



WESTON 2000      WESTON 2000      WESTON 2000

**THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

With the cooperation of the  
Weston Arts & Crafts Association  
proudly presents

**A MILLENNIAL EXHIBIT**

**WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN**

documenting the recent past and the present of Weston, Massachusetts in words and images. Two years in the making, it represents the cooperation of dozens of town organizations from the cultural, artistic, educational, religious and commercial walks of life. Schools, clubs, churches, women and conservation groups, museums and businesses are represented, framed by illustrative samples of Weston's art community. This is a Weston mosaic of words, photographs and art, a once in a millennium event, displaying the **POTRAIT OF WESTON** – a chance not to be missed.

**WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**Gallery and Community Room**

Wednesday, MARCH 1, 2000 to Wed., MARCH 29, 2000  
Open to the public during library hours free of charge.

**GALA OPENING**  
and reception with refreshments  
7 p.m. Wednesday, March 1, 2000

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## **LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY:**

On the title page you see the announcement of the WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN project. This is a program of your Society. We need your moral support. We operate on a shoestring, and it is unlikely that we could afford a townwide mailing of this announcement.

For that reason, we ask you to talk about this program with your friends, especially in any group(s) that you belong to. Please ask your minister, club president, chairperson of your group to announce it at your meetings to the membership, or even better, to print it in any newsletter, bulletin or material mailed to the membership.

Publicity for WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN is essential, and YOU CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE. Feel free to xerox the flyer on the front page, or we can supply them.

Your WESTON 2000 Committee has been working hard for two years on this program. Millennia come around only once in a thousand years, and we are lucky that this one happens in our life-time. Let us all pitch in to support its commemoration through WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN, our town, with all the enthusiasm that the occasion warrants!

Please accept the gratitude of your WESTON 2000 Committee,

Committee members:

Barbara Coburn  
Elizabeth Drake  
Anna Melone  
Douglas McDougall  
Sheila Patraiko  
Rees Tulloss

Sincerely,

Dr. Vera Laska, Chair  
for the  
WESTON 2000 Committee  
Tel. 781-237-1447

Hostesses: Mimi Hastings  
Gene Gastillo  
Charlotte Jacobs

Treasurer: Harold Downing  
Photographer: Andrew Laska  
Consultants:

George Amadon  
Douglas Henderson

Exhibit Consultant:  
Laurel Nilsen, Director  
Wellesley Historical Society

**MEMBERS - SAVE THE DATE OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2000, 7 P.M.**

**FOR THE GALA OPENING OF WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN  
IN THE WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY!**

### **WESTON TIME CAPSULE**

We still have some space in the Weston Time Capsule. Let us have your suggestions on what should be included in it for posterity. It should be opened by Westonites in a hundred years. Share your ideas by sending a postcard to the Weston Historical Society, P.O. Box 343.



## **SNEAK PREVIEW OF THE GALA OPENING OF WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN**

Plans for the Gala Opening program of WESTON 2000 are still under wraps, but to give the Weston Historical Society members a foretaste of it, here is the list of the main points in the program:

Amusing readings from Once Upon a Pung about Weston of yesterday;

Awards for 3 winning essays about Weston

Awards for outstanding "One Square Mile" projects

Piano concert by Maestro Arthur MacKenzie with some  
surprising numbers

After the program live background music by piano and violin by  
renown professional musicians

SPECIAL THANKS will be acknowledged on the program notes for specific support to the following individuals:

Gloria Bachman

Colleen Egan

Stanley Jakuba

Jane Kim

Ruth Leiby

Bill Livingston

Roy MacDowell

David Mareno

Judy Markland

Robert Walker

Paramount thanks to Lauren Nilsen, Director of the Wellesley Historical Society, our exhibit consultant, whose professional help and wise advise guided us from first concept to installment.

The WESTON 2000 committee is expressing deep gratitude for the neighborly understanding and financial support to the following organizations:

Chestnut Shop

First Parish Church

Friends of Weston Public Library

Gifford School

Golden Ball Tavern

League of Women Voters

Leiby's Garden Shop

Methodist Church

Prime National Publishing

Regis College

Richardson Drugstore

Rivers School

St. Julia's Church

Weston Baseball League

Weston Community Children's Ass'n.

Weston Conservation Commission

Weston Historical Society

Weston Travel Service

Women's Community League of Weston

Women's Community League Garden Club

## **THE ONE SQUARE MILE PROJECT**

In our Fall, 1999 issue of the BULLETIN we presented to you the interesting and laudable "One Square Mile Project" under the direction of English teacher Mr. Robert Walker at the Weston High School. We came upon the project too late to be able to include illustrations, but this year we managed to get some samples, courtesy of Mr. Walker, who is an inspiring teacher, indeed.

Following are samples in art form by the students, all eleventh graders, of their concept of a square mile space in Weston. These and additional samples will be included in the WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN exhibit this coming March at the Weston Public Library.





*Nature in two media: 1. charcoal, 2. crayon, by Courtney Couper*





*Two concepts of a view, traditional and modern, by Cora Zimmerman*



# *Weston One Square Mile Project:*



## *Types of Trees*

*By Catherine Sharp*

*Cover page of illustrated research paper, "Types of Trees" by Catherine Sharp.*



*Joseph Hassell*

## THE WESTON HIGH SCHOOL POND

For my “Weston 2000: A Portrait of a Town” project I have chosen to present facts about the pond located at the high school at 444 Wellesley Street. The pond is an important addition to the landscape of the beautiful high school grounds and it is also the only man-made body of water in a public area of the town.

This pond was constructed in 1964. Originally proposed by the landscape architect as an esthetic and serene addition to offset the practicality of the various sports fields surrounding it, the pond has served many additional purposes over the 35+ years that it has been there.

Every season, there is something spectacular happening at the pond. In the fall, before flying south for the winter, flocks of geese make their home at the pond. They return home every spring to dip and glide in the pond or walk along the water’s edge with their newly hatched goslings. The bright red, yellow and gold colors of the leaves reflected in the calm surface of the pond are a breathtaking sight and a contrast to the lush green leaves of the trees from the summer months. On a hot summer day, many people take advantage of the quiet and privacy that the pond offers to bring a picnic lunch and enjoy the sun. There are numerous lily pads that seem to grow more numerous each year, and often a big bull frog can be caught napping on one, or waiting for some insects to fly by for the makings of a hearty lunch. Although there is ice on the pond during the coldest part of the winter, there is no skating on the ice.

Dogs who are lucky enough to be brought to the pond by their owners can enjoy a swim or a game of fetch and spend enjoyable moments getting exercise running around the pond while their owners run around the track. The high school football field is also nearby.

The pond is approximately 100’ by 50’, and while there is no swimming or boating allowed, every spring the Weston Rotary Club sponsors a fishing derby. The pond is stocked with fish for this event, and many families come to compete for the prizes and enjoy a day of fishing.

Naturally, there are many stories that have been told over the years about what “other” things may be in the pond. One is a real “fish story.” Do you believe that five years ago a group of boys caught a large goldfish in the pond? Well, believe it or not, the story goes that they sold that goldfish to a local pet store for \$350! Interesting.

There are also many legends that continue to be told about the pond. It is possible that there is a car at the bottom of the pond. A Volkswagen beetle is rumored to be there, driven in by a student back in the 70s!

Until recently, there was a “rite of passage” that all incoming freshmen boys at the high school were tossed in the pond. The senior class would pick an afternoon in the fall, and every freshman would have a turn at being tossed into the pond – not a fun experience, if you ask me, at least not for the freshman.



The Environmental Science class at the high school uses the pond as a classroom learning center. The interesting plants that grow there are beneficial to our environment, and understanding their importance is helpful to students.

So next time you are looking for someplace peaceful and nice to visit, remember the pond. There is a lot to see, and you can gain a real appreciation for the beauty of this town. It is all around us.

Occasionally, while rehearsing a play, the drama students will be seen at the pond studying their lines or taking a break.

I appreciate this opportunity to participate in the Weston 2000 project because it presented an opportunity to look at the town where I live and to learn something new. Talking to people who have information that they want to share is a good experience.

*Joseph Hassell*

*This sensitive and perceptive vignette of Weston was one of the three winners of the WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN essay contest in Miss Jane Kim's 11th grade history class in the Weston High School. We congratulate Joe Hassell for his talent and for his precise English. The essay will be part of the WESTON 2000 exhibit. The two other winning essays will be published in our forthcoming issue. Ed.*

## **THE MILITARY BACKGROUND OF THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH BELL**

On September 6, 1775 the infamous colonel Benedict Arnold reviewed his 1000 troops – among them 18 Weston men – on Cambridge Common. He had just been appointed commander of the Kennebec Expedition by George Washington. The expedition's aim was for General Richard Montgomery to come down from Fort Ticonderoga, capture the British Fort of St. Jean, then Ville Marie, now Montreal, and join Arnold on the Plains of Abraham.

General Montgomery was a former British officer and had fought the French with the famous General Wolfe who had defeated the French forces on the Plains of Abraham, a large, relatively flat area west of the walled city of Quebec. The plan was for Arnold and Montgomery to make a two-pronged attack upon the Bas Ville (lower town) of Quebec.

It was believed that if both of these, Ville Marie and Quebec, were captured, the French would support the Americans and assist in driving the British forces out of Canada. Canada would then become a part of the United States.

Arnold marched his troops to Newburyport where they embarked for the Kennebec River and sailed up it as far as they could navigate. At that point they transferred into 20 foot flat bottomed bateaux, flared sided boats made of green wood.

It was intensely cold that fall and winter, and the men suffered from the freezing water, swampy terrain and difficult long portages. All their supplies had to be carried by hand. At one point, three days were spent traversing waist high water. They were helping each other to survive, when general orders were issued for every man to save himself and abandon the stragglers.

Arnold and his survivors finally reached Point Levi across from Bas Ville of the walled city of Quebec around the first of November. They secured their boats and canoes and ran a blockade to land on the shores of the Plains of Abraham.



Later in the month General Montgomery arrived at the Plains of Abraham after they had captured the British fort of St. Jean just over the border north of Ticonderoga and the unwalled village of Montreal (Ville Marie). Arnold's troops were in a sorry state lacking supplies and suffering from the cold, wanting to return home. General Montgomery with his leadership skills managed to keep the forces together.

The troops waited while scattered fire from and to the walled city caused casualties on both sides. It was decided that the main attack should take place during the first large storm, when the defenders would be less effective. On December 30, 1775 a great storm came out of the northwest with heavy snow and strong winds. It was the storm that they had been waiting for.

General Montgomery and his troops traveled down a path below the walled city of Quebec towards Bas Ville. At a point called Près de Ville, the British had set up a redoubt containing a six pound cannon. Montgomery and his staff walked up to this gun, not being able to see it in the heavy snow. The British fired grape shot and killed or wounded the leaders of the attempted incursion. General Montgomery was killed. The surviving American armed forces retreated.

Colonel Arnold took a route taking him along the east wall of Quebec trying to get around into the Bas Ville. Unfortunately the British learned of this plan; alarm bells rang in the city, and a withering fire engulfed Arnold's troops with no place for them to seek protection. Arnold himself was carried off to an American hospital. Without the assistance of Montgomery's men and with Arnold's men in complete retreat, the hope of capturing Bas Ville and eventually the town of Quebec was lost.

Ironically, on January 14, 1776 while Arnold was recuperating, he received a letter from George Washington congratulating him on the presumed capture of Quebec and promoting him to Brigadier General.

The early intelligence gathering of the American Continental Army was just as poor as it was during World War II, particularly from Japan. Before the combined attack upon Quebec occurred, a contingent of 200 trained British troops under the command of Colonel Allan MacLean had just arrived from England; a quarter of the Americans captured by the British enlisted in MacLean's British corps of Royal Emigrants. It was said that the French Catholic Bishop was pro-British and threatened excommunication of anyone supporting the Americans.

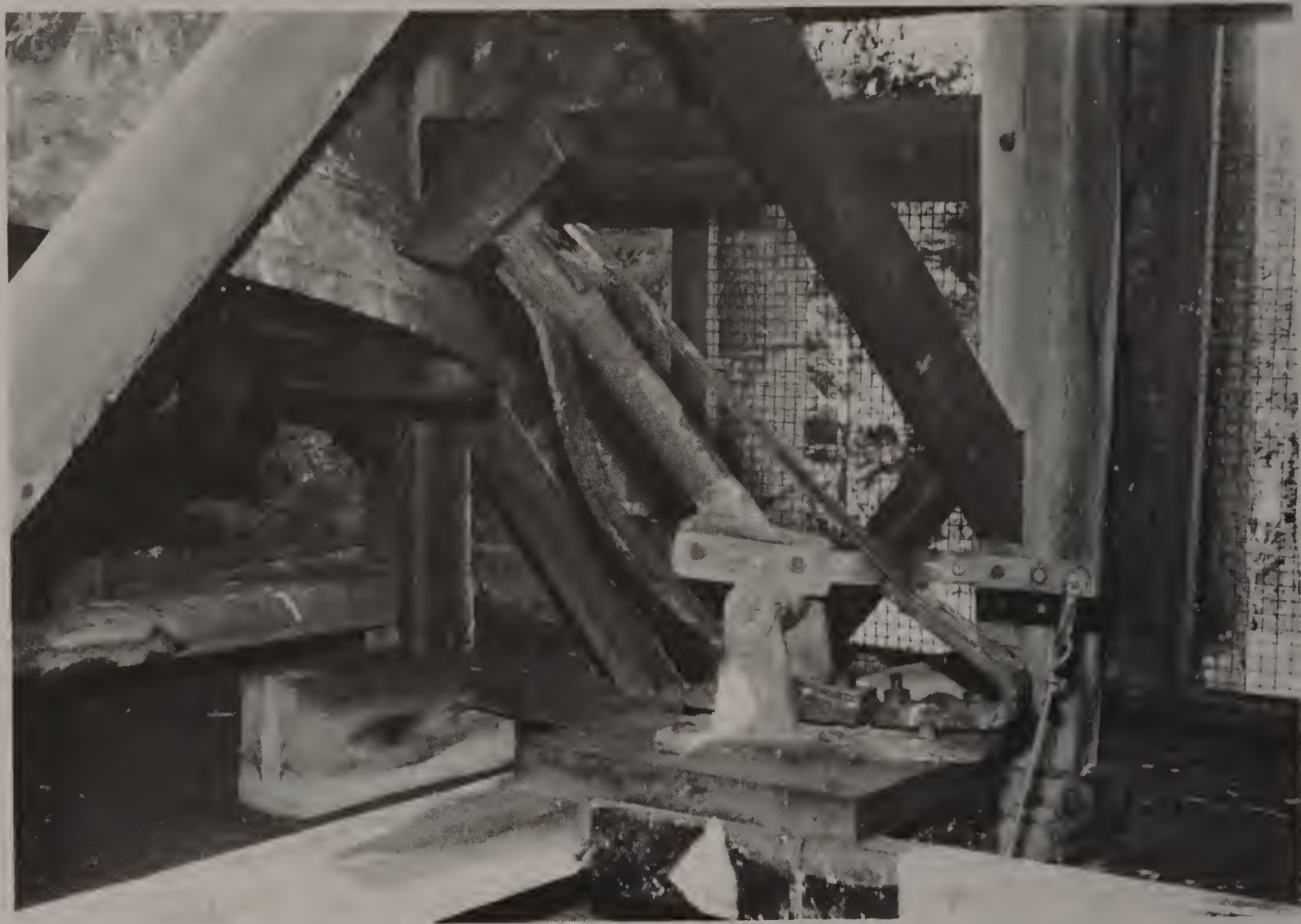
General Arnold's troops lived under trying conditions and threatened to return home. General Arnold pleaded for additional troops so that he could attack the Bas Ville once again. This dream ended on June 15, 1776 when it was reported that Bergoyne with a strong force was approaching Quebec. Arnold and his men made a hasty retreat by boat across the St. Lawrence, then down the Richelieu River to Lake Champlain and eventually reached the safety of Fort Ticonderoga.

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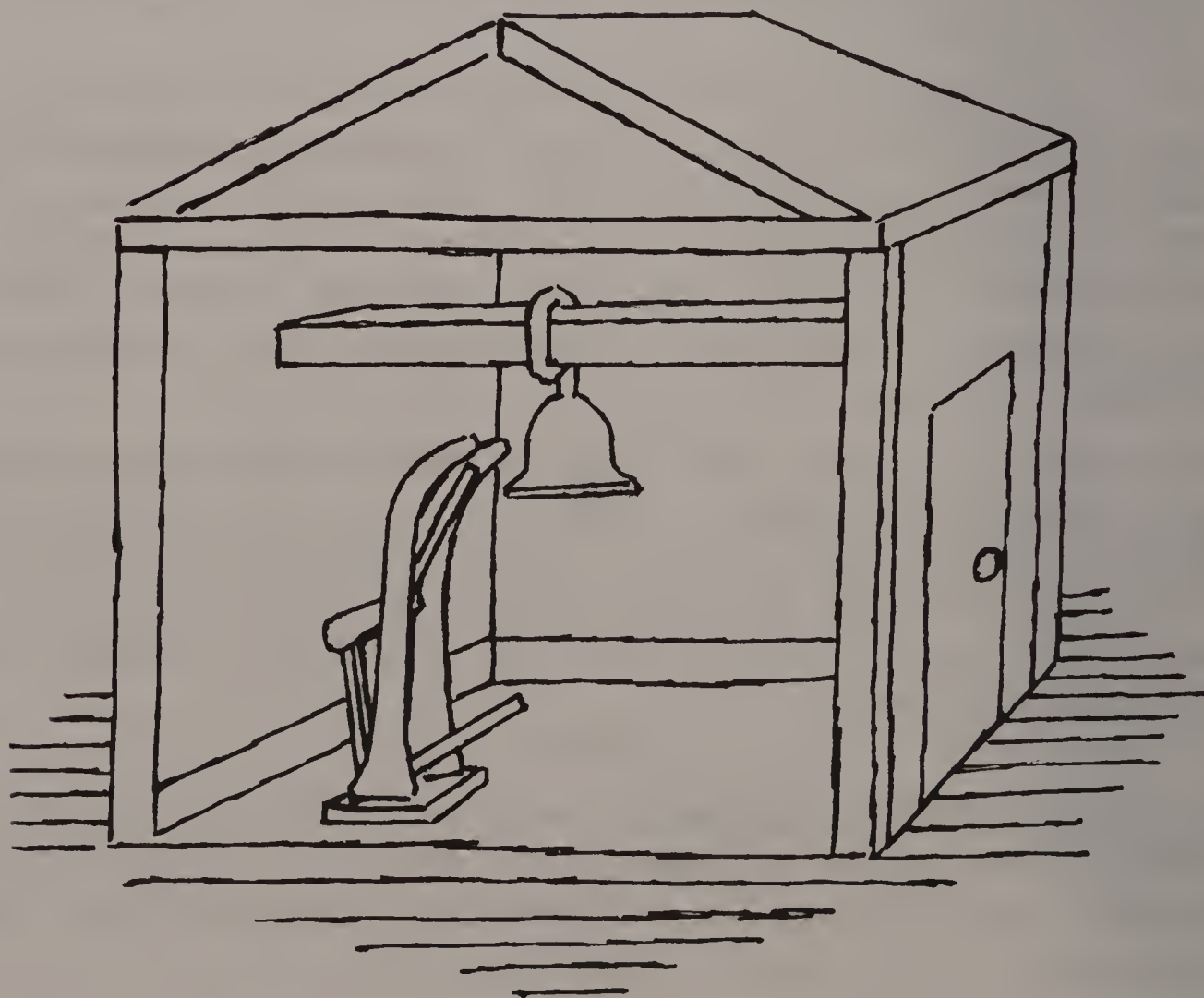
In time the eighteen Weston residents, who went to Canada with General Arnold, were released from duty and in some way managed to return to Weston – with a surprise! They had “liberated” a small bell from a French Catholic chapel and carried it all the way back to Weston.

The eighteen Weston men were: Converse Bigelow, John Warren, Jr., James Cogswell, Samuel Danforth, Thomas Rusell, Jr., Paul Coolege, Benjamin Bancroft, Ruben Hobbs,





*The bell in the left top corner of the photo; tight space in the bellhouse prevents a full picture.*



*Cross section of bellhouse with the liberated Canadian bell and striker; drawing by Meredith Lightbown of Weston.*



Samuel Train, Mathew Hobbs, John Hagar, Benjamin Rand, William Helms, Daniel Sanderson, John Baldwin, Elias Bieglow, John Stimpson and Lemuel Stimpson. For their nine months service they received 6 pounds, 6 shillings and 8 pence, as allowed by the General Court.

The bell was approximately 20 inches in height and 14 inches in diameter at the base and weighed some 164 pounds. It was offered to the town by the 18 veterans. However, budgetary problems prevented the town from accepting the gift, and nothing was done until the year 1782 when the town finally decided to accept the bell.

The bell was hung in a bell-house, probably to the right in front of the second Meeting House said to have been erected in 1721, and at the direction of Reverend Samuel Woodward, a Congregationalist. It made a happy sound, calling the congregation to worship, or in clanging a sound of alarm. After several years, a device was developed out of cast iron about six feet high. When a pedal was stepped upon, a striker would contact the bell causing it to peal.

This grand Canadian bell was in use until around 1880, when restorations were made on the second Meeting House; a belfry was constructed for the new bell which weighed in at 997 pounds and was cast by Paul Revere and Sons in 1881 at a cost of \$443.12. The older Canadian bell had been given to The Revere Company which extended a \$72.88 credit towards the new bell. The Revere bell has rung a happy sound ever since.

To complete the story, a wealthy benefactor in the town of Weston in 1883 donated a tower clock to the town; the First Parish Church seemed to be the best site for it, and it was installed there. In 1961 a public subscription was made towards the purchase of an electrically powered tower clock, and it was soon placed within the church tower. When the new Unitarian Church was constructed in 1883, the Revere bell and tower clock were installed in it. From that time on the town has had the pleasure of hearing the Paul Revere bell rung on the hour.

I owe much of my research material to *The Life of Benedict Arnold* by Clare Brandt, (New York: Random House, 1994) and to material given to me by the late Mary Maynard, able chronicler of First Parish Church history.

*George Frazee Amadon*

## **THE “WILD MAN” FROM BORNEO**

One sunny summer afternoon, when I was a small boy, my Uncle Harry visited us. I remember that visit, not only because Harry was a very large man, but because he entertained us by playing the banjo, and singing. The only song I remember was a repetitive additive rhyme in the style of the nursery verse about the house that Jack built.

This song began “The Wild Man from Borneo has just come to town” and then added wife, child, dog, cat, hens. Of course I had no idea where Borneo was but it sounded exotic, and the image of a wild man caused chills. This scene came back to me recently as I went about my work of ordering the files of the Weston Historical Society. There, among a number of miscellaneous papers, was a typed sheet, yellowed with age, without a signature or date, bearing the title WILD MAN OF BORNEO.



I reproduce it here in its entirety:

It was on March 16, 1905 that Wano, one of the erroneously dubbed “Wild Men of Borneo” succumbed to a long illness at the home of his guardian, Hanford A. Warner on Crescent Street.

Innumerable legends had been established here surrounding the antecedents of these two brothers of diminutive stature who had in a sense become world celebrities over a period of almost half a century. Some of the stories circulated about them were indeed ridiculous to an extreme degree, and the Warner family, all of which were highly respected here in Waltham, were from time to time subjected to rude annoyances on the part of certain individuals who persistently sought an interview.

As a matter of fact these two little men, who during their youth adopted the names of Hiram and Barney Davis, were possessed of kindly natures, and their one desire, following their retirement here, was to spend their retirement years in privacy, for they no longer sought any glaring publicity and resented any further attempts to exhibit themselves as curiosities. It should be strongly emphasized that they were not fakirs or freaks and their long careers within the entertainment world were marked by exemplary conduct and dignity, all serving to endear them to their managers and professional associates.

The story runs that “Wano” and “Plutano,” to make use of their stage names, had been captured by a trader in the Dutch East Indies probably about 1850 when they were of youthful age, and that in due course of time they were engaged by the Barnum Circus, with which organization Mr. Hanford Warner was prominently associated in some sort of publicity capacity.

During the period immediately following the Civil War these two “Wild Men” (and it is hard to imagine a more inappropriate designation) visited almost every state in the Union, and at a later period they were exhibited, along with other circus celebrities, in England and France.

When Mr. Hanford Warner retired and returned to Waltham accompanied by his two proteges, in 1886, the family resided for a time at 623 South Street; later, following a brief stay in Weston, the family purchased a house then numbered 297 Crescent Street, and Mr. Warner’s son, Ernest, became engaged in the boat making industry. But father and son bestowed unremitting kindness upon these two little men and exercised throughout their lifetimes a benevolent guardianship over their affairs.

The present writer recalls seeing one of them sunning himself on the front porch of the Warner home during the time of his high school days; a lonely, rather pathetic figure, dressed in native costume, with an expression of sadness discernible upon his bearded features, to indicate, perhaps, that his thoughts had drifted far afield, in the direction of that South Pacific wilderness where he was born.

These two brothers were closely attached to one another, Plutano in fact, never became reconciled to the death of his brother in 1895 and passed away aged 80 on May 31, 1912, following a period of declining health. There both lie buried in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. It should be noted that they were slightly under 4 feet in height but that they were possessed of extraordinary strength, and it was due to these characteristics associated with their physical aspect and skill as entertainers that they became recognized presently “among the best known, most widely travelled circus performers in the world.”

*Douglas Henderson*



## MEMORIES... MEMORIES...

*The Weston Senior Citizen's Club recently held an essay competition, with entries in three categories: Adventure, Memories and Mystery. The winner in the Memories category was the following essay by lifetime Westonite Elsie Cooke, a youthful octogenarian of cheerful disposition. Ed.*

Close your eyes and let your mind wander back to the early 1900s and relive with me my early years.

I was born in 1910 in the house across from the one where I live today, on North Ave. There were six of us kids – four boys and two girls – plus “Ma” and “Pa.” We ate around a large kitchen table, except on Sundays, Thanksgiving and Christmas, when we had “dinner” and used our best tableware and table manners!!

We all went to the little North School on North Ave., and Miss Lissie Viles was my teacher for three years, then on the bus to the center of town for the 4th grade through High School. Alice Ayer and Betty Otto Rafuse lived in this neighborhood, and we can remember trudging to school in the winter behind Harold “Toe” Coburn driving his horse and plow. Coming up Viles St. we could see Miss Viles wading in the snow up to her knees. We often coasted from the school house down the hill across North Ave., down Viles Street, sometimes to the railroad tracks – if the snow was hard enough.

Stoney Brook ran behind our house, and it was our play yard in the summer time. We made our own rafts, swam all day long, pulled blood suckers off our legs and enjoyed our vacation. I also had a trip or two to Norumbega Park, riding on the merry-go-round, the caterpillar and had fun in the Penny Arcade.

In 1918, the year of the First World War, we sat on our front steps and watched the trucks going up North Ave. to Camp Devens, loaded with caskets for victims of the “flu epidemic.” My brother Harold was the only one in our family to contract it and mother saved his life with her union poltices – I can still remember the smell!

I can see North Ave. being paved – first time I think – and Silas Small from Silver Hill was driving the big steamer roller. I remember keeping my distance from “that thing,” I didn’t want to fall under it!

We had a jitney for a short time – the route was from Waltham to Lincoln and back to Waltham. It went through Silver Hill, down North Ave. and cost 15 cents from our house to Central Square in Waltham. Movies cost 10 cents, and we often sat through two shows of the same movie. A whole afternoon’s amusement for 50 cents (including jitney and candy).

Until High School we went barefoot all summer around the neighborhood and complained heavily when we had to put on shoes to go back to school; the soles of our feet were like leather.

First day back at the North Ave. School meant a few flowers and a tasty snack for Miss Viles. A young boy named Joe, whose desk was in front of mine, had a nasty habit of spitting on his desk. Miss Viles said to him: “Joe, if you spit on your desk one more time, I’m going to rub your nose in it.” Joe looked at her, spit on his desk, she rubbed his nose in it – end of spitting habit!





*Grades One, Two and Three at the Old North School, years 1915 and 1916. Teacher: Miss Emma Viles. Back Row: Elsie Foote, Dorothy Vittum, Nora Benotti, Mary Lennon, Laura Feranti. Second Row: Annie Sheppard, Gladys Foote, Beatrice Swenson, Ada Feranti, Thelma Davis. First Row: Allan Garfield, Raymond Vittum, Joseph Nahuminti, Delmo Feranti, Joseph Benotti, Paul Miller.*



*Class of 1927 – 55th Reunion, 1982: (left to right) Lincoln Smith, Elsie Cooke, Helen Johnson, Charles Pear, Isadore Elwell, Olive Sloan, and Charels Cutter.*

On to the “center of town” for the 4th grade through High School. Swam at the town swimming pool – girls one time, boys another – never but never together! In high school - boys on one side of the homeroom, girls on the other – freshmen down front, seniors up back. We even had separate entrances. In the winter we danced in the Assembly Room to the tune of the player piano for 15 minutes after lunch. I took the bus to and from school. If you missed it because you had a “slip” for deportment or poor grades, which kept you after school for 40 minutes, you had a two and a half mile walk home – only fun when you had a “special” boy to walk with!

I graduated in 1927. We were the first class to graduate from the Town Hall. The School hall was too small – 19 in my graduating class. I then went on to Chandler Secretarial School, graduated, got a secretarial position and left my childhood behind – I was now an adult!

*Elsie Cooke*



JUST FOR THE RECORD

Below are the scores of the 1999 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) examinations of fourth, eight and tenth graders in Weston and statewide. "A" is advanced, "P" proficient, "NI" needs improvement, "F" failed (under 220), "F/T" failing/ tested, "F/A" failing/absent. These tests were introduced statewide in 1993. Source: Massachusetts Department of Educaiton, published in the Boston Globe, December 8, 1999, pp. C1, 3, 7.

Grade / Subj.	% of students				'99 av. scaled score	1998 scaled score	No. of pupils enrolled	Percent tested
	A	P	NI	F				
Statewide								
4 English	0	21	67	12	231	2307	8,841	96.1
Math	12	24	44	19	235	234		97.5
Science	10	46	36	9	240	238		97.3
8 English	3	53	31	13	238	2377	3,021	95.3
Math	6	22	31	40	228	227		96.5
Science	5	23	27	45	224	225		96.2
History	1	10	40	49	221	NA		96.0
10 English	4	30	34	32	229	2306	3,183	92.6
Math	9	15	23	53	222	222		94.1
Science	3	21	39	38	225	225		93.8

Grade / Subj.	% of students at each level					Ave. scaled score	1998 scaled score	No. of pupils tested
	A	P	NI	F/T	F/A			
Weston								
4 English	3	46	50	1	0	240	238	188
Math	33	34	30	4	0	248	244	188
Science	23	60	15	2	0	249	241	188
8 English	15	69	15	1	0	249	250	137
Math	23	45	23	9	0	245	251	137
Science	16	41	27	15	1	240	242	137
History	1	20	57	21	1	229	NA	137
10 English	14	55	23	8	0	244	245	114
Math	39	26	21	13	0	248	246	114
Science	8	39	40	13	1	236	237	116

Top ten school systems are:

Harvard	2204	Wayland	2191
Wellesley	2201	Belmont	2186
Weston	2199	Hamilton-Waltham	2184
Lexington	2198	Newton	184
Medfield	2194	Winchester	2182

Also of interest to us in Weston in this millennial year is the result of a survey run by the Children's Rights Council. Based ont he criteria of child abuse, high school dropout, child poverty and infant mortality, the number one state in the union to bring up children is Maine, with Massachusetts ranking second. The five best are: 1. Maine, 2. Massachusetts, 3. Connecticut, 4. Vermont, and 5. New Hampshire. (The worst: Washington, D.C.)



### THIRD WORD HEARD

*Oh, the vagaries and caprices of the English language! No wonder that “Johnny can’t spell!” As a friendly repost to the editor’s verse by an anonymous author in the March 25, 1999 Town Crier, dealing with the treacherous spelling of English, came the following witty poem by Westomite Louise Lind. What a treasure trove of talents flourish in our town! Ed.*

“When the English tongue we SPEAK”  
I hear that PIQUE will rhyme with FREAK.  
“Will you tell me why it’s TRUE”  
We can rhyme a ZOO with FEW...A COUP! ADIEU!...?  
But the founding of a VERSE  
Must never rhyme a NURSE with WORSE.  
A BIRD his spring song’s welcome WORD,  
A CORD to BOARD and THIRD with HEARD.  
A COW won’t PLOUGH, take DOUGH in TOW,  
You SHOE needs GLUE, while LOW we OWE.  
It seems to me we learn by ROTE  
The English we pronounce by THROAT.  
Why must the letter sounds COMPETE?  
See CHEAT, A SWEET, ELITE, RECEIPT!  
Schools won’t let kids MEMORIZE –  
Multiply eights APPLIES.  
Perhaps the STATE should get it STRAIGHT–  
Basic ED would then have WEIGHT.  
All the kids should learn to SPEAK  
Our English language so UNIQUE.  
And they will know by learning, TOO,  
That HIRE the HIGHER makes rhyming STEW.  
If kids can’t read, speak, spell TODAY.  
When chips are down, they’ll be PASSÉ.

*Louise Lind*

### WINTER AT MARRIAM VILLAGE

The autumn leaves have come and gone  
We no longer hear the robins’ song  
  
Sixteen crows black and tall  
Sending out their raucous call  
  
The winter wind howls around the house  
Disturbing cat Rufus and our house mouse  
  
We snuggle down deep in our covers  
Touching our bodies like youthful lovers  
  
The night is cold and long and gray  
But brings promise of a finer day

*George F. Amadon*





*Barbara Coburn*

## INTRODUCING: BARBARA COBURN

Born and raised in Worcester, Massachusetts, Barbara received a Bachelor's Degree from Wellesley College in History of Art. Here she also met her husband, Frederick Coburn, a Weston native. After living in Watertown and Sudbury, they arrived in Weston in 1958. Here they raised five children, who represent the seventh generation of Coburns in Massachusetts.

When the last children started elementary school, Barbara enrolled in Boston University and received an M.A. in Education. Subsequently she taught in the Weston elementary schools for 23 years. During that time, she and her husband were active in the First Parish; family vacations were spent camping and hiking in New Hampshire's White Mountains and on Maine's coastline. She and her husband also took trips to France, Finland, Italy and Greece.

After the sudden death of her husband in 1991 and after the children were no longer at home, she moved to a smaller house on the Boston Post Road. When she retired a few years ago, she became a member of the Board of Directors of the Weston Historical Society and of the Friends of the Weston Public Library and continues to be active at the First Parish Church. Barbara Coburn is also one of the first members of the WESTON 2000 Committee.

During the school year, she tutors in an after school program in Roxbury. For fun, she plays tennis and paints watercolors. Best of all, she can travel during non-vacation times.

**MEMBERS - SAVE THE DATE OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2000, 7 P.M.**

**FOR THE GALA OPENING OF WESTON 2000: PORTRAIT OF A TOWN  
IN THE WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY!**

### WESTON TIME CAPSULE

We still have some space in the Weston Time Capsule. Let us have your suggestions on what should be included in it for posterity. It should be opened by Westonites in a hundred years. Share your ideas by sending a postcard to the Weston Historical Society, P.O. Box 343.



**TIME CAPSULE:** Please let us have your ideas!

**QUESTIONS:** Call 237-1447, Laska.

## **WESTON HISTORY**

1. Brenton H. Dickson: One Upon a Pung, delightful stories about Weston of yester-year; hardcover, \$7.50.
2. Brenton H. Dickson & Homer C. Lucas: One Town in the American Revolution, Weston, Massachusetts; hardcover, \$7.50.
3. Daniel S. Lamson: History of the Town of Weston, Massachusetts, 1630 -1890; 1997 reprint, with new Introduction and an INDEX; this book should be in every Weston home; hardcover, \$29.95.
4. Lee Marsh, comp.: Weston, photographs from the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, paper, \$15.00.

All books available at the Museum of the Weston Historical Society, Wednesdays 10a.m.-12 p.m. or by phone 237-1447. Out of town orders: please add postage & handling \$3.00.

## **DUES ARE DUE**

Annual dues for the year 2000 are now due. Please use the enclosed envelope to mail your check to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, MA 02493. If you are in arrears for the past year, it would be kind of you to rectify this by enclosing the same amount for that year, too.

## **THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

President: William Martin  
Vice President: Vera Laska  
Secretary: J. Kenneth Bennett  
Treasurer: Harold A. Downing

### **BULLETIN Editor**

Vera Laska

Membership dues: Individuals \$10, family \$15, life \$250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02493. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at \$2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society. ISSN 1083-9712.