



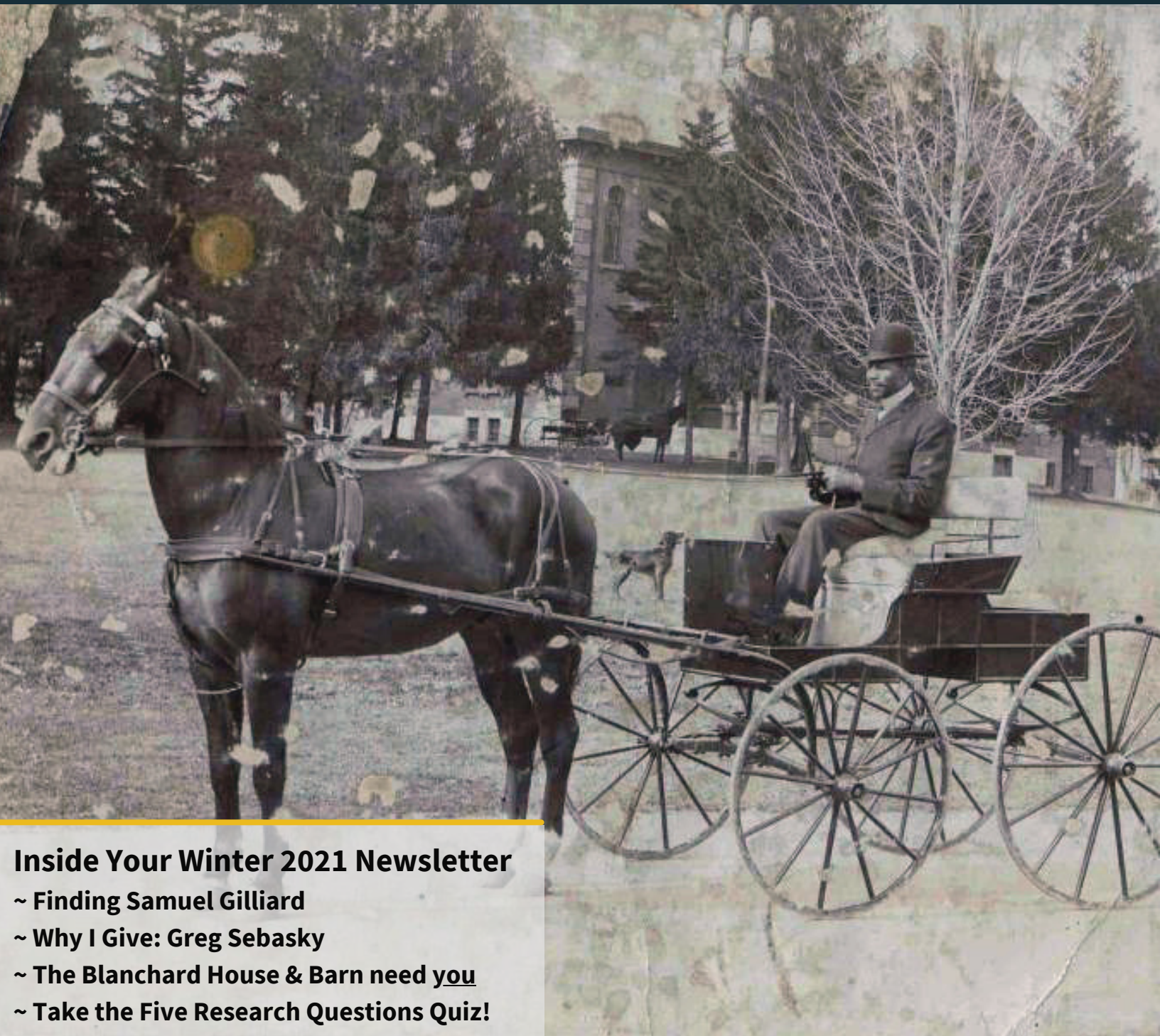
ANDOVER
CENTER
FOR
HISTORY
& CULTURE

97 Main Street, Andover, MA
AndoverHistoryandCulture.org

CONNECTIONS

Connecting you with the Andover stories you help save

Thank you for helping find his story



Inside Your Winter 2021 Newsletter

- ~ Finding Samuel Gilliard
- ~ Why I Give: Greg Sebasky
- ~ The Blanchard House & Barn need you
- ~ Take the Five Research Questions Quiz!

A new chapter of Andover's story is being discovered....

Thanks to you!



We know so little about the lives and contributions of African American residents who have lived in Andover since the 17th century. It's a missing chapter in Andover's story that you're helping find.

Last year, we introduced you to this photograph. In 2005, it was found in a file labeled "Transportation." There it stayed for 15 years....**until you helped uncover the story.**

Thank you for helping uncover this missing chapter in Andover's story! You've helped provide access to the research tools and resources that helped uncover his story, and connect with his descendants.

Who is the gentleman driving the buggy?

Research began with the Whittier Court houses on the right side of the photo. Census records told the names of the homeowners. Among them was Samuel Gilliard, an African American man who had moved to Andover in 1907 after working as a coachman in Boston.

Through History Center records, Ancestry.com, and other resources, **that you helped make available**, Samuel Gilliard's life began to unfold. **It was a search that led to his nephew, grandniece, and the story of his legacy.**



The previous owners in front of 6 Whittier Court, where the Gilliard family lived for over 50 years.

Samuel Gilliard was born into a Gullah-Geechee community in South Carolina in 1876. His grandniece told us that at a certain age, when they started to get into trouble, boys in the family were sent north to find work. Samuel was sent to Boston.

In 1906, while living in Boston, he married Nellie Cobb from Norfolk, Virginia. The couple moved to Andover the next year.

Searching through the census records, birth, marriage, and death records, street directories, newspapers, school yearbooks, and maps **that you made available**, the family's story came to light. **Thank you!**

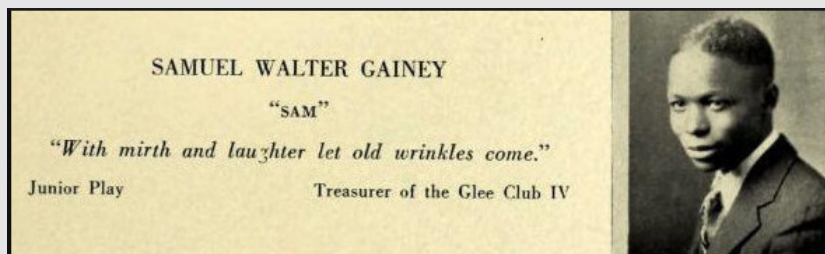
Samuel and Nellie lived at 70 North Main Street before purchasing their home at 6 Whittier Court. Although Samuel and Nellie didn't have children, they raised Samuel's nephew Samuel "Sam" Walter Gainey.

The Gilliards appeared in the social pages of the Andover Townsman when they changed jobs, traveled to visit family in Virginia, South Carolina, and Philadelphia, and succeeded in school. Samuel worked for years as the boiler operator for the Andover Press. In the 1930s, he worked as a chauffeur and gardener for an as yet unknown Andover family.

Samuel Gilliard died in 1946 at age 70. He was buried in Andover's Spring Grove Cemetery. Nellie Gilliard continued to live in her home at 6 Whittier Court until her death, at age 93, in 1964.

Nephew Sam Gainey followed the family tradition of moving north to find opportunity. The opportunity he sought was education. In Andover, he found what he was seeking.

The opportunity nephew Sam Gainey sought was education. In the front yard of his uncle's home on Whittier Court were the schools he attended: Dove Elementary, Stowe Middle School, and his alma mater, Punchard High School, graduating class of 1930. He went on to attend and play football for Wilburforce College in Ohio.



Punchard High yearbook entry for Sam Gainey, nephew of Samuel Gilliard.

Through your support for research, we connected with Sam Gainey's granddaughter.

As we shared information with each other, she learned about her grandfather's upbringing in Andover. We started to learn about the Gainey family's remarkable history...and we saw our first glimpse into the lasting legacy of the family's time in Andover.

We saw our first glimpse into the lasting legacy of the family's time in Andover.

The story has just begun! There's still much we have to learn, and much to be done to share this family's remarkable story.

Thank *you* for helping make this possible!

Why I Give...A Sense of Place

For Greg Sebasky, Andover Center for History & Culture represents many of the things that make Andover a great place to live – appreciation for the town's long history, a vibrant downtown, education as a core value, and a strong sense of community.

Beyond the role that ACHC plays in preserving local history, Greg values the historic house and barn and how ACHC's location on Main Street enhances the downtown business district. He especially likes the way the history center brings people together through public programs and events and how there are "so many possibilities going forward." Greg has contributed financially to ACHC programs, events, and capital projects since 2015.

Greg says that he "appreciates history more and more as time goes on." He dedicates most of his leisure reading to historical works. He's interested in "everything from the rise and fall of the Roman empire, to the plight of America's indigenous peoples, to the agricultural history of West Andover."



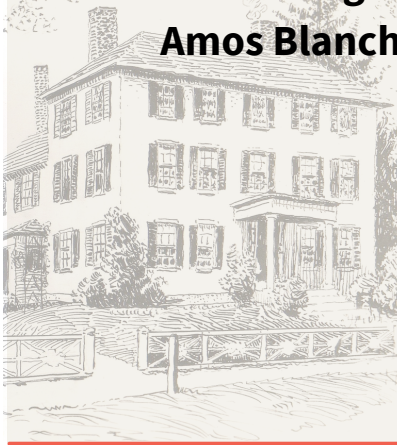
Greg Sebasky and wife Ellen have lived in Andover for 30 years. Greg is the CEO of Ascend Learning and former CEO of Phillips North America.

In a moment of reflection, Greg observed that, while his first significant donations were to his alma maters and children's programs, over the last decade, he has focused on improving Andover, by "creating gathering spaces where people can connect, learn, and give back to the community."

A big thank you, Greg, for all that you do for Andover - the youth center, the senior center, the farmer's market... the list goes on...but especially for your continuing financial support and vote of confidence in ACHC.

Preserving and improving Andover's historic Amos Blanchard House and Barn is a challenge

Can You Help?



Top priority is replacement of the barn roof and main house roof (overdue!), repairs to wood trim and clapboards, and a refresh of landscaping on both sides of the property. The larger goal is to create an appealing outdoor venue for more public programs and community use.

Thanks to grants and donations, we have raised over half of the funds needed to complete the project this year. \$69,000 is the amount still needed. **If you can contribute to this effort, please contact Judy Normandin** at 978-566-5888 or jnormandin@andoverhistoryandculture.org.

With your support, History Center staff and volunteers answer over 500 research questions a year!

Inquiries come in through email, social media, by phone, and with safe in-person visits to the research library. **The resources your support provides help answer questions from** genealogists, authors, students, homeowners, and **curious folks, just like you. Thank you!**

"I am completely without speech and filled with such gratitude! Thank you so much for your commitment and doggedness on this project for me. I'm absolutely blown away..."
~Ed A.

Can You Ace This Five Research Questions Quiz?

1. What was Andover's connection to the oral polio vaccine?
A. It's a lawn ornament that the homeowner's mother liked.
B. In 1933, they petitioned for cold bread with breakfast, rather than the warm bread they were being served.*
C. Fieldstones
D. Andover's Thompson Farm sold fertilized eggs to Dr. Albert Sabin and Dr. John Elders for their research.
E. Author Laura Ingalls Wilder's 9 times great-grandfather was the grandfather of Martha Carrier, the first Andover resident to be accused and hanged during the witch trials of 1692.
2. What was the name of a popular restaurant on South Main Street in the 1960s?
3. What's the story behind the polar bear statue on Lowell Street near Iceland Road?
4. What's the connection between Andover and *Little House on the Prairie*?
5. Why did Andover Theological Seminary students petition the school about bread?

**The pious Calvinist Seminary students who petitioned the Seminary dining commons for cold bread in 1933 believed that warm bread was fitting for sick people, but was inappropriate for healthy men, such as themselves.*

Answers: 1(D); 2(C); 3(A); 4(E); 5(B)

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A gift in your will is a wonderful way to leave a legacy and help preserve Andover's history. Please consider adding a gift in your will for the Andover Center for History & Culture. Please reach out to Marilyn Helmers, mhelmers@andoverhistoryandculture.org