Our next meeting: Award-winning history students

The Bedford Historical Society is very pleased to honor the Bedford High School students who placed first and second in the National History Day competition held at the University of Maryland this past June.

The students will present their winning projects at the Historical Society’s September meeting.

Winners of the First Place Award in the Senior Group Performance final round were Katie Harkins, Jynette Demarco, and Gemma Smith for their performance of “The Seneca Falls Convention: An Event That Sparked and Ultimately Unified the Women’s Rights Movement.”


The Historical Society is proud of the Bedford students’ accomplishments and is eager to honor them by sharing this program with all Bedford residents to acquaint them with the students’ outstanding work. Parents, students and townspeople are particularly urged to attend. Free and open to all. Accessible building.

Wednesday, September 24, 7:30 PM
First Church of Christ, Congregational
25 The Great Road, Bedford

For other lectures this year, see page 7.

Please visit our web site: www.bedfordmahistory.org
**The Preservationist** is published seven times yearly for the purpose of sharing topics of interest for the education and enjoyment of the Society’s members and the community in general. Comments, suggestions and contributions of relevant articles are welcome and should be addressed to: Editor, The Preservationist, 2 Mudge Way, Bedford MA 01730.

Alethea “Lee” Yates, Editor  
(781) 275-3294 (home)  
(781) 275-7276 (BHS office)  
Email: bedford-history@usa.net

**Bedford Historical Society, 2008-2009**

**Officers**  
Alethea Yates, President  
Jan van Steenwijk, Vice President  
Phyllis Cooke, Secretary  
Don Corey, Treasurer

**Directors**  
Don Corey (‘09)  
Miriam Brown (‘09)  
Jan van Steenwijk (‘09)  
Marion Bryan (‘10)  
Marietta Ellis (‘10)  
Donald Jenkins (‘10)  
Doris Crowell (‘11) - Board Co-chair  
Neil Leary (‘11)  
Judie Toti (‘11) - Board Secretary  
Carol Amick (‘12)  
Norman Toti (‘12)  
Julie Turner (‘12) - Board Co-chair

**Committees**

**Activities:** TBD  
**BOD Liaison to Executive Board:** Doris Crowell, Julie Turner  
**Hospitality:** Marietta Ellis  
**Membership Secretary:** TBD  
**Merchandise/Ways & Means:** TBD  
**Newsletter Editor:** Alethea Yates  
**Nominating:**  
  - Wilma Johnson (appointed by Executive Board, ‘08)  
  - Carol Amick (appointed by Membership, ‘09)  
  - TBD (appointed by President, ‘10)

**Program:** Cecile Walker  
**Sunshine:** Sharon McDonald  
**Welcoming:** Lois Jenkins  
**Finance Committee:**  
  - Doris Crowell, Julie Turner (Board Co-chairs)  
  - Don Corey (Treasurer)  
  - Neil Leary (‘09)  
  - Frank Gicca (‘10)  
  - TBD (‘11)  
  - Alethea Yates (BHS President)

---

**Annual Giving update**

Donations to our Annual Giving drive continue to come in. We are most grateful to our donors:  
- John Gerdes  
- Carol Amick and Bill Moonan  
- John and Meredith McCulloch  
- Carole and Clive Grainger  
- Barry Patel  
- Christopher Bryant  
- Cynthia and Charles Schweppe

We offer our apologies to John Gerdes, who was one of our earliest contributors. Somehow we overlooked his gift and failed to acknowledge it when we should have. Thank you for your patience, John!

**Have you seen us?**

Several years ago the Society had a wildly successful activity at Bedford Day. We had a large painting featuring the couple from Grant Wood’s iconic painting *American Gothic*, plus the children from *The Simpsons*, with spaces for folks to put their heads through so we could take their photo. Everybody loved it – but nobody knows where the painting went after Bedford Day. We surely would like to find it. Can you help? Please call our office, 781-275-7276, if you have clues to offer.

---

**Archives hours**

Our room in the Stearns building (a.k.a. the Police Station building) at 2 Mudge Way is usually open at the following times:

**Monday, 9 to 12 and 1 to 5**  
**Tuesday, 9 to 1 - Wednesday, 9 to 1**

Other times by appointment. It’s best to phone ahead before you stop by because we do step out for errands now and then. Please call our NEW PHONE NUMBER, 781-275-7276.
Bedford Day, Sept. 20

Bedford Day, the town’s annual get-together and birthday bash, will be held this Saturday, September 20. The parade and fair both begin at 10 AM, and the fair in the Town Hall parking lot runs until 3 PM. We’ll be there to help celebrate. We’ll have our sales booth out (be sure to check our new line of KID STUFF, traditional toys and books on early American crafts and activities – see page 6), and we’ll also have OPEN HOUSE in the Stearns Building (a.k.a. the police station). This is our big event of the year, our chance to show the whole town who we are and what we do.

Help wanted. HELPERS ARE NEEDED, of course, to help mind our booth and receive visitors at the Open House. No experience necessary. Shifts are 9-11, 11-1, and 1-3. Please call our office at 781-275-7276 or email us at bedford-history@usa.net if you can help. We have a lot of new merchandise at the booth and hope to have a deluge of customers and visitors.

Weather policy: The Town of Bedford Day Fair and Parade are held rain or shine. If we encounter weather that is severe and threatens the safety of participants, the events will be postponed to the Saturday following the regularly scheduled Bedford Day. The decision to postpone would be made by 8:30 a.m. on the regularly scheduled Bedford Day and the information would be posted on the Recreation website (www.bedfordrecreation.org) and recorded on the Recreation Department answering announcement (781-275-1392).

Bedford Learning Connection

The Bedford Learning Connection (BLC) is a new enterprise in town, offering courses on a wide variety of topics.

The Bedford Historical Society if providing the history programming for this session. Don Corey led a “Historical Walk in Bedford” on September 13. Lee Yates will present “Stories of Bedford” on Thursday, November 13, 6:30 to 8:30. You can register online at www.bedfordlearningconnection.org, or by calling 781-275-6562.

BLC needs your support. Many of you have asked for community education classes; BLC is here to give what you asked. Please consider becoming a member even if you don’t plan to take courses this session. For more information, visit the web site or call 781-275-6562.

BLC Benefit Auction. To meet its startup costs, BLC is holding an auction on Saturday, October 18, at First Parish Church on Bedford Common. Preview and registration at 1 PM, auction at 2.

Donated items for the auction are being sought now, and volunteers are needed. Please ransack your attic, consult your calendar, and call Mary Mady at 781-275-6562 to donate and/or volunteer.

Bedford Tellers at Three Apples Storytelling Festival

The popular three-day Three Apples Storytelling Festival returns in November. This year there’s a new feature you’re sure to enjoy – Bedford Tellers.

Bedford Historical Society members Don Corey, Town Historian John Dodge, Doris Smith, and Lee Yates, along with Neil Couvée of Chip-In Farm, will be telling stories of old Bedford on Saturday the 27th, 1:30 PM in the Old Town Hall.

For information and to register online, go to www.threeapples.org; or call 781-287-0069; or write to Three Apples Storytelling Festival, P.O. Box 192, Bedford MA 01730-0192.

Shawsheen Cemetery tour

The older portion of the Shawsheen Cemetery on Shawsheen Road was recently named to the National Register of Historic Places. Bedford Historical Society president Lee Yates plans to lead a walking history tour of the site. Founded in 1849 as part of the Rural Cemetery Movement, Bedford’s second cemetery is one of our most important and least appreciated historic sites.

The tour is tentatively scheduled for the afternoon of Saturday October 25, rain date Sunday, October 26. 2 PM. See next month’s Preservationist for complete details.
Bedford Garden Club quilt to be raffled

The Bedford Garden club is having a raffle for an exquisite small quilt. It’s one of a kind, with panels made from photos of some of their Garden Club’s delightful flowerbeds around town, surrounded by traditional quilt blocks, all in springtime colors.

Tickets can be purchased at Garden Club booth on Bedford Day, and at any time from Garden Club members. This little quilt is destined to become a historic treasure! Don’t miss your chance to win it. You’ll be helping the Garden Club do what they do to make Bedford’s traffic islands and other public sites such a pleasure to behold.

This photo just doesn’t do justice to the quilt’s lovely springtime colors or its photo panels of flowerbeds tended by the Bedford Garden Club.

Old books sold

At the Society’s annual meeting in May, the members approved deaccessioning of a number of books that do not relate to Bedford’s history and should no longer be taking up some of the limited space in our archives. This summer we sold some of the books to the Boston Book Company of Jamaica Plain, an antiquarian book dealer. Johnson’s Dictionary of the English Language, 4th Edition (Vol. 1 of 2), National Portrait Gallery of Eminent Americans with Biographies, and seven Boston Almanacs issued between 1838 and 1866 brought a profit of $435 to the Society.

Society member Cindy Haynes has reviewed our other deaccessioned books and identified some that she thinks are of value. She will post them on eBay for us this fall: the Poems of Robert Burns, 2 volumes (1843), The Town Officer’s Guide: General Laws of MA (1825), and Saul: A Poem in Two Parts by William Sotheby (1808). We will sell the rest of the books at our Bedford Day booth to anyone willing to make a small donation.

We are very grateful to Cindy Haynes for the time and effort she has devoted to helping us with this project.

Skiing in… Bedford?

We recently had a phone message at the Historical Society office that left us bemused. The caller asked about the ski area that used to exist on Old Billerica Road. Feeling pity for a poor soul who could be so deluded as to imagine anyone skiing in low-lying Bedford, we phoned him back. Well, he told us about the New England Lost Ski Areas Project, www.nelsap.org.

Still feeling skeptical, we went to the web site and sure enough, it has a listing for the Little’s Tow ski area, located where the Bedfordshire Village condominiums now stand. We saw photos and read comments from a variety of folks who recalled skiing there in their younger days. The area even had a ski lift, although one contributor says that the line for the ski lift was sometimes as long as the ski slope itself.

Do you remember skiing in Bedford? Please send us your comments at 2 Mudge Way, Bedford or email us at bedford-history@usa.net. Extra credit will be given to anyone who has photos!
From Bedford to Harvard, piece by piece

Ned and Susan Leeming had a dream. They wanted to rescue 18th-century farmhouse at 62 Billerica Road and turn it into a home for themselves and their children. Not only that, they wanted to record every aspect of the construction details of one of Bedford’s oldest houses. Through extraordinary effort and patience, a love of history, and a sense of fun, they made their dream a reality.

Built by Joseph Fitch in the early 1700s – his marriage to Sarah Grimes in 1730 was the first recorded in the new town of Bedford – the house was a fine example of the architecture of its day. By the early 1980s, though, the house was ready for some tender, loving care. It had been uninhabited for a number of years and was deteriorating. The owner did not want to sell the land but was willing to part with the house.

Enter the Leemings. They purchased the house for a nominal sum and found a lovely plot of land on a hilltop in the town of Harvard, Mass. Rather than move the house as a unit, in 1982 they carefully disassembled it piece by piece, recording each stage of the process. Every architectural feature was carefully photographed and catalogued.

There were a few bumps along the way. One day the crew separated a vestibule from the body of the house and set it in the yard to be moved. Returning the next day, they found that the vestibule had been stolen. A metal spiral staircase, a late addition to the house, was also stolen after it had been separated from the building.

After careful deconstruction, all salvageable components of the house were transported to the Harvard hilltop and reassembled among the trees of an old apple orchard.

Up goes the reassembled frame in its new location

The completed brand-new-and-very-old house was restored to look as much as possible as it did when first built in Bedford.

At home in Harvard, 1982

This summer the Leemings visited the Bedford Historical Society’s office and told us their story. They then kindly loaned us the four photos albums that document the move so that we could scan the photos and add them to our collections. These photos, an exceptional record of one of Bedford’s earliest houses, will be a valuable resource for generations to come.

- With warmest thanks to the Leemings
Kid Stuff!

New this year, we now offer a line of traditional wooden toys and children’s books on early American life and crafts. You’ll find all these at our booth on Bedford Day and in our office year-round. If you’d like to stop by our office for a little shopping, please call us at 781-275-7276. For shipping outside Bedford, please contact us.

Photos and full descriptions of these items can be seen on our web site, www.bedfordmahistory.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOYS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All American Boy Art of Yo (yoyo and book)</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All American Girl Wonderball</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrowhead replica</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Bess dummy gun</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sorry, too large to ship outside Bedford)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial America Massachusetts Coins</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cup &amp; Ball Toy</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand Propeller</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob’s Ladder</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juggling Set</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucet</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musket Ball</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Money of Colonial America</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peg Top</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pewter Coin Whirligig</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic Fife</td>
<td>$6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolling Hoop (sorry, too large to ship</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside Bedford)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy Toy Log Cabin Playset #6</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tin Whistle</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOOKS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothing for Ladies and Gentlemen of Higher or Lower Standing</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Times A to Z</td>
<td>$8.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Colonial America Projects You Can Build Yourself</td>
<td>$14.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The American Boy’s Handy Book</td>
<td>$12.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HATS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mob cap</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tricorne hat, child’s, small, gold trim</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tricorne hat, child’s, large, white trim</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MISCELLANY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedford Flag postcards</td>
<td>$0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedford Flag, desktop size</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedford Flag/US Flag stickers</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration of Independence rolled document</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering Bedford magnet</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. War Battlefield Map</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Brothers Rocks magnet</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Flag pin</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BHS lecture series 2008-2009

Program chair Cecile Walker has lined up an exciting lecture series for the 2008-2009 program year. All are free and open to the public; meetings are held in the Congregational Church at 25 The Great Road.

Wednesday, October 22, 7:30 PM. A British Soldier in the American Revolution. We’ve all heard “our” side of the story. What was it like for the other side? Historical interpreter Guy Morin, playing the part of a uniformed British regular, will explain what it was like to fight in defense of the Crown. What you hear may surprise you.

Wednesday, February 25, 7:30 PM. Bedford’s Patriots of Color. We honor Black History Month with a talk by George Quintal, Jr., author of Patriots of Color: A Peculiar Beauty and Merit, African Americans and Native Americans at Battle Road and Bunker Hill. At least five black men from Bedford served in the Patriot cause. Who were they? Why did they fight? What became of them? The foremost expert on the subject will share his findings with us.

Wednesday, March 25, 7:30 PM. Treasures from the Archives In this ever-popular annual event, members of the Society will present some of our treasures and tell the Bedford stories behind them.

Sunday, April 26, 2:00 PM (not Wednesday at 7:30 as usual). Michael Bacon, the Naked Quaker, Rascals and Rapscallions. Diane Rapaport, author of The Naked Quaker: True Crimes and Controversies from the Courts of Colonial New England, presents a cast of colorful and questionable characters including Bedford’s home-grown rascal, Michael Bacon, and his purloined pig.

Membership Application and Renewal Form

Dues (please check one):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student:</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual:</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple or Family:</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting or Business:</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron:</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life – Individual:</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life – Couple:</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name: __________________________
Address: __________________________
__________________________________
City:______________________________
State: __________________  Zip: ______
Phone: ____________________________
Email: ____________________________

Donation
I would like to contribute the following amount to aid the Society: $ ____________

Total enclosed: $ __________________

Bedford Historical Society, Inc.
2 Mudge Way, Bedford MA 01730-2138
781-275-7276
bedford-history@usa.net
Are your dues up to date? Please check the mailing label for your membership status

For our annual members, ANNUAL DUES ARE DUE! Please see Page 1

Birdseye view in 1894 of Bedford Lumber and Manufacturing Company, next to Bedford Depot on Loomis Street. It was quite an extensive operation. Markings identify separate buildings for lumber, mouldings, doors (two buildings), and “house finish.” (Image courtesy of the Lexington Historical Society)