



THE GEORGETOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER **SPRING, 2012**

From the President:

Spring has arrived, time to open the windows to let in fresh air, clean the house and tend to our gardens. It is also time for us to start preparing the Brocklebank Museum for opening. We will be having our annual **spring clean-up day** at the museum on **Saturday, May 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** We hope you will drop in and help us for a while—the more volunteers, the better! We will be cleaning the museum and school house, tidying the yard, and possibly, if the weather is favorable, putting the final coat of paint on the shoe shop. A second clean-up day may be planned if necessary.

We need to have the museum looking its best before June 7, when the Penn Brook School third-graders make their annual trek to the museum. This is always a fun event for us as well as the students. We love their big smiles, their great questions, and their “Thank you! That was fun!” as they leave. We *especially* love to see them return later in the summer with their families!

The museum will be opening for the summer on July 8, and will be open every Sunday from 2-5 through Columbus Day. This is a change from the second and fourth Sundays that we’ve been doing for a while now. We had considerably more visitors to the museum last year, due at least in part to our new Civil War exhibit. We hope to see even more people visiting this year, and feel that removing the confusion over which Sundays we are open will help. We are fortunate to have several new members who have volunteered to be tour guides. If you haven’t been to the museum recently, we hope you will come visit us this year. Members are always free!

Chris Comiskey
President



CURATOR'S CORNER

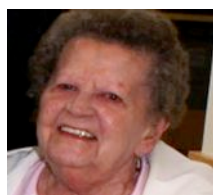
Steve Keene:

WELL TRAVELLED PAINTING OF NINETY-FIVE CENTRAL STREET - COMES HOME TO GEORGETOWN



A snowstorm on Feb. 18, 1920 caused Mary Ruth (Holt) Brice, mother of the donor, to be born at home in this house at 95 Central St., Georgetown. Her neighbor J. Harrie Tidd, Mrs. Alfred E. Tidd (1897–1984), painted this view of the house and gifted it to her while she was a young girl.

The painting accompanied Mary Ruth through a lifetime journey away from Georgetown. It's "coming home" is the foundation of an archive about Mary Ruth, her parents, and children that chronicles the travels and dispersal of Georgetown family members that began in the 20th. Century.



Following graduation from Perley High (1937), and St. Elizabeth's Hospital Nursing School, Brighton, MA., Mary Ruth became a plant nurse at Grumman Aircraft in New Jersey. There she treated her husband to be, George J. Brice, for malaria contracted in China while a crew chief in the AVG (the Flying Tigers). From Westfield NJ the well travelled canvas next moved to Bradenton, FL, where the donor and her brother were born. All moved again to the Air Force Academy and next with the FAA to Chicago and Cleveland before George's retirement and their return to Florida.

Mary Ruth's husband passed in 1982 and in 1997 she and her painting travelled to Cambridge, WI to be near the donor's family, and her only grandson. In the donor's words "She really enjoyed her time here, and eventually needed the additional help of assisted living and, at the end, of hospice care. At 91, she was ready, and as you know, passed on August 17th. (2011). As to the painting, it has always been in our home, and she stated more than once that a Mrs. Tidd (her neighbor from Georgetown) had painted it for her as a gift, but I don't know exactly when."

The paintings return to Georgetown has not only ended its journeys but also has sparked interest in the details of our local history. Among the connections it presents are: Homer Tapin, the society's first president lived at 95 Central immediately following the Holts; Ellsworth Tidd, son of J. Harrie Tidd was Mary Ruth's contemporary. Known for being the architect of George-town High School, in his Florida retirement Ellsworth wrote many chapters chronicling Tidd history and his growing up in Georgetown. Mary Ruth, is mentioned therein, but his recollections, as he named them, have only recently arrived for cataloguing. They were donated by Homer Tapin.

BEING A TOUR GUIDE

By Chris Comiskey



Being a tour guide at the Brocklebank Museum can be an interesting and enjoyable experience. You get to meet people from many different places and with varying interests. Some are interested in the historical architecture, others in the antiques and artifacts, while many want to learn more about local history. Our new “Georgetown in the Civil War” exhibit generated a lot of interest last year.

I particularly enjoy meeting the genealogists, probably because I happen to be one myself. Descendants of the early owners, especially the Brocklebanks, find out about us through the Internet. They come from all over the country to visit the home where their ancestors lived and died, to walk where they walked, to imagine what their lives were like. Some of these visitors even become members, helping to ensure that their ancestral home will be protected and preserved for future generations. We often schedule special tour times for these visitors, even if they contact us after the museum is closed for the season.

If you are interested in joining our crew of friendly and enthusiastic volunteer tour guides at the museum this summer, please contact us at info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com. There is no memorization required, and you get to choose which Sunday afternoons you wish to work.

Three generations of Brocklebank descendants visited the museum last year. L-R: Nathan Magleby, Ardis Bitner, Colleen Magleby and Drew Magleby. The Maglebys are from Portland, OR, Mrs. Bitner is from Salt Lake City UT.

COME RING THE PAUL REVERE BELL



In our last issue, we talked about the historic Revere & Sons bell that still rings every Sunday from the First Congregational Church. We are happy to tell you of an exciting opportunity coming up. On Saturday, June 9 from 10-3, the church is having a Summer Fun Day, which will include tours of the steeple to see *and ring* the historic bell! GHS President Chris Comiskey, who is also the church historian, will be conducting the tours. GHS will also have a table at the event to sell merchandise, answer questions, and sign up new members. The church will also have children’s activities, lunch, craft fair and music. We hope you’ll come join in the fun! More details to follow. Check our web-site, www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com, for updates.

HELLOS AND GOOD-BYES

We are happy to welcome our newest members, Robert & Carolyn McVoy, Paul D'Eon, Michael Bogart and Dianna Radzinski, who have joined us in the past few months.

We note with sadness the passing of three of our members, Dick Thomas Norm Pierce, and David Curley. Dick has been a member of GHS since 1987, and held several offices over the years. David was a newer member, having joined in 2011. We extend our condolences to their families.



Dick Thomas was born in Salem 80 years ago. His Salem obituary recalls athletic prowess at Salem High School, college at Swanee University in TN and Korean War military service in Communications and as an MP. All followed by an over a 50 year career in specialty lines of insurance.

We recall that he moved to Georgetown following the death of his first wife and his marriage to his widow Elisabeth. Soon after he discovered the GHS. The Thomas's joined in November 1987. Elected a director in 1991 he promptly furnished the Board meeting space at his office (in Jack Hayman's CVS complex and later in the Rauseo Building). President in 1996 and 1997 he followed by serving a president's traditional five year term as Director.

Dick's strengths included an ability to draw new members willing to serve at the Board level and a diplomatic ability to encourage and develop such service. When fund raising for a project to raise funds to restore a barn to the Brocklebank grounds proved a futility he skillfully guided us through that period including our offer to return contributions, if donors wished. Not to mention his advices regarding insurance matters and his continuous offer of meeting space, he is also remembered for spearheading GHS lasting participation in and with the Essex National Heritage Area (EHNA). Located in his former town, Salem, Dick won that organization's commendation for his services and he was a recognized at the level of "Commisioner" and as "Commissioner Emeritus." God speed Richard.



Our friend and member Norm Pierce, who passed on May 6, served on our board from 1989 through 1998 (Recording Secretary 1989 - 1991; President 1992 - 1993; Director 1994 - 1998). He and Carol were enthusiastic volunteers and workers. Norm vastly enjoyed research of the town's early roads and his hand drawn maps appeared repeatedly in our highly regarded slide show program, "Plowshares to Shoe Pegs." Norm also contributed interior carpentry skills, reworking the south wall of the slave hole room when the added entrance there was closed off and removed. He worked also in the kitchen-pantry-bathroom area which included renewing the vent stack and installation of a hot water heater. Remembered for authoring news letters from "Max, the Brocklebank Museum Mouse," Norm's enthusiasm was often punctuated with "Awesome !"

DATES TO REMEMBER:

May 19: Museum clean-up 10-2

June 7: Penn Brook School third-grade tour 9 a.m.

June 9: First Congregational Church Summer Fun Day 10-3m. *RING THE BELL!*

July 8: Brocklebank Museum opens for the summer 2-5

September 22 & 23, and 29 & 30 Trails and Sails weekends – Open House at museum



Kiwani's Breakfast GHS Table Curator Steve Keene, Board Member Jeff Lamoureux and his daughter, Hannah.

MATCHING GIFT PROGRAMS

Recently, one of our members made a generous donation of \$100 to GHS. Her workplace has a 3-for-1 Matching Gift Program. After completing the necessary paperwork, we received a check from them for \$300!

This is a great way to help non-profits like GHS. If your workplace has a similar program, we hope you might consider helping us by making a donation and using your company's matching gift program.

2012 DUES REMINDER - PLEASE



We still have 16 members who have not paid their annual dues for 2012, which were due in January. This makes it difficult for us to budget for other special events. If you have not yet paid your dues **PLEASE** do it soon. We count on every member to help us achieve our goals.

Thank you to everyone who has already sent in their 2012 membership dues. If you have not sent yours in yet, we hope you will do so soon. Visit our web-site, www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com, and click on "Join the Society." You can print and mail in the membership form along with your dues, or pay online using Paypal.

Georgetown Historical Society



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- JOIN US ON FACEBOOK! Search Groups, “Georgetown Historical Society”.
- VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com to see more information about GHS and upcoming events.
- EMAIL US AT: info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com

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