



The Marston's Grist

The newsletter of the Marstons Mills Historical Society
P.O. Box 1375 Marstons Mills, MA 02648

A few words from the President...

As we look in our rear-view mirrors at 2022, it has been a truly up-and-down year for many people. For the Marstons Mills Historical Society, we have continued to meet via Zoom, which, although necessitated by the COVID epidemic, has had one salutary effect: our ability to involve members who live far from the Mills in our regular meetings. We did have two in-person events and will probably have occasional in-person meetings in 2023, while continuing to take advantage of the possibilities afforded by Zooming.

The time since the previous Grist of summer 2022 has been marked by several activities. These have included the continuing search for artifacts around the periphery of some historic buildings, the continuing efforts to preserve the 19th century glass horse-drawn hearse in the Village, and a successful Historic Building Tour this past fall. A careful look at the entirety of Cape Cod and its crucial need for preservation was the feature of our final meeting of 2022. For 2023, we anticipate several presenters to give relevant talks to the membership, among other activities.

On a final note, this issue of The Grist will be the final one that is prepared by Antonia Stephens, who over many years has done all of the technical editing of The Grist, including layout and design. Wendy Bierwirth will be taking over responsibility going forward. We express our great appreciation to Antonia for her many years of service.

Best wishes to all for 2023!

- David Martin, President

HISTORIC HEARSE PRESERVATION

For several years, the Society has been making efforts to have the historic 19th century glass horse-drawn hearse to be preserved as it occupies the Hearse House in the village cemetery. Dating from 1885 and built by the George Brownell Company of New Bedford, the hearse is in reasonably good condition for its age; however, it needs preservation work. Owned by the Town but housed in the Village, the efforts to find a preservationist have now succeeded. Work is scheduled to begin in early 2023 on the site by David Wheelock of Sandwich, who has much preservation experience. While the Town will fund the preservation, the Society will fund the purchase of one important missing item—a pair of lanterns (one to be mounted on each side of the driver). Member Jeffrey Crocker is heading efforts to locate lanterns that are faithful to the original period of the hearse. When the preservation is completed, the hearse can be available for public display.

OFFICERS FOR 2023

The Annual Meeting of the Society, to be held on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 will include the annual election of officers for the year. Candidates for officers are: President, David Martin; Vice-President, Rick Presbrey; Secretary, Marguerite Adams; and Treasurer, Bebe Brock. As always, members are invited to make alternate nominations prior to this meeting.

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.

Coming Events...

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

Several presentations are on the tentative schedule of events for 2023 for the Society:

- ◆ ****Wed. January 11 @ 2:00 p.m.:** Annual meeting followed by a presentation by Jay Gitlin, Yale History Professor, on the historic evolution of Cape Cod from a colony to a tourist destination.
- ◆ Michael Kemp on the colonial ties between the Town of Barnstable, MA and its twin town of Barnstaple, England
- ◆ Historic airplane tour from the Airfield.

*** Yes, Wednesday—and in person!*

Stay tuned for details. All are welcome!

Now is the annual season for membership renewals, and the usual form is included in this issue. Deadline for renewals for 2023 is January 31. Annual dues remain at \$15, and additional donations are always appreciated. Thank you for renewing!

MMHS OFFICERS

President: David Martin

Vice-President: Rick Presbrey

Secretary: Wendy Bierwirth

Treasurer: Bebe Brock

BOOK STORE

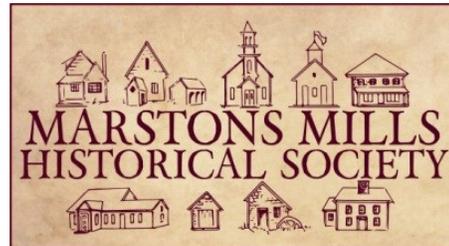
Images of America: Marstons Mills. An Arcadia Publication written by local historians James Gould and Vivian Cushing. Limited signed copies. View this publication at marstonsmillshistorical.org/publications. Available for purchase at MMPL.

NOTE: prices of some books have been reduced!

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, subject line: order book.



Comments and articles for submission should be sent to wbierwirthusa@gmail.com.



MEMBERSHIP FORM

- I / we wish to join the Society and enclose payment for my / our Individual Membership(s) at \$15 each.
- I / we wish to renew my/our membership for 2023 at \$15 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 2nd Tuesday of the month, 2:00pm. Thank you !

*The Marstons Mills Historical Society is
a 501 (c) 3 Charitable Organization*

P.O. Box 1375
Marstons Mills, MA 02648
marstonsmillshistorical.org

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

METAL ARTIFACTS CONTINUE TO APPEAR

MMHS member Tony Mulone has an effective metal detector that he has used around historic buildings in the Mills for more than two years. In the past, he has surveyed the exterior of such sites as the Library, Liberty Hall, the Community Church, the Isaac Crocker Farm, the Luther Hamblin House, a house on Upper County Road and the Burgess House. Previously he had located a variety of objects, including old coins, a musket ball, an iron used for pressing clothes, metal tools, a perfume bottle and various farm implements. Since the last issue of this publication, he has carried out additional surveys, naturally all with permission of the owners. Recent surveys were done at the William Marston house on Route 149 and several other locations. Among the interesting finds has been a metal badge for the U.S.



From Tony: “The first search was conducted at the William Marstons House off Route 149. I was only there for about an hour, so there is more to be done. The most interesting

find was a door lock key hole with a bear embossing (above). It matches the big bear door knocker on one of the shed doors.

The second property searched was 1295 Race Lane. The house was built in the 1740s. The most interesting find was **USIS medal (right)**. These medals were used for healthcare services before Medicare and Medicaid were created. This badge was for people who had no insurance. I do not know the date but more research can be done.”

All found objects are offered to the owner of the property and are requested for the Society to borrow for display; a display was done in January 2022, and another may be scheduled for the future.

Anyone who would like to invite Tony to try his skills on the outside of their property can contact Tony at 508-982-3436 or tonymulonejr@gmail.com. Artifacts will be given to the homeowner to keep unless they would like to loan them to the Society for future displays.

Finds from the William Marston House (photos by T. Mulone)



FULLER FARM PLANS

The old Fuller Farm site, located on the west side of Route 149, has been developed by the Barnstable Land Trust into an educational center with walking trails as of the Fall of 2022. The original farmhouse was demolished about two years ago. The Society is collaborating with the Trust to develop a historical marker which will give the story of the original house, including a photograph of the Fuller family in the late 19th century. A new barn has been erected, which is to be a center for education. The plaque will be visible by all who visit the current site. Members of the Society visited the site in the Fall of 2022 and enjoyed one of the walking trails. (See the final article in this issue, by Sandra Bolton, for more details on the Fuller Farm.)

HISTORIC BUILDING TOUR

In 2016 MMHS ran an Historic Building Tour involving six sites. The Society mounted another highly successful Tour this fall, involving six sites throughout the Village. With the collaboration of the Village Association and the Community Church, the Tour encompassed the Burgess House, the 19th century hearse at the cemetery, the Community Church itself, the Airfield, the Luther Hamblin House on Santuit-Newtown Road and the Isaac Crocker Homestead on Olde Homestead Drive.

A team of volunteers from the entire membership of the Society staffed each site with hosts who also provided historical background stories for the benefit of visitors. Members of the Church went above-and-beyond with not only a historic talk but also hospitality to those who were staffing the Tour throughout the day. About 60 people participated in the Tour, held on Saturday, October 1, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The significance of each site was easy to perceive. The Community Church has been a fixture in the

Village connected with two different faiths and has a historic chapel. The 19th century Hearse is housed in the Hearse House in the Marstons Mills cemetery and dates from 1885 (another article in this issue expands on the preservation efforts). The Burgess House, which was also on the 2016 Tour, is the recipient of Town funding for full restoration and is in admirable form for all to enjoy. The Airfield—also on the 2016 Tour—is a bustle of activity with current plane owners, but also has a history dating to 1929. The Luther Hamblin House, fully restored, was the recipient of the Outstanding Preservation Award from the Town of Barnstable in the past, and the Isaac Crocker Farm, dating from ca. 1750, is a showpiece of preservation of the original structure but also is a fully working farm—probably the oldest privately-owned farm on Cape Cod.

Great appreciation goes to all the members who willingly volunteered as hosts and record-keepers to make the event an important success.

PROTECT OUR PAST



As part of a Cape-wide effort to preserve historic structures, the organization known as Protect Our Past presented a program at the December 2022 meeting of the Society, held in person at the Library. Staff members of the project provided an informative video presentation showing the necessity of preservation and methods of carrying out work that will prevent deterioration or destruction of important historic buildings. The presentation was helpful in showing the larger context of this work being done throughout our

peninsula—and elsewhere by historic-preservation groups in many locales.

T-SHIRTS AND HOODIES FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

A number of Society T-Shirts and Sweatshirts are still available for purchase. Both shirts come in two colors—gray and red—and on the back have an historic photograph from the Archives: the photograph of the single-wing airplane being filled with gasoline at the Cash Market, which was necessitated by the fact that in 1930, there was as yet no gasoline pump or tank at the Airfield itself. The shirts come in all sizes; T-shirts are \$23 each and Sweatshirts are \$39 each, and may be purchased either at the Library Circulation Desk or by contacting David Martin at davidmartindr@aol.com or 508-527-0460. Do get one while they last!



Photo by David Martin

MMHS ARCHIVES REPORT

Thanks to the generosity of the Marstons Mills Public Library in 2014, the Society's Archives continue to be safely housed in a room near the children's section of the library. In August and September 2022, we took steps to make our space more efficient by purchasing stand-alone shelving and new storage containers, which has allowed us to reorganize the area to make our collection visible and accessible. As part of this effort, we made the following improvements:

- ◆ Our extensive collection of Barnstable County Fair posters and our large-format photo reproductions are now arranged horizontally in archivally-safe containers. Note that we now have 18 original County Fair posters and images of four more Fair posters.
- ◆ Our collection of Barnstable town maps and Marstons Mills village maps has been inventoried and documented. We now have 30 different maps of the area, some on paper and others imaged, the earliest dated 1795 and 1830. We also have a large-format map and accompanying written description of the original owners ("proprietors") of the Town of Barnstable for the years from 1639 to 1716. This information was originally recorded in the early Town records. It was researched and documented by Eben Lennart Johnson and Wilbur Cushing, who completed the project in 2012.

Recent additions to the collection are a 1902 autograph book owned by Carrie Hamblin and two pictorials, one each of the 1938 and 1954 hurricanes.



Great appreciation is due to our Archivist, Dianne Potter, who continues to carry out a truly professional organization and management of the Archives. Anyone who would like to have access to items in the Archives should contact David Martin at 508-527-0460 or davidmartindr@aol.com, to arrange an appointment to meet there.

Photos by Dianne Kavanagh Potter

SANDY SNEAKERS WALKS THE VILLAGE



Wow! What is going on at the old Fuller Farm homeland? Rebirth!

When the historic Fuller farmhouse, a grand and glorious example of addition upon addition to accommodate extended family and friends, disappeared in a cloud of dust in 2020-2021, it was sad. The old rugged house with its mansard roof turned the heads of all who passed by.



Imagine scenes of farm workers tilling the soil, milk maids working the cows, a well-worn path to the “privy,” pots of stew in a cast-iron cauldron, the Saturday night tin-bath in the middle of the kitchen...these comprised the rural tough life of the Fuller family and many others.

The Fuller farm was not just a farm. It was faith, hope, and charity rolled into one. It was an open-air food pantry for neighbors in need. The land, hand plowed, seeded and nurtured, provided fresh hand-picked vegetables, and hand-milked cows provided milk that sustained life for many families.

It was a cold blustery day in very early spring 2022 when the staunch Marstons Mills Historical Society members met with Barnstable Land Trust representatives.



Barnstable Land Trust is paying tribute to the Fuller family with its versatile vision to be implemented with agriculture, livestock, walking trails, and education for future generations.

‘till next time...Sandy Sneakers

Text and photos by Sandra Bolton