



THE HOURGLASS

NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

CCLXXVIII

Northborough Historical Society
www.NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org

May 2019



Next Meeting: Friday, May 17, 2019

Annual Meeting, Pot Luck Supper & Museum Open House.

The pot luck supper will begin at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. followed by the Museum Open House, at the Society building, 52 Main Street, Northborough. The Open House and the supper are free and open to the public.

The program originally scheduled to take place on this date, *Mysteries from our Museum* presented by Ernie Racine, will be rescheduled.



History Corner

by Former intern Elizabeth Gitschier

Most of my time at the Historical Society has been spent researching the Robertson family history and its collection of letters and photographs. This collection was abandoned in a barn in Vermont around 1970. Efforts were made to track down descendants but were futile or not a good fit for saving the collection. The owner contacted the Northborough Historical Society as the Robertson's were a Northborough family.

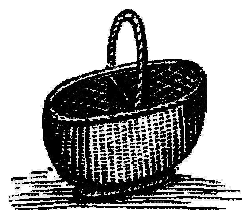
Starting out in Eaton, New Hampshire, and ending up in Northborough, three generations of the Robertson family did their civic duty and joined the military.

Charles Robertson was the first generation of military veterans in this collection. Charles served in the Civil War. An interesting fact I discovered about him was that he was stationed in the defense of Washington during the war and he was on duty the night President Lincoln was shot. The son of our Civil War soldier, Mark Robertson, missed all the fun but eventually had a son, Charles Sr, who served in World War I. Charles went overseas for a few months only to be injured in the line of duty and discharged. After the war he met his wife Marion and they bought a house on Davis St in Northborough where their three children grew up and went to school.

Charles Senior's children are the most interesting family members that I learned about, as they had the bulk of the letters and artifacts. I spent many hours reading about 200 letters containing updates, stories, and humor. All of Charles Sr.'s children served in the military during World War II. Charles Jr. joined the army as a medic. He was the first of the three children to end up overseas. He was injured in the line of duty and received one of the Purple Hearts which were donated as part of their collection to the Historical Society. Madeline joined the Marines as a naval aviator supplier. She spent most of her time stationed in Philadelphia. Robert joined the army in the infantry, eventually making it overseas. Unfortunately, he was killed in the line of duty. After the war, Charles Jr. married and had three children. Madeline had a daughter.

The eight weeks of my internship at the historical society included filing, taking trips outside of the society, transcribing diaries, and researching the Robertson's. I also put encapsulated documents in Mylar and assembled archival boxes for fragile books. I transcribed the William Maynard diary and two of the Mary Mack diaries. William lived during the 19th century. He was a cemetery worker who also did pickup and delivery of bodies. Mary was a young woman who lived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries who wrote diaries from 1880 to 1942. The society has 41 of her diaries. I recorded, archived artifacts, and spent countless hours reading the Robertson's letters. I learned how to navigate through PastPerfect, the software used by

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Curator's News by Ellen Racine

On April 15th our Historian Kathy Pierce, and several members, presented a Historical Pageant for Whitney Place. We enjoyed bringing history to the residents and they enjoyed the show. My thanks to Kathy Pierce, Ernie Racine, Cindy & Dick Atwood, Jim Priest, Lois and Brian Smith, Beryl Krouse, Diane and Forest Lyford, and Linda and Norm Corbin for participating. This was our third performance!

On June 1 & 2, during the Art Guild Show, the Museum will be open.

On June 1 at 2 p.m., Glen Campbell will perform an informal organ concert and answer questions about our vintage 1874 pipe organ.

Glen is organist at the Church of the Nativity. Stop by and hear our wonderful organ!

With the arrival of spring we have had several visitors. We opened the Museum for a visitor who was particularly interested in Native American history and the China trade. Another visitor to the archive was interested in James Ball, and a third in the Wood family who lived at 75 Main Street. Three Myrick sisters, who are

great, great granddaughters of Rev. Joseph Allen, donated his document box containing his hand-written sermons and lectures. They spent time here reading letters from their grandparents that we already had in our files.

Tom Danforth donated five early garments.

Welcome New Members!

Debbie Martin
David McConeghy
Sheila Wenc

History Corner, continued

museums to catalog collections. I created a few finding aids that will be used for researchers who come to the archive to find information on the town. I also took excerpts that had to do with Northborough from a book titled, *Remarkable Events in Marlborough* and typed them in a word document. Some of the trips I took were to the Worcester History Museum, the Westborough Library, and viewing the Northborough historical markers. I made a vintage valentine card display, and then a small display in the meeting room with a few of the artifacts from the Robertson collec-

tion. Lastly, I put together a display in the Museum consisting of the Robertson’s collection.

I would like to thank the volunteers from the Northborough Historical Society who helped me with my education: Ellen Racine, Lois Smith, Kathy Pierce, Beth Finch-McCarthy, and Bob Marchetta.



Elizabeth Gitschier



**Members Visit to the
Blackstone Valley Heritage Center**

On Sunday May 5, 29 members gathered at the Blackstone Valley Heritage Corridor Visitor Center. Lunch was followed by a talk on the Blackstone Valley, its history, and its importance to the industrial history of Massachusetts and the entire nation.

Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate so the outdoor guided tour could not take place, although a few hardy souls ventured forth on their own to explore the architecture, the walking, cycling and nature trails, and the remains of the valley’s industrial past. Our thanks to the BVHCVC for hosting us for the afternoon.

Don’t forget the Pot Luck Supper before the May 17 meeting!

Come along and enjoy sharing a meal with fellow members.

Not been to a Society supper before? Bring a dish to share, a plate and silverware, and you’ll be all set.

Tip: Paper plates and plastic cutlery mean nobody has to do dishes!

What kind of food? Your choice.

No time to cook? Store bought is fine.

What time? We eat at 6:30 p.m.



Desserts, fruit punch and coffee will be provided by the Board of Directors and the Program Committee.

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

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