



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 22 Number 12

December 1999

First Annual Holiday Visions: A Stroll Through the Villages of Dennis

to be held the weekend of December 11th and 12th. Through a cross-town collaboration of various business and civic organizations, festive activities will be happening in all five villages. Tree lightings, caroling, open houses, raffles, refreshments and music are a sampling of the holiday cheer planned for this community celebration. Your historical society is participating, and both the historical homes will be open.

The Jericho Historical Center

December 11-12
12:30 – 4:30 PM

The Josiah Dennis Manse

December 12
2:00 – 4:00 PM

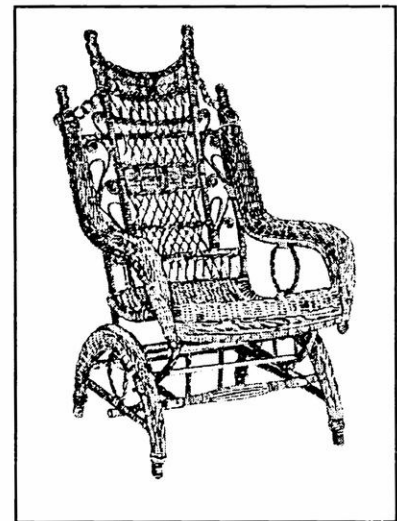
A complete listing of events is available at the Dennis Chamber of Commerce, Route 28 and Route 134 in South Dennis (398-3568) and at participating businesses in the villages.

AN OLD CHAIR

Burt Derick

I constantly marvel at the old things which come to light despite the passage and ravages of time. The following is an example.

The old rattan rocking chair pictured was purchased on 17 July 1901 by James S. Joy of Dennisport, one of that village's numerous sea-farers. The chair, manufactured by A. H. Ordway & Co., of South Framingham, MA, was sold to James Joy by the Bay State Company of Boston, for the price of \$13.00, of which he paid \$1.00 down



and \$1.00 per month (no interest). The chair and the bill of sale both still exist, having passed from James Joy to his daughter Ida, to her son Edward Chase, to his daughter Ann (Chase) Hill of Winter Park, FL. The old chair is still in excellent condition, regularly used, being only hosed down semi-annually for cleaning and to keep the wood supple.

Mr. Edward Chase, aged 99 years, is the venerable historian-emeritus of Dennisport. Now living mostly in Florida, where the climate is more gentle than our Cape Cod weather, he continues to grace friends and family with his anecdotes of days-gone-by. DHS Library files, and private collections (e.g., those of Pauline Wixon Derick and Phyllis Robbins Horton) contain numerous stories and anecdotes of what life was like in Dennisport early this century. As a boy, I delivered the daily newspapers to his house on Depot Street, and "Mr. Edward and Miss Dorothy," as we addressed our elders, would often invite me in to warm up on cold winter days, occasionally to ply me with a cookie or two to keep up my energy. Would that I had the foresight in those days to record the various things "Mr. Edward" would recite to me about his youth!

"Mr. Edward"'s grandfather was James S. Joy, the son of Ebenezer Joy and Rhoda Marchant. James S. was seventh generation from the first of the

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AN OLD CHAIR

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name in New England, and, although most of the earlier ties of his ancestors were associated with Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, there was an attraction about Dennisport that resulted in many ties. Dennisport names abound in the ancestry of James: Peter¹ Joy, first settler, of Salem; Samuel² of Dartmouth and Nantucket; Ebenezer³ of Nantucket; John⁴ Joy of Nantucket & West Harwich, m. Charity⁵ Nickerson; John⁵ Joy Jr. of Nantucket & Dennisport, m. Sylvia⁷ Chase; Ebenezer⁶ Joy of Nantucket & Dennisport, m. Rhoda Marchant; James⁷ S. Joy of Nantucket & Dennisport, m. Ann "Annie" Maria Hamblin. James Joy was in Dennisport by 1872 when he purchased vacant land of widow (of Capt. James Wixon) Bethiah S. Wixon on what is now Depot Street, and had a house built by Charles W. Young in 1873. James was back on Nantucket the following year, where his daughter Ida was born, but was a permanent resident of Dennisport by 1880. His son, Arthur was born in Dennisport in 1882, the same Arthur Joy who was later lost in 1918 on the Cross Rip Lightship. This house, now 121 Depot Street, on the west side of the road south of Cross Street, was later occupied by James' daughter Ida H. (m. Thomas Chase), then by her son, "Mr. Edward".

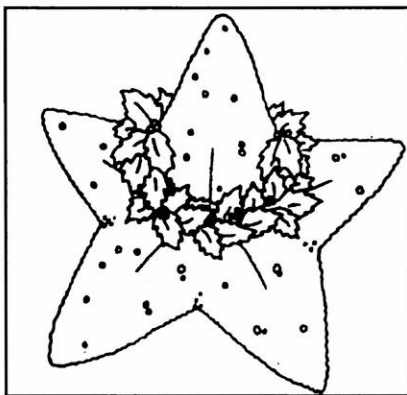
We have heard the phrase "if these houses could talk". The same phrase could equally be applied to this old rocking chair. We thank Ann (Chase) Hill for sharing this information about the Old Chair.

To help you with your holiday cooking, we thought we'd include a few special recipes...

A Plumb Cake

A recipe from the 1700's

Mix one pound currants, one drachm nutmeg, mace and cinnamon each, a little falt, one pond of citron, orange peel candied, and almonds bleach'd, 6 pound flour, (well dry'd) beat 21 eggs, and add with 1 quart new ale yeaft, half pint of wine, 3 half pints of cream and raifins, q: f:



The Holiday Visions logo by artist Kimberly Brinks – a five-pointed starfish representing the five villages of Dennis. The starfish is decorated with white lights and holly for the annual stroll.

Christmas Jam

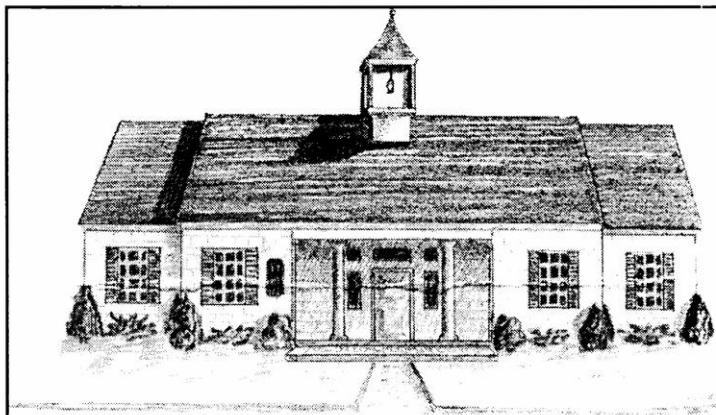
Doreen Coombs

1 (12 oz.) package of fresh cranberries
 2 (10 oz.) package of frozen strawberries (thawed)
 4 cups sugar
 1 (3 oz.) package of certo
 Chop cranberries (coarse) in food processor. Combine strawberries, cranberries & sugar, bring to a full boil & cook 1 min. stirring occasionally. Remove from heat & add the liquid certo to the mixture. Bring back to a full rolling boil & boil 1 min, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat & skim off foam. Pour into hot sterilized jars – wipe jar rims. cover with metal lids and process in water bath for 5 minutes. Makes 6 or 7 jars.

The Dennis Memorial Library

“The Little Library that Grew”

The Dennis Memorial Library began as many libraries did in the mid 1800's, as an association of citizens who paid a subscription to buy and share books. It began in front parlors of private homes in the village, moved in a few years to a small room in Carleton Hall, until at last, in 1924, a group of public spirited citizens banded together to build what is how the main room of the present library.



The land was given by the Hall family and the rest was a community effort paid for by benefits, donations, suppers, etc. The library association decided to honor World War I veterans from Dennis and the library was given its present name. Two wings were added in 1958 and the Friends of the Dennis Memorial Library raised money to pay for a large fiction room completed in 1960.

The library has not only grown in size, it has also grown substantially in services. From simple beginnings with kerosene lamps, a coal stove, a collection of several hundred books, and very limited hours, we now have modern lighting, air conditioning, 6 computers, 2 internet connections, fax machine, a color copier, videos, taped books, CD-ROMS, CLAMS, over 15,000 books and are open 30 hours per week.

The first librarians would surely still recognize the charm and beauty of the original building with the portraits of Captain Daniel Howes (1767-1866), his son Moses Howes and his wife Jerusha Sturgis Howes. What is interesting about their portraits is the view from the window they are sitting beside. Captain Moses' view is of his clipper ship in full sail while her's is the house they lived in – currently Paul Sullivan's office. Jerusha and Moses had no children and she often sailed with him on his around the world trips. They designed their house on one of their trips and then she stayed behind on the next trip in 1850-1851, to supervise the construction of this very typical retired sea captain's mansion.

The library is also honored to house two works by contemporary Dennis artists. Arthur McMurtry's painting of "Friends" hangs in our fiction wing and Patricia Walker designed and wove a tapestry of Scargo Lake and Hill. Both are much admired and treasured.

The Dennis Memorial Library continues to grow and provide modern, friendly, library services in a convenient historic building.

Nancy Symington, Librarian

This is the first of a series of articles about our Town's libraries.

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THE WAY WE WERE

This picture, a Christmas card from Ralph and Helen Richardson, was saved by Doreen Coombs and shared with us for the Christmas season. How many faces can you recognize?

If you have a favorite picture or memory to share, please contact the Newsletter Publishing Committee of the Dennis Historical Society, P.O. Box 607, South Dennis, MA 02660.



Christmas Pageant 1952 – East Dennis Community Church
Robert Kaul, Judy Pierce, Hillary Kaul, Wally Williams (?), Karen Eldred,
Carol Pierce, Bobby Eldred, Roddy Pierce, Ben Richardson,
Penny Johnson, Charles Pennington, Natalie Crowell, Richard Coombs,
Sue Richardson, Alma Jane Clanny, Elaine Coombs, Elaine Black