The Bedford Flag, the oldest existing flag in the United States, ca. 1704. On view at the Bedford Library.

The Preservationist

Bedford Historical Society, Inc. - Bedford - Massachusetts

Founded in 1893

September 2018 *Published for anyone interested in our history* Volume 127, Number 6

Enjoy our next lecture

Wednesday Evening, September 25

7:15 pm at Congregational Church

25 Great Road

A refreshment period from 7:15 – 7:45 pm will kick off the event.

The Society's kick off program of its 2018-19 season will feature two interesting topics: Bedford High School students who participated in the National and Massachusetts History Day competitions will be honored by the Society for their history projects.

Following the awards, the second topic titled "What's in Bedford's Attic" will feature a display of various artifacts from the society's museum collections.

Students invited by the Society to briefly describe their projects are:

Eran Zelixon, whose project was on the Terezi concentration camp.

Samantha Gallant and Bernice Lai, whose project was on the 1965 Watts Riot.

Chloe Byun, Kristen Hekimian and Georgia Pitner, whose project was on Australian Aborigines.

Sydney Hoiseth and Lucy Santiago, whose project was on the AIDS epidemic.

Omar Al-Adhami, Matthew Carluccio, Nathaniel Kang, Ryan Lobo and Ryan Richard, whose project was on Pimg-Pong Diplomacy.

President Don Corey

The second program about "What's in Bedford's Attic" includes an overview of Bedford's history from prehistoric times to the 20th Century, highlighted with various artifacts from the Society's collections.

Mr. Corey, re-elected in May as the Society's President, also serves on the Town of Bedford's Historic Preservation Committee. He is a member of the town's Community Preservation Committee, a Director of both the Friends of the Job Lane House and the BHS, a past Bedford Selectman, Planning Board member and Citizen of the Year.

Carol Amick

Bedford Primer - "What's in a name?"

By: Mary Drake

With the population of Bedford expanding, the history of some names might be of interest to newcomers. Here is an incomplete list of how some buildings and streets were named. Many thanks to Ina Mansur, who was the town historian from 1975 until her death in 1988 and from whose book *The Ina Mansur Reader, Tales of Bedford, Massachusetts* (Alethea Yates, ed.) some of this information was taken. First, the biggies:

Bedford's Anthony-Hunt-Hamilton Post 221 of the American Legion is named for three Bedford men who died in World War I. They are also remembered in the names of three streets in a central Bedford neighborhood. Stanley Thomas Anthony, 24 years old and a sailor, died when the USS Chauncy was rammed by an allied ship. Hugh I. Hunt, a 19 year old soldier, was fatally wounded in action in France. William Walter Hamilton, 37 a career Marine, was also killed in France.

Laurence G. Hanscom Airport was originally named Bedford Airport and in 1943 was renamed in honor of a citizen of Massachusetts who was killed during flight training with the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Bedford's US Veterans' Hospital was opened in 1928 and in 1978 was renamed The Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Administration Hospital, in honor of a US congresswoman who was noted for her support of the hospital and veterans.

cont. pg 4

The End of Farming in Bedford?

1875 Bedford Census – 900 people; 2,545 hens; 196 pigs; 488 milk cows, calves & bulls.

1885 Bedford Census – 930 people; 934 cows

That year 115 cows lived along Main Street (now Great Road) - at the Fitch farm (now municipal campus), Wood's farm (now Bedford Marketplace) and other farms. North Road was a "sparsely settled district", but the few people had a lot of cows – 120.

One of John Dodge's favorite stories involved the Great Hog Swap during the Great Depression in the 1930s. The entire town was in on moving hundreds of pigs around town to hide them from Federal inspectors that were trying to reduce the supply of pork and raise its market price.

Times change! Bedford's population more than doubled in 10 years, from 5,234 in 1950 to10,969 in 1960. A neighborhood was built off of North Road during that time called "Orchard Acres", which

cont. pg 6

VA Hospital's 90th Anniversary Celebration

This summer marked the 90th anniversary of the VA Hospital's opening here in Bedford. Following World War I, the Veterans Bureau needed a new hospital to help brain-injured men returning from the war. Other communities were reluctant to lose property from their tax bases, but at a public meeting here there was a unanimous vote to invite the hospital to be built in Bedford. It has been an integral part of the community ever since.

The VA had a large celebration on Saturday, July 14, to mark the anniversary with a parade, vintage cars, bands, horses, Bedford Farms ice cream, and more. Historical Society President Don Corey was among the speakers at the event. The Society had a display at the event featuring World War I memorabilia, photos and articles about the VA Hospital from its establishment, and photos of Bedford's own 200th Anniversary celebration, which happened the year after the hospital opened. Favorable comments about the display were made by a number of people.

Representing the Society, and manning the booth:.
From Left: Sharon McDonald, Don Corey and Lee Vorderer

Introducing our new Executive Director!

It is with excitement and anticipation that we greet our new Executive Director, Kathleen Fahey! She was hired over the summer to replace our departing Administrator, Kara Kerwin (see the following article!). It will be an enormous task learning all of Bedford's history and finding her way among the thousands of documents and artifacts in our Archives, but – with the help of Kara and our president Don Corey - she is well begun.

Kathleen has an impressive resume. She has twenty years of experience at local historical sites and societies. Most recently, she was the Curator of the Wellesley Historical Society, where she helped coordinate their future move to larger quarters (sound familiar?) all the way from planning exhibits and collection storage to learning all one needs to know about keeping insect pests out of tasty old documents.

The complicated computer program that we use to catalog our collection? She has already been using it in Wellesley for years. Not only cataloging and collections management, but doing research, fundraising, outreach to the public, grant-writing, and conducting programs are all her forte. All this and everyday things like opening the mail! Kathleen will be working twenty hours a week. Come by the Historical Society's office in the Police Station, or introduce yourself at the Society's booth at Bedford Day. We're thrilled to have her in Bedford!

Goodbye to Kara Kerwin

With sadness and gratitude, we must bid farewell to our current Administrator, Kara Kerwin. who is a special education teacher in the Burlington High School. A sudden shift in her teaching schedule makes keeping her hours in the Bedford Historical Society impossible. She has been so important to us!

For eight years, it has been Kara who has kept our Archives rolling. She catalogs new acquisitions, supervises our volunteers, does research to answer our many reference questions, makes sense of the money and keeps the membership records up to date. Those pictures of old Bedford taken in the 1880's? A 150-year-old bottle of Hayden's Viburnam from the Hayden Phamaceutical Company at Bedford Springs? A packet of letters written by the Pickman Family in the early 20th century? Kara found all these on the Internet and pounced on them. Our Society has been greatly enriched by her work here, and we will miss her terribly! Our best wishes go with you, Kara!

Sharon McDonald

A slice of History: Bedford Springs, the New York Pharmaceutical Company, and the Hayden House

By Julie McCayTurner for the Bedford Citizen *(Reprinted with permission)*

Some would say that a house is just structure built of bricks and mortar, but houses hold the history of their place and the stories of their families.

The residence at One Fawn Circle is still known as the Hayden house. It was built in 1926 by Sarah Holden Hayden to draw her son Arthur Holden Hayden back to Bedford so he could assume control of his father's company, New York Pharmaceutical Corporation, and continue the production of HVC, Hayden's Viburnum Compound, after his brother William's death in 1923.

But how did the New York Pharmaceutical Company come to Bedford Springs?

According to Abram English Brown's *History of the Town of Bedford*, Bedford Springs was part of the Shawshin grant that enlarged Newe Towne, soon to be renamed Cambridge, in 1644. Then through a land transfer, Captain Daniel Gookins sold 150 acres of his grant to Thomas Oakes. The land included Sulphur, Chalybeate, and Sweet Water springs that were used medicinally by Nipmuck and Pawtucket healers. Native American tribes living in the area were dispersed when the General Court ceded their land to the Town of Billerica through the Wamesick Purchase in 1685, but tribesmen returned through the 1700s to "fill their leathern buckets with waters from the springs."

Fast forward to 1835 when Augustus Pierce rented his pasture to local farmers. Livestock grazing near and drinking from the springs were reported to be in better overall health than cattle feeding nearby in apparently better pastures. According to *The Gem of New England*, Massachusetts' State Chemist Charles T. Jackson, MD, pronounced Bedford's spring waters to be valuable in treating disease, "particularly in all scrofulous and cutaneous diseases, rheumatism, and affections of the kidneys."

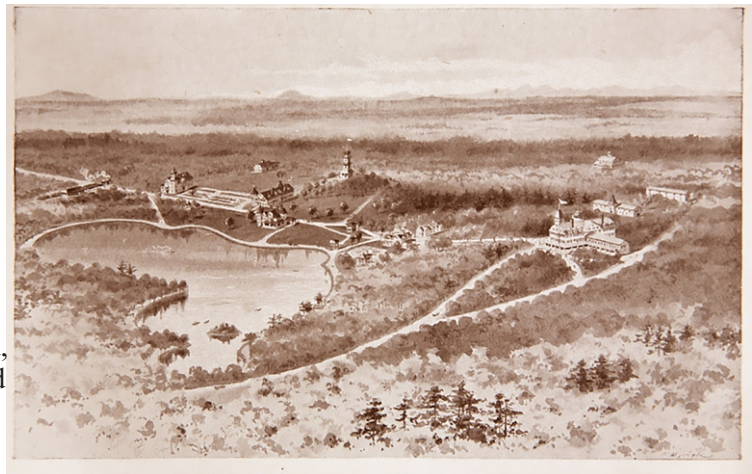
W. R. HAYDEN, M. D.
Author of the formulæ of "Hayden's Viburnum Compound."

Dr. Jackson's report was confirmed by other scientists and attracted Dr. William Richardson Hayden who purchased the property in 1856 and moved the New York Pharmaceutical Company to Bedford Springs in 1867. The company's laboratory, now the site of condominiums on Sweetwater Avenue, produced up to 350 different potions based on the spring waters and various healing botanicals. Its principal products were Compound Phosphorus Pills, Uric Solvent, and Hayden's Viburnum Compound. In 1889, 25,000 pounds of Hayden's Viburnum Compound were shipped from the laboratory via the American Express office at Bedford Springs.

The Development of Bedford Springs

Dr. Hayden petitioned the Legislature for a charter to bring the nation's first narrow-gauge railroad, the Billerica and Bedford Railroad, to Bedford Springs along what's now known as the Narrow Gauge Rail Trail in 1877. After the line's bankruptcy in 1878, he persuaded the Boston and Lowell Railroad (later the Boston and Maine) to expand the right-of-way with a standard gauge branch line that opened in 1885. In 1888 he established the Bedford Springs Post Office and served as its Postmaster.

The spring-fed pond that became Fawn Lake was reportedly dug during the 1870s by 100 Italian laborers who traveled from Boston each week and lived in a temporary building near the Bedford Springs train depot, according to Willis Farrington in his 1999 book, *An Awesome Century*. Fawn Lake and its surrounding acreage were turned over to the Town as conservation land by Hayden descendants in 1978.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW FROM "THE SWEETWATER," BEDFORD SPRINGS, MASS.

Dr. Hayden's original purchase included the Springs House Hotel which was never commercially viable. After it was demolished in 1897, Hayden began construction of the Sweetwater Hotel. Handsomely laid out, beautifully appointed, and heavily advertised, the Sweetwater Hotel became a favored destination for Bostonians seeking to escape the city's summer heat or to take its curative waters.

(this article will continue in our October issue)

"What's in a Name? cont. fr. pg 1

Carleton-Willard Village began as Willard Hospital in 1890 to treat "dipsomania" or alcoholism. In 1910, the mission of the facility changed, becoming a place to aid middle-aged women who needed a temporary home in which to recuperate, learn a job skill or just recharge their batteries. The mission change came with a new name, Llewsac Lodge, which is the backwards spelling of the facility's founder, Caroline Caswell.

Davis, Hartwell and Page Roads were named for founding families. Davis Road encircles lands that belonged to Daniel and Eleazer Davis in 1730. Hartwell Road was laid out soon after the town was organized. William Hartwell was a large landowner. Hartwell Town Forest was given to Bedford by a descendent of the family. Page Road bears the name of Nathaniel Page, who acquired much of the land in 1688. The Page homestead stands at the intersection of Page and Brooksbie Roads.

Willson Park, at the intersection of the Great Road, Concord and North Roads, honors Captain Jonathan Willson, who was the captain of Bedford's Minuteman Company in 1775. He was killed in the attack on the retreating British forces near Bloody Angle, Lincoln on April 19, 1775. Willson Park is also the scene of Bedford's Pole Capping event every April.

Harriet M. Mudge, Bedford's first female postmaster and her sister Rebecca established the Mudge Fund to provide recreational opportunities for children, such as the playing fields to the west of Town Center. The road that runs through Town Center past the playground was named Mudge Way in their honor.

Edwin N. Rand rented out rowboats and canoes at his Oakland Boat and Canoe Livery on the Concord River in West Bedford. The streetcars that ran along Concord Road brought customers, dropping them off at the end of Davis Road. The boathouse, which stood near the end of today's Rand Place, burned down in 1921.

In 1694, the present Wilson Road was laid out leading to John Wilson's mills. In 1683, Wilson established a grist mill on Vine Brook, a tributary of the Shawsheen River. In 1685 Wilson was granted an additional thirty acres adjacent to the mill. He eventually operated both a grist mill and a saw mill on Vine Brook.

Bacon Road was named for the prominent Bacon family. Michael Bacon built his mill in about 1663 and settled here in 1671. There were six Bacons from Bedford who served as Minutemen in the Concord fight.

Dr. William Richardson Hayden purchased the Bedford Springs House hotel in 1866. Hayden relocated his pharmaceutical company, New York Pharmaceuticals, near Fawn Lake while continuing to operate the Bedford Springs resort. Both were very successful; the hotel because of the mineral-laden springs and the business because of the popularity of elixirs, including Hayden's Viburnum Compound.

Mary Alzina (Hartwell) Fletcher was the main force behind the development of the Fletcher Road area. A Bedford native and descendant of two old Bedford families, she inherited 60 acres from her parents, and by the end of 1912, had sold 44 building lots. She recalled the names of patriots who had influenced her nation and drew Hancock Street, Maxwell Road and Paul Revere Road on her map.

Elihu G. Loomis was a prominent attorney and judge in Boston and Bedford. He developed Loomis Street as an eastern approach to the new railroad station at the intersection of Loomis Street and South Road. The trolley from Lexington turned left at Loomis Street, stopping at the railroad station, and then went up South Road to Main Street (now The Great Road) eventually dividing at Willson Park, with one line going to Concord, and the other line heading off to Billerica.

Wallace Gleason Webber purchased large parcels of land in the center of town which he subdivided for residential development and is probably best known for building houses on Webber and Hillside Avenues. He was co-founder of Paine, Webber & Co., an internationally known Boston investment firm.

Right in Bedford there are two historic places open to the public. The original Bedford Flag, believed to have been carried by the Bedford Minutemen to the Concord Bridge on April 19, 1775 can be viewed at the Bedford Free Public Library. Our Bedford Flag is the oldest flag in the United States. It was made for a cavalry troop of the local Massachusetts Bay Militia early in the eighteenth century. It can be viewed any time the library is open.

The Job Lane House at 295 North Road is open on selective Sundays from May through October. Deacon Job Lane built the present house about 1713. It contains murals thought to be painted by New England muralist, Rufus Porter. The house is maintained by the Friends of the Job Lane House. Check their website (joblanehouse.org) for a schedule of when the house and barn are open.

The Bedford Historical Society, with over 250 members, is the caretaker of Bedford's past. Their inventory contains thousands of documents and other unique items donated by residents who wish to keep Bedford's past alive. Residents are invited to find out more about Bedford by visiting the Society and attending its monthly meetings.

Historic Preservation Commission Update

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is a town-appointed commission with its mission of working to preserve historic properties and other cultural resources that contribute to the town's character. The Historical Society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation with its mission to preserve documents, artifacts, photographs and information regarding Bedford's rich history. The two organizations' efforts complement each other in many ways. A few of the HPC recent projects are noted here.

David Fitch House

National Register of Historic Places – The HPC is providing assistance to Carleton-Willard Village in its efforts to have the David Fitch House (their guest house) listed on the National Register. The HPC also applied to the Mass. Historical Comm. (MHC) to have a portion of Concord Road listed on the National Register. Such listing can provide financial incentives for owners of historic homes in their preservation efforts. The MHC determined that the historic integrity of the neighborhood had been too compromised by modern construction to qualify. However, the Col. Timothy Jones House appears to be individually eligible, and the HPC is preparing documentation to move forward on that house.

Commission Vacancies – A second vacancy just opened up on the 7-member Commission. Anyone interested in more information about serving on this Town Board is encouraged to contact the Historical Society, which will forward your information to the appropriate individuals.

Don Corey

Col. Timothy Jones House

Help Support the Society's Work to Preserve Our Past

Join Us! Clip and Mail:

Member Application

Annual Membership Dues:

_ Individual: $25.00
_ Couple/Family: $45.00
_ Contribution: $100.00
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_ Benefactor: $300.00

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Send us an email:
info@bedfordmahistory.org

The Preservationist.
Design, production & photography: Jan van Steenwijk
Contributing writers ; Carol Amick, Don Corey, Kara Kerwin, Brian Oulighan & Sharon McDonald

The Preservationist
Bedford Historical Society, Inc.
2 Mudge Way
Bedford, MA 01730-1238

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DON'T MISS IT!!!

See You on Bedford Day

Bedford Day, a fun day for young and old. The Historical Society will once again join in celebrating Bedford Day on Saturday, September 22.

Festivities commence with the parade on The Great Road from Loomis Street to Mudge Way. The Society again intends to display its big Bedford Flag float in the parade, following behind Bedford's Citizen of the Year.

The Society will of course also have its booth, located again this year near the food booths opposite Town Hall. The Rock Village Forge blacksmith will be at the booth showing how tools and other items were made in the "old days". A wide variety of merchandise, including Bedford Flags, T-shirts, caps, books, maps and other items, will be available for purchase at the booth.

The End of...cont. fr. pg 1

included Appletree Lane & Macintosh Road. The land was previously owned by Marcellus Copeland, who had owned the farm of about 100 acres for about 40 years. He had 200 apple trees, 11 or more cows, and over 40 chickens.

The new owner, Theodore Belbin, was a carpenter from Cambridge and ran a boarding house on Mass. Ave. in Harvard Square before coming to Bedford. He appears to have been "city raised". The first house that he sold on Appletree Lane in April 1954 contained the following restrictions in the deed:

1 - No chicken coops, henhouses, rabbit hutches, swine houses or swine pens or cattle sheds shall be placed or built on the premises.

2 - No cattle or poultry; such as hens, chickens, ducks or geese and no rabbits, horses, ponies, swine, mink or foxes shall be kept on the premises.

3 – No kennels shall be placed or maintained on the premises.

4 – No commercial motor vehicles commonly known as trucks, buses, trailers or home trailers shall be stored or lived in on the premises except a motor vehicle commonly known as a pick-up truck with a capacity of not more than one-half ton may be stored on the premises.

I think this was the end of our farming community.

Brian Oulighan