

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



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DANCING CHILDREN, a 40 inch hydrocal sculpture by DOROTHY WELFORD of Weston, adorned since 1969 the tall window of the Brook School Apartments. It delighted all who passed or drove by for many years, then it was destroyed by unknown vandals. To preserve the likeness of this joyful image, part of this photograph is placed in the Community Center by Weston historian Dr. Vera Laska.

A BOOK IS BORN

I had been researching Weston history for several years before I gave any thought to writing a book. My first work in that area was done shortly after I moved to Weston in 1991, when I volunteered to help the Weston Historical Commission prepare information forms on houses in the Case Estates area. In 1993, I was hired by the commission to do a comprehensive survey of the town, co-funded by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The purpose of these surveys is to identify historic buildings and sites within a community and, armed with this information, to help the local commission set up goals and priorities. Since that time, I have continued to work as a consultant for the Weston Historical Commission and administrator of its historic marker program.

When the Weston survey was completed in 1994, the commission decided to sponsor three lectures on Weston history beginning with the early settlement and concluding with the turn-of-the-century estate era. I purchased copy equipment to make my own slides, thus beginning the process of collecting images of Weston buildings and events. These images come from dozens of sources, including institutions such as the Weston Historical Society, which has a fine collection. I began to use the Society's photographs more frequently, I volunteered to develop an organizational system based on family name, geographical location and subject matter.

About this time, I took a short computer course in Photo Shop at Weston High School. The class was encouraged to bring in photographs to use for practice, and I arrived with a wonderful early 20th century photograph of a child pushing a toy baby carriage. Sarah B. "Sally" Gilman, a professional photographer living in Weston, was also enrolled in the class, and we explored our common interest in old photographs. I was beginning work on the Historical Society collection, and Sally volunteered to help. The two of us met weekly for two years sorting photographs, placing them in archival-quality plastic sleeves, and organizing them by category into new, acid-free file folders. Sally estimated that we each spent over 200 hours on this project.

Meanwhile, the first lecture series was enthusiastically received, and for several more years I gave three lectures a year on Weston topics. These required additional research, as I explored neighborhoods like Kendal Green and estates established by men and women like Robert Winsor, Horace Sears, General Charles Jackson Paine, and Marian Case. I wrote about the Winsor Estate for the *Weston Historical Society Bulletin*, and this article later became the nucleus for one chapter in the book. I spent hours tracing chains of title at the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds in Cambridge and pouring over assessor's records in the town hall vault. I was able to track down grandchildren and great-grandchildren of estate owners and estate workers, and they shared their family collections of photographs and memorabilia. Kendal Green residents came forward with photographs of the organ factory. Owners of historic houses shared their records and visual images, as did several local business owners.

I kept buying more filing cabinets and began thinking about writing a book. In the fall of 1996, I completed another volunteer project serving as principal author of the town's study, "Open Space and Recreation Plan." While I had never written anything like a history book, I felt that the materials I had been collecting were worthy of publication. While Weston's early history was recorded by Col. Daniel Lamson in his *History of the Town of Weston*, the late 19th and early 20th centuries were not well documented. Brenton H. Dickson's books *Once Upon a Pung* and *Random Recollections* provided wonderful anecdotes and insights into the period, but were never intended to be a complete or systematic record. I enjoy



Summer (left) and John Bryant Paine, sons of Weston estate owner General Charles Jackson Paine, with the model of a sailboat, reflecting the family's favored sport. Photo courtesy of Thomas M. Paine.



Pastoral scene from old Weston, from the archives of the W.H.S.

working in history after about 1850 because of the availability of good documentation in the form of written records and photographs.

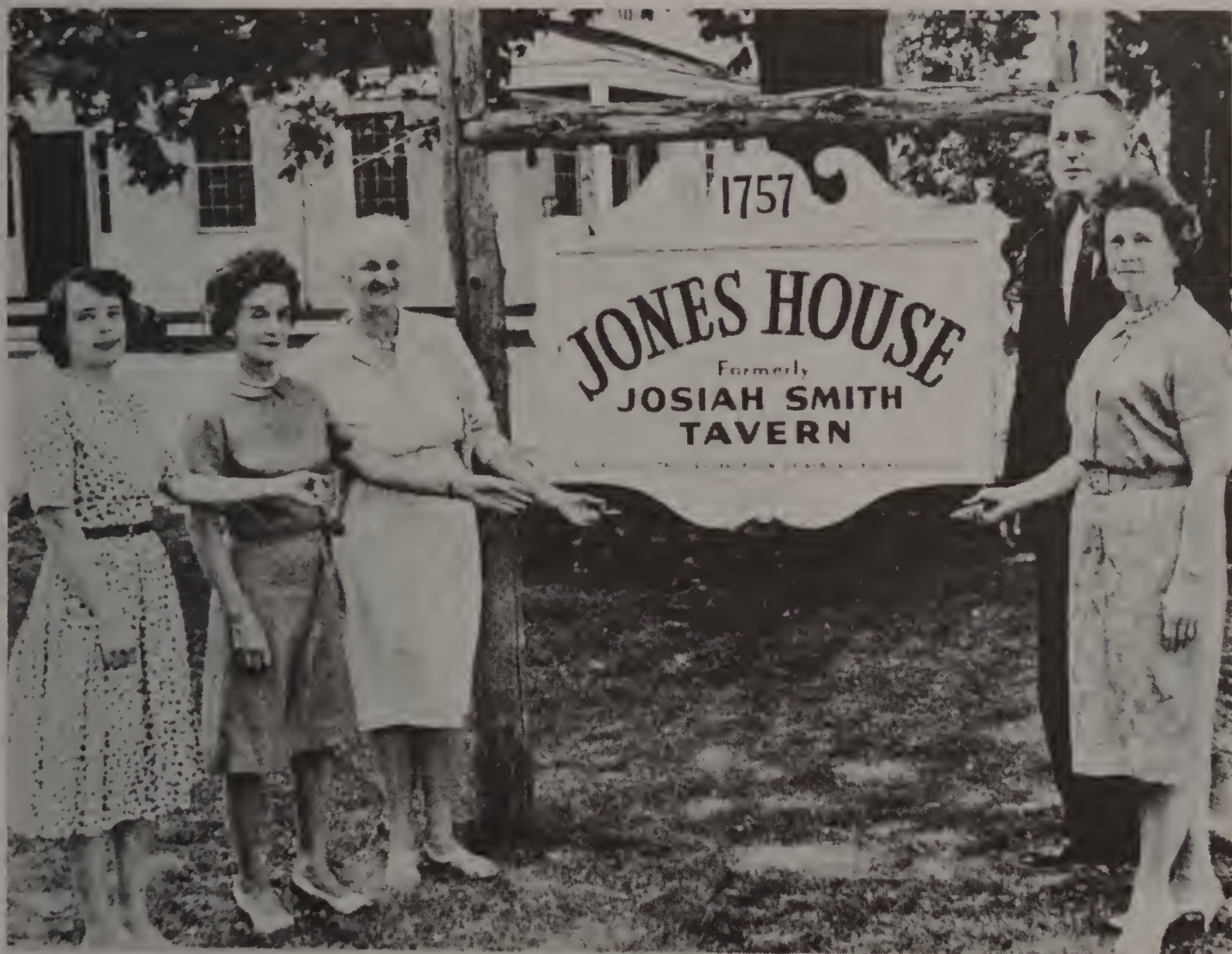
In early 1997 I attended a program on 20th century history sponsored by the Bay State Historical League. The purpose of the five day-long sessions was to encourage historical societies to think about collecting 20th century materials and telling the story of the more recent past through exhibits and publications. One of the speakers, historian and author Sam Bass Warner, spoke specifically about writing local histories of the 20th century. I went to speak to him after the program and mentioned that I had been thinking about a book but envisioned it organized geographically—in terms of neighborhoods and sections of the town—rather than in the more traditional way, by time period or subject matter. He said to me: “This is your book. You’re doing the work. Write it as you see it.”

I began by writing up the lectures from previous years and then selected new neighborhoods to explore. The last 21 chapters of the book, beginning with Kendal Green and ending with the Wellington and Blaney properties on Wellesley Street, were all written before chapter 1 to 9. These opening chapters are organized chronologically and were added for two reasons: to provide an overall context for understanding neighborhood development, and to allow me to explore topics of town-wide importance like governmental structure, public health and safety, transportation, agriculture, community organizations, and so forth.

Farm Town to Suburb is heavily footnoted. Local history abounds with “factoids,” a word I use here to denote concepts that come to be regarded as facts, not because they are true, but because they have been endlessly repeated. I expect that I will not be the first or the last local historian to repeat something that is not correct. I would, however, like my readers to know the source for my information, so that they may explore further and make their own judgements as to accuracy.

At the end of each geographical chapters is a list of individual houses by address. This is not intended to be a list of significant Westn buildings but rather was begun as a way to streamline the chapter text. I know there are many additional houses with historical or architectural merit. This is particularly true of modern houses of the post-war period. I hope that readers will write down the history of their houses and send it to me and to the Historical Society, to be available for future historians.

Photographs are an important part of *Farm Town to Suburb*, and I owe a great debt of gratitude to Sally Gilman, the book’s photo editor. When Sally and I completed work on the Weston Historical Society collection, we began compiling photographs for the book. This process involved copying images from individuals and institutions. The book contains approximately 1000 illustrations, of which over 200 are from the Weston Historical Society—the largest single source. For several years we worked one day a week to organize these images by book chapter. Sally spent many hours in her dark room making “quick prints” in 3” X 5” format, to be used in making the final selections. She then devoted many more hours to making final prints with the best possible technical quality. In cases where photographs were damaged, we used either computer restoration or hand re-touching to make repairs. Sally and I went together to area institutions including the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Massachusetts Historical Society, and Jackson Homestead/Newton Historical Society to choose photographs from their collections. We spent many hours debating what pictures to include, and many more hours cutting out over 100 pictures when it became clear that the book would be too long. Her artistic eye, dark room skill, practical advice, editorial comments, and proofreading skills were crucial to the making of the book.



At the 1964 open house of the Weston Historical Society in front of the Jones House are, from left, Mrs. Edmund U. Ritter, Mrs. Henry W. Patterson, Mrs. James E. Frazer, curator, Mr. Harold "Red" G. Travis, president, and Mrs. F. Leslie Ford.

Farm Town to Suburb is being published by Peter Randall of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. In addition to his publishing business, he is an accomplished photographer who has written the history of his own hometown. He specializes in local histories and was responsible for publication of the recent histories of Waltham and Lincoln. The book will be printed in Hong Kong. The cost of publication is being underwritten by the Golden Ball Tavern Museum with the help of nearly 150 sponsors, including individuals, businesses and institutions, who have contributed between \$125 and \$2500 and will receive special leather-bound editions. The 9" X 12" book will be printed in hardcover only and will have approximately 670 pages. Copies of the book can be ordered through Love Lane Press, 98 Love Lane, Weston, MA 02493. The cost is \$65 plus \$3.25 MA sales tax and \$7.00 shipping and handling, for a total of \$75.25. Checks should be made payable to Love Lane Press. We anticipate that the book will be available by the December holidays.

Pam Fox

In the summer of 2001, Dr. Vera Laska, editor of the Weston Historical Society Bulletin, asked me to write about the making of my book Farm Town to Suburb: The History and Architecture of Weston, Massachusetts, 1830 - 1980. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Weston Historical Society board, particularly Bill Martin, president, and museum committee members Vera Laska, Douglas Henderson and George Amadon, for their help in making materials available for research and publication.

Pam Fox



Weston's youngest author, Laura M. Caso

THE YOUNGEST WESTON AUTHOR

It is 2001 and I'm in the 6th grade. In June 2000, my first published book came out—it was the happiest moment of my life. Having a book published is hard work: here is how it happened.

In fourth grade we had the author, Jeff Kelly, come into my school. He has written three books about life. The an illustrator came and showed us how to make illustrations from construction paper. As the year was coming to an end, my teacher told us to write a paper on the up-coming summer vacation. So, when my family and I went to Italy to stay with my grandmother, all of a sudden I came down with chicken pox. Soon after my sister and brother got the same thing. I remember how miserable we were, because we were not allowed to be in the sun, let alone play with my grandmother's dog outside. Remembering what my teacher had told me, I began to write down my experience with the pox and also began to make illustrations to go with the story.

Back in Weston, my parents invited my American grandparents for dinner. When my grandfather asked us what we had done over the summer, my sister, my brother and I each told him about our projects, and we all read our stories. But other than saying he liked all of our three stories, he didn't say much more. It came as a surprise when, some time later, he said he would be interested in publishing my story, if I worked on it hard in re-writing it and in re-making better illustrations. I knew my grandfather's company had published hundreds of books and that he himself had written many of his own books; but I never expected him to tell me that he would publish my very own book.

For the next several months, I visited my grandfather's home. With the help of my grandmother Margaret, a retired teacher, we worked hard in re-writing the text and in re-doing the illustrations. Her help was certainly invaluable; now I know how to form a book. Finally, I presented the final copy to my grandfather, and the rest is history. On seeing my

book, people now say it was much more than family love for him to publish the book.

I like having a little bit of fame. In fact, on the Internet—Amazon.com—five stars appear next to my book. I have also gone to a couple of schools to give a talk about my book and plan to do another one soon for first graders. Something that really makes me feel known is when fans, whom I don't even know, send me letters saying how great it is to be a published author at eleven. That is something that really makes my day.

It is hard writing, but I always seem to have my pencil tip sharpened and ready to write. In the future, I hope to publish many more books; but for sure, my next book won't be on chicken pox, unless I become a doctor!

Laura Caso

Laura A. Caso was born on July 17, 1989 and is the grand-daughter of author and publisher Alfonso Caso; both live in Weston. Laura's hobbies are soccer, swimming, acting, singing, and of course writing. We shall be hearing about this energetic young lady in the future! You can get her book, Chicken Pox Explosion! at Weston's Dragon Books (Boston: Brandon Books, 2000; 30 pp., \$7.95, illustrated). Ed.

MEMORIES OF "THE REC"

Memories are made of this, that and other things and often hazy; yet for me these snapshots in time for the most part seem clear and vivid. So goes my memory of the Riverside Recreation grounds — fondly called "The Rec" — along the Charles River in Auburndale. That's how I remember The Rec, but in fact most of its territory is in Weston.

Back in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when I was 11, 12, and 13, Summer was lazy and hazy. We had three whole months off from school with nothing to do but read Nancy Drew books, go swimming, bike to the playground for gimp (arts and crafts), softball, archery, and other pastimes, and eat sandwiches at picnic tables. Our days were unscheduled and left up to our own, hopefully honorable, devices. Transportation was primitive: walk, ride your bike, or roller skate. Getting a ride in the family car was never an option. That was reserved for visits to Grandma's. My memory tells me that there were many more very hot days back then than there are now, so swimming was often our goal.

The Weston Pool, at the corner of School Street and the Boston Post Road by-pass, was always first choice, because I knew all the kids there. But because it was not big enough for everybody who wanted to use it, the town set aside times according to age, sex, and purpose: boys under 12, girls under 12, boys 12 and over, girls 12 and over, adults, swimming lessons. So even when combining swimming lessons and fun time, girls my age could only swim at the Weston Pool three to five times a week, during the morning or afternoon only. So what to do the rest of the time? If you lived near the Auburndale part of the Charles River, you went to The Rec.

To get there we walked up Auburn Street toward the back side of Auburndale Center, took a right on Charles Street and continued to the end of it, climbed the hill to the railroad tracks near the canoe factory, walked a bit down the tracks, ran down the other side of the hill to where the big gingerbread boathouse sat beside the Charles River, walked behind it, went through the opening, and — wow! — beheld the wonder before us.

Besides a ballfield, picnic areas, walkways, and benches, there was, in my estimation, the biggest pool in the world. In fact, at 50 meters long and 35 meters across, it was the largest pool in New England. The pool had a dark wooden surround, anchored at one end with the finest cabanas ever, each the size of a small hotel with two or three stories, executed in

Richardson style architecture. The effect was overwhelming. At the other end there were three spring diving boards staggered across the deep end and at different heights, the highest one reaching up to the top of the trees. What a sight to see an actual mortal spring off that high board and jack knife or somersault into the pool. What raw courage!

Although my goal was to try it someday, that remains unfulfilled. But all these years later, I can still feel the excitement of watching in wonder what to me was a breathtakingly daring feat. You see, years later I became a swimming teacher at the Weston Pool and in the course of my duties I had to teach basic diving off a platform. However basic that was, every child in my class who dove into the water from the side of the pool was in my imagination coming off that high, high, high, springboard at The Rec.

I recall it costing five cents to swim at The Rec for the day, which seemed to be no discouragement at all. The Rec always was teeming with people, in the pool, around the pool, on the diving boards, in the cabanas, paddling the canoes, on the ballfield, at the picnic benches, near the river's edge. They were everywhere. When I first went there as a young girl, the sheer size of the pool and its environs and the number of people were intimidating — yet it quickly became a whole lot of fun for my sister, our friend, and me.

Sadly, my childhood is not the only part of these memories that has ended. On May 10th, 1959, what was left of The Rec burned down in a spectacular fire which we could see from our house, about a half-mile away.

Still, almost fifty years later, I do not know how to drive a car to that spot. It seems to me that we crossed the river to get Auburndale and then crossed the river again to get back to Weston.

Please, do not ask for directions.

Peggy Curtin McDonald

Peggy C. McDonald has lived in Weston since age ten. She graduated from Weston High School and received her Bachelor's Degree from Regis College, majoring in English. She was at one time a swimming teacher at the Weston pool. She is now an editor at an art publishing company. She makes her home in Weston.



"Now, my idea, Your Majesty, is a stamp tax for the American colonies—
it will be painless and easy to collect."

EARLY DAYS - RANDOM MEMORIES

My father met my mother while he was working on the Paine Estate as a chauffeur, and she was working as a cook for the Dicksons.

I was born at 12 Highland Street in 1914. I was delivered at home by Dr. Frenesius F. Van Nuys, who came to the house in his horse and buggy. In the winter he would make his visits using a horse and sleigh. During my early childhood, we had no electricity, phones, indoor plumbing, or heat. A woodburning stove in the kitchen was the only source of warmth. Needless to say, that was where we spent our time when indoors in the winter.

As children, we managed to fill our days without television, videogames, or movies. Much of our time was spent in the woods. We did a lot of hunting, fishing, and trapping. We swam in the Baptismal Pond, which was located near the current police station.

In the winter, we'd break apart a wooden barrel to use the staves as skis, attaching a strip of leather to hold them on. We liked to go sledding at the Morrison Estate, which is now Regis College. Starting at the upper part of the grounds, it was a nice long ride to Wellesley Street. We would ask a sleigh or pung driver if we could hook our sled on the back to get a ride. Most were glad to accommodate us.

As Christmas approached, we'd take a sled and saw into the woods and cut down our Christmas tree. Decorations were simple: popcorn, cranberry, and paper chains. As there was no electricity, candles were used to light the tree.

In the winter there were no vehicles on the road. The roads were shoveled by hand. Jimmy Anza plowed the sidewalks with a wooden snowplow drawn by two horses. The Ogilvies had a sawmill. They used the first power snowplows in Weston, attaching a plow to a logging tractor.

I graduated from the Weston High School in 1932. There were 26 students in my class. I remember that the boys had to wear a tie to school. Mr. Eaton was the principal. Everyday he would enter each classroom and say: "Good morning, boys and girls". We would have to stand and say: "Good morning, Mr. Eaton". Everybody took a lunch to school. In cold weather, Moms would put warm biscuits in their children's mittens to keep their hands warm on the way to school. Then they'd eat the biscuits at lunchtime. Some pranks played in school (of course not by me, I just observed!) were: a snake in a girl's desk, thumbtack on chair, aspirin in inkwell that would foam up, and an empty liquor bottle in Miss Constance Burrage's desk.

I worked as a water boy when there was roadwork being done on route 30. I would go down to Oak Street, pump a pail of water and deliver drinks to the workmen. They all used the same dipper. When the water got warm, I'd dump it out and fetch more.

When automobiles became increasingly popular, I had a job standing on the back of a truck and shoveling sand onto the road after snowstorms.

For several years, I helped harvest the ice from Foote's Pond. I was the last iceman to deliver natural ice in Weston. The ice house was destroyed by fire (see Fox article above).

I remember: Selling a 250 lb. pig for 5 cents per pound; the price of steak at the market was 25 cents for 2 pounds; gasoline was selling 8 gallons for a dollar.

I helped my father plant the trees on the left side of Newton Street between Wellesley and Ash Streets. They still stand today.

I was a member of the volunteer fire department. We did get paid 50 cents an hour. I helped fight the fire that destroyed the Brook School in 1948.

After spending the first 85 years of my life in Weston, I have recently moved to California.

As I approach the first winter of my life without snow, I'm glad to have all the memories of a beautiful town filled with many wonderful people.

Henry Lingley

Mr. Henry Lingley recently donated to the Weston Historical Society Museum a charming small school desk with chair, several Town Reports, a "Class Book" from the 1950s with photographs and a toy guitar. I went to pick them up from his former residence in Warren Lane from his grand-daughter. His garage held an amazing collection of tools, dozens upon dozens of hammers, screwdrivers, pliers, and other handymen's paraphernalia - he was a collector of them all. They must be worth a fortune to some other aficionado. I suggested that Mr. Lingley might write down some of his memories of his lifelong residence in Weston, and the above charming vignettes are the result.

In her letter accompanying them, his daughter Kate Lingley wrote among others: "Dad is living in an assisted living facility similar to Sunrise in Weston. His mealtime tablemates are slowly learning all about Weston. I know Dad misses it much more than he usually admits."

His grand-daughter told me that Henry Lingley's father John came from Nova Scotia, his mother Hilda from Sweden. Henry Lingley was a Jack of all trades, gardener, landscape worker and for many years in the trucking business in Weston. A number of oldtimers I talked to knew him. All four of his children went through the Weston school system up to high school. About that charming little school desk set: it most likely came from the Brook school, as much of the furniture from it after the fire had been trucked away to the dump.

We are most grateful for Mr. Lingley's donations to our Museum and for sharing his fond memories of the days gone by in Weston. We wish more people would follow his example.

Vera Laska

WESTON 2000 HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY WINNERS

In the Spring, 2000 issue of the BULLETIN we printed one of the three high school winners' essays, namely Joseph Hassell's "The Weston High School Pond." What follows are the essays of the other two winners, Michael Miller's "Technology in the Weston Fire Department" and Chris Wentworth's "Weston: It Is A Quality School." Ed.

Technology in the Weston Fire Department

Captain Perrin of the Weston Fire Department was interviewed on November 16, 1999. He provided information pertaining to how the Fire Department is becoming technologically advanced and also discussed the day to day operations of Weston Firefighters.

Recently the fire department has participated in a new work schedule which significantly changed their work week but not their roles and responsibilities. Weston firefighters now work 24 hour shifts for three days a week on an eight day rotation. This means that every eight days the three days they work are changed. Their daily activities have remained the same. On Mondays engines of the truck are checked. This includes the fire engines, ambulances and service trucks. On Tuesdays, the S.C.B.A. (self contained breathing apparatus) is inspected, on Wednesdays the basement is cleaned, on Thursdays the outdoor



A MEMENTO FROM OUR FILE, MARCH 1968

HISTORY PAPER - Harold G. Travis, president of the Weston Historical Society, accepts a research paper compiled in conjunction with the Weston History Project being carried out by Regis College students. Making the presentation is Miss Catherine Imbriglio. Looking on are Dr. Vera Laska of the History Department, supervisor of the project, and Regis College Academic Dean, Sister M. Flavia. Dr. Laska states Miss Imbriglio compiled an index card catalog of the archives located in the Town Hall of Weston. "I believe the enclosed work is a laudable contribution to the worthy cause of history, and embodies the cordial relations between Town-Gown in the historical community of Weston," commented Dr. Laska.

TRUST IN HIM

THE GOOD LORD GIVES US FLOWERS BRIGHT
AND DEEP PURPLE SHADOWS FALL AT NIGHT

HE GIVES US GRACE TO HANDLE ILLS
BLUE GREEN PONDS AND ROLLING HILLS

OUR LOVER'S CHARMS ARE OUR DELIGHT
A WARMTH TO LOVE IN EARLY LIGHT

KNOWING HE WATCHES OVER US
WE PLACE OUR LIVES IN HIS GOOD TRUST

George F. Amadon



Polly Dickson with her sons Edward H. Dickson, Jr. and Carl B. Dickson; Polly Dickson is holding the artistic rendering of the future Dickson Meadows.

DICKSON MEADOWS

Dickson Meadows, Weston's mixed income condominium community on Livermore Lane off Highland Street, will be completed and occupied by the end of 2001, five years after we started planning it. In those years Ed's and my dream has become a reality, and it will remain a legacy of his love for Weston.

Background

When Ed graduated from secondary school in 1930, Weston had 3327 residents in 773 homes. It was a small town where most everyone knew each other, and its people came from various backgrounds with different levels of income. The average assessed value of its homes was \$10,518. By 1960, when Ed and I were married, there were 8261 people in 2376 homes, and the average assessed value of a home was \$10,903. (This would be market value at that time of \$21,000 since assessment was at 50% of market.) By 1990 the population was 10,200 and the average assessed value per home had jumped to \$555,000 (market). The decrease in affordable housing was becoming a concern for many people in Weston.

The first efforts to alleviate this problem were directed toward seniors and handicapped: Brook School apartments were started in 1979 and Merriam Village soon after. In the early 1990s the selectman appointed a Housing Needs Committee to study the need for affordable housing. The committee proposed a 24 unit family housing development on town-owned land off Merriam Street near Sunset Road. After considerable opposition from

neighbors the town withdrew the plan. At a hearing when this plan was discussed one neighbor said something which Ed and I listened to carefully: why should not there be multiple housing in other parts of town? Their neighborhood already had Merriam Village. Ed and I said to each other, why not have affordable housing on Livermore field, our hayfield nearest to town?

Beginnings: 1997

In early 1997 we gathered a small group of residents who were knowledgeable and concerned about affordable housing, several of whom had served on the town Housing Needs Committee or had other expertise. They became the “team” or Advisory Committee which has been meeting regularly for five years to bring about the creation of Dickson Meadows. It could not have happened without them. Team members in addition to Ed and me were: Bob Brown, Ken Fish, Ed Lashman, Cam Searle, and Eleanor Searle. We decided to build on the work of the Housing Need Committee and its conclusion that mixed income development under chapter 40b, the so called “anti-snob zoning” law, was the most feasible way to achieve affordable family housing. Winter Gardens, the first development of housing under this law in Weston, had just been completed.



Carl Dickson lending a helpful hand with the first shovel of earth in the planting of the elm tree in memory of Edward H. Dickson.

The next steps were to select a developer, donate the land, and draw up plans. For developer, we chose The Community Builders of Boston (TCB). Next Ed and I donated 11.23 acres to TCB for construction of an 18 unit mixed income housing complex. Although both Winter Gardens and the Sunset Road plan had 24 units for 6 affordable homes, we hoped that the gift of the land would make it possible to have 6 with only 18 units. To



A house under construction at Dickson Meadows.

qualify to buy an affordable unit, the family's income must not exceed 80% of the median income for the area. A deed restriction would be placed on the houses to assure continuing affordability in perpetuity. Ten of the houses were to be sold at market prices, and we hoped it would be financially feasible to have the remaining two offered at a moderate price with similar restrictions. With land, a plan and a developer we were ready to seek permission from the town to proceed.

Approval Process (11/97 - 4/99)

From the fall of 1997 to the spring of 1999 this plan went through the permitting process, when the plans were presented to the various town bodies and became public.

The first obstacle was a little known clause of chapter 61a, the law that allows real estate taxes to be deferred on farm land as long as it is so used. This clause states that the town has an option to buy farm land for conservation if its use is being changed from farming. This was the first opening used by opponents of the plan to try to stop it. From January to April, 1998, the selectmen listened to our plans and to the opposition and finally came to an agreement to allow us to proceed as long as one of the selectmen could be part of the development team. Betsy Nichols joined the team as selectman and has been an invaluable member ever since, continuing to be designated after she was no longer selectman. This agreement had two parts; first, the Board of Selectmen waived their option to purchase the property for conservation, as they too were concerned about the need for affordable housing in Weston. Second, they agreed to sign our application to the State to develop under chapter 40b through the Local Initiative Program. This was important for approval, since the State prefers to have support of the local government, if possible. So the support of the Board of Selectmen was essential to the fulfillment of this project.

The next step in the permitting process was going before the Board of Appeals, the body empowered to grant approval for building, since the development is not subject to local zoning restrictions. The application was submitted in the fall of 1998, and hearings were



A ready house at Dickson Meadows.

other as neighbors. We also believed that everyone should have a home, and the increasing number of homeless people was appalling to us.

But our overriding reason was that Ed believed strongly and I continue to believe in the value of a diverse community. Ed had always had friends in Weston from many backgrounds, and his life was enriched by them. In the past ten or fifteen years many of these friends had to move away for financial reasons. The Weston he grew up in and served all his life was becoming very homogeneous. In the process of helping bring this project to reality we learned that many Westonites share our concern, and that the town officials heard their voices. Our effort is small in relation to the need; however, we hope others will be encouraged to continue to help people with limited resources live in Weston.

Polly Dickson

Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, Polly Dickson worked as a social worker for ten years before she was married to Ed Dickson in 1960. From 1960-80 she was a wife, homemaker, and mother to four children. Later she had various positions, paid and volunteer, connected with social justice work of the church.

Here Stood a Mighty Elm

Here stood a mighty elm
Sturdy and strong as he presided over this forest
Tall and proud as he resided on this commanding hill

Here he was raised in this beautiful forest
In warm, rich soil, blessed by so many
This was a community, a village
His roots grew deep and broad

He lived for this forest
He tended to its land
He made it his work to conserve
His sweat and blood renewed its soil, its essence
An essence of community, of humanity
His heart never wandered
His mark can be found all over
This forest

Now buds the spring
Birds sing, flowers bloom
Rain renews and refreshes
But on this elm, no leaves sprout, no blossom
No bolt of lightning, but age has overcome

And yet he stands
He remains with us
We who grew beneath the limbs
And emerged from the protective shadows
We still see him right where we have always looked for him
We stand beside him today
He stands with us, in us, always

*This poem, written by John Dickson, son of the late Ed Dickson,
was read April 19, 2000 at the dedication of an elm tree planted at
Dickson Meadows in memory of his father.*

MEMORIAL DAY 2001

Welcome to the 122nd consecutive Memorial Day Exercise in the Town of Weston. We are fortunate to have the Middlesex 4H Fife and Drum Corps with us again today. We shall now hear a selection from the corps.

We are gathered here today to honor the memory of those who served in the American Armed Forces to guard us from aggression. We salute the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Special Forces, plus the peace keeping groups of the world. May they obtain success!

We remember with gratitude those who served with valor at Louisburg, Yorktown, Aisne Marne and Gettysburg, from Pearl Harbor to five miles in the air over Tokyo, to 200 feet beneath the cold Atlantic, to Vietnam, Korea and the Gulf.

We honor those who served, those who were killed in action, who were wounded, all who returned to us, and those who have left us.

There appear to be few documents that have survived concerning Weston's involvement in the Civil War. I have recently located one event that might be of interest to you.

When word was received that private Ralph Adams Jones, 17 years of age, great great grandson of the builder of the Golden Ball Tavern, lost his life at Antietam, where 23,000 men were either killed or wounded in one day, the Reverend Calvin H. Topliff, pastor of the Baptist Church, was appointed by the town of Weston as a committee of one to travel to the battlefields and return the remains of the men of Weston who died there. It was the practice of the Union Forces to bury their dead in shallow graves near the battlefields.

When the family at home were notified of the death of a relative, an embalmer could be contacted at the battleground, that they wished to have their family member embalmed and shipped home by freight car. In those days before dog-tags were in use, it was somewhat difficult to identify the deceased. It was best not to open the coffins.

The cost of Reverend Topliff's travel expenses, embalming, and return of the deceased was about \$125 each; the Town of Weston covered the expenses.

Within the Union Forces eight Weston young men were killed, including Ralph Jones; three died of wounds and one died in the notorious Andersonville Confederate Prison. All are buried in the older section of Lynwood Cemetery.

In the records of the Baptist Church was found a statement made by an elder of the Church as follows: "Weston owes a debt of gratitude to the Pastor of this church for creating a healthy influence and inducing men to enlist to preserve this country from the impending overthrow."

We will now recite the Pledge of Allegiance found on the back side of your program. I shall now turn over the program to Beverly Dillaway, Chairperson of the Memorial Day Committee.

Thank you!

George F. Anderson
Memorial Day Committee, 2001



Pam Fox

INTRODUCING

Pam Fox was born in Roslyn, New York and grew up in Rye (NY), Houston, and New Orleans. She graduated from Radcliffe College in 1971 with a B.A. in art history. She and her husband, Michael, met in college and lived in Hanover (NH), Rochester (NY), Providence, Boston and Main Line Philadelphia as he trained as a pulmonary doctor and later entered the pharmaceutical industry. In 1978 Pam received an M.A. degree in Preservation Studies from Boston University. Over the next 20 years she worked as a preservation consultant, initially full time and later part time after the birth of her three children, Laura, David and Danny. She has done consulting projects for the Boston Landmarks Commission, the township of Lower Merion (PA), and other cities and towns.

In August, 1991, Pam moved to Weston, where she has focused on preservation of historic resources and open space. These ten years in Weston are the longest she has ever lived in the same place, and studying the community has helped her put down roots. In 1993-4, she conducted a comprehensive survey for the Weston Historical Commission—the beginning of research into Weston history that culminated in the book *Farm Town to Suburb: The History and Architecture of Weston, 1830-1980*, to be published in the late fall of 2001 (see article in this issue). This is the sixth year she will be offering a lecture series on the town's history and architecture. Pam is a member of the Weston Planning Board, the Weston Historical Society and Weston Land Trust boards, the Golden Ball Tavern Museum tavernkeepers, and serves as a consultant to the Weston Historical Commission.

THANK YOU NOTES

Since we do not have a membership secretary at this time - and would more than welcome a volunteer! - we take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to all of our wonderful members who in addition to their dues sent in on time added an additional voluntary contribution. Please know that your gifts are deeply appreciated and put to good use.

We also wish to welcome our most recent life member, Mrs. Laura Trowe Bookman of Weston. We encourage our members to consider a life membership; in the long run it may save you many dollars. Ed.

CORRECTION

Experts inform us that the truck pictured on the front page of our Spring, 2001 BULLETIN is not a Model A but a Model T Ford. Sorry about that. Ed.

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.

OFFICERS OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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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.