



# NEWS-LETTER

## DEDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

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Library Hours: by appointment; Museum Hours: Tuesday – Friday 12pm – 4 pm

Both are open even-dated Saturdays: 1pm – 4 pm

### JULY 2015

## MOTHER NATURE COOPERATES FOR SPRING SOIRÉE

The warm temperatures and sunshine arrived just in time for the Dedham Historical Society & Museum's Spring Soirée at the historic home of Mette and Bart Coughlin. Over 130 guests enjoyed food, wine, and friendship. A special thank you to our hosts for the use of their beautiful home and gardens; Building Conservation Associates for their assistance with the invitations; Stanton Lyman for his architectural notes on the house; Chiara for the amazing food; and MaryEllen & Mark Browne for sponsoring the pianist. The Worthington Committee also deserves special credit. They are an amazing group of women who volunteer their time and talents to organize our social fundraising events. The committee took care of numerous details from addressing the invitations to cleaning up after the event and everything in between.

Benefactors for the Soirée included: Donna and Paul Frank, Robyn and Dale Garth, Jennifer Krebs and David Jennings. Patrons included: Denise & Bruce Bauman, Vivi Duke, Andrea and David Gilmore, Nortie & Vicky Knox, Liz McCabe, Clara Potash, and Laurie and Bruce Rabe.



## SPRING HOUSE TOUR A SUCCESS DESPITE AFTERNOON SHOWERS

The weather prediction didn't deter 300 guests who toured the wonderful homes on this year's spring house tour. The owners of five architecturally diverse private homes on Village Avenue opened their doors in support of the DHS. An additional treat included a tour of the c. 1640 Fairbanks House, the oldest timber frame house in the U.S. A special thank you goes to our homeowners Patty Hornblower, Becky and Blaine Hurst, Marty and Kathy Lindermann, Maeve O'Marah and Sandy Zaragoza, Eric Merithew and Jennifer O'Neil, and the Fairbanks Family in America. We also want to thank Stanton Lyman for his architectural notes on the houses, Molly Jackson for her house sketches used in the house brochure, and Clara Potash and Laurie Rabe who served as co-chairs for both events. Gibson Sotheby's International Realty deserves a special acknowledgement as sponsor of our 2015 House Tour.

## **GRANT FROM DEDHAM SAVINGS FOCUSES ON DIGITIZING DOCUMENTS IN THE COLLECTION**

The Board of Directors and staff are committed to making the collection more accessible to visitors and researchers. This year the DHS received \$5,000 from the Dedham Savings Foundation to carefully scan fragile documents in the collection to create electronic versions while preserving the originals.

The first item to be digitized is a framed Indian deed to Dedham dated April 18, 1685 and signed by Charles (son of Josiah Chickataubut, grandson of Chickataubut, Sachim of the Mattadchuseuct), William Stoughton and others. This rare deed must be carefully removed from its frame, scanned using museum standard methods, and reframed for safekeeping. Once the scanning is complete a new paper copy will be enhanced and the text made more readable. The enhanced copy will allow visitors to read the text, something they cannot presently do with the original document.

The second part of this project includes a rare newspaper collection, the *Dedham Citizen*, which was published for only a short time in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The DHS collection of this newspaper includes the years 1939 – 1946 and contains significant information about Dedham servicemen, residents, and businesses during World War II. The original newspapers have turned yellow and are too fragile for everyday use. An electronic master copy will be made along with accessible versions for use by researchers.

Scanning the Indian deed and the *Dedham Citizen* newspaper collection will cost approximately \$10,000. The Dedham Savings Foundation grant will pay for half of the project and the Society will pursue support from other groups for the remaining balance.

## **SOCIETY RECEIVES MAJOR COLLECTION OF DEDHAM POTTERY**

Earlier this year, Dedham & Chelsea Ceramic Pottery Curator Jim Kaufman coordinated a major donation of Dedham Pottery to the DHS. The collection, from Charles E. Willis III, was acquired over many years by his mother, Catherine Childs. The ninety-seven pieces are all of the rabbit design and includes plates (dinner, bread & butter, luncheon), various bowls, pickle & olive dishes, ashtrays, candle holders, mugs, salt shakers, bouillon cups, demi tasse cups & saucers, tea cups & saucers, and more. The Society plans to incorporate some of these items into the exhibits later this year.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> GRADE STUDENTS ENJOY LEARNING ABOUT DEDHAM HISTORY**

Third grade students from Oakdale, Avery, and Greenlodge elementary schools, as well as Newman School in Needham participated in the Society's hands-on learning experience this spring. During their visit the students wore white cotton gloves in order to carefully touch museum objects and photographs, learn about the early schools in Dedham, and tour special items in the exhibits. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Dedham Women's Club.



## **LOCAL HERMANN DEXTER LODGE SUPPORTS FALL EXHIBIT WITH GRANT**

The Hermann Dexter Lodge # 133, I.O.O.F. Oddfellows is supporting the DHS with a grant of \$500 for the upcoming fall exhibition "Historic Gardens of Dedham." Gardens have always been an important part of the local community. In the early years they were a necessity for providing food and herbs and later, as the community grew, many of the larger estates were able to hire groundskeepers and gardens became a place of quiet contemplation. The exhibit will include early photographs of gardens, including the Endicott Estate, as well as objects such as the 1650 sundial owned by Jonathan Fairbanks. Several members of the Fairbanks Garden Club are assisting the DHS with research for the exhibition. Our sincere thanks to the Lodge for their support of this project.



## QUESTIONS WE ARE OFTEN ASKED – PART II

We received such a wonderful response to the Q & A section in our last newsletter that we thought you might enjoy a few more commonly asked questions and answers.

### 1. Where was the first public school in Dedham?

Located on the First Church green facing High Street, a bronze tablet in a large boulder commemorates the establishment of "the first free public school to be maintained by general taxation. Near this spot stood the First School House built by the town 1649." Classes were most likely held for the young scholars in the nearby meetinghouse until the construction of a separate schoolhouse. Education was open to all boys, supported by general taxation of the population. Tradition holds that Ralph Wheelock was the first schoolmaster. A tax was imposed on all male children between the ages of 4 and 14 to pay for the salary of the schoolmaster. Students were also required to provide wood for the fire places. Built by Thomas Thurston, the schoolhouse was constructed of wood with a watch tower attached. It was located by the Meeting House, perhaps a deliberate juxtaposition of intellectual and spiritual development.

### 2. What are the marble tablets in Town Hall?

The names inscribed on the two tablets commemorate the forty-seven local men who died in the War of the Great Rebellion (the Civil War). The tablets were originally placed in Memorial Hall, which was built to remember the sacrifices of these men and served as Town Hall along with housing several businesses. Located in Dedham Square, Memorial Hall was dedicated on September 29, 1868. Designed by Messrs. Ware & Van Brunt, Architects, of Boston, it was a majestic building built of local yellow granite and interspersed with blue Quincy granite. Of special interest is Charles W. Carroll, Captain of Company F., who was a graduate of Dedham High School, Dartmouth College, and was a member of the Suffolk Bar. He was wounded in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Bull Run and died Sept. 2, 1862 at the age of 26. The local group of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) was named in his honor. Memorial Hall was razed in 1962 to make way for the current police station and the tablets containing the names of the fallen soldiers were relocated to the lobby of the new Town Hall on Bryant Street.

### 3. What was/is the Mother Brook?

Mother Brook was also known as the ditch, the creek, the Mill Creek, and the Mill Brook. It starts at the Charles River and runs through East Dedham eventually joining the Neponset River.

The early settlers noticed that the Charles River often flooded the East Brook wetlands and large areas of their grazing lands. To solve this problem the townspeople planned to divert the water into an existing stream that emptied into the Neponset River. A permanent ditch was dug beginning in the summer of 1639 and the work was concluded a year later. From the Charles River the ditch dropped 45 feet in less than a mile enabling water-driven mills to be built, the beginning of the town's industrial growth. The total length of Mother Brook is approximately two miles.

Eventually there were five mills built along Mother Brook: the first, built in 1641, near what is now Condon Park at the corner of Bussey and Colburn Streets. The second mill was built in 1664, at High and Maverick Streets, called the Morse Dam. The third mill was built in 1682 at Mill Lane. The fourth mill was built on Milton Street in 1787 at Stone Mill Drive, and the fifth mill was built in 1814 at the corner of River Street and Knight Street in what is now Readville.

Mother Brook continues to be part of the flood control system for the Charles River. The Department of Conservation and Recreation regulates the flow from the Charles River into Mother Brook to prevent flooding.

**NOTE: The lecture by Robert Cheney “Willard Eight Day Clocks & the Mysterious English Connection” has been rescheduled for Thursday, September 24 @ 7:30pm.**

**THE ‘CRAB’ CHOSEN AS THE 2015 DEDHAM POTTERY REPRODUCTION PLATE**

The Crab design on antique Dedham Pottery was introduced more than a century ago during the time of Hugh Robertson, the founder of the Dedham Pottery. This rare design is highly sought after by today’s collectors. The New England theme design, with the Crab’s asymmetrical placement, owes much to the influence of Japanese art which had swept the Western art world.

This year’s plate faithfully copies a rare example in the Society’s museum collection. Be sure to note the embellishment of a stylized wave design around the perimeter.

The Crab design compliments the 2014 Lobster plate (which is still available). The price of the plate is \$88 for Dedham Historical Society & Museum members; \$98 for non-members. Massachusetts tax applicable for residents. \$12 fee if shipping is required. For information to purchase the Crab plate or any of the previous plates, please

see the enclosed flyer or contact the office.



**SATURDAY HOURS:**

*The DHS Museum, Gift Shop, and Library/Archives are open on even dated Saturdays from 1pm – 4pm.*

*This newsletter is a benefit of DHS membership. For membership information call 781-326-1385 or visit*

**WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS**

- Robert S. Bossange
- Richard DeVito
- Lindsey P. Driscoll
- Ellen Donovan
- Carol & Terry Gregory
- Gerspacher Family
- Kerry Hawkins
- Barbara E. Hunt
- Paul J. Ingersol, Jr.
- James F. McKinney
- Barbara J. McAlpine
- Rosanne Payette
- Mary Ellen Washienko
- Linda & Edwin Winslow

**PLEASE THANK OUR CORPORATE SUPPORTERS**

- Bay State Federal Savings
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- F. M. Walley Insurance Agency
- Grant’s Printing Service, Inc.
- MIT Endicott House
- Needham Bank
- Norfolk & Dedham Group
- Roscia’s Plumbing & Heating
- Total Image Day Spa
- Vogt Realty Group

**WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS**

- Barbara Berry
- Gabrielle Costantino
- Nancy England
- Gavin & Whitney Fitts
- Gary Gregory
- John & Kim Koger
- Darcy A. Lane

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**DEDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

Andrea M. Gilmore, President, James D. Kaufman, Vice President; William E. Flanagan, Treasurer; Clara B. Potash, Recording Secretary. Directors: Stephen K. Brayton, Thomas A. Gormley III, Alexander K. Leith, Stanton Lyman, Mary Anne Osborne, Laurie Rabe, John Underhill, Mark R. Whalen. Executive Director, Vicky L. Kruckeberg

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