



### DENNIS -- 195 YEARS OLD AND COUNTING

We celebrated the town's 195th birthday at the Lighthouse Inn which you will see elsewhere is also celebrating a birthday. As always, we are indebted to the Stone Family for their gracious hospitality. We also wish to thank the following merchants for door prizes: Harney's, A Touch of Brass, Hart Farm, Christmas Tree Shops, The Lighthouse Inn, Positively Depot Flowers and Finley's Liquors.

Congratulations also to the lucky winners.

### THE HOUSE WITH A QUAKER CANNON

Did anyone spot the Quaker Cannon? It is located at 5 Old Main Street in West Dennis, at the intersection of Route 28. You may have missed the cannon, but you probably have noticed the very attractive quarter-board type sign which reads, "Pine Cove Inn". The building dates from 1837, when Zeno Gage had it built for his growing family. Gage is not as common a name hear-abouts as Baker or Sears, but the family is an honorable one and has contributed to our history. According to Frederick Freeman, the family had the sad distinction of losing two sons in the King Philip War in 1675-76. Their name is preserved in three street names in Dennis and a portion of the salt meadow surrounding Herring River is known as Gage's Point. Zeno was born in Harwich, the son of Freeman Gage and his wife Sally Chase. He seems to have lived most of his adult life in West Dennis. On July 5th, 1835 he was married to Sarah B. Farris by the Baptist minister in South Yarmouth. He purchased the one and one half acre of land where the Inn now stands from Elisha Baker, who lived on the adjoining lot. He is first taxed for a dwelling house in 1837, which is how I arrived at the date of this building. Zeno was a farmer and a fisherman, as were many of his neighbors. The boats of the fishing fleet in Bass River generally sailed out together as soon as the back of winter was broken. Fitted out for a trip of about three months, they went to fish for cod off Canada or perhaps out to the Banks. As fish were caught, they were dressed and salted down in the hold. When the salt supply was exhausted, or as the expression went, "All the salt was wet", the fleet would sail for home. The fish was rinsed and spread on racks, called flakes, to dry in the sun. I know that the fish was turned at least once, but I do not know how it was protected from bad weather. Does anyone else know? By this time the oak leaves were as big as a field mouse's ear--time to plant while the fish were drying. This done, the sturdy fishing schooners became traders. The fish was once again packed in salt, barrelled and loaded into the holds. Zeno Gage and his neighbors, Samuel and Moses Smalley, owned the Schooner Maria, 68 tons, in 1838. In a vessel that size they would probably only trade down as far as Baltimore or possibly up the Hudson to Albany. On their return they would pick up cargo for Boston, or for store keepers here on the Cape. They were back in time for harvesting, and if the weather held there was a possibility of a fall fishing trip. Thus with fishing and farming many a Cape family was sustained. From the records we have, Zeno Gage appears to have been a successful man. His home was fine, if not elegant. He owned land in addition to his homestead, the necessary wood lots and a cranberry swamp. After the sale of the Maria he had an interest in several other vessels, including the Schooner Luther Child and the packet schooner Simon P. Cole. His sons were educated, three of them also becoming master mariners, Zeno T., Freeman and Rufus.

But I started to tell you about the Quaker cannon on the lawn of Capt. Zeno's house. I stopped in to ask what the Johnson family, who now own the house, knew about it. Mrs. Johnson laughingly explained that the cannon was made of wood by her husband, purely for decoration. She was amused to know the Quaker cannon story. So the Quaker cannon on Capt. Zeno Gage's lawn is not an antique. But nevertheless it can remind us of a clever subterfuge by which Yankee sea captains with Quaker crews managed to protect themselves without violating the consciences of the peace-loving Friends.

### THIS AND THAT

Manse librarian Esme Willis is still seeking town reports from various years to fill out our collection. Does anyone have 1900, 1901, or 1905-10?.....We are also trying to complete our set of Bulletins from the New England Historical Genealogical Society. Needed are the most recent volumes, 1965 on.....And if you are cleaning out your attic and find old account books, scrap books, etc., will you let D.H.S. know before discarding them? Much can be learned from a study of such old records.....Among the things which are on exhibit at the Manse for this summer is a hooked rug made by the late Marie Friend. It depicts the neighborhood in the vicinity of New Boston Road and 6A, showing mills, schools and the homes that once stood there. Be sure to see it.....Bill Scofield and Josh Crowell continue to show our slide shows. The next date is for The Shiverick Story, to be presented at the Sandwich Glass Museum on July 19th.....This letter is being sent to some non-members who we think might be interested in joining the Dennis Historical Society. If you know a prospective member, please give their name and address to Isabel Flynn, P.O. Box 607, South Dennis, MA 02660...or call 385-2966.

## CALENDAR

- July and August Every Tuesday and Thursday 2-4:00 Josiah Dennis Manse is open.  
Special exhibit-"Women's Work" Live demonstration of spinning and weaving  
by Susan Kelley.
- July and August Every Wednesday and Friday 2-4:30 Jericho House and Barn Museum are  
open. Special exhibit-"Earning a Living on Cape Cod".
- July 11 7:30 P.M. Board meets at Lilla Smith's.
- July 13 7:30 P.M. Program "The Cape Cod Canal Story" Carleton Hall.
- Aug. 25 7:30 P. M. Program "The Cape Playhouse-A Reminiscence" V.I.C.
- Sep. 20 7:30 P.M. Carleton Hall. Annual Meeting.

### "CAPE COD IS NOW AN ISLAND"

The Yarmouth Register of Sept. 27, 1913 carried this headline in it's story about the work being done at Bourne. "The tide rises and falls through the partly completed canal and fresh water ponds." I wonder if you know how close we came to having the canal built at Bass River? There was a strong move on the part of citizens of the mid and lower Cape to have the river chosen as the path from the Sound to the Bay. Many of those eager to see this happen were sea captains. They knew the waters around the Cape very well, and felt that the currents at the approach to Buzzards Bay were too dangerous and that ships under sail would find it difficult to enter the canal at that end. No doubt they were right. Today any sailor in these waters looks for ideal conditions before sailing in that area. If the canal had been built in 1880, when it was under serious discussion, it is very possible it would have been here. But by the dawn of the 20th century, sailing vessels and their problems in navigating were no longer the paramount consideration. So Bourne has had to bear the burden of being the gateway to this man-made island, and we have been spared. We will see and hear all about the canal that was built at the meeting on July 13, at Carleton Hall. The very beautiful slide show will be shown by a Canal Park Ranger who will gladly answer questions. Please bring your summer guests along.

### A GOLDEN YEAR FOR D.H.S. MEMBERS, THE STONES AND THE BARROWS

Congratulations are in order for Faustina and Burton Barrows, who have recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Tina is a descendant of Capt. Elihu Kelley who lived on Fisk Street in West Dennis. Capt. Elihu and his wife Ann (Crowell) also celebrated a Golden Wedding on January 14, 1890 in West Dennis, and when the family prepared a booklet for Tina and Burt, they included the guest list and a poem from the party given for these great-grandparents. On the list of about 150 guests are found the names of 43 sea captains and 51 captain's ladies. Is it any wonder that most of my stories of bygone days have to do with the sea? The Barrows did not have that many master mariners at their party, but they were surrounded by friends and family, who we join in wishing them many more happy years together.

Another D.H.S. family has reached a fifty year anniversary--it is the Stone family of the Lighthouse Inn. It was 1938 when Everett and Gladys Stone bought the old Bass River Light which had been a working light from 1855 until the opening of the Cape Cod Canal in 1914. The family is now in it's third generation of operating this fine business. Through the years they have also contributed measureably to the community in which they have for many years been year-round residents. As an example, son Jonathan serves on the town's Recreation Commission, and the Board of the Dennis Chamber of Commerce. Barbara has been on our town's Housing Authority, and of course, Robert has been a Finance Committee member for many years. In addition to preserving and maintaining one of this town's historic structures, the Stones conduct a business of which the whole town can be proud. Congratulations, and may you all enjoy many years of success. (Editor's note: Your editor fondly remembers Mr. and Mrs. Everett Stone, from years of waitressing at the Inn. On my first day at work, I was assigned to serve lunch to Mr. Stone, known affectionately as "Pop". I took his order properly enough, then spilled his lobster salad right in his lap!! He didn't make a fuss, and the next time I waited on him he ordered a bowl of hot clam chowder. How's that for a vote of confidence?)

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