



THE HOURGLASS

NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

CCLXXIX

Northborough Historical Society
www.NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org

June 2019



Next Meeting: Friday, September 27, 2019

Pot Luck Supper, Meeting & Program

African American Army Units in World War I - presented by Robert Stacey, a curator for the Worcester Historical Museum. Robert will describe the experience of a Worcester man who served as an officer in an African American army unit during World War I.

The pot luck supper will begin at 6:30 p.m., the meeting will follow at 7:30 p.m. at the Society building, 52 Main Street, Northborough. The program and the supper are free and open to the public.

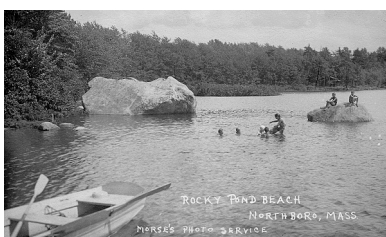


History Corner

by Kathy Pierce

The Good Old Summertime

As the Historical Society drifts into its summer hiatus, members may be dreaming of sunny ocean beaches, picturesque lakes in Maine, trips to Europe or even cheering on the Red Sox at Fenway Park. A century and more ago, however, most town residents spent their summer days right here in quieter pursuits. Here are a few memories and photos of those bygone summer pastimes.



Kids frolicking on Rocky Pond



Fred and Hattie Proctor with Robert on Bartlett Pond, 1909



"Party boat" at Sunday School picnic on Lake Chauncy, 1907

On May 30, Mary recalled that "Papa took our family...to Wood's Grove in the hack (a wagon). Treated to beer, confectionary, etc. went out boating, etc. In the evening ...had confectionary, peanuts, beer and very nice time."

On July 12, Mary "went up to the common to help get ready for Lawn Party... In the evening we held the party. All my friends from town there...Had lovely time but was

nearly sick."

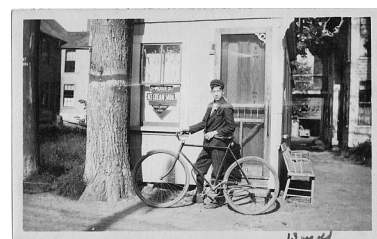
Mary went to Wood's Grove often that summer. On July 17, she wrote, "Bert came down and took me to Wood's Grove to a party ...We went out rowing, danced and had ice cream and a very nice time generally. Got home at 12:30."

His obituary in 1921 reported that George B. Wood, operator of Wood's Grove, "was famed as a maker of ice cream and was the first to introduce it into Northborough..."

Wood was said also to be the first person to bring a soda fountain to town.

In a 1960 presentation to the society on the town at the turn of the century, Edwin Proctor recalled the Grove as a "perfect spot for Sunday School picnics...Wood would set up a merry-go-round and would sell us his famous ice cream."

He added that Wood "was a beloved character to the youth of the town for during the summer months his ice cream cart would jog along the roads and anyone who had a nickel could run out with his own container to get a dishful." Wood also had a little ice cream room on South Street.



Clarence Nelson in front of Wood's ice cream shop with his new bike

Proctor further recalled heading to Solomon Pond for a swim. "No bathing suits were needed, not a cottage in sight, and one could roughhouse, splash and dive as untrammelled as perhaps Adam was..."

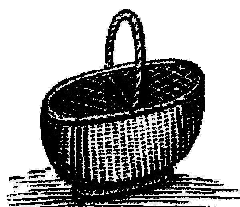
Strawberry festivals abounded at churches and other organizations. According to old newspaper articles and diary entries, just about everybody attended one in early summer.

Caleb Maynard, young and single, wrote in 1868 that he went "courting" and "sparking" on several summer evenings as well as "playing ball" and being a referee for the ballplayers.

But all was not innocence and light even in those seemingly idyllic days. Caleb also recorded that on July 24, "S... is on a drunk. Got arrested tonight." Some things never change.



Solomon Pond



Curator's News

by Ellen Racine

Glen Campbell from the Church of the Nativity gave a wonderful organ recital on June 1st. His selections showcased the wide range of built-in musical tones. Following this, Glen invited the visitors to see the inside mechanics of the instrument. One pianist was excited to try out the organ. It is always a treat to hear the organ played with music that envelops the whole museum.

In answer to the Scavenger Hunt question in the Museum, cranberries

grew wild on Sulphur Hill on Howard Street and also, according to Historian Kathy Pierce, grew in the meadow around Cold Harbor Brook near the Church Street bridge.

Lois Smith and I attended a program sponsored by the Digital Commonwealth entitled Local History Hierarchy of Needs presented by Anthony Vaver, Ph.D., M.L.S., Westborough Local History Librarian. This five step process was explained and I was glad to hear that the first phase of keeping records safe with archival boxes, folders, etc. and with mitigation of disaster planning has already been accomplished. The next phase is the organization of collections and this has been done by Louise Benton, Bob Ellis and me over many years and currently is

being entered onto Excel spreadsheets as recommended. Finding aids are also in process for phase three. Scanning is being done to coincide with the prioritized collections spreadsheets. The last two phases involve using digital tools to share the information through the Website, Digital Commonwealth, Omeka, Blogging, etc.

A special thanks to Forest Lyford who quickly fitted the organ bench with a platform for the safety of musicians of different heights. We would also like to thank Diane Guldner, Carol Benedict and Carolyn Squillante from the Garden Club for weeding gardens and planting flowers at our building.

**Next
Board of Directors
Meeting
Tuesday, September 10**

Applefest September 2019

Applefest is a great opportunity to raise the Society profile in the community and let them know what a wonderful organization we are.

On Saturday, September 21 we will have a booth on Blake Street manned by members in costume who will distribute information to the public. We will also hold an Ice Cream Social at the Society, and the Museum will be open.

On Sunday, September 22 we will have a float, accompanied by members on foot, in the parade.

We need volunteers to help with these fun endeavors. If you can spare some time to support the Society during Applefest, please email President Ken Bennett.

kbenne34@hotmail.com

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*

Dues are due September 2019

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