



Barrington Preservation Society

DISCOVER • PRESERVE • RESTORE

Fall 2012

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

Barrington Preservation Society Museum

Lower Level, Public Library

Hours

Wednesdays, Thursdays
& Saturdays
11:00 – 4:00 or by
appointment

Phone

(401) 289-0802

DESTINATION DROWNVILLE



*The Olney & Phoebe Arnold Cottage, c.1872,
on 15 Appian Way (Paul A. Darling photo)*

Station, Alfred Drown decided to subdivide his farm into house lots. The street that bears his name now boasts some of Barrington's most attractive homes and gardens. With marsh and water views, the cohesive neighborhood still retains its historic charm, and on September 15, the Barrington Preservation Society will open eight of those homes and two nearby churches for a house tour from 10 am to 4 pm.

Included on the tour are rambling farmhouses, converted summer homes and cozy bungalows, all of which have seen transformations over the years. A trolley and vans will connect the parking lot and event registration at Barrington Christian Academy (9 Old County Road) to the houses along Washington Road, Alfred Drown, Annawamscutt and Appian Way. The tour is a pleasant walk of approximately two miles, and refreshments will be available at the United Methodist Church on Washington Road and St. Matthew's Episcopal Church on Chapel Road.

Make your reservations through the BPS website at www.barrpreservation.org, at the BPS Museum in the lower level of the Peck Center (open Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, 11 am – 4 pm) or by mail: PO Box 178, Barrington, RI 02806. Tickets are \$25 (\$30 the day of the tour) and can be picked up the morning of the tour at Barrington Christian Academy.

Nockum Hill Update

You may have noticed that Nockum Hill has been in the news recently. First, the town's Planning Board unanimously rejected a proposed 27-unit condominium project, containing a number of affordable housing units. A few days later, the Barrington Town Council approved revisions to the town's zoning map, which reclassified substantial portions of the Nockum Hill area to R40-CD (i.e. Conservation Development). These events may seem like good news to those of us concerned with historic preservation. But these events, in fact, should cause great concern to us. The lawyer for the proposed condominium development has promised to appeal the Planning Board's decision as contrary to the state's affordable housing mandate. In addition, the new R40-CD zoning classification appears to be too flexible in respect to future development of the Nockum Hill Area. (cont. on pg. 5)

SAVE THE DATES!

September 15

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

House Tour

Destination Drownville

*see article for details

October 22

7:00 pm

Annual Plaque Program

Catherine Zipf, PhD

Barrington Public Library

Auditorium

*see article for details

November 1

"Let's Celebrate" exhibit opens

BPS Museum

December 11

7:00 pm

Nancy Austin and RWU students

"Uncovering Barrington's
Industrial Past"

Barrington Public Library

Auditorium

January 13, 2013

12:00 pm

BPS Annual Meeting

Robert Geake

"Historic Taverns of Rhode Island"

Tyler Point Grill

Letter from the President

Although this is the Preservation Society's fall newsletter, it comes to you earlier than usual because we are excited to get another announcement of the "Destination Drownville" house tour in your hands. See the article in this newsletter and please join us on Saturday, September 15 in a visit to eight magnificent homes and two churches in the Alfred Drown Historic District.

Congratulations again to the Town of Barrington for being designated by First Lady Michelle Obama as a Preserve America Community. This designation was received in early 2011, however, Town Manager Peter DeAngelis only recently received the sign indicating such designation (see sign below). Now the question is, where should this sign be placed? We would like your suggestions which you can send to me at kentphillips@cox.net.

I thank our members, the community and the merchants of Barrington who have generously supported the Preservation Society this year financially. Membership dues alone are not sufficient to meet the needs of the Society's educational, preservation, exhibition and lecture activities. Such special events like the house tours are important contributors, however, we do not conduct them every year. With your financial help, we are near completion of the digitization program at the Museum and you have helped provide for initial expenses incurred to conduct Destination Drownville.

I hope you had a rejuvenating summer and look forward to the change of season.

Kent Phillips, President



*Town Council member and Preservation Society town liaison
Jeff Brenner, Town Manager Peter DeAngelis, Kent Phillips,
and Museum Director Carole Villucci display
Barrington's Preserve America sign*

PRESERVATION PROGRESS IN BARRINGTON: FROM 1885 TO TODAY...

The records of The Barrington Preservation Society speak clearly of a strong partnership with the Town of Barrington, represented by the Town Clerk, Town Council, Library, and School Department

1885: The Barrington Antiquarian Society was organized in anticipation of the completion of a new Town Hall. The first Town Museum opened in 1888 on the 2nd floor of this landmark building. Remnants of the original collection are in the BPS Museum.

1965: The Barrington Preservation Society (BPS) was organized and immediately began a series of lectures and the historic plaque program that recognizes buildings over 100 years in age. Today, 165 buildings in every neighborhood of town display the BPS historic house plaque. For over 45 years, the Town Clerk and assistants have assisted in the deed research for this important heritage education program. In return, BPS has supplied information about historic properties to the Town.

1970s: In the late 1970s, Nicholas Gizzarelli, the “Town Historian,” suggested that his massive collection of artifacts, papers and photographs could become the core of an enlarged Town Museum. The Gizzarelli Collection is a major resource for historians and students interested in the significant contributions of Italian Americans to the history of the remarkable Brick Works in Barrington and to the social, ethnic and the industrial history of Rhode Island.

1976-2008: BPS assisted in preparation of three historic districts and five individual nominations of historic properties to the National and State Registers of Historic Sites and Places. BPS supplied photographs, including rare images from glass-plate negatives in the George Thurber Miller collection, deed research and family histories. Listing in the Registers makes owners eligible for federal and state financial incentives and tax credits for historical preservation, when available.

Barrington National Register entries in chronological order:

- 6/30/76 Belton Court/ Frederick S. Peck Estate, Middle Highway
- 12/12/76 Barrington Civic Center Historic District (Town Hall, Library, Prince’s Hill Cemetery and Woods Pond), County Road
- 2/25/88 Nayatt Point Lighthouse, Nayatt Point
- 8/21/91 Saint Matthew’s Episcopal Church, 5 Chapel Road
- 7/23/96 O’Bannon Mill/Collins & Aikman Mill, 90 Bay Spring Avenue
- 6/10/05 Alfred Drowne Road Historic District: along Alfred Drowne Road and Washington Road
- 3/6/08 Jennys Lane, Mathewson & Rumstick Roads Historic District
- 9/19/08 Benjamin S. Jackson House, 115 Nayatt Road

1984: In 1984, the Peck Center opened with a new Town Museum, operated by BPS and located in the lower level of the Library. BPS President Jean Buffum with Ann Lavender and Carol Horrocks worked to make this a reality. The Museum has continued to grow and offers a regular school program to Barrington’s 3rd graders; it provides a center for local historical and genealogical research and a place for changing exhibits, demonstrations and receptions. The Society receives generous support from the Town, who provides space, heat, lighting and janitorial services.

cont. from pg. 3

1990s: An unusual cultural project, sponsored by BPS and undertaken by the Spicer family, was production and sale of two CDs that preserve the sounds of the world famous Barrington Boys Choir and the Barrington Men's Chorus.

1993: BPS supported the publication of "The Architectural and Historical Resources of Barrington, Rhode Island," published by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (RIHP&HC). BPS continues to sell this useful town history at the Museum.

2000: To celebrate Rhode Island's Bi-Centennial, the Society with the Friends of the Barrington Library, made oral histories of thirty nine residents who have lived in town since the end of World War II. BPS published 1,000 copies of "The Transformation of Barrington: From World War II to the Millenium." This project has become a model for other historical and preservation societies in Rhode Island.

2005: BPS celebrated its 40th Anniversary with a House Tour of the Jennys Lane/Mathewson Road National Register waterfront district, followed in 2007 by a House Tour of the Nayatt Point neighborhood, featuring the Nayatt Point Light House. These two tours attracted over 600 visitors to each event.

2008: "Barrington By The Bay" was written by BPS and provided without charge to all 3rd grade students in Barrington's public schools. It has now become a regular part of the school curriculum.

2009: The Town and BPS reached a cooperative agreement concerning future legal protection of the Frederick S. Peck Collection, including town documents from the 1740s and some of Frederick S. Peck's personal letters, family photographs and memorabilia. This collection was donated to the Society by Nicholas Gizzarelli, who received it as a gift from Helen Peck, Frederick S. Peck's only child. BPS bylaws were amended to read that in case of dissolution of the Society "all memorabilia, assets and/or proceeds from the sale of such assets shall be conveyed to the Town of Barrington." (bylaws of the Barrington Preservation Society, Article VI, Dissolution, 6/8/09).

2010: BPS completed a highly-acclaimed Bike Path Signage project, created by Sydney Montstream-Quas, chair of the BPS Education Committee, and a team of dedicated volunteers. Support was received from a variety of financial sources, including a competitive award from RIHP&HC. This innovative project presents the history of Barrington's historical sites to town residents and to all Rhode Islanders who enjoy the popular East Bay Bike Path.

2011: BPS cooperated with the Town Council to support the proposed purchase of Belton Court, built for Frederick S. Peck. A brochure was prepared with construction history and the significance of Peck's interest in manufacture, politics and Americana. Tour guides were provided for two community tours of Belton Court.

Recently, BPS established a new Endowment Fund and is working to expand its membership and innovative educational programs for young people and adults in town. It remains committed to development of the Museum and to cooperation with all segments of the Barrington community and its government. It will continue to answer all requests about architecture, history, genealogy, sites and objects related to Barrington's heritage.

Research by:

Van Edwards, Past President BPS

Elizabeth (Bonnie) Warren, Past President BPS

Interested in what the Museum has in storage? Check the link on our web site www.barrpreservation.org



WANTED

PERIOD CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES
FURNITURE CA. 1800-1930, MUSICAL
INSTRUMENTS, QUILTS,
BARRINGTON SUMMER ACTIVITIES
(PHOTOS, ARTWORK)

PLEASE HELP ADD TO OUR HISTORIC
COLLECTION. IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING
IN GOOD CONDITION THAT YOU WISH
TO DONATE TO THE MUSEUM PLEASE
CALL CAROLE VILLUCCI AT
401-289-0802 OR E-MAIL
MUSEUMDIRECTOR@
BARRPRESERVATION.ORG

museum news

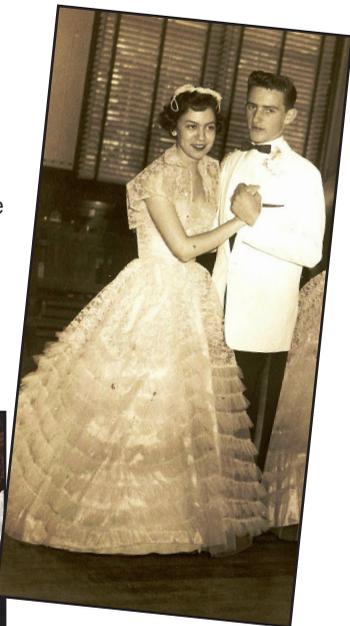
Roger Williams University Community Partnerships Center

The BPS Museum was selected as a community partner with Roger Williams University Community Partnerships Center (CPC) during the 2012-13 academic year. During the fall semester, Carole Villucci will work with Professor Nancy Austin's Historic Preservation students, and during the spring semester, she will work with Professor Laura D'Amora's American Studies and Labor History students. The topic of the BPS proposal is "Uncovering Barrington's Industrial Past." The culmination of the project will be an exhibition in the BPS Museum showcasing archival research relating to Barrington's industrial past. This will happen in the fall of 2013. The Director of the RWU CPC is Arnold Robinson.

Upcoming Museum exhibition: "Let's Celebrate"

November 1, 2012–February 25, 2013

Taking a look back at how Barringtonians enjoyed themselves at social gatherings, this exhibition will focus on women, men, and children's party clothing, accessories, music, food and beverage containers, and other party-related items including historic photographs showing people having a grand time wearing their party best. "200 Years of Barrington Summers" exhibit closes on October 7. There is still time to see the exhibition documenting Barrington's summer history. Look at musical instruments, costumes, wicker lawn chairs, historic quilts, cameras, paintings, photographs, and fishing and sports gear. Diaries from 1910-1912 written by Jeanette Mowry Tiffany illustrate what life was like for her and her visiting nieces at her home on County Road each summer.



c. 1955



c. 1939

Volunteer Opportunities

Barrington Preservation Society
Museum is a great place to spend some
time! Call 401-289-0802 or e-mail
museumdirector@barrpreservation.org.

Museum Summer Interns

During the summer, the BPS Museum had several high school and college interns working on various projects from organizing books in our library, researching specific businesses, creating digital format for our maps, and helping move objects between storage facilities. Many thanks to Josh Zimmt, Max Villarreal, Matthew Alvarado-Ross, Rachel Magers, and Shani Kantor.



Summer interns
Matthew Alvarado-Ross
and Max Villarreal

(cont. from pg. 1) Nockum Hill Update

The Nockum Hill Area has tremendous environmental and historical significance. Nockum Hill contains the site of John Myles' 17th century church, the second oldest Baptist church in the United States, and the first center of settlement of our town (destroyed in 1675-1676 during King Phillip's War).

Members of Town Council have indicated that they are interested in input from the Preservation Society. Accordingly, a special meeting of the BPS Board has been convened for Wednesday, September 19 in the Library Trustees meeting room. At this meeting, the Board should develop a strategy to encourage a more restrictive approach to development in the Nockum Hill Area and to ensure the permanent protection of this historically significant site.

Finally, the next time you go to 4 Town Farm to buy corn and other local food, take the 'back way' home along George Street. Just past the late 18th century farmhouse on the right, you will see a monument. Get out and read the monument, then look over your left shoulder – that is the site for the proposed 27-unit condominium project.

***Thank you to Joseph Strong and Mad Dog Tools of Bristol for loaning the Cadillac convertible utilized by BPS in the town's Memorial Day Parade!

Historic Drownville Plaque Program with special Newport Lecture

The 2012 Annual Plaque Program will be held on Monday, October 22 at 7:00 pm in the Library Auditorium. Three turn-of-the century historic homes in Drownville will be honored. They include the George C. Anderton House at 33 Alfred Drown Road, the William T. Lewis, Jr. House at 45 Alfred Drown Road, and the Henry Clay Ballou House at 27 Appian Way. All three are connected to Alfred Drown's legacy.

Following presentation of the Society's distinctive plaque to homeowners, Catherine W. Zipf, PhD, Research Scholar at MIT, will present, "Making A Home of Her Own: Newport's Architectural Patronesses, 1850-1940." Catherine has discovered that more than 150 women built homes for themselves during the nineteenth century. These women were presenting their aspirations at a time when women had few other ways to do so. She will discuss this remarkable group of women and the architecture they produced.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for October 22, 2012.

Visit the BPS Museum's gift shop for Barrington note cards, towels, books, and CDs.

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 museum purchases, including photo reproductions.

Membership Categories

Student \$10 _____ Individual \$25 _____

Family \$35 _____ Supporting \$50 _____

Business \$100 _____ 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