JOIN US FOR THE SPRING SOIREE AND HOUSE TOUR!

The DHS annual spring Soiree takes place on Saturday, May 30, followed by the House Tour on Sunday, May 31. These are two events you don't want to miss.

The Soiree will be held at the private home of Mette and Bart Coughlin on High Street. Join us to enjoy tasty food, good wine, great conversation, and beautiful surroundings. Their home is a handsome, five bay structure, with a prominent hipped roof, an unusual dormer with a clerestory lantern of windows, topped by a “widow’s walk.” Soiree tickets include admission to the House Tour.

The next day, May 31, enjoy visiting five great private homes along Village Avenue plus the historic Fairbanks House. The tour includes an 1895 shingle style home, a 1960 ranch house transformed in 1982, a 1946 gambrel roofed cottage with major additions, a 1855 home which stylistically transitions from the late Greek Revival to the early Italianate design, and a 1965 home by architect William Berkes of Deck House, Inc.

Refreshments will be served along the way. A raffle for an original Dedham Pottery Swan Plate will be offered at the tea. This Dedham Pottery Swan Plate was donated to the Worthington Committee for fundraising and is not part of the DHS collection. Raffle ticket prices are: 1 Ticket $5.00 or 3 for $10. The drawing will be held at 4pm on Sunday, May 31, 2015 at the Dedham Historical Society & Museum. The winner does not need to be present at the time of the drawing and will be notified within three business days of the event.

Invitations to the Soiree were mailed to DHS members in early May. For more information on the house tour please see the enclosed flyer or contact the office at 781-326-1395, society@dedhamhistorical.org.

LOCAL GRANTS SUPPORT DHS PROGRAMS –THANK YOU!!!

The Society recently received several grants to support our 2015 programs. Once again David Newsom is sponsoring the DHS Lecture Series in honor of his late wife, Carol; the Dedham Women’s Club is supporting our educational programs; and The Norfolk & Dedham Group is sponsoring the DHS and Fairbanks House participation in the annual Flag Day Parade. We are also fortunate to have Grant’s Printing providing in-kind services to reproduce the Dedham Veteran’s Memorials and Monuments walking tour brochure. These grants are an important part of the Society’s operational budget and we are very grateful for their support.

DHS VIDEO HELPS SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THE SOCIETY

“WOW – This is amazing! Awesome video!”

Over the long winter the DHS worked with local videographer Nick Papps to create a three minute promotional video. The purpose of the video is to spread the word about the unique items in the collection, our exhibits, programs, and research facilities. The link to the video is posted on our FaceBook page, our website, and YouTube. Society members were also sent the link via an email message in April. If you haven’t seen the video you can find it on our website or on YouTube by searching Dedham Historical Society. Please share this video with your friends and family. Let everyone know what a great place we are and encourage them to become a member!
FAIRBANKS HOUSE PAINTINGS ON EXHIBIT THIS SUMMER

The DHS is currently hosting an exhibit of paintings of the Fairbanks House. Four paintings, each giving a unique perspective of the house, are on loan from the Fairbanks Family in America. The DHS and Fairbanks House have collaborated on several events over the past few years, but this is the first time that the Society is showing paintings from their collection. The paintings include: two 19th century paintings; a 19th century watercolor and a 1933 oil painting by J.B. Fairbanks of the house with a full moon shining on a snow covered house (see right). The exhibit will close on September 30th.

Oil Painting by J.B. Fairbanks

IS MY HOUSE HISTORIC?

If you live in Dedham, there are several ways to discover the answer to this question. First, Dedham has three local historic districts and one National Register Historic District. The houses located within these districts have been identified as significant historic properties. The three local districts are located at “Connecticut Corner” on High Street, around Franklin Square, and at “Federal Hill” on Highland Street. The National Register District includes all of these properties, as well as properties not in the local districts on High Street and Village Avenue. Maps of the boundaries of these districts are on the Town of Dedham’s Web site: www.dedham-ma.gov. There are many other important historic houses in Dedham that are not in the local and National Register districts – notably the Fairbanks House and the Endicott Estate. Your home may well be an historic house too.

Another way to learn about the history of your house is to spend a day researching at the Dedham Historical Society & Museum. The Society’s archives have a large collection of photographs, maps, and other information. For questions about researching at the DHS archives, please contact Sandra Waxman at: library@dedhamhistorical.org or call 781-326-1385. Ms. Waxman is available to assist with research by appointment on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00am – 4:00pm and on even-dated Saturdays from 1:00pm – 4:00pm.

HISTORIC PLAQUE PROGRAM

If you have a historic house and want to share this information with your friends and neighbors, consider purchasing a date plaque from the Dedham Historical Society & Museum. The historic house/building plaque program provides oval wooden plaques that are painted green, with the date in a contrasting color. To be eligible for a date plaque, the house, or a visible section of the building, must be 50 years or older and be substantially as built so that it accurately reflects its date of construction. The Society’s archives are utilized for verification of the date of construction.

Plaques are available for a fee of $85.00 ($75.00 for DHS members). The price for replacement plaques is $60.00. For information about the plaque program call the Society at 781-326-1385 or society@dedhamhistorical.org.
QUESTIONS WE ARE OFTEN ASKED

Throughout the year DHS staff and volunteers answer hundreds of questions. However, there are several questions that seem to pop up quite often and we thought the newsletter is a perfect venue to share the answers and put to rest myths that are often found in internet searches.

1. Who were the original founders?

The original founders of Dedham came from Watertown and Roxbury in 1635 and began building a settlement. They developed a Covenant and all who joined their settlement were expected to sign it. The land which eventually determined the Town of Dedham was granted by the General Court of Massachusetts to a few proprietors. These men then apportioned lots to individuals who would be part of the town: 12 acres to married men and 8 acres to single men. These original grants were made in 1636. Some of the early men mentioned in the Town Records were: Joseph Morse, Samuell Morse, Daniell Morse, Philemon Dalton, John Coolidge, Joseph Shawe, Abraham Shawe, Ezeriel Holliman and Nicholas Phillips. Note: The spellings of these names are as they were written in the original Town Records.

The first grants mentioned "The Keye" which was a place near the present Stone Bridge on Ames Street over the Charles River.

2. Did George Washington visit Dedham?

According to the October, 1894 Dedham Register "On the fourth day of April, 1776, after the evacuation of Boston by the British, Gen. Washington left Boston on his journey to New York, whither a portion of the army was on the march. On the same night, he lodged in Dedham. This fact is recorded in the diaries both of Rev. William Clark and Dr. Ames; although the latter enters it on the 5th while the former says it was the night of the 4th. Probably the last statement is correct as we know from independent historical accounts, that Washington left Cambridge on the 4th. There is little doubt that Washington spent this night at the Dexter House." General Washington had dinner at the Ames Tavern, and lodged at the Dexter House, at 699 High Street which was occupied at the time by Joshua Henshaw, an attorney.

3. What are the earliest burials in Village Cemetery?

The oldest stone in the cemetery is that of Hannah Dyer, who died in 1678, although a lot for a burial place was first set apart in 1636. There were 1,070 deaths recorded in the town between 1637 and 1777, but unfortunately there are few stones extant from that time period. In the Village Cemetery Preservation Management Plan prepared for the Town of Dedham in 2005, it was noted that some of the graves were dug over a number of times with no gravestones. Even the graves of the first three ministers are lacking markers.

4. Did Abraham Lincoln visit Dedham?

In September of 1848, when Abraham Lincoln was a first term congressman from Illinois, he visited Dedham to shore up support for Zachary Taylor who as running as the Whig candidate for President. According to George H. Monroe, a prominent Boston newspaperman and Dedham resident who served as an escort, Lincoln was ill at ease and indifferent until he began to speak at Temperance Hall. The book "Tale of a Dedham Tavern" by Walther Austin in 1912 notes "The speaker bubbled over with humor, told funny stories of western life to illustrate points in his argument, and talked to his auditors in the most familiar and off-hand way imaginable. Suddenly after he had been talking half an hour, a locomotive bell on a train about to start for Boston was heard. Lincoln stopped and said he had to speak in Cambridge that evening and must run for the train." Despite the protestations from the listeners, Lincoln insisted on keeping his word for the Cambridge people, as he had for the Dedhamites.

5. Who painted the murals in the U.S. Post Office on High Street?

The 1936 murals are titled "Early Rural Mail Delivery" and "Early Rural School" by artist William Lester Stevens. The Department of the Treasury's Section of Fine Arts commissioned the pieces - not as it is commonly believed, the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The function of the Section of Fine Arts was to choose art to decorate public buildings if funds were obtainable.
NEW ACQUISITION SHOWS c1930 VIEW OF HIGH STREET

Grogan & Company recently donated an oil painting showing a unique view of High Street. The street scene is looking from approximately the site of the courthouse towards Dedham Square. The artist, “Legard” did not date the image but there are clues that lead to the c1930 date. First, the car located predominately in the center of the painting lends itself to the 1930s and second, the U.S. Post Office, which was built in 1935, is not shown on the left side. The Dedham Institution for Savings building is located on the left side of the painting and the old Dedham Square train station is directly ahead. The Society has been unable to find any information regarding the artist and would appreciate help from our members to identify the artist.

OPEN SATURDAYS: The DHS Museum, Gift Shop, and Library/Archives are open on the following Saturdays from 1pm – 4pm: May 2, 16, & 30th; June 6 & 20th. This newsletter is a benefit of DHS membership. For membership information call 781-326-1385 or visit www.dedhamhistorical.org

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS
Robert F. Delph
Martin Egan
Amy Gabriel
William E. Gasperini
John A. George
Calvert C. Groton, Jr.
Timothy Lenane
Kevin X. Looney
Elizabeth McCabe
Judy Neiswander & Chris Kelly
Edward & Elisabeth St. George
Lia Hunt & Todd Zylsra

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PO Box 215  612 High Street
Dedham MA 02027
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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The Dedham Historical Society & Museum Spring House Tour
Sunday, May 31, 2015  Noon – 4 pm

Celebrate Dedham’s rich architectural history with a self-guided walking tour of wonderful homes in one of Dedham’s historic neighborhoods. This year’s tour includes five great houses plus the Fairbanks House, the oldest timber frame house in New England. The tour will take place rain or shine. We welcome children age ten or older. Refreshments and tea will be served along the way.

Tickets purchased in advance may be picked up the day of the tour at The Dedham Historical Society & Museum, 612 High Street; beginning at 11:30 am. Houses are open from noon until 4 pm. For more information contact the Society @ 781-326-1385 or society@dedhamhistorical.org

Ticket Prices:
DHS Members $25  Non-members $30

ORDER FORM

Name: __________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________

__________________________________________________________  ☐ Member

Email: ____________________________  ☐ Non-member
Telephone: ____________________________  ☐ Joining now

Tickets: ________@ $25 members $ _________

__________@ $30 non-members $ _________

Tax-deductible contribution $ _________

Total $ _________

Please make checks payable to: Dedham Historical Society; Box 215; Dedham MA 02027