



PAULINE WIXON DERICK DAY

The testimonial dinner in honor of Pauline Wixon Derick was a huge success. About 100 friends, neighbors, associates, and family gathered together in tribute to this grand lady. Polly was really surprised and pleased--maybe overwhelmed is a better description. She is a quiet, unassuming person who has managed to do mountains of work that most people were unaware of.

The following is from the commemorative menu that is now a treasured keepsake to many:

Pauline Frances Wixon Derick was born in Dennis Port to Nathaniel Hawes and Marion Baker Wixon--a tenth generation Wixon and eleventh generation Baker. Pauline attended Dennis schools and graduated from Yarmouth High School, class of 1935.

Pauline has donated thousands of volunteer hours to the betterment of Dennis, the preservation of Dennis historic properties, and Dennis history. She was a charter Commissioner and founder of the South Dennis Historic District where she served eighteen years, five as Chairman. A charter and present member of the Dennis Historical Commission, the Josiah Dennis Manse Committee where she was treasurer until last year, and the Dennis Historical Society where she was the first secretary and is a Past President. She served on the Planning Board, was instrumental in realizing the value of and acquiring the Indian Lands Conservation Area located behind Town Hall, and served her village as Past President of the Old South Dennis Village Association. She worked seventeen years with other genealogists transcribing the Dennis Vital Records which are now in print, researched and transcribed all the Dennis cemeteries, which is also in print. This is a valuable research tool as many of the gravestone inscriptions have been obliterated by acid rain. She served on the 1976 Bicentennial Committee and on numerous other boards and committees. Pauline is Chairman of the Genealogy Committee of the Nickerson Family descendants of William Nickerson. Three volumes of the genealogy are in print and the fourth volume will soon be printed.

In addition to these accomplishments Pauline has been a great teacher and an inspiration to all who have worked with her.

Pauline was married to Orion "Dutch" Derick for fifty years and is the proud mother of Burton of Mineral Wells, West Virginia and Elbert of Sabattus, Maine, grandmother of six and great-grandmother of two (and a half!).

Pauline's pastor at the Reformed Church of Latter Day Saints in Dennis Port, the Rev. Benjamin Fleet gave the invocation which included some lovely sentiments on her life. Selectman Charles Crowell read a commendation from the Board of Selectmen, Irvin Nickerson, President of the Nickerson Family Association, told of the work she has done for NFA and Roberta Bratti told of Polly's work on the Dennis Vital Records. Our President, Lura Crowell, presented her with a DHS Certificate of Appreciation, Nancy Thacher Reid read a Citation from the Massachusetts House of Representatives signed by Speaker Charles Flaherty, and Josh Crowell and myself presented Pauline with a bronze plaque that will dedicate a library room at Josiah Dennis Manse in her honor.

Pauline's sons and her sister, Adelia West, told some family stories. It seems she didn't perceive herself as a very good wife and mother because she didn't wear paint, powder, or frilly lace, but she did throw a mean baseball, made scrumptious clam pies and chocolate marble cakes and no one else could ever open scallops faster than she could. Any woman who could generate the kind of love that came through from her sons and friends that night at Lighthouse Inn certainly has been doing something right for years.

Everyone who has ever been associated with Polly has benefited from the experience. She is always very generous with her knowledge and assistance. One in a million-- Pauline Wixon Derick!

Two passes to Old Sturbridge Village donated by Betsy Hall Wentworth for the dinner were won by Polly's brother-in-law, Neil Denzer, and Lena Anderson took home two certificates for lunch at Lighthouse Inn donated by the Stone Family. Many thanks to the donors and congratulations to the lucky winners!

JIM CARR--LIBRARIAN

DHS Board member, historical researcher, archivist, and good friend Jim Carr has volunteered to become librarian of the DHS Library at Josiah Dennis Manse. The library was relocated at the Manse five years ago when several major changes took place. A number of books with no relevance to Dennis were deaccessioned and the books and articles dealing with our history were placed on the shelves pretty much in the right categories, but the card file was never updated. For anyone seeking a particular bit of information it's like trying to find your way across country without a road map.

Jim has done yeoman's duty collecting and copying pictures and compiling veteran's lists for Nancy Thacher Reid's history of Dennis. That job is about completed and after a short breather he'll be on duty at the Manse. Anyone researching Dennis history may contact Jim at 385-6464 to arrange a visit to the library. Thanks, Jim!

DUES DECISION

The bylaws meeting was held at the Manse on June 11. It was decided by a unanimous vote to raise the individual dues from \$8.00 to \$10.00, and the family dues from \$10.00 to \$15.00. The \$2.00 Student and \$100.00 individual life memberships will remain the same. In last month's newsletter I noted the increase in postage. Since then our printing costs have also increased. Apparently the same domino effect of the postal increase. You will find a dues remittance envelope included in this newsletter for your convenience in renewing your membership.

CALENDAR

July 19 7:30 P.M. DHS Board meets at Josiah Dennis Manse.
Aug. 19-27 Dennis Festival Days. Check at Chamber of commerce for flyers.

CLASS OF 1945--YHS

Recently the 1945 graduating class of Yarmouth High School had our 50th reunion. Dennis High School graduated it's last class in 1931. After that Dennis high school students attended Yarmouth High School--a forerunner to what eventually became Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High school. It was grand to see everyone again. Quite a few had not seen each other since graduation. Our high school years were not easy ones. They spanned World War II. We graduated from eighth grade with the gloom of Pearl Harbor and fighting a war on two fronts hanging over us and graduated as Seniors with the Axis on the run, but with many of our classmates in the armed services or relocated because of family involvement in war materiel production. Invitations were extended to everyone who had been part of our class throughout high school.

Some of my classmates were very identifiable--they had changed so little. Others I wouldn't have known in a hundred years! Thank heavens, the reunion committee had foresight in making name tags with our year book pictures on them. However, it really didn't take long for the fifty years to vanish and the strong bonds created, in some instances, by twelve years of almost daily contact in the 1930's and 40's were just as close as ever.

Thirty-three members of our extended class met for dinner at Christine's Restaurant in West Dennis. When we went past that spot in Eddie Higgins' school bus on our way from Dennis Port to the John Simpkins School in Bass River it was the northern edge of the great West Dennis Cedar Swamp. The area was filled in and built on before the wetlands protection came into being--just one of the many changes that have taken place on the Cape over these fifty years.

The reunion committee of Joe Tripp, Gordon Daggett, Alice Govoni Sprague, Florence Whitehead Bassett, Estelle Taylor Brackett, Beverly Brown Winstead, and Eunice Long Gibson did a great job of locating all but Irene Cobb, Robert Esty, and Lawrence James of the fifty-six members who were part of our class over the four years of high school. Joe did most of the legwork--or should I say armwork?--with his computer and access to all kinds of networks. He also was the one I wouldn't have known in a hundred years. A prominent beard served to throw me off completely. Loretta Abbe McVey came the greatest distance--from Surprise, AZ--she also was the "girl" who had changed the least. Rick Shaw qualified as the guy who had been treated kindest by fifty years, and Helen Hallett took top honors with fourteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Helen said it takes her all year to get ready for Christmas. Bill Devine who did the artwork in our yearbook--Escutcheon...1945 did the cover on the class roster presented to everyone. The daring young knight out to seek his great quest in life has returned fifty years later with a broken lance, collapsed plume on his helmet, grey beard, and a sagging paunch. Nice touch, Bill!

Twenty-three of our members are still living on Cape Cod and several others have summer homes here. Eight of our classmates are no longer with us, but were fondly remembered. Joe located our class advisor, Miss Elizabeth Clough. In 1945 she was a lovely young woman with blond curls piled on top of her head--and every boy in the class had a crush on her. She moved to Skowhegan, Maine where she taught for many years. On her retirement the school was named in her honor. Unfortunately, she passed away several years ago. It would have been nice to see her again.

Dave Hodsdon was singled out, to much applause, as having been our high school super sports star. Shortly afterwards Joe called for us to rise individually and introduce ourselves. Paul McDowell, who has always had a great sense of humor, was first on his feet and announced so all could hear, "I'm Dave Hodsdon!"--which prompted more applause and laughter. Laughter and nostalgia were the order of the evening--and it was there in great measure. I doubt if any of us gave a single thought at graduation to fifty years hence. That was just too far away. We were a serious bunch of young adults out to conquer the world. Now many of us have retired, some have embarked on second careers, some are still working--Eddie Crowell could not be with us as he was in Puerto Rico building a golf course. Each of us has had full and interesting lives with lots of great stories to tell, but what impressed me most was the spirit, vitality, and zest for life still present. We may be rushing towards 70 (in a couple of years) but we still have a lot to offer. Congratulations, Class of 1945!

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