



STOW-INFO

Newsletter of the Stow Historical Society

February 1992

Stow, Massachusetts

LANDMARK SERIES FOCUSES ON MINUTE MAN AIR FIELD

As the Stow Historical Society continues its lecture series on major landmarks in Stow, the focus will be on Minute Man Air Field, a well-known family business for more than 20 years. Speaker at the meeting, to be held Thursday, February 27, at the air field's conference center, will be Donald McPherson, present owner.

The program will open with a dinner at 6:30 p.m. at the airfield. Reservations are required for the catered chicken dinner, and must be made by Friday, February 21, by calling Ginger Pearlman, 897-9194. There is no charge to members. If you signed up at the January meeting, you do not have to re-register! Please call Ginger with any cancellations.

The air field, located off Boxboro Road, is the site of the old Erikson farm, and the only flying done there before 1963 was by chickens. Cows and a hayfield were the chicken's companions.

The Eriksons built a private, noncommercial landing strip in 1963, and the land was acquired in 1966 by Paul McPherson, father of the present owner. Don will share anecdotes about local people and flyers who have made history at the air field.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO OPEN OFFICE IN OLD TOWN HALL

Work will begin this month on setting up an office for the Stow Historical Society in the Old Town Hall. The society will make its headquarters in the former office of the assessor. A work party will be held Sunday, February 23, at 2 p.m. to move materials into the space. If you would like to be part of the work party, please call Barbara Sipler, 897-5996, or meet at the Old Town Hall at 2 p.m.

The space will be used for research and storage of materials now tucked away in members' attics, closets and garages. Sale items including Frannie Warren and Ellie Childs' histories will become more readily available. Thanks go to Thelma Fletcher and Carol Anthony for the long years of sharing their garages with the these books. In addition the office will be used for preservation work on old documents, which will continue to be stored in the old Town Vault in the Police Station.

Last fall members of the society met with consultants hired by the Municipal Buildings Study Committee to voice concern about the future of the Old Town Hall and the need by the Historical Society for storage and office space. A meeting followed in January with the committee, and space became available.

There is a need for a desk, desk chair, additional tables, a desk lamp, shelving, and file cabinets. Please let Barbara Sipler know if you would be willing to donate any used office equipment.

NEXT TWO MEETINGS--Mark your calendar for Sunday, March 29, and Thursday, April 23, for two more meetings in the Landmark Series sponsored by the Stow Historical Society. The March meeting will be a Tea at Tastings Restaurant at 2 p.m., and the topic will be "Growing Old Gracefully in Stow," a look at the Stow Elderly Housing Program. The April meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Randall Library will focus on "The Greening of Stow--a Golfer's Mecca, with speakers from Stow's golf courses.

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THIRD GRADERS NEED YOU!--Stow third graders at Pompositticut School are gearing up for their annual Stow History Unit. Members of the Historical Society and other residents are visit the classrooms each year to talk or give demonstrations on "Growing Up in Stow," Indians, Minutemen, tools, farming, quilting, spinning, stenciling, and metalcrafts. Linda Hathaway-Smart, who will help coordinate the speakers again this year, noted that speakers are again welcome on these subjects as well as other topics including: corn husk dolls, tin punching, printing, colonial cooking, reverse glass painting, marbleizing paper, pottery, or any other topic or craft. Talks will start in March and continue through May when the unit culminates in a class visit to Sturbridge Village.

"Members of the Historical Society are the people who know the history of the town and the children need to know it," points out Jody Newman who was parent coordinator of the third grade unit for many years. "Oral history is wonderful and needs to be passed on; otherwise, the information doesn't get remembered and passed on to the next generation."

Linda Smart, 897-2808, will welcome calls from volunteers or information on possible speakers.

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A BIG THANK YOU--Ralph Crowell, former society president, drew a large crowd at the January meeting with his excellent two-screen slide presentation on the history of the Lower Village Common and Stow Shopping Center. Ralph noted that in this century the site has changed more dramatically than any other part of the town. Thanks also go to Dorothy Sonnichsen for videotaping the presentation. Call Dorothy if you would like to borrow the videotape.

100th COMING UP--Randall Library has started planning for its 100th anniversary in 1994 and would welcome members on its planning committee. Call the library for information.

SPECIAL INVITATION--Brownie Troop 2515 has invited the Stow Historical Society to speak to its members on May 7 on the early history of the town. Mary Warren and Thelma Fletcher have volunteered to present the program to the girls who are working on their Stow patch. Patti Selin, society member, designed the patch.