

DOVER TIDINGS

Holiday 2014



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Editor

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Come One! Come All!
To the Society's Annual Holiday Party
Sunday, December 14th 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 music and carols.

Harpichord Music with Diane and Michael Jones

Goodies to Eat and Drink

Soap Making Demonstration for children at 2:15 PM



The President's Letter

The Society is excited to announce the recent acquisition of a Chippendale style wing back chair with an interesting history. The chair comes to us through the generous donation of Marcia Close of McClean, Virginia. Mrs. Close is the daughter of Willard F. Smith whose parents, Allen and Edeler (Chickering) Smith lived in the house on Centre Street that is now occupied by the Charles River School. On the evening of January 21, 1908 the Smiths and others removed this chair from the fire that was consuming the Williams Tavern which lay across the street and just south of the present Dover Library.

The Williams Tavern was originally constructed by Colonel Daniel Whiting in 1761. Local historian Frank Smith notes in his *History of Dover, Massachusetts, as a Precinct, Parish, and Town* that "the Dover tavern, from the start, was not much used by guests who tarried, but rather as a stopping-place for those who journeyed and as a place of resort for the people of this and surrounding towns."

In 1800 the tavern was purchased by John Williams who also operated a livery stable. In 1818 Williams was succeeded as manager of the tavern by his son-in-law, Isaac Howe. By the early 1830's the business was in decline and the tavern ceased to operate as such around 1838, although the building continued to be used as a grocery store until about 1844. It remained largely vacant from that point until it burned in 1908.

The chair itself has been verified as dating from 1780 – 1800 which is consistent with the period in which the tavern was in its heyday and it is certainly within the realm of possibility that men such as Reverend Benjamin Caryl, his son Dr. George Caryl, or even Colonel Daniel Whiting might once have made use of.

The Society plans to have it reupholstered in an historically appropriate fabric and placed on display at the Benjamin Caryl House. We thank Mrs. Close for her generosity and her continued interest in Dover's history.

On an entirely separate note, Ms. Fay Bacher, longtime Curator of the Sawin Museum, has recently stepped down. We thank Fay for her years of service and welcome as her successor Dr. Stuart Swiny, longtime Dover resident and recently retired Emeritus professor of archaeology at SUNY Albany.

Elisha F. Lee

Harvest Time at the Caryl House

Fall season at the Benjamin Caryl House would have been a very busy time of year for Benjamin and Sarah and their family.

Everyone would be involved, even the young children, getting in the crops and especially the root vegetables such as beets, carrots and turnips as well as squash, pumpkins, cabbage and potatoes. Once the fields were plowed, the kids could find and gather the potatoes. These vegetables, vital for winter survival, would be placed in cold storage in baskets in the basement on the dirt floor of the Caryl House. The dirt floor still exists at the house, but is not open to the public.

These vegetables would be used in stews and soups etc. for the winter months. Cold storage was the only way to preserve them without our modern refrigeration. Food and the preservation of it was very important for Colonial folks to survive the winter months. Wheat would have been converted to flour and stored for future use as well. The winter wheat crop would get planted so the House would have an early crop of wheat for breads. Hay from the fields would be placed in the barn loft and with luck there would be two hay crops each year.

Other large crops that had to be harvested, stored and preserved were the hard fruits such as apples. Apples came to the colonies with the pilgrims in 1623 by way of apple seeds. When they planted these apple seeds the pilgrims never really knew what type of tree would be produced. Many of the trees would cross pollinate with native crab apple trees to produce stronger varieties. The first orchard was started in Beacon Hill. The oldest variety bred in the United States is the Roxbury Russet, dating to about 1635 and discovered in Roxbury, now a part of Boston. Farmers selected what they wanted in apples.

Later, Colonial farmers preferred to get cuttings or grafts from trees instead of using seeds, as they knew what type of apples would be produced by each tree. Some of the more popular apples at the time were Baldwin (produced different offsprings, red color and good storage), Roxbury Russets (good storage apple and after some storage developed a caramel pineapple flavor with brown sandpaper skin), Porter (good for jelly) and Dorchester Tolman Sweet (large sugar content).

At the Caryl House we currently are growing four Roxbury Russet trees. These apples were enjoyed fresh, baked, dried, and pressed into cider, which turned into hard cider when stored. There is an apple press at the Fisher Barn. Along

with the apples, hops were grown for beer and are still being grown . On your next visit to the Caryl House, look for these. Also check out the Concord grapes on the arbor near the back entrance. These delicious grapes were excellent for making jelly. Apples not used for household needs were fed to the pigs. Putting up or curing of meats from the pigs and steers was also a part of the fall activities.

When the Temperance movement created Prohibition (1920 - 1933), many apple trees were destroyed. New England country farmers with small lots were able to save many trees. Today there is a group in Boston called the Boston Tree Party trying to preserve and replant these apple trees in the Boston area. Look for these heirloom varieties in the market, but remember that they might not have the same bright reds and greens of the agribusiness apples.

As our Town has moved away from an agriculturally based community, our winter preparation of raking leaves, cleaning gutters, checking heating systems has replaced the fall food preserving activities and the stocking of cords of wood so prevalent during Benjamin and Sarah Caryl's lifetime.

The Caryl House has a cookbook called *Battelle Family Receipts* which was written in 1807. It lists jellies, jams, preserves of all types and apple pudding. Also listed are receipts to put up a 200 pound beef and diet bread. The cookbook would make a great holiday gift (\$5.00).

Janet Comiskey-Giannini
Curator, Caryl House

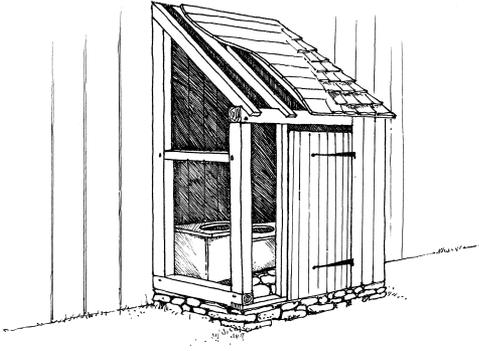
Battelle Family Receipts-Dover Historical Society ---1999

Rowan Jacobsen—"Bring back the strange apples!" --Boston Sunday Globe; September 7, 2014

Rowan Jacobsen ----Apples of Uncommon Character -- New 2014

A Privy for the Parson

Attached to one side of the Fisher Barn dismantled in 1999 there was a small outhouse containing a traditional wooden privy with seating arrangements for an adult and a child as well as an opening to a square bin, presumably for storing the necessary corncobs. The 6 ft. by 2 ¼ ft. wooden box with its carefully shaped seats is now exhibited in the barn and attracts much attention and curiosity, especially from visiting children. In order to enhance the authenticity of the Benjamin Caryl farm lot a traditional "privy" is surely a necessity and the Dover Historical Society now plans to reinstall it next to the barn!



The outhouse will be built by a craftsman, Mr. Mark Oteri, who has considerable experience with traditional materials and wood-working tools. He plans to hand-hew and adze the beams for the sill, posts and rafters and will fit them all together with mortises and tenons held in place with wooden pegs, just like the barn.

This framework will be clad with boards and roofed, again like the barn, with cedar shingles. A flagstone floor and wooden door with traditional fittings will complete this simple structure that was such an integral, and often overlooked, feature of any homestead. The drawing (above) by Mark Oteri gives an accurate impression of the finished outhouse. He has provided a cost estimate for the building amounting to \$3,500.00 for labor and an additional \$450.00 for materials. All of the beams, rafters and boards will be of locally grown timber and the flagstones will also come from Dover, adding to the authenticity of the project.

The Dover Historical Society has applied to the Massachusetts Cultural Council for a portion of the funds required, but even if successful we will need to raise the balance of around \$3,000 and to this end we are seeking your support for this endeavor.

Stuart Swiny

Interim Curator, Sawin Museum

The Privy – a Potted History

The state of plumbing matches up reasonably well with the state of civilization using it. Indoor plumbing has been invented and forgotten several times in human history beginning with the Minoans on Crete (using clay pipes for supply and drainage and inventing the first flushing toilet). The mainland Greeks used water brought in through underground aqueducts and had the technology for pressurized showers as well. Some houses in the cities had indoor toilets flushed with waste water, draining into underground sewage pipes to be discharged into some larger body of water. These pipes had to be vented to prevent the buildup of noxious fumes.

The Romans developed their immense systems of aqueducts, public baths and toilets and reached a state of sophistication that was not to be surpassed until the 19th century. The great installation at Bath, England was developed over a period of 300 years starting around AD 60, using the natural hot springs found there. The Romans were regular bathers, a habit that fell out of favor for about a thousand years after the empire fell. The baths fell into disuse, bathing was regarded as sinful and unhealthy, and indoor plumbing virtually ceased to exist.

The problem with plumbing (and civilization in general) can be summed up as the Law of Conservation of Filth – you can't clean something without getting something else dirty. The outdoor privy or outhouse has the advantage that the waste is deposited directly into the ground where it will decompose (ideally without contaminating ground water), be covered over, and the outhouse relocated. The hole might also be used as a garbage disposal, and there's a fertile field of outhouse archaeology, yielding a trove of well-preserved artifacts.

In the cities, the chamber pot served the same purpose, and the problem of disposal was solved by dumping – out the window perhaps – but mostly into the streets or other common areas and thence into rivers, leading to dreadful pollution, noxious odors, and disease. Combined with a lack of basic cleanliness, cities were a laboratory for all kinds of pestilence.

It was about the time of Benjamin Caryl that bathing and sanitation started to be valued again, in England, but it took years for the development of germ theory and the need for clean water. Our privy is probably later than that time, and indoor plumbing took quite a while to reach the country. The Tremont House in Boston was the first American hotel to have indoor plumbing, in the 1830's. Bathing wasn't commonly accepted until much later.

The solution to our waste problem may circle back to the privy in the form of the composting toilet, having the convenience of indoor plumbing without the issues of septic or sewage systems. And no need to retrieve experimentally flushed toys or fixing the valve that starts leaking at 2AM. There is, however, a psychological barrier to be overcome.

Richard White

Curator, The Fisher Barn

Meet the Caryl House Caretaker

Growing up on Pine Street with three sisters and one brother, John Sugden III developed an affinity for the outdoors. Hiking Snow Hill was a favorite activity. An enthusiastic member of the Troop 1 Dover Boy Scouts, John became an Eagle Scout. After attending Chickering, Carroll, Dover-Sherborn, Norwich University, and the University of Maine, where he studied wood science and forestry, John worked for The Trustees of Reservations at Noanet Woodlands as Park Ranger and Powisset Farm in the maintenance area. Subsequently, he became one of two caretakers for a large Sherborn estate. Last January, after being selected from a strong pool of applicants, John moved into the Caretaker's Apartment at the Benjamin Caryl House. His interest in history, experience as a caretaker, and skills as an arborist apprentice are qualities which make him an excellent match. John has regular



responsibilities for the House and Home Lot. Consulting with him on gardening issues has been a pleasure.

This summer I was thrilled when I learned that John owns Powissett Property Management, because at that very moment the Dover Historical Society was looking for someone to rid the 1.2 acre Sawin lot of saplings and poison ivy. John and a co-worker tackled the job and in combination with other ongoing tree work, the Sawin Museum once again is visible and we are well on our way to creating a park like setting. John has helped identify native species, which have been labeled, increasing the educational merit of the area.

In his free time, John enjoys fishing and camping. He serves the community as a member of the Fire Department. Please welcome John when you see him at the Caryl House or around Town.

Priscilla Pitt Jones

Fifth Annual Preservation Award

Help us promote awareness of Dover's historic homes by nominating one you admire. Send the name of the homeowner and the address by February 1, 2015 to the Dover Historical Society, Box 534 or doverhistoricalsociety.org. Contact Priscilla Jones at priscillapjones@yahoo.com with questions.

Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, December 14 from 2 to 4 PM Holiday Open House at the Caryl House, 107 Dedham St. The annual Caryl House Holiday Party. Seasonal music with Diane and Michael Jones and festive decorations. Soap making demonstration for children at 2:15 PM. Cider and period refreshments will be served.

February: Date to Be Announced . Harvard Museums Tour
Guided one hour tour of the Harvard Art Museums in Cambridge, Busch Reisinger, Fogg, Arthur M Sackler Museums under one roof. New design by Renzo Piano

Wednesday, March 25 at 7:30 PM Annual Meeting
At the Dover Library, Lower Level Stuart Swiny, Professor Emeritus of Archaeology, University at Albany and Laina Swiny, Harvard Museum of Semitic Studies will speak on *"Imperiled Cultural Heritage: From a Worldwide Perspective to Dover, MA"*

April/May: Date to be announced American Modernism
Dover Library, Lower Level. Jill Pearlman, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Studies at Bowdoin College will speak on *"American Modernism"*

Sunday, June 7 from 2 to 4 PM Garden Party at the Caryl House
107 Dedham St.

In Memoriam

Andrew Bailey
David Barry
Richard Billings, Sr.
Robert Bond
Evelyn Brown
Donald Burns
Molly Campbell
Billy Campbell
Frances Converse
Leonard Cook
Anne Couch
Thomas Dabney
Jon Davis
Jonathan Dolan
Theresa Edmands
Theodore Fisher
Joseph Gilhoolley
Henry Grew
Helen Hamilton
Paul Keleher
Marjorie Kelley
Anne Kennedy

Janice Kispert
Kyra LeRoy
Martin Lobkowicz
Al Lordi
John Martin
Joseph Melican
Henry Minot
Clare McDonnell
Carol McGovern
David Pinkham
Raymond Shanahan
Nancy Simpson
Robert Smith
Henry Stone
James Storey
Ray Sylvester
Theodore Tedeschi
Anthony Tizzano
Heather Tourtellotte
Joseph Wallace
Alexander Wheeler, Jr
Janet Wood Jensen

