



# Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

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Send letters & stories to Dennis Historical Society, Box 607, S. Dennis 02660 or [pjhowes@verizon.net](mailto:pjhowes@verizon.net)

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## The Rose Victorian

The Board of Directors has been presented a challenge with the gift of this property, namely determining its future for DHS. Roof re-shingling, originally contracted by Kathy Roach and expanded by DHS has been completed, as have quite a few preliminary 'clean-up' tasks. In the upcoming weeks our long range planning committee will be grappling with this issue.

DHS owns this historic building that was built by Captain Calvin F. Baker, a Master Mariner and a member of the Boston Marine Society. The following is an excerpt from a 1938 newspaper article.

"(His) association with the (neighboring) Fisk brothers from childhood on throughout life was a permanent one. It was through this influence that Calvin became captain and part owner of the "George S. Adams". This schooner, built in 1856 at Westport, was of white oak with iron fastenings, 112 feet long, of 213 tonnage. In the year 1865 her owner, George S. Adams, chanced to be a guest at the home of Captain Uriah B. Fisk. At this time, across the street from the Fisk home Mr. and Mrs. Calvin F. Baker were parents of a new born son who had not been given a name until Mr. Adams asked that he be named "George Adams Baker" for him. That winter Calvin became captain of the Westport schooner and remained with her for several years in coastwise trade.

It was in 1861 that Calvin Baker married Miss Sarah Belle Snow, a daughter of James Snow of Hyannis. She was a sister to Captain Luther Fisk's wife, Isabelle. The couple lived for some time in the Captain Elias Darling house on School street and in Captain Grafton Sears' house. In 1883 they had built by Allen S. Crowell, and apprentices Caleb E. Crowell and Reuben Rogers, the house which is now the home of Dr. and Mrs. Ernst S. Osborne. A large barn was built in 1886.

In 1873 a three-masted schooner took the ways at the Blaisdell boatyard at Bath, Maine<sup>1</sup>. It was the "Calvin F. Baker", homeport Dennis. Captain Calvin was in command and it was a happy day for the home folks when she came alongside Bass river breakwater and anchored for inspection. Captain Calvin's family, the Fisk families, Hiram Crowell, and many others of the village went aboard. The "Calvin F. Baker" was of 600 tonnage (567tons, 144.5 ft. long, 32.5 ft. wide)<sup>2</sup> and was used in coastwise trade.

April 13, 1874, Captain Calvin's mother died at the age of 70 years. The following October 2nd his father died. The captain had erected at their graves in the homestead burial lot, a double stone which bears their names, the dates, and the epitaph "Father and mother now with angels, happy on that radiant shore, Though thy place is ever vacant, Thou art only gone before." And in the same plot, the stone erected to the memory of the son of Calvin and Polly, is inscribed "James T. Baker, drowned December 29, 1853, aged 20 yrs. 5 mos. & 4 dys. Loved one farewell. We still remember thee."

The sons of Captain and Mrs. Calvin F. Baker were James T. born November 30, 1860, who died December 10, 1910, a master mariner of Dennis. George Adams born December 28, 1865, died July 22, 1927. Allen S. born in 1878 died in 1920. A daughter, Sarah Belle, born May 13, 1874, died January 5, 1879, and another child born in 1878 lived but a few months.

Captain Calvin gave over the command of his schooner "Calvin F. Baker" to his son, Captain James T. Baker, in the year 1881. He then bought of Mary E. Kelley a store on Main street (now Smith's Market) where he conducted a general store until the time of his death.

<sup>1</sup> The builder and owner is listed as Alex. Robinson and the Master as Calvin F. Baker in the book *A Maritime History of Bath Maine and the Kennebec River Region*, by Baker, William Avery, Marine Research Society of Bath, 1973 Vol. II, pp848

<sup>2</sup> From above reference

In 1897 he was elected to the board of selectmen of the town of Dennis and served continuously for nine years, holding the office when he died.

On October 18, 1906, the captain was stepping into his carriage in front of his store when his horse started suddenly, throwing him to the ground. His foot was caught in the wheel and he was dragged some distance before help could reach him. In an unconscious condition he was carried to the home of his son George where he died October 20.”<sup>3</sup>

Some folks in Town, especially Phyllis Horton, will remember the next owner, Dr. Ernest S. Osborne, the first full time doctor to live in Town and set up practice. Dr. Osborne owned the home until 1949, and he possibly doctored other members of our Society.

Peter Howes

### Gladioli Will Bloom Again



Fifty years ago Dennis Girl Scouts planted ‘glads’ at the new town museum, Jericho. On June 17<sup>th</sup> this year, Brownie Scout Troop 80300, one brother and Cadet Girl Scouts came to Jericho to re-create that 1<sup>st</sup> planting of 1963. Two occasions were celebrated: the start of Jericho and the birth of the Dennis Historical Society.

### Tough Life at Sea

[Excerpt of a letter from Obed Baxter to Augustus Hallet ]

Boston March 9<sup>th</sup> 1876

“Dear Old Augustus

It seems as though you have been sorely tried on this your last passage, and I probably know how to sympathize with you better than any one else can I have seen some pretty rough times in the New England and done some pretty tall pumping when we have been loaded with ice, and done some pretty hard pumping with other heavy cargoes. When we have been carrying sail pretty hard and shoving her bows under pretty smartly we have found that we leaked badly under the Bowsprit and no way to stop it without taking it out. Knowing where it was and about the extent of it we have always let her go It is quite a long distance from her bow to the pumps and there are two holes in each one of her floor timbers, one about the [page] size of your wrist and the other right over it some smaller. the lower ones may be

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<sup>3</sup> O’Neil, Neva “*Master Mariners of Dennis*”, Yarmouth Port Mass, Friday October 21, 1938” (Believed to be from the Barnstable Patriot)

stopped up some of them But we have always found that when the water was just about level with the ceiling that it would take us a long time to get that water out of her because her timbers being of iron are thin and it leaves a large well room for water all over her floor. The consequence is that when you pump the water out of two or three frames, she will suck and then let her stand and pump again and the lower you get the water the slower it runs along and of course the longer it takes to get it out of her especially if she be any thing like on even keel. We have been sometimes as long as twenty four hours some times after a blow getting the water out of her that came in forward during the time we were pressing her into it and could not seem to get much water out of her until the blow was over. But as you have been in her a voyage with ice and [page] done some pumping you may know just how that all works.”

Derrick, Burton *Denis Source Records Volume 2, Annals Of South Dennis*, pp 148

## Horses Return To Melpet Farm



After a long absence the pastoral scene on Rte. 134, South Dennis is again complete. Congratulations to Ro Nelson and Jenny Morgeson whose dream to reopen the stables at Melpet have come to fruition.

## The Super Summer Yard Sale

The Dennis Historical Society is having a Flotsam and Jetsam Yard Sale of Historical or Hysterical Stuff!! on August 7th. We have some items that no longer fit our collections policy and we are running out of storage space. The money we raise will help to purchase items that **do** tell our story of Dennis. In the past several years we have been able to purchase a number of lovely portraits and ship's paintings from around the country that tell of our grand maritime heritage. Through the wonders of the internet we now have access to our treasures that "went west". It's a thrill when they come back in Dennis.

It's a given that most people have too much Stuff collected over who knows how many years. I am the fifth generation in my home. When anyone passed on their heirs took the good things and left the rest. It's time to clean out!

Your Society is looking for donated items to sell at the best price we can get—or you can rent a table for \$25.00 and sell your own Stuff. If you plan to donate items to DHS please call soon so we can make arrangements to receive your gift. If you are renting a table please make your reservation. When your fee is received we will give you a table number and instructions for the day of the sale. No used clothing, please. There are lots of charitable thrift stores selling donated clothing that would benefit from them. Crafters are welcome.

Please call **508-385-3012** to make reservations or for information.

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### Bits 'n Pieces - July 1963 - from The Dennis-Yarmouth Register

7/05 \*ZIP CODE postal delivery system went into effect on 7/01/1963.

\*An Open Meeting is planned for July 11 to form an historical society to assist the newly formed Jericho Committee. The new society will help in setting up exhibits, accepting gifts & historical preservation.

7/08 \*Actor Art Carney opened the Cape Play House Season to a sold-out audience.

7/12 \* Dennis Riding School won several ribbons at the 4H horse show in Orleans.

7/26 \*Mrs. Edward P. Chase reported Major & Mrs. Clarence L. Horton & four children are visiting his Mother, Mrs. Mildred L. Horton of Lower County Rd. and her Mother, Mrs. Edith Robbins of Main St.

\*Two-hundred see exhibits at Jericho: The first public exhibit at Jericho included marine paintings and other objects loaned by 27 residents of the town which included a sextant, an octant and a fid and more.

#### Born in July 1963

7/06 - Edie Falco/Actress.....7/14 - Martha Coakley/ MA Politician.....7/30 - Lisa Kudrow/Actress

July 4<sup>th</sup> Trivia: On July 4, 1826 two U.S. presidents died -Thomas Jefferson & John Adams - within hours of each other with Adams dying believing Jefferson was still alive.

#### DHS Current Events for July

6/13 Jazz at Jericho & a box lunch from Red Cottage Restaurant, \$25. Per person.

Reserve by 7/9 by calling PAT @508-385-3012, live music with "Reaching Minimum Wage" a DY Jazz Band.

6/19 Sea Captain's Walkabout with Terri Fox 10 a.m. meet at So. Dennis Congregational Church, then on to the graveyard for tales of "those gone by". Rain date: Sunday, July 21, 2 p.m.