EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

Summer 2021 **Volume 21, Issue 4**

Summer Update

As summer began, Massachusetts and most other states began relaxing the Covid-19 restrictions that have been in place since March 2020. While most retail stores and restaurants have fully reopened, other places have taken a conservative approach to getting back to normal.

Museums were among the last group of public spaces to be allowed to open. Some museums are open fully, or have opened with caution. Many of the local historical societies and museums have not reopened fully. Some have chosen to stay closed for now, others are available by appointment, and still others are operating on restricted hours.

We have slowly been reopening our doors to researchers and visitors. While visitation is very low at this time, a few people have been in to work on research or other projects. Programming such as our monthly open houses has not been announced just yet.

The Directors have taken a cautious approach, but they have also been looking at ways to freshen up our Museum before we reopen fully. Over the summer, we expect to make many changes to our exhibits, add signage, create more content both in the Museum and online, and add more programming. We may not be open just yet, but we expect to hit the ground running now and reopen with a fresh, new start in the fall. We ask our members to please be patient a little longer as we change things around and make our Museum a special place to visit. We look forward to communicating exciting things with you soon!

CALENDAR

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

Hopefully this space will be full of special events, announcements, open houses, and other great things in the next newsletter.

Watch emails and our website and Facebook page for reopening announcements!

We look forward to seeing you soon!

New! Volume 12 of Reminiscences should be available by the end of August with a special tribute to the late Edwin C. White. Also learn the relationship between Easton and the Toll House Cookie.

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

"One benefit of Summer was that each day we had more light to read by." — Jeannette Walls

I have always been a reader. From the time I was young, my parents kept a good selection of books in our home, and encouraged us to read. My parents also enjoyed reading, and seeing them with a book in their hand set a nice example for my brothers and me to follow. Our home had a good selection of Golden Books, many of those classics that are still read by young people today. The Little Engine That Could, Goldie Locks and the Three Bears, Mr. Pine's Purple House all strike a chord with me, as well as a myriad of alphabet and counting books. Later I graduated to books like My Side of the Mountain, The Hardy Boys Mysteries, Kids Say the Darndest Things, Reader's Digest books, and O. Henry stories. Paul Harvey's The Rest of the Story was a favorite. Another favorite writer was Edward Rowe Snow and his tales of New England lore, shipwrecks and buried treasure. I felt like the best library was right in our home.

The Museum has a library too. A look at some of our recent donations might raise your interest in what we typically have on hand. Yes, we have resource books like town reports, poll tax books, street listings, and other books to help us research a place or a person. Don't forget our high school yearbook collection too! We keep a good collection of town histories, genealogies, and regional and Massachusetts history books as well. Our collection includes books on architecture and landscape architecture (including Richardson and Olmsted), cook books, military history, railroad history, and other historical general interest books. We also have books on Shaker design and Swedish heritage, and even music. Some books in our collections are from Easton authors. There are some Golden Books and other children's books in our collection as well. Of course, our series of Reminiscences and other Easton Historical Society publications are also resident there. My favorites are the books about legends and lore in our immediate area. I enjoy discovering more of these stories as I read through these books, and I can then pass that storytelling along to others.

I will spend a lot of time this summer reading, exploring the world around me through print. There is a constant pile of reading material next to my chair, be they magazines, books, or other print articles that come my way. I am one of those people who still likes to have a book in my hand, and I cannot get used to those electronic readers. When we reopen later this year, I encourage you to come in and check out our library. Perhaps you too might find some good reading there, and some books are available for loaning. Spend some of our summer cooling off with a cold drink and a good book. And if your reading time devolves into nap time, well, that's not all bad either!

Let's all turn a few pages as we navigate the rest of the summer.

The Easton Historical Society Newsletter
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Officers for 2020-2021
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Donations

Priscilla Almquist-Olsen donated a book of children's poems by Robert Louis Stevenson, a book titled Treasures of New England Folklore by B. A. Botkin that features our horse thief, George White; **Mary "Heidi" Ames** donated the surviving pieces of two of Mrs. Frothingham's china breakfast sets with her monogram; **James Baker** donated a Distinguished Service Award, 1995, from the Easton Lions Club and the Jaycees; **Art Barrett** donated an Easton Town Flag from the Bi-centennial, #91/100, and a copy of the 1931 Ames Housing Auction Brochure; **Paul Berry** donated a 1911 Easton Poll Tax Book, and a 1942 Brockton Suburban Directory with information on Easton; **Peter Constantine** donated copies of The Ettienne Music Magazine and other music related publications originally owned by Lawrence Gurney; **Anthony Fontes** donated copies of the Brockton Enterprise from 1931 with Easton news, and a copy of the Boston Post May 2, 1931 with an article on the Ames-Cutler wedding in New York; **Beatrice B. Garvan** donated two contracts for building Easton schools, dated 1845 and 1859; **Darrien Gourdine** donated a copy of the 1975 reprint of the History of Easton; **Elizabeth Hathaway** donated a photo book of the 1938 Hurricane published by the Brockton Enterprise in memory of her father **Wayne Legge**; **Grace Healey** donated a 50th Anniversary Golden Jubilee 1897-1947 program book for the North Easton Council No. 238 Knights of Columbus Celebration, held June 1, 1947 at St. Mary's Hall featuring John F. Kennedy's signature, and a 1962 Democratic Ticket with Edmund Kennedy's signature; **Carol Leonard** donated extensive materials from Frank Seymour Hersey who was the prior owner of her home. The archive includes his Brownie camera, glass negatives, multiple articles on photography, many late 19th and early 20th century magazines on ornithology, and two certificates of membership in ornithology societies. Hersey worked under the tutelage of Arthur C. Bent, and he contributed heavily to the landmark volumes that made up the Smithsonian Institution's Life Histories of North American Birds; **Janet Linehan** donated her father's (Clifton D. Wohlen) stamp and First Day Cover collection, postcards and a WWII Victory Dinner menu from Camp Roberts, California, and a photo of the former Sportwelt shoe factory on Mechanic Street; **Carol Misiewicz** donated a beautiful full color Easton throw; **Dr. Stanson A. Moody** donated all the research done by him and his father regarding the Morse cars, including a tape recording of the interview with Neubert Morse and Dr. Jay Rice Moody, an original owner's manual, newspaper clippings related to the Morse car and the Boston Auto Show, various pamphlets, photos, and research on former Morse car owners and the cars they owned; **Richard Smith**, of **Richard Smith Architecture** donated an album of photos of the Easton Town Hall prior to renovations his firm did in the 1990's; **Merrick Sokol** donated a Nikon CoolPix Digital Camera; **Ron Somerville** donated news clippings from the Enterprise, including two of a recent Disney themed birthday party, and one about tree work being done at the Governor Ames Estate; **Jill Webster Whiffen** donated items from her aunt **Dorothy Webster Levesque's** estate including a 1997 OAHS Alumni Directory, OA Class of 1953 50th Reunion Book, news clippings of Easton articles, photos of O'Connor's News Store, the OAHS 1950 Girls Field Hockey Team, and a 1949 photo of a Gibson Girls Dance.

Financial contributions have been received from **Priscilla Almquist-Olsen, Charlton and Eleanor Ames, David Ames, John and Sarah Ames, Mary "Heidi" Ames, Tom Ames, Steve and Donna Anderson, Harold Bailey, Patricia Baker, Richard and Linda Beal, Barbara Beech, Robert Benton and Jane Pike-Benton, Roger and Michele Blake, Fairis and June Bliss, Cynthia Brown, Geraldine Brown, Mary Camara, William Carlson, Brad and Nancy Cohenno, Carolyn Cole, John and Linda Conant, Michael and Patricia Conley, Priscilla Crane, Charles and Ann Crivellaro, Karen Danielson, Brian Donofrio, Anne Wooster Drury, Ann Durgin, Ken and Joanne England, Carol L. Ferreira, Kathleen Anderson Fox, Gloria Freitas-Steidinger, Stephen and Joann Freitas, Stephen and Nancy Gay, Harold and Susan Gershman, Jack and Kelsey Gill, Dick Grant, Owen and Hazel Hayes, Grace Healey, Theresa Hodges, Mark Ingalls and Sheri Anderson, Mark and Patrice Johnson, James Kenneally, Dale Kerester, Amy Kirkcaldy, Robert D. and Sally G. King Trust, Harriet Lapin, Edward Leonard, Janet Linehan, Judge Leon and Sara Lombardi, Joe Lopatosky, Oliver A. Manice, Maura McCarthy, Russ Meninno, Estate of Warren F. Moffitt in memory of the Warren F. Moffitt Family, Daniel and Amy Morse, Dianne Cella and Larry Mowatt, Jack and Beth Mowatt, Leslie and Bill Mullen, Donna Silva Norris, Kenneth and Gloria Nykiel, Kathleen O'Connor, Sharon O'Leary, Duncan and Carol Oliver, The Pare Family, Patricia Parrie, Oakes Ames Plimpton, John and Rita Pope, Elaine Rudd Reasoner, Tom and Judy Sabin, John and Lin Schuller, Robert Silva, Jeffrey Simonson, Susan and Joel Solomon, Ronald Somerville, Jane Sproul, Gail Starkey, John and Carol Strom, Gary Sullivan, Alan Swanson, Valia Lee Thoms, Janice Toomey, John and Amanda Varella, Paula Concannon Vieira, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Vogel, Edward P. White, Janet Peterson White, Kevin Williams, Lee Williams, Elizabeth Cuzner Wood, Maureen Yachimski.**

Donations in memory of **David Varella** were given by **Mary Boudreau**, **Rosa and Peter Galeno**, **Robert and Nancy Hall**, and **William and Louise Morse**.

Dr. and Mrs. Leslie and Marcia Hirsch made a donation in memory of **Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Brooks**.

Hazel Varella made a donation in memory of **Nancy Holmander**.

Kenneth Michel made a donation in memory of **Marion Silva**, **David Varella**, and **James Shyne**.

Thank you for your continued generous support of the Easton Historical Society and Museum during these extraordinary times!

A special note of thanks is expressed to Nicole Casper, Director of Archives and Historical Collections at Stonehill College. Last year, prior to the pandemic, she and her assistant Jonathan Green began a project scanning more than thirty copies of Easton Journals and Easton Bulletins from the 1880's. Nicole recently completed that project, and the scans are available on Stonehill's website. You can use this link to check out Easton news, advertising, and other information:
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8ixxta8hwl5jfop/AADwy7FcP_2qm7ucJhFugYb8a?dl=0

Memories of Easton

Pauline Flinkstrom Robello

I'll never tire of learning - and reminiscing - about my beloved hometown's past - especially when it relates to the Ames family, which has been of particular interest to me ever since I was in grade school. My parents, both avid readers who visited the library weekly, introduced me to the endless joys of the Ames Free Library when I was still a toddler; I loved the adventure of finding just the right book to take home from the children's section for mom to read to us.

When I entered into grade school and was able to read on my own, I coveted books about Easton, the Ames family, etc., that weren't readily found in the children's section, so every week mom and I would stroll through what appeared to be endless stacks of awesome books calling out to us from the adult wing at the library (because I was too young at that time to have permission to go into those stacks alone mom went with me). Mom would help search for books about Easton, its history, the Ames, etc., that she would take out for me to read! And, as a teenager I would sit alone for hours in the reading room engrossed in W.L. Chaffin's History of Easton, Mass. Later I obtained, and will forever cherish, my own copy of the book, as well as History of Easton, Massachusetts, Volume II by M. McEntee, et al.

While my siblings were outside playing, I'd be sitting under a tree contently reading the books about the Ames family and how it changed the dynamic of North Easton from a basically farming community, along with small, local foundries and industries, to a major producer of quality shovels used worldwide, which in turn provided employment opportunities for locals and immigrants.

The Ames family cared about the well-being of the village, of those residents who helped their industry flourish and grow. They provided housing when needed, there was the Catholic chapel to meet spiritual needs, schools were built, a Richardson-designed library and town hall erected and dedicated for the townsfolk, a gymnasium on Barrows Street, the Frothingham Memorial Park... so many generous contributions to the town over the years. And we can't forget the mansions they erected, each with its own unique charm, elegance, architecture and landscaping; true they were built first and foremost as their homes, however these edifices are pleasing to the eye, have stood the test of time and serve to enhance the village's attraction and ambiance.

Over the course of my life, I've loved looking at vintage photos, and being enthralled while listening to stories from my parents, grandparents, older family friends and others who lived in the "village" "in the Old Days" when "everybody knew everybody." Some of these people, who are long gone now, either worked, or had family that worked, on the Ames estates, in the shovel shops or did business with them, etc., and were able to make the Ames family "come alive" for me.

My dad, who was so proud of Easton, helped ignite my passion for knowledge about the town and the Ames family about 66 years ago, when I was a small child. On summer nights and weekends he'd take my sister and me for car rides to get ice cream and enjoy leisurely drive-by tours of the beautiful family estates, Langwater's Gate Lodge, the Library, the shovel shops, the Clock Farm, Unity Church with its famous stained glass windows, and the "Ames cemetery," as he called it, to name a few.

I'm so happy to have been to the airfield at Stonehill before it, like so many historic places, was no more and can only be read about; we'd hike to the eerie, abandoned Ames stables behind Queset House and the library, which we accessed by trailing into the woods off the road going down to the town pool. My sister and I had so much fun galloping around while imagining what it was like to have real horses in those stables!

When my sister and I were a bit older, in the late 1950's, we'd walk downtown with friends to innocently explore on the grounds of various Ames estates - especially Langwater, our favorite at the time, marveling at the massive greenhouse, all the grandeur, the beauty, wondering who lived there, what it was like to have such an awesome home, what the family was like, were there kids our ages?

Sometimes we'd cross over the Langwater estate side of a bridge connecting to the side where the Governor's mansion once was, eventually walking out across the street from the train station. I don't know what it's like today, but in those days no one bothered us or told us to leave.

Everyone loved figure skating on Langwater Pond in winter; fellas, young and old, frequently got together for hockey games, too. My uncle Jim Gordon, who traveled over from Mansfield to play in the years before he married, moved to North Easton and coached hockey. Often at night someone would have lit a bonfire right on the ice which we'd all huddle around for warmth.

And, I can still remember my sister and me, in our pajamas, riding downtown in the backseat of my father's pride and joy, an ugly, dull-green-colored Hudson to watch, along with what seemed like hundreds of other people, a fierce, raging fire at one of the Ames shovel shop buildings, in the Elm Street neighborhood (around 1959-1960ish?), the sight of which I will never forget. (May have been in a building Steadfast Rubber leased from Ames Shovel or in a building housing wood used by Raymor Co.)

In the early 1960's I was asked to babysit for the children of one of Mrs. Oakes Ames's staff who resided in a house on the Borderland estate. Wow! To be that close to the Ames family! I thought I'd died and gone to Heaven! When I was in high school an elderly family member who lived on Williams Street most of her adult life presented me with cherished photos of Ram Cat and Sheep Pasture taken long before they were razed, which I cherish. I also remember on a number of occasions, while standing outside O'Connor's News Store, watching the world go by with friends, seeing an impressive, prim and proper Mrs. Parker driving slowly by us in her Bentley, her husband in the passenger seat. It was almost like seeing movie stars like Gloria Swanson or Marlene Dietrich pass by.

In the 1990's I worked for Morse Brothers, Inc., a cranberry grower whose corporate office's address at the time was 28 Main Street, in one of the renovated shovel shop buildings; the entrance faced the train station / Easton Historical Society. One day when we were chatting I told Howard Morse, the company's owner, a very wealthy man, another Ames family fan, the owner of an original Morse car, and a generous donor to the Easton Historical Society, how Paul Berry, a school friend, had taken my husband and me on the private, spectacular Borderland tour a few years back. Howard was very impressed, further speculating as to what a great treat that would make for the five of us from the office to travel by limo to the estate, have our tour and then head, again by limo, to Locke Ober's, an expensive restaurant in Boston, for an early dinner. Well, as fate would have it, not long afterward Paul came into the office to speak with Howard, and before he was taken into Howard's office I asked him if something like he did for my husband and me could be arranged for Morse Brothers. Paul agreed immediately! The date and time were worked out, reservations for the limo and restaurant were made, and when the day arrived we climbed into the car and headed off for an afternoon of great fun. Unfortunately, Paul declined to join us for the trip to Boston, having a previous commitment. Sometimes I wonder if I'll ever admit it's time to close the history books, that I've seen, experienced or learned all I want to know about Easton and the Ames Family. Or that I'd ever accept changes that would destroy the centuries-long, historic charming village that we - and our ancestors - have loved, been proud of and will always cherish. No. I never will. I'll continue to check the Society's website for any new books, etc., to add to my home library. And add my voice to those wanting to save Easton village for future generations to enjoy.

Thank you, Pauline, for sharing your memories of growing up in Easton. We certainly hope your contribution will spur others to reflect on their time growing up in town, and encourage them to write their memories down and share them with us. It is always special to hear from our members and friends, and we welcome contributions from all. Each of us has a story to share, so let's make sure we do that!

In Memoriam

Phyllis C. Anderson, age 89, passed away on March 23, 2021 after a lengthy period of failing health. Phyllis was the wife of the late Donald E. Anderson. They wed in 1954 and made their home in Easton. She was a member of the Easton Historical Society, the Easton Natural Resources Trust and volunteered at the Guardian Life Center of Brockton. She was a highly involved member of the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Easton. Phyllis leaves behind her son, Bruce E. Anderson and his wife, Lori Anderson of Raynham. She was predeceased by her daughter, Donna M. Anderson Andresen and her sister-in-law, Lorraine A. Anderson. Phyllis is survived by her son-in-law Christian Andresen, four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Her obituary is at Southeast Funeral and Cremation Services (southeastfuneralhome.com).

Nancy L. (Bowman) Holmander, age 69, passed away peacefully at her home in North Easton. She was the loving wife of Carl B. Holmander. Born in Boston, she was the daughter of the late William H. Bowman IV and Mary (Ryan) Bowman. Nancy was employed for many years at Arrow Business Forms in Medfield as a graphic arts designer and proofreader. She did the proofreading for her husband Carl's book on Unionville. She attended the Emmanuel Baptist Church in Norfolk and later became a member of the Easton Baptist Church becoming the church's first secretary, a charter member and one of the first deaconess of the church. She served as Youth Advisor for the church in its early years. Besides her Husband Carl, Nancy was the loving and proud mother of Keith B. Holmander of North Easton, who she was able to see work through Massasoit Community College, graduate from Stonehill College and work at Stonehill's Technology Support Group. Nancy's full obituary can be found at http://hosting-6751.tributes.com/obituary/show/Nancy-L.-Holmander-108517771.

Dr. Joel B. Solomon, age 83, passed away peacefully at the Good Samaritan Medical Center in Brockton on May 3, 2021. He was the loving husband of 48 years to his loving and committed wife Susan P. (Philbrick) Solomon. A member of American Board of Internal Medicine he was a professional & skilled Gastroenologist both for Brockton Hospital and the former Cardinal Cushing Hospital, and in 1969 with his partner, Dr. Burton Sack started Rheumatology and Gastronology Associates in Brockton. He was a professor in the Boston University Medical Center; Director of Medical Education, Brockton Hospital; Consulting Physician, Boston VA Hospital; and held many other medical and teaching posts of distinction. Dr. Joel had several of his studies published throughout his 50-year career as a physician. He was a resident of Easton since 1973 and was an avid reader. In addition to his wife Susan, he is survived by his two children, Julie C. Solomon of London, England and Mark A. Solomon of Massachusetts; a step-son, John Philbrick Barratt of Easton; a grandson, Joseph O. Davies of London, England; a sister, Sandy Rosenberg and her husband Ira of FL; a nephew, Brian Rosenberg of NY and a cousin, Kathy Solomon of Oklahoma. His full obituary can be found at http://hosting-6751.tributes.com/obituary/show/Joel-Solomon-108517885.

Carl Robert "Bob" Carpenter of Stoughton, age 81, passed away peacefully on April 25, 2021. He was the son of the late Carl and Ruth (Gustavson) Carpenter. He was educated in Easton schools and was a graduate of Massachusetts College of Pharmacy. Bob was employed as a pharmacist at the former Easton Pharmacy and Sedell's Pharmacy for 50 years. Many called him "Doctor Bob." Bob was honored by the Easton Historical Society for his role as the first Curator. He also spent countless hours performing repairs when the Society first received the Railroad Station. Bob is survived by his daughter Kristen; a sister, Jean Shearing and her husband Sydney; a brother, Richard Carpenter and his wife Janet (Hill). His full obituary is at http://hosting-6751.tributes.com/obituary/show/Carl-Robert-Carpenter-108517544.

John R. Moran, 80 passed after a brief illness. Raised and educated in Easton, John was the son of the late James L. Moran and Harriet L (Queeney) Moran. John was talented machinist and engineer for Brookfield Engineering for many years. He researched his family's history and was a frequent visitor at the Society. John is survived by his brothers Hartford of FL, Edward of Waterford, VT, Lindley of Biddeford, ME, Gerald of North Port, FL, and Patrick of Fayetteville, AK. He was also the brother of the late Cynthia, Lawrence, Michael Moran, Candace Piela and Cheryle Brophy. He also is survived by many nieces and nephews. John's obituary can be found at http://hosting-6751.tributes.com/obituary/show/John-R.-Moran-108513960.

Ruth E. Goold, a life member of the Easton Historical Society, and longtime President and officer of the Norton Historical Society, passed away March 28, 2021. Ruth received degrees from Wheaton College and Bridgewater State College, and taught for forty years in Ashland, MA. Her love of local history was shared with many through her work in Norton. Third graders in Norton learned from her each year about what school was like in Norton's early days. She co-authored Images of America—Norton, Massachusetts with George Yelle. She received many honors and was recognized by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women as one of the Unsung Heroines of Massachusetts. Ruth was also involved in Norton's Land Preservation Society and other local groups.

We express our sincere sympathy to the Anderson, Holmander, Solomon, Carpenter, Moran, and Goold families.

Smile!

Patiently waiting for an train that may never arrive, a model poses in front of the bulls-eye glass window and under the North Easton sign at our Museum. Our beautiful building attracts the eye of many photographers and videographers, and photo and video shoots take place often. These include wedding photos, class photos for yearbooks (many from out of town!), antique and classic cars, or models and photographers looking to build their portfolios. Other popular sites for photographers are the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall, the Ames Free Library, Queset House and Gardens, and the Governor Ames Estate. Many thanks to Ann-Marie Ford (her website is amfordphotography.com) for sending this along!

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