The December Holiday Party Rescheduled!

The original scheduled Holiday Party on Dec. 12th at Carol Amick and Bill Moonan’s house is, unfortunately, postponed due to a construction project at their home, which is significantly behind schedule. Therefore, the holiday party has been re-scheduled to Saturday, January 23, 2016. Please change the date in your Society Yearbook to the new, 2016 date and the correct time: 3-6 pm.

Society members are urged to bring an appetizer to share at the party. Liquid refreshments will include a “nice” (non-alcoholic) punch made by Marion Bryan and a “naughty” (alcoholic) punch made by Carol Amick, as well as soft drinks, wine and coffee supplied by the Society and the hosts.

This annual party gives Society members and their guests an opportunity to socialize with one another and to view Bill Moonan’s extensive antique tool collection. Entertainment will be supplied by Bill, who will ask guests to identify which one of three stories (written by him) is an accurate depiction of Bedford history.

Party reminders will be sent to all members on the Society's email list; those without email will receive a call about the event. This is a popular social event that typically draws 60 or more Society members.

President's Message

The Antique Appraisal Event held earlier this month was very successful. A steady stream of people brought family treasures to the event, and Kaminski's appraisers in the field were totally booked doing “home” appraisals for the entire day. At least some of the treasures turned out to be just that, to the great delight of those owners. We are extremely grateful to Kaminski Auctions for donating their services and to all the folks who attended and supported the event. The proceeds will help the Society in its mission to reestablish a local historical museum. We anticipate repeating the event in the future.

Now mark your calendars for the big “Small Business Saturday” holiday sale at the Freight House in Depot Park on Saturday, November 28, from 10AM to 5PM. All merchandise will be discounted by 10% on that day by the Friends of Bedford Depot Park, Bedford Historical Society and Bedford Minuteman Company. More information is contained on the back of this newsletter. Shoppers are encouraged to come and find historic Bedford gifts for your family and friends while supporting these local non-profit organizations.

Finally, our Holiday Party hosts, Carol Amick and Bill Moonan, now anticipate that contractors will still be working in their house on the date originally scheduled for that party in December. Consequently, a number of us concluded that rescheduling the party to mid-January, after all the holiday shopping and rushing around is done, seemed like a good time to get together. Therefore, the Society's Holiday Party will now be held at 18 Crescent Avenue on Saturday, January 23, 2016, from 3PM to 6PM. More information is provided elsewhere in this newsletter, and other reminders will be sent out closer to the date.

Don Cory

Before Martha Stewart - Bedford's Own Celebrity Chef!

by Kara Kerwin

As our thoughts turn to preparations for upcoming holiday meals and parties, many of us rely on our favorite celebrity chefs for cooking tips. We thought it would be appropriate to feature the story of an early 20th century 'celebrity chef' who was born and raised here in Bedford and whose talents propelled her to become a popular lecturer on the science of cooking before television, food blogs and glossy photos were available for inspiration in the kitchen.

Carolyn Putnam Webber, or Carrie, as she was called, was born in Bedford on June 3, 1882. She was the daughter of Mary A. Putnam and Wallace G. Webber, founder of the brokerage firm of Paine Webber and Co. Even as a girl, Carrie seemed destined for a life devoted to the domestic arts. She is mentioned
History Day student says 'thanks'

A delightful thank you note arrived at the Bedford Historical Society's office from one of the students who participated in the annual History Day competition – and came to our September Historical Society program to describe his project and receive a small check and copy of A Revolutionary Town from the Society.

Haroon Bukhari, a Bedford High School senior, submitted a group documentary on Abbie Hoffman along with classmate Otto Altmann. They took Second Place in their category at the state History Day competition.

We were so impressed with Haroon's note that we wanted to share a bit of it with our members. Haroon wrote:

"I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to those in the Bedford Historical Society for their incredible show of support. It is truly impossible to fully capture that feeling one gets when one's project - the fruit of nine months of research and labor - is applauded by people who genuinely care about the history wrapped within.

"The fact that this support has existed throughout the Bedford High School History Day Teams' existence clearly illustrates your unshakable will to help students like myself see that history is not words in a thick textbook, but an ever-growing understanding of how we became who we are in the present, and who we will become in the future."

Very well expressed, Haroon!

Haroon and Otto's video, titled Abbie Hoffman: Leading the 60's Counter Culture Revolution, can be viewed on YouTube at Abbie Hoffman.

Carol Arnick
How Many Bedfords Are There?

At the Historical Society Archives, there are occasional phone calls from people who are calling the wrong Bedford! Doesn’t it seem like every state in the Union has a town called Bedford? Well, that's just about right!

The Bedford with the largest population is Bedford, Texas, with 46,000 people. That's three and a half times our population! But we're not the smallest by a long shot. That would be Bedford, Kentucky, with 677 people.

How about area? Can you believe that Bedford, New York has an area of 40 square miles? That's just much too large. Imagine how many traffic lights! No, our 14 square miles is much more cozy. And just how cozy is the record? That would be Bedford, Kentucky again with .4 square miles. There must be a skyscraper apartment building to fit all of those 677 folks into!

Well, while we're at it, we might as well look at highest and lowest elevations. Bedford, Pennsylvania soars at 1,614' high. And who knew that we hold the record as the Bedford at the lowest elevation? (Wait for it – 135'.)

Sadly, we are not the oldest of them all. Bedford, New York claims their town was founded in 1680. Bedford, Massachusetts comes in at a weak second at 1729. And which is the youngest? Bedford, Virginia – that's because it went by the name of “Liberty” for its first hundred years.

And now, the last record: which Bedfords don't even exist? There would be two: Bedford, Wyoming, which is just a U.S. Census designation for a wide place in the road on the side of a mountain. And poor Bedford, Tennessee, has faded into history. It's been absorbed into Shelbyville.

What about all the New Bedfords, Bedford Counties, Bedford Townships, Bedford Hillses, Bedford Springses (yup, there are at least two more) and Bedford-Stuyvesants? Not to mention Bedford, Australia; Bedford, Nova Scotia; and the mother of all, Bedford, England? Oh, don't get me started!!

Now, have you a guess for how many Bedfords there are in the 50 states? That would be fourteen, including the two that don't exist. And which is the dearest of them all? You are voting with your feet on that one!!! Welcome Home!

Sharon Lawrence McDonald,
Bedford Town Historian (Bedford, Massachusetts that is!)

Valuable 1852 Map Added to the Society’s Collection - Don Corey

The Society is very pleased with the addition of an important map to its extensive collection. We recently became aware of a Map of Boston & Vicinity printed by the Shields Company in 1852. It is unique in being the earliest known map showing the locations of buildings throughout town with most of the owners’ names also shown. The State Archives was contacted in order to get a copy of the portion of the map containing Bedford. The response was that the State had an original of that map in its collection, but it was in too poor condition to scan it to provide a copy. In order to accommodate our request, the archivist instead photographed segments of the map with her cell phone and sent the digital files to us. Jan van Steenwijk expertly merged the files together to create a single map file showing the entire Town of Bedford.

The Shields 1852 map will be extremely useful in helping to identify various features in Bedford at that time, confirming construction dates for many mid-19th Century buildings, and tracking ownership of properties held by various Bedford families. Our sincere thanks to Jan for his expertise in this project (as well as in many others).

Thank You!

Couple Renewals: Jane & Dan Puffer, Robert & Paula Fowler, Cindy & Lawrence Walsh and James & Judith Brunner
New Couple: Ron & Sue Swanson
New Individual: Michael Cashman
Cash Donation: Robert & Paula Fowler
HOLIDAY SALE!
Saturday, Nov. 28, 2015 – 10AM to 5 PM
Freight House – Depot Park - 120 South Road

On the Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 28, 2015, a giant Holiday Sale will take place in the Freight House at Depot Park. That day is recognized as “Small Business Saturday”, when shoppers are encouraged to support their local stores.

All merchandise will be discounted by 10% on that day by the Friends of Bedford Depot Park, Bedford Historical Society and Bedford Minuteman Company, who all encourage you to come and find historic Bedford gifts for your family and friends. Visitors to the Freight House will find a wide variety of Bedford-related merchandise that is sold by the sponsoring organizations - Flags, clothing, DVD's, books, maps, toys, etc.

Society items include:
- Unbreakable bright red Christmas ornaments decorated with the Bedford Flag logo, packaged in individual boxes; and,
- Coffee mugs, 16 oz., maroon and also decorated with the Bedford Flag.

Visitors can also enjoy free coffee on that day. The Freight House, at 120 South Road, will be open from 10 AM to 5 PM on Saturday.

This is a one-time opportunity for real bargains that you won't want to miss!

“If you are unable to visit in person, shop the online store - www.BedfordDepot.org/store - and enter this code for the discount savings: Holiday Sale 2015.”

Don Corey, president

And don’t forget: we have the 12x12” Bedford Flag - a perfect gift for anyone!