

News-Letter - March 2006

KING PHILIP'S WAR IS LECTURE SUBJECT, MARCH 9

Michael Tougias will give a lecture and slide presentation on the war between the Colonists and Native Americans in 1675-76. The lecture will take place at the Dedham Historical Society Museum at 7:30 on Thursday, March 9. There is no cost for members; the non-member cost is \$5.

Tougias is the author of the acclaimed *Until I Have No Country (A Novel of King Philip's War)*, and co-author of *King Philip's War: The History and Legacy of America's Forgotten Conflict*.

The first part of the presentation will discuss the Native American way of life, colonial settlements, and the events leading up to the war. The second part will cover the battles and strategy during this cataclysmic war which, on a per capita basis, was the bloodiest conflict in our nation's history.

Slides will include battle sites, period sketches, historic markers, maps, and suggestions for visiting road-side history. Tougias will also discuss Native American strategy during the war.

Tougias is the author of fourteen books including *River Days: Exploring the Connecticut River from Source to Sea*, *The Blizzard of '78*, and *Quabbin: A History and Explorers Guide*.

All of our lectures this year are made possible by a grant from David Newsom in memory of his wife Carol.

NEW EXHIBIT HONORS DEDHAM FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS

Dedham Fire and Police Department artifacts, photos and memorabilia are part of a new exhibit currently in place in the Dedham Historical Society Museum.

While the Society's collection of artifacts has been quite limited, we have many old photographs and other ephemera. In putting together this exhibit, we have been most fortunate in having a number of items either donated or loaned by police officers Michael Buckley and Michael Feeley, and by firemen Nicholas Spada, William McElhinney and Michael Lessard. In addition, fire enthusiast Carlisle Smith has loaned the Society memorabilia from his personal collection.

Some of the artifacts from the Police Department include motorcycle paraphernalia, handcuffs, nightsticks, patches, badges, riot helmets, uniforms, and gas masks, as well as photographs.

The Fire Department exhibit includes fire trumpets, an axe, nozzles, record books, clothing, helmets and hats, antique fire apparatus toys, and photographs.

The Fire and Police exhibit will run through June.

ENDICOTT ESTATE PRODUCES DEDHAM POTTERY STYLE PLATE

The Friends of the Endicott Estate, working with the Dedham Historical Society, have produced a replica of a Dedham Pottery plate with an image of the Endicott Estate in the center. The plate commemorates the 100th anniversary of the estate.

Price of the plate is \$135. For information call Rita Mae Cushman at 781-329-1286.

SOIRÉE SET FOR JUNE 3

The social event of the year in Dedham, the Society's Annual Soirée, will be held a bit later this year, on the evening of Saturday, June 3. The date was changed to coincide with the House and Garden Tour.

Details will follow in late April or early May. Karen Durham is chairing this event for the Worthington Committee.

HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR ON JUNE 4

The Society's Annual House Tour, conducted by the Worthington Committee, is now a *House and Garden Tour*. For that reason the date has been changed to Sunday, June 4 to accommodate Mother Nature and greater garden displays. In some cases just the houses will be open, and in others just the gardens.

The anchor of the tour will be the magnificent MIT Endicott House, formerly owned by the Weld and Endicott families. Both the house and the gardens will be open for the tour. The gardens are considered one of the four most important gardens of their type in the country.

In addition, the committee will hold a plant sale to benefit the Society. The House and Garden Tour is being chaired by Susie Durocher.

DOCUMENT REVEALS 1812 POLITICS IN DEDHAM

Last year, the Society received a generous donation, an original handwritten document dated the Sixth day of April, 1812. The manuscript states that there was “a legal meeting of the Inhabitants of the Town of Dedham in the County of Norfolk and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, qualified by the Constitution to vote for Governor and Lieutenant Governor...for the purpose of giving in their votes for Governor and Lieutenant Governor of said Commonwealth.” The candidates for Governor were His Excellency Elbridge Gerry (the man for whom gerrymandering was named) and the Honorable Caleb Strong. Standing for election for Lieutenant Governor were the Honorable William King and Mr. William Phillips. Mr. Gerry received 299 votes against 172 for Mr. Strong. Mr. King triumphed over Mr. Phillips, 299 to 173. Five Dedham selectmen were noted: Calvin Whiting, Josiah Daniell, William Phipps, Homer Ellis, and Joshua Whiting. Mr. Daniell, serving as the town clerk, attested to the results. It was addressed to the Honorable Benjamin Homans, Esquire, Secretary of State for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and marked as received on April 11.

It is important for the Historical Society to preserve documents like this because they tell us a great deal about the past, both by what is written and what is omitted. The votes were given in, sorted, counted and recorded, all by hand. In 1812, there were over 239 houses in Dedham and over 2,000 inhabitants. Why were there so few voters? Perhaps because one had to pay a poll tax in order to vote. Also, some inhabitants were not eligible to vote, including women, men without property, Native Americans, blacks and indentured servants, among others. There were five selectmen. Calvin Whiting appears to have been very active in town life since he also signed the first subscription to purchase a fire engine, and it was housed near his store at Connecticut Corner. (A copy of that document is on display in the Fire and Police exhibit.) It is interesting that the town clerk, Josiah Daniell was also a selectman, a situation that today we would consider to be a conflict of interest.

The document itself was printed and then filled in by hand. It was probably a standard form on which the date, day, and locale were already printed, as well as the words “For Governor,” “For Lieutenant Governor,” “Selectman” and “Attest.” The clerk could fill in the rest of the information and seal the document with wax.

It is interesting to note that the votes were taken at a legal town meeting held in early April rather than on a separate election day.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR YANKEE MAGAZINE?

For several years, the Dedham Historical Society has had an arrangement with *Yankee Magazine* under their “Community Partners” program. The program gives a discount to people who subscribe to the magazine, and it also returns to the Society \$8 for every subscription. However, in order for the Society to receive the donation from Yankee, you must indicate when you subscribe or renew your subscription that you are doing so through the Dedham Historical Society.

Please cut out the coupon below and send it to Yankee with your new or renewal subscription. Mail it to: Yankee Magazine Community Partners, P.O. Box 523, Dublin, NH 03444-9985.

2005 ANNUAL APPEAL CONTRIBUTORS

Our sincere thanks to all who helped us meet our financial obligations for the year 2005. 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.

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