



Barrington Preservation Society

DISCOVER • PRESERVE • RESTORE

Spring 2019

Trustees

Nathaniel Taylor, *President*
David Stonestreet, *Vice President*
Duncan Sutherland, *Secretary*
Jason Lawrence, *Treasurer*

Jean Douglas
Van Edwards
Stephen Venuti

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

Extraordinary Women of the East Bay



Catherine Stewart
"Kitty" Shadd



Mary Tefft
"Happy" White



Mira Hoffman



Natalie Peterson Luethi

This June, opening on Thursday, June 6, BPS Museum will be hosting an innovative project to honor the lives of *Extraordinary Women of the East Bay*, organized through Roger Williams University, and involving sixteen museums and historical societies in several East Bay locations. The exhibit recognizes and celebrates sixty extraordinary women of the East Bay from the past four hundred years, including four from Barrington: Mira Hoffman (1865-1944), benefactress of Girl Scouts; Mary Tefft "Happy" White (1916-2009), artist and philanthropist; Catherine Stewart "Kitty" Shadd (1923-2014), Editor of The Barrington Times; and Natalie Peterson Luethi (1926-2012), founder of the Luethi-Peterson International Camps. Come to the Museum in June to learn about these and other Extraordinary Women of the East Bay.

<https://sites.google.com/rwu.edu/exhibit-eastbay-women>

BPS Receives Heritage Harbor Foundation Grant for Conservation of Rare 1830s Barrington Militia Flag



Grant delivery: ➤

(L to R) Robert Burke, Heritage Harbor Foundation; David Stonestreet, VP, BPS

In January, BPS received a grant of \$7,455 from Heritage Harbor Foundation for the conservation of Barrington's rare painted silk militia flag, and a new display based on the flag and associated objects.

The flag is hand painted on blue silk and signed by William W. Pitman, a professional sign and flag painter in Providence from 1824 until his death in 1838. The flag shows the Rhode Island seal and the name of Barrington's militia company. It was used to drill the town's militia company. The flag was carried into action only once: in the summer of 1842, Barrington troops joined the state army marching on

*Flag (current state): ►
Barrington Militia Flag, painted
1820s–1830s, front view.
Photograph shows the current
state of preservation of the flag.
Dislocated pieces of the central
painted portion will be returned
to position; the torn blue silk
field will be stabilized, and the
whole will be encased in a new
frame with customized matching
blue backing fabric. An inset in
the back of the new frame and in
a custom-built shelf will permit
viewing the back of the flag.*



Chepachet against the forces of the Dorr Rebellion, Rhode Island's almost-civil-war. The Rebellion was defused with no shots fired.

Although it has been on exhibit for much of the past three years, the original flag is in a poor state of preservation. After reviewing three professional proposals, BPS selected Spicer Art Conservation LLC to perform much-needed conservation. The flag will be treated and stabilized in a new custom-built frame, and is expected to go on display in a new exhibit in the Museum within one year. The project also includes the creation of a flyable replica flag and the publication of new information on the flag and related artifacts from this period of Barrington's history.

In February, Heritage Harbor Foundation official **Robert Burke** presented the funds to BPS. In March, BPS Trustee **Jason Lawrence** personally drove the flag—carefully wrapped up—to Spicer Art Conservation in upstate New York, where it will remain for part of this year.

BPS is an all-volunteer organization whose mission encompasses stewardship and education about artifacts and buildings representing Barrington's heritage. Heritage Harbor Foundation's grant will help ensure the longevity of this rare and beautiful flag, and allow BPS to interpret and share this beautiful and significant artifact with the people of Barrington and Rhode Island for many years to come.



◀ *BPS Trustee Jason Lawrence poses as he set out deliver the Barrington Militia Flag to Spicer Art Conservation LLC in upstate New York.
Thank you Jason!*

2019 Annual Meeting Highlights and Elizabeth Sargent Warren Award



▲ *Townsend Tavern*

At the annual meeting and luncheon at Blue Water Grill in January, BPS looked back on a busy and successful year, and looked forward to a similar year in 2019. **Jeff Howe**, historian of Barrington and East Providence and long-time member, gave an engaging and personal talk on Barrington's "Lost Tavern"—the **Townsend Tavern**.

The 2019 Elizabeth Sargent Warren Award was awarded to **Sydney Montstream-Quas**, "in recognition of her creative vision, stewardship, and education about Barrington's heritage with the book *Barrington By the Bay*, interpretive signage on the East Bay Bike Path and Civic Center, and her many successful bicycle and graveyard tours."

Another guest of honor at the luncheon was **Jason Patrician** of **Fish Bindery**. Jason's careful work repairing and boxing the original manuscript of the town meeting records of **Barrington, Massachusetts**, was co-sponsored by BPS and by Rhode Island Genealogical Society, as well as by the Town. The **original manuscript made an appearance** at the luncheon, under the watchful eye of Mr. Patrician and courtesy of **Town Clerk Meredith DeSisto**.



▲ *Warren Award (BPS VP David Stonestreet and honoree Sydney Montstream-Quas)*



▲ *Jason Patrician presented a repaired and boxed record book to Town Clerk Meredith DeSisto*

Town Record Book Restored with BPS Sponsorship: *Update*

Innovative private and public partnerships are a key to preserving our heritage in this community. Last year, Barrington Preservation Society joined with **R.I. Genealogical Society** and the Town of Barrington to sponsor professional repair and reboxing of the town's earliest record book.

Barrington was a town in Massachusetts for thirty years, from 1717 to 1746, when the colony border shifted. Briefly united with what is now Warren (and operating under that name) from 1747 to 1770, Barrington was reincorporated as an independent Rhode Island town in 1770. The different colonies used different record-keeping strategies, and Barrington now retains very few records from our Massachusetts days. This is the earliest book in town custody; some even earlier records, from the 1600s, are on permanent display in the Museum.

The work was completed in the winter by **Jason Patrician** of **Fish Bindery** here in Barrington, and the book was formally returned to the town in January—in time to be briefly **on display** during BPS annual meeting and luncheon.

museum news

This is an important year for work behind the scenes and on exhibit at BPS Museum. Volunteers, led by Trustee **Barbara Hail** and Museum Committee Chair **Van Edwards**, have been thoroughly revamping BPS museum collection management practices, as well as honing and rotating some of our core exhibitions. Your **volunteer participation is needed!** Stop by the museum on Wednesdays or Saturdays, or contact Barbara Hail or Van Edwards to find out how to get involved.



▲ Donors Norman and Marjorie Whitehead and grandsons at Recent Acquisitions Opening

Saturday, March 9, saw the grand opening of a **new exhibit, *Recent Acquisitions***. New items include turn-of-the-century dolls, toy soldiers, a hand-stitched Barton family christening gown, and period dresses worn by Ethel Antoinette Whitehead Tallman (1885–1977) to receive guests and take long walks in Roger Williams Park. Returned to display are a functioning 1918 Victrola with records, a Lace Pattern Book and lace cap, collars and camisole from Rhode Island Laceworks, and a hand-hooked rug by Molly Nye Tobey, who lived in Barrington for sixty years; her rugs are on permanent display at the Metropolitan and Shelburne Museums. Also newly on display are a 1729 law book owned by Peleg Heath, an engraved portrait of Lord Barrington (for whom the town was named 301 years ago), and a deed granting a major portion of land on Rumstick Point to Nathaniel Smith's heirs.

BPS REESTABLISHES BARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP FOR HISTORY AND RELATED FIELDS



As reported in last Fall's newsletter, Barrington Preservation Society reestablished an annual \$1000 scholarship to recognize a graduating senior at Barrington High School with high academic performance and an active interest in history, art history, historic preservation, or architecture. This first award of this new scholarship will be presented at **Barrington High School Awards Night** on **May 30, 2019**.

Supporting student interest in history and related fields has a strong tradition in Barrington, dating back to the time of Thomas Williams Bicknell, Barrington historian and educator, who sponsored scholarships for local students through the Barrington Historic Antiquarian Society, active from the 1880s to 1920s.

RECENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

HALLOWEEN CEMETERY TOUR



On an overcast evening in a cemetery lit by lanterns, Barrington Preservation Society hosted a perfect way to prepare for Halloween—a spooky tour of some of Barrington’s oldest gravestones. Local historian Jeff Howe provided commentary at historic Prince’s Hill Cemetery for this evening event on October 26. Walking among the spirits, Jeff brought to life the stories of some of Barrington’s earliest settlers, as well as veterans of the Revolutionary War, Dorr War, and Civil War. Refreshments were served at “Happy Hollow Tavern,” otherwise known as the Peck Mausoleum, which was donated by the Peck family in 1909. Susan Taylor, Chair of the Cemetery Commission, helped to make this event possible and memorable. She opened and decorated the mausoleum, and really got into the Halloween spirit, dressing in costume. This free tour was a big hit and drew over 100 guests.

NOVEMBER PLAQUE PRESENTATION



In November, BPS’s Plaque Committee awarded four new or updated plaques, for a wide range of historic properties in different Barrington neighborhoods. Four houses were plaqued: The Benjamin Drown House, c. 1750, moved to site c. 1758 (170 New Meadow Rd.)—a renewed plaque accompanied by careful new research by BPS plaque volunteer Anne Shannon; The Mary Eliza Dyer Carriage House, 1897 et seq. (6 Holly Lane); The Walter J. Howland House, c. 1900 (84 Alfred Drown Rd.); and The Jerry S. & Cornelia Goff Cottage, 1902 (30 Walnut Rd.). David Kelleher gave a presentation on the Rhody Award-winning restoration of Riverside’s iconic 1871 Pomham Rocks Lighthouse.

VOX HUNTERS CONCERT



In March, BPS and Barrington Public Library presented an afternoon performance by The Vox Hunters. Seekers and singers of old songs, cultivators of local music, and chronic multi-instrumentalists, Armand Aromin and Benedict Gagliardi, better known as The Vox Hunters, have unearthed and revitalized forgotten fragments of Rhode Island’s musical heritage. Their first collection of Rhode Island folk songs, *The Ocean State Songster*, offers a window into Bristol County’s past through historic songs, tunes, and local lore. Their songs touched on the Revolutionary War, tales of a long-forgotten murder, Warren’s godly visitation by Poseidon himself, and even a century-old plea for better roads.

forthcoming events

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

Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit Number 1
Barrington, RI 02806



May 1, 2019 "If Jane Should Want to be Sold"

Marjory O'Toole, director of Little Compton Historical Society, presents her new book on the history of slavery in Little Compton. Co-sponsored with Barrington Public Library.

June 6, 2019 "Extraordinary Women of the East Bay"

Collaborative exhibit with Roger Williams University and sixteen local historical societies, celebrating the lives of sixty women including four from Barrington. Exhibit up through June at BPS Museum.

*** Be a member and help preserve Barrington's rich history.
2019 dues cover from January 1 to December 31.

Join the Barrington Preservation Society!

Name _____
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.

Membership Categories

- High School Student ☐ \$5
College/University Student ☐ \$10
Individual ☐ \$35
Family ☐ \$50
Supporting ☐ \$100
Patron ☐ \$250
Life Member ☐ \$1000

August 3, 2019 Tour of Barrington Bike Path led by Sydney

Montstream-Quas (Rain Date: August 4).

September 17, 2019 Docent-guided tour of New Bedford

Whaling Museum

October 2019 (date TBD) BPS Annual Plaque Program Award

and Presentation

November 2019 (date TBD) Barrington Militia Flag Restoration

Presentation and Opening

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