

WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Volume XLX No. 2 — Fall 2019

COMING EVENTS

Thursday, October 24, WHS Annual Meeting (7:00 pm) and Fall Lecture (7:30 pm), Weston Public Library (see article at right)

Sunday, October 27, Cemetery Tour with Pam Fox, begins 1:30 pm at Golden Ball Tavern (see article below)

Thursday, December 3, Special Town Meeting, 7:00 pm, Weston High School. Vote for JST construction fees.

Friday, January 10, 2020. SAVE THE DATE for the WHS Members' Evening, 6:30 pm, Parish Hall, First Parish Church.

CEMETERY TOUR SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

On Sunday, October 27, Pam Fox will lead a cemetery tour. The program will begin at 1:30 pm with refreshments and a tour of the Golden Ball Tavern, followed by a walk to Farmers' Burying Ground at 2:15 pm.

Cemeteries are outdoor museums of history and art and important landscaped spaces. Fox will look not only at who's buried in Weston's two oldest cemeteries, but also at changes in tombstone styles, materials, and placement between the time of the Farmers' Burying Ground (established 1703) and Central Cemetery (established 1792).

“WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE IN MASSACHUSETTS”

A lecture by Barbara Berenson

Thursday, October 24

7:00 pm Annual Meeting; 7:15 pm Refreshments; 7:30 Lecture

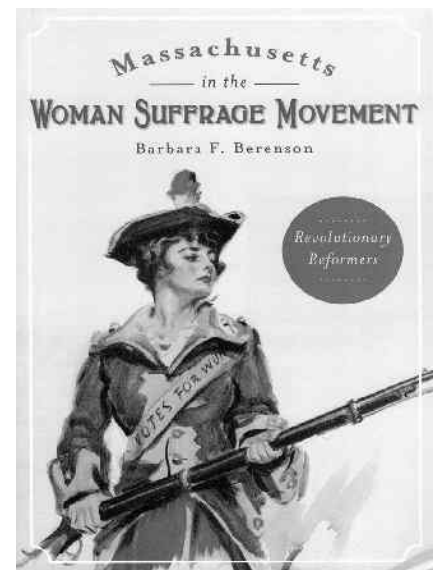
Weston Public Library

This summer marked the 100th anniversary of Massachusetts' ratification of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote. The amendment became law in 1920. The central role of the Commonwealth in the national struggle for women's rights is the focus of the Weston Historical Society fall meeting on Thursday, October 24, featuring Barbara F. Berenson, author of *Massachusetts in the Women Suffrage Movement*. All are welcome.

Berenson's book traces the fight for women's rights back to the 1830s, when Massachusetts women opposed to slavery sought to participate in political debates. They launched the organized movement at the first National Women's Rights Convention, held in Worcester in 1850. Boston was the home of an entire critical national wing of the movement called the American Woman Suffrage Association and home of the most significant suffrage newspaper, the *Woman's Journal*. New tactics critical to the movement, such as open-air campaigns where suffragists took their message directly to audiences, were piloted in Massachusetts for the first time.

Berenson, a Newton native, graduated from Harvard University and Harvard Law School and recently retired as Senior Attorney at the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. She has also written about Boston's place in the abolitionist movement and Civil War.

Berenson notes that the role of Massachusetts suffrage activists has been unfairly neglected by history. There was a schism over race early in the suffrage movement,



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Lecture (continued from page 1)

right after the Civil War, after passage of the 15th Amendment granting African-American men the right to vote. Lucy Stone, the most important Massachusetts women's suffragist, and her allies supported the 15th Amendment. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton refused to support it because women were left out. That led to a schism, and two competing organizations were formed. During those years of schism, Stanton and Anthony wrote a one-sided account of the history of the women's suffrage movement that minimized the role of Lucy Stone and her allies.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN WESTON

By the second decade of the 20th century, more and more Weston women were attending college; training for jobs; working in schools, libraries, factories, offices, and retail shops; and advocating for the right to vote. The following accounts come from the pages of the *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune*.

At an August meeting in 1914, "Miss Manning" took on the common argument "... that a woman's place is the home, and that she should not mix in politics:"

This, of course, entirely overlooking the hundreds of thousands of women who have no home or who are forced out of their home by the necessity of earning their daily bread ... my conclusion is that because women's place is the home she should have the vote to represent that home and to protect that home, if for no other reason. (8-28-14)

A few months later, "Mr. Kjellstrom," a lawyer from Jamaica Plain, made this argument at a meeting of the Weston Equal Suffrage League:

Men cannot represent their wives. No man would permit another to vote for him and why should not a woman wish to represent herself." (10-23-14)

In November 1914, members of the Weston Equal Suffrage League heard speaker Henry Pinkham, who also took aim at the notion of a "woman's place:"

Picture yourself dear reader ... a dirty crowd of sub-normal and degenerate men staggering up to the ballot box and casting a potent corporate vote for a law that your wife and sister must obey ... Suppose your wife and sister don't like this law but would prefer a more ideal one, what then? Let them learn to say this little verse: "Our place is in the home." If they like that verse they are lucky because they've got to say that and no other or else maintain silence. (11-7-14)



Weston suffragettes entered this red, white, and blue "Votes for Women" float in the town's 1913 Bicentennial parade. (WHS photo)

Weston women could run for two local offices: school committee and overseer of the poor; and women could vote for candidates in those positions. They first registered to vote in large numbers in March 1915, when Carolyn Burrage, the first female school committee member, was challenged by a male candidate. Within days, more than 100 women were expected to appear before the Board of Registrars to be added to the voter list. (3-12-15)

There were also anti-suffrage proponents in Weston and throughout the country. In April 1914, the newspaper reported: "Cards have been sent out by the Anti-Suffrage League to determine just how the women of Weston stand on the question of suffrage for women." Unfortunately, the results were not reported.

The most prominent leader of the anti-suffrage movement was Mrs. Charles H. Fiske Jr. of the prominent Weston family. Like many female anti-suffragette leaders, Fiske was a woman of wealth, social status, and privilege. Anti-suffragettes everywhere were concerned with societal disruptions and saw suffrage as a threat to femininity, the value of domestic life, and the vocation of motherhood.

The first suffrage rally in Weston was held at Town Hall in June 1915. Mrs. Maude Wood Parks, a well-known suffrage leader, addressed the Weston Equal Suffrage League. One of Mrs. Park's forceful arguments was judged to be the following:

If a voter, next fall, votes "No" on the suffrage question, he will be declaring either that he believes a republican form of government (government by the people) to be wrong, or else that he believes that women should not be recognized as people but should continue to be, as they are now, classed with idiots, criminals, illiterates, and aliens. (6-11-15)

HISTORICAL SOCIETY ACQUIRES MOSHER FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS

In 2018, Weston Historical Society purchased on Ebay a collection of some 200 “real photo postcards” taken by Clarence “Fleetwood” Mosher in the early 20th century.

The purchase included a detailed frontal view of Case House (at right). Only one other photo of the house is known to exist; and in it, the porte-cochere (entrance porch) is completely covered with vines. Historical Commission member Henry Stone has noted that this photograph made it possible for architects working on the restoration of Case House to reproduce the original porte-cochere. Stone writes:

There is no question how important the WHS photo collection is to the ongoing preservation of our town’s architectural heritage. The Case House porte-cochere is certainly one of the more dramatic examples of how these old shots help us, but there were numerous times when old photos helped us restore the Old Library accurately, and the same applies to the JST.

Another important image is of Allen Mosher inside a greenhouse that was undoubtedly one of the Case greenhouses, which stood approximately where the Weston Community Center is today. Mosher was the superintendent and gardener for the James Brown Case family. Another photo, labeled “The Swimming Pool,” is the only known view of the front of the Town Pool that stood at the corner of School Street and the State Road By-pass and was used from 1906 to 1950.

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Clockwise from upper right: Case House; Mosher house at 84 Wellesley Street; Harold and Margaret Mosher, early 1900s, Town Pool on School Street; Allen Mosher, probably taken in the Case greenhouses (WHS photos).

NANCY BIDDLE BATES

Nancy Biddle Bates moved to Weston at age four, and, except for her college years, has lived here ever since. Her father, Clinton P. "Chick" Biddle, was a professor, and later a dean, at Harvard Business School. He and his wife Barbara "Bobbie" [Freeman] bought the mid-18th century Burleigh Mansion at 100 Orchard Avenue in 1937. This handsome Georgian Colonial house had been moved to Weston in 1922 from its original location in New Hampshire. Two years later, Chick, then in his early 40s, passed away, leaving his wife with five children under 10 years old.

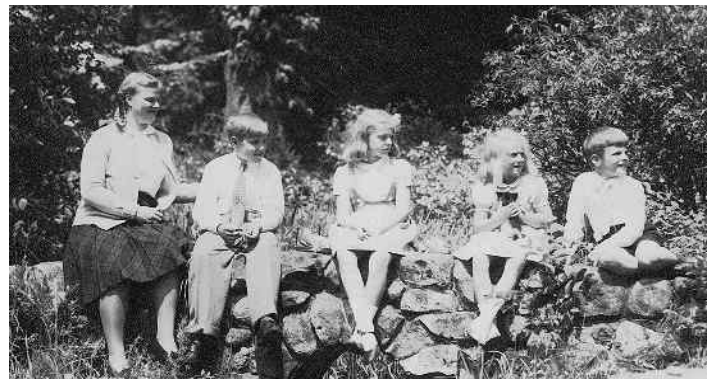
Nancy attended Weston schools, Concord Academy, and Smith College, Class of 1955. She knew George Bates from an early age because George's father was also a professor at Harvard Business School, and the two fathers had written a book together. George and Nancy began dating late in college and were married in 1958. They purchased the historic early 18th-century house at 266 Glen Road in 1961. Their three children, Cynthia Breed Bates, Stephen Biddle Bates, and Sarah Brownell Bates Dolcino all attended Weston schools.

A life-long volunteer, Nancy has been a member of the Weston Garden Club for 50 years and a trustee of Weston Scouts Inc.



Above: Clinton Biddle and Barbara Freeman were married in November 1924. Right above: Skiing at 100 Orchard Ave. Right below: Barbara, David, Nancy, Susan, and Bruce Biddle, June 1943. (Courtesy of Nancy Bates)

The Weston Historical Society would like to thank Nancy Biddle Bates and her daughters Cindy and Sarah for their donations to the Weston Historical Society. These include Biddle and Bates family photographs, a Weston High School letter jacket, 1747 Horse Show award (a metal pitcher), Weston school papers, and even a pre-plastic-era Weston Library card.



for 52 years. Over the years she has served as a Brownie, Girl Scout, and Cub Scout leader and worked with the Weston COA, Boston MFA, and as a volunteer tutor. In the summer, she has officiated at the Wednesday night harbor races in Stonington, Connecticut, for 52 years.

Nancy recently recorded an interview for the Weston Media Center, produced by WHS board member Molly Varnau. To view it, go to <https://weston.vod.castus.tv/vod/?video=e69d-07cf-a22e-46f0-b86f-69467421e5b6&nav=recent>.

**GEORGE PRESTON BATES
1932 TO 2018**

For more than 50 years, George Bates was the principal force behind developing, mapping and protecting the system of trails throughout the town. He served as Treasurer of the Weston Forest and Trail Association for decades and Chair of the Weston Conservation Commission for 19 years. His name is synonymous with conservation and land stewardship in Weston.

In this newsletter I would like to speak to George's interest in history. In 1961, George and Nancy purchased the 1732 Nathaniel Jennison house at 266 Glen Road. With his characteristic thoroughness, George researched the history of the house. In 1985 he compiled a 33-page report, beginning with William Jennison's arrival in Watertown in 1630 and continuing into the 18th- and 19th-century ownership by members of the Jennings family. Edward Jennings moved the Jennison house across the street to its present location in 1924; and it served as the model for many of the Colonial Revival houses that Edward and his sons built in the immediate neighborhood.

As part of his research, George obtained family photographs and memorabilia from the Jennings and Wyman/McNutt families. His research and images are included in my book *Farm Town to Suburb: The History and Architecture of Weston, Massachusetts, 1830–1980*. This was by no means George's only contribution to *Farm Town to Suburb*. He was one of a handful of people who read the draft and provided thoughtful comments and much appreciated corrections. He was an exacting reader, and I am very grateful for the time and attention he gave to this project.

I also consulted with George on articles for *The Weston Historical Society Bulletin*, for example, "What Weston Avoided," the Spring 2014 issue discussing the town center sewerage problems. George was appointed Chair of the Sewer Committee in 1974 and spent more than 15 years searching for a solution to this complex issue.

Not surprisingly, George passed on to his daughter Cindy his curiosity, love of history, and desire to document and share his findings. He was a member of the Weston Conservation Commission in 1989 when the ConCom became responsible for the Melone Homestead on the Sears Conservation land. Cindy writes: "My father thought the town ought to know the history of the house and did some research in the late 1990s, but came to a dead-end for the house's origin." In 2004 he asked Cindy if she would be willing to continue the research, and he funded her work. Physical evidence suggested that the house had been moved, and through exhaustive research, Cindy identified its original location and the date of the move, 1855. This year, the Weston Historical Society will be publishing her book *Uncovered: The History and Mystery of the Melone Homestead*.

by Pamela W. Fox



Above: George and Nancy Bates with Stephen, Sarah, and Cindy, Christmas 1967, at 100 Orchard Ave. (Courtesy of Nancy Bates);

Below: Stephen, Nancy, Cindy, and Sarah Bates [Dolcino] at the Weston Forest and Trail Annual Meeting on May 5, 2019, which featured a tribute to George Bates and his decades of work with WFTA. (Photo by Pam Fox)

VOTE "YES" FOR THE JOSIAH SMITH TAVERN

In the summer of 2007, the Town of Weston restored the exterior of the historic 1757 Josiah Smith Tavern. But finding an acceptable use was a more difficult challenge, one that has occupied town committees and consultants for more than a decade.

At Special Town Meeting on December 3, residents will be asked to take the final step in this long process — the vote for construction fees to restore the tavern as a restaurant and space for three community non-profits. Weston Historical Society is one of these non-profits. A "Yes" vote will mean that the society will finally have a code-compliant home in the three first floor rooms facing Boston Post Road plus one second floor bedroom.

A 105-seat restaurant will be located in the barn and connector. The Women's Community League and Weston Forest & Trail Association will also have space in the tavern. The second floor Community Room, which holds 50, will be available for rental by individuals and groups for lectures, meetings, dinners, and special events.

The Friends of the Josiah Smith Tavern submitted this winning proposal and will lease the building from the town. Money for building maintenance will come from the restaurant, the three non-profits and Community Room rentals. A part-time paid manager will be hired.

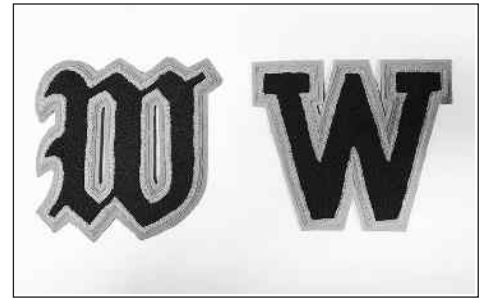
Engineers and architects are now working to complete the design and estimate construction costs. One major expense is a rear addition with elevator, rear stairway, and restrooms, all of which are necessary to meet contemporary building codes. Also required are major structural repairs, fire suppression, handicapped accessible entrances, a new septic system, new HVAC and electrical systems, a parking lot, and site landscaping.

Money to fund the restoration will come from Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds collected by the town every year by means of a 3% surcharge on property taxes. The CPA was passed by the state in 2000 to allow communities to tax themselves to raise money for open space and recreation, historic preservation, and affordable housing. In the first years of the program, the state match was 100%, a percentage that has gone



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This image of the Josiah Smith Tavern is one of eight original watercolors donated to Weston Historical Society by Ann Leibowitz. (story at right).



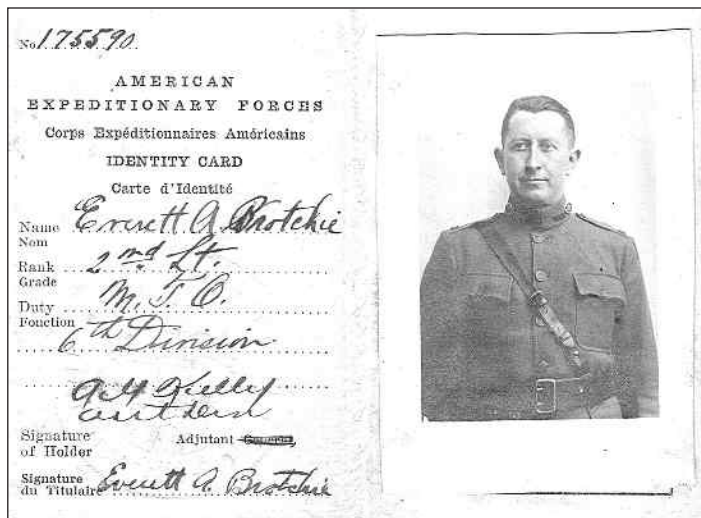
Weston High School athletic letters, old and new versions, earned by Doug Schofield, donated by Tom Schofield.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Ann Leibowitz has donated to WHS eight original watercolors by artist Ray Doyle, which she commissioned in the early 1990s when she served as a selectman. The paintings, each approximately 8" X 10", depict the Fiske Law Office, First Parish Church, Old Library, New Library, Weston Town Hall, Golden Ball Tavern, Linwood Cemetery Gate, and Josiah Smith Tavern (pictured at left).

Leibowitz, who served as selectman from 1991 to 1996, and her husband, Howard, recently sold their Weston home and will live year-round in Dana Point, California.

Tom Schofield, whose family has lived in Weston for many years, has donated items belonging to his father, Douglas, who attended Weston High School and returned to Weston after serving in the Marines in World War II. The gift includes the following: two Weston High School letter sweaters, an assortment of high school athletic letters (see above), a first-place award ribbon from a 1946 July 4 event, and a Weston semi-pro baseball uniform. Doug Schofield played on Weston's little known semi-pro baseball team, which existed from 1946 to 1950.



EVERETT BROTCHE WORLD WAR I COLLECTION

The Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 *WHS Bulletins* were devoted to Weston in World War I. Since that time, WHS has processed another collection of World War I memorabilia, this one belonging to Everett Brotchie and donated by Eloise Kenney. Over the past decade, Eloise has donated important items relating to the Kenney, Stimpson, Cutting, Perry, and Brotchie families.

Everett A. Brotchie sailed for France in August 1917 as part of the Sixth Division, in a regiment recruited almost entirely from “railroad men.” They were sent to France to aid in construction work, and their work continued even after most Weston soldiers had returned by May 1919. Brotchie left the service with the rank of 2nd lieutenant.

The following items are part of the Everett Brotchie World War I collection:

American Expeditionary Forces Identity Card (see above).

Photos of Everett Brotchie, Harvard Class of 1911.

Postcards. On the back of one, postmarked August 16, 1917, Brotchie wrote “I marched before the king to-day with first U.S. troops that ever marched thru London under arms.”

French bread ration tickets (see image at right).

Letter from the Welcome Home Committee of Weston to Brotchie, sent to his 6th division in Germany on May 30, 1919, the day of the festivities welcoming home Weston soldiers. “It must be hard for you to ‘carry on’ when so many of your comrades are back in the old home. . . You may be sure that your return to us, though long delayed, is awaited with eager interest.”

Booklet: *To the Homeward-Bound Americans* by B. Van Vorst, summarizing the history of the war and expressing the gratitude of the French people to the Americans: “Their ingenuity in saving time, and in overcoming all obstacles, will remain as an example of what can be accomplished when the men of a free democracy labor together in fraternal unity for a common cause.” (p. 12)

Booklet: *Where Do We Go From Here: This is the real dope* by Wm. Brown Meloney, published by War Camp Community Service with information on discharge, clothing and equipment, disability, compensation, getting a job, and other practical matters in the transition to civilian life.

American Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Diary, 1918, with entries throughout the year.

Instruction tag on “Correct Use of Gas Mask Equipment,” with plaster for repairing tears.

World War II items including ration books for Brotchie and his wife Louise, along with an official identity card from the Massachusetts Committee on Public Safety and an ID card indicating that Brotchie was a member of War Price and Rationing Board No. 136.355 in Weston.



Mosher Photographs (continued from page 3)

Allen Mosher (1859–1948) and his wife Maggie (1862–1935) had three children Clarence (1885–1964), Margaret (1896–1996), and Harold (1898–1963). They lived in the house at 84 Wellesley Street now occupied by Allen’s great-grandson Robert and his wife Denise.

Real photo postcards are one-of-a-kind photo images printed on postcard stock. Clarence was intent on improving his photographic skills and sent some of his postcards to an unknown recipient, with technical information such as this: “Made with Conley Camera 4 X 5 Wollensak Junior Shutter, R.R. lens instantaneous exposure, bright sun in June at 9 am. . . . Kindly return with criticisms.” Unfortunately, he was less diligent in identifying all the people and buildings represented in this large collection.



Board members Tony Davies and Mary Marder in the basement of St. Julia's Church, where WHS is now located. (Photo by Pam Fox)

Josiah Smith Tavern (continued from page 6)

down but still adds state funds to the town's CPA balance. From the beginning, restoration of the Josiah Smith Tavern was the town's highest priority for historic preservation, and money for this use has accumulated in the fund.

The society and the Women's Community League moved out of the building in late May. The society's collection of Weston-related objects, photographs, books, documents, and memorabilia is now in the basement of St. Julia's Church.

Weston acquired ownership of the tavern in 1985 from the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (now Historic New England), which holds a 450+ year preservation restriction limiting changes on both the exterior and interior. This restriction limited potential uses, as did the fact that most residents wanted the town to continue to own the building, rather than allowing it to pass into private ownership.

One use consistently favored by many was a "farm to table" restaurant. In 2008 Town Meeting voted to grant a liquor license to the Josiah Smith Tavern Corporation, which will hold it on behalf of the selectmen. This is the first and only license to serve alcohol in the formerly dry town of Weston. The restaurateur will get a code-compliant empty space, and will pay for all kitchen equipment and furnishings.

WHAT'S NEW?

New Newsletter. Please let us know what you would like to see in future issues. (see questionnaire included with this mailing.) The *WHS Bulletin* will continue to be published as time allows.

New Website. The WHS website, www.westonhistory.org, has been completely redone with the assistance of web designer and WHS board member Jonathan Dowse. Please explore the expanded content and let us know what else you would like to see.

New location. The Weston Historical Society has moved from the Josiah Smith Tavern to the basement of St. Julia's Church. The church kindly volunteered to house the collection until the restoration of the JST is completed. The vote for construction fees for the restoration will be held at Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, December 3 (PLEASE VOTE YES!) (see article on page 6).

WHS would like to thank Father Mark Mahoney and the staff and congregation of St. Julia Parish Weston and Lincoln for providing this much needed interim space.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Weston Historical Society is an all-volunteer 501-c-3 organization supported by membership dues and donations. Please renew your membership using the envelope enclosed with this mailing, or go to www.westonhistory.org. Help us preserve Weston's heritage!

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Membership dues: Individual \$35, Family \$50, Sponsor \$75, Supporting \$100+, Life membership \$500. Tax deductible contributions and bequests to the Endowment Fund are welcome. Opinions are not necessarily those of the editor or Weston Historical Society. Please visit our website: www.westonhistory.org.