



## EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

### Summer Events For Your Enjoyment!

Easton is a wonderful place to explore in the summer. There are many beautiful landscapes, ponds, summer gardens to enjoy. Here are a few events that we will be a part of this summer!

Join us at our summer Open Houses at the Museum! You know that Henry Hobson Richardson designed five outstanding buildings in North Easton. Do you know other buildings he designed around the United States? In June you can discover some of Richardson's other work while visiting us. July will feature a selection of recent donations to our collection. There are a number of items listed in each newsletter, and from time to time we will focus on interesting new additions. Check them out. Our August Open House is being planned and could feature a guided tour somewhere in Easton.

The Fourth Annual Legacy Event will be held at the Governor Ames Estate on June 25th from Noon to 5 p.m. A number of events will be held during the day for all ages. Spend some time checking out good food, cool music, cold brews, children's events, and exploring the grounds and landscapes of this historic property! This year the Society will host the Junior Juried Art Exhibition at our Museum. Stop by and check out some award-winning artwork by our talented young Eastoners!

The Easton Garden Club is holding a Summer Garden Tour on July 14th and 15th. The event, titled "Back to Our Roots," will feature five exquisite Easton gardens. The event runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. We will be the host for the Garden Club, providing a place to purchase tickets, pick up pre-ordered tickets, and a box lunch will be available. Tickets are \$22 each in advance, \$30 on tour days. For more information, check out its website at [www.eastongardenclub.org](http://www.eastongardenclub.org), or email to [eastongardenclubinfo@gmail.com](mailto:eastongardenclubinfo@gmail.com), or order advance tickets by calling Debby Johnson at 774-257-7653 or contact her via email at [egetreasury@yahoo.com](mailto:egetreasury@yahoo.com).

### CALENDAR

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

*Sunday, June 11th, Open House 1-5 p.m. featuring a look at the other works of Henry Hobson Richardson.*

*Wednesday, June 14th, Flag Day—fly the Stars and Stripes with pride!*

*Wednesday, June 21st, Summer officially arrives!*

*Sunday, June 25th, Legacy Festival at the Governor Ames Estate, Noon to 5 p.m. Visit the Museum to see the Children's Art Exhibit!*

*Tuesday, July 4th, a very Happy 241st Birthday to America! Celebrate!*

*Sunday, July 9th, Open House 1-5 p.m. Check out some of our recent donations.*

*Sunday, August 13th, Open House 1-5 p.m. This would be a good day for a walk. Spend a leisurely afternoon with us!*

*Summer is a great time to take a walk and discover Easton. Do you have family or friends coming to visit this year? Planning a special event? Checking out local colleges? Stop in and check us out! Better yet, call ahead or email us so we can be expecting you. We love visitors, so why not put us on your list of summer things to do?*

*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

### Memories of a Favorite Post Office

The passing of Norma-Jean Hanscom brought back a lot of memories of growing up in Furnace Village. Some of my favorite ones centered around the Furnace Village Post Office, located during my younger days in a small white building that stood on Poquanticut Avenue between Foundry and South Street. I don't remember when I was first old enough to walk to the post office and get the mail each day. Once I began, it became my daily chore, and one I thoroughly enjoyed. Leaving my house near the corner of Foundry and South Streets, I would walk past a number of neighbors' houses. First was the home of Helen Blaisdell, who was quite elderly when I was a kid. Going up South Street I then passed the homes of the Harlow, Westwater, Ralph, Buckley, Roscoe, Ford, Rathbun, Annand, and Hanscom families. Directly across from where South Street met Poquanticut Avenue, I would pass the Beals' home. Sometimes I would meet Mrs. Blaisdell while she was returning from getting her mail. Other times I would meet my neighborhood friends to see who was around to play ball, street hockey, or some other sport.

Arriving at the post office was sometimes fraught with fear! "Wink" Hanscom, who was the retired postmaster, took good care of his building and a small white post and rail fence that lined the path from the street to the front door. We all learned very early never to lean our bikes against that fence. One thought that "Wink" stood watch all day, waiting for us to make such a mistake. I learned quickly so as not to catch his wrath! Of course, he was really a kind and gentle person who took pride in keeping the post office looking nice.

Each day when I got the mail, I was always welcomed by either Norma-Jean, or by Mrs. Josephine Farrell who would occasionally fill in for her. I learned how to open the mailbox with its combination lock, answered questions about how my family was doing, and asked about their family. As I got older I would learn more about what was going on in the lives of the people around me. The atmosphere there was always a good one, and it was clear that Norma-Jean took an active interest in us. When I was old enough to have some pocket money, she got me interested in buying stamp sets which I did for several years. And of course, whenever we went somewhere and sent a postcard, we would sometimes write "Hello Norma-Jean" on the back of the card. After all, she was part of our neighborhood family.

Time changes things. The old post office finally was retired, and the location was moved to Whistlestop Plaza nearer to the Five Corners. We still saw our neighbors once in a while at the new post office, but we no longer would walk through our friendly neighborhood to get our mail. Easton's Zip Code of 02334 still exists, but somehow it has never been the same. Thanks, Norma-Jean, for making me feel like a part of your family.

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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Curator—Frank T. Meninno





### Easton High School Class of 1896

Before the name Oliver Ames was given to the “new” high school in November, 1896, there was a class that graduated from that building a few months earlier. The school was still known as the Easton High School at that time. Here is a look back at the last class to graduate as alumni of the Easton High School: Gertrude Clifford Belcher, John Wilmart Belcher, Francis James Bradley, Grace M. Cassiday, Frederick Thomas Conley, Ethel Helene Copeland, John Patrick Cunningham, Harry Bertram Davis, Caroline Torrey Drake, Henry Preston Fitton, Leroy Grinnell, Hattie Belle Heath, Annie Louise Howard, Susie Thompson Howard, Leigh Shelton Keith, Lewis Arthur Miller, Lottie Mitchell, Edith Winifred Pratt, Charles Martin Ripley, Lorenzo Deroyce Smith, Esther Elizabeth Soule, Mabel Lavinia Soule, Harriette Vesta Stone, William Arthur Taylor. If you can match a name to a face in the photo, please let us know!

In the Easton School Committee Report for 1896 Maitland C. Lamprey, principal, lists all members of the Easton High School graduating classes from 1873 – 1896. The 1873 class was the first to graduate a four year program from a regular high school curriculum. Graduates from that class were Florence E. Berry, Helen Carr, Abbie J. Phillips, Lizzie L. Reed, Jessie F. Russell, and Edith E. Williams. The total number of graduates from the Easton High School between 1873-1896 was 274 students.



The Town of Easton built the Union School in 1869. Located on the corner of Highland and South Streets, it combined two smaller districts. Grades 1-3 were taught on the first floor, grades 4-6 on the second. In the picture on the left, Lincoln Drake and his class pose for a class photo. The class on the right was taught by Mertie Williams. The photos were taken in the late 1880’s. Notice that all the students are wearing their “Sunday best!”

## 2017 Chowder and Chatter Evening a Success

If you missed this year's Chowder and Chatter evening, then you missed out on an interesting night of great food and conversation. After enjoying a delicious chowder and clam fritter dinner with dessert prepared and served by the Culinary Arts Program students at Southeastern Regional, the successful Ames Shovel Works development was discussed. Many thanks to the panel participants: David Ames and Frederick Ames (Friends of the Ames Shovel Works), Colleen Corona (Town of Easton), Avery Lee Williams (Community Preservation Committee), Greg Galer (Easton Historical Commission), and Josh Cohen (Beacon Communities), who all spoke of the important roles played by their respective organizations. Ed Hands did a masterful job of moderating the discussion. Very special thanks to Avery Lee and Kevin Williams for sponsoring this annual event, which raised \$470 for the Society!

### In Memorium

John Richard Maguire, Jr. died March 4, 2017. Born June 1, 1943, and a native of Easton, he lived in the Middleborough and New Bedford areas during his working years and had retired in Carver. He was predeceased by his parents, John Richard Maguire, Sr. and Helena M. O'Neill Maguire. He is survived by his four children, William F. Maguire of Marblehead, Susan Maguire Avery of Foxborough, Kelly Maguire Jenkins of Carver, and Kelly Santos of New Bedford and their spouses, and his eight grandchildren. He is also survived by a sister, Patricia Maguire Parrie of Waldheim, La., and two brothers; Michael F. Maguire of Lakeville and Frank Maguire, Esq. of Germantown, Md.

Norma Jean Hanscom of Pocasset passed away February 22, 2017. Born in Easton, she was the daughter of the late Norman Molin and Bessie (Hennigar) Tufts. She was a longtime member of the Society and contributed two articles to Reminiscences. Norma Jean was post master for many years at the Easton Post Office on Poquanticut Avenue, serving after the retirement of her father-in-law. She became an honorary member of the Board of Trustees of No. Easton Savings Bank after retiring from the board. Norma Jean was also an active member of the Eastern Star and the former Outlook Club. She was the wife of the late John W. Hanscom. She is survived by daughter, Nancy Aubin and her husband Henry of Mansfield; sons, Howard Hanscom and his wife Lynn of Pocasset, Jon Hanscom and his wife Joy of Florida. She was the mother of the late Scott Hanscom. She also leaves 7 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

Mary Louise Heath of North Easton passed away on Tuesday April 18, 2017 at the age of 80. She was the daughter of the late Ralph and Virginia (Gray) Heath. Mary was a lifelong resident of North Easton, a graduate of Lesley College in Boston and taught in the Easton School System for 32 years. She was an active member of Unity Church in Easton. She loved traveling around the world with her fellow friends, and loved to go shopping with her mother. She is survived by her sister Priscilla Manchester of Hull and her cousins Charles Heath of Easton, Sheila Platt and her husband Ray of Raynham, and Patsy Heath.

Robert J. "Bob" Kane, 74, founder and co-owner of Kane Funeral Home & Cremation Services and a resident of Easton for the past 52 years, died April 22, 2017. Bob moved to Easton in 1965 and began working in the Easton Public School System as a substitute teacher. He established Kane Funeral Home & Cremation Services in 1968. Bob was a Notary Public and Justice of the Peace. He served the Community of Easton in various capacities of Town Government for over 40 years and was a past member of the Easton Housing Authority, former Selectman and a member of the Easton Board of Health from 1981-2011, serving many years as chairman. Bob was a founding member and communicant of the Holy Cross Church in Easton. He was a longtime incorporator of the North Easton Savings Bank, a member of the Easton Historical Society, Natural Resource Trust of Easton, The Ames Free Library in Easton, The Easton Democratic Town Committee, Registrar of Voters in Easton, a life member of both the Knights of Columbus Council 238 of Easton and The Easton Lions Club. Bob is survived by two brothers, Albert Kane of Merrimack, NH and Thomas Kane of Easton; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. He was also the brother of the late Richard Kane, Peter Kane and Madeline Sullivan. He will be always missed by Stephen & MaryBeth Raymond and their children Kayla, Jackie, Courtney and Sean. The Easton Historical Society and Museum expresses its sympathy to the Heath, Hanscom, Maguire, and Kane families and to the family of Stephen Raymond.

## Donations and Thank You's

Abraham Lincoln collage, from Dr. and Mrs. B. Hoagland Rosania; 11 wooden plaques in the Easton Historical Landmark Series, from Roberta Southwick Bellows; many 1950's and 1960's Easton photographs taken by and donated by Val LeSieur; Frank Holub's "Still Life" framed painting, from Edmund Hands; Whistle marker to let a train know when to begin sounding its whistle, from Rick Martin; Gilmore Compound Calculator, from Burt Lewis; Lens Magazine, Winter 2016 featuring Queset House and the Ames Free Library, Book - The Country Club 1882-1932 a 50th anniversary history of the Brookline Country Club with Louis Frothingham featured, from Ron Somerville; 1997 OAHS Alumni Directory, Book - Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay 1625-1725 including the Josiah Keith House, Eastoner Christmas 1947, Jaycees Public Servant Award 1980 given to Alice McCarthy, two newspaper photos from the Enterprise of award recipients, photograph of Johnnie Mara's canoe at a camp at Ames Long Pond, 1942, from Alice McCarthy; high school desk c. 1950, from Ronald and Karen Danielson; photo of Miss Harvey's North Easton Grammar class, 1938 (6th grade) with students dressed as Uncle Sam, Lady Liberty, etc., from Myrtle Blaisdell; book - Popular History of New England Volume 1, 1879, from Richard Hill; a number of receipts from Easton stores / businesses, a framed hand-made Masonic Apron, from Carl Anderson; two pieces of architectural salvage from the Ames Shovel Company (pieces of iron bars that hold the buildings together), from Jeff Webster; miniature dresses based on designs worn by historical Easton persons, handmade by and donated by Allison Such; an OAHS sports shirt, from Leo and Helen Harlow; Class of 1957 materials including letters for orchestra, field hockey, a manager's letter, 1957 graduation programs, 1957 memo to grads, 1957 Class Day program, 2 Oliver Ames badges, 1956 Basketball Tournament program, newsclipping of the 1956 Class C game, newsclipping about Monte's Pond, from Kathleen Anderson Fox.

Financial donations have been received from Robert and Jean Alger (2), Mary ("Heidi") Ames, John and Linda Amorim, Phyllis Anderson, Robert Babineau, James Baker, Robert Benton and Jane Pike-Benton, Leona and Bert Berglund, Myrtle Blaisdell, June Bliss, Tom and Louise Bono, James Carlino and J. Peter Simpson, William and Beverly Carlson, Dorothy Clark, Caroline Cole, Sandra Conant, Michael and Patricia Conley, Celeste Dahlborg, Anne Durgin, Ronald and Karen Danielson, David DeVore, Joanne England, Richard Emerson, Kathleen Fox, Stephen and Joann Freitas, Rose Friedeborn (2) Ramona Gallagher, Stephen and Nancy Gay, Richard Grant, Leslie Gray, Genevieve Habelt, Nancy Hall (2), Nancy Hauck, Robert and Betty Holmberg, Miriam Jackson, Carolyn Kenyan (2), Barry Knowlton, Val LeSieur, Judge Leon and Sara Lombardi, James MacPhee, Kathleen Marathas, Alice McCarthy, John Moran, Jack and Beth Mowatt, Michelle Natusewicz, Duncan and Carol Oliver, Patricia Maguire Parrie, Chet and Maureen Raymo, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ryan, John Schuller, Senior Group of the Covenant Congregational Church in appreciation of Hazel Varella's presentation, Ronald Somerville, Dr. Nancy Sullivan, George and Maura Tyrrell, Jeffrey Webster, Phyllis E. Witty, Lee and Betty Williams, Butch and Valerie Wood. A donation was received from Second Half Learning in appreciation of a tour of North Easton. A memorial donation in memory of Suzanne Rivard was given from James Carlino and J. Peter Simpson, and memorial donations in memory of Ken Martin were given by Myrtle Blaisdell, Jack and Beth Mowatt, Tom and Judy Sabin, and Joanne Soule.

At our Annual Meeting we re-elected our current officers. Thank you to William Rose for an excellent program about his career in the FBI, and special thanks to Frederick L. Ames for providing the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall for our meeting. Thank you to those who helped out during a very damp bottle drive: Hazel Varella, Dick Grant, Ed Hands, Tom Bono, Nancy Gardner Hill, and Frank T. Meninno.

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





# WWII Letters Published

A few years ago members of the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church came across copies of letters sent by the church to their members serving overseas during World War II. The church has decided to publish these letters. They are a time capsule of 1940's Easton. Among the many names and places mentioned are O'Connor's News Store, Ames Shovel Works, Long Pond, William N. Howard's Insurance window display, the Bandstand, the Honor Roll sign erected at the Rockery, many community organizations, and a host of Easton family names.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church is now taking pre-orders for books to help finance the publication of this important collection from World War II. You may use the form below to place your order, or pick up a form at the Museum.

In 1943, during WW II, an Honor Roll Committee was formed at Lebanon Lutheran Church for the purpose of occasionally writing to the boys and girls. Thirty-four letters were written, one every month. These beautifully written letters must have felt like heaven to the troops. Many wrote back; it was the best news they received from home. These letters tell a remarkable story of what was happening in a small town while they were away.

Support this unique venture by pre-ordering one or more copies. Your name or the name of a loved one will appear on a special page in the book titled **Friends of the Publication**.

In order to receive the completed book in time for Veterans' Day your order with payment must be received **no later than June 15<sup>th</sup>**. This book, containing the letters from home along with many photos and newspaper clippings, will be about 110 pages in length.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL : \_\_\_\_\_

Number of books @ \$19.95 each \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check payable to: **HTLC Fundraising** Mail to **Holy Trinity Lutheran Church**

143 Lincoln Street

North Easton, MA 02356

Name you wish to appear on the special page titled:

**Friends of the Publication** \_\_\_\_\_



## The Freshet of February 12-13, 1886

It has been a wet spring in Easton this year, but at least not as wet as it was in 1886! These photos capture the damage caused by flooding during a very wet spring thaw. On the left is South Street, Furnace Village, looking towards Highland Street. On the right, a man with a boy rows a boat at the Shoddy Mill site, Turnpike Street, Easton, Massachusetts. Photos are by Simpson, The Land-Scape Photographer, South Easton.

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