EASTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

Spring 2025 **Volume 26 Issue 1**

SPRING

There is much to look forward to at the station this Spring. On March 23rd our Open House is "A Tribute to Easton Music Teacher Ruth Ashley". We welcome any colleagues, friends, students, family, to our Open House in honor of Ruth Ashley and her importance in the history of education in Easton. Please send memories to the EHS&M, we would love to include them in a tribute booklet.

On Wednesday, April 9th Chowder & Chatter will be held at the Residence at 5 Corners, 6-8. There is limited seating and guests are limited to members and a friend. Please contact the EHS&M to reserve your seats! On Sunday April 6th there will be a special presentation at Oakes Ames Hall (2:00-4:00 pm) by the authors of a new book on the designs of H.H. Richardson. Jay Wickersham, Chris Milford, and Hope Mayo are the authors of a new book and the first in-depth publication from the Harvard Collection of over 4,000 drawings made by Richardson in his studio.

Upcoming highlights include:

"The Shot Heard Round the World", presented by Ken & Dianne Sterling, and the DAR, Deborah Sampson Chapter,2-4 on April 13th. Open House.

April 19, "Easton300 Family Fun Day" at Langwater Farm (10-2)

On Saturday, May 3rd the original Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs film will be shown at Stonehill College, 7-10

Volunteers are needed for the Museum's participation in Easton300 for a planning committee and participation in the scheduled July 12, 2025 parade. President Ken Michel is leading the effort to coordinate with the Garden Club and Ames Free Library. Get in touch if interested.

CALENDAR

Thursday, March 20, Spring begins

Sunday, March 23, Open House, Tribute to Ruth Ashley 12-4

Wednesday, April 9, Chowder & Chatter at the Residence, 6-8 pm

Saturday, April 12, Passover begins

Sunday, April 13, Open House, "The Shot Heard Round the World" 12-4 pm

Saturday, April 19, Family Fun Day at Langwater Farm, 10-2

Sunday, April 20, Easter

Saturday, May 3, At Stonehill College, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs", 7-10 pm

Sunday, May 11, Mother's Day

Sunday, May 18, Open House

Monday, May 26, Memorial Day

Sunday, June 15, Father's Day

Thursday, June 19, Juneteenth

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.

Museum News

A special thank you to Paul Berry and Steve Anderson for their help with the Biweekly Newsletters. Paul does much of the research and Steve makes it all look good. I couldn't do it without them! The Museum continues to be open on Saturdays 10 to 4 and on many days during the week when the OPEN flag is out. It is closed all Mondays.

The fire suppression system is complete. Thank you to Tim Hurley for overseeing this. Now basement renovations can begin. Estimated completion is May 2025. To be done: removal of remaining items, pouring of concrete, installation of industrial dehumidifiers, creation of egress windows for ventilation and an emergency exit. Thank you to Robert Silva for a significant monetary donation.

In February Ken and Jon gave a talk at Zen Easton Senior Living. The topic was the Ames Family and the Shovel Business. The get-together was very well-attended and a second visit will be scheduled. On April 16, Ken and Jon will be presenting a program at the Residences in Easton and speaking about the Ames Shovel Works.

The EHSM annual letter was mailed February 28 and subsequently sent to all email addresses.

On Sunday, January 19 the Society hosted an Open House, "The Fourth Fred". Frederick Lothrop Ames spoke about his family and the three 'Freds' before him. He is the fourth. The February Open House focused on the Morse car.

On Sunday, February 16 the topic of our Open House was the Morse Car. Many thanks to Jonathan Coe for arranging the museum display. Both the January and February Open Houses were standing room only.

In the South Woman's Waiting Room, the following were displayed: "Pilgrim Wedding Procession", a gift from OA class of 1901, it has been restored and hung, The Rev. Paul Dean portrait, the current Unity Church with original transept east window, a newly framed Mary Bodio print of Stonehill College, and a J.E. Goss bus sign has been added. In the North Men's Waiting Room there is a new display of vintage scrapbooks, Ames family portraits, a donated "duster" coat used when riding in vintage cars, and the Ames Mansions pictures were reorganized.

Plans are in the works to enhance outside security. Signage noting video monitoring will be added and current outside cameras abilities will be enhanced. A smaller map designed for walking tours of historic North Easton was updated and reprinted. The gift of a children's wicker 3 chair set originally from Springhill was received at the station and re-gifted to the Rhodes Family, the current owners of Springhill.

Membership. If you want to become a member or renew your membership go to our website and click on the MEMBERSHIP menu. It is easy to navigate and join/renew online. **www.eastonmahistoricalsociety.org** You can also pay be check if you prefer. Mail to P,O. Box 3, 80 Mechanic Street, North Easton, MA 02356. If you are not sure of your membership status please contact us.

""No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn" — Hal Borland

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

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The "Four Freds"

At the **January Open House** Fred Ames engaged the audience with his talk on the "Four Freds". He himself being the fourth.

The first, Frederick Lothrop Ames Sr. (June 8, 1835 – September 13, 1893) inherited a fortune in railroads and shovel manufacturing, was Vice President of the Old Colony RR and a director of the Union Pacific RR.[1] His grandfather was Oliver Ames Sr. He built the Langwater Estate.

Frederick Lothrop Ames Jr. (July 23, 1876 – June 19, 1921) was the great-grandson of Oliver Ames. He was involved in the Ames Shovel Company. and served on the boards of directors of many company. He was the great-grandson of Oliver Ames and son of Frederick Lothrop Ames. He built Stone House Hill House and raised prize winning Guernsey cattle.

Frederick Lothrop "Freddy" Ames III (May 1, 1905-Nov 6, 1932) was the son of Frederick Lothrop Ames Jr. Very interested in flying, Freddy had a small airport on his estate, called the "Ames Country Club of the Air", on what are now athletic fields for Stonehill College. Freddy was on the cusp of a serious career in the new field of commercial aviation when unfortunately he died in a plane crash at the age of twenty-seven.

The "Fourth Fred" (b. 1952) currently lives in Easton, MA and helps keep his family's history alive. He is the President of the Board of Trustees for the Oakes Ames Memorial Hall.

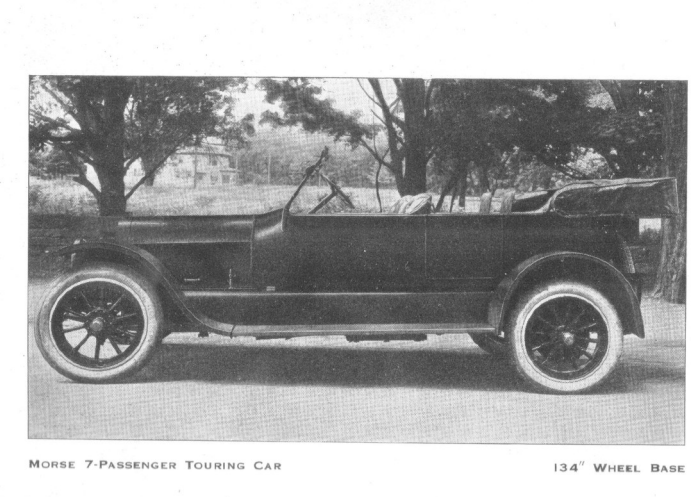
Left, photo of Fred Ames and HS&M President Ken Michel. Above, Fred Ames speaking at a well-attended Open House.

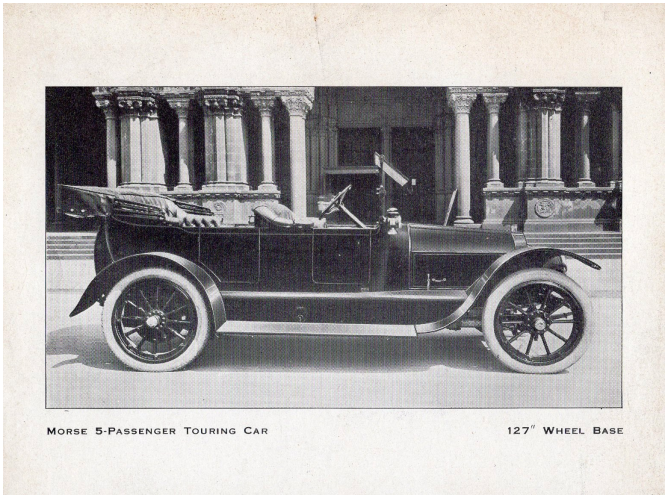
February's Open House was "Easton's Morse Cars Revisited". Dr. Stanson Moody was the guest speaker. Dr. Moody, D.M.D., has always been interested in antique cars, on which he is expert, and he is a *particular* expert on Morse cars. The presentation began with President Ken Michel speaking about the 1899 Morse Prototype and how it was acquired by the EHS&M and the difficulty of transporting, insuring, and positioning the car in the Museum. All during COVID. Dr. Moody spoke about five specific Morse cars: the 1899 Prototype housed in the Museum, the 1902 2 seat Runabout, the 1 seat Runabout, the 5 seat Touring Car, and the 7 seat Touring Car.

The Morse car was manufactured in Easton, was well made and purchased by many local people. Members of the Ames family owned Morse cars, the F.B. Washburn Candy & Biscuit Co. of Brockton purchased 5 Morse cars with a delivery truck custom made. Elsie Janis, American actress of stage and screen, had a car custom-made for her, and Dr. Hallet of Brockton owned a 1 seat Runabout that he used for house calls.

Many Morse family members were in attendance and added to the conversation. A very enjoyable afternoon.

Morse family members enjoying the "Morse Car". Pictured left, Tad Morse, Sarah Morse, Peggy Morse, and Mary Beth Morse. Pictured right, Peggy Morse, Jonathan Coe, and Susie McDonald Sheehan.





The Morse Car, two models– the 5 person touring car and the 7 person touring car.

An Automobile Holdout

There are always people who choose not to change with the times. They prefer things the way they have always been. George W. McLauthlen of Highland Street was one of those people. In 1938 at age 88, he was still driving his horse and buggy regularly to Brockton. According to a Dec. 27, 1938, article in the *Daily Boston Globe,* George figured that over the previous 30 years he had ridden approximately 150,000 miles in his then 50-year-old buggy. McLauthlen worked for years in the shoe business in Brockton and later at the J.H. Nye office, also in Brockton. His daily routine, which included driving 6 days a week with his horse and buggy, was responsible for his longevity, he believed. One of the perks of his non-gasoline ride was that he didn't need a sticker.

McLauthlen's horse's name was Hollyrood Blackstone and he was a retired race horse. Not surprisingly George was also a great horseman and a charter member of the Brockton Gentleman's Riding Club. For some years he owned a livery stable on Wilders Ct. in Brockton. His way of life- which even at age 88 included rising early, milking the cows and feeding the chickens- worked for him and that's what matters. By 88 he had slowed down somewhat, only driving to Brockton 3 days a week!

He Sticks to Horse and Buggy Days

George McLauthlen of North Easton at 88 Drives Over to Brockton Three Days Each Week

GEORGE W. McLAUTHEN AND HOLLYROOD BLACKSTONE
Hollyrood is a lively critter in the morning.

Article published in Daily Boston Globe, December 27, 1938.

Between 1902 and 1914 the Easton Machine Company, owned by Alfred B. Morse, built about 48 automobiles. The first Morse car was a two-cylinder runabout. Alfred's focus was to produce a high-performance car with exceptional durability and economy of operation. Eventually, the four-cylinder Morse cars were offered in four body styles. In 1910, the cost for the runabout car was around thirty-nine hundred dollars. Above is the factory located on Central Street in South Easton.

Alfred Bryant Morse was the third generation of Morse entrepreneurs in Easton. Amazingly he only had an eighth grade education. He was very clever and filed over 80 patents. The first Morse in Easton was E,J.W. Morse who arrived in the 1820's and produced cotton thread. Later the family patented a silk-like thread that was very successful. Eventually the company was sold and Alfred used that factory, and a new one he built, to experiment with many machines, the most famous result was the Morse Car.

The whereabouts of only 2 of the Morse cars is known today.

JAMES GINTY OF MANSFIELD HAS STRENUOUS DAY

Just as George W. McLauthlen resisted the switch to the automobile, James Ginty of Mansfield had a hard time accepting the "electric road" or trolley cars of his day. In 1898 the Easton & Mansfield trolley line was built and part of Mr. Ginty's land was taken. He alleged damage was done to his land that was never repaired as promised. After that he became been a bit of a nuisance. At various times he spoke at town meeting, blockaded the trolley, delayed passage, and eventually damaged property. On December 17, 1902, a motorist approaching Ginty's Corner "found planks and a small tree across the rails." Standing on top was Mr. Ginty. Mr. Ginty informed the trolley car driver "that the car should not pass unless it went over his body." As the incident dragged on Deputy Sheriff Henry A. Perry of Mansfield and the superintendent of the Norton and Taunton Company arrived and ordered the obstructions removed. However later the same day more damage was done, an electric car broken, windows wrecked, the street blocked. "The motor-man claims that he was chased by Mr. Ginty, who furiously swung an ax, and at one time, it is alleged, displayed a gun." This time Mr. Ginty was arrested for breach of the peace and obstruction of an electric road. Further research is needed on the result of the charge and his threatened lawsuit. (*Boston Daily Globe*, *(1872-1922):* Dec. 18, 1902. ProQuest Historical Newspapers, The Boston Globe, p.1.)

Donations

Monetary donations were made by Bob Silva, James Carlino, Maura McCarthy, Nancy DeLuca, Scott Faust, Maura Tyrell, Kristine H. Atkinson, Robert Babineau, James Baker, Wayne Casey, Joseph Blansfield, Mark Ingalls, Dianne McNamara, Robert Wooster Jr., Barbara Beech, Christine Salmon, Harold Bailey, and William Monahan.

IN MEMORIAM

Jean A. (Southworth) Alger, 95, a lifelong resident of Easton, passed away on January 21, 2025 within hours of her loving husband, Robert L. Alger Sr. The couple recently celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary and have been together since their childhood. Jean was a 1947 graduate of Oliver Ames High School and continued her education at William Business School in Brockton. Jean is a longtime member of the Easton Historical Society and the Natural Resource Trust of Easton. Jean is survived by her children, Donald R. Alger and his wife Karen of Whitman, Rev. Kathleen S. Alger and her spouse Rev. Debora-Ellen Brown of Manchester, NH., Nancy Varney and her husband Mark of West Bridgewater and Robert L. Alger Jr. and his wife Lori of Middleboro; her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Robert L. Alger Sr., 96, a lifelong resident of Easton, passed away on January 21, 2025 within hours of his loving wife's passing, Jean A (Southworth) Alger. The couple recently celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary and have been together since their childhood. Born in Easton, a son of the late Alton E. and Florence M. (Walker) Alger, he was raised in Easton and was a 1946 graduate of Oliver Ames High School. Robert began his working career at Simpson Springs Beverage Company of Easton. After he worked as an assembler in the gear manufacturing industry and started out with Boston Gear and retired from Astro Gear and Instrument of Brockton after years of service to the company. A longtime member of the Evangelical Congregational Church of Easton where he was also the custodian from 1965-2018. Robert was an honorary member of the Easton Lions Club. Robert was a former member of the Easton Finance committee for a number of years and a member of the Easton Historical Society as well as the Natural Resource Trust of Easton. He was the brother of the late Clarence Alger, Alton F. Alger, Hazel Benton and Marian Rowand.

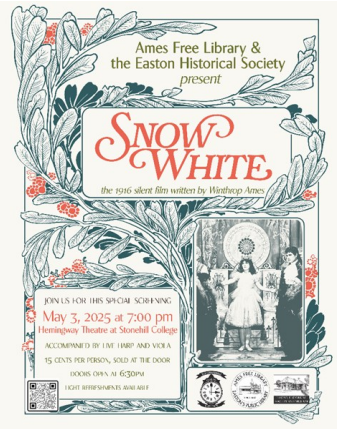
Robert N. (Robin) Brooks of Amherst, MA, formerly of North Easton, MA, passed away on January 3, 2025. Mr. Brooks was the son of the late Atty. and Mrs. Abraham Brooks of North Easton. He was a 1953 graduate of Oliver Ames High School and a 1957 graduate of Brandeis University. In1964, he received an Ed. M from Boston University's Graduate School of Education. From 1958-60 he was the director of protocol and Secretary to Massachusetts Governor Foster Furcolo; from 1964 until retiring in 2001, he was a Student Affairs administrator at UMass Amherst, where he served as Associate Dean of Students, Assistant Dean of Admissions, and in the ten years prior to his retirement, Director of Visitor Relations In 1998, he was named Amherst "Citizen of the Year"; in 2012, Brandeis University's Board of Trustees elected him a "Fellow of the University" recognition of his years of service, including his role as alumni historian and archivist for the senior staff. He was a Colonel (Ret.) in the U.S. Army Reserve Medical Service Corps. A lifelong bachelor, Mr. Brooks leaves a brother, David B. Brooks of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Michael L. Corsini, 67, a lifelong resident of Easton, passed away on January 29, 2025. He was the husband of Claire Kilawee. Born in Brockton, a son of the late Leon and Jane (Plunket) Corsini, he was raised in Easton and graduated from Oliver Ames High School in 1975. After completing his Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Northeastern University, Michael served the Commonwealth for 37 years, dedicating much of his career to corrections leadership. Michael was a respected leader and a man who balanced his professional dedication with a deep love for his family. He was a proud member of the Easton Historical Society and the American Correctional Association. In addition to his wife Claire, he is survived by two children, Mia Corsini Bailey and her husband David of Kingston and Liam Corsini of Norton; his siblings, Anne Hutchinson of Easton, Melon Corsini of Supply, NC., Timothy Corsini of Berkley, and Christopher Corsini of Hull; he leaves behind many loved nieces, and nephews, and many lifelong friends from his hometown of Easton and beyond.

Elizabeth Ann (Wade) Porter, 95, a lifelong resident of North Easton passed away on March 2, 2025. Predeceased by her beloved husband of 63 years, Howard L. Porter Jr. Loving mother of Deborah J. Varisco and her husband Phillip of the Township of Washington, NJ, Howard Porter III and his partner Denise Kenney of Brewster, and Bonnie J. Porter-Meglio and her husband Vincent of North Easton, as well as 5 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. Elizabeth graduated from Oliver Ames High School in 1947 and attended Boston University. She was the secretary and bookkeeper for her husband's plumbing business. She was involved in numerous community organizations including the Order of the Easton Star, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Easton Historical Society, Clover Club, Garden Club and more. She served as a polling warden for the Town of Easton for more than five decades. Elizabeth received several awards, including the Lions Club Outstanding Achievement Award, in recognition of her many years of service.

Easton's 300th anniversary celebration continues with a showing of the 1916 silent film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,* written and produced by Winthrop Ames. The film will be shown on Saturday, May 3rd at 7:00 pm in the Hemingway Theater at Stonehill College. There is seating for 250 people, doors open at 6:30. Tickets will be sold at the door.

The tale was written as a play by Winthrop Ames under the pseudonym Jessie Braham White and produced by him under his own name. Debuting at the Little Theater in New York City on October 31, 1912, the play starred Marguerite Clark. The play was a more light-hearted version of the tale that was appropriate for children. Performances were held after school at 3:30 and later eleven o'clock shows were added on Saturdays as the play was so popular. The play was well-received, and Marguerite Clark went on to star in the 1916 silent film. A young Walt Disney saw that film.



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