



Barrington Preservation Society

DISCOVER, PRESERVE, RESTORE

Fall

2008

70th Anniversary Hurricane Program a Big Hit



Program attendees gather for the Preservation Society's hurricane anniversary program

photo: Paul Darling

Our Storm of the Century, a 70th anniversary program about the Hurricane of 1938 was a great success. Greater than 120 people, including approximately 20 people who lived through the hurricane, attended this rousing event. Preservation Society Museum Director Jean MacIntyre presented slides of Barrington before the storm as well as many devastating hurricane images. Several people gave harrowing accounts of September 21, 1938, followed by a segment of the WSBE-TV documentary entitled "Wake of '38" which is available through the public library system.

After the program, several hurricane survivors provided the Preservation Society with their memories of that day. Paul Darling was eight years old in September 1938 and lived on County Road in Barrington. He states, "When the river level rose and the salty water poured across County Road and into our low land, we realized that a storm of unusual severity was upon us ... Our yard had suddenly become an extension of Barrington River." When Paul's father, W. Arthur

Darling, returned from work in Providence, Paul clearly remembers his mother, Mary, lifting the center window on their porch to let him put a leg through and enter. If she had opened the front door, it would have blown off its hinges. Paul and a young friend watched, laughing aloud, as the shingles on the rental cottage next door flapped wildly up and down, like the keys of a player piano gone mad!

The next morning, fishes were flipping up and down in their yard in the receding (continued on page 3)

***The Miracle Worker* Performance at 2nd Story Theatre to Benefit Barrington Preservation Society**

Calling all theatre lovers. You can easily help raise funds for BPS by attending the Wednesday, November 19 Family Night performance of *The Miracle Worker* at 2nd Story Theatre. Whether or not you have experienced this renowned theatre before, don't miss this chance to support BPS and see a great show.

The performance is at 8:00 p.m. and tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children under 18, with limited seating available. The upstairs bar will be open to purchase beer, wine, soft drinks and cookies.

The well-known story of *The Miracle Worker* is about Annie Sullivan. Sullivan, almost blind herself, takes on the daunting position in the Keller household to reach their young daughter Helen, left blind and deaf from scarlet fever. With a dynamic gift for teaching, Annie breaks through Helen's darkness, leading her to a world of light. It's William Gibson's robust story of love, faith, and dedication.

Be sure to call Board member Phyllis Fragola at 245-1054 for your reservation. Don't miss this

opportunity to see a great play and help BPS at the same time.

Letter from the President

An important mission of the Barrington Preservation Society is to preserve and share memories close to home. The Society does not simply display objects. It tries to relay the experiences behind them. The latest program, Our Storm of the Century, brought home the significance of "doing" oral history. In addition to listening to various personal experiences about the hurricane of 1938, the museum staff had the privilege of reviewing personal photo albums, high school yearbooks, reunion essays, and memoirs.

Memoir-writing is a terrific way of relaying unique interactions about family, neighbors, our town and society. It is precisely these personal perspectives and details that make the "telling of the past" interesting. While memoirs educate, writers may also gain the satisfaction of knowing that others will hear their stories.

Thankfully, we have a Museum which serves as a repository for past Barrington experiences. It is a place where your voices will ultimately be heard and preserved. We invite you to think of the Society as your encouragement, motivation and place to share your Barrington memories.

Nancy R. Peck, President

Ott Grant Launches Glass Negative Project

Over the years, the Preservation Society has had the good fortune of accumulating a collection of glass negatives dating from 1860 – 1900. At a time when photography was still a phenomenon and done by few, some stunning moments in Barrington time were captured.

In order to bring this collection into an even safer status for research use and to enable options for reproduction, an effort is being made to digitize these images. The glass negatives' unusual size and formats require some scanning expertise and scanner adaptation. An Ott Foundation grant was made to BPS this year and has allowed for the launch of this project. In addition to the scanning, the work also involves identifying, labeling, inventory, archival storage supply, and their incorporation into a database.



Bicknell House, Washington Road



Bay Spring shoreline

The collection contains some of the oldest surviving photographs of Barrington, some of which are especially vivid and unique. The Society looks forward to sharing these images with you in the future.

Endowment Fund Donor Request

In the past six months, the Endowment Fund has received generous gifts from the Estate of Carol Horrocks, the CVS Corporation and individuals. We still have a long way to go and we will gratefully accept your tax deductible contributions. Simply write a check payable to the Barrington Preservation Society with "Endowment Fund" on the memo line, and send to the Treasurer, Barrington Preservation Society, P.O. Box 178. If you have any questions, please contact Van Edwards at 245-9719.

6th Annual Winter Jazz Concert
performed by the award-winning
Barrington High School Jazz Ensemble
Friday, December 5 at 7:30 p.m.
St. John's Episcopal Church
191 County Road
Reception to follow

Save the date for this free
Barrington Preservation Society
sponsored event!

This year BPS is selling ad space for the
event program for \$25 and \$50.
Be a sponsor and show your support
for local youth.

Please contact Sydney Montstream-Quas at
Sydney_Mike@fullchannel.net if interested in
purchasing ad space.

Membership Drive Ongoing

An organization, especially a volunteer organization, is only as good as its membership.

The Board of Directors of Barrington Preservation Society initiated a membership drive in 2008 that will carry into next year when the annual membership renewal solicitation is conducted. Membership fees from our 124 members have been barely sufficient to enable us to fund our programs and meet the obligations of maintaining the BPS Museum.

A major Museum project, in the proposal stage, is the inventory and indexing of all Museum assets. This is a costly program which would be accelerated with additional funding. Please consider being part of this major project.

In addition, increased membership means building a larger pool of volunteers to assist in conducting our programs. Why not consider becoming a BPS volunteer?

Hurricane article continued from page 1
puddles of river water. Other Darling property on Annawamscutt Road had been reduced to unrecognizable splintered rubble. Timbers from all the houses had fallen into their foundations. The scene was one of universal destruction as far as the eye could see.

Lloyd Broomhead was 12 on September 21, 1938 and lived on Alfred Drown Road. His brother told him to go to Allin's Cove to pump out their 21-foot gaff rigged sloop which was full of water. Through pouring rain he was completely wet, but kept pulling their boat higher and higher as the water rose, and thought he would be a hero if he got it high enough so that it would be set for the winter. Things floated by him, like a friend's sail, which he was tempted to swim out and grab, but realized he'd drown if he tried. He kept pulling the boat higher and was waist deep in water when his older brother showed up and exclaimed, "What are you doing?! Go home and take a bath." He obliged, and then went back to the boat to see what was happening, only to see the water had risen another 15-18 feet closer to their home. That sloop survived the 1938 hurricane but succumbed in Hurricane Carol in 1954.

Gloria Barnes McCagney was 12 years old on that day and lived on Pleasant Street in the Alfred Drown neighborhood. From a second floor window of her house, she recalls seeing the huge tidal wave come up and over Bay Spring point, then saw the wave recede, only to see a second huge wave rise up and over the point, carrying homes with it. From that same vantage point, she also could see Willow Way, along the waterfront, and watched those summer houses collapsing. One house at the end was better built and stayed up the longest. But all of the wood from the surrounding fallen cottages continuously battered this one house until it finally fell too. In the morning, she was amazed to see only a thin stream in the Providence River that was free of debris, such as stoves, houses, roofs, and refrigerators. "Everything under the sun littered the river," she said, "That's when we realized how bad this thing was."

The Barrington Preservation Society is always open to hear other eventual stories about this locale. Please contact us with your story.

**Holiday Traditions in the Pioneer Valley:
Historic Deerfield, Yankee Candle & Bright Lights**

The Barrington Community School and Barrington Preservation Society have collaborated to bring you an excursion to Massachusetts' Pioneer Valley on December 3. An orientation program will introduce you to Historic Deerfield before the group tours the Williams House, a local historic home. A visit to the Flynt Center of Early American Life, a museum full of nationally-acclaimed decorative arts and exhibits related to early American

furniture, clothing and textiles follows. A buffet luncheon at the 1884 Deerfield Inn precedes a visit to the Yankee Candle Company. In the late afternoon, the group will drive through Springfield's historic Forest Park, which will be lit up with more than 300,000 lights for the "Bright Lights" event. The fee for this program is \$75. For more information, or to register for this event, contact the Community School at 245-0432 or barrcomm@bcs.necoxmail.com.

Interested in plaquing your home? Call BPS at 289-0802

Barrington Preservation Society
P.O. Box 178
Barrington, RI 02806

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**Return this form with check payable to:
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P.O. Box 178, Barrington, RI 02806**

Join the Barrington Preservation Society

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