



# NEWS-LETTER

DEDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY      DEDHAM MA 02027-0215  
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January 2010

## ROBERT D. HALL TO LECTURE ON DEDHAM'S PRAYING INDIANS JANUARY 21

Robert D. Hall, historian and author will present *The Praying Indians of Dedham*, Thursday, January 21, 7:30 PM at the Society museum/auditorium. Hall will tell the history of John Eliot's first establishment of a home for those American Indians he converted to Christianity, educated, and "civilized" on a tract of land carved out of Dedham and located in what are today portions of Natick, Dover, Wellesley, and Needham. The talk will include some of the Indians' exploits during both King Philip's War and the American Revolution.

Hall is a resident of Needham where he serves as a member of the Needham Historical Commission. He is also Needham Historical Society Historian and Editor of its newsletter, "The NHS Gazette," for which he has written nearly 100 essays on the history of Needham and environs, including the Indian Lands.

Hall has lectured at schools, historical societies, and before numerous clubs and organizations throughout New England on such subjects as "The American Civil War," "The Irish Invasion of Canada," "Rufus Porter, Peripatetic Artist," "King Philip's War," and the Massachusetts Praying Indians."

He is a graduate of Brown University. He is a member of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, the Olde Colony Civil War Round Table, the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, the Lincoln Society of Boston, and is currently serving as a Commissioner on the Massachusetts Abraham Lincoln Bi-Centennial Commission, and as a Trustee on the Board of MassBay Community College.

## VICKY L. KRUCKEBERG APPOINTED NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Board of Directors of the Dedham Historical Society has chosen Vicky L. Kruckeberg as the Society's new Executive Director.

Kruckeberg has extensive experience as a museum administrator, curator, and educator. She most recently was director of the John Adams Courthouse "Discovering Justice" program at the historic Pemberton Square courthouse in Boston.

Kruckeberg will succeed current Executive Director and CEO Ron Frazier, who is retiring after 16 years at the helm of the Dedham Historical Society. Selected by a search committee, Kruckeberg was unanimously approved by the board at its November meeting.

"Vicky Kruckeberg brings a blend of organizational and curatorial skills that will ensure continued strong leadership of the Society," President Steve Brayton said.

Kruckeberg's appointment is effective Jan. 1, but she will be working with Frazier during December to effect a smooth transition.

"I am honored to be chosen by the Dedham Historical Society," Kruckeberg said. "The Society is one of the oldest and strongest historical societies in America, and I look forward to working with the membership and the community as we build on this tradition."

Earlier in her career, Kruckeberg served as chief curator of the Detroit Historical Department and later as coordinator of the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center in Lansing, MI. After moving to Massachusetts in 2003, she was director of the Textile Conservation Center at the American Textile History Museum in Lowell.

Kruckeberg resides in Winchester. She is a graduate of Southern Illinois University, where she also earned a Master of Science degree in Clothing and Textiles. Kruckeberg holds a post-graduate certificate from the Museum Management Institute at the University of California-Berkley.

Kruckeberg's appointment is effective January 1.

## **A Farewell Letter from Ron Frazier**

### **Executive Director & CEO\***

As I prepare to enter a new phase of life—that of retirement—it is interesting to look back at my 16 years as Executive Director and CEO with Dedham Historical Society (DHS). When I first came on board it was as a consultant. Things soon grew into more than a full-time position. At times it has been challenging, amusing, fun and very rewarding.

I think one of the most challenging aspects of the position is getting across to the general public what the responsibility of heading a private, non-profit historical society involves. Some believe it is strictly as a historian, others a curator, and still others a genealogist, while in reality it's none of these and still all of them. The job of executive director is most importantly as an administrator, fund-raiser, media-relations person, part-time psychologist and magician, trying to keep all of the above balls in play.

As a child I was always interested in old things (which I later came to know as *antiques*, *antiquities* and *artifacts*), and old people (because of the great stories they could tell about people and times they had known, which became *history*). When I began my non-profit career as general manager of a chamber of commerce in 1969, my employer told me to get involved in the community, including the local historical society (which I did, eventually becoming its president). That was the beginning of my presidency and chairmanship of many historical, cultural, arts and civic organizations, eventually leading to my employment by the Dedham Historical Society. The kicker question I often receive is "*What do you do for a living?*" which, of course, is indicative of the lack of knowledge about historical societies, their directors and the important mission we undertake.

When I came to DHS, I was told by the board of directors that the Society was "*the best kept secret in Dedham.*" We've changed that and now have a reputation as one of the important regional historical societies. In recent years our growth in membership, financial strength and services has enabled us to take our place among the most recognized historical societies in the country. And well it should be. Our library and archives is one of the nation's oldest and most important. Our collections, which have been highly significant since the Society began in 1859, have increased phenomenally in recent years, due in great part to our visibility in the media and on the world-wide-web.

Of course, non profit organizations can only operate if there is a broad base of support and \*until 31 December 2009 most importantly, volunteers. I can truly say that DHS has been blessed with a cadre of magnificent, hard-working volunteers, as well as wonderfully dedicated professional staff. (I won't even attempt to mention names as there are so many.) I thank all for their efforts and support.

While out of necessity, as an administrator, (not the *curator* or *historian*), for me, one of the truly enjoyable, exciting and rewarding aspects of being CEO at DHS, has been the opportunity to hold some of the nation's most magnificent and important artifacts and documents and to play a role in their protection and preservation. DHS is no longer the "town's best kept secret," though the national importance of its collections is substantially underestimated, a fact which has become more obvious to me with each day that has passed and each new discovery made. As a parting word, I vigorously urge the board and membership to get to know and really appreciate what is held in public trust by DHS.

With an aged parent and four grandchildren, still many volunteer cultural and historical involvements, plus more of the world for Mary and me to see, more museums to visit, more genealogical research to do, and gardening on good days instead of just Saturdays, I've come to the realization that if I'm ever going to do it all, that I have to make the time. It is therefore, with a mixed emotion of sadness, a sense of accomplishment and many great memories, that I leave behind old friends and great collections to move on into another phase of life, that which is officially referred to as "*retirement.*"

I've been credited by others with accomplishing much at Dedham Historical Society; however, my wish is that it will be insignificant compared with what great strides will be made in the future.

In closing I would be remiss if I did not thank my family who has treated DHS like a "family business," as **volunteers**. My son, Forrest, not only photographed several items in our collections that now appear in school text-books and museum catalogues, he also created and has been web-master of our web-site for many years. My daughter, Sarah Anne who has been a top administrator in non- and for-profit organizations, has helped with suggestions. And my wife, Mary, has catalogued our costumes and textiles for 16 years, and also acted as our sometimes I.T. consultant. In addition her photographs have appeared in our press releases and News-Letters, and she has taken several thousand images, writing brief descriptions of items which the Society recently placed in off-site storage.

A heart-felt, sincere thanks to one and all.

## **LIBRARY ARCHIVAL ADDITIONS**

**The Oakdale School Library Media Project.** Gift of Eleanor Palma.

**Life of Reverend Benjamin Balch.** Gift of Holly and Bruce Decker.

**Rust Craft Cards.** Gift of Helen Nehiley.

**Through an Uncommon Lens** . Gift of author Patricia J. Fanning who wrote about Fred Holland Day, a renowned photographer and genealogist. He was born in Dedham and lived in Norwood.

**Dedham Women's Club April 1997- Sept. 2009 Ledger.** Gift of Sally Galt.

**The Best of "Tell It to Bud"**. Columns written by Walter E. Barrett, Jr. for the Bay State Antique Auto Club.

**Photographs of Legacy Place, Endicott Estate, and Brookdale Cemetery.** Gift of Joseph Pagliuca.

**Photographs of Dedham High, Class of 1949.** Gift of Eleanor Palma.

## **2009 ANNUAL APPEAL CONTRIBUTORS**

Our sincere thanks to all who helped us meet our financial obligations for the year 2009. It is only through such help that we are able to do so much of that to which we aspire. It is important to note that many other individuals and organizations have made significant contributions throughout the year to specific projects of the Society. They have been gratefully acknowledged at the time of the gift. (IMO = In Memory Of, IHO = In Honor Of) This listing is as of December 1. The next News-Letter will have new additional donations.

### **SESQUICENTENNIAL CLUB (\$1,500-2,499)**

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**Shown at the Annual Wine Tasting, which also honored retiring CEO Ron Frazier, are Society Directors Susie Durocher, John Herrmann, Jr., Clara Potash, Andrea Gilmore, President Steve Brayton, Ron Frazier, Director Mark Whalen, Mary Anne Osborne, Treasurer Bill Flanagan, and Director Michael Grogan.**