

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



January 1977 Vol. XIII, No. 2



Photograph by Roberta Siegel

“FAMILY DAY” MARKED THE CLIMAX OF WESTON’S COMMEMORATION OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL

Shown above is a typical scene on the Town Green last June 12th where from dawn to dusk, happiness was everywhere. See “Sidelights and Highlights” beginning on Page 3.

A VERY SPECIAL INVITATION

This issue of the BULLETIN is being sent to every resident of Weston. The directors believe that since it contains a birdseye account of the Bicentennial of our great nation, town-wide distribution will reassure the community of the ongoing fulfillment of the Society’s aims. We hope we deserve the active support of every citizen, young and old, so that as one great family, Weston preserves and protects the best of its past, and promotes the endurance of patriotism and respect for its institutions. If you are not already a member and wish to support these objectives, send your check to Weston Historical Society, Inc., Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02193: — \$5 per person, \$8 per family, \$200 for life. For fuller information, call Mrs. John A. Paine, Jr. at 894-4079. Through the BULLETIN which is issued four times annually, and through special mailings, you will be kept posted on our programs and projects. They embrace *all* of Weston’s history, and we solicit the support of *all* of the people *all* of the time. We’ll be happy to welcome *you*.

COME WITH US TO SANDWICH JANUARY 15TH

All members are invited to attend the January 15th WINTER MEETING of the Bay State Historical League in the town of Sandwich, just an hour and a half's drive from Weston via Routes 128 and 3 to the Sagamore Bridge: thence a few miles via Route 6A to the famous Sandwich Glass Museum. Here Part One of a Seminar on "COLLECTORS AND COLLECTING" will start at 10:30, preceded by registration and a short business meeting.

Director-Curator Nancy Merrill of the Museum will lecture on "Sandwich Glass" and conduct a tour of the galleries. Concurrently a workshop on "Primer for Local Historical Societies" will engage the attention of your officers and directors. You too, as members of Weston Historical Society, are most cordially welcome to either session.

The 12:30 Luncheon at historic and hospitable Daniel Webster Inn will be followed by Part Two of the Seminar at Heritage Plantation of Sandwich whose director, Nelson O. Price, will introduce you to the Folk Arts and Antique Carousel in the Arts and Crafts Building, and to the displays in the Military Museum of Antique Firearms, Military Miniatures, and the Flag Collection.

Deadline for reservations is January 10th, so if you or other members of your family can join us, please phone Mrs. Dudley B. Dumaine, Liaison Chairman, at 899-1098 not later than January 9th. We hope as usual to have a good turnout of Weston members.

MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT

December 1976 marked the 13th birthday of the formal founding of the Weston Historical Society! The idea of the Society was conceived in 1962-63 during the 250th Weston Celebration out of the spirit and enthusiasm of that Town Anniversary.

It has grown and matured under the devoted guidance of several of its charter members. We are indebted to them for energetic leadership and foresight.

The Society must attract the interest of a wide number of our residents from all sections of the Town; it must develop and maintain concrete projects of historic nature.

In this vein, we solicit active participation by all of our present members and earnestly, and cordially, invite other Weston residents to join our ranks in the never ending projects of research and preservation.

Several active and enlarged committees are to be appointed. We welcome nominees and volunteers: — if *you* are interested, or know of one who *is*, please tell *us*. Also, what are *your* particular interests? We are currently working on committee appointments which we hope to announce in our next issue of The BULLETIN.

Finally the Directors wish me to thank all who have served so faithfully, particularly Erlund Field who has retired after having been a director since the founding, and Edward Marshall who has relinquished the Presidency but fortunately remains on the Board.

John H. Bishop

MID-WINTER MEETING

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27th at 8:00 P.M.

in the BALLROOM

of the Josiah Smith Tavern

Eleanor P. DeLorme (Mrs. Thomas) of Milton, Mass. will present her exciting and appropriate lecture:

"THE FRENCH ARMY IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION"

concerning the French Landing at Newport, the Yorktown Campaign, and their Embarkation from Boston.

Mrs. DeLorme is a Guest Lecturer at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, writes for Antiques Magazine, the American Art Review, and several European Journals. She spent 12 years in France pursuing her studies, and from the beginning has been fascinated by the History of the French.

Mabel Patterson, Program Chairman

HIGHLIGHTS AND SIDELIGHTS: HOW WESTON OBSERVED THE BICENTENNIAL

Weston can well be proud of the wholesome way in which officially and individually it commemorated the 200th birthday of our nation. Beginning with our Vol. XI, No. 1 October 1972 issue, we have steadily endeavored to record the exciting succession of events that were so admirably conducted by so many people and organizations. A review of each one, name by name, would fill a book! The part that Weston Historical Society played not only through projects and programs of its own but by also supplying active membership on the committees of practically every Bicentennial event, cannot be minimized. Gratefully and gladly we share with our readers this review of the part Weston played in commemorating the Bicentennial anniversary of the American Revolution.

The nation's Bicentennial started officially on April 19th, 1975, but as fully related in our Vol. XI, No. 4 May 1975 issue, Weston had already begun! It's no doubt too early to be sure, but we suspect that likewise Weston will, in one way or another, keep the spirit of the Bicentennial alive, even though the observance itself was declared closed a short time ago.

In the span of the Bicentennial, old man Weather ran the gamut from the sudden squall that hit the Lamson Boulder dedication on the 19th of April, 1975 to the ideal skies that blessed "Family Day" on June 12th, 1976! Large turnouts greeted every event, and the crowds that thronged over the snow-covered Town Green in the late afternoon fog of January 25th attested to the high spirit of Weston people. Space allows only scant mention of most Bicentennial projects and observances conducted by Weston organizations. Everyone *from the youngest to the oldest* had a piece of the action.

In the public schools, the curriculum at all levels began pointing toward the Bicentennial several years ago, stimulated by cooperation of many of our Society's officers and members. Events such as "Sturbridge Day", "Colonial Day", "Our American Heritage Week", the "Bicentennial Spring Concert", and "Bicentennial Week" that featured exhibits such as the "Freedom Trail" and the "Art Festival" which included lifesize, Paul Revere mounted on his horse, defy description. Enthusiastic teachers and their eager students did an outstanding job, week after week. In the townwide competition, students by the hundreds submitted truly remarkable entries in all four divisions of the arts, crafts, and literary categories.

Private school participation in Weston's Bicentennial Commemoration was also noteworthy. Meadowbrook, for example, involved the whole school with contests, plays, and trips to historic places, and in constructing a 30' by 40' map of the United States on the courtyard. Rivers School should be particularly cited for its production of an original colored sound movie "The Journal of John Howe, British Spy" which the whole Town enjoyed at its showing in the Town Hall last April 6th as a part of the Awards Night program.

Appreciation should universally be expressed to literally thousands of people, both town officials and private citizens alike, for the exceptional spirit with which everyone made his or her contributions. Let us merely list below some of the undertakings that represented so much unbounded and unmatchable energy, enthusiasm, and talent:

The repair and repainting of many private and public structures, the landscaping of many grounds and parks, the beautification of homes and store window displays, the significant new plantings, and the feeding and pruning of our oldest, most venerable trees, — the repainting of "Welcome to Weston" signs, the remodeling of the barns of the Josiah Smith and Golden Ball taverns, the preservation and historic marking of the 1740-1967 Burgoyne Elm's bole, the dedication of plaques on the Lamson Park boulder and the "Weston Beacon" stone, the publication of distinguished works including "ONE TOWN IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: WESTON, MASSACHUSETTS", "REMEMBER THE LADIES", "WINDOWS ON WESTON", and the second printing of "ONCE UPON A PUNG," — the restoration of the view from "Sunset Corner", the many civic and college lectures of cultural and historic interest, the numerous arts and crafts displays at schools and other places including the Town Green, the faithful and fascinating exhibits that the

(Continued on Page 6)



Jan. 25, 1976



"From the Youngest

"FAMILY DAY



Left to Right: Top Row:

Knox Trail "Trekkers" approach W
Alison Vaughan, 4 days old on "Fa
charter member facing 100th birthd
Park; Col. Knox orders Ticonderoga

Second Row:

En route to Reviewing Stand at T
Parade Grand Marshal's personal a
Tree opposite Fiske Law Office; Pri
Town Green display; Three patriotic
Park.

Left:

Chief leads impressive array of fire a
Road at corner where Major Samuel
night's gala Bicentennial Pageant in

Right:

All kinds of sports provided afterno
"Family Day" say "Well Done!" to
nial Committee.

For the photographs above we extend tha
R. Morganstern, V. Harnish, J. Corre
W. Smith.



HIGHLIGHTS



To the Oldest"

June 12, 1976



Town Line via the Old Connecticut Path; [unclear], came home from the hospital; Anna Hall, [unclear], watches parade from heights of Lamson [unclear] on Weston Town Green.

Police Honor Guard heads the procession; [unclear] staffs in ancient cars pass Buttonwood [unclear] Bicentennial quilt features arts and crafts [unclear] spectant generations await parade at Soldiers'

[unclear], old and new, and turns into Town House [unclear] house once stood; The Recorders open the [unclear] auditorium.

Chairman of Selectmen and Co-chairman of [unclear] of Weston American Revolution Bicenten-

[unclear]pers, H. Randle, E. Randle, G. Osmond, and



Jan. 25, 1976



librarian and his staff kept up to date and timely in the display case our Society moved from the Fiske Law Office to the public library, — these are some, but not all, of the worthwhile projects that came to the fore.

Then think of the *events* that were planned, arranged, and staged with such care, skill, and thoroughness!

Townpeople turned out on drizzly Sunday afternoon, January 25th, to welcome the hardy and personable Knox Trail “Trekkers” who acknowledged our hospitality with two gun blasts on the Town Green, one from a mortar and one from the cannon. Nine horse vans transported the teams to their private stables, and a cheerful log fire on the grounds west of the Josiah Smith Tavern lighted up the scene. Inside the tavern, our Society hosted and toasted the indomitable marchers at a reception and dinner after which our guests, weary from the rugged “Re-enactment Journey” all the way from Ticonderoga, “bedded down” for the night on the wall-to-wall carpeting of the Tavern’s barn. Before the party left for Cambridge in the morning, 30 busloads of youngsters came to the Green from our schools while some members of the “Trek” made brief appearances at the high school.

Beginning 8 days later, Weston’s gala Bicentennial Musical gave seven sensational performances of “Ben Franklin in Paris”. With cast and chorus exceeding fifty talented Westonians, all backed by a committee of 200, it was a thrilling success. Once again Weston had brought forth its best and brightest stars! Mention has already been made of the activity that was proceeding apace at our schools, class after class, building to building. History was in the air, and April 6th was another happy evening at the Town Hall when it was filled with parents and friends to examine the exhibits and witness the awarding of prizes to the talented winners of the second Bicentennial School and College competition.

But the climax of the entire Bicentennial, and perhaps of the more than 3 centuries during which people have lived here, came to a head Saturday, June 12th. Long awaited, it became Weston’s greatest day, and it marked the culmination of more than two years of diligent planning and incredible preparations by hundreds of top-talented residents all pulling together as one great happy family. From every corner of the town came old-timers and newcomers, eager to embrace the concept of an oldfashioned town-wide family picnic in the Town Center. For two years they met month after month, then week after week, to plan a “day” when, despite the town having increased sixfold in population, we still would crowd around the Green to have an oldtime family party that offered joy and action to every member of the community from the youngest babe to the oldest inhabitant.

So here came “The Day!” Two January concerts by Weston’s renowned concert pianist, Arthur Mackenzie, had provided funds for extra features the cost of which, the committees agreed, should and would not be borne by our purposely modest budget. Generous donations of materials and skills by uncounted fellow townsmen also provided a day that will never fade in memory.

The ringing of all the church bells at 9 o’clock announced the advent of “Bicentennial Family Day.” Simultaneously an ecumenical family church service was conducted in a packed Town Hall where all faiths participated and the Declaration of Independence was solemnly read. At ten o’clock we witnessed a most impressive flag raising ceremony when one of the world’s largest flags, 15' by 25', made famous for having flown from the ill-fated Battleship “Missouri”, was hoisted in military dignity by a crew of 8 local veterans, to the top of perhaps the tallest single-piece wooden flagpole in America, almost 100 feet above the ground. With a brisk and cheerful breeze to support it, “Old Glory” warmed our hearts with gladness.

The colossal parade, executed in grand manner with perfect precision, was over 2 miles long and would have done credit to Broadway! In true Weston style, though, marchers seemed to outnumber watchers in some stages of the parade’s line of march! Deliberately and determinedly the committee had insisted in carrying out Weston’s Bicentennial slogan: “In Weston, For Weston, and By Weston!”

The reviewing stand in front of the Town Hall was packed to capacity. After the Grand Marshal and his staff arrived and took their positions, loud applause steadily

greeted the appearance of marchers and floats as follows: American Legion Post 214, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Weston High School Band, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, Waltham's American Legion Band, Fort Devens' Marching Unit and Color Guard, Lexington Minute Men, 26th Supply and Transport Battalion, 26th Infantry Division Band; Headquarters/Company A, 726th Maintenance Battalion, 26th (Yankee) Infantry Division, the Lincoln Minute Men, the Sudbury Fife and Drum Corps, the Sudbury Companies of Militia and Minute Men, — Sir Galahad — Natick Commandery No. 33, Knights Templar, — Kennedy Junior High School Band of Waltham, the Aleppo Temple Shriners Uniformed Units, the Massachusetts National Lancers, Weston's Green Power float, the Hallamore Clydesdale 3-Horse Unicorn Hitch, the Weston Garden Club float, the Weston Pony Club, the Weston Children's Public Library float, the Girl Scout float, the Weston Boosters float, the Weston 4-H Club, the Weston Recycling Program float, the Weston Drama Workshop's covered wagon, the League of Women Voters float, the Waverly Post No. 1272 V.F.W. band, many antique cars, the Weston Fire Department and guest apparatus of colorful magnitude from Massachusetts and Connecticut communities, the Stuart Highlanders Pipe Band, and last but not least, the Children's Bicycle Unit!

Following picnic lunches on Lamson Park and elsewhere, the town seemed to converge upon the Town Green where all sorts of activity created a scene that can't be described. Here were Senior Citizens in Colonial costumes, two parade bands alternating to delight the crowd, Weston's popular "Westonnaires" singing lightly and lustily, the Chamber Music Society of Lower Newton Street strumming its tunes, and the "Vagabonds" performing dramatic dances of the 1651-1790 era. Also arts and crafts displays of appeal and character adorned the Town Green while, across the Post Road on the Josiah Smith lawn, were exhibits of the Field School fifth grade's Sturbridge Day program.

All the while "Open House" throughout the afternoon attracted large crowds at 3 nearby historic landmarks, — Josiah Smith Tavern, Isaac Fiske Law Office, and Golden Ball Tavern. Meanwhile sporting events in varying degrees of excellence provided much enjoyment for hordes of participants and spectators, young, middle-aged, and old. In mid-afternoon, invited guests were bused to Sanderson Hill for the dedication of the Revolutionary War Beacon Plaque.

Picnic suppers on and off the Green were the vogue as the evening shadows began to fall. A delicious supper at the High School cafeteria fed the rest of the multitude, followed by a tremendously successful and triumphant evening of entertainment in the high school's jam-packed auditorium. Entitled "The Bicentennial Pageant", it featured in rapid succession music by a talented group in Colonial garb, a reenactment of the stormy and history-making town meeting of June 18, 1776, concert tunes by the High School Stage Group, and a spectacular initial performance by the Weston Chorus, — a group of 125 magnificent voices that made the welkin ring!

The awarding of citations to various individuals brought "Family Day" to its brilliant close. It was the last event on the calendar of the Weston American Revolution Bicentennial Committee whose final review of the Bicentennial years should be of lasting inspiration and historical value, in the forthcoming Town Report.

H. G. T.

IN OUR NEXT !!!

The March issue of the BULLETIN will feature a most interesting article prepared by Messrs. Brenton H. Dickson and Homer C. Lucas entitled "*THE REMODELLING OF THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH IN 1800.*"

IN MEMORIAM

Since our last issue, we have lost two of our most faithful charter members, Mrs. William W. Gallagher, Jr. and Mr. Walter Trumbull. The contributions each made to our town were generous and sincere. We extend our sympathy to their families.

WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Officers

President: John H. Bishop
Secretary: Mrs. David V. Harmon
Treasurer: Samuel R. Payson

Directors

John H. Bishop '77, Brenton H. Dickson, 3rd '78, Roy L. Dickson '78, Donald D. Douglass '77, Mrs. Dudley B. Dumaine '78, Homer C. Lucas '77, Edward W. Marshall '79, Mrs. John A. Paine, Jr. '79, Mrs. M. Kirkbride Patterson '79, and Harold G. Travis '78.

Membership

Annual dues: \$5.00 per person, \$8.00 per family

Life Memberships \$200

Gift Memberships are suggested

Contributions and Bequests to the Society are welcomed.

Checks should be made payable to Weston Historical Society, Inc., and mailed to P. O. Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02193.



Editor of the *BULLETIN*: Harold G. Travis 899-4515

Additional copies may be obtained at 50 cents each by phoning Mrs. Bonner 893-4346.

WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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