

THE GEORGETOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



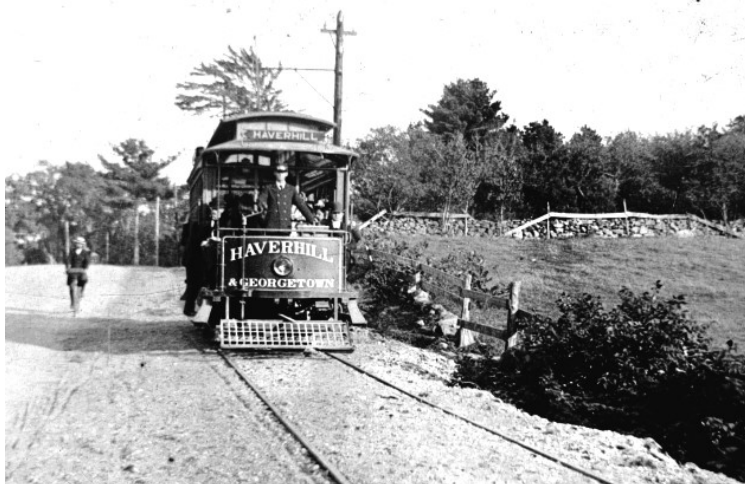
Preserving and promoting the history of Georgetown

Spring 2016 Newsletter

GEORGETOWN'S TROLLEYS

The Haverhill, Georgetown & Danvers Street Railway Company was incorporated in 1893 to build an electric railway running from Bradford, through South Groveland, Georgetown, Boxford and Topsfield to Danvers. Construction began in the spring of 1896, which included building a 710-foot-long trestle to cross over the B & M railroad tracks on West Main Street (this is how the Trestle Way apartment complex, located near the site of the old trestle, got its name). A car barn was also built on West Main Street, not far from the trestle.

The first trip on the line took place on the morning of July 2, 1896, although the trestle was not yet completed. The July 11, 1896 *Georgetown Advocate* noted: *With a distinguished party of passengers on board, the first car equipped with electricity was made over the tracks of the H. G. & D. Street Railroad to Georgetown Wednesday morning. The trip partook of the nature of a triumphal procession, for every house along the route furnished its quota of cheering, enthusiastic people. Fish*



A trolley makes its way down West Main Street in 1905

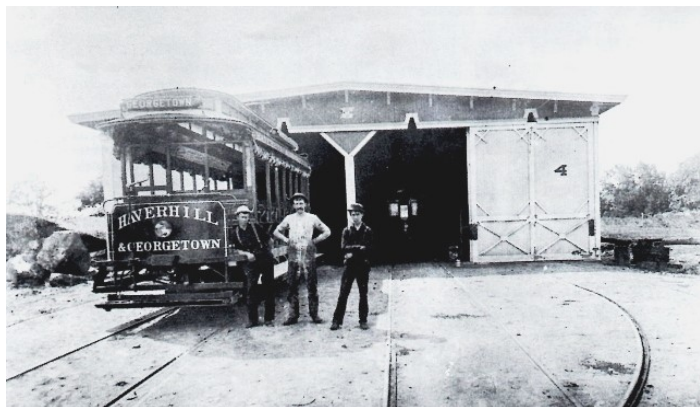


A trolley crosses the trestle over the B & M tracks

horns were blown, flags waved to the breeze and the crowds gathered at South Groveland waved hats and handkerchiefs in a most enthusiastic manner..... All along the line projecting limbs from trees by the roadside obstructed the course of the triumphal party, but a saw and a hatchet, wielded by athletic passengers, soon removed the offending branches. The trip was continued to the trestle work, where the tracks will be carried over the B. & M. crossing. The party alighted there and quenched their thirst, after which the trestle was inspected. This bridge will be a model of strength and stability when completed, and in another week cars may run to the heart of Georgetown.

Two weeks later, the trestle was completed, but they ran into an obstacle down the road. The Newburyport Railroad would not allow them to cross their tracks, and a trestle was not feasible in this thickly settled part of town. After much legal maneuvering, permission was granted and by the end of 1898, the H. G. & D street railway was running to its terminus at Georgetown's Pentucket Square. The line was never continued beyond that point.

Disaster struck the line on the morning of February 18, 1900 during a snowstorm, when workers discovered a fire at the car barn. The snow hindered the firefighters' efforts to get to the scene, while the high winds fanned the flames. The building was completely destroyed, along with all seven cars stored inside. The only car saved was the snow plow, which was in use at the time. Trolley cars were borrowed from other lines until new ones arrived in July. The car house was rebuilt on the same location.



The original car barn on West Main Street

In 1899, another company, the Georgetown, Rowley & Ipswich Street Railway Company, was organized. This line began in Georgetown's Pentucket Square, heading down North Street to Byfield, Rowley and Ipswich. The line was completed and opened in the spring of 1900, but proved to be much less successful than the H. G. & D. It was abandoned in the fall of 1919.

Albert Hatfield and Martin Murphy pose on car #22 in Georgetown Square in 1900



TIME FOR A TREASURE HUNT!

It's spring cleaning time, a great time to get rid of all that old stuff cluttering up your attic, basement or garage. But wait, haven't you wondered if those old "family heirlooms" that grandma gave you are



worth anything? Do you suspect that garage sale find may be worth much more than you paid? If so, we welcome you to have those items verbally appraised at our second annual **Antiques Appraisal Night**. We once again welcome the entertaining and informative antiques appraiser **Dan Meader** of McInnis Auctioneers. The event will be held at the Georgetown Peabody Library meeting room on **Wednesday, May 18 from 6 - 8 p.m.** Admission is free, but there is a charge of \$5 per item to be appraised, with a limit of three items per person.

COMING SOON - RED SOX TICKETS RAFFLE!

One of our GHS members has very generously donated two Red Sox tickets to be raffled off as a fundraiser for GHS. The game is Tuesday, August 9th against the Yankees, and also happens to be Ortiz bobble-head night. We will be selling raffle tickets at the Antiques Appraisal night and other places and times to be announced.



BROCKLEBANK MUSEUM OPENING DAY

The Brocklebank Museum will be opening for the season on **June 26** and will be open every Sunday through Columbus Day weekend from 2 - 5 p.m. and other days and times by appointment. Come check out our newest acquisitions and our *Early Businesses of Georgetown* exhibit. Admission is always free to current GHS members.



BE A TOUR GUIDE - GET A FREE ENHA PASS!

If you are interested in local history and enjoy meeting and talking to people, you should consider joining our Brocklebank Museum tour-guiding team! It is a fun and easy job—no memorization or wearing of costumes is required, and you get to choose the Sundays you wish to work. This is also a great opportunity for high school students looking to earn Community Service credits. As an added incentive, **anyone who volunteers at least 10 hours with GHS this year will receive an Essex National Heritage Area Volunteer Reciprocal Pass.** This enables you to get into over 60 Essex County historic sites including such popular venues as the Crane Estate, the House of Seven Gables, and the Peabody Essex Museum absolutely **FREE!** If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information, please contact Georgetown Historical Society President Chris Comiskey at 978-352-7364 or e-mail her at: info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com.



ESSEX NATIONAL
HERITAGE AREA

TOWN MEETING MAY 2ND

Georgetown's Spring Town Meeting will be held on Monday, May 2nd at 7:00 p.m. at the GMHS auditorium. We urge you to attend and support the Georgetown Historical Society's request for \$7000 in Community Preservation Act funding.

Last July, we discovered that a portion of the ceiling had collapsed in the curator's room of the museum and the kitchen ceiling was sagging. We also need to replace all the old broken window shades with new light-blocking shades to better protect our contents from damaging light.

We also encourage you to support the library's request for CPA funds to restore the portrait of George Peabody. For more information on George Peabody, go to our website, www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com, and check out the Winter 2015 GHS Newsletter in our Newsletter Archives.



Collapsed section of ceiling at museum

UPCOMING HISTORY-RELATED EVENTS AT THE LIBRARY

The Georgetown Peabody Library has two upcoming events of historical interest:

Monday, May 9th from 6:30 - 8 p.m., Seema Kenney will present information on how to get started in genealogy and family history, including organization and useful sources.



Monday, May 23rd from 6:30 - 8 p.m., Terry Palardy, owner of *Quilters Quarters* on North Street, will present a history of sewing machines from the mid 19th century to present day, including information on restoration and maintenance. A display of vintage sewing machines will be available for viewing.

Visit the library's website, georgetownpl.org, for more information on these and other events.

DESCENDANT OF CAPTAIN SAMUEL BROCKLEBANK PASSES AWAY



David Myron Brockelbank, a native of Georgetown and eighth great-grandson of Captain Samuel Brocklebank, died in Newkirk, Oklahoma on January 19, 2016 at the age of 80. Brockelbank, son of the late Myron and Esther Brockelbank, was born in Georgetown on October 25, 1935. He spent four years in the Navy, serving on the U.S.S. Randolph from 1954-1958. A master machinist and prolific inventor, dozens of his creations were patented by his employers. Brockelbank was a Life-Member of the Georgetown Historical Society, having joined in 2000. Among his survivors is his daughter, GHS Curator Karen Brockelbank, and his sister, GHS member Rebecca Alberg.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS!

We extend a warm welcome to the following members who have joined GHS in the past few months: Christine Canning and Scott Demers, Joseph Corcoran, John and Amanda Feeks, Heather Forgione, Jodi and Michael Gauron, Steve and Paula Hooper, Jan Jones, Jeffrey and Brian Krieger, Stuart and Tricia Krupnick, Jim and Ann Lacey, George Perkins, Dean and Alicia Raspa, Jason and Brittany Seidman, and Carol Snow.

FREE HOUSE HISTORIES



In our last newsletter, we announced our new offer to do house histories for new and current GHS members upon request. As you can see by the above list of new members, this offer has proved to be quite popular. One new member discovered that her home was a station on the Underground Railroad and was visited by many famous abolitionists, including Frederick Douglas and William Lloyd Garrison! While few of Georgetown's historic homes can boast such an interesting history, our goal is to get more people—especially our newest residents—interested in Georgetown's history and the role that earlier inhabitants of their homes may have played.

If you have requested but not yet received your house history, rest assured that it will be coming. Researching older homes, especially those built before 1855, can be very complicated and time-consuming.

2016 MEMBERSHIP REMINDER



If you have not yet renewed your GHS membership for 2016, we hope you will do so very soon. All annual memberships run from January 1st to December 31st. A membership form is included with this newsletter for your convenience, or you can renew online by visiting our website, www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com and clicking on "Join the Society." If you are unsure of your membership status, please e-mail us at info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com.



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 contribution 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
Georgetown, MA 01833

Georgetown Historical Society



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