



Middleborough Historical Association, Inc.
 P. O. Box 304, Middleboro, MA 02346
www.middleboroughhistoricalassociation.org
 Nancy J. Thomas, Editor

From President Doug Vantran...

I have been very busy trying to get the word out about our "Made in Middleborough" raffle. To that end, I will be manning a table at the Oktoberfest at the KOA Kampground on **Saturday, October 17th** beginning at **2:00 PM**. Details on the raffle follow below.

Anyone who has any ideas for activities or fundraisers or would like to find out about helping in any way or if you have any programs you would like to see us present, please call me at 508-946-1017.

"MADE IN MIDDLEBOROUGH"

We are holding an ongoing fundraiser raffle of items "Made in Middleborough" and donated by various local businesses, artists and craftsmen. Here is the list of items and donors:

Purchade Farm – 14 – 18 lb. Farm Fresh Turkey
 Sis Denson – watercolor painting
 Dymond Treasures - decorated vase/arrangement
 Ron Mello Studio – hand-turned pottery bowl
 Jessa-Loop Designs – handcrafted wooden sign
 Vant Hobbies – seven-foot birdhouse
 Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc. – basket of products
 Battistini's Bakery – basket of baked goods

Tickets will be for sale each Wednesday and Saturday from 12:00 noon to 3:00 PM at the Museum throughout October and at all events up to and including the Annual Meeting in November at which the drawings will take place.

Tickets are one for \$1.00, six for \$5.00 or twelve for \$10.00. **GET YOURS NOW!!!** Think Christmas gifts! Call 508-946-1017 for tickets!!

LAVINIA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

On **Saturday, October 31, 2015**, the Association will be celebrating the birthday of Lavinia Warren Bump Stratton Magri AKA "Mrs. Tom Thumb" at the Museum. From **3:00 PM to 5:00 PM** the public is invited to bring their children for "**Trick or Treat at the Museum.**"

The celebration follows the regular Museum hours of 12:00 noon to 3:00 PM. This will be closing day for the Museum until next year.

ANNUAL ELECTIONS...

At the Annual Meeting to be held on **Saturday, November 14, 2015**, a slate of candidates will be presented by the Nominating Committee for consideration for the new Association year.

A total of five positions need to be filled. They are: **Secretary** for 1 year, **Treasurer** for 1 year, **Director** for 2 years and two **Directors** for 3 years.

If any position interests you or you would like more information as to the duties for each position, please call this year's **Nominating Committee** members: **Cheri Reimels, Bob**

Reimels at 508-923-0328 and Margaret Washburn at 508-947-2279.

ANNUAL MEETING

The **Annual Association Meeting** will be held on **Saturday, November 14, 2015 at 6:30 PM** at the Robbins Museum on Jackson Street. The evening will start with our annual business meeting during which **elections** will take place. (See article above.)

At 7:00 PM, Bruce Young will present a "**Musical Slideshow Lecture.**" Mr. Young will tell the story of Edison's foray into the home entertainment industry in a fascinating sixty-minute program. He will cover the development of the phonograph from Edison's earliest hand-driven machines, to the glory days of the two-minute cylinder record, to the introduction of Edison's unique diamond disc phonographs and records. Best of all, you will *HEAR* some of the Edison recording artists exactly as they sounded on the *ORIGINAL* two- and four-minute cylinder and diamond disc records played on *ORIGINAL* Edison Talking Machines from that long forgotten recording era.

Light refreshments will be served.

RECENT EVENTS...

SEPTEMBER 26th : Flea Market

On Saturday, September 26, 2015, the Association sponsored a **Flea Market** on the Museum grounds. It was a lovely and sunny early fall day.

There was also a bake sale table to celebrate the birthday of Johnny Appleseed. Jerry Thayer prepared delicious hot dogs for sale. Helping at the food stand were Gladys Beals, Judy Donahue and Jerry Thayer.

SEPTEMBER 16th: Members' Meeting

On Wednesday, September 16, 2015, the Association held a "Night at the Museum" as its **September Members' Meeting**.

We know it is difficult for some of our members to visit the Museum during our normal opening hours so this offered a chance to see the seven buildings and various exhibits in a different "light." Members enjoyed the opportunity to view the new parlor/video room, kitchen and child's bedroom.

In the "parlor" in Mill Building No. 2, President Doug Vantran presented a Power Point program on the restoration project of the "Sproat Tavern Necessary." The restoration is now complete.

The outhouse building, which dates back to the late 1700s, had fallen into a terrible state of decay. Association member Bob Reimels, upon seeing its condition, took on the lengthy project of restoring it. Everything from the sills to the roof needed repair. With the thought in mind to use the same construction methods as were originally used, but using modern tools, he got started. The members present at the meeting thanked Bob for seeing the long and involved project to a successful completion.

A brief business meeting was convened during which the members of this year's Nominating Committee were announced. Light refreshments were served.

AUGUST 16th: Garden Party & Open House

Our second **Garden Party & Open House**, held on Sunday, August 16, 2015, was a social and fundraising success! We set a goal of selling 64 tickets and we came within one ticket of our goal!!

Owner Doug Massey graciously opened his property, antique home and stables to the public at his beautiful and sprawling "Horse Latitudes Farm" on Thompson Street.

Arthur Battistini of Battistini's Bakery made a most generous donation in the form of sour cream coffee cake, cranberry scones and ginger scones. Store manager Jeff Hilditch of the local Hannaford donated a gift card and Margaret Washburn donated fruit.

Local artist and Association member Betsy Ehlers graciously allowed us the use of her pen and ink sketch of the property for the front of our program.

The event could not have gone as smoothly as it did without the help of the volunteers. Wally Glendye and Jerry Thayer set up the tents, tables and chairs. Kay Vantran assembled centerpieces for the tables. Mary Cook, Judy Donahue, Cherie Reimels, Dotty Thayer, Jerry Thayer, Nancy Thomas, Jane Thompson and Kay Vantran prepared the food in Mr. Massey's country kitchen. Dick Cook and Bob Norvish directed guests to the parking field.

Cynthia Brown, Mary Cook, Judy Donahue, Holly Norvish, Dotty Thayer, Margaret Washburn and Carol Wilbur served the sandwiches, iced tea, lemonade, fruit and desserts to our guests.

Dotty Thayer gave a brief talk on the history of Thompson Street and its significance as an agricultural district in town. Local author Edward Lodi regaled the guests with stories of hauntings and other mysterious happenings at the house. Many guests commented favorably about local musician Speedy Lapanna's guitar music and singing.

Derel Lee Twombly displayed paintings by Jesse, the Painting Horse, along with items for sale and information about the non-profit "Amazing Grace Equine." Margo McWeeney brought Toulouse Le Chat, Artiste

Extraordinaire, to his first public appearance and displayed his artwork, greeting cards and calendars to benefit the non-profit "Ralphie's Retreat."

Chairman of the event Nancy Thomas planned the event from the beginning and oversaw everything the day of the event.

AUGUST 7th and 8th : Krazy Days

Middleborough's annual street festival known as **Krazy Days** was held on Friday, August 7 and Saturday, August 8, 2015. President Doug Vantran walked up and down the streets "dressed" in a "sandwich board" sign to drum up interest in the upcoming Garden Party and Open House fundraising event.

Early on Saturday afternoon Doug, along with Nancy Thomas, talked live on-air with Ed Rand at the WVBF radio station's booth.

JULY 11th: Doll Tea Party

Linen tablecloths and napkins, china plates and teacups, real silverware---the tables were set for a summer afternoon **Doll Tea Party** on Saturday, July 11, 2015.

Proper tea etiquette was shared with the children who brought their favorite doll and an accompanying adult. Association members served the guests petite desserts along with tea or lemonade.

Each child created two craft projects - a decorated straw hat and an embellished photo frame into which was placed a photo of each guest taken when they arrived at the party.

Other activities included a narrated tour of the museum and an opportunity to view the President and First Lady doll collection of Jane and Dan Thompson, as well as some of the White House Presidential china patterns.

The tea party ended with the raffle drawing for the American Girl doll "Samantha," which was won by Heather Boyce.

The Association thanks those who attended the event for their support and the volunteers for their efforts. The party was fun and added \$343.81 to the Association's treasury.

-----*Dorothy Thayer, Association Treasurer*

JULY 4th : Fourth of July parade

President Doug Vantran and Treasurer Dotty Thayer represented the Association in a float entitled "Let Freedom Ring" in the annual **North Middleborough Fourth of July Parade**.

In fact, the parade judges awarded the Association a trophy for the "Most Patriotic Float" along with a \$50.00 cash award!!

Winthrop-Atkins Company

In the Spring issue, I wrote about the various locations of the A&P grocery store in Middleboro. Association member Harold Atkins informed me that I missed an earlier location.

This is the perfect lead-in to a brief history of the Winthrop-Atkins Company. It was founded as Nichols-Atkins by Horace Atkins in 1919, following World War I. He had learned photography in the War while in the U.S. Army Air Corps.

The business consisted of photofinishing and also made calendars and wooden frames. The first location of his shop was in Everett Square. The second location was in the original School Street School building after it was moved from School Street around the corner to its present location on Center Street when the new school was built.

In 1922, the year Harold Atkins was born, his father moved the business to on the west side of North Main Street next to the old Nemasket House. The building was called the Norris building and housed a total of seven store spaces. Nichols-Atkins occupied almost all seven of those stores for its manufacturing. The store spaces were not accessible

to each other from the interior so a person had to go outside to access one of the other spaces.

This is where Harold remembers the A&P in its location that preceded the corner of Center Street and Thatcher's Row. It was located on the east side of North Main Street in the Jones Block, across from his father's business. The manager of the A&P would come in to see his wife, who worked for Harold's father.

Nichols-Atkins moved to the three-story factory building on Peirce Street in 1937 and changed its name to Winthrop-Atkins. Mrs. Estelle (Ashley) Winthrop was the sister of Horace Atkins's wife, Josephine Fearing (Ashley) Atkins, for whom the Middleboro Youth Building, directly across from the Museum, is named.

Winthrop-Atkins intended to rent the first and second floors and a Mr. Lobl said he would find a tenant for the third floor. He never had the chance, as the company, then a booming business, was quickly able to find its own use for the third floor as well.

After Harold Atkins returned from college, he became the manager at the Peirce Street location. The company had also started renting space in the former Star Mill complex of buildings on East Main Street, where his father Horace and his brother Donald were in charge of operations. In 1959, Harold was ill for sixteen weeks. This helped fuel the decision to consolidate the company's operation in one location. So in that year, the Peirce Street location was vacated and the entire company began to operate out of the East Main Street location.

Business centered on calendars and cardboard frames. A Mr. Fernandes, who had worked for Winthrop-Atkins, bought the wooden frame-making part of the business and opened his own Fernandes Frame Shop. Later Winthrop-Atkins would manufacture magnetic slates and fans after they bought a New York company and, for a period of time, they were also manufacturing toys such as board games and paper dolls, both of which I have.

Harold retired in 1987, the same year that Winthrop-Atkins Company was sold.

-----*Nancy J. Thomas, Editor*

