



# THE HOURGLASS

## NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

CCXCVII

Northborough Historical Society  
www.NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org

June 2021

### COVID-19 Closure Information

At this time there are no Friday meetings planned at the Society. The museum and archive will remain closed until further notice. Enquiries regarding the museum and archive should be directed to Historian Kathy Pierce and Curator Ellen Racine. They can be reached by e-mail:

Kathy: [Historian@NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Historian@NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org)

Ellen: [Info@NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Info@NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org)

**Stay safe and well!**



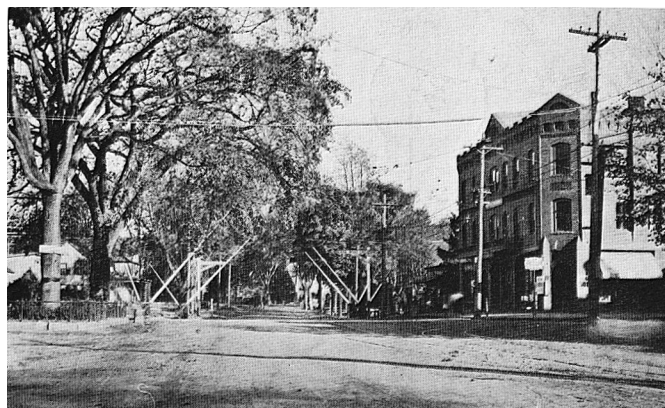
## History Corner

by Kathy Pierce

### Postcards from the Past

Seth A. Emery was the main druggist in town for 23 years until his passing in 1911. His store was in the Winn-Whittaker building at Main and South streets. His wares included typical medicines of the day, but he also carried another profitable product - penny postcards with local scenes on the back.

Emery wasn't the only purveyor of the 1-cent message



Published by Seth A. Emery

The Square, Northboro, Mass.

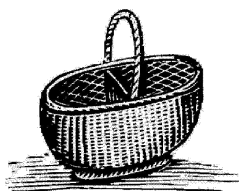
medium here in the early 1900s, however. They were also sold at C.T. Shattuck's drugstore, and at former druggist W.A. Crossley's variety store, The Spa. In the days before texts, emails and even widespread telephone usage, postcards were a quick way to get a note off to relatives or friends. Those with images of a locale were particularly popular. Indeed, a billion cards a year were mailed in this country during what is called the "Golden Age of Postcards" - specifically 1907 to 1915, according to the Smithsonian Institution archives.

The Historical Society has scores of postcards dating from that era, including one album holding cards from 1900 to 1920, most with black-and-white scenes from around town. Many are not attributed to any distributor, but some state "Published by S.A. Emery." A few others were published by Crossley and Shattuck.

According to a 1911 article in a monthly publication titled *The Pharmaceutical Era*, postcards could be a lucrative sideline for druggists.

"Regarding the advertising value of postcards to the retail druggist or confectioner \_ outside of the direct profit he will derive from their sale \_ cards are of great value if he will keep his stock in good shape. He can

(continued on page 4)



## Curator's News

by Ellen Racine

How did **YOU** survive the Pandemic? Read? Learned a new language? Comfort food? Home improvements? Zoom-A-Lot? Well, one of our gifted and creative members, Forest Lyford, engaged in woodworking. Along with building replica Mexican style end tables possibly ten of them – he next moved on to wood crafting. With his love of animals and thrifty nature, Forest used scrap and found wood pieces. He created a plethora

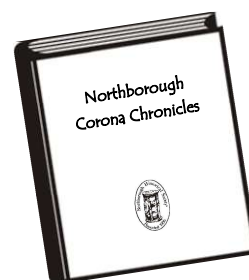


of animals that now roam his landscaped back yard. A few of his creations were a goat, a pig, a llama, a penquin, a stork, an elephant, a rhinoceros....and probably a few more that escaped!



of animals that now roam his landscaped back yard. A few of his creations were a goat, a pig, a llama, a penquin, a stork, an elephant, a rhinoceros....and probably a few more that escaped!

We are wrapping up the project of our Corona Chronicles and hope you can contribute a short essay of your thoughts and experiences of the past year and a half, and maybe photos and memorabilia.



Just send them along via e-mail or drop them off at the Archive door. We look forward to opening our doors again.

Officers, Board & Committee Members  
2021 - 2022

President	Rick Ferenchick
Vice President	Mike Duchesneau
Directors	Allyn Phelps Jr. Lois Smith Michael Mills Mark Bashour Kathleen Howland Karen Ruszkowski
Treasurer	Dale Williams
Membership Secretary	Jean Langley
Recording Secretary	Hilary Wilson
Museum Trustees	Beryl Krouse Bill Webster Nancy Harlan Melanie Magee Jane Fletcher Diane Lyford
Hospitality	Cathy Duchesneau Marcia Mills Suzanne Williams
Program	Jo-Ann Sullivan Karen Walsh Janice Ferenchick
Property	Paul Derosier Chuck Krouse Peter Stone
Publicity	Kenneth Bennett Laura Ziton
Kitchen	Debra Bennett Cindy Atwood Marcia Parsneau
Legislative	Mark Bashour Ernie Racine Kenneth Bennett
Nominating	Kenneth Bennett Carol Bostock Lynne Derosier
Ways & Means	Henry Squillante



Northborough  
Historical Society



Did you know that you could support Northborough  
Historical Society while shopping at Amazon?

When you shop through this link the Society will receive 0.5% of your eligible purchases made at Amazon. This costs you nothing - the program is funded through the AmazonSmile Foundation. You access the same pages and pay the same prices - the only difference is that you will see a small banner if the item is Amazon Smile eligible. Whole Foods grocery orders placed online through AmazonSmile for pickup or delivery are eligible purchases.

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/04-6156604>

When you follow this link you will be able to select Northborough Historical Society as your charity of choice - just follow the instructions to start shopping. You will also be able to open an account with Amazon if you do not already have one.

For the Society to receive your contribution you must access Amazon via <https://smile.amazon.com> so add it to your bookmarks now!

0.5% of your purchase may not seem very much but when all of the purchases of all of our members and friends are aggregated, this donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation can be a significant contribution to our funding.

Questions? Email:  
[northborough\\_historical\\_society@charter.net](mailto:northborough_historical_society@charter.net)

**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 each September

**Welcome New Members!**

Kerri Martinek  
John G. Northgraves  
Mary Ellen Radovanic  
Karen Ruszkowski

**Next  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, September 14**

## Honorary Members

At the Society Annual Meeting in May, the Board of Directors proposed bestowing Honorary Membership to those listed below. The motion passed unanimously. The Board based their nominations on the following criteria from the by-laws.

*The following criteria for nomination shall be used as a guide, but shall not limit the reason or reasons for nominating:*

1. *Dedicated service to the purposes and programs of the Society on a continuing basis.*
2. *Extraordinary donations of time and talent far exceeding normal expectation for a Society member.*
3. *Outstanding achievement in historic preservation or education within or outside the Society*

All of the honorees have given many years of extraordinary service to the Society, way surpassing the guidance in the by-laws. Space does not permit us to list of all of their service and accomplishments, but brief descriptions are below.

This is just a small sampling of how these exceptional members have served the Society. In addition to serving on boards and committees, they have each volunteered to help with countless events and projects for the last 25 - 50+ years.

### Congratulations to our new Honorary Members!



#### **Carol and Eugene “Buzz” Bostock**

**Carol:** Trustees, multiple times. Hospitality multiple times. Kitchen Committee - inventoried the kitchen and wrote the kitchen instruction manual. Nominating Committee – many times.

**Buzz:** Property Committee, building and ground maintenance.

**Both:** Board of Directors – multiple times. Regular Museum hosts. Applefest.



#### **Paul Derosier**

Served as President twice. Nominating Committee and Board of Directors - many times. Applefest hotdog griller extraordinaire for many years. ‘Go-to’ person for anything related to the building. Served multiple times on the Property Committee but will always help with building issues, whether or not he is on the Committee. Researched and presented multiple programs. Has provided the equipment to tow, and has driven our parade floats on multiple occasions.



#### **Genevieve Earle**

Served as President. Board of Directors – multiple times. Nominating Committee – many times. Program Committee. Kitchen Committee - multiple times. Hospitality Committee - multiple times. Supper chair. Regular Museum host.



#### **Jane Fletcher**

Served as President twice. Chaired 2016 Society 250th Committee. Ham & Bean Supper Chair. 20th Century Committee. Nominating Committee - many times. Legislative Committee, multiple times. Board of Directors - many times. Program Committee. Hospitality Committee. One of the Applefest "core" members who ran Applefest for many years. Regular Museum host.



#### **Judith “Judie” and Alan Gustafson**

**Both:** Board of Directors – multiple times. Regular Museum hosts. Applefest and root beer stalwarts. Flea Market kitchen.

**Judie:** Longtime Trustee. Nominating Committee – many times. 20th Century Committee.

**Alan:** Property Committee. Space Committee, resulting in the creation of the “Gustafson Wing”. 20th Century Committee interviewer.



#### **Mary Kennerly**

Multiple times on the Kitchen Committee, Nominating Committee and the Hospitality Committee. Flea Market Cookie Walk. Board of Directors – multiple times. Mega Museum host. Presented a special program during our 100th anniversary year.



#### **Forest Lyford**

Served as President and Recording Secretary. Board of Directors – multiple times. Nominating, Program and Property Committees – multiple times. Chaired the Applefest Committee for many years. Mainstay of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Project. Prepared and presented several programs on a variety of subjects. Used his woodworking skills to repair items from the collection. Served as custodian and groundskeeper for several years.



#### **Ernie Racine**

Served as President twice. Board of Directors – multiple times. Nominating and Property Committees - multiple times. Program Committee. Flea Market Chair. Presented several programs. Reached the pinnacle of service to the Society and stole the show at the Town 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary parade when he walked behind the horse drawn stagecoach with a bucket and shovel!!



#### **Carolyn Squillante**

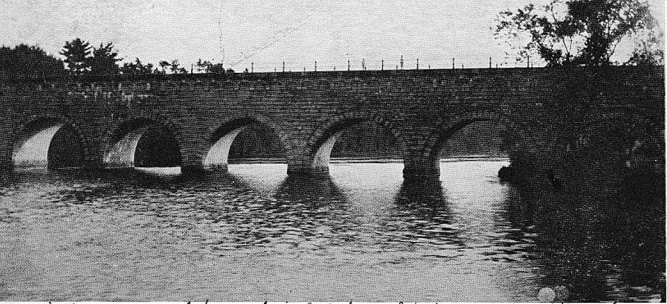
Hospitality Committee – many times. Publicity Committee – many, many times. Board of Directors - many times. Supper Chair. Regular Museum host. Applefest regular. Cookie Walk. Has managed the Society email list since its inception, and has kept members and non-members up-to-date about Society happenings.

History Corner, continued

find no cheaper nor more effective way of attracting customers,” wrote William Frazer, postcard manager for American News Co.

Frazer touted that the cards would attract strangers who would in turn buy other offerings in the store. “Thus, he can gain many hundred percent of his original investment...\$50 spent in cards would give a good display to the average retail druggist.”

Several cards in our album were mailed during the “golden age” by visitors to town. For instance, one of Emery’s scenic cards, was mailed July 2, 1912, by M.T. to a Miss Holmes in Boston. “The country air out here is great,” M.T. wrote.



*I wish you could see this bridge. It is very pretty. The road runs right under the arch... I wish you could see this bridge. It is very pretty. The road runs right under the arch... I wish you could see this bridge. It is very pretty. The road runs right under the arch...*  
Wachusett Aqueduct, Met. Water System, Northboro, Mass.

Another card sent in May 1907 to West Somerville, Mass., features the Wachusett aqueduct bridge. “I wish you could see this bridge. It is very pretty. The road runs right under the arch...,” wrote the sender. She also lamented that no one had invited her to go driving, adding that there were very few cars here. That sure has changed.

An October 1912 sender to Luella in Townsend, Mass., had more luck with touring by car. “I have been automobile riding. Went sixty miles yesterday... the scenery out here is beautiful,” wrote Emily on a full- color card featuring a picturesque local road lined with birch trees.

Not all cards were sent by tourists. Yet another, from C.T. Shattuck’s, pictures the former Baptist Church, now Historical Society headquarters, and holds a more

mundane message to the recipient in Berlin.

“This is where I go to church every Sunday...I asked (*illegible name*) if he would come over to Berlin Wednesday night. But he said he would let me know Tuesday night. It is hard telling if he will come or not. I won’t say if I will be over.” Definitely this would be a text or email today.

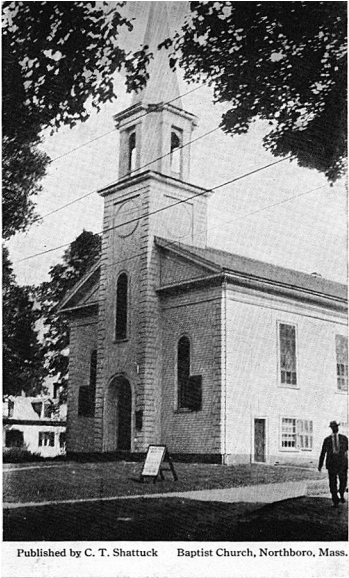
According to the Smithsonian, postcards have undergone many changes in size, color and other regulations over time. As we all know now, a postcard is a way of sending messages without an envelope. This was not always possible.

Congress approved the first open postcards on Feb. 27, 1861. This allowed privately printed cards weighing one ounce or less to be sent in the mail. That same year, John P. Charlton copyrighted the first postcard in America. In 1872, the government approved production of its own “postal cards.” One side was for a message, the other for the recipient’s address.

In 1907 a major change governing styling went into effect. This allowed messages to be written on the left half of the address side. This change ushered in the “golden age” when picture cards became wildly popular. Now a scene could take up one side with the message and address on the other.

As indicated by the neatly organized album in our archives, postcard collecting is a popular hobby. Some collectors prefer clean unused cards while others like those with messages. Rare ones can cost thousands of dollars.

And lastly, the pastime is called deltiology. Now there’s a good trivia question.



Published by C. T. Shattuck Baptist Church, Northboro, Mass.

**Thank you!**

The Board of Directors would like to thank our outgoing President Ken Bennett for his service during the last two years. We would also like to thank all of those who served as officers, board and committee members, and many individual members, for their efforts on behalf of the Society. Although we have not been “open”, many of you have still been as busy as ever. We welcome our incoming President Rick Ferenchick, and we look forward to two more successful years under his leadership, aided and abetted by our newly elected boards and committees.