

Dedham Historical Society January 2005 Newsletter

JAN 20 LECTURE TO BE: Rediscovering the 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield

What happened to Dedham's offspring, in Deerfield, will be the subject of the January 20 lecture to be held in the Dedham Historical Society auditorium at 7:30. The lecture is free to members, with a \$5 charge to guests. Our guest speaker will be Professor Kevin Sweeney of Amherst College, and his subject will be ***Rediscovering the 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield***.

The devastating February 29, 1704 French and Indian raid on Deerfield is one of the most dramatic and revealing events in early American history. First settled in 1669 under the auspices of Dedham, Deerfield had grown to be a community of about 275 by the outbreak of Queen Anne's War. In a predawn assault, 250 to 300 Abenakis, Frenchmen, Hurons, Mohawks, Pennacooks, and Iroquois of the Mountain penetrated the village's stockade, killing 50 and capturing 112. By evening half of the village's population was gone: men, women and children. Of those taken prisoner to Canada, only 62 returned to New England.

Using previously untapped sources, Kevin Sweeney will recount how the attack grew out of the aspirations of New England family farmers, the calculations of French officials, the fears of Abenaki warriors and the grief of Mohawk mothers as they all struggled to survive the era's ongoing confrontations of empires and peoples. His illustrated talk is based *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), written by Sweeney and Evan Haefeli, Assistant Professor of History at Tufts University. Currently the two authors are editing a collection of accounts of the raid entitled *Captive Histories: Captivity Narratives, French Relations and Native Stories of the 1704 Deerfield Raid*.

Kevin Sweeney is Professor of History and American Studies at Amherst College, where he has taught since 1989. Born in Saratoga Springs, New York, he majored in history at Williams College and obtained his doctorate in history from Yale. He was director of the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum in Wethersfield, Connecticut, worked at the Winterthur Museum in Delaware, and from 1986 to 1989 served as Director of Academic Programs at Historic Deerfield, Inc. He currently lives in Greenfield, Massachusetts.

NEW ARCHIVAL ACQUISITIONS

- The Junior League of Boston/14th **Decorators Show House Book in Dedham**, Gift from Frank Gobbi.
- Dedham Photographs-**Disasters in Town 1953-1960**, Gift from Barbara Garlick
- **Letters to Catherine Dexter Haven**, Letters, article and genealogy, Gift from Burnham Carter Jr.
- **Riverdale School 2004 Yearbook and Catalog**, Gift from Nancy Clement
- **Dedham Women's Club 2004-2005**, Gift from Mrs. Jean Sawizky
- **Juror Booklet** related to Dedham trial, Gift from Jan Fiore
- **Colombo Sand and Gravel Photographs**, Gift from Joseph Columbo
- **School Photos Late 40's**, Gift from K. Boniface
- **Dottie Thomas Collection** Genealogy, poems, Gift from Barbara Fowler
- **St. John's Methodist Church Articles, photographs**, membership, church conferences, board meeting materials. Gift from Mrs. Sidney Brown
- **Football Team 1930 two photographs** Gift from Mrs. Patricia McCormack
- **Post card Mary Hartigan's**, Gift from Carol Sestito

- **Fair Canoe Club Photograph of Dedham Canoe Club Auxiliary**, Gift from John Sigel
- **Fryer Collection Maps**, written material about Dover, Gift from Josef and Bonnie Fryer
- Recording of St. Mary's Choir, Gift from the Choir
- **St. John's Methodist Church** (continuing) article about church, Gift from Walter Barrett
- **St. John's Methodist Church** (continuing) Homecoming booklet, Gift from Sally Galt
- Jim Kaufman Collection (continuing **American Jewish Committee** Greater Boston Chapter publication, Gift of Jim Kaufman
- Mary Folsom Collection **Photographs, diploma, ephemera from Ames Jr. High and Dedham High School**. Gift from Mary Folsom
- **Oakdale Jr. High Class Photo 1927**. Gift from Robert Keough
- **Fisher House tour on CD-Rom Recording** of inside of house where Adeline Grearson, granddaughter of **Alvan Fisher**, lived on School Street, Gift of Del Fillmore
- **Dedham Pottery Photographs** Unusual photographs detailing process of making pottery showing inside of the factory and kiln, Gift from Don Becker

THANKS FOR MAKING SPRING AND SUMMER MORE BEAUTIFUL

While our custodian, Fred MacEachern keeps our building and grounds in good shape, special thanks must go to Mabel Herweg for doing the plantings of shrubs and hostas, as well as cultivating and mulching. Bob and Mary Anne Osborne are responsible for the plantings that adorn the stairs at the entrance of our building.

So many thanks Mabel and Bob and Mary Anne.

NEW MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

- **Avery Oak Presentation Gavel** given to Town Moderator James R. Hooper, 1933. Gift from James R. Hooper, son of the recipient.
- **Cape Collar worn by Mary Ann Clapp** whose memoir was written in 1815 by her minister Joshua Bates (newly found artifact in the Society's collection).
- **Sterling Silver Nut Scoop made by Katharine Pratt**, in the shape of a stylized pineapple. Gift of Michael Grogan.

ONE MORE DEDHAM AUTHOR

Dedham is famous for its authors and artists, many still living. Of course we all know about Peter Reynolds, one of the newer authors of Dedham. We all know of Bob Hanson, who graduated in the Dedham High School class of 1964, along with Anita Shreve, also in that class. Shreve lived on VanBrunt Avenue. Our latest Dedham author also lives on VanBrunt Avenue.

Lisa Brems Brayton, wife of Society Vice President Steve Brayton, writes under the name Lisa Brems. Brems' new book ***Policing Needham – A Story of Suburban Cops*** details the history of a suburban police force.

Brems is a journalist who has written extensively for the Boston Globe and other newspapers in the Boston area. She has covered police beats and criminal trials and has a special interest in writing about law enforcement issues. She is also a member of the Society's Costume and Textile Committee.

Order forms for the book are available at the Society. They may also be purchased through Amazon.com, or BarnesAndNoble.com.

VALENTINES EVENING SET FOR FEBRUARY 12

Our Worthington Committee, under the direction of Clara Potash and Laurie Rabe, is in the process of finalizing a very special evening event for the Valentine's Day weekend. Just wait to see what they have planned. Watch for news about this happening.

SOCIETY RECEIVES GIFT OF DEDHAM POTTERY

The Society has received a gift of 80 pieces of Dedham and Chelsea pottery from Mary Simmons of Maryland. Simmons learned of the Society through our web site and determined that ours was the best location for her collection. A friend gave the collection to her mother many years ago. While it's all crackleware, much of it dates from the Chelsea period.

Simmons suggested that the Society keep the pieces that it considers rare, unusual, or better than what we currently have in the collection, and that we sell the remainder and place the funds received in the Collections Fund to purchase items that we need for the collection. There are about two dozen pieces that are important to the collection.

Details of the sale will be announced later.

1886 RAILROAD COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE RETURNS HOME

By Stephen Brayton

A piece of Dedham's history is back home after lying discarded in Sharon for many years.

A large granite plaque installed by the Boston and Providence Railroad in 1886 to commemorate a new railroad bridge in Dedham was discovered several years ago in woods near the railroad tracks in Sharon. The Department of Public Works trucked the stone marker back to Dedham in November and placed it temporarily in Brookdale Cemetery.

The 4x5-foot plaque reads ***THE FOUNDATION OF THIS BRIDGE WAS LAID A.D. 1886, THE 250 ANNIVERSARY OF THE INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF DEDHAM.*** Officers and directors of the Boston and Providence Railroad are listed on the stone.

Where was the plaque located in Dedham? Selectman Chairwoman Marie Louise Kehoe, who sought the artifact's return, asked the Historical Society to find the answer. So far, however, research has failed to uncover any information

Officials speculate the polished granite plaque was located either at the Dedham railroad station at High Street and Eastern Ave. or at the nearby railroad bridge across the High-East Street intersection. Both structures were removed decades ago. One clue: a marker stone visible today on the abutment of the former railroad bridge is dated 1886.

Kehoe, a Society member, would like to see the plaque displayed in a more visible location. She wants it incorporated somewhere on the reconstructed High and Harris Street highway bridges, a state project scheduled to begin soon. "We will have to talk with MassHighway about it," she said.

Anyone with recollection of the plaque in Dedham should contact the Historical Society.

FRAZIER ELECTED FELLOW OF MA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Ron Frazier has been elected a Fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Frazier has been Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Dedham Historical Society since 1983. He has also been Chairman of the Braintree Historical and Historic District Commission since 1992, is a past president of the Braintree Historical Society, and has served on a number of state and local commissions. He is a member of the Bay State Historical League and has served as an officer on its board of directors, and is a member of the New England Museum Association and the American Association of Museums. He is a past president of the Braintree Men's Club, the Wedgwood Society of Boston, the Captain Robert Bennett Forbes House Museum in Milton, and the Acadian Cultural Society. He is a Braintree town meeting member and a former member of the Finance Committee. In addition, he is a member of the Friends of the Thayer Public Library, and the American Legion (having served in Viet-Nam), and is involved in a number of other arts, historical and cultural organizations.

Frazier is listed in a number of "Who's Who" type publications and has received a number of awards for his work in the historical and organizational management field. He co-authored the book *Braintree – Its History*, and has been published in periodicals such as *The Magazine ANTIQUES*, *ARS Ceramica*, and *Antique Collectors & Price Guide*, among others. He lectures on the subjects of financial management of non-profit organizations and historical, arts and cultural subjects.

The Massachusetts Historical Society bestows the honor of "Fellow" on individuals who have made extraordinary contributions in the historical field.