

GEORGETOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preserving and promoting the history of Georgetown



A Note From The President

We are incredibly pleased to be able to open the museum this year. We have missed our Sunday visitors. It is exciting to be getting back to normal. We hope you can stop by even if it is only for a minute or two to say "Hello."

I would like to take this time to thank my fellow board and society members. This past year was challenging for all of us as we had to find new ways to work together, while working apart. A special thank you to Michelle and Lew; without your technical expertise I do not know how we would have made our meetings work. Thank you, Jim, for your continued restoration of the shoe shop and other special projects. I relish crossing off the items on the museum maintenance "to do" list. Mary, Sylvia, Eileen and Darlene thank you for all your help in getting the property ready for our opening, both inside and out. It looks beautiful. Chris thank you to you and your AP History class for jumping in and creating the video for the third-grade class as they were not able to have their field trip again this year. You have a very creative group. Rick, Jeff, Chris and Mackenzie thank you for all your help in sorting as we get ready for the state archivist. I know this will be another big project, but we are making great progress. A final thank you to Michele Augeri, Beverly Knapp, Lew, Sylvia, Darlene Dupre, Mary, and Rick for signing onto the archival project. Your insights have been invaluable thus far.

The Garden Committee would like to thank Barb Harrold of the Georgetown Garden Friends for representing the club and coming by the museum property to consult on the gardens. We always enjoy fellow gardeners' input on what we have created thus far and our future planting plans. Our latest garden is a Victorian garden just inside the fence to the left of the front door. It is a work in progress but we feel it will add another layer to the history of the property. Please contact us if you would like to join us in working on the landscape or if you would like to donate plant materials.

As always, feel free to reach out with any recommendations or concerns you have regarding the museum, the gardens, or Georgetown Historical Society in general. We welcome and value the support of all of you, our members.

If you have time, we welcome your participation in any and all ongoing projects.

Betsy Moran

Summer 2021 Newsletter

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GHS Officers

President:	Betsy Moran
1st Vice President:	Sylvia Johnston
2nd Vice President:	Rick Detwiller
Treasurer:	Michelle Wilkins Cook
Secretary:	Lew Harrold
Curator:	Karen Brockelbank

Board of Directors:

Jeff Lamoureux	Jim Boynton
Joe Corcoran	Mary Saunders
Chris DiFranco	



Inquiries

Our Society email

info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com frequently receives inquiries connected to Georgetown history. Sometimes, a member of the Board has the answer or knows whom to ask. Sometimes we send the inquirer to the Southern Essex Registry of Deeds online, or to the Georgetown Public Library's Local History online links. This past Spring, when the old Baptist Church on North Street, which is now a residence, was up for sale, we received several questions about its history. Rick Detwiller, Vice President, had some answers and Michele Augeri, librarian at the GPL came up with more. Serendipity occurred when Chris DiFranco, Board Member, had students, in doing research on Frederick Douglas speaking in Georgetown, needed to know more about the location of the Baptist Church. Isn't history fun!!!

There are many Georgetown's in the United States and around the world, some large and well-known and some, not so much. It seems that our society website comes up readily in Google searches and then sometimes gets mistaken with Georgetown's in other states or even Canada. We check the website at least once a week for messages that need answering. Below are some of the requests for information we received from those trying to contact other Georgetown Historical Societies.

1. We received a very detailed email about Soldier's Point and the MacFadden family from a Visiting Research Assistant Professor at the University of Memphis who wanted help finding more information because he has a cabin on the property. Some of the clues in the email pointed to Maine so he was informed that he had contacted Massachusetts.
2. "I am working on a novel based on the Braddock expedition in the 1750's. Could you suggest the name of a tavern around 1755 in Georgetown?" I was excited by the mention of a tavern but, of course, Georgetown wasn't Georgetown in 1755 so I suspected an error. This request sent me out of curiosity about the Braddock Expedition to do a bit of research myself. It turns out the Braddock Expedition

left Ft Cumberland in Maryland in 1755 in an attempt to capture Ft. Duquesne during the French and Indian War.

3. "Trying to find jail records for Melvina Francis Ludley. She was Jailed in Georgetown County Jail 5 times between 1890s and 1910 for giving birth to Mixed race Children." I never found out what state this was because the sender didn't respond to my reply.
4. An archivist for the Lewes Historical Society in Delaware sent, "We have been reviewing our photograph collection and have noticed 3 images of graduating classes in front of Georgetown High School." So, I checked and there is a Georgetown, DE.
5. Also, from Delaware came this request, "I am interested in knowing if I could rent the barrel barn on June 6th, 2021. I would like to host a graduation party." The Georgetown, (DE) Historical Society Website says, "Barrel Barn, which used an innovative truss system of laminated rafters by a local builder (c. 1930, Rodney O'Neal)".



Barrel Barn located in Georgetown, DE

6. "I was just wondering if there was anyone interested in viewing a binder that I have assembled containing papers found during several renovations at 60 Dayfoot Drive in Georgetown by the previous owner (Doug Matthews) and ourselves." Dayfoot Drive was a clue that this isn't our Georgetown and the address of the inquirer in Georgetown, Ontario was the other.

Garden Volunteers

The garden volunteers have been busy as usual this spring. We are very proud of the tulip display and the peonies near the front door. Did you see them? The raised beds, which were funded by the Essex Heritage Partnership Grant, are growing well. The apple and pear trees now have lowbush blueberries nearby as well as a compost bin. A witch hazel bush and winterberry bushes have been planted near the wetlands in the shade garden. And a Victorian-style garden is beginning to take shape in front of the Victorian parlor. Thank you, Karen Brockelbank, for the plants.

The Museum is Reopening

Sunday, July 11 from 2 to 5, the Museum will be open for visitors to tour the house (in masks) and garden. We plan to have the Museum open on Sundays throughout the summer and fall, weather permitting. New docents are needed. Call Mary Saunders at 978-352-6886 and leave a message if you would like to be trained as a docent.

Museum cleaning sessions are being held every Saturday morning starting a 10 AM (except July 3) from now until opening. **Come join us.**

SHRAB Grant Approved

GHS applied for and received a State Historic Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) grant to have a Roving Archivist consult with us about improving our documentation of the collection and do a better job preserving those materials we have stored. The Georgetown Peabody Library (GPL) will be part of this effort by storing and preserving the Society's books in the climate-controlled history room of the library with its new (CPC-funded) glass-fronted, lockable shelves. Archivist, Irene Gates, met with us on Zoom and then in person to tour our facilities including the library. Much volunteer work will be needed on this project. Volunteers to help with data entry and research are always welcome. Contact us at info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com



Raised garden beds at the museum.

Museum Tour For Third Grade

For the **second year**, the third-grade classes at Penn Brook were not able to tour the museum. But this year the Society was more prepared. Chris Difranco's AP History class came to the museum and prepared a video for the third grade. The high school students presented each room of the museum and the schoolhouse to the Penn Brook classes. In addition, Betsy Moran put together bags for each class containing the Georgetown Images book, house blocks of the museum and school house, a Gtwn sticker, two maps: 1830 and the birds eye view, and the post card of the museum and school house. The large print of the drawing of the house by Chuck Margeson was included and will be part of a coloring/art contest for the **Trails and Sails** event in September.



Lew Harrold conducting a tour of the museum for a third grade class in 2019

Georgetown Mass. “Shoe Shops” By Jim Boynton

Maps of Georgetown, Mass. from the “Atlas of Essex County” dated 1872 indicate twenty-two Shoe Shops spread out around the town of Georgetown. They are showing on: West Main St. (1); Central St. (4); Andover St. (3); Nelson St. (1); Elm St. (4); Chestnut St. (1); East Main St. (1); Park St. (1); North St. (4); Tenney St. (1) and Jewett St. (1).

Back then, many small Shoe Shops were often referred to as “Ten-footers” due to their length and width usually being somewhat around ten feet. The attics were left unfinished and used for storage. These were small structures to serve as a shoemaker’s shop. It has been noted that many farmers had these little Shoe Shops adjacent to their homes so that they could make coarse shoes during the winter months and off-seasons to sell or barter for some of their living necessities.



Only one such Shoe Shop still exists intact within Georgetown today. It is the one that came from the property of 124 North Street. It was donated to the Georgetown Historical Society (GHS) in 1969 as a gift from the then residents, Sue and Byron Merrill. Its actual age and early history prior to 1940 is yet to be determined. During the Barton’s ownership the Shoe Shop was utilized for storage, a small kindergarten class, a gift shop and then back to a storage shed. Initially the Shoe Shop was moved to the GHS’s Witham House museum property located at 170 Jewett St.. Then in 1975 the GHS sold the Witham Museum property and purchased the Spaulding property at 108 East Main Street for its new museum location now known as the “Brockelbank Museum”. The Shoe Shop was then moved to this new location where it now resides.

Most recently, for preservation, the Shoe Shop has had: a new cedar shingle roof; some new clapboard siding (where needed) and complete repair of its five windows along with ongoing window sill maintenance. Being the only one of its kind in Georgetown it deserves our attention for posterity. If it were not for the Barton’s the Shoe Shop most likely would have met an ill-fate like all the others within Georgetown.

Just for the record, our “ten-footer” is actually 14 feet 4 inches in length and 10 feet 5 inches in width!

Remembering Janis Blouin



Sad news of the passing of life member, Janice Blouin. The following was posted by member Dan Meader on Facebook: “Janis Blouin, one of the most passionate collectors I ever knew. Born the same day as Elvis, she died this weekend. I knew her since I was little living in our little town always on the hunt for her next treasure. I was lucky enough for her to trust me when the time called just a couple summers ago to sell all those treasures. She’s up there with her boy Eddie and his Dad now. Not a fan of these changes as we all advance through time. Hope there are endless new treasures past every cloud that will make all your days forever now.”



Georgetown Historical Society
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Upcoming Events

Antique Appraisal Roadshow
hosted by Groveland Historical Society
101 Washington St., Groveland

June 24th
6 PM - 9 PM

Veasey Parks's Fairy House Festival

September 11 & 12
10 AM - 4 PM



September 19 & September 26

- JOIN US ON [FACEBOOK](#)! Search Groups: "Georgetown Historical Society."
- VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com to see more information about GHS, upcoming events and Newsletter archives
- E-MAIL US AT: info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com