

News from the Stow Historical Society

A newsletter for all friends of Stow history.

Please feel free to pass it along to others who might be interested!

SAVE THIS DATE
March 31st

February 27, 2019

Mass History Conference in Worcester on June 24, 2019 *Empowering Our Communities through History*

The conference's theme is **"preserving and telling the many stories of the towns and people of Massachusetts."**

Since the founding of the SHS in 1961, preserving Stow's stories and history has been number one to the society.

The Massachusetts History Alliance, which is presenting this conference, has invited organizations to **compete in a postcard design** for their conference literature.

**The Stow Historical Society
has submitted an entry.**

Please go to

<https://masshistoryalliance.org/postcard-competition-entries/> and view the entries.

On the right **vote** the image or design you like best. **Stow's submission is #5.**

*"Unveiling and Dedication
of the WWI Memorial on
the Stow Upper Common"
May 30, 1921*



March
STORY #1

Stow Historical Society Presents

1942 –

How Preparations for WWII Changed Stow



Sunday
March 31, 2019
2 PM

at the **Assabet River National
Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center**

By December 9, 1941, U.S. newspapers were headlining *Japan at War with U.S.- Congress to Act*. Pearl Harbor had become part of history, as civilians across the US stepped up their recycling and rationing for the war effort.

Not only did the citizens of Stow recycle metal and tires, shop with ration coupons, buy War Bonds, and send their young men and women to the frontline, they witnessed the Federal Government's quiet and forceful takeover of 3100 acres of land in Stow, Maynard, Sudbury and Hudson. Nearly half of this land was within Stow's boundaries. Some families had ten days to vacate their property, their homes and their farms!



"CHILDREN AND GRANDPARENTS
give up home in Stowe to U.S. as
patriotic duty"

Boston Globe, April 1942

Step back into 1942 and learn about two of Stow's multi-generational families who had their farms taken by eminent domain, as the Federal Government scrambled to build up the country's defenses. For Stow, it was the construction of the Army's Ammunition Depot off White Pond and Sudbury Roads. With maps and photos projected on the screen, **Bill Wickey** of Morristown, NJ will tell his and his family story, while Marilyn Zavorski, of the SHS will present the Suikko/Wanhatalo family story. Plus, brief stories about the Paakki/Sippo and Parker families will be shared.



Stow's **Jim Sauta** will narrate his experience of the air raid drills, the black outs, the secret trains running at night, and of touring the secure military compound during the war as a teenager.

Today the Ammunition Depot is the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge,
680 Hudson Road, Sudbury, MA.

Bill Wickey Ceramic Sculpture Exhibit at the Randall Library through mid-April

Stop by the Randall Library's restored second floor and view sculptor, Bill Wickey's excellent exhibit.

Bill Wickey was born on a farm on Lower White Pond Road, Stow, which is now part of the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge.



He began to draw as a young boy and hasn't stopped since. After graduating from high school in Stow he attended Boston Fine Arts School and then transferred to Northeastern University where he received his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering in 1957. After graduation he was immediately drafted in to the Army.

Bill began working as a Mechanical Engineer for the US Government in 1962. In 1964 Bill and his wife purchased a home in Morristown, NJ, where he resides today. While working as an engineer, Bill spent nights and weekends developing his sculpture and pottery skills. Art is critical in his life and he works daily in his ceramics studio. He is an accomplished sculptor and an avid historian. Currently, six of his *famous person's series* of sculptures are on display in Stow's Randall Library. <http://wickeypottersculpture.com/index/>



Eleanor Roosevelt
and
Winston Churchill

March
STORY #2

Here's a **1937** story just waiting to be uncovered.



The granddaughter of John Samuel Miller (1889-1949) of Waltham sent the following two photos of John Miller's Stow apple orchard.

These two photos are labeled Hemlock Acres, Stow, MA 1937.

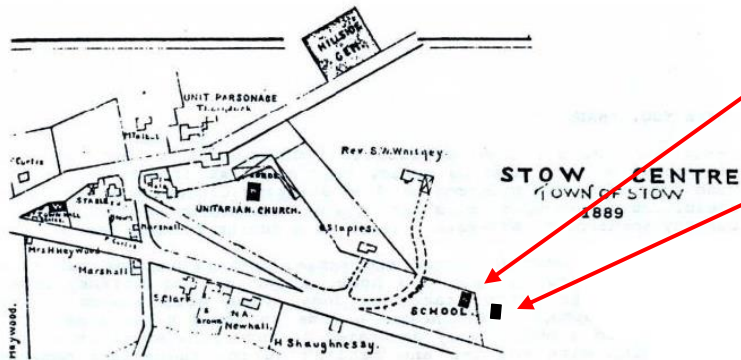
Anyone recall hearing the name Hemlock Acres?



March STORY #3

Here's a 1908 story. Stow's Union School Fire

“At the annual Town meeting in March 1902, it was voted to build a new union school house at the Center, and combine the several schools, including the Hale High school, in one building.” The school was built on the site of the 1824 Stow Academy building.



In 1905
the Union Evangelical Church
was built next to the school.

Today this is Highrock Church.

On Dec 4, 1908 Union School caught on fire.



Horse Sheds



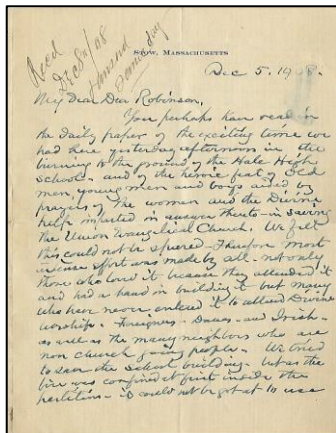
copied from Neil Phalan Stow postcard collection

Use your imagination, since there are no known side-by-side photos of Union School and Union Church.

The school was on a knoll and today the location would be in the church's parking lot.

George Henry Morss, 76, who was living with his sister and brother-in-law on Crescent Street, was among those in Stow who came and fought the fire. On Dec 5, 1908 he sent a 4-page letter about the fire to Union Church's Deacon Charles W. Robinson, who was away visiting family.

NOW THINK **FIREFIGHTING** a 111 years ago!



The school had no water and no axes to open the partition walls to use fire extinguishers.

“The wind happened to be blowing strong from the southwest which was favorable to carry it above the horse sheds toward the pond.”

(Ministers Pond is behind the church.)

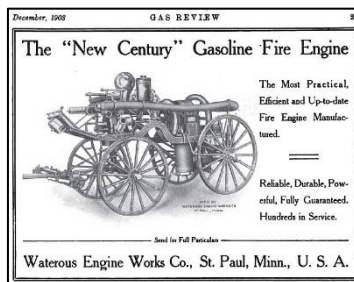
See above photo.

“To keep the horse sheds wet Mr. Lewis led the way and got ladders and mounted on top.”

“An army of men and boys kept busy carrying water [from Ministers Pond] in pails, milk cans and boilers to the men at work on the horse sheds.”

→ “The Maynard Fire Department was summoned by Town officials at the outset. When they arrived, they found no water was available to use the engine, the pond too far distant, so they returned home.”

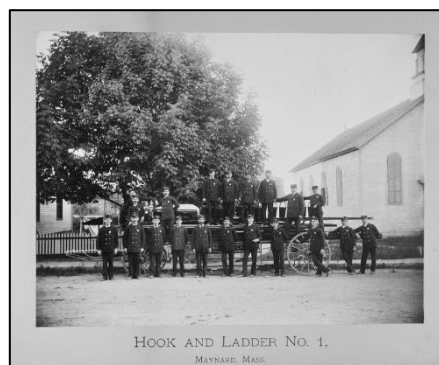
Maynard might have had a Waterous Fire Engine.



Watch how one would have worked on YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmtH1B3uqfA>



→ “The Hook & Ladder Co came, and their ladders were available to get up on the difficult parts of the Church. The side [to] the school had four, I think, put up against it, and men with pails were kept busy sprinkling on the windows to keep them from blistering and breaking, the woodwork was kept deluged so as to save that from igniting.”



Maynard Historical Society Archives

The Hook and Ladder Company was organized on April 29, 1891.

<http://collection.maynardhistory.org/items/show/3123>

“When the fire had reached the end nearest the Church, it became intensely hot. The cinders were carried many on the horse sheds, and beyond, but so constant were the men at work there, the fire got no lodgment. The wood beyond in some instances for fire but [was] quickly extinguished.”

“When the [school] walls fell inward to the basement the heat diminished and all danger of the Church was over.”

Please share your Stow stories and memories with the SHS!