

The Sutton Historical Society Bulletin

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i n h e r i t a n c e f o r f u t u r e g e n e r a t i o n s .

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2015-2017**

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2014-2016**

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Keith Downer
Marjorie Duff
Alice Shaw
Linda Sinacola
Norman Storey**

**Museum Curator-Wally Baker
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Editor-Janice Swindell
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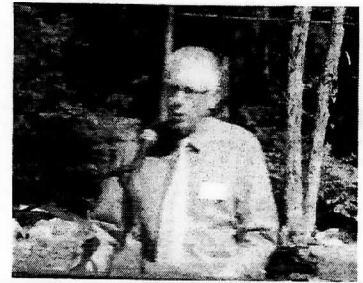
REDEDICATION OF EIGHT LOTS SCHOOLHOUSE

By: Dave Pizzi

On Sunday, September 20, a special ceremony was held for the rededication and reopening of the Eight Lots School. It was a beautiful sunny day with about 200 people of all ages attending the special event and touring the schoolhouse. The ceremony was a celebration of the three-year undertaking of the complete and successful restoration of the schoolhouse led by various members of the Historical Society. The festivities included special guests and speeches, a tour of the school and schoolhouse displays, society members dressed in era clothing, souvenirs and delicious desserts and pastries.

The schoolhouse was built around 1773 and is considered to be one of the oldest one-room, wooden structure schoolhouses in the United States. Unfortunately, through the years as the schoolhouse lay dormant and not properly maintained, it experienced extensive deterioration and damage due to age, weather and insect infestation. Major work included lifting the schoolhouse off its foundation, leveling and rebuilding the granite stone foundation, replacing rotted sills, framing, sheathing, clapboards, floor joists and finished flooring, installing a new cedar shingle roof, repairing windows and ceiling plaster and full interior preparation and cleaning. All restoration activities replicated original era construction materials and construction techniques to ensure historical significance. The full restoration activities took approximately 3200 man hours with 2800 man hours provided by volunteers.

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The schoolhouse is a historical gem and the Historical Society found it important to preserve it as part of Sutton's heritage. On display inside the schoolhouse are old style desks, some of which were original to the schoolhouse, writing slates, glass inkwells, a list of teachers who taught in the schoolhouse from 1810 till its closing in 1918, the names of Revolutionary War soldiers who were educated in the schoolhouse, local maps of the original Eight Lots district. Also on display during the rededication were personal historical family heirlooms representing the 1800's era, such as a family bible, teaching books, clothing, writing quills and pens, pencil kits, a hand held school bell actually used at the school. We want to recognize and thank Linda Sinacola, Joyce Smith, Alice Shaw, Marjorie Duff, Wally Baker and Marian King for sharing their family treasures.

The rededication ceremony included guest speakers; Brian Stevenson, President of Sutton Historical Society, Ryan Fattman, MA State Senator, David Hall, Chairman of Sutton Board of Selectman, and David King whose mother Eunice Perry King was a teacher at the schoolhouse during 1916-17.

Brian Stevenson stated: "how it was important to do something special to give back to the community. We were very fortunate to have volunteers provide labor, materials and financial support to make the restoration a success."

Ryan Fattman stated: "Sutton has such a rich history of people serving and giving back to the community. The schoolhouse is a great example of how far this town has come and we always need to remember our history and what was granted to us by our forefathers."

David Hall stated: "the schoolhouse creates a window into our heritage, a collective vision of who we are, where we came from: learning from our past provides a perspective to our future. What is more iconic to our history than this one room schoolhouse".

David King stated: "what an honor it is for me and members of my family to attend the ceremony and to recognize and celebrate the 100 year anniversary of my mother coming to teach at the schoolhouse. It is great that the schoolhouse has been preserved, as it is always very special to me as this is where my mother taught". David also spoke and shared many fond memories of his mother, how his parents met and wed, and visiting the schoolhouse as a young boy. He also showed a collection of family photographs, books and he read some of his mother's writings.

The success of the schoolhouse restoration could not have been accomplished without the working volunteers, donated materials and services, and the generous monetary donations received from 75 families and individuals. In support of the successful restoration, special recognition awards were presented to the following individuals:

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Outstanding Volunteers were the individuals who provided the most hours worked: Brian Stevenson, John Belculfine, Dave Pizzi, Scott Modig, Curtis Dakin and Norm Storey.

Special Recognitions

David King for his very generous donation that helped make the restoration possible.
Bobby Shaw donated all rough cut lumber, floor and roof joists, exterior and floor sheathing.
Sean Kidd donated the services of his four crew members who worked three days to fully install the roofing underlayment and cedar shingle roof.

Special Donated Services

Paul Lavoie, Professional Tree Co., large tree removal, pruning and shredding brush
Nick Jane, Nicholas R. Jane Landscaping, full grading, landscaping and seeding
Larry Morris, Morris Electrical, installation of underground conduit and full electrical services
Dave Penttila, Dave's Pest Control, insect preventative treatments and extended free service
Dennis Towle, Brian Jacques and Dan Jacques, interior plastering and wall repairs
Town of Sutton Highway Department, routine removal of scrap building materials

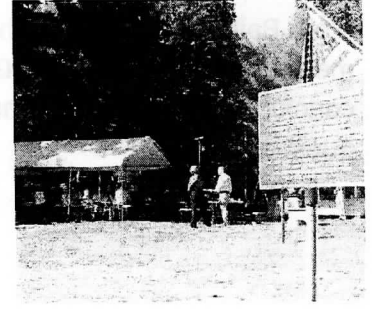
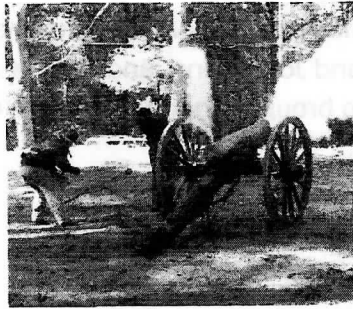
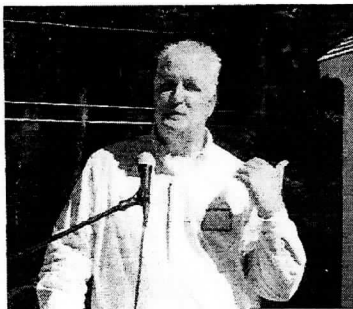
The ceremony was concluded with three firings of Big Ben, the Civil War cannon. A special thank you to Carl Hutchinson and Tom Haynes for displaying and shooting the cannon and to Bob Largess who transported the cannon from the center of town, down Boston Road to the schoolhouse with his team of Belgian draft horses. Everyone was really excited and impressed with the sight of the horses escorting the cannon and the cannon firings.

Thank you to Jim Carafotes of Dunkin Donuts who donated all the coffee and munchkins served at the ceremony.

Lastly, very special acknowledgments go to Marion Belculfine and Beverly Pizzi for all their dedication and hard work in restoring the schoolhouse and in making the rededication ceremony a fabulous success.

The rededication ceremony and reopening of the schoolhouse was truly a memorable event enjoyed by all.

Rededication ceremony programs are available for \$5, includes mailing.
DVDs containing photographs of the restoration of the schoolhouse and from the rededication ceremony are available. The DVD is \$10 and additional \$5 if mailing is required.
Please contact Dave Pizzi at davepz@charter.net or call at 508-865-5070.



CENTER/CEMETERY WALK BY 8TH GRADE CLASS

By: Joyce Smith

On Friday, October 30, 2015, the Sutton Historical Society hosted the 8th grade for a combined cemetery tour and historical tour of Sutton Center. The Society was asked by teachers Ann Coron and Heather Keddy, from the Eighth Grade team, about a cemetery tour as part of the Day of the Dead that was studied in Ann's Spanish class. Groups walked from the school and were met by Joyce Smith near the Town Pound. It was explained how the Pound was necessary to corral escaped domestic animals while they waited to be claimed by their owners. The house to the west of the Pound was owned by John Hancock during the American Revolution and he was known to visit here. This may have been why Sutton sent 500 of the 5,000 militia in Worcester in Sept. 1774 to prevent the installation of British judges at the courthouse.

Next was the cemetery tour starting with the stone of Dorrance Sibley (died May 18, 1818 age 26). Decorations on the stones and the epitaphs changed over time as the attitudes toward death changed. This grave has the following epitaph: *Behold and see as you pass by, as you are now so once was I, as I am now soon you may be, prepare for death and follow me.*

The crypt of Reverend David Hall, second minister for 60 years, was next. He built the house next to the present Town Hall known as the Hall-Mills house. The house was next to the church with the cemetery in back of the church.

Wally Baker was at the King plot, describing burial customs and the origin of sayings. One of the fears was that people would be buried alive. A bell was often placed inside so if a person woke up they could ring the bell. Marian King's husband, Norman Storey, was inside a homemade casket and would sit up when the bell rang. "The grave yard shift" refers to those assigned the task to sit at the grave all night, listening to see if the bell would be rung.

Alice Shaw then met the group at the stone of the four girls who drowned in Lake Singletary when their boat overturned in May of 1822. The four girls were sisters Mary Marble (23) and Hannah Marble (22), Adeline Lombard (17) daughter of famed furniture maker Nathan Lombard, and Nancy Tenney (14). They were buried together in the Tenney plot.

The stone of Deacon Benjamin Morse has the dates in Roman Numerals. "He died April II, MDCCLXXVI in the LXII year of his age". When did he die and how old was he?

Alice explained about the General Rufus Putnam Museum and the groups went on to the entrance of the Town Hall. There they looked at the names of veterans from the Civil War in preparation for their program honoring Veterans Day.

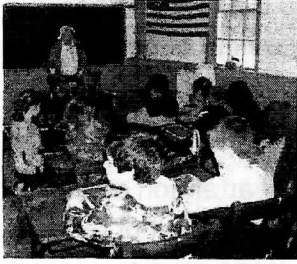
Mark Bailey met them on the common and explained about the 3 locations for the church, the memorial trees for Ronnie Gibson and John Henn, and a bit of history of the Brick Block. The tour concluded with Stuart Mulhane who brought an antique horse drawn hearse and answered questions.



EIGHT LOTS SCHOOL VISIT BY 3RD Grade Class

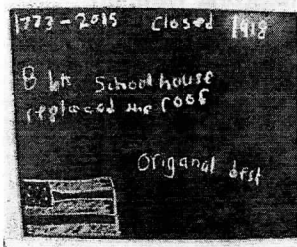
By: Joyce Smith

The Eight Lots School was used for its intended purpose on October 29, 2015. With restoration complete, the school hosted the entire Sutton Elementary 3rd grade class. The 3rd grade focuses on local history for the MCAS tests in May, and we were anxious to involve local school children in a taste of what school would have been like a century ago. Many could not imagine no electricity, a wood stove, and many grades in the same room with one teacher.



Dave Pizzi greeted the students as they got off the bus and Alice Shaw and Joyce Smith were at the door in period costume, ringing a school bell that belonged to Joyce's 2nd great-grandmother, Julia Torrey Waters, who had taught at the school in 1879.

Alice showed an antique lunch pail and explained how children had to walk to school with their lunch pails in all kinds of weather. It was explained that paper was too expensive in the early days and an antique slate was shown. New slates were on the desks and students were excited to use them.



There were 5 groups of 20-24 students that were brought in from 8:30 to 1:15 for about 45 minutes at a time. Joyce displayed the test on Roman numerals from 1911 that was found during the restoration. Hope Freeland received a mark of 100%. Some of the children liked trying to use the Roman Numerals.

Almost every group noticed the switch hanging above the blackboard and asked what it was. Other items of interest were the "different" flag, the desks and inkwells. We were asked if there was recess in the old days. It was explained that there were 13 school districts in Sutton, which would be within walking distance of the students. We also explained that the teachers had to board with local families for a few weeks at a time. Both teachers and students agreed that they were glad that doesn't happen anymore.



Joyce explained that her mother Belle Putnam (Smith) was a student of Eunice Perry (King) when she was in the first grade. A boy raised his hand and said Eunice was his grandmother. It turned out Eunice was his 2nd great-grandmother and she was the next to last teacher at the school. We can thank David King, Eunice's son for a donation that made a great deal of the restoration possible.



After 5 groups we were tired, but pleased with the participation of the students and their enthusiasm. We were especially interested in the positive comments that students wrote on the slates. Dave took pictures of each group and has since delivered the pictures to their respective classes. They also received commemorative cups. The 5th grade is planning a spring visit.

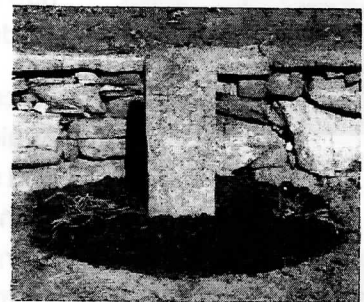
REINSTALLATION OF THE BOSTON ROAD MILE MARKER

By: Dave Pizzi

The Sutton Historical Society owns the granite stone highway mile marker located at Boston Road and Burbank Road which was installed in 1771. The marker site was identified and surveyed by Benjamin Franklin when he was the US Post Master General laying out the Post Road from New York to Boston. The information chiseled on the marker states "M 46 to B" meaning 46 miles to Boston. The mile marker stands within a registered easement area located on the corner of the current home owner's property. The ownership of the mile marker was granted to the Historical Society by Richard Hutchinson and Laura Lindstrom in 1998 with the related easement deed stating the purpose for "preserving, maintaining, displaying and otherwise promoting the existence of the Boston Post Road stone highway marker".

In early October it was discovered that the stone marker was in immediate need of attention as the marker, which was installed within an elevated field stone wall, was leaning forward as part of the stone wall securing the marker had collapsed. There was great concern that the stone marker would fall and break apart. The granite stone marker is about 5 feet tall and 2 feet wide and weighs hundreds of pounds. A rescue team of Dave Pizzi, John Belcufine, Brian Stevenson, Curtis Dakin, Peter Marshall and Larry Morris had to lift and gently remove the marker from the stone wall, lift and position the marker into a newly dug hole, and then fill and compact the hole with gravel to properly secure and stabilize the marker. The team also repaired the collapsed portion of the stone wall for the home owners.

Special acknowledgments go to the rescue team for all their dedication and hard work, to Dave Lavalley of Andrews Survey & Engineering who donated his time to survey the property and provided a plot plan showing proper measurements to relocate the marker within the designated easement and to Rick and Nora Atchue who were very gracious for letting the team members work on their property to reinstall and preserve the historic stone marker.



Preserving Sutton Common

By: Brian Stevenson

In early October 2015, I received two messages with concerns about plans to remove roughly a dozen trees from the town's Common, as well as cutting ten feet from both the west and south side of the Common to accommodate seven to ten parking spaces. This was quite alarming to us, so the Historical Society took action as indicated in our mission statement "Dedicated to preserving our historical inheritance for future generations". I believe it is our obligation, not only as a historical society member but also as a citizen, to speak out if we are unhappy with a potential change.

On Monday, October 5, society members attended an open meeting with the town's Planning Board to directly voice our concerns. The meeting was also attended by Ron Despres, a certified arborist from the Town of Millbury who was hired by the Planning Board to examine, assess and issue a report regarding the affected trees. His report was presented at the meeting that various trees had extensive tree rot and hollowing of the tree core, and diseased. Some trees were no longer living. Subsequently, the identified trees and stumps were properly removed in December. During the meeting, aside from the tree issue, the planning board stated that they did not know all the details regarding the planned parking expansion.

The next night on Tuesday, October 6, society members attended the monthly Board of Selectmen's meeting, in particular to address concerns over taking areas of the Common for parking spaces. Members presented their collective views and were engaged in a Q&A session with the Selectmen. The following recommendations from the Historical Society were presented at the meeting:

1. The need to create a dedicated employee parking lot as the parking spaces at the Town Hall and library for visitor's use seem to be used by many Town Hall employees.
2. Parking for 18 spaces is already laid out on land on Singletary Ave (old high school lot) but is not used.
3. The field on Uxbridge Rd next to the Town Hall was purchased for parking and a town water tower and neither has happened.
4. Experimental arrangement with the Congregational Church to allow town employee parking in their parking lot.
5. Reconfigure existing parking spots, traffic flow and relocate the dumpster in the current Town Hall parking lot.
6. Install "no parking" signs along the Common on Uxbridge Rd, reinstall the curbs and reseed the area damaged by current parking.
7. There are plans being developed for a new police station and library, which would greatly reduce the need for additional parking spaces.

After the meeting we formally issued a letter including our list of recommendations to the Board of Selectmen, Jim Smith, Town Administrator, and the Planning Board. Our letter and recommendations were also published in the Millbury-Sutton Chronicle. Subsequently after reviewing our statements and recommendations the Selectmen and Jim Smith decided to put the parking plan on hold for further evaluation and decisions. They stated that the current parking situation is a temporary dilemma pursuant to future plans for building new police, library or fire station facilities. Our Historical Society appreciated the open dialogue with all our town officials allowing us to voice our concerns. We thank them for their understanding and vision to preserve our precious Common.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY ACHIEVEMENTS 2015

1. February - Removed old furnace from Rufus Putnam Museum and assessed for new replacement furnace
2. March - Did formal presentations in separate meetings with the Board of Selectmen and the Historical Commission on the charter, overview, goals and properties owned by the Historical Society
3. May - MA State Archivist assessed and provided a report on archiving contents of Rufus Putnam Museum
4. August - Completed the full restoration of the Eight Lots School (2012-15)
5. September - Held a very successful schoolhouse rededication ceremony
6. October - Gave schoolhouse tours and lectures with Sutton 3rd grade classes
7. October - Gave tours and lectures of Sutton Common and Sutton cemetery with Sutton 8th grade classes
8. October - Repositioned and properly secured the Boston Road Mile Marker
9. October - Presented views at the Board of Selectmen meeting and published a petition that successfully repealed immediate plans to remove 10 feet from the Common to make additional parking spaces
10. October - Elected SHS Executive Officers for 2015-17
11. December - Had open house and tours of the schoolhouse during the Sutton Chain of Lights celebration

VOLUNTEER...

WE WELCOME ALL VOLUNTEER HELP. IF YOU HAVE A SPECIAL TALENT, SKILL OR A TRADE, PLEASE LET US KNOW HOW YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER OR WHAT YOUR AREA OF INTEREST IS. PLEASE CONTACT BRIAN STEVENSON AT SUTTONBUZZ@GMAIL.COM OR 508-865-2122 OR DAVE PIZZI AT DAVEPZ@CHARTER.NET OR 508-865-5070.

THANK YOU.

**SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP FORM
Annual Membership Fee is due February 2016**

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____

\$15.00 Individual Fee: _____

\$25.00 Family Fee (including children under 18): _____

Additional Donation _____

Mail to:
Sutton Historical Society Inc.
4 Uxbridge Road
Sutton, MA 01590

The Sutton Historical Society is a nonprofit corporation, all donations are tax deductible

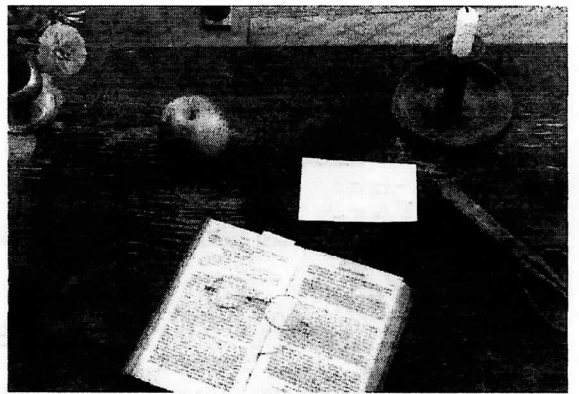
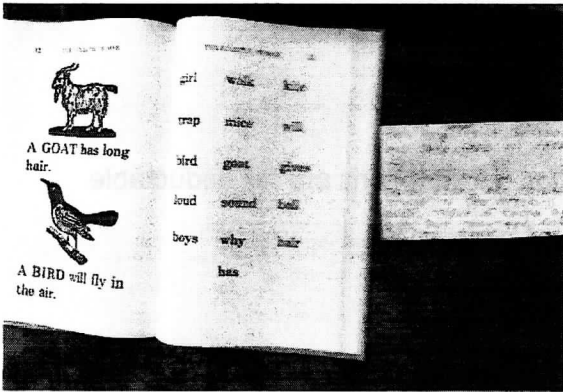
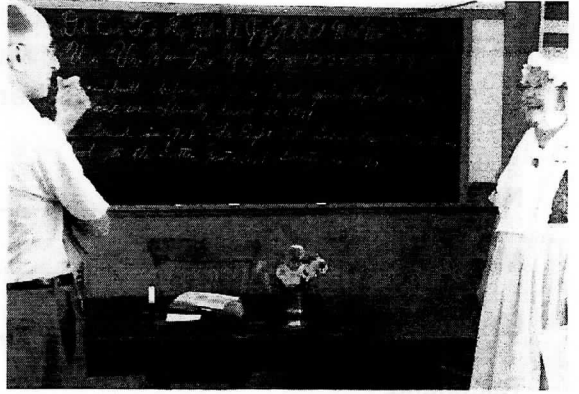
SPECIAL ORDERS

- ___ Rededication Ceremony Program, \$5 includes S&H
- ___ Restoration and Rededication Ceremony DVD, \$10 plus \$5 S&H
- ___ Historical Society Stoneware Mug, \$15 plus \$5 S&H
- ___ 1715 Original Sutton Map (17" x 22"), \$10 plus \$7 mailing tube & postage
- ___ 1795 Sutton Map (18" x 22"), \$20 plus \$7 mailing tube & postage
- ___ 1850 Sutton Houses Map (16" X 22"), \$10 plus \$7 mailing tube & postage
- ___ 1870 Sutton Map (17" x 22"), \$10 plus \$7 mailing tube & postage

Note: Sutton maps are on display and can be purchased at the Sutton Public Library

Mail to:
Sutton Historical Society Inc.
4 Uxbridge Road
Sutton, MA 01590

Please contact Dave Pizzi at davepz@charter.net or 508-865-5070 with any questions



SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
4 UXBRIDGE ROAD
SUTTON, MA 01590

2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 2	7:00PM	General Meeting	First Congregational Church
March 1	TBA		
April 5	7:00PM	General Meeting	First Congregational Church
May 3	TBA		
June 7	6:30PM	Cookout/Pot Luck Manchaug Baptist Church	439 Putnam Hill Rd
July 12	6:30PM	Annual Pot Luck Supper	Sherman Blacksmith Shop
August 2	6:30PM	Annual Pot Luck Supper	Eight Lots School House
September 6	TBA		
October 4	7:00PM	Annual Meeting	First Congregational Church
November 1	7:00PM	A look back at 2016 a look forward 2017	First Congregational Church
December 6	6:30PM	Annual Christmas Pot Luck Supper	First Congregational Church

As always, anyone interested in any of these events is welcome to join us. Upcoming meetings are listed in The Millbury-Sutton Chronicle, Towns section of the Worcester Telegram, The Uxbridge Times and our Facebook page Sutton Historical Society Inc.