

DOVER TIDINGS

Winter 2012

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Susanne M. Knowles
Editor

The Dover Historical Society, P.O. Box 534 Dover, Massachusetts 02030
www.doverhistoricalsociety.org

Come One! Come All!
To the Society's Annual Holiday Party
Sunday, December 9th from 2 to 4 p.m.

At the Caryl House, festively decked out for the occasion.

Find joy in the fellowship of friends and in the magic of song.

Caroling led this year by

Christopher Keene, Choral Director at the Dover Sherborn
Regional High School.

Goodies to Eat and Drink and Special Activities for the Kids.



The President's Letter

Rodman Pond sits just south of the intersection of High Street and Lowder Street in Dedham, its shoreline dominated by a large estate sufficiently removed from the street as to be largely invisible. It's an isolated spot even today and must have been that much more so in the winter of 1661 when 8 year old Lydia Fisher made her way south from her family's home on Lowder Street carrying food for two men who were hidden in the woods nearby. History does not tell us her thoughts on that night – she may well have been puzzled, for her father, Captain Daniel Fisher, was a Selectman and prominent figure in Dedham and an unlikely person to be harboring fugitives. There is much that we do not know, for the secret with which she had been entrusted was of such importance and the danger so great that it was never documented and the story has survived largely through family legend.

Her overnight visitors had arrived in Boston from England a year before. General Edward Whalley was a Parliamentarian cavalry officer during the English Civil War and a cousin to Oliver Cromwell, the late Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Whalley's traveling companion was his son-in-law, William Goffe. The two men were among the 59 Commissioners who had signed the death warrant of King Charles I in 1649. With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 the surviving Commissioners became the most wanted fugitives in Britain. Ten were apprehended, hanged, drawn and quartered by a vengeful King Charles II and another 19 sentenced to life imprisonment. Oliver Cromwell's body was disinterred, hung posthumously at Tyburn gallows, and then beheaded. Whalley and Goffe slipped out of the country and made their way to Boston days ahead of Royalist agents armed with an arrest warrant. While welcomed by the Puritan leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony their presence presented a very real risk to a colony that owed its continued existence to a royal charter as well as the risk of imprisonment and death for those who granted them asylum. Unable to remain, Whalley and Goffe continued south to the New Haven Colony where they were initially harbored by one of the Colony's founders, Reverend John Davenport, who is said to have exhorted his congregation in the words of Isaiah 16:3 to "Hide the outcasts, betray not him that wandereth". Later the two men hid for some months in a cave within what is now West Rock Ridge State Park. In 1664 as the long arm of the crown drew ever closer the two fled again, this time north to the frontier village of Hadley, Massachusetts, where they lived out the remainder of their lives in a secret room within the house of Reverend John Russell. In 1670 Lydia, by then a young woman of 19, accompanied her brother Daniel to Hadley where she spent approximately a year living with

the Russell family and attending to the needs of the fugitives Whalley and Goffe. Whalley died in Hadley in 1674 and Goffe's fate, ever a closely guarded secret, remains unclear.

Lydia Fisher returned from Hadley in about 1671. In October of 1674 she married Nathaniel Chickering of Dedham as his second wife and the two had nine children. On Nathaniel's death in 1694 she moved into the house that he had built for them in what is now Dover. The property survives as 77 Haven Street, although the original house was demolished in 1767. There is no evidence to indicate that Lydia shared the story of her journey to Hadley or betrayed the enormous secret entrusted to her until late in her own life when she confided in her minister, Reverend Jonathan Townsend of Needham. Townsend recorded it in his diary on the day of her death at 86 years of age in 1737, noting "having lived a virtuous life, she died universally respected, and came to her grave in a full age as a shock of corn cometh in his season."

Elisha F. Lee

Ode to Youth

It is hard to over-emphasize the value of the work we do with little kids, and the fun we have doing it. October 17th was a case in point when Daisy Troop 85386 paid a visit to the Caryl House. For the uninitiated, a Daisy Scout is in kindergarten or 1st grade -- younger even than a Brownie. I'd lost touch with the attention span of little girls and feared the worst. Anxiety wasted! They wiggled and chattered to be sure, but none of it mattered because their defining characteristic was inquisitiveness -- veritable sponges, each devouring information in excess of her weight. This seemed to favor leech jars, outhouses and brow-wrinkling puzzlement at the notion of a world without running water and central heating, but also thoughtful reflection beyond their years about what it would mean to have been a kid in Dover 200 years ago. They had wonderful questions and joie de vivre to spare. As our time together drew to a close, we talked about them coming back for the Holiday Party. They proudly produced a thank you gift -- naturally a gerbera daisy. And then they were gone, leaving the house quiet and me feeling guilty for having had even more fun than they did.

The following Saturday I was greeted by a little boy exclaiming "Do you live in this house? I want to live in a house just like this one." His mother explained how he had been introduced to the miniature loom at the Caryl Grand Re-Opening three weeks prior. Having become captivated by it, he could not be deterred from making this return visit. He worked at the loom

for a bit before announcing boldly that he thought he would become a teacher when he grew up, perhaps a history teacher.

Minutes later a master teacher in his own right began his class in the Hall. Mark Yesko had come to teach us all how to care for our antique furniture. Demonstrating the same boyish enthusiasm of my young weaver, Mark told us precisely what to do and not do – totally open, holding back nothing, confident in his knowledge that most of us would never trust valued pieces to our own tentative competencies, nor invest the sweat equity to improve. This I will tell you: there is something better than mayonnaise to deal with water rings on your dining room table. And it is likely to be found in your bathroom. All will be revealed at the Holiday Party.

Please plan to come to the party. It's a special way to get into a holiday frame of mind. We truly need additional docents and providers of sweet or savory goodies. We also need additional masters and mistresses of cones, sprigs, wreaths, buds and swags to help decorate the house; we will gather at the house at 10 a.m. on Saturday, December 8th for this purpose. If you signed up with Amy Wilcox to be a docent or to contribute floral arrangements, I know who you are! Many thanks! Additional volunteers are urged to give me a call at 785-1190.

*Barbara H. Palmer
Curator, Caryl House*

The Lure of Old Barns

The Fisher Barn is 15 years older than the Old Farmer's Almanac. I don't know if that's a useful reference point but it says something about the value that we place on the preservation of things that are so ordinary as to be nearly invisible. Barns are practical and anonymous structures that fade into the rest of the countryside unless adorned with advertising for Mail Pouch tobacco (one of West Virginia's gifts to dental hygiene, the last of such barns was painted in the early 1990s, now gone the way of the Burma Shave sign). The sight of a neatly maintained barn (with or without silo) and other outbuildings is one of the small pleasures of driving through agricultural areas, and it is fitting that Dover should possess one of the oldest and best preserved barns in the country.

The Fisher Barn, lovingly dismantled, moved from Centre Street, and reassembled on Dedham Street, is one of the most visible symbols of the Historical Society's mission to preserve and educate. Tools and artifacts from the colonial period to the present serve to tie

the structure to the history and economy of Dover, and the space possesses excellent acoustics for the occasional musician (most recently the talented Diane Taraz) and the present curator's struggles with the oboe.

The Barn is open on Saturdays during the warmer months and provides an opportunity to see just what goes on in one of those anonymous structures that seem to be vanishing from our landscapes.

No Mail Pouch tobacco available on the premises, however.

Richard White
Curator, Fisher Barn

Sawin Museum

We are getting ready for the winter, as we will be closing at the end of November. We will open again in the Spring, and will be welcoming all volunteers for special projects or for folks who would like to contribute a few hours of their time to be docents and to learn more about Dover's history. It's really easy to do this, and requires no special knowledge, so if you are new to town or have just never thought of yourself as being historically well versed, we will help you.

We really rely on our wonderful docents to keep our properties open during the Spring and Fall seasons. Since we are open on Saturdays from 1 PM to 4 PM, one's time contributions can be as little as three hours per year. In the scheme of things, with all of us being so busy in our lives, three hours does not seem like much to most folks, but it is a huge and wonderful gift to the Dover Historical Society, and allows us to continue with our mission to provide educational opportunities for both children and adults in our Town. We are enormously grateful to the small but trustworthy band of volunteers who support our properties and help keep us vibrant and engaged in the community.

So, if you are curious about this potentially rewarding volunteer opportunity, we hope you will come in to volunteer, but if you cannot do so, come in anyway to see our wonderful collections of Dover's historical artifacts. You will, perhaps, be surprised by the quality of our three museums, and will hopefully learn about the beautiful town that we are so fortunate live in. We hope to see you soon!

Fay Bacher
Curator, Sawin Museum

In Memoriam ~ 2012

Cesar Brea
Merritt Brown
Glen Buckley
The Rev. Deane Clark
Robert Connors
Robert Courtemanche
Donna & William Crage
Elizabeth Dawson
Barbara Dolan
Susan Ellis
James Foster
E.K. Fretwell
Hazel Goguen
Mary Grew
Patricia Heilner
Eleanor Hickey
Virginia Holmes
Philip Jones
John Kirby
Patrick D. Krolack
Patrick M. Krolack

Rita Krolack
Archibald Lade, Jr.
Rebecca L'Heureux
Mary Virginia Lordi
Barbara Markhus
Philip McChesney
Cecelia Meau
James McDonnell
Eva Miller
Paula Neville
Joseph Plumb, Jr.
Harold Phillips
Curtis Prout, MD
Cleo Repetti
Richard Russell
Kenneth Seaman
Mary Simonds
Betty Sivacek
Ernest Stockwell
Nicholas Vinios

Dover Historical Society Officers and Board Members

President	Elisha Lee	(508)785-1653	eleejr@verizon.net
Vice President	Jack Hoehlein	(508)479-1937	jhoehlein@hotmail.com
Secretary	Priscilla Jones	(508)785-0236	priscillajones@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Sue Fitzgerald	(508)785-2161	suefitzgerald@comcast.net
Carol House	Barbara Palmer	(508)785-1190	barbarapalmer @comcast.net
Curator			
Fisher Barn	Richard White	(508)785-3197	whitefork@verizon.net
Curator			
Sawin Museum	Fay Bacher		
Curator			
Fund Raising	Heather Hodgson	(508)785-1977	UnpackingSolutions @comcast.net
Hospitality	Dorothy Boylan	(508)785-1980	DLBoylan@att.net
Public Programs	Clare Burke	(508)785-1357	clareburke@comcast.net
Public Relations	Sue Knowles	(508)785-0858	susanneknowles@aol.com
School Programs			
Volunteers	Amy Wilcox	(617)266-1360	amydwilcox@mac.com

Advisory Board

Pam Kunkemueller
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Patty Howe

Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, December 9 2 to 4 PM Holiday Open House

The Annual Caryl House Holiday Open House. Please join us for a celebration of the holiday season. Enjoy festive decorations and seasonal music with carols led by Christopher Keene, Choral Director at the Dover Sherborn Regional High School. Children's activities. Period refreshments will be served.

Thursday, January 17 at 11:15 AM Museum Tour

At the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Guided 60-minute tour of the museum's Collection Highlights including the new addition. Admission: \$17.00/Senior, \$20.00/Adult which is payable at the door by cash, credit card or check. Optional: Lunch at Café G. RSVP to Clare Burke at 508-785-1357 or clareburke@comcast.net

Wednesday, February 17 at 7:30 PM Dover Boys Go to War

At the Dover Library, Lower Level. Elisha Lee, president of the Dover Historical Society, will speak on *Dover Boys Go to War*.

Thursday, March 21 at 7:30 PM Annual Meeting of the Society

At the Dover Library, Lower Level. Annual Meeting of the Dover Historical Society. Mark Hullung Ph.D., the Richard Koret Professor of the History of Ideas at Brandeis University, will speak on *Was the American Revolution a Revolution?*

Third Annual Preservation Award

You are invited to recommend your favorite restoration of a historic property to receive our Third Annual Preservation Award. Email your suggestion to DHS1895@aol.com or mail it to Box 534, Dover, MA 02030 by February 1, 2013.