

# THE SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS

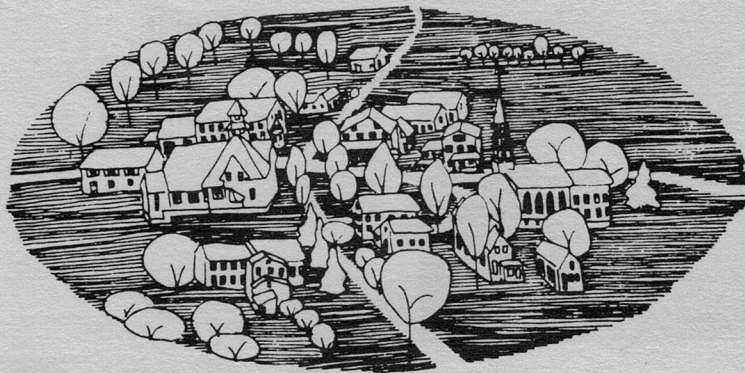
## — BULLETIN —

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### PUTTING SUTTON ON THE MAP

By- Daniel S. Smith, et al

Farm land, rolling hills, and a quiet rural life style for several hundred years graced the Sutton landscape. Today the people still seek that way of living in building homes on the byways, in field and wooded dale.

A Suttonian abroad in the world previous to the 1960's when queried "where are you from?" could only answer, "Massachusetts, southern Worcester County, ten miles south of Worcester on the road to Providence, Rhode Island." Hopefully, the inquiring person would be geographically oriented sufficiently to know in what general direction to look- otherwise possibly a bewildered glance became the mute acknowledgement,

HOWEVER, after 1961, one went through the usual Sutton map references and in a brief brilliant burst of thought, would say, "do you know where Pleasant Valley Country Club is?" And the answer usually would be, "Sure, I've been there!" So, the common bond became one.

In the mid 1950's, Cosmo Mingolla and his associates of Bayer and Mingolla after unsuccessful attempts in the City of Worcester, decided to establish a country club in the Town of Sutton. The old Moe Farm [see the BULLETIN Vol. V. No. 3, Sept. 1978] then owned by Theodore Buyniski was purchased as a site to establish a club house on the highest elevation of the contemplated golf course.

The Moe Farm was located on both sides of Armsby Road just west of the junction of Burnap and Armsby Roads which partitioned the Pleasant Valley property located south and west of the Pleasant Valley Road dam, washed out in the November 4, 1927 flood. The property included the long pond [now dry] and water flowage rights. The remains of the dam are located at the bottom of the hill behind #2 hole on the golf course. The Pleasant Valley Road, now terminating at the buildings near the Town Highway Department site, formerly crossed the dam, up the hill behind #2 hole and fairway to connect with Burnap Road.

On this road was located a house in which Everett Minor and his wife Gladys lived for awhile. After moving out it remained empty until destroyed by fire. On the west side of the road was an extensive orchard operated by Herbert A. Taylor. This area included holes #5,6,7,11 and their fairways. Holes #3 and 4 drive across the pond to the north side





EARLY PHOTO  
OF FARM HOUSE  
WHERE SITE OF  
PLEASANT VALLEY  
CLUB HOUSE  
IS TODAY



L.R.-  
OLIVE MOE  
DORIS(MOE)MURRAY  
RICHARD MURRAY(SON)  
JEFFERY MURRAY(SON)  
ROBERT MURRAY  
(photo late 1940's)

and back with the fairways. The maintenance buildings are close by at the foot of the hill from the Club House where hole #17 and fairway is laid out. Part of the #18 fairway was all or part of the pond.

The complete layout of the 18 hole course and Club House construction project became the responsibility of Raymond Bayer who utilized the earth moving equipment of Bayer and Mingolla Construction Company, The 18 greens were established the first year and seeded. Insufficient rainfall in the late summer became a problem when the seed failed to germinate. Raymond Bayer approached me as Fire Chief at the time for assistance. The Town had a ten wheel tank truck equipped with pump and hose for forest fire fighting purposes. Bayer furnished all the labor and the greens were watered every morning until the grass growth began to become established. This operation saved over a thousand dollars worth of seed, plus replanting labor and enabled the Club to commence operation of the Course on schedule.

The Carlin Open was the first tournament held at Pleasant Valley and it was televised over a large network. Thus, a Suttonian could identify himself with Pleasant Valley Country Club through the medium of a video broadcast to the nation. As time went on the geographical implications were compounded. Yet, today, the Post Office only lists Sutton as a rural delivery of Millbury despite the presence of two postal offices in sections of Sutton, Wilkinsonville and Manchaug.



Land was purchased from the Levely Farm where holes #13 and #14 are located. Later, the whole farm was bought for additional parking. Parcels of land to expand hole #14 to the north was purchased from Fred H. Smith and for access to Boston Road from James O'Connell. A gravel pit near hole #17 purchased from John C. Dudley was sold to Pleasant Valley and on the east side of the right of way purchased from O'Connell was land owned by Mrs. Frank Bullard which was bought to complete holes #3 and 4.

The road from the Pleasant Valley dam was still a town road and a town meeting vote was necessary to discontinue it. As Armsby Road was a winding road around the Armsby Cemetery, Bayer and Mingolla partitioned the Town for permission to straighten the road by Well's Pond and re-surface the road from the Club House to Route 146 at their expense for an improved and safer road to a major highway.

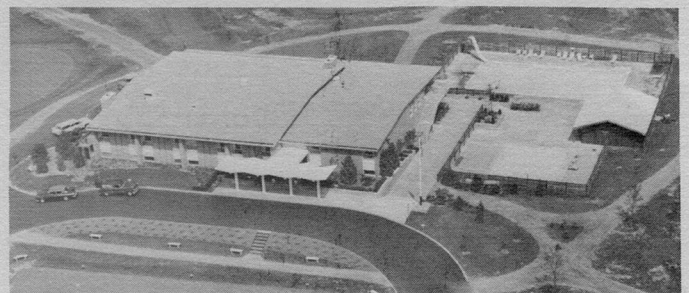
While many tourney winners have been awarded with paper "gold", real gold was mined on the very site these awards were being made to them. The remains of a gold mine shaft which operated for a short while was located near the maintenance sheds on the edge of the old pond bed. Another shaft went into the ground on the northwest corner of the intersection of Burnap Road and Central Turnpike. It was assumed that the gold bearing ledge stretched from Central Turnpike, under the Club House site to the edge of the pond to approximately where the maintenance sheds are now located. Only the shafts were dug. The gold content of the ore was very slight and the difficulty of pumping water out of the shafts made the operation uneconomical and was abandoned.



PLEASANT  
VALLEY  
COUNTRY CLUB  
FAIRWAYS

aerial views, September 18, 1961

PLEASANT VALLEY  
COUNTRY CLUB HOUSE  
(see text for update)



The Pleasant Valley Motor Lodge was built on Route 146 near the #2 fairway on land purchased from William T. Stockwell. This functioned as an accomodation to golfers and to the general public. The Lodge was sold by Edward J. Mingolla in the early 1980's.

The Pleasant Valley Country Club was completed in 1981 by Cosmo E. Mingolla and Ray Bayer. Originally, plans were for a nine-hole golf course for employees of Bayer and Mingolla Construction Company.

Many varieties of trees were planted to enhance the grounds, but original apple trees still bearing fruit to whet the occasional golfers appetite, are growing on the fairways. A Pro Shop was constructed in the mid 1950's and later a roof deck was added. Tennis courts are an extra feature to the Club grounds. The house across the street was converted to offices in 1980. The far right hole (#2-4) was straightened in 1985 and a parking lot constructed to the right of that hole and it extends almost down to the Motor Lodge.

Major changes were made to the Club House in 1986. The breezeway was modified to provide additional locker room space on the first level and office space over. The previous two rooms downstairs are now one large room.

"Cuz" Mingolla bought Ray Bayer's interest in the early 1970's and now Edward J. Mingolla owns the property since the passing of his father in 1979.

At least one, sometimes two, major golf events have been held at Pleasant Valley Country Club every year since 1962 when the Ladies Professional Golf Association [LPGA] made their debut. The Man's Professional Golfer's Association [PGA Tour] tournament launched the men's competition in 1965 and was won by the late "Champagne" Tony Lema. The famous and ever popular Arnold Palmer [with the ever present "Arnie's Army" (in the galleries)] won the tourney in 1968.

"I'm from Sutton." "Where?", "Ya, know Pleasant Valley Country Club?" "Sure do, who doesn't?"---

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## EIGHT LOTS SCHOOL FUND

At the death of Phyllis A. MacLaren on April 15, 1986, the following paragraph was in her obituary write-up in the Worcester Evening Gazette,-

"Memorial contributions may be made to Sutton Historical Society for maintenance of the Eight Lots Schoolhouse."

At the Board of Directors meeting on April 17, 1986, it was agreed to set up a separate account at the Bank of Boston to deposit contributions as received. It will be known as the following:

Sutton Historical Society  
Eight Lots School Fund

Contributions may be sent to the -

Sutton Historical Society  
Box 127  
Manchaug, MA., 01526

G. William Holst  
Treasurer  
Sutton Historical Society



## Sutton Settlement

Winter, 1716-1717, a cold and fearful time -  
Wintry gales and high drifts made staunch hearts  
flinch and quail;  
But pioneers are sturdy folk, men and women, too  
(And children blissfully forget the pinching times and woe).  
Three families dared to weather through to see the spring arrive  
With greening trees and sparkling streams, the northward  
flight of geese;  
The slash of axes felling trees, the mallet's rise and fall;  
The sound of distant voices, the lowing of a cow.  
Full thirty families had arrived within the given year,  
Had chosen plots and built their homes within the eight mile square.  
In 1718, December third to be exact,  
The fathers met at Captain John's to constitute a town.  
The name, the date, the articles were writ upon the page -  
The clerk laid down his inky quill, the writing now was done.  
He sanded well the document, then said in awesome calm,

"Fore God we've done a wondrous thing today,  
We have founded us a town:  
A town we now call SUTTON  
May she prosper well and grow."

Alice Clark Riley

Bev Anderson, scribe

### RUFUS PUTNAM HALL PROJECT

The Sutton Board of Selectmen has advised the Historical Commission that this presently disused building may be reactivated under the supervision of the Commission.

Presently, plans are progressing to share jointly an office space by the Sutton Historical Society and the Waters Farm Preservation Group. This office has been constructed in a corner of the old library area by volunteers.

A Historical Society Committee has surveyed the balance of the library floor space and are formulating a layout for display purposes to exhibit artifacts and other historical items to the public. This project is scheduled to be completed in time for the Blackstone Valley Heritage Home Coming program to be observed October 4 and 5.

The disused DAR Hall on the second floor will be renovated and the DAR memorabilia which that organization has graciously voted to donate to the Historical Society will be arranged in their previous quarters for display.

The Historical Society will underwrite several minor rehabilitation items required to reutilize the building.

July 1986

LETTER TO THE EDITOR-

115 Washington Place  
New York City, N. Y. 10016

The poem "West Sutton, Massachusetts" brought back many pleasant memories for me. It was in 1911, and I met a delightful lady dressed in a calico dress and a sunbonnet. It was Eliza Bullard and she asked me if I would like to see her home. The walls were covered with scenes of colonial days, and she had a chair that Lafayette had sat in.

The country store at the top of West Sutton hill had a fascinating array of penny candies. Mr. Luther gave the children hair cuts. He put a bowl on top of their heads, and cut around it, and the result was a very neat Buster Brown effect.

I attended the little one-room schoolhouse and Miss Lucy Phelps was my teacher. She was very strict, but a excellent teacher.

In winter we used to get on our sleds at the top of the hill and coast all the way down to the school at the foot of the hill.

I stayed at the Freeland brick house for six months. Grandma Freeland was a wonderful lady. When she was nearly one hundred years old she used to make a big batch of doughnuts every Saturday. I slept in the big ballroom. On rainy days we played in the ballroom.

Miss Alice Davis was our teacher in the little Eight Lots Schoolhouse. We all adored her. There was a pond across from the school, and we took our skates and skated recess and at lunch time.

My step father was Henry Franklin Rice. He was in the State Legislature with Calvin Collidge. He was a Civil War veteran and he is buried in Sutton.

I enjoy the BULLETIN very much.

Sincerely,

Ruth Bullock Cass  
(Mrs. Matthiew M. Cass)

(Monthly meeting reports in coming issue)

APRIL TO JUNE- WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

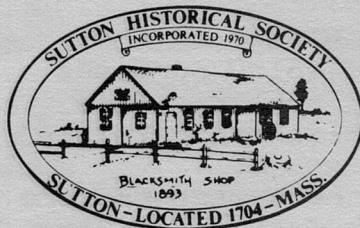
Ona C. Fleet                      Marieta G. Howard  
Harry and Mary Arakelian

Oxford Historical Commission  
Millbury Sutton Chronical

IN MEMORIAM

\*Lottie H. Goddard \*Phyllis MacClaren \*R. Gordon 'Bunky' King  
\*Howard F. Barnett \*Francis Mateer

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