

The Sutton Historical Society Bulletin

D e d i c a t e d t o p r e s e r v i n g o u r h i s t o r i c a l
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 .

F o u n d e d D e c e m b e r 8 , 1 9 6 9

In This Issue:

- **President’s Message**
- **Treasurer’s Annual Report**
- **Secretary’s Annual Report**
- **Curator’s Annual Report**
- **The Cattle Pound**
- **Annual Membership Dues**
- **Membership Form**
- **2020 Calendar of Events**

-Society Officers- 2019-2021

President-Brian Stevenson

Vice President-Pamela Strong Rocheleau

Secretary-Christine Watkins

Treasurer-Beverly Pizzi

Museum Curator-Joyce Smith

-Board of Directors- 2018-2020

Keith Downer

Marjorie Duff

Rochelle Forsythe

Peter Michelson

Shelia Moss

Alice Rosebrooks Shaw

Blacksmith-Fran Donnelly

Bulletin Editor-Janice Swindell

Cannon Caretaker – Carl Hutchinson

Schoolhouse Caretaker – Dave Pizzi

Celebrating 50 Years

President’s Message

By: Brian Stevenson

Here we are 2020 another year gone by. One cannot help but to reflect on that year and our accomplishments made as well as looking forward to future goals. Take a look at our list of 2019 accomplishments within this newsletter. Pretty impressive if you ask me.

I must say how proud I am of the Sutton Historical Society. We are such a small group, working with an extremely limited budget. We will continue to improve the General Rufus Putnam / Sutton Historical Society Museum. We are also moving forward with improvements to the M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop. I am sure you will notice some progress there within 2020. One of our latest endeavors is the Sutton Center Cemetery project behind the town hall. This cemetery is in desperate need of attention. Many stones broken or leaning at a degree on the verge of breaking. I encourage you to take a walk through the cemetery, and I am sure you will be appalled at the state it is in. I think of people coming to this cemetery to visit the resting place of a long lost relative only to find the headstone broken and lying in dirt. How sad. When this project was proposed, I thought for sure the group would think it was another project on our pile. But no, to my surprise, this project was received with such enthusiasm. Again, if you decide to visit this cemetery, you will notice the progress we have made. Many stones scattered throughout have been cleaned. The Reverend David Hall brick memorial at the bottom of the cemetery was crumbling and has since been rebuilt with the help of a local Boy Scout. We have reset a few rows of headstones starting at the top of the cemetery. This project will resume in the Spring.

I would like to take this moment to thank all our members for your continued support. I would also like to thank State Senator, Ryan Fattman, for his assistance with the First Church Meeting House, Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism (AKA MOTT) grant. Thank you, Betsy Perry, for helping us with the Preservation and Collections grant. Thank you to the Dudley Gendron Post 414 for your financial support on the Cemetery project. Thank you to Jim Smith and all the town hall personnel for your help and encouragement, Matt Belsito and all fire personnel for allowing us the use of station resources for the cemetery project.

The Historical Society, founded on December 8, 1969 and organized under Massachusetts state law on March 19, 1970 will be marking its 50th anniversary in 2020. This is an exciting milestone. In our 50th year, we are having a significant impact on the Town Common through our collaboration and financial support of the First Church Meeting House renovations in celebration of their 300th year as well as our continued commitment to the repair and restoration of the Town Center Cemetery through our Cemetery Restoration project.

Our March 4, 2019 General Meeting will be a Celebration of 50 years! What were you doing in 1970? What did the town look like in 1970? Join us for cake and discussions about how far the Town of Sutton and the Historical Society have come in the last 50 years. Main in your 2020 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL today!!!!

Sutton Historical Society, Inc.
 Treasurer's Annual Report
 October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019
 Beverly Pizzi - Treasurer

Revenues:

Membership Dues	\$1,690	
Membership Dues – 2020 Prepayments	\$140	
Member Donations – Cash	\$2,927	
Corporate Match Donations	\$1,123	
Donation – Noncash	\$71	
Donation – Cemetery Project	\$1,200	
Event Income (Cannon Club & Society)	\$944	
Yard Sale Income (excludes participant fees deposited 10/2019)	\$593	
Interest – All accounts	<u>\$61</u>	
		\$8,749

Expenditures:

Cemetery Project Expenses	\$992	
Cannon Club Expenses	\$654	
General Rufus Putnam Museum Bunting	\$105	
Meeting Room Rental	\$200	
Newsletters (including postage)	\$158	
Stamps	\$82	
Speaker Fee	\$150	
Plastic Cups - 3rd Grade Visit	\$172	
Maintenance – Blacksmith Shop & Cannon Shed	\$881	
Eight Lots Painting & Handicapped Ramp	\$1,651	
General Rufus Putnam Museum Heat	\$495	
MA Annual Report Filing Fee	\$18	
Property Insurance	\$2,043	
Electric	\$148	
Website	\$173	
Pest Control	<u>\$169</u>	
		\$8,091

Change in Combined Society Deposit Accounts	\$658
---	-------

Sutton Historical Society, Inc.
Secretary's Annual Report
October 2, 2018 - October 1, 2019

As a collective group, we held Annual Meetings on October 2, 2018 and October 1, 2019; 2 general meetings; 6 Board of Director's meetings; hosted 5 speakers

- Christine Watkins, 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day – Remembering Sutton's Soldiers
- Ross Weaver – Sutton Cemeteries and Burial Records
- Professor Robert Thorson – New England Stone Walls
- Peter Michelson – A Return to Collins Farm in Sutton
- Betty & Carlo Mencucci, Cemetery Conservators

hosted the local 3rd grade at the Eight Lots School, M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop, and the General Rufus Putnam Museum; ushered in the new year with our annual firing of "Big Ben" our Civil War cannon on New Year's Eve, opened our property doors for the annual town-wide Chain of Lights event, the Strawberry Festival, Memorial Day, 4th of July Parade event, and Labor Day. Our Cannon Club participated in an event in Grafton. For the third year, we held our annual yard sale which continues to be a significant fundraiser for the Society. We hosted three social gatherings: the annual barbecue at the Manchaug Baptist Church; the annual potluck at the Eight Lots School; and our annual Christmas Potluck at the First Congregational Church. Member Ed Chrostowski shared his metal detecting discoveries from Sutton properties at our Christmas Potluck.

We issued two newsletters. Members with emails on file received copies of the Newsletter via email. This type of delivery was chosen to help reduce printing and mailing costs for the Society.

Our Vice-President, Dave Pizzi, stepped down after many years of dedicated service to the Board. He will continue to be an active member and outstanding caretaker of the Eight Lots School property. We elected 3 new Board members. Peter Michelson was elected on December 5, 2018 to fill seat vacated by Linda Sinacola, Shelia Moss was elected to fill seat vacated by John Belculfine on February 5, 2019 and Pam Strong Rocheleau was elected to the Board to replace Dave on October 1, 2019 as Vice President. Thank you to all our retiring Board members!

We suffered the theft of our well-pump at the Eight Lots School. This event drew local news coverage and resulted in the donation of a replacement pump by members, Mike and Shelia Moss. The Eight Lots School also received a new coat of paint thanks to Brian Stevenson, Dave Pizzi, and John Belculfine.

We received final approval and acceptance of our handicapped accessibility improvements at the Eight Lots School from the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. Thanks to members Dave Pizzi, Brian Stevenson, and John Belculfine who worked tirelessly to complete the required work.

Brian Stevenson, Dave Pizzi and John Belculfine also completed work at the Blacksmith Shop and Cannon Shed. A new well cover was installed at the Blacksmith Shop and the sill and entrance ramp of the Cannon Shed was repaired. In addition, the Sutton Beauty Apple Tree located on the property was transplanted.

We established a Cemetery Restoration Committee led by Society members Ross Weaver, Brian Stevenson, Peter Michelson, and Keith Downer working with Sutton Cemetery Commission members Jim Renaud and Jim Johnson. Work began and continues on the Sutton Center Town Cemetery with grave marker cleaning, restoration and resetting. Repair workshops were held on August 25 and September 14. Several members also worked many days on their own schedule. This work was highlighted by self-guided cemetery tours sponsored by the General Rufus Putnam Museum during the Strawberry Festival and 4th of July festivities.

We applied for several grants in the last 12-month period. We began the process for a grant in partnership with Sutton Public Library for town-wide preservation and collection identification through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Joyce Smith is working with Sutton Librarian, Betsy Perry, on this grant. We applied for a Sutton Cultural Council grant for financial assistance with publication of Brochure and Rack cards designed by member, Dave Pizzi, describing Historical Society properties. The goal is to distribute the brochures at our events and our rack cards through the distribution system for the Blackstone National Corridor. Lastly, through collaboration with our local state senator and members of the First Congregational Meeting House, we applied for a Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism grant to allow the Society to assist the First Congregational Meeting House 300th Anniversary committee with renovations to the exterior and interior of the Meeting House as it is a focal point for tourism to our town.

We renewed our website for 2 years and secured our domain name for 5 years. We responded to several historical research questions throughout the year regarding property background information and family genealogy questions.

Our membership continues to increase from year to year. Counting family memberships as 2 individuals, we increased our membership to over 140 individuals this year. Our Facebook followers continue to increase from 500 a year ago to almost 700 this year!!

Our small group is definitely having a positive impact on our community and sharing our love of history with young and old alike.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Watkins
Secretary

**General Rufus Putnam Museum
Curator Report
October 1, 2019**

The curator is to report to the general membership at the Annual Meeting. This has not been done frequently in the past, but it is required by the bylaws.

Our "year" is October 1 to October 1. Last December, the General Rufus Putnam was opened for Chain of Lights. Tables with items donated from Vaillancourt Folk Art and Historical Society items were displayed for sale. Our military display done for our reopening on Memorial Day was explained and enjoyed by visitors. Items were sold and the money turned over to the Treasurer.

Christine Watkins and I spent a lot of time the previous winter working in freezing temperatures to get the first display done. We couldn't face working in the cold and both had busy lives going on. A couple of changes were made in the displays, as Brian donated mannequins that we were able to put WWI uniforms on. We received part of Harry Anderson's Indian artifacts and Marty Jo Henry composed a sheet explaining the pieces. All of what was donated came from the Sutton side of Manchaug Pond. The case that was emptied of uniforms had children's toys put into it for interest to the 3rd grade class that visits in June.

The Museum was open for Memorial Day, July 30th for the parade, Labor Day the breakfast on the Common, and we will be open for Chain of Lights. I have talked to the library about having the museum open on a night when they are open late.

I have opened up for individuals who want to see the Museum. Yesterday (September 30), I was contacted by Pam Johnson from the library, as a couple from Chicago were coming to look up Marsh ancestors and wanted to see the museum. I met them at 12:30 and it turned out Jo was a distant cousin. I took them to the cemetery on Hutchinson Rd to Peter Marsh's grave and to the Dodge Cemetery. They bought a "new history" and are planning to send a donation to the Society and to become members.

This morning I met with Betsy Perry and Evan Wright who is from the State. Betsy has approached the Society to join with the library and possible other groups, for a grant of up to \$30,000 to assess our needs and create a plan to move forward to preserve our collections. This first 2 years of this grant is just an assessment and planning process that hopes to involve various groups in cooperative interactions with the goal of preservation.

After the assessment phase, a grant of \$10,000 can be applied for to actually buy computers, archival materials, etc. to carry out the plans developed in the first round. Evan will work with Betsy and myself on the application. He was very impressed with our textiles and suggested various other grants that he is aware of (specifically from the veterans), to preserve uniforms. He also said he may know of a grant to put UV resistant film on windows, that would prevent sun damage without having shades.

The grant with the library is focused more on books and original papers etc. that is in the collection. He agrees that the most pressing need is to catalogue our collection. He recently became aware of a program called Collections that he would recommend for our needs that is "user friendly". He is going to do more research and help us with that. This grant will help us develop a plan to go forward to find out what is in our collections and make plans to store and display them in the future.

Thanks to Betsy Perry for making us aware of this Grant and for being
+ willing to work on it with us.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Smith
Curator

The Cattle Pound

By Joyce Smith



Not everyone knows that there was a law in Colonial times (1635) ordering every town to have a pound. These structures are currently forgotten, ignored, and obsolete curiosities. At a Town Meeting on March 17, 1719, at the house of Samuel Sterns, the town voted the following: Choice of Town Officers, 100 pounds per settler to defray the cost of building a Meeting House, and voted to have a minister for three months. The 4th article was as follows: "Voted also the same day to rays (sic) a rate of three pounds to defray the charges of building the pound and other charges."

The Common officially extends West as far as the present pound. In a deed signed by John Gibbs who resided in the house at 334 Boston Road, the 1719 pound was west of the driveway at 324 Boston Road, my childhood home. The present pound is across the street. The town common was where anyone could graze livestock, which could lead to conflicts. Any troublesome animals or fowl, could be penned up in the pound. There they would be ransomed by paying a charge to the town. Each town would set their own fees and if you stole another's animal, there was usually a very high fine. If after a set number of days, no one claimed the offender, the animal could be sold.

Construction of pounds varied, depending on the vote of the town. Some were round and some square. A usual request was to make them "horse high, bull strong, and hog tight". In the 19th century, common lands went out of style and farmers put up fences to contain their livestock. Many pounds were hidden in brush that grew up, dismantled by property owners and otherwise forgotten. We are fortunate that the present pound is in a prominent location in front of the oldest cemetery, next to the hearse house, and next to a house that was owned by John Hancock all during the years of the Revolution.

Living across the street, we had several occasions to use the Pound for its intended purpose, mostly for runaway horses. My Dad, (Jim Smith who was Chairman of Selectmen at the time), installed the gate and cut the trees that had grown up inside, prior to the 1954 Bicentennial. The reviewing stand for town officials viewing the parade was built in front of a lovely, huge Elm tree that was next to the pound.

The present pound is supposed to have been built by Jonathan Wales Paine who also built the walls at the Pigeon Hill Cemetery on Mendon Road. In an excerpt from the 1911 Selectmen's Report: "The wall around the old Pound has been repaired, which brings back to some of the older residents of the Town, memories of the time when cattle found roaming at large were driven there and kept at the expense of the owner."

For those of us growing up on Boston Road during the '50 & '60's, the corner of the wall of the pound was first base in kickball or softball games, and the area near the cemetery and hearse house a place for hide-and-go-seek. The Hearse House was where the horse drawn hearse was stored (I'm not old enough to remember that) and then used by the cemetery commission to store equipment. Today it is still used for storage. My Dad retrieved the cannon, now known as Big Ben, from where it had been sold as scrap by a resident who had the cannon near their yard. It was placed in the Hearse house and over time sunk into the dirt floor. Ben MacLaren remembered where it was and the Historical Society restored it. It now has its own shed next to the M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop at 6 Singletary Avenue. It is fired on Memorial Day and "Last Night" at midnight.

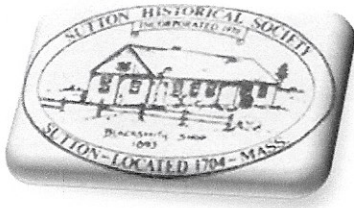
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Please note the annual membership fees are due by **March 1, 2020**. The fees collected are important funds to help sustain payments of related insurances, utility bills and ancillary bills, the mailing of the news bulletin and various activities. Please help support the Historical Society and mail your membership form today.

We gladly except all donations.

VOLUNTEER...

We welcome all volunteer help. If you have a special talent, skill or trade, please let us know how you would like to volunteer and your area of interest. Please contact sutton1704@gmail.com.



Mail all payments to:

**SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Inc.
4 UXBRIDGE ROAD
SUTTON, MA 01590**

email: sutton1704@gmail.com
www.suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Annual Membership Fee is due March 1, 2020

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

\$15.00 Individual Fee: _____

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

Additional Donation: _____

The Sutton Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.
Consult your tax professional for the deductibility of all donations.

2020 CALENDER OF EVENTS

Dates and Times may be Subject to Change

February 4	7:00 pm	General Meeting	First Congregational Church
March 4	7:00 pm	Celebrating 50 Years Historical Society Founded December 8, 1969 Organized in Massachusetts March 19, 1970	First Congregational Church
April 7	7:00 pm	Robert Hubbard, Author <i>General Rufus Putnam: George Washington's Chief Military Engineer and the "Father of Ohio"</i> Presentation about the life of General Rufus Putnam. Born in Sutton, American soldier and Pioneer settler of Ohio	First Congregational Church
May 5	7:00 pm	William Reid, Chief Ranger The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor Presentation about the history of bald eagles in the country and a description of the unique characteristics of these amazing birds.	First Congregational Church
June 12	6:30 pm	Annual Cookout/Potluck Supper	Manchaug Baptist Church 439 Putnam Hill Road
June 20	12:30 pm	Museum and Town Hall Cemetery Tours in conjunction with Strawberry Festival on Town Common from 9 am - 3 pm	General Rufus Putnam Museum
June 28	5:30 pm	Museum and Town Hall Cemetery Tours after the 4th of July Parade in Sutton Center	General Rufus Putnam Museum
August 7	6:30 pm	Annual Potluck Supper	Eight Lots School House
September 15	7:00 pm	General Meeting	First Congregational Church
September	TBA 8:00 am	Town-wide Yard Sale	M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop
October 6	7:00 pm	Annual Meeting	First Congregational Church
November 3	7:00 pm	General Meeting	First Congregational Church
December 1	6:30 pm	Christmas Potluck	First Congregational Church
December 5	Various	Chain of Lights Annual Town-wide Christmas Event	Eight Lots School House General Rufus Putnam Museum M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop
December 31	Midnight	Last Night Cannon Firing Cannon Club	M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop

All events open to both Society members and the general public. Visit us at www.suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org or Facebook for updated meeting information. Upcoming meetings/events are listed in the Millbury-Sutton Chronicle, The Uxbridge Times, and Yankee Xpress.

SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
4 UXBRIDGE ROAD
SUTTON, MA 01590