



# The Hourglass

CCX Northborough Historical Society April 2012

**Meeting April 27, 2012, 7:30 PM**  
**Northborough Historical Society**  
Program: "Great Scott! It's Andrew Carnegie".

Richard Clark will portray Andrew Carnegie, a man of contradictions, who rose from humble beginnings to become the "King of Steel" and the richest man in the world.

*Hosted by Mary Kennerly and Sue Halpin.*

## **A Native Returns to Northborough in 1908**

Elizabeth Myrick, one of the great-grandchildren of Rev. Joseph and Lucy Allen, was born in Northborough in 1890. Her mother, Helen, a daughter of the Allens' third child, Thomas Prentice Allen, lived in Northborough for many years and married Lockwood Myrick, the son of a minister who had assisted Rev. Allen in the latter part of his pastorate, but the family moved to New Jersey when Elizabeth was still an infant, and she never lived in town thereafter. The Myricks did sometimes come, usually individually, to visit their relatives, descendants of the Allens' eldest child, Mary, who dwelt in the former parsonage on Church Street.

Elizabeth visited them in the spring of 1908. Writing letters being an essential part of the way of life of the Allens and their descendants, Elizabeth wrote five letters to her mother. Much of what Elizabeth did obviously reflects townspeople's activities in

## **Membership**

Northborough Historical Society  
Membership Dues:

Regular \$15.00; Student and  
Seniors (65 and over) \$10.00;  
Family \$35.00; and Life \$250.00.

Dues should be sent to

Judy Bissett

300 Ball St.

Northborough, MA 01532

Checks should be made out to the  
Northborough Historical Society

Director's Meeting  
Historical Society Building  
April 10, 2012  
7:30PM

## **Curator's News**

The museum will open on May 6th with a new military exhibit to honor the men and women of Northborough who enlisted and served their country. To kick off the season, we are hosting a USO Canteen on Sunday, May 6th from 2 to 4:00. The meeting hall will be decorated, music played, canteen sandwiches and beverages served and a Bake Sale will offer tasty items made by our members. Come join in the fun and see the new exhibit.

Proceeds from the Bake Sale

their leisure time: attention to relatives, exchanging visits with neighbors, going for walks, picnicking, picking flowers. Elizabeth also spent much time at the library (the front portion of the present library), probably more than did the typical resident. One of the children she met while in town, nine-year-old Elizabeth Hilliard, would one day become its head librarian. "I like Elizabeth, she is so quiet and old-fashioned," she wrote her mother.

She visited Mrs. Gale, widow of Cyrus, who had funded the building of the library, and saw a good deal of the Mentzer, Potter, Eames, and other families-and cousins almost beyond number. As in earlier days at the parsonage, people who came to stay for a while, including relatives, paid board, and Elizabeth also was enlisted at times to care for small children.

She provides a detail about the recent death of Raymond Potter, which I happened to have mentioned in an Hourglass last fall. He had suffered an attack of appendicitis. Elizabeth learned that "he wished very much to have an operation then and his father seconded him. But the doctors thought it wasn't necessary, but that he could finish his course at Worcester Polytechnic where he was a senior, and have it this summer if it was still necessary. This spring [actually in February] he had another attack combined with peritonitis" and died.

On May 1 Elizabeth wrote of attending a Historical Society meeting the preceding evening. "Mr. Kent spoke, reading extracts from town records and other things. It was very interesting." In her next letter she tells of attending the May Festival, which had been postponed until May 8, "at the hall," presumably the Town Hall. "There was a

will go toward the 1874 Pipe Organ restoration fund. This project and the CPA funding requests will be voted in during town Meeting on April 23 and 24th. Please support this much-needed restoration request.

Thanks to Carol and Buz Bostock, our meeting hall windows sparkle after they spent a few afternoons washing windows. What a wonderful way to welcome spring. Thanks again!

The Northborough Historical Commission is in need of two new members. They meet once a month and work to preserve the historic character and charm which draws families to our community. If you are interested and would like more information, please contact Diane Wackell at the Town Hall, 508-393-5001 or [HC@town.northborough.ma.us](mailto:HC@town.northborough.ma.us).

#### **New Accessions:**

Two men's hats from 1930/40s and china tea cups from Trish and Joseph Benedict  
Vintage kitchen implements from Marie Nieber  
Bicentennial buttons and coin, 1966 from JoAnn Sullivan  
Two Bicentennial booklets from Cathy Cairns  
Annual reports, booklets, papers of N. history including a menu from CAFE DU COQ D'OR with ham or chicken sandwiches for 25c from Bucky Rogers.

***Ellen Racine, Curator***

march of seventy-two children headed by two girls with butterfly wings of large dimensions." After this group assembled, the approach of the queen, Louise Eldredge, was signaled by a bugle. "The queen stepped out of her chariot and approached her throne in an elaborate procedure." After the subsequent coronation came "a scarf drill of nine girls about my size. Then the winding of the maypole by eight boys and eight girls." Thereafter there were dances including a Virginia reel . . . and a rainbow drill of twelve girls which was very pretty. The programme ended with a chorus." Dancing both by children and adults followed. Elizabeth stayed in bed till noon the next day.

In the same letter she tells of a walk, probably along Maple Street and then Ridge Road, "to Bartlett's pond where we stayed quite a while. Then home by a road branching off opposite the pond (most likely Collins Road). When we came to the railroad we walked along it the rest of the way to Main Street." She writes of several other walks: one to the Pine Grove, "to the left of Howard St. beyond the cemetery," one to "the waterfall by the sawmill", one along Fay Lane, and one on Mt. Assabet, which members of the family always visited on the Sunday after the apple trees bloomed. She was always looking for flowers and tells of picking "crow foot violets."

Her letters make clear that local social events and encounters with nature were prominent features of Northborough life in 1908. Kenneth, her younger brother, and his family lived in the old parsonage for many years beginning in the 1950s.

*Bob Ellis, Historian*

