

## Historic Cemeteries in Dennis

Sixteen cemeteries are located in the town of Dennis. Of these, fourteen are town owned. Five are considered active because they currently allow burials and nine are considered inactive because burials are no longer allowed there. Two cemeteries, Old Swan Lake Cemetery and Quivet Cemetery are privately owned. In these web pages we also include Brewster's Sears Cemetery, which lies just over the Dennis/Brewster town line and is accessible from Airline Road in Dennis.

Eleven of these cemeteries are listed by the Massachusetts Historical Commission in their Cultural Resource Information System because they are considered ancient burial grounds, having been laid out between 1650 and 1853. Only one cemetery, Dennis Village Cemetery, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The oldest burial marked by an engraved stone is that of Marcy Winslow in Worden Cemetery. She died on September 22, 1688 at the age of 48. All of the ancient burial grounds indicate the possibility of earlier unmarked burials. The Indian Burial Ground, containing no marked burials, is surely the oldest burial site. These cemeteries represent a link to our past, a reminder of lives long gone. Each grave stone is a unique testament.

The Dennis Cemetery Advisory Committee continues to survey these cemeteries in addition to supporting the repair and cleaning burial markers. Frequently we hold a cemetery open house to highlight a current rehabilitation project. The Dennis Historical Society also hosts several cemetery tours each year.

The following web pages are the result of several years of dedicated research and photography by the Dennis Cemetery Advisory Committee and Dennis Historians. Hopefully this introduction to Dennis cemetery history will encourage you to visit these cemeteries. A linked map listed as the [Historical Cemetery Map](#) will help you locate them.

## Baker Family Burying Ground - ca. 1853 Swan River Road, West Dennis

A bronze plaque set in natural stone marks the Baker Family Burying Ground located on the West side of Swan Pond River Road, in a section colloquially known as “Battletown” for its reputation as a rough neighborhood. This “South Village” of West Dennis flourishing along the “South Sea” (Nantucket Sound) was home to vast salt meadows, fishermen and mariners.

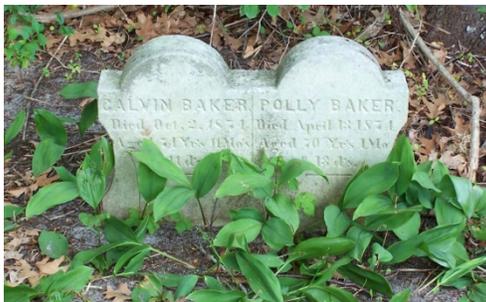
The true extent of this cemetery is not known as only two grave stones remain in a small fenced area hidden by a growth of brush along the town owned right of way. The grave of James T. Baker who drowned in his twentieth year on December 29, 1853 is marked by the earliest stone. The graves of Calvin Baker and his wife Polly, who died in 1874, are marked by the second stone.

The Baker family was one of the earliest and most prolific families who settled in Dennis. Few people who trace their ancestry here can deny descent from the Baker clan who were most famous for their maritime feats, many achieving the status of master mariner.

In 2008 this cemetery was repaired by a nearby resident with the assistance of the Department of Public Works.



Baker Family Burying Ground



Calvin Baker died Oct. 2, 1874  
Polly Baker died April 13, 1874



James T. Baker died Dec. 29, 1853

**Dennis Village Cemetery - 1728**  
**Route 6-A & Old Bass River Road, Dennis**

Bordering a large village green that was once a militia training field, Dennis Village Cemetery is situated at the site of the 1721 first meeting house of what was then the Town of Yarmouth's East Precinct. Burial markers of Colonial slate and brownstone intermingle to make up one of the largest collections in the Mid Cape region. This cemetery, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and set in the Old King's Highway Historic District, dates back to 1728, although a number of unmarked graves suggest an earlier burial ground. It has evolved from colonial slates in solemn rows, the first recorded expansion being in 1797, to more elaborate Victorian marbles in family plots and contemporary granites. Portions of the cemetery are in active use today with future expansion being considered.

The earliest marked burial is that of Mr. John Crowell (d. Oct. 13, 1728), a grandson of one of the first founders. The cemetery contains the remains of many distinguished citizens of the town and their families including Reverend Josiah Dennis (d. Aug. 31, 1763), first minister of the East Parish in whose honor the town was named at its division from Yarmouth and incorporation in 1793; the second minister, Reverend Nathan Stone (d. Apr. 26, 1804); Revolutionary officer Major Micah Chapman (d. Oct. 29, 1792); and Asa Shiverick (d. Apr. 12, 1861), founder of the famous local shipyard and his sons, David, Asa Jr. and Paul who produced the only clipper ships built on Cape Cod.

Soldiers and patriots of conflicts ranging from the Indian Wars and Revolution, to Korea and Viet-Nam are buried here. The town's rich maritime history is represented by the graves of sea captains, mariners and their families. Remembered in this cemetery are the captain and crew of the schooner "Bride," (eight of the crew of 9) the only bodies recovered, of twenty-one Dennis mariners lost in the Great Gale of October 3, 1841. In total, 72 men and 1 woman have markers that reveal they were lost or died at sea.

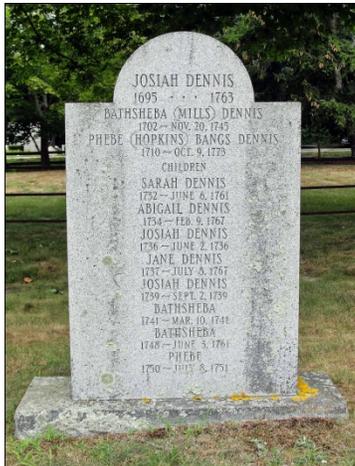
Distinctive burial markers represent the craftsmanship of the earliest Colonial stonecutters. Carvers from as far away as Boston and Plymouth such as Coye, Geyer, Lamson, Park and Soule may be represented here. Motifs of grim skulls with and without wings, Medusa-haired cherubs, formal portrait heads, sun bursts and the enduring urn with its tree of life adorn the early stones along with poetic epitaphs.

The Receiving Tomb erected in 1875, housed bodies over winter until the earth was thawed and burial could be accomplished. In 2009 this small building was consolidated into a museum that displays burial traditions.

The cemetery has undergone several condition assessments and is currently undergoing conservation and marker repair with the assistance of the Department of Public Works, Dennis Community Preservation funds and federal funds.



Dennis Village Cemetery & Receiving Tomb Museum



Reverend Josiah Dennis & Family



Major Micah Chapman  
died Oct. 29, 1792

**Hall Family Cemetery - ca. 1696**  
**Corporation Road, Dennis**

This small cemetery is located on Route 6A along the northern bank of Nobscussett Creek, near the Cape Playhouse. Laid out within the Old Kings Highway Historic District, access is limited through a small right of way. The cemetery was enclosed in a granite post, iron-rail fence in 1919 through town appropriations and private donations.

The cemetery contains few burials, all descendants of John Hall who came in 1651 from Coventry, England to this area, then known as Nobscussett. He established a farm of 147 acres and fathered 12 sons by two wives. His descendants were evidently of a religious nature, as some were Deacons in the church occupying 8 pews in the East precinct Church. There are no burial markers for John Hall and his wife, Elizabeth, in this burying ground, however three sons and their families are represented by slates: Gershom Hall (d. Oct. 31, 1732); Deacon John Hall (d. Oct. 24, 1710) and Joseph Hall (d. May 31, 1716).

The earliest headstone is a slate, its tympanum incised with a winged skull done in the style of the Lamson carvers of Boston for Mrs. Bethiah Hall, died October 15, 1696. Standing under a cedar tree honoring Bathsheba (known as Batha) Hall is an exquisite slate decorated by two doves plucking cherries from an urn done in the style of the Stevens carvers of Newport, RI. Batha, daughter of Samuel and Pashench (Patience) Hall, was six weeks old when she died in February of 1698. The headstone of Hannah Hall, died August 23, 1710, is carved in the style of John Noyes of Boston. The slate has an urn overflowing with flowers in the tympanum as vines scroll down the sides. A very early winged head decorates the slate of Presiller Hall, died March 30, 1712.



Hall Family Cemetery



Batha Hall died February 1698



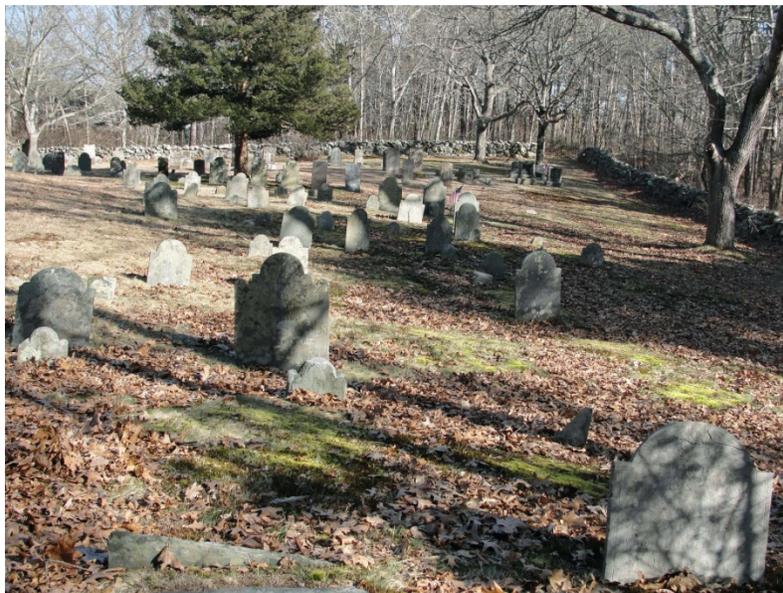
Deacon Joseph Hall died January 29, 1736

## Howes Family Cemetery - R. 1650 Bramble Lane, Dennis

In 1639, four settlers were given permission to settle land in Mattacheese that would soon become known as Yarmouth. One settler was Thomas Howes. His land grant consisted of 100 upland acres plus 26 more of meadow in Nobscussett, now known as Dennis. The cemetery, lying in the Old Kings Highway Historic District surrounded by conservation land, is situated on part of the original farm and accessible via a short footpath from Bramble Lane. The cemetery is enclosed on 3 sides by a beautiful stone wall hand crafted by David Howes in 1879 from varied-sizes of rough granite ashlar.

Thomas Howes and many of his descendants rest here. In colonial times, more residents of the town had the Howes surname than all other surnames combined. Many family members took part in the American Revolution. Others were involved in local government, were masters of sailing vessels and captains of industry. The Howes family owned and maintained the cemetery until 1917 when the Howes Cemetery Association was formed, continuing care until 1961, when it was deeded to the Town of Dennis.

A monument in honor of Thomas Howes and his wife Mary (Burr) was erected here by their descendants as the original burials lie unmarked. The earliest recorded burial is that of Sarah Howes (died 9 Sep 1705); it is a slate adorned by a winged skull with wrinkled brow in the style of Mumford or Emmes of Boston. Standing together are three vivid slates whose winged skulls are carved in the Lamson style, each with a pronounced grain going in a different direction: Mary Howes (d. March 14, 1712), Isaac Howes (d. September 20, 1728) and Joseph Howes (d. December 24, 1743). The burial marker of Sarah Howes notes that she died March 1776 in the 100<sup>th</sup> year of her age, a rare accomplishment of longevity.



Howes Family Cemetery



Jane Chase died May 3, 1986  
Daniel Chase died December 7, 1971



Hannah Howes  
died November 7, 1739

## Indian Burial Ground - prior to 1620 Route 6A along Scargo Lake, Dennis

The Indian Burial Ground is located above the shores of Scargo Lake. In 1829 it was enclosed with a stone and iron fence for \$160 and yet there are no headstones to define burials, which is in keeping with early Native American tradition. This area is considered a Late Woodland site by the Massachusetts Archeological Society based on the finding of a large milky quartz projectile point and other small artifacts. The nomadic Nobscussett tribe, under its Sachem Mashantampaine, spent summers here cultivating the fertile ground. The first Europeans arrived around 1639, among them John Crowe who settled the lake's northern shore on land he purchased from the tribe. A possibility exists that some early Crowe or Crowell family members may be buried in or near this burial ground. Relations between settlers and Native Americans were agreeable, routinely trading goods and information. Many Indians were converted and established homes in the town. The last known Native American living in Dennis died in 1810. A local legend portrays Scargo Lake as being dug by the Nobscussetts for Princess Scargo to keep alive a pumpkin full of fish given to her by the warrior Weaquaquet before he left on a journey. The fish lived, her lover returned and they lived happily ever after.



Indian Burial Ground marker

**Oak Ridge Cemetery - established 1970  
Route 134, South Dennis**

At the Dennis Town Meeting of 1965, on motions by George E. Armeson, the Town voted to divide the land area along Rt. 134 known as the Town Forest. Article 26 gave land to the School Department and Article 27 gave land to the Cemetery Commission. Another motion by Armeson requested the Town to take by eminent domain for a fee of \$6,000 land for cemetery purposes owned by Henry C. and Linda R. Maloney. Article 25 transferred land from the School Department to the Cemetery Commission so the cemetery land would be contiguous. By 1970 the Town's largest active cemetery, Oak Ridge, was accepting interments. The Department of Public Works continues to enhance the roadways and landscaping as they open new sections for burials.



Oak Ridge Cemetery

**Old South Dennis Cemetery - ca. 1700**  
**Old Bass River Road (behind Dennis Town Offices), South Dennis**

In a section of the Old King's Highway Historic District once known as Bass Ponds for its abundance of fish, the Ancient Cemetery is nested on land originally owned by Nicholas Nickerson who settled here shortly before 1656.

Many graves are unmarked or marked only with a large natural boulder ending with a smaller rough stone as a footstone. Engraved stones indicate members of the Baker, Nickerson, Crowell and Berry families who were some of the earliest residents of South and West Dennis Villages. For reasons that have not been discovered a group of the earliest burials are laid out with headstones facing Northwest to Southeast, contrary to the Colonial burial tradition of headstones facing from West to East aligned with the Cardinal points of the compass , facing the sun rise ready to rise up to heaven at God's call.

The earliest slate is shaped like a cradle end and was engraved in the style of Boston carver Joseph Lamson for Marcy Beery (sic. Berry), who died Nov. 15, 1713 at the age of 19.

A large rough boulder facing North with almost undecipherable hand hewn initials appears to read M H died MA 1711.

Revolutionary War Veteran and Yarmouth Selectman Lieutenant Israel Nickerson, who died in the fall of 1791 along with 4 of his children during a period of 2 weeks from a sickness about which no records have been found, is buried here. On October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007 American Veterans Post 33 held a memorial observance here and dedicated a commemorative boulder honoring Lt. Nickerson as well as 2 other veterans of the Revolutionary war Allen Bangs (1733-1793) and Jeremiah Baker (1748-1840) and to War of 1812 veteran Captain Josiah Baker (1784-1835).



Old South Dennis Cemetery



Marcy Beery died Nov. 15, 1713



Lieut. Israel Nickerson died Sept. 30, 1791

## **Old Swan Lake Cemetery - 1865 Depot Street, Dennis Port**

Old Swan Lake Cemetery, Depot Street, Dennis Port, is a privately owned and operated cemetery. It is under the control of the Swan Lake Cemetery Association, Inc., a non-profit corporation run by unpaid volunteers.

Dennis Port was the only one of the early villages in the Town of Dennis which did not develop a community cemetery in early times. While there were a number of family plots in the village (Wixon, Kelley, Chase, Gage families), many interments of village residents were done elsewhere (West and North Harwich, South Dennis).

In 1864, Dennis Port was the most populous village in town. A loose association of Dennis Port residents was formed to identify a site for a burial ground. Then-vacant land, 8 acres, was donated by Jeremiah and Sophia Kelley in October 1864. The land was cleared by the residents, plots and pathways laid out, and the lots were sold to residents at minimal cost. All maintenance was strictly voluntary. One enters the Old Swan Lake Cemetery through a graceful stone arch that was erected by the Society of Willing Workers in 1925.

In 1919, after the shipping industry collapsed and population plummeted, proper care of the cemetery could not be maintained. The Swan Lake Cemetery Association was then formally organized into a Corporation and its charter was granted by the Commonwealth on 5 Apr 1919. Perpetual Care was then instituted and a regular organization has continued to this day.

The cemetery is characterized by its diversity of monuments, from the elaborate to the plain. Many mariners, from Captains to common sailors, are interred there. A member of the original U. S. Life Saving Service, Alton J. Baker (1880-1958), is buried here.

Being a close-knit village cemetery, nearly all the individuals buried there are related to one another by blood or marriage. A number of burials pre-date the cemetery's founding, having been moved there from other sites.

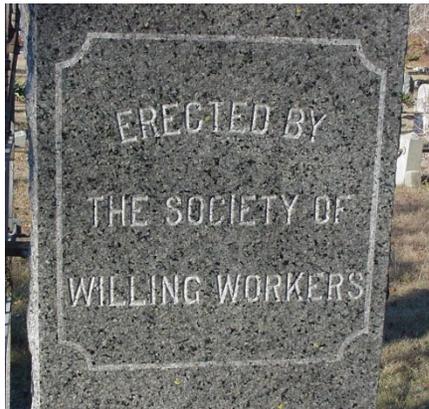
The most notable interment is that of Benjamin Franklin Baker (1862-1927), the only native of Cape Cod to have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. He had been a USN Coxswain on the USS Nashville in Cienfuegos Harbor, Cuba, in the Spanish-American war, when he and his mates, while under fire, exhibited "extraordinary bravery and coolness" while cutting two large submarine trans-Atlantic cables connecting Cuba and Spain. He also served in the Boxer Rebellion, China, and in World War I.

There are a number of stones dedicated to mariners who were lost at sea, including many of the crew of the famous Cross Rip Lightship, which was lost in the ice. There is also a potter's lot, containing the unknown and the indigent.

Old Swan Lake Cemetery continues active, as does its association and lots continue for sale to the public. For information please contact Burton R. Derick, President, at (508) 398-3183 or [bderrick37@comcast.net](mailto:bderrick37@comcast.net). News and updates can be found on Facebook, search "Swan Lake Cemetery Inc."



Old Swan Lake Cemetery



Willing Workers engraving on arch



Benjamin F. Baker died May 19, 1927

**Paddock Cemetery - ca. 1708**  
**Route 6A, East Dennis**

Paddock Cemetery lies within the Old Kings Highway Historic District, south of Route 6A along a cart path just east of Paddock's Path, on land originally owned by Zachariah Paddock (1636-1727), son of Plymouth's Robert Paddock. Zachariah moved to this area when he married Deborah Sears of Quivet (now East Dennis), daughter of Richard Sears/Sares and unmarked burials dating to the mid 1600's are likely resting here.

Zachariah and his wife Deborah are in unmarked graves somewhere among the 42 marked burials of this small family plot. Three of Zachariah's sons are here, along with their wives and descendants. The earliest engraved stone carved in the style of Nathaniel Emmes of Boston is that of Bethiah, wife of Zachariah Paddock, who died at the age of 41 on March 8, 1708. Rebecca Chapman, daughter of Isaac Chapman and Elizabeth Paddock, who died in 1726 at the age of 2, is the only headstone without a Paddock surname.

The Paddocks were early followers of the sea and noted whalers. Elder Zachariah's son Ichabod taught Nantucket Island residents there "the art of killing whales and using the oil." Other Paddocks served in local government under British rule. Zachariah Paddock Jr. (1664-1718) was a town Selectman in 1697 and a town Representative from 1706-1709. His brother Captain John Paddock (1669-1718) was a town Representative in 1714.

The headstone of Capt. Judah Paddock (d. March 31, 1770) is deeply carved in the style of Geyer, Boston, with a head whose wings are slightly askew.

The epitaph of Hannah Hall Paddock, who died 21 July 1830, aged 1y 11m, is particularly poignant:

"This lovely bud so young & fair,  
Call'd home by early doom;  
Just came to show how sweet a flower  
In Paradise would bloom."



Paddock Cemetery



Bethiah Paddock died March 8, 1708



Capt. Judah Paddock died March 31, 1770

## Quaker Cemetery - R. 1720 Mayfair Road, South Dennis

Quaker Cemetery rests on a northerly knoll along Mayfair Road in South Dennis, within the bounds of the Old Kings Highway Historic District. There are only seven simple white marble headstones, as early tradition did not allow for the ostentatious marking of burials. The cemetery is quite large prompting speculation of more graves. A Meeting House was built nearby in 1714 on land owned by David O'Kelia (now Kelley), a fervent Quaker ancestor of the prominent Kelley family. The house was moved to Yarmouth in 1808 by cutting the building into quarters and floating them down Bass River.

Quakerism reached this area about 1660, partially due to persistent persecution by Plymouth Separatists and Massachusetts Bay Puritans which caused many followers of the faith to move to less populated or more tolerant areas. Two such families were the Dillinghams and Wings of Sandwich, who moved to what is now known as West Brewster. Others soon moved to vacant land around Follins Pond, one of whom was Francis Baker who married the Quaker girl Isabel Twining in what was the first recorded marriage in Yarmouth.

The earliest headstone belongs to Hattil Kelley (1720-1809). He owned a wind grist-mill which sat in the middle of the town beside the Old Quaker Road (from Brewster) near Old Chatham Road. Hattil was evidently imprisoned for refusal to pay taxes that were used at that time to pay the militia and to support "approved" religious activities, both of which the Quakers opposed on principal. In 1757 he petitioned the Court seeking his release.

Another headstone is that of Cyrenius Kelley (1770-1840), son of Hattil Kelley and husband of Jerusha Baker, who was a dedicated blacksmith, performing many services for the town's people.

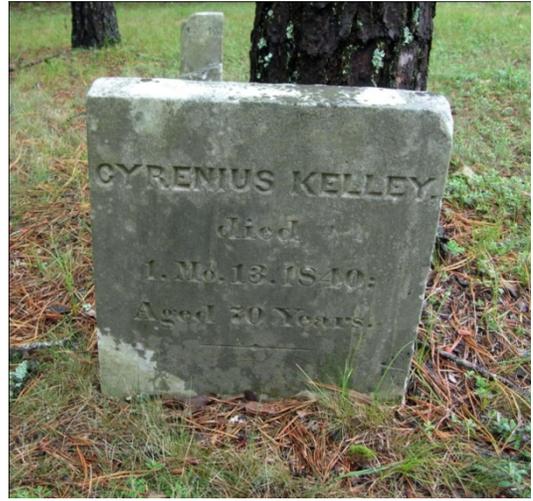
Local names who were prominent in the community and adherents of the Quaker faith were Chase, Kelley, Baker, Eldredge, Wing, Gifford, Smith, Crowell, Gage, Ellis, Covel and Nickerson, all numbered among the very earliest settlers of the region.



Quaker Cemetery



Hattil Kelley  
died March 8, 1809



Cyrenius Kelley  
died Jan. 13, 1840

**Quivet Cemetery - ca. 1843  
South Street, East Dennis**

Quivet Cemetery can be found overlooking the marshes of Quivet Creek at the end of South Street just before the entrance to Crowes Pasture.

Early interments may have been members of the Reformed Methodist Society of Dennis and West Brewster who moved from Brewster to East Dennis in 1845, taking the name Wesleyan Methodist Society of East Dennis. In 1896 cemetery trustees paid Josiah F. Sears \$5 for a right of way to "pass and repass on foot over a certain way intersecting said cemetery with a certain well by a pipe located on any upland adjoining said cemetery." It expanded to the east in 1907 with a purchase of land for \$30 owned by Olive B. Perkins and became a self-perpetuating private association. In 1976 there was another expansion with a purchase of land for \$45 owned by Alice N. Kelley and Alice L. Kelley. Currently the only burials available are those in existing family plots.



Quivet Cemetery



Christopher Hall  
Died May 15, 1857

Betsy Hall  
Died April 7, 1855

**Sears Cemetery - ca. 1676**  
**Corner of Airline Road & Route 6A, Brewster on East Dennis boundary**

Sears Cemetery lies hidden in Brewster overlooking Muddy Pond at the beginning of Quivet Creek, the border between Dennis and Brewster. It was laid out along the original Old Kings Highway, later known as the Old Way, in the late 1600's. Surrounded by private property and conservation land, it was accessible from a path in the Bound Brook Conservation Area to the Old Way until 1975-76 when Barnstable Land Court accepted a petition to discontinue the Brewster part of the Old Way and incorporate it into Lot 91 of the private property. Access to the cemetery was granted through the Dennis side of the Old Way.

It was once described as a "traveling cemetery" by a local resident because it was laid out in the Town of Yarmouth, was in Harwich when that Town was established and was in Brewster when that Town was established. The cemetery was fenced with stone posts and iron rails in 1881 for a sum that grew from an estimate of \$250 in 1880 to over \$500 by 1881 with residents of Dennis financially supporting about 25% of the project.

Capt. John Sears (1744-1817), a Quivet Neck resident, rests here. Salt was a vital commodity for local fishing fleets and maritime trade. It was very difficult to import or produce. In 1766 "Sleepy John" experimented with the evaporative precipitation of sea water, an effort which resulted in only 8 bushels of salt at first. By 1799 he had obtained a patent for portable roofs to protect the salt vats from rain and thus began a prosperous salt production enterprise which assisted the local economy for many years.

The slate of "Elesebeth Sears," wife of Capt. Joseph Sears, who died on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1772 is adorned with a large wigged head with collar and feather like wings carved in the style of William Coye of Plymouth, but the footstone is carved with a simple oval head that is bald and wings defined by modest lines.

A grim skull with narrow jaw done in the style of Geyer carvers of Boston defines the damaged slate of Mrs. Rhoda Sears, wife of Mr. Reuben Sears, who died April 16<sup>th</sup>, 1784.

The Sears Cemetery is well recorded through the Sears Family Cemetery Association at [www.searsr.com](http://www.searsr.com).



Sears Cemetery



Rhoda Sears died April 16, 1784



Elesebeth Sears  
died June 11, 1772

**South Dennis Congregational Church Cemetery - 1795  
Main Street, South Dennis**

In 1795 local residents voted to establish the South Parish Meeting House on land originally owned by John Nickerson, grandson of one of the first settlers, along with an adjacent burying ground. Nearby land granted by Bathsheba Baker in 1846 became known as the South Congregational Burying Ground. Cemetery care was taken over by the South Dennis Cemetery association in 1882 when these two cemeteries were combined as one. Following several other expansions the South Dennis Congregational Church Cemetery was deeded to the town and is still an active cemetery located in the South Dennis Historic District. A rough hewn boulder monument, lying outside the current cemetery boundary, marks an additional land gift of Richard S. Hall and Alfred C. Kelley in 1979.

The earliest marked grave is that of Mr. Isaiah Baker (d. 25 Sep 1795, in his 57th year) and the landscape suggests that there are many unmarked graves. Reverend John Sanford (1788-1866), first permanent pastor of the South Parish Meeting House lies here. His headstone bears this respectful epitaph:

In God denied him health for many years, but his trust was unshaken, and his end was peace. He sleeps, by his own request, among the people whom he never ceased to love."

The church, also called "The Sea Captains' Church", honors the many mariners, both interred and lost at sea, who made South Dennis a prosperous maritime center. Among these are: Capt. Samuel Chase (1760-1845) who served in the Massachusetts Militia, and the Continental Line at Valley Forge, fathering his last child at the age of 81; Capt. James Nickerson (1744-1815), a Revolutionary soldier, sea captain, and owner of a local grist mill; brothers Capt. Jonathan Nickerson Jr., Master (1807-1847) and John S. Nickerson, First Officer (1819-1847), both lost in the wreck of the schooner Sarah Adams along the coast of Ireland.

A simple marble stone inscribed "Chinese Woman Brought from Hong Cong by Capt. Alpheus Baker Jr. Died aged 31 years 5 April 1872" marks the grave of a woman known "Amah." She was picked up in Shanghai by Capt. Alpheus to be a nanny to his children, one of whom was born at sea.

The family plot of the brothers Obed Baxter Sr. (1797-1862) and Joseph Baxter (1834-1916) is enclosed by an elaborate cast-iron fence, whose gates appear to be pictured in the iron works catalog of Wood & Perot, Philadelphia. Plans for its repair are currently being designed by the Cemetery Advisory Committee.

In 2007 with the assistance of the Community Preservation Committee and the Town of Dennis the main entrance gate was stabilized and painted along with conservation of eighteen burial markers.



South Dennis Congregational Church Cemetery



Obed Baxter Fence ca.1862

**Swan Lake Annex Cemetery - established 1950  
Depot Street, Dennis Port**

In May of 1950 Dennis voters approved two articles at Town Meeting: Article 80 (motion by Nathaniel Wixon) allowed the Town of Dennis to purchase for the sum of one dollar 2.2 acres given by the Swan Lake Cemetery Association, Inc. to be used as a town cemetery and Article 81 (motion by George Armeson) the appropriation of \$500 to clear the lot. Thus was born Swan Lake Annex Cemetery, laid out in four avenues, which is currently an active cemetery. Many veterans of the World Wars, the Korean War and the Vietnam War are interred here.

An unusual large granite monument shaped as a pharmacist's mortar and pestle engraved Maloney marks the resting place of Henry Carlton Maloney (1909-1970), long time pharmacist and druggist in Dennis Port.

The headstone of Constance E. Caler (1916-1989) bears the epitaph  
"Like a Thief in the Night - Be Ready!"



Swan Lake Annex Cemetery



Henry Carlton Maloney (1909-1970)

## **West Dennis Cemetery - 1833 Fisk Street, West Dennis**

This Cemetery, located at the corner of Fisk and Pond Streets in West Dennis Village, originated ca. 1700 as the Crowell Family Burying Ground. In 1857 the Methodist Congregation voted to purchase an adjacent acre then owned by Capt. Freeman Crowell which later became known as the Church Burying Ground. As additional land was added it became known as the Village Cemetery. Finally it was taken over by the town, became known as West Dennis Cemetery and continues to be used as an active burial ground.

The earliest inscribed headstone belongs to Caroline Crowell (d. 1833) although spacing of the remaining slates suggests many unmarked burials may exist. Crowell, Baker and Kelley family members, some of the earliest settlers of "Crow Town" and "South Village" are thought to be buried here.

West Dennis Village borders Bass River whose deep water supported a thriving maritime and fishing industry. A memorial honor roll at West Dennis Community Church lists 123 sea captains many of whom rest in this cemetery. Descriptive of the many seamen lost at sea, the epitaph of Zenas C. Kelley (1812-1853) reads:

"For him break not the green turf  
Nor turn the dewy sod  
His dust shall rest beneath the surf  
His spirit with its God"

Around 1870, Providence stonecutter James Harvey Jenks established a monument company on Main Street which thrived thru the 20<sup>th</sup> century under his son, J. Harvey Jenks Jr., and his associate Robert C. Baker. Both Jenks Jr. and Baker are buried here marked by stones of their own carving.

Sometimes Yankee thrift is not successful. Capt. Oliver Kelley Baker (1828-1907) sought to save money by digging his own grave and bricking his own vault ahead of time, but when burial time came the space was not large enough and needed to be re-dug and re-bricked at additional expense. Buried here is publisher Thomas Y. Crowell (1836-1915) founder and owner of a company which still bears his name and inventor Luther Child Crowell (1818-1896) whose patent for the flat-bottom paper grocery bag was one of 280 patents he held.

At the May 1950 Town Meeting Article 78 was passed with a motion by Ena Crowell "to raise and appropriate \$1,000 to clear, survey the land and relocate the fence around the property purchased at the last Town Meeting as an addition." With the assistance of the Town of Dennis, federal funds and Community Preservation Committee funds, burial markers were stabilized in 2006 and two raised crypts were repaired in 2008.



West Dennis Cemetery



Vaults of Charles G. Kelley died Oct. 31, 1889  
Flora B. Kelley died Dec. 3, 1887  
Chloe Kelley died March 3, 1895



Caroline Crowell  
died Oct. 9, 1833

## **Wixon Family Burying Ground - ca. 1718 Summer Street, Dennis Port**

The Wixon Family Burying Ground is located on the east side of Summer Street, Dennis Port Village, known in colonial days as Crook's Neck or Crooked Neck or Crocker Neck, nearly in the center of the original Wixon property. The site, now in a heavily developed area, is marked by a granite boulder and plaque.

Robert Wixon, an early settler of Eastham and prominent in colonial affairs, married an Indian woman of the Nauset tribe according to family tradition. By 1711, his sons Titus and Barnabas, who served in the Indian wars in Piscataqua (Maine), purchased nearly a square-mile of land from an Indian named Jacob Crook. Over the years this family produced soldiers, fishermen, shipbuilders, sea captains, and also a justice of the peace. They greatly influenced economic development on the south shore of Dennis by building fisheries and vessels and developing the early "coasting" trade including eider-down trade between Cape Cod and Labrador. Members of the Wixon family still reside on portions of this land.

The brothers Barnabas (1762-1849) and Joshua (1761-1849) Wixon, who died of fever within a month of one another, are the only two headstones recorded here, but they disappeared about 50 years ago. Examination by the Dennis Historical Commission estimates that the burying ground extends farther than its "preserved" plot. At least 50 graves can be identified based on soil compaction, plant growth and ground contours. No burials of the Wixon family are found elsewhere in the Town before 1850 and it is reasonably concluded that they may rest here.



Wixon Family Burying Ground

**Worden Cemetery - ca. 1640**  
**Route 6A, Dennis**

Worden (Werden) Burying Ground with only 85 marked burials can be found behind Worden Hall, just off Route 6A in the Old Kings Highway Historic District. Peter Worden (1569-1639), who may have been the first permanent English resident, rests there in an unmarked grave in a plot laid out by his son, Peter Worden Jr. (1609-1681).

The oldest engraved headstone, also the oldest engraved stone in the Town of Dennis, is that of Mercy Winslow (d. Sept. 22, 1688), daughter of Peter Worden Jr. and wife of Kenelm Winslow (d. Nov. 11, 1715). It displays a winged skull and scroll border on slate with a strong diagonal grain done in the style of Lamson carvers, Boston. There are many fine examples of the Lamson style in this small cemetery. This cemetery became known as the Winslow Cemetery as additional family members were interred here.

Also buried in this ground is Hon' r Thomas Winslow Esq' r (1704-1779), son of Kenelm Jr., a Colonel of the Militia and a Selectman of the town of Harwich, together with 9 of his children all of whom died in infancy. The epitaph on Col. Winslow's slate with winged skull contains an optimistic rather than grim tone:

"Beneath this Stone here lies the Dust  
Of one who's numbered with the just  
He Died lamented, lived below'd  
And now is gone to dwell above."

Two markers with the same date of death, Aug. 30, 1751, are those of Theophilus Crosby (age 19, son of Theophilus Crosby & Thankful Winslow) and Josiah Hopkins (age 17, son of John Hopkins & Mehitable Crosby). They both drowned that day along with Nathan Howes, Priscilla Rogers, and Mercy Laha in what must have been a great tragedy for their families.

A winged portrait head in the style of Soule carvers, Plymouth, adorns the headstone of Mrs. Sarah Burges (d. April 17, 1755).

In the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the cemetery took on the name of the Homer Burial Ground because many members of the Stephen Homer family, a descendent of Benjamin Homer who settled in Yarmouth during the early 1700's, were interred here.



Worden Cemetery



Kenelm Winslow died Nov. 1715



Kenelm Winslow died March 20, 1728



Kenelm Winslow died June 28, 1733