

# DOVER TIDINGS

Spring 2011

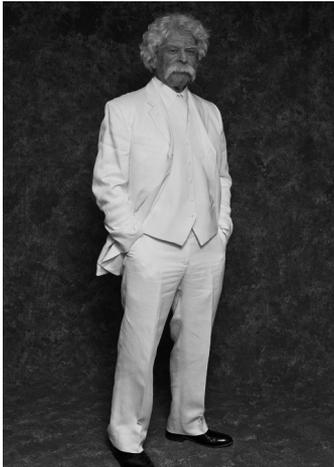


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Susanne M. Knowles  
Editor

The Dover Historical Society, P.O. Box 534 Dover, Massachusetts 02030  
[www.doverhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.doverhistoricalsociety.org)

## DHS to Present "Twain's Last Stand" Starring Alan Kitty on April 8th



"Twain's Last Stand", a program commemorating the Mark Twain Centennial, will be presented by the Dover Historical Society on Friday, April 8th at 7:30 PM in the Alan T. Mudge Auditorium, Dover-Sherborn High School. Nationally acclaimed Mark Twain impersonator, Alan Kitty, will star in the performance.

In this unique take on Twain, the State of the Economy has induced The Great American Humorist to travel through time and space to offer us a way out of the Recession. And part of his plan is to announce his run for the Presidency in 2012.

Writer/performer Alan Kitty's portrait of Twain comes from books, essays, speeches, interviews, newspaper articles and letters written between 1866 and 1909. "Last Stand" is a 21st Century Twain's-eye view of the world and is suited to audiences of all ages.

Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Available at the Dover Market, or by mailing a check to the Dover Historical Society, Box 534, Dover, MA 02030.

Alan Kitty began impersonating Mark Twain 30 years ago. His work has been called "Genius!" by the Mark Twain Society and he has earned a place among the foremost Mark Twain impersonators in the world today. He has portrayed Twain at several ages, first as the young Hartford author and father in "Alive and Well". He also appeared as the ghost of Twain in the short film, "The Spirit of Giving".



## *The President's Message*

One of the central aspects to virtually any small New England town in the 19th century was its militia company. New England's militia laws had their origin in the Muster Law enacted by Queen Elizabeth I when faced with the prospect of a Spanish invasion in 1572. The custom was brought to New England by the colonists and Dedham had a "train band" or town militia company by 1636. While

often used synonymously with Minutemen there was a distinction between the two terms in the 18th century. The militia was charged with protecting the town from foreign invasion while Minutemen were a subset of the militia specifically selected for mobility and rapid deployment.

Prior to the establishment of Dover as an independent town, the residents of Springfield Parish served with the Dedham militia. In 1792 the 2nd Congress enacted the Militia Act which conscripted every free able-bodied white male citizen between the ages of 18 and 45 into a local militia company and required that they arm themselves with a musket, bayonet, cartridge box containing 24 rounds, and a knapsack. While there is no evidence to indicate that Dover's militia wore any particular uniform, the wealthier communities of the time often sported ornate tunics. A larger supply of ammunition was stored at the powder house which was located on the large rock off Walpole Street in the area of Old Farm Road. In 1814 the town paid Ralph Battelle \$1.00 for making cartridges and obtaining paper for same.

Training days were held four times a year, typically on the town common in front of the Williams Tavern. These were holidays for old men, women and children, and, for the men themselves, a relief from the drudgery of farm chores. The day's events typically included a roll call and prayer (Reverend Ralph Sanger, the official chaplain of the First Regiment from 1818 to 1834), manual of arms drill, target practice, and socializing. The proximity of the training field to Williams' Tavern was probably not coincidental as liquor was found to make

the independent minded citizen soldiers more tractable. In certain communities with laws against the consumption of alcohol a tent was erected to house a “striped pig”. For a nickel, one could enter and see the pig while enjoying a surreptitious tot of rum.

From a military standpoint the lax discipline and poor organization of the local militia system proved less than successful. British forces easily routed American militia forces along the Canadian border during the war of 1812. In 1840 the Massachusetts Legislature abolished the local militia system in favor of state controlled volunteer regiments. In 1852 Dover’s powder house was deemed no longer necessary and was sold to Calvin Richards for \$5.50.

Social as it may have been, service in the town militia was not without risk. Dover’s Vital Records note that Captain William Everett was “accidentally killed at the head of his company” on May 4th, 1802 and in 1855 George Bliss was killed when a cannon burst while celebrating the establishment of the Charles River Branch Railroad on Miller Hill.

Elisha Lee

## Preservation Plan for the Benjamin Caryl House

In 1920 George Ellis Chickering willed the Benjamin Caryl House with its 83 acres, which he had purchased from the estate of Ellen Miller, to the Town under the care and control of the Historical Society. Over the years, the Society has funded most work and requested money from the Town only for large projects. Prudently, the Selectmen decided they would like an evaluation of the structure and fabric of the House and a preservation plan, prioritizing appropriate treatments, so that plans may be made for current and future needs – at least as much as anyone can predict the requirements of an old house. The 2010 Town Meeting appropriated \$10,000 for this purpose. A Committee, consisting of Greer Pugatch, Assistant Town Administrator, Carol Lisbon, Selectwoman, Karl Warnick (non-voting), Superintendent of Building Maintenance, Elisha Lee, President, Priscilla Jones, Vice President, and Barbara Palmer, Caryl House Curator, was appointed by the Selectmen. The November Request for Proposals produced 7 responses and the Committee interviewed 4 groups and unanimously recommended the firms of Adams and Smith of Swampscott and Finch and Rose of Beverly to the Selectmen. Priscilla Jones serves as the Owner’s Representative.

We are fortunate indeed to be working with Richard Smith, an architect specializing in historic preservation, and William Finch, an historic preservationist with a long track record in the conservation, repair, and restoration of traditionally constructed buildings. He has

worked on numerous important structures, including the House of the Seven Gables (1668), the Judge Corwin House (1675), the White-Ellery House (1710), and the Crowninshield-Bentley House (1727).

The project has begun with document research, aided by Barbara Palmer's review of records and subsequent spreadsheet. Photographs in some cases speak volumes. March 8th saw the beginning of field investigations. Certain issues such as causes of plaster cracks, rolled floorboards, and window failures pose mysteries to be studied and hopefully understood. Structural analyses, including the "flying" chimney in the attic, should provide clues. Bill Finch is curious about what has happened to the House over time. He finds the kitchen chamber intriguing, with its lack of fireplace and re-used building materials. "It's bizarre that there are so few windows on the South side of the house," he states. We all enjoy the steep learning curve.

Information will be available prior to the Town Meeting to determine whether funding requests should be considered for the 2011 Town Meeting. Please contact me if you have questions.

*Priscilla Pitt Jones*  
Vice-President

## Fisher Barn

In the 50 years of post Civil War, agriculture in New England had radically changed from hand labor to machine farming, leading to the eventual transformation of household subsistence to commercial enterprises.

The Cyrus McCormick hay reaper in 1840 led the way for vast improvement of farm land productivity and was soon followed by other farm machines such as planters, Cutters, huskers, manure spreaders and potato planters.

Thanks to the generosity and consideration of Shirley and Tom McGill of Dover, The Fisher Barn now has a fine example of an early stage mechanical potato planter that has been used in Dover for many years. Although we have been unable to date or brand identify the planter, we do know that it resembles a circa early 1900's Aspinwall Company horse (and later tractor) drawn machine that reduced the hard manual labor required for potato farming in the area.

This machine furrowed the ground, evenly spaced the planting of potatoes and covered the seed in one pass. The planting was based on a rotating dish (think of a lazy susan) that had

rotated over a tube that dropped the cut seed potato pieces through a tube into the furrow that a front leading plow had just created. The rear of the machine had an inverse plow device that covered the furrow and seeds!

This process replaced a single pass to plow a furrow, a second pass to hand plant the cut seed potato pieces, and a third pass to cover the plantings. The reliable and even spacing of the potatoes was very valuable, because at harvest time, you had a much better idea of where you should dig to reach your crop!

Although this may not sound like much, it reduced the labor and time to allow most households of the day to consider potatoes as a staple of the household crops.

With the rapid expansion of commercial farming in post WWII, it is easy to forget the machines and tools required for many homesteads to produce a balanced diet of nutritious items. Certainly, the potato planter was an item that many small and mid sized family farms relied upon. Please stop by The Fisher Barn this spring to see our newest item on display and ponder the life of days gone by.

*Jack Hoehlein*

Fisher Barn Curator

## Spring at Sawin!!! Spring to Sawin!!!

It appears that Spring may actually be here, and we are all getting excited about being outside doing things again. That said, we are getting excited about Sawin Museum being open for the Spring, and the great things that are happening there.

We have had two volunteers, Katrina Brace and Ollie Luey, who have spent Saturdays all winter photographing the Sawin clothing collection. They are almost done. After that, we have another volunteer willing to catalogue the photographs into our museum software program. This is a HUGE undertaking and we are most grateful to their commitments.

Of note, we, also, have had wonderful projects developed in the past by Eagle Scouts. These include the documentation of the names and locations of all Veteran graves in Highland Cemetery by John Benson and the scanning and transcribing of a number of the Benjamin Caryl sermons by Ben Brea. The commitment of time and effort for these projects is HUGE, and we are most grateful.

That said, we are commencing work with the Girl Scouts and the Boy Scouts and are VERY excited about their interest in a variety of activities. In celebration of the 100 Year

anniversaries for both groups, we plan to install exhibits for each at Sawin Museum, with the input from the Scout troops themselves. This is a long overdue project as the Scout troops in Dover have had a long and active role in many organizations and deserve recognition in the historical documentation of our town. Among the projects planned, aside from the development of the exhibits, are:

- Tracing the genealogy of the scout members in order to provide to develop a more complete database on Dover families,
- An involvement in the Old Home Day Historical Bake Sale, by baking cakes and manning the sale,
- Lining the drawers upstairs in Sawin with archival lining and relocating the numerous files presently situated on our shelves to allow for more exhibit space,
- Grounds cleanup
- Sean Rapela will be installing a pathway from the Hodgson shed to the Sawin Museum,
- Landscaping the new pathway with groundcovers, etc
- Involvement with the new "Sawin Cafe", which will exist for one day per year, Old Home Day, weather permitting, and which will allow visitors to sit and have coffee, tea, and other beverages, while tasting the cakes that are for sale and enjoying the music collection of McGregor McGehee,
- Increasing awareness for Sawin Museum among Dover youth, and
- Development of an Historical Badge to be presented to the scouts involved.

We are, also, still considering other projects with the Scouts, such as: a possible historical play for those thespian oriented scouts, and a program aimed at location and GPS documentation by the scouts of the myriad historical locations in town, many of which are no longer visible to the eye, for those scouts who want to spend time outside.

While we love working with the Scouts, we always have the opportunity to provide availability of research topics for school projects and welcome any students who want to volunteer for activities that would provide them with Community Service hours.

We love working with older volunteers, as well, so if you have a few hours that you would like to volunteer as a docent or to do any related project, please contact us to discuss this. You do NOT have to be computer literate to undertake a project, but if you are, then, there are more options for you to choose from.

We look forward to hearing from you and hope to be able to assist you in your questions and interests related to Dover's history.

*Fay Bacher*

Sawin Museum Curator

# Dover Historical Society Officers

Elected at the Annual Meeting 3/31/11

President	Elisha Lee	(508)785-1653	eleejr@verizon.net
Vice President	Priscilla Jones	(508)785-0236	priscillapjones@yahoo.com
Secretary	Rich White	(508)785-3197	whitefork@comcast.net
Treasurer	Sue Fitzgerald	(508)785-2161	suefitzgerald@comcast.net
Caryl House Curator	Barbara Palmer	(508)785-1190	barbarapalmer @comcast.net
Fisher Barn Curator	Jack Hoehlein	(508)479-1937	jhoehlein@hotmail.com Jack.Hoehlein @morganstanley.com
Sawin Museum Curator	Fay Bacher		
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	Patty Howe	(508)785-9044	pahowe54@yahoo.com
Volunteers	Amy Wilcox	(617)266-1360	amywilcox@mac.com

## Advisory Board

Pam Kunkemueller	Judy Schulz
Shirley McGill	Dierdre Windsor-Bailey
Dale Cabot	Kim Phelan

### Mark Your Calendar

The Annual Caryl House Garden Party will be held Sunday, June 5th at the Caryl House. Historic Preservationist Bill Finch will be our special guest. He is eager to share with you the secrets and curiosities the Caryl House has revealed to him. Take a walk-through in his company and become enchanted with the stories and the story-teller.

The 10th Annual Old Home Day Celebration will take place on Sunday, Oct. 2nd. For further information on Old Home Day and Application Forms to exhibit at the Craft Fair and Car Show, see the website: [www.DoverOldHomeDays.org](http://www.DoverOldHomeDays.org)

# DOCENT SCHEDULE

## SPRING 2011

<b>Date</b>	<b>Sawin Museum</b>	<b>Caryl House</b>	<b>Fisher Barn</b>
April 2	Fay Bacher	Dorothy-Boylan	Jack Hoehlein
April 9	Dorothy Boylan	Patty Howe	Jack Hoehlein
April 16		Dale Cabot	
April 23	Priscilla Jones	Elisha Lee	
April 30	Richard White	Nancy Ferguson	Dorothy Boylan
May 7	Elisha Lee	Priscilla Jones	Jack Hoehlein
May 14	Clare Burke	Richard White	
May 21	Fay Bacher	Jane Moore	Priscilla Jones
May 28			Richard White
June 4		Barbara Palmer	
June 11			
June 18		Sue Knowles	Betty Brady
June 25	Fay Bacher		Jack Hoehlein

**Caryl House Garden Party**, Barbara Palmer, Fay Bacher, Dorothy Boylan, Dale Cabot, Priscilla Jones, Jack Hoehlein, Elisha Lee, Pam Kunkemueller

If you can fill one of the open dates above, please contact Elisha Lee at [eleejr@verizon.net](mailto:eleejr@verizon.net).