

BIRTHDAY PARTY REMEMBERED

A truly local menu provided a tasty luncheon, topped by old-fashioned strawberry shortcake. Mr. Norman Gray and Dorothy Thayer provided a pleasing program on the history of American Music, introduced by a reading of some of the poetic works of some of Dennis' bards, read by John Miller. Although our boat ride on Bass River had to be postponed due to the fact that the boat, "Grand Cove", had not yet arrived, a nice afternoon was enjoyed, complete with birthday cake decorated with the town seal, cut for this celebration of our 187th by Mrs. Marion Crowell Ryder. Our most grateful thanks to Jean and Bill Taylor for countless hours of planning and preparation. We also thank the Wixon School kids who helped to serve, the board members who helped prepare the meal, Josh and Eleanor Crowell, who each year take reservations and Mr. Everett Durgin for flags which were offered as door prizes.

THE BLESSING OF THE BAY

The Massachusetts Bay Colony, settled in 1630 by English Puritans, took its name from the body of water encircled by the arm of Cape Cod and the fist of Cape Ann. The fruitfulness of the sheltered water was commemorated by Governor Winthrop who christened his sloop, the first vessel recorded as being built in the colony, "Blessing of the Bay". The southernmost part of this bay nestling against the north shore towns of Barnstable County was called Barnstable Bay on old maps, but now is more generously called Cape Cod Bay. We will turn our attention to this lovely body of water on Wednesday, July 23rd, at Carleton Hall, 7:30 PM when Mrs. Hugh Ferguson will recount some of the interesting facts about our bay. Please be with us, and your friends and guests are most cordially welcome.

DENNIS FESTIVAL DAYS

Looking ahead to August, the Board is lining up a few activities of an historic nature to include with the many events already planned for Dennis Festival Days by the Chamber of Commerce. Among these will be a bike tour and modelling of antique costumes at our historic centers. We hope to hold a drill by the Barnstable County Militia and possibly a square dance, if arrangements can be made. Anyone interested in helping with any of these activities, please contact Gail Hart, 398-9359.

"TALL SHIPS" ALSO (LOVINGLY) REMEMBERED

Many of you took advantage of the organized bus tours and joined the thousands, nay millions, who went to Boston to view the assemblage of vessels gathered to celebrate Boston's birthday, her 350th. You were probably surprised to discover (or did you even know?) that most of the craft were not properly ships at all. A Ship is a class of sailing vessel, distinguished as are most by the masts and rigging. A ship is a full-rigged vessel, with three masts, each of which is rigged with square sails, raised and lowered by spars called yards. A full-rigged ship might carry as many as 25 sails and therefore required a large crew to man her. Of particular interest to Dennis history enthusiasts are Clipper ships. The adjective "clipper" refers to the stream lined hull, long and sleek, which gave so much speed to these graceful "greyhounds of the sea". The Baltimore Clipper hull style was designed in the early 1730's in the South, its name probably coming from the Pennsylvania Dutch word "klepper" meaning a fast moving trotter. The early Baltimore Clipper was not a ship, but generally was rigged as a schooner, or sloop (triangular sails instead of square). She was used by the colonists as a smuggler, bringing illegal goods from the West Indies. The design persisted serving in many capacities where speed was required, including the slave trade. As America's mania for speed increased and advertising made fast trips so lucrative, designers such as Donald MacKay and Samuel Pook adopted the Clipper hull and rigged it as a ship in an effort to capture the California trade.

Why should Clipper Ships be so interesting to those of us who live in Dennis? Primarily because of the large number of Masters of these commercially prominent and romantic vessels who were born and raised in this town. Cape men in general were known for their skill as mariners and as hard driving masters. Since the shape of the hull prevented the carrying of a huge cargo, speed was where the money was, and Dennis Captains excelled at speed. There is many an interesting story of races between vessels from California to Boston, ending in a dead heat between two brother Captains, or neighbors from East Dennis. But our Captains are not the only reason for a local interest in Clipper Ships as a classic sailing vessel. On Sesuit Harbor from 1850 to 1862 eight of these vessels were built and launched by the Shiverick Shipyard. Each had a colorful career, bringing considerable profit to her owners, and the shipyard itself provided a livelihood for many of the East Dennis residents. All were crewed by local men, with local men as officers and most were owned jointly by residents of East Dennis. Many vessels have been built in Cape Cod ship yards, including schooners, sloops and brigs, but none have captured the imagination as have the Tall Ships of Shiverick.

WANT A DATE MARKER FOR YOUR HOME?

The House Dating Committee has prepared an application for an official date marker, marking houses in the town that are 100 years old or older. If you would like an application and instructions as to how to go about verifying the date of your house, write us at Box 607, South Dennis, 02660, or call Chairman Edmond Nickerson 398-3174.

**** CALENDAR ****

July 16 7:30 PM Executive Board meeting. Home of Mrs. Richard Dunham
July 23 7:30 PM Carleton Hall, Talk by Mrs. Hugh Ferguson, "The Bay Shore"
August 23-September 1 Dennis Festival Days
September 8 Annual Meeting and Election of Officers. Dues are due!
ALL SUMMER Jericho House 2-5 PM Wed., Friday, and Saturday
Josiah Dennis Manse 2-4 PM Tuesday and Thursday
Maps for self-guided Bicycle tours of historic sites are available at the
Dennis Chamber of Commerce.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Our annual membership drive is underway. If you know of someone who would like to be a member, please contact Elinor Slade and she will give them the information about membership. Payment of dues will entitle a new member to full priveleges from now until September 1981. And remember, your dues are also due. You would save us a great deal of time and money if you would mail your dues to Mrs. Slade, Box 607, So. Dennis, MA 02660, with a stamped envelope for your receipt and membership card. The dues are \$3.00 individual, \$5.00 family and should be paid before the annual meeting on September 8. Thank you.

STREETS OF OUR TOWN

Several of the first families to live in the part of Yarmouth that became Dennis have had streets named in their honor. One of the three proprietors who originially settled Yarmouth was Thomas Howes. He came from Norfolk, England in 1637 with his wife Mary Burr, and three sons, Joseph, Thomas and Jeremiah. He was made a freeman of Plimouth Colony in 1639 and, with Anthony Thacher and John Crowe, was granted a patent to settle at "Mattacheese", soon to be called Yarmouth. Thomas and Mary probably settled near Beach Street and Whig Street. The Howes family cemetery, where 150 members of the family are buried, is located at the end of Bramble Road of Beach, and a monument is there, erected to the memory of the progenitor of this remarkable clan. The three Howes sons married and produced a great family of Howes who all went forth and multiplied, to the point where, if you are researching your family tree, you may find it difficult to determine from just which Joseph, Thomas or Jeremiah you are descended. The name survives, there being 54 families named Howes in the Cape Cod telephone directory, 16 of them living in Dennis. The Howes originally were farmers, but like most Cape families, they soon turned to the sea for their livelihood. During the Golden Age of Sail, a great number of vessels were commanded by Captains Howes, many of whom set sailing records. The family cemetery and those in North and East Dennis shelter their monuments, a fair share of which mark empty graves--"lost at sea". In the Great Gale of October, 1841, twelve of the twenty men lost from Dennis were named Howes.

Both of the villages of East Dennis and North Dennis have a Howes Street. Howes Path also runs from Old Bass River Road through the Rocky Ridge area, an ancient way across Howes woodland. Among the many illustrious members of this family, I will just take time to name Captain Thomas Prince Howes. His education came about largely by his own efforts, as was the case with most of the sons who followed the sea. He learned the art of sailing before the mast, and he was master on many foreign voyages improving his time while visiting foreign ports in studying the people and their cultures. He read extensively and after his retirement from the sea, he served his town as superintendent of schools, sharing his knowledge of geography and literature with the fortunate young scholars of this town. He recorded a great deal of local history and biographies of early residents, from which we have learned much that we know about the early history of Dennis and her people. In addition to all of this, he served in the legislature for two terms, and acted for several years as pilot commissioner for the port of Boston. He died much lamented in 1894, one of many of this family who have continually contributed to the well being of their home town. It is certainly fitting that the name of Howes should be remembered in the names of three of the Streets of our Town.

Dennis Historical Society
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