

Charlton Historical Society Newsletter

Fall 2004

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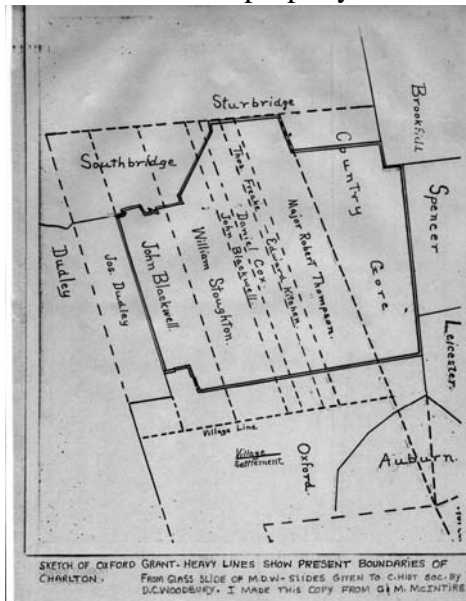
News for Charlton Historical Society Members

Time Line for the Establishment of the Town of Charlton

By William O. Hultgren

Ebenezer Mackintire's home and tavern, on what was to become Charlton Common, had been the meeting place of the men intent upon convincing their fellow Oxford townsmen and ultimately the General Court in Boston, that their properties in the western part of Oxford should be made into a separate town..

Oxford had been settled by French Huguenots as early as 1683. Following a number of clashes with the native Nipmucks, they had abandoned the settlement. The General Court then authorized a settlement of English pioneers in 1713, on the eastern part of the grant, now Oxford center. The remaining west part of 3000 acres was granted to five individuals: Robert Thompson, William Stoughton, Daniel Cox, John Blackwell and Joseph Dudley. The Town of Dudley was subsequently established from Joseph Dudley's lands. Thomas Freak and John Blackwell, by division, each take two sevenths of the Daniel Cox land. Edward Kitchen, in 1730, acquired the Thomas Freak property. The accompanying map



illustrates this division of land. By 1730 some of these lands or "farms" were subdivided and sold to individuals. Ebenezer Mackintire and his relatives took up three of these 150 acre lots, Ebenezer taking the area now comprising Charlton Center

in 1733. There remained a wedge-shaped piece of land of 6000 acres north of the Oxford lands, called "County Gore" which was surveyed and divided into farms in 1719.

Life was rough on these settlers. Land must be cleared, houses built, and basic needs supplied.

Important to these early families was the strong religious convictions associated with the established church. These matters would become a strong arguing point in the petitions of these west Oxford families to be established as a new town.

Oxford town meeting voted, in 1721, to build a new church. All land owners were assessed towards the construction and the support of a minister. The west Oxford residents complained that they were, in some cases, seven miles from the meetinghouse and must travel, in all sorts of weather, over paths unbridged, to attend meeting, yet charged for the support of the Gospel without any benefit thereof. They also complained that large herds of cattle were driven onto this area to graze, destroying their crops and tillage land, "all these things considered, we feel we shall be undone without help of the Court," the petition reads.

The land owners in that area called the "Gore" north of Oxford, complained that they belonged to no town. They were, therefore, unable to record their deeds to their land and were too small to be a town of their own. They, in 1750, joined with the west Oxford settlers in petitioning the General Court to be "set of" as a new town.

Oxford town meeting voted to support this petition, only moving the town line one mile farther west than requested. With this change, no action was taken in Boston. In 1754, another petition was presented. This time the "Gore" lands were not included and the east line re-established.

The petition was referred to committee and their recommendation was "having considered all the circumstances, recommend a district be made." On Friday, January 10, 1755, an engrossed bill, entitled, "an Act for Setting Off the Inhabitants, as Also Their Estates of the West Part of Oxford, into a Separate District by the Name of _____," passed to be enacted. No name was inserted in the act, but when it reached the office of Gov. William Shirley, he inserted the name "Charlton."

A district differed only in that Charlton was not allowed to send a representative to the General Court, combining with Oxford in that choice. Charlton become a "town" by a law making all districts towns in 1775.

The first town meeting was held at Ebenezer

Mackintire's dwelling on March 12, 1755 at which time, Richard Dresser, Obadiah Mackintire, Jonathan Ballard, John Dresser, and Ebenezer Mackintire, were chosen selectmen with Richard Dresser also Town Clerk

In 1757, the inhabitants of the Gore petitioned to be annexed to Charlton, which was granted on June 3, 1757.

The new district of Charlton, in 1756 voted monies for the support of the Gospel, but were divided as to where to build the meetinghouse. Before the Gore joined, it was voted to build the meetinghouse as near the geographical center as possible. This site is the hill just south of Flint road at 50 Dresser Hill Road. Dissent arose, even after timber, nails and glass were prepared on site. Discussion continued until, after the Gore was annexed, to then accept the offer of Mackintire of one acre of land near his house. The offer was accepted and a meetinghouse was ready by 1761 with Rev Caleb Curtis as minister.

Grants are Appreciated

By Cindy Cooper

Maintaining the Rider Tavern is essential for the programs and activities presented by the Charlton Historical Society. A \$500 grant from the Southbridge Savings Bank and \$1000 from the Sturbridge Wal-Mart are greatly appreciated. They will assist in repairing and painting deteriorating clapboards, posts and fascia boards at the Rider Tavern. The project is estimated to cost \$4,500 for carpentry and materials, with volunteers providing hours of work that will prevent additional labor expenses.

Providing a stable environment for the archives and historic artifacts allows the Historical Society to continue to provide the public to access the wealth of information, programs, tours, and resources available at the Rider Tavern. We ask for **your** financial assistance to complete this maintenance project.

Charlton History Day

Sunday October 17th from 2-4 PM

By Glenn Ellis

Take a step back in time and enjoy the afternoon as costumed interpreters guide you through three historic sites in Charlton's Old Northside Village.

Tour the 205 year old Rider Tavern, located at 255 Stafford Street in the Old Northside Village, and see

the completed and on going restorations of the 15 rooms inside as well as the period gardens outside. Enjoy period music in the Widow's Garden provided by the Heritage String Band. Browse the Historical Society's Gift Shop, "The Widow's Third," and check out the wonderful selection of handcrafted items and various periodicals on local history.

Relax and enjoy an afternoon Colonial Tea in the Tavern Ballroom. Costumed interpreters will be serving the Tavern's own blend of herbal tea and freshly baked gingerbread with old fashioned whipped cream. (A donation of \$5 is requested for the tea)

At the #2 Schoolhouse on Northside Road, there will be costumed interpreters telling stories of what it was like to attend school in a one-room schoolhouse. Tours of this building will be available as well.

At 1:15 in the Militia Lot across the street from the Tavern, the Massachusetts Dental Society will Rededicate the monument to Dr. Morton. The monument was moved recently from Rte 20 to the Militia Lot.

The Charlton Heritage Preservation Trust will be sponsoring the Fourth Annual Scarecrow Contest in the Militia Lot as well. Contact Lisa Westwell at 248-5121 for entry details.

All festivities, excluding the Tea, are free of charge. Sponsored by the Charlton Historical Society, Friends of the #2 Schoolhouse, The Charlton Heritage Preservation Trust and the Town of Charlton.

If Walls Could Talk

By Cindy Cooper

As renovations have been conducted over the years at the Rider Tavern, workers saved and stored samples of the layers of wallpaper and stenciled plaster taken from each room. This summer, a team organized the samples by room, and attempted to sequence the layers according to the order they were applied for some of the rooms. Some of the paper contained information about the manufacturer, which is being used to trace the time period it was made as a method to date the paper's use. Interestingly, the more public rooms contained the most layers. The receiving room had at least nine layers! There were over eleven patterns in the room, but not all patterns were found on every wall. The oldest layer is composed of paper formed in squares, similar to the way floor tiles are now applied.

Property Committee Report

By Don Weinhardt

This is a summary of just some of the artifact and archival items donated to the Charlton Historical Society since our last newsletter in April 2004.

Cindy Cheever, Paxton - Redware pitcher, glazed, three books related to New England history, flax pillow bolster, tin single candle wall sconce, an early round basket, thumb back chair with plank seat; **Kevinetta O'Brien**, Charlton - Four more books for our history and genealogy library, map of Charlton from the Atlas of Worcester County, Massachusetts - 1870, published by F. W. Beers, New York, N.Y. (The map has been matted, glazed and reframed with conservation material, compliments of **Peg O'Connor and Jim Hipkiss**, owners of New England Graphics in Sturbridge and Framers Gallery in Auburn.); **Richard H. Green**, Spencer - Three periodicals, two are "Rural Visitor" published by Old Sturbridge Village and a copy of the "American History Illustrated" (contains a good article about General Lafayette); **MaryKate McMaster**, Oxford - Book, "A Publisher's Hand: Strategic Gambles and Cultural Leadership by Moses Dresser Phillips in Antebellum America", by Mary Kate McMaster, 2001; J & S Enterprises (**Joe Craig and Sara Hunt**), blue transferware plate, Patrick Henry addressing the Virginia Assembly 1765, signed No. 9, Ye Old Historical Pottery, Staffordshire England.

Claudia Lacerte, Oakham - Silver plate bowl signed Wilcox, International Silver Co., this is a Paul Revere style bowl, silver plate tea service, signed Wm. Rogers, Paul Revere Reproduction, pewter porringer, reproduction signed STEDE, three dark blue transfer print plates, signed Bridgewood & Son, England; **Charles and Cathy (Weinhardt) Peterson**, Northboro - Sofa, 3 place and wing back chair, upholstered, with wood cabriole legs, Queen Anne Style, manufactured by the Hallagan Manufacturing Co., Newark, New York, and a wood tilt top tea table, reproduction; **Robert and Beverly Beaudette**, Charlton - Ribbon and medal, "Patrons of Husbandry", Charlton Grange No. 92, Charlton, Mass., booklet, "Official Minutes of the Ninety-Third Session of the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church", held in Boston in 1892, (Includes references to the Charlton City Methodist Church), sleeve or tube of unused paper plug caps from Cook's Farm. These caps were used to close and seal milk bottles and were imprinted Cook's / Farm /

Pasteurized / Homogenized / Milk / Charlton, Mass. 01507.

Judith A. Sessler, Brimfield - Table, small drop leaf, wood probably pine, turned legs that have been grain painted, this table was saved from an old house that was lost to the Quabbin Reservoir project; **Charles Chaplin**, Southbridge - Booklet, "Charlton, Massachusetts an outline of its history 1755 - 1976", by Fred W. Murkland (Chairman) and members of the Book Committee of the Charlton Bicentennial Commission, published circa 1976, booklet, Union Contract: Agreement Between the Charlton Woolen Co. And the Amalgamated Textile Workers Union etc., dated 1977, four early photo postcards with Charlton City views, The Charlton Inn, St. Joseph's Church, and the Electric Railway Station; **Harry Howard**, Charlton - Two matching ceramic cream colored vases, these are replica of early 19th century items, "Victorian style teapot, white with gold decor, round, convex mirror, wood gold gilt frame with an eagle on the top, replica of an early American mirror.

Thank you all for helping to preserve Charlton's past.

Also note, that the archive and library re-organization is moving forward, and very good progress is being made. If you have, or know someone who has any locally significant material, and is looking for a good permanent home for it, please contact me at 248-1632.

Spring Yard Sale

By Don Weinhardt

Our Spring yard sale was held on Saturday May 8th and was very successful. The following people were the donors of our timeless merchandise: Kevinetta C. O'Brien, Claudia Lacerte, Carol Weinhardt, Kathy Murray, Cindy Cheever, Cindy and Peter Cooper, Joyce Stewart, Janet Blaisius, Sarah Hunt and Joe Craig (J & S Enterprises), Armand Bisette, Peg O'Connor and Jim Hipkiss (New England Graphics and Framers Gallery), Glenn Ellis, Ruth and Erik Schwendeman. Thank you all, and anyone I may have inadvertently omitted.

The well trained sales staff consisted: Joyce Stewart, Cindy Cheever, Claudia Lacerte Diane MacDonald, Ruth Schwendeman, Cindy Cooper and Carol and Don Weinhardt. It was such a success, and we all had so much fun, we are doing a Fall yard sale on Nov. 6th.

Charlton Historical Society
P. O. Box 252
Charlton, MA 01507

Membership Form

Charlton Historical Society
P. O. Box 252
Charlton, MA 01507

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Type of Membership:

____ **Individual \$5.00**

____ **Family \$10.00**

____ **Life \$50.00**

____ **Renewal**

____ **New Member**

I would like to volunteer at an event or be a member of the board of directors. Phone _____

____ **Enclosed is a donation of \$** _____

Comments: _____

The Gardening Committee

By Ruth Schwendeman

With the abundance of rain this year, the Tavern gardens have progressed nicely. Mature shrubs and perennial plants in the "Widow's Third" fenced garden made a fine display, and the addition of new hollyhocks, lavender and motherwort are sure to contribute to the show next year.

On the Tavern's west side, Joyce, Don and Ruth revived the raised bed near the side door, grubbing out plant roots and trimming back the plot's huge flowering shrubs. The newly cleared space now features plantings traditional to the Tavern period: daylilies, perennial geranium, bugleweed, nasturtium and 4 o'clocks, to name a few. This work-in-progress shows signs of becoming an attractive addition to the Tavern perimeter. Thanks to Bill Hultgren for the gift of tulip bulbs sure to bring a nice show in the Spring.

Still more gardening took place with the refurbishment of the small herb bed on the building's northeast corner. Based on board member Cindy Cheever's initial design, the gardening committee expanded the plantings. The pungent smells of tansy, lemon thyme, and peppermint are now evident, along with the bright floral displays of coneflower, cranesbill, and yarrow.

The addition of these new plants, as well as the purchase of new gardening tools was made possible in part by donations from board member Ruth Schwendeman, as well as plenty of sweat equity!

Documenting Between the Sheets

By Aimee E. Newell

On Saturday, August 21 volunteers from MassQuilts, the state quilt documentation project arrived at the Rider Tavern to uncover "clues in the calico." MassQuilts was founded in 1994 to increase public awareness and appreciation of the significance of quilts in the lives of their makers and as part of our cultural and artistic heritage by identifying and documenting quilts that reside in Massachusetts that were made prior to 1950. To date, the entirely volunteer-run group has documented over 4400 quilts from every corner of the state.

At the Rider Tavern documentation, the volunteers looked at 32 quilts brought in by twenty-one people, most residents of Charlton and some from nearby towns. After each quilt was photographed, the MassQuilts workers filled out a standardized form for each with information on size, techniques, materials, color and pattern name. The quilt owner received a

copy of the form and photo along with information on how to care for the quilt and a special label to be stitched on the back so that future generations will know that the quilt was documented. The information on each quilt documented will be entered into a master database housed at the New England Quilt Museum in Lowell; plans are in the works to make the database accessible online in conjunction with data from quilt documentation projects in other states.

One of the day's treasures was a quilt with fabrics that allowed the documentors to date it to the 1840s. Another discovery was a signature quilt made by members of the Helping Hand Society around 1950. The blocks were appliquéd with a Sunbonnet Sue pattern and then signed by those who made them.

Charlton Historical Society volunteers were on hand to give tours of the Tavern and to serve light refreshments. A quilt borrowed from Old Sturbridge Village for the day was displayed alongside a quilt from the CHS collection. As the documentation day wrapped up, everyone who participated shared stories of their favorite quilt of the day or of new information that they learned.

If you have a quilt that was made before 1950 and resides in Massachusetts, but were unable to join us on August 21, MassQuilts still wants to hear from you! Visit the website for the New England Quilt Museum, www.nequiltmuseum.org, and select "Community Projects" from the left.

Calendar of Events:

October 17, 2004 Sunday

Charlton History Day at the Tavern and Northside Village from 12 to 4 PM

Charlton History Day is the society's biggest event of the year and a chance for you to see all that is new at the old Tavern.

Nov 6, 2004 Saturday from 9:00 to 2:00

Yard Sale Fundraiser at the Tavern

We will be selling many items that have been donated to be sold. They will include tools, antique bottles, household goods, collectables and many other serendipitous items. We are still accepting donations of items for the sale. Call Don Weinhardt at 508-248-1632 if you have anything!

Stop by and search for treasures!

We will be there rain or shine.

PAST EVENT

PAST EVENT

Capital Campaign Results

By Glenn Ellis

The 2004 Capital Campaign has raised \$3960 to date. We would like to thank and show our appreciation to the following area businesses for their support in helping us preserve our special piece of New England History.

American Reclamation Corp.
Charlton Flower Shop
Charlton Food Mart
Coldwell Banker Towne & Country Realty
Country Bank for Savings
Cronin Cabinets & Marine
Culliton & Fanning, CPA's
Curtis K Abbott Co Inc
Gentex Optics Inc.
Gregson Insurance Agency
Hyde Manufacturing
Karl Stortz Endovision Inc.
O'Malley's Truck & Auto Body Co
Savers Co-Operative Bank
Southbridge Savings Bank
Ted's Package & Variety Store
Wal-Mart of Sturbridge
Webster Five Cent Savings

The society is solely funded through private and corporate contributions as well as local grants. We do not receive any funding through local taxes. All contributions are tax deductible. We keep our membership dues low in order to include all that are interested. We rely on the generosity of those that can afford more to help us by including a tax-deductible contribution with their membership application. We would like to thank all of you who have contributed in the past and those of you who are considering it now! If you would like more information on how you could help please contact us by mail at Charlton Historical Society, P.O. Box 252, Charlton, MA 01507 or phone Glenn at 508 248-7913.

Decorating Committee Report

By Joyce Stewart

The muggy days of summer created some obstacles for the stenciling crew (Cindy Cheever, Ruth Schwendeman and I) in the Southeast Bedchamber but I am happy to announce the stenciling surround has been completed. Our choice of the McIntire/Bond house stenciling, found only 5 miles from the Rider Tavern, demonstrates local

artwork circa early 1800's. Many thanks to Nancy Garcia for providing the hand cut stencils traced from the original wall design which were used. The frieze consists of 6 stencil overlays and the border consists of 3 stencils. Five different colors red iron oxide, red, mustard, light green and dark green were applied. The next treatment will consist of the freehand scroll work and leaf and flower design which simulates wallpaper design (but at an affordable price!). One can only imagine the talent necessary, without the modern day tools, that an itinerant artist possessed or the hunger for food and lodging.

A ferocious beast has taken residence in the Rider Tavern thanks to artist Inez Gornall. The replication of the Harvey Dresser fireboard has arrived thanks to the support of the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Charlton Cultural Council. Inez's work in oil of the lion comes to life on the 33" x 46" fireboard which is used to close the opening in a fireplace during the seasons not in use. His features are of human/character type and resemble an animal found in the Edward Hicks (Folk artist, 1780-1849) paintings. We are honored to have this work of art in a setting similar to the original fireboard which was discovered in the Dresser tavern on Dresser Hill.

The Decorating Committee has contacted a local artist named Heidi Howard for design work and replication of a tavern sign. Claudia LaCerte had an article about Heidi and her mother Helen Howard (artist/antique dealer). They visited the tavern to get a feel for the type of sign that would lure travelers to stop and rest at the Rider tavern. Heidi brought several examples of her work in the area of signs and offered a visit to her studio to view many more. We look forward to visiting her in the hopes of a new sign for the 250th anniversary of the town.

Thanks to Cathy & Charlie Peterson for donating the furnishings in the ladies' parlor. This room felt empty without these pieces and suddenly it is alive. A small drop leaf table also arrived via Brimfield by the generosity of Judith Sessler. Harry Howard's decorative finger vases add color and style to the mantel as well. Thanks to all contributors to the decorative ambiance of our room.

We are interested in recording the artwork created in Charlton. If anyone has original artwork (stenciling, samplers, pictures, paintings, etc.) from the 1800's that can be attributed to originating in Charlton we would appreciate a call to Don W. at 508-248-1632 for further research. We hope to see all on October 17th.