McDonald at Chapin Beach for a nature walk. As usual, George was generous with his time and wealth of knowledge. Everyone came away refreshed by the salt air and stimulated by the new information they had learned.

DENNIS IN THE FALL

A small but enthusiastic group met with Dennis Natural Resources Officer George McDonald at Chapin Beach for a nature walk. As usual, George was generous with his time and wealth of knowledge. Everyone came away refreshed by the salt air and stimulated by the new information they had learned.
CALIFORNIA

Nov. 14 7:00 PM  Board meets at Gertrude’s
Dec. 6 10:00 AM Cape and Islands Historical Assn. meets at Cape Cod Community
College in the Language Lab at the Library. The subject will be
Disaster Planning given by New England Document Conservation Center
Dec. 8 2-4 PM Harwich Historical Society Open House, Brooks Academy. All invited
Dec. 9 2-5 PM Christmas Open House at Josiah Dennis Manse

CHRISTMAS AT THE MANSE

You are cordially invited to join us on December 9 from 2-5 PM at the Josiah Dennis
Manse for our annual Christmas Open House. Susan Kelly & Co. will again put their decorative
talents to work—transforming our old house into a Christmas delight. Dennis Girl Scouts,
Troop 1515, will greet you at the door with carols and Stephen Russell, singer and songwriter,
will entertain you with traditional songs. Our famous (or infamous) Col. Negus Punch will be
served along with many other goodies to tempt you. Do come to celebrate the season with us--
and bring a friend!

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THANKSGIVING?

My spouse and I were in Boston just lately. It was one of those beautiful October
days which we enjoyed this year, just before Hallow’een. As we walked down Newbury Street
headed towards the Public Gardens, the shops to our left were advertising all the necessities of
a matter of fact, some of the young people we passed seemed to be trying out their costumes
for effect a few days early! Be that as it may, we had no complaint with the orange and
black streamers and pumpkins, nor of the passing crowds in their varied garb. But to our
right, along the street there were crews of workers stringing Christmas lights in the little
trees. The trees were not even bare. Many of them were still totally green,—and already,
in early October, being dressed for December 25th. What happened to Thanksgiving? Don’t
remember a holiday of that name, first celebrated by the Pilgrims in 1621, and held
sacred, especially in New England, ever since? Well, not exactly ever since, for the feast-
and family get-together we know as Thanksgiving did not become an annual event until
modern times. A second season of Thanksgiving which was also a time of feasting as well as
prayer was in July 1623. After that, and throughout the Colonial period Days of Thanksgiving
were proclaimed by the governor, or the General Court for such things as military victories,
the ending of a plague of sickness or insects and even for a refreshing rain following a
period of drought. Then towards the middle of the 19th century a day of Thanksgiving
appears almost annually, as a harvest celebration in the province of Massachusetts. It
continued to be a local holiday proclaimed at different times in different states until
President Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November, 1864, as a national day of
Thanksgiving. It was celebrated on November’s last Thursday until 1939 when Franklin
Roosevelt moved it back a week to lengthen the Christmas shopping season. In 1941, Congress
ruled that the holiday would fall on the fourth Thursday of November, and would be a
federal holiday. A couple of trivia questions you might toss out as you gather around the
festive board this year. Who was it who campaigned for twenty years to have the holiday
nationalized? And on what day is Thanksgiving celebrated in Canada?

A WORD FROM ISABEL

The United States Postal Service has become very strict regarding delivery of non-
profit permit mailings; i.e. third class postage--treatizing as "undeliverable" pieces not
showing: Proper name and address, street number, P.O. Box number, or Zip Code. Temporarily
away residents should notify DHS of their forwarding address and dates of departure and
return. Also, changes in address, new P.O. Box number, or from box to street number deliv-
ery at home or for permanent change of residence address. To insure timely receipt of your
newsletter please notify DHS, Box 607, South Dennis 02660, or by phone 385-2966 in advance
of seasonal or other changes.

Isabel also announces some new members as of September: Mr. Thomas and Dr. Paulette
Periera, Mr and Mrs. William T. Brown, Alice Chase, Mr. and Mrs. Seth Crowell, Mr. and Mrs.
Harry Whitley, Joan Merz, Thomas E. Howes, Wilfred P. Ellis, and New Life Member Norma
Dooley. Welcome aboard, one and all! Be sure to attend our Open House at the Manse, and
introduce yourselves—we’ld love to meet you!!

Dennis Historical Society
P.O. Box 607
South Dennis, MA 02660