



# THE HOURGLASS

## NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

CCC

Northborough Historical Society  
[www.NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org)

November 2021



### Next Meeting & Program: Friday, December 3, 2021

**The Vikings, an Icelandic Saga.** Dr. William R. Short, an internationally renowned author, filmmaker, and independent scholar, will present a fascinating talk of enduring tales and historical facts of the Viking people: a culture of combat, weaponry and feared warriors in Medieval times.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. at **Trinity Church, 23 Main Street, Northborough.** The church parking lot is accessed from Hudson St. The event is free and open to the public. Masks must be worn.

### Northborough Historical Society COVID-19 Accommodations

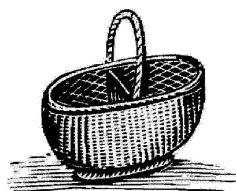
After conferring with Northborough's Health Department and following CDC guidelines, please note the Northborough Historical Society has decided to hold their fall meetings at the Trinity Church, 23 Main Street in Northborough.

Although the NHS building can accommodate our guests, the meeting room is not large enough to provide for social distancing and adequate ventilation. The Trinity Church's meeting room will provide a substantially larger space. In making this move, together with an enforced mask mandate, and no refreshments being served, we have made in-person meetings as safe as possible under the circumstances.

Watch for meeting notices on a monthly basis since we may adjust meeting plans due to changes in CDC guidelines.



**Masks must be worn.**



### Curator's News by Ellen Racine

Mark your calendars for visiting the Historical Society on December 4th from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. We will be hosting a book signing for Bill Flynn, a Northborough High School alumni and former resident. He has published several books including The Reunion Bomber based loosely on locations in our town.

The Museum will be open from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. for those brave enough to tolerate the cold temperatures in the Museum. Our

own publications will be available for sale as well as old picture frames, topographical maps and sheet music that has accumulated over the years but not accessioned. Our thanks to Lois Smith for organizing our event to coincide with the town tree-lighting festivities.



**Saturday, December 4, 2021  
4:30 p.m.**

**Light Up Northborough!  
Tree and Menorah Lighting**

**November 28 - December 4  
The Great Northborough  
Snowman Hunt**

<https://northboroughguide.com/snowmanhunt>

## Meanwhile, back at the Society building, things have been happening.....



It's been power washed,  
scraped and restored....



....primed and painted....



....and now our beautiful  
old building is restored to  
its former glorious self!

**There are so many people to thank for the team effort that made this whole project possible.**

Mike Duchesneau, assisted by Jean Langley, for preparing all the paperwork  
and applying for CPA funding.

Paul Derosier and Chuck Liljestrand for gathering estimates and selecting a contractor.

Paul, Chuck L., Chuck Krouse and Peter Stone from the Property Committee, along  
with director Allyn Phelps for their tremendous efforts on this project.

The entire crew from Target Painting.

The Historic District Commission and the Community Preservation Committee  
for their support of the project.

Town Planner Kathy Joubert for so many questions answered.

Finally, thanks to the wonderful townspeople of Northborough who voted to allocate  
CPA funding for the project - we couldn't have done it without you.

**Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!**

As we enter the season of thanks and giving, would you  
please consider making a small donation to the Society?

Any support would be greatly appreciated, and would help us to maintain  
our beautiful old building and care for our collection.

Please make checks payable to *Northborough Historical Society*  
and mail them to:

Northborough Historical Society Attn: HGTC  
PO Box 661  
Northborough, MA 01532

*Northborough Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization.*

*Your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent provided by law.*



**The Northborough Historical Society is thankful for the  
support of all our members and friends. We wish you all  
a safe and happy holiday season!**

### **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

► It is now easier than ever to make a donation to Northborough Historical Society ◄  
Donations can be made online at our website. [www.northboroughhistoricalsociety.org/donate.html](http://www.northboroughhistoricalsociety.org/donate.html)



## History Corner

by Kathy Pierce

### Whither Went Whipsuppenicke?

At the top of a winding driveway on upper Howard Street, a sprawling modern house nestles naturally into the 150-acre wooded landscape. The builders of the 1956 estate christened their summer home Whipsuppenicke. The lyrical moniker memorializes the Native American history of the Boroughs area and its connection to this town's northeast corner. With November being Native American Heritage Month, it's a good time to remember the region's long-ago name.

Whipsuppenicke was what the Native Americans called the area west of Sudbury. It was the area's name when the English settled alongside the few remaining natives dwelling there. It is believed to mean "place abandoned because of pestilence." The name likely stemmed from the time of the Great New England Indian Plague, which decimated the native population from 1616 to 1620.

In 1656, 13 petitioners from Sudbury who sought more land because of that town's growing population petitioned the General Court, which acted as a legislative and judicial body, to grant them a piece of the open western expanse.

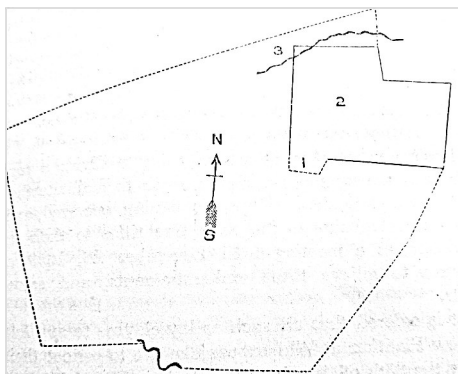
"It is therefore the humble request of Petitioners to this Hon'd Court that would bee pleased to grant unto us eight miles square or so much land as may containe to eight miles square, for to make a Plantation," read the appeal.

The Court granted the request, and the Sudbury landowners retained the name Whipsuppenicke for their new plantation. But it soon came to light that part of that land had already been granted by the Court to the Native Americans living there. The Sudbury group was then ordered to work out a fair division of their new plantation with the native inhabitants.

According to Charles Hudson's 1862 *History of Marlborough*, the local natives were a branch of the Natick and Wamesit tribes, a part of the Penacook Federation. It is said they had occupied their site at least as early as 1643. At that time, the natives put themselves under the protection of the English Court with the assurance that they should enjoy the lands in their actual possession and be protected in their rights. This accord was honored by the Court when granting the Sudbury residents' petition.

The native plantation and village was called Ockoocangansett and included a 150-acre planting field on the hill behind the current Walker Building in the center of town. The plot contained cornfields as well as an apple orchard and appeared to have been cultivated by natives for a very long time.

- Key**
1. Indian Planting Field
  2. Indian Plantation
  3. Marlborough Plantation / Whipsuppenicke before the Boroughs separated



Local histories say the native inhabitants were Praying Indians converted to Christianity by the renowned Rev. John Eliot, known as the "Apostle to the Indians." Eliot also helped the natives win their land ownership claim before the Court when Marlborough plantation was being carved out.

Under the Court plan, the Sudbury men set about plotting the metes and bounds of their new plantation. The natives retained 6,000 acres including the cultivated hill, with the rest of their land surrounding and adjoining that rise. The English plantation was to the south and west of the native plantation and, with subsequent grants, eventually surrounded it.

It appears Whipsuppenicke stretched as far as Northborough's Howard Street where a boundary sign, pictured here, testified to that fact until it disappeared at some point. Then in 1660, the English plantation was incorporated as a town and the Court ordered it to be called Marlborough. Hence the Whipsuppenicke name ceased to be - except on that hilltop estate on Howard Street.



Despite the disuse of the ancient name of their locale, the natives continued to own their allotted share of the Marlborough Plantation for several decades. Even though the Marlborough residents ultimately built part of their Meeting House on the native's land and the two groups felt some tension over the configuration and proximity of their assigned lands, they lived peaceably enough together for years, wrote Hudson. That was until King Philip's War with its brutal hostilities erupted in 1675. Some claim the Marlborough natives remained neutral, but there is evidence that some joined Philip's marauders.

As was typically the case, the Native American lands gradually came into the hands of the English settlers. According to Hudson's history, in 1667 the natives sold about 120 acres of their land that was nearly surrounded by the English settlement to Daniel Gookin, government Indian supervisor. This land passed eventually to his heirs.

Then in 1684, the few natives who remained in Marlborough after King Philip's war, laid claim to the Marlborough Plantation based on their 1643 ownership agreement with the General Court. This they argued even though the Marlborough settlers had possessed the land for 30 years under the 1656 Court ruling. Rather than create animosity with the native neighbors and pursue a Court challenge, the Marlborough men agreed to pay the natives 31 pounds "lawful money of New England" for their own property.

Because the original deed granting the natives their 6,000 acres of Whipsuppenicke barred them from ever selling it, this sale of it to the Marlborough buyers was disputed for many years. Neither the native tribes nor the Marlborough inhabitants, however, challenged the transaction in Court. As a result, the buyers "gained a title by prescription and the Court confirmed it," wrote Holden.

And so ended the Native American claim on all or part of Marlborough Plantation, aka Whipsuppenicke.



## Welcome New Members!

Matt & Stefanie Dillon  
Robert Licht

If there is a red dot in the address panel below, it is time to renew your membership.

**Next  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, January 11**

This is the last Hourglass of 2021 - we do not publish a copy in December.

The Officers and the Board of Directors of the Society would like to wish all of our members and friends a wonderful Holiday season, and a happy and healthy New Year.



amazon smile

Northborough  
Historical Society



## It's that time of year again!

**Did you know that you could support Northborough Historical Society while shopping for holiday gifts 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 Dues Payments

If you are planning to pay your membership dues at the October meeting, please put your check or cash (exact amount) in an envelope, along with a completed copy of the membership renewal form, and place it in the container at the membership table when we meet at Trinity Church. This is to enable everyone to maintain social distancing and avoid the usual scrum around the table.

**Form available at [www.northboroughhistoricalsociety.org/membership.html](http://www.northboroughhistoricalsociety.org/membership.html)**

Thank you for your help in this matter.

