The Bedford Flag, the oldest existing flag in the United States. On view at the Bedford Library.

The Preservationist

Bedford Historical Society, Inc. - Bedford - Massachusetts
Founded in 1893

March 2017 *Published for everyone interested in our history* Volume 127, Number 2

Wednesday, March 29, 2017

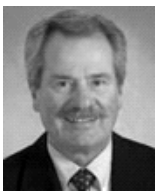
Congregational Church, 23 Great Road
7:15 pm - Refreshments, 7:45 pm - Guest Speakers

The Societies programs are free and open to the public

"If My Walls Could Talk: Historic Homes of Bedford"

An 1800s resident of Bedford, brought back through time to tour Bedford today, would be astonished and saddened to see how different Bedford looks due to the disappearance of so many old homes. Fewer than 100 Bedford buildings constructed by 1850 endure today.

Three surviving historic homes will be described in detail by their modern-day owners.



Historical Society member Carl Hanson will speak on his house at 40 Springs Road, known as "Twin Elms," and of the first owners of the property. Their name was Gragg, but there were numerous other Graggs in Bedford. Mr. Hanson also will show some photographic history of the homestead.

The Hanson's house is a two-story of Colonial-Federal style that is believed to have been built around 1834-35. The land on which the house sits was owned by Joshua Page, one of Bedford's first real estate developers, and sold for $200 on April 28, 1834. In 1835, real estate taxes on the house amounted to $8.00.

The property was named "Twin Elms" because of two magnificent elm trees, which were destroyed in the Hurricane of 1938.

Alan Long will speak on the history of his historic house, the "Corey House" at 43 The Great Road. This house was thought to have originally been built on Springs Street, and later moved to The Great Road and remodeled in 1830. Research conducted by Town Historical Ina Mansur in 1978, however, revealed that the original house was built around 1822-25 on its current site.

Original owners of the Corey House were cordwainers (shoemakers), one of the most active and successful early industries in Bedford. Dr. Long will display a scrapbook that was passed down from the former owner and share information about the history of the house and its inhabitants. Dr. Long has served as Vice President for Research and Academic Affairs for Massachusetts Eye and Ear since 2011. Before assuming this position, for 36 years he worked at Harvard University; his last Harvard position was that of Assistant Dean for Research Finances and Systems for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. In Bedford, he has served on the Historic District Commission for many years.

Kevin Latady, current resident of the "Christopher Page Homestead" at 2 Myers Lane (formerly 50 Old Billerica Road). Christopher Page (1710-1786) received the land from his father, Nathaniel, who lived nearby at 89 Page Rd. The Christopher Page Homestead included a large tract of land; the property remained in the Page family until 1830.
Part of the property was the site of Bedford's Nathaniel Page Elementary School, built in 1957. He founded Latady Design, LLC in 2000.

Mr. Latady is a long-time member of the Bedford Historic District Commission and served on both the John Glenn Middle School and Bedford DPW Design and Building committees. He is a past Vice President of the Bedford Chamber of Commerce.

Carol Amick

This Lecture is Not To be Missed!

Presidents Message

Remembering

The Society is always deeply grateful for gifts received in memory of members and friends who have passed away. This year the families of Barbara Marshall, who died in January, and Earl Sorensen, who died in February, requested that their loved ones be remembered with such gifts. In turn, we remember several of Bedford's wonderful historic resources with which they were respectively associated in this month's Preservationist. The Oliver Pollard Homestead was the home of Barbara and Don Marshall for decades, and Earl Sorensen grew up on and worked with his father at the Pickman estate.

The United States entered World War I in 1917 after a series of provocations, and the war brought sweeping changes to the world order, to this country and to Massachusetts. The Massachusetts World War I Centennial Commission was established by Governor Baker to honor the memory of those who served and those who died in that war. The Society will remember those who served from Bedford in articles in this and in future Preservationists this year.

Don Corey

Bedford in World War I

This year we observe the 100th anniversary of United States' entry into the "War To End All Wars" (which it most certainly did not). The suffering and loss of lives was dwarfed by the staggering losses in the Civil War a half century earlier, but the many stories of courage, struggle and sacrifice are important to remember.

Bedford remembers those who served in two important ways. First, the World War I Memorial on the Common was erected "In memory of the Men of Bedford who gave their lives in the World War and in appreciation of all those who served to the credit of their town, state and country". Second, Bedford's American Legion Post is named in honor of the three Bedford men who died in in that war - Stanley Thomas Anthony, Hugh I. Hunt and William Walter Hamilton. This month we remember the service of those three men. A number of others who served will be noted in future newsletters.

U. S. DESTROYER SINKS; 21 LOST

Ship Chauncey Goes Down in Collision While on Patrol Duty.

CARRIED 91 MEN IN ALL

Navy Department Lacks Facts Regarding the Cause of Accident.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20—Twenty-one Americans are believed to have been lost when the United States destroyer Chauncey sank following a collision on patrol duty in foreign waters early Monday. The remaining 70 officers and men of her crew

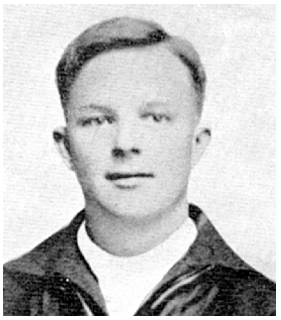
BOSTON MAN LOST WITH SHIP

Charles A. O'Conner, Chief Yeoman, South Boston, One of Those Missing with Destroyer Sunk in Collision—Commander and Two Junior Officers Lost

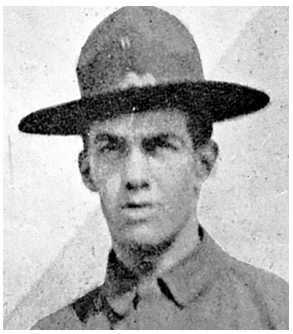
Washington, Nov. 22—Lieutenant Commander Walter T. Hasso, the commanding officer, his two junior officers, Lieutenants Charles P. Weddleburn and Ensign Harry S. Skinner, Jr., and eighteen enlisted men were lost in the sinking of the American torpedo-boat destroyer Chauncey in a collision in the war zone, Monday morning, the Navy Department was advised yesterday, by Vice Admiral Sims.

The enlisted men lost were:

Stanley Anthony enlisted in the Navy in 1910 at age 17 and earned the rating of First Class Radio Technician. In November 1917 he was stationed on the destroyer USS Chauncey. While escorting the Transport Rose, with both ships running without lights in the war zone, the transport rammed the Chauncey and cut it in half. The rear section with 21 men aboard, including Stanley Anthony, sank immediately. The bow section with 70 men aboard stayed afloat long enough for them to be rescued. After the war a tablet to the memory of the Chauncey War Dead was dedicated at Gibraltar.



Stanley Anthony



Hugh Hunt enlisted in the Army in 1915 at age 17. He saw service at the Mexican border in 1916, and his infantry regimen was sent to France in September 1917. While delivering a message he was shot by a German sniper and died later that day. He was buried with military honors, and after the war his body was transferred to the American Cemetery in Ploise Aisne. He was 19 years old at the time of his death.

Hugh Hunt

The Sunday Post

FORMER BEDFORD BOY DIES OF WOUNDS

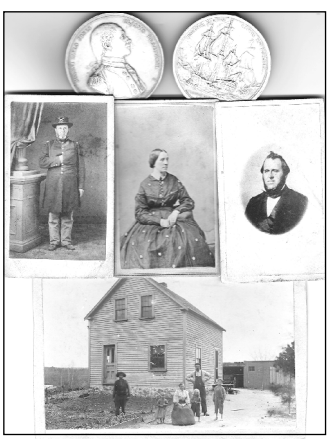
DEATH OF HUGH I. HUNT OF WOUNDS IN FRANCE

Walter Hamilton enlisted in the Marines in 1899 and was a career Marine. He served in the Spanish-American War and in subsequent conflicts. He was Gunnery Sergeant in his Marine Brigade that went overseas in June 1917. He was wounded at Belleau Woods in June 1918 and killed in action on November 2, 1918, less than 2 weeks before the end of the war He was awarded a number of citations by the French government and the Marines.

Don Corey

Walter Hamilton

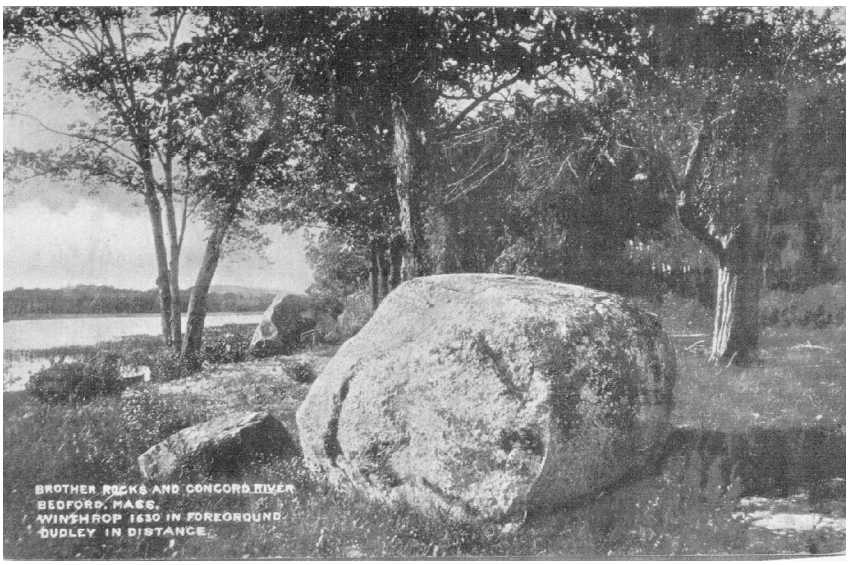
Deaccessions from the collections



The Society often accepts donations of items from members and friends with the clear understanding that they may be added to the collections or sold if they are not relevant or appropriate to Bedford's local history. Last year about $250 was raised from the sale of such items. However, items that have previously been accessioned can only be deaccessioned from the collections and disposed of after notice to the Board of Directors and public notice in the Society's newsletter.

The Society proposes to deaccession two (2) John Paul Jones commemorative medallions about 2" in diameter and made of a composite nonmetallic substance. It also proposes to deaccession photographs of unidentified people printed in Chicago, IL, Columbus and Cincinnati, Ohio and Ashfield, MA. None of these items are useful for the purposes and activities of the Society. Anyone wishing to obtain more information about these items can contact the office by email, telephone or mail.

The Pickman Estate



The Two Brothers Rocks on the Concord River in Bedford

The Pickman family's long association with Bedford began in 1884, when Dudley Leavitt Pickman and his bride, Ellen Rodman Motley, visited here during their honeymoon. They ultimately acquired about 450 acres in Bedford along Dudley Road (then Chestnut Avenue) including the Two Brothers Rocks, the former Stearns mill and property in both Bedford and Billerica, Huckins Farm, and extensive wetlands along the Concord River. While their permanent residence was on Beacon Street in Boston and they only lived in Bedford seasonally, they had a staff that managed the estate and farm operations on a year-round basis. He had a passion for natural wildlife and also managed the woodlands, cut paths for walkers, created a bog garden in the wetlands near the river, and had the Two Brothers Rocks inscribed at the request of the Historical Society and his friend, A.E. Brown.

William Sorensen (1882-1974) was head caretaker of the Pickman estate for over fifty years. His son Earl grew up on the estate and worked with his father while raising hundreds of chickens in a chicken and egg business. When Bedford and Billerica applied in 2009 to create a 2-town National Register Historic District encompassing the Two Brothers Rocks and the historic portion of Dudley Road, the Historical Society contacted Earl Sorensen. He was an incredible source of historic information about the property, with maps and other documents as well as personal recollections of his life on the estate. It greatly enriched our knowledge of the workings of the estate, which was reflected in the National Register of Historic Places application. The National Park Service listed the historic district the following year. Earl Sorensen passed away last month.

Various changes occurred to the estate after WW2. A Nike missile site was constructed at the south end of the Pickman property off of Old Causeway Road, which is now the Harvard University Field Station. About 200 acres in Bedford and Billerica and 192 acres in Carlisle were later conveyed to the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. Huckins Farm Condominiums were developed at the end of the 20th Century with extensive wildlife corridors, bridal paths and walking trails. David Pickman's death several years ago marked the end of the family's association with the property, but the family's legacy is the preservation of so much of the area's historic agricultural landscape.

Don Corey

If you have any items related to Bedford's history, like photos, ephemera, tools, etc., please consider donating them to our Society.

Thank You! *Our supporters help keeping history alive!*

Dues Renewals:
Dorothy Africa & Guy Fedorkow, Ruth Beauchesne, Bedford Funeral Home, Carol and John Carlson, Bonnie and John Crouteau, Carlton Willard Village, Barbara Doyle, President; George Epple, Lillian Grassi, Dana & Myle Holley, III, Dzidra J. Knecht, Ken and Caroline Larson, Dr. Mayada Najim, Brian Oulighan, David & Virginia Packer, James & Adele Purvis, Fay Russo, Cynthia Schweppe, Ann Seamans, Irving and Jean Smith, John and Lucia Stewart, Susan and Michael Wingfield, Stanley Wentworth, Zoe & Edward Pierce.

Donations:
Dorothy Africa, Jack Fisher, Dzidra J. Knecht, Brian Oulighan, Adrienne St. John, Joan Waite, Joan Waite, Frans van Berkhout, Stanley Wentworth, Karen Frederick

Donations in Memory of Barbara Marshall:
Joan Waite

Donations in Memory of W. Earl Sorenson:
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"We Don't Make History...
We Keep It Alive..!"

The Bedford Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Support your Heritage.

Member Application

Annual Membership Dues:

_ Individual: $25.00
_ Couple/Family: $45.00
_ Contributing: $100.00
_ Patron: $175.00
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The Preservationist.
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Contributing writers ; Carol Amick, Don Corey, Kara Kerwin, Brian Oulighan & Sharon McDonald

Oliver Pollard Homestead

197 North Road in the 1950s

The Pollard family was a prominent one in Bedford for several generations. Oliver (b.1703) and Walter (b.1709) Pollard were brothers, born in Billerica in a family of 15, who came to Bedford within 10 years after the town's founding. Walter married Dorothy Danforth in 1735 and they became the innkeepers of Pollard Tavern on North Road. Dorothy's father, Samuel Danforth, was the innkeeper of Bedford's other earliest inn (a.k.a. the Shawsheen House) on Page Road by the Shawsheen River.

Oliver Pollard married Hannah Hill of Billerica in1736. He was a carpenter and farmer, and according to former Town Historian Ina Mansur's research they were living in their homestead at 197 North Road by 1738. Located at the intersection of Pine Hill Road with North Road, the Oliver Pollard Homestead is one of the very few structures still standing in Bedford that date to that era.

The property remained in the Pollard family for three generations, and was later owned by Levi Bailey and then his grandson Edward Butters for much of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Dana Clark family lived there and did substantial restoration work on the house during the mid-20th century, before it was purchased by Barbara and Don Marshall in 1966. Barbara's description of the house interior in The Bedford Sampler - Bicentennial Edition (1974) follows:

> *"The fireplaces were opened and great care was taken to preserve the eighteenth-century paneling in the dining room. The house has other examples of early carpentry work, such as pegging and gunstock beam supports. The bedroom floor is of interest because obviously it was a clever craftsman who could lay the 19-inch wide boards. All cut from the same tree and set end to end..., the tapered ends form perfect rectangles and thus a square floor."*

Barbara and Don moved into a new house on the property a few years ago. Barbara passed away in January, but Allen Marshall and Anne Bickford continue to care for this charming 18th century farmhouse.

Don Corey