Wednesday, May 10th at 1:00 P.M. with the Commission on Monday, May 8th at the Cape Cinema at 10 A.M. and then walk out of our tribute to our founders in this 350th Anniversary year, please note. We will meet with the Commission at the Hall Burying Ground at 10 A.M. and then walk out to the Hall Burying Ground for a "how-to" workshop on using the inventory form. Please bring a pencil, measuring tape, and a clip board if you have one. The rain date is our Open House teas. There is always something new to see at our Historic Centers, and also something old—old friends, and old reminders of our town's past.

WE REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY

D.H.S. is seeking to attract new members to swell the ranks. We plan to hold two open house teas to the town's historic interest, with special exhibits of our collection of historic interest, as well as displays showing some of our activities. These are the basis for a successful afternoon, in addition to the usual yummy refreshments! But, as in all recipes, a dash of the "active ingredient" is needed. If our recipe was for bread, yeast would be the pre-requisite. But for a successful new-member recruitment tea the active ingredient is YOU, our present valued members. Please attend one or both of our Open House teas. There is always something new to see at our Historic Centers, and also something old—old friends, and old reminders of our town's past.

OUR GRAVESTONE INVENTORY BEGINS

For all you good people who have volunteered to help the Dennis Historical Commission inventory the ancient gravestones in various burying grounds in town, as part of our tribute to our founders in this 350th Anniversary year, please note. We will meet with the Commission at the Cape Cinema at 10 A.M. and then walk out to the Hall Burying Ground for a "how-to" workshop on using the inventory form. Please bring a pencil, measuring tape, and a clip board if you have one. The rain date is Wednesday, May 10th at 1:00 P.M.

LADY SLIPPER WALK SCHEDULED

The forsythia is fading fast, and ere long the petals of the flowering shrubs in front of Town Hall will be dropping like pink snow flakes along Main Street. Summer's almost here, but there remains one late spring treat to anticipate—the hundreds of Lady's slippers which grow in crowds on the south peninsular of the Indian Lands Conservation. D.H.S. will once again sponsor walks conducted by Dr. Norton H. Nickerson, on Saturday, June 3, at 9 A.M. and at 10:30 A.M. If you plan to attend, please sign up by calling Fern Daniels at the Conservation office, 394-8300, indicating what time you will be there. Comfortable shoes, please, cameras welcome. Mark this date down now, as your June newsletter will probably be too late for a reminder.

JUNE LUNCHEON AT THE LIGHTHOUSE INN

Circle Sunday, June 25th and plan to attend the annual Town's Birthday luncheon. Menu and reservation form next time.

AN EXEMPLARY EXHIBIT OF "EXAMPLERS"

If, after attending our "Open House" afternoon at Dennis' two Historic Centers you still have a yen for things historical, you must take the time to visit the Sandwich Glass Museum. In addition to their unique glass collection, this summer's special exhibit, entitled "Cape Cod Samplers" is truly special. Curator Lynne Horton has collected and studied over 100 samplers made by Cape and Island girls in the late 18th and early 19th century and many of them will be on display all summer. To fully appreciate this event you must first consider why samplers were made. In the early days much, if not all, of the family's clothing and household linen was manufactured at home. Before her marriage a girl was expected to have made for herself 3 sets of table linen, 3 sets of bed linen, and 3 sets of body linen. In some areas, including rural New England, that meant spinning flax into thread and weaving the cloth first—which, incidentally, explains why unmarried girls were called "spinsters". Each piece of precious linen was embroidered with the makers initials and a number, and might be decorated or edged with open work. The sampler, sometimes called an "exampler", was a practice piece, used to teach the little girls how to make the cross stitch letter and numbers as well as decorative embroidery. It would then serve as an example or pattern for stitches on their dowry linen. Four samplers in the Sandwich exhibit are the work of Dennis girls—actually two pairs. One pair was done by two little girls who grew up together near Scargo Lake—Eunice Cobb Paddock, born in 1814, and Lucy Hedge Howes, born in 1817. Both were done when their stitcher was 11 years old, and they are very similar in style, colors, and decorative stitch. Ms. Horton has concluded that they were taught by the same seamstress, possibly a teacher in the district school that stood beside Scargo Lake in that era. When Lucy and Eunice married, the girlhood friends were separated, Lucy to live in Sandwich with her husband Joseph Nye, Eunice to travel with her husband, Capt. Carleton Howes, as he sailed around the world. This summer the work of their young hands reunites them in a way they probably never imagined. I'll tell you about the other pair of samplers next time.
May 8 10 A.M. Cape Cinema parking lot. Gravestone inventory group
May 16 7:30 P.M. Board meets with Sarah
May 22 3-5 P.M. Open House at Josiah Dennis Manse. Quilt exhibit
June 3 9 A.M. and 10:30 A.M. Lady Slipper Walk. See article for information
June 4 3-5 P.M. Open House at Jericho
June 12 noon Annual Dennis Town Birthday Luncheon at Lighthouse Inn

WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOORYARD BLOOMED

The birthday of an American President will be celebrated in the month of May—
Cape Cod’s own President, John Fitzgerald Kennedy. It’s not a big national holiday—
probably the evening news will show a member of the family placing a wreath near the
Eternal Flame at Arlington Cemetery. Perhaps there will be a similar, simple ceremony
at the Memorial in Hyannis. However, news media and public alike will take little notice
of this birthday, in contrast to the extensive coverage the anniversary of Kennedy’s
death received last November. The Kennedy family has stressed that they prefer that John’s
life be remembered on the day of his birth, not his death. If you have visited the
Kennedy Library you will have noted that no part of the exhibit deals with that terrible
day in Dallas. The movie which is viewed upon entering the display area ends with these
words, spoken as the screen becomes dark: “On the 22nd day of November, 1963, in Dallas,
Texas, John Fitzgerald Kennedy died....” The audience typically sits in silence for
several moments, many wiping away an embarrassing tear. Each is remembering exactly where
he was and what he was doing when the tragic news was heard. Probably, if you were alive
in 1963, you are having a flashback to that moment right now. If so you, can relate
to a moment in history which occurred 124 years ago. Dennis residents in 1865 did not
hear about President Lincoln’s death, nor did they respond in the same manner as they did
in 1963. The telegraph operator in the Dennis Port office must have read the report incorrectly!
but subsequent reports confirmed the news. As the word spread around the town, neighbor comforted
neighbor. Teachers who received the news at school tearfully dismissed the children.
Wagons pulled off the road, and their drivers openly cried. Two days earlier the town
had joyfully celebrated the surrender of Lee to Grant at Appomattox. An outdoor rally
had been held in West Dennis, with speeches made from the steps of the church. “Jeff”
Davis had been hung in effigy, there were cheers for the President and General Grant,
and patriotic music was heard. “It was the general belief that so fine a celebration
had never before been held in this place,” states a letter to the editor in the Yarmouth
Register, of April 21, 1865. But the letter appears in columns edged in black, side by
side with accounts of more somber activities. As in 1963, so in 1865, the citizens
bonded together in their shock and grief. In Dennis village the residents of the north
side met on Sunday evening, which was Easter Day—“Oppressed with grief and wishing to
sympathize with each other.” On the south side, citizens met the following evening to
make resolutions expressing their sentiments of grief and loyalty. On the 19th of April,
a memorial service was held at the South Meeting House at the same hour as the funeral
in Washington. The church was draped in black, and a large and solemn audience attended.
Flags were at half-mast, bells tolled mournfully for hours. Of these sad days, Carl
Sandburg has written: “Thousands on thousands would remember as long as they lived the
exact place where they were standing or seated or lying down when the news came to them.”
If you were born before 1960, these words could apply to you on November 22, 1963.
Memorial services, tolling bells, lowered flags and shared grief are all a part of that
flash back. This year, as for many years, Abraham was remembered on the day of his
death. The anniversary of his assassination passed with only a line in the daily almanac. One day
this will be true of J. F. Kennedy. But as long as any of us live who heard live reports
from Dallas, we will remember the exact place where we were when the news reached our
bewildered ears.

When lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed,
And the Great star early dropped in the western sky at night,
I mourned and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.”

Walt Whitman