



December 2010 Newsletter

NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 693

NORWELL, MASSACHUSETTS 02061

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The Norwell Historical Society
P.O. Box 693
Norwell, MA 02061
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MUSEUM

& LIBRARY HOURS

The Jacobs Farmhouse is open by appointment only. Please call the Society for further information or to schedule a tour.

The Norwell Historical Society Library at the Norwell Middle School (328 Main Street--Route 123) is open on Wednesdays and Thursdays: from 1:30 to 3:30 during the school year, and 10:00 to noon during the summer.

The Norwell Historical Society Archives Center on the 3rd floor of the Sparrell School is open by appointment only.

The purpose of this Society shall be: a.) to plan and arrange for the promotion of knowledge about the Town of Norwell by discussion, research, meetings and publications; b.) to collect, solicit and preserve documents, manuscripts, charts, maps, records, photographs, relics, and items of local interest; c.) to arrange, index, catalog and file/maintain such material for use by the members of the Norwell Historical Society and other interested parties; d.) to work with and cooperate with other entities, groups, organizations, and individuals directly and indirectly.

ONE OF NORWELL'S GREATS: PHOTOGRAPHER JARED GARDNER

by William Slattery

Jared Gardner was a locally-prominent photographer in the first half of the twentieth century. His photo entitled "The Mower," published in three magazines, is found in Merritt's history of the town along with a few other of his



Jared Gardner

photos. He was a son of Wilbur G. and Susan E. (Ainslie) Gardner of Pine Street. He graduated from Norwell High School, probably around 1901. He established a studio on Union Street in Rockland Center and, in 1919, another on Main Street in Plymouth. His wife was Elsie B. Mann.

The following article was taken from the *South Shore Life* newspaper of 1936: "Making Pictures Gardner's Work: Studying Photographic Problems Since Boyhood Has Brought Him Success":

"A prophet is not without honor save in his own country," says the old proverb, and the facts usually bear out the theory. Occasionally, however, an individual will be accorded a place of honor right among his home folks. This type of man has to be modest, affable, a "regular" fellow. Such a man is Jared Gardner who lives in the house

where he was born on Pine Street, Norwell. His achievements as an artist photographer have been considerable, but his real success is the fact that his neighbors speak well of him, as do his associates in Rockland and Plymouth where he conducts studios.

Old Pine street has its scenic charm and the old elms, the fields and quaint old barn of the Gardner place have often been the subject of their occupant's illustrations. Especial [sic] studies made here have been "The Old Barn," "The Mower," "A Good Smoke," etc. A mile away, the shaded ridge of Church Hill drew forth one of Mr. Gardner's most famous subjects. This "Evening, O'er the Wooded Hill" hung in the London Salon photographs and has often been exhibited in this country.

Jared Gardner has a wide acquaintance among New England photographers, and has followed his vocation ever since he graduated from Norwell High school. Ever watchful of the progress of science in his department, he has kept abreast of the times and is considered an authority and the peer of any city expert in his chosen field.

To learn more about Mr. Gardner, you may visit the Norwell Historical Society Library at the Norwell Middle School during business hours.

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT: WHAT A YEAR!

by Wendy Bawabe

How can I describe the Norwell Historical Society's 75th Anniversary year? One of the many aptly quoted lines by me from the *Norwell Mariner* might be appropriate: "cool," "neat," "blow me away." While these may not be the most scholarly descriptions of the events we hosted in 2010, they are accurate. I'm afraid that my enthusiasm for the Society and Norwell's history made me slightly tongue-tied when speaking to the *Mariner's* editor... hence the comical (but correct!) descriptions. I'd like to briefly summarize some of our 2010 events, using this opportunity to thank some of the many volunteers who made it all possible.

On **Sunday, April 11th** and **Sunday, November 7th**, the Society co-sponsored historic interpreters Louisa May Alcott and Teddy Roosevelt with The James Library. Both events were beyond full--with guests spilling out to the hallway! I have learned that collaboration is the key when volunteers are at a premium.

On **Sunday, June 13th**, the Society held its annual **Strawberry Festival**. To witness the mingling of children in sack races with long-time members eating shortcake harkened back to Norwell's former town fairs. The huge crowds (we ran out of berries and cakes!) were due in large part to the Norwell Farms CSA which is now headquartered at the Jacobs farmhouse. I believe people in this town are looking for opportunities to connect. Isn't the Jacobs Farmhouse the perfect place for these connections to be made?

On **Thursday, October 28th**, the Society held its **75th Annual Meeting** at the site of its first Annual Meeting: The James Library. With the surge of interest in farming in town, the Society featured speakers on the subject. Jennifer Freidrick, the principal farmer at Norwell Farms; Cliff Prentiss, long-time member of the Conservation Commission and amateur farmer; and Rick Merritt, current Chair of the Norwell Board of Selectmen all spoke, and the crowd was very amused by their stories and impressed by their knowledge. Even Mr. and Mrs. Henry Norwell stopped by in costume to congratulate the Society on its significant birthday!

On **Friday, November 12th**, the Society sponsored a **Book Release Party** at the Cushing Center to celebrate Gertrude Daneau's *The ABCs of Norwell* and Samuel Olson's *A Narrative of South Scituate-Norwell (1849-1963): Remembering its Past and the World Around It*. I estimate that between 250 and 300 people came to buy books, meet the authors and celebrate our town. A well-oiled party planning committee of three (Holly Wenger, Cheryl Goodnow and Erin Hull) coordinated the event with ease, and there was plenty of food and books for everyone who came.

Finally, we will finish the year with our annual **Christmas at the Farmhouse** on **Sunday, December 12th**. Please join us as we end our 75th Anniversary year with a celebratory cheer... and a sigh of relief!



Did You Know?

...the answer to the last issue's Trivia Corner Question? The question was: **In 1913 there was a "murder mystery" in Norwell, and the house where it happened still stands today. Where is the house and what was the mystery?**

The answer is: According to Chapter 16 of Sam Olson's *Narrative of South Scituate/Norwell*, the mystery took place at 427 Washington Street: the Weichert Realtors building. In 1907, Admiral and Mrs. Eaton moved to Assinippi to spend his retirement.

A baby boy was "apparently" born to the Eatons in March 1909. Although there was a birth announcement in the *Rockland Standard*, no birth was recorded by the Norwell Town Clerk. Then at 5 months old, the baby tragically died.

Mrs. Eaton demanded an autopsy which revealed the baby died of natural causes. Only Admiral Eaton and the church sexton attended the burial. Rumors abounded that the marriage was not happy, and on March 14, 1913, a stunning headline reported the sudden death of Admiral Eaton. An autopsy raised questions as to the cause, and the widow was placed under surveillance.

An inquest resulted in Mrs. Eaton's arrest on the charge of murder in the first degree for giving arsenic to her husband. Although Mrs. Eaton was acquitted, the two-week trial accused her of jealousy, and there was a witness who testified that Admiral Eaton had actually poisoned their baby four years earlier!

TRIVIA

QUESTION:

What is a blockhouse and where was the most notable one in Norwell located?

ANSWER: in the next issue!

OR...read "Letter K" in Gertrude Daneau's new book, *The ABCs of Norwell* to find the answer.

Trivia Corner

NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DATE _____ NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

TOWN _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP

Individual (\$15) _____ Business (\$40) _____

Family (\$25) _____ Life (\$200) _____

Benefactor (\$500) _____

Please make checks payable to the *Norwell
Historical Society* and mail to: NHS,
P.O. Box 693, Norwell, MA 02061

AREAS OF INTEREST

Newsletter _____ Public Relations _____

Hospitality _____ Program Planning _____

Library Volunteer _____ Historical Research _____

Photo Cataloging _____ Process Archival _____
Material

Other: _____

**CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS
AT THE FARMHOUSE**

Please mark your calendars: **Sunday, December 12th** will be the traditional Christmas party of the Norwell Historical Society at the Jacobs Farmhouse. The house will be scrubbed and polished and decorated in a traditional fashion for the holidays. The public will be invited to tour the house during the party, from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m.

Volunteers to decorate and clean the farmhouse prior to the event are especially needed. A cleaning and decorating "party" will take place on Friday, December 10th at the Farmhouse from 1:00 until 3:00. Donations of greenery, antique Christmas finery, and edible treats are also welcome.

If you are interested in helping clean or decorate or donating finger foods, please call Wendy Bawabe at 781-659-1464.

Once again this year, the early organ will be pouring out Christmas songs ably rendered by organist Len Palmer. All of the Historical Society publications will be available for sale, and mulled cider will be served to warm the bones!



Have you ever paddled down the North River and noticed these evenly-spaced poles jutting out from the river bank? The Norwell Historical Commission has had two different inquiries regarding these, and the Society has taken on the task of looking for answers. Marshfield resident Paul McCarthy, an amateur river detective and lover of history, has a few theories. Would you like to know more? Have you, too, seen these structures? In our next issue we will propose a couple of theories that have surfaced, and Mr. McCarthy will be speaking to the Society in the Spring to share some of his theories.



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CHRISTMAS AT THE FARMHOUSE DECEMBER 12, 2010

NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS AND MEMORABILIA

- A NARRATIVE OF SOUTH SCITUATE-NORWELL _____ \$20
by Samuel H. Olson
This book chronicles the life and times of our town from 1845-1963 through a collection of articles previously published in *The Norwell Mariner*.
- SHIPBUILDING ON THE NORTH RIVER _____ \$45
by L. Vernon Briggs
The definitive book on ships built on the North River and the shipyards that lined the shores. Written in 1889, and re-printed in 1988.
- HISTORIC HOMESTEADS OF NORWELL _____ \$15
Learn more about our stately houses and the people who lived in them. This book, well-illustrated with drawings, discusses architectural features and includes genealogical information.
- HENDERSON MAP _____ \$3
Interesting hand-drawn map suitable for framing. Drawn by Anne Henderson and first issued in 1967, it is a favorite depiction of the location of historic homes.
- 1879 MAP _____ \$3
This map is reproduced from a hand-drawn map of South Scituate in 1879. It shows the locations of road, homes and their owners. Suitable for framing.
- NORWELL TILES _____ \$10
These 6" X 6" white tiles depict various scenes: Kent House, Cushing Center, etc. *Limited number.*
- THE ABCs OF NORWELL _____ \$10
by Gertrude Daneau
This coloring book is perfect for children (of all ages!). This illustrated book can be used as a text for teaching budding historians, or as a quick guide to Norwell's many famous personalities and historical features.
- HISTORY OF SOUTH SCITUATE-NORWELL _____ \$25
by Joseph Foster Merritt
A recently re-published history of the town to 1938. A unique narrative considered to be an invaluable account of Norwell prior to WWII.
- MORE THAN JUST A COOKBOOK _____ \$5
This book is full of time-tested favorite recipes submitted by locals. Beyond the gastronomic delights, we have included sketches, interesting narratives and accounts of historic events.
- THE WAY WE WERE _____ \$20
by Jeanne Garside
This book is a series of articles written for Norwell's Centennial Celebration in 1988. Illustrated with old photographs, it tells what times were like in 1888.
- JACOBS MILLS PAINTING REPRODUCTION _____ \$25
This 8" X 10" reproduction of the 1830s Jacobs Saw and Grist Mills painting is canvas-mounted on board and ready for framing. The original hangs in the Jacobs Farmhouse.

All the above items are available at the NHS Library in the Middle School on Wed. & Thur. (1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., see summer hours on front), or you may call Gert Daneau at 781-659-2226, or you may request a publication using this form and enclosing a check (made payable to NHS). Mail to: NHS, P.O. Box 693, Norwell, MA 02061.