

EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TRAIN TRACKS



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.

Hot Summer Days, Cool History!

On Sunday, June 10th, the Easton Historical Society will celebrate our museum and headquarters with a display about trains! We have some special things planned for you to see and do.

First, meet a hobo, one of those decidedly different individuals who were once the “kings of the rails.” Find out about hobo signs, and what some of them mean. Kids, dress in your best hobo outfit and take part in our hobo contest at 3 P.M. Next, spend a few minutes between trains with the station master. Learn about the very first train that arrived in Easton, and why it didn’t leave as quickly as it came. Find out about switching tracks, and what happens when things don’t go as well as planned. View our display of early photos of locomotives and train stations around Easton. Get a copy of an original train ticket and a reproduction railroad stock certificate.

The highlight of the day will be an unbelievable model train set of the Ames Shovel complex, built to exact scale by Ellery Willis over twenty years ago. You have to see this to believe it! Mr. Willis painstakingly measured all the buildings in the complex, and created a very accurate representation of the former shovel company. Soon this model will be returned for restoration and display in a model railroad museum. Don’t pass up an opportunity to view this great historical item!

The July open house will feature items used to advertise some of our local businesses, especially those that were commonly given away to customers. This display was put together a few months ago, but very poor weather kept most people away. Check out this great bunch of things, from 1870’s advertising cards to ashtrays and yardsticks. You might be surprised at what you remember!

For August, watch the web site and local papers for open house announcements. Don’t forget to reserve your space for our yard sale on September 8th! This is a good time to rid yourself of that “stuff” that keeps collecting around the house or garage. Details are inside this issue. As the young people say, have a chillin’ summer!

Volume 7, Issue 4

June 2007

CALENDAR

Sunday, June 10th, Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M. Theme is Train Day.

Thursday, June 14th, Flag Day. Show your colors!

Friday, June 15th—Sunday, June 17th, Grace Wooster Memorial Wooden Bat Baseball Tournament at Frothingham Park. Society table display on Saturday, June 16th.

Sunday, June 17th, Happy Father’s Day!

Thursday, June 21st, First Day of Summer!

Wednesday, July 4th, Happy 231st Birthday, United States!

Sunday, July 8th, Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M. Theme is advertising items and giveaways.

Sunday, August 12th, Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M. Theme to be announced.

Saturday, September 8th, Yard Sale at the Station, 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. Rent a space for \$15! Use form on back cover.

Easton Historical Society Newsletter “Train Tracks” is published quarterly by the Easton Historical Society.

Officers:

*President—Deborah MacPhee,
1st Vice President—Kenneth J. Michel
2nd Vice President—Edmund C. Hands
Treasurer—Patricia A. Baker
Recording / Corresponding Secretary—Hazel L. Varella
Directors—Karen R. Cacciapuoti,
Nancy DeLuca, James Morrison, Andrew R. Salisbury, Robert J. Wooster
Curator—Frank T. Meninno*

The Station Master

President Deborah MacPhee

The Society has had a busy Spring, with several member events. My thanks to everybody that participated in any events. Some special thanks worth mentioning:

- In March we held our eighth annual Chowder and Chatter at the Southeastern Regional Vocational School. This event is one of our most popular, selling out in just a few days. Guest speakers Alice McCarthy, John Grant, Lynn White, and Ginny Reusch each spoke about early conservation efforts in Easton, including the history of Wheaton Farm and the formation of the NRT. The students at Southeastern did a great job cooking and serving our meal. This event has been underwritten by Avery and Kevin Williams since it's inception. Special thanks to them for their continued support.
- Professor Chet Raymo led another one of his great mystery walks on the Stonehill College campus. The event was well attended, and participants learned about rock formations and their movement over time. Chet is always informative and the walk through Stonehill's beautiful campus is always a delight.
- At our Spring Meeting Greg Galer, Curator, and Nicole Tourangeau, Archivist, of the Stonehill Industrial History Center gave an interesting lecture to members about buildings and artifacts from Easton's history and then led a tour of the collections.
- The Annual Meeting in May was held in the library of the Borderland Mansion before a backdrop of rare books. Special thanks to Eleanor Yahmarkt for coordinating this special venue. Ken Gloss, owner of Boston's Brattle Book Store, attended the event and talked about old and rare books. Ken was nice enough to give free verbal appraisals to those that brought books to the event.
- We recently held a dedication of the Ladies Parlor at the Railroad Station in honor of Margaret Adams Williams. The dedication recognized Ms. Williams' long-time support of our organization. Many remember her as "the cake lady," because of her tradition of arriving at our Open House events with a treat in hand.
- Ken Martin again led his semi-annual bottle drive at the Railroad Station. Proceeds of \$113 from this drive directly benefit the upkeep of our historic building. Our thanks to Ken and Ed Hands for their efforts.
- The Society's Research Group meets weekly during Spring and Fall to organize and categorize the collections of the Museum. This work makes it easier for researchers to find information quickly. The group's dedicated members include Judy Luke, Hazel Varella, Barbara Beech, and Maureen Raymo.
- Curator Frank Meninno has really brought a lot of creativity to our monthly Open House events. Recent exhibits include a history of the DeWitt Lumber Company and artifacts detailing Easton business' advertising & giveaways. Thanks go to Dwight MacKerron, who spoke at our March Open House about the culture of the Samuel Hodges Tavern Store. Continued thanks to Frank for his leadership and dedication. Thanks also go to Frank's wife, Anne-Marie, and sons, Dominic and Anthony, who do a lot to get the Station ready for the public.

Finally, a special thank you to the members of our Board of Directors. Their tireless efforts help our Society to deliver on our mission. If you read about something and wished you had participated, I encourage you to visit our new website often. For your convenience, we always post upcoming events and contact information on the site.

Curator's Corner

Curator / Caretaker Frank T. Meninno

Sometimes I can't read my own writing. A case in point is last quarters newsletter, where I misspelled the name of Persis Garniss, who graciously donated ice tongs and an ice pike to the Society. My sincere apologies for the error in spelling, and many thanks for her equally gracious understanding!

Last month, I attended a seminar offered to small museums and historical societies. It was hosted by the Centerville Historical Society, where I spent some time viewing a wonderful collection of Victorian era dresses, wonderfully displayed on mannequins. When I asked their curator how he was able to get some mannequins, he said "just keep asking the stores until you get some." Being one to know good advice when it is offered, I made the rounds at the local shopping centers. After about three weeks, JC Penney called from their Taunton, MA. Store and offered to donate some half height forms typically used to display shirts or blouses. Thanks to their generosity, we are now able to properly display some of the clothing items in our collections. Right now, there is on display a coat worn as part of the uniform of the original Oliver Ames High School band. The coat dates from about 1900—1910, and an accompanying photo shows the uniforms worn by band members during this time. I still hope to secure one or two full male and female mannequins to display dresses or full uniforms.

★
★ *The Society is celebrating two special dedications. Watch for the next newsletter for details!* ★
★

Where's the Shovel?

Hey Kids! Have you seen our shovel? We have photographed an Ames toy shovel in various locations around Easton. Do you know where? The photo and contest rules are on posters around town. Send an email with your name, age, phone number and best guess to: curator@eastonhistoricalsociety.org. Make sure you have your parent's permission first! Five winners will be chosen from all correct entries at the end of each contest. Good

Dues Reminder

Many of you have renewed your dues for 2007. We thank you for your prompt response. As this newsletter goes to print, a few members have not yet renewed. If you see a "2006" on your label, your dues are due. We understand that during busy times it is easy to overlook such things. Your continued membership is very important to the Society. Thank you for your support of the Easton Historical Society, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Individual membership, \$15 Family Membership, \$20 Senior membership (60 or over), \$7

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

WOOD YARDSTICK FROM MITRANO CHEVROLET, DONATED BY MIKE AZEVEDO; GEORGE H. DEWITT LETTERHEADS AND PAPERS, DONATED BY CHARLOTTE DEWITT; SIMPSON SPRING ENVELOPE, VIA EBAY; SIGN, MENUS AND SHELVING FROM DOROTHY LOU'S BAKERY, DONATED BY THE PIANTONI FAMILY; MALE AND FEMALE FORMS FOR DISPLAYING SHIRTS AND SWEATERS, DONATED BY JC PENNEY, TAUNTON, MA. THE EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS GRATEFUL FOR THE CONTINUED GENEROSITY OF THE DONORS OF THESE AND OTHER HISTORICAL ITEMS TO OUR COLLECTIONS.

BOTTLE DRIVE A SUCCESS

Many thanks to all of our members and friends who took the time to drop off your bottles and cans at our spring bottle drive. Ken Martin recently presented the Society with a check for \$113 thanks to your generous contributions. All those nickels do add up! Special thanks to Ken and his able assistant Ed Hands for once again running the bottle drive. Watch the next newsletter for the date of our fall drive, and thank you for saving those bottles and cans for us. We appreciate your continued generosity!

Another Easton First!

According to a story published in the Easton Bulletin, February 7, 1936, Easton was the first place where paper towels were used! Here are the absorbing details as reported:

A. A. Gilmore, a native of this town and a salesman for a Boston concern dealing in paper articles when interviewed recently at St. Petersburg, Fla., where he is passing a vacation, stated that the paper towel now in common use throughout the country, originated at No. Easton as the result of a protest made by F. S. Pope, native of Sandwich, who was at that time superintendent of the schools in North Easton.

As the result of the conversation by Supt. Pope who considered the roller towel then in use, 35 years ago, as an abomination, he and Mr. Gilmore worked out an arrangement whereby tissue paper was fastened to wood fixtures made in the carpenter shop at the No. Easton school, starting the paper towel which is now so widely used.

Mr. Gilmore has spent most of his 42 years as a salesman in the Cape Cod and Maine territory and is considered a dean of the road to many of his customers. He boasts having taken photos of everyone with whom he does business as a hobby.

So there you have it. Our local boys, under the expert supervision of two well known people, created the first modern paper towel back in 1901.

YARD SALE RESERVATION FORM

Saturday, September 8th, 9 A.M. to 2 P.M., at the Station, 80 Mechanic St., N. Easton

To reserve your space in our yard sale, please fill out this form and send it, with a check for \$15 payable to the Easton Historical Society, to: Easton Historical Society, P.O. Box 3, North Easton, MA 02356. The Society is not accepting donations of yard sale items.

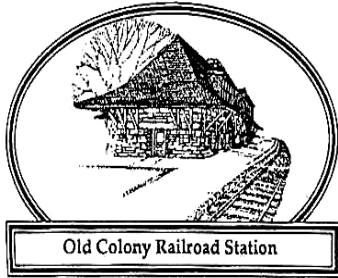
The yard sale will be held rain or shine. Spaces are limited, and will be the equivalent of two adjoining parking spaces. They will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. You must bring your own tables and chairs. There is no trash collection at the Station, so please plan on removing your trash from the site when you are finished. All items must be yard sale items. Crafters will not be permitted at this time. The Society assumes no liability for damages to any person or property before, during or after this event. Thank you for supporting the Easton Historical Society.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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