## DENNIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 16 No. 5 May. 1993 Compiled and Edited by Nancy Thacher Reid



#### THE BICENTENNIAL TOWN MEETING

The good citizens of Dennis convened for the 200th Annual Town Meeting at 7:00 P.M. May 4, 1993 at the Nathaniel H. Wixon Middle School to transact the business of keeping our town running for its 201st year. The meeting was carried on in an orderly fashion by Moderator Robert Chamberlain and 45 articles were dispatched with ease in one evening. The voice of dissent was heard, which is good! Some of the early town meetings of this century and, I expect, the century before were marked by great discussions (and dissention) over certain articles of the time. Too bad none of them were recorded. Some of our forbears were very good orators and a few of those town meetings must have been pretty lively.

The meeting was opened by 10th generation Ben Thacher, a direct descendant of Anthony Thacher--one of our three original settlers. Ben was dressed in the colonial garb of the Town Crier and he played the part to perfection. Ben read the Proclamation of Incorporation of the Town of Dennis, signed by Gov. John Hancock on June 19, 1793. For those of you who do not know Ben---picture a full-bodied, full-bearded man with his glasses at half-mast, a 100% uncut Cape Cod accent, and a twinkle in his eye. Thanks, It was our pleasure.

The Bicentennial Quilt was unveiled --- and what a beauty it is! The Stitch and Chatter Quilters did an outstanding job. It had to be a labor of love. After being displayed at a number of functions and locations this Bicentennial year it will hang

permanently at the Dennis Town Office. Thank you ladies, from all of us.

And the envelope please....Life-long Dennis resident Joshua Crowell was named Grand Marshal of the Bicentennial Parade on June 19th. That's our Josh Crowell---our one and only Treasurer of DHS. Josh's service to the town from various and sundry jobs, committees, etc. adds up to 155 years of service!---and those are only the ones listed in the town reports. Not to mention service to DHS, The Dennis Memorial Library, his church, or any other volunteering. Josh makes a fine representative of all the men and women working today....and those who have been here before us....to make Dennis what it is today.

Just think...after June 19th we'll be heading towards our Tricentennial!!!

### ANSWERS TO TOWN MEETING TRIVIA

The question was: Name four buildings still standing where town meetings have been held since the demise of the old Town House shown on the cover of the Annual Reports of 1992, excluding the Nathaniel H. Wixon School.

The Answer:

- 1. West Dennis Community Building was the regular Town meeting place from 1923 to 1951. The building was also in use as a school from 1923 to 1930.
- 2. Ezra H. Baker Achool was used for annual Town meetings for 1952, when the first addition which included the auditorium was completed, until the opening of the Wixon School in 1970.
- 3. The large meeting room at the Town Office Building was used for several Special Town Meetings in the 1960's, after the addition to the west was built.
- 4. The Cape Playhouse was the site of a Special Town Meeting at one time, but I'm not telling when or why. You'll have to read the book!

## THE HENRY C. BOLES SCHOLARSHIP

This years recipeint of the Henry C. Boles Scholarship was Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School student Elizabeth Symington. The award was presented by Peggy Eastman. This scholarship was started with funds remaining from expenses of the delegation that went to Denver, CO in 1977 to compete for the 1978 All-America designation. It was named in honor of the late Henry C. Boles (selectman from 1973-1977), whose leadership and extensive personal contributions to town programs were in large part responsible for the town's being eligible for this special recognition. The award is based on an essay on the subject of citizenship and is intented to perpetuate the citizen participation that originally won Dennis its designation as an All-American town. This scholarship will continue as long as we (that's you and I, folks!) continue to make contributions. Please make checks payable to: Town of Dennis, Henry Boles Scholarship Fund. Checks should be delivered or mailed to Elinor Slade, Treasurer, Town of Dennis, Dennis Town Hall, South Dennis, MA 02660.

Reservations by June 12th.

DHS CELEBRATES THE BICENTENNIAL
A good way to relax after the excitement of the Parade on Saturday will be at our
200th Birthday Dinner at the Lighthouse Inn, West Dennis on Sunday, June 20th with Social
Hour at 5:00 P.M. in the Lower Deck and Dinner at 6:15 in the Dining Room. This is such
a lovely spot looking out over Nantucket Sound. We have been anticipating this Birthday
Celebration for a number of years and it's finally here! Do comewe're expecting you!!
*** <del>*</del> ********************************
200th Birthday dinner reservations
Please make reservations for people. I enclose a check for \$(\$14.00 per person)
Tax and gratuity included.
Choice of entree:Seafood Newburg in Patty ShellChicken Bianco (white wine and
mushroom sauce)
Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope and send to: Joshua Crowell
Box 963

Dennis, Ma 02638

#### CALENDAR

May 12 7:30 P.M. May 18 10:00 A.M.-8:00 P.M. DHS Board meets with Brendan and Maureen Joyce.

Dennis Town Elections. It's important to get out and vote!

May 20-28 June 14 Anytime Third grade school program at Josiah Dennis Manse. Flag Day. Fly the flag, also the Bicentennial flag. We are still accepting sponsors for Nancy Thacher Reid's History of Dennis. Mail a check for \$100.00 to DHS, Box 607, South Dennis, MA 02660. Please make a notation of how you would like your name listed on the sponsorship page.

#### WE HAD A FLAG DAY IN APRIL!

What an interesting program we had on April 18th. DHS member Ed Gelsthorpe of East Dennis presented his program on "The History of Flags". Not only were his flags beautiful, but his narration was informative and entertaining. If you missed it and ever have the opportunity to catch it somewhere else, our advise is——do it! The Board members once again provided some delicious refreshments. Our Program Chairman Gertrude Lailey does a great job of finding nice programs for us. Thank yous to Gertrude, DHS Board, and Mr. Gelsthorpe!

### DHS CUP PLATES

In 1984 DHS introduced some cup plates featuring the seal of the Town of Dennis. The Cup Plate was designed by Nina Sutton of Sandwich. It was engraved by Alvin White and pressed by the Pairpoint Glass Co., Inc. of Sagamore. The plates were sold out except for a certain number that were held out to be released during our Bicentennial Year. They will be presented for sale on June 20th at the DHS Birthday Dinner at Lighthouse Inn at \$25.00 plus \$1.25 MA tax and are available in clear or blue. They may also be ordered by mail by sending \$30.00 to Dennis Historical Society, Box 607, South Dennis, MA 02660. Please state which color you want.

### MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Membership Chairman Isabelle Flynn has announced 12 new members up to mid-April. Our new members are: Mr. and Mrs. Alden Grove, Nelson W. Stanford, Alfred and Priscilla Reylik, Mr. and Mrs. Conrad MacQuarrie, Mrs. Virginia Reynolds DeAngelis, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Chamberlain and Mr. and Mrs. Alfred F. Wild. Long-time member Pauline Nickerson Kennedy is our newest Life Member. How nice to have you join us in our Bicentennial Year.

# OUR HISTORIC HOUSES....

in 1962 to enable the town to accept the gift of the Jericho House from the estate of Elizabeth Reynaud, author of "This Narrow Land" and other books. At that time Dennis had no historical organization and it was anticipated the gift would go the the Historical Society of Old Yarmouth. An interested group of Dennis citizens formed the Dennis Historical Society for the purpose of "establishing a Dennis Historical Center and will be glad to actively assist in furthering the purpose." Several years later the town purchased the Josiah Dennis Manse. Over the years both houses have been well maintained and staffed by the town and DHS members. However, many of our long-time volunteers are no longer able to assist with hostessing duties as they have in the past. In order for the houses to be open in the summer we need more volunteers. We anticipate many visitors this summer because of the Bicentennial Year and a special Cape Heritage event (more on this next month). Being a host or hostess is very easy. All the information you need is provided. There will be an orientation day at the Manse on May 19 and 26 at 9:30 A.M. Please volunteer for one or more times—the more you become involved, the more interesting it becomes. It's a very pleasant way to pass a summer afternoon from 2-4. Please call Lilla Smith at 398-3367 to assist at Jericho (the Barn Museum is especially interesting for men) or Phyllis Horton at 394-0017 to help at the Manse, where we have a Maritime Wing that is very interesting to men, also.

#### CASTING CALL

The Dennis Recreation Department will be casting for a revue "Dennis...200 Years Young" written by Ben Thacher and directed by Marcia Wytrwal to be presented June 25, 7:30 P.M. at Wixon Middle School. If you are interested in working on this project please call Mike Farreau at Dennis Town Hall 394-8300 ext. 51 or 59.

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