



Dedham Historical Society & Museum

May-June 2019 Newsletter

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Hours

Museum & Gift Shop
Tuesday – Friday
9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Archives/Library
Tuesday and Thursday
9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Schedule an appointment
Library@DedhamHistorical.org

New Saturday Hours
Museum, Gift Shop &
Archives
2nd & 4th Saturday
11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Contact

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& Museum
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www.DedhamHistorical.org

Important Simon Willard Clock On Loan to Willard Museum Until April 2020

Looks can be deceiving, as with the DHSM's circa 1781–1784 Simon Willard Astronomical Shelf Time Keeper. With its damaged fretwork, missing brass-faced front foot, and stained paper, one might wonder why the clock is one of the more important objects in the collection. Simply put, it's a highly significant early example of the famous clockmaker's attempt to make a semi-animated, domestically produced (i.e. not from England) almanac timepiece. Only one of two examples known to survive of some seventy produced, it is the purer of the two (the other is at Winterthur Museum), described as “a glorious relic” by scholar Richard Philbrick, who wrote extensively on the clock in a 1997 exhibition catalogue on Willard's thirty-hour timepieces.



Philbrick focused on deciphering the complicated engraved paper in the lower section, which records upwards of twenty features of the clock. In 1784, Willard (1753-1848) advertised these as including a perpetual calendar, showing the day of the month, the rising and setting of the sun and the moon, high tide, as well as the longitude and latitude, hour and minute of notable places around the globe. Moreover, the engraving is attributed to Paul Revere based on accounts in his day book.

The importance of this clock has brought it to the Willard House & Clock Museum in Grafton for a second time (the first was the 1997 exhibition), where it will be on display for the coming year. This June, hundreds of attendees of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors (NAWCC), which is holding its national convention in nearby Springfield, will visit the Willard Museum to see the Society's clock, which will be showcased with other examples from their collection. We are very pleased that the Society's time piece will be enjoyed by so many enthusiasts.

Important Fundraising Event



Reserve your tickets today for the annual Soirée

Saturday, May 18, 6:30-8:30

At the home of Susie and John Durocher, 194 Village Avenue, Dedham, Massachusetts

Catering by Chiara of Westwood

R.S.V.P. requested by May 10th

Be sure not to miss this year's Soirée — our annual members-only event. This spectacular private home was once owned by Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, after whom the college is named. The current owners, Susie and John Durocher, have undertaken a major restoration and reconstruction of their historic residence. While period elements have been retained, the house reflects 21st-century living, complete with skylights, glass “walls,” and enclosed courtyard. Gorgeous landscaped gardens include a pergola-shaded bluestone terrace, pool, pool house and entertainment cabana. Please return your response card or call 781.326.1385 to reserve your tickets.

Our Appreciation for the Following Grants & Donations

Please join us in thanking the Dedham Jr. Woman's Club for support of DHSM's educational programs and outreach, and the Dedham Women's Exchange for funding our educational efforts for this year's Holiday Stroll. The Society is also most appreciative of David Newsom's support of our 2019-2020 lecture series in honor of his late wife, Carol L. Newsom; the series starts in September. In addition, thank you to the family of Ben Fisher, who support the Society's Annual Meeting lecture presentation each April. The flowers at the front entrance are underwritten by the Fairbanks Garden Club. Thank you also to the following contributors to our 2018 Annual Appeal: Cindy Kopf (\$100-\$249) and Carmen & Marguerite Capozzi (\$10-\$99).

Please remember to renew your membership if you have received a recent request. Help the Society save resources by reducing reminders. Also let us know if you prefer to receive this newsletter by email. Check the relevant box on the membership form or send an email to info@dedhamhistorical.org.

Thank you for your continued support!

DHSM News

Educational Outreach: All four elementary schools are finalizing separate visits to the DHSM in June. Each school's third grade class will experience history first hand as it relates to their studies. The Society appreciates the efforts of the teachers in coordinating the visits, and the parent chaperones who attend.

Annual Meeting: DHSM's April Annual Meeting experienced a phenomenal turnout with more than 75 people in attendance. A significant contributor to the evening's success was Gail Coughlin who spoke on the Indigenous Peoples of Dedham from before European contact to today.

Lecture Series: Please join us in thanking all of the wonderful speakers who participated in the 2018-2019 series. Stay tuned for the 2019-2020 program, starting in September. The Society greatly appreciates David Newsom's continued underwriting of the series, and Ben Fisher's family for supporting the April lecture.

Exhibits: Four mini exhibits are currently on view: *Shoes!*; *Native American Stone Tools*; *Cycling in Dedham*; and *Water in Dedham*. The latter is one of six photographic collaborative exhibits (from DHSM's collection) around Dedham and on view through May. Other venues include the Dedham Community House, Dedham Community Theater, Motherbrook Arts & Community Center, and the Main and Endicott library branches. The photograph displays are in association with the May 4th symposium, *Water in Dedham: Past, Present & Future*.

Dedham Now & Then: East Dedham Square



When you next drive through East Dedham Square, try to imagine the scene that existed little more than 50 years ago. Instead of the shopping plaza, parking lots, and housing complexes surrounding the High-Milton-Bussey Street intersection, you entered a tight-knit village of stores, apartments, and professional offices. There was Gates Drugs, Tony's Barber Shop, Brody's department store, Humpty's Pool Hall, Rosen's Hardware, the candy store, the dentist, and many more. The post office stood on Walnut Street at the intersection of Milton Street where the Hartnett Square park is today.

The village vanished in the 1960s. With East Dedham's mills gone and the village's commercial and residential structures deteriorating, town officials in 1960 declared the Square "blighted" and jumped on the urban renewal trend that was transforming communities nationwide. From contemporary news reports, most residents and shopkeepers favored redevelopment. Sensitive to the impact on residents, officials scaled back the renewal zone from 26 to 14 acres. Still, when the plan finally won town meeting approval in 1965, it came by just one vote over the required two-thirds margin. Opponents tried but failed to overturn it in a subsequent referendum vote. The final project toll was nine residential properties taken, requiring relocation of 42 families. Nearly all the neighborhood shops fell to the wrecking ball. One fortunate survivor was the historic East Dedham fire station, just outside the project area.

Dedham Storytellers and DHSM

This spring, the Dedham Storytellers program returned to the DHSM for a third year. With the aim of sharing conversations and experiences about Dedham, High School students enrolled in U.S. History I, taught by Mr. Michael Medeiros (below left at DHSM), interviewed residents over the age of 55 who attended Dedham High School. Participants attended three luncheon interviews, visited the DHSM, and enjoyed a final celebratory luncheon at the Endicott Estate.



On their visit to the Society, the students and seniors were divided into three groups. They were given a museum tour by educator Maryann Wattendorf; visited the archives with Rebecca Carpenter; and discussed Dedham's history and viewed local sites through historic and contemporary images with DHSM Board member Stuart Christie. Each student will write three essays (an autobiography; a biography of the senior with whom they're paired; and a "then" and "now" comparison) that will be archived at the DHSM. Discussions will soon be under way to plan next year's program.

This newsletter is a benefit of DHSM membership.

For membership information, call 781-326-1385 or visit www.DedhamHistorical.org

PLEASE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Luis & Anna Cardenas, Thomas A. Connors,
Linda Ingram, Andrea Kupski-Keane,
Heidi Fritz Martinez, Jodi C. Rand,
Justin Schlesinger

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We hope you will consider joining our outstanding team of volunteers. Please call 781.326.1385.

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