



The Hourglass

CCXI Northborough Historical Society May 2012

**Meeting May 18, 2012, Pot Luck Supper
6:30PM. Regular and Annual meeting 7:30PM.**

Program: What Would You do for Freedom? -
National Park Ranger, Chuck Arning, will discuss
the compelling stories of formerly enslaved
Africans, their quest for freedom, and those who
spoke to the citizens of Northborough.

*Hosted by Board of Directors and Program
Committee*

Northborough in 1962

Let's look at how Northborough was viewed fifty years ago. According to the selectmen's report in the 1962-1963 Annual Town Report, operations at the Town Hall, once "carried on in a couple of closets somewhere in the back," had "pushed all but one commercial establishment off the ground floor. Our booming population will not fit in the auditorium for Town meetings." What was to be done? "Whether it is a large renovation, whether it is removing the top two floors [which had been condemned as unsafe] and renovating the bottom, or whether it is a gigantic bonfire and a complete new building, changes are coming to our Town Hall and not too far away." The bonfire, as it turned out, would not happen for twenty-three more years.

On the subject of transportation, the selectmen observed that "Route 495 is now under construction between Westborough and Marlborough." Meanwhile, "going in the other direction, the best guesses place the Worcester

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
May 8, 2012
7:30PM

Curator's News

Sunday, May 6th is the
Museum opening - and to
celebrate our new Military
exhibit, "Marching Through
Time" we will decorate our
meeting hall as a USO
Canteen from 2 to 4:00
pm. Sandwiches, pastries
and beverages, music and a
Bake Sale will kick off our
spring museum

Expressway on the 'northern' route." This possibility raised the question of whether there should be access in Northborough, or where the access should be? Would a new road be needed from the Expressway (i.e., Route I-290] to the center of town?

Other issues concerned fire and police protection. The conservative commitment to the increasingly difficult task of supplying fire-fighting volunteers is reflected in the way the selectmen posed the question: "Will we be forced from a cracker-jack Volunteer Fire Department to a so-so full time Fire Department?" The town's police chief for thirty years, during many of which he served as a one-man force, Francis P. Boudreau, died in February. James Carbrey replaced him, and at the March town meeting the voters approved a motion to add a fifth police officer to the department.

At the March town meeting two articles passed relating to pest control. For insect pest control and gypsy moth control \$1,435 was appropriated, and \$3,500 was approved for a "mist blower." In that same year a monumentally important environmental book, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, was published, but six years would elapse before Massachusetts banned the use of DDT.

Schools are always an important issue. A motion "to recommend the School Committee take steps to establish a Public Kindergarten beginning in 1963" lost. Almost another decade had to pass before kindergartens were established in Northborough. The School Committee urged that "the town be prepared for the possible necessity of building another elementary school for September 1965." This would be the Lincoln Street School, which would be built on the same plan as that of a new school opening in 1962. The preceding year the town had taken by eminent domain land on Maple Street that had been the farm of Ralph DeArmond and of his father before him. Still living in the

season. Come join in the fun and see the new exhibit. My thanks to Museum trustee members Cindy and Dick Atwood and Kathy Pierce for all their time and talents.

Proceeds from the Bake Sale will go toward the 1874 Pipe Organ Restoration fund. Our thanks to the Community Preservation Committee and the voters of Northborough for funding this special historic project. We look forward to hosting many organ concerts in the future.

New Accessions:

Wood ironing board, toasters, toys, etc. from Kevin Carroll

Two-man saw, sewing machine, early wall telephone, apple-butter paddle, 1960s clothing and hats from Dolores Weaver.

Ellen Racine, Curator

Ellen Racine, Curator

family's eighteenth-century cottage was Ralph's daughter Edith. At a special town meeting on July 16 the most dramatic event of Northborough's legislative year occurred. With the new school rising behind Miss DeArmond's quaint home, the town defeated 153-141 a motion "to convey to Edith a life interest in a parcel of land on Maple Street subject to certain conditions." Edith was evicted, and the cottage was not permitted to stand in the front yard of the Maple Street School as a possible demonstration to students of early town life, for indeed it had been very little modernized. A few years later the school would be renamed in honor of Marguerite E. Peaslee, a long-time art teacher in the Northborough schools.

The population boom of the 1960s was already suggesting that three-year-old Algonquin Regional would soon be too small. The late nineteenth-century Hudson Street School had to be used to supplement the former high school on Main Street as the home of the town's junior high school students. A few years later the concept of the middle school was attracting attention, and late in the decade such a project was launched on Lincoln Street.

In 1962 Civil Defense remained a prominent issue. For the first time a personnel policy for town employees was being worked out. And the third floor of the Winn-Whitaker building at the corner of Main and South Streets, where nationally famous boxers like Joe Gans and Sam Langford had once trained, was pulled down.

Bob Ellis, Historian