



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

SEPTEMBER 2016



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DHS LECTURE SERIES KICKS OFF SEPTEMBER 29, 2016

The Dedham Historical Society & Museum's 2016-17 lecture series kicks off on Thursday, September 29 with the unique story of "Belinda's Footsteps: Sugar, Slavery, and Survival" by Olivia Searcy, Education Coordinator for the Royall House & Slave Quarters in Medford. Through Searcy's presentation we follow Belinda's footsteps from her West African homeland to Ten Hills Farm in Medford, just 24 miles from Dedham, where she spent more than fifty years enslaved to wealthy Isaac Royall and his family. This program will examine the roles that sugar and the triangle trade played in Belinda's journey.



We are dedicating a special program, on **SUNDAY, October 30 at 2 pm**, to those who have served our country in the military. The Society owns a collection of several hundred letters written by local residents to friends and family while serving during wartime. The DHS gives a special nod to our veterans with a reading of several of these letters. The correspondence dates from the Civil War, World War I, and World War II. The readers, both veterans and non-veterans, will give a short biography of the author of the letter to help personalize their words.

On November 10, we welcome Peter Gittleman, Team Leader for Visitor Experiences at Historic New England, to tell us about a new historic house museum in nearby Milton, "The Eustis Estate." This rare surviving example of late nineteenth-century architecture and design will soon be open to the public for the first time ever. Designed by renowned Boston architect William Ralph Emerson and built in 1878, the Eustis Estate sits on eighty acres of picturesque landscape at the base of the Blue Hills. The house is full of stunning, intact architectural and interior design details, and is a historic site unlike any other in the Greater Boston area.

2017 lectures include: **SUNDAY, January 22 at 2 pm**, DHS President Andrea Gilmore brings Dedham's history to life with "Chickering House – Dedham's Temporary Home for Women and Children 1864-1969." This little known story of a shelter and transitional home for women who had been discharged from prison reminds us how much there is to learn about our own local history. On Tuesday, March 30, Stephen Kenney, Director of the Commonwealth Museum, shares information about "Exploring Massachusetts History at the Commonwealth Museum" and some of their important archival treasures. Our series closes on April 27 with the Ben Fisher Memorial Lecture and Annual Meeting. After the meeting and election of officers, Anthony Sammarco takes us on a visual tour of well known Boston institutions that failed to stand the test of time and were demolished, lost to fire, or neglect. Join us for his lecture on "Lost Boston: Landmarks That Left Their Mark on the City."

Unless otherwise noted, all lectures begin at 7:30 pm at the Dedham Historical Society & Museum auditorium. Admission: DHS members free; \$5 per person for non-members. Be sure to post the lecture series card inserted in this newsletter in a prominent place so you don't miss any of these outstanding presentations. The 2016-2017 lecture series is sponsored by David G. Newsom in memory of his wife, Carol L. Newsom.

WALKING TOUR OF HISTORIC EASTON

Join us for a walking tour in the historic community of Easton on Saturday, September 25 at 2 pm. The tour, led by Frank T. Meninno, curator at the Easton Historical Society, will focus on the design of buildings by architect H. H. Richardson, and works by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, architect Christopher Grant LaFarge, sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens, architect Stanford White, and church architect Henry Vaughn. A highlight of the tour includes a very rare opportunity to tour the private Gatelodge designed by H. H. Richardson and owned by the Ames family. Between 1875 and 1886 the village of North Easton Village was transformed by the Ames family from a working class area into an area rich in architectural and cultural treasures.

The tour is approximately 2-hours and the walk is estimated at 1.5 miles long. Advance reservations are required and are non-refundable. Tickets are \$40 for DHS members and \$50 for non-members. Tickets are limited and transportation is on your own. Please see the special insert for more information. This program is generously sponsored by Francis M. Walley Insurance Agency, Inc.



Ames Memorial Hall in Easton



THE OLD VILLAGE CEMETERY

The Old Village Cemetery on Bullard Street is one of the oldest burial grounds in the state. Although there may have been burials there as early as 1636, there are no records to confirm them. The first recorded death in Dedham was that of John Fisher in 1637, but the records don't indicate where he was buried. Unfortunately, many of the records pertaining to the cemetery contain conflicting information, so the Society faces a challenge when trying to piece together an accurate history of the town's oldest burial ground.

Although residents were buried in the cemetery in the 1600s, their markers no longer exist except for Hannah Dyer. Her marker is the oldest tombstone in the Old Village Cemetery-December 15, 1678. There were many early graves in the original part of the cemetery, which lies to the left of the main gates. However, before 1700, new interments were placed on top of older ones, making it impossible to know who was buried below. In the 1700s, tombs were constructed, including one for Daniel Fisher and another for Reverend Samuel Dexter.

Unlike most colonial-era burial sites, the Old Village Cemetery did not adjoin a church. However, a wide path, known as a "Beere Way," was created on Bullard Street to serve as a path to transport the deceased from the First Parish Church. In 1800, the cemetery was expanded, growing it to a parcel that contained more than two acres. Between 1813 and 1815, the First Parish Church bought three more pieces of land and added them to the burial ground. The Village Avenue entrance was probably added in 1835.

Throughout the 1800s, plantings and landscaping beautified the Old Village Cemetery in a reflection of the national movement to create rural cemeteries. After the Civil War, a monument was erected in memory of 64 Union soldiers who died at the training ground at Readville, Massachusetts. The Town of Dedham is responsible for the cemetery and has a map on their website to assist anyone trying to locate ancestors who are buried there. Please check their website at http://gis.dedham-ma.gov/cemeteryviewer_village/ for more information.



U.S. PRESIDENTS VISIT DEDHAM

The 2016 presidential campaign season is well underway and so far, the presidential nominees have yet to discover Dedham. But many past presidents stopped off here, and some even spent the night.

Have you heard the rumor that George Washington slept here? It's true! The father of our country was here on April 4, 1776 and spent the night at the Dexter House on High Street after dining at Ames Place, a tavern run by Deborah Fisher Ames, widow of Nathaniel Ames, Sr. The British had just evacuated Boston, and General Washington was on his way back to New York after a trip to Boston. Both Nathaniel Ames and Reverend William Clark wrote about Washington's visit in their diaries.

Nathaniel Ames also wrote about President James Monroe's visit in 1817. According to Ames's diary entry, the Calvary escorted Monroe from the south boundary of Norfolk to Dedham, where the president reviewed the troops on the Common at sunset. Monroe stayed overnight at the home of Edward Dowse, a U.S. Representative who lived on High Street. The next morning, Monroe walked from Congressman Dowse's house to Polley's Tavern, where he shook hands with so many well-wishers that the General of the Division told the rest of the visitors not to extend their hands, but to "front & bow & pass by."

President John Quincy Adams made several visits to Dedham, many while en route to Quincy to visit his aging father. President John Quincy Adams, his brother, and two sons led a procession in Dedham on July 31, 1826, the day that Horace Mann delivered eulogies for Presidents John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, both of whom had died on July 4. John Quincy Adams returned to Dedham in 1843, when he delivered an anti-slavery speech.

On June 21, 1833, President Andrew Jackson was accompanied to Dedham by a large entourage, including Vice President Martin Van Buren, Secretary of War Lewis Cass, Secretary of the Navy Levi Woodbury, among others. According to an article in *The Norfolk Advertiser*, President Jackson was saluted by the Walpole Artillery and then greeted by a group of Dedham citizens. He was then led to the area in front of the First Parish Meeting House, where he reviewed Colonel Eaton's regiment. Afterward, Jackson and his group dined at the Norfolk Hotel.

Congressman, and future President, Abraham Lincoln visited Dedham in September of 1848. Lincoln's purpose was to bolster support for Zachary Taylor, the Whig candidate for president. Dedham resident George H. Monroe escorted Lincoln and noted that he was ill at ease until he began to speak at Temperance Hall. According to an account in *Tale of a Dedham Tavern*, "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." Although the crowd protested, Lincoln insisted on keeping his word for the people of Cambridge, as he had for the Dedhamites.

Dedham hasn't been a stop for Presidential candidates or Presidents since Lincoln, but there is still time before November 8th!

EFFORTS TO PROMOTE THE DHS

The DHS is often referred to as a "hidden gem." The staff and board of directors continuously strive to promote the organization while working with a limited budget. We thought you might be interested in some of our recent public relations activities. If you know of any additional free or low-cost venues to help promote the Society, please contact us at info@dedhamhistorical.org.

- Our first half-page ad appeared in the local newspaper, the Dedham Times
- A collaboration with the Dedham Community Theater to distribute 100 free passes to the Museum
- Staffing a table at the Dedham Farmer's Market to pass out literature
- Executive Director Vicky Kruckeberg filmed a segment of "Museum Open House" for NEWTV (Newton public access TV)
- Vicky Kruckeberg presented the keynote speech at the Griswold Family Reunion

2016 ANNUAL APPEAL UNDERWAY

DHS President Andrea Gilmore has launched the Society's 2016 Annual Appeal. Her letter and a contribution form will soon arrive in your mailbox. The Society contacts members twice each year for funding. In January the Membership Renewal notices are mailed to members and are followed in September by the Annual Appeal. The Society relies on both of these appeals for a significant portion of its operating budget. In closing her letter, Gilmore asks members to "join us in many different ways."

Please come to our lectures and tours. Bring your friends and families to visit our remarkable collections. Socialize with friends and celebrate Dedham's architectural heritage at the spring Soiree. And give generously with your financial support so that we may continue preserving and presenting the rich history of Dedham.

This year, the Society focused on several building maintenance projects to protect our historic structure. We repaired wrought iron railings at the entrances to the building and are currently accepting bids for painting the outside windows. The painting will take place in the spring of 2017. These projects are often more costly than what is allocated in our annual operating budget but are important to protect our building. Your Annual Appeal donation will help us pay for these expenses as well as support our operating budget. Thank you.

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

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

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

John A. George
Sandra A. Gumm
Evan C. Ouellette
Gregory M. Quinn
Kristen E. Stewart

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