagon and commenced to work on the wreckage where the Ford had slammed through. Not just common repairs, though, they constructed a second pair of doors on the back of the barn. From then on, late or not, Elnathan opened both sets of doors before he started up his Ford.

The old cars were difficult, in some ways, they were just what rural people needed. The "T", for instance, could be, and was, used as a tractor, as a power plant for sawing wood and many other farm chores. You raised one rear wheel on a jack, and ran a drive belt from the wheel to what ever equipment you choose to operate. Only the elevated wheel would turn. Sears, Roebuck or Montgomery Ward carried the adapter parts, and many a small farm became a better producer due to The Ford's versatility.

There were lots of things besides Fords that needed cranking. Mom's sea clam grinder, a vital Part of making chowder, or sea clam pie, was a crank job, as was the potato slicer Dad and Uncle Ray used in their intense, but rather short life in the potato chip business. The wringer on Mother's first washing machine also required manual cranking. This machine was a hose-out-the-door affair, still required water heated on the stove, and you had to take the hot clothes out of the machine with a stick and put them through the wringer by hand, but saved a lot of scrubbing. There were still a few old wells, which needed a crank apparatus to carry the "Old Oaken Bucket" of water and of course earlier on, seamen cranked a windlass to raise anchor, trim sails, and load cargo. I remember watching Dad crank his big round grindstone by pushing his foot up and down on a bar while he held the ax blade firmly against the rough surface. It was fun

watching the sparks it made. Oh, yes, the phonograph also had to be cranked, and a spring wound tightly, before you could stick a disk under the needle, and dance to a new big band record, or hear an old favorite. For my birthday last year, my wife gave me a short wave AM/FM radio with a re-chargeable flash light on it and a crank for charging the batteries, in case of a power shortage. Progress.

Dad's cars were usually pretty old when he got them, but they sure did yeoman service. He used them not only to go to work, but, as we burned wood for heat, the wood, which we cut in various woodlots was trucked home in the back of the car, after the rear seat was removed. Likewise, oysters, big wet burlap bags of them that he got in Cotuit, shucked, and sold, loads for the dump on Sunday, egg deliveries, and once, I even managed to take home a full-grown, and well horned, billy goat my uncle gave me. His cars were usually still in the "fix them with a little piece of bailing wire" category, tires with tubes which you could patch, a carburetor which could be adjusted and a fuel pump which could be cleaned and regulated, not like today's computerized models.

I got my first car at 16 sharp 16, (I remember, for \$25) it was very little younger than I; it was a 1932 Ford, a model "B". The "B" was an adaptation of the Model A, but with a longer front end, and a big V-8 motor. It didn't do all those jobs the old "T" could do, but it sure helped me get around. The car had been named "Cassie" by her former owner, and following the tradition about changing the name of a ship being bad luck, I left the name of my Ford alone. She was a fast little thing, gave me very little trouble and I kept it until I went into the service, used it for work, school, and play.

How, someone astute might well ask, could you go many places on the War Time Ration Quota, which was for a nonessential worker, or a kid, only three (3) gallons per week? Burned kerosene, my friend, just like the Stanley Steamer! Gas motors really don't like it, and today's cars probably would cough and quit, but that old Model "B", put some gas in the carburetor, pour kerosene into the tank, start her up, and keep her going. It belched smoke like the Canal Electric Plant on a very bad day, but what did we know about Pollution back then Oh My, My!

Thacher, Ben, Whose Boy Be You? pp40,41

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**Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**"Music 'n More" with the**  
**"Sound Dunes Swing**  
**Ensemble"**

**&**  
**"Who's The Boss"**  
**7 - 9 PM at the W. D. Graded School**  
Come Dance, Sing Along, or just Listen!  
Prizes & Complimentary Refreshments  
Donation: \$15.00 per person. This is a  
**FUNd Raiser** for property improvements  
especially fence & paint projects.  
at the Rose Victorian  
Reservations appreciated  
but not necessary

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Questions & Reservations:
call June @508-385-9308

Colonial Open House



at the
1736 Josiah Dennis Manse
Saturday, August 20, 10 - 4
Life in the 1700's
Colonial skills
Homemade Pies & Baked Goods Sale
77 Nobscusset Rd., Corner Whig St.,
Dennis Village
www.dennishistoricalsociety.org
Information: 508-385-2232

Ancient West Dennis Cemetery

Friday, August 12, 11:00 a.m.
meet at
Fisk St., West Dennis
Terri Fox will guide you through
this historic cemetery
Rain Date Sunday, August 14, 2:00 p.m.



