



Exploring History

Barrington Preservation Society Newsletter

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Barrington Preservation Society Museum

Lower Level, Public Library

Hours

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or by appointment

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DEFIANCE BOWLS, CLANDESTINE MEETINGS, AND THE ROLE OF COLONIAL TAVERNS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By Stephen Venuti,
President, BPS

Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam, By John Greenwood, 1755-58, Depicting Various Prominent Rhode Islanders, including Stephen Hopkins and his brother Captain Esek Hopkins

On June 19th, 1775, two days after the defeat at Bunker Hill, Colonel Nathaniel Martin of the nascent Continental Army visited the Bowen Tavern (then located on what is now County Road, Barrington, just north of and diagonally across from the Congregational Meetinghouse) and ordered two large bowls of "Toddy" to share with his fellow patriots. Tavern owner Henry Bowen eagerly obliged and served up the order in what his ledger records as two large "Defiance" bowls. According to Bowen's ledger, the cost for these "Defiance" bowls ("4s. 2p.") was both authorized and paid for by the Town of Barrington. It is worth noting that Henry Bowen's support of the patriot cause extended well beyond serving up "Defiance" bowls. Bowen served as the local army recruiter throughout the duration of the war, while his tavern doubled as the local recruiting office.

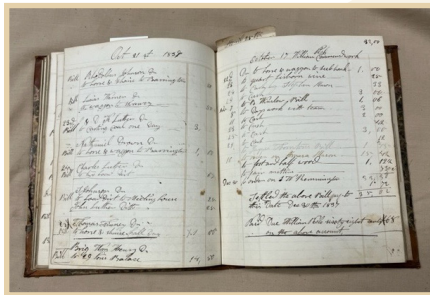
The role of taverns in colonial life dates back to the earliest days of the New England settlement. As early as 1647 the General Court of Plymouth authorized every town within the colony to establish and license one or more taverns. Since at least that time, taverns were the central gathering place for everything from the collection of mail, purchasing of food, general supplies and drink, to the sharing of news, rumors, and gossip. They served equally well as de facto seats of government as well as safe havens for patriots, scoundrels, and schemers alike.

museum news

SPOTLIGHT ON SOME OF OUR PRIZED ARTIFACTS

The original Kinnicut Tavern ledger, pine desk and portrait of Josiah Kinnicut (1765-1848) are three of the Barrington Preservation Society's most prized artifacts. These three artifacts are usually on permanent display in the Society's museum on the lower level of the Peck Government Center.

By Julia Califano



The Kinnicut Tavern was first built in 1785 and still stands at 509 County Road near the intersection with Federal Road. It is now a private home but was originally built as a post office, inn and coach stop on the Newport-Providence-Boston route, and Josiah Kinnicut was the first innkeeper and postmaster.

The Kinnicut Tavern Ledger Book includes entries from 1836 to 1852 dealing with drayage, metal work and room and board, and many entries include still familiar Barrington names.

The portrait of Josiah Kinnicut was painted ca. 1848 by S. Roscoe Chaffee, the great grandson of Josiah Kinnicut and an early member of the Providence Art Club.

The portrait was a gift to BPS from Mrs. J.M. Robinson. The desk was a gift from Leo Lanlois and Nicholas Gizzarelli, Sr.

FEATURED CURRENTLY



By Julia Califano

In May, we welcomed the Primrose Hill third graders to a museum display of an early twentieth century classroom in Barrington outfitted with desks salvaged from the Peck School, a slate chalkboard, early textbooks and a manual typewriter. The students asked lots of questions and were very enthusiastic about the Native American artifacts in the museum, the museum displays on farming, the military, brick making and lace manufacture as well as the "ghost properties," photographs of iconic Barrington buildings that had either been torn down or greatly altered. The most popular artifact for the third graders, however, turned out to be a brass bell, used in the classroom to signal the end of class.



Traditionally, all the Barrington third graders visit the Preservation Society Museum, Town Hall and the Prince's Hill Cemetery in May to learn about Barrington history and government. During Covid restrictions, however, those visits were mostly curtailed. The Museum is currently open to the public only on Wednesday mornings, 10-noon and by appointment, but the Preservation Society

Board is eager to recruit new volunteers to help open the Museum on Saturday afternoons.

If interested in volunteering for BPS, stop in and visit us on Wednesdays or visit the BPS website at barringtonpreservation.org.

MUSEUM MANUSCRIPTS AND PAPER FILES: INVALUABLE RESEARCH TOOLS

by Maria Bruce

Not all Museum research projects are expansive and garner attention like Barrington's Past History of Slavery, Extraordinary Women of the East Bay, Barrington 300, or the Dorr Rebellion, just to name a few. Many (if not most) research projects, and research requests are smaller in scope and nature, and typically reveal an interesting slice, or important facet of Barrington's past none-the-less. By utilizing the Museum's manuscripts and paper files, which quietly exist behind the scenes on shelves and in file cabinets alike, one is afforded a unique glimpse into Barrington's past, and can gain a true opportunity to explore history. The following three research requests were received (and fulfilled) earlier this year:

The Rhode Island State Police Museum: In early 2023, Retired Lieutenant Kenneth Bowman of the Rhode Island State Police Museum Foundation, Inc. inquired about Barrington's long-forgotten State Police sub-station, thought to be located on the Wampanoag Trail, during the first half of the twentieth



Rhode Island State Police sub-station and barracks, previously located at 562 County Road.
The Nicholas Gizzarelli Sr. Collection

century. Lt. Bowman explained that early State Police barracks and sub-stations were located in private homes, and in brick-and-mortar buildings, strategically placed across the State. Lt. Bowman's research will be used to develop a portion of the Museum's permanent exhibit, and in an upcoming book on the history of the Rhode Island State Police, slated to be published in time for their centennial anniversary in 2025. Although the project proved to be more challenging than expected, both documents and photos of the sub-station were found in the Nicholas Gizzarelli Sr. Collection, and provided to Lt. Bowman. The barracks and sub-station were housed in buildings once owned and occupied by Barrington's first Fire Department Chief, Daniel A. Nichols. The property is now the site of East Bay Mental Health. During his early May 2023 Museum visit, Lt. Bowman provided the Museum with copies of related documents from the 1920's to the 1940's, including rental agreements and building inspection reports.

The Little Rhody Division of the National Model Railroad

Association: In response to a March 2023 research request from Susan Osberg, Superintendent of the Little Rhody Division of the National Model Railroad Association, BPS provided documents, maps and photographs to this local model railroading organization, which was founded in 1966. Sourced primarily from the Museum's Nicholas Gizzarelli Sr. Collection, the information encompassed operational details of both the Providence, Warren and Bristol Railroad (first opened to the public on July 4, 1855), and the New England Steam Brick Company (organized in 1890). The N-scale (scale ratio of 1:160) prototype model of the New England Steam Brick Company created by Superintendent Osberg was "as close a representation of the brickworks as possible." Prototype modeling involves the re-creation of either a previously existing, or currently existing railroad-related scene.



As accuracy is essential, appropriate documentation and research is critical.

Top: N-scale (1:160 ratio) prototype model of the New England Steam Brick Company, created by Susan Osberg. From Left to Right: Barrington Center railroad station, brick storage shed, brick kilns (3), and (back, right) brick production and drying building.

Bottom: model of a Barrington brick.

Photos courtesy of Susan Osberg

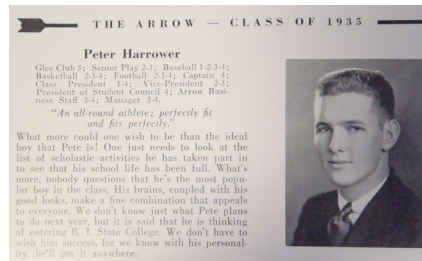
Barrington United Veteran's Council, 2023 Memorial Day Parade:

Back in mid-February 2023, retired Army Lieutenant Colonel Paul Dulchinos, Commander of the Barrington United Veteran's Council reached out to his "Preservation Society Associates" and requested research assistance with this year's Memorial Day Parade theme, and keynote address: a tribute to Barrington's WWII "Greatest Generation" of Veterans, especially our fallen heroes, who gave their lives in defense of our country. Along with a list of 26 names, Commander Dulchinos provided a solid foundation of service information to use as a starting point. The research goal was to "fill in the blanks" and find any photos, family connections, occupations, etc., in an effort to honor our hometown heroes. Genealogical records and WWII information from the Nicholas Gizzarelli Sr. Collection were

BPS welcomes donations of information, photographs and artifacts relating to Barrington history!

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tapped into, as was the Museum's collection of Peck High School Yearbooks. With the desire to pursue a "deeper dive," both newspaper archives and on-line resources were also used. On Memorial Day 2023, retired Army Lieutenant Colonel Paul Dulchinos, Commander of the Barrington United Veteran's Council honored our fallen heroes in his keynote address:



Peter Harrower

Peter Harrower graduated from Peck High School in 1935. He served in the US Navy as a Gunners Mate 1st Class. He was killed in action on May 4, 1945 when the USS Morrison was sunk by Kamikaze Aircraft. 152 crew-members were lost at sea. Peter was 28 years old.

Photo Credit: Barrington Preservation Society

"On Memorial Day, we are not honoring those who have served, but those that made the ultimate sacrifice. Those brave men and women who gave their last full measure of devotion in the defense of this country. During World War 2 over 1000 men and women of Barrington answered our nation's call, representing just over 16% of the town's population at the time. But 26 of our native sons would have their lives cut short, with many being laid to rest on foreign lands or lost in distant seas. They are more than just names on a bronze plaque and hopefully, for a moment in time, I can bring back some of their memories — As one is never truly dead until they are forgotten." ~

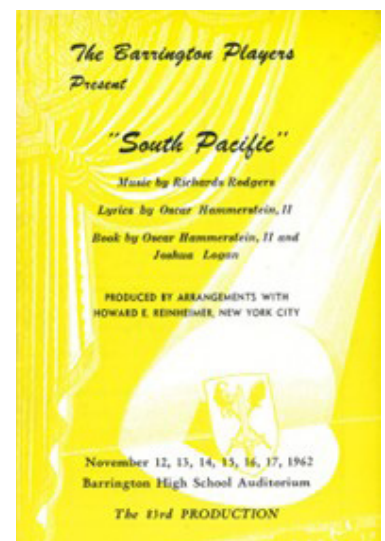
Barrington Preservation Society seeks help researching Barrington Players performances and memorabilia

The Barrington Preservation Society is undertaking a project to learn more about the Barrington Players, the community theater group that was a mainstay in town from the 1930s to the mid-1970s.

The popular, highly-regarded organization was especially active in the 30 years after World War II. It generally staged three productions per year: a drama, a comedy, and a musical, with each play performed three times in a week.

At its peak, the group was even more ambitious. In November 1962, the musical "South Pacific" was performed six times and featured a 17-piece orchestra comprised of members of the Rhode Island Philharmonic. The behind-the-scenes support — from Producer Philip Lapidès and Director Edward Guys, to set designers, costume makers, and the like — numbered over 75 people, backing up the 37-member cast. One wonders how many people were left in town to buy tickets. But the Players' reputation drew audiences from all over Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts.

The Barrington Preservation Society wants to learn more about the Players' history so it can tell its story more thoroughly and acquaint current Barrington residents with this colorful part of the town's past. If you have any relevant materials — playbills; props; Board files; production notes; posters; even specific memories — that you would be willing to share or even donate to the BPS, please send an email to Dr. Luther Spoehr at Luther_Spoehr@Brown.edu, so you can help the BPS make Barrington's history come alive.



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Sometime between the years 1755 and 1758, well before the start of the Revolution, the artist John Greenwood painted the now somewhat infamous portrait titled “Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam.” This rather comical painting depicts several seafaring

notables carousing in an unnamed tavern in the slave-trading port of Surinam, South America. Among those depicted are Stephen Hopkins who later become Governor of Rhode Island and a signatory of the Declaration of Independence, and his brother Esek Hopkins, who captained slaving missions for the Brown Brothers (including the infamous voyage of the Sally in 1764, on which 109 of the 196 African Slaves perished from disease, starvation or in mutiny). Esek Hopkins is also believed to have participated in the 1772 burning of the Gaspee.

The house where Stephen Hopkins lived while serving as Governor of Rhode Island still stands at the corner of Hopkins and Benefit Streets in Providence. A five-minute walk, around the corner from the Hopkins house, near the corner of Planet and South Main Streets in Providence, is a commemorative plaque identifying the former location of the Sabin Tavern. The plaque reads: “Sons of Liberty — Upon this corner stood the Sabin Tavern in which on the evening of June 9th in 1772 the party met and organized to destroy HRM Schooner Gaspee in the destruction of which was shed the first blood of the American Revolution.”

The identity of those who gathered in the Sabin Tavern that night to plot the burning of the British (anti-smuggling patrol) Ship the Gaspee was a closely guarded secret. Whether or not John Brown or his loyal sea captain Esek Hopkins were physically present at the planning meeting, it is well known that the Burning of the Gaspee was in direct retaliation for the Gaspee harassing the Brown Brothers’ shipping interests in Narragansett Bay. This act of rebellion, though overshadowed in many accounts of the American Revolution by the Boston Tea Party, actually occurred well before the Boston Tea Party and is regarded by many as just as significant, if not more significant, to the start of the Revolution.



Undated photo of the Bowen Tavern shortly before it was destroyed by fire in 1873. At the time of the fire the tavern had changed ownership and was known then as the Remington Tavern. C.T. Miller Collection.

Photo Credit: Barrington Preservation Society

And speaking of the Boston Tea Party, it too was the result of clandestine meetings in a local tavern. A favorite gathering hole for Freemasons in Boston was the Green Dragon Tavern, then located on Union Street, just across from the Union Oyster

House and a block away from Faneuil Hall. As resistance to the British Crown and its allegedly illegitimate taxation grew, the Freemasons morphed into what became known as the “High Sons of Liberty.” Among them were such notables as Paul Revere and Dr. Joseph Warren (who, later serving as General Warren, died at Bunker Hill while leading the resistance against the British). On December 16th, 1773, the High Sons of Liberty met in secret at the Green Dragon Tavern, where they planned the Boston Tea Party.

It was not just the patriots who found taverns to be both safe havens and logical places to meet and organize. After the siege and occupation of Boston and battle of Bunker Hill, the British warships left Boston Harbor and established a prolonged blockade of Newport Harbor, beginning in December 1776 and continuing through 1779. Shortly after occupying Newport, British troops commandeered the White Horse Tavern to serve as a command post. The White Horse Tavern, built sometime in the 1720’s, survived the British occupation and is still in operation today. It is believed to be one of the oldest (perhaps even the oldest) operating taverns in the Country.

There are surely many more stories to be told of taverns playing crucial roles in the American Revolution. But I will conclude this article with just one more. It might just be a fanciful tale. But it has been reported that in June, 1776, Thomas Jefferson, while struggling to organize his thoughts sat alone, sipping ale in the Indian Queen Tavern, located in Philadelphia and began to write: “When in the course of human events...” ~

Transformations: Plaqued Homes 1892-1923

by Maria Bruce

On September 13, 2023, in co-sponsorship with the Barrington Public Library, Barrington Preservation Society (BPS) held its annual Plaque Program at the Peck Center's Salem Family Auditorium. During this year's event entitled "Transformations: Plaqued Homes, 1892 to 1923" BPS recognized five historic properties, and presented their current owners with a BPS plaque designating the name of their original owner(s) and build date(s). BPS Past President, Nathaniel Taylor provided a lively and enlightening presentation featuring these newly plaqued homes, while focusing on Barrington's growth and development during this very transformative turn-of-the-century period.

Viewed as important representations of our town's history and heritage, all of the recipient properties met the 100-year-old threshold requirement, and other criteria relating to the structure's exterior treatments, details, and overall footprint.

At the event, current owners also received a dossier summarizing the BPS Plaque Committee's research findings, including: land evidence records, tax book information, maps and plat maps, genealogical information, as well as information gained from physical inspections.

Having been fortunate enough to secure Shawn Gilheeny of Providence Painted Signs as our plaque vendor in 2022, our classic BPS hand-made and hand-lettered 11" x 14" wooden oval plaques feature the name of the home's original owner and build date. Shawn is a Rhode Island native, and holds a degree in Fine Arts. He founded Providence Painted Signs in 2012, and his work can be seen throughout the region. Over the past several years, Shawn has also created numerous championship tournament and trophy plaques for Rhode Island Country Club.

Information on the BPS Plaque Program (including both "New" and "Replacement" plaques), as well as a Plaque Application can be found on our website at www.barringtonpreservation.org, under the "Plaques/Plaque Program" tab. For any additional information or questions, please contact the Plaque Committee at plaques@barringtonpreservation.org

As we approach 200 plaqued properties throughout Barrington, we recognize and thank all of our plaqued property owners for their

continuing stewardship efforts, and extend a warm welcome to our **newest plaque recipients:**

100 Maple Avenue
Pary-Farina House, c.1892/1923

50 Lincoln Avenue
Caleb R. Nye, 1895

132 County Road
Isaac F. Foster, 1910

37 New Meadow Road
C. Moulton Stone, c.1917

3 Glen Avenue
Edmund P. Sayles, 1923



Homeowner Jared Watkins holding his new BPS Plaque.

Photo courtesy of Nathaniel Taylor



Completed in January 2022, the transformation of 50 Lincoln Avenue included the removal of the decades-old white vinyl siding, revealing the beauty of the home's period details and mansard roof silhouette.

Photos courtesy of the Bledsoe Family

Attention History Buffs!

Dear Members, Past Members & Not Yet Members –

Please take a moment to join or renew your membership now

using the membership form and envelope included with
this newsletter or by going online to
barringtonpreservation.org/membership/

Want to help even more? We are actively recruiting docents,
committee members and Board Trustees. We are particularly
in need of volunteers with social media skills or an
interest in member recruitment and outreach.

***To volunteer please contact
us at info@barringtonpreservation.org***

We Need You



To Keep Us Strong



Congratulations!
BPS New Lifetime Members
Luther & Kathy Spoehr



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

become a member or renew today

Please complete this form and return with dues.

*** Be a member and help preserve Barrington's rich history.
2024 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 Catagories

High School Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$5	Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$100
College/University Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$10	Patron	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$250
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$35	Business Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$250
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