



Nashua Historical Society

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www.nashuahistoricalociety.org

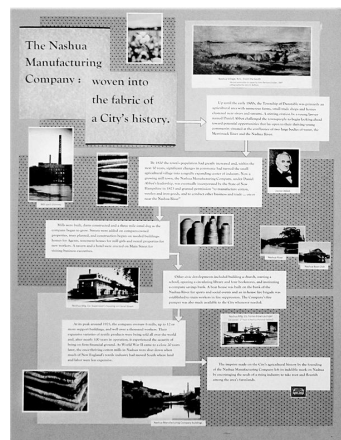
Nashua Manufacturing Exhibit

by Barbara Comer

Come Welcome Our New Arrival! ... An Invitation

For those of you who have been in to see the *Agriculture and Farming* exhibit here at the Historical Society, you've realized how that firm pastoral foundation supported and sustained the evolving Township of Old Dunstable into the early nineteenth century. Building on that foundation, we have taken a next step in Nashua's growth and now invite you to view our newest exhibit in the Speare Library featuring "*The Nashua Manufacturing Company - woven into the fabric of a City*".

Challenged by a prophetic oration by Nashua's own Daniel Abbot in the 1820s, the townspeople began looking ahead toward the potential opportunities that lay open to their young community, which was ideally situated at the confluence of the Nashua and Merrimack rivers. In 1823, under Abbot's leadership, the Nashua Manufacturing Company was established and incorporated by the State of New Hampshire, thus granting permission "to manufacture cotton, woolen and iron goods, and to conduct other business and trade...on or near the Nashua River".



The exhibit is supported by numerous photographs, pictures and architectural drawings; spools, shuttles and milled fabric, sheeting and blankets. Brief histories of the Indian Head Mills and Joseph Baldwin's Bobbin Shop round out the display along with an ode to young "Thomas B. Bell", who met with great misfortune in one of the mills, hence reminding us of the inherent dangers faced in factory work.

The imprint made on the City's agricultural history by the founding of the Nashua Manufacturing Company left its indelible mark on Nashua by encouraging the seeds of a rising industry to take root and flourish among the area's farmlands.

We hope you will visit the exhibit soon.

Abbot-Spalding House 1 Nashville St. Nashua, NH 03064

Florence H. Speare Museum 5 Abbott St. Nashua, NH 03064 (603)883-0015, (603)889-8515 fax

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President's Message

The first day of spring is March 20 and with the bone-chilling cold this winter so far, my guess is that most of us will be ready to welcome it in.

In the summer, Curator Beth McCarthy worked with volunteers to start preparing the Abbot House for our participation in the Symphony House tour on December 2 and 3. On Saturday, the Speare Museum was also open for visitation. Visitors were charmed by the Abbot and impressed with the exhibits at the Speare. We had some new memberships as a result.

The Society is fortunate to have volunteers who assume projects in areas of interest to them. Our program audiences, for instance, are very aware of our Refreshment Committee and the array of treats they offer. What you may not know is that several of the same members also prepare our newsletters for mailing. They've got that process down to what has to be a world record!

The Finance Committee will be meeting soon. They will be making a list and checking it twice of what the Society can afford over the next fiscal year. That process will result in a budget.

For those of you with internet access, don't forget that the Society has not only a website, www.nashuahistoricalociety.org, but also a Facebook page.

Drop by and visit when you have a chance. We're open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Joanne

In Remembrance

We were very sad to learn of the sudden passing of John "Jack" Clark. Jack was a dedicated member who served on the board several times. He was always willing to assist the Society with thoughtful advice. Jack was a true gentleman, loyal supporter and a genuinely kind person. He is truly missed.

Correction:

In the spring 2017 newsletter, we inadvertently left out the report from the Finance Committee that was given at the Annual Meeting on May 16, 2017. That report is included below. We apologize for the omission.

Finance Committee Report

As our 2016-17 year goes into the books, once again we are pleased to report a very successful year. The Finance Committee made a decision in the third quarter of 2016 to direct one of our investment banks (TD bank) to move a substantial amount of our equity investments into ETF's and index funds. This move proved to be timely as the market exhibited substantial improvement over the past two quarters. In FY 2016-17 we took distributions from our investment accounts of \$212, 000, slightly more than the 4% we plan for due to a number of unexpected large expenses relative to our buildings. The approved budget for FY 2017-18 does not account for additional building expenses (Abbot Spalding roof replacement) as the estimates were not available at budget time. We expect an X-budget expense of approximately \$25,000, which we can easily accommodate. The Society enters the new fiscal year in excellent financial condition and no debt.

Question: We have a family membership. We only need one copy of mailings from NHS. Why do we each receive a copy of the mailing?

Answer: While you think it would be less expensive for us to send out one mailing per house hold, it is significantly less expensive for us to use bulk mailing. For bulk mailing we need to send out a minimum of 200 identical pieces of mail. Unfortunately, if we send one mailing per household, we have less than 200 pieces so we mail one to each member to get over the 200 minimum. The difference in cost is significant. Postage with bulk mail is \$.167 as opposed to \$.49 for regular mail.

We would love for you to share your stories

We are always looking for ideas for newsletter articles. Our members have some great stories and memories of Nashua. We would love for you to share them with us so we can include them in the newsletter. Please write up one of your Nashua memories and email it to Nashuahistorical@comcast.net. If, like many people, you think you do not have a talent for writing, call Eileen at the Society and set up a time to meet with her, and you can write it together.

French Hill Remembered
by
Donald and Eddie Jean

French Hill in the 1950's centered around the St. Francis Xavier Church with baptisms, first communions, confirmations, marriages and funerals. The priests said mass every day and six times on Sunday with vespers at 6 p.m. The sisters of Holy Cross taught school, grades one through eight at St. Francis Xavier Academy a bi-lingual school. The parishioners supported the church, school, Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) sports, boy scouts, cub scouts, bean suppers, raffles, bingo, etc.

The neighborhood was self-sustaining with businesses of all kinds. Variety stores, furniture stores, corner markets, hair dressers, barbers, shoe repair, funeral homes. The Francoeur bakery at the corner of Summer and Tolles Streets is now a construction company. The Salem Street Pharmacy at the corner of Salem and Whitney Streets is now a parking lot. The Riverside Golf Course along the railroad tracks at the end of Lock Street is now the Nashua Swim and Tennis Club and Thoreau's Landing Condominiums. The Guard de Rochambeau social club is now the Heritage Baptist Church.

The years have brought about other changes. The Saint Francis Xavier Church closed after 100 years and was sold to a Coptic orthodox church. The school was converted to senior citizen apartments and the nuns were moved to a convent in Manchester. Big changes were in store for the employment field. Johns Manville, Granite State Tannery, Improved Machinery Company (IMPCO), and Nashua Corporation along with many other companies are now gone, but French Hill has managed to move on with the times into the hi-tech industries.

Summer time in the 1950's and 60's was naturally fun for the kids. Sunny days, no school, playground ready to go with swings, slides, wading pools, baseball equipment, bean bags, ring toss, horseshoes, basketball all supervised by playground attendants. Morning we'd walk or ride our bikes to neighboring playgrounds and play baseball against their teams. Afternoons we'd play cards. Bid Whist was a favorite game. For a change of pace we'd start some days at 7:00 a.m. on the corner of Chandler and Canal Streets waiting for a big stakebody truck from Griffin Farm Windham, NH, to take us to pick string-beans on their farm, pay was 2c a pound. We would bring your lunch if we wanted to eat something besides string-beans. Other days were spent hiking into the second field beyond the playground, what today is Avon Drive and Atherton Avenue extended from the playground to East Stark Street and continuing our hike to "red guts" to swim in the Merrimack River. "Red guts" insert your own phantasmagoria as to how it got its name. Some days we'd walk along the railroad tracks collecting errant golf balls from the Riverside Golf Course and sell the balls back to the golfers.

Other reminiscences: Mail delivery twice a day, Lenny's Variety Store n/e corner of Lock and Pelham Streets, candlepin bowling alley on Canal Street east of Dunkin Donuts, and finally the day ended at 8:00 p.m. when the "boodang" rang. It was time to go home. That was when the fire alarm sounded from the top of the central fire station which is now the Arts and Science Building on Court Street.

The 50's are gone, the 21st century advances, businesses are transitioning from manufacturing to hi-tech jobs, computers, cell phones, internet, and instant communication. You can work from home instead of driving to the office something I've dreamt of doing. I'm retired now. I'll have to leave my dream to the next generation.

Annual Potluck

The Annual Member Potluck was held on Saturday, January 27 at the Nashua Historical Society.



It was a perfect time to show our appreciation to our members and enjoy good food with long-time members and to get to know some new members.



John Sanders entertained us with stories written by Gianni Rodari.



Photographs taken by Robert Garneau.

Rotating Member Exhibit

The current exhibit in the display cases in the main entrance is Mom's Aprons loaned to us by NHS member David Pinet. Dave has provided a number of lovely aprons that his mother used to wear.



The aprons are for everyday use and special aprons for holidays and other special occasions.

In the 1940's and 1950's, aprons were not just for protecting a woman's clothing.

They had a myriad of uses including as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven.

They dried children's tears.

They were used for carrying eggs into the kitchen or half-hatched eggs to the warming oven.



When unexpected company drove up the road, it could dust a house in a matter of seconds.



Please stop by to see these colorful aprons and to learn more about how they were used.

Spring Programs 2018

We have two really interesting programs planned for this spring.

Tuesday, March 20, at 7:30 p.m. Jeremy D’Entremont will tell us about *New England Lighthouses and the People Who Kept Them.*

Everyone knows there’s “something about lighthouses” that gives them broad appeal, but their vital role in our history and culture is little appreciated. Our early nation was built on maritime economy, and lighthouses were part of the system that made that possible. Due to automation, traditional lighthouse keeping is a way of life that has faded into the past. Jeremy D’Entremont tells the history of New England’s historic and picturesque lighthouses primarily focusing on the colorful and dramatic stories of lighthouse keepers and their families.

This program is free and open to the public through a grant from the NH Humanities ’Humanities to Go! Speaker’s Bureau.

Tuesday, April 18, at 7:30 p.m. Searching for Barton Carter.

Nancy Clough spent seven years researching her ancestor, Barton Carter. This presentation will focus on the heroic life of Barton Carter, who turned away from a future laid out for him to fight against Fascism in the Spanish Civil War and disappeared in that fight when he was only 23 years old. Barton’s work with Catalonian orphans is still having an impact in third-world countries today. Nancy will also touch on the history of the Carter family from their arrival in the Nashua area and the continuing growth under their leadership of Nashua Corporation on Franklin Street.

Free and open to the public.

Saturday, May 19, at 10 a.m.

We are going to have the privilege of dedicating a tulip tree to Frank H. Mellen and Marvis J. Mellen for all of their devotion to the mission of The Nashua Historical Society. This tulip tree has been donated by Gate City Tree Service.

Free and open to the public.

This dedication will be held in conjunction with the **Nashua Garden Club’s Annual Plant Sale from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.**

Nashua Garden Club members have worked diligently to divide their favorite perennials and to grow vegetable plants from seed. There will also be annuals, bulbs, herbs and indoor plants. Savvy gardeners know to come early for the best selection! Garden club members will be on hand to answer your questions.

In case you missed it!



As usual, the beautiful Christmas decorations were lovingly arranged to enhance the Abbot Spalding House during this past holiday season.

Rotating City Hall Exhibit

The current exhibit in the Nashua City Hall is a history of some long-time Amherst Street businesses and pictures of the present and the past.

We’ve added a Facebook Page

The Nashua Historical Society is now on Facebook. Please “Like” us. It is a good way to keep up with NHS activities. Also, please consider writing a review. The link is <https://www.facebook.com/NashuaHistoricalSociety/>