



### WALK THE BOTANIC TRAIL WITH US

On July 9 at 3 P.M. we invite you to join us as we take a guided walk along the beautiful Botanic Trails of the Historical Society of Old Yarmouth. Located at the rear of the Yarmouth Port Post Office on Route 6A, these trails feature wide varieties of Cape vegetation. We will be led by Ginger Carpenter, naturalist from the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History. After our walk we have been invited by our sister organization, the Historical Society of Old Yarmouth, to share light refreshments and visit the Bangs Hallett House next to the trail. See you there. (Rain date, July 16.)

### SEA CAPTAINS OF DENNIS

Horatio Sprague Kelley, Sr. 1825-1904

Time for another sea story. Horatio S. Kelley was born in June 1825, the son of Nehemiah Doane Kelley. "He began his career at sea at the age of 11." I begin the biographies of so many of our master mariners this way you must think I make it up! However, it was part of the rites of passage into manhood for Cape Cod boys to begin to learn the ways of the sea as soon as they were big enough to reach the galley stove. Any one who knows anything about sailing will agree, the time to learn the art of sailing is when you are young. The ways of the sea, the wind and the tide become second nature and the mastery of all the skills needed is easy to the young. This early training was what made Cape sea captains sought after by ship owners all up and down the Atlantic coast. Horatio's talent as a sailor and as a manager of men was apparent early. He was one of those talented navigators who was chosen to work his way up to command a clipper ship, that ultimate of sailing vessels. On one of his early assignments he served on the famous record setting clipper Eagle Wing. She was launched in Medford in 1853 and was employed in the California trade. That meant that she sailed around the Horn to San Francisco with supplies for that new community, then took a cargo to China, where she loaded with tea, spices, and silks for Europe. Then it was around the Cape of Good Hope, usually to an English port, and across the North Atlantic with English goods for America. In 1860 he was first mate under Capt. Elbridge C. Colby who hailed from Amesbury, on this around-the-world route, when he had the opportunity to prove his worth. The voyage was nearly completed when Eagle Wing was struck by a furious storm. The ship held her course as best she could, but the tremendous pounding of the gigantic waves took it's toll. One of the planks in the hull parted, and water began rising in the hold. The men pumped for a while, but sensed that their efforts were futile. Capt. Colby was powerless to inspire his crew, so he placed Mr. Kelley in command. "Do the best you can," was all he said to Horatio. Then he retired to his cabin to pray with his wife, thinking all was lost. But the mate was equal to the challenge. He was a strict disciplinarian, and the crew knew that. When he ordered them back to the pumps, they went. Then Mr. Kelley, working in water waist deep, located the leak and, with super-human effort, was able to make enough of a repair to reduce the amount of water and allow the men to keep ahead of it. The ship was saved. When they arrived in New York, Capt. Colby resigned his command of the Eagle Wing and the grateful owners made Horatio S. Kelley Sr. Her new master.

Capt. Kelley and his family lived in Dennis Port. He had two children. Perhaps you will remember Dr. Horatio S. Kelley Jr., who had a medical practice and drug store in West Dennis. His home is now Basketville. Horatio's daughter was Annie Colby Kelley and she also was well known in Dennis. She learned Morse Code and became the operator of the telegraph office on Telegraph Road in Dennis Port. Old-time residents of Dennis Port remembered having her teach them about that magic wire which carried messages to far off places. Capt. Kelley lived out his life among family and friends after he retired, and lived to be nearly 80 years of age.

### EDUCATION IS ONE OF OUR GOALS---

And we are meeting that goal as far as our school children are concerned. Our field trips are completed, involving dozens of volunteers, and once again teachers, parents, and the children seemed to enjoy themselves at our historic centers, as did those who volunteered. Our fifth graders have had a bus trip to historic sites. Lots of fun for all, (especially lunch on the beach!) Thanks to all of you who made this possible, especially Mig Maher and the Manse Committee and Lilla Smith and the Jericho Committee. We haven't room to name everyone involved, but Honorable Mention must go to Chris Harriman, who, in spite of recent illness, made butter and baked bread with the kids on each of the six days of the tours, to say nothing of the preparation of the caps the girls wear and other jobs to many to list. We couldn't do it without you, Chris!

## CALENDAR

July 9 3:00 P.M. Walk on the Botanic Trails of HSOY on Rt. 6A Rain date July 16  
August 20-27 DENNIS FESTIVAL DAYS  
Coming in September Annual meeting of D.H.S.  
July and August Josiah Dennis Manse open Tues. and Thur. 2-4  
Special summer exhibit--Quilts  
Jericho House open Wed. and Fri. 2-4:30  
Special Summer exhibit--Social activities and entertainment of  
the 19th century

### "THE POOR ALWAYS YE HAVE WITH YOU"

In recent months, many of the social activists in our midst have taken to their hearts the plight of the poor. Marches against hunger, soup kitchens, and shelters for the homeless have been among their efforts to alleviate the pain of being poor. These efforts are commendable and deserve our support, for there are few more limiting conditions than poverty. Current programs which try to improve that condition for the less fortunate are new and innovative, but the problem itself is old. The title of this article was penned in the first century A.D. Folk tales, fairy tales, old songs and legends from antiquity relate the struggle of the poor throughout historic times. Causes of poverty vary from culture to culture, generally associated with either physical or mental inability to perform useful work. Wars, epidemics, and suppression of minorities have also contributed to the legions of the poor. The founders of our town in 1639 were familiar with poverty. The Elizabethan Era of which their fathers and grandfathers lived and in which some of them were born had created its own types of poverty, often in the name of religion. With the establishment of the Church of England as the religion of the land, measures to silence dissenters were taken. Those families which chose to remain faithful to the Pope had their property confiscated and were turned out of their homes. Puritans who met secretly to hear their ministers preach were arrested and jailed if discovered, leaving their families unprovided for. Simultaneously, the convents and monasteries which were traditional havens for the needy were closed. Desperate groups of paupers banded together and roamed the countryside like gypsies, begging, stealing, and threatening the peace of the villages. "Hark, hark, the dogs do bark, the beggars are coming to town. Some in rags and some in tags and some in silken gown." Remember that rhyme from nursery school days? It dates from this period of English history, when these roving troops of impoverished citizens were menacing those struggling to make their own livelihood. At that time no police force or army protected the rights and property of the citizens. Each village or parish had a Justice of the Peace, who saw that the English laws were obeyed, collected fines and set tax rates. In order to address the cries for help from her people, good Queen Bess established the "Poor Laws". They provided for settling and collecting a tax for the support of the poor in each village, in an effort to stop the roving beggars. The Justice of the Peace was to set the tax based on local need and would collect it to be used for the benefit of the poor of that parish alone. No paupers were allowed to be removed to another parish where benefits might be better. The new policy did help to remove the threat of the pilferers, and made life a bit easier for the unfortunate. Our founders brought this principle of each town being responsible for its own poor with them to New England. But how could the developing towns be sure they did not admit more poor people than they could comfortably support? The Court at Plymouth solved this problem for them. The proprietors should inquire into the background of everyone who applied for permission to settle in their town. If any doubt remained about a man's ability to care for his family, he was "warned" that should he become indigent, he would not be a charge to the town, but must return to the place he came from or move elsewhere. Today this sounds elitist and discriminatory, but in the early days of our settlement, when very little money was available and each family subsisted by the work of their own hands, it was no doubt a necessary rule. It kept poverty within our towns on the Cape at a minimum during the settlement period. Then the towns were forced to find other ways to deal with their poor. More next time.

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