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IMAGES

(Above) George Washington, volunteers, staff and their families march in the Santa Parade

(Left) Detail of child's black rubber boots

ADAM BROOKS, THE VOLUNTEER BEHIND OUR NEW EXHIBIT

by Elaine Clements, Executive Director

What is the difference between paid and unpaid staff in nonprofits? That seems like a silly question because, of course, there is a basic difference. Some are paid for their time; others donate their time. But how often do the two merge, mingle, or otherwise blur? More often than we might think.

For at least a dozen years now, we've had two very part-time paid staff members who share opening Andover Historical on Saturdays, each working an average of 12 hours a month. Our two current weekend staff are Kenna Therrien and Adam Brooks. Kenna has moved between volunteer and paid staff, and is now also working 15 hours each week as our Administrative Assistant in addition to her weekend work. Adam has worked as a weekend assistant since 2010, while working full-time as Assistant Registrar at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem.

In 2014, Adam brought to us the idea for an exhibit about George Washington. It was outside the scope of his weekend assistant duties, but Adam saw that by curating the exhibit, he could develop new museum skills while exploring a topic that interested him.

"I have always been interested in the creation of American identity," Adam said, "Symbols were a major force in the creation of American identity. The earliest and most powerful symbol is that of George Washington, whether he is depicted as a hero, an ideal republican citizen, or even a demigod. The collections at Andover Historical...inspired me to see if others could have the same emotional and intellectual connection to these objects that I have."

Adam proposed that he research, write, and develop an exhibit and an accompanying catalog. Some of this work could be done

Continued on page 7

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

WINTER 2015



It was early November when I sat down to ponder what to write for this newsletter's theme of "giving." It's always an appropriate and not too surprising topic just after our aptly named "Thanksgiving" day, and the anticipated cultural drum-beat to give in the spirit of the Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa, and all the holidays that round out the year.

Just as I was thinking about what to write, my eye spied a small piece in the daily paper from Gov. Larry Hogan (Maryland) on his road to recovery from cancer. The gist of what he said was *"Do what you can whether it's voluntarily giving your time to help...making a donation...No act of kindness is too small. It really does make a difference."*

The act of giving and the ripple effect that comes about from a well-intentioned act are both fully human and inherently good. Why we choose to give and to whom we choose to give are personal and for that reason, empowering. We can choose to give something that we have, be it money, time, or personal effects to a person or purpose

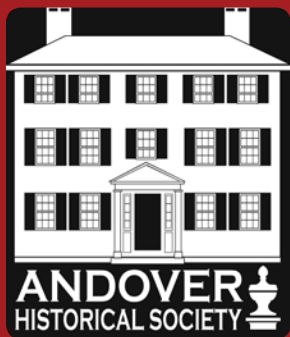
– and both the object of our giving and our very selves are enriched at the same time.

We are indeed lucky to have the staff, volunteers, members, and donors who do so much to sustain and enrich the Andover Historical Society. Every day, we receive the gifts of time – volunteers who give so willingly to scan photos for posterity, to teach the town's children the history and the ways of Andover in days long gone by, and to fulfill many other tasks. We receive donations both in kind and in dollars which keep the Amos Blanchard house, barn, and gardens in good shape to house the treasures for our future and our children's future. All of this giving is important. All of this giving is good.

Thank you all for giving, and all the best for the holidays,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan".

Susan McKelliget
President, Andover Historical Society



You can help make history today and every day

Thank you to all our members and friends who support Andover Historical's Annual Fund! Without you, we could not do the work necessary to gather, preserve, and share Andover's stories. With your support, hundreds of students in grades 1 through 12 – and well beyond! – have access to the unique resources in Andover Historical's collection. You help inspire community connections and civic engagement.

There's still time to support this year's Annual Fund! Please join with your fellow members and friends of Andover Historical by making an unrestricted gift. You can donate online on our website, www.andoverhistorical.org. Click on "Support" to discover the many ways you can inspire and engage people in Andover's history.

WHY I GIVE: HELEN SELLERS

by Ellen Marcus

Shortly after moving to Andover in the late 1960s, Helen and her friend Louise Ponti attended an Historical Society program at their alma mater, Merrimack College. They were immediately recruited by the Society's volunteers to participate in programs. Helen began a relationship with the Andover Historical Society that has now spanned over forty years.

Reflecting on why she readily accepted the invitation to join Helen said, "I came to the Society with a firm conviction that preserving the Blanchard House and its collections was important and that the organization should have a significant role to play in Andover. Very quickly Helen joined the Board of Directors and in due course became the Society's Corresponding Secretary, an Executive Committee position. She recalls just how much work had to be done by the Board and other volunteers. Those were the days of little professional help and just about all aspects of running the Blanchard House organization fell to volunteers. A big part of Helen's job was to communicate with members. In the days before computers and email this required many handwritten thank you notes, donor acknowledgements, and personal invitations to programs and events. As a mother caring for three children Helen often had to do her work at the Blanchard House, her young daughter in tow. Her daughter spent so much time playing in and exploring the house that Helen recalls the young girl telling people "My Mommy has two houses."

In the late 1970s as Helen puts it "Everything changed with the Purdon Bequest" and she was the President of the Board of Directors. It was an enormous responsibility and required much negotiating skill to build consensus as to how to allocate this windfall. She recalls that the Society was used to working within a budget of about \$7,000. Over the next couple of years she and other directors oversaw the construction of a climate-controlled library and archives providing much-needed storage for the Society's collection of archival materials, some dating back to the early days of Andover. She was also instrumental in establishing the Society's endowment with many trips to the State Street Bank in Boston to consolidate the many bequests accumulated over the years. There was even sufficient income from the endowment to start thinking about hiring professional help.

The Society was not only changing, but as Helen says, "the children were getting older and college expenses were looming, so I felt I had to go to work. Actually, I loved my job at Memorial Hall Library." She spent many



Helen Sellers
Photo by Cristen Farrell

years at the Library using her unique talent to interface with the public to Andover's advantage, but the Society still received her and her husband Jim's support.

After she retired from the library, Helen returned to the Society as a member of the Membership Committee. She and Jim became an integral part of the planning and delivering of the Society's Neighborhood Programs – one of the main ways people become aware of the Andover Historical Society and their specific neighborhood's history. Helen also serves on the Society's Collections Committee, attending monthly meetings and reviewing donations. Her in-depth knowledge of the house and its collections has proved invaluable.

Helen has seen the Society change over the years. Some changes she led, others she observed and supported, and perhaps a few were hard to accept. Yet, she continues to give her time and support. Indeed, she has invested a lot in the Society's success. When asked what fuels her steadfast support she says: "I like people, I like meeting new people, I believe strongly in preserving the Blanchard House, I believe the Andover Historical Society is an important and significant Andover institution."

EVENTS AND AN



*"I walk on untrodden ground.
There is scarcely any part of my
conduct which may not hereafter
be drawn into precedent."*

– George Washington

On Exhibit, Now

Our newest exhibit, *George Washington: Hero, Demigod, Face of a New Nation* inspires us to think about service, leadership, and heroism.

Join us in 2016 to explore what these ideas meant in the early Republic and mean today. How did early Americans create the symbols that defined their new nation? How did George Washington influence those symbols? In our multicultural, diverse community and country today, how do we define national identity? What symbols have meaning and how did they come about?

School age kids will have the opportunity to think about what it means to be a hero and to celebrate heroes in their own community. Who are their personal heroes? How are heroes identified today? Mock elections and service projects will let kids explore civic life. And how could we explore heroism without having fun with Superman, Mulan, and other heroes and heroines.

A full calendar of events and programs will be announced in early 2016. We look forward to seeing you at our events and encourage you to share your stories of heroism and service on our website.



Annual Winter Closure

Did you know that during World War II, Andover Historical closed for most winter months due to fuel shortages? Today, in deep winter the Blanchard House can use up to 16 gallons of oil a day...and that's with the heat turned down to New England sweater temperature! So part of the reason behind our annual winter closure is to save on fuel costs.

This year Andover Historical will be closed weekdays from December 24, 2015 through January 8, 2016, with the heat turned down to a minimal (safe for the pipes) temperature.

The Library and Archives, which are easier to heat, will be open Saturdays December 26, January 2, and January 9. See the note below about our new Second Sundays openings starting January 10, 2016!



Second Sundays at the Society

Beginning January 10, 2016, the Society will open its doors on the second Sunday of each month, January through May. This is the idea of Society member Gail Ralston, whose memories of Sunday openings in the 1980s were her inspiration. Second Sundays will offer another opportunity for research and tours to folks unable to stop by at other times. Attendance and positive feedback will determine the continuance of the program. Thank you, Gail, for suggesting and staffing Second Sundays.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coming to a Historical Society Near You!

As we round the corner and welcome the New Year in a few weeks, we take time to look forward to the year ahead. 2016 promises to be a year full of history and fun. Here's a sneak preview of what's to come.

Some of the possible program ideas in the pipeline include a January program on historic beverages inspired by the book *The World in a Glass: Six Drinks that Changed History* and in February, a Valentine's Day event with a dramatic twist.

Later in April, we'll look forward to our Annual Meeting and our Community Enrichment Team (CET) will be planning for the Spring sessions of our signature school education program, *Andover at Work in the 1820s*. Did you know that *Andover at Work* has been engaging elementary school children since 1982?

June seems far, far away, but it'll be here before we know it and we'll be inviting you to our fourth annual *Spring for History* breakfast. It's an inspirational morning and we hope you'll join us June 8, 2016, 7:30–8:30 am, at the Andover Country Club.

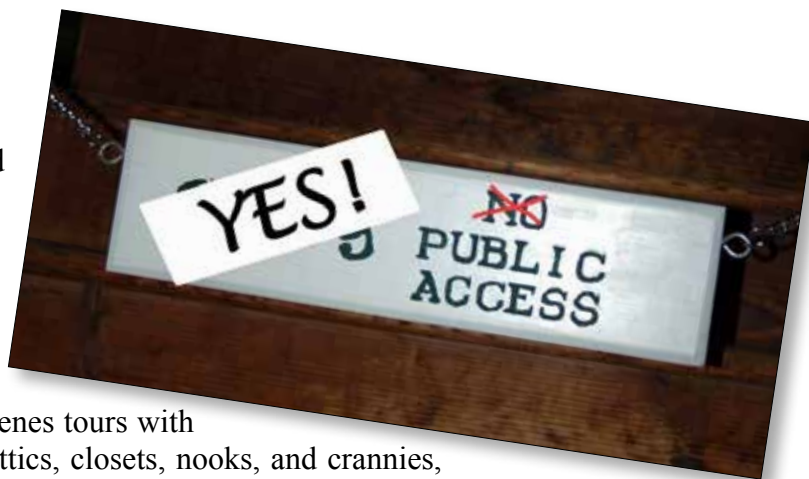
And that's just the first half of 2016! We're looking forward to spending some time with you in the months ahead.



“Behind the Scenes” at the Blanchard House

Peek inside closets, pull aside curtains, and explore behind the scenes in the Blanchard House and Andover Historical Society. Special one-hour Behind the Scenes Tours are now being offered twice a month. Here's your chance to give in to that irresistible urge to look behind the “staff only” and “no entry” signs.

Andover Historical is offering Behind the Scenes tours with a fun twist. As you tour the Blanchard house attics, closets, nooks, and crannies, you'll also hear stories about rarely seen collections items. The stories will change with every tour, so there will always be something new. Maybe you'll hear about a Civil War artifact.....or an early 20th century bobsled...or a pair of leather pants from the 1970s...



UPCOMING BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR DATES:

January 12, 1–2 pm

January 26, 7–8 pm

February 10, 11 am–12 pm

February 24, 7–8 pm

March 12, 10–11 am

March 23, 7–8 pm

April 12, 1–2 pm

April 26, 7–8 pm

*Call or register online for this free tour on our website: andoverhistorical.org/behind-the-scenes.
Group tours of 8 to 12 guests can be arranged by calling 978-475-2236.*



Scott Slaughter (left) with Pam Mitchell and Jim Batchelder. Photo by Cristen Farrell

WHY I GIVE: SCOTT SLAUGHTER

by Martha Tubinis

Step into the Historical Society almost any day of the week, day or night, and you may hear the pounding of a hammer, the buzzing of a saw or the subtle swishing of a paintbrush. This is no resident ghost of the Blanchard House – it's Scott Slaughter, our extraordinary carpenter, repairman, and handyman. Where would we be without him? We dare not think about it.

Scott was born and raised in Ilion, NY, where even as a young man, he loved to visit historic homes and museums. He moved to Boston 30 years ago. Fifteen years ago he and another of our tireless volunteers, Jim Batchelder, purchased a circa 1820 home

right here in Andover. That home, like the Blanchard House, is "a labor of love. I really enjoy historical architecture and undertaking properly executed repairs and maintenance. I work on our home and then apply what I learned about that old house to this old house and vice versa. Both structures are fragile and need lots of maintenance or they will deteriorate. Do it right the first time and you save yourself a lot of work down the road. That is why I am so finicky about my workmanship."

Indeed, inspect his work – it is flawless! His very first job at the Historical Society was 3 years ago. The barn windows were about to fall out. Half of them were replaced and the rest re-glazed and painted. He was hooked! Since then he has painted floors, renovated the bathroom, rebuilt the attic skylight, repaired shutters, renovated the library, painted and repaired the back of the barn, and painted the outside of the house. At least, that's all he can remember off the top of his head. Last summer he was on fence repair duty. He replaced 22 pickets and then, with the help of 8 high school volunteers, painted the entire fence.

"I've touched every inch of the Blanchard House and loved every minute of it!" Thank you, Scott, for your dedication, time, and love for all things historic. You are appreciated!

WHY I GIVE: GAIL RALSTON

by Thomas M. Adams, Editor

Volunteering, getting involved or just lending a helping hand is something Gail learned growing up in Chicago. She watched as her father gave unselfishly to others. Through her father, Gail saw firsthand how volunteering made a difference in people's lives and how it lifts the world up community by community, person by person. She learned how reaching out and helping others keeps you connected to the broader world. How it allows you to share perspectives, to find common ground, and ultimately to make this world a better place.

Gail began following her dad's lead at an early age. If it meant helping others, "there was never anything that I wouldn't do," Gail said. As a young girl, her interest in music and mastering the flute made her a popular performer at school gatherings and parties. In high school, she belonged to the Girls Service Organization. Through her love of writing, Gail wrote political commentaries and submitted articles. She became a group leader with the La Leche League. With fellow volunteers, she helped man a 24-hour hotline taking calls (often in the wee hours!) from distraught new mothers. She gave advice and reassurance, shared common experiences, and helped to calm young mothers. When she and her family settled in Andover, Gail brought her passion for helping others along. Gail quickly found ways she could help. The Andover Historical Society, The American Textile Museum and many other local organizations, all have all benefited from Gail's helping embrace. Gail even found time to serve on the Town of Andover Board of Selectmen!

For Gail, volunteering is about giving back. It is about connecting with others and giving of one's self. "Giving is key to being part of the human race. It is the right thing to do," Gail offered. "It makes me feel good."



Gail Ralston (right) ready for the Santa Parade with Bob Decelle and Mary O'Donoghue

ADAM BROOKS, THE VOLUNTEER BEHIND OUR NEW EXHIBIT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

when he was working in Andover on Saturdays, but much of the work would have to be done on his own time.

For those of us who work here, our best days are those when we get to help someone have an “aha moment,” when they become truly excited about a story they discover. With that in mind, we quickly accepted Adam’s offer and began to look forward to spending time with George.

Early in 2015, Adam came to us with a conundrum and an unusual solution. It no longer made sense for him to work for Andover Historical, because as a paid employee the majority of his wages were going to taxes.

“With the relatively long commute and few hours,” Adam said, “it is only the great experience (of working at Andover Historical) that made the job worthwhile.”

Adam’s proposal was that he continue to work weekends and on the Washington exhibit unpaid. In exchange, he asked if we could help advance his professional development by covering his costs to attend relevant workshops and conferences. It was a win-win all around and we gratefully accepted Adam’s proposal.

Adam continues to be here on weekends, opening the library and museum for guests, while researching, writing, and developing our new exhibit *George Washington: Hero, Demigod, Face of a New Nation*. As he attends museum conferences and workshops, the skills he brings to Andover Historical multiply – and our members, friends, and guests benefit.

George Washington opens in December and we’re looking forward to a series of programs in spring 2016 that will explore the idea of heroes and national identity. All the while, Adam is thinking ahead to the next exhibit and what it could mean for Andover Historical and our community.

Thank you, Adam, for your time and talent, and for the treasure you give back to Andover Historical and our community. Your way of giving is unique to you, as it is to each of our volunteers, members, and donors, and we are grateful.



Adam Brooks preparing the *George Washington* exhibit

George Washington: Hero, Demigod, Face of a New Nation



Apotheosis, Sacred to the Memory of Washington E81885, image courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum



George Washington pitcher
On loan from Portsmouth Historical Society #1504, Gift of James R. May



Washington at Mount Vernon, 1797
#1935.20.1, Gift of Alice Belle Eaton



Henry Clay cup plate #1965.152,
Gift of Frederick E. Cheever



Essex County
Community Foundation



ANDOVER
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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*Child's black rubber boot with snap closure.
Made by Tyer Rubber Co., Andover, MA
#2015.039.2ab, Gift of Gail Ralston*