



Historical Happenings

the newsletter of the

Medway Historical Society

Est. 1902

Experience the History of Medway, Massachusetts

Volume 2015, Issue 4

President's Note

Medway Historical Society

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Dear Historical Society Members and friends,

Once September is over the unofficial holiday season begins! Retailers want us to open our wallets and spend, spend, spend. And it is mighty irresistible for many of us to pass up that treasure on the shelf that has such personal appeal. I too, am guilty of buying things that liven the spirit of the season. Many of the new items are reminiscent of times long ago. Though I must say that in recent years I have actually gone in and out of our most popular and favorite stores with nothing bought. Nothing! This is not because I own everything in the store already. I think it is more so about being content with the items that now have so much family history behind them having been brought out and dusted off year after year.

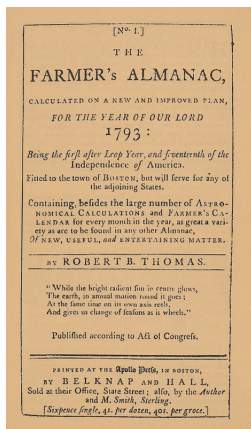
For the past, I hope that you find that something reminiscent of the past, sprigs of pine for your front door, bells that jingle on the doorknob, or maybe a song playing on the radio to brighten your spirit this holiday season.

For the present, we will have plenty of spirit to share at our 'Holiday Open House' at Thayer Homestead on Saturday, December 19th from 10am—1pm. Stop in and say hello. We are looking forward to seeing you!

For the future, we hope you find joy each day in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Sheila Dubrawski



FARMER'S ALMANAC

Our inventory contains many issues of the "Farmer's Almanac." The premier issue of the "Old Farmer's Almanac" was published in 1793 during George Washington's first term as president. The almanac cost only six pence (about nine cents).

In those early years, almost all households had only two reading materials hanging by their fireplace, the bible and the almanac.

In this age of information overload it seems like that may be a welcome reprieve once in a while. The poem to the

right is from the 1824 issue. Even then, Pedlar Tim offered personal delivery and encouraged his customers to spend, spend, spend. www.almanac.com

Tom Twilight

Through drifting snow and cutting
sleet
I've trudged and toiled my friends to
greet;
And tug'd beneath my lumb'ring gear,
To wish you all a *happy year*.
Ye, gentle folks, shall I unpack,
The precious store upon my back,
My wallet, crowded to the brim,
And all the wealth of *Pedlar Tim*?
I've books of various sorts and sizes;
Come, buy just as your fancy prizes.

Cutler Family Reunion

On Saturday, October 10th descendants of Medway's earliest and most influential families including Whiting, Cutler, Thayer and Sanford began their weekend family reunion in Medway. Family members came from near and far including MA, ME, CA, MD, NY, FL, NC and DE. Ellen Cutler organized the group some of whom had never met each other before. We began the tour of Medway at the Medway Community Church where Pastor Schultz, Nancy Vinton and Marge Maxwell welcomed the group with a history and tour of the beautiful church. After a brief tour of Rabbit Hill off we went to Thayer Homestead, the Medway/Thayer Mill and then to the Village Church. There Pastor Longhurst along with Sandy, Ron, Bruce and Judy gave us a great history of the building which was often used as a meeting place to conduct town business over the years. A drive through Sanford Mill and up Village Street brought us to Thayercroft the family homestead where Jane Norris graciously welcomed the family. We ended the tour with a short walk to Galante's Restaurant the old "Stanley House" where Kathy and all the staff bustled to serve the large group. The family made one last stop at Evergreen Cemetery before leaving Medway to continue their reunion in western Massachusetts. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the day a memorable one for our visitors.



INTERACTIVE DIGITAL DISPLAY FRAME

We are very fortunate to have purchased a digital frame from Almont Green Gallery in Medway. This frame is currently showing over 500 of Medway's oldest images in high resolution. The images are available for purchase and make great gifts. You will be able to view the images at our monthly museum open house and at our next Holiday Open House

at Thayer Homestead on Saturday,
December 19th, 10am to 1pm.

*Almont Green, Sheila Dnabrowski, Cathie Perkins,
Mark Wilcox, Stephen Malloy and Paul Russell*

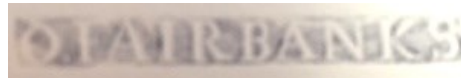


CURATORS CORNER

In the process of inventorying the upstairs of the museum we came upon a box containing what looked like cobbler tools. MHS Director Chuck Waldron identified what each of the tools was used for. Among the tools was a stamp (top right) that reads "OFAIRBANKS." Chuck took the research a step further to learn that these were the shoemaker tools of "Otis Fairbanks."

In the second half of the 1800's, Medway became a factory town with many boot and bonnet shops. There was still a need for the cordwainer or shoemaker in most towns. Otis Fairbanks was one of these people.

Born in Medway, May 16th 1785 to parents Levi and Molly (Fuller of Wrentham, MA) Fairbanks, Otis lived, married and died in Medway. He married Sylvia Fuller, April 28, 1814 and had two children, Mehitabel Fairbanks Cole and Eliza F. Fairbanks Turner. Some of his tools include edge shavers, racers, pricking iron, leather burnishers, leather crease tool and awls. The 1850 census list his occupation as a farmer in Medway. The 1870 census reports his occupation as cordwainer. Otis Fairbanks is then living on Village Street with Abbie Cobb, 39, a school teacher and Marge Fairbanks, 75 working for a bonnet factory. Otis had \$1600 of real estate at this time, was 85 years old, white and blind. Otis Fairbanks died in Medway, September 23rd, 1879 at age 94. From a map of 1876 O. Fairbanks lived on Village Street across from A. Allen, currently in the vicinity of 287 Village St.



TIDBITS

? What IS the oldest standing house in Medway? Have you any idea?

? A question came from Betsy Johnson of the Sherborn Historical Society asking if anyone has knowledge about Charles Ellis from Medway (possibly now Millis) who in 1833 attempted to murder the family of Mr. Benjamin Holbrook of Sherborn by infusing arsenic in his pump.

? Do you have any access database experience? We could use help finalizing the creation of our database by linking images and creating a few simple queries and reports.

? Interested in helping our with our holiday party and other event planning on an occasional basis?

- The Pond/Ollendorf house at 121 Main St. is back on the market and is a gem. It has all the character preserved of yesteryear with all the updated features of today!

email: @info@medwayhistoricalsociety.org

Medway Historical Society



*2015 Holiday Open House
"A Few of Our Favorite Things"*

*Saturday, December 19th
10AM to 1PM*

*Thayer Homestead
Choate Park, Medway*

*Enjoy light refreshments!
Admission Free*

**Medway Historical Society
Annual Membership Enrollment Form**
(all memberships end annually on May 31st)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ (newsletters via email)

☐ New Member or ☐ Renewal

☐ Senior/ Student \$10

☐ Family \$25

☐ Individual \$15

☐ Business \$50

☐ Couple \$20

☐ Lifetime \$200

☐ Please accept my additional tax-deductible 501c(3) contribution.

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Make checks payable to:

Medway Historical Society
223 Main Street, Medway, MA 02053

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available for purchase at
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PHONE: 508-533-7222

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT !

Established in 1902 the
Medway Historical Society
is a 501C (3) Non-profit Organization
Your donations are tax deductible.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Holiday Open House

December 19th 10am—1pm Thayer Homestead

MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE - 223 Main St. - 3rd Sunday of the month 1 - 3 p.m.

Medway Historical Society

223 Main Street

Medway, MA 02053

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Visit our website:

www.medwayhistoricalsociety.org