

WINCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BLACK HORSE BULLETIN

Volume 33, Number 3

July - September 2008

From the President

by Bob Colt

This is my first column as President of the Winchester Historical Society. I sincerely appreciate your support in electing me at the Annual Meeting on May 13th. We have a great team of officers to join a very strong Board of Directors with Nancy Schrock becoming the Vice President, after professionally revamping our systems as Treasurer, Donna Patalano continuing as our talented Secretary and Doug Marmon becoming our new Treasurer.

I already realize the time and commitment that Gail Sjo and Carol Keller put into the Winchester Historical Society as President and Vice President of our esteemed organization. The years of their dedicated leadership, bringing the Society through times of great expansion are very

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Money from the State for the Sanborn House

by Bob Colt

Breaking news - The State budget, signed by Governor Deval Patrick on July 13th, contains \$75,000 for the Winchester Historical Society toward the restoration of the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center. Representative Paul Casey placed a line item in the House Ways and Means budget under Travel and Tourism and Senator Pat Jehlen lent her support. The Winchester Historical Society is most grateful for the support of our legislators and the Commonwealth. This recognition, will be important as we move ahead to renovate the Sanborn House for the community of Winchester.



Board members at the July meeting from the top of the Sanborn House stairs:
Drew Bottaro, Carol Keller, Nancy Kilker, Nancy O'Herron, Bob Colt, Nancy Schrock, Bob Stone, Susan Keats, Doug Marmon, David Stirling, Candace Van Aken, and Lauri Minitti.
Missing: Michael Manzo, Donna Patalano, Paula Swartz, and Gail Sjo.

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Officers and Directors 2008 - 2009

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Directors (through May 2009)

Nancy Kilker	Patrick Hall
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Directors (through May 2010)

Susan Keats	Lauri Minitti
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Directors (through May 2011)

Drew Bottaro	Carol Keller
Michael Manzo	Gail Sjo
David Stirling	Paula Swartz
Candace Van Aken	

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much appreciated by both our whole membership and myself. Thank you Gail and Carol!

This will be a year of activities and challenges as we continue to renovate and restore the Sanborn House, making it a true community historical and cultural center for Winchester. The level of excitement and activity in the house from the lively Society Speakeasy to the rental for the Winchester Artists Network reception to multiple Town Day events clearly shows the way in which the public is embracing the Sanborn House.

If you missed the events at the Sanborn House, there will be another opportunity to tour the building on October 18th when we will hold our biennial Historic House Tour. If you are looking for a great facility like the Sanborn House to rent for your family or organization event, call the Winchester Society at 781-721-0135. You can arrange for a tour of this beautiful mansion and join the others who have marveled at the great setting for that special function.

Please stay involved with the Winchester Historical Society as we grow. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Thanks for the Help!

by Gail Sjo and Carol Keller

A heartfelt “thank you” to the Board and all of the members of the Society for giving us the privilege of serving in alternating roles of President and Vice President for more than a decade. This truly has been an amazing experience which would not have been possible without the wonderful support you have given us. Pleased and proud are just two of the words that describe our feelings about what the Society has accomplished over these years and much of the credit goes to you—the wonderful volunteers and members. We also want to thank the Selectmen, the Town of Winchester and its employees—town managers, library staff, town hall workers, and the DPW—who have worked with the Society to make the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center a reality.

We are happy to have a wonderful and talented new slate of officer; we know they will be instrumental in bringing the Society and the Sanborn House to a new level of accomplishment and success. We remain on the Board, looking forward to creating another year filled with educational and celebratory events.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to spend time with you--whether at informative monthly programs or at one of the numerous Society parties and events. Most of all, thank you for helping the Society actively contribute to making Winchester a special community.



Corporate Sponsors

Book Ends, Boston Tree Preservation, Children's Own School, Duffy Floors, Hall & Sullivan, Attorneys at Law, Mary McKenna and Associates, Inc., Nick's Painting, Winchester Art and Frame, and Wine Country.

75th Birthday Potluck

by Gail Sjo

Delicious homemade food, friendly folks, great conversation, an elegantly decorated Sanborn House and lively entertainment by Mel Simons added up to a wonderful 75th birthday celebration for the Historical Society. Each year the potluck is a truly wonderful event, but Sunday, April 6, 2008 was indeed special. From the platinum-colored balloons and beautiful flowers to a giant birthday cake decorated with our beautiful black horse symbol, the mood was set to commemorate the April 24, 1933 founding of what we now know as the Winchester Historical Society.

After dinner, Mel Simons, a well-known radio personality and entertainer, led the group of about 70 members and guests on a journey back in time to the 1930's and 40's through songs and stories. Although the age range of the audience was wide, everyone seemed to completely enjoy hearing voices from the golden age of radio and personal stories about stars of the past including Al Jolson, Jimmy Durante, and George M. Cohan. A complete-the-advertising-phrase trivia quiz had everyone participating, with almost a perfect score. After all, who doesn't remember “You'll wonder where the yellow went, when you brush your teeth with Pepsodent?”

This year the potluck kicked-off a special fundraising appeal to replace the failing Sanborn roof, building on last year's successful chair drive in which the Society received donations to buy more than 60 folding chairs. Donations are still being accepted for the roof. If you would like to join the “Roofing Crew” and help stop the leaks and ceiling damage on parts of the second and third floors, send a check to the Winchester Historical Society and indicate that your donation is for the roof.

Speaking Easily Event Harkens Back to 1920s Revelry

by Eric Tsetsi, Staff Writer, Winchester Star

The place looked almost deserted. The lights in the old mansion situated on the crest of High Street overlooking Winchester were dim, barely visible from the street. But once you made your way through the back door, where two would-be flappers were scrutinizing visitors, the jazz tunes of Swing Café and bluesy vocals of Louise Grasmere filled the house, insulating it from the threat of an unannounced raid by the few cops who couldn't be bought off.

"It makes for a fabulous party," whispered Susan Keats, as she weaved through the crowded rooms. "It's the only place in town to have this type of party." The Sanborn House, at 15 High St., had transformed itself into a classic 1920s speakeasy, reminiscent of prohibition-era America. The party, sponsored by the Winchester Historical Society and its Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center, was held to raise money for renovations to the old mansion built in the early 1900s.



The jazz tunes of Swing Café and bluesy vocals of Louise Grasmere filled the Sanborn House during a Speakeasy fundraiser Saturday night. Photo by Eric Tsetsi

Residents from throughout Winchester donned formal attire and quietly made their way to the house Saturday night for live music, dancing and, of course, a drink or two. "It was in this building that I first became involved in Winchester politics," said Planning Board member Peter Van Aken, who could be found mingling with guests at the party. According to Van Aken, the School Committee used to meet in the Sanborn House back in the 1970s. "This is a marvelous building, and they're doing a great job restoring it," he said. "I'm glad that it's going to be kept in the community service."

According to Sanborn House Event Coordinator and Manager Sue Clark, the goal is to create an archival and historic center for the town within the house. More than two years ago, the Historical Society signed a 50-year lease with the town to set up its home within the former home of Oren Sanborn, son of James Sanborn, co-founder of Chase and Sanborn Company.

Part of the lease agreement requires the Historical Society to complete renovations to restore the historic site, an effort that is ongoing thanks to grants and fund-raising efforts that are helping to bring the building back to life. The first floor has been refurbished to resemble the original beaux-

art design and architecture popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Office rental space will be created on the second floor. A local artist is already renting out space for classes, according to Clark.

The exterior will be revived as well. The veranda of the building was recently repainted. "This next year is just going to be a tremendous year as we open [the house] up to more people," said Bob Colt, the incoming [President] of the Historical Society. "Once they see it, they fall in love with it. It has the grace of the old mansions."

The speakeasy was one of the most recent Historical Society fundraisers for the renovation project. There was also an artist reception May 31, from 5 to 8 p.m., for anyone interested in the artwork displayed throughout the house. Clark hadn't tallied any fundraising numbers for the event as of Tuesday. "But, regardless of however much we made, it was great success," she said. Before the night was over, though, word of the party had apparently found its way to police who showed up to shake the place down. Clark and the police department staged the raid. "They just thought it was a hoot," said Clark.

Reprinted by permission from the *Winchester Star* of May 8, 2008. A video of the event is available online. Go to: www.wickedlocalwinchester.com and enter "Speaking easily" into the search box. The video is halfway down the page.

From the Archives: New Booklet

by Ellen Knight

The new century began with two significant projects to preserve the history of Winchester. In addition to leasing the Sanborn House to the Winchester Historical Society for use as a historical and cultural center, the Town of Winchester purchased Hamilton Farm, known historically as the Wright-Locke Farm, the last remnant of the town's vanishing agricultural roots. Together they present a tangible reminder of Winchester from the 18th to the early 20th century.

Now you can take a look into the history of the farm in a brand new 16-page booklet titled *Wright-Locke Farm: A History in Pictures*. The lavish illustrations cover the Wright-Locke farm and the greater Ridge Street area from different time periods and various angles, including aerial shots. There are also sections on the original farm owners, the Wrights and the Lockes. A copy of an anonymous painting of the farm, owned by the Society, graces the cover.

In addition to capturing the history of the farm, the booklet also illustrates the value of the Archival Center collections, which furnished Town officials with historical information about the farm while the Town was debating its purchase and future. Purchase of this booklet will, in fact, benefit the Archives and its mission of documenting Winchester's history and making it available to the public. All proceeds will go into a newly established revolving fund for use by the Archival Center.

The booklet sells for \$10 and is currently available at the Archival Center (in the lower level of Town Hall), the Engineering Officer (across the hall from the Archival Center,) and by mail from the Society (see insert).

For further information, you may contact the author, Ellen Knight, by email: archives@winchester.us.

Town Day 2008

Three activities were offered by the Society on Town Day, June 7, 2008. It appears another tradition has started with the success of the first Strawberry Festival and Classic Car Show, which joined the Trolley Tours and Town Day Booth as Society endeavors.

"Trolley Tours Filled to Capacity"

by Tom Michalak

Once again, the Trolley Tours at this year's Town Day were filled to capacity as more than 320 people signed up for one or more of the tours. One former citizen of Winchester currently living in North Carolina, even made a special detour on her annual vacation, just to come to Town Day and do the trolley tours.

The popular tours were made possible by the generous support of the Winchester Savings Bank, which provided two trolleys, and the Historical Society members who provide the expertise as tour guides.

This year the tours included:

- **Middlesex Canal** – Marge Harvey described the original route of the Canal, which gave access to the Atlantic seacoast from the industrial centers farther inland. The Canal passed through Winchester from the Mystic Lakes, through The Flats, and down past the cemetery to Horn Pond in Woburn.
- **Along Main Street to Symmes Corner** - Susan Keats presented a tour of Main Street toward the south, down to Symmes Corner and back through the Bacon Street area, with descriptions of the Black Horse Tavern and the homes of various renowned inventors and town leaders from Winchester's past.
- **Development of North Main Street** - John Clemson led a building-by-building tour of North Main Street. His tour provided a whole new way of looking at the historic buildings and the changes over time that have become part of this gateway into the town center.
- **Winchester: Homes of the Stars** – Ellen Knight led the trolley past homes of some of the many famous people who have lived in Winchester. The list includes prominent figures in art, business, politics, and especially stars of the stage and screen.

At the conclusion of the tours, the trolleys made continuous loops to the Sanborn House to bring people to the Strawberry Festival and Classic Car Show.

Tom Michalak was chair of the Trolley Tours; John Minniti, Laurie Minniti, Paula Swartz, and Doug Marmon helped with the coordination of the tours, ticketing, and loading/unloading of the trolleys.

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“First Strawberry Festival and Classic Car Show a Success”

by Sue Clark

It was a beautiful day on Town Day at the Sanborn House. Artists with their easels and paints were working in the shade of the trees. People were just sitting in their lawn chairs enjoying the beautiful day. Fifteen classic cars open for viewing lined the drive and carriage house parking lot. Classic trolleys transported many of the more than 150 people from Winchester Center and the downtown area to the Westside hill and the Sanborn House.

They came to enjoy strawberry shortcake, lemonade and coffee for the afternoon on the veranda and to tour the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center. Children played on the lawn and everyone seemed to converse with everyone else. It was easy to imagine the early days of the Sanborn House when there were undoubtedly many other summer afternoon parties in this magnificent home just like this 2008 one.

The Girl Scouts troop 1474-5 enlightened the public about their Bronze award project, the reintroduction of the Baldwin apple tree to Winchester at the Sanborn House. They also sold annuals and raised enough money to purchase their Bronze award pins. They sat in the shade of co-troop leader, Ellen Wilson’s renovated 1950 pull along camper an addition to the classic car show.

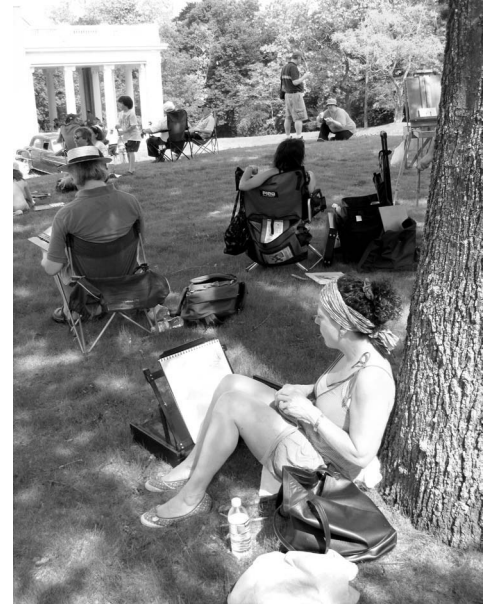
The Society would like to thank several local merchants who helped to make this an incredible success: La Patisserie for the shortcakes,

Stop and

Shop for

lemonade and Starbucks Coffee for the coffee. The Society would also like to thank all of the 15 car owners for sharing their vehicles and for their time.

Sue Clark and Nancy Kilker were the chairs for the Strawberry Festival and Classic Car Show. Cynthia Latta, Linda and Jim Whitehead, Brian Clark, Susan Keats, David Feigenbaum, Ellen Wilson and Jan Santaniello all helped with different aspects of the event.



Artists and others enjoy the grounds of the Sanborn House on Town Day.



Classic cars line the Sanborn House driveway on Town Day 2008.

“Town Day Booth Offers Raffle”

by Nancy Schrock

The Society occupied its traditional booth location in front of Book Ends for Town Day. New and old friends stopped by to view Society publications, pick up membership forms, find out more about the Sanborn House, and register for the raffle. This year’s raffle had so many submissions that two winners were awarded in each category. Sara Dicker and Julian Phillips won *Architects of Winchester* books, Jeff Stump and A. Wagner won *Children’s History* books, and Anna LaViolette and Caroline Wooten won Sanborn House tee shirts.

Nancy Schrock and Gail Sjo were chairs. Nancy O’Herron, Kate Fitzgerald, Drew Bottaro, and Jean Twitchell all manned the booth for different times during the day.

Over 25 volunteer were involved in the Society’s most successful Town Day ever. The Society would like to thank all of these volunteers and looks forward to next year.

Fundraising Consultant Sets Society Up for Success

by Donna Jalbert Patalano

Faced with the daunting task of raising funds to restore the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center, the Historical Society Board set a course to hire general counsel to create a development strategy. After a three-month search, the Development Committee selected Cari Palmer to work with the Board to develop the Historical Society's fundraising program.

Cari brings extensive experience in institutional advancement, non-profit management and preservation. She met with the Board in April and immediately set to work by examining the priorities of the Board given its stewardship of the Sanborn House. "I have had the pleasure of working with organizations of all shapes and sizes, with various missions," Cari said. "My favorite types are the smaller historic and cultural organizations that are growing through a change - be it attached to a campaign, new board leadership, an opportunity regarding a facility, or transitioning from a volunteer-run to professionally run entity."

An associate with Copley Harris Company, Cari's skills and expertise center around strategic planning and philanthropy, particularly reshaping and revitalizing development programs for organizations that span cultural, educational and healthcare missions. Working as general counsel for development assessment and capacity building with organizations like Old Sturbridge Village, Framingham Historical Society and Stonehurst Mansion, Cari has built a reputation based on organized proficiency that results in successful comprehensive development programs.

Cari has also served as Director of Development and Marketing for the House of the Seven Gables. At the Essex National Heritage Area, she raised funds and then conducted a feasibility study to establish a regional Documentary Heritage Program. She also served as Director of Development Operations for the North Shore Medical Center Foundation where, among other duties, she spearheaded the largest cancer initiative north of Boston (NSMC Cancer Walk), which included--appeals, third party events, major gifts, media partners, and corporate sponsorships raising more than \$1 million annually.

Prior to joining Copley Harris, Cari was the Executive Director of the Newburyport Maritime Society where she guided the board and staff through a strategic planning process.

The Winchester Historical Society Development Committee was particularly impressed by Cari's background in both development and archives management since the Sanborn House will be the new home to the Town's historic collections. At the June Board Meeting, Cari facilitated a strategic planning and capacity building session that included review of results from an rigorous, comprehensive Board survey, a mission critique, and an enlightening core value discussion. With Cari's help, the board is taking important steps to set priorities that will serve as a foundation for the growth of the Historical Society's development program.

New Society Officers and Board Members

by Bob Colt

The May 13th Annual Meeting of the Winchester Historical Society saw the election of new officers and the addition of several talented members to the Board of Directors. Elected President was Bob Colt, who has been an active Board member for the past 5 years. Bob is President of Colt Communications and has been involved in numerous area Boards and several Historical Societies. Nancy Schrock takes over as Vice President and will be working closely with Bob on all matters for the Society and the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center. Nancy previously served as Treasurer of the Society and is Conservator of Special Collections for the MIT Libraries.

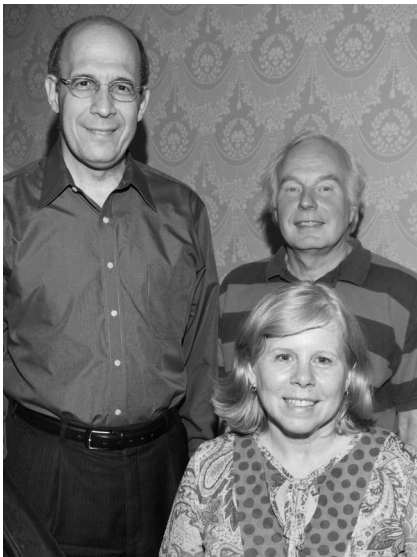
Coming in as Treasurer of the Winchester Historical Society is Doug Marmon who is well known as a Town of Winchester Finance Committee member and past Chairman. Doug is an investment systems analyst and brings this expertise to the position of Treasurer. Continuing for a second year as Secretary of the Society is the extremely capable Donna Patalano, an appellate attorney with her own practice in Winchester. Donna also serves on the Town of Winchester Board of Appeals.

Joining the Board of Directors are Drew Bottaro, Michael Manzo and Candace Van Aken. We are very fortunate to have such qualified and dedicated Winchester community leaders join the officers to make a seventeen person Board of Directors.

Drew Bottaro is a Senior Vice President at Calibre, and has

served on the Historical Society's Finance Committee, the Town Finance Committee, and is currently serving on the Town of Winchester Planning Board.

Michael Manzo is Senior Vice President of the Beal Companies and served as a Director of Boston History Collaborative and on the Town of Winchester Strategic Planning Committee. He has extensive experience in real estate development and equity acquisition.



New Board members Drew Bottaro, Doug Marmon, and Candace Van Aken

Candace Van Aken is an art teacher at nearby Medford High School. She has served as president of the Winchester League of Women voters, a member of the Town of Winchester Finance Committee and chair of the Winchester Historical Commission.

Gail Sjo and Carol Keller, the outgoing President and Vice President, were thanked for their unwavering support and outstanding leadership for the Winchester Historical Society, and were elected to 3 year terms on the Board of Directors along with the re-election of Directors David Stirling and Paula Swartz.

Vote NO on Movies

by Cynthia Latta

The Historical Society continued its 75th anniversary celebration with a presentation on "the great movie controversy" which raged in Winchester from 1917 until the first theater finally opened in 1937. The long-running debate, often heated and always cast in terms of the safety and welfare of the children, provided the basis for a lively and informative audience participation drama written and produced by Ellen Knight. The program was entitled "Vote NO on Movies" and was held on May 13, 2008.

The official actors were Ellen Knight, in the role of Miss Snoop, a typist and later society columnist for *The Winchester Star*; Robert Hallisey, who played Mr. Wilson, the editor of *The Winchester Star*; and Barry Garden in the role of the Reverend Howard J. Chidley, the most persistent, vehement and determined opponent of a local moving picture theater. Members of the audience assumed the roles of teachers, doctors, preachers, churchgoers, businessmen, and ordinary citizens, reading excerpts from the hundreds of letters written to the editor of *The Star*, both for and against the theater.

The audience listened intently as self-appointed guardians of the town's morals cowed the supporters of modernity to defeat one theater proposal after another. Eventually, though, appeals to common sense and the practical carried the day. Winchester did indeed get its movie theater, but by the time it opened in 1937, the forces that would bring about its demise were already gathering. At the conclusion of the program, convinced by the letter writers who argued that the theater ban hurt no one but those who could not afford the carfare to a neighboring town, the audience voted unanimously in favor of a theater.

The program was presented in the music room of the Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center. The appropriate mood was established by the availability of fresh hot buttered popcorn and Necco wafers. For those who do not have a long history in town, the Winchester Savings Bank now stands on the one-time theater property.

Save the Date

Saturday, October 18, 2008

The Winchester Historical Society is planning its biennial historic house tour for **October 18, 2008** and is looking for homes to feature at this popular event. We would like to duplicate the success of the last tour so we need six historically significant homes to show. Perhaps you have friends or neighbors who could volunteer their homes for four hours on a Saturday afternoon...we look forward to your suggestions.

Please call any member of the board or Nancy O'Herron at 781-446-7442.

Notices and Upcoming Events

Meetings

Board Meetings - Third Tuesday of the month (July 15, August 19, September 16), 7:30 PM, Music Room, Sanborn House Historical and Cultural Center.j

Programs

September - Workshops on the preservation and management of records for Winchester non-profit organizations, sponsored by a grant from En Ka.

October - Exhibit of the Society's artwork with talk by historian Ellen Knight.

October 18 - Historical House Tour

October and November - celebrations in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Sanborn House.

Help Wanted

The Society needs:

Hosts and Hostesses for the Historical House Tour
Managing Editor and writers for the *Black Horse Bulletin*
Volunteers for the Education and Programs Committee.

For more information, see the Historical Society web site (Volunteer Opportunities) or contact Nancy Schrock (781-721-1229; email: ncschrock@comcast.net) or Carol Keller (781-721-4643; email: kellerck@aol.com)

