

WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume XLII, No.2 — Fall 2021



*Sketch of enslaved men making wood shingles on a Virginia plantation, c. 1850.
(Courtesy Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum, Williamsburg, VA.)*

Zoom Lecture by Jane Sciacca ***“Slavery in a Colonial New England Town”***

Thursday, November 18

7:15 Annual Meeting

7:30 Lecture

Enslaved people lived in colonial Weston. Their history will be featured in the Weston Historical Society exhibit planned for the reopening of the Josiah Smith Tavern in 2022. Jane Sciacca, longtime Wayland resident and past president of its historical society, has extensively researched slavery and abolition in her community. Her lecture will provide important clues about how the enslaved in neighboring Weston might have lived with and worked for their owners. She will be incorporating Weston information based on research being done by the WHS exhibit committee.

To attend, visit westonhistory.org and register for the program via the Google form linked to the lecture description.

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SLAVERY IN WESTON

The Weston Historical Society is preparing an exhibit to celebrate the reopening of the restored Josiah Smith Tavern in early 2022 (see article on page 2). Because Josiah Smith owned two enslaved persons, WHS volunteers are studying the history of slavery in Weston from the early days of settlement through 1783, when enslaved persons were freed by judicial decree. Information in this article will be part of a permanent exhibit panel.

While slavery is often associated with Southern plantations, New Englanders used enslaved indigenous peoples and Africans to address chronic labor shortages. Enslaved men and women of African descent were working in towns including Weston until Massachusetts became the first state to abolish slavery outright, by judicial decree, in 1783.

It is generally agreed that enslaved Africans first arrived in Massachusetts in the 1630s. Massachusetts was the first colony to legalize slavery, in the “Body of Liberties,” passed in 1641. Massachusetts residents actively participated in the slave trade. Slavery in Massachusetts differed from the South in part because of climate and labor needs. It also reflected Puritan beliefs about family life, marriage, and the importance of being able to read the Bible. Historians estimate that between 1755 and 1764, the enslaved population was approximately 2.2 percent of the total Massachusetts population.

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Since 1757, the Josiah Smith Tavern has been an important landmark in Weston, serving as a tavern, a residence, and a community space. Soon the carefully restored building will provide new opportunities for community enrichment. (Photo c. 1865)

WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY PLANS EXHIBIT "HISTORY UNDER ONE ROOF: THE EVOLUTION OF THE JOSIAH SMITH TAVERN"

To celebrate the much-anticipated JST reopening in early 2022, Weston Historical Society is working on an exhibit "History Under One Roof: The Evolution of the Josiah Smith Tavern," to be on display through next summer.

Rather than immediately moving the society's collections out of our temporary "headquarters" in the St. Julia Church basement, WHS will take advantage of the empty rooms at the newly restored JST to tell the story of taverns in Weston and display furniture and artifacts from the Jones family. A timeline showing the history of Josiah Smith's tavern, along with five informational panels, will remain at the JST on a permanent basis.

Funding for the exhibit will come from donations (see membership dues envelope!) and from the Weston Historical Commission. The society is also applying for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to restore objects including a fire screen once used to cover one of the fireplaces in summer.

The exhibit will explore the history of taverns in Weston, focusing specifically on the following topics:

- Josiah Smith's Tavern: Three Generations of the Smith Family
- The Jones Family: A Century of Family & Community
- The Tavern after 1950: Community Uses
- Architectural Changes over Time
- Slavery in Weston (see article beginning on page 1)

Weston Historical Society volunteers working on the exhibit include Pam Fox, Kitty Smith, Mary Marder, and Molly Varnau.

Guiding them is Rebecca Migdal, a free-lance museum consultant, who is researching furniture, objects, and documents from the Jones family and will be arranging their display. Three rooms at the JST will be devoted to everything from dolls and toys to the varnish containers used by Theodore Jones in his carriage painting business.

Chris Reynolds of Reynolds Design and Management is designing the timeline and informational panels. Will Twombly of Spokeshave Design will design and install the exhibit, as he did for the society's 2013 Tercentennial exhibit and 2015 "Ready Willing and Able" exhibit on Weston fire, police, and DPW.



In researching the upcoming exhibit, we learned that Josiah Smith was one of the three Weston men who represented Weston at the first Massachusetts Provincial Congress in 1774. The Congress was established by those with patriot sympathies to govern the colony after the British annulled the Provincial Charter. It served as the de facto government throughout the war years. Each town sent distinguished citizens as delegates. (Above, seal of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress.)



Playing card found in the attic of the Josiah Smith Tavern. Weston historian Daniel Lamson wrote that gambling took place there "even on the Lord's Day."



The child's chair with raffia and leather seat belonged to the Jones family and will be on display in the WHS exhibit. (Photo by Pamela Fox)



Working on the upcoming WHS exhibit "History Under One Roof: The Evolution of the Josiah Smith Tavern" l-r: Pam Fox, Mary Marder, and Kitty Smith, WHS volunteers; and Rebecca Migdal, curator. In the background are preliminary drafts for the timeline and post-1950 period. (Photo by Chris Reynolds)

Caroline Jones, the third sibling

Until research began on this exhibit, we were unaware that John Jones and his wife Abigail had a daughter in addition to sons Theodore and John Jr. We may never know why Caroline "Carey" was institutionalized in 1861, the same year her father died. For the rest of her life, Caroline lived at the Vermont Insane Asylum, later called the Brattleboro Retreat, in Brattleboro, Vermont. The 1000-acre, semi-private institution applied emerging theories of moral and humane mental health treatment.

Theodore Marries the Girl Next Door

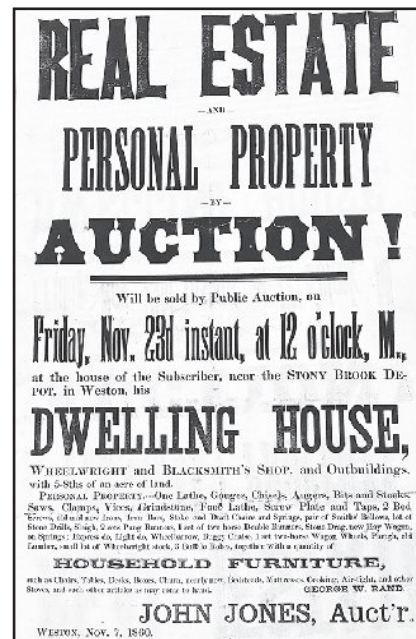
The Joneses lived next to George W. Cutting Sr., owner of the general store across the street. In 1857, Theodore Jones married George's daughter, Sarah Lord Cutting, and the Cutting home became like an extension of the Jones home.

Theodore and Sarah had two daughters, Ellen and Alice, who were ages 5 and 2 when their mother died unexpectedly at age 30 of phthisis, a form of tuberculosis.

Though Sarah died young, her siblings remained close with the Jones family and some lived in the JST. Sarah's widowed sister, Harriet Cutting Stimpson, helped raise Ellen and Alice alongside her own children, Clara and Charles. They lived at the Cutting house and then at the JST after 1899, when the Cutting house was moved to make way for the Weston Public Library.



Was this charming china doll a favorite play toy of the Jones sisters? We don't know, but we know it was owned by the family. (Photo by Rebecca Migdal)



Poster for an auction conducted by John Jones, head of the first generation of Joneses to live in the former tavern.

"THE COTTAGE" CLOSES AFTER 69 YEARS

STEVE AND DELORES ALLEN DONATE YE OLDE COTTAGE GOLF CLASSIC AWARDS PLAQUE



Above: Steve Allen and his wife Delores donated to WHS an awards plaque with the names of the winners of the "Ye Olde Cottage Golf Classic," held from 2002 to 2006. Below: Mural of Weston-super-Mare, England, by artist Francis Grayson. (Photos by Pamela Fox)

Ye Olde Cottage (YOC), a Weston landmark since 1952, closed at the end of June. For this article, Pam Fox interviewed two long-time owners Steve Allen and Dick Murray.

Steve and Delores Allen bought Ye Olde Cottage from Marlene Murray in January 1999. A few years later, one of the "regulars" suggested having a golf tournament, and the "Ye Olde Cottage Golf Classic" was born. Steve contacted the pro at Twin Springs Golf Course in Bolton, who arranged the tournament, first held in 2002. The entry fee was \$20, and more than 50 people signed up. Twin Springs closed for a few hours, and the tournament had a "shot gun" start followed by a barbeque. The event was so successful that Steve repeated it through 2006, the year he and Delores first retired.

The Allens sold the restaurant in 2006 to Dawn Rabinowitz; but when the business failed to thrive, they took it back in August 2015. By 2021, the sixth year of their second time around, Steve and Delores were both turning 70 and wanted to retire. They had hoped to find a new owner who would carry on the tradition of good food and community fellowship. Sadly, there were no takers, and after almost seven decades, Ye Olde Cot-

tage served its last morning cup of coffee on June 30, 2021.

Long-time owner Dick Murray recalled the early history of "the Cottage." In the 1940s, the Metrano family from Auburn-dale owned a meat market located where Central Tailoring is today, with a restaurant next door connected through an inside doorway. Fresh meats from the market could be quickly sent over if needed at the restaurant.

The Giamo brothers, Joe and Frank, purchased the restaurant space in 1952 and changed the name to Ye Olde Cottage. The meat market was later sold to the Acconcia family and became the Triple A Market, which served the town for many years after moving across the street to the present location of Brothers.

Along with the red bar stools at the counter and juke boxes in every booth, one of the distinctive features of the Cottage was the pastoral scene on the rear wall (see photo below). Painted by Wellesley artist Francis Grayson, it depicts Weston-super-Mare, the town's sister city in England. At times, confused patrons would ask if Weston (MA) ever had a lake.

Joe Giamo was very involved in the community. Each year, whenever the Weston High football team won a game, he hosted the team for a dinner of spaghetti and meatballs. He was health conscious and very anti-smoking. Murray recalls that he never let the kids smoke.

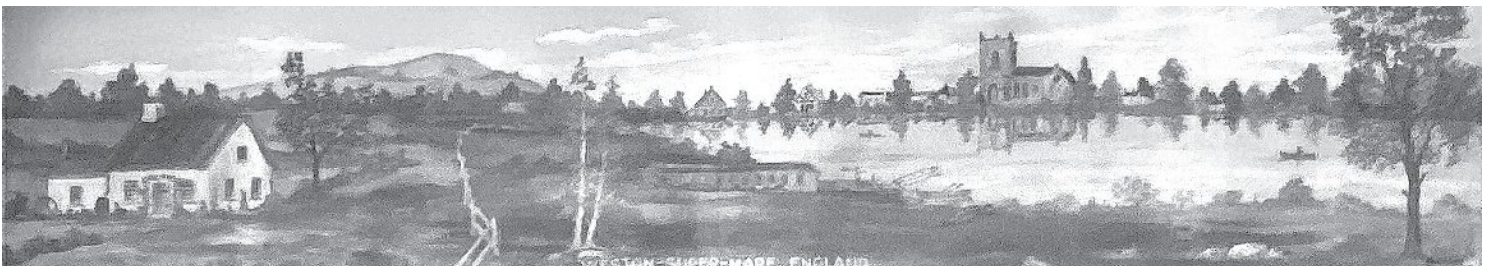
Marlene Malone began working for Joe Giamo as a waitress in high school. She married Dick Murray in 1960 and the couple bought the Cottage in 1967. The restaurant was open for breakfast and lunch six days a week, and they worked about 70 hours a week, including setting up on Sundays. At the same time, Dick earned his undergraduate degree at night from Northeastern. He did the cooking until 1991 when he left to take a job as director of the Massachusetts Environmental Police. Marlene worked at YOC for 44 years, 1955 to 1999.

The Murrays kept the menu simple. Murray explains:

People were in a hurry to get in and out, plus the cooking surface in the kitchen was small. We served a different special every day, usually a hearty meal, which was common in those days when lunch was often the main meal of the day. People don't eat big lunches anymore.

YOC was unique because of the diversity of clientele. Murray

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LINDA PERRIN, WESTON SCHOOL NURSE FOR 31 YEARS, DONATES NURSING BAG TO WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Above: Linda Perrin was interviewed in September 2021 by Cathy Konover, who took this photo. Below: nursing bag donated by Linda Perrin to WHS.

by Cathy Konover

Linda Perrin and her husband Peter can certainly be considered Weston lifers. They were both born and raised in Weston and then both became employees of the town. Peter was a Weston fireman for 43 years and retired as a captain in the fire department. Linda was a Weston Visiting Nurse and a nurse for the Weston school system for 31 years.

Nursing care in Weston has changed a great deal in the last 70 years. Sometime after World War II, Jane Hosterman became the original town nurse

and Dave Reed the town doctor. Jane handled everything – home care, school nursing and working with the Board of Health. Once the Weston Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) began there were several more nurses to share the workload.

Linda was hired as a visiting nurse in 1975 and was paid per diem. She was one of five nurses who cared not only for town residents but also for children in the four Weston schools. The women reported to Country School every morning to receive their assignments from director Barbara Williams and started out on their rounds with their black bags. Their visits could include administering insulin, taking blood pressure, and caring for wounds after surgery. The patients were all residents who had been referred by their doctors. The VNA office was in Country School in the back of the building near the gymnasium.

These five women provided home care in the morning. In the afternoon they reported to the town schools in time for recess and spent the afternoon caring for the school children. They received two paychecks — one from the Visiting Nurses Association and the other from the town. In 1981 the VNA in Weston was dissolved due to financial reasons. Townspeople were then able to receive nursing care from the neighboring town's VNA's.

In 1982 Linda was hired as the part-time school nurse for the Middle School, and the following year she became its full-time nurse. In 1984 Linda was encouraged to apply for the head nurse position by Don Kennedy, the superintendent of schools at the time. She was approved and her title was Administrator, Director or Superintendent of Nursing depending on who was addressing her, but basically she was the boss of the school nurses. At the time Linda took the new position, she and Cecile Sullivan were the only nurses for the four Weston schools. Besides handling emergencies, the nurses were

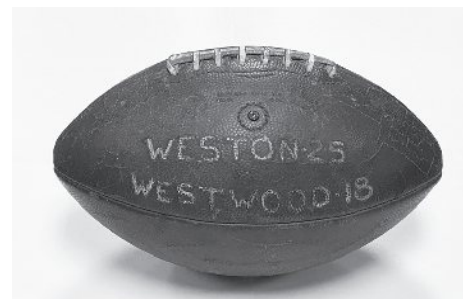
responsible for vision and hearing tests, vaccination compliance, the town's flu clinic, Board of Health Meetings and home visits— WHEW!

During her 25 years as director of nursing, Linda worked on many changes in the school nursing offices. With parental backing, she petitioned the School Committee to request a nurse for every school. She maintained that it was unsafe not to have medical care available in every school every day. Her determination paid off, and soon every school building had its own nurse.

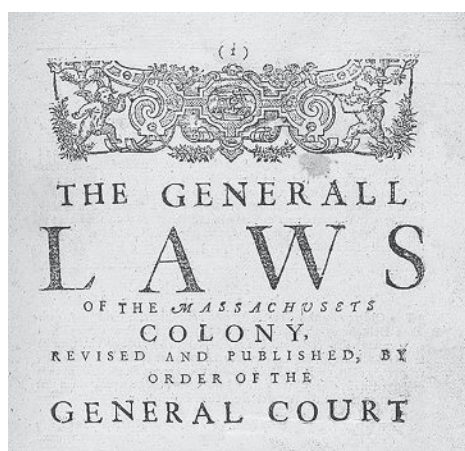
The school nurses applied for and won a grant from the state, which they used to equip every nurse's office with a computer and necessary software and also to hire a second nurse for the high school.

Any time you are involved with children there are bound to be scary events. Linda remembers once a young child came to school with all of his fingers super-glued together. One child came to school with a broken arm and another was having a serious asthma attack that required hospitalization. Being a school nurse is certainly not a job for the faint of heart.

AUSTON HALE FOOTBALL DONATED



Joe Schwartz has donated this game ball given by the Weston High School football team to Austin Hale in the 1940s. Hale served in WW I and later distributed weekly letters to hundreds of Weston servicemen during World War II. After the war, he sponsored annual dinners for Weston sports teams and coaches and was instrumental in founding Weston Boosters.



The "Body of Liberties" was the first legal code established in New England.

Slavery in Weston (continued from page 1)

"Servants for Life"

In the Massachusetts Bay Colony, enslaved persons were euphemistically called "servants for life." They were generally concentrated in industrial and coastal towns, where they worked on the docks or as laborers. Some were highly skilled and worked as carpenters, shipwrights, sail makers, shoemakers, blacksmiths, weavers, bakers, coopers, and tailors.

In small landholdings west of Boston, such as Weston, most enslaved men performed domestic chores or worked on farms, while most females did household tasks like cooking and cleaning and were referred to as "maid servants."

Treatment of Enslaved Men and Women

Enslaved persons in Massachusetts had an uncertain status— at times being treated as family and at times as property. This confusing status depended on what their owners and the law allowed.

Enslaved men and women in Massachusetts generally slept in the owner's house and ate meals with the family. If owners loaned them out, enslaved persons could augment their meager existence by earning wages— a portion of which owners

felt entitled to keep. Under Puritan law, they were encouraged to marry; but because most households had only one or two slaves, their partners often lived across town or in different towns. Children lived with the enslaved mother and could be sold. Enslaved persons could be physically abused and sold.

Weston Records

Weston's record of enslavement begins in 1725 with the baptism of Peter, a "Negro servant" who belonged to a Mr. Woolson. This was probably Thomas Woolson, who succeeded his father, also Thomas, as owner of the first tavern in Weston.

1773 was the last year that slaves were recorded on Weston tax lists. The 11 households listed below owned 16 enslaved persons. Weston slaveholders included British sympathizers, tavern owners, and wealthy townspeople. Ironically, some were "Liberty Men," the term used to describe those who wanted to break free from the shackles of British law.

Jonathan Bullard - 1
John Flagg - 1
Joseph Gouldthwait - 2
Isaac Harrington - 1
Joseph Harrington - 1
Elisha Jones - 2
Isaac Jones - 1
Samuel P. Savage Esq. - 1
Braddyll Smith - 2
Josiah Smith - 2
Doc. Joseph Starr - 2

Working in Weston Taverns

Four of the 1773 slaveholders were tavern owners: Jonathan Bullard, John Flagg, Isaac Jones, and Josiah Smith. Josiah Smith acquired his first enslaved person, a woman, in 1764 and a second man or woman in 1766.

Keeping a tavern required many different tasks shared by the family and by enslaved Africans and African Americans, including cooking and serving food and

drinks, cleaning, doing laundry, and taking care of travelers' horses.

Lucy, "Maid Servant" at the Golden Ball Tavern

In 1771, Isaac Jones, proprietor of the Golden Ball Tavern, purchased a "negro female slave, about twenty years old, together with her wearing apparel," for 40 pounds. She was named Lucy, but Jones reportedly changed her name to Venice (probably pronounced Venus) because he had a daughter named Lucy. The sale was recorded with a deed, as in a real estate transaction.

The 1790 Federal Census, taken after slavery was abolished in Massachusetts, lists two free non-white persons living in the Isaac Jones household. One of them may have been Lucy.



In this 2009 photo, Andrea Lyman and Cort Mather portray enslaved maid servant Lucy and Golden Ball Tavern innkeeper Isaac Jones in the Weston High School movie *Allegiance: The Legend of Isaac Jones*. This scene depicts the tavern room after a mob ransacked the house looking for Jones, a Tory sympathizer. (Photo by Pamela Fox)

Cuffee Peacock, freed by Jonathan Bullard

Cuffee Peacock, owned by tavern keeper Jonathan Bullard, served in a regiment that invaded Canada in 1758. Bullard freed Peacock in his will of 1773:

And I do order that my negro servant Cuffee shall be manumitted at my Decease, and that he shall have a Home or Habitation, allowed and provided by my son Jonathan, in my now Dwelling House, if he desires it— and be provided for by my said son in the case of sickness or the infirmity of Old age, being unable to provide for himself.

**Murrey Philemon
and the Harrington Family**

Enslaved persons were allowed to own property with the consent of the owner. Murrey Philemon was an enslaved man owned by Benjamin Harrington. In 1756, Harrington deeded him a piece of land, approximately 12 acres, “in consideration of the Love and good will I bear to my Negro servant named Murrey.” Philemon paid tax on his real estate but no poll tax, presumably because he was not allowed to vote.

His wife, Peggy (also written *Pegey* or *Pegge*) Mingo belonged to Benjamin’s brother Joseph. They were married in 1761 and continued to live in Weston until Philemon’s death in 1797. Their son, Isaachar, was paid for three months service in the Continental Army. A year after Peggy’s death in 1804, the Philemons’ granddaughter, Rose, sold the property in Weston back to the Harringtons, to Benjamin Harrington’s youngest son Tyler, for \$400.

***The War of Independence and
the Meaning of “Liberty:”
“Freedom” for Colonists but not for
the Enslaved***

The *Boston Gazette and Country Journal* covered liberty protests against the Stamp Act in 1765 and the Boston Massacre in 1770 on the same pages as advertisements for the sale of enslaved persons. The political debates leading up to the Revolution made clear the inconsistency of claiming an inalienable right to freedom only for white colonists. The enslaved used the same arguments to petition for the end of slavery.

Enslaved and free Black men fought bravely in both integrated and all-Black battalions. Historians estimate that between 5,000 and 8,000 African-descended people participated in the Revolution on the patriot side.



Contemporary illustration by artist Gordon Carlisle depicting an African- American soldier in the Revolutionary War, created for Stephen Clarkson’s book Patriot’s Reward (Peter Randall Publisher) (Courtesy Gordon Carlisle, www.gordoncarlisle.com)

**Salem Middlesex,
Continental Army Soldier**

At least two enslaved men from Weston served in the Revolutionary War. Salem Middlesex (d. 1799) was one of two enslaved persons owned by Braddyll Smith. In 1774, Salem Middlesex married Vilot, a “free Negro” formerly owned by a Lincoln man. They were baptized in Lincoln four years later. After Vilot died in 1781, he married Catherine “Cate” of Weston (c.1802), mother of his several children. Middlesex enlisted for military service in 1776, 1778, and 1780. In 1780 he was paid 1,320 pounds for three months’ service with the army in Rhode Island.

**Jubee,
freed by Samuel Phillips Savage**

Revolutionary War leader Samuel Phillips Savage owned Jubee, who probably came with him from Boston when Savage purchased property in Weston in 1765. Savage is recorded in the 1771 Massachusetts inventory of taxable property as having one “Servant for Life.” That

year, an intention of marriage was filed between Jubee and Judith, an enslaved woman from Lincoln. Savage owned Jubee until 1776, when he wrote in his diary: “Jubee, by my consent, left me.”

The name “Jube Savage” next appears in Revolutionary War records. He is listed as a private, age 40, in a militia that fortified the Dorchester Hills outside of Boston in March 1776. He later served in the Continental Army. Around 1779 - 80, Jube Savage purchased land near Walden Pond from his wife’s owner. A community of free African Americans lived there immediately after the Revolution. By 1790 he was living in Temple, NH.

***“All men are born free and equal”
Massachusetts Constitution of 1780***

In 1780, when the Massachusetts Constitution went into effect, slavery was still legal in the Commonwealth. However, during the years 1781 to 1783, in three related cases known today as the “Quork Walker case,” the Supreme Judicial Court held that laws and customs that sanctioned slavery were incompatible with the new state constitution.

In the first of these cases, Elizabeth Freeman (c. 1744 - 1829), also known as *Bet*, or *Mum Bett*, became the first enslaved African-American to file and win a freedom suit in Massachusetts. She was later remembered as saying:

Any time, any time while I was a slave, if one minute’s freedom had been offered to me, and I had been told I must die at the end of that minute, I would have taken it— just to stand one minute on God’s airth [sic] a free woman— I would.

In the nationwide census taken in 1790, Massachusetts was the only state that reported no slaves. Life continued to be difficult for the newly freed, as racial prejudice and discrimination limited economic opportunity and participation in civic life.

Ye Olde Cottage (continued from page 4)

recalled that the president of Raytheon, who lived in Wayland, would stop by for coffee every morning and might be sitting down next to the town garbage man:

There was a commonality that was created by being at the restaurant. People could be themselves and nobody was immune from the give and take that went on there, just because of their position in life or business.

YOC had a large blue-collar clientele— Boston Edison workers, Weston police, fire, and highway department workers, local tradesmen — who mingled with the town manager, bankers, local attorneys, and the Triple A Market owner. Murray liked the mix. Top athletes who lived in Weston, like Bobby Orr, John Havlicek, and Jerry Remy, felt comfortable going there because no one bothered them. One of his customers contemplated doing her thesis on the mix of customers.

Town politics was a frequent topic of discussion. Customers convinced Murray to run for selectman, which he did in 1982. He served for 11 years and “loved every minute of it.” He also served as a Special Police Officer from the mid 70’s until 2009. Although he disputes the idea that “everything in town was decided in the corner booth,” the fact that town leaders, firemen, and police all patronized the Cottage did help with union collective bargaining. Problems could be avoided because of personal relationships.

For Murray, personal relationships and practical jokes made up for all the hard work: “People in those times had a sense of humor and didn’t take themselves too seriously.”

The juke boxes on the wall were connected to a cabinet in the basement that played the songs. Murray charged a quarter for five songs. The boxes were never a big moneymaker. He or someone from his family went to Waltham on a regular basis to buy 45 rpm records. They would swap out the

YE OLDE COTTAGE RESTAURANT



Weston Center **Joe & Frank** Waltham 5-8092
Owner Joe Giamo with high school patrons at Ye Olde Cottage in the 1950s. Photo from Weston High School Yearbook..

songs and change the tabs. When Dawn Rabinowitz owned YOC, she sold the working mechanism in the basement but left the boxes on the walls to carry out the 1950s theme.

Weston resident Arthur Alexander began coming to YOC in 1973. He got a cup of tea every morning, but on Saturday mornings he brought his two sons for breakfast. It was like a ritual. The week before the restaurant closed, Alexander and his two sons, now ages 49 and 47, came back for their last Saturday morning breakfast.

Zoom lecture by Jane Sciacca (continued from page 1)

Jane Sciacca is well known in Wayland and beyond for her “distinct ability to enliven historical events and places for all to understand and enjoy.” She has provided innumerable programs for the Wayland Historical Society and the National Park Service including a Spring 2021 program on Slavery in Colonial Sudbury (Wayland was originally part of Sudbury). Jane worked as an Interpretive National Park Ranger for twenty years, specializing in slavery, abolition, and 19th-century American literature. She also wrote several guidebooks and children’s books for the National Park Service. In addition to serving as president, curator, and lecturer for the Wayland Historical Society, she has chaired the Wayland Historical Commission. Jane and her family have lived in Wayland for over fifty years.

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