

Stow - Info

News of The Stow Historical Society

March 2004



STOW FARMERS TO TAKE SPOTLIGHT AT SPRINGFEST ON MAY 15

Farmers in Stow will be on hand for Springfest on Saturday, May 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the “Down on the Farm” program sponsored by the Stow Historical Society at Town Hall in the upstairs hall.

Antique tools and historic photos of past and present farms will be on display, and good farm stories will be swapped at the booths lining the old hall. Farms participating include Applefield Farm, Carver Hill Orchard, Derby Orchards, Dragonfly Farm, Hampshire Farm, Heath Hen Meadow Farm, Honey Pot Hill Orchard, Marble Hill Farm, One Stack Farm, Pilot Grove Farm, Shelburne Farm and Small Farm.

From Stow’s beginnings in the late 1600’s, Stow’s “inhabitants were mostly farmers with such numbers of traders, tavern keepers, blacksmiths, carpenters and shoemakers as were needed for the wants of the other inhabitants.” That’s how the 1889 literary magazine of Hale High School described the town. Sawmills and gristmills were first on the scene followed by cider mills, box mill and the large cotton/woolen mill in Gleasondale.

In 1933 the Crowell History of Stow listed 22 farms. Dairy products, poultry, apples and hops were a major part of that scene. That number continued to dwindle and by the 1950’s Stow was more residential
(continued on page 3)

Join the Grange for a Pie Party at 2 p.m.

One of the highlights of the Springfest “Down on the Farm” show on May 15 will be a Grange Pie Party at 2 p.m. in Town Hall. Homemade pies will be served to the public, commemorating the more than 100 years of the history of Stow Grange #103, Patrons of Husbandry. The Stow Grange ceased operation in the early 1980’s.

Donna Brown Jacobs and Jim Sauta, both former Grange members, will share stories about the local Grange at the pie party.

Stow’s Grange was organized on February 15, 1877, with 31 members. The nationwide

Grange at the time was the oldest and one of the strongest farm organizations in America and the only farmers’ fraternity in the world. Through its efforts the welfare of the farmer had been advanced, education has been promoted, the life of the rural people enriched and American ideals uplifted. The local Grange sponsored monthly meetings and a Stow Fair each fall complete with ribbons and all the trimmings of an agricultural fair.

Other former Grange members are invited to the pie party to share their memories of this part of Stow’s history.

NEW FLAG TO HANG IN BOSTON

Stow will now be on the map—at the Great Hall of Flags at the State House, Boston.

On Friday, March 19, the new Stow Town Flag will be inducted into the flag display in the State House. When Webelos Den 7 toured the State House some time ago, they discovered flags for many communities hung in the Great Hall, but none for Stow.

In 2000 local scout groups approached the Selectmen to suggest a flag contest. Both students and adults submitted ideas from which Rosemary Bawn, well-known designer, created ten designs. A vote was taken and the winning design announced in August 2001.

An invitation to attend the induction ceremony has been issued to all townspeople by Pat Walrath, State Representative, and Pam Resor, State Senator. The Hale Middle School Band will present a program at 10 a.m. at the Grand Staircase and the flag ceremony will begin at 11:30 a.m.. Tours of the State House can be arranged. by calling Pat Walrath at 617/722-2180. The COA is arranging a van trip.



New Flag for Stow

SCOTS FOR SALE

Is there a little Scotch in your ancestry? "Scots for Sale," the shocking story of the fate of Scottish War Prisoners in 17th Century Massachusetts, will be told on Sunday, May 2, at the annual meeting of the Minuteman Regional Historical Society.

The meeting will be held at 1 p.m. at the First Parish Church, Sudbury Center (corner of Concord Rd. and Route 27. Parking behind Town Hall). Speaker will be Diane Rapaport who has researched the history of two shiploads of Scottish war prisoners who arrived in 1651 and 1652 in Boston, destined for indentured labor. Their unwilling exile is a little-known chapter in colonial history.

The Minuteman Regional Historical Society is composed of more than 40 historical societies in this area. Each year a different historical society is host. The program has been arranged by Lee Swanson of the Sudbury Historical Society. Last year, the Stow Historical Society was the host with a well attended program on stonewalls.

SHARING HISTORY WITH BOXBOROUGH

On Sunday, March 21, at 7 p.m. the Boxborough Historical Society will present a program in the Boxborough Town Hall on "**Cate Taylor Chester and the African Experience in Colonial and Revolutionary Massachusetts.**" Barbara Tornstrom, speaker, has been doing research in the Stow Town Vault, on Cate Chester who was a member of Stow and Boxborough's first African-American family, Cate was a maid-servant in the Burroughs Rd. farm of Phineas Taylor. History relates that Taylor obtained Cate when a babe, in Boston, "making payment therfor with a box of butter," and she grew up in Stow. She was given her liberty after serving the family for 30 years.



DID YOU KNOW?

Linda Dodge, avid genealogist and member of the Ancient Documents Committee, is the author of just-off-the-press hard cover book on the genealogy of the Fish family of Starks, Maine, home of her mother's family.

Lew Halprin is uncovering historical nuggets in the Town Vault and incorporating them in his "From the Vault" column in the Stow Paper. Don't miss these gems of Stow history. Did you know about Paul Revere's dog? This dog retrieved Revere's spurs so that the impassioned patriot could make his famous ride to Concord. Revere had forgotten them and sent the dog home to get them. Lew is a member of the Ancient Documents Committee.

Stan and Helga Sherman, long-time members of the Historical Society, have moved to Marlboro. Their new address is 370 Hemenway St., Marlboro, MA 01752. Stan and Helga were recognized earlier this year for their many contributions to the Stow Historical Society and to the town of Stow.

Ruby Law, long-time Stow resident, has moved to 205 Vernon Ave., #205 Vernon, Conn. 06066.

There's a new book, "**Sea of Glory**," by Nathaniel Philbrick about the U.S. Exploring Expedition, 1838-1842, which charted the Pacific Ocean, top to bottom. Six sailing vessels and a crew of hundreds that included botanists, geologists, mapmakers and biologists took part in this expedition under the command of Lt. Charles Wilkes. Stow's best-known benefactor, **John Randall**, was to have sailed on this expedition but internal wrangling and politics delayed the start of the expedition and Randall backed out. This amazing trip, comparable in scope to the Lewis and Clark expedition, is little known. John Randall stayed home in Stow and amassed a fortune and that is why we have the Randall Library.

STOW FARMERS (Continued from page 1)

than farming. However much of the town's open space legacy has been preserved, capturing the pastoral beauty of an old New England village. Less than a dozen farmstands are scattered throughout the town today, and the town is known chiefly for its apple orchards and, of course, its golf courses. On the rise are niche or specialized farms, a trend across New England, that offer Christmas trees and naturally grown produce, herbs, and flowers. Stow also has beautiful sheep farms and horse farms.

A continuous photo show projecting pictures of old Stow farms and farmlands will be shown during the Springfest celebration. Another feature will be the distribution of a new brochure, listing farmstands in Stow, made possible by a grant from the Stow Cultural Council, a local agency that is supported by the Fieldstone Foundation and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



Ode to the Farmer, popular Grange poem

GIFTS TO THE STOW HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Stow Historical Society is the recipient each year of a wide variety of materials spelling out bits and pieces of Stow History. We thank the following friends for their generosity:

Alan Ferguson Playscripts and Cartoons: **Carol Bernklow, Alan Amos, Craig Martin, Charles and Carol Barney, Stan Sherman, Bob and Dee Glorioso.**

Arrowhead Collection: **Stan Sherman.**

Pilot Grove Milk and Erikson Cream Bottles: **Bob and Ruth McConnell.**

Copies of Early Stow Villagers: **Bob and Dee Glorioso.**

Photos and Postcards: **Bob and Ruth McConnell.**

Photos and Postcards of Lake Boon: **Mark and Kathryn Flinkstrom.**

School Photos and other Hale High School Materials—1941: **Mark Greeno.**

Springfest Photos-1970's: **Charles and Carol Barney.**

Postcard Scrapbooks: **Faith Field.**

Copy of Stow Family Genealogy: **Bob Trumpolt.**

Peter Bagdigian: Collection of Stow Photos—funded through the Stow Cultural Council.

If you have materials about Stow you would like to donate to the Stow Historical Society, call Karen Green, SHS Curator, 978-568-9499.

HELP NEEDED

The Stow Historical Society has put out a call for help for upcoming meetings.

- Join the bucket brigade to help spruce up Town Hall for Springfest, May 15. (Call Jody Newman, 978-897-7076 and give her your date preference).
- Organize the museum cases upstairs at Randall Library. (Call Kate Hardikar, 978-562-8546).
- Help the book chairman for Stow Historical Society keep track of sale books and distribution. (Call Eve Fischer, 978-568-0396).
- Bake a pie for the “Down on the Farm” Show and Grange Pie Party at Springfest, May 15. (Call Karen Green, 978-568-9499).

BAKE A PIE FOR THE GRANGE PARTY

