

DOVER TIDINGS

Autumn 2011



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Mark Your Calendar

September 3rd through November 26th Museum Open Houses

Open houses at Caryl House and Fisher Barn, 107 Dedham St. and the Sawin Museum, 80 Dedham St., from 1 to 4 PM each Saturday from Sept. 3rd through Nov. 26th.

Wednesday, September 14th 7-9 PM Reading and Book Signing

At the Dover Library. John Harrison Smolens will read from his newly-published novel, *The Schoolmaster's Daughter*. Set in Massachusetts during the first year of the American Revolution, the book portrays the Lovells of Boston. John Lovell was schoolmaster at the Latin School, today known as Boston Latin. In particular it depicts the contributions Abigail Lovell and her brothers, James and Benjamin, made to the patriot cause.

Tuesday, September 20th 12:30 PM Revolutionary War Songs

In the Caryl Community Center. Diane Taraz will sing Revolutionary War Songs at this program, sponsored by the Dover Historical Society. If you would like to order a light lunch, call the Council on Aging Office, 508-785-0032, extension 246. \$4.00 donation.

Saturday, September 24th 2-4 PM Tea Honoring Barbara Provest

At the Caryl House. You are invited to a tea celebrating the restoration of the Caryl Family Loom and honoring Barbara H. Provest who inspired and executed the project. Ms. Provest will talk about the restoration and exhibit a story board documenting the effort. RSVP by 9/19 by calling 508-785-1190 or emailing barbarapalmer@comcast.net.

Saturday, October 1st from 2-4 PM Flower Arranging

Try your hand at creating an arrangement in the spirit of the Early Federal period for display at the Caryl House on Old Home Day (after which it's yours to enjoy in your own home!) Jinny Leonard, master arranger and Caryl docent will be showing us how it's done. Enrollment is limited. Call 508-785-1190 or email barbarapalmer@comcast.net.

Sunday, October 2nd The 10th Annual Old Home Day Celebration

A Dover celebration for all ages! See schedule in this issue of Dover Tidings.

Sunday, December 4th 2 to 4 PM Holiday Open House

The Annual Caryl House Holiday Party. Please join us for a celebration of the holiday season. Enjoy festive decorations and seasonal music. Period refreshments will be served.

The President's Message



The recent loss of the Groton Inn is a reminder that the landscape of our community evolves as much by circumstance as by planning. Smaller by good measure than Groton, the center of our own town is dominated by a Town Hall dating from 1922, a library dating from

1968, and a scattering of commercial structures so small as to be a source of both local pride and amusement to our neighbors in Medfield and Needham. Few of the farms which defined the town for most of its history have survived and visitors to the Caryl House who find nothing unusual in an 18th century parsonage with a baseball diamond in its back yard must work to imagine the property as the 80 acre tract that it was in its heyday. At that time, however, the center of town was defined by the Whiting-Williams Tavern which was situated just southeast of the present library.

The northern portion of the tavern was built in 1761 by Daniel Whiting, the son of a prominent local family who spent much of his early life fighting the French and Indians. On returning to Dover, Daniel married Mehetable "Hattie" Haven and the couple raised five children. On learning of the battle at Lexington, Whiting immediately rejoined the local militia and subsequently the Continental Army with which he would

serve in distinguished capacity for the next six years. Left to manage on her own, Hattie promptly succumbed to an attack of apoplexy and the children were scattered in the care of various relatives. Unable to manage his affairs from afar, Whiting sold the tavern to John Reed in 1778.

In 1799 the tavern was acquired by a prominent local businessman, John Williams, whose other interests included a stagecoach line between Woonsocket and Boston. Williams expanded and added a dance hall, a store, livery stable, and a bowling alley. On Thanksgiving Day the bowling alley was the site of a turkey shoot in which fowl were placed at a distance of 110 yards and local residents paid ten cents a shot in the hope of bringing home their dinner. In addition, the tavern served as the town Post Office until 1876.

In 1818 ownership of the tavern passed to John Williams' son-in-law, Isaac Howe and later to Lorenzo Mann. The business began to decline in the 1830's and the property passed through multiple short term owners over the next eight decades without regaining economic viability. The Whiting-Williams Tavern was destroyed by fire on January 21, 1908.

Readers with an interest in the local landscape will be pleased to know of the publication of a second brochure based upon the late Dick Vara's *Dover Days Gone By*. Titled *Dick Vara's Dover – Exploring By Car, Boat on Foot* this publication is scheduled for release on Old Home Day (October 2, 2011).

As always, I appreciate your continued interest and support.

Elisha Lee

The Caryl House Family Loom



Heddle and harness, beater and beam, warp and weft – it's time to brush up on your weaving vocabulary because the Caryl Family Loom is sporting a new look these days. It is all thanks to the generosity, expertise and hard work of Barbara Provest, textile artist extraordinaire.

Our “barn frame loom” (so-called because of its tight mortise and tenon construction resembling that of 18th century barns) has in all likelihood stood unused and frozen in time for more than 150 years. On Old Home Day, October 2nd, you will see it come alive, fully restored to working order with Barbara weaving at it throughout the afternoon.

Having discovered that she is a shirt-tail relative of Rev. Caryl’s youngest sister, Elizabeth, Barbara Provest has become a wonderful friend of the Caryl House. A member of The Weavers’ Guild of Boston with 30 years of experience in loom conservation and restoration, Barbara will be the guest of honor at a tea party at the Caryl House on September 24th from 2-4 p.m. There she will give a talk about the restoration process, so please mark your calendar and plan to join us on that occasion as well.

This much I can tell you: this project was fascinating, important, affordable, and completed with dispatch. It started simply enough -- taking photos and measurements. For a spell we debated our true goal. Was this to be a restoration utilizing only authentic 18th century replacement parts? Or were we more interested in utilitarian objectives? If so, that would favor parts that would actually enable us to weave fabric on it. We knew we wanted the restoration to be transparent: there would be no attempt to make a more modern component appear to be antique. In the end, we wanted it all. The initial objective would be to have a working loom; the longer term goal to be on the lookout for period parts, swapping them in and out as appropriate to the task at hand. Now serious expertise came into play: what parts were missing? Barbara quickly made a big long list of them – all with strange names to my ears but old friends to hers. She writes that the loom itself gave her clues to get started: “the angle of the seat, the counter balance rod, the scribe marks on the heddle sticks, the cut-out slot in the breast beam.” Then the treasure hunt began to acquire the missing pieces. Serendipity played a part. A prominent Connecticut weaver died, allowing us to acquire her pulleys and horses (not the four-legged variety). Barbara’s husband Jon constructed the treadle mechanism using photos taken at the American Textile History Museum in Lowell and the Framingham Historical Society. Finally, Barbara hand knotted linen heddles on a heddle frame and wove the linen tapes on an inkle loom.

It is easier now to look upon the Caryl loom and understand its centrality to domestic life in the waning years of the 18th century. Sixteen year old Elizabeth Fuller of Princeton, MA made diary entries for eighteen days in April 1792. Five of them were devoted to the Sabbath. Almost all of the rest report some kind of home textile production including twelve days devoted entirely to weaving.⁽¹⁾ But this was a fragile moment in time about to be overtaken by technology. The industrial revolution in America began in textiles with New England at the center of the action, making the transition from home craft to factory production an important theme in regional history. Spinning was automated first when in 1793,

Samuel Slater built the first successful water powered, cotton spinning mill in North America on the banks of the Blackstone River at Pawtucket.⁽²⁾ The obvious next step was the power loom, to convert yarn into cloth. Francis Cabot Lowell had the idea to build weaving mills in Massachusetts, an experiment that took root in Waltham in 1814, becoming the first mill in the USA to combine all the operations to convert fiber into cloth. As early as the 1820s, home textile production in New England was giving way to these developments. By the 1830's most farm women in Massachusetts had given up on home textile production altogether.⁽³⁾ The spinning wheels and looms were moved to the attic as factory-made fabric became readily available at affordable prices. Jane Nylander points out the irony associated with the fact that New England women came to the zenith of their artistry and productivity in home textile production at about the same time that textile factories rendered home production obsolete. ⁽⁴⁾

Barbara H. Palmer

Curator, Benjamin Caryl House

1 Old Sturbridge Village, Primary Document, Diary: "Elizabeth Fuller at 16" www.osv.org/explore_learn

2 later Mill Website (<http://www.slatermill.org/museum/about>)

3 arkin, Jack, "From Farm to Factory: New England's Industrial Revolution in Textiles," OSV Papers and Articles, 2003.

4 ylander, Jane C. Our Own Snug Fireside. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993, p. 182.

Reprieve From Daily Chores

However small it is on the surface, it is four thousand miles deep, and that is a very handsome property.

A trip to Grandmother's valued inheritance, the Natick Pasture, was an event to be enjoyed in anticipation, as well as in the excursion itself.

There was the bustle of preparation at the barn, varied with the season and the project.

"Salting" the young cattle; picking sweet apples or juicy, coarse-grained, puckery "baking" pears; cutting hay or mowing bushes; mending a "post and rail" fence, or building a stone wall: any one of these may have been the serious object of the expedition. The pleasure seekers in the party had in mind the short ride through the village street to the Cleveland place, and the long and delightful ride, "by right of way" through the fields, woods, and berry pastures, where a jolt succeeded jolt as the wheels passed over embedded rocks into the deep worn ruts. Arrived at Pegan Hill Lane and the pasture, we reveled in its berries, fruits and flowers, gathered hickory nuts and acorns, and explored the Indian cellar hole, ever with a wholesome dread of snakes. Tired out at last we sat in the shade to watch birds and squirrels, or rehearse the tales of vanished Indians, until it was time to go home.

The excerpt above is from the book, *Dover on the Charles, a Contribution to New England Folklore* by Alice Jones, daughter of Hiram Jones, Farm Street, Dover, Massachusetts circa 1847-1867, page 39.

A visit to the Fisher Barn will allow a glimpse into a time gone by. Cranberry rakes, cider press, blueberry rakes and many tools required for the chores in the Alice Jones narrative are on display.

Jack Hoehlein
Curator, Fisher Barn

Goings On At Sawin Museum.....

Sawin Museum has, once again, been most fortunate to be partnered with two Eagle Scout candidates in their quests to complete their Eagle Scout Projects. We are pleased to be able to assist and very appreciative of the benefits that will come our way as a result.

Sean Rapela, has begun work on a pathway that will lead from the Sawin Museum to the Hodgson shed. This will make access to the shed easier, with a gradual path and occasional steps. We look forward to this improvement to the property, as it will help to tie the Hodgson shed into the Sawin Museum and make access easier.

Richard Freimer, another budding Eagle Scout, is in the early stages of developing a plan which would make use of QR codes to be used to identify and provide historical information related to the buildings in Dover Center. A relatively new technology in the US, a QR code (abbreviated from Quick Response code) is a specific matrix barcode (or two-dimensional code) that is machine readable and designed to be read by smartphones.

It is hoped that the project will link historical information on multiple levels to each location, and make it available to persons who may be doing a walking tour of the Center. Eventually, we hope the project could be expanded to the rest of Dover's historical sites, to make information related to Dover's history available to all, and to preserve the locations and information, much as historical markers have done for so many years. Richard will be working with the Staff at the Dover Town Library, who are proficient in QR code technology.

Once again, we are honored to work with the Girl Scouts as well. They will be assisting us, especially in Old Home Day's Great Historical Cake Sale. The cakes will be sold at "Sawin Café", a new location, located outside the Museum on Old Home Day. Coffee, tea, and a variety of beverages will be available. There will be multiple new exhibits this year on Old Home Day, related to Dover's history, so come on in! We look forward to seeing you.

Fay Bacher
Curator, Sawin Museum

DOCENT SCHEDULE

AUTUMN 2011

Saturdays 1-4 PM

Date	Sawin Museum	Caryl House	Fisher Barn
Sept 3	Fay Bacher	Dorothy-Boylan	Jack Hoehlein
Sept 10	Dorothy Boylan	Kay Guild	Jack Hoehlein
Sept 17	Elisha Lee	Bev Ryburn	Amy Wilcox
Sept 24	Jack Hoehlein	Amy Wilcox	Dorothy Boylan
Oct 1	Amy Wilcox		
Oct 8	Elisha Lee	Priscilla Jones	
Oct 15	Clare Burke		Priscilla Jones
Oct 22	Priscilla Jones	Dale Cabot	
Oct 29			
Nov 5	Sue Knowles	Patty Howe	
Nov 12		Ursula Gray	
Nov 19			
Nov 26	Fay Bacher		Betty Brady

OLD HOME DAY Sunday, Oct. 2 Fay Bacher, Dorothy Boylan, Jack Hoehlein, Priscilla Jones

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE Sunday, Dec. 4 Dorothy Boylan, Priscilla Jones, Jane Moore

If you can fill one of the open dates above, please contact Amy Wilcox, 617-266-1360.

Old Home Day 2011

Sunday, October 2nd

10:00AM – 4:00PM – **6th Annual Craft Fair** - Town House, 5 Springdale Avenue
In our Great Hall, Dover locals and neighboring artisans selling hand-crafted treasures.
Pottery, quilts, doll clothing, greeting cards, wood carvings, jewelry, and more!
Silhouettes by Carol Lebeaux classic hand-cut of children, families & pets (bring photo of pets).
To schedule a ten-minute appointment call 785-1977. Walk-ins fine too!

Noon – **Ringing of the Dover Church Bells**

Noon – **Antique Auto Show & Parade** (at 2:00) - Militia Field across from Library
Hounds and horses from the Norfolk Hunt Club arrive after 1:45 to lead the parade.
Please vote for the Best Car in Show! Visit the hounds.

Noon – 2 PM - **Lunch on Town Green** –Gourmet Burgers & Dogs from Dover Market

Noon – 4 PM - **Sawin Museum** – 80 Dedham Street
An exhibit highlighting Dover as written in the final edition of *Dover Days Gone By*.
McGregor McGehee will provide music. The “café” will be open selling historic cakes !

Noon – 4:00PM - **Caryl House and Fisher Barn** – 107 Dedham Street
Textile Arts- weaving and spinning in the Kitchen Chamber, Rug Hooking too!
Field Day - Games start at 3:00PM. Old-fashioned children’s games including tug-a-war,
three-legged race, potato-sack race, and the infamous egg toss!
Checkers Champion -Come match wits with past state champion Richard White too!

12:00 – 4:30PM – **Horseshoe Tournament** - American Legion Hall
In its third year and oh so fun. Get a team together – call 785-9878 for more info.

4:45PM - **Ceremony for Disposal of Unserviceable Flags** - American Legion Hall
Music provided by High School’s Chorus. Bring a flag for disposal.

5:30PM – **Old Fashioned Grange Supper** - American Legion, 32 Dedham Street
Hand Carved Ham & Turkey with Bean Supper catered by Dover raised Geoff Janowski
owner of Blue Ribbon BarBQ! Come one, come all - \$12 Adults & \$8 Seniors/Children.

For supper reservations call Heather Hodgson at 785-1977 or oldhomeday@comcast.net.