



THE HOURGLASS

NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

CCLXXV

Northborough Historical Society
www.NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org

February 2019

Next Meeting & Program: Friday, February 22, 2019

Serving the World with Worcester Dining Cars – presented by Richard Gutman, foremost authority on the history of diners, and author of the book *American Diner Then and Now*, a definitive work on the subject. Decades after the company's closure in 1961, Worcester dining cars were sent to California and two to the United Kingdom, justifying the 1925 slogan. This illustrated lecture will celebrate the Worcester Lunch Car Company's contributions to the legacy of this enduring American icon. The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m., at the Society building, 52 Main Street, Northborough. The event is free and open to the public.



History Corner

by Kathy Pierce

The Life and Times of a Historic Northborough Meeting House by One Who Loves It

It was a sweltering day in August 1973. I packed our seven children into our outsized Plymouth station wagon and headed off to meet a real estate agent at an 1800s house in Northborough.

I had called him about an antique in Westborough. That was on deposit so he mentioned the Northborough listing. I agreed to look at it though I was totally unfamiliar with the town. We were living in a gracious 1830s Greek Revival home in East Douglas, but after three years there had decided to look elsewhere because of school issues and my husband's job in Westborough. By then I knew that a large old house near the center of a small town was where I wanted to raise our family.

The big white Northborough house was set on a triangular lot at Church and Pleasant streets. As we pulled up to it, the kids piled out of the hot car and into the vacant dwelling. The current owners had already moved so no breakage worries.



Built in 1832 for \$2100 as the Evangelical Congregational Church, it had about 40 pews for its 35 original members plus a pulpit, a gallery and, eventually, a bell. The new denomination split off from the Unitarian Church, the town's first church, because of a difference in doctrine. After 16 years, the 36-foot by 44-foot structure was too small for the growing congregation. It was auctioned off and the group built Trinity Church downtown. The former meeting house became a dwelling until 1882 when Edward H. Allen opened his college-preparatory boarding school for boys in it.

Because the house is converted from a church and a school, it has undergone much alteration. There are plenty of original touches left, however, like beamed ceilings and wide-pine floors. Exterior walls are six-inches thick with deep windowsills that are perfect for holding prayer books and

hymnals. One home inspector deemed it built like a fortress. Small filler blocks set into the living room floor cover holes left when the pews were removed. Congregants in those days bought their pews. This is a copy of the pew layout with their values in 1847.

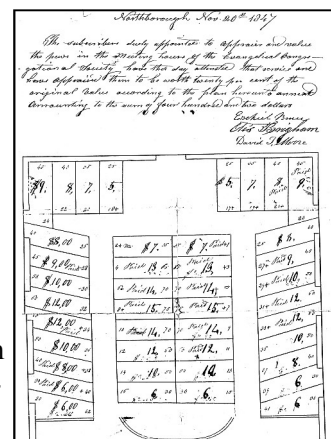
The house now has a large main dwelling on one side and a two-level apartment on the other.

Remnants of three more bedrooms remain on the third floor as well as wonderful two-foot-wide pine floor boards. Built-in corner shelves, presumably to hold wash bowls or oil lamps for Allen School students, are still up there. Also recalling its past life as a school are pages torn from textbooks and glued to the wall in one of the closets. An illustration of British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli is on one of those pages - a hero of one of the students most likely. I never wanted to remove any of those relics.

The house is in the Meeting House Common Historic District established in 1973. This also includes the Unitarian Church, the old section of Howard Cemetery and the strip of land alongside the house on Pleasant Street. The strip was the militia training ground in the Revolutionary era, but in our tenure, it has been a handy ball field for our children and their friends.

I fell in love with the property on that summer day and called my husband to come see it on his lunch hour. Relenting to my passion for the place, we made an immediate offer on it and moved in a few months later. The rest spans nearly half a century of our family history. It was my home for 25 years. For these past 20 years, it has been home to our daughter and son-in-law and their lively brood of five children.

My heart holds such pride of place and fond memories for this aged domain. How I relished sitting on the side porch or in the attic dreaming of past lives and events that make up its 187-year existence. Two generations of our family are fortunate enough to be part of its long life. May this proud structure continue to bring the same pleasures for many more years to future lovers of Northborough history.



More on the life of this historic edifice in the next Hourglass.

Welcome New Members!

Susan Alatalo
Ed Harlow
Kathleen Howland
Joan Maddox
Margaret Moore
Marie Spence
Laura Ziton

Next
Board of Directors
Meeting
Tuesday, March 12

Membership

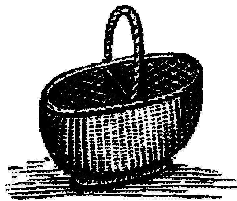
Annual Dues:

Single — \$20
Student/Senior — \$15
Family — \$45
Lifetime — \$250

Send dues to:
Northborough Historical Society
Membership Secretary
P.O. Box 661
Northborough, MA 01532

Please make checks payable to
Northborough Historical Society

If there is a red dot in the address
panel of this newsletter your dues are
past due!




Curator’s
News
by Ellen Racine

The Archive has been extremely busy this past month. Our intern, Liz, has met and worked with several members, has completed some genealogy, accessioning, transcribing letters and diaries and we have visited two museums to see what other Historical Societies offer to the public. She will soon be working on a few writing assignments and designing an exhibit for our museum. My thanks to all who have stopped by for a friendly visit or lent a hand in her education: Lois Smith, Kathy Pierce, Cindy Atwood, Beth Finch-McCarthy, Bob Marchetta, Jenifer Bakkala and JoAnn Sullivan.

Calendar Raffle

Purchase your raffle calendars now for the chance to win awesome prizes during the month of March! There are 47 prizes, including 100 gallons of Northborough Oil, restaurant gift certificates, auto repair certificates and much more! Each calendar is \$10, and a winner (or two!) will be picked every day. Calendars will be available at the February 22 meeting or you can purchase one by emailing Hilary Wilson at hilarywilson@charter.net or Bob Marchetta at marchetta4@verizon.net



NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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March		2019		01		02		
						Casa Vallarta \$25 Core Connection Classes \$80		
						Lavish \$25		
03	04	05	06	07	08			09
Uno's Pizzeria Party for 8	Moe's Northborough Auto \$25	Craftworks \$25 Festive Bread's \$25	Moe's Pizzeria \$25 JP's \$25	Northborough House of Pizza \$25	JP's Restaurant \$25			Jimmy John's \$50
10	11	12	13	14	15			16
\$100 Romaine's Gift Card from Realtor Michelle Gillegie	Northborough Septic \$50	Moe's Northborough Auto \$25	Main Street Boutique \$25 4 Tickets NAACC	2 Doors Down \$25	4 Northborough Contra Dance Tickets \$40			Pepper's Cakes \$50
17	18	19	20	21	22			23
100 Gallons Heating Oil from Northborough Oil Local area only	Octoba \$25 AI's Oil \$25	Clean & Green Car Wash \$25 Ted's Montana Grill \$25	Moe's Northborough Auto \$25 Legion #234 \$25	Paint Your Own Pottery \$25	Wayne's Western World \$25			\$50 Clean & Green Express Clean Car Wash
24	25	26	27	28	29			30
Not Your Average Joe's \$50	Lulu Java \$25 AI's Oil \$25	4 Northborough Contra Dance Tickets \$40	Northborough House of Pizza \$25 4 Tickets NAACC	Moe's Northborough Auto \$25	Clean & Green Car Wash \$25 AI's Oil \$25			Margarita's \$50
31								
Armeno's Coffee \$25	NAME:							
Lowe's Market \$20	PHONE:							

Thank You To Our Wonderful Prize Donors!

Lowe's Market
Paint Your Own Pottery
Qdoba
Al's Oil
Monti's Pizzeria
Festive Breads
Northborough Oil
JP's Restaurant & Pub
Lavish
Casa Vallarta
The Ski Barn
Not Your Average Joe's
Armeno's Coffee
Ted's Montana Grill
Northboro Auto
Margaritas
Northboro Septic

Lala Java
Northborough Contra Dance
Northboro House of Pizza
Northborough Area Community Chorus
Michelle Gillespie (Romaine's Card)
Bob Marchetta (NHS Membership)
Clean and Green Car Wash
Craftworks
Two Doors Away Café
Wayne's World
Scrubs with Style
American Legion #234
Uno's Pizzeria & Grill
Jimmy's John's Gourmet Sandwiches
Pepper's
Core Connection
Main Stream Boutique

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