

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



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Carol and Ned Downing in colonial garb, with curator Vera Laska, on the opening day of the museum of the Weston Historical Society at the Josiah Smith Tavern, on Saturday, May 18, 1996. Photo by Andrew J. Laska.

WESTON AND THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

Historians describe the progressive era, from about 1900 through 1912, as a time of reform, a period in which private reformers and some politicians addressed, if they did not solve, the problems caused by the rapid growth of cities and industries. Did Weston, a town with a population of 1,834 in 1900, share in the spirit of the progressive era?

Weston leaders did initiate many of the improvements enjoyed by town residents today during the early years of the century, a time in which the selectmen and voters were dealing with the results of industrialization and the growth of metropolitan Boston. The following questions are samples of issues raised between 1899 and 1912: Should Central Avenue be taken as a state highway? Should the Waltham, Weston & Wayland Street Railway Company locate its tracks on Central Avenue? Should one-fifteenth of the town budget be spent on incandescent electric lamps for street lights? Should the speed limit of fifteen miles per hour for automobiles on country roads be established? Could the town keep certain roads free from automobiles altogether? Would Weston or the Charles River Reservation be forced to pay for fifty percent of the replacement cost of the bridge over the Charles River at South Avenue? Should Weston pay a high per capita charge into the Metropolitan Park System when there were "more than 5½ acres of land for every man, woman, and child in town?" Should Weston cooperate in the effort to annex the suburbs to the city of Boston? All these questions and more challenged town officials, just as similar ones challenged political leaders across the country.

Weston was changing. Although there were 1,012 cows and 502 horses in town in 1900, there were also six railroad stations for the eight miles of railroad track in town, which connected Weston directly with Boston and the rest of the continent. The Hastings Organ Factory was operating at its peak of production, sending high quality, custom-made organs to churches and halls across the United States. While Weston residents received benefits from their proximity to the Boston metropolis, they continued to be a community determined to maintain their identity and quality of life.

Weston residents did join in the progressive spirit of the times. Several "improvements" were proposed in little more than a decade. The selectmen and other residents petitioned the Metropolitan Park Commission in 1899 to establish a park at "Devil's Den," eighteen acres of land near the Stony Brook Station, which was "one of the most picturesque and attractive places in town." While the Commission took the matter under advisement, private negotiations continued and ended by establishing a stone quarry on the spot. In that same year, the town opened a new library, featuring an open shelf system to encourage "the public to make their own selections." The town reports for these years list each of the acquisitions of the library; the new facility allowed the acquisition of many volumes to meet the interests of library patrons, who read for both pleasure and self-improvement.

The town took its obligations to provide for the welfare of its residents seriously. In 1900 the Overseers of the Poor reported that the town-farm had been improved with the addition of a bathroom, two water closets, a new range, and a hot water boiler. The Overseers provided support at the almshouse that year for a 22 year old woman and her two year old daughter. The mother died after a two months stay, and the arrangements for the child are not recorded in the town report. Six hundred and sixty-four tramps stayed at the town-farm during 1900. The assessors valued the town almshouse buildings, equipment, and 68 acres of land at \$6,000 in 1904, almost equal to the value of the

“Grammar School.” Although the needy contributed to their support by working on the farm, the town did spend \$640 supporting the poor in 1904. The Merriam Fund for the Silent Poor met the immediate financial needs of residents, such as shoes for school; the balance in the fund at the end of 1904 was \$3,308. The town guaranteed hospital care for the needy by paying Waltham Hospital \$745 in 1904 to maintain “free beds.” The selectmen determined under what circumstances a person could occupy a bed.

Improved public education was high on the list of priorities for the progressives. Charles “Boss” Eaton, Weston Superintendent of Schools, yearly urged students to improve their performance in school and encouraged parents to support high academic standards. In the 1903 town report, he noted the difficulties facing city schools: “bad inheritance, poor environment, and lack of ideals in the home,” while recognizing that “in our town we have to combat this sort of thing little if at all, but we have our difficulties. . . . The greatest hindrance to the work in our schools is a lack of ambition. Our pupils are practically all well-fed and well-clothed. . . They have rarely felt the pinch of want, nor do they fear it in the future. Their parents provide well for them. . . They are often too self-satisfied, and are content with work that is only fairly good, instead of striving for the best. . . they should learn while still young to carry some responsibility for themselves. . .” In 1904, Eaton urged the importance of education: “Never, in the history of our country, has there been a greater need for education in order to succeed in life. . .” With greater specialization of labor and improved standards for the professions, education was receiving attention across the country.

By 1912, the selectmen were taking on long-term projects for the benefit of the town. First, they planned to create “the finest Town Common in Massachusetts,” and to provide proper facilities, housing, and “an automobile chemical engine” for the Fire Department, while showing fiscal restraint in planning to move the existing Town-house rather than constructing a new, expensive building. Town leaders opposed bills introduced into the state legislature to annex surrounding towns to Boston and to create a Greater Boston Federation which would transfer control of local affairs from town government to some other “instrument of government.”

Who was setting town policy during these years of change? Voters numbered 381 in 1900 and 479 in 1912, approximately 22% of the population. The statistics for the town included a category “number of voters, women” listing 1 for 1899, 2 for 1900, and 0 from 1901 through 1912. While the 1911 town report did note that bills granting suffrage to women in municipal elections and in town matters involving the appropriation of money had failed to pass in the state legislature, the town report is silent on local feeling on these issues.

How did the town relate to the national issues? Town voters supported the Republican point of view throughout this period. In 1900, the town voters supported McKinley, the Republican, with 203 of the 268 votes cast (76%). In the 1904 presidential election, candidates received the following totals: Republican [Roosevelt] 210 votes (76%), Democratic 51, Prohibition 13, and Socialist 1. It would be interesting to learn who cast this vote for the Socialist Party, a radical move in an upper and middle class community. While Wilson received more votes than any other presidential candidate in Massachusetts in the 1912 election, Weston voters remained loyal to the Republican party, splitting their votes in the following way: Republican [Taft] 46%, Progressive [Roosevelt] 33%, Democratic [Wilson] 20%, Prohibition 7% and Socialist 0%. The most prominent of

Republican leaders in this time was Theodore Roosevelt, president from 1901-1909 and candidate for the Progressive Party in 1912.

What were Roosevelt's values? He believed in hard work, the importance of individual character, the responsibilities of citizenship, and practical idealism. In an address to the Liberal Club in Buffalo, New York, in 1893, Roosevelt emphasized his belief that "every man must devote a reasonable share of his time doing his duty in the political life of the community. No man has a right to shirk his political duties under whatever pleas of pleasure or business. . . ." The many volunteers, past and present, who make up town government and support local programs, exemplify Roosevelt's ideal. For example, in 1903 the town voted its appreciation of Oliver R. Robbins who had served the town as selectman, school committee member and, for thirty-one years, as library trustee. The town report notes that "the transfer of the Library to its new building and its subsequent growth and development and increased usefulness were largely due to his business sagacity, literary judgment, forceful methods and unsparing use of his time and energy . . . he was a fine example of that type of New England character that has made these towns renowned for their civic virtue and pure democracy." Several individuals served town government for years during this period, providing the continuity needed for the successful completion of large projects.

A believer in the "strenuous life," Roosevelt enjoyed every opportunity to be outdoors. As President, he took dramatic steps to conserve the forests of the country; he would surely have approved of the town's long-standing interest in conservation. Four national parks were created during his administrations; with 296 acres of parks within town boundaries by 1900, Weston had already taken its first steps towards conservation of open space.

When questioned about his reasons for selecting his social causes, Roosevelt replied that "concrete cases" aroused his interest. In a community of fewer than two thousand people, residents knew each other and had established social "safety nets" to deal with specific needs. The town's commitment to public education for all would have met with Roosevelt's enthusiastic endorsement because education provided the basis for future self-development.

A final example of the spirit of community throughout Weston in the early years of the century is the celebration of the town's bicentennial in 1913. The celebration committee, yet another group of volunteers, recommended three days of activities beginning with a Sunday "union service" of townspeople to be held at the First Parish Church. Monday was "to be devoted to the pupils in the public schools," with formal student presentations in the morning and an historical pageant and parade in the afternoon. Tuesday would feature athletic events and the major speeches and music, to be followed by a band concert and fireworks in the evening. The town had much to celebrate in the positive effects of the reform efforts of the previous years. Little did they know that the progressive era nationally was coming to an end and that the battlefields of Europe would dominate much thought and conversation in the future.

Lee Marsh

The sources for this article are the Weston Town Reports for 1899, 1900, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1911, 1912, and Dewey W. Grentham, ed. Great Lives Observed: Theodore Roosevelt (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1971, pp. 41-42.)



T.R. or T.Z.?

BULLY! TEDDY ROOSEVELT IS COMING TO TOWN!

**RESERVE THE DATE: Wednesday, October 23, 1996, 8 p.m.
presented by the Weston Historical Society
at the First Parish Church in Weston
Free Admission & Refreshments**

The man after whom the Teddy Bear is named!

The man about whom politico Mark Hanna said: "That damned cowboy is but a heart-beat away from the presidency," when T.R. was "kicked up" to the vice-presidency in 1900!

The man who as police commissioner of New York personally chased the prostitutes off the streets!

The man who had overcome his frail physique by roaming the West!

The man who founded a third party and was beating his chest proclaiming that he felt like a Bull-Moose, thus adding a new animal to the political zoo of the Democratic donkey and the Republican elephant!

The man who led his “Rough Riders” up San Juan Hill in the Spanish American War hollering: CHARGE!

The man whose diplomatic slogan was “Speak softly, but carry a big stick!”

The man who claimed that “I took Panama!”

The man who was our youngest president, wrote over two dozen books, won the Nobel Peace Prize, hunted lions in Africa, quarreled with the Pope, discovered a river in Brazil - we are running out of space!

This is one program you should not miss. If you do, you will later regret it. We let you in on the secret: the impersonator will be Ted Zalewski, who looks like T.R.’s twin, and is a nationally acclaimed performer and actor. Bring your friends and favored enemies, bring your children, and retreat into the fun and games of Teddy Roosevelt’s times.

If you are ambitious to read up on Theodore Roosevelt, we recommend Edmund Morris’ The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt (New York: Coward McCann, 1979), or David McCullough’s Mornings on Horseback (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), the latter a super book but dealing only with the young T.R.

Vera Laska

REV. SEARS’ “OTHER” CHRISTMAS CAROL

It is a well known fact that one of the most beloved of all Christmas carols, “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear,” was written by a local minister. The author, Reverend Edmund Hamilton Sears, a distinguished scholar, preacher, author, and poet, served as minister at both the First Parish Church in Wayland (1838-1840, 1848-1866) as well as the First Parish Church in Weston (1866-1876). It was while he was minister at the Unitarian Church in Wayland in 1849 that he composed the now famous hymn for the Christmas Eve Service. With its universal message of “peace on earth, good will to men,” the hymn has become known and loved the world over. (Queen Elizabeth II once quoted a stanza from it on a special Christmas Eve broadcast.)

Less well known, but thought to be equally as beautiful, is another Christmas carol written by Rev. Sears, entitled “Calm on the Listening Ear of Night.” Oliver Wendell Holmes, a renowned poet himself, called it “The finest hymn in the English language.” Below are the first and last verses of the text. It has often been a matter of controversy, however, as to just when this poem was written by Rev. Sears, and now, fortunately, the question has been answered.

This past winter, while rearranging some files in the age-old safe at the First Parish Church in Weston, I came across a small paper notebook. On the cover, in the familiar flourishing script used by Rev. Sears, was the title “POEMS on all subjects – and some others by Edmund H. Sears.” This small gem of a notebook turns out to be probably the first book of poems written by Rev. Sears. All in his own beautiful handwriting, it begins on the inside cover with a poem simply called “Hymn” and was written, according

to Rev. Sears, “while digging a ditch in my father’s meadow. I was 12 years old. I presume it was a curiosity – literally as I chalked it upon my hat at the time.”

Most of the poems were written and dated in Sandisfield, Massachusetts, a small town in the Berkshires, where he was born (in 1810) and grew up. Others were written and dated while he was a student at Westfield Academy, Union College, and Harvard Divinity School – graduating from the latter in 1837. On the very last page is the greatest treasure of all. It is here where he jotted down the words to “Calm on the Listening Ear of Night,” written while a student at Harvard.

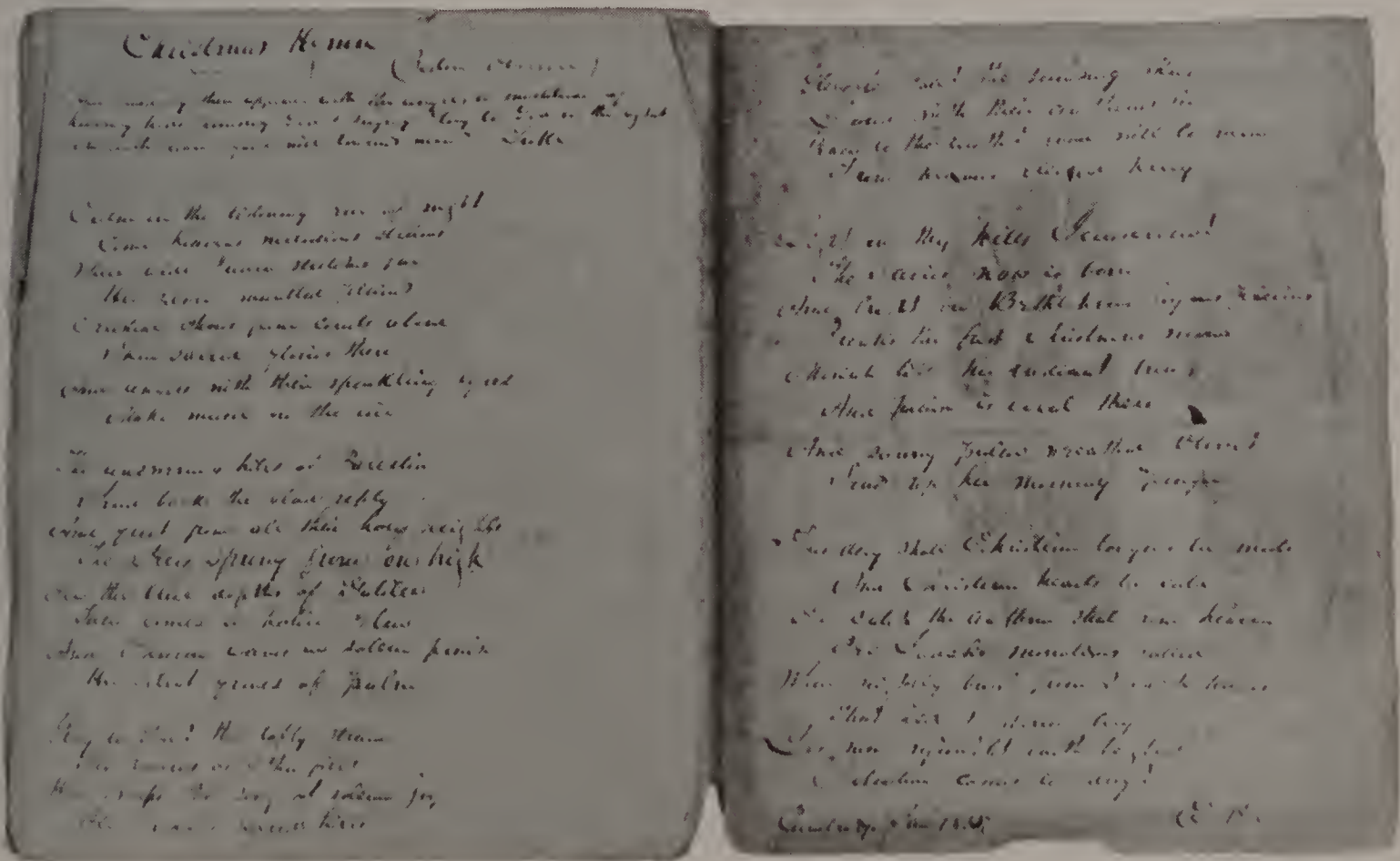
Thanks to the expertise of photographer Sarah Gilman, we now have some of the poems captured on film for all to see. In December, this charming little notebook, along with some other historical documents, will be on display in the Field Memorial Cabinet in the front vestibule at the First Parish Church. Stop by and have a look!

Mary Maynard

Calm on the Listening Ear of Night

Calm on the list'ning ear of night,
Come heaven's melodious strains,
Where wild Judea stretches far
Her silver mantled plains.

Light on they hills, Jerusalem!
The Saviour now is born!
And bright, on Bethlehem's joyous plains,
Breaks the first Christmas morn.



“Christmas Hymn” manuscript.

Photograph by Sarah Gilman

ARCHTECT SPEAKS AT ANNUAL DINNER

“Why do we love our old buildings and hate so many of the new ones? asked architect Jonathan Hale, the speaker at the Weston Historical Society’s annual dinner at Regis College on May 9, 1996 and author of The Old Way of Seeing (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994). After President Lee Marsh’s opening remarks, she asked member Joe Sheehan to introduce Hale. The nearly 75 members in attendance looked at slides of the beautiful and ugly in architecture as Hale explained his central point. “When you love an old house, there is a reason,” he said. “The old houses have a visual music to them – harmonies of light and shade, proportion and shape, that draw us to them because they are lively, interesting and compelling.”

He reiterated several times in his talk that today we have lost the old way of seeing. We no longer know how to look at our buildings; nor do we seem to care any more how they look. Our modernist priorities of convenience and function, or our need for symbols of status, have distractd us from the importance of the crucial visual patterns, which make a building lively and exciting. It is not that the styles are different or that the designers are inferior; modern architecture can be very beautiful. We no longer demand beautiful buildings because we have ceased to be aware of our visual environment. We need to recapture the visual awareness our forbears had of what makes a building beautiful.

Hale’s was a powerful message to all of us in Weston to take stock of our surroundings. Are we doing enough in this town to preserve the best of our old buildings and make sure the new ones are beautiful? How do we recapture the old visual standards? We all know how easy it is to tear down the old buildings and how difficult to maintain them. We also know it is easier to forget than to remember.

The relentless pace of change in modern life tends to obliterate the past and to leave us with “dullness” and “mismatched systems.” Amidst a building boom, the new MWRA water tank project, concern for open space, and controversy over the new Title 5 septic regulations, so threatening to our old houses, many people in Weston share Hale’s concerns, and his talk was an inspirational reminder to us that an awareness of being rooted in time and place reinforces our sense of belonging to an important heritage. The more we look ahead, the more we must look to the past to anchor our efforts to make the difficult choices we face about the future of the town. Architecture is a visual means of telling our story because those old houses and barns do have stories, and represent an important part of the town’s history, helping us define ourselves and reaffirm our traditions.

Ned Rossiter

Weston resident Ned Rossiter is Chairman of the Department of History at Newton North High School. He is also a member of the Weston Historical Commission.

PRESERVING WESTON'S PAST

Welcome action is being taken to restore some of Weston's most treasured old buildings. We all know that the Josiah Smith Tavern at 358 Boston Post Road, where our museum is located, is in very bad condition, and the selectmen have begun tentative, preliminary discussions with the Historical Commission, a six member appointed body under the chairmanship of Al Aydelott, to begin thinking about a proposal for restoration. Current thinking is to turn over the Josiah Smith Tavern restoration to the Town Buildings Committee under its new chairman, Bill Helm, for the needed capital improvements. The Weston Historical Commission is also struggling to rescue from the wreckers a lovely old white house at 449 North Avenue on the corner of Lincoln Road. A developer wants to tear it down to build something new and almost certainly less beautiful.

Most in need of repair is the old Isaac Fiske Law Office at 626 Boston Post Road, built ca. 1805, which has been on the agenda of the Historical Society for thirty years. This little architectural gem reminds us of everything that Jonathan Hale said at the annual meeting of the Historical Society in May at Regis College. Here is a building of classic simplicity and grace. Its beautifully proportioned lines, the symmetry of the front facade, and its setting embody Hale's notion of "visual music." Similar small, one or two room structures, which served as law offices, dot the New England landscape. Many of them were lovingly described by Harold G. Travis in a past issue of this Bulletin (Vol. IX, No. 1, Oct. 1972).

The Fiske Law Office served as the headquarters of the Weston Historical Society for several years and over the years the Historical Society has labored heroically to maintain the building. Historical Society Bulletins of the late 1960s frequently refer to the volunteer restoration efforts. We read of "lady volunteers stripping wall paper," while "still others removed layer after layer of paint from door sills and frames. Happy voices rang out above the roar and racket." (Vol. VI, No. 4, May, 1970.) How times have changed. Does anyone have the time and motivation to do this kind of volunteer work any more?

In spite of all these efforts, once again the Fiske Law Office is in an advanced stage of decay, and the selectmen and the Historical Society have agreed recently to turn the building over to the Historical Commission to undertake repairs and find a suitable use for the building. Descendants of Isaac Fiske, who sold the law office to the town in 1928, remain deeply concerned about its condition.

The Historical Commission is presently assessing the extent of the restoration work needed on the Law Office and seeking out bids for major structural repairs and a new septic system. The town is funding this project, but no significant work can be undertaken until there is a clearer vision of the future for the building. Commercial use as a small business, or as an active law office once again, or civic use, or even use as a dwelling, are all possibilities.

The important work to be done preserving our old buildings so cherished by Jonathan Hale, while clearly beyond the means of the Historical Society alone, is very much part of its mission. So many of the Society's members have such a wealth of information and experience that their input would be vital to any successful restoration efforts on the part of other town agencies or committees. Members are urged to stay involved.

Ned Rossiter

A version of this article appeared in the Town Crier on June 16, 1996. Thanks to Pam Fox for her assistance in preparing it.



Sam Payson as premier danseur in the song and dance "I Love a Livery Stable," in the 1956 production of "Never Walk Alone." The others are: unidentified lady, Bill Wolf, Bob Fisher, Jane Wolk, Tom Scott and Ginny Scott.

“NEVER WALK ALONE”

An Original Weston Musical Production or Reminiscences of a Not Too Adept Dancing Boy

Rumaging around our attic, I came across some photographs of one of the Weston Friendly Society's original musical productions, called "Never Walk Alone." They brought back sweet memories.

The Friendly Society certainly ranked high in Weston entertainment. "Never Walk Alone," written and produced by Frank Hatch and Harry Patterson in 1956, was just one of several musicals produced in that era. Weston had about half the population that it has today.* Route 128 was in the process of being constructed, and the Massachusetts Pike extension was an idea on paper. Weston was a quiet country town, with much fewer activities than now. Thus when a musical was put on, as it was every three years, there was intense enthusiasm, and many people got involved.

The plot of "Never Walk Alone" evolved around Concord in the days of Henry Thoreau. An important cog in the cast was a girls' and boys' dancing chorus. Prior to this, I had been active in singing choruses, mostly of the Gilbert and Sullivan variety; so why not be a dancing boy? I found the idea intriguing. So with daring I tried out for this group and, to my surprise, was accepted.

Rehearsals took place in the First Parish Hall and in March moved to the second floor of the Town Hall. There was much enthusiasm and much confusion what with members of the cast, property committee, costume, lighting and program committee. Then there was the long suffering rehearsal pianist. Before the dress rehearsal, there were two Sunday rehearsals, the whole musical being run through several times with the professional orchestra.

*10,200 according to the 1990 U.S. census, ed.

In the dancing chorus, there were five girls and five boys. It was strenuous work with many lifts and leaps, but it was good fun. Yours truly distinguished himself by fainting, sustaining a bloody nose, and to top it all losing his pants doing a leap, luckily only at the dress rehearsal. A quick curtain was followed by a hasty stage repair.

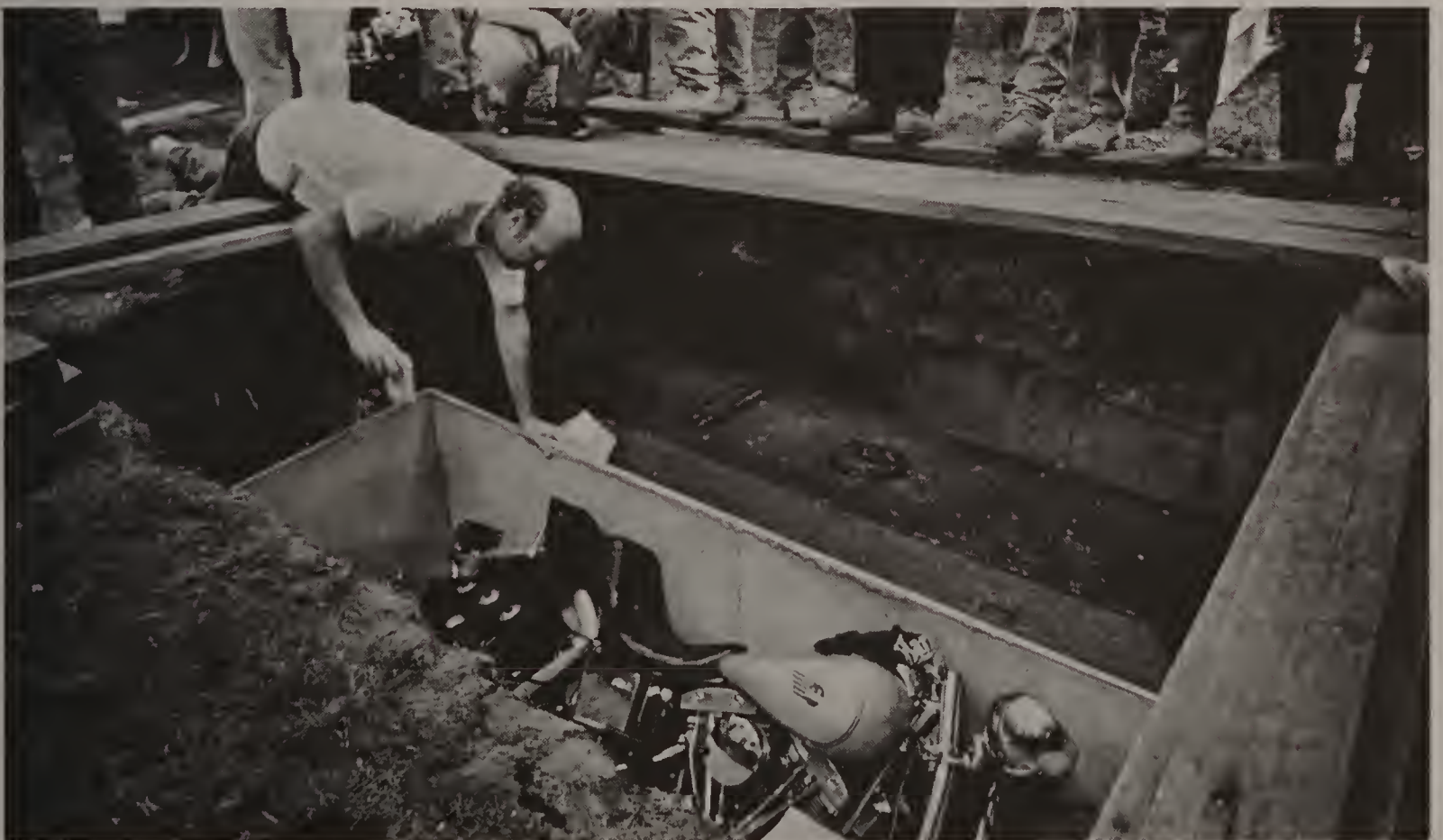
There were three performances. Thursday night was a benefit for the Waltham Hospital; Friday and Saturday evenings many in the audience came all dressed up, the ladies in their evening gown fineries, the men in their dinner jackets. The chorus was strictly admonished; disaster or not, just keep smiling – and we did.

Following the final performance, there was a cast party for all participants of the show in Ritz and Barbara Rice's home off the Boston Post Road. It started at midnight and ended not in the wee hours but around seven in the morning. Gifts were presented to those responsible for the success of the show. There was much singing, and the dancing chorus repeated its routines over and over. This time I kept my pants on. Needless to say, *spiritus fermenti* flowed freely and many a head was woozy the following day. A few diehards prolonged the party until nine in the evening on Sunday at a house on Sudbury Road.

There was oh! so much camaraderie among the members of the dancing chorus that we had at least three more gatherings at various members' houses before the beginning of the summer. If memory serves me right, some members of that famous chorus still live in Weston: Ginny and Tom Scott, Jane and John Paine, Pug and Tony Morse and Carter Crawford.

Samuel R. Payson

BURIED WITH A FAITHFUL COMPANION



We bring you this truly unique photograph from the annals of Weston. Henry Viles is shown as he says his last farewells to his brother Jay Viles, 45, who had been killed in a highway accident on Route 117 on June 29, 1991. With ultimate brotherly understanding, Henry buried his brother's beloved motorcycle along with his brother's coffin in Linwood Cemetery in Weston. Henry and Jay Viles's parents were the Weston teacher Mary Viles and the erstwhile police chief Sumner Viles. (ed. Photograph courtesy of Town Crier.)

MEMORIAL DAY 1996

Remarks of George F. Amadon, organizer of the 1996 Memorial Day ceremonies:

We meet today to embrace old fashioned values. We are honoring our veterans who have died, were wounded, and served in our armed forces in order to bring peace and tranquility to our daily lives. We also honor those who waited, worked and prayed for the safe return of their loved ones. We also remember on this day our loved ones and friends who are forever gone from us.

This is the 117th Memorial Day celebration in the town of Weston. The first official celebration took place in 1879, when the town cornet band was paid forty dollars for their appearance. Now it is not a cornet band but the high school band that plays, and our thanks go to Ronald Morri, the conductor of this band, for his services to the town in the 26th year that he has lead the band on Memorial Day. The first unofficial Memorial Day was celebrated on April 25, 1866 in Columbia, Mississippi, but it was not until 1868 that it was set for the last Monday in May.

We gathered here this morning to honor the men and women of the army, navy, air force and marines who have given their lives in battle, defending our world against aggression and to let the world know that they will never be forgotten. They lost their lives in distant places: at Gettysburg, Louisbourg, San Juan Hill, in the air over Tokyo and beneath the North Atlantic. Nor have we forgotten Korea and Vietnam.

There are contained battles in our world again, but we hope that by the grace of God we will be spared another war.

David H. Bradley was the guest speaker. He is a veteran in naval aviation and a long time real estate broker in Weston.

He focused his address on three key words: hero, freedom and peace. "The true definition of a hero is one who performs a noble and courageous act. Heroes can be found among us every day. . . every major world event that has occurred in this century has been for freedom." The fall of the Berlin Wall and the student stand at Tienanmen Square were cited as examples. "A society only works well when its members are free." He pointed to the troubles found in many third world countries.

Mr. Bradley concluded by stating, "Memorial Day is a holy day. Bodies are buried in the name of peace. Today is truly a day of remembrance."

George F. Amadon

NOSTALGIC VIEWS OF WESTON YESTERYEAR

Available at the Museum for \$1 each or three for \$2.



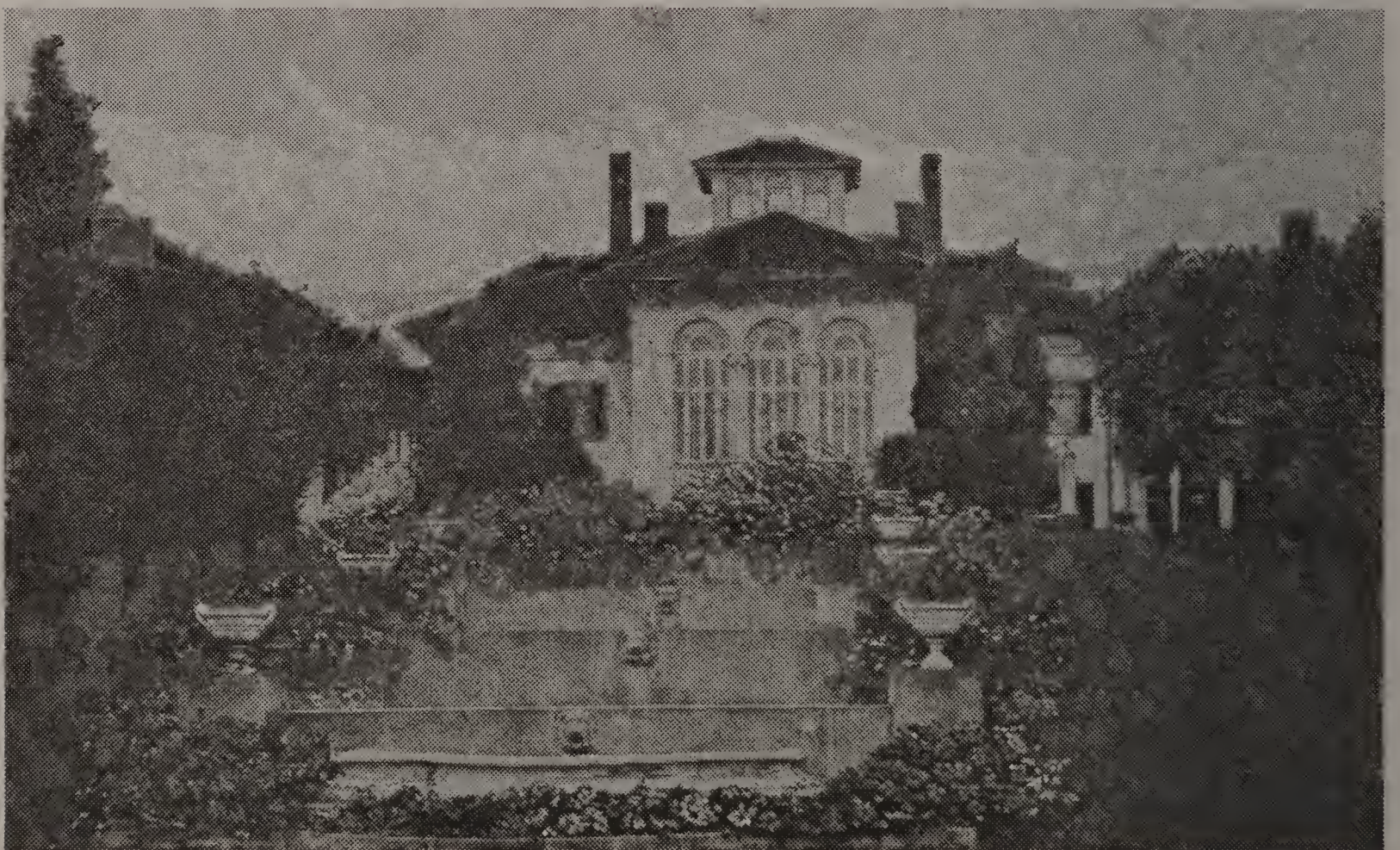
The First Parish Church.



The Old Public Library.



North View of the Horace Scudder Sears Mansion on the Boston Post Road; it has been torn town.



South View of the Horace Scudder Sears Mansion and Gardens.



The Hastings Organ Factory at Kendal Green; no longer standing.



Drabington Lodge at Kendal Green, now the Westonian Retirement Residence.

OFFICIAL OPENING OF OUR MUSEUM

On Saturday, May 18, 1996 the newly organized museum of the Weston Historical Society was opened. It was a great success, with over one hundred people dropping in to view the several exhibits in the two rooms at the Josiah Smith Tavern at 358 Boston Post Road. On the same day the garden club had its flower sale in front of our building and thus provided a most colorful framework to our museum.

The first room now contains five exhibit cabinets that hold various artifacts from Weston's history, among them ladies' embroidered handbags, toys, old bottles and pre-Columbian stone implements. The second room is a faithful replica of a nineteenth century living room with refinished fine furniture, among them a cabinet with glass and China ware.

The one hundredth visitor on opening day was Mrs. David Swan of 11 Brenton Road, who received as a prize Brenton H. Dickson's Once Upon a Pung. Ann and David Swan moved to Weston from California last fall.

Our thanks go to the many helpers, all volunteers, who contributed to the success of the day. In preparation for the museum opening they were Jean Jones, Pam Fox, Andrew Laska, and most of all Charles Marsh, truly a master of all trades, without whose know-how we would have been lost. On opening day we were fortunate to have the assistance of Carol and Ned Downing, who manned a booth with colonial games, and Meredith Lightbown, Judy Gaughan and Jane Abbott, who as hostesses helped with refreshments. George Amadon and Joe Sheehan, Jr. took care of publicity.

We also wish to acknowledge the friendly help we received in minor emergencies from the Central Tailoring Company, Florentine Frames, and as always from Bill Livingston of Nobb Hill Press, all of Weston. Dragon Bookstore kindly accommodated our poster, as did the Cambridge Trust Company, both in Weston.

AUTUMN MOOD IN WESTON

The shadows are longer, the trees are still,
The setting sun and the autumn chill.

A time of foreboding, yet a time of grace,
A time for reflection for the human race.

Geese low overhead, black night in the west,
Each voicing its preference of a place for rest.

George F. Amadon



INTRODUCING DOUGLAS HENDERSON

Douglas Henderson was born on Chestnut Street in Weston on October 15, 1914, the fifth of seven children. He attendend Weston public schools and graduated in 1932. He matriculated at Boston University in the fall of 1936, on a scholarship sponsored by Hiss Helen Green, a Weston High School teacher. In the spring of 1940 he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and graduated magna cum laude. He continued his studies at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, on a Buck Fellowship granted by Boston University, and received his Master of Arts degree in the spring of 1941.

He entered the Foreign Service of the United States in February 1942, and was first assigned to the American Consulate in Nogales, Mexico. His subsequent assignments were: officer in charge at American Consulates in Arica, Chile and Cochabamba, Bolivia; consultant on financial affairs in the American Affairs Branch of the International Affairs Office of the Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.; economic and financial specialist at the American Embassy, Berne, Switzerland; assistant chief in the Economic Policy Division, Department of State, Washington, D.C.; Economic Counselor and then Charge d'Affaires at the American Embassy, Lima, Peru; U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia; and U.S. Representative to the Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress of the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C.

He retired from the Foreign Service in 1974 after thirty-three years of service and returned to his family home in Weston in June, 1975. He has been involved in various civic activities in Weston since that time, including memberships on the Boards of Directors of the Weston Historical Society, the Weston Forest and Trail Association and Land's Sake. He is also a member and past president of the Ambassadors' Council of the World Affairs Council of Boston and member and past president of the Foreign Affairs Retirees of New England.

He is the father of six children by his first wife, Dorothy Henderson [sic] Henderson, who died in 1968, and has six grandchildren. He now lives with his wife Marion English Henderson in the family home on Chestnut Strteet where he was born. Doug Henderson is a volunteer in our museum in charge of documentary materials.

VOLUNTEERS AT THE MUSEUM

The museum of the Weston Historical Society functions under the curatorship of Dr. Vera Laska. There are two important sections in the museum: the documents in manuscript form, which are in charge of Douglas Henderson, and the photographs, in charge of George F. Amadon. The hundreds of photographs are a great treasure but also a cause of much frustration because a large portion of them lack any notation of people or places they represent. Lately we were fortunate in getting significant help from Pam Fox who is setting up a system for the cataloguing of the photographs, with the assistance of Sally Gilman. Our heartfelt thanks to these volunteering ladies.

Curator Laska finished putting our library in order, compiling two full sets of all our Bulletins, preparing a stand with permanent multiple exhibits and taking care of the current business of the museum. Planned activities are indexing all Bulletins, cataloguing the books and preparing more “pages” for the multiple exhibits.

We would welcome a few more volunteers who could give us two hours, Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (We are closed when the schools are closed.) If you think that you could help us out, please call Vera Laska (237-1447).

REWARDS FOR YOUR DETECTIVE WORK

If you come in some Wednesday morning and manage to identify people or places in our photographs, you will be rewarded; for the identification of three (3) photos by the charming book on Weston history Once Upon a Pung; for identification of six (6) photos by the book One Town in the American Revolution; for the identification of 10 photos by one of the above books plus a one year membership to the Weston Historical Society.

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