

The Duston-Dustin Family Association

Minutes of the 114th Annual Meeting, August 11, 2018

The Buttonwoods Museum, Haverhill, Mass.

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. Officers present were:

- President John E. Dustin
- Vice President Cedric H. Dustin, Jr.
- Secretary David A. Dustin.

Also in attendance were:

- Diane Dustin Itasaka (President, Duston-Dustin Garrison House Association)
- Jennifer Emerson (Director, DDGHA)
- Thomas Spitalere (Director, DDGHA).

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that Treasurer Peter G. Dustin was unable to attend for medical reasons and Historian/Genealogist Craig Richardson felt it necessary to attend his daughter's wedding.

2. The Secretary read the minutes from the 113th annual meeting, which were accepted as presented.

3. The President read the Treasurer's Report. The DDFA balance at 2017 end was \$34,539.86 (\$14,552.17 checking + \$19,987.69 savings). For the Year To Date it stands at \$34,735.03 (\$7,000 checking + \$27,735.03 savings).

4. The President read the Genealogist's Report. Mr. Richardson reported on progress toward publishing a history of the Duston-Dustins in North America which builds on material left by the previous Genealogist, Mr. Chris Bailey, and will replace the Generations 1-12 booklets currently offered by the DDFA.¹ He said it will be several hundred pages in length. He is investigating a print-on-demand arrangement to reduce publishing cost.

5. The Secretary reported the composition of the DDFA Executive Committee per last year's election:

- President, John E. Dustin, Shrewsbury, Mass.
- Vice President, Cedric H. Dustin, Jr., Bow, N.H.
- Treasurer, Peter G. Dustin, Ardmore, Penn.
- Secretary, David A. Dustin, Contoocook, N.H.
- Historian (Genealogist), Craig Richardson, Amherst, N.H.

¹ Later in the meeting the Vice President observed that the genealogy booklets had all been compiled and published by 1956 when he first joined the DDFA, and can be considered complete only through Generation 8.

He reported that the following Executive Committee positions remain unoccupied:

- Assistant Secretary
- Assistant Historian (i.e., Assistant Genealogist).

He invited nominations to permit the retirement of long-serving Vice President Cedric H. Dustin, Jr.

The notice for this annual meeting was distributed to 243 active and recently inactive (annual) members. To date, nine mailed notices were returned as undeliverable for reasons including death. At the end of 2017, DDFA membership stood at 266, in contrast with historic totals, such as 2,000 in 1973.

The Secretary briefly reviewed the Constitutional objectives of the DDFA: (a) for genealogical expansion (via the Hannah Duston Memorial Fund); (b) preservation and promotion of family “monuments and relics” (via the Duston Monument Fund); and (c) maintenance of an Administration Fund for meeting the incidental expenses of operating the DDFA. He noted the disparity between dues rates from 1935 (\$2 annual, \$50 Life) to present (\$15 annual, \$100 Life), as had been pointed out by the Treasurer.

6. Old Business. The President noted that a DDFA Chapter in Michigan, which once had reported hundreds of members, had suffered a similar diminution in membership and had not been heard from in recent years.

7. New Business.

Duston Garrison House activity. DDGHA President Diane Dustin Itasaka reported rising popularity of Garrison House open houses, school tours (and a new Hannah Duston board game), especially in conjunction with the visits by Goodwife Dustin (Trustee Jennifer Emerson) and more recently Midwife Mary Neff (Danielle Anderson). She said there had been discussion about expanding the troupe of family re-enactors. She said the DDGHA Facebook page has attracted some 6,000 electronic visits, physical attendance is up at open houses and more donations are being received in the coffee can. She said that the new security system is in place to meet concerns about the political climate in Haverhill, where Hannah -- with her central statue -- is a figure of occasional controversy. Diane also noted the presence at the meeting of a representative of the Sterling family, which had sold property to Hannah and Thomas Duston for the sum of 100 pounds.

Jennifer Emerson (“Goodwife Dustin”) introduced her colleague Danielle Anderson (“Mary Neff”), a medievalist also from Connecticut. She said they are

conducting a lot of research about their characters and other members of Hannah's Emerson family, including her misunderstood sister Elizabeth.²

Create a category called "Friends of the Duston Garrison House." With interest in the Garrison House growing, Diane Itasaka said she saw an opportunity to continue generating more interest and attendance via a newsletter and more special events. The Secretary said that in his experience, publishing a newsletter over time is difficult and requires extensive volunteer effort, as well as considerable resources to print and mail. He said the current annual meeting invitations had cost nearly \$1.50 each for cheap printing, an envelope, and postage, and suggested it made better sense today to focus on exploiting electronic means / social media, to include Instagram and Facebook. David Jellison shared his experience of finding the DDFA, the Duston Garrison House, and this annual meeting largely via the internet thanks to a website reference in the Jay Atkinson book, and said he senses growing interest today in genealogical research using that means. He said there are many unexploited channels which we need to explore in order to expand our membership. The sense of the meeting was that the Executive Committee should explore these opportunities more extensively before taking further action. Several members, including Jennifer Emerson and Deodonne Dustin Bhattarai, offered to assist with social media outreach.

Urgency of expanding membership to younger generations. Clearly, as older generations fade, it becomes imperative that ways and means be found to attract younger relatives of Hannah Duston to our membership. The creation of the Duston-Dustin Garrison House's presence on social media (an increasingly popular Facebook page established by Diane Itasaka) is one contemporary tool that seems to be generating interest in the Hannah Duston history and legacy. Another is the activity of "Goodwife Dustin" (a/k/a DDGHA Director Jennifer Emerson), whose insightful portrayal of our ancestor brings an immediacy to the Hannah Dustin legacy that resonates well with individuals more attuned to an audio/visual mode of learning. Other approaches and methods of outreach will have to be discussed and implemented expeditiously. Younger attendees, some of whom self-identified as Millennials, emphasized the necessity of reaching their generation via electronic means and methods, and of keeping membership costs affordable for them.

Similar membership problems in other historical associations. Carolyn McLean reported that another historical association to which she belongs³ is

² She said that Hannah and Elizabeth's mother believed Elizabeth was raped by a neighbor, not promiscuous as has often been suggested.

³ the Manning Homestead in Billerica, Mass.

experiencing similar problems with falling membership and the burden of publishing a costly newsletter. She also said that her grandson and his friends, involved with an activity called "The Cellar Hole Club," had "loved" Diane's tour of the Duston Garrison House, which was helping make them enthusiastic about archaeology.

8. Nominations for the slate of officers. The following slate was nominated and elected for 2018-2019:

- President, John E. Dustin, Shrewsbury, Mass.
- Vice President, David W. Jellison, Amesbury, Mass.
- Treasurer, Peter G. Dustin, Ardmore, Penn.
- Secretary, David A. Dustin, Contoocook, N.H.
- Historian, Craig Richardson, Amherst, N.H.

9. Jim Beam bottle and other merchandise. The authentic Hannah Duston Jim Beam bottle was auctioned to Helga Canon, of Las Cruces, N.M., for \$50. Merchandise and printed resource sales amounted to \$182, including the Jim Beam bottle. The outgoing Vice President authorized offering commemorative hatchet pins free of charge to the attendees, which proved popular.

10. Attendance. The President asked for a show of hands, and the attendance profile looked like this:

Massachusetts	13
New Hampshire	5
Connecticut	2
Virginia	1
New Mexico	1
	22

11. Program. Skip Webb, president of the James House Association, Inc., spoke at length on "The Life of Benjamin James and the James House, Hampton, New Hampshire." Attendees began leaving before he finished.

12. The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m., and a small remnant drove to the Duston Garrison House to meet Goodwife Dustin and Mary Neff in character.

Respectfully submitted,
David A. Dustin, Secretary

September 7, 2018