

THE NEWSLETTER  
Summer 2016  
Vol. 41, No. 2



# ANDOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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## IMAGES

(Above) The Blanchard House gets a new elm tree, courtesy of Andover. Pictured with volunteer "planters" new Board member, Marc Fournier and Belko Landscapers

(Left) Detail of Fireboard, circa 1810 (#1986.023.1)

## GARDENS: THEN AND NOW

by Tom Adams, Editor

*My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece.*

CLAUDE MONET



**S**pring is a time of renewal. A time for hope. In New England spring comes on the heels of winter's seemingly endless days of snow, ice, and bone-chilling cold. We savor those warm days we yearned for during winter's siege. Quickly, our thoughts turn away from clearing our driveways, raking our roofs, and turning up the furnace. We begin to consider that there is indeed life after winter - and what better place to find it than in our own gardens! Invariably, those little buds begin to pop out of the soil making their first appearance. Their summer-long journey has begun. The promise of an abundant bounty of flowers and fruits, and vegetables and herbs is but a few weeks from being kept.

Gardening has its origins in prehistoric times. These primitive gardens lay alongside riverbeds, bogs, and wetlands. Early man identified trees, flora, and fauna that provided nourishment and ultimately helped them survive. As their knowledge of the local terrain grew, so too did the span of their gardens. Sometime around 10,000 B. C. the first enclosed outdoor gardens appeared with barriers to keep out unwanted animals. It was a precursor to garden design and landscaping - the shape of things to come.

The wealthy designed their gardens toward more aesthetic ends. Egyptian gardens featured lotus ponds and a wide array of flowers. Ptolemy created magnificent gardens at Alexandria. King Nebuchadnezzar designed the stepped-terrace hanging gardens of Babylon. From the spoils of war, the Romans introduced eastern ideas about gardening. After conquering Britain, Rome was introduced to a number of new plants including roses, leeks, turnips and plums. They mastered the art of topiary and created gardens next to their palaces and villas adorned with statues and sculptures.

In the Middle Ages, gardens were planted with lawns and then sprinkled with fragrant herbs. Gardens contained fruit trees and

*Continued on page 5*

# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

## SUMMER 2016



Andover is lucky indeed to have so much in the way of natural beauty and no fewer than four garden clubs dedicated, among other things, to maintaining and enriching the floral and shrub beauty of the downtown and surrounding areas. Interest in gardening from the general public however, seems to ebb and flow over the years. There are always enthusiasts of course, but we happen to be in one of those pro-gardening movements where interest in growing your own food, in private or communal gardens, farm stands, and “keeping it local” all contribute to a greater interest in gardening as a lifestyle choice.

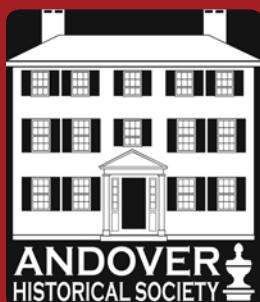
We have heard of private “victory gardens” - and some remember them of course—little family plots for growing fruits and vegetables. These were prevalent in Andover during the 1940’s to supplement the family food supply. And of course during this time farms covered most of West Andover. Fruits, particularly strawberries, and vegetables of all types, were to be had at the various farms “down the road in West Andover.” Strawberry Hill Farm formerly on Lowell Street and Shattuck farm located in the area where the Chateau restaurant is, were among the local favorites. Even the site where today’s Historical Society is located was itself part of a farm in the 1850’s. Deacon Edward Taylor’s farm extended from Love Lane (Locke Street) to the site of the former post office on Main Street (now Santander Bank).

And then, at the turn of the last century, an attempt to interest Andover’s children in gardening was pleaded in a Townsman editorial from exactly 100 years ago last month. Appearing on May 5, 1916, “In one form or another, different communities are arousing the interest of the young people in raising the biggest cabbage, or marketing the heaviest squash, or producing the most beautiful blossom, all with the ideal of getting the young life into closer contact with Mother Nature... What a nice thing it would be to take the piece of land over back of the playground, have it ploughed, harrowed and put into shape, and marked off into regular squares, furnish the children with seed, get the cooperation of the parents, get somebody to take charge of the whole proposition, and put in ten dollars worth of vegetables in each of fifty homes that might well make use of what could be raised on little plots thus provided.”

Now again, we are in a time where interest in gardening and growing is on the upswing and this is a good thing for us in many ways. In fact, our town library has been a ‘seed library’ these last few months spreading interest in seed packets and butterfly gardens. This month’s newsletter covers many issues related to gardens. It’s a happy subject and I for one am pleased we are in the upswing phase of this movement!

A handwritten signature of the name "Susan" in cursive script.

Susan McKelliget  
President, Andover Historical Society



### It's Time to Get Moving!

Ah, summer in New England. It's short and sweet and, we hope, full of ice cream and sunny weather. Are you inspired by this Newsletter to garden, dig in the dirt, and watch things grow? Come to the Andover Farmers' Market and see all that our local farmers grow right here at home. Bring along some colorful annual flowers to add to our new landscaping and outdoor classroom, created by our neighbor Andover Village Square where you can sit and enjoy your coffee or gelato. Or if you're inspired to get moving, check out the Andover Trails Committee's 2nd annual Andover Outdoor Challenge. They "want to make close-to-home walking, biking, and paddling one of Andover's greatest assets." Check out the Andover Outdoor Challenge at [andovertails.org](http://andovertails.org) and their new web map, [andovertails.org/map](http://andovertails.org/map). We hope to see you at the Market, at the history center, or on the trails this summer!

# COLLECTIONS: ANDOVER'S PAST GARDENS

by Marilyn Helmers

*"A little garden in which to walk.  
An immensity in which to dream"*

VICTOR HUGO



Andover has many lovely homes with gardens in which to walk. Some, particularly those during the Gilded Age of Mansions, did indeed have immensely manicured gardens where one could get lost in dreams.

Times change though and many of those gardens are gone. However, we still have some of that splendor captured in photographs in our collection. One series gives a glimpse as to the magnificent gardens which were maintained in country estate homes of the 1920's-1940's.

Greencourt, still standing at 280 South Main Street, was built in 1926-1927 by Maurice J. Curran for his son, Maurice Joyce Curran. Maurice Sr., with his partner John Joyce, were owners of "Curran & Joyce", bottlers and manufacturers of ginger ale and soda water and later were investors in the Gillette Razor company. Maurice, Jr., his wife Annette Marie LaFrance, and their two daughters and son, along with three to four staff, lived in the 18 room Tudor Revival styled home set on four acres. After Maurice and Annette divorced, Maurice married Yvonne Theresa (Pellerin) Blanchette in 1944. Yvonne was a French Canadian singer who had a radio program and then as a single mother raising her three daughters, the owner of a fashionable beauty salon on Essex Street in Lawrence. She met Maurice Jr. at an event for her business. After their marriage, she came to live in Greencourt with her daughters.

The black and white collection of Greencourt photographs doesn't do justice of what the gardens must have looked like in full bloom. But one can dream.



Greencourt 280 Main Street. Gift of Reta Buchan  
(Mrs. C. Edward Buchan) (#1982.003.3j)



Side Garden at Greencourt. Gift of Reta Buchan  
(Mrs. C. Edward Buchan) (#1982.003.3k)



Step Garden at Greencourt. Gift of  
Reta Buchan (Mrs. C. Edward Buchan)  
(#1982.003.3c)



Rear Garden – Madonna nook at  
Greencourt. Gift of Reta Buchan  
(Mrs. C. Edward Buchan) (#1982.003.3m)



View of gardens, trees, statues and umbrella table  
at Greencourt. Gift of Reta Buchan  
(Mrs. C. Edward Buchan) (#1982.003.3i)

# FARMERS' MARKET RETROSPECTIVE

By Elaine Clements, Executive Director

In April 2006, Andover Historical Society director Elaine Clements attended the American Alliance of Museums annual conference in Boston. Squeezing into the back of a packed conference room in the Hynes Convention Center, she listened to a staff member from the Detroit Institute for the Arts talk about how the Institute connected with the weekly farmers' market that took place just outside the art museum. "A farmers' market?" she thought, "what a great idea for our side lawn!" She came back to Andover and asked the then Museum Edu-

alternate location. It was an offer too good to pass up. For years, we heard concerns from potential Farmers' Market customers who could not navigate the uneven grassy lawn or gravelly parking area. A move to the newly paved parking area at 91 Main Street meant that customers with mobility limitations or those using wheeled devices (including wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers) would be able to access the Market.

In April 2015, two generous Andover residents Greg and Ellen Sebasky provided the funds to hire our first

dedicated Market Manager to manage the move to the new location. The Sebaskys also provided free parking in the municipal lot during market hours. Our 2015 Market Managers Alexandra Adler and Irena Kuchner oversaw the full season.

2016 will be our 10th Andover Farmers' Market. Ten years of fresh local produce, locally produced specialty foods, craft vendors, business and corporate sponsors, musicians, local nonprofit partners, performances, agricultural history, crafts for kids, face painting,

and – we could never leave them out – cute animals from puppies to alpacas.

Ten years is a good time to evaluate and assess our work and the role of the Farmers' Market has in the greater Andover Community. Earlier this season, we heard from vendors and shoppers that returning the market to the South Lawn in front of the barn would renew the community feel of the market. We hope to continue evaluating and planning for future Andover Farmers' Markets by collaborating with the Andover High School Environmental Sustainability Internship Course (ESIC) again this fall and winter. If you would like to be part of the 2016 Farmers' Market season, or if you would like to help with our evaluation and planning, please let us know! Contact Elaine Clements at [eclements@andoverhistorical.org](mailto:eclements@andoverhistorical.org) for more information.



*First market 2007*

cator Sarah Sycz Jaworski to research what it would take to host a farmers' market. On the foundation of Sarah's research, the Andover Farmers' Market launched its first season in June 2007.

The Andover Farmers' Market started small, with two anchor farms and a few regular vendors. Over time, the Market outgrew the side lawn and expanded to our parking area. Sarah was our first Market Manager, followed by her successor Deb DeSmet Parsons, and later staff members Marilyn Helmers and Carrie Midura.

2015 was a year of change. The possibility of landscaping renovations to our parking area by our neighbor John Fenton and Andover Village Square (AVS) meant that we stood a good chance of losing half the market for the 2015 season. John offered his parking area at the back of 91 Main Street, adjacent to our backyard, as an

# GARDENS: THEN AND NOW

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



*Richardson School students planting a school garden circa 1920.  
Charles H. Newman Collection Andover Historical Society (#1987.598.959ab)*

had raised flowerbeds and trellises of roses or vines. Monasteries grew gardens of medicinal herbs and vegetables. They grew orchards and vineyards and flowers for their altars. Monastery gardens were not purely functional; they were importantly a spiritual place where the monks could relax and enjoy nature.

Gardening methods and techniques continued to evolve and follow man westward through the Iberian Peninsula, Western Europe, England, and later to North America. For many, gardens continued to satisfy their most basic need for food and sustenance. For others, gardens were a measure of wealth and status. Adorned with sculptures, fountains and topiary, the gardens of the rich and famous held onlookers in awe with their natural beauty.

Gardening has been one of America's long-favored pastimes. By all indications, it has never been more popular than today. From 2008 to 2013, the number of home gardens increased by 6 million to 42 million households, while community gardens tripled from 1 million to 3 million, a 200% increase. In 2013, \$3.5 billion was spent on food gardening alone, 40% more than just 5 years earlier. A recent study found that nearly half of all Americans, some 162 million of us, have gardened within the last year. This huge community is still growing. The number of homeowners growing their own produce is on the rise - a nearly 20% increase in home vegetable gardens in the last decade. Today, 35% of all households in America are growing food at home or in community gardens. Millennials (ages 18-34), are the fastest growing population

segment of food gardeners numbering over 13 million - a 63% increase over the past 5 years. Several factors play a role in this phenomenal growth. Simple economics are one. Studies found that \$70 worth of plantings yields \$530 worth of produce. That's a lot of lettuce! Properly planted trees can reduce air conditioning costs by 25% or more during the summer, and the shielding trees provide against wind can reduce heating costs by 10%. Secondly, consider the benefits to your health. Just think, an hour's worth of gardening burns some 200 to 300 calories! Not the Boston Marathon numbers, but not bad either! Finally, there is a profound sense of self-satisfaction and personal fulfillment that comes from eating what you produce or in just relaxing as you enjoy the vista your garden creates.

May your garden be your most beautiful masterpiece!



*Postcard - Andover Inn garden Phillips Academy campus 1945  
(#1988.630.1)*

# PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS



## Farmers' Market

The 10th season of the Andover Farmers' Market has begun! We're delighted to have Farmer Dave's, Gaouette Farm, and White Gates Farm, and Swissbakers returning this season and welcoming Deano's Pasta of Somerville, MA to the market each Saturday! Their homemade ravioli and sauces are a wonderful addition to the amazing produce, baked goods, and honey already offered at the Farmers' Market. We also want to thank Amergy Solar for their sponsorship of the market this season. You can learn more about Amergy and their work every other Saturday at the market starting June 18th.

## New Market Day Manager

Andover Farmers' Market is happy to welcome our new Market Day Manager, Sara Hidalgo to the team! Sara, a trained art conservator, works as an administrator, curatorial assistant and instructor at the Essex Art Center. A long-time farmers' market shopper, Sara brings an enthusiasm for supporting local farms and a deep commitment to the community. Please be sure to say hi at the Manager's Station on your next trip to the Market!



## Cultural Scavenger Hunt

In July, the Andover Historical Society is participating in the Andover Cultural Council's cultural scavenger hunt. We look forward to visitors coming to the Blanchard House to strike a pose with George Washington in our exhibit, *George Washington: Hero, Demigod, Face of a New Nation*. For more information about the scavenger hunt visit <http://www.andoverculturalcouncil.com/home>

## Andover Day and Shawsheen River Arts Exhibit Opening

Andover Historical is looking forward to participating in this year's Andover Day on September 10th. Visit the Blanchard House Gallery to view the opening of the Shawsheen River Arts Exhibit. Shawsheen River Arts is a juried art show inspired by the Shawsheen River and supported by Andover Historical Society, the Shawsheen River Greenway Committee, Andover Cultural Council, Andover Artists Guild, Andover Tomorrow, working artists, and interested individuals. To learn more about the exhibit or to submit your work, visit <http://www.andoverhistorical.org/shawsheen-river-arts>.

## Essex National Heritage Area Trails and Sails event

Andover Historical is happy to be participating in the Essex National Heritage Area Trails and Sails event again this year. Join us, September 17th from 11am- 12pm for a fun family walking tour of Downtown Andover. Learn about the different styles of architecture displayed on Main Street, see how downtown has changed and in some places remained the same over many years, all while hearing engaging stories about the town and its residents. This walk is designed for elementary age children and their families but strollers and baby carriers are welcome! Visit [www.andoverhistorical.org/public](http://www.andoverhistorical.org/public) for more information on this program and [www.trailsandsails.org](http://www.trailsandsails.org) on August 1st for a listing of all Trails and Sails events in the area.



## Not So Good Life of the Colonial Goodwife

Join us October 15th at 7pm for *The Not-So-Good Life of the Colonial Goodwife*, "an interactive presentation about the little-known issues faced by New England's colonial women," presented by Velya Jancz-Urban. "Beyond quilting bees and spinning wheels," Ms. Jancz-Urban will make you laugh and grimace as she answers questions many of us want to know but were afraid to ask. Watch for more details and for registration information this summer on our website [www.andoverhistorical.org/public](http://www.andoverhistorical.org/public).

## Andover Murder Mystery Dinner Returns in October

Celebrate autumn and the spookiest month of the year on October 22nd at our Murder Mystery Dinner. Enjoy a lovely meal, and try to solve a murder mystery at the Blanchard House. Watch for more details and for registration information this summer on our website [www.andoverhistorical.org/public](http://www.andoverhistorical.org/public).



# ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 28, 2016

One hundred and five years ago in April, a group of men and women, described as “deeply interested... and full of enthusiasm for all matters of historic value and importance” met and founded the Andover Historical Society. The mission as defined then was “for the purpose of cultivating and encouraging an interest in antiquarian and historical research; to collect and treasure significant historical matter and antiquarian relics, and to found and maintain a museum where such collections shall be preserved and exhibited...”

Today, the Historical Society’s mission has changed little. We gather and share Andover’s unique stories to help build a connected and engaged community. This is done through Preserving the Past, Educating for the Future and Connecting with our Communities.

At this year’s annual meeting on April 28th, Susan McKelliget, President of the Board of Directors opened the meeting and spoke of the historical beginnings and of the future for Andover Historical Society as Andover’s

center for history and culture. Don Robb, Treasurer gave the financial report indicating that the Annual Budget FY2016 is \$268,000 and the Endowment balance as of March 31, 2016 was \$1,354,542. Our sustainable funding efforts that seek to fund our mission and the work we do continue. This sustainable funding campaign outlines specific funding that is needed and the impact of funding on each of the Historical Society’s activities.

Governance Committee Chair Doug Mitchell introduced the slate for the 2017-2018 Board. Outgoing board member Mike Morris, Jr. was recognized for his time, service, and advice and particularly for his involvement in the program series, *Lest We Forget 2014*, a collaborative community effort that was hugely successful. Larry Wangerin, also leaving the board, was recognized as a member for over 25 years, previous past president of the Board of Directors, and member of most committees. Larry most recently participated on the Collections Committee.

## — In Memoriam —

*This year, Andover Historical lost three dedicated volunteers.  
Susan McKelliget acknowledged all that they had done for the Historical Society.*

### Robert Burns

Bob Burns died in Oberlin, OH on September 10, 2015. After attending Dartmouth College, he was a proud Navy Seaman and engineer. Bob spent most of his career with AT&T in North Andover. He was dedicated to restoring his 1811 home and was an avid naturalist and photographer with a strong interest in archaeology. Bob was an active and involved volunteer for fifteen years and his wife, Marilyn, served as our President. His work experience as a trouble-shooting engineer was a great asset at Blanchard House helping to solve alarm system failures, flooding, and a score of other building-related issues. Bob is fondly remembered, too, as one of the “barn boys” who banded together to set up tool exhibits, photographing and cataloguing much of our barn tool collection.



### Audrey Bedell

Audrey Bedell died on October 2, 2015. Born in Pittsburgh, PA, Audrey was raised in Saugus and graduated from Saugus High School. Audrey and her

husband Harry previously resided in Andover, where they made their home for over 42 years. She was a member of the Andover Historical Society for many years and a collections volunteer who initially helped catalogue our postcard collection. Audrey later joined the Board of Directors serving from 1997 to 2002. She was known for keeping the Board “real”.



### Bernice A. Haggerty

Bernice Haggerty passed away on December 6, 2015. Born in Malden, MA, Bernice was a civic-minded woman who loved to cast her vote in every election, was an active member of the Democratic Town Committee, and served on the John F. Kennedy State Election Committee. She was an active member of the Andover Historical Society, serving on the Board of Directors from 1983 to 1987 and as a Committee Chair. Over the years, she was a dedicated volunteer cataloguing many objects in the collection. Bernice had an encyclopedic knowledge of Andover history. She brought great enthusiasm and contributions to so many of our events.

# ANDOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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*Detail of Fireboard, circa 1810  
(#1986.023.1)*

# ANDOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY



**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**Tuesday through Saturday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**Second Sunday of every month: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

**Office: 978-475-2236 Fax: 978-470-2741**

**[www.andoverhistorical.org](http://www.andoverhistorical.org)**

## STAFF

Elaine Clements,  
Executive Director  
[eclements@andoverhistorical.org](mailto:eclements@andoverhistorical.org)

Lauren Kosky-Stamm,  
Programs & Social Media Director  
[lkosky-stamm@andoverhistorical.org](mailto:lkosky-stamm@andoverhistorical.org)

Marilyn Helmers,  
Development Director & Collections Manager  
[mhelmers@andoverhistorical.org](mailto:mhelmers@andoverhistorical.org)

Kenna Therrien  
Administrative Assistant  
[ktherrien@andoverhistorical.org](mailto:ktherrien@andoverhistorical.org)

Adam Brooks  
Weekend Assistant

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