



NEWS-LETTER

DEDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

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

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

November 2017

FALL PROGRAMS TO FINISH THE YEAR

The Dedham Historical Society & Museum closes the year with two special programs. On Thursday, November 16 at 7:30 PM, we welcome Laura Johnson, Associate Curator at Historic New England, for a presentation on *Mementos: Jewelry of Life and Love from Historic New England*. Based on her book of the same title and an exhibit at the Eustis Estate Museum, this program highlights jewelry's distinctive role as public display of personal history. Admission: free for members; \$5.00 for non-members.

On Friday, December 1 from 6-8 PM, kids of all ages will enjoy Thomas the Tank Engine and other trains during the annual Dedham Holiday Stroll. Be sure to also bring those young at heart, and start the holiday season off with the sights and sounds of our model train layout. If you can't make it here on Friday, you can also see it on Saturday, December 2 from 11-2 PM.



FALL WALKING EXCURSIONS: SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL HISTORY

Mother Nature provided beautiful weather for the walking tours of *Historic Village Cemetery* and the *Dedham History: True or False* program. The cemetery tours were sold out several weeks in advance. Guests enjoyed learning about the history of the cemetery and some of the early Dedham families who are buried there. Tour guide Joan Pagliuca received rave reviews for her knowledge and stories. The event was so popular that the Society has decided to offer additional tours in spring 2018. Stay tuned for more details.

Participants in the *Dedham History: True or False* program also enjoyed a fall day of historic facts and stories as they strolled to six sites in the area. While some of the stories were amusing and some seemed outlandish, guests had fun determining which ones were true or false.



SAVE THE DATE: DHS WINE EVENT FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2018

LIST OF 2017 ANNUAL APPEAL CONTRIBUTORS AS OF OCTOBER 10, 2017

This listing includes all donations as of October 10, 2017. Our sincere thanks to all who helped us meet our financial obligations for the year 2017. 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. Please be sure to contact us if there are any errors. (IMO = In Memory Of, IHO = In Honor Of)

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JEWELRY IN THE DHS COLLECTION



Jewelry is a universal form of adornment. It speaks to us of many things: emotions such as love or mourning, political, military, or religious affiliations; memories of travels; and appreciation of beautiful objects. Some people own only a few select pieces, while others collect certain types of jewelry. Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was famous for her pin/brooch collection and often expressed her view of world events through her famous line “Read my pins.”

The Society has a small but varied jewelry collection. It ranges from an 1800s pocket watch belonging to the Whiting family to Dedham High School class rings. Unfortunately, some of the items have little or no information about the owners or donors. For many years, objects were donated but notes were not recorded because donors assumed the facts were common knowledge. But memories fade, facts blur, and the memory keepers pass on.

As an example, the simple set of gold rings shown above on the left are engraved with dates and initials of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Bletzer. The larger ring is inscribed “P.B. M’ch 19 ‘91” and the smaller one is inscribed “Ph. F. M’ch 19 ‘91” (most likely their wedding date March 19, 1891). Their birth and death dates are 1860-1944 for Peter and 1868-1939 for his wife, Philippine. The rings were donated in 1947 by their son. There are so many questions we would ask him today. When and how did your parents meet? What was their life like in Dedham?

Other pieces have more details but include information that cannot be verified. A gold mourning pin from Mrs. F. O. C. Darley, shown above on the right, contains woven strands of hair. The rectangular pin is engraved on the reverse with the words “Warren Colburn, Died September 13, 1833.” The notes accompanying the piece suggest that Mrs. Warren Colburn preserved two locks of hair, one of her husband, and the other of her grandson, Warren Colburn III, born January 19, 1852. While the hair inside the pin has several shades of color, it is impossible to know if the notes are accurate or just a lovely story.

Jewelry is more than just pretty, and often expensive, eye candy. It embodies personal stories about family history and artistic taste. Please join us on Thursday, November 16 at 7:30 PM for our lecture *Mementos: Jewelry of Life and Love from Historic New England* with Laura Johnson, associate curator, Historic New England. This lecture is free for DHS members; \$5.00 for non-members.

WORLD WAR I COLLECTION AT THE DHS

The DHS collection of World War I archival materials offers a window into local activity related to the war effort. The archival collection includes broadsides—printed sheets used as announcements or advertisements; Enlistment Record Sheets, some with photographs of soldiers; personal letters; a scrapbook; military papers; ration cards; and other photographs. Some of the enlistment sheets contain service records.

Earlier this year, the DHS received grant money to catalog the collection into PastPerfect, the software program that we use to input data about our collections. Our longtime volunteer Susan Kuecker cataloged the large collection of broadsides. These sheets give us a clear idea of people's wartime concerns. While some broadsides advertised Liberty Bonds, others provided practical information about conserving food, and, of course, there were plenty intended to induce Dedham citizens to participate in the war effort.

This fall, we have University of Massachusetts graduate student Donna Russo cataloging the enlistment records and photographs. One of our

generous volunteers, Stuart Christie, has been assisting in the process of cataloging this important collection. For more information about this collection, contact archivist/librarian Sandra Waxman; library@dedhamhistorical.org or 781-326-1385.



*Cooks in the Chow Line-World War I
Photograph from the DHS collection*

NOTE: The exhibit *Wish You Were Here: Souvenirs of Dedham* will close on December 31, 2017. The new exhibit, *Dining in Dedham*, will open in late January, 2018.

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

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

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