



ANDOVER  
CENTER  
FOR  
HISTORY  
& CULTURE

97 Main Street, Andover, MA  
AndoverHistoryandCulture.org

# CONNECTIONS

Connecting you with the Andover stories you help save

In it together then and now...  
**Thank you for helping keep  
Andover's stories alive!**



## Inside Your Fall 2020 Newsletter

A Story for Uncertain Times

A Rivet for a Six Pence: The Making of "Johnnie Spitfire"

Growing the Legacy Circle: How You Can Help

More Johnnie Spitfire resources

Connecting with you like never before

*A World War II Spitfire pilot heading out on a mission during World War II. From the "Johnnie Spitfire" history published in 1980.*



# A story for uncertain times

The Johnnie Spitfire story was scheduled to be featured in the Spring 2020 issue of Connections. Then COVID-19 restrictions hit. All of our plans were put on hold as we worked to figure out how the History Center could be here for you during the pandemic, after the pandemic, and long into the future.

Here we are – more than six months later – still working around COVID-19 restrictions and illnesses, grieving losses, and processing the monumental changes our country and our world are going through. The pandemic has changed the way we live our daily lives: how we gather, celebrate, and mourn. Black Lives Matter has

made us stop and think about our values and our actions. It impacts not just our own lives....it's having a profound impact on our country during an election year.

Then, as I opened up my Connections files to prep what is now the Fall 2020 issue and re-read the Johnnie Spitfire story, I was struck again at how the world came together in the 1940s to weather a storm of a different kind. And how individuals, families, communities, and countries stood together against a force that could have torn them apart. I hope you are as inspired by this story as I am.

Elaine Clements,  
Executive Director

## Two Andovers. Two Countries. One Goal: Defeat Evil

## Thank you for helping share the Johnnie Spitfire story

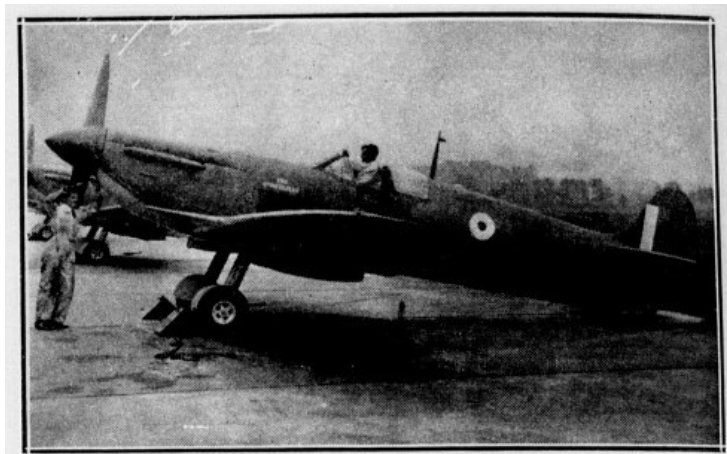
*Years before the official start of the Sister Towns movement in 1947 and decades before the towns were officially “twinning” in 2000, Andover and North Andover Massachusetts, gave critical wartime support to friends in Andover, England.*

### A desperate nation rallies

In 1940, pressure from Nazi Germany was increasing. Great Britain needed to quickly rebuild its armed forces, neglected during the hard years following World War I. To rally public support, British newspapers promoted the need to get more aircraft into the air to join the fight.

The Spitfire airplane captured the attention of the British people. Within a few months, over 1,400 Spitfire funds were set up by towns, businesses, and individuals to raise the £5,000 needed to fund one Spitfire. Donors could fund a wing for £2,000, a gun for £200, a spark plug for 8 shillings, or a rivet for a sixpence.

*“Although our spirits were undaunted,  
we were alone in our struggle against  
Hitler and the Nazis and all the evil things  
which those words imply.”*



*A photo of the Andoverian that accompanied a letter from the mayor of Andover, England, published in the Andover Townsman in 1954.*



*Spitfire Fund displays like these raised more than funds to support the war. They raised the spirits of the people, as well.*



Seeing a Spitfire flying overhead, knowing that maybe that was the airplane they helped build, boosted public morale during desperate times.

## Andover Rises to the Challenge

Citizens of Andover and North Andover came to the aid of their British brothers and sisters by raising and donating \$4,200 to help purchase “The Andoverian” Spitfire.

In 1954, the Townsman published a letter from the retiring mayor of Andover, England, “...thanks for your generous gestures of friendship and sympathy at that period in the war, when, although our spirits were undaunted, we were alone in our struggle against Hitler and the Nazis and all the evil things which those words imply. Now we stand together,” wrote the mayor, “in a common cause, looking forward with confidence...”

**Thank you for supporting the research that makes sharing stories like this possible.  
Want to know "the rest of the story?" Turn to page 4 for links and other resources!**

## How you can show your commitment Expanding the Circle of Support

Legacy Circle donors (like you!) love history and support the mission of the Andover Center for History & Culture by making an annual donation of \$500 or more for five years.

**Did you know that 27 of you, our Legacy Circle donors, give a total of \$40,000 each year. Thank you!**

Not only are you funding preservation projects, public programs, and capital improvements, you're improving the financial stability of the History Center, allowing us to budget and plan accordingly, and - most important of all - helping find and share the Andover stories you love.

**Your impact is so important that we are expanding the Legacy Circle program. The wider the circle of donors, the more stories and connections can be shared with you and our community! All thanks to you!**

We missed celebrating our Legacy Circle donors at the Spring for History breakfast this past May. We're looking forward to getting together with you again when COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Then we can welcome you back to the History Center and look forward to another Spring for History!

*"It's great to be part of the History Center! Preserving the treasures and stories of our local community is more important than ever right now. I look forward to getting to know you and expanding the Legacy Circle program."*



*~Judy Normandin, Legacy Circle Director*

We're happy to introduce to you our new Legacy Circle Director, Judy Normandin.

Judy comes to the History Center with eight years experience in nonprofit fundraising and communications. You might remember Judy as the owner of Annie's Book Stop in North Andover.

To learn more about the impact you can make as a Legacy Circle donor, as well as the benefits and recognition aspects of the program, please contact Judy at 978-566-5888. Or you can email Judy at [jnormandin@andoverhistoryandculture.org](mailto:jnormandin@andoverhistoryandculture.org).

## Do you want to know more about the Andoverian & Johnnie Spitfire?

Thanks to the support of donors, like you, Johnnie Spitfire is just one of many new stories being shared on the History Center's website.

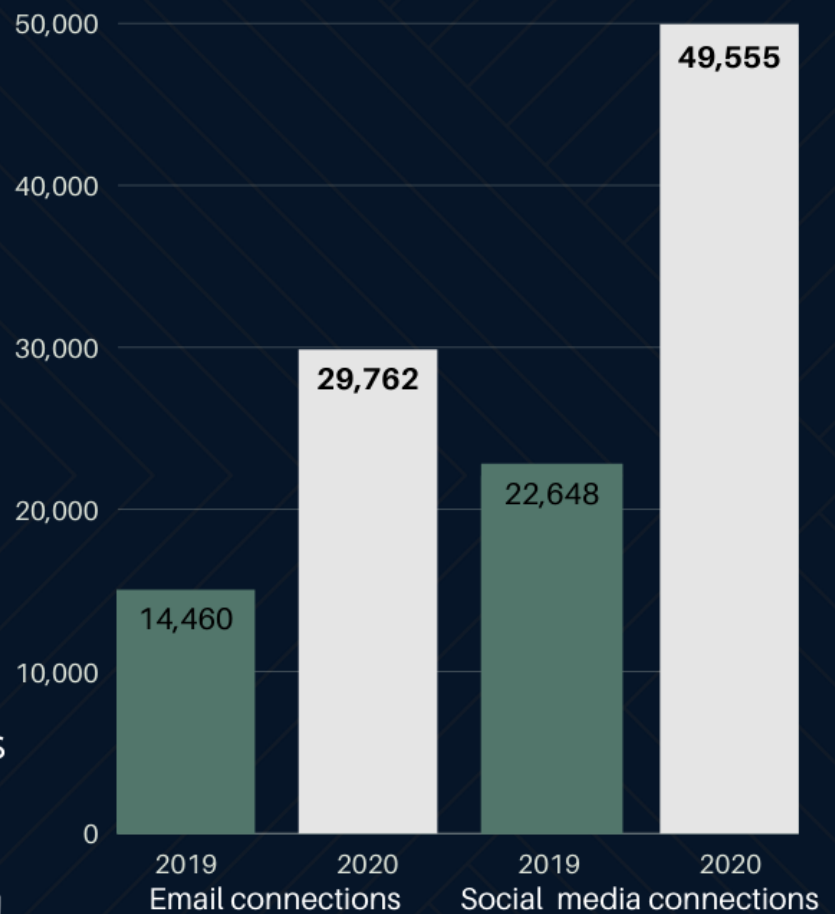
- You can read more of the story on our new Research Highlights website page. Visit: [AndoverHistoryandCulture.org/Research-Highlights](https://AndoverHistoryandCulture.org/Research-Highlights).
- You can make an appointment to come to the History Center to read this history of Johnnie Spitfire. Email: [info@andoverhistoryandculture.org](mailto:info@andoverhistoryandculture.org).
- You can explore dozens of Andover Stories from the home page of the History Center website. Visit: [AndoverHistoryandCulture.org](https://AndoverHistoryandCulture.org). Click on "Andover Stories."

**As always, thank you for helping find and share Andover's stories!**



## CONNECTING WITH YOU & SHARING THE STORIES YOU LOVE

- Since COVID-19, we shifted to online, email, and social media
- Thousands of connections & conversations
- All made possible by YOU!



Andover Center for History & Culture  
97 Main Street, Andover, MA 01810  
978-475-2236  
[andoverhistoryandculture.org](https://andoverhistoryandculture.org)



#andoverhistoryandculture

*Once your family has been provided for, 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. Questions? Please call Marilyn Helmers, Director of Donor Relations at 978-475-2236.*