Opening Day at “Jericcho”

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!

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 Delner, 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 / 73

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, coppied 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 Topsisail 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 have 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 1\(\frac{1}{3}\) 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\(^2\) 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 ½ 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 25\(^{th}\) 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 checks on Foremast had settled.

Tuesday 26\(^{th}\) August / 73 (sea time)
Comes in fresh breeze and fine weather with
passing rain squalls. Employed repairing
Bobstay and other damages and secure
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
eye 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

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\(^2\) 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 trooped 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 rechargeable 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
Colonial Open House
at the
1736 Josiah Dennis Manse
Saturday, August 20, 10 - 4
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www.dennishistoricalsociety.org
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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.

Saturday, August 6th
"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!
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