



## EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

Hello, Spring!

Springtime! Warm, sunny days, gentle, nourishing rains, green budding trees and bright daffodils, and spring cleaning, all bring to mind a busy season. Make sure you take some time off to join us at for our own busy spring season of Easton history!

Hopefully you remembered to set your clocks ahead one hour so you will not be late for our April 8th and May 20th Open Houses. Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 6th at “Queset” which was built for Oakes Angier Ames and is situated directly behind the Ames Free Library. We have a range of topics for you to enjoy and learn about, from family history, to new research, some special Oliver Ames High School Senior Project presentations, and a few surprises mixed in. Details on these programs can be found inside.

Another sure sign of spring is our annual “Chowder and Chatter” evening at Southeastern Regional. Sponsored very generously by Lee and Kevin Williams, the evening includes a wonderful chowder dinner and trimmings prepared by the students of the Culinary Arts Program at the school, followed by a panel discussion. This year we will focus on houses both historical and surprising! Perhaps you will share something unique about your own home with us following the talk.

Hopefully you have saved your returnable bottles and cans all winter. We will be honored to receive them during our spring drive in memory of Ken Martin on April 28th.

Remember that our May Open House is held on the third Sunday due to Mother’s Day. Note as well Arbor Day on April 27th, (Easton has been named a “Tree City” for a number of years), Armed Forces Day on May 19th, and of course Memorial Day on May 28th. Let’s hope for good weather for a nice parade and appropriate exercises to remember those who have gone before us.

Hope to see you this spring!

### CALENDAR

*All events are held at the Easton Historical Society & Museum unless otherwise noted.*

*Sunday, April 8th, Open House, 1-5 p.m. Oliver Ames High School Senior Projects.*

*Friday, April 27th, Arbor Day.*

*Saturday, April 28th, the Ken Martin Spring Bottle Drive, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. rain or shine!*

*Thursday, May 3rd, annual “Chowder and Chatter” at Southeastern Regional, 6 p.m. Details inside!*

*Sunday, May 6th, EHS&M Annual Meeting at Queset House, 2 p.m. Emily Wormwood will present new research on Oakes Angier Ames.*

*Sunday, May 13th, Mother’s Day! No open house today.*

*Saturday, May 19th, remember Armed Forces Day.*

*Sunday, May 20th, Open House, 1-5 p.m. Janice Hatchfield Lyttle will discuss her extensive Hatchfield family tree.*

*Monday, May 28th, Memorial Day. Take time to reflect.*

*Looking ahead:*

*Sunday, June 10th, our Open House will feature Dr. Neil Kozol who wrote a book about Normandy with his father. Details will be in the next newsletter.*

*The mission of the Easton Historical Society is to preserve, promote and interpret the unique industrial, social, cultural, architectural and environmental history of the Town.*

## Curator's Corner - Curator / Caretaker Frank T. Meninno

### A Few Thoughts on Water

*"Water is the driving force of all nature." - Leonardo da Vinci*

March is the 50th anniversary of the "Great Flood." (No, not THAT great flood!) Easton had its own version of that cataclysmic event back in 1968 when the dam at Flyaway Pond failed. More on that later.

My memories of water are mostly good ones. From a young age playing in the bathtub was a nice reward for being good while being bathed. A little later I found out that fish could be kept in what amounted to a large, rectangular jar we called an aquarium. We had one in our house. I have vague memories of going somewhere to get a few fish, and having to remember to feed them somewhat regularly. A few years later my dad taught me how to fish, and introduced me to the peace and quiet that could be gained from a lazy day at a pond, watching my bobber slowly rise and sink. That simple action mesmerized me as I studied it, and evidently did the same to the fish who never seemed to be biting.

I can remember being in a canoe or small rowboat on Morse's Pond as a child, with my dad and (I think) my uncle Dickie along with us. They were both good outdoorsmen. I remember very well another boat story that I heard some time back. It seems that my father was going fishing in a small boat with two very good friends, Dick Southworth and Christopher Brophy. Dick and Chris were two pretty hefty guys. Once all three were in the boat, the water was very close to the gunwale. As they were ever so gently rowing away from the shore, Chris happened to mention that neither he nor Dick could swim! My father was quite relieved when they safely returned to shore. I am pretty sure another excursion did not take place.

Back to the flood! Da Vinci knew what he was talking about. That spring of '68, a warm thaw and heavy rains combined and did indeed become a driving force as streams and brooks overflowed, and ponds were overfilled. I remember walking from our house as close to New Pond as we were allowed to go, having to traverse planks past Old Pond as Foundry Street was pretty well flooded. What I sight I beheld! There was water running over the entire length of both the Old Pond and New Pond dams. A television reporter was broadcasting atop New Pond, water running around his ankles. "Wow", I thought, "I think I would find a better spot to report from!" But those old earthen dams held back the waters. North Easton was not so lucky. The recently repaired Flyaway Pond dam burst, sending a cascade of millions of gallons of water through the downtown and causing severe damage to the surrounding area, before finally settling near West Meadows in West Bridgewater. There the mighty flow was tamed and quietly absorbed into the Hockomock Swamp. Now, there's a story for a rainy day!

The Easton Historical Society Newsletter  
is published quarterly by the Easton Historical Society.

#### *Officers for 2017-2018*

President Kenneth J. Michel  
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## Was an Easton Man at Antietam with Lincoln?



Abraham Lincoln at Antietam, Maryland, on Friday, October 3, 1862. Lincoln is posed standing by a chair and facing General McClellan with other Union Army officers grouped outside a tent. From left to right: Colonel Delos B. Sacket, Captain George Monteith, Lieutenant Colonel Nelson B. Sweitzer, General George W. Morell, Colonel Alexander S. Webb [Chief of Staff, 5th Corps], General George B. McClellan, Scout Adams, Dr. Jonathan Letterman [Army Medical Director], *unidentified soldier*, President Abraham Lincoln, Colonel Henry J. Hunt, General Fitz-John Porter, Joseph C. G. Kennedy, Colonel Frederick T. Locke, General Andrew A. Humphreys, and Captain George Armstrong Custer. (Source: Ostendorf, p. 107) Photo by Alexander Gardner, Library of Congress .

Is it possible that the unidentified soldier in the photo above may be one of our own Civil War veterans? Philander W. Fecto was a well-known Eastoner. He lived on Main Street, and for many years he ran a livery service and a stable. During the Civil War, he attained the rank of 1st Sergeant, and while serving with the 7th Mass. Volunteers, may have been within 10 miles of Antietam when President Lincoln was reviewing troops. Ed Hands did some preliminary research on the unit, which possibly places Fecto nearby. If the unidentified man is he, why was he at Lincoln's camp? More research needs to be done, but compare him with a known photo of Fecto as a much older man. What do you think?

Easton Civil War veterans, about 1920. Philander W. Fecto is at left, unidentified man, Mr. Slocum, Reverend William L. Chaffin, next two men are unidentified.



## Coming Events

Father Time and Mother Nature have conspired to delay the newsletter, so March events are not included. Please take note of the following great events and make plans to join us!

- Our Sunday, April 8th Open House will feature Oliver Ames seniors who have been working on special Senior Projects. Selected projects will be presented by the students during the afternoon. The Senior Project is an opportunity for seniors to do intensive research into areas outside of their comfort zone. Called “learning stretches,” each student uses a set of 21st Century skills to research, do fieldwork, write a research paper, and create a final presentation on their chosen subject. “The Senior Project is an authentic assessment that challenges students to demonstrate and display their mastery of many skills they acquire in the Easton Public Schools. The Senior Project allows students to take control of and have a powerful voice in their own education. The Senior Project is an opportunity for students to challenge themselves and to showcase their achievements.” (Source: OA Senior Project brochure.) Come by and see what great work our Easton students are doing!
- Thursday, May 3rd, join our annual “Chowder and Chatter” evening at Southeastern Regional High School, 6 p.m. Details and reservation information are on page 7.
- Sunday, May 6th, Annual meeting of the Easton Historical Society and Museum at Queset, 2 p.m. After a brief business meeting, Society volunteer Emily Wormwood will present new research about Oakes Angier Ames, who built “Queset” and was president of the Ames Shovel Company at a pivotal time in its history. Working with William Ames, Emily has been updating Wikipedia information on several Ames family members. A tour of “Queset” given by Hazel Varella will follow.
- Sunday, May 20th, join us at our monthly Open House where Janice Hatchfield Lyttle will share information on the Hatchfield family from an extensive Hatchfield family tree. Learn about this important Easton family!

### Can You Help Us?

If anyone knows of descendants of the following three people, could you please contact Hazel Varella by phone at 508-238-3614 or by email at mdhvarella@comcast.net. Thank you!

- ◆ Mary Stone-early administrator at NEG
- ◆ Ellen Atwood-Easton Visiting Nurses Association's nurse
- ◆ Louise Simpson-associated with the Young Club

We are also looking for members of the family of George Schindler, who was killed in action in World War I. Please contact Frank Meninno at the Society by phone at 508-238-7774 email at eastonmahsmuseum@gmail.com.

### Spring Bottle Drive Announced

Getting ready for some spring cleaning? We will gladly take your bottles and cans at our annual spring bottle and can drive, held in memory of Ken Martin, which will be held on Saturday, April 28th at the Society Museum from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The drive will be held rain or shine! We will be accepting all clean bottles and cans with a Massachusetts deposit. We are unable to accept items that are recycle only.

Your donation of these cans are very much appreciated, and all those 5¢ deposits add up. For pickup, please call or email the Society to make arrangements.

Volunteers are needed and welcomed! Join us for coffee and conversation.

## Donations

**Robert Brooks** donated a book, Connecticut Pewter and Pewterers signed by the author John Carl Thomas to "Abe" and "Mae" Brooks. There are several pictures of the pewter owned by Mr. and Mrs. Brooks; **Gerry Gaston** donated a CD of the Class of 1952's "Our Fond Memories"; **Hazel Varella** donated a book, Ruth Wakefield and Her Famous Toll House Cookie by Kathleen Teaham. Hazel's mother Olivia Luke arranged fresh flowers there daily for a number of years; **Janice Hatchfield Lyttle** donated an extraordinary family tree of the Hatchfield family; **Christopher and Tamsin Serjak** donated 1930's newspapers, five vintage hats, and other artifacts found in the house at 30-32 Oliver Street during renovations; **Nancy Sullivan** donated plot plans and maps for the "Seaforth" development (former Brodie property off of Summer Street, now Elizabeth Way); **Priscilla Almquist-Olsen** donated a doll and a toy horse and wagon that belonged to Harry J. D. Sundell, and many textiles from her family; **Peter Constantine** donated a Foster Building Supply carpenter's apron; **Ron Somerville** donated a stereocard of the National Monument to the Forefathers in Plymouth, MA. (Oliver Ames, Jr. paid for the statue that tops the monument), and a photo of Ron and other children being honored in Taunton, MA for their actions in helping an injured boy; **Donna Nevins Bishop** donated 1930's kitchen items: a bread dough mixer, a knife sharpener, potato masher, egg beater, and small sieve; **Burt Lewis** donated an OAHS 1951 Class photo from the Brockton Enterprise, June 5, 1951, Pamphlet - Ousamequin Chapter Order of DeMolay, Installation of Officers, April 2, 1955, lineup card for Hanover High vs. OAHS football, October, 1952, Pamphlet - The Children's Theatre of New York, Third Boston Season, 1940-1941, Pamphlet - Testimonial Banquet to the 1955 Undefeated OAHS Football Team, December 17, 1955, Pamphlet - Concert by Musical Organizations of the Easton Schools, May 25, 1951, Pamphlet - Mrs. Andrew McNamara Presents Her Pupils in a Musicale Revue, undated, Program - Concert & Fashion Show Presented by Easton Chapter No. 164 Order of Eastern Star, October 21, 1954, Program - Minstrel Show, Easton Huskies A.A. Inc., 1949 and 1950, Program - The Belle of Barcelona presented by Unity Church, undated, OAHS Graduation Exercises for 1946, 1949, 1951, 1952, 1956, OAHS Class Day Exercises for 1951 and 1956, OAHS Commencement Service for 1951 and 1956, OAHS Class Play booklets for 1949, 1951, 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958, bill head for Oliver Ames & Sons, 1874, bill head for Langwater Farms, 1926, for house rent; **Emmy's Salon** donated gift baskets of beauty supplies and surprises; **Linda Williams** donated an OAHS Orchestra letter, OA Manager letter, Field Hockey letter, OA letter in fancy script, newspaper photo taken by Stanly Bauman of Linda with Field Hockey Coach (1954), Latin class photo with Mrs. Valente, May 10, 1955, OA Girls Basketball team photo with Linda and Joan Hall, who were co-captains (1957), photo of OA girls basketball game, 1955 vs. Stoughton; **Kathleen M. Dunn**, daughter of Robert Wood, donated 8 Golden Glove trophies, 4 medals, a Marine Hat, medal on a ribbon, (2) 50 Mile Run awards, (2) shot-put ribbons, a scrapbook of Bob Wood's boxing career, and a display case made by Bob's father Arthur W. Wood; **Thomas Copeland** donated 5 plates, each featuring a different locomotive; **Richard Williams** donated a Dr. Hartshorn's medicine bottle circa 1880-1890; **Russ Meninno** donated candy for the holiday sale; **Jeanette Meninno** donated many Christmas spider ornaments, and tied ribbons on the Mary Bodio notecards.

Financial Gifts were received from Art House Lectures and Tours of Detroit, Tom and Louise Bono, Robert Brooks, James Carlino and J. Peter Simpson, David E. DeVore, Bill Dexter, Easton Garden Club, Eleanor Grant, Leslie Gray, Patrick & Lisa Healey in memory of Mary T. Bodio, Moira Linehan, Natalie Franzen MacDonald, Alexis MacLean, James MacPhee (2), Alice McCarthy, Dr. Robert and Carol Misiewicz, OAHS Class of 1959, Edward Weiner, Senior Group of the Covenant Congregation Church in appreciation of Hazel Varella's presentation, James R. McSherry and Frank Altieri of Shovel Town Brewery in appreciation of Ed Hands' hayride.

**Donations in memory of J. Peter Simpson** were made by Mrs. Oliver F. Ames, Candia Atwater, James M. Carlino, Louise Chwalek, Kelly Gloger and Bonnie Luria, Richard and Sandra Karp and Tracy Friedman, Judge Leon and Sara Lombardi, Dr. Robert and Carol Misiewicz, Niccoli Oil & Energy, Gary and Marlene Perkins, John M. Sutherland III and Nina R. Sutherland, David and Hazel Varella, Jim and Ann Wheelin, O. Cooper Winston, Jr. and Susan F. Winston, and Ernie Carlino. **Donations in memory of Veronica E. Carter** were made by William Baxter and the Varella Family. Lois DiPasqua made a donation in **memory of Melodie Stanton**. Alice McCarthy made a donation in **memory of the Dickinson/Meninno Family**.

The Easton Historical Society & Museum very much appreciates your contributions and your support. Thank you!

## In Memorium

Veronica E. (Honohan) Carter, 109, a longtime resident of North Easton and retired teacher from Oliver Ames High School, died December 13, 2017. Our oldest member, Veronica taught at OAHS and was the chair of the Business Department for many years. A long time resident of Lincoln Street, she often talked about seeing members of the Ames family (probably Mr. and Mrs. Hobart Ames, whose land adjoined hers) riding on horseback, with Mrs. Ames riding very ladylike in a sidesaddle mount. She was the Treasurer of the Society and Board member from 1975-1981. Veronica was the beloved wife of George A. Carter, Jr. who died in 1990, and the sister of James Honohan of Walpole and the late Madeline Dodge and Joseph and John Honohan, and aunt of John Dodge and James Honohan, both of Walpole and Patricia Noyes of Hudson. She was sister-in-law of the late Walter Carter. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Oliver Ames High School, 100 Lothrop St., North Easton, MA 02356 or to The Pond Home Employee Appreciation Fund, 289 East St., Wrentham, MA 02093. A scholarship for an outstanding Business student will be awarded in Veronica's name by members of the Historical Society.

John Peter Simpson, 66, died peacefully at home on Thursday, December 7, 2017. He was the husband for 37 years of James F. Carlino, and son of the late C. Leslie and Agnes (Manning) Simpson. A native of Millis, he graduated from Millis High School and Bryant and Stratton College in Boston. Peter resided in North Easton, Provincetown and St. Croix, USVI before moving to Norton in 2012. He and his husband Jim purchased and restored Unity Close, the former home of Oliver Ames Jr., and brought back to life the historic gardens, which they always made available for Society tours. The restoration was thorough and accurate, and a labor of love for their home and the community they love. Peter was a frequent visitor at the Society and a very generous supporter. In 2000, Peter and his husband Jim received the first Briggs Award from the Easton Historical Commission for outstanding commitment to Historic Preservation in the Town of Easton for the restoration of their home and gardens. Peter was an avid reader, art and antique collector, talented cook, wonderful host, loved to swim at the beach, and enjoyed his treasured cocker spaniels. In addition to his husband, Peter is survived by his brothers, Edward F. Simpson and his wife Joan of Bourne and Leslie M. Simpson and his wife Janice of Millis, his father-in-law, Ermie W. Carlino of Stoughton, his sisters-in-law, Susan L. Carlino of Dedham and Marian Hadden of Taunton and his brother-in-law, Gary LaForest of Dedham. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews, a gaggle of beautiful grand-nieces and grand-nephews and many quality friends of the world. Donations in Peters memory may be made to Easton Historical Society & Museum, 80 Mechanic St., N. Easton, MA 02356; the NRT of Easton, 307 Main St., No. Easton, MA 02356; the Cocker Spaniel Rescue of New England, POB 162, Greenfield, NH 03047 or to the VNA of Attleboro, 10 Emory St., Attleboro, MA 02703.

Mary T. Bodio, a resident of Easton for over 60 years, passed away Thursday, January 11, 2018 at Bay Path Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Duxbury with her family at her side. She was the wife of the late Joseph A. Bodio. Mary was born in Boston but her heart was in Easton, where she raised her family. She was a professional artist, specializing in watercolors. Her work featured many landmarks of her favorite places such as St. Croix, USVI, Cape Cod, Maine, and of course Easton. Her work resides in many places in these areas, and in Easton, she painted collages of landmark buildings, schools, Frothingham Park, and other commissions. For many years the Society has featured her watercolors of the Richardson buildings on our very popular notecards. Mary had numerous art shows, including two very successful ones at the Society. She is survived by her 9 children, Stephen J. Bodio of Magdalena, N.M., Mark H. Bodio of St. Croix, US Virgin Islands, Wendy M. Jennings of East Bridgewater, Karen S. Graham of South Weymouth, Alicia J. Healey of Easton, Michael F. Bodio of Athens, Ga., Anita M. St. John of Plymouth, Janine M. Marcoux of Gibsonia, Pa., and Judith A. Caringola of Valencia, Pa.; 17 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews. She was also the sister of the late Myles McCabe, Francis McCabe Jr., Doris Cavanaugh and Gertrude Croak.

Althea R. Thornton, 87, a long-time resident of Bay Road in Easton, died Thursday, January 18, 2018. She was married to the late Robert F. Thornton for 50 years, and was the daughter of Walter and Rhea Russell. Althea's love for Easton was demonstrated through her love for conservation and history and activism. She spent many years as a trained Audobon guide showing Easton children the wonders of the natural world around them. Her work continued with important roles with the Natural Resource Trust of Easton, Wheaton Farm, opposing plans to place an airport in Easton and the relocating of highways, and supporting community and church groups. Althea was a regular visitor at Society programs, "Chowder and Chatter" evenings, and wrote a series of articles about growing up on Bay Road as a child that were printed in our newsletter. Althea is survived by her four children; Kenneth, David and Jeanne LaPensee, Meredith Porter, her step-son Barry Thornton, seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. She has four surviving siblings, Rhea Hewitt, Tina Lewis, Martha Bell and Robert Russell. She had one deceased son, Richard LaPensee. She was sister to the late Barbara Kaehler and Walter Russell.

For the full obituaries, please follow these links: Peter Simpson (<http://farleyfh.tributes.com/obituary/read/John-Peter-Simpson-105572314>); Mary Bodio (<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/southofboston-enterprise/obituary.aspx?pid=187847535>); Althea Thornton (<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/wickedlocal-easton/obituary.aspx?pid=188230409>); Veronica Carter (<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/bostonglobe/obituary.aspx?pid=187564939>).

The Society expresses our deepest sympathy to the Carter, Simpson, Bodio, and Thornton families.

## It's "Chowder and Chatter" Time!

The Nineteenth annual "Chowder and Chatter" evening will be held in the Colonial Room at the Southeastern Regional High School, 250 Foundry Street in South Easton on Thursday, May 3rd at 6:00 P. M. The idea of Dr. Robert Misiewicz, this very popular program has been and still is underwritten by Lee and Kevin Williams.

Following the traditional and always delicious chowder dinner with trimmings and dessert prepared by the students of the Culinary Program, we will treat you to a special panel discussion. The four-person panel this year, moderated as always by Ed Hands, will focus on four historic and interesting houses in our community. Learn more about these special places, maybe even a surprise or two, and share your information after enjoying the traditional tasty meal. Do you have a house with a story, or a surprise? Does it have a special feature? Hazel Varella will start accepting reservations April 1st. Be sure to reserve your seat! Preference is given to members. Any remaining seats will be offered to the public beginning April 19th.

The Society extends its sincere thanks to Lee and Kevin Williams, whose generosity makes this special evening possible.

### 2018 Chowder and Chatter Reservation Form

#### Mail on or after April 1st!

Please use this form to reserve your seat for the May 3rd "Chowder and Chatter" dinner. Southeastern Regional High School is conveniently located at 250 Foundry Street (Route 106) in South Easton. Once again, Lee and Kevin Williams have very generously offered to underwrite the cost of this event. As in the past, there is no cost to you. However, all donations made will go towards the purchase of archival supplies. Any donations by check should be made out to the "Easton Historical Society." Your generosity is very much appreciated, and we hope you enjoy this excellent evening!

Seating for this popular event is limited, and member requests will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Any seats left will be made available to the public April 19th. Please send this completed form to: Mrs. Hazel Varella, 121 Center Street, North Easton, MA 02356. Thank you!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Seats Requested (limit of 4) \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Attendees (include yourself) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## One Of Histories Mysteries?

This interesting photo was taken in Easton by Charles Belcher sometime prior to 1900. A member of the well-known iron making family, Charles was a trained photographer and may have had a Boston studio at one time before the family business came calling. Later, he would become an engineer at granite quarries in Vermont.

The small child in the photo, finely dressed and posed for the occasion, is unidentified. So too is the major feature of the photo. Built from timber and stone, and covered in earth, one wonders for what purpose it may have been built. It may be something as simple as a root cellar. A few clues may prove otherwise. This may show the remains of a shelter used by charcoal makers. Charcoal was necessary to provide heat for smelting iron. The men who made charcoal first had to cut



hardwood, then carefully pile it into a pyramid shaped pile, cover it with earth, and then burn the wood very slowly. This process took weeks, perhaps months, to produce a useable quantity of charcoal. Too hot a fire made useless ashes, but a properly maintained fire would provide the charcoal that was such a valuable commodity to an iron founder. Local charcoal makers such as Quanticut Smith would also build shelters to give them protection from harsh New England weather. Based on research and drawings of similar structures known to be these shelters, and seeing this in the middle of land cleared of timber, I think this may be a forgotten link to our iron making past, one that caught our photographer's (and iron-maker's) eye.

Address Service Requested

