

# *Preserving Sutton's Heritage*



**Sutton Historical Society, Inc.  
Sutton, Massachusetts**

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## Contact Information

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[Sutton Historical Society Inc.](https://www.facebook.com/SuttonHistoricalSocietyInc)

*New members are welcome*

The Sutton Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

All donations are tax deductible

## Founded

December 8, 1969

## Mission

Dedicated to preserving our historical inheritance for future generations

## Purpose

To promote research and learning in the history of Sutton; to acquire, preserve and protect property, both real and personal, having historical significance; to establish a museum to display documents, relics, and objects; to promote the celebration of patriotic and historical anniversaries; to record events both past and contemporary for the purpose of publication. Hold open public meetings that feature historical and informational subjects and cooperate with local schools supporting educational activities pertaining to historical events, projects and presentations.

## Historical Properties

The Historical Society owns and/or maintains and preserves six properties that have valuable significance in the history and development of Sutton. The descriptions of these properties are contained in this brochure.

## General Rufus Putnam Museum



The General Rufus Putnam Museum, 4 Uxbridge Road, was built in 1823 as a joint effort of the Olive Branch of Masons and the Sutton Centre school district. When first constructed, the Masons used the top floor and the school used the first floor. The Masons sold their half of the building to the Town in 1851. Throughout the years the building served as an elementary and high school, it was also used by the Daughters of the American Revolution and as the town library. In 1954, historical exhibits were displayed in the Rufus Putnam building for the Town's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

In 1986, the Town authorized use of the building to the Sutton Historical Society for the purpose of storing, preserving and displaying historically significant items.

In 2018, the Historical Society completed a restoration of the first floor, which now functions as the main museum. Various exhibits are displayed on a rotational basis. The Historical Society is now electronically cataloguing the artifacts and cultural items. The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The museum is open to the public at various times during the year and for special town events.

## Eight Lots School



The Eight Lots School is located at 54 Eight Lots Road. It is a one-room school house built before 1773 on land that was deeded to the Town in 1799. It is believed to be one of the oldest one-room school houses in the United States still standing on its original foundation. The school serviced children of the Eight Lots region, so named for the eight 40-acre tracts of land apportioned to original settlers. The families that settled and farmed this land were some of the more famous Sutton forefathers.

The school house functioned until 1896. It reopened again in 1911 until its final closing in 1918. In 1990, the Eight Lots School Association deeded the school house to the Sutton Historical Society to be responsible for its preservation and maintenance. In 2015, the Historical Society completed a three-year extensive restoration of the school house. The school house contains artifacts and displays that are original or related to the era when the school was used. The school house is open to the public at various times during special town events.

## M.M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop



The M. M. Sherman Blacksmith and Wheelwright Shop is located at 6 Singletary Avenue. The shop was built circa 1895 by the original owner, Daniel Dudley, prior to being purchased by Milton M. Sherman in 1896. The blacksmith shop is located in the center of town and was a very pivotal business during the late 1890's and early 1900's when many local residents needed their horses and oxen shod and their wagons, carriages and farm implements repaired. The shop contains a quantity of original and still functioning equipment; the forge, anvil, bellows, oxen sling and historic blacksmithing, wheelwright and carpentry tools.

The shop and its original equipment were left intact when the shop was finally closed by the Sherman family in 1953. The Sutton Historical Society purchased the building and all its contents in 1971 and has performed subsequent building repairs throughout the years. The Historical Society maintains the building as a fully-functioning blacksmith shop and living museum. The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The shop is open to the public at various times during special town events.

## Cannon Shed



The Cannon Shed is located at 6 Singletary Avenue and is a post and beam structure built by the Historical Society in 2004. The shed was built specifically for the storage of the authentic 1862 Civil War cannon identified as "Big Ben" and a circa 1880's antique horse drawn "closed style" carriage.

## “Big Ben” Civil War Cannon



After the Civil War, the Town of Sutton received four cannons from the U.S. Government to be used as monuments to commemorate and honor the local soldiers who fought and died in the Civil War. Three of the cannons are fixed monuments; two cannons are at the entrance of the Town Hall and the other at Mateychuk Square located in the Village of Manchaug.

Big Ben is a fully-working 900-pound brass cannon that was cast in 1862 in Boston at the Cyrus Alger & Co. foundry. The cannon is a smoothbore, model M1841 cannon known as a “6-pounder” for the size of its cannonballs which had a shooting range of up to 1520 yards (almost 0.9 mile). The treasured cannon and its carriage, tools and equipment are co-owned by the Town of Sutton and the Historical Society. The Historical Society is responsible for its custody and care. In 1999, the cannon was refurbished, and an exact duplicate carriage was built. A group of dedicated Civil War re-enactors from the Historical Society display and fire the cannon during special town events and they are often requested by other towns for participation in their special events. In 2013 the cannon and its team proudly participated in the 150-year anniversary re-enactment of the Battle at Gettysburg.

## Boston Post Road Stone Highway Marker

This stone mile marker is located at 2 Burbank Road. Officially known as the Boston Post Road Stone Highway Marker, it has the inscription “M 46 to B”, marking it as 46 miles to Boston. This marker dates back to 1771 when Ben Franklin was the first Postmaster General. At that time, he was responsible to personally survey and have “measured mile makers” installed along principal roads leading from Boston to New York City.

According to the recorded “History of Sutton” (Volume II, page 172), during the time he was surveying the Sutton area, Ben Franklin spent the night at what is known as the Grey Bear Farm at 435 Boston Road.

In 1998, the Hutchinson family deeded ownership of the mile marker and related land easement to the Historical Society for the purposes of preserving, maintaining and displaying the marker.



## First Town Meeting Road Marker

This plaque is located at 82 Eight Lots Road and was erected by the Historical Society in 1976. It designates the general location of the first town meeting held on December 3, 1718.

The Town of Sutton was officially located in 1704 as an eight-mile square section of land which was subsequently settled in 1716. The current towns of Grafton, Millbury and parts of Northbridge, Upton and Auburn were all originally parts of Sutton.



Mass  
Cultural  
Council

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