

2016 Annual Appeal

November 2016

Dear Friend(s) of the Dennis Historical Society,

As we launch this year's Annual Appeal, we thought you would enjoy the following story.

DHS Board member and curator, Phyllis Horton, received a call from the Town of Dennis about a very large wooden crate that had just been delivered to the Society's West Dennis Graded School House. It had been shipped from Redmond Washington. Where did Phyllis want the crate to go? She replied that it should be taken to the second floor and after much pushing and shoving, the heavy crate was finally in the elevator with "a half an inch to spare," said Phyllis. When the crate was at last pried open, inside were a number of maritime items belonging to Captain Ahira Kelley of Dennis. Having traveled around the world in the 19th century with Captain Kelley, they had made their way across the country in the 21st century. Now they were home! Included was an 1858 boxed sextant, many charts, including a mahogany framed 1872 chart of Cape Cod Bay, and a very unique porthole cover. All of these items have now become part of the Society's important maritime collection.

The Dennis Historical Society was founded 53 years ago. We are charged with protecting our town's rich history...through our collections, our historic buildings including the 1736 Josiah Dennis Manse, 1801 Jericho House and Barn, 1876 West Dennis Graded School House and the 1877 Rose Victorian, and through our diverse programming, exhibits and publications. Sea captains (over 600 in Dennis alone!), historic homes, digitized archival records, maritime maps, family cemeteries, beautiful quilts...there are many artifacts to preserve and stories to tell our visitors.

The Society operates on a modest budget with revenues derived primarily from membership dues, grants and donations. There is no endowment fund. The Annual Appeal's general goal this year is raising funds to enhance and expand our programming and to support and protect our historic collections. In addition, we have identified five specific projects in need of funding. We ask you to give either to our general fund, or if you would prefer, to one of our 2017 projects.

We thank you, in advance, for considering our request and have enclosed a return envelope for your convenience. Your tax free contribution will enable us to continue to fulfill our mission and bring important items, like the maritime objects above, home to Dennis.

And, finally, what happened to that big crate? As Phyllis and her Yankee ancestors say, "Wear it out, use it up, make it do or do without." The crate was taken apart by Dave Talbott and the boards are being saved for shelving. Now, that's frugality!

With best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season,

The Board of Directors of the Dennis Historical Society