



## CALENDAR

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

*Sunday, June 2nd, Oliver Ames High School graduation. Congratulations, Class of 2013!*

*Sunday, June 9th, Open House featuring a look at the Geddes family who immigrated from Scotland to Furnace Village in the 1870's, 1-5 p.m.*

*Friday, June 14th, Flag Day.*

*Thursday, July 4th, Independence Day. Happy 237th birthday!*

*Sunday, July 14th, Open House featuring South Easton institution Simpson Spring, 1-5 p.m. Location to be announced.*

*Sunday, August 11th, Open House featuring "Tools of the Trade" with antique and unusual tools on display, 1-5 p.m.*

*Ames Free Library—Easton's Public Library: Boomer's The Next Chapter programs led by Ed Hands. Ed is once again doing a summer series of historic walks and talks which are always very interesting, and a great learning experience. Contact the Library at 508-238-2000 for more information on Boomers programs!*

*Thursday, June 27th, Talk—Reading the Secret Book of Nature, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Library, 53 Main Street*

*Thursday, July 18th, Walk—Center Street Surprises*

*Thursday, August 22nd, Walk—The Architecture of the Other Guys*

*The two walks will begin at the Library, 53 Main Street. Meet in the parking lot at 9:30 a.m. You should bring water, a hat, and comfortable shoes.*

## What Are You Doing This Summer?

Have you made your plans for summer? We did! The Society will have our usual summer open houses during June, July and August. Programming includes a June celebration of the Geddes family who came here in the 1870's from Scotland and worked in the Belcher foundry. The family settled in the Poquanticut area at first, then bought a home on Highland Street in Furnace Village. Come and learn more about a group of immigrants who played an important role in Easton's history! In July we will celebrate the best beverage around, Simpson Spring! They have been bottling tonics and water in South Easton since 1878 and this local landmark is still going strong. During our August open house join us for a look at tools. Some were used by Easton people; others are interesting examples of days of craftsmanship gone by. Join us for interesting displays, great refreshments, and excellent fellowship.

If that isn't enough to whet your appetite, then please drop in over the summer to see what we are up to! The Society is open most weekdays and Saturday mornings, and visitors are always welcomed. Summer usually brings family get-togethers, and if you have family coming from out of town, this is an excellent time to bring them by the Society. Do you have an architectural student home for the summer? Or a history major looking for someplace to go? Send them to us! Such students as these are frequent visitors over their summer breaks. This is a great time to take in Easton's history, and we will be happy to do some tours for you!

We hope you will enjoy your summer! Whether you will spend it sipping lemonade by your pool, or cooking up a storm on your grill, or just taking some time off to "chill out" at the beach, spend it well. And we hope you will spend some of it with us!

*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

### Smile!

Summer is a great time for vacations, family gatherings, attending local events, or hitting the beach! Hopefully you will take lots of photos. I love picture taking. It is something I developed as a child using my mother's old 126 film camera around our yard. Later, I saved enough of my allowance to purchase my own, a small plastic camera that was purchased from the toy section at the Village Store at the Five Corners. Later on I had an Kodak camera that took a flash bar and 110 film. I kept that in my car all the time, and took some good photos of events around Easton. These included the fire at Tommy Williams house around 1978-79, the parade honoring Jim Craig in 1980, and a bunch of my friends and family playing ball. In 1984 I purchased a nice 35mm Canon for our honeymoon. It has since recorded the memories of our growing family, several weddings, and pictures of Easton during the 1980's and 1990's. At some point, my wife surprised me with a digital camera that I often use. What changes in photography have occurred just in my life.

If a picture is truly worth a thousand words, then just think of the volumes that have been written. Our early photographers captured the frontier of this country as the westward expansion progressed. Native Americans were photographed in their own environment, proud of who they were on the surface, but with a profound sadness exuding from beneath. Matthew Brady brought President Lincoln into our home, and also shocked us with the carnage recorded in his Civil War battlefield pictures. Ansel Adams used simple black and white photography to capture the sheer majesty of the natural world. Still others have used photography to document the times of our lives.

When I think of all I have seen so far, I am glad I took photos. So many places have changed and people have grown and moved away. My photos prove what once was; my memory not so much. I can look at something I photographed years ago and laugh at my own poor attempts with that plastic camera. But then I can study these same photos, and suddenly the details are there! There is the building I remembered that has since been torn down, there is the bunch of 17 and 18 year olds playing baseball behind the schools, there is the first place I lived in after I was married! Am I ever glad I took those pictures.

I encourage you to do what I did—take pictures! Maybe you use that nice Nikon ultra megapixel camera, or maybe you are still a purist like me who still likes the feel of an old film camera. Whatever your choice, do it! And be prepared to share them too! The photos you take today are as valuable as the ones our parents and grandparents took. They are a wonderful tool, preserving those days and people who have entered into our history. Your pictures are doing the same thing. And don't overlook the importance of **labeling** your photos! Future generations will some day look upon your photos and mine. Will they know who is in the photos? What will they see? The people, places and things that in our time will become history, a history that can only be recorded by people like you and me.

## Your Help is Needed!

**The Society is looking for old photographs of Frothingham Park, especially any taken of the construction of the park, or before World War II. The photos will be used in a video being developed this year. Any photos that show the original playground equipment and other equipment are needed. Please check those old family albums! The Society would like to see any that you have regardless of how good they are. Please contact us if you have something to share!**

The Easton Historical Society Newsletter "Train Tracks" is published quarterly by the Easton Historical Society.

#### *Officers for 2012-2013*

President Kenneth J. Michel  
1st Vice President David Ames, Jr.  
2nd Vice President Edmund C. Hands  
Treasurer Nancy DeLuca  
Recording / Corresponding Secretary Hazel L. Varella

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Melanie-Jane L. Deware  
Judge Leon J. Lombardi  
James MacPhee  
Debra Salisbury  
Robert J. Wooster  
Immediate Past President—Deborah MacPhee  
Curator—Frank T. Meninno

### With Special Thanks

- To Mrs. Oliver F. Ames, who graciously hosted a special afternoon at her historic home "Langwater" honoring the Society for 65 years of service to Easton, and the Ames Free Library—Easton's Public Library for 130 years of service;
- To event Co-Chairs Deborah MacPhee of the Historical Society and Marion Wingfield of the Library, Speakers Ken Michel, Donna Richman, Thomas Deubler, Edwin White (for Mrs. David Ames), Hazel Varella (as Mrs. Louis A. Frothingham), Emma Varella (as Mary "Heidi" Ames). Also helping were Patricia Baker, Nancy Donahue, Michelle Duprey, Edmund Hands, Dr. Uma Hiremath, James MacPhee, Alice McCarthy, John Mowatt, John Varella, Frank J. Meninno, and four OAH&S students who provided the music, Nicole Cosgrove, Davis Healey, Joseph Maglio, and Matthew Thibeault, and to Gloria Freitas-Steidinger for flower arrangements assisted by James Carlino. Funding was provided by the North Easton Savings Bank;
- To David Ames for his excellent presentation on King Philip's War at our annual meeting, Ed Hands for his always great refreshments and use of his technological knowledge, Frothingham Memorial Hall for the meeting space, and to all who were elected as officers for the Society;
- To Lee and Kevin Williams for generously sponsoring "Chowder and Chatter", Southeastern Regional for the delicious chowder, corn bread, and desserts, and panelists Norma-Jean Hanscom, Lee Williams, and Hazel Varella expertly moderated by Ed Hands. Special thanks to Norma-Jean who traveled from Cape Cod for the evening!
- To all who donated to our spring bottle and can drive, and to volunteers Tom Bono, Roger McNamara, Bob Carpenter, Hazel Varella, Barbara Beech and Frank J. Meninno;
- To Bob Vogel, who loaned his extensive collection of Easton postcards and some special items for our May open house.



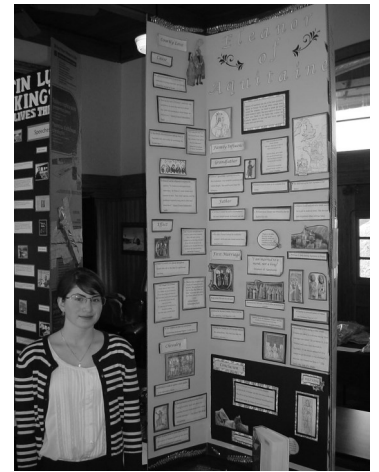
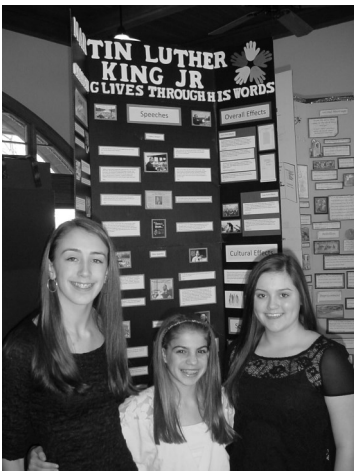
The Declaration of Independence, signed on July 4th, 1776, was first read in Easton on Sunday, July 21st of that year. It was ordered to be read the first Sunday after it was received by the minister of each denomination in each town in the Provinces (as the future states were then known). In Easton, that singular honor fell to Rev. Archibald Campbell who was the minister of Easton at that time. After concluding the afternoon portion of church services, Rev. Campbell read the document aloud. It was received with joy and some trepidation, as Eastoners considered at what cost their freedom from such a power as England would cost. The document was then handed over to Town Clerk Matthew Hayward who had the honor of copying that Declaration into the town records. Mr. Campbell's copy of the Declaration of Independence was then passed on to the next town. We do not know where it wound up. However, the location where it was first read to the citizens of Easton, who then became the first generation of Americans, should be marked as a reminder to all who fought for that first taste of freedom. Perhaps we could begin an annual tradition of having that most important founding document read each July 4th for all to hear again!



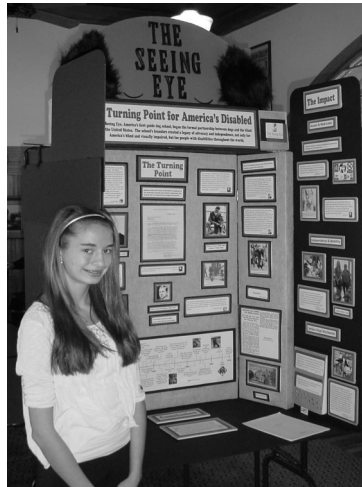
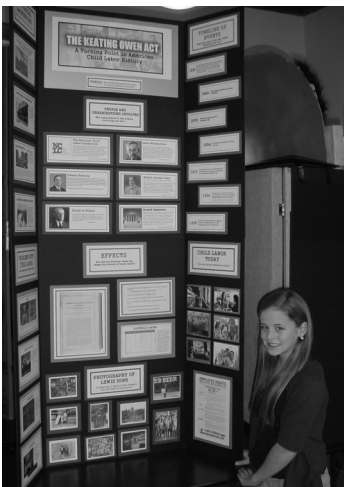
# 2013 National History Day

The Society recently hosted Easton Middle School 8th grade students who won the school National History Day competition. These students either wrote papers, created slideshows or web sites, or did display boards covering a range of historic people and events. For the sixth time in the past seven years, Easton will be sending students to compete at the national level of the National History Day Competition held from June 9th-13th at the University of Maryland. Congratulations to Catie Naughton, Abby Weintrob, and Catherine Murphy who will represent Easton!

In addition to these students, the Society also congratulates all the winners from the local, district and state competition: Jessica Zolotarevsky, Taryn Reardon, Taylor Wooster, Jessica Robarge, Lauren Wright, Jenny Delpidio, Stephanie Berry, Cole O'Brien, Ally Kalfelz, Sophia Sarro, Mike Abela, Kyle Gagliardi, Ben Kemp, Andrew Morgan, Kayley Donze and Anna Leowald.



Left to right: Jessica Robarge, Lauren Wright, Jenny Delpidio with their project on Martin Luther King, Jr.; Taryn Reardon and Taylor Wooster show their project on The Industrial Revolution: A Growth in Urbanization; Jessica Zolotarevsky with her project on Eleanor of Aquitaine.



Left, Abby Weintrob with her project about The Keating-Owen Act; Catie Naughton with her project The Seeing Eye; right, Kayley Donze with her paper on The Emancipation Proclamation and Anna Leowald with her paper on The Black Death.

## In Memorium

Wallace M. "Wally" Fulcher, 67, a resident of Easton for the past 48 years, died Saturday, February 16, 2013. He was the husband of the late Karen "Kay" (Lowndes) Fulcher who died September 17, 2012. Wally founded Wallace Fulcher Construction of Easton which he operated for many years. Wally later became the full time Building Inspector for the Town of Easton, a position he held for 15 years. A longtime elected official of the Easton Board of Assessors, he was a volunteer member of the Municipal Building Committee which helped to oversee the construction of both the Oliver Ames High School and the Easton Middle School renovations. Wally is survived by a daughter, Lisa M. McKenna and her husband Michael of Easton; a brother William "Bill" Fulcher and his wife Judith of Easton; beloved Papa of Molly, Patrick and Abigail McKenna all of Easton; and several nieces and nephews. He was also the father of the late Karensue Fulcher.

Bernard E. Lawson of Hingham formerly of Easton passed away on Friday, March 1 at the age of 87. He graduated from Northeastern University class of 1946 with a Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry, and Boston University Class of 1957 with a Master's Degree in Education. He worked for 10 years at Walter Baker division of General Foods and was a science teacher for 24 years for the Braintree Schools. Bernard was a long time member of the First Baptist Church of Brockton where he was a former usher, deacon, and benevolence treasurer. He belonged to Appalachian Mountain Club, Friends of Borderland State Park, Natural Resources Trust of Easton Volunteer, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Massachusetts Teachers Assoc., and was a life member of the National Education Assoc. He is survived by many cousins.

John J. Kent, 91, a lifelong resident of Easton, died March 26, 2013 at home. He was the husband of Jean M. (Oberlander) Kent for 58 years. Born in Easton on February 19, 1922, a son of the late Daniel and Mary (Spillane) Kent, he was raised in Easton and was a graduate of Oliver Ames High School. A veteran of the US Navy during WWII and the Korean War, he served in the both the Atlantic and Pacific Theatres as a navigator on tug boats. Upon discharge, he enrolled at Bridgewater State College and earned a Bachelors Degree in Education and later received a Master's Degree from Boston College. John began teaching at the Center School in Easton and was later appointed as the first principal of the Parkview School in Easton. Later he became a Professor of Education at Bridgewater State College and retired as principal of the Holbrook South Elementary School. John was a past selectman for the Town of Easton and also served on the Easton Finance Committee and other various Easton Town Boards. John was a member of the Easton Historical Society, the Natural Resources Trust of Easton, the Friends of Borderland and was an active member of the Easton VFW. His hobbies included fishing, walking, and spending time outdoors. He often wrote many published articles about the history of the Town of Easton. In addition to his wife Jean, he is survived by his adult children, John "Jack" Kent and his wife Karen of Easton, Jeanmarie Kent Joyce of Easton, and James L. Kent and his wife Diana of West Boylston; a sister, Alice McCarthy of Easton; a brother, Maurice Kent of North Dighton; six grandchildren, Matthew Kent and his wife Kathleen, Daniel Kent, Julie Kent, Caitlyn Joyce, Sonja Kent and Christian Kent; a great grandchild, Isabella Kent; and several nieces and nephews. He was also the brother of the late Jane Daly, Phillip Kent, Leo Kent, Kathleen Carey and Mary Twomey.

Virginia (Tuttle) Anderson, of North Easton, MA on April 5, 2013, after a brief illness. Born on July 3, 1923, she was the daughter of Frank and Sally (Droege) Tuttle. Beloved wife for 50 years of the late Norman A. Anderson; devoted mother of Christine (Richard) Salmon of Troy, NY and Steven (Donna) Anderson of Spartanburg, SC; also survived by grandchildren David and Hilary Salmon, Carrie (The Rev. Mark) Peterson, The Rev. Nathaniel (Carolyn Starz) Anderson and great-grandson Charlie Peterson. A graduate of Oliver Ames High School and the Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School, Jinny worked as an executive secretary for the Harvard Radar Research Labs during World War II and later for McCormick and Company Real Estate. She retired as the Assistant Personnel Manager for Instron, Inc. In the 1960s she and Norman worked for John Volpe's gubernatorial campaigns. When his 1962 bid for governor failed, she wrote Volpe a letter telling him how proud they were to have worked on his re-election. He was so touched that he gave them the license plate number "58N", which Jinny continued to renew for the rest of her life.

Rose F. (Mitrano) Slavitz died Monday April 29, 2013 at the age of 103 at the Island Terrace Nursing Home in Lakeville. She was the wife of the late John J. Slavitz, Sr. Rose was born and raised in North Easton a daughter of the late Daniel and Anna (Camelio) Mitrano and lived in the town for most of her life. A graduate of Oliver Ames High School, she also attended Lesley College and earned her degree in education. Her teaching career spanned many years in the Town of Easton. She was the first kindergarten teacher when the Center School opened and had also taught at the Furnace Village School. She is survived by children Rose Marie LaRosee and her husband Raymond of Pembroke, Joyce Schmid and her husband Thomas of Bridgewater and the late Dr. John J. Slavitz, Jr. and his widow Noreen of Nantucket. She was the grandmother of Lisa Sullivan and her husband David of Pembroke, Edward LaRosee of Pembroke, Jason Schmid and his wife Rhonda of Bridgewater, Lt. Adam Schmid, USCG and his wife Mary Regina of Middleboro, Jeremy Slavitz of Nantucket and Joanna Slavitz of Concord. She also leaves 7 great grandchildren and several nieces. She was the sister of the late Frank, John, Paul and Daniel Mitrano and Marie Lalli.

## Recent Acquisitions

Punchbowl and cups from Carol Misiewicz; J. O. Dean deeds, map and an early wood snow shovel marked "J. O. Dean, from Mr. and Mrs. Ross Henderson; Posters from Anna Lee Frohlich (Ames Monument Historic Site and the 150th Anniversary of the Union Pacific Railroad and a copy of the Ames Family Tree); material about the Mary A. Frothingham Cadets, an article about the Field Trial Championships at the Ames Plantation in Tennessee, and a Readon deed (1993) that involves land that Oakes and Oliver Ames owned in 1868 from Margaret Lupica; old Easton postcards, picture of the 1959 Ames Shovel Shop fire, and 90th Harmony Grange anniversary invitation from Norma-Jean Hanscom; Book-In Memory of Oliver Ames from Joan Roan; Simpson Spring bottle that was found under the beach in Truro, from Peter Anthony; a variety of Easton milk bottles, a Simpson Spring visitors pin, and a Civil War military commission signed by Abraham Lincoln and Edwin Stanton, from Peter Brophy; Simpson Spring bottle and cast iron marker from the Vasa order of America, from Ken Michel; an antique leather luggage carrier used by members of the Gurney family, from Patricia Baker; photos of the Kent family, from Alice McCarthy; photos taken at the Ames Free Library donated by Kristen Carpenter; a Harlow and Donahoe pharmacy bottle and a French perfume bottle, from Chet and Maureen Raymo; Civil War era pottery, pipe stems, and other items, from Janice and William Lyttle; postcard of Queset Garden sent by a caretaker, Clifton Brown, mentioning cinnamon trees and goldfish in the pond, from Evelyn Brown; labeled slides of Easton from Ed and Lyn White.

Financial donations- Avery and Kevin Williams for "Chowder and Chatter", Ruth Albert, Robert and Jean Alger (twice), Priscilla Almquist-Olsen, Charlton and Eleanor Ames, David and Sally Ames, John and Sarah Ames, Mary Ames, Ethel Anderson, Phyllis Anderson (twice), Robert Babineau, Patricia Baker (twice —once in honor of Hazel Varella), Richard and Linda Beal, Barbara Beech, Jonathan Belk, Judith Bissett, Myrtle Blaisdell, Muriel Britton (in honor of her sister Jean Visnauskis), Evelyn Brown, Abel Camara, Ernest Camara (twice), William and Beverly Carlson (twice), Nancy Cohenno, George Comeaux, Michael and Patricia-Ann Conley, Edgar A. Craig, Celeste Dahlborg, Ellen Dehm and Catherine Adler, Dominic DeBattista, Anne Durgin, Stephen and Joann Freitas, Rose Friedeborn (twice), Stephen and Nancy Gay, Dorothy Goveia, John and Genevieve Habelt, Norma-Jean Hanscom (twice), Jessica Heft, Miriam Jackson, Stanley Kavka, David and Deborah Kaufman (twice—once in honor of David's birthday), Betty Foote Kellogg, Professor James and Louise Kenneally, Carolyn Kenyon, Cynthia Van Vloten Khoury, Nancy King, Barry Knowlton, Margo and Richard Lawless, Shirley Boudreau Leavitt, Wayne and Marilyn Legge (twice), Judge Leon and Sarah Lombardi, Helena Luxton, Deborah MacPhee, James MacPhee, Kathleen Marathas, Leo and Janice McEvoy, John Moran, Joan Morrison, Howard Morse, Jr., Larry Mowatt and Dianne Cella, North Easton Savings Bank, Benjamin and Deborah Neumann and Family, Earl A. Nichols, Sharon O'Leary, Duncan and Carol Oliver, Bernadette and Dan Pare, Patricia Parrie, Howard and Elizabeth Porter, Nicolina Previti (twice), Chet and Maureen Raymo, Elizabeth Rose, Thomas and Judith Sabin (three times), Dr. Paul Schreiber, Louis Silva, Dr. Joel and Susan Solomon, Ronald Somerville, Joanne Soule, Gloria and Paul Steidinger, Robert Sultan (twice), Robert and Althea Thornton, David and Hazel Varella, John and Amanda Varella, Jean Visnauskis, Edwin and Lyn White, Avery L. and Elizabeth Williams, David Williams, Kevin and Hala Williams, Linda Crowley Williams, Frank and Valerie Wood, United Technologies with thanks to Henry Ames, Give with Liberty with thanks to James MacPhee.

Following our annual meeting, several people asked for a copy of the King Philip's War video that was shown. If you missed the presentation, or want a copy for your own use, copy and paste the link below into your browser. It will bring you to a website for TMW Media Group, who specialize in educational and instructional media programming. You will find several options for purchasing a copy. If you don't have web access, you can call them at 800-262-8862 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time. Ask for the video by title—"King Philip's War—The History and Legacy of America's Forgotten Conflict."

<http://tmwmedia.com/newtmw/productlisting/details/king-philips-war-the-historylegacy-of-americas-forgotten-conflict>

## Back to Bay Road

Althea Russell Thornton

*A few issues back Althea Thornton regaled us with her memories of growing up on Bay Road. She has since sent more material along for our reading pleasure, bringing back memories of the rural life once lived in Easton. Thank you Althea!*

We had a working farm during World War II. Where the Soeldners now live (325 Bay Road) we grew multiple types of vegetables, green and yellow beans, and beets. In the back were carrots and more beets. On the north side of the farmhouse was corn up to the stone wall. On the south side of the tool house, carrots and squash were planted. In the back of the barn were apple trees and green tomatoes. One year we had a huge tomato fight after the frost hit. Everyone joined in. One time in the middle of the night, a cow from Johnson's barn got loose, scared me silly! I screamed and woke up the family. We incubated chicks in the cellar and had a hen house on the south side of the barn.

The vegetables were picked at dusk and delivered to market in Boston at the crack of dawn. We had a vegetable stand on Route 138 in Canton and sold out of an open truck with a scale in Sharon. The ladies were so fussy changing carrots from one bunch to their bunch and changing the dime price.

A big flat stone, 3 x 4 feet, topped the stone wall in front of what is now 327 Bay Road. On June 6, 1944, I said prayers for a fast, and safe end of the war and safe return of our troops on that rock.

The house at 335 Bay Road was built during the middle 1940's. My brother Robert did a lot of labor on it, making the stone chimney and fire place. Hard labor!

When we were in Florida in 2010 we visited our daughters on the west coast and then went to see Stuart on the east coast. We stayed at my sister Tina's house and every morning Bob Russell brought in freshly brewed coffee. Everybody else was a tea drinker. He loved Tina's rag doll cat, Paddywacker, 17 pounds and not an ounce of fat. That cat had his own room and if you let him out in the morning when he pawed at the door, he was your favorite for the day.

We were remembering old times in the late 1940's and early 1950's. Bob told us about the mysterious hermit on Bay Road, Ollie Conant. The following is in his own words: "As well as I can remember, I was in the ninth grade when I started cutting wood for Ollie. An axe was the only tool that he gave me to cut sapling trees on the average that were six feet tall. The place was nothing but a shack and the only time we ever went into it was when he paid me. He always paid me with coins which he kept in a can under the floor. The floor was rotting away and there was plastic covering the window. He told me that he let me see where he kept the money because he knew I would not steal it from him. That made a big impression on me and I never forgot what he said. The barn was well built and he kept the horse there. After we loaded the wood into the wagon I would unhitch the horse and ride him back to the barn. I would have to grab the door frame and let the horse go into the barn so that I would not hit my head on the door frame because the horse would not stop. One time he was taking a load of wood to town and I rode on the wagon out to Bay Road and Summer Street. I asked Ollie if I could go with him and he said no because people would not like it. I never gave it a thought until I started writing this to you. How sad!!! He was always kind to me along with Howard Pool and Uncle Bill. I am sure that he (Ollie) must have lived in the barn. The only time I saw him cook anything was when he lit a fire on the ground, boiled water in a can and made coffee. When I returned home from Basic Training, I went to see him but he was no longer there. Someone told me that he had been taken to a nursing home and someone else told me that he died. That was in December of 1953."

*Ollie Conant was one of several people who lived a hermitic lifestyle west of Bay Road. His groceries were brought by car and a signal from a horn would tell him that he could get them. He would not come out until the delivery driver left. There were even stories of a piano being played deep in the woods. In the late 1970's his home site could still be found and remnants of his dump were still there.—Ed.*



“Day of Kind-Ness” Honors Memory of Oliver Ames Student

Devin Ness, a senior captain on the Oliver Ames wrestling team, passed away suddenly in January from a brain aneurysm. Devin was known for being a great person and was always ready to help others. The Class of 2013 sponsored a day of community service in his memory. Students worked in the schools and many other places around Easton. Ten members of the senior class came to the Society on April 25th and cleaned windows and display cases, polished furniture, spread mulch and raked leaves. The Society was honored to be a part of this special tribute.

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