

A Letter to our Community from the Executive Director: continued from front page

Highlights); Tuesdays (Gold Rush History Profiles); Wednesday (What is It? Object from the Collection); Thursday (Throw Back Thursday Duxbury Pictures); Fridays (Dateboarded Historic House Histories).

And wait, there's more! Our special exhibition for the 2020 commemoration, "Creating a Legacy: 400 Years of Duxbury & the Pilgrims" will launch digitally on our website, in early June. Since its founding as the second Pilgrim settlement, Duxbury's residents have continuously invoked the town's Pilgrim history, for a variety of reasons. From William Brewster's Puritan spoon, to modern day souvenirs, this exhibition explores the discovery of items left behind, as well as those created to craft the legacy of Duxbury's Pilgrim past.

Our offices, the Drew Archival Library, and the museums will remain closed through May 3 and we will keep you updated on our schedule as our situation evolves. As always, our staff is available for email inquiries. You can find their contact information at www.duxburyhistory.org/ourpeople/.

We hope you stay well and take good care through these difficult times. Our physical doors may not be open, but we have flung our virtual doors open wide. Please use them to connect to our community, to our shared historical and environmental resources, and to this time and place. Together, in learning about our past, we also build a future that is worth looking forward to.

With gratitude and hope,
Erin McGough
Executive Director

P.S. Your generosity and support to DRHS matters more now than ever. If you are able, please consider making a donation to support our ongoing and changing work at www.duxburyhistory.org/donate/. Thank you, as always.

2020 New Members

The Duxbury Rural and Historical Society is pleased to welcome the following Members who have joined the Society for the first time, Members who have rejoined after a break, and Members who have increased their support level since the publishing of the DRHS 2019 Annual Report. We thank you for your support and dedication to preserving Duxbury's heritage!

- Contributing**
Virginia Sykes
- Family:**
Sean Burke & Family
Alanna Coolong & Family
Erik Dilger & Family
Darren and Caitlin Humphreys
Brian Lee and family
Michael Violandi and Family
- Individual:**
Chris Errasti
- Senior Couple:**
Arthur and Sarah Evans
Tobin and Margaret Harvey
Sam and Woody Lawson
Kathrine Reardon
Nancy Stobie
- Senior:**
Douglas Hart
Heidi Pape Laird
Elizabeth Lester

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Library
Drew Archival Library
147 St. George Street, Duxbury

Museums
King Caesar House
120 King Caesar Road, Duxbury

Bradford House
931 Tremont Street, Duxbury

LAMPLIGHTER

The Newsletter of The Duxbury Rural & Historical Society
Spring, 2020



Winsor's Wharves, Snug Harbor, Duxbury



A Letter to our Community from the Executive Director:

Pride in our community, our sense of place, and a strong commitment to the people around us are the ideas upon which the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society (DRHS) was founded in 1883, when a group of residents (many of whom were young women) had the spark of an idea to form a town beautification society. Little did they know how far their spark would go!

Today, all of us face a spring season unlike any that we have seen before. For DRHS, our historic houses will not open as scheduled and our calendar is not likely to happen as planned. But in challenge comes opportunity. For us, Place Matters and the spirit of the DRHS shines as our people innovate with new ideas. We will continue to serve the town of Duxbury, just as we have for the last 136 years.

Already this spring,

- We have launched our new web portal dedicated to the 1791 logbook from the American brig, *Grace*. Written by a 22-year-old Duxbury sailor and shipbuilder named Samuel Delano, Jr., the logbook is the earliest and only-known English language version of the first meeting between an American ship and the Kingdom of Japan. Donated to the DRHS by the Hoyt family and recently conserved through the donations of several donors, the logbook is now fully digitized and available for you to "flip through" online, with a partial transcript of the most interesting days. Check out: "Collections Highlights" at our website.
- Our website now has a section devoted to Online Learning. We are continually adding a wide variety of engaging online content, virtual tours, and lectures so that you can access Duxbury's history from anywhere, at any time. We've already uploaded "What was Duxbury like in 1883?" as well as a presentation on the Reimagined Bradford House, with more soon to come, including Duxbury's Women at Sea, and Charlotte Bradford: Civil War Nurse. View: "Online Learning" at our website.
- Be sure to stay connected through social media! Our pages on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are full of tantalizing tidbits. We now have a rotating schedule: Mondays (Women's History

continued on flap

Place Matters

Barbara Hayes, Development Committee

Whether you live here, visit when you can, or stay in touch from afar, we all share something very important—the history and rural landscape that tell the story of Duxbury community. This place feels special from the very first, it just does.

The work of the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society is right at the heart of it all. We believe that Place Matters—a belief that infuses everything we do. It shapes how we tend and preserve 150 acres of open space and guides our careful curation of the character and lore of our four historic homes. It is in the people, families, and friends of this community—you can see it in the faces of all of us at the annual DRHS Clark’s Island Picnic.

Duxbury’s abundant rural beauty and history go back to our nation’s earliest days, with stories that infuse the sea, soil, and homes here. Stories that define the qualities and characteristics that shape this town’s identity. It is what makes Duxbury, well, Duxbury. Our sense of place. Your home, no matter where you’re from.

DRHS members, volunteers, and generous donors provide the support we need to help us preserve

and care for this beautiful and historic place. Our work is just not possible without you.

Connect.

By attending one of our many events, going for a tour at one of our historic properties, or simply by becoming a member! You will meet people and families who are curious, just like you—about history, Duxbury’s abundant natural beauty, and understanding more about where we live.

Explore.

The open space around us, set out across Duxbury Bay for our annual Clark’s Island picnic, step back in time for a King Caesar House Christmas.

Volunteer.

Hundreds of volunteers help us throughout the year, some for a couple of hours, others as vital members of our team. What interests you? The possibilities are endless—Collections / Special Events / School Tours / Gardening / Historic Maintenance, and many others.

Dr. Christiana Faunce: A Remarkable Woman

Carolyn Ravenscroft, Archivist & Historian

Christiana Isadore Faunce (1842-1929) was born in Duxbury to Zenas Faunce, Jr. and Christiana (Prior) Faunce. Her father and grandfather were the local blacksmiths, owning the forge at the Blue Fish River bridge. Christiana grew up in the house at 584 Washington Street which was decorated with an ornate iron grill on the second floor made in the Faunce’s forge from a design Zenas, Jr. had seen in New Orleans. We can only assume Christiana and her siblings attended the local Duxbury grammar schools, and perhaps Christiana went on to Partridge Academy, at the time a private co-educational secondary school on Tremont Street. She was living at home throughout her young adult life, but in the 1870s she left Duxbury to obtain a medical degree, something almost unheard of for women in the 19th century. To be admitted to Dr. Emily Blackwell’s Medical College in New York, prospective students had to provide a certificate of “good moral character” from a physician or clergyman. One wonders if Dr. James Wilde of St. George Street gave Christiana her reference. In 1880, at the age of 38, she was one of nine women in the graduating class. Christiana gave the valedictory address on the comparison of women with men in the arts, sciences and professions. From there she moved to Norwich, CT where she practiced medicine for the



Daguerreotype of Dr. Christiana Isadore Faunce (1842-1929), c.1848. Drew Archival Library, DRHS.

remainder of her life. She and Helen Marshall, the librarian and curator at the Norwich Free Academy, owned their own home and often summered in Duxbury.

There are two interesting anecdotes to Dr. Faunce’s life. The first is that her youngest brother, Sylvanus, married an earlier graduate of the Women’s Medical College, Dr. Mary Ann Wattles. Did Sylvanus introduce Mary Ann to Christiana, thus sparking her interest in medical school, or was Christiana the conduit for Sylvanus meeting Mary Ann? The second

comes from an article written about Irish domestic servants in Connecticut. According to the article, Dr. Faunce and her companion, Ellen Marshall, were very good to their young Irish housekeeper, Nellie O’Neill. When Nellie married, the two women gave her a gift of fine china and let her know that “the latch is always out” at their house for her.¹

¹ Hogan, Neil. “Connecticut’s Irish Domestic.” *Connecticut Explored*. August, 2013. www.ctexplored.org



Faunce home, 584 Washington Street, Duxbury

Due to the ongoing public health concerns, many DRHS events have been cancelled or postponed through spring and summer 2020. Please check our Events Website at www.duxburyhistory.org for frequent updates.



Spring flowers placed on the Reynolds-Maxwell Garden at the Blue Fish River Bridge by Woody Lawson, Trustee of DRHS and Member of the Duxbury Garden Club. Hopefully a harbinger of spring and better things to come. The Reynolds-Maxwell Garden is a property of the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society and the DRHS has partnered with the Duxbury Garden Club in care of the garden for more than 70 years: <https://duxburyhistory.org/lands/reynolds-maxwell-garden/>

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New Donation

Melanie Correia, Collections Manager

The DRHS is the proud recipient of a new donation: a portrait of the Rev. John Allyn (1767-1833) of Duxbury, donated by descendant, Faith Laskaris. Rev. Allyn was the minister of the First Parish Church for 45 years, from 1788-1833. While the majority of his tenure was peaceful, Allyn was part of a controversy at the end of his career that divided the town and had repercussions for decades after his death. You can read more about Rev. Allyn at our Drew Archives website: <https://drewarchives.org/tag/john-allyn/>.

We are glad to bring the Reverend’s portrait home to Duxbury, where it joins other items in the DRHS collections that once belonged to him: in 2013, the DRHS received a gift of over fifty of the Rev. Allyn’s sermons from Faith (Stimson) Laskaris and Emily Sugg.

Thank you to the donors who so generously entrust the DRHS with these important pieces of our shared history. You can visit the portrait during regular business hours at the Drew Archival Library, where it is already on display.

