

EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TRAIN TRACKS



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

It may be hard to believe, but the year is drawing to a rapid close! The Society finds itself busy getting ready for the holidays.

We will take part in the annual Easton Lions Club Holiday Festival, scheduled for Saturday, December 2nd and Sunday, December 3rd. The Society will be open both days, and will feature the new 2006 Mary Bodio designed glass ornament. These ornaments have become very popular. This year's ornament, the fourth in the series, will showcase Ms. Bodio's artwork of the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall. The cost of the ornaments will be \$10 each, or a set of any four for \$36. We have the 2003, 2004 and 2005 ornaments available, so it is not too late to begin your set! Ms. Bodio will be available to sign your ornament on Sunday, December 3rd, and again during our regular open house on Sunday, December 10th. The time will be announced in the local newspapers, and on the Station answering machine.

The Society is also offering, for the first time, our own tee shirt! Featuring the crossed shovel design created by Mary Bodio, these long-sleeved tees will make an excellent gift for your loved ones (or for yourself)! The tees are available in adult sizes small through 2X for \$17 each, and in children's sizes small, medium and large for \$12 each. Come early for the best selection. See page 3 for further details.

Look at page five inside for a special member's only holiday treat.

Be sure to stop by and enjoy some hot coffee and refreshments.

A Note About Your Newsletter Deliveries

It has come to our attention that some of you have experienced late deliveries of our newsletter. After investigating this with the post office, we were told that bulk mailings such as this one receive a last priority and may take up to three weeks to deliver. We regret the inconvenience. In an attempt to allow more timely deliveries, the Society will endeavor to publish our newsletter earlier in the month. We are also developing a web site that will have an electronic copy of the newsletter available, as well as information on upcoming events. Thank you for your patience as we address this situation.

CALENDAR

December 2nd and 3rd, Lions Club Holiday Festival Hours are 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. on Saturday, and 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. on Sunday. Bake sale. New Ornament and Shoveltown Tee Shirts will be available!

Sunday, December 10th, Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M.

Thursday, December 21st, Happy 281st Birthday to Easton!

Sunday, January 14th, Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M.

Sunday, February 11th, Open House at the Station, 1-5 P.M.

Looking Ahead....

Thursday, March 29th, Chowder and Chatter

Wednesday, April 25th, meeting with Greg Galer of the Stonehill Industrial History Center

Wednesday, May 23rd, Annual Meeting with Ken Gloss at Borderland

Easton Historical Society Newsletter 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

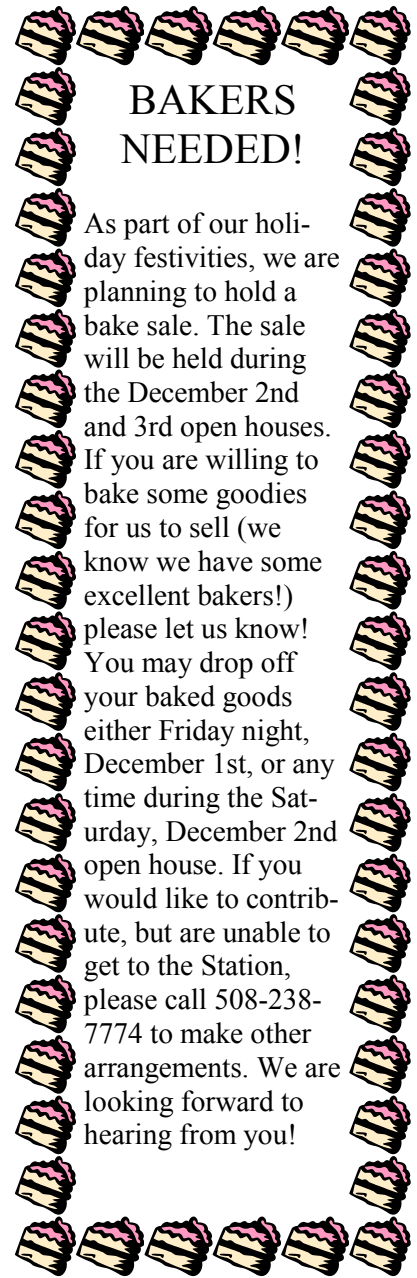
Fall brings a notable change to our town as green leaves yield to brilliant reds, oranges, and yellows. This fall also brings an important change for the Easton Historical Society.

I am honored to announce that during the October Board of Directors meeting, Frank Meninno was appointed as the Curator / Caretaker for the Society. Frank has been an active member of our Society since 1980 and is a past-President who served as a Director for the last ten years. In selecting Frank as Curator / Caretaker, the Directors recognized his extensive knowledge of the history of Easton, his long-standing dedication to the Society, and his colorful vision for the Society. Frank is a lifelong resident and fourth generation Eastonite.

Change is also underway at the Station. Frank has created some very interesting exhibits for the past few open houses. Our April open house featured photographs by Easton resident and professional photographer Henry Belcher taken during the late

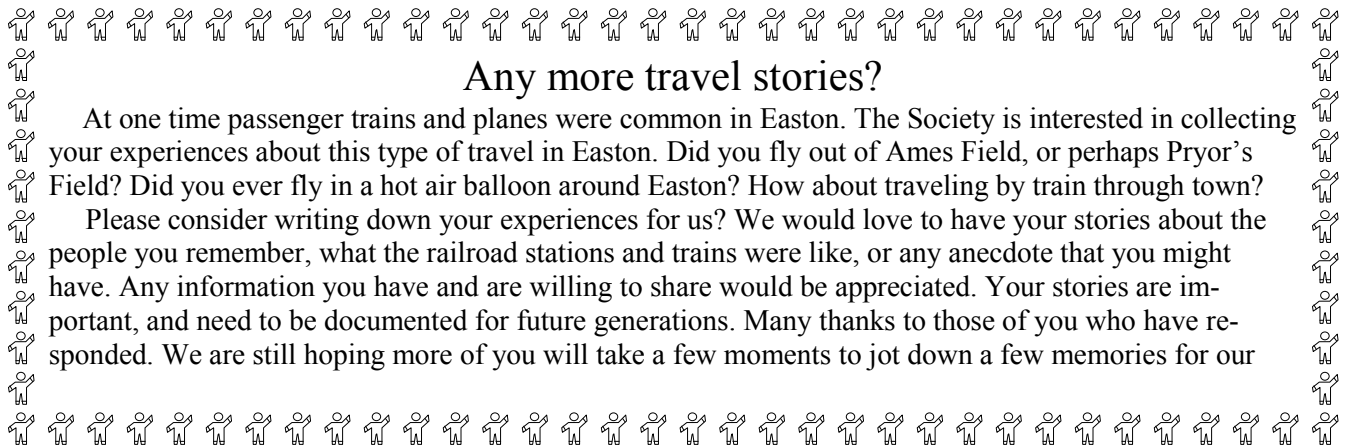
1890's. In July, there was a retrospective on historical gardens of Easton, featuring the famous rose garden of Mrs. Louis Frothingham. In September, the open house featured pictures and artifacts from school days gone by, and many attendees flipped through old yearbooks to find pictures of themselves or family members. Finally, the October open house featuring baseball was a big hit with sport enthusiasts. One gentleman who visited the Station with his granddaughter was surprised to find that he was in one of the pictures.

Open houses are held at the Station the second Sunday of every month from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., and include light refreshments designed to compliment the featured exhibit. The open houses are a great place to gather with other people interested in our town's rich history. Our November open house will be held on the 12th. Please join Frank and the rest of us at the Station to view his exhibit honoring veterans from Easton. See you!



BAKERS NEEDED!

As part of our holiday festivities, we are planning to hold a bake sale. The sale will be held during the December 2nd and 3rd open houses. If you are willing to bake some goodies for us to sell (we know we have some excellent bakers!) please let us know! You may drop off your baked goods either Friday night, December 1st, or any time during the Saturday, December 2nd open house. If you would like to contribute, but are unable to get to the Station, please call 508-238-7774 to make other arrangements. We are looking forward to hearing from you!



Any more travel stories?

At one time passenger trains and planes were common in Easton. The Society is interested in collecting your experiences about this type of travel in Easton. Did you fly out of Ames Field, or perhaps Pryor's Field? Did you ever fly in a hot air balloon around Easton? How about traveling by train through town?

Please consider writing down your experiences for us? We would love to have your stories about the people you remember, what the railroad stations and trains were like, or any anecdote that you might have. Any information you have and are willing to share would be appreciated. Your stories are important, and need to be documented for future generations. Many thanks to those of you who have responded. We are still hoping more of you will take a few moments to jot down a few memories for our

SHOVELTOWN TEES



The Easton Historical Society is pleased to offer for sale SHOVELTOWN TEE SHIRTS!

Our grey long-sleeved tee is made from a pre-shrunk 90% cotton/10% polyester blend for comfort and ease of care. The word "EASTON" with two crossed shovels, designed by well known artist Mary Bodio, is screen-printed in black on the front of the shirt, below the left shoulder. Easton's nickname, "SHOVELTOWN" is boldly screen-printed in black down the right sleeve. Any Eastoner would be proud to be seen wearing his or her own "SHOVELTOWN" shirt. Wouldn't this make a wonderful gift for someone special?

The SHOVELTOWN TEE SHIRT is available only from the Easton Historical Society.

Recent Donation Lists Thanksgiving Programs

The Society recently received a donation of Brockton Enterprise newspapers from Ms. Pat Conley. The following is taken from the Friday, November 28th, 1919 edition.

THANKSGIVING PROGRAMME

Thanksgiving day exercises were observed last evening at the Swedish Congregational Church including Bible reading and prayer by Alfred Rosen; selection, choir; selection, orchestra; address of welcome, John A. Anderson; selection, quartette; hymn, Rev. A.J. Freedlund's Sunday School class; dialogue, John Rhodin and John Eak; selections, men's quartette; baritone solo, Edwin Nystrom; selection, men's choir; recitation, Mrs. Arthur Anderson; selection, orchestra; address, Rev. A. J. Freedlund; selection, choir; selection, orchestra; closing prayer, Elias Anderson. After the concert all went to the church vestry where refreshments were served by the Ladies' Sewing Circle.

IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Thanksgiving day was observed in the public schools with appropriate exercises under the direction of principal Mary A. Stone and teachers. The program included: "America", school; "Thanksgiving Day", grade 5B class; "The First Thanksgiving Day", Madeline Cameron; "Speed Our Republic", grades 6A and 6B; "The Pumpkin", Clinton Litchfield; "The Landing of the Pilgrims", grade 5B; victrola selection; "The Wheat", Loretta McGinty; recitation, Alora Owens; "Why We Celebrate Thanksgiving", Miss Ruth Conant; recitation, Elwood Horton; salute to the flag, "The Star Spangled Banner", school.

CONCERT AT CHURCH

A Thanksgiving concert was held last evening at the Swedish Lutheran Church with a large attendance. The following programme was carried out: piano solo, Helga Johnson; selection, choir; recitation, Miss Mabel Hagg; vocal solo, Miss Doris Carlson; selection, choir; lecture, Rev. A.C. Lindervalle of North Grosvenor Dale, Conn., on "Present Condition of Russia". Refreshments were served in the vestry by Mrs. Elias Johnson, Mrs. Andrew Johnson, Mrs. Charles Johnson, Mrs. John Johnson, Mrs. Charles Jacobson and Mrs. Charles Lawson.

1872 School Rules

The 1872 school committee members were Oliver Ames 3rd, Reverend William L. Chaffin, and Judge A. A. Rotch. What follows is from the school rules adopted that year.

School began at 9:00 A.M. and the morning session ran until noon. From spring to November 1st, the afternoon session began at 1:30 P.M. and finished up at 4:30 P.M. During the winter the afternoon hours were moved up fifteen minutes. Teachers were to be present in their room or school house fifteen minutes before classes were scheduled to begin. The first exercise of the day for all classes in all schools was to read a portion of the Holy Bible.

The morning began with the call of the roll. Written excuses were required for absent or tardy students. Three inexcusable marks for tardiness caused the student to be reported directly to the school committee. If truancy was suspected the truant officer was notified. Early dismissals required a written note or a personal visit from the parent or guardian. The teacher had the authority to hold the child until the last recess so the child wouldn't miss valuable lessons.

Teachers had to keep their books accurately and neatly. They were subject to inspection by school committee members at any time. They had to record any visits by someone other than a student. The equipment in the class rooms became the responsibility of the teachers also. They had to answer for those items found to be in less than acceptable condition. If a student was found responsible for damage that students parent or guardian had to cover any expenses incurred by them. The teachers were expected to set a good example for the children of the town. "Upon all suitable occasions (the teacher) shall inculcate principles of truth and virtue, inciting their scholars to avoid idleness, profanity, falsehood, and every wicked practice and conduct themselves in an orderly and becoming manner". This evidently extended itself to after school hours as well as those spent in the classroom. Even when out of school a child could expect to be corrected, even chastised by a teacher when caught doing something wrong.

Teachers did have a fair amount of authority given to them. They decided when and if a student could be dismissed. They were allowed to close school for half a day on certain occasions. One of those instances occurred during the county agricultural fair, and again to allow the teacher the chance to visit another school. Punishment was also in the teachers realm of authority. The dreaded rattan, a blow across a students knuckles with a ruler or wooden switch could be given at any time. In the case of a female offender the rattan could not be given without the permission of the principal. This form of punishment was used in Easton from the earliest times up to the late 1960's. But the crowning moment of power for the teacher was the ability to suspend a student themselves. All that was required from the teacher was a written explanation of their actions to the school committee. No hearing or warning was needed.

Teachers had to maintain a class room temperature of at least 67 degrees. They were responsible for the care of the wood and coal burning stoves in their room or school house. Some of the older students were allowed to carry in coal or wood. If the outside temperature fell to zero or below school was called off for the day. Those stoves couldn't keep up with that kind of cold. The air in the class rooms had to be changed at each recess and at the end of each session. This was the duty of the teacher as well.

Enough about teachers. Pupils were required to be clean in person and dress. A pupil not meeting this need was sent home until they could present themselves in an appropriate fashion. Whispering or any other type of communication between students was forbidden. They were allowed in the school house only during school hours and only when the teacher was present in the room. No student was permitted to leave the school yard during recess. No student was allowed to stay at the school during the time between sessions. They were to return home. The only exception to this rule was to accommodate students who traveled a distance each day. Permission was obtained from their teacher and the student reported to the principal. This is the first mention of a principal in the entire set of rules. Everything else fell onto the school committee. Any student not passing the year end examination had to repeat the grade.

VIETNAM WAR MEMORABILIA NEEDED

THE EASTON VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS ARE PLANNING THE DEDICATION OF THE VIETNAM WAR MEMORIAL AT MEMORIAL PARK FOR THE FALL OF 2007. CURRENTLY THEY ARE LOOKING FOR INFORMATION ON THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO ENLISTED FROM EASTON, AND THEY HAVE ASKED FOR OUR MEMBERS HELP. PHOTOS, NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS, ETC. ABOUT THESE BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN WILL BE USED IN THE PUBLICATION OF THE DEDICATION BOOK. IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO CONTRIBUTE OR LOAN, PLEASE CALL COMMANDER AL SMART AT 508-238-7143 OR THE SOCIETY AT 508-238-7774. THANK YOU!

Bottle Drive A Success!

Our fall bottle and can drive was held on Saturday, September 30th. It was a nice day, and many of our members and friends turned out to donate their items. Thanks to your generosity, more than \$170 was raised for the Society. Many thanks to Ken Martin for another outstanding job, and to Ed Hands for being Ken's able assistant. The proceeds will be used to defray the cost of heating the station this winter.

We also had a fall cleanup day in conjunction with the bottle drive. Thanks to all of you who turned out to spend a while polishing furniture and cleaning the downstairs. Plans are being made to do this again in the spring, and we hope more of you will come out and join us.

EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Member's Discount Coupon

This coupon entitles members in good standing to a 10% discount on your total purchase of Easton Historical Society items from our museum store. Your address label must appear on the reverse as proof of membership.

Present this coupon at time of purchase. Coupon is valid only for the month of December, 2006, and expires on December 31st, 2006. This coupon has no cash value, and may only be redeemed as specified above.

No discount will be given on the 2006 Christmas ornaments or the new Shoveltown tee shirts.



Recent Acquisitions

The detail above is taken from a beautifully framed photo of George DeWitt's lumberyard, Park Street, donated by Ms. Charlotte DeWitt. Thanks to Paul Berry for his help in obtaining this gift.

We have also received the following important gifts:

Two 1950's advertising signs from the North Easton Cooperative Bank, donated by Mr. and Mrs. L. Paul Slater; Easton Huskies memorabilia and books from the collection of Connie Spillane, donated by Mrs. Mary Spillane; 1943-1947 Eastoners, donated by Ms. Betty Jean Kellogg; Appraisal report of the estate of Winthrop Ames, anonymous donor; 1919 Brockton Enterprise papers, donated by Ms. Pat Conley; Photos, featuring Oliver Ames teams, donated by Val Le Sieur. The Society is honored to be the recipient of these, and other important historical items, and extends our gratitude to the donors.

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