

NEWS-LETTER

DEDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

PO BOX 215 612 HIGH STREET DEDHAM MA 02027-0215

Tel: 781-326-1385 E-Mail: Society@DedhamHistorical.org Web Site: www.DedhamHistorical.org

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

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

May 2017

JOIN US FOR THE SPRING SOIRÉE ON MAY 20TH AT THE HISTORIC SAMUEL DEXTER HOUSE

Join us for an evening of cocktails at the annual spring soirée on May 20th at the historic home of Vicki and Norty Knox.

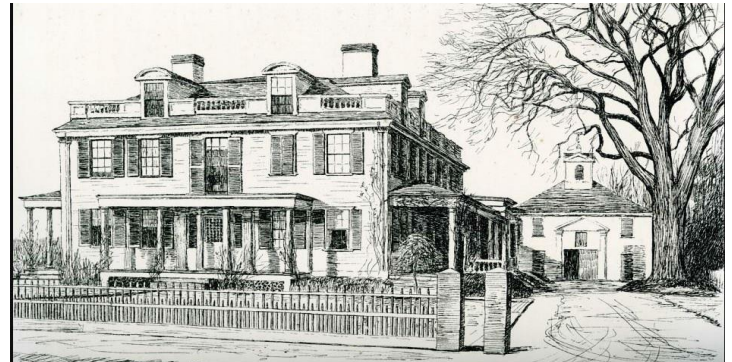
Known as the Samuel Dexter House, 699 High Street is an 18th century Georgian-style house that was enlarged and remodeled in the Colonial Revival style in 1901. The original house, built by Samuel Dexter in 1761, was a two-story structure with a hipped roof, center entry, and side porches. The house was occupied successively by the Dexter, Henshaw, Sprague, Swett, and Burgess families.

The 1901 remodeling added the third story, the roof balustrade, and the Colonial Revival trim. The interior of the Dexter House is noted for its historic scenic wallpaper, as well as its fine Georgian and Colonial Revival wood trim.

During the siege of Boston in 1776, the books from the Suffolk County Registry of Deeds were stored here for protection from the British. George Washington did sleep here – on April 4,

1776 – while traveling from New York to Boston. The etching (below) shows the house before its 1901 remodeling.

Invitations were mailed to DHS members in early May. Soirée tickets are \$100 per person, \$125 for patrons, and \$200 for benefactors. Catering is by Chiara of Westwood. For more information, please see the enclosed flyer or contact the Society office at 781-326-1385.



SOCIETY RECEIVES GRANTS FOR MILITARY ARCHIVAL COLLECTION

The Dedham Historical Society & Museum has received grants from the State Historical Records Advisory Board and the Civil War Roundtable to help preserve our military-related archival collections. The Society's military collection includes documents related to the French and Indian War, the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War I, and World War II.

The State Historical Records Advisory Board grant provides funding for the Society to catalogue the archival and photographic materials into a museum database and place them in appropriate storage materials. The Civil War Roundtable grant provides funding for the purchase of archival materials to re-house the Civil War archival collection.

Some of the more unusual items that will be addressed include: local militia lists from the French and Indian War; a printed booklet from 1701 titled *Military Discipline: The Compleat Souldier or Expert Artillery Man*; original photographs from the Civil War/World War I/World War II; ledgers from the 18th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers/Civil War and a Regimental Descriptive list of men enrolled in the regiment; personal letters including a letter from Henry Tisdale, 35th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, while in the Andersonville Civil War camp; and a Civil War diary written by Amasa Guild, 18th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE “HORSELESS CARRIAGE” IN DEDHAM

The next time you are caught at a traffic light in Dedham Square, you might want to consider the introduction of the "horseless carriage" in our community. According to historian Frank Smith in his 1936 book, *The History of Dedham*, Dr. H.K. Shatswell of Dedham built and drove a "steam powered horseless carriage" about 1900, two years after the first automobile was sold in the U.S.

Smith also notes that Theodore Burgess is recalled as being the first to drive a *real* automobile on the streets of Dedham after buying three French manufactured cars in 1900. Both Mr. and Mrs. Burgess drove the three cars in Dedham, and Mrs. Burgess is believed to be the first woman to drive in Massachusetts. Apparently, Dr. Shatswell's self-made steamer was not recognized as a *real* car compared to the French models.

The 1903 Massachusetts Registration Listing Book includes the following Dedham residents:

Registration #	Owner	Make & Horse Power
25	Harry K. Shatswell 67 School St., Dedham	
95	William H. Brouthers 59 Oakdale Ave. E. Dedham	2 1/2 H.P. N. England Motor Carriage Co.
141	Thomas R. Richardson 51 Court St., Dedham	6 1/2 H.P. Cadillac
230	Hiel E. Marden 535 Washington St., Dedham	
305	Eloise M. Weld Haven St., Dedham	4 H.P. Northern Mfg. Co.
1819	Benjamin F. Copeland 10 Willow St., Dedham	6 H.P. Stanley
2069	Frederick P. Royce Common St., Dedham	4 H.P. Stanley
2338	Theodore P. Burgess High St., Dedham	5 H.P. DeDion Bouton
2339	Theodore P. Burgess High St., Dedham	5 H.P. DeDion Bouton
2340	Theodore P. Burgess High St., Dedham	8 H.P. DeDion Bouton
2537	Frederick L. Lutz 25 Chestnut St., Dedham	



The image above shows Theodore P. Burgess, with his three imported automobiles from France, in 1900. For months after their appearance in town, their coming down the street (announced by loud engine noises) caused all activity to cease. The cars' owners were told to stay off the main highways and away from the railway station, the country club, and race meets because the noise frightened the horses.

THE SCHOOL CONNECTION

The Society is gearing up for springtime school visits by Dedham third graders. This June, we'll be hosting groups from the Oakdale, Greenlodge, and Avery Schools. Third grade teachers devote a unit to Dedham history, and their students visit the Historical Society and Museum to observe some of the objects that were owned by early citizens and to learn more about life in early Dedham. Items the students will see include a bell made by Paul Revere, Michael Metcalf's chair (the earliest dated chair made in America) and chest, and 19th century fire buckets. They'll also visit the Library and Archives to get a close-up view of early photographs of their schools.

The relationship between the Dedham schools and the Historical Society goes back to the 1800s, and the collection reflects that rich history. The Society's collection of School Registers, books containing handwritten records, dates back to the 1890s and continues through 1969. Annual School Committee reports, going as far back as 1843, are also part of the collection, as well as copies of *Reflections*, the Dedham High School yearbook, and *The Mirror*, the school newspaper, both collections dating back to the 1920s. These records are a treasure for researchers as they show information about the number of students enrolled in school, the daily attendance/absentee numbers, and financial records. The collection also includes miscellaneous diplomas, class photos, and reunion pictures.

This 1907 school room picture (right), identifies two individuals: the future Dr. Grant

(almost completely obscured) and Sarah Gallagher. Unfortunately, the school itself is not identified.



SPOTLIGHTING BENJAMIN BUSSEY

This year, our Family Research Saturdays spotlighted four early Dedham families, including Fales, Metcalf, Whiting, and Avery. The program was a success, with visitors exploring our archival holdings of these families. One of the families that will be highlighted next year is the Bussey family.

Benjamin Bussey (1757-1842) played a key role in the commerce and industry of early Dedham. He opened a gold and silversmith shop on East Street in 1778, where he made spurs, spoons, and other metal objects. After several years, Bussey added general merchandise, expanding an already thriving business. After making \$25,000, Bussey moved his shop to Boston in 1790. For 16 years, he ran a successful shipping and trading business at five downtown locations. At the age of 49, he retired to a 300-acre farm in what was then Roxbury, where he began raising Merino sheep.

At 62, Bussey came out of retirement to buy the failed Norfolk Cotton Manufacturing Company on Maverick Street in East Dedham. Five years later, he purchased a failed woolen mill on the site of the former Whiting mill, where he brought in the best equipment available and refurbished the old buildings. He used wool from his Merino sheep, producing a high caliber of wool that sold well for many years.

In addition to his superb business skills, Bussey was generous. He left his estate in Jamaica Plain to Harvard University, which transformed the land into the Arnold Arboretum, a place that many Bostonians enjoy to this day for its beautiful plants and trees. For more information on Benjamin Bussey, please contact DHS Archivist Sandra Waxman, 781-326-1385 or library@dedhamhistorical.org.

SOCIETY ANNOUNCES HORSE CHESTNUT AS 2017 DEDHAM POTTERY PLATE

The Dedham Pottery's *horse chestnut* design holds two distinctions. It was one of the earliest designs on Hugh Robertson's crackle-glazed dinnerware, which became known as Dedham Pottery, appearing before the business relocated from Chelsea to Dedham, MA in 1896. The *horse chestnut* design is also the least recognized motif. It has been mistaken for cotton balls, peaches, and grapefruit, none of which were Dedham Pottery designs.

The basic *horse chestnut* design remained largely the same over the 47 years of Dedham Pottery production and remained popular throughout that period. The Dedham Historical Society & Museum owns a fine example of this design, which this year's plate accurately reflects. The price for this year's plate for DHS members is \$88.00 plus sales tax, and the price for non-members is \$98.00 plus tax. Shipping is available for an additional \$12.00. To order a plate, please call the DHS at 781-326-1385 or contact us at info@dedhamhistorical.org.

Most previous plate designs are still available. Please contact the office for more information.



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

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

Peter Aranow
Caryn Ciesielski
John Dashe and Family
Karen Elverson
John A. and Barbara Emery
Nicholas Spada
Michael Warren

PLEASE THANK OUR CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

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Dedham MA 02027

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