



# Barrington Preservation Society

DISCOVER • PRESERVE • RESTORE

Spring 2010

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Stephen Story, *Vice President*  
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Pamela Hilton, *Secretary*

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Flora Stewart  
Marion Willey

Carole Villucci, *Museum Director*

Sydney Montstream-Quas,  
*Newsletter Editor*  
Sara Kriz, *Graphic Design*

## Barrington Preservation Society Museum

Lower Level, Peck Center

## Hours

Wednesday, Thursday  
& Saturday  
11:00 – 3:00 or by  
appointment

## Phone

(401) 289-0802



### The Preservation Society inducted new officers at the January 17 Annual Meeting.

Pamela Hilton, *Secretary*  
Stephen Story, *Vice President*  
Nancy Peck, *Treasurer*  
Kent Phillips, *President*

## Society Recipient of Rhode Island Foundation Media Grant

On March 24, the BPS received a \$1500 Media Project Grant from the Archive, Document, Display and Disseminate (ADDD) Fund at The Rhode Island Foundation. The Rhode Island Foundation is a charitable community trust serving the people of Rhode Island. The grant application was initiated by the Society's new Museum Director, Carole Villucci.

The award is to be used for hiring a part-time consultant to catalog the Society's collection of objects covering 300 years of local history. Matching funds, provided by BPS Trustees and members of the Museum Committee, were a key ingredient in securing the grant. In addition, BPS staff and volunteers will provide a variety of in-kind services.

Ms. Villucci states, "We have a remarkable collection of objects and photographs and the need to document them in a standardized, current and proper manner is evident. The ADDD grant will allow us to begin this extensive work." Museum artifacts, ephemera and archival photographs are so numerous at this point that the cataloguing process could take more than a year's time to complete.

Linda Blade has been contracted to perform the work. As this project's Collections Management Specialist, she will be using PastPerfect software. PastPerfect is a database software designed specifically for museum cataloguing and is approved by the American Association of State and Local History. In addition to the software's ability to search for catalog records, each record will feature a photo and description of the object, and will more easily direct the researcher to its location within the Museum storage facility. Ms. Blade is a Barrington resident and, among other professional experiences, has recently completed the Museum Studies program at the Harvard University Extension School and an internship at the Culinary Arts Museum.

Additional volunteer help is needed to organize the collection. If interested, contact Carole Villucci at the Museum: 289-0802.



**These men represented the entire Barrington Police Department in the 1920s: Benjamin Bosworth, John Medici and Chief Albert Pearson. They had an office in the Town Hall.**

## SAVE THE DATE!

**Thursday, June 10th  
7:00 pm**

**Larry McDonald, in the persona of Capt. Thomas Cole of Wickford Town, will speak of the 1778 "Battle of Rhode Island"**

**Event to take place in the Barrington Public Library auditorium, refreshments following**

**Free admission**



Captain Thomas Cole, from Wickford, was a true American Patriot. He marched in June 1775 to Boston to join the Army of Observation and also fought numerous New York battles. In 1778, he returned to Rhode Island to help recruit the Black Battalion and then fought in the Battle of Rhode Island. Later, he was involved in the siege of Yorktown. He earned eight Battle Stars.

## *Letter from the President*

Welcome to the New Year and increased energy for Barrington Preservation Society. We are pleased to have Jane Scola return to the Board and to continue making major contributions to the Museum Committee. Newly-elected to your Board at the Annual Meeting held at Tyler Point Grille in January are Elizabeth King who will be chairing the Program Committee and Flora Stewart who will be working on Hospitality.

You will read more about the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission grant, RI Council for the Humanities grant, and The Bay Team and Fuel Belt, Inc. donations that we received to enable BPS to install, with the help of Barrington DPW, seven historic markers along the bike path. An additional marker will be placed at the Civic Center Historic District. I mention this as a tribute to Sydney Montstream-Quas and her dedication to getting the grants and to completing the project. Thank you Sydney.

I also call your attention to the success of our new Museum Director, Carole Villucci, in procuring a grant from The Rhode Island Foundation. Carole has really hit the ground running for BPS and we appreciate her seemingly endless energy and enthusiasm.

Be on the alert for increased programs activity this year. If you missed the joint Barrington Library/BPS program presented by former Channel 12 newscaster, Glenn Laxton, on Hidden History of Rhode Island on March 25, you missed a very worthwhile night out. Watch for more to come later in the year. Good job, Liz King. Also, be sure to wave to us as we participate in the Memorial Day parade.

Let me remind you that if you are interested in the possibility of your home becoming a local landmark with a BPS Plaque, our volunteers are in research mode and would be interested in helping you attain this worthwhile status. Please write to me at [www.bpspresident@barrpreservation.org](mailto:www.bpspresident@barrpreservation.org) if you would like me to follow up on such an interest.

From a membership and endowment perspective, BPS is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization and can accept your gifts, tax deductible to you. With that in mind, you should know that BPS has established a new membership category, "Life Member." Since our March membership mailing we have already registered one Life Member who has requested anonymity. In addition, our endowment fund now totals approximately \$30,000. I encourage you to consider BPS in your estate planning.

Your Board meets the second Monday each month at 7:15 pm in the Barrington Library. These meetings are open to the membership and I would welcome your attendance and comments.

Kent Phillips



to our website [BarrPreservation.org](http://BarrPreservation.org) and follow the link to the January SoCo Magazine article about the BPS Museum!

## Museum News

Leaps and bounds might describe the Museum's theme since the last newsletter — a bevy of activity since new Museum Director Carole Villucci joined our forces. She has accomplished much on her own initiative as well as in tandem with Museum committees and sub-committees overseen by Bob Robertson. Museum policies continue to be scrutinized regarding aspects of loans, gifts, acquisitions, deaccessioning policies, rights and reproductions. Long-range plans and ideas for three years of exhibitions and related programs are being formulated. Visitation numbers are increasing including a visit from the nearby Barrington Senior Center. The visit gave some long-term residents a chance to share some fond memories. Researchers continue to find the Museum a resource. As always we invite you to visit, again and again, and be a part of our ever-changing Museum.

### Exhibits

The upcoming exhibit in the Museum is titled, "The Marrying Kind." The exhibit will feature six wedding gowns, all donated to BPS and once worn by Barrington residents. They span one hundred years from 1857 to 1957. The gown and accessories display will be accompanied by wedding day photos as available. Some gowns have been in the collection for many years, others acquired very recently. "The Marrying Kind" will be exhibited from June 5 to September 1.

Then, in mid-September and coinciding with the unveiling of historic interpretive signage on the East Bay Bike Path (see article on page 5), the Museum will have an exhibit entitled, "On the Path: Bikes and Other Wheels." All ages will find this exhibit amusing. If you have or know of someone who has an unusual or antique bicycle or tricycle to lend for this exhibit, please call the Museum Director at 289-0802 or e-mail [museumdirector@barrpreservation.org](mailto:museumdirector@barrpreservation.org). Other fun biking paraphernalia or garb, or perhaps an old pair of roller skates, would be of interest also. (cont. on page 4)



**Carole Villucci and Susan Hay (BPS Exhibitions Curator)** display one of the wedding dresses for the upcoming exhibit, "The Marrying Kind."

### *Did you know that the Museum's collection dates back 300 years?*

The Museum Committee is always on the lookout for items that are of historical value and interest to the Barrington community. Some of the objects on our wish list are early quilts, pottery, 19th century furniture, clothing and accessories from 1850 - 1950 and historic paintings. We are also interested in dolls from the 19th century and early 20th century. Items must be in good condition. If you have an item you would like the acquisitions committee to review, please call the Museum Director.



**Building the Town Hall in 1888**

### ***Museum Volunteer Opportunities***

Docents to guide tours, museum receptionists, graphic designers, and people to help with special exhibitions and organize collected materials

## **Museum News cont.**

### **Student Outreach**

The Museum welcomed elementary school teachers and their third grade students this spring when Primrose Hill and Nayatt Schools toured our Civic Center Historic District, including Town Hall, the BPS Museum and Prince's Hill Cemetery. In the Museum, staff and docents display objects which complement local history lessons students learn in their classrooms. Pre-Museum-visit presentations in school classrooms are available as well. Many BPS news-letter readers are already familiar with the fact that the Education Committee's *Barrington By the Bay* book has been distributed and incorporated in all Barrington Public School third grade lessons for the last two years. We've realized the benefit of history immersion and preservation concepts by osmosis at an impressionable age!

At Hampden Meadows School, fourth grade students in Ms. Colangelo's class will be collaborating with BPS on an oral history project. Ms. Colangelo received a grant to assist in having digital capabilities for the project. The students will be writing questions to ask relatives and others, and will be learning the basic principles and importance of oral history. A copy of their final project will be incorporated into the BPS collection. Also in the works is a partnership with St. Andrew's School to formulate a history and preservation course to be implemented in the near future.

### **The Value of Volunteers**

This past winter, we were fortunate to have Barrington High School senior Seavor Anderson volunteer in the Museum. In fulfilling the high school's requisite community service hours, BPS benefited from Seavor's helping organize the Native American display case. He created illustrations and helped other volunteers with storage organization and shelf assembly—for a total of 30 much-appreciated hours. Museum Director Carole Villucci hopes to work with more high school students who would consider the Museum the go-to place for volunteering.

Last but not least, the Museum's storage area has received an upgrade thanks to the generous contribution of shelving units from Museum Committee member Burr Sebring. This good deed has made a significant difference in storage status as we manage an ever-growing collection and do the quick-change artistry necessary when dismantling one exhibit and replacing it with another. Burr continues to be instrumental behind the scenes in helping organize and preserve objects in our storage facility. Thank you, Burr!

## Bike Path Historic Marker Project Well Underway

A Museum Without Walls. That's the term that BPS Museum Director Carole Villucci gave the series of historic interpretive signs to be installed along the Barrington section of the East Bay Bike Path. This has been a long-term project undertaken by the BPS Education Committee. Seven signs are expected to be unveiled this autumn on the path, with an eighth at Barrington's Civic Center Historic District.

In coordinating this project, Sydney Montstream-Quas has learned to expect the unexpected, especially when connecting with Barrington natives who have shared wonderful memories about their (or their ancestors') lives in Barrington. She states, "Seeking first-person information and stories has been beneficial not only for enriching the historical details of a project like this, but for empowering longtime Barrington residents to share their rich and colorful memories of Barrington." Bob and Betty Harrower, for example, have enjoyed being involved in BPS's historical projects to share their stories with individuals who are keenly interested in people's lives here many years ago. Other examples of Barrington residents contributing to the bike path signage project have included:

- Eleanor DelSanto who recollects stories of her grandmother giving cold-drinks, chilled in her well, to the men building the "new" Barrington Bridge in 1914. (See Eleanor's paintings of historic Barrington sites on display in the Barrington Public Library's glass display case in May.)
- Mary Suriani who recounts that her father, Giuseppe (Joseph) DeAngelis, moved from Italy to Barrington when he was 15 to work in the Barrington brickyard. Mary, by the way, has been a dedicated worker at the Barrington Preservation Society Museum for many years.
- Seymour Glantz who shared a photograph of the 1984 library book brigade, when the public library was moved from the Town Hall building to the current Peck School site.
- Todd Blount who sent a thorough family history, including information about his grandfather's ice house on Little Echo (pond).
- Hervey McNally, age 91, who walked up Alfred Drown Road on a cold winter's day to point out where the former Drownville railroad depot once stood (on today's bike path).

Education Committee members include Carolyn Bannon, Joanne Duval, Pamela Hilton, Sydney Montstream-Quas (Chair), Maureen Soutter, Leslie Weeden, and Sandra Wyatt. Committee members have discovered rarely seen photos and negatives in storage at the BPS Museum. They have also uncovered photographic gems from private collections, including one of women clamming in Bay Spring circa 1910, sent to a committee member by a man who now lives in New Hampshire. BPS members will have the benefit of viewing some of these newly-scanned photos in future BPS newsletters and mailings. The public will be able to see them at BPS Museum displays, and of course, on the historic signs that will grace Barrington's East Bay Bike Path and Civic Center Historic District. Committee members have spent well over 300 volunteer hours so far on this project, and look forward to the celebration event to occur in the fall when the signs will be officially unveiled.



### Sydney Montstream-Quas, Project

**Director** of the historic signage project, recently took part in a panel discussion at the April 24th RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission's 25th annual conference. The panel's topic was "Local Priority: Something Important Happened Here." Ms. Montstream-Quas displays her "I Brake for Historical Markers" bumper sticker received during that presentation.

\*The fall BPS newsletter will include a complete list of those who contributed information and photos to this project.

# Membership Update

The Barrington Preservation Society welcomes new members:

Todd and Mindy Blount                      Barbara L. Smith  
David Hanrahan                                Linda Winterbottom  
Maria and Michael Marra

In addition, the Society welcomes its first Life Member. In restructuring fees this year, the Preservation Society added this new category. For a one-time gift of \$1000, you too can become a life-time member. Life membership contributions will strengthen the underlying foundation of the organization.

For those who have not yet renewed their membership, it is not too late to pledge your support. As you see in this newsletter, there is much activity to uphold and sustain.

Support your community's past, present and future.  
Join the Barrington Preservation Society.

Julia Califano, *Membership Chair*

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

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## Join the Barrington Preservation Society!

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
New member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are tax deductible and qualify members for discounts on museum purchases, including reproductions of archival photographs.

### Membership Categories

Student	\$10 _____	Individual	\$25 _____
Family	\$35 _____	Supporting	\$50 _____
Business	\$75 _____	Sustainer	\$100 _____
Patron	\$250 _____	Life Member	\$1000 _____

Please clip and send this form with a check payable to:

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