



Poems from Our Archives in Honor of National Poetry Month

A SONG OF THE OLD ELM TREE

by *Ida Mason Gardner*

I am the elm tree your fathers knew
When they were young boys,--and their fathers too.
Nobody knows the year when I came;
Of the God-like act, whose the worthy fame.

And yet I grew in beauty and grace,
As if I had come from a royal race;
One branch here, another up there
Swinging and tossing in ambient air.

One stands out straight, so strong and so stiff,
And one grows long, till with every whiff
of zephyr light, it kisses the wall
Where its slender shadows quivering fall.

On one, way out on the farthest tip,
Sways a hang-bird's nest like a swinging ship.
To and fro, now high, now low, slow, slow,
The wee birdlings rock, and swiftly grow.

In bird-like ways, till, one fine day,
Birdlings and Mother-bird fly swift away,
And leave the old elm-tree all alone,
That never itself has the home-love known.

Ne'er have I found my own true love-mate;
I stand all alone, but not desolate;
For I stand up straight! When troubles come
No moan do I make; my lips are dumb.

The lightning strikes and glides down my trunk;
With the horrible pain I am almost drunk;
But never a whine or whimper slips
From the narrow line of my tight-drawn lips.

And one dark night, with all earth asleep--
Ah! if I were a woman I could weep! F
or the dear old home went up in flame,
And the scorching heat to my branches came.

Blackened and gaunt in the wintry air,
Even in summer they're leafless and bare.
My beauty has vanished; I'm growing old;
I must soon go my way,--but behold!

Along that wall on the farther side
of this meadow strip, and in garden wide,
From my far-borne roots young elms have sprung;
For them, some far day, shall new songs be sung.

I'm not dead yet, but I shall not shrink,
When the dark hour comes; for I joy to think
That for other children, other men,
I shall live my tree-life over again!



STEVE PERRY

(Carrier of the mail from Providence to Fall River
and way offices, North Swansea, Swansea Center, and
Swansea Village)

Author unknown

1. As I with several others
Was husking corn today,
I saw Steve Perry's wagon
A passing on its way.

2. Chauncey Pierce said to Franklin Arnold
With all the air of a clown
"What is that thing a comin' there
with the hind part hanging down?"

3. And as it slowly jogged along
It was complimented well
By all our little company.
Those thoughts did bind the spell.

4. And on this little occasion, friends,
As I once wrote before,
I was asked to write a poem, which
Caused me to think furthermore.

5. Although it seems hard to some at it
You will see by the way of my song,
That all the words I require
Very easily come right along.

6. Now when I see the United States Mail
Which is driven through this place,
It seems to me as though it was
To Uncle Sam a disgrace.

7. It is enough to scare the Hottentots
When it comes into sight
To see such an animal, driven
Around in broad daylight.

8. But I suppose it's just as good a
Horse as Steve Perry can buy
With the money they give him
To carry the mail for you and I.

9. And as this is a poor subject to write on
And as I am now tired,
I will now give it up, knowing
That you are not much admired.

10. So, may the mail bring you messages
Of love, business, and affection,
And may you remember their contents
Until the day of resurrection.

The End

Luther Store Signs

On 1/23/26, the Executive Board of the Swansea Historical Society had the JG and JB Luther signs removed from the building. These signs are deteriorating and they are original to the Luther Store.

The signs will be cleaned, sealed and they will then be hung inside the Luther Store where they will be protected from the weather. We are having replicas made of resin. We are doing this so the original signs will last for generations to come.

Swansea Historical Monthly Presentations

In January, Swansea Historical Society President Cheryl Bogle presented a talk on local taverns and historic homes that are not located in historic districts.

On February 11th, in honor of Valentine's Day, the well attended presentation was on George and Martha Washington's Love Story. The talk also consisted of a drawing for three beautiful Valentine-themed baskets. Thank you to all who donated to and/or supported our drawing.

March's presentation was by Brandon Travers and covered memorabilia from World Wars I & II. This was another well attended presentation.

The presentation for April will consist of a poetry reading by Jim Bronson. It will be part of a poetry presentation by the Swansea Council on Aging.

Check our calendar for other upcoming presentations at the Swansea Community Center/COA.

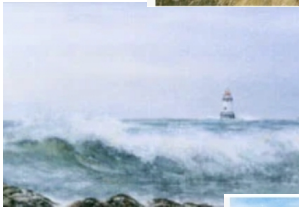
Swansea Watercolor Artist John (Jack) Eddy

by Russell Easterbrooks

John L. Eddy was a lifetime resident of the town of Swansea. John was well known for his restored Model T truck he drove in parades in the area.

John began a career as a photographer, after studying at the Country School of Photography in Woodstock, Vermont. After 20 years behind the camera's lenses, he decided his real love was art. His first paintings were oil on canvas, but he quickly settled on pencil drawings and watercolors as his medium exclusively. His painting efforts led to him teaching watercolor art classes and exhibiting his paintings.

John's artwork was comprised of sea and landscapes. His time serving with the U.S. Coast Guard gave him inspiration from the New England coastal scenes he encountered.



John always excelled in the fine details in his paintings. He also did very small amounts of Christmas cards he had printed each year, which are very collectable. The tiny details in his Christmas cards are extraordinary!



John was a member of the Westport Art Group. He also contributed to the publication "The Swansea Stage Coach" a wonderful look at Swansea's local history.

His watercolors and pencil drawings are held in numerous private collections.

John was my uncle, and I enjoyed the times we spent painting together. I learned a lot from uncle John, which helped me to enjoy wildlife watercolor painting, like my attempt at a red fox.



Note: This article is the opinion of the author and not the Swansea Historical Society. It is published with his permission.

Step Back in Time with 1908 Tea

Join us on May 9th at the Swansea Community Center, 260 Ocean Grove Avenue, for "Step Back in Time with 1908 Tea."

Seats are limited. Tickets are \$15 each. Call now to reserve your spot! Please contact Cheryl Bogle at 508-496-9564.

Tea will be served as well as lemonade and other drinks. We will also be serving Victorian Tea finger foods.

Tickets will be available for a drawing to win a basket containing a Kate Spade pocketbook, wallet, bottle of wine, chocolates and a gift card to Nails on First Nail Salon. The basket is worth over \$600!

Step Back in Time with...

1908 Tea

Rita Parisi portrays Mrs. Michael Gordon, who will share humorous and eye-opening stories about life at the turn of the 20th century.



Tickets \$15

Saturday May 9, 2026
Tea served at 2:00 PM • Performance at 3:00 PM

Swansea Community Center
This Tea be held in the room just outside the Community Center offices

For Info & Tickets : 508-496-9564

Mass Cultural Council This performance is supported in part by the Swansea Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



Please visit our website at swanseahistoricalsociety.org and click on the "Store" link to see our available items for purchase.

Monetary donations are always accepted! Please mail checks to:

Swansea Historical Society
PO Box 723
Swansea, MA 02777

Upcoming Events

Please visit our website for event details
swanseahistoricalsociety.org

April 22nd

11:00 a.m., Swansea Community Center
Jim Bronson Poetry Readings

May 9th

2:00 p.m. (Tickets \$15)
Swansea Community Center
Step Back in Time with 1908 Tea

May 4th

10:30 a.m., Swansea Community Center
Talk on Women in Swansea History

June TBD

Swansea Community Center
A Talk by Robert Cembrola on the British Frigate that sank off the coast of Narragansett in 1778

July 11th

Women in History 1776 (Tickets \$15)
with Rita Parisi

August TBD

A Talk by Brandon Travers on luxury liners of the 1800s & early 1900s

SHS Officers & Board

President - Cheryl Bogle
Vice President - Karen Bowen
Treasurer (acting) - Karen Bowen
Acting Secretary - Brandon Travers

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