Dennis Historical Society Newsletter

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Stone Family Historic Documents

I'm sure that our readers are well aware that Rev. Nathan Stone, the town's second minister, suggested that the town be named for his predecessor, the much beloved Rev. Josiah Dennis. Rev. Stone and his wife also resided in the Manse with widow Dennis and her stepdaughters while their own Manse was being built. Mrs. Stone bore their first child, Nathan, while living there. Burt Derick provided us with these excerpts from the archives of the Stone Family that provide wonderful windows back into the past and some fun summer reading:

PDH

A Minister's Introduction

[17xx Poem 3; a scrap of paper with verse on one side, notes on the other:]

[front:]

How A Minister Introduced himself to a Young Lady
My calling is Divine
My Living Large & fair
Come let us now Combine
And make a Happy pair
The womans Answer
S^{r} your Calling is divine
your Living But for Life
And when the Ministers Dead
what will become of his Wife

And Even Murder-----

Not all of the items in The Stone Collection involve the Rev. Nathan Stone. There are items from his parents, his in-laws, his siblings and his children. This, from his sister Joanna, was written about April 1778.

Joanna Stone, b. Southborough, 22 Apr 1747, d/o Rev. Nathan Stone (1708-1781) & Judith (Fox) Stone. The transcriber has no evidence that she ever married.

The Brookfield, Mass., Vital Records give the death of Joshua Spooner, "murdered March 1, 1778 by three soldiers of the Revolution, Ross, Brooks and Buchanan, at the instigation of his wife Bathsheba. They were all executed at Worcester July 2, 1778," which inscription is on Joshua's gravestone. The records also show that Joshua Spooner and Bathsheba Ruggles, m. int. Dec 1765, and were the parents of several children. The implication of the poem is that the murder was done for financial gain by the wife.

[At the bottom of page, inverted was:]

Cruel murder; of a mournful Poem.
occationed by Sentence of Death being passed upon William Brooks James Buhannon Ezra Ross

"The Cruel murder of a mournful Poem accationed by Sentence of death being passed upon William Brooks James Buhannon Ezra Ross and Bethsheba Sponer Who were tried and found tuilty of murdering M^{r} Joshua Spooner of Brookfield and Who are all ordered to be executed at Worcester thirsday the 2d Day of July next Which awful Sight god grant may be a warning to all.

You siners all both young and old
attend to What I Write and say
to Heart while you have time
What will be a doleful Sight
Behold I say a Sinful vew[?]
Who for their crimes
~~Soon going~~ to the gallows tree
to die before their times
Who being Wicked over much
Cant live half their Days
this the portion of a such
as follow sinful ways
And tho for Wise and holy ends
their doom may yet suspend
judgment will most assurdly
overtake them in the End
unless they do be times forsak
all their most Wicked Ways
And turn to god with all their heart
and live unto his Priase
Behold the murderers now in chains
With sad and heavy Heart
Approaching soon the place where
they
Will have their just Desert
No hope of favour can they have
from any humane hand
the Blood Which they have spilt
must be
Purged from off the land
yet if they in sincerity
To god do make
they may find mercy at his hand
for Jesus Christ his sake
No human pardon can ge bot
by intercession made,
But flea they must unto the [?]it
and by no man be slayed
their sad no woful case
an [worn]fed sight reveals
to [worn]t from venjenc in his chase
hath taken by the heel
we see the fall of those that cast
their lot in by degrees
with those that wait the twilight Past
that so no eye might see
that murderous action which the
thought
by Night would be concealed brought
by providence way Strangly
this for to be revealed
by which we see apparently
there are no place sure
where workers of iniquity
can hide themselves secure
there are no men by human sit
can keep their crimes concealed
When he that made them think if so
the same should be revealed
How odious murder is we see
how dear for it we pay
By that sad anguish of those folks
that are thus soon to die
we pray that all would Notice too
of their untimely death
and make their peace with god betim
while they have life and Breath
they that get wealth by Bloody [??]r
and slight the Righteous Ruby
Do have them here amidst their Days
and die at last like fools
Then takt a caution high and lo
For warning her eyou have to carry
on
From those whose feet are on
the borders of the grave
Repent of all your Errors past
and eye the stroke of Fate
lest you should come to shame at
last
and mourn when tis too late
And O that all that reads this now
would warning take by them
That so they may avoid the snare
that they were taken in
Besure young men do you attend
to what the scripture says
That he that's Wicked over much
shant live out half his days
and let this warning loud should
heard by ev'ry one
o do no more Such wickedness
as has of late been done

Joanna Stone her
Verse

Burt Derick

DHS Items

Like to meet some folks and get a bit involved with DHS? Here's a few ideas ---

DHS Board – We are actively seeking interested individuals, current DHS members or not, to help guide the Dennis Historical Society's many activities that span a wide range of interests and to help us expand our horizons to attract a wider audience. As I look over what we are doing as well as the many activities of the other historical societies across the Cape (see the Cape & Islands Historical Association web site for the list), it seems that the extensive range of activities represents the imaginations of their members. What sorts of activities is DHS involved in and where could you help out?

Become a board member. We are looking for folks interested in becoming Board members, people interested in interacting with other folks and helping DHS grow and expand into new areas that will be of interest to a wide range of individuals. Board elections are at the Annual Meeting, so please let us know soon. The DHS Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 22 at historic Liberty Hall in South Dennis, with Edmund Rhodes Nickerson our guest Speaker.

Another thing that comes to mind is our need for someone to head up our Programs activity, or folks who just want to help plan new activities for DHS. These activities can involve a wide range of topics, including programs with other Cape Cod historical societies.

Then we could use some volunteer help with our Digital Archiving project – an activity that will bring over 40,000 items (pictures, log books, journals, postcards, letters etc) of historical value as a fully searchable archive on the internet.

We're also planning a new web-site. We have a small committee formed, but would love to know what you would like to see there – or don't like on our current site. We're looking to make this a highly relevant site for residents and visitors – not a static set-piece.

And then there's the three museums containing DHS Artifacts – the newly refurbished Josiah Dennis Manse Museum, the Jericho Historical Center and the West Dennis Graded School. Would you like to help out operate these Dennis treasures? Become a docent! It's a great way to meet people, become lightly involved and help them function. For the Manse, please contact Terry Fox at 508-760-0433 or terrifox1@comcast.net, or Nancy Howes, Manse Committee Chair at 508-385-3528 or nanrich@verizon.net; For Jericho, please contact Joan Martin, Jericho Committee Chair at 508-954-9303 or JM9303@aol.com; for the West Dennis Graded School the committee Chair is Roger Sullivan, 508-760-3721 or roger_k_sullivan@msn.com.

And I would absolutely be tickled pink for you to send in old letters, stories about your families and the past, old pictures – items that can be used for this fine newsletter!!

I hope you'll consider joining our team.

Pete Howes, DHS President

Membership

It's time for DHS membership renewals. As our fiscal year begins on September 1, 2011, dues envelopes were mailed mid-July and are due back by August 31. Your dues help to fund all DHS activities and programs at all three of our museums. Thanks to all who so rapidly responded – and our thanks in advance for those of you who are just about to mail your check.

Dawn Delner

DENNIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD MEETING

Note: All members are invited to attend monthly DHS Board Meetings. The next meeting is at 3 pm on Thursday, August 11 at the air-conditioned Jericho Historical Center, 90 Old Main St. West Dennis. We have moved to meeting on the second Thursday of each month.

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~ COMING ATTRACTIONS ~

Friday, August 12th, 11:00 a.m.
Walk Through the Swan Lake Cemetery
with Terri Fox
Resting place of Cape Cod's only Medal of Honor winner, many local sea captains, early residents.
$3 donation to the tax exempt Swan Lake Cemetery Assoc. suggested for this private cemetery maintenance.
Meet at the Swan Lake Cemetery
Depot Street, Dennis Port
Rain date: Sunday, August 14th, 2:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 20, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Colonial Open House at the Manse
Costumed interpreters will demonstrate early skills such as: open hearth cooking, candle making, spinning, pie making, children's games on the lawn – and more.
Always a wonderful event for young and old!
Visit the one-room schoolhouse.
Refreshments will be served.

1736 Josiah Dennis Manse Museum
77 Nobscusset Road, Dennis Village

Sunday, August 21, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Summer Fun Days at Jericho
Costumed guides demonstrate the varied skills needed for life in the1800's.
See the authentic tools of the time in *The Barn at Jericho*.
Children's games. Refreshments
1801 Jericho Historical Center
90 Old Main Street, West Dennis

Sunday, August 21, Noon – 4:00 p.m.
Open House at West Dennis Graded School
School life in the 19th Century
Special Maritime Exhibit Continues
"The Bounty of the Seas"
Visit the 1867 Schoolrooms & 20th Century fishing artifacts
Shiverick Shipyard Video Presentation.

West Dennis Graded School House
67 School St., West Dennis