

Adventures of the Museum Director



Barbara Parkhurst's gown for the 1935 Apple Blossom Festival

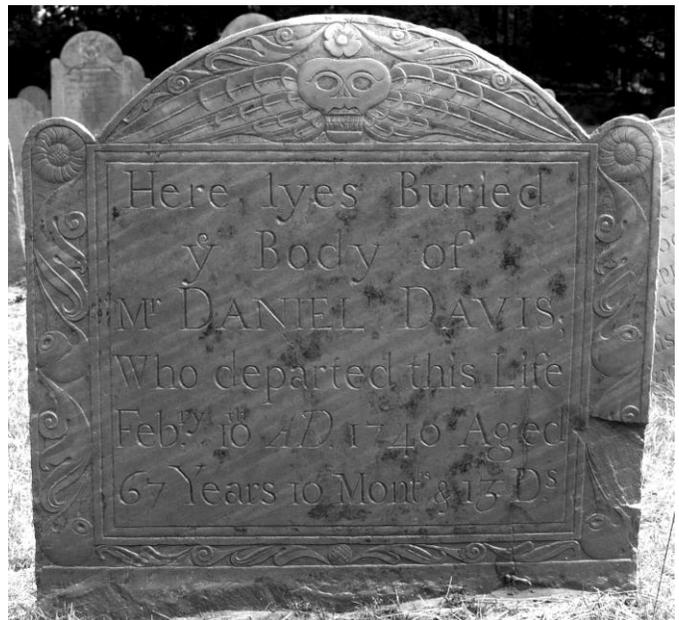
I recently had the opportunity to participate in a **Costume Mounting workshop** offered at the Andover Historical Society by Camille Breeze, a professional textile preservationist. Each participant brought along a costume and a manikin. We were taught about different manikins and mounting techniques and then given the time and resources to mount our own costume. I chose a salmon colored gown, which had been worn by Barbara (Hildreth) Parkhurst, a Lady in Waiting at Westford's first Apple Blossom Festival in 1935. It was made by her mother, Mrs. Arthur G. Hildreth. Now I'm contemplating an Apple Blossom Festival exhibit for the Spring of '08. Anyone who has any **Apple Blossom memorabilia** or photos, I'd love to hear from you!

In another recent adventure, I spent a morning **cleaning gravestones at the Old Burying Ground in Bedford**. Bedford received a grant to restore some of their historical cemeteries. (What cemeteries are not "historical"?) In addition to repairing and resetting some stones and replacing the sod coverings over the double-layered brick tomb vaults, they are doing some basic cleaning of gravestones. A small group of volunteers, trained by a professional monument preservation consultant, is cleaning the stones, many of which, over the years, have become partially or totally covered by algal or lichen growth, obscuring the inscriptions. The process involves a few commercially available chemicals, soft brushes, and a lot of 'elbow grease'. If anyone is interested in more details, I'd be happy to put you in touch with the appropriate people.

Wishing you many historic adventures during the coming holiday season!



Daniel Davis' gravestone before cleaning



Daniel Davis' gravestone after cleaning

Music at the Museum

The **Westford Folk Concert Series** upcoming concerts:

Dec 14 - Hanneke Cassel Trio - "Exuberant and rhythmic, somehow both wild and innocent, delivered with captivating melodic clarity and an irresistible playfulness," says The Boston Globe about Hanneke Cassel's playing. Such charismatic fiddling has brought Hanneke Cassel many honors and awards. She is the 1997 U.S. National Scottish Fiddle Champion, and holds a Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance from Berklee College of Music.

Jan 11 - Spirit Fiddle - Champion Fiddler Robin Warren and Guitarist Brian Clancey, performs a wide variety of energetic music, ranging from bouncy Southern and Texas swing tunes to sweet waltzes, old popular songs, bluegrass numbers, French Canadian and Celtic jigs and reels, and Parisian musette.

Feb 8 - Notorious - Eden MacAdam-Somer and Larry Unger bring together traditional and contemporary acoustic music from around the world, creating a dynamic, swinging sound that is sure to get you on your feet. With Eden on fiddle and vocals and Larry on guitar and banjo, their music is full of rhythmic drive and melodic candor. Their show is always new and exciting, presenting everything from traditional American and Celtic fiddle tunes to jazz, blues, and the group's original compositions.

March 14 - Yankee Notions - Yankee Notions is **Jim Douglas and Tim Van Egmond**. Both are accomplished singers, storytellers, and musicians (guitar, hammered dulcimer, English concertina, pennywhistle, Appalachian dulcimer). Performing throughout New England for close to 20 years, Yankee Notions has been featured in hundreds of community concerts and festivals, schools, libraries senior centers, and heritage museums (including Old Sturbridge Village (MA), Historic Deerfield (MA), Mystic Seaport (CT), Old Bethpage Village Restoration (NY), and Plimoth Plantation (MA)).

April 11 - Eric McDonald and Mia Friedman - Eric and Mia are multi-faceted young musicians that are making an impact on the Boston folk music scene. Eric, a student at Berklee and founder of numerous bands, fronts the critically acclaimed local bluegrass band Jaded Mandolin, plays in a duo with his sister Justine called Talaria, and plays mandolin for various singer/songwriters and ensembles in the area. Mia, a dynamic fiddler, studied with Hanneke Cassel,

Alasdair Frasier and Natalie McMaster, among others, and recently released a record of mostly her own compositions with her sister Ari, entitled Lady and the Pants. She also plays in the fiddle quintet 5AM.

May 9 - Providence Whompers - Chris Turner and Rachel Maloney return to the museum for a rousing night of entertainment. Hohner Blues Harmonica Champion Chris Turner plays the harmonica with a skill and vibrancy that must be seen to be fully appreciated. Rachel adds a well-polished and infectiously enthusiastic fiddle to the mix. They play a mixture of American and European traditional music, blending a myriad of harmonics to create a rich and luscious sound. Chris also plays English bag pipes, Jew's harp, flute, penny whistle, and wind controller, and, of course, vocal chords. Rachel, in addition to fiddle, plays bowed psaltery, melodeon, Jew's harp, washboard, and electronic and midi-fiddle (five string).

Jun 13 - Stephen Webber and Friends (at the PCA)
This concert only: Members \$12, non-members \$18, teens \$5, under 13 free.

Warm up performances start at about 7:15 PM. Concerts are in the Westford Museum, unless otherwise noted. Refreshments are pot luck. Adult Museum members pay \$10, adult non-members \$15, and teens \$5 per concert. 12 and under are admitted free. Our seating space is limited. If you are not a season ticket holder, please call 978-692-5550 or e-mail museum@Westford.com to reserve a seat.

Membership update

The Westford Historical Society membership year runs from 1 November to 31 October. Membership letters have gone out. If you haven't received yours or if you'd like to become a new member, please complete the form below and send it along with your check today! Thanks for your support!

2007-2008 WHS Membership

Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40
Students/Seniors	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10
Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Benefactor	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> \$_____

Coming Events

Love Letters

The intimate correspondence of
John and Abigail Adams



The correspondence between John and Abigail Adams over their months and years of separation gives us unparalleled insight into one of the world's great love affairs. The fact that this love affair took place at such a critical time in America's history is most remarkable! Reenactors Tom Macy and Pat Bridgman bring the Adamases' letters to life as the audience is brought from 1762 and the beginnings of their courtship, to 1777 when John is preparing to leave for France. Learn more about these iconic personalities as they reveal their homely pleasure in their children and their farm, their deepest hopes for their nation, and their undying love and respect for one another.

The Museum will be hosting this romantic presentation on Saturday, 9 February, just in time for Valentine's Day. Plan to bring your valentine! Tickets will go on sale in January.



Tom Macy and Pat Bridgman as
John and Abigail Adams

Book Group to Discuss the *Wardsman* in February

For the annual book discussion, we will be reading extracts from the *Westford Wardsman* newspaper. The *Wardsman* was published as a section of the weekly Ayer newspaper, *Turner's Public Spirit*. The *Public Spirit* began publication in 1869, although the early issues have very little information on Westford. A *Westford* section was inserted in the paper about November 1905 and the *Westford Wardsman* made its first appearance in the *Public Spirit* in January 1906.

The Westford Historical Society has microfilm of *Turner's Public Spirit* from January 1908 to December, 1921, and the J. V. Fletcher Library has five scrapbooks of clippings from the *Wardsman* dating from July 28, 1906 to December 30, 1916. The Ayer Public Library also holds microfilm copies of the *Public Spirit*, although some of the microfilm is completely illegible.

The *Westford Wardsman* contained various sections, apparently written by different correspondents, covering various parts of town. For example, nearly

every issue had sections under the following subheadings: *Center*, *About Town*, *Graniteville*, and *Forge Village*. Additional subheadings were used for such items as weddings, deaths, funerals, entertainments, church services, sporting events, town meetings, and other special events. We are transcribing representative articles from the *Wardsman* which we will make available to book discussion participants at the cost of copies.

We will be discussing the *Wardsman* on each of the four Tuesdays in February. Please call the Historical Society office at 978-692-5550 to register for the book discussion and to obtain your copy of the *Westford Wardsman* transcript. There is no cost to attend beyond the cost of the transcript copy.

The *Westford Wardsman* provides a rich source of information on the day-to-day activities within the town of Westford at the beginning of the 20th century. Join with us as we learn about life in Westford a hundred years ago.

Lois Scheyder: 3rd Grade Tour Guide Extraordinaire!



“The Solomon Keyes House was built in 1664. How old is it now?” This is one of the questions 3rd graders were asked while on their October bus tours of Westford with Dee Bus Company driver Lois Scheyder.

Each fall, all the 3rd graders in Westford come on a field trip to the Westford Museum. This year 20 classes of third graders from the Day, Crisafulli and Abbot schools spent an hour in the museum, with tours led by Westford Academy Museum club members, and then took a one-hour bus tour of Westford.

Lois has been involved in the bus tours for 6 years, since her daughter was a 3rd grader. She has gradually built up her participation, and this year drove for all 20 tours, narrating over half of them.

Lois moved to Westford 16 years ago after leaving home in Wisconsin to seek out a change. She’s still here and loves the history of the town she now calls home. “I like getting the history out to the kids,” Lois said.

The tours are pre-scripted, but Lois makes a point of talking about the railroad and waterway connections and how the two were necessary for early industry in Westford. She also *ad libs* math questions for the students to do in their heads. If you calculated 343 years in your head, well you’re as smart as a third-grader!

A Treasured Family Recipe Bake-off and Bake Sale

Come share your treasured holiday baked item with us and you will be eligible to win a prize and the honor of having your baking skills recognized. The Westford Museum will host a contest for local bakers to compete on Sunday, December 9th from 2-4 P.M. There will be categories for children, aged 5-13; young bakers, aged 14-18; adult bakers and professional bakers. Entries will be judged upon appearance, creativity, originality and taste.

To participate, please request a registration form and full information by contacting Ann at 978-692-7965 or E-mail Gail at Connolly408@aol.com.

Bake-off participants will receive a limited edition cookbook containing photos and recipes from the competition in time for gift giving. Copies of the cookbook will also be available from the Museum.

The Museum will also be conducting a bake sale concurrently with the Bake-off. Anyone who would like to contribute should register as indicated above.

TOWN OF WESTFORD COMMITTEE MEMBERS SOUGHT Historical Commission

The Westford Board of Selectmen is seeking applications for the Town’s Historical Commission. Although not required the following qualifications will be desirable:

1. Can attend meetings held on the third Wednesday of the month at 7PM, and other meetings as necessary.
2. Knowledge or the desire to learn about Westford history.
3. Can entertain and support innovative ways to protect, preserve and promote Westford history.
4. Has a background in, but not limited to historical preservation, architecture, construction, or law.
5. Most importantly brings enthusiasm and the desire to work with the Historical Commission to further our goals.
6. Has volunteered in some other capacity for the Town of Westford.

Appointment is for a term of three (3) years

Interested persons should complete and submit a Citizen Activity Form which is available online at www.westford-ma.gov, the Town Clerk’s Office or the Town Manager’s Office.

Roland Pendlebury

Long-time Member

One of the Historical Society's long-time members, Roland Francis Pendlebury, passed away on September 8, 2007. He was born in Graniteville on March 16, 1916, the son of Scottish immigrants, attended Sargent School, Westford Academy, and the Lowell Vocational School, and lived in Graniteville most of his life. He was a longtime member of the Methodist Church in Graniteville, was the church's oldest and longest attending member, and was usually the first member of the congregation to arrive for Sunday morning services. Roland had a lifelong interest in Westford's history and in the history of his church.

In addition to his longtime membership in the Historical Society, Roland served on the Westford Historical Commission from 1990 to 2005 over the time when the Demolition Delay Bylaw was passed and our five villages and five cemeteries were placed on the National Register of Historic Places. He served regularly as a docent at the Westford Museum. A former employee of Abbot Worsted Mill and the C. G. Sargent Sons Co., he recently contributed to the Museum's current exhibit on the Abbot Worsted Mill, and he was present at the exhibit's opening on May 19, 2007.

Roland served in the U.S. Army in England in World War II where he met his wife, Ruth. He held memberships in the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6539, the American Legion Post 159, and the Tahattawan Masonic Lodge in Littleton where he was a Past Master. As a young man he served in the Westford Fire Department, and he was Scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 159 in Westford.

We will miss Roland at the Museum. We extend our condolences to his wife, Ruth, and to his family.

Westford Area Spinners

A group of spinners meet at the Museum on the second Tuesday and Fourth Thursday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. The group is informal with no fees or sign-ups. All are welcome. Bring a spinning wheel or drop spindle, or just come by to watch and chat. Information on learning to spin is available from members of the group. For more information, contact Christine at chfknts@gmail.com

Holiday Gifts in the Museum Shop!

The 2008 Westford Historical Society Calendar featuring photos of the Abbot Worsted Company is now available in the Museum Shop. These historic and recent photos of the mills and the Abbot workers make a wonderful keepsake after your visit to the Abbot exhibit at the museum. Great gift idea, too!

Walking Tour of Fairview Cemetery

Book by Marilyn Day, now for sale!

This 53 page full-color manuscript is based on a tour of Fairview cemetery given by the Westford Historical Society in September 2006. The manuscript contains a history of the cemetery and brief stories of many of the folks interred there. It is full of wonderful color photographs by Rob Rubin and is a fresh look at our oldest town cemetery. Copies of *Walking Tour of Fairview Cemetery* are available at the Westford Museum. \$22.00.

A Note from Marilyn:

Dan's kind words in the last newsletter were certainly appreciated, however, I couldn't help but think of all the people who have gone before me, who have put in untold hours, those who began the museum, and worked on the collection and buildings, those who have been officers and on the board, those who have served refreshments and planned so many great functions and those who kept the doors open during some very dark days. They are the ones that really deserve our on-going thanks. Somehow through years of transition, the goal and focus of our town museum and historical society have remained intact, so that all we do continues to reinforce our goal of preserving Westford's history, and I'm glad to have been counted among those able to participate in such a vital organization.

Marilyn Day

Westford Academy Museum Club

In addition to helping out with the 3rd grade tours this fall, the Westford Academy Museum Club members are preparing for the Westford Academy Bazaar. They will be selling pottery, books and other Westford gift items from the Museum Shop, so be sure to stop by their table at the Bazaar on Saturday 1 December!

Contact Us



The Westford Museum is located at 2 Boston Road, next to the Parish Center for the Arts.

The Museum is open Sunday afternoons (except holidays) from 2:00-4:00, or by appointment. Check our on-line calendar for specific dates.

The Westford Historical Society office is located in the cottage at 4 Boston Road. Regular business hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Office phone/fax: 978-692-5550

We're on the web at www.westford.com/museum.

Penny Lacroix MuseumDirector@westford.com

Museum@westford.com (for folk concert tickets)

Fall 2007

Westford Museum Musings

EXPANDED

The Westford Historical Society
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www.westford.com/museum

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