



# The Marston's Grist

The newsletter of the Marstons Mills Historical Society

## President's Message

*As we enter the second quarter of the twenty-first century (believe it or not!), we reflect on the year just past and look ahead. The Marstons Mills Historical Society in 2025 was saddened by the loss of two of its key members—Rick Presbrey, President, and Dianne Potter, Archivist; both contributed significantly to the activities and the resources of the Society. Our Program Committee, headed by Vice-President Freddy Kraics, has made great strides in developing plans and events of a highly varied nature—see the upcoming schedule for the first half of 2026 in this issue. And the Archives is poised to become more widely accessible for members to enjoy and appreciate its relatively small but very rich holdings; again, see the related article in this issue. Meanwhile, we salute the ongoing commitment of officers and members to make our community fully aware of the Mills' importance in local and regional history over nearly 400 years. Best wishes for 2026 to all!*  
— David S. Martin

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## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Details on the next five upcoming may be found on page 5 .

## A LOOK-BACK AT CAMP ALPINE



For its September 2025 program, Society members enjoyed a thorough look at the rather long history of Camp Alpine, located for well over 20 years on the shores of Middle Pond. Joanne Budd Cunningham, daughter of Camp Directors Mark and Lillian Budd, came to the meeting from her home in Sherborn, MA to present narratives about the story of the Camp, along with artifacts and photographs. Current member Aimee Silberman recalled happy memories of her three children as campers at the camp during their childhood years. Acting President David Martin also told stories from his year as a counselor at the camp in the summer of 1960 when he was in graduate school; he was one of three counselors for the six-year-old boys and taught woodcraft (ways to construct shelters from .../...

*The Mission of the Marstons Mills Historical Society is to foster an interest in the story of our village. We preserve historical images, documents and artifacts, research historic resources and support educational opportunities for all ages for villagers and other interested persons, in order to better understand and appreciate the past, present and future of Marstons Mills.*

**\*\*The MMHS meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 2:00 p.m. at Marstons Mills Public Library.\*\***

## 2026 MMHS OFFICERS

*President: David Martin*

*Vice-President: Freddy Kraics*

*Secretary: Marguerite Adams*

*Treasurer: Bebe Brock*

*Archivists: Jeannie Oakley*

*& Marguerite Adams*

*Website Mgr. & Grist Editor:*

*Wendy Bierwirth*

*Past Presidents:*

*David Martin, Bob Frazee,  
Rick Presbrey, Sandra Bolton*

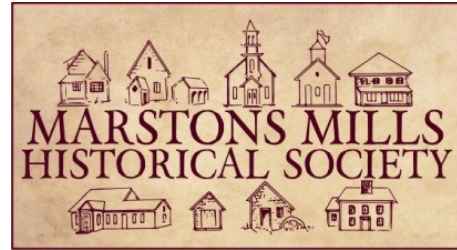
## BOOK STORE

***“Images of America: Marstons Mills.”*** An Arcadia Publication written by local historians James Gould and Vivian Cushing that presents the village's history through rich and fascinating images and gives readers and residents a view into the past.

***“Women of Barnstable.”*** By James W. Gould and Nancy Viall Shoemaker. "Women have been exploring the world and delighting in their discoveries for all of history. When one looks a little closer, as close as one's own hometown, their tales can be surprising and delightful."

***“Explore! Contemporary Marstons Mills, Cape Cod.”*** A limited edition, full-color book by Sandra Bolton. Mail a check payable to MMHS for \$32 plus \$5 shipping and handling to P.O. Box 1375, Marstons Mills MA 02648. Also available by emailing [boltonslanding@comcast.net](mailto:boltonslanding@comcast.net), subject line: order book.

***“The Revolutionary War on Cape Cod and the Islands.”*** Published in observance of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of American independence. Available for purchase at \$25 in person or \$30 by mail order. Written by 27 contributors, the book covers the period 1761-1783 and the events and individuals on Cape and Islands which played important roles in the Revolution. The book was developed by the Cape and Islands Historians Committee, two of whose members (Nancy Shoemaker and David Martin) are also Society members. Contact [davidmartindr@aol.com](mailto:davidmartindr@aol.com) to arrange a purchase.



## MEMBERSHIP FORM

I / we wish to **join** the Society and enclose payment for my / our Individual Membership(s) at \$20 each.

I / we wish to **renew** my/our membership for 2026 at \$20 each.

I / we wish to make a charitable contribution to the Society to support the development of its Village Archives and the Preservation of its Collection.

\$250    \$150    \$75    \$25    \$10    Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street / POB: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I / we wish to be notified about MMHS Meetings.

Please mail your check or bring it to the Library, marked for MMHS. Regular meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, 2:00pm. Thank you!

Cut out and return to the address on the bottom of the form.

Comments and articles for  
submission should be sent to  
[davidmartindr@aol.com](mailto:davidmartindr@aol.com)

## A LOOK-BACK AT CAMP ALPINE CONT'D

the forest and the building of campfires), led all-camp singalongs, and provided the Friday evening Sabbath “message” each week of that season. The Society Archives has a fine collection of memorabilia from the camp (together with collections about other former camps in the Mills), which members can access by appointment at any time.

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## WEST BARNSTABLE BRICK FACTORY



For its October 2025 meeting, the Society had the benefit of a presentation about the historic West Barnstable Brick Factory—a significant industrial presence in the region which manufactured bricks for many years for Cape construction projects. Member Nancy Shoemaker, historian and Vice-Chair of the Barnstable Historical Commission, provided a description, samples, and illustrations about the work of the factory in the region. One can still find bricks in some locations on Cape Cod which have the imprint of the West Barnstable Brick Factory. A bonus is

Nancy’s offer during spring 2026 to lead a walking tour of the site of the Factory for those who are interested in further depth about this manufacturing presence within our Town.

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## CAPE COD AIRFIELD



The Cape Cod Airfield—the only remaining grass airport on all of Cape Cod—lies within Marstons Mills and borders West Barnstable. Founded in 1929 on the site of what had been a raceway in prior years, the field and its history were described by Airport Manager Chris Siderwicz, Jr. and his wife, Caty, at the November 2025 meeting, which was held on site in the hangar of the airfield. Chris gave an in-depth review of the history, including the presence of Amelia Earhart at one point in the 1930’s, along with a superb collections of photographs and posters. Members also had a chance to

tour the entire hangar and see the various aircraft which are housed and in some cases still regularly used during the airfield’s season (spring, summer, and fall).

.../...

[marstonsmillshistorical.org](http://marstonsmillshistorical.org)

## CAPE COD AIRFIELD CONT'D



Separately, in August 2025, Chris Siderwicz, Sr. gave several interested members a sight-seeing ride in one of his restored DC-3 aircraft, which had originally flown on the Provincetown-Boston route for many years. Beautiful weather provided riders with close aerial views of the entire southwest part of Cape Cod, including all three Canal bridges. A future repeat of the flight can be arranged if at least six people are interested during 2026.

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## EASTHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Marca Daly, Director of the Eastham Historical Society, gave a presentation at the December 2025 meeting of the Society. That Society has a virtual “campus” of historic buildings that have been assembled over the years for anyone interested in the history of the Outer Cape in general and Eastham in particular. Among the buildings are an exhibit center, a historic restored 1869 schoolhouse, a gift shop, a library, the Ranlett Tool Museum, a Fishing Shack, and a research center which includes genealogy archives and photographs. A rich collection

of historic artifacts is one of the attractions of that Society, which is open during the summer months. However, anyone interested in investigating the history of the region can make an appointment at any time of the year to carry out their own research.

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## THE ARCHIVES LOOK AHEAD

### Dianne K. Potter Archives

The Society’s archives, now named the Dianne Potter Archives to honor Dianne’s significant work and memory, is preparing to identify elements of the varied collection to showcase to members at different times. A tour of the archives will take place as part of one of the Spring 2026 monthly meetings, to demonstrate to members the overall comprehensiveness of the collection. Marguerite Adams and Jeannie Oakley are working to plan events, and have the advantage of a funding bequest made to the Society by

Dianne’s estate. Anyone who is interested in looking at any aspect of the collection can arrange an appointment with either Jeannie or Marguerite at a mutually convenient time.

# PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORT

The Program Committee, led by Freddy Kraics, has been hard at work to identify a series of program ideas for monthly meetings. The planned schedule of topics until summer 2026 is provided below. Committee members, in addition to Freddy, are Aimee Silberman, Wendy Bierwirth, Jeannie Oakley, and Marguerite Adams. It is clear that a broad view of Cape history will enlighten all who are able to attend these upcoming meetings.

February 10, 2026: Cotuit Oyster Company

March 10, 2026: Curious Cape Cod

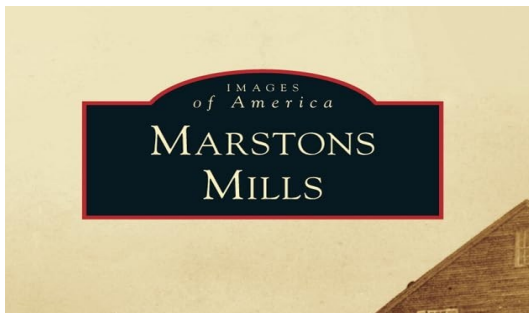
April 14, 2026: Archeological Discoveries on Cape Cod

May 12, 2026: History of the Shiverick Boatyard, Dennis

June 9, 2026: Bourne Historical Society and the Aptuxet Trading Center

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## ARCADIA BOOK



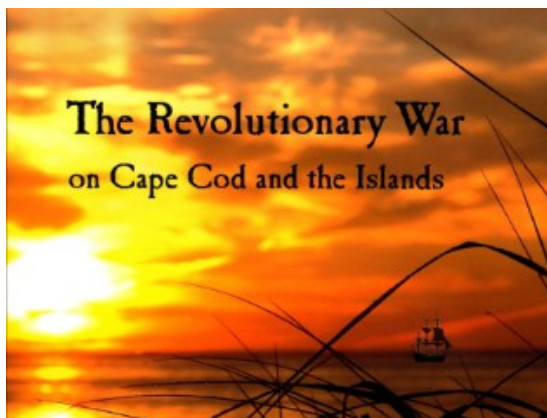
A fresh supply of the Arcadia book series, “**History of Marston Mills,**” is now available.

This book, published several years ago by the late Jim Gould and the late Vivian Cushing remains available at the unchanged price of \$24, and the book now has a more detailed index than the original published index.

The book can be purchased at the Library by contacting David Martin at [davidmartindr@aol.com](mailto:davidmartindr@aol.com).

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## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION ON CAPE COD



The newly published 2025 book, in observance of the 250th anniversary of American independence this year, *The American Revolution on Cape Cod and the Islands*, is in print and available for purchase at \$25 in person or \$30 by mail order. Written by 27 contributors, the book covers the period 1761-1783 and the events and individuals on Cape and Islands which played important roles in the Revolution. An overview of the book was provided at the May 2025 regular meeting of the Society in Liberty Hall. The book was developed by the Cape and Islands Historians Committee, two of whose members (Nancy Shoemaker and David Martin) are also Society members.

Contact David [idmartindr@aol.com](mailto:idmartindr@aol.com) to arrange a purchase.

# SANDY'S SNEAKERS WALKS THE VILLAGE



Loyal member Sandy Bolton returns to The Grist with another of her inspiring reflections about different aspects of Marstons Mills history.

In this issue Sandy Sneakers takes a break to reflect and embrace this village that was once the cranberry capital of Cape Cod.

The Marstons Mills Historical Society is one-of-a-kind! It was founded in 1983 by a group of wonderful residents to preserve the beginnings of Marstons Mills. Slow and steady goes the pace to develop sustainability. It is remarkable the fortitude, ingenuity, hard labor, neighborly concern, fertility, generosity, and faith that was the impetus for relentless hope to make life better for everyone in this village.

According to history there were scrappers and flappers, readers and leaders, drinkers and thinkers. Normal everyday people that accomplished extraordinary things. Of course, there were the eccentrics that stirred the pot.

Mill grinders, thatchers, blacksmiths (smiths) doctors, lawyers, Judges, teachers, preachers, ship builders, seamen, fishermen, ship's captains, wives, widows and generations of offspring. Years and years of hard labor, community unity, good old fashioned neighborly love never went by the wayside.

The horse farms, dairy farms, the one room school house that became the Marstons Mills Village Library. The history of the village is truly remarkable.

It is refreshing to reflect on the history of the village. Here it is hundreds of years later and the village thrives. It is truly impressive.

What is really outstanding is the MMHS commitment and striking support of its' leadership and membership, archives and creative community outreach with meetings, lectures, authors, program development, original performing arts programs, fundraising. Being a member of the MMHS is priceless.

Ahh, yes -- the MMHS is a one-of-a-kind to be envied for its versatility and preservation. I mean if you stop and think about...if it were not for the MMHS how would we know about its' impressive exceptional history? Plus, you would never have met Sandy Sneakers!

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## MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL

**Members are reminded that 2026 membership dues are now being received, with a deadline of January 15, 2026. Dues remain at \$20 for the year, plus any additional donation that anyone would like to make. A check made out to MMHS or cash may be brought to a regular meeting, or a check may be sent by regular mail to Box 1375, Marstons Mills 02648. We thank you in advance.**