

# The Sutton Historical Society Bulletin

Dedicated to preserving our historical inheritance for future generations.

Founded December 8, 1969

## Society Officers 2011-2012

### Acting President

Linda Sinacola

### Secretary

Joyce Smith

### Treasurer

Marian King

### Historian

Johanne Walker

THANK YOU TO ALL  
WHO HELPED  
ACHIEVE OUR GOAL  
OF A NEW  
BLACKSMITH SHOP  
ROOF

## TOWN OF SUTTON HISTORIES REPRINT EDITIONS

VOL I — \$90  
1704-1876

VOL II — \$45  
1876-1950

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SHERMAN BLACKSMITH SHOP

By Janice Swindell, Granddaughter of Lewis Hollis Sherman

According to the History of the Town of Sutton, Vol. II, between 1876 and the early '80's, the Sherman barn housed a livery stable, a blacksmith and a wood working shop. The barn stood between the Brick Block and the present blacksmith shop. It was quite large. During the 1930's and 40's my dad kept our car in it overnight. I was warned not to go roaming around - who knew what critters used the barn for shelter? I do recall the cages where my Uncle Wish (Lewis Patch Sherman) kept his pet raccoons.

The original operator of the blacksmith shop, a man from Upton, was succeeded by Dan Dudley who worked with George Rich, a wheelwright. Hollis Sherman bought the property in approximately 1893; his son Milton took over the blacksmith shop.

Shortly afterward, Dan Dudley moved out, leased a part of the adjoining land from M.M.Hovey, and built part of the present blacksmith shop. He worked there for 2-3 years, then sold to Milton Sherman, who built on an addition and a building for lumber storage. In 1957 Milton deeded the property to Lewis Patch Sherman, his nephew.

I remember seeing my grandfather, Lewis Hollis Sherman and Uncle Mil in the shop during the 1940's. Grampy chewed tobacco and Uncle Mil smoked his pipe. The shop was a mysterious place to me, with the forge glowing and the assorted tools of the blacksmith trade lying about. Of course, as a girl, I was not expected to have any interest in the business of the shop. It was not a place to "play" and I didn't go there very often.

The Sherman Blacksmith Shop is located at 6 Singletary Avenue

IN MEMORIAM  
Ruth Shaw Putnam



*A Life well lived.....*

Ruth Shaw Putnam was born on December 14, 1913 on "The Shaw Farm" property the town now owns. She was the 7<sup>th</sup> of 10 children born to Salem Martin Shaw and Grace Bell Elliott. She lived on this farm until she married David T. Putnam in 1937 and in 1942 they moved to Century Farm Road, where she lived for the next 69 years.

Around 1976 she retired after 20 years of working in all the Sutton school cafeterias. At home she had flower and vegetable gardens that she tended, canning or freezing the produce as it came along. She learned how to dry flowers and made nosegays, wreaths or baskets full of dried arrangements. She kept very busy.

She became a volunteer at Waters Farm, being one of the original committee members of the Waters Farm Preservation to oversee what could be done with the buildings and land that Dorothea Waters Moran had given to the town 1974. She cleaned, set up the north kitchen with old utensils, big black fireplace pots, old apple paring gadgets and spent hours explaining what they were for or how used to the visitors who came to Waters Farm. For the annual Farm Days she put floral bouquets in every room with flowers from her garden. Another one of her labors of love, she did this until she was about 90 years old.

As Waters Farm grew, with some financial assistance from the John H. Chaffe BRVNHCC, structural improvements were made and Bud Gurney would invite the politicians to see firsthand how things were progressing. One hot summer day a delegation was coming, led by Ted Kennedy and his wife Victoria. Platforms and tents were set up for some shade. Bud Gurney thought that Ruth should present Mr. & Mrs. Kennedy with a Waters Farm commemorative plate. As she stepped up on the platform she stepped on the hem of her long costumed dress and tripped and fell into Ted Kennedy as he reached out to save her. She was mortified and he accepted the plate with a smile.

There are many more such stories of Ruth's good life, probably several more pages. After a few years of declining health she passed away on December 13, 2011, 1 day prior to her 98<sup>th</sup> birthday and she will be missed by many.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 7                      Pot Luck Supper  
6:30 PM                      Eight Lots School House

\*\*\*\*\*SAVE THE DATE\*\*\*\*\*

SEPTEMBER 15, 2012  
9 AM to 3 PM  
7TH ANNUAL ANTIQUE SHOW  
AND SALE ON THE COMMON  
20+ DEALERS

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SUTTON TRIVIA

Where is General Rufus Putnam buried?

Where was "the chicken mill"?

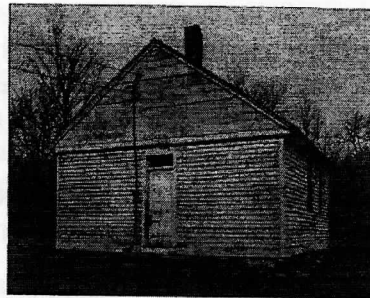
What was the purpose of the town pound?

Where is Washington Hall?

Why was the settlement delayed from 1704 until 1716?

What is Crooked Pond now called?

**EIGHT LOTS DISTRICT SCHOOL HOUSE NEEDS OUR HELP**



The Eight Lots District School House is located at 54 Eight Lots Road and although the exact date of construction is unknown, some claim that it is the oldest wooden school house in the United States still standing on its original foundation.

In 2010 the Sutton Historical Commission and Sutton Historical Society began the long application process regarding the Eight Lots District School's eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In April 2011 notification was received from the Massachusetts Historical Commission that our school "appears to meet National Register criteria A and C at the local level".

The Sutton Historical Society has sole responsibility for the continuation of this process and our next steps are the restoration of the school and the preparation of a "National Register Nomination that meets the standards of the National Park Service".

We need help from anyone familiar with the restoration of historical buildings and anyone who has experience with the National Registration application process and can volunteer their time to help us. Any questions please contact: Brian Stevenson at 508-865-2122

THANK YOU.

SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.  
4 UXBRIDGE ROAD  
SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01590

2012 DUES

Please mail to:

SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.  
4 UXBRIDGE ROAD, SUTTON, MA 01590

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

\$15.00 INDIVIDUAL \_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 FAMILY (INCLUDING CHILDREN 18 AND UNDER) \_\_\_\_\_

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL DONATION FOR EIGHT LOTS DISTRICT SCHOOL HOUSE PROJECT \_\_\_\_\_

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP? \_\_\_\_\_

A FEW HOURS, MATERIALS OR MONEY APPRECIATED!

PLEASE CONTACT [sutton1704@gmail.com](mailto:sutton1704@gmail.com) WITH ANY QUESTIONS

WE ARE A NON PROFIT CORPORATION, ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTABLE