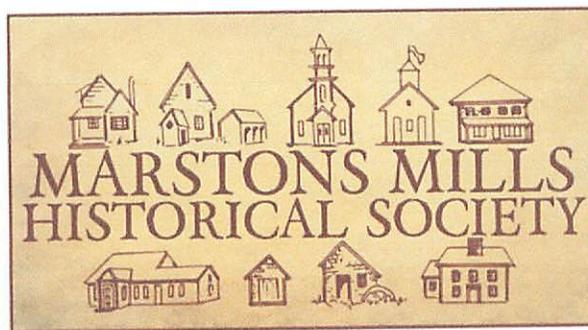


Marstons Mills Historical Society
Interview with Beryl Lewis
(by Jim Gould & David Martin)
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I just turned 99. My maiden name was Torrey; I was born in south Braintree and went to Braintree High School (1929). My mother's maiden name was Barnicoat. I went to Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School. To begin with I worked at Crawford Hollidge Department Stores on Tremont Street in Boston—a beautiful store. It was one of those very nice stores where they waited on you—all those niceties are gone. I worked for Cities Service in Braintree, but had to quit when I married Paul Davis in 1934 because they didn't allow you to marry. I raised three daughters in Hingham. My mother's maiden name was Barnacle, from Quincy. My cousin, Charlie Fox, was a wood carver; at one time he lived at the corner of Falmouth Road and Route 149. Paul inherited his father's photography business, and did commercial photo's for Howard Johnson, and billboards.

We first came down here after the war when my three daughters were teenagers. I bought this house from "Rae" (Dr. Rachel Burgess). Paul was her nephew, the son of Rachel Burgess' sister Alice. She also had another sister Katharine and two brothers, Stoddard and George Hardwick. She didn't get married until she was in her forties, in 1938. Her husband was James Atwood Burgess, a specialist in marine insurance in Boston (James was not related to the numerous Burgess families who have lived for generations on Cape Cod). James was a notable yachtsman in his own right and insured many of the great luxury yachts of his day. Rae owned what is now the Burgess House on Route 149 in Marstons Mills, diagonally across the street from my house. James and Rachel met during the hurricane of 1944 when she was ducking in out of the storm in the same restaurant as a shelter. Jim invited them to join them at his table.

You know she was a pediatrician, a very gracious lady. I don't think she practiced down here, but she did a lot of volunteering. We inherited our present house across the street from the Burgess House from Rae in about 1987, and our daughters used to swim in the pond (Hamblin's) down at the beach. The Burgess House was beautiful, well cared for, with wonderful gardens, tended by a gardener by the name of Knute (Carlson) who lived in the house down on the water. A maid named Mary lived in the barn—she was Black. We had picnics down at the beach. There was a big lobster feast there. My children weren't afraid of Rachel, but held her in awe. She had finger bowls at dinner, and you knew you were on your best behavior when you came down. On her death, her great niece inherited the house, and she sold it to the town. (A set of slides is available that shows the house and gardens as were in 1961-2).

Rachel was the youngest of the three Hardwick girls. My mother-in-law Alice, the oldest, married George Davis, a photographer of Boston.

Katharine was a social worker at Simmons College, and never married. She was Dean of the School of Social Work there, and Hardwick Hall there was named for her. Katharine became the chair of the Oversight Committee of the Boston Welfare Department. She also was involved in the planning of the national Social Security system, including sessions at her house at 54 Front Street in Marblehead. The news clippings about Katharine's career are kept in the Simmons Library. She had a strong resemblance to Eleanor Roosevelt, and on the day that Eleanor died, Katharine was getting out of an official

limousine in Boston when a woman saw her and fainted, thinking she was Eleanor's ghost! About 1950 she built her own house on the corner of Old Falmouth Road and Cotuit Road (Route 149). Then there were no houses between this house and hers. "Stod" (Stoddard)'s wife was Myrtle. Paul's sister Theodosia, a niece of Rachel Burgess, married Philip Morehouse; they had two children, John and Jane.

The House was fixed up through work of local people. My (third) husband, Herb Lewis, did a lot of the windows, along with Charlie Fox and Fred Adams. Pat Fox, Sally Adams and I painted the fence in front of the house along with Sally Adams and others. Bob Frazee now acts as a caretaker for the House. A Friends group now meets at the house on Sunday mornings.

