



Middleborough Historical Association, Inc.
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www.middleboroughhistoricalassociation.org
Nancy J. Thomas, Editor

New President's Message

Winter at the Association

I looked out my window this morning and thought something was seriously wrong. It wasn't snowing! Think what a great spring it will be and how much we will appreciate it!!

During this season the Board of Directors has been planning this year's events. We look forward to having some interesting and some fun programs. The first to happen will be on April 8th when Eleanor Roosevelt comes to town. Judy Bernstein's portrayal of the former First Lady will be at the Middleboro Public Library at 6:30 PM. That will be preceded by a short meeting of the Association at 6:15 PM so please try to be there by then.

The second place you will see us is at the Herring Run Festival at Oliver Mill Park. This event was a great success last year. When you come to the Festival please stop at our booth and say 'Hello.'

There is still a lot of work to be done at the museum and we can always use help. Right now we are recruiting guides for when we are open. So if you would like to do that please contact us.

When you have finished reading this newsletter and are wondering where to go next, why not try our webpage? (see address at the top of this page) Our webmaster Wally Glendye has been making

many changes and there is a lot of information right there. One feature is our proposed events for the year. Stay tuned for more information as the dates get closer. Until next time,

-Doug Vantran, Association President

UPCOMING IN APRIL...

As we continue to look at "snow mountains" all around us, we are happy to announce two events upcoming in April. It is a good thing that the membership approved a recent by-law change that eliminated our February members' meeting! Otherwise, we may have had to cancel it due to the extreme weather that we have been experiencing. In spite of this weather, I have heard a recent report that a few herring "scouts" have been seen in the Nemasket River. Can spring be far away?

Spring Members' Meeting

The **Spring Members' Meeting** will be held on **Wednesday, April 8, 2015** in the elevator-accessible lower level meeting room of the Middleboro Public Library at **6:30 PM**. Following a brief membership business meeting at 6:15 PM, the Association will present Judy Bernstein as she portrays "**First Lady of the World – Eleanor Roosevelt, The Inspiring Story of One of America's Most Beloved First Ladies.**" Ms. Bernstein is a graduate of New York University School of Dramatic Art and holds a masters degree in Oral Communication. Join with

the Association in welcoming her as she brings history alive with this inspiring program that will focus on the life of Mrs. Roosevelt. Beginning with her younger years as a serious and reserved girl, then following her growth into a woman of courage, warmth and dignity, this presentation is based on Mrs. Roosevelt's private papers. Light refreshments will be served.



HERRING RUN FESTIVAL

This year the Association will again participate in the **Herring Run Festival** at **Oliver Mill Park**. The dates are **Saturday, April 11, 2015** and **Sunday, April 12, 2015** during the hours of **10:00 AM to 4:00 PM** both days.

Last year's first annual Herring Run Festival was very successful. The first day's attendance was estimated to be over 2,000 people.

The herring run is an annual natural event, and as such, we may tend to take it for granted. Every spring, from as early as February (a few scouts) until early May (the stragglers), the herring make their appearance in the waters of the Nemasket River, on their way from Mount Hope Bay in Rhode Island to their spawning grounds in the waters of Lake Assawompsett in Lakeville. In Middleboro they can easily be seen at the Fish Ladder on Wareham Street in the downtown area and at Oliver Mill Park just off Rt. 44 at its intersection with Plymouth Street.

Association member Michael J. Maddigan has written a book entitled "Nemasket River Herring: A History." It covers the history of the Nemasket Fishery, including its economics, politics and culture. Because numbers have been significantly down from what they used to be, a moratorium on catching herring is continuing.

A book focusing on the natural history of herring is by John Hay entitled simply "The Run," published in hardcover in 1959. According to the back cover of the revised paperback edition (1965), "'The Run' has become a classic example of beautiful and sensitive nature-writing, coupled with sound scientific observation. It is the chronicle of the annual migration of the alewives, ... and provides fascinating insights into the biology, behavior, and environment of a small animal in the world of water."

Hope to see you all at the 2nd Annual Herring Run Festival!! Look for our booth both days!



WCVB-TV'S "CHRONICLE"

On Monday, February 16, 2015, WCVB-TV reporter Anthony Everett and a film crew from the popular "magazine" show "Chronicle" visited Middleborough to film a segment for a "Mystery Town" episode. That episode aired on Wednesday, February 24, 2015 on Channel 5.

Association Treasurer Dorothy Thayer and Honorary Board Member Gladys Beals were seen speaking while standing inside the Museum's Mill House #1. If you missed it or would like to see it again, here is the link: <http://www.wcvb.com/chronicle/mystery-towns-middle-of-it-all/31461896>

The segment on Middleborough was aired third in that episode. The other two towns were Burrillville, Rhode Island and Hopkinton, MA.

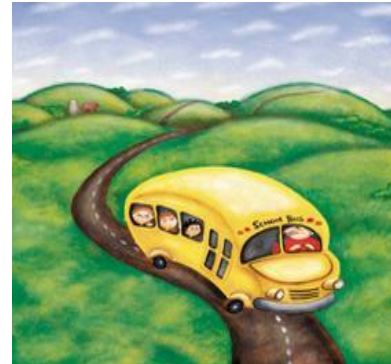
"I received a call from Selectman Leilani Dalpe that I would be getting a call from a 'Chronicle' producer, Stella Gould, about access to the Museum. When she called she explained that Middleborough was to be part of a Mystery Town segment and they would like to film at the Museum. This was to be filmed on the following Monday, February 16th. Their focus at the Museum was to be Tom and Lavinia Thumb so who else to speak about them but Gladys Beals? Gladys could not get out of her driveway in Carver. One of her neighbors brought over a snowblower and made a path so she could get to the road to be picked up. We all met at the Museum: Gladys, Dorothy Thayer, Dan Thompson and myself. The 'Chronicle' crew showed up right on time. They were there for about an hour and filmed quite a bit. Gladys and Dorothy were fabulous spokesmen and the inside of the Museum showed up very nicely. Hooray for us!" - Doug Vantran, Association President

Annual Meeting and Elections

On November 6, 2014, the Association held its annual meeting and elections at Lorenzo's Italian Restaurant. Elected were: **Douglas Vantran - President** for 2 years; **Daniel Thompson - Vice-President** for 2 years; **Wally Glendye - Secretary** for 1 year; and **Dorothy Thayer - Treasurer** for 1 year. Elected to the **Board of Directors** were: **Dr. Richard Cost** (see his bio on the next page) and **Larissa Hallgren** for 3 years each; **Betty Rollins** for 2 years; and **C. Stetson Thomas** for 1 year. **Nancy J. Thomas** was re-elected for 2 years.

After a short meeting, outgoing President Cynthia McNair was thanked for her hard work on behalf of the Association. The Association also recognizes the hard work given by JoAnn Clay as Vice-President and Kate Lazarovich as Treasurer.

A team of volunteers from the Central Congregational Church presented a program about their continuing project of restoring the historic town Christmas crèche. The team members are Dan Cooney, John Crutchfield, Patricia Keay and Carol Sherman. They were quick to note that there were many other people involved to make this project happen. The audience was shown by words and pictures the effort it takes to complete the work.



Hosting a Museum Field Trip

"Eighth Grade students from the Coyle and Cassidy Middle School Division in Taunton visited the Museum as part of their unit of study on the American Civil War. Students and their chaperones explored the collection on General and Mrs. Tom Thumb, period artifacts in the Peirce General store, the Deborah Samson War Room and the Blacksmith Shop. In the Law Office of Judge Wilkes Wood, students heard a presentation on the Role of Women in the Great War and in the Carriage House received military instruction and marching drill by Civil War re-enactor Brian Belanger. Presenters for the day included Association Board Members JoAnn Clay, Mary Cook, Cynthia McNair, Dorothy Thayer, Daniel Thompson and Douglas Vantran. The trip was planned and organized by Rosemary da Silva and Daniel Thompson, teachers at Coyle and Cassidy Middle School Division. Thanks to everyone for a great day. Our students, parents and teachers had great things to say about our visit."

-Dan Thompson, Association Vice-President

LOOKING AHEAD...



Garden Tea Party

One of the special events we are planning for 2015 is a second **"Garden Tea Party"** to be held on **Sunday, August 16, 2015**. The first one was held in 2013 at the Pickens house on South Main Street. We thought we would like to hold another one, this time in East Middleborough. Association member Doug Massey has graciously agreed to open his antique farmhouse and spacious grounds located at 273 Thompson Street for this fundraising event.

Stayed tuned for more information in the Spring newsletter!!

"Tom Thumb" Home for Sale

The "Tom Thumb" house located at 351 Plymouth Street in Middleboro is FOR SALE!

One listing describes it as a: "Gorgeous Victorian HISTORIC HOME built at a time when craftsmanship mattered. Ten-foot ceilings with ORIGINAL, EXQUISITE PLASTERWORK make the large rooms enviable. Originally built by 'Tom Thumb' in 1870, the ALL ORIGINAL WOODWORK in this home is something to behold! Includes oversized hardwood doors, ornate hand-turned railings and balusters, built-in cabinetry and custom wall alcoves. Two sets of stairways serve the home; one for the family and one for the servants. A working DUMBWAITER is available to bring dishes from the kitchen to the BUTLER'S PANTRY."

Introducing New Director on the Board - Dr. Richard W. Cost

Dr. Richard W. Cost served as the ninth president of the University of Maine at Fort Kent from July 2002 until his retirement in July 2010. Two years later, the University of Maine System Trustees awarded him the title President Emeritus in recognition of his accomplishments. He earned his doctorate in education from Rutgers University, an MBA from Old Dominion University and a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Syracuse University. He is a retired Navy Reserve Captain, recipient of the Meritorious Service Medal and attended the US Naval War College.

At UMFK he created a fundraising office and annual fund campaign and worked to increase the visibility of the institution resulting in selection as a Best Northeast College by the Princeton Review for six consecutive years (2006-2011).

He is currently a Trustee of the Davis Educational Foundation, an Overseer of the SEA Education Association and Chair of the Board of the Silver Bay YMCA of the Adirondacks. Dick and his wife Ellen have three grown children and six grandchildren. They moved to Middleboro when he accepted a position in 1994 as Vice-President for Institutional Advancement at Bridgewater State College. They moved to Northern Maine in 2002 but retained their house in Middleboro until they returned five years ago in retirement.

The Costs learned about the Moravians while Dick was a Vice-President at Moravian College and Seminary in Bethlehem, PA, and in Maine, learned the history of the Acadian people who settled the St. John Valley in 1785 following their expulsion from Nova Scotia in 1755 and the American Revolution. A brand new home for the Acadian Archives was designed and built on campus under his leadership at UMFK. Dick has thoroughly enjoyed studying the history of this region living so close to the Nemasket River. His other hobbies include watercolor painting, sailing and reading.

