



The Hourglass

CCXVI Northborough Historical Society December 2012

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Way Back in 2002

We have attempted to deal with several centuries, but so far nothing about the 21st. This time we will recall the year 2002. Let's start with a controversy of the year: should a car wash be built on a corner of Main and Maple Streets occupied for many years by a series of restaurants? The opponents won that battle, and today we have a credit union instead. (When a space opens up in Northborough, a bank or credit union usually springs forth.)

Businesses come and go, and 2002 saw the end of Everybody's Bicycle Shop not far from that corner and of the rocket Mr. Trimble planted outside. It was also announced that the Laurence Candle Factory would be moving perhaps nearby, perhaps someplace else. Someplace else won. The following year a Lexus dealer would operate in town-no car washes but more cars. Armeno Coffee Roasters was sold but to a local buyer.

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

Kent's Current Events

Jan.14, 1914. Cold Weather

Wednesday For three days we have been having very rough weather. It started in at about noon on Monday with a black snow squall. From that time the wind increased in violence and the cold in intensity. By the middle of the afternoon the wind was blowing seventy miles an hour and kept up all through the night and all the next day. The mercury

And another hardy business,

Sawyer's Bowladrome, celebrated fifty years in town.

A cultural institution, the Assabet Valley Mastersingers also celebrated an anniversary, its twenty-fifth. Another institution, Algonquin Regional High School, learned from an archaeological dig on property into which the school needed to expand, that although there were some ancient artifacts on the land, there were important living things too-salamanders. It was hoped that such finds would not result in delays-but they did. Another school acquired a new name: Melican Middle School.

There were several changes in local governance. Jill Myers resigned as Assistant Administrator and was replaced by a gentleman named John Coderre. Whatever happened to him? Northborough was not ready in 2002 to join the communities that had decided to embrace the Community Preservation Act, but it was ready, by a 3-2

fell below zero, and at no time on Tuesday did it rise higher than 4 degrees below. Today there has been but little wind, but the cold is intense. Both this morning and yesterday the mercury was down to 14 degrees below zero.

Railroad service has been demoralized, and much damage done. It is one of the worst situations known to the weather bureau.

Jan. 27, 1915. Burglary. Northborough was the scene of several burglaries last night. The Burglars entered the Selectmen's Room in the Town Hall and after ransacking that room passed into the drug store of Claude T. Shattuck where they stole cigars etc. They next went into the grocery store of Mr. Daniels (next door) where they took nothing; next into the Post Office where they got nothing; next into the Depot where they got about eleven dollars belonging to the Express Company; and next to George H. Felt's coal office where they stole Mr. Felt's fur coat.

Jan. 15, 1919 The Movies Come

Northborough is developing into an amusement center, The movies have struck town, and gave their premier performance this Evening. By permission of

vote of the selectman, to adopt trash bag fees, which would be a mere \$1 for a small bag, \$2 for a large one. The voters decided to approve the purchase of the former Fish and Game property on Colburn Street, but it was not at the time being considered to fulfill the obvious need for a new senior center.

Many townspeople rejoiced when William and Ann Rawstron, members of the Historical Society, also demonstrated their friendship with the environment, agreeing to protect permanently sixty-two acres of their land from future "development."

Improvements in the span over the Assabet at Allen Street became essentially a new bridge. Anyone residing in the area for much longer than fifty years could say that he or she had lived to see three bridges built over the river at that point.

Two changes in Northborough clergy came about. The first was an unhappy one, for Father Chester Devlin of St. Bernadette's had to be removed upon discovery of past sexual misconduct. More happily, a new pastor, Judith Wright, was chosen to lead the congregation of the Unitarian Church.

Among the deaths of the year were some well-remembered Historical Society members: Caroline Walker, Dorothy Hunt, and Frances Doherty. Dot Hunt was an instigator of a program of interviews, especially with older citizens, that have become one of our important resources. One of the early interviews, on August 6, 1998, was with Caroline Walker, then 95, who told of living in an apartment house on Whitney Street when her girlhood friend, Marguerite Peaslee, came to visit her. Mrs. Walker, then Miss Merrill, asked

the Selectmen, a performance will be given every Wednesday evening. The movies have great educational possibilities, and are beginning to be used in that capacity. I think that the moving picture business has a great future. Lest some should regard this as the first moving picture exhibition in Northborough I will record this: The first exhibition was given in the town hall 21 years ago, and under the auspices of the churches. The pictures were very crude, but they were a novelty and drew a big crowd, notwithstanding the weather was very stormy. I remember this exhibition very vividly, for I represented my church on the committee.

her friend, fresh from Portland Art School, to teach her class at Hudson Street School one day. The superintendent heard her, hired her, and Miss Peaslee taught in Northborough for over thirty years. Another of Mrs. Walker's stories pertained to her first playground duty in Northborough. Some of her boy students yelled, "Here comes old lady Merrill." Meeting with her after school at a running track, "The boys started to run, and I beat every boy in the class. So I was no longer 'old lady Merrill.'"

Fran Doherty, the curator when I became involved in the archive, helped me enormously. She was a social treasure generally. If, as sometimes happens, a speaker did not show up, she would quickly fill in, her specialty being an uproarious presentation from an ancient book setting forth rules of etiquette.

It is still a little early for me to comment on the people who were born in 2002, but I can report that in that year Howie and Susanne Stone announced the arrival of a baby llama.

Bob Ellis, Historian

**Director's Meeting
Historical Society Building
7:30 PM January 1,, 2013**

Our mailing address has changed

**Northborough Historical Society
300 Ball St.
Northborough, MA 01532**