



CALENDAR

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

Sunday, September 13th, Open House featuring the famous Ames Langwater Guernsey cattle, 1-5 p.m. Also, tour historic Tufts Farm at 108 Canton Street, North Easton and check out the Guernsey cattle there!

Saturday, September 26th, Ken Martin Memorial Bottle Drive, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunday, October 11th, Open House featuring a walk of "Hidden Easton," 1-5 p.m. with the walk at 2 p.m.

Sunday, November 1st, Daylight Savings Time ends. Remember to set your clocks back one hour!

Sunday, November 8th, Open House program on Easton's political history. Also, an exhibit on Easton's Civil War veterans, 1-5 p.m.

Wednesday, November 11th, Veteran's Day. Thank a veteran for his or her service, and attend the parade!

Annual Holiday Festival Open Houses will be held Saturday, December 5th and Sunday, December 6th.

Sunday, December 13th, Open House from 1-5 p.m.

It's not too early to think about holiday gifts! Check out our offerings of historical publications and items.

EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM



What's in a Name?



We are excited to announce a new addition to our family—we are now the Easton Historical Society & Museum! Our mission has not changed, nor has our commitment to you, our members. In many cases, the name "Society" indicates a group of people who gather for a common cause. Their mutual interest binds them into an effective group of people who can work together to further their cause. Many of these groups meet in rented halls and do not have property to call their own.

Thanks to the generosity of the Ames and Parker families, our Society owns a gem of a building with a wonderful story of its own. Our building has always been our museum. However, many other people are not aware that we are more than just a Society. As a matter of fact, some of our visitors are surprised to find that we do indeed have a great building, and a wonderful museum. By adding the phrase "& Museum" to our name, we are telling everyone else that we have a place to showcase Easton's history, that we are a place that they can visit. We are a destination that can be experienced!

Equally exciting is the notice that we have been voted the Wicked Local 2015 Reader's Choice Award as one of the best museums in the South Region Area! The South Region includes fourteen cities and towns. This Bronze Award, voted by the readers of the Easton Journal, Brockton Enterprise, and other associated newspapers, is a first for us. While we had already decided to add "& Museum" to our name prior to being notified of this honor, it certainly helped to confirm that we were being recognized as a museum as well as an active Society. Thank you to all who voted for us, and we look forward to continuing to be an active Society, providing interesting programming, educational programs, research opportunities, and more!



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

I love to read. Reading has been an important part of my life as long as I can remember. My mother and father always encouraged me to read as a child. I have fond memories of reading while waiting for my father to come home from work. Sometimes I would take a flashlight to bed and read my children's books long after the lights went out. Later I would read O. Henry, the Reader's Digest Condensed Books, and the set of encyclopedias that once filled one of the bookshelves in our living room. And God bless my first reading teachers at the Furnace Village School, Mrs. Anna Gilmore (1st grade) and Mrs. Esther Heath (2nd grade), for instilling the value of reading into a young and curious mind. Those early lessons last a lifetime.

Some years ago I was given a set of books by a friend who thought I might like them. Recently I re-read them and found them to be as interesting as the first time I read them. They were written by one of my favorite authors, Edward Rowe Snow. Perhaps you might remember him. For many years, he researched New England folklore, especially the Atlantic coast and the Boston Harbor islands. His very popular radio show allowed him to build a large following. But it was his way of telling stories that captured my imagination.

Edward Rowe Snow was, in my opinion, a master storyteller. He wrote like he talked, and could spin a sailor's yarn with the best. Perhaps he romanticized some stories, but he did his research as well. Usually he did a good job of preserving facts and a good share of New England folklore. Through him I discovered tales of pirates, pirate treasure, shipwrecks and other disasters, a deep, mysterious money pit, and more. His love for the islands of Boston Harbor led him to do a well researched history of them. One does not forget the "Lady in Black" once you have heard her story. Lighthouses also received a lot of his attention. His stories of lighthouse keepers, those special people who braved the elements as well as loneliness and a myriad of other hardships, preserved a way of life that has all but disappeared. Snow had a fondness for them, and for many years as the Flying Santa, would drop gifts to keepers while flying over their outposts in a plane or helicopter, always dressed as Santa. He remembered well those whose tales he told.



Items Still Needed for our 2015 Festival of Trees

Each year the Society donates a tree for the Easton Garden Club's Festival of Trees. As we begin this year's tree, our intrepid decorators, Laurie Gomes and Nancy DeLuca, are hoping to do a "Polar Express" style tree. **They are in need of railroad related items for tree decorations.** Check your old train sets for props and decorations that you are willing to donate to us to put this exciting tree together! If you have any small railroad related items for us, please call the Society, email us, or drop them off before November 15th. These are being donated, so your items will not be returned. Your generosity and willingness to assist is very much appreciated, and will make someone's 2015 Christmas a special one. Thank you!

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

Officers for 2015-2016

President Deborah MacPhee
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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Educational Liaison—Matthew Auger
Curator—Frank T. Meninno

Reminiscences Volume 6 Available this Fall

Volume 6 of Reminiscences, edited by Daniel P. Pare and Hazel L. Varella, is going to press soon and should be available October 11th. As with the first five volumes, Volume 6 presents a variety of writings to tickle your historical fancy. Here are the topics that will be featured in this edition:

"Barking Up the Ames Family Tree," by Tony Chamberlain (a 1975 Boston Globe Magazine article)

"An Historical Mystery Solved," by Edmund C. Hands (tracing the history of a painting in OA Memorial Hall)

"Notes About Elise Ames Parker and Her Brother Oliver," by Hazel L. Varella

"The Library and Its Librarian," by John Howard Bergstrom (focusing on Mary Lamprey, Ames Free Library librarian for 53 years)

"The General Electric Company Plant 1925," by D. O'Connell (OAHS magazine article about a factory formerly in Easton)

"Easton and Nantucket Baskets," by Hazel L. Varella (focusing on Easton's Paul Whitten, who specialized in this style of basket)

"Sights, Sounds, Smells and Tastes of Furnace Village," by Avery L. Williams, Jr.

"22 Interesting Facts About Unionville," by Carl B. Holmander

"Memories of the Class of 1952"

"Life and Death at "Borderland"," by Linda E. Williams (memoir by one of Blanche Ames's nurses who lived at Tisdale House)

"This and That"—A Medley of Short Pieces

"When Easton Ratified the Constitution (Or Not!)" [blurb about a delegate voting No]

"Our High School 40 Years Ago," by Clara Swift (from old OAHS magazine)

"Did You Know That an Easton Man Served on the Lizzie Borden Jury?"

"In Memory," by Catherine Cahill (from OAHS magazine, marking 1 year since William Chaffin's death)

"The Parade, Ghosts, Shades of Norman Rockwell," by Robert J. Wooster (about a parade during the 1st Gulf War)

"Once Upon a Time," by Robert J. Wooster (brief reflection on some land on Elm St.)

"Three Poems," by Anne Wooster Drury

A section with photos of EHS Highlights of 2014-2015

In addition to the authors listed above, we express our appreciation to Kimberly Hedrick, Val LeSieur, Judge Leon J. Lombardi, Dwight MacKerron, Charlene McNeil, and the generosity of Dr. Robert and Carol Misiewicz.

Can you speak Algonquin?

Queset, Massapoag, Poquanticut? Do you know that each time you say those names you are speaking one of the most ancient and difficult languages in North America? It's true! You may not realize it, but these place names are a reminder of the Native Americans who once lived here. Today these names perpetuate the memories of a culture that had all but vanished by the time Easton was settled in the mid-1690's.

The Algonquin nation of Native Americans was made up of many sub-tribes including the Massachusett, Natick, Narragansett, Niantic, and Wampanoag peoples. We will focus on the place names of the Wampanoags who lived in this area for thousands of years.

There were a few early attempts to record and translate the Algonquin language. A few Native American converts to Christianity (praying Indians) learned English, and they were able to assist Rev. John Elliot while he wrote the Algonquin Bible (1663). There were a few earlier works from which we can learn some of the language as well, those being William Wood's Nomenclator (1634), and works done by Roger Williams (1643). Most of our current understanding of Algonquin comes from recent efforts to preserve the language by Native American tribes. John C. Huden published Indian Place Names of New England and their meanings in 1962. More recently, Dr. Frank Waabu O'Brien, a member of the Aquidneck Indian Council, published Understanding Indian Place Names in Southern New England in 2010. His work breaks the language down into roots, prefixes, and suffixes, which help to define more clearly the meanings of the names. As a result, many of the names that have survived are now preserved for future generations.

I have compiled a list of Native American names for some of the places in and around Easton, and using both Dr. O'Brien's (primary) and Huden's (secondary) works as guides, I have tried to interpret their meanings. As you might imagine, they always refer to something in nature that held significant meaning for the Native Americans.

Massachusett: "at the place of large hills"; also *Messatsoosec*, "hill in the form of an arrowhead."

Wessagusset (Weymouth): "at the small salt water cove, or outlet."

Squantum: "a door or gate"; also, "angry god." A Wampanoag named Squantum, or Squanto, was the interpreter for Massasoit.

Titicut: "the principal river" or "at the great tidal river."

Hockamock (Swamp): "hook-shaped place" or "land formation like a hook."

Ponkapoag: "clear, open pond" or "shallow pond." Also *Punkapog* and *Punkapoag*.

Nippenicket: probably "fresh water pool" but possibly "at the summer place."

Winnecumet or *Winneconnet*: "at the place of the good (or beautiful) lake" or "pines."

Massapoag: "large pond." Variant, *Mashapoog* or *Mashapauge*: "large pond" or possibly "worthless pond." (Swampy land, unfit for planting, but an important supply of bog iron). ⁽¹⁾

Cowekesit: "pine tree place" or "place of young pines." Spelled *Coweset*, *Cowesit* and *Cowesuck*. ⁽²⁾

Queset: "place of swift running water" or brook. ⁽²⁾

Poquanticut: "at the clear or shallow stream."

Sequasett: "at or near the large clearing." Do you know where this was? Check with Curator Frank Meninno for the answer!

Cornipsus: meaning unknown at this time. ⁽³⁾

Notes

⁽¹⁾ *Massapoag* is a well-known spring-fed Sharon lake, and was created from mining bog iron for early iron industries. It makes sense that the name may have meant "worthless pond" as translated here, since it would have resembled a swamp or a boggy area rather than a clear natural pond. The bog iron would have not been of much value to the Native Americans.

⁽²⁾ William Chaffin writes in his 1886 History of Easton that *Queset* and *Cowesit* meant the same place, but in fairness to him, he did not have access to our information. *Coweset* River, as it runs through West Bridgewater, goes through large stands of pine forest. Meanwhile, the *Queset* River as it runs through Easton moves at a quick pace, so I believe the translations above are correct—the names mean two different places along the same river system.

⁽³⁾ Finally, there is a word that defies translation: *Cornipsus*. Chaffin records this place as being off Elm Street Extension, where the Leonards and others set up mills. Native Americans were heard to utter this sound when a large saw began cutting wood. It may have been an exclamation of amazement at the work that was being done. Or, the guttural sound that was uttered by the Wampanoags may have been a somewhat less than gracious term for the colonists! For many years, local boys called the swimming hole there by a shortened form of the name, *k'nipt*.

Recent Acquisitions and Gifts

Town reports and a letter from the Easton Historical Commission dated 1972 noting property inclusion in the Bay Road National Historic District, from Carol Leonard; a collection of Easton papers and reports, from Alice McCarthy; an old bread slicing knife with attached guide, from Priscilla Almquist-Olsen; news clippings of Oliver Ames basketball teams in the 1950's, from Burt Lewis; original History of Easton, from Bonnie Adams; information about Paul Whitten, from Barbara Read.

Financial gifts have been received from Tom Bono for the Ken Martin Memorial Bottle Drive; Burch and Audrey Alford, Priscilla Almquist-Olsen, Mrs. Oliver F. Ames, Celeste Dahlborg, Michael Farrell, Gwen Wray Ferrini, Olaf Hentschel, Lawrence and Nancy Hurley, the Robert D. and Sally G. King Trust, Leon and Sara Lombardi, William M. Martel, Noreen Nackenson, the Neumann family, MacKenzie and Jeannine Smith.

Thanks to Gordon Melin who loaned us interesting photos and clippings to copy, and to Michael Luke who allowed us to copy the Langwater Guernsey 1940 sale catalog . Thanks also to Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Costello who brought in a number of train toys for our Festival of Trees donation. Thanks to the Frothingham Memorial Corporation, Chuck Hurley, President, and Dan Morse, for golf umbrellas and lens cleaners to sell.

The Easton Historical Society very much appreciates your contributions. Thank you!

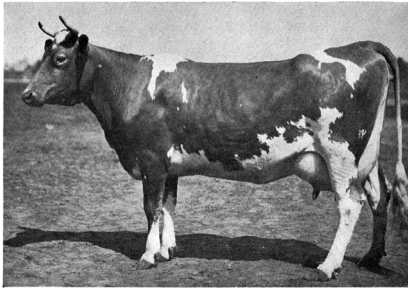
“ A Road Pray'd For”

A letter was sent to Daniel B. Wheaton, Chairman of the Selectmen of Easton on May 29, 1847. The innocuous looking letter, a piece of paper folded into itself and sent without an envelope and stamp, was probably hand-delivered. Excerpts from the letter follow:

“At a legal meeting of the inhabitants of the Town of Easton held Saturday May 29 1847 it was voted to accept certain resolutions in regards to the road pray'd for by Capt. Barzillai Dean and others, presented to the Moderator, for action thereon, by Elijah Howard Esq.” “Whereas the County Commissioners will meet at the house of Barzillai Dean on June next for the purpose of viewing the route for a road pray'd for...it is considered doubtful whether the route above mentioned is the one that will the best promote the interest and convenience of the public...resolved that the Selectmen be instructed to examine a route for a road beginning near Copeland and Blake's Store and running eastwardly to the North Bridgewater Line; and also examine the route pray'd for by B. Dean and others.” ... “and in the case that the County Commissioners will suspend for the present their actions in the matter that the Selectmen be instructed to lay out whichever of these routes that will in their judgement best promote the interests of the town and the public at large. Resolved that the road so laid out by the Selectmen shall be built and opened for travel, whenever a road to meet the same shall be laid out in North Bridgewater or West Bridgewater as the case may be, and responsible evidence afforded that the same road will be built and opened to the public.” ... “state to them (the County Commissioners) that inasmuch as there has never been any request to the town to locate a road as pray'd for by B. Dean and others...and it is considered very doubtful...whether the location pray'd for by B. Dean and others is best calculated to promote the public interest and convenience, the town respectfully request said Commissioners to postpone for the present the location thereof.” - Tisdale Harlow, Town Clerk.

The road in question “pray'd for” by Barzillai Dean evidently was not asked of the town. Mr. Dean went directly to the County Commissioners! The Selectmen, were requested to study the issue of a road to Brockton. Dean ran the mill at South Easton Green and his home was there as well (still standing at the lights at Depot Street and Washington Street). An alternate route would have begun near Central Street and Washington Street. In the end, Dean won, and in 1848 Depot Street was extended east to Turnpike Street, a real convenience for him. The extension of Central Street would not have made sense anyway, since Grove Street (now Belmont Street) as early as 1757 provided a direct route to the center of Brockton.

Fall Open Houses Planned



DOLLY DIMPLE 19144 (A R 628)

Holy cow! Or, more accurately, Holy Guernsey! Our September 13th open house will feature an exhibit about a little known part of our history, but one that has national significance. Information on the famous Langwater Guernseys will be on display. Founded by Easton's Frederick Lothrop Ames, and successfully bred by F. Lothrop Ames, Jr., and later his brother John S. Ames, these champion milk producers founded many American dairies. The day includes a visit to see the Guernseys at the Tufts Farm at 108 Canton Street, North Easton, with appreciation to Mike and Mary Luke who operate it.

The march is on! On October 11th, join us for a walk through "Hidden Easton" led by Society President Deborah MacPhee. She will point out a number of places and things that you may pass by regularly but go un-noticed in North Easton. Hear some interesting historical anecdotes! The walk is planned for 2 p.m. Wear comfortable walking apparel!

Vote early, vote often! Join us for some political history on November 8th as we take a look at Eastoners who have served in Federal and State political offices. The Honorable Leon J. Lombardi, former State Representative and retired judge, has been researching these public servants. Some may be well known to us, but a few might surprise you. Consider the sharp dressed man in the photo on the right. Do you know who he is? You will after spending the afternoon with us. Also, on loan from a private collection, a poster of Massachusetts office holders from 1865 will be on display.



Each November we honor our veterans. This year, remembering the end of the Civil War, our exhibit will focus on Easton's Civil War veterans. Let us remember those who gave the Supreme Sacrifice to preserve the Union. Learn about a Civil War surgeon who heroically saved wounded soldiers, and about an Irish immigrant who rose from poverty to become a Civil War major and later a state's Attorney General by way of Easton. A selection of Civil War related artifacts will also be on display.

Easton veterans gather for a Memorial Day parade in the early 1900's. From left to right: Philander Fecto, unknown, Mr. Slo-cum, Rev. William L. Chaffin, Mr. Davis, un-known.



Members of an Easton family take time from a busy day to pose for a photograph. It looks like three generations are captured in this picture. The man on the right with the peg leg was identified some years ago as Ellie Gibbs. The Gibbs family was in Easton in the 1750's, serving in Easton's Militia and fighting in the Revolutionary War. Photo taken by George Belcher prior to 1900. Location unknown.

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