



THE GEORGETOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER **FALL 2014**

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It was another busy season at the Brocklebank Museum, as we welcomed many visitors to see our new *Early Businesses of Georgetown* exhibit, while many others dropped in to see our *Georgetown in the Civil War* exhibit for the last time.

Our two weekends of *Trails & Sails* in late September brought in people from all around the region. I would like to thank our great group of volunteers who helped me with welcoming visitors and generally keeping an eye on things: Karen Brockelbank, Brendan Comiskey, Barry Crawford, Sue Daigle, Loretta Foan, Faith Johnson, Sylvia Johnston, Beverly Knapp, and Carolyn Vicari. Also a special thank you to local artist Ed Des Jardins who held an art sale in the parlor and donated a portion of his sales to GHS, and to Ralph Chouinard who did such a great job fixing up our walkways and grounds.

We had many people attend the talk on "Reading Your Old House" at the library on September 17th by Joe Cornish of Historic New England. Thank you to GHS member Rick Palardy who taped it. If you were unable to attend, check our local GCTV listing for dates and times when it will be played.

We are always looking for new volunteers and new ideas. If you would like to help us in any way, or have an idea for a newsletter story, event or fundraiser, please contact us at info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com or call me at 978-352-7364.

We hope to see you at our Annual Meeting on December 3rd. Notices will be going out in November.

Christine Comiskey



ASK GHS

Because many of our museum visitors this year have asked about the Bitters bottle collection in our new *Early Businesses of Georgetown* exhibit, we decided that we would address the question often asked: **WHAT ARE BITTERS?**

Bitters were a common “medicine” which became very popular in the 1800s. They were made from various medicinal herbs and “pure spirit sufficient to preserve their medicinal properties” (quote from a Carter’s ad). Most had an alcohol content of 30-50%, some even contained narcotics.

It was no coincidence that Bitters became popular during the time of the Temperance Movement. One could have a nip of alcohol and still appear respectable to the Temperance crowd, since it was marketed as a cure for just about anything that could ail a person. Bitters could also be purchased in taverns by the shot.


Here in Georgetown, Moses Atwood commenced the manufacture of Atwood’s Bitters with Lewis H. Bateman in 1840. Atwood sold the original recipe for the Bitters to Moses Carter and Benjamin Dodge of Georgetown in 1852, and moved to Iowa.

Moses Carter and his son, Luther F. Carter, continued manufacturing several varieties of Bitters and also produced native wines and various flavored extracts. The items were peddled from door to door by a salesman who rode around the area with a horse and buggy. In 1875, Luther Carter sold the patented recipe for Atwood’s Bitters to a New York firm who marketed in nationally.



Carter's Bitters, extracts, and wine bottles on display at the Brocklebank Museum

Right: An ad for L. F. Carter from *The Georgetown Advocate*



CARTER'S,
PHYSICAL EXTRACT
—OF—
Roots and Herbs.

This medicine contains only the best and purest of Vegetable Extracts, prepared with Great Care, and SAFE IN ALL CASES for which it is recommended. It is a great blood purifier, and the best physic for family use ever offered to the public. It is an effectual cure for

Humors, and Impurities of the Blood, Disordered Stomach and Bowels, Constipation, Bilious Complaints, Indigestion, Headache, Dyspepsia, Costiveness, Worms in children, Sour Stomach, Jaundice, Dizziness, Pains in the Side, Back and Limbs, Liver Complaint, Cold and Fever, Fever and Ague, Sickness of the Stomach, Loss of Appetite, and General Debility.

It regulates the Secretions, Tones up the System, and is a NEVER FAILING REMEDY.

Nature has provided in her Roots, Plants and Herbs, the natural and original Medicines for the cure of all diseases that may afflict mankind. This remedy is the chemical combining of those known to possess the most valuable and wonderfully curative properties for the cure of the diseases for which it is recommended.

CARTER'S ELIXIR OF LIFE,

A safe Medicine to use in all cases, and certain to cure Internal and External complaints. This Medicine has wonderful curative properties; a few doses taken in the first stages of the diseases for which it is recommended, is sure to relieve and cure at once. No family should be without a bottle in the house. No Man or Woman, no Traveler by land or sea should be without this wonderful Medicine, as it is sure to cure at all times.

Carter's Concentrated Extract of JAMAICA GINGER.

The Universal Family Medicine.

Nothing can be found superior to CARTER'S JAMAICA GINGER. Its use improves the appetite, gives tone to the Stomach and organs of digestion, and keeps one in perfect health. No one can afford to be without a bottle, as it is retailed at so low a price as to be within reach of all.

Carter's Flavoring Extracts, Essences and Tinctures

Have been tested in every way and their immense sale proves their great superiority. They are unexcelled for richness and delicacy of flavor and great strength.

Carter's American Wines

Consist of Grape, Elderberry, Currant, Port and light Madeira. They are made from carefully selected fruits, and are strictly pure. Sold Bottled or by the gallon.

Also, constantly on hand, a general assortment of Medicines, Toilet Soaps, Cigars etc. sold Wholesale and Retail.

L. F. CARTER,
MAIN STREET,
Georgetown, Mass.

PAUL “PEG” PILLSBURY

Among our many notable citizens is inventor Paul Pillsbury. Paul was born in Newbury in 1780 to Revolutionary War soldier Parker Pillsbury and Sarah (Dickinson) Pillsbury. As a young man he went to work for Paul Lunt of Newbury, where his inventive talents developed while working on wind and water mills. Tiring of that line of work, he built himself a lathe, moved to Amesbury and commenced making shuttles for Amesbury's woolen mills. He married Sarah “Betsy” Frink in 1812.

Around 1814, he inherited “the garrison house” on Jewett Street from his Uncle Oliver Dickinson. He and his wife settled in to the house where they would eventually raise their eight children.

In the west chamber of the house, Paul set up a private machine shop with a forge, foundry, lathe, and other machines all of his own making. His first two patented inventions were for a corn sheller and a bark mill, but the invention that brought him widespread fame was the shoe peg machine.

One day Paul paid a visit to his neighbor, Moses Stickney, whom he found whittling wooden heel pegs with a jackknife, a tedious and time consuming task. Mr. Stickney suggested to Paul that, since he could invent just about anything, he should build a machine that would produce heel pegs. Paul immediately recognized the brilliance of this suggestion and set to work on it. He eventually perfected a machine that made not only heel pegs, but also smaller pegs for the rest of the sole, eliminating a difficult job of hand-stitching the soles. Paul made himself a pair of shoes using the pegs, completing the job in less than a quarter of the time than it previously took. Finding them to be serviceable, he began selling his shoe pegs to the local shoemakers at eight cents a quart or two dollars a bushel. Unfortunately, he never bothered to obtain the patent. Though others had sought to produce a similar machine, all had failed.



Paul Pillsbury's home on Jewett Street, still standing today



Shoemakers bench with bucket of shoe pegs at Brocklebank Museum

Paul closely guarded his secret for years, allowing nobody to enter his shop. Eventually he relented, allowing a “good deacon” to see the machine to satisfy his curiosity. When the deacon left, so did the secret process which had vexed the other inventors. Within a year, another peg mill was producing shoe pegs at a reduced price.

Paul Pillsbury had many inventions in his lifetime, but it was his shoe peg machine that helped revolutionize the shoe industry, earning him the nickname “Peg” Pillsbury.

ALL ABOARD!

The citizens of Newburyport had been harboring a grievance against the Eastern Railroad that serviced their city, and in 1846 proposed a new line which would run through Georgetown, Groveland, Haverhill, etc. and eventually connect with the Boston & Maine Railroad. The shoe and boot industry was by then booming in Georgetown, and our shrewd businessmen realized that a railroad through town would be great for business. Raw materials and finished products could be moved about much faster, easier and cheaper by train.

The Newburyport-Georgetown Branch was opened in 1850, due in large part to the investments of many of the prominent citizens of Georgetown. A few years later, a second rail line was completed, connecting through to Danvers. Early meetings prior to incorporation were held in Georgetown, as well and many Annual Meetings of the Corporation, which were held in Georgetown's Tenney Hall.



Georgetown Station, built in 1850 at the corner of Moulton Street and Railroad Avenue

There were many accidents in the early days of the railroad. Cows were a problem along the line and were often hit as they meandered along the tracks. The first serious accident on the new rail line occurred on July 18, 1850. Georgetown resident Benjamin Hilliard, age 33, was a conductor. With his friendly and outgoing manner, he was well suited to the job that he so enjoyed.

As the train arrived at the station, Benjamin would jump off onto the platform before it stopped in order to help the passengers on and off the train. On that fateful day, Benjamin hopped off the moving train onto the platform, not knowing a cow was on the track just ahead. The train struck the cow, causing one of the cars to derail and tip over. None of the passengers were hurt, but the car landed on poor Benjamin, killing him instantly.

**NEWBURYPORT
AND
DANVERS & GEORGETOWN
RAILROADS.**

**NEW & MIDDLE ROUTE
BOSTON & NEWBURYPORT**

GEORGETOWN, TOPSFIELD AND DANVERS,
Connecting at WEST DANVERS with Trains to and from SALEM.
Trains from BRADFORD and GROVELAND connect with this line
at GEORGETOWN for BOSTON.

Depot in Boston, - Boston and Maine Depot, Haymarket Square.
Bradford, - - - - - At Haverhill Bridge.
Newburyport, - - - - - West of the Tunnel.

FALL ARRANGEMENT.
ON AND AFTER MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1854.

TRAINS LEAVE

FOR BOSTON.		FROM BOSTON.	
NEWBURYPORT, 7.45, 11.00 a.m., 1.45, 5.00 p.m.	BOSTON, - - 8.05 a.m., 12.00 m., 3.00, 5.30 p.m.		
BYFIELD, - - 7.57, 11.12	W. DANVERS, - 8.45	12.35	2.35, 6.08
HAYVILLE BRIDGE, 7.45, 11.00	N. DANVERS, - 8.54	12.41	2.41, 6.18
GROVELAND, - 7.50, 11.05	TOPSFIELD, - 9.08	12.58	2.58, 6.32
GEORGETOWN, - 8.03, 11.18	BOXFORD, - 9.25	1.05	4.05, 6.39
BOXFORD, - - 8.09, 11.25	GEORGETOWN, 9.35	1.13	4.15, 6.46
TOPSFIELD, - - 8.15, 11.34	GROVELAND, 9.31	1.21	4.21, 6.52
N. DANVERS, - 8.23, 11.39	BYFIELD, - 9.39	1.31	4.31, 6.59
W. DANVERS, - 8.42, 11.58	HAYVILLE BRIDGE, 9.30	1.39	4.39, 6.57
Arrive at BOSTON, 9.10, 12.40	2.55, 6.49	Ar. at NEWBURYPORT, 9.43	1.53
			4.53, 7.04

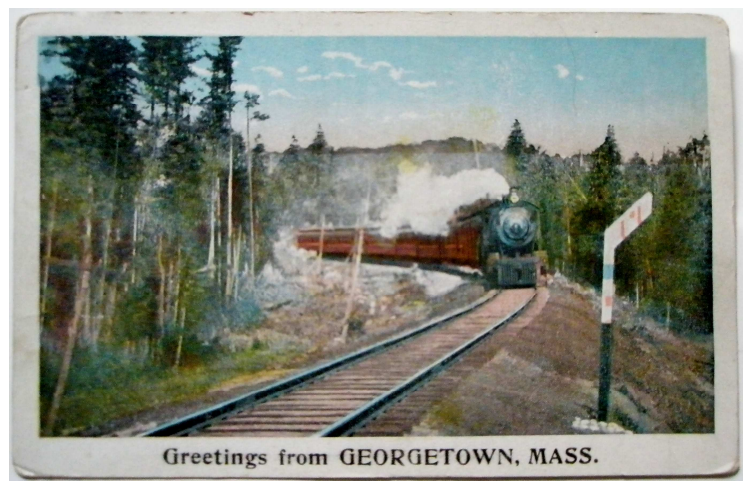
NEWBURYPORT AND BRADFORD.
TRAINS LEAVE NEWBURYPORT FOR BRADFORD at 7.45 and 11.00 a.m., 1.45 and 5.00 p.m.
" " BRADFORD FOR NEWBURYPORT at 8.40 a.m. and 1.45, 2.55 and 6.20 p.m.
" " Leaving NEWBURYPORT at 7.45 and 11.00 a.m., and 5.00 p.m., and BRADFORD at 8.40 a.m., 3.45 and 6.20 p.m., connect with Trains on the Boston & Me. Railroad to and from LAWRENCE, and the West and North; also, with Trains going East.

GEORGETOWN AND HAVERHILL BRIDGE.
TRAINS LEAVE GEORGETOWN FOR HAVERHILL BRIDGE at 8.05, 9.35, 11.15 a.m. and 1.15, 2.05, 4.15, 5.15 and 6.45 p.m.
Leave HAVERHILL BRIDGE for GEORGETOWN at 7.45, 8.35, 11.00 a.m., 12.55, 1.45, 3.00, 5.00, 6.30 p.m.

Passengers are not allowed Baggage above \$50 in value, or 50 lbs. in weight, without extra charge. For further particulars, see Railway Guide.

C. S. TENNEY, Sup't.

GEORGETOWN, OCTOBER 18, 1854.



Greetings from GEORGETOWN, MASS.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS SAVED!

Two of Georgetown's beautiful historic homes on East Main Street, which were previously featured in our "Endangered Georgetown" columns, have been saved from demolition. The Richard and Mary Tenney house at 60 East Main Street (right), built circa 1842, was under threat from the owner of the plaza next door, who wanted to buy it and tear it down for increased parking. GHS Board members attended several meetings to voice their opposition to losing another piece of Georgetown's past. We are please to announce that those plans have since been withdrawn.



The former C. B. Hills Building at 34 East Main Street (left), built circa 1810 and known as the Dunbar Hotel in the mid 1800s, stood vacant and neglected for years. It was recently purchased by Alan and Maureen Aulson of Georgetown, who are already in the process of restoring it to its past splendor. Hundreds of visitors toured the property in September when the Aulsons hosted an Open House. GHS Board Member Rick Detwiller entertained visitors with a slide show of the building's history.

SAVE THE DATE

Georgetown Historical Society will hold its Annual Meeting on **Wednesday, December 3rd at 7 PM** in the Georgetown Library Meeting Room. Following a brief business meeting, Rick Detwiller will give a special presentation on **"Public Houses of Georgetown."**

Throughout its history, Georgetown has been home to numerous Inns, Hotels and Taverns, including our own Brocklebank Musuem, which was a tavern in the 1700s. Join us for a fascinating slide show and talk on these early businesses and their importance to the town.



The Pentucket House in Georgetown

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to our newest GHS members, Scott and Sue Daigle. Sue has also been volunteering as a Tour Guide at the Brocklebank Museum this summer, and has come up with some great new ideas which we hope to implement next year.

CEMETERY TOURS

Whether you prefer to learn about local history or are looking for macabre tales for Halloween, we have a cemetery tour for you.



October 18 and 19 at 2:00 PM. Join GHS President Chris Comiskey for a historical tour of Georgetown's Union Cemetery on East Main Street. Learn about early soldiers and ministers, slaves and abolitionists, and the young victims of a tragic epidemic. See the evolution of gravestone carving since 1731 and learn about early burial customs.

October 25 and 26 at 2:00 PM. Join Chris and the Grim Reaper for a glimpse at the macabre side of Georgetown's history. Hear about witches, ghosts and ghastly deaths, including a murder (and a most surprising murderer!) while touring Georgetown's historic Union Cemetery.

Cost of admission for each tour is \$5, with all proceeds going to the Georgetown Historical Society. For more information, contact us at info@georgetownhistorical.com



amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Before you know it, Christmas decorations will be springing up at the malls and the TV will be filled with ads telling of all the wonderful things we should be buying for our loved ones. Many of us will head to the internet to shop, and if you are one of the many who shop at Amazon, we hope you will shop using the Amazon Smile program and help GHS while doing so.

Georgetown Historical Society is now a listed charity on Amazon Smile, a program through which Amazon donates a small percentage of customer purchases to the charity of their choice when checking out. Like any non-profit, GHS is sustained by the generosity of its members and contributors. So when you purchase online at Amazon, consider going instead to their charity link, smile.amazon.com, and choosing "Georgetown Historical Society" as your supported charity.

Thank you for your continued support of GHS. Check out: <http://smile.amazon.com/> for more information on their program.



Georgetown Historical Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 376, Georgetown, MA 01833

Membership Form

Name(s) included in membership _____

Address _____

Phone number (optional) _____

E-mail _____

I would like to help GHS "Go green" *and* save money. Please send newsletter by e-mail.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Membership Levels:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 | BENEFACTOR(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$300 | LIFE (One-time payment) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 | SUSTAINER(S) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 50 | CONTRIBUTOR(S) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 30 | MEMBER(S) | | |

Your membership fee is tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to:

Georgetown Historical Society

Optional: I would like to help as a GHS volunteer (check area(s) of interest)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Museum tour guide | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising/Merchandise sales |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Board member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special events | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |



Georgetown Historical Society
P.O. Box 376
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Georgetown Historical Society



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<i>President:</i>	<i>Christine Comiskey</i>
<i>Vice President:</i>	<i>Sylvia Johnston</i>
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Ralph Chouinard, Rick Detwiller,
Jeff Lamoureux, Ed Des Jardins,
Michael Hinchliffe

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