

DOVER TIDINGS

Spring 2005



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Priscilla Pitt Jones

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Editors

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A Letter from the President...

Dear Members:

I hope that you had a chance to attend the March 31 Annual Meeting and hear Stephen Marini's comments on Benjamin Caryl's religious world in 18th century Dover. It was great to see everyone emerge after a very lengthy winter.

Despite the lengthy winter, officers and members of the Society have continued to work diligently on various projects. We are especially proud of Glenda Mattes work to move the preservation of The Dover Reporter forward as well as her efforts to find support for the preservation of The Flag made in 1861 by the Everett Family to show the Town's patriotism and support of the Union cause.

All through the winter, Priscilla Jones, Ellen Little, and Kay Guild have worked at the Caryl House going through the inventory and correcting and adding information as needed. Until most recently this labor of love was a bit drafty, but became more comfortable with the purchase of two electric heaters.

The house marker program has moved forward also. Currently, we have 27 buildings with signs up. Once the snow clears, and I can get a ladder up safely, I have four more to install. The markers are a very good way to remind ourselves and the town of the importance of architectural history to the community. *Continued on next page*

Have You Paid Your 2005 Dues?

On March 6, 2005, the Reverend John A. Nelson gave a marvelous eulogy for Helen T. McGill who died the previous week at 101. Helen, a lifelong member of the Dover Historical Society, came to Dover in the early 1920s after graduating from Wheaton College to take up a teaching position at the high school. She married and spent her life, as John Nelson commented, seemingly "...to serve as the conscience and memory for the town of Dover. She would remind us of this community's shared history."

Helen's service to this place was long and honorable: trustee of the Library, leader of the Campfire Girls, leader of the Visiting Nurse Association, of the March of Dimes, head of the Salvation Army in the town, treasurer for the Dover Branch Alliance, deaconess of The Dover Church, and tax collector of the town among her many roles. She spent her life engaged with the people of this town, young and old. The church overflowed with family and friends. At the reception, many of us listened as the gathering told wonderful tales of Helen, her life and her contributions to the community as a whole. We shall all miss her kindness, her understanding, and her faith.

On April 9, the new board members will meet to discuss what we want to accomplish in the next two years and how to raise the money to accomplish same. Program is a very important aspect of our mission, but it takes money to carry out our ideas. We welcome any support or ideas in meeting this challenge.

Remember that our sites will open for the season on April 2. The Caryl Garden Party is on June 12. Old Home Day this year will be on October 2. I know that the committees organizing these events are planning great things. They also would like to invite members of the community to join their efforts to make these events better and more successful. As an all-volunteer effort, the Society welcomes all to join in our efforts.

You all might like to know that the Blodgett House (Colonel Paul Wentworth House), 25 Claybrook Road, was successfully moved back to Rollinsford, New Hampshire (formerly Salmon Falls Village) in October 2002. Successful fundraising has supported the raising of the timber frame of the house on October 11, 2004, and the restoration of the house, in almost the very same spot it was moved from in 1936, is well underway. For further information and pictures go to <http://paulwentworthhouse.org/history.html>

Paul H. Tedesco

CARYL HOUSE

Following the Holiday Open House, which was made more special by a music grant from the Dover Cultural Council, inventory work continues. Various combinations of docents, including Emilie Chamberlain, Kay Guild, Ellen Little, and I meet on Wednesday mornings. We welcome additional volunteers to compile information and make discoveries.

Recently, one mystery has been solved. As you know, before integrated pockets in clothing evolved, women tied separate pockets around their waists under their skirts. A beautifully embroidered example hangs framed in the Upper Entry. Over the years it had been attributed to Sarah Caryl. Clothing consultant, Nancy Rexford, however, states that the cotton twill was machine woven in England in the early 1770's and embellished with fine crewel work in wool. The earliest inventory of items found in the House lists a pocket and this led to initial confusion. Finding the hand stitched, 15 x 7 1/2 inch, cotton Caryl pocket among linens was thrilling. The linen tape tie appears original and the wool and cotton twill tape tie seems to be a replacement. Obviously, it was much used and its simple style seems appropriate for a minister's wife. After Deirdre Windsor completes its conservation, look for the pocket on display.

To complement Steve Marini's presentation on the Religious World of Benjamin Caryl, the three extant letters written by Benjamin will be on display along with transcriptions. This is the first time they have been made available. Do visit this Spring.

Priscilla Pitt Jones
Caryl House Curator

FISHER BARN



The recent donation of an unusual flexible ox yoke provides an opportunity to pause and consider the animals that provided much of the necessary labor on the Colonial farm. In most cases this was the ox, rather than the horse. Oxen offered a

number of distinct advantages over horses. Sturdier and comparatively inexpensive, they required less rest and feed, and on reaching a certain age, could be slaughtered and eaten themselves.

Ox yokes were handmade to suit a particular team, and dimensions varied accordingly – both from team to team and as a pair grew over time. The yokes themselves were shaped with a broadax and drawknife from a solid block of green hardwood such as oak or maple, which was less prone to splitting. The bows were steamed to a flexible state and shaped by wrapping around a tree. While to all outward appearances a simple product, the distance between bows – and thus the separation between the oxen - was of critical importance. If the bows were placed too close together the oxen interfered with one another's movement, if placed too far apart the pair tended to "see-saw". The optimal separation between the oxen was a function not only of size and shape, but also of the work being performed – with plowing requiring one degree of separation and pulling stumps or logging another.

Elisha Lee
Fisher Barn Curator

SAWIN MUSEUM

The 34-Star Flag

Speaking before the first Old Home Day gathering on August 19, 1903, Martha Elizabeth Plummer Everett, wife of George Draper Everett, noted how this gathering was so different from those held 42 years before.

"Those who were not in the midst of it can hardly realize or imagine the excitement that prevailed when the news came that Fort Sumter had been attacked. ... My sister, Miss Plummer, [who was] teaching in New York at the time, ... urged that we have a flag raised in town to show our interest and sympathy in this great struggle. Bunting could not be had in Boston; the demand so much exceeded the supply. We sisters, with our father's help, bought the cloth of which this flag is made."

"This flag measures about 12 x 6 feet. It consists of 13 red and white stripes and a blue field with a white eagle surrounded by 34 white stars. At the end are the words "Liberty and Union" on one side and "The Constitution" on the opposite. The flag was hung across Farm St at about #56 in celebration of every Union victory, which, Mrs. Everett notes, were few in 1861, but increased in the following years.

The Plummer family lived at, what was known in 1903 as, the Minot Cottage. Does anyone know where this home was?

This flag, which has been back in Dover since 1965, thanks to the thoughtfulness of the Everett's grandson, is in extremely fragile condition. We have an estimate for conserving it, which will cost about \$15,000.

This is only an example of the treasures to be found in the collections at the Sawin Museum. As we continue to discover and catalog, the unfolding history of our Town is tremendous and fascinating.

Glenda Mattes
Assistant Curator Sawin Museum

DHS ANNUAL MEETING

The 110th Annual Meeting of the Dover Historical Society gathered some 80 members and citizens to the Great Hall of the Dover Town House to hear Dr. Stephen Marini, Professor of Religion at Wellesley College, resident of Dover, and member of the DHS, discuss "The Religious World of Benjamin Caryl: Belief, Worship, and Ministry in 18th Century Dover." Steve's research interests are concentrated in two areas: religion in Revolutionary America and the sacred arts in America.

Steve's discussion of Benjamin Caryl, based on the Dedham Historical Society collection of almost 500 Caryl sermons, was a marvelous example of what good local history can be. Steve's view of Benjamin Caryl opened up areas never touched before and, when presented in a finished manuscript ready for publication, will certainly add much to our understanding of Dover in the period of 1760-1810. It was especially nice to have a member and resident contribute such valuable research to a better understanding of the history of our small, but important community.

Paul Tedesco

SPRING 2005 DOCENT SCHEDULE

Saturdays 1 -- 4 pm

Date	Caryl House	Fisher Barn	Sawin Museum
April 2	Jane Moore	Paul Tedesco	Louise Crane
April 9	Kay Guild		Patty Howe
April 16	Miriam O'Day		Betty Brady
April 23	Louise Crane		Jinny Leonard
April 30	Nancy Ferguson		Paul Tedesco
May 7	Louise Crane		
May 14	Louise Crane		Gary Sawin
May 21	Dave Stapleton		Paul Tedesco
May 28	Betty Brady		
June 4	Paul Tedesco		Patty Howe
June 11	Sara Jo Marble		Emilie Chamberlain
June 18	Pearl Chamberlain		Dave Stapleton
June 25	Priscilla Jones		
June 12	Garden Party Priscilla Jones, Alison Campbell, Emilie Chamberlain, Madeline Chamberlain, Pearl Chamberlain,, Louise Crane, Nancy Ferguson, Sue Knowles, Sara Jo Marble, Jane Moore, Paul Tedesco		

Additional volunteers are needed at the Fisher Barn and the Sawin Museum. If you can be a docent for one of the open dates above, call Sue Knowles at 508-785-0858.

DOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

Elected at the Annual Meeting 3/31/05

President	Paul Tedesco	508-785-1933 PHT52@AOL.COM
Vice President	Dave Stapleton	508-785-0078 DAVE.STAPLETON2@COMCAST.NET
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