



THE HOUR GLASS

NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Northborough Historical Society

May 2015

www.northboroughhistoricalsociety.org

Step back in time, as the chorus "American Harmony," brings our nation's earliest choral music to life at the next meeting of the Northborough Historical Society, Friday, May 15 at 7:30 p.m. An optional pot luck supper begins at 6:30 p.m. The singers are directed by music historian Nym Cooke, who has been leading choruses, choirs and community sings in New England for almost 30 years. He is the author of a new book coming out this year titled "American Harmony."

The General Artemas Ward House in Shrewsbury will be the setting for a members-only event on Sunday, June 14 from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. Tours will take place at 12:00 and 2:30 p.m., with a picnic lunch at 1:00. Sign up at the Welcome Table or with Paul DeRosier at WCD Garage 44 West Main Street (508-393-2493) or mail a check to Paul at 192 Whitney Street. Tickets are \$10.

The Board of Directors will meet at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 12.

The Legislative Committee proposes the following changes to the Society's by-laws. These changes will be voted on at the annual meeting, 7:30 p.m. May 15.

Article V, Section 1 Subsection A Term and eligibility for reelection of elected officers - Proposal: That the Membership Secretary serves an indefinite term, instead of the current 2-year term, with the eligibility of being reelected for a further 2-year term.

Article IV, Section 6 Standing Committees - Proposal: That the Kitchen Committee consisting of at least 3 members but no more than 5, be made a standing committee of the Society, and that the duties of the committee chairperson be as listed in this section.

Article V, Section 1 Subsection D Terms of Office for Standing Committees - That the terms of office for kitchen committee members be included be the same as those under Other Standing Committees. *One member shall be elected each year for a 3-year term and shall not be eligible for re-election.*

The Nominating Committee proposes the following slate of officers for the 2015-16 season, with those underlined being nominated for election at the annual meeting May 15.

President	<u>Mark Bashour</u>	2017
Vice President	<u>Robert Marchetta</u>	2017
Directors	Carol Bostock	2016
	Jane Fletcher	2016
	Robert Marchetta	2016
	<u>Diane Lyford</u>	2017
	<u>Forest Lyford</u>	2017
	<u>Vacant</u>	2017
Treasurer	Frank Bissett	Indefinite
Recording Secretary	Hilary Wilson	Indefinite
Membership Secretary	Jenifer Kahn Bakkala	2016
Newsletter Editor	Jenifer Kahn Bakkala	Indefinite
Museum Trustees	Beryl Krouse	2016
	Cheryl Saverese	2016
	Cynthia Atwood	2017
	Richard Atwood	2017
	<u>Kathy Pierce</u>	2018
	<u>Jo-Ann Sullivan</u>	2018
Hospitality	Jane Fletcher	2016
	Linda Corbin	2017
	<u>Vacant</u>	2018
Program	Arlene Marshall	2016
	Richard Ferenchick	2017
	Gabrielle Russo	2017
	<u>Melissa Lesage</u>	2018
Property	Jim Halpin	2016
	<u>Forest Lyford</u>	2017
	<u>Paul Derosier</u>	2018
Publicity	<u>Cathy Cairns</u>	2018
	<u>Carolyn Squillante</u>	2018
Kitchen	<u>Carolyn Squillante</u>	2016
	<u>Maureen Sargent</u>	2017
	<u>Jean Langley</u>	2018
Legislative	Melanie Magee	2016
	Hilary Wilson	2017
	<u>Dorai Sitaram</u>	2018
Nominating	<u>Paul Derosier</u>	2016
	<u>Helen Calverley</u>	2016

History Corner

by Bob Ellis, Historian

Newspapers in Northborough

I have just gone back to a little essay on Northborough newspapers that I wrote in 2008 for a weekly newspaper called *The Record*. The very fact that this newspaper doesn't exist anymore makes clear that this little article, like everything else these days, must be "updated."

Many journalistic changes have taken place since 2008. The Worcester Telegram, which for decades could be said to have covered Northborough, scarcely does it now. The Community Advocate continues and does a good job on some topics, such as the activities in local schools, but it does not try to go thoroughly into local news. The Villager, largely a spin-off of the Metrowest Daily News, sometimes has a good news story. Most local newspapers attempt to appeal to several communities. Online newspapers have sprung up; some have died, others have showed signs of life, but only briefly. By and large, however, the situation seems to suggest that not much is happening in Northborough, or if it does, isn't much reported.

Northborough had no newspaper until some boys at the Allen Boarding School, along with some of Rev. and Mrs. Allen's children, issued *The Meteor* in 1836. It lasted a year. The boys reported marriages, deaths, and lectures at the lyceum, which one of the boys would attend and review.

The first local commercial newspaper that we have in our archive is the *Northboro Farmer*. We have several issues from the 1870s and 1880s. On June 30, 1876 it reported that the Colorado potato bug was troubling farmers and that the local strawberry crop was poor because of dry weather. September, the *Farmer* predicted, would be a good time to visit the Great Centennial in Philadelphia, where one would find a collection of shell jewelry made in Milo Hildreth's factory at the corner of Main and River Streets. The elder Cyrus Gale, reckoned the oldest man in town at 91, had just returned from a visit to New Bedford. The *Northboro National Bank* had declared a

Membership

Annual Dues:

Single ♦ \$20

Student/Senior ♦ \$15

Family ♦ \$45

Lifetime ♦ \$250

Send dues to:

Northborough Historical Soc.

Membership Secretary

P.O. Box 661

Northborough, MA 01532

*Please make checks payable to
Northborough Historical
Society*

Curator's Report

By Ellen Racine

The Museum opened on May 3 with a special event: Child-

ren's Day. This Museum Trustees-sponsored event was a great beginning to the season, with fifteen to twenty children participating. They made flowers, May baskets, played dress-up, toured the Museum and had lemonade and treats. Beryl Krouse, Cheryl Saverese, Cindy and Dick Atwood, Kathy Pierce, Jo-Ann Sullivan and Arlene Marshall did a fabulous job planning and hosting the event. And thanks to Dick Atwood, we have a new lawn sign for museum openings. It is very visible with black, hand-cut wood letters on a yellow background.

Our period costume Sewing Group will meet on May 18 at the Society's building at 1:00 p.m. Stop by and see our projects.

semi-annual dividend of five dollars per share.

The Northboro News succeeded the Farmer in the 1890s, padded liberally with national and international news, undoubtedly copied from other newspapers. A column called "Sunbeam" had contributions like the following: "'Yes, I'm opposed to girls marryin' furriners,' said old Mrs. Sipes. 'I'm just that opposed to it that if my girls can't marry people of their own sex, they needn't marry at all.'" No, Mrs. Sipes was not recommending a social development that only became common in our century, just expressing linguistic confusion.

During the first half of the twentieth century most Northborough news came from the Marlboro Enterprise. By the 1950s readers could consult the Tri-Town Times. Which three towns constituted the "tri-" is difficult to say, since Shrewsbury, Westborough, Grafton, and Boylston were represented, as well as Northborough.

On June 12, 1958, the Westboro Chronotype, long in business, launched the Northboro Herald. It contained much advertising: Julio's in Shrewsbury was selling large eggs for 39 cents a dozen and loaves of bread for 17 cents. Mac' Foreign Car Center in Fayville was offering a 1952 Mercedes-Benz for \$1,795. A story in the July 31 issue announced that Baby First Frozen Food Products would open in September at "the old ice house," the building now occupied by Pepper's Catering. But this event, predicting thirty new jobs, never seems to have materialized. On October 9 the Herald reported that a third police officer was needed "to provide protection after 2 A.M., when Officer Carbrey goes off duty, and 8 A.M., when Chief Bodreau goes on." On December 18 readers learned that Hector Giovanucci had been appointed as the third officer.

The worthiest of newspapers in this town, the Northboro Star, flourished in the 1960s and 1970s, edited much of this time by Jody Martinson. At 18 by 23 inches it also feels very large today when a newspaper like the Telegram has a surface more than one third smaller.

Some of us lament the decline of newspapers. The ones that persist, however, have had to be reinvented. Often the reader finds more features than news on the front page, for presumably we already know the news from listening to the Comedy Channel.

Is anyone today courageous enough to invent a new Northborough newspaper?

Upcoming project: Start taking photos of Northborough! A photo contest with submissions from 2015-2016 will be held next June. Concentrate on sites of our town, activities, at work, families/portraits, interiors and a special category for vintage photos of our town and former residents. Forest Lyford can be reached for more information.

