



Barrington Preservation Society

DISCOVER • PRESERVE • RESTORE

Fall 2016

Trustees

Nathaniel Taylor, *President*
David Stonestreet, *Vice President*
Van Edwards, *Treasurer*

Richard Donnelly
Jean Douglas
Jason Lawrence
Bonnie Warren

Sara Kriz, *Graphic Design*

Barrington Preservation Society Museum

Lower Level,
Public Library

Hours

Wednesdays & Saturdays
1:00 – 4:00 or
by appointment

Phone

(401) 289-0802

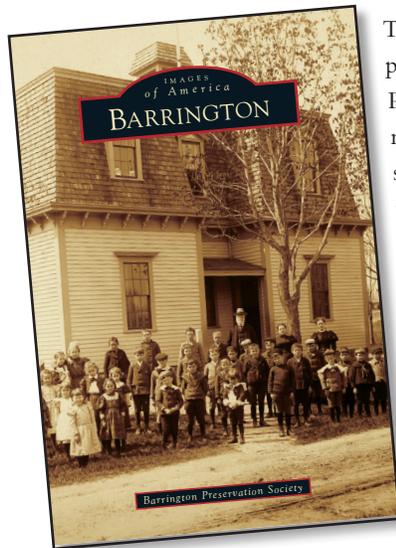
E-mail

info@barringtonpreservation.org

Barrington 300—Update!

Earlier this year the Barrington 300 Committee, spearheaded by BPS officers as well as others, became an official administrative committee of the Town, with a mission to plan and organize appropriate celebrations of our town's 300th Anniversary in 2017. The Barrington 300 Committee is working with departments of the Town, civic groups, schools, churches, business, athletic organizations and citizens of Barrington to create a multi-month celebration worthy of this important milestone. Planned events begin with an opening party in January and include participation in the Memorial Day Parade, photo contests, tours of Barrington's oldest homes and churches, bike tours, hikes, lectures, and exhibitions. The celebration season will culminate with a Birthday Party and awards event at the Town Hall, November 18th, 2017—the actual 300th birthday of our town's formal creation. Residents not yet involved are invited to join the Barrington 300 Committee by leaving name and contact information at the Town Manager's office in Town Hall. Your participation is welcome!

Barrington: Book Coming in May 2017



This spring, work began in earnest to compile and publish *Barrington*, a new pictorial history of our town in the "Images of America" series by Arcadia Publishing Company. Hundreds of towns all across the country, including nearby East Providence, Warren, and Bristol, have published books in this series. "Images of America" books combine a readable brief town history with about two hundred vintage photographs, and usually run to 128 pages. Our core book team includes Jean Douglas, Van Edwards, Bonnie Warren, and Richard Donnelly as chair. Together the team members share a wealth of knowledge of Barrington history, people, and property. We have logged hundreds of hours searching and organizing BPS photograph collections, as well as tracking down photographs from outside BPS. We have researched and written historical introductions and photo captions. We are scanning and editing our selected images according to strict technical guidelines for a polished final book, with an October deadline to enter production for Spring release.

The historical introduction to the book reviews the history of Barrington from its Wampanoag roots to the first European settlers of the 1640s, incorporation as a separate town in 1717, the evolution from agricultural roots, with bridges and the railroad, to the coming of industry including the brick and lace works, ending with post-World-War-II housing development and population explosion. Photos from the mid-1800s through the 1950s illustrate Barrington's history and development, including historic buildings, farming, manufacturing, schools, churches, and clubs, as well as the faces of many people who lived here and built the town of Barrington.

The book is scheduled for release next May at the beginning of the Barrington Tricentennial season (see tentative event calendar). Copies will be for sale throughout the town, with a portion of proceeds to benefit BPS.

Book Cover Image: ▲

This 1898 image shows more than fifty students with their teachers in front of the new, mansard-roofed District No. 4 Drownville School, built to accommodate rapid Drownville growth after 1870. Thomas W. Bicknell, noted educator and historian, stands in the doorway. (Additional photographs from *Barrington* book on page 3.)

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 28, 2017

Preview Party

Barrington 300 Launch

Benefit event

May 1, 2017

**Barrington Timeline Exhibit
goes up in the Library**

May 21, 2017

Barrington Book Launch

May 28, 2017

Memorial Day Parade

will include special
Barrington 300 elements

June 15, 2017

Summer Heritage Weekend
tours, lectures, picnic, etc.

July 22, 2017

Photo Contest,
“Best of Barrington”

August 5, 2017

Clambake

September 16, 2017

Fall Heritage Weekend
tours, lectures, picnic, etc.

October 14, 2017

Barrington 300 Gala

November 3, 2017

Forum on “Barrington’s Future”

November 18, 2017

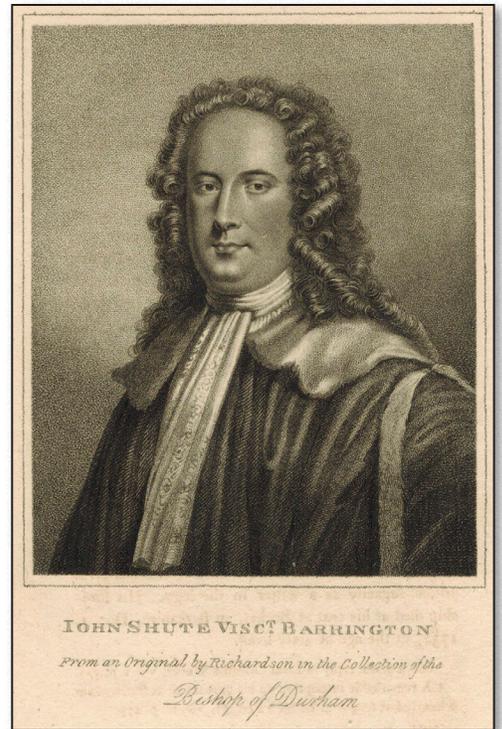
Birthday Party at Town Hall
(culminating event)

Our Namesake, Lord Barrington

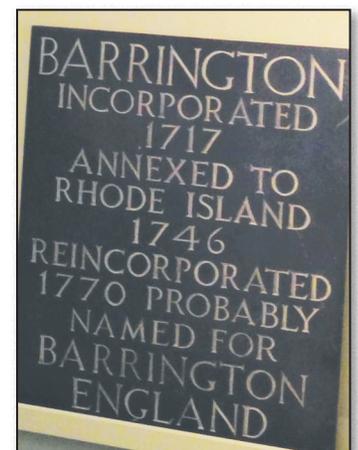
John Barrington, 1st Viscount Barrington, was born just plain “John Shute” in 1678. The son of a London merchant, John made a name for himself as both a theologian and a lawyer and was “reckoned the shrewdest head in England” by 1716, when he had his last name officially changed to Barrington to assume an inheritance from a childless Barrington cousin, from a prominent family in the county of Essex, northeast of London. He became a peer as “Viscount Barrington” in 1720.

John’s older brother Samuel Shute, a successful army officer, became governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1716. The next year, in 1717, the Massachusetts General Court granted a petition of people in the western part of Swansea to form a new town. The Court chose the name Barrington to honor the governor’s brother.

There is a coincidence about the name which has caused confusion in the town for over a century. Town historian Thomas Bicknell knew that his ancestor, Zachary Bicknell, came to New England in 1635 from the small parish of Barrington, Somersetshire, in the southwest of England (which had nothing to do with the place in Essex named for Lord Barrington’s inheritance, two hundred miles away). Zachary Bicknell settled in Weymouth, Mass. One of his grandchildren, named Zachariah, moved from Weymouth to the western part of Swansea about 1702. This newcomer, Zachariah Bicknell, was one of the petitioners to split from Swansea and form a new town. The petition was granted in 1717, and the new town was named Barrington after the Governor’s brother. Thomas Bicknell, our town historian thought the town had been named for his family’s original English home, but his ancestor, Zachariah Bicknell, was still a newcomer to this neighborhood when we became a town, and no other colonial families here were connected to that same town in England—so it was a coincidence!



▲ Barrington Preservation Society recently purchased this 1805 engraving of a portrait of Lord Barrington; this will be on display as we celebrate our Tricentennial.



▲ Back in 1936 when this sign was made, the naming connection to Lord Barrington was not clear!

Digging into the Vault: Plaque News

Digging into records in the Town Vault, tracing old plats, and reading early wills and inventories can become a real treasure hunt. Add genealogical data, census and tax records, and a picture of life in old Barrington comes alive. This year the Plaque Committee has been busy confirming the ages of the oldest houses in Barrington Village. One exciting discovery was an 1838 inventory of the Kinnicutt Tavern (509 County Rd.) in the town's probate records. The tavern was quite fashionable! Furnishings included "6 Beds, 8 Bed Sheets, 6 blankets, 4 Bed Spreads, 3 Large Silver Spoons, 12 Small Silver Spoons, one silver Porringer, 2 doz. knives and forks, one Pair Brass Andirons, 2 Doz. Chairs, 4 Arm Chairs, 5 Tables, 3 Light Stands, 3 Looking Glasses" and much more.

HOUSES WANTED FOR PLAQUES

It is not too late for your house—or a neighbor's house you love—to be considered for a BPS Plaque in our Tricentennial Year, 2017. Houses and buildings must be one hundred years old, represent their original styles, and NOT have vinyl or artificial siding. Preliminary plaque application fee is only \$25. If the house is approved, a full fee of \$300 covers research expenses and the plaque. If your house has an old plastic plaque, upgrade to our current durable, hand-painted wood plaque for \$125. For more information, please contact Plaque Committee member Anne Shannon, ashannon6@gmail.com, or find us at the BPS Museum.

BE INVOLVED!

Barrington Preservation Society has no paid staff to keep things running smoothly for us. A small core of trustees and active participants shoulder all the business, as well as the "fun stuff," of our organization. As a custodian of material collected for and on behalf of the Town of Barrington, we are an independent organization but have an important role to fill in the town. Please get involved! Come to meet us, poke through our collections, and ask how you can be involved with the things that matter most to you: our land, our waters, our houses and buildings, our people past and present. Your help can make a vital difference!

Recent and possible future volunteer activities include:

- docent at the Town Museum, Wednesday or Saturday afternoons: *meet visitors and explore our collections on display with them, or our in-house research library. Experienced volunteers can help patrons with special interests dig into our artifact and document collections not on display.*
- plaque committee member: *visit beautiful homes, dig into records, build your skill networking and sharing practical advice on maintaining Barrington's beautiful houses.*
- collections volunteer: *participate in (or lead!) special efforts to care for and better publicize our collections of pictures, artifacts, books and documents.*
- publicity and education: *help write and tell the stories of Barrington to others. Beyond our own membership, we work with schools, the newspaper, and sister organizations in the area to share our heritage.*
- finance, fundraising, membership: *we need volunteers with varied nonprofit experience to help in all aspects of what we do, including joining our board of trustees to insure that many voices within the town are heard.*

Photographs from *Barrington* (see page 1)



▲ A full load of Bay oysters fills the deck of the *Flora*, coming into the Buckingham Oyster Co. dock on the Warren River. Beginning in the late 1880s, the shellfish industry employed a number of Barrington fishermen. Both the Buckingham Co. and Blount & Hunt Oyster Company began in Drownville near Bullocks Cove. In the distance are two extant mid-19th-century houses along Mathewson Road in Barrington.

▲ Barrington's "Finest" in front of Town Hall in this ca. 1930 photograph shows Fire Chief Daniel Nichols, Earl Nichols, Harrison Kingsley Russell, and Leon Nichols with their ladder truck and spray batons. Town Hall (1888 et seq.), a local landmark, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

▲ This 19th-century view shows the second Barrington Congregational Church or "White Church" as viewed from the inlet behind Kinnicutt Tavern. The first Congregational Church was built in 1710 on Jennys Lane and reputedly was moved here to land donated by Joshua Bicknell in 1734. It was replaced by this 1805 Federal-style edifice, which was raised one floor in 1852 to construct a vestry underneath. Windows, doors, and the steeple with Italianate detailing were added. The 1938 Hurricane toppled the steeple.

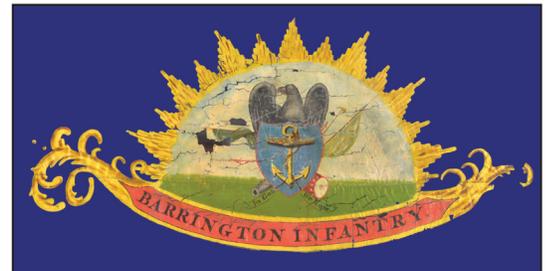


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Barrington Infantry Flag Update

This spring and summer we secured a second independent professional assessment and bid for needed conservation work on the striking but fragile “Barrington Infantry” flag, which dates probably from the 1820s. A committee is now being assembled to review the proposals and make a decision to move forward with conservation work over the next few months. Later this year look for more information on the condition of the Barrington Infantry flag and planned conservation, as well as an appeal to contribute towards that work. Our expectation is that a combination of Town funds, private institutional grants and individual Barrington donations, will help us preserve this precious flag well into its third century.



*** Be a member and help preserve Barrington's rich history. 2017 dues cover from January 1 to December 31.

Join the Barrington Preservation Society!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail * _____

New member _____ Renewal _____

*Stay connected and help BPS reduce costs by giving us your email address. Dues are tax deductible and qualify members for discounts on museum purchases, including museum photographs.

Membership Categories

Individual \$35

Family \$50

Supporting \$100

Patron \$250

Life Member \$1000

Join or renew online at barringtonpreservation.org/membership/, or clip and send this form with a check payable to:

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