

EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TRAIN TRACKS



CALENDAR

Summer Fun!

Summer is finally here! Will you be summering at the beach house? Visiting another state? Traveling to Europe? Are you just staying home? Whatever you do, please make time to visit a few historical sites and museums. First of all, be sure to schedule some time at your Society this summer! We will be open the second Sunday in June, July and August as usual. We would love to see you. Come in and have some punch, chat with us and discover something new about your town! Do you know someone who has recently moved into Easton? Summer is a great time to invite them to visit the Society with you. The Society is open by appointment, and if you have family or friends visiting from out of town that would like to see us we will try to accommodate you.

While you are in Easton, spend some time at Stonehill College. Dr. Greg Galer, Curator of the Tofias Archives, has put together a great display of artifacts about the Ames family and their diverse business interests.

Also at Stonehill, visit the Martin Institute Archives. You will see a display put together by the students that is exceptionally well done. More information on that display, and the Society activities that helped to support it, can be found on the back of this newsletter.

If you venture to the back of Stonehill College, at the end of the furthest parking lot, you will find an area that contains the remains of a 1700's mill stone quarry. The area is protected with a post and rail fence. However, the stones are easily viewed in their various states of manufacture. It is a rare find indeed, one that allows us to see a bit of colonial Easton history in the very place where it happened. Call the college at 508-565-1000 for more information.

NEW ORNAMENT DESIGN FOR 2005!

We are pleased to announce that this years limited edition Christmas ornament, the third in a series, will once again feature the artwork of Mary Bodio! The featured building will be the Gate Lodge, designed by H. H. Richardson. Watch for further details in the fall newsletter!

*Sunday, June 12th,
Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M.*

*Tuesday, June 14th,
Flag Day*

*Monday, July 4th,
Independence Day*

*Sunday, July 10th,
Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M.*

*Wednesday, July 13th,
Organ Historical Society visit*

*Sunday, August 14th,
Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M.*

Upcoming events:

NRT Harvest Fair, Sunday, October 2nd. Stop by and see the Society display!

Lions Club Holiday Festival, early December. New Christmas ornament available!

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

Officers:

President, Editor—Frank T. Meninno

*1st Vice President—Ken Michel
2nd Vice President, Curator—Paul Berry*

*Treasurer—Patricia Baker
Recording Secretary—Hazel Varella
Corresponding Secretary—Curtis Chase*

Director—Dot Berry

Director—Ed Hands

Director—Gary Uzdavinis

Director—Deborah MacPhee

The Station Master

President Frank T. Meninno

Hello everyone!

A while ago, I wrote about the need to upgrade some of the systems at the Station. Thanks to a generous offer of a zero interest loan from the Bank of Easton, we expect to begin work on upgrading the heating system that failed us several times last winter.

As part of this building

upgrade, the Society is seeking estimates on finishing the basement. At this time, it is a dirt floor, and not very useable. I believe that by cementing the floor, adding a vapor barrier, and increasing the heating capacity, we will have a valuable space for storage and maintenance. The first floor of the building has a slight sag in it, and cementing the basement will allow us to

correctly support the structure.

Once I have the figures, I will communicate them to you in a letter. We are seeking grants to help with the cost, but there is no guarantee of success or available funds.

Please be thinking of how you can help. It is a project that I believe in, and one that needs to be done. Thank you!

The Curator's Corner

Curator Paul Berry

The Society building is in need of some improvements. While we will be seeking funds for some of the larger projects, we have some smaller projects that need another type of giving: your time and talents! One of the things that needs to be done is to apply a new linoleum or tile floor to the restrooms. Currently, the ladies room has an old linoleum floor. The mens room is a painted cement floor. If you have had any experience in doing this type of flooring, and would like to lend a hand (along with good knees), we would appreciate it.

Another project that needs a few hands is to straighten out the kitchen area. It may involve removing some accumulated items to another part of the building. It is probably no more than a one day project with a few helpers.

Some of our furnishings could stand a good dusting / oiling. Once again, a few hours time would do the job, and keep things in good repair.

There is a need for volunteers who might be willing to lead some walking tours of North Easton. On occasion, a visiting group will ask for tours of the immediate area. You do not have to be up to date on all the buildings. We will provide you with a printout that will contain all the information you need.

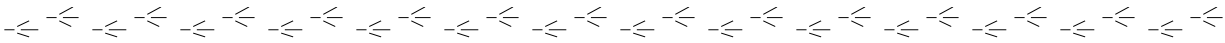
Please call the Station at 508-238-7774 to volunteer some time and talent!

Organ Historical Society to Visit North Easton

The Organ Historical Society will hold their Old Colony Convention during the week of July 12-18, 2005. Past president and Society member Richard Hill, a noted organist, is leading this years event. On Wednesday, July 13th, the group will hear two recitals. Mr. Hill will perform on the 1875/1933 Hook and Hastings organ at Unity Church, and Mr. Kevin Birch will play the 1859 F. & G. Hook organ at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

One of the highlights of the North Easton stop will be a series of walking tours for the attendees. The tours are tentatively slated for 4:45 and 5:30 P.M. We are seeking 5 or 6 people to volunteer to be tour guides for these visitors.

Please call the Society if you would be willing to help.



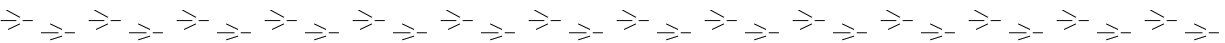
VACATIONS FROM THE PAST

A century ago, the vacation trips you took would have caused great excitement throughout the town. Newspapers accounts from the 1880's took note of anyone's travel adventures. After all, it was big news when someone took a real vacation in those days. Thanks to those old time newspapers we know a little bit about where Eastoner's went to when they wanted to get away from it all.

Many Eastoner's spent hot summer days at nearby lakes such as Long Pond on the Easton / Stoughton line. Lake Winnecunnet (Norton, Ma.), Lake Massapoag (Sharon Ma.) or the Norton Grove areas were also popular places to seek relief from the summer heat. These areas were easily accessible by road, just a short trip from many parts of the town. A few fortunate families could afford to rent or own small cottages along these lakes, or in the case of the Brett family, a place on the sea at Brant Rock in Marshfield. For many years the Outlook Club had their summer gathering at Brant Rock because of the hospitality offered by the Brett's.

Occasionally someone from town would travel further than the neighboring towns. When the cold New England winter approached, an Eastoner could take a train along the coast and head south. A popular destination for these travelers was sunny Florida. Arthur DeWitt, who ran a successful business in town, often spent time in Florida during the winter. A Mr. Earl, who worked for the Ames family in the company store, spent the winter of 1885-1886 in the Sunshine State. Daniel Belcher took his family to Florida in February 1885 for a pre-Disneyworld vacation of sun and surf. Edward B. Hayward, a well to do gentleman farmer from South Easton, also wintered in Florida with his family from time to time.

Florida wasn't the only place Eastoner's traveled to. The Reverend A.S. Smith of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Easton took a trip to Kansas. He went there to improve his health by avoiding the severe New England winter. R.G. Randall, sexton of Unity Church, traveled to meet with family in Philadelphia. His pastor, Reverend William Chaffin, spent the summer of 1884 in New Hampshire. While staying there he was able to locate his birthplace. The name of the place was not recorded but the paper made note of the fact that he was not pleased with its deplorable condition!



Special Anniversaries

The Easton Historical Society would like to congratulate the Easton Garden Club on the occasion of their 75th anniversary. For those who aren't aware of all they do, take a look at the Rockery and the Civil War Soldier's Monument, the window boxes on Main Street, and all the flowers along the road sides. Thanks for keeping Easton beautiful!

The mansion at Stonehill College celebrates it's 100th anniversary this year. At one time, this magnificent edifice overlooked a pasture, and later, an airport. Today it houses some of the administrative offices of the college, as well as the Irish Studies Library.

Society Helps Stonehill Students

This past spring, the Society was contacted by Professor Thomas Conroy of Stonehill College in regards to participating in a special project with members of his Public History Class. It seems that when the history majors were asked what they would do once they received their degree in history, nearly all of them took it for granted that they would become history teachers! That is a wonderful choice of a career, but the students missed the point. They entirely overlooked other types of work that a history major might perform. To introduce the students to other opportunities, Professor Conroy gave them an assignment: Put together a museum quality exhibit about Easton and Brockton. The class was split up and assigned one location or the other to research.

During a span of about three weeks, several groups of students came to the Society to view our collections. They took some photographs, bought a few small items and asked lots of questions. Then they went to work.

The result of their research is displayed in an excellent exhibit with the title

Beyond Shovels and Shoes:
Exploring the Histories of Easton and Brockton,
1700-1900.

The display shows some of the similarities between Easton and Brockton (during the exhibit period Brockton was known as North Bridgewater.) These talented students used archival materials and techniques to accurately tell the story of a time when Easton was not very different from Brockton. Some well documented colonial artifacts from the Stonehill area are a welcome surprise.

You should take a few moments to see this for yourself. The display is located on the second floor of the Martin Institute, in the Stonehill College Archives. The archives are generally open between 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. Call 508-565-1396 for further information.

Congratulations to the students of the Spring 2005 Public History Class, and we hope this exercise will be repeated next year!

EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Old Colony Railroad Station

P.O. Box 3, 80 Mechanic Street
North Easton MA 02356

Ehsociety@arczip.com

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
NO. EASTON, MA 02356
PERMIT NO.25