

Under the Hump

SOCIETY BUSINESS

NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Next Meeting:
Tues., Feb. 20th, 7 pm,
CBMS Library

- Annual elections will be held at the Feb. meeting.

• Our next DHS meeting will be Tuesday, February 20th, 7 pm, in the Crossett Brook Middle School library. February is the month for our annual election of all officers and those scheduled trustees. Following the business meeting, we will enjoy a historic photographic tour of Duxbury's people and places. Refreshments will be served.

• Reminder: Dues expired December 31, 2023. If you haven't already, please mail your dues to Mark Morse, Treasurer (see back of newsletter), which will help defray postage costs of reminders. Dues are \$10 per person. If you have already submitted your dues please disregard this notice.

Wreath Sale

Our annual wreath sale was a successful fundraiser in 2023. We raised \$790 for our society! Thank you to everyone involved in this fundraiser from buying and selling the wreaths, delivering them, and staying with them at the Sunshine Hall while people picked up their orders. There is a large amount of work involved and several moving pieces in this fundraiser. We appreciate our society members and friends coming together to make this fundraiser happen.



Shawn Perry photo.

The wreaths on display at the Sunshine Hall, waiting to be picked up by their owners.

Annual November Bake Sale

Our annual fall bake sale was held on Friday, November 10th, 2023, in front of Kinney Drugs in Waterbury. Thank you to everyone who donated bake sale items, volunteered at the table, and who purchased the goodies. We raised \$267 for our society! Lastly, thank you to Kinney Drugs for allowing us to set up outside the store.

"Pie for Breakfast"

On January 13, 2024, our DHS helped with "Pie for Breakfast" at the Duxbury Citizens Have Your Say Day at Crossett Brook Middle School. Attendees brought a pie to share and we served coffee, tea, and slices of pie. We thank Cabot Creamery for donating cheddar cheese slices and whipped cream. We made \$303 in donations. Thank you to everyone who helped and who donated to our society!

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Archival/Preservation Committee Report

Members: Eulie Costello, Lori Morse, Bonnie Morse, Mark Morse

- The archival committee provided materials for display at the annual Duxbury Town "Have Your Say Day" in January.

Donated Artifacts/Documents/Ephemera

- Documents/Letters/Photos relating to Duxbury - Waterbury Historical Society
- Antique Post Maul from former Breen Farm - Steve Grace

Monetary Donations Including the Annual Appeal as of 1-13-24

Phyllis Arsenault-Berry & Bill Berry
 Lisa Beliveau & Stephen Lindsay
 Maureen & Andrew Bothfeld
 Cara Capparelli & Tom Hart
 Catherine Cjessing & James McCarthy
 Carol & Fred Collins
 Rachel & Arthur Cubit
 Rose Cummings
 Curtis Mill LLC
 Elizabeth & Dwight Day
 Cathy Ellis & John Tobin, Jr.
 Martha & Larry Ewell
 Carla Fenner
 Eric Gallo
 Marge & Ed Gormel
 Family of Robert & Kathryn (Sherman) Grace (In memory
 of Howard & Katherine Sherman)
 Breta & Steve Grace
 Kim Greenwood & Ian Orman
 Sandy Griffin
 Kim & Jesse Guertin
 Brenda Hartshorn
 Maureen Harvey
 Theresa & James King
 Stephanie Koonz & James Dryden
 Barbara & Maurice Lavanway
 Doreen Lebel

Jason Longo
 Kathleen Lumbra
 Marshall-Carney Family Charity Fund (In memory of Howard
 & Katherine Sherman)
 Theresa & Roy Marshall
 Mame McKee
 Bill Morse
 Sarah Page & Robert Westcott
 Ed Patterson
 Kim & Bradley Revoir
 Dwight Rost
 Winston Rost
 Joan Schultz
 Cindy & John Senning
 Donna Sinanian
 Solhem Sauna LLC (Nils Shenholm)
 Ian Stewart
 Debbie Sweetser
 Kelley Taft & Trevor Cole
 Shannon & Michael Thompson
 Douglas Weber
 Mary & Don Welch
 Wendy & James Welch
 Elizabeth Wilbur
 Beverley & Alan Young
 Patrick Zachary

Building Committee Report

Submitted by Ken Spencer

There was a lot of digging on the property for the electrical upgrade in October, and we have plans for there to be a lot more. As mentioned in the last newsletter, the committee voted to plan for a basement addition to the Sunshine Hall to house our Society documents and artifacts and to provide 21st Century support and infrastructure to the building. Our architect, Joe Greene, has provided an initial concept plan for this and we are working with him to make sure this plan fulfills our needs. The initial plan included one restroom, but we have decided that having two makes more sense for the future.

Other steps include:

- ⇒ An engineering plan from Grenier Engineering of Waterbury was completed that sites the septic system and well for the Sunshine Hall.
- ⇒ An estimate for the well was obtained that indicates a price of \$10,000 to \$18,000 depending on depth.

SOCIETY BUSINESS

- ⇒ The new electric heaters for the Meeting House have proven that they can rather rapidly make the space comfortable in cool weather. Spring and fall events can now be reliably planned for the space.
- ⇒ The increased nesting of wasps inside the Meeting House this fall has made the restoration of the original windows a priority.

It is obvious that many dollars will be needed to renovate the Sunshine Hall and restore the Meeting House. As we get more estimates for the work we want done, the emphasis for 2024 will shift to fundraising. Current fundraising points include:

- A fundraising letter to all Duxbury residents went out in mid-December. We are hoping for a few new members in addition to some contributions.
- The second contribution of ARPA funds (\$10,000) was approved by the Town Selectboard in November.
- Our traditional fundraisers continue. The table was pretty empty by the end of our November bake sale. We shall once again support the "Pie for Breakfast" tables at the Town's "Have Your Say Day" in January.
- At least one 2024 grant possibility has been identified for the Meeting House windows. For restoration grants like this the historic worthiness of the buildings needs to be established. We are happy to note that Devin Coleman, the Vermont State Architectural Historian, has designated the property as eligible for the National Register of Historical Places. We may someday try to get on the National Register, but the eligibility is very important in the meantime.

When can all that new digging begin...? We're not sure but we'll keep you posted.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Duxbury Historical Society Christmas Service

Submitted by Skip Flanders

On December 16, 2023, the Duxbury Historical Society held its first Christmas Service entitled "Christmas at South Duxbury Church" in the South Duxbury Church. The service was led by Skip Flanders of the Duxbury Historical Society (DHS) and Pastor Marie MacDougall of the Moretown Methodist Church with DHS member Ken Spencer on the pump organ.

The service featured early hymns that were likely sung at the first Church Service in the new church in 1855. The service opened with hymn "O'Come All Ye Faithful" written in 1743 followed by prayer and scripture reading by Pastor Marie MacDougall. The next hymn was "Silent Night." Skip Flanders began the service by sharing the story of the writing of the hymn "Silent Night."

"Silent Night" was written in 1818 in Oberndorf, Austria. It was first sung on Christmas Eve in 1818 in the Chapel of Saint Nicholas, Oberndorf, Austria, a snow covered village at the foot of the Austrian Alps.

In 1818 Father Joseph Mohr was a Priest at Saint Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Austria. Father Mohr and Franz Gruber, the school master and Church Organist, were getting ready for a special Christmas Eve Service when they learned the Church organ did not work.

Father Mohr then decided he must write his own Christmas hymn to have music for the special Christmas Eve Mass. After completing the text, he took the words to Franz Gruber who composed the music. Without an organ Father Mohr and Franz Gruber sang their new hymn to the accompaniment of Gruber's guitar.

The melody of the new song was suggestive of a lullaby, as were the words, describing the baby Jesus sleeping peacefully. The churchgoers that night heard the gentle tones of the Christmas carol "Silent Night" for the first time. The hymn made a



Skip Flanders and the attendees at the Christmas service.

Shawn Perry photo.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE

deep impression on the parishioners that Christmas Eve as it has succeeding generations around the world.

When the organ repairman came to the little village church he was impressed by a copy of the Christmas Carol and decided to spread it all around the region of Tyrol. Today it is sung in all major languages of the world and is a favorite where songs of Christmas message are enjoyed.

In 1914 during World War I, a spontaneous truce occurred on the front lines where the soldiers were fighting in trenches a short distance apart such they could talk to each other. Both sides were sitting in mud and slush with their dead comrades laying in the land between the trenches and Christmas seemed a million miles away. And yet on that starlit Christmas night the magic of Christmas unexpectedly touched the soldiers. Spontaneously British and German soldiers crawled out of their trenches, shook hands and sang Christmas songs together. Both sides sang "Silent Night" in French, English and German. It was the one carol that all the troops knew. That is the magic and spirit of "Silent Night" on Christmas Eve to cause a truce in the spirit of the soldiers.

Following the story of "Silent Night" the service referred to a *Waterbury Record* account of the 1939 Christmas program held at the South Duxbury Church performed by South Duxbury school children under the direction of Mrs. Walter Carpenter. The 1939 program consisted of 12 songs or recitations made by the children. For the 2023 program, three of the 1939 recitations were presented.

First the poem "The Santa Claus Express" was read by Mark Morse of the DHS. In 1939 this poem was recited by sisters Violet and Dorothy Harvey. Mark gave a short history of each of the sisters Violet and Dorothy. Violet married Dalton Sherman, Sr. and Dorothy married Donald Merchant. Both Violet and Dorothy and their families are longtime residents of Duxbury and have passed away.

The next presentation was a song "Will There be a Santa Claus in Heaven" presented by Pastor Marie MacDougall. In 1939 it was sung by Esther Backus accompanied by Walter Carpenter on the violin. Esther Backus was the sister of Alice Backus DeLong and was married to Lewis Johnson and has passed away. The song was about a dying child asking if there is a Santa Claus in Heaven. It was reported to be a popular song in 1939.

The last presentation was "Santa Claus on the Train" read by Shawn Perry of the DHS. It is the story of Santa Claus providing gifts while a child slept on a train. In 1939 the poem was read by Henrietta Sherman. Henrietta married Richard West.

At the completion of the 1939 program, Santa Claus arrived at the Church and gave each child an apple from his pack and picked presents off the tree for each child. The students also received a candy bag. The people presented Pastor Rev Daniel Strickland a Christmas tree with one dollar bills tied on the tree.

Our service continued with singing "Joy to the World" written in 1719. Following the hymn the guests recited in unison the

"Christmas Prayer" written by Robert Louis Stevenson. Pastor MacDougall followed with a Christmas Blessing.

Our program closed with the singing of "Silent Night" and a prayer that the spirit of Christmas and the hymn "Silent Night" could result in a new truce in one or more of the current conflicts around the world. Amen.

Thanks to all of the DHS members who made the program possible, the cleaning of the church, clearing of the grounds, turning on the new electric heaters to heat the church, the readers, providing the music and those who assisted with publicity. There were about 40 guests in attendance from Duxbury, Moretown, and Waterbury who enjoyed the service.



Shawn Perry photo.

Mark Morse reading the poem, "The Santa Claus Express."



Shawn Perry photo.

Ken Spencer with guitar leading the singing of "Silent Night" at the closing of the service.

U S S G R A Y B A C K

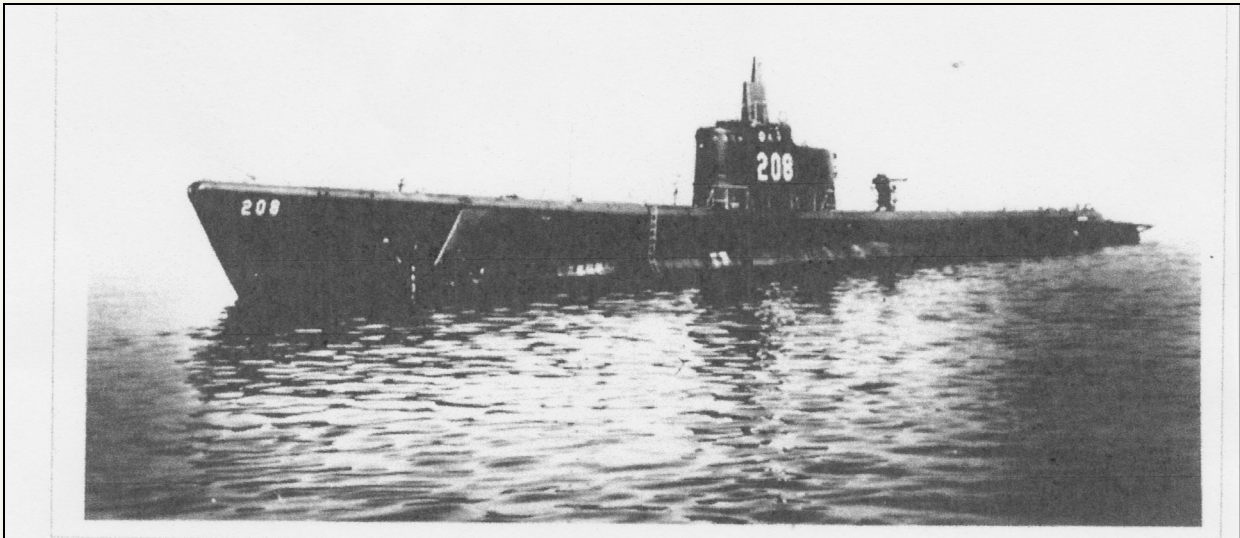
USS GRAYBACK TRAGEDY IN THE PACIFIC Submitted by Mark H. Morse

The USS GRAYBACK (SS-208) was one of the most successful submarines of WWII.

The vessel was commissioned on June 30, 1941 and set sail six months later for service in the Pacific. After the attack at Pearl Harbor the sub became a major part of the war's submarine service. With a crew of 80 she patrolled the enemy waters throughout the Japanese held islands and territories performing 10 successful war patrols and sinking a total of 63,835 tons of enemy ships and cargo.

Her first target was a 3,291 ton cargo ship off Port Lloyd in the Japanese held Bonin Islands on March 17, 1942, which proved a successful sinking of the vessel. Throughout 1942 she damaged several enemy freighters, escorts, shipping, and submarine vessels. On Christmas day 1942 she sank four enemy landing barges with her deck guns.

On January 5, 1943 the sub helped rescue six survivors of a US B-26 downed aircraft on the island of Munda Bay. Cmdr. Edward C. Stephan was awarded the Navy Cross for their efforts.



The USS Grayback (SS-208) photographed in 1941. Photo courtesy of Naval History and Heritage Command

The GRAYBACK was damaged on January 17, 1943 by enemy depth charges and had to seek repairs back at port in Brisbane, Australia before returning to service.

In September-October 1943, the GRAYBACK formed the first submarine force "Wolfpack" along with the USS Cero and USS Shad which coordinated a mass-attack tactic to destroy the enemy's shipping. The "pack" successfully sank 38,000 tons and damaged 63,300 tons of material on enemy convoys, including sinking two transport ships and a fleet tanker.

After returning to Pearl Harbor for resupplying, the GRAYBACK left port for the last time on January 28, 1944 on its 10th war patrol for the East China Sea. In late February the sub radioed it had sunk two Japanese army cargo ships and had only two torpedoes remaining. She was ordered back to Midway Island.

On February 27 she reported she had been damaged by enemy aircraft but still managed to sink an enemy naval transport. The sub was not heard from again.

The GRAYBACK was expected at Midway Island on March 7, 1944 but did not arrive. It was listed as "presumed lost" on March 30, 1944.

According to Japanese reports obtained after the war, a Japanese carrier-based plane spotted a sub on the surface in the East China Sea and attacked, reporting the submarine exploded and sank immediately. Japanese anti-sub craft were dispatched to depth-charge the area which was clearly marked by a trail of air bubbles, until a heavy oil slick showed upon the surface.

You may be asking: **"What does this have to do with the history of Duxbury, VT?"**

Clyde George Phillips was raised on a farm at the northern end of Turner Hill owned by his parents Donald and Gracia

USS GRAYBACK

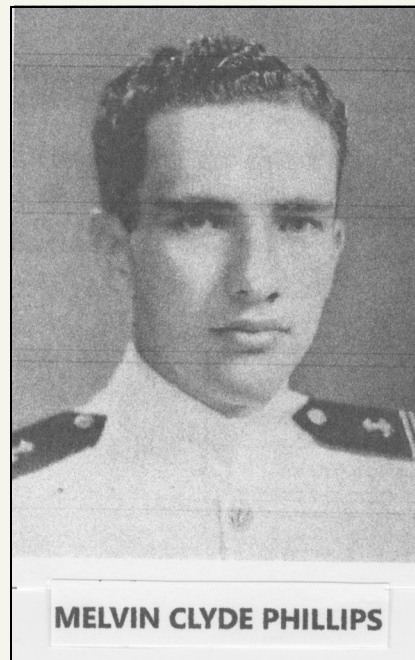
(Freeman) Phillips. Born November 4, 1896 in Duxbury he married his childhood neighbor Susanna Cornelia Corliss on January 15, 1919 in South Duxbury, presumably at the South Duxbury Church. Susanna was born August 31, 1899, the daughter of Charles and Annie (Marble) Corliss.

After their marriage the couple moved just over the town line to Freeman Hill in Moretown. Clyde took a job with Ward Lumber Company and worked there for 30 years. The couple had three children: Melvin Clyde born November 2, 1919, Kenneth Elwin born August 9, 1925 and Clifton Charles born June 13, 1930.

Youngest son Clifton died May 8, 1945 at Mary Fletcher Hospital from an acute appendicitis. He is buried in the South Duxbury cemetery.

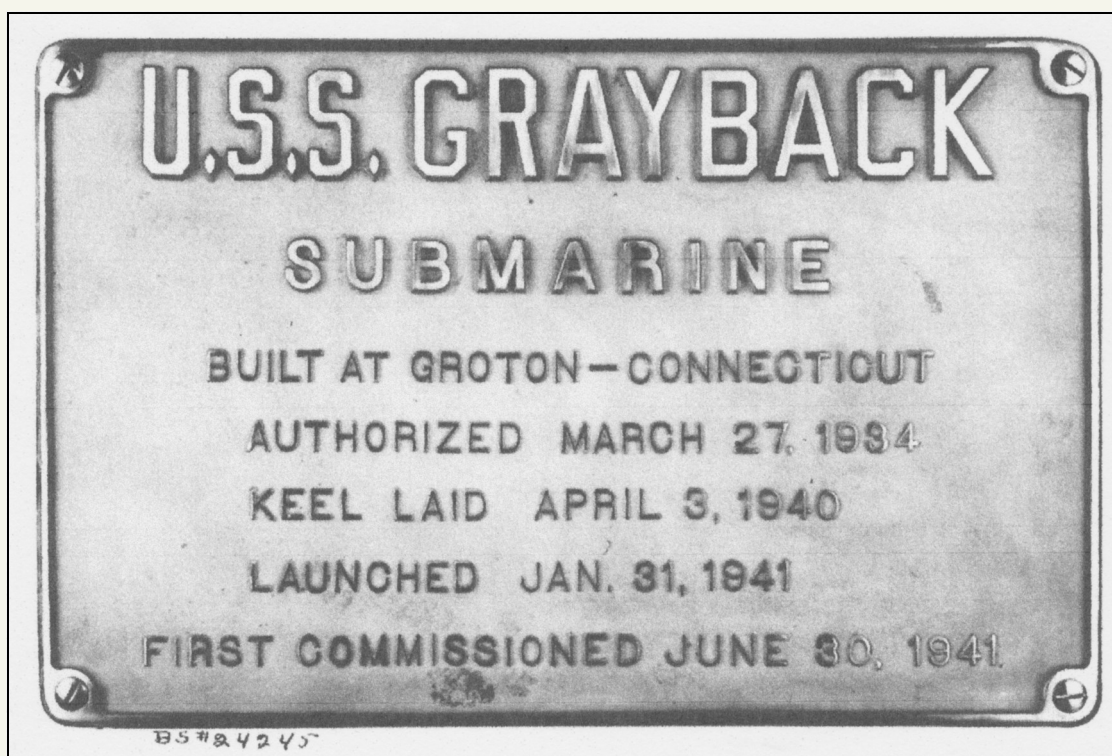
Son Kenneth attended the US Naval Academy, a member of the class of 1948 and reached the rank of Captain in the US Navy. He resided in Oregon with his wife and children at the time of his death on October 1, 2009. He is buried in South Duxbury Cemetery.

Son Melvin, after attending UVM for two years (class of 1941), was appointed to the Naval Academy on July 14, 1939. The Naval Academy Class of 1943 was graduated in June 1942 due to World War II. After graduation he stayed at the Academy in the Executive Department until September when he reported for submarine training in New London, CT, which he completed in December 1942. He then proceeded to the Submarine Force Southwest Pacific where he joined the submarine USS GRAYBACK in April 1943. He qualified in submarines on January 31, 1944 and conducted four successful war patrols aboard the GRAYBACK. For his efforts during one of these patrols, Melvin received the Bronze Star Medal for heroic service. The citation reads:



MELVIN CLYDE PHILLIPS

For heroic service as Torpedo Data Computer Operator of a United States Submarine during aggressive War Patrol. Efficiently and with outstanding technical skill, Lieutenant Phillips provided a continual flow of vital, accurate information which was invaluable assistance to his Commanding Officer, thereby contributing materially to the success of his vessel in sinking and damaging an important amount of enemy Japanese shipping, including an auxiliary cruiser. Lieutenant Phillips's courageous conduct and steadfast devotion to duty under extremely perilous conditions were an inspiration to the officers and men with whom he served and in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.



USS GRAYBACK

In addition to the Bronze Medal he wore the Purple Heart Commendation Medal, American Area Campaign Medal, American Defense Service Medal with Fleet Clasp, and the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal.

It was on the tenth war mission that the GRAYBACK met its tragic end on February 27, 1944, though unknown by authorities for weeks. After the ship had failed to arrive at Midway Island at its scheduled time on March 7, it was listed as presumed lost on March 30, 1944.

The crew including Melvin were declared missing in action (MIA) on April 8, 1944. It wasn't until after the war that Japanese battle reports were reviewed and the sinking of the GRAYBACK was confirmed. Melvin and presumably the entire 80 member crew was officially declared killed in action (KIA) January 12, 1946.

Melvin has a cenotaph in the family plot at the South Duxbury cemetery.

Clyde and Susanna had suffered the loss of two sons within eighteen months and the third preparing to serve his country as well.

After 75 years the USS GRAYBACK was found off the coast of Okinawa in 2019. Previous searches for the vessel had been unsuccessful because of a mistake in translating the Japanese attacking aircraft's report.

Though not technically Duxbury residents, Melvin, Kenneth, and Clifton Phillips had native Duxbury blood running through their veins as both parents were Duxbury born and many of their relatives continued to live in Duxbury for many generations.

Sources:

US Naval Academy; Naval History and Heritage Command; Duxbury and Moretown Vermont Records;

Ancestry.com; US Census; University of Vermont



**D U X B U R Y H I S T O R I C A L S O C I E T Y , I N C .
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**DON'T FORGET THE NEXT MEETING - FEB. 20TH
CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL - 7 PM**

**D U X B U R Y H I S T O R I C A L
S O C I E T Y , I N C .
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