



Dennis Historical Society Newsletter July 2021

Volume 44, No.07

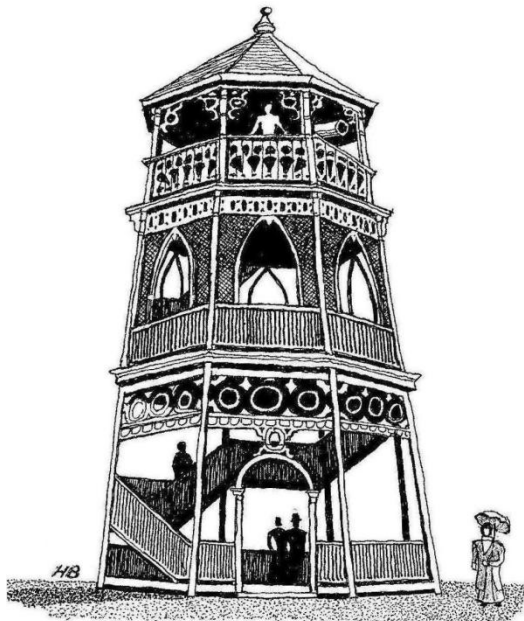
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**The next Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 13th, 2:00 pm at the Dennis Memorial Library
1020 Old Bass River Road, Dennis Village**

Members Welcome

Please send information & stories for the newsletter to Dave Talbott at the DHS Website email address: info@dennishistoricalsociety.org

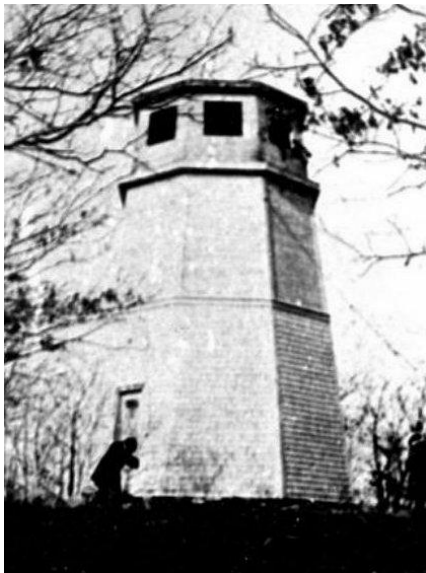
Imagining the Past – 2



Scargo Tower by Howard Bonington

The March 2021 Newsletter featured the first rendering by local artist Howard Bonington of a scene from the past for which there are no known images. It was of the Crowell Pier at the mouth of Bass River, circa 1825. Howard has been at it again, this time imagining the original wooden tower which was erected on Scargo Hill. Of this, he writes – *Once upon a time long ago in 1874, a pleasure tower was built atop Scargo Hill in the Town known as Dennis. The hill had been created, according to legend, centuries before to honor the Indian princess Scargo, who had cared for the survival of so many precious goldfish. On this appropriate spot, the tower was constructed by a group of wise men, known as investors, to provide a scenic panorama of Cape Cod Bay, to tourists and townspeople alike, all for just a nickel! Another, Francis Bassett, donated a telescope, mounted in the tower, to greatly magnify the view. Alas, two years later, in the Age of Victoria, Mother Nature totally destroyed the tower with a violent windstorm. And then, it was gone forever. What was it like? Was it a very plain tower? OrDid the wise men, who wished it to be a popular attraction, carefully design it to reflect the Victorian tastes of the age. There is no record. Now, we can only see it in our imagination.*

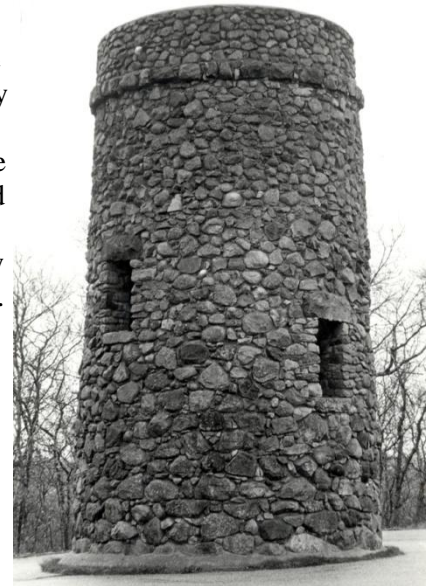
Thank you Howard!



2nd Scargo Tower – image provided by the DHC

In case there are readers who are either new members or missed the article in the June 2020 issue, I went back to one of my favorite quick and easy reference books *The Gazetteer of Dennis*. Produced by the Dennis Historical Commission and edited by Burton N. Derick, this book provides the following encapsulation of the history of the second and present Scargo Towers.

Rebuilt of wood, the second tower was secured by wire cables to prevent winds from toppling it again. In 1890, the hill and tower were purchased by Francis Tobey, who had purchased the NobsCUSsett Hotel from his brother Charles. In 1900, a fire started on South Main Street near Southworth Nye's butcher shop, and the wind being so



Present Scargo Tower – DHS Digital Archive

brisk, it spread rapidly. A backfire was started to contain it, and it worked, but not before the wooden tower on Scargo Hill lay in ashes. Francis Tobey had the tower re-built, this time in stone. The rocks came from Sandy Neck, Barnstable, and were brought by raft to Corporation Harbor. The 30-foot tower was built by stonemason John Murphy of Boston who always wore white overalls and a derby hat.

Taking Steps Toward the Way We Were!

As you see by the enclosed 2021 calendar, the Society has started on the path to being normal again! After fifteen months, the banner at the top of the newsletter's page 1, announces that on July 13th the Board will meet in person. Kevin's posters on page 4 inform us that July will have the first two events of the year, cemetery walks conducted by board vice president Terri Fox! In August, the Josiah Dennis Manse Museum and the DHS Maritime Museum will reopen! Work has not yet started on the renovation of the Captain Baker House and Barn, so the Jericho Historical Center will be closed for all of this year. It will be so good to welcome people back! Please note all the 2021 events on your personal calendars and attend as many as possible.

Mr. Fred D. Gage

Returning again to the March 2021 Newsletter and the July 8th 1913 fire which destroyed Fred Gage's house and barn, the following question was asked - "Like the Phoenix, did Fred Gage's business rise from the ashes?" Here is follow up information on both the man and the property emailed to me by DHS Board Member and Dennis history buff Ann Croston. Ann has spent 100s of hours researching our history. Especially useful in her research have been the resources available through the Newspaper Indexes of the Sturgis Library's *Barnstable Patriot and Register* Digital Archive - <https://www.sturgislibrary.org/collections/newspaper-indexes/> - a visit to the site is highly recommended!

Farmer's Exchange rebuilt

Barnstable Patriot, Monday, November 24, 1913 Hyannisport. The dwelling house and stable that are being removed from the lot where the new inn is to be built have been sold to Mr. Fred Gage and are being "flaked" to Dennis where they will be erected on the lot occupied by the store that was burned last summer.

MILCH COWS FOR SALE.

New Milch Cows—one four, one seven — 16 quart and 18 quart. Prices reasonable. Several Helpers for sale. F. D. GAGE, Farmers' Exchange, Dennis, Mass.

Yarmouth Register, Saturday, July 28, 1917, page 2

Yarmouth Register, Saturday, November 15, 1919; Page: Mr Fred D. Gage of the Farmers Exchange is busy these days letting out his cows for their winter keep. Mr Gage is probably the first man in the world who has conceived the idea of selling bovine stock on the installment plan. Yet it works wonders with the summer people, who want milk from their own faucets during the summer.

Friday, October 30, 1936, Fred D. Gage, 72 years of age, died in his sleep at his home here (Dennis) last week.

Eldon Earle Davidson (1920 - 1963) Reminiscences: Next to the McDowell's and on the corner was Fred Gage's store. He sold the Sunday papers n peanuts, candy and various other items. I always remember that in the back there always seemed to be a card game going on and I believe there was a little poker played there. Mr. Gage had a very jolly disposition and as I recall had a gold, upper front tooth - He was also a fancier of horses and had a red coated, high stepping horse that he drove around the village. The original store has been enlarged several times and had several owners - I don't think the present store presents a good appearance for the town -

Date 4/6/1938, Deed 537-566, \$5000

I Thomas Otis, Admin of Estate of Fred D Gage, grant to Elsie L Williams, a certain parcel of Land with Buildings Northeasterly by land now or formerly Of Warren Wigginton, 270 feet

Southeasterly by land of said Wigginton, 83 feet

Southwesterly by land formerly of Freeman G Hall, 217 feet

Westerly and Northwesterly by the State Highway

See deed from William Crowell to Fred Gage dated July 15, 1905 and recorded in Book 271-462

Date 4/6/1938, Deed 537- 567, Grantor: Elsie Williams, Grantee: A Harold Castanguay

Yarmouth Register, Friday, June 20, 1941; Page: 7 - Louis Terpos has purchased a business in Dennis and moved his family there. Store also was known as "Louie's".

The Dennis Public Super Market (DPM), at 653 Route 6A, initially opened as a franchise of IGA (the Independent Grocers Alliance) which was founded in 1926 and quickly grew to eight-thousand independent markets nationwide.

Mrs. Estelle Savage and her husband were the original proprietors, then in 1941, Elias 'Louie' Terpos and his wife purchased the market. After the sale, Mrs. Savage had life tenancy above the market and worked behind the register nearly until she passed away.

Thank you Ann!

Back to the Homestead

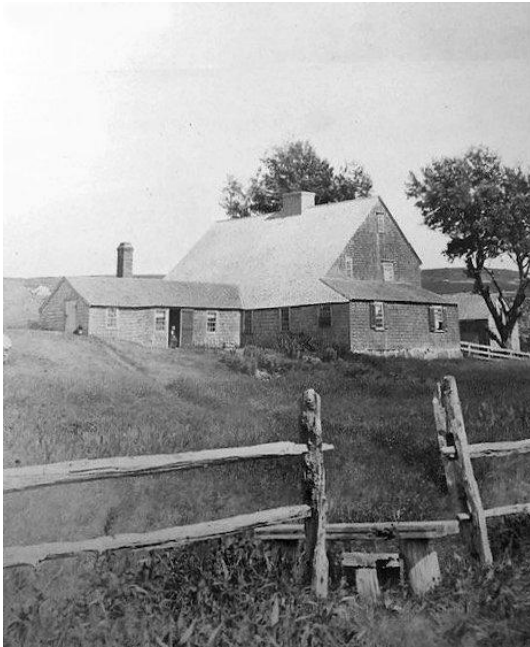
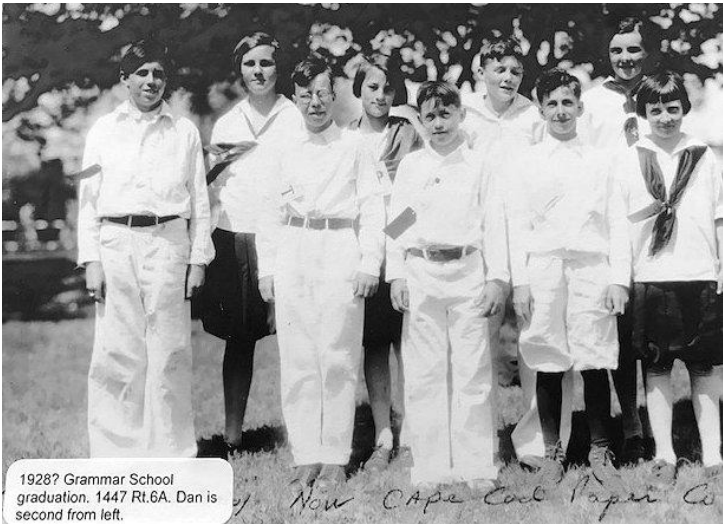


Image provided by James Bryant

As you remember, the June Newsletter evolved from an email with a picture sent to DHS from James Bryant of Newton, MA. After it was published, I emailed James a digital copy. Here is his reply –
Wow! I feel very honored to be the impetus for so much scholarship. I still have not fully digested all the information you sent me. Please extend my thanks to everyone who contributed. I certainly was not expecting such results and am both amazed and grateful. I don't think I told you how I was connected to the house. I am a Sears descendant but as far as I can tell not of the branch who owned the house. However, the sister of my 3rd great-grandmother was Jedidiah Baker Sears. My 3rd great-grandmother, Alcy Baker, also married a Sears. Jedidiah Sears was pictured in one of the photos I sent you. Alcy and Frederick Sears, my direct ancestors, left the Cape for the boomtown of Fall River and prospered. Again, many thanks, In fact, James had not included a second picture, but he promptly sent it when I asked him if he would. I will be sending a hard copy to Henry Kelley as I know he will be pleased to add it to his collection! It is amazing that the picture shows a very young Jedidiah at the door.

“Gramma School”

Our final article this month is another from lifelong Dennis resident Carole Bell. How terrific it is that we are again getting to learn our history first hand!



1928? Grammar School graduation. 1447 Rt.6A. Dan is second from left.

Photo provided by Carole W. Bell

and our parents were fast friends. My dad told me that when some work was being done, the school's flagpole was unearthed! I wonder where the flagpole ended up. In the DHS archives there is a good photo and the front porch that you see today was added by the Bohlins. I am including this original photo in the group that will eventually come to DHS but wanted you to have fun seeing it now. Maybe it is already in the archives but I am not the best “searcher”.

Thank you Carole!

My father labeled this as his gramma school and often pointed the building out to me when we would drive by. But in the DHS January 2021 newsletter it states that the other school was in East Dennis near Worden Hall and was demolished. So what about the school at 1447? The assessor's property card states that the building was built in 1900. I say we ask the super sleuth Ann Croston to find out! Map 390 Parcel 36.

Ed. Note – Carole is absolutely correct about the school on 6A. The January Newsletter was referring to the type of schools called *Graded Schools* which were in Dennis and East Dennis. Carole further wrote - *Dan Walker, my father went here. It is now a private residence but when I was growing up, it was the home and office of the Bill & Doris Bohlin family who started the Cape Cod Paper Company. I grew up with the Bohlin kids*

Our Memories Are Our History

Please continue to share them with all of us. Your contributions are welcomed!

Dennis Historical Society
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02664

HISTORY COMES ALIVE
FRIDAY, JULY 16, AT 10AM



DENNIS VILLAGE
CEMETERY WALK

FREE TOUR WILL HIGHLIGHT
EARLY DENNIS HISTORY

Meet guide Terri Fox at the Receiving Tomb
RAIN DATE: Sunday, July 18, at 2pm

Coming up in August

The successful first year of the ***Kathleen E. Roche Internship*** is celebrated with an interview of intern Allison Smith by DHS Publicity Director Kevin Keegan and also with Allison's own reflections on her experience.



Sea
Captains'
Cemetery
Walk

FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 10AM

Join guide Terri Fox for a free walking tour through South Dennis Congregational Church Cemetery, 234 Main Street, and learn about local history through stories of notable early residents buried in these hallowed grounds. Park on the street or behind Scargo School next door. Rain date: Sunday, August 8, at 2pm.