



# The Nashua Historical Society

## *Preserving the Past for the Future*

Issue No. 3 Fall/Winter 2022 [www.nashuahistoricalociety.org](http://www.nashuahistoricalociety.org)

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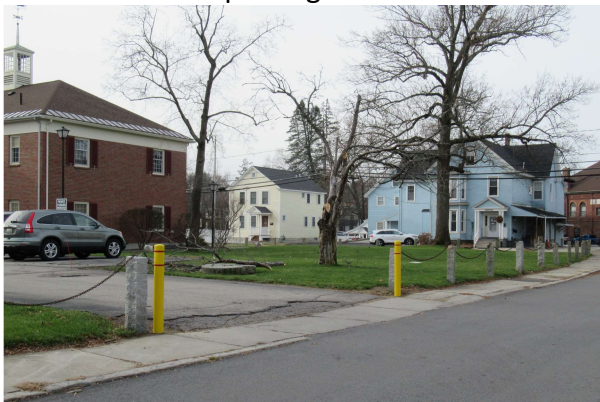
### President's Message

Greetings to all at this particularly fun, but busy, time of the year!

In the past few weeks we've made significant progress on a number of fronts, among them the long-anticipated approval from the city and the Historic District Commission to proceed with our two-pronged project to redesign and upgrade the roof on the east side of the Speare Museum, and to extend the roof that currently only covers a portion of the ramp that makes the museum handicap accessible and, therefore, ADA compliant.

Final touches have been completed on the architect's blueprints and the next step is the start of construction. The completion date isn't set in stone, as weather conditions could play a role in the pace of the work.

Another of the several matters the building and property committee, under the able direction of Chairman Dennis Parker, has been dealing with involves those granite pillars along Crescent Street, on either side of the parking lot entrance.



For years now, there's always been one or two pillars that were either toppled over or snapped in half, mainly by snow plows coming in contact with them. It seemed to become a perpetual problem – replace or re-install one post and another gets hit. Fix that one, and, well, you get the picture.

So as suggested by Dennis, we approved the installation of protective barriers, not unlike the ones you see in front of gas pumps, propane tank cages and stores in strip malls. While not exactly aesthetically pleasing, such barriers are a practical solution to a fairly costly – and definitely aggravating – problem. Our thanks to En Gannim Landscaping for being easy to work with and doing such a good job on the project.

As Covid keeps moving farther and farther into the rear-view mirror – soon to disappear entirely – the staff has decided to reactivate the 150th Anniversary Committee, with a goal of planning some celebratory activities next year.

Encouragingly, several people have responded and shown interest in being on the rejuvenated committee. Right now, the plan is to invite all interested parties to an organizational meeting, to be held in January, the exact date of which is to be determined. If you would like to learn more about the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, please contact Eileen, who works Tuesdays through Thursdays, at 603-883-0015 or [nashuahistorical@comcast.net](mailto:nashuahistorical@comcast.net).

Best to all for a great holiday season!

Dean Shalhoup, President

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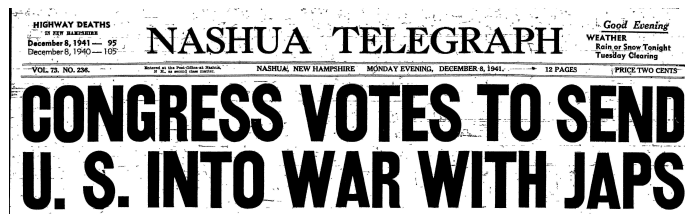
### **And the Bride Wore....A Showcase of 150 years of Nashua Bridal Fashion**

After two years of Covid restrictions, the Society was thrilled to once again welcome visitors to the Abbot-Spalding House Museum with an exhibit of 150 years of Nashua bridal fashion!



The exhibit was well received, and 130 visitors attended. Janice Fronko and Paula Lochhead, our two talented textile volunteers, spent countless hours researching and curating the exhibit.

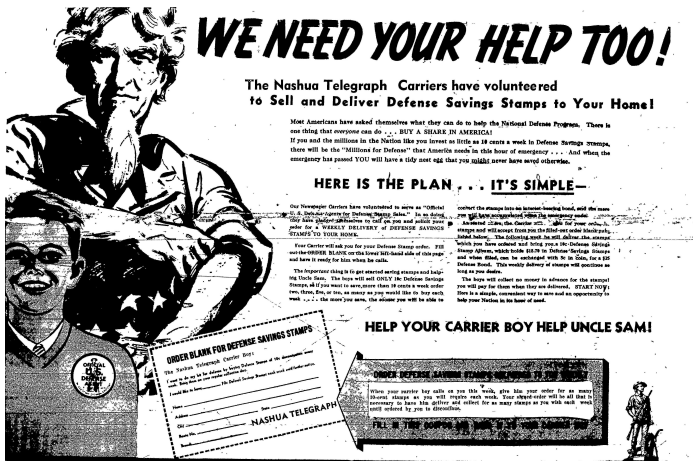
If you did not have a chance to attend the exhibit, Janice and Paula are planning to make some changes to the exhibit and reopen it in the spring. Spring exhibit dates will be announced soon!



In the days after the bombing at Pearl Harbor news of our loved ones was slow getting home (we knew Daniel Letendre was stationed at Wheeler Field and his brother Armand was stationed at Pearl Harbor, *Nashua Telegraph*, p. 5). Also, by order of the FBI, the Nashua Municipal airport grounded all airplanes. A 24-hour guard was posted and local plants involved in defense work were told to take precautions and guard against sabotage (see p. 12).

### **Upcoming programs**

We are beginning to schedule programs for Spring 2023 and a new exhibit opening! Details will be in the next newsletter.



**Welcome new volunteers**

The Society is enriched by our volunteers and adding new volunteers is a special treat! In the last couple of weeks, we welcomed Jeremy and Sylvia who were looking to give back to the community. We are happy they have joined us!

Nashua Telegraph, 10 December 1941, p. 1 First word reaches Nashua. Mrs. Felix A. Sharek received a telegram that afternoon signed by her husband who was stationed at Pearl Harbor.



**Hannaford programs**

The Society appreciates being a beneficiary of Hannaford’s two community outreach programs - the Hannaford Giving Tag reusable bag program and the Bloomin’ 4 Good flower program. Thank you to all who purchased reusable bags and flowers!

**Abbot-Spalding House Museum Videos**

Recently, the Society was fortunate to team up with Video Producer John Sadd to produce videos about the history of the Abbot-Spalding House Museum. Over several months, John recorded long-time volunteers as they shared their memories of the house and its history.

The plan is to show the videos not only in the Abbot House, but also in the Spere Museum. As some may know, due to the age of the Abbot House it cannot be made handicap accessible. This means that many people are not able to tour the house. By showing the videos in the Spere Museum, it will give everyone a chance to learn about the Abbot House.



The tower was removed after 1905.



## THE WAR OF THE TOWNSHIPS...

### Nashville vs Nashua

By Patricia Klee

I like to call it the War of the Town Hall. In March of 1842, during the Nashua Town Hall meeting it was determined that a new Town Hall needed to be constructed. The problem was where do you build such an important building. Back then Nashua consisted of two different populuses... or what would have been considered two different districts or villages. The North (now called the north end) was referred to as Indian Head and South of the river was Harbor Pond. Harbor Pond was the first settlement and the more affluent lived in the North. A vote was had as to where to place the new proposed townhall: North 396 and the South 582. As you can imagine the North was not happy so they applied through the NH Legislation to become a separate and corporate town to forever become known as NASHVILLE. As there was no opposition the new township was granted and on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1842, the new town of Nashville was incorporated.

The area of Nashville was "all that part of Nashua in the County of Hillsborough, lying westerly and northerly of a line commencing upon the Nashua River at the east side of Hollis, and running thence down said river, to the bridge erected over said river by the Nashua and Lowell Railroad Company; thence from the southwest corner of said bridge, eastwardly by said railroad to the Old Ferry Road so called, thence by said last mentioned road to the Merrimack River."

For 10 years all seemed good and both Nashville and Nashua lived but then there were some stirrings... There were noticeable issues and weaknesses for both towns. The split township created problems in education, police, fire, and so much more. Even issues for water supply and gas to both towns would need a collaborative approval and management.

On top of all these issues, there has been discussions relative to the fact that both Concord (1849) and Manchester (1846) had adopted City Charters. This left the two townships of Nashua and Nashville struggling and having a bit of "city-envy".

So, in 1853 the two townships realizing that they were stronger together than apart they applied to the NH Legislation to become a UNITED city. . On June 27, 1853, the UNITED Nashua NEW charter was granted and Nashua became a city... The approval of the charter was dependent on a vote by each of these townships. Nashua voted Yes-468, No-334 and Nashville voted Yes-249, No-115... Total Yes-717 and No-449.

#### Fun Facts:

- In 1845 the population in total was 6861...
  - Nashua 4429
  - Nashville 2432
- Based on 1850 census united population was 8942 which was 2888 from 1840.

This information was taken from

- COW HAMPSHIRE's – "Missing Places – Nashville NH"
- Nashua Website History page
- Wikipedia
- Nashua Historical Society



## The Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce

The Society was happy to be one of the hosts for Leadership Greater Nashua's kickoff for their time to explore Nashua History, Arts & Culture. Throughout the day the participants heard presentations from historians and held panel discussions with Nashua's Welcoming City Efforts and Positive Street Art. Later in the day they did a walking tour through downtown Nashua to view the murals and sculptures.

## CARES Act Grant and SHARP Grant

There were many projects that the Society wanted to be able to share with our membership and the Nashua community, but the cost was prohibitive. During the Covid-19 lockdown The Nashua Historical Society was fortunate to receive two grants, the CARES Act Grant and the SHARP Grant. These grants were offered by New Hampshire Humanities through the National Endowment for the Humanities.

With these grants we were able to upgrade a lot of our technology. Some examples of which were being able to purchase additional equipment so that we can stream programs in rooms other than the library, which also allows for social distancing if needed. The sound system was upgraded so that program speakers can be heard more clearly.

Our favorite upgrades include being able to have video tapes, audio tapes and film reels converted to MP4 files. Because these hidden gems were recorded on technology that is no longer readily accessible, we are excited to be able to share the information on our YouTube channel for everyone to enjoy. Also, since the Abbot-Spalding House Museum is not handicap accessible, everyone can watch the Abbot House videos (mentioned in another part of the newsletter) in the Spere Museum.



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The first notification of a Nashuan fatality at Pearl Harbor was received 10 December 1941 and reported in the *Nashua Telegraph* the next day (see p. 24). Scotty Brown, a flying cadet, was killed at Hickam field. That same day, morning papers reported no new tires would be sold until after December 12 to prevent a “buying wave” (see p. 10). Tire rationing was announced December 27 and officially started on January 5. On January 8, Nashua stores voluntarily began rationing sugar to prevent hoarding. The intention to register all men age 18 to 65 for service was announced on December 12.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Nashua River-Fest

The Society was excited to participate in the First Annual Nashua River-Fest on October 15. The weather was perfect, and the event was well attended. River-fest was created by Aldermen Patricia Klee and Tom Lopez to bring unity between their wards and to share information about Nashua and Nashville. The article The War of the Townships...Nashville vs. Nashua is included in this newsletter. There were many activities for children and adults as well as ice cream! We appreciated the invitation to participate in this community-building event. It was a good chance to connect with our neighbors and share information about the Society. We look forward to participating again next year.



**Answers to the Quiz on Page 7**  
A. 6, B. 1, C. 4, D. 2, E. 5, and F. 3

Beth McCarthy, Curator, setting up for River-Fest



# Discount Admission Opportunities

If you are planning to travel, a reminder that one of the benefits of being a member of The Nashua Historical Society is access to the Time Travelers program and to the New Hampshire Historical Society.

The Time Travelers program includes over 400 organizations in more than 45 states across the country. Members of these organizations can receive a variety of exclusive benefits and privileges, such as free admission, gift shop discounts, and much, much more.

Most museums will require you to show a membership card to The Nashua Historical Society. Before your trip, please contact the Society. We will be happy to provide you with a membership card. The link to see the list of participating museums is <http://timetravelers.mohistory.org/institutions/>.



American Independence Museum, Exeter, New Hampshire

**APPLICATION FOR WAR RATION BOOK** (To be filed in by Registrars only.)

**IMPORTANT**—A separate application must be made by (or, where the Registrar permits, on behalf of) every person in whom a War Ration Book is to be issued. The separate applications for each and every member of a Family Unit (see Instructions to Registrar) must be made by one, and only one, adult member of such Family Unit.

Local Board No. \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Application made at \_\_\_\_\_ (NAME OF CITY OR TOWN) (SEE INSTRUCTIONS TO REGISTRAR)

1. NAME, ADDRESS, AND DESCRIPTION of person to whom the book is to be issued

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ (PRINT NAME) \_\_\_\_\_ (PRINT NAME)

RESIDENCE \_\_\_\_\_ (PRINT ADDRESS) \_\_\_\_\_ (PRINT ADDRESS)

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

2. (a) If the person named above is a member of a Family Unit, state the following:

(1) Number of persons in Family Unit, including the person named above \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Total amount of white and brown sugar in use during which \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Total amount of white and brown sugar in use during which \_\_\_\_\_

(4) If the person named above is NOT a member of a Family Unit, state the total amount of white and brown sugar in use during which \_\_\_\_\_

(5) If the person named above is a member of a Family Unit, which is owned by the person named above \_\_\_\_\_

3. Number of War Ration Books to be issued from War Ration Book \_\_\_\_\_

Book One (upon the basis of information stated above) of \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE INSTRUCTIONS TO REGISTRAR)

OPRA Form No. R-501

**REGISTRATION STRIKES HOME**—The facsimile above represents what will soon be the first step in obtaining the family's sugar supply. Filing out the "Application for War Ration Book" constitutes a necessary preliminary to obtaining the coupons without which no housewife will be able to purchase the household sweetening. This is the type of questionnaire that you will be asked to fill out at registration time in May; ought to be studied closely by housewife to avoid any delay in the work of registration.

## How Well Do You Know Nashua World War II History?

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| A. First day, 5,700 ration books issued in Nashua.                                       | 1. December 7, 1941  |
| B. The Japanese Attack Pearl Harbor  | 2. January 5, 1942   |
| C. Businesses start rationing sugar.   | 3. December 11, 1941 |
| D. Tire rationing begins.  | 4. January 8, 1942   |
| E. <i>Nashua Telegraph</i> reported Felix A. Sharek survived the attack on Pearl Harbor. | 5. December 10, 1941 |
| F. First Nashuan Pearl Harbor death reported in the <i>Nashua Telegraph</i> .            | 6. May 5, 1942       |
- Answers on page 6

# Nashua Historical Society

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