



EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

Spring 2020

Volume 20, Issue 3

2020: Remembering Blanche Ames and Women's Suffrage in Massachusetts

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the passing of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, giving women the right to vote. The ratification brought to a close a long and hard-fought battle that divided the nation. Many of the early supporters did not live to cast a vote; their legacy was passed on to a new generation to continue the fight. Blanche Ames was one of those people. From sponsoring rallies to using her artistic talent to further the cause with pointed political cartoons, she (and others across the Commonwealth) continued the fight for women's rights. Here are a few ways to learn more about this important event in our history.

You can see a new documentary on Blanche Ames! William M. Ames and Kevin Friend of BCN Productions created the film about Borderland and Blanche's role in the suffrage cause. It will be shown at our Open House on March 8 at Queset. Watch our website and social media for further details. You can find information, a trailer, and showings by going to <https://www.documentaries.org/borderland>. Other viewing dates will be announced in the near future.

The best way to keep up with centennial events around Massachusetts is to visit the website www.suffrage100ma.org. It has a calendar, photos and other information on events in the area. You can also learn about the history of voting rights and current issues that may affect them. You can also find out how women of color took a different path to win their voting rights.

The Friends of Borderland have put together a full calendar of special events to celebrate Women's Suffrage. A list of special speakers, a musical, and recreations of significant events highlight the activities. You can get more information, and a list of other interesting tours on the Friends website: www.friendsofborderland.org.

CALENDAR

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

Sunday, March 8, Daylight Savings Time begins!

Sunday March 8, Open House at Queset with Blanche Ames documentary shown at 1:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 29, OAHS Senior Project Day. Details inside!

Wednesday, April 8, Passover begins at sundown.

Sunday, April 12, Happy Easter! No Open House today.

Sunday, April 19, Open House from 1-5 p.m. Program to be announced.

Wednesday, April 29, Chowder and Chatter evening at Southeastern Regional. Form inside!

Saturday, May 2, Ken Martin Spring Bottle and Can Drive, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunday, May 3, Annual Meeting at Queset, 2 p.m. featuring State Auditor Suzanne Bump.

Sunday, May 10, Happy Mother's Day! No Open House today.

Sunday, May 17, Open House from 1-5 p.m. Program to be announced.

Monday, May 25, Memorial Day.

The mission of the Easton Historical Society and Museum 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

"Teach the children so it will not be necessary to teach the adults."-Abraham Lincoln

This year you will hear a lot about the 100th anniversary of the Suffrage movement that resulted in the 19th Amendment and gave women the right to vote. I think it is appropriate to highlight some of the women who have played a role in my life. I hope you might do the same.

I think a good place to start is with several teachers I had over the years. Most of my primary teachers were women, and three in particular stand out. Mrs. Anna Gilmore taught first grade at the Furnace Village School on Bay Road (currently the home of the Easton Water Department) where I attended. An older lady when I had her, she was an old-fashioned teacher in the best sense of the word. She instilled a quiet confidence in us as we sat in our reading circle, sounding out new words, or working quietly at our desk on work sheets. We might even get one of those red, blue, or gold stars on our forehead if we did well enough. There was a stash of them in her top desk drawer. I can't imagine how many she gave out, but I was always glad to earn one from her. I even did well enough to lead the reading circle sometimes!

Across the hall was my second grade classroom. It was taught by Mrs. Esther Heath, who happened to be the sister of Mrs. Gilmore! She was also the acting principal at the school and the disciplinarian too. Yes, we had the rattan in those days, and she was not afraid to use it. Mrs. Heath and Mrs. Gilmore always had the best interest of their students in mind though, and rewards continued for good work. Towards the end of the second grade school year, I wanted to try to teach the first graders some of the things I had learned. I do not remember exactly how things transpired, but somehow I was allowed, at least a few times, to read a story to the first graders, maybe try to teach a song—I distinctly remember trying to sing "How Much is That Doggie In the Window" - or show them how to do math. Imagine my doing that!

I fast forward now to high school. Southeastern Regional is a great trade school. They also were very supportive of regular classes. We had double periods of both Math and English. One English teacher in particular, Mrs. June Paduch, encouraged us with some creative writing assignments, some of which would be printed in the school literary magazine. Under her tutelage I first learned to write creatively, slowly gaining confidence that maybe, just maybe, I might one day write something that people would read. Little did I know that those early skills would lead me to write history.

Mrs. Gilmore and Mrs. Heath remained friends for many years until they finally both graduated to their final rewards. I like to think they might be pleased to see that I am still doing teaching in some way. And Mrs. Paduch, wherever you are, I hope my attempts at writing might still be good enough to merit your approval. I owe all three teachers a debt of gratitude for instilling in me a life-long desire to learn and also to do something with the knowledge they imparted to me.

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

Officers for 2018-2019

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Oliver Ames High Senior Projects

A special Open house will be held on Sunday, March 29 and will feature Oliver Ames seniors who have been working on special Senior Projects. The Museum will be open from 1-4 p.m, with students presenting their projects at 2:30 p.m. You can view information on their topic on display boards that the students create as part of this prior to or after presentations are made. Students will also be available to answer questions about their project. Last year, many of the students chose to pursue a career in their chosen topic.

Seniors who are interested in this year-long project must apply for the program. Once selected, they spend time researching their chosen topic, and must also be mentored by someone outside of the school in a real world environment. It is a very competitive program, and being selected to participate in it is a high honor. 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 the 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.)

Support our OA seniors! Come by and see what great work our Easton students are doing!

Dues Letters Are In The Mail

The 2020 dues letters will soon be sent out. The letters serve two purposes: they recap many of the past year's events and successes, and they provide a means to keep our membership roster current. Please return your form, even if your dues are up to date. This will allow us to maintain accurate records and contact information. You can also opt to receive weekly updates by email. Our members are important to us, and your dues and donations are vital to furthering the important mission of the Society and Museum.

To see if your dues are due, simply look at the date in the upper right corner of your mailing label. If it says 2019 or earlier, your dues are due. As always, we value your support and membership!

Spring Bottle Drive Announced

Doing some spring cleaning? We will gladly take your returnable bottles and cans at our annual spring bottle and can drive, held in memory of Ken Martin. This very important fundraiser will be held on Saturday, May 2nd at the Society Museum from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event 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 donations of each of those 5¢ deposits add up. We made over \$225 with our fall bottle drive! For pickup, please call or email the Society to make arrangements.

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

Shaw's Program to Benefit Museum



Shaw's Supermarket, 690 Depot Street in Easton, has chosen us as the March recipient of their "Give Back Where It Counts" program! When you purchase one of these bags for \$2.50 at the Easton Shaw's, we will receive \$1 for each bag sold. Easton will soon stop using plastic bags, so get your re-useable bags this month. We thank Shaw's for supporting our community and the Easton Historical Society and Museum!

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Alger on the very special occasion of their 70th wedding anniversary! Robert and his wife, the former Jean Southworth, celebrated their day with a family gathering. They were married January 1, 1950. Congratulations also to Jean who recently celebrated her 90th birthday!

Congratulations to Oliver Ames High School girl's basketball coach Elaine Clement-Holbrook, who recorded her 700th career win on February 7 with a 72-49 win over Mansfield! She is the winningest girl's high school basketball coach in Massachusetts history. Clement-Holbrook has won 18 Hockomock League championships, two Division 2 state championships (2006 and 2010) and four South Sectional titles. In January of 2016, she became all-time leader in wins (634) in the state for girls basketball, passing Frontier Regional legend Vi Goodnow. Clement-Holbrook has an incredible 700-237 record at Oliver Ames, and her 44 year coaching career includes 41 tournament appearances.

The Oliver Ames High School Girls' Swim & Dive Team won the Hockomock League Girls Swimming Championship for the second year in a row on February 1. The team was a perfect 8-0 on the season. The OA girls beat all 11 other schools in the Hock League (Franklin, King Philip, Canton, Sharon, Taunton, Milford, Attleboro, Foxboro, Mansfield, North Attleboro and Stoughton), and broke multiple records throughout the event at the annual championship meet held at Milford High School. <https://easton.wickedlocal.com/news/20200204/swim-and-dive-undefeated-oa-girls-win-hockomock-championship>

In Memoriam

Elaine (Brooks) Lundin passed away on February 8, 2020. She was the wife of the late Harry B. Lundin. Elaine and her husband lived in Easton for many years. She was a member of the Historical Society, the Brockton Women's Club, Telephone Pioneers Life Member Club, and Trinity Episcopal Church of Stoughton. She also was a former member of Browning Club in Easton, the Wednesday Fortnightly Club in Brockton, and Board of the Wales Home in Brockton. Elaine had also enjoyed being a volunteer at Fuller Art Museum in Brockton and Stonehill College. The full obituary can be found here: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/southofboston-enterprise/obituary.aspx?n=elaine-lundin&pid=195367471>.

Richard W. Hill, a gifted musician and a resident of Easton for the past 42 years, passed away peacefully surrounded by friends and family on February 2, 2020, at the age of 81. He was a past-president of the Easton Historical Society. Richard was employed for 38 years as a teacher for the Town of Easton Public Schools having taught both elementary and high school education. He studied organ playing under the tutelage of John Fesperman at the New England Conservatory in Boston. Richard was a member of the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and performed in many churches throughout Massachusetts and the greater New England area. Richard was also a member of the Organ Historical Society, Easton Lions Club, Easton Historical Society and a life member of the Taunton Historical Society. Richard is survived by his loving wife of 55 years, Sandra M. (Taylor) Hill of Easton; father of Timothy W. Hill of Japan, Paula E. Hill and her husband Kevin McGuire of Media, Pa., and Kristen A. Parrella and her husband Michael of Jackson Heights, Queens, N.Y.; brother of Roger Hill of Orlando, Fla., David Hill of Wyoming and Florida and the late Marilyn Alvarnaz; grandfather of Jake, Steven, Miranda, Lillian, and Katherine. A celebration of life and music for Richard will be held at Christ Congregational Church, Brockton, in the spring at a date and time to be announced. His obituary can be found here: <http://hosting-6751.tributes.com/obituary/show/Richard-W.-Hill-108122360>.

Judith G. (Roberts) Bissett, 81, a resident of Easton for 66 years, passed away peacefully at Good Samaritan Medical Center after a period of failing health. She was the wife of the late Richard P. Bissett. Born in Long Island, NY., she moved to Massachusetts to start a family with her late husband Richard. Judy was a nurse at Brockton Hospital for 55 years. She enjoyed the Cape and traveling. Judith is survived by two children, Nancy Hamilton and her husband William of Easton, Stephen Bissett and his wife Stella of Utah; a brother, Richard Roberts and his wife Kathy of NY.; three grandchildren, James of Mansfield, Nicholas of Easton and Tyler of Utah; also survived by nieces and nephews. You can read her obituary here: <http://hosting-6751.tributes.com/obituary/show/Judith-G.-Bissett-108097715>.

Valmore R. "Val" LeSieur, Jr., 82, a lifelong resident of Easton, passed away on Thursday, December 26, 2019 at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston after a brief illness. He was the husband of the late Anne (Craig) LeSieur. A son of the late Valmore R. LeSieur, Sr. and the late Matilda (Pontes) LeSieur, he was raised and educated in Easton. Val was the proprietor of the Speedway Scene from 1972-2006, a news weekly that covered auto racing. He was also the publisher of the Easton Patriot and The Sports Reporter, which covered high school sports in Easton and many surrounding towns. Val is survived by his daughter, Valarie A. Tucker and her husband Steven of Norton; he was the father of the late Christopher P. LeSieur and Timothy J. LeSieur. Here is his obituary: <http://hosting-6751.tributes.com/obituary/show/Valmore-R.-LeSieur-107974179>.

Arnold B. Tofias of Boston, passed away on Tuesday, January 28, 2020, six days shy of his 97th birthday. Mr. Tofias was the donor of the Ames Shovels and Company Papers to Stonehill College. He was the son of Julius and Esther Tofias. He was a veteran of WWII, Second Lieutenant in the Army Air Corps, and served as a flight engineer on B-29s, flying missions over Africa, China, Japan and the Philippines, and in the Korean War. After the war, he and his father worked in a hat factory in Medfield, Ma., until its closure brought about an opportunity to develop real estate. Among his best known developments are the construction of the "Silver Building" on Route 128, and the repurposing of the Ames Shovel Works in the 1970's. Mr. Tofias for many years provided the Historical Society landscaping and plowing services. Arnold is survived by 4 children, Elise Tofias Phillips and Russell S. Phillips of Newton, Lauren Tofias of Monterey, Bruce Tofias and Deborah of Wayland, and Donald Tofias and Joanne of Newport. He leaves nine grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren with one more due in March. He also leaves his wife Gloria and her children: David Dwork and his partner Amy Lee, Robert Dwork and his partner Carol, Jamie Dwork Pierce and Howard Pierce, as well as grandchildren Justin, Jenny, Casey Dwork and Josh and Alex Levin. He is also survived by his sister, Annabelle Sheppard. His full obituary is here: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/bostonglobe/obituary.aspx?pid=195196545>.

Donations

The estate of **Frank L. Hicks**, c/o Donna Randall, donated a John S. Ames milk bottle, three ice saws, four ice chisels, a hand ice plow, and 1 unidentified ice tool; **Patricia Condon** donated a History of Easton from her brother Richard Buckley's estate; **Burt Lewis** donated a print of Jim Craig by Eddie Germano, an O. Ames Shovel blotter circa 1920's, receipts from the Ed Ebbs family: 2 receipts for milk sold by O. J. Lindquist dated 1917, receipt from George DeWitt Lumber dated 1934, a receipt for insurance dated 1899, and a receipt for tires bought at Nolan's Garage dated 1934; **Alice McCarthy** donated 2 large photos of the Class of 1948 50th reunion with names, a 1954 photo of her house at 300 Center Street, 2 photos of the Kent House at 69 N. Main Street (since razed), and a photo of Mary Lamprey and the Jermolovich Sisters (Dorothy and Nellie) at Miss Lamprey's farm in Antrim, N.H. dated 1931; **James Kempf** donated Eastoners from 1967, 1968, and 1969; **Robert Vogel** donated eight call cards from ham radio operators in Easton; **Lou Silva** donated photos of the OA 1945 football team with all the names of the players; **Kevin Mulligan** donated a wooden bowl made from an old tree from the Museum property; **Clyde A. Jenne**, Town Clerk, Hartland, VT sent a booklet for a play published by Walter H. Baker Company, Boston, titled Taking the Third Degree in the Grange and published in 1908. The play is dedicated to Harmony Grange, No. 247, Easton, and was first produced at the Harmony Grange Hall July 17, 1908; **Kristina Lappin McGill** donated an 1871 Bristol County Atlas, and a certificate for perfect attendance to George Ripley Wood from 1911; **Mark Bergeron** donated pictures of Edward Smith, killed in the Vietnam War; **Emmy Ducharme** of Emmy's Hair Salon donated gift baskets of beauty supplies and other great items for our "Chowder and Chatter" event; **Russ Meninno** donated candy for the Holiday Festival event.

Financial donations have been received from **Barbara Beech, Joseph Hurley, Murdoch and Patrice Johnson, Megan Betts and family, Eleanor Grant, Tim McCarthy, Matthew Soeldner**, and **Judith Baptiste**. **Carol Misiewicz** gave a donation in memory of her husband **Dr. Robert F. Misiewicz**, which will be used to offset the cost of Reminiscences Volume 11. **Lois DiPasqua** gave a donation in memory of **Edward S. Watson**.

Thank you for your continued generous support of the Easton Historical Society and Museum!

Welcome Our New Members!

Joseph Hurley, N. Easton; E. Sookie Noh, N. Easton; Theresa Hodges, N. Easton; Jeanmarie and Caitlyn Joyce, S. Easton; Robert and Nancy White, N. Easton; Dr. Philip McCarthy, Dover, MA.; Ronald Wood, N. Easton; Deb Walker, N. Easton; Lorraine Reid, N. Easton; Matthew Soeldner, S. Easton; Joe Lopatosky, N. Easton; The Betts Family, N. Easton; Frank Scolaro, N. Easton; Murdoch and Patrice Johnson, N. Easton; James Kempf, S. Easton; Theresa Pratt, N. Easton; Mark Minton, S. Easton; Michael Corsini, N. Easton; Pastor Adam Riveiro and family, S. Easton; Maura McCarthy, Rochester, N.H.; Timothy McCarthy, N. Easton; Joshua Peach, motivational speaker and founder of Be Au Sm, S. Easton; Michelle and Roger Blake, N. Easton.

“Chowder and Chatter”

The annual "Chowder and Chatter" evening will be held in the Colonial Room at Southeastern Regional High School, 250 Foundry Street in South Easton on Wednesday, April 29 at 6:00 P. M. This is the 21st annual “Chowder and Chatter” event, first envisioned by the late Dr. Robert F. Misiewicz and generously funded 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 present a special program for you. Past Society presidents since 1969 will reflect on the challenges and successes over the past fifty years of owning the Museum building. Ed Hands will moderate the evening’s discussion. Hazel Varella will start accepting reservations March 16. Be sure to reserve your seat! Preference is given to members in good standing. Any remaining seats will be offered to the public on April 1.

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

2020 Chowder and Chatter Reservation Form

Mail on or after March 16!

Please use this form to reserve your seat for the April “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 very special 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 on April 1. 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) _____

March Open House Special Announcement!

The March Open House will be held on March 8 at Queset, 51 Main Street, N. Easton directly behind the Ames Free Library. William M. Ames and Kevin Friend will have a special screening of the new documentary **Borderland: The Life and Times of Blanche Ames Ames**. The event will begin at 1:30 p.m. The presenters have asked us to limit attendance, so you will need to reserve your spot by calling the Museum at 508-238-7774. Someone will confirm your request. This is offered on a first come, first served basis. Sorry, but in fairness to all, we cannot accommodate large groups for this event. Light refreshments will follow.

The Museum will not be open as usual on this day. We express our thanks to William M. Ames and Kevin Friend for making this special showing possible!

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