

DENNIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
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Compiled and edited by Nancy Thacher Reid

BIRTHDAY PARTY-1981 - 188 YEARS OLD

All Around the Common is the name of a charming booklet written by Ella W. Bray (1866-1954), who describes the Yarmouthport common as it was in her girlhood and some of the changes as her life unfolded. We could borrow her title for our annual celebration of our town's incorporation. For we will visit our mother town, from which Dennis was separated in 1793, for a day "all around the common" of Yarmouthport on June 14. Your ticket to the luncheon entitles you to tour both the Bangs Hallett House and the Winslow Crocker House before the social hour, which will begin at 12:30. At the charming Colonial House Inn, you can enjoy the special offerings of the house (Bloody Mary, Champagne Cocktail or Mimosa for \$1.00) or a drink of your choice, while admiring the collected furnishings of the Inn which reflect its long history. The sumptuous menu includes your choice of a hot entree (choice of ham or cheese quiche, creamed chicken, or cream of mushroom crepe), in addition to ham, and a groaning buffet of fruit juices, soup, salads, potatoes, assorted breads and rolls, coffee or tea. A decorated birthday cake will be served for dessert. Please make your reservations today, as we need you all to blow out 188 candles! A reservation blank is attached.

EZRA H. BAKER SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

Again this year the 3rd and 4th grades of our elementary school have enjoyed visits to our two historic centers. For six days, 10 to 12 volunteers will be at The Manse and 10-12 more will be at the Jericho house to show our school children the crafts, arts and skills which our ancestors needed to maintain their families in the 1700's and the 1800's. Each day, approximately 30 children from Grade 4 will spend two hours at the Jericho and 30 more from Grade 3 will spend two hours at The Manse. This is a never-to-be-forgotten visit for our children. We are grateful to Mr. Walter Morley, principal, his teachers, parent volunteers, the committees of both houses, and all who give so generously of their time, to make these field trips among the best historic experiences offered to school children on the Cape. D.H.S. can be justly proud of their part in organizing this annual program.

WHAT'S A POND NAMED DENNIS DOING IN A TOWN NAMED YARMOUTH?

Most of you probably know that the town of Dennis was once a part of the town of Yarmouth and understand when we refer to Dennis as East Yarmouth, or speak of Old Yarmouth when referring to the early history of the town. But why should there be a pond named Dennis in the town of Yarmouth? The pond is almost at the boundary of Barnstable, and is nowhere near our common border. Can it be that the Reverend Dennis was so renowned that our parent town decided to commemorate his name as well? Probably not, for although Mr. Dennis was a fine pastor, the truth is that those not directly affected by his ministry couldn't even spell his name right. Dennis Pond in Yarmouth is named for an earlier settler, Robert Dennis, carpenter. His name appears in the records of Plymouth Colony in 1640 and continues to appear for nearly 30 years. He was a freeman, a voter, able to bear arms, and served on a number of committees and then seems to disappear from town with no memorial except the pond that bears his name. While here, he certainly was widely respected, for he was witness to many wills, overseer of many estates. He is called "neighbor" by William Chase, and "beloved friend" by old Thomas Howes. He owned land in what was called the West Field, adjacent to Dennis Pond, and probably lived close by. About 1666, he is mentioned as having an interest in Woodbridge, New Jersey, although why anyone would leave the Cape for New Jersey is a mystery to me. At any rate, he disappears from the records, leaving his name behind to denote a spot of great beauty. Take the time to visit this lovely pond. It will help you to remember how beautiful the Cape was and still can be, if people take the time to make it so.

BIRTHDAY PARTY RESERVATIONS

JUNE 14

COLONIAL HOUSE INN

Please make reservations for _____ people.

I enclose \$ _____ @ \$6.50 per person.

Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope and send to:

Mr. Joshua Crowell
P.O. Box 963
Dennis, MA 02638

CALENDAR

- June 14 Birthday Luncheon, Colonial House Inn. Reservations necessary. See Article.
Also of interest to DHS Members... Bus tour to Rockport and Gloucester, including the Saugus Ironworks and Hammond Castle. June 16. Cost \$20.00. Call 394-5739.
- NOTE: June 1-5 and 8. Ezra H. Baker Field Trips.
- June 23 7:30 Executive Board Meeting at Gail Hart's.
- June 26 2-5 Silver Tea at Jericho.
- July 14 7:30 V.I.C. Hall, Dennis Port. Talk by Georgia Ferguson.
"Patsy Kittredge Tells Stories of Cape Cod" Open to Public.

MEDIA PROJECT FUNDED

"As we go to press" word has been received from the Massachusetts Council of Arts and Humanities that (budget permitting) the D.H.S. has been awarded a matching grant of up to \$1,000.00 for the production of a slide and sound presentation of our town's history. The Dennis Chamber of Commerce and other civic groups have indicated an interest in aiding this project, which is headed by Paula Bacon. Our Town's history is fascinating and varied, and we want to present its highlights in an artistic and professional way. The help of several talented citizens has been enlisted. We would be happy to hear from anyone who would like to be involved. Call Paula at 394-5739.

DEAN STANLEY SEARS DAY

It was also Town Meeting Day, but the town has had town meeting days for 342 years. This particular day was uniquely Dean Stanley Sears Day, and D.H.S. was proud to have a small part by presenting Mr. Sears with a drawing of his home on Sea Street at the ceremony preceding the Town Meeting on May 5.

Mr. Sears was honored as "the Dean of Dennis Citizens" in recognition of his many years of service to the town. How good to have Mr. Crowell and Mr. Kelley, his neighbors, and family neighbors since the 1640's both adding words of appreciation. Congratulations, Mr. Sears. May you live long and prosper, and continue to teach and inspire good, active citizenship among your fellow residents of our All America town.

REMEMBERING OLD CAPE COD

An evening of reminiscence of Cape Cod in early days is planned for Tuesday, July 14 at 7:30 in V.I.C. Hall, Depot Street, Dennis Port. Georgia Ferguson will present an illustrated talk entitled "Patsy Kittredge Tells Stories of Cape Cod." Mrs. Kittredge came to the Cape in 1895, where she met and married Henry C. Kittredge. He became a noted historian and author, whose book Cape Cod: Its People and Their History is among the best of locals histories. Mrs. Kittredge is still living in Barnstable, and in her mind reside nearly one hundred years of stories of Old Cape Cod. We will hear some of these on July 14.

THE STREETS OF OUR TOWN

We'll all be following the Streets of Our Town that lead to Yarmouth on Sunday, June 14, and there are many, all with interesting histories. Let me just quickly tell you a little about one of the more ancient ways, Setucket Road. If you start at the Yarmouth end, you will find it is called Satucket Road; and I would like it if somewhere along its route it was labelled Sawtucket Road. All three versions of the name appear in early town records, for the town of Yarmouth was responsible for a short time for the affairs of High Brewster, at the end of this road. As the Indians had no written language, our ancestors were free to spell it however they wished. And so are you. But, however you prefer to spell it, follow it on June 14, or at least come to Old Yarmouth by some one of the other Streets Of Our Town.

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