

Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 29, number 1

January 2006

Calendar

Archival Workshop in Dennis

**Saturday, Jan. 21
9:30 AM-3:00 PM
Dennis Memorial Library**

Have you ever wondered how to preserve that box of 19th century letters and journals in your attic? Or how to organize the scores of pictures you've collected? Donna Webber, a practicing archivist in the Boston area for thirty years, will give a daylong workshop on techniques for preserving and displaying multi-media, records, and memorabilia. Under the sponsorship of Eventide Arts the workshop is open to our members. Call (508) 255-9255 for a reservation. A charge of \$20 in advance covers the workshop and lunch. Space is limited.

Save the date:

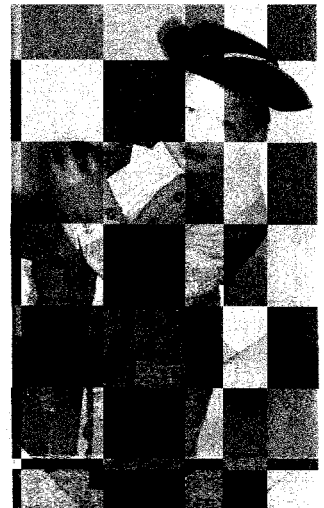
**Genealogy in Dennis
Thursday, Feb. 16
1:00 PM**

Historian Burt Derick and the Cape Cod Genealogical Society will explain and demonstrate the library's excellent genealogical resources.

**Dennis Public Library in
Dennisport**

The Memories Linger On

To the right is the youngest Manse docent, Ruth and Burt Derick's grandson Colby. He last appeared in our Newsletter in April of 2002 with his Mom, Rebecca Hancock. Just look at him now! At the Christmas open house he was busy demonstrating how to play games in the children's room upstairs with his special friend Mary Kuhrtz. Here Susanna Orr has caught him on his way downstairs—to the refreshment table, perhaps? Rumor has it that he was told he had to wait until two o'clock before he could come back for more cookies. Is it two o'clock yet? He's already learning what it was like to live in the eighteenth century and if asked can tell you all about it!



This photo by Richard Howes shows Chris Talbott on the left and Nancy Howes at the Manse Colonial Days Open House making their famous apple pies which were selling, unbaked, as fast as they could put them together. Don't miss this year's July bake sale if you want a taste.

Also by Richard Howes is this picture taken during Colonial Days with DHS President Virginia Devine lending a hand at the sales table. Burt Derick is entertaining interested visitors with excerpts from his newest book, *Dennis Source Records, Vol. I*. Beth Deck, one of our faithful spinners working nearby, declared she learned more about Dennis history just listening in.



Memories are made of this:

Just a few months ago **Phyllis Horton**, after twenty years on the Josiah Dennis Manse Committee, announced that with the new year she would be stepping down as Chairwoman of the Committee, a roll she has filled for the past fifteen years. Her announcement was greeted with silence, consternation, then dismay, and finally acceptance. We are heartened to know she will still be "camping out" at the Manse in order to fulfill her newest roll as **Curator/Archivist** for the Dennis Historical Society. Never one to handle only one job at a time, she has also agreed to continue to create new exhibits to display the Society's artifacts. How does she do it all? We recall being told on one occasion, "Well, you can't hit a moving target!" and you may remember the old saying, "I'm 39 and holding!" She may not tell you her age, but she did admit she'd "*been there—twice!*" No big deal.

At our December Christmas party for the Manse Committee members, Chairman of the Town Selectmen, Don Trepte, presented Phyllis with a Proclamation to recognize the many wonderful things she has been responsible for over the years. We'd love to print the whole Proclamation, but we'd need three Newsletters to do it and you wouldn't believe it anyway.

The Manse Committee will be celebrating with Phyllis at a luncheon on January 11, but as the news is getting around, something else is going on. **Camille Murphy** was the first to send a special donation to the DHS *to honor Phyllis Horton's dedication to the Josiah Dennis Manse*. **Chris and Dave Talbott** wrote: *Dave and I would like to give the enclosed check to help toward the newsletter...in honor of Phyllis Horton in recognition of the extraordinary job she did as chairman of the Josiah Dennis Manse Committee and the wonderful articles she's written for the newsletter*. **Joel and Beth Crowell and family** also sent a donation *to honor the service of Phyllis Horton....Phyllis has committed an enormous amount of energy and time to help the Society accomplish lofty goals*. We can only say thank you, not only for Phyllis and her legacy but also for those who love and honor her.



Phyllis' photo by Terri Fox

More thanks and more memories:

To **Janet Y. Benjamins**, Orchard Park, NY; **Jo Anne G. Sullivan**, N. Eastham, MA; and **Joyce G. Heath** of Naples, FL our most sincere thanks for their generous donation in memory of their aunt, **Gertrude Wagner Lailey**. *We know Gertrude was very active in the Society for many years, strongly supported its goals, and was very proud of her contributions to the Society. It is our pleasure to honor her with a contribution to a cause she so fervently believed in.*

Thanks also to **Bryan and Kathy Urquhart** of Roswell, GA who sent a special donation in memory of our former president and friend, **Ray Urquhart**. (We have to tell you that Bryan also sent us books and books of stamps which we used for our postcard notice of the Annual Meeting. Why? Just one of those "random acts of kindness" so much a part of Bryan's life.) We know a lot of wonderful people—and there's more!

Memories of another kind

thanks to Nancy Howes

Last November we noted some of the teachers who liked to reminisce about their days at the Dennis Consolidated (later Ezra Baker) School. Following that, Nancy Howes writes: *November 28, 2005 I just had a lovely conversation with Marion Mugridge Eldredge. She told me all the names of the teachers who after retiring from teaching...started to get together twice a month starting in the 1940's. They met for many years and now there are only 4 of the group left: Marion will be 96 tomorrow. The others remaining are: Irene Tibbetts (Tibby) Dumican, also in her mid 90's, Dorothy Gill Royal now 92 and Hope Crowell Hallett, in her mid 90's.*

The list of teachers in the group was: Susan Chase McHenry, first grade; Mae Greenleaf Freeman, 2nd grade; Margaret (Mig) Walker Maher, 2nd grade following May; Dorothy Gill Royal, 3rd grade; Irene Tibbetts Dumican, 4th grade; Evelyn Longfellow Stairs, 5th grade; Hope Crowell Hallett, 5th grade after Evelyn; Marion Mugridge Eldredge, 6th grade; Ellen Sears Curran, 7th grade; William McLin, Principal; Elinor Goodspeed Crowell, Physical Education Teacher for Dennis, Yarmouth, and Brewster!

Some other teachers who did not belong to the group were: Velma Sears Dexter, 3rd grade for 1 year; Evelyn Swanson Raymond, 8th grade for 1 year; Vida Foss, 3rd grade after Dorothy Royal; and Helen Wigginton Taylor who replaced Irene Dumican in 1936.

Teachers in those days had to leave if they got married. After World War II some were invited to return as there was a shortage of teachers. Irene Dumican, Mae Freeman, Mig Maher and Hope Hallett returned.

Member News

We note the passing of Life Member and former Manse docent **Martha "Sherry" Sparrow** and extend our sympathy to her daughter Terri Fox and her family.

A Letter to "Dear Friends,"

I was concerned to hear about the financial difficulties of our wonderful Historical Society, and am enclosing a check which I hope will be of some use. I have such fond memories of all my time with the Society, beginning with the meeting at Liberty Hall at which I—an unknown—was voted onto the Board on the word of Josh Crowell.

Happy New Year!

Sarah Kruger

Thank you, Sarah, for your most generous donation!

We are also very grateful to other **Life Members** who have sent in donations to help build up our Operating Fund:

David and Jane Wood, Dennis
Peter McDowell, Dennis
Regina Mullen, New Castle, DE
Mary Ann Gelsthorpe, E. Dennis
Laura McDowell May, Dennis
Elizabeth and Gordon Wentworth, S. Orleans
Richard Zaffino, Framingham
Lois Steele, W. Yarmouth
LTC USA Ret. Robert A. Howes, Las Cruces, NM
Robert and Diane Chamberlain, S. Dennis
Kate Byron, Dennis

Our 2006 Calendar and Brochure is in the works and will be sent out soon. There are two special events in March that you'll want to look for.

A Celtic Musical Journey
Sunday, March 12
and
Antique Appraisal Day at Eldreds
to benefit DHS
Thursday, March 16

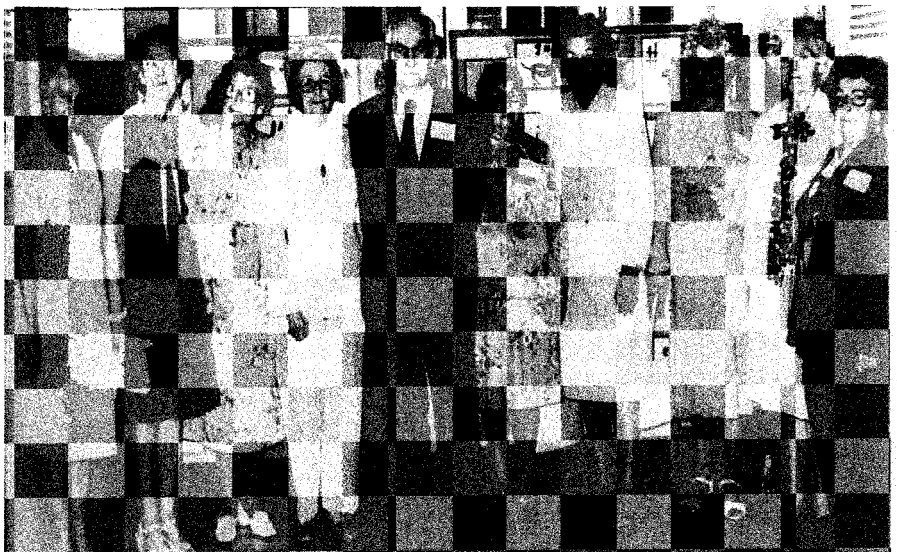
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The Way We Were

In 1981, fifty years to the day that the Dennis Consolidated School opened its doors to a total of 209 students in eight grades, the "Year of the Ezra H. Baker School" was celebrated. From left to right we meet Marion Mugridge Eldredge, Evelyn Longfellow Stairs, Susan Chase McHenry, Velma Sears Dexter, William McLin, Irene Tibbetts Dumican, Evelyn Swanson Raymond, Ellen Sears Curran, Elinor Goodspeed Crowell and Mae Greenleaf Freeman. Nancy Reid's *History* states that *Collectively, they had given over 200 years of service to Dennis school children!* (P. 785-6)



*50th anniversary of Teachers at the Dennis Consolidated School
(Ezra Baker School) Courtesy of Marion Mugridge Eldredge*