

EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 8, Issue 1

September 2007

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.

Easton Ranks 48th in the Top 100 Best Places to Live!

Easton made a little history recently when Money Magazine included our town in their list of the top 100 places to live in the United States! The list was developed from towns with a population up to 50,000. Our town was recognized for its rich history, H. H. Richardson buildings and natural beauty. Some of the other items that were used in the rankings included economic opportunities, good schools, safe streets, things to do and a sense of community. Above average home values and the towns parks, trails and pristine ponds also contributed to the high ranking. More details are available on the CNN / Money Magazine web site. Of course, we always knew we grew up in a great town. Now everyone else knows!

Please take note of our October open house. The Society is the recipient of an important collection of Tisdale family articles. We tentatively plan to showcase these extraordinary items on October 21st. Barbara Holbrook Read, a direct descendent and the donor, is hopefully going to be with us to discuss some of the items which includes a Victorian era wedding dress, family Bible and silverware. Watch the Easton Journal and our web site for information.

The Society notes with great sadness the untimely passing of John A. Keach, Jr. John was a long time member of the Society who had a keen interest in Easton's history. John provided legal advice to the Society many times over the years, and never charged us for his expertise. Our sincere sympathy is extended to his wife and children. We hope to have a day to honor his contributions to the Society and to Easton sometime next year.

We also note the passing of Easton native Wayne Pratt, an expert on antiques and TV's Antique Road Show favorite. He spoke at the Society several times over the years. We will miss him.

CALENDAR

Saturday, September 8th, Yard Sale / Bake Sale at the Station, 9 A.M. to 2 P.M.

Sunday, September 9th, Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M.

Saturday, September 15th, Mass Bay Rail Road Club Tour.

Sunday, September 30th, NRT Harvest Fair at Sheep Pasture, 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Saturday, October 6th, Class of 1957 Reunion Tour.

Saturday, October 13th, Fall Bottle Drive at the Station, 9 A.M. to 1 P.M.

Sunday, October 21st, Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M., Tisdale Family. (Tentative)

Thursday, November 1st, Fall Meeting at Olmsted School, "Easton Students, Easton Teachers", 7 P.M.

Sunday, November 11th, Veteran's Day Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M.

Saturday and Sunday, December 1st and 2nd, Annual Holiday Open House.

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

It certainly has been a beautiful summer. Easton's youngest residents are enjoying their summer break, and as the lazy, hazy days of August settle in they will begin gearing up for the new school year. I mentioned in my spring column that the Board of Directors had updated our mission statement. One important component of that statement was for your Historical Society to "develop educational programs for people of all ages." I'd like to share information on two programs we held aimed at encouraging an interest in our town's history among our town's children.

Our June open house called "Train Day" focused on the history of train transportation in Easton. The Society was honored to display a model train set depicting the Old Colony Railroad Station (home of the Easton Historical Society) and surrounding buildings including the Ames Shovel Company complex, built by Ellery Willis. Mr. Willis even stopped into the station and spent quite a bit of time talking with people about the train set.

Young train enthusiasts had the opportunity to participate in a scavenger hunt, hear about the history of the train in Easton, and even talk to a "hobo" about life on the rails. The part of our hobo was played by Ed Hands, who did a fantastic job! Ed told stories about what it was like to live as a hobo, and even made "hobo soup" for visitors to try.

Also in June, the Easton Historical Society hosted third grade students from the Center School and Moreau Hall school for a tour of the former Old Colony Railroad Station and surrounding area. This visit is part of a larger educational unit focusing on the American Revolution. Ed Hands gave students an overview of the history of the area surrounding the Station, and inside I spoke with students about the history of the Ames family and about products created in Easton. The students were intrigued to learn that the Morse car was built in Easton. This year we added to the visit by collecting pictures that the children from the Center School had painted of the H. H. Richardson buildings in town and displaying them during their visit. The children were full of such energy and enthusiasm that we can not wait to have our next group of third graders visit this upcoming year.

Please review the calendar section of this newsletter, located on the front page, or visit us online at eastonhistoricalsociety.org for a list of current and coming events. Open houses are usually held the second Sunday of each month from 1-5 P.M. The October open house is tentatively scheduled for the third Sunday to accommodate a special event and guest, if final scheduling can be arranged. Watch our web site and our Easton Journal for announcements. I hope to meet you there!

Curator's Corner

Curator / Caretaker Frank T. Meninno

CAN YOU HELP US?

Recently we have received a few requests for information that we do not have. First, we are looking for information about the former Meadow Brook Campground on Bay Road. Please contact Hazel Varella at 508-238-3614 if you have anything to share with us, including names, photos or advertisements. The other request is for information on a Main Street bakery owned by the Tatro family during the 1950's. Please call the Society if you have a photo or other item about the bakery.

Speaking of photos, we would very much like to add to our collection of photos, especially those taken during the 1950's and 1960's. We have the means to make high quality copies of any photo you might not be willing to part with. Other items such as gym uniforms would be great as well. The Society appreciates your continued support and donations. Thank you!

TWO VERY SPECIAL DEDICATIONS



Kevin Williams

Lee Williams

On Sunday, May 20th the Easton Historical Society dedicated the Ladies Parlor in memory of Margaret Williams. Mrs. Williams, affectionately known as the “cake lady” for her habit of never arriving empty-handed, was a long time member of the Society. She was a regular visitor, very well informed of current events and readily shared her wit and rare sense of humor. Son Lee Williams and grandson Kevin Williams, Society members and supporters, shared some touching stories with the family and friends who joined in for this special day of remembrance.

On Monday, May 28th, family members and friends of the late Mr. David Ames gathered at the Station for an intimate ceremony to re-dedicate a new Society sign in his memory. The original sign was to be donated by Mr. and Mrs. David Ames, but he tragically passed away shortly before it was completed. The sign was instead dedicated to his memory. The new sign was needed to replace the original which was badly weathered. Roger McNamara of South Easton built both signs.

Mr. Ames was a very active supporter of the Society, and one of the four members of the Ames family (the others being Sen. Oliver Ames, John S. Ames Jr. and William A. Parker) who purchased the Station from the railroad and then gave it to the Society for our headquarters.

Mrs. David Ames, sons Fred and William Ames and grandson Samuel were in attendance. Hazel Varella spoke during the ceremony, giving a brief history of how the original sign came to be. Mrs. Ames expressed thanks on behalf of the Ames family, and shared some touching memories. The afternoon ceremony was followed with a viewing of a display of Ames family photographs.



Mrs. David Ames with the new sign.



2007 Holiday Ornament

H. H. Richardson’s Gardner’s Cottage is featured on this years edition of our very popular holiday ornament series. The very talented Mary Bodio has loaned her wonderful artistic talents to depict this historic building. Ms. Bodio will be on hand to sign your purchase during the annual holiday open house. The Society extends its sincere appreciation to Mary for her continued support! Use the form below to reserve your ornaments. We have a limited supply of ornaments from the previous four years, so you can still get a complete set of all five Richardson buildings. Order now for the holidays!

Ornament Order Form

Please use this form to reserve your limited edition 2007 ornaments. Make checks payable to Easton Historical Society, and send to: Mrs. Hazel Varella, 121 Center Street, North Easton, MA 02356. The Society thanks you and appreciates your continued support!

Name _____

Address _____

City & State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone (____)

Number of single ornaments _____ X \$10 each \$ _____

Sets of four ornaments _____ X \$36 per set \$ _____

Total Cost \$ _____

FALL BOTTLE DRIVE

We will hold our fall bottle drive on Saturday, October 13th, from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. at the Station, rain or shine. Our ever faithful friend Ken Martin, and his assistant Ed Hands, will be on hand to expertly handle the drive. We appreciate your donation of clean returnable bottles and cans. Proceeds will benefit the heating fund. Thank you!

FALL MEETING

Do you remember the television show Welcome Back, Kotter? The show was about a teacher who taught at the same school he attended as a child. Well, on Wednesday evening, November 1st, the Society will hold a meeting at the Olmsted / Richardson School Teacher's Room about that same thing, only Easton style! Join us at 7 P.M. for a discussion with four Easton teachers who attended Easton schools as students. I am sure their insights into the past and present educational experience will prove to be quite interesting. While developing a list of potential panelists, it made sense to divide this into a two-part event. This meeting will include panelists from the elementary school level. A future meeting will include panelists from the secondary level. The panelists for this meeting are John Kent, Patricia Baker, Marilyn Cunha and Cynthia Hall. Ed Hands will be the moderator for the evening. Please be sure to join us for an interesting night!

Special Events

On Sunday, September 30th, be sure to come by our table at the annual NRT Harvest and Craft Fair. The event will be held at Sheep Pasture, Main and Washington Streets, North Easton.

The Society will be open during the annual Lions Club Holiday Festival. On Saturday, December 1st, we will be open from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. On Sunday, December 2nd, we will be open from 1-5 P.M. The Society will have the newest holiday ornament, as well as T-shirts, train whistles and other gift ideas. Mary Bodio will once again be on hand to sign your ornaments on December 2nd at 2:00 P.M.. Watch the next newsletter, our web site and the Easton Journal for more details.

We will hold our regular December open house on Sunday, December 9th, from 1-5 P.M. Our special guest for the day will be the Easton Garden Club, who will be selling beautiful holiday wreaths. Join us for an afternoon in a beautifully decorated, historic setting!

MEMBER DISCOUNT COUPON

This coupon entitles members in good standing to 10% off their total purchase of items from our Society gift tables. Present this coupon with your order / purchase to receive the discount. Address label must be attached on the reverse side as proof of membership. Coupon is valid from December 1st, 2007 to December 22nd, 2007. Mail orders will be accepted, but contact the Society for instructions. Sorry, we cannot offer further discounts on our Richardson holiday ornament collection.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Certificate—Society of the Colonial Dames of America, certifying that Mary Shreve Ames is a descendent of John Alden. Anonymous donor.

“Plans of Real Estate Owned by the Easton Investment Company”, 1874; mounted sandstone grinding wheel circa 1870, long wooden workers seat, brass and leather fire hose nozzle, circa 1875, all used in the Ames shovel plant; aerial photo, circa 1940 of the Ames plants and surrounding area; four panel hinged slate blackboard from the Ames shovel plants. Donated by Mr. Arnold B. Tofias.

Ames related papers and catalogs, payroll book, workers pay envelopes, maps and exposition awards, donated by Mr. David Ethier

Ames implement and seed cart, donated by the family of the late Martyn Lincoln.

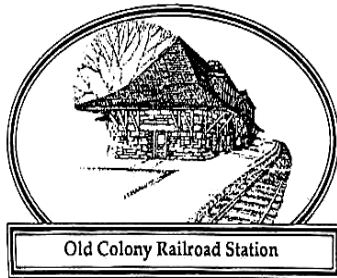
Variety of items including photos of Springhill and Stonehill College, framed poster for the 1994 Founders Gala, photographs by Jean Churchill, framed limited edition print of the Richardson postcard. Donated by Dr. and Mrs. Robert Misiewicz.

The Easton Historical Society is grateful for the continued generosity of the donors of these and other historical items to our collections.

YARD SALE and BAKE SALE

Calling all bakers! The Society is sponsoring a yard sale on Saturday, September 8th, from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. As part of our event, we would like to have a baked goods table as well. Cakes and loaves seem to sell the best, but all contributions are welcome. If you can contribute a baked good for our sale, please call the Station, or drop off your baked good anytime after 8 A.M. on the day of the sale. Spaces are still available for the yard sale. Consider renting a spot, or maybe stop by, visit, and shop for some bargains! Call the station for more information. As always, thank you for supporting the Easton Historical Society!

EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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www.eastonhistoricalsociety.org

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