



EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

Winter 2020

Volume 21, Issue 2

2020 Holiday Season Update

We missed a lot of our favorite people and fun things to do in 2020. As this goes to print, we look forward to welcoming our friends from the Easton Garden Club for their annual Greens Sale! The sale will be held on Saturday, December 5, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Museum. Things will look very different for this year's sale. Everything will be outside, and you are strongly encouraged to pre-order your wreath or greens at the Easton Garden Club website. A selection of wreath designs are available to choose from. Curbside pickup will be available for pre-orders. There will not be a raffle this year, but you can get plenty of Christmas cheer for your home and support a great group of people who work so hard to keep Easton in bloom! Masks are required, as is following social distancing protocols. Access to pickup areas may be restricted depending on the turnout, so please plan ahead and be patient.

The Museum will also have items for sale outside, and you can pre-order from our website, by email, or by phone. New this year is Reminiscences Volume 11, ready for purchase, and we hope to announce a new publication that we think you will find very interesting. Unfortunately, the Museum will be closed for this event. Other shopping hours can be arranged to fit your schedule by appointment. We will also be available weekdays and Saturday mornings. If you order through the website or by phone, we can have your order ready for pickup at your convenience. We very much appreciate your support, as do so many of Easton's small businesses this year. We look forward to seeing you in December!

CALENDAR

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

Saturday, December 5, Annual Easton Garden Club Greens Sale from 9 a.m. to noon.

The Museum is open for your holiday shopping weekdays and Saturdays, or by appointment. Online ordering is encouraged, and curbside pickup is available. Access inside will be limited to no more than 6 people at a time. Masks are required, and please remember to practice social distancing. We all want to have a happy and healthy holiday season!

Thursday, December 10, Hanukkah begins at sunset. Happy Hanukkah!

Friday, December 25, Christmas Day. Merry Christmas!

Friday, January 1, 2021, A Happy New Year to all, with hopes for a much better year.

Monday, January 18, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Monday, February 15, President's Day.

Sadly, there are no other events currently scheduled due to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis. For updates on programs, please call or email the Museum or check our website and Facebook page. Thank you.

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

“God puts rainbows in the clouds so that each of us – in the dreariest and most dreaded moments – can see a possibility of hope.” – Maya Angelou

Rainbows have always been a big part of my life. I love to see them, and I often go out of my way to try to find one when I think conditions are right. Learning the Rainbow Song in kindergarten at Center School is one of my favorite childhood memories. I still think that is the reason that I do not have a favorite color today—I like them all!

In recent years I have begun to appreciate the other thing that rainbows stand for: they are a sign of hope, a declaration of a promise kept. In the Old Testament, Noah saw a rainbow as a promise that God would never again flood the earth. Following the tragic events of the 9/11 terrorist attack on the United States, many of us gathered at the flagpole at the Middle School on Columbus Avenue for a special time of prayer and reflection. A light rain came through the area followed by brilliant sun. Just as the gathering began, I looked up and saw not one, but *two* rainbows over us. I found a renewed sense of hope and peace, an assurance that things would be all right.

I did not give much thought to rainbows again until the beginnings of the current pandemic in March. Early on, I saw lots of teddy bears looking out from people's windows and doors all around Easton. As spring wore on, and things became more uncertain, I noticed a familiar and comforting sight in people's houses and yards—lots of rainbows! There were rainbows on doors, in windows, drawn on people's driveways with multicolored chalk or paint, rainbows on signs too! They have become for me an indelible image, and a reminder that all of this will pass, and we need to have hope.

As we prepare to celebrate our holidays in 2020, things will certainly take on a different look. There will be no Holiday Festival in Easton this year, though the Rockery will still have lights. Gatherings will be scaled down, travel may be difficult, lots of our favorite holiday activities have been canceled, and Black Friday sales began online and in stores way ahead of the usual crazy shopping hours that have themselves become such a tradition. And yes, there will be too many empty seats at our tables. Still, we can be hopeful that this time will help us to focus on what is really important in life. It isn't how much you spend, or where you go, or what you do. Look for the rainbows in your life this holiday season. If you find more than you need, share a rainbow with someone who hasn't found theirs. As we close a very different year together, I thank you for your support and for your friendship too. I do miss seeing you all! My wish to you all for 2021 is that you will find peace, blessings, and above all, hope.

The Easton Historical Society Newsletter
is published quarterly by the Easton Historical Society and Museum.

Officers for 2019-2020

President Kenneth J. Michel
1st Vice President David Ames, Jr.
2nd Vice President Edmund C. Hands
Treasurer Nancy DeLuca
Recording / Corresponding Secretary Hazel L. Varella

Directors

Patricia Baker
Jonathan J. Coe
Joanne England
Judge Leon J. Lombardi
Debra Salisbury
Past President—Deborah MacPhee
Director Emeritus—Robert J. Wooster
Educational Liaison—Matthew Auger
Curator—Frank T. Meninno

Recording the Great Pandemic of 2020

The onset of the current Covid pandemic changed our lives in a very short time. We went from coming and going at will to following stay at home orders. Toilet paper, disinfecting wipes, and processed foods disappeared from store shelves. Limits were placed on other items. Face masks quickly moved from being something of a novelty to becoming a chief weapon against the spread of the virus. We also saw teddy bears in doors and windows, rainbows on signs as a reminder of hope, and one way aisles in stores.

We need to document this pandemic so it can be studied much as we studied the 1918 influenza pandemic. We are asking for your help! Please take some time, write down your memories of living through these times. The following questions might help you record your memories for future generations to study.

- ◆ How were you affected by the outbreak of the pandemic?
- ◆ What part of your life became different for you?
- ◆ What do you miss seeing or doing? Who do you miss?
- ◆ What did you notice about life in general during this time?
- ◆ What have you done instead of your usual routine?
- ◆ How did your shopping habits change?
- ◆ What did you do to adapt to a “new normal?”
- ◆ Was there a silver lining in this for you?
- ◆ There are many other questions that could be asked, so please do not be limited by these suggestions. Be creative!

Please send us a letter or an email so we can record your experiences. This is an important part of preserving our history. We can always research data and major news items. What we really need is your own story, the story of living through an extraordinary time. If you think your story may not be important enough to write down, think again! Make the effort, take the time, and tell us your story. Be sure to include your name and contact information. And keep in mind that your story, in full or in part, may be published in the future. After all, what good does it do anyone if we collect our history and do not share it?

By the way, you can read an excellent article on the 1918 flu written by Ed Hands in last year’s edition of Reminiscences.

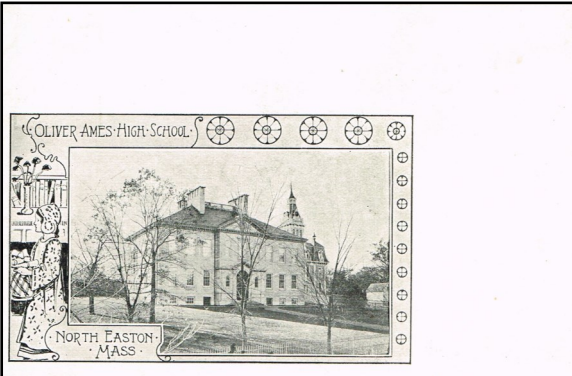
Holiday Shopping Made Easy!

Not sure about what to get people this year? Here are a few ideas to make your holiday shopping easier, and at the same time, support the Society and Museum. Remember, you can drop by, call, email an order, or use our new web store. Items can be shipped or made available for curbside pickup.

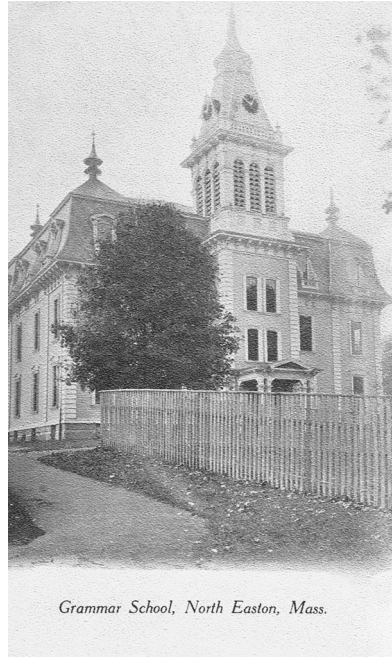
- ◆ A Beautiful Image of Historic Easton is \$40!
- ◆ The Easton Jigsaw Puzzle, a popular gift, is priced right at \$15 each or two for \$25!
- ◆ Reminiscences Volume 11, and all other issues, are ready to go for \$10 each!
- ◆ Prints and note cards by Mary Bodio are available at \$10 each!
- ◆ Birds-eye maps of North Easton and South Easton are available for \$10 each!
- ◆ Pewter ornaments are only \$10 each!
- ◆ We have a variety of publications at super prices!
- ◆ Watch the online store and emails for special offers!

A Postcard Tour of Easton, Part 2

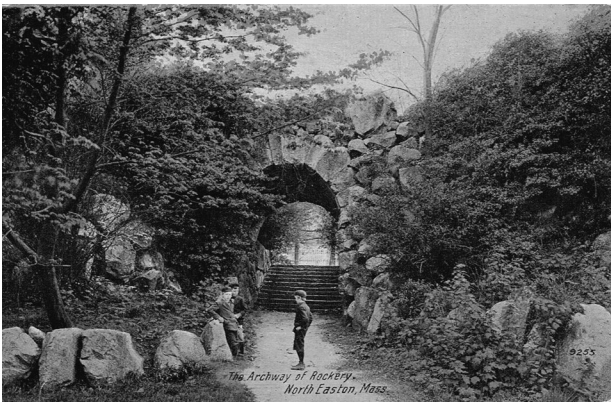
One of our projects during this pandemic has been to scan images of Easton postcards for future projects. Below are a few examples for you to look at. We hope you will enjoy this postcard tour around town.



The 1895 Oliver Ames High School stands proudly overlooking North Easton. The space around the card provided room for a message.



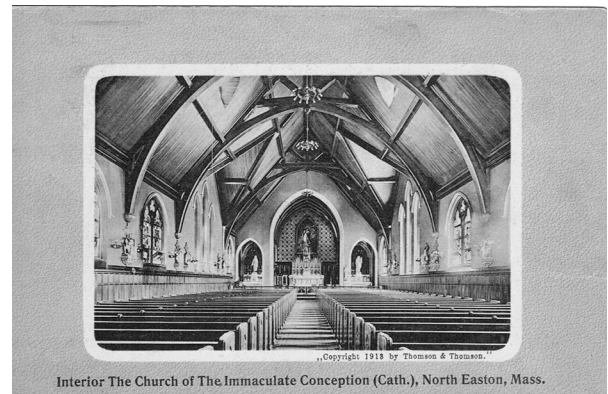
Built by workers from the Ames Shovel Company, the 1869 Easton High School building was moved around 1894 to make room for the new 1895 Oliver Ames High School. It served as a grammar school until about 1930 when it was torn down to make room for the gymnasium addition to the High School.



Three boys gather in the archway of the Rockery, a popular gathering spot for many years.



"Springhill" was built in 1893 by Governor Oliver Ames for his son William Hadwen Ames. The house is set far back from Elm Street. One can see why the locals sometimes referred to this as the "castle."



Interior views in Easton are rare. This post card features the original interior of the Immaculate Conception Church, Main Street, in 1913.

Donations

John and Linda Conant donated the following items from the **Rohdin** family: silk ladies gloves, milk pail, two woman's hats, man's hat, various early cookbooks, hurricane lamp, buggy whip, three canes / walking sticks, washing pitcher and bowl, Chelsea vase, Card Board from the NY, NH and Hartford Railroad, newspaper on President McKinley's shooting, newspapers on the Blizzard of 1978 and the Bicentennial, carnival glass 4 cup measuring cup, cranberry scoop, 2 antique hand held farm implements, J. H. Rohdin photo with delivery wagon and obituary. **Lela (Melendy) Pierce** donated four Easton school books from the early part of the 20th century. **Jeanne Ebert** donated family photos, photos of Ames workers, a 1960 Easton Valuation book, both volumes of History of Easton, and a ledger. The estate of **David and Barbara Williams**, through their daughter **Jean Atwater Williams**, donated newspapers from the early 1900's covering Lincoln's 100th birthday, the Great White Fleet trip around the globe, McKinley's death, the 1916 Republican Convention, and an older supplement to the Boston Globe about Garfield's death, and several Easton Bulletin newspapers. **Burt Lewis** donated two signed Mary Bodio prints of the "Unity Close" Gardens. The **Lions Thrift Shop**, with thanks to **Don Tuck**, donated an antique hand-held lawn trimmer and an old brass cooking thermometer. **Peter Constantine** donated a book of sheet music found in his house called The Amateur Cornetist printed 1906 and signed by John W. Shepard. **Robert Brooks** donated a full bottle of Simpson Spring Coffee Soda. **Ed Hands** donated the draft of Kate Klise's book Stay that was based on Ed and his dog Maggie, and an old stock certificate for Howard Johnsons. **George and Elaine Mather** donated a "Unity Close" Garden print signed by Mary Bodio, and four significant drawings and prints: a print of the United States Steamship "Atlantic"; a drawing of a garden plan for the mansion at Stonehill College, about 1916; two watercolor sketches of mansions by Parker, Thomas and Rice, Architects, 1916; and a pencil sketch for a house / garden for a Mrs. Ames. **James L. Lincoln** donated a panorama photo of the North Easton Knights of Columbus, 1928 taken in front of the Rockery. **John Visnauskis** donated the following items from his late parents papers: Fernandes Supermarket paper bag, Stonehill College Freshman Record, 1983, Stonehill Acres, 1984, Eastoners (1987, 1990, 1991), 1965 and 1970 Easton Valuation lists, June 1985 Easton Bulletin, 9 Olivians from the 1980's and 1990's, Byzantium literary magazine, Easton Junior High - 3 issues, The Oracle Easton school newspaper - 2 from 1998; Easton School News, 1983 + 1985, Innisfree - 3, from the 1990's and 2000, Information on the new HHR FLO School, Copies of American Studies curriculum, 1990's, OA Class of 1941 50th Anniversary items, newsclipping on McMenemy's 2000, OA program and ticket for Little Shop of Horrors, 1989, 1994 Class Night program, 1980-81 Easton Directory, 2 folding street maps, Easton Historical Society annual program book 1971-72, Poetry Slam tickets 1990's, Simpson Spring Labels, Moxie Labels featuring Ted Williams, Misc. undated photos of an OA Class Night, probably 1990's. **Joseph Freitas** donated information and photos of the Easton Town pool, 1960's. **Charles E. Beveridge, Lauren Meier, and Irene Mills** donated Frederick Law Olmsted: Communities and Private Estates, Supplementary Series Volume 3 of The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted published by Johns Hopkins University. **Arlene (Johnson) Robinson** donated a radio won by a young Joel Johnson in 1924 in a contest, and a news article about his winning the contest.

Financial contributions have been received from **Nancy Hill** in memory of Ken Martin.

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

In Memoriam

Donald Scott Deware, 60, of Easton, MA, passed away on Thursday, August 27, 2020 after a lengthy battle with cancer. Born in Quincy, MA, he attended Derby Academy, Thayer Academy and Hingham High School. He is a graduate of New England Institute, Mount Ida College, Newton MA, and received a degree in Business Management and the Applied Arts and Sciences. A family member of Deware Funeral Home in Quincy, MA., as a Funeral Director he performed several roles during four decades of commitment: President, Deware Family Funeral Homes, Quincy MA; Director of Marketing and Events, Affiliated Family Funeral Homes of New England (comprised of over ninety affiliated funeral homes in the Northeast United States and Eastern Canada and a subsidiary group of Service Corporation International (SCI) the world's largest funeral service provider). Through SCI, Scott was especially proud of his roles as the New England Director and Coordinator, "Escape School", a child abduction prevention program and the New England Director and Coordinator, "Smart and Safe Seniors", a senior citizen safety program. With the help of industry suppliers and a devoted team, the Dream Car Foundation was introduced in 1993. The #18 NASCAR BUSCH Grand National North Series replica of Scott's actual #18 NASCAR BUSCH Grand National North Series competition car made its debut, complete with a custom passenger door and a seat that swiveled out so that a child could be placed in the car. For several years the Dream Car Foundation fulfilled the dreams of boys and girls around New England by providing a full day at the track as a real team member highlighted by a solo ride (with all the NASCAR safety features in place) in the Dream Car driven by Scott. In 1995, Scott and his wife Melanie moved to Easton, MA. They purchase the oldest house in the town, the 1717 Josiah Keith House. He described the project as a real "love-hate relationship", restoring the property with historical accuracy into a home both warm and educational. This love of history bridged into Melanie being elected to the Easton Historical Commission and tirelessly working to preserve historically important buildings in Easton. During their eighteen years together they raised three girls, enthusiastically and tirelessly supporting all their school and outside activities. Scott is predeceased by his wife Melanie Jane (Lyons) Deware, and his parents the late Donald M. Deware and the late Mary E. Deware. He is survived by his children, Lily, Bethany, and Eden. Scott is the brother of Captain Jacklyn Dewar Gallagher, USN, Retired, her husband Captain Paul C. Gallagher, USN, Retired of Florida and nephew Chandler Scott. Son in law of John (Jack) and Charlotte Lyons of CT; Brother in law of Michael Lyons, his wife Cheryl, Nicholas and Marisa of SC; Jay Lyons, his wife Charlene, Anthony and Jason; Erik Lyons, his wife Pamela, Brayden and Selby of CT, Patrick Lyons, Jack and Gracie of NH. His full obituary can be viewed at <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/quincy-ma/d-scott-deware-9329193>

Barry G. Knowlton, age 78, died Thursday, September 24, 2020, at Good Samaritan Medical Center after a period of failing health. Barry was born in Brockton, son of the late George and Virginia (Bird) Knowlton. He grew up in Easton and was educated in the Easton school system. He was a longtime employee of Bay State Gas in Brockton, where he was a supervisor and well-liked by his men. Among his many activities and memberships were the Easton Rod and Gun Club, the Easton Historical Society, and the Police Chiefs Association of Mass. He was also a founding and generous member of Handi Kids in Bridgewater of which he was quite proud. Barry was an avid and accomplished outdoorsman and gun collector. He is survived by his brother Greg of Lexington, Texas, his son, Mark B. Knowlton of Daytona Beach, Fla., two daughters, Sara Knowlton of Bridgewater and Theresa Young of Portsmouth, R.I., his former wife, Rebecca (Maliff) Knowlton of Bridgewater, as well as two grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. He was also a good friend of Anne Marie Matuszak of Brockton. Barry was the brother of the late Ronald and Douglas Knowlton. His obituary can be found at <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/southofboston-enterprise/obituary.aspx?pid=196897164>

Florence Joan (Gnecco) Hall, 86, originally of North Easton, MA, passed away on Thursday, September 24th, 2020 with family by her side. She was born on November 8th, 1933 in Framingham, MA., daughter of John C. Gnecco Jr. and Florence M. Davey Gnecco. Florence was known by her friends and family for being loving, kind, thoughtful and generous. Throughout her life she enjoyed spending quality time with them, attending mass, and being a dedicated housewife. She loved taking craft classes and always found time to care for others, making them feel appreciated. She made everyone feel special. She was always ready to help with Girl Scouts or any activity important to family and friends. She was a devout Catholic and a long standing member of Immaculate Conception Church. Also, as a member of the Woman's Club, she greatly enjoyed the annual Christmas Bazaar. Florence is survived by her two daughters Ann-Marie Hall-Fiske and Mary-Ann Farrell, her son-in-law Mark R. Farrell Sr., her sister-in-law Elizabeth Gnecco, and her three grandchildren. She is also survived by many nephews and nieces and friends that were considered family including her snuggle buddy, Scout. She was predeceased by her husband William W. Hall, her sister Mary M. Treen and brother John C. Gnecco III. Her obituary is at <https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/18435634/Florence-J-Hall>

In Memoriam

Lawrence "Larry" A. Wood, 81, of North Easton, passed away on Friday, September 25th at Good Samaritan Hospital, Brockton, following a short period of failing health. Born and raised in Easton, he was the son of the late Arthur W. Wood and Mary A. (Garcia) Wood. He was a 1957 graduate of Oliver Ames High School. In 1959, completing U.S. Army Court Stenography School, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, Larry served in the European Theater Headquarters Communications Zone, Orleans, France. He was a Specialist 4th Class during the Berlin Crisis until discharge, returning to Easton in Jan. 1962. He worked at the Brockton Enterprise, Boston Edison and was a manager of several liquor stores in Dorchester. Larry is survived by his son, Larry Joe Wood and his mother, Anne Wood Leonard, of Penobscot, Maine, his sister, Margaret E. (Peggy) Turpin of Taunton, his brother, Francis W. "Butch" Wood and his wife, Valerie of North Easton, and his lifelong friend, Ron Somerville of Easton, as well as many nieces and nephews. He was also the brother of the late Robert A. "Bob" Wood of Canton and Mary Anne Schofield Murray of Easton. His obituary is here: <http://hosting-6751.tributes.com/obituary/show/Lawrence-A.-Wood-108496825>.

Janice (Mone) McEvoy, beloved wife of Leo D. McEvoy, devoted mother and grandmother, talented nurse and administrative nurse, and longtime resident of North Easton, passed away Thursday October 22, 2020. She graduated from Stoughton High School in 1952, and was an honor student, class officer, athlete, and cheerleader. Janice attended Massachusetts General Hospital School of Nursing, graduating in 1956 and accepted a nursing position at Massachusetts General Hospital. While on a short vacation with a classmate in the spring of 1956, Janice visited the USMA at West Point. While there she had a serendipitous meeting with Cadet Leo D. McEvoy of North Easton. They married in December 1957. After leaving military service, the family settled in North Easton. Janice accepted a position at Cardinal Cushing General Hospital, where she established and managed a utilization review department program. Future Cardinal Cushing General Hospital assignments included Social Service Group, Quality Assurance and then Director of Case Management until retirement after a 30 year career. She enjoyed extensive domestic and international travel. She was a faithful member of Immaculate Conception Church in North Easton. Janice will be lovingly remembered by her husband of 62 years, Leo and her children, John and Aedie McEvoy of Milton, Massachusetts, Kathy (McEvoy) and Cameron Law of Grand Junction, Colorado. Janice will also be fondly remembered by five grandchildren, Micah (Lizz), Eli (Sophia), Alexander, Leydn, and James. Her sister and brother-in-law Marilyn and Fred Hozeny, sister-in-law Nora Mone as well as one niece and two nephews, and one grand niece and three grand nephews. Janice was predeceased by her daughter Susan McEvoy and a brother Donald Mone. Her complete obituary can be found at <http://hosting-6751.tributes.com/obituary/show/Janice-M.-McEvoy-108498909>.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Deware, Knowlton, Hall, Wood, and McEvoy families.

In Appreciation

The family of David Varella deeply appreciates the thoughtfulness and generosity of so many who made donations to the Society in Dave's memory. These include Mary "Heidi" Ames, Mary "Minnie" Ames, Steven and Donna Anderson, Wayne Hill and Julius Apus, Robert Babineau, Harold and Patricia Bailey, Patricia Baker, Craig and Elaine Barger, Evelyn Battinelli, Barbara Beech, Myrtle Blaisdell, Myles and Gina Boone, Kelly Bressette, Robert Brooks, Geraldine Brown, Dr. Deborah Keirstead Bublitz, Jacqueline Buck, Patricia Buck, Abel and Ardath Camara, Jim Carlino, Diane Carr, Janice and Neysa Slater-Chandler, William and Diana Clay, George Comeaux, George and Elaine Cravenho, Jack and Nancy DeLuca, Thomas and Jane Deubler, Lois DiPasqua, Anne Wooster Drury, Joanne and Kenneth England, Marilyn Ford, Friends of Frothingham Hall, John E. Hill, Betty Holmberg, Madeline Miele Holt, Francis Ialenti, Marlana Johnsky, Kenneth and Eveline Johnson, Dolores Kent, Judith King, Ronald and Anne Marie Large, Edward and Theresa Leonard, Leon and Sara Lombardi, Janice and William Lyttle, John and Tammy Mallery, Christine Margulies, Gerard and Janice Marsan, Kristina McGill, Frank and Anne-Marie Meninno, Kenneth and Janet Michel, Carol Misiewicz, Leslie Gray and Hunter Moorman, John and Beth Mowatt, Larry and Luzann Noonan, Donna Silva Norris, North Easton Savings Bank, Duncan and Carol Oliver, Peter Paulino, Frank and Maeve Paul, Joanne and Frederick Peterson, John and Rita Pope, Maureen and Chet Raymo, Barbara Read, Burton Rosen, Gary and Charlotte Rosen, Thomas and Judy Sabin, Frank and Shirley Sahl, Steven and Debra Salisbury, Ellen and Robert Sheridan, Hilda Silva, Regina Silva, Robert Silva, John and Carol Strom, Michael and Florence Sullivan, Roberta Whitmore, Phyllis Johnson Whitty, Avery Williams, Kevin Williams, Allen and Eleanor Winecour, Elizabeth Cuzner Wood, and Maureen Yachimski.



Easton Bicycle Path

On December 12, 1974, a groundbreaking celebration was held for the beginning of construction of the Easton Bicycle Path, part of Easton dual-celebration of the Town's 250th Anniversary in 1975 and the United States Bi-Centennial celebration in 1976. The creation of the bikeway helped to link different parts of Easton together and promote the safe use of bicycles as a great way to discover areas of Easton. Today the path remains a favorite for bikers, runners, and walkers.

From left to right: Selectman James H. Healey; Gerald Ducharme, Public Relations Director of the Ma. Bi-Centennial Commission; Rev. Ernest Bartell, CSC, President of Stonehill College; G. Robert Shepard, Chair of Easton's Dual Celebration Commission; Representative John S. Ames, III; Easton Police Chief Joel Johnson; Easton Town Administrator James E. Chase; Selectman Chairman James D. Mullen, Jr.; and Col. Paul McPhersan, Director of Public Affairs, Stonehill College. Photo by Henry C. Bradford Professional Photography, West Bridgewater. Note the shovel that Rep. Ames is holding—it is the oldest Ames Shovel known to exist, dated about 1774, and is in the Ames Shovel collection at Stonehill College.

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