



# Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 23 Number 5

Newsletter Committee: Lura Crowell, Susan Kelley, Brendan Joyce, Joan Martin, Beth Deck

June 2000

## Calendar of Events

### Saturday, June 3rd Lady Slipper Walk 9:30 AM

Narrated walk over the Indian Lands Conservation Area, led by botanist Shannon Goheen. Meet at Dennis Town Hall parking lot. Reservations requested, 508-394-0017.

### Sunday, June 11th 12-4 PM

**Interpretive Flower Show and Opening Tea**  
For a touch of the historic, Jericho will host a flower show in which the arrangements will interpret the historic paintings and/or prints embellishing this historic 1801 Captain's house.

### Jericho Historical Center

### Saturday, June 17th Colonial Leisure Activities 1-4 PM

Time-travel back to the 1700's as costumed guides demonstrate life in that era, at work and at play. Visitor participation invited. Activities: graces, dancing, charades, sack races, etc. 1770 One-room schoolhouse on grounds.

**Josiah Dennis Manse**

## NEW LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTER

Submitted by Helen A. Robinson, Member of Board of Directors

New Life Christian Center, an interdenominational church, began with a handful of men and women who desired to have a church to attend on Cape Cod that portrayed the beliefs that they shared. There were seven original members who met faithfully, without a pastor, in the basement of a home in South Yarmouth.

They gathered around a television each Sunday to watch a satellite broadcast from Word of Faith Outreach Center in Dallas, Texas. They met this way for about a year, continually praying that God would send a pastor to Cape Cod to pioneer a church. In September of 1987, Pastors Charles and Patricia Gamble felt a call from God to move to the Cape. The Gambles, who were graduates of the Word of Faith Outreach Center in Dallas, Texas, came to Cape Cod not knowing what to expect.

For almost a year after the pastors' arrival, the tiny group continued to meet in the basement of the home in South Yarmouth. As more and more people began to hear about the meetings, the basement quickly became inadequate. The members of the church began to pay for a meetinghouse that would lend itself to all the activities they desired to have.

In July 1988, the tiny church moved to Liberty Hall in South Dennis, one of the most historic landmarks on Cape Cod. The Liberty Hall building was established in 1865. Even as far back as 1933, the Liberty Hall was the site of revival meetings, and has since been the home of five churches.

Once the church moved into the Liberty Hall building, it began to advertise its services and the size of the congregation grew tremendously. Due to this growth, a permanent place of worship was necessary. After an exhaustive search and through much prayer, in 1994 New Life Christian Center rented with an option to buy the Dennisport Theatre building on Route 28. After many hours of hard work by church members and friends and with a considerable amount of money invested, the members moved into their beautiful sanctuary on February 5, 1995. This year, 2000, New Life Christian Center purchased the building.



**Liberty Hall, South Dennis**  
Edmond Rhodes Nickerson Collection

# AGAINST THE BRIDGE

**Burt Derick**

The following is a draft of a proposal which was written in opposition to the building of the lower Bass River Bridge. The draft is not dated nor signed. A copy was found in the collection of Pauline Wixon Derick. Whether or not this draft was formally presented to the General Court is not known. The document shows, however, that the idea of a bridge joining South Yarmouth and West Dennis across Bass River was not considered as progress by all the population.



**Early Lower Bass River Bridge  
From West Dennis**  
DHS Collection

*Your Remonstrance Vessel Owner and Masters and marioners Living a bove the Contem-  
plated place by your Pettioners for building a Bridge acrost Bass river by leave to Represent  
to Your Honours the difference in the local situaion of the petitioners and that of Your Re-  
monstrance the former inhabitants of Yarmouth & Dennis Living below or near the Contem-  
plated place for Erecting a Bridg a Crost Bass river which Entersepts the Towns of Yar-  
mouth and Dennis the Latter arre Situated a bought one mild a bove – we there fore beg  
leave to State to Your Honorable bodey that we owne a bought fifty Sail of Vessels which we  
employ in the Lumber and Costing trade – the Latter is employed in bringing produce wood  
&c into our town and may if not ubstructed – Carey it to all most to Every mans door while  
those employed in Lumber trade for the building of Howeses and Salt woorks have to Raft  
the Lumber from Out Side the bar – and will be renderd Verrey ilconvenient – to pass rafts  
throug the narrow draw of a bridge – we trust and pray that your Honorable body would  
not Suffer any obstructions to be place in nor over Bass river – our oneley harbor which we  
so often pray for to have betterd –*

## Kudos and Accolades



**Our Librarians – Burt & Ruth Derick**

Photograph by Nancy S. Howes

Burt & Ruth Derick have taken on the care of the Dennis Historical Society's Library, housed at the Josiah Dennis Manse. They have done a tremendous amount of work cataloging all the books in the library. Burt has worked diligently scanning the old photographs, postcards and documents which have been loaned to the DHS, and has created a filing system which will assure that these historic treasures will be available for researchers in the future.

The Library itself was dedicated to Burt's mother, Pauline Wixon Derick, in appreciation of her years of historical and genealogical research. Burt and Ruth are carrying on her work of preserving the history and genealogy of the Nickerson Family and of the Town of Dennis. The DHS owes a big vote of thanks to this hardworking, dedicated cou-

# DENNIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Dennis Public Library exists as a result of a series of events which began in 1995 when the Board of Selectmen appointed a nine-member Library Board to “make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen to provide all the residents of the Town of Dennis with modern comprehensive and readily accessible library and information services.” Special Town Meeting that year funded a certified librarian position and office space which was rented at 900 Route 134.

During the next two school years the D-Y Community Partnerships for Children awarded the Town grants for a part-time Children’s Librarian, initiating story times, craft activities, special programs, and outreach to Head Start, preschools and the public schools. 1998 Annual Town Meeting authorized Town funding for a Children’s Librarian, Special Town Meeting funded CLAMS membership and its space needs. Bids were reviewed by the Library Board and space in Dennisport was recommended to the Selectmen.

Upon completion of the move, the Dennis Public Library opened in the former Maloney Drug Store at 673 Main Street (Route 28) in Dennisport on May 1, 1999 with a grand opening celebration hosted by the Library Board in August.

Shortly after the move, CPC awarded the Library a \$10,000 Multicultural grant and donated two computers with educational software for children, further strengthening the Library’s youth collection. The Library’s growing adult collection offers bestsellers, recent fiction and nonfiction, large print, audio books, nearly 200 videos, CLAMS catalog, and Internet access. The Friends of the Dennis Public Library has donated periodical shelving to be installed in May 2000, providing display and storage for at least 80 magazines and newspapers. The Library hosts the Cape Cod Genealogy Society family history collection and their volunteers who assist with its use. A meeting room is available to community groups.

Long-time Dennis residents are intrigued by the transformation from drug stores to library! Proudly displayed are the seven prints of Nancy DeVita’s Shiverick ships, donated by Donn DeVita, one of the many special gifts to the Library from individuals, business, and civic groups. The impetus of taxpayer support, grants and donors has created a library “short” on history, but “long” on growth, working with the village libraries to enhance services throughout the Town.

*Special thanks to Meg Hill, Library Director, Town of Dennis*

This concludes our series of articles on the Libraries of the Town of Dennis.



**Dennis Public Library,  
Route 28, Dennisport**

Photo courtesy of Richard S. Howes  
(The first with our new digital camera!)

## Dennis Historical Society

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FORWARDING & ADDRESS  
CORRECTION REQUESTED

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Organization  
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02660

## THE WAY WE WERE

On June 3rd the DHS will sponsor our annual Lady Slipper Walk over the Indian Lands Conservation Area to a premier stand of lady slipper orchids. This year's walk will be led by Shannon Goheen.

When the lady slippers bloom, we think of our friend Dr. Norton Nickerson, who was instrumental in introducing the public to the beauties of this special place in our Town. Norton's family once owned some of the land that is now included in this conservation area behind Town Hall.

The DHS would like to encourage all of our members to visit this historically significant place, once the winter home of our native Americans, the Nobsclussetts, who took advantage of the sheltered location and abundance of resources.



**Doctor Norton Nickerson leading the  
Lady Slipper Walk, June 1991**

Photograph by Howes

