

Menotomy Minutes



NEWSLETTER OF THE ARLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPRING 2018

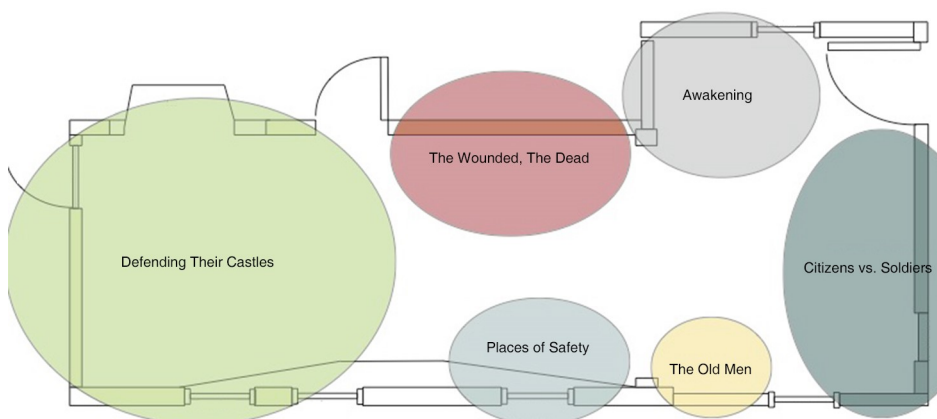


New Exhibit Planning Grant

We are pleased to announce the recent award of an exhibition planning grant from Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities. Funds of \$7,500 will allow curatorial research for a small permanent exhibit in the area leading from the Smith Museum into the Jason Russell House. This will become an important component to the visitor experience of the House and introduce the events of April 19, 1775 better to our visitors. It will utilize new objects in the collection to tell stories to connect to the audience, and provide more context and a sense of landscape and place. Once this planning phase is complete, we will seek implementation funds for installation.

Much of the early planning and design was done by Director Sara Lundberg as part of her graduate degree course on Exhibition Design. The bubble diagram below is an example of the planning and the thematic structure which will be followed in the exhibit. The grant funded project will

further fine-tune the exhibit design and content and carry out additional research on the objects. Noted historian Robert Gross, PhD, former professor of American History at UConn and the author of *The Minutemen and Their World*, has agreed to serve as project scholar. We are also pleased to have on our team many individuals who will play diverse roles in research, advising, writing, and design. Thank you to all team members who have agreed to play some role, large or small, in the success of this project: Society Museum Assistant Meredith Affleck, Board Member and chair of Tour Guide Committee Doris Birmingham, specialist in Historic Arms and Militaria at Skinner Joel Bohy, Society Volunteer and retired designer Kenton Rhoades, and former Director and local historian Doreen Stevens. ❖



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This 'bubble plan' shows the basic thematic structure of the new exhibit.

President's Corner

On a Saturday morning this past January, the board of the Historical Society participated in a retreat and brainstorming session where we considered our strategy for the future. The retreat was organized by board member Patsy Kraemer, and was facilitated by Joan Robbio, who frequently leads similar sessions for corporations. One question we posed to ourselves was, "what is the purpose of opening our doors today and over the next 10 years?" A number of interesting ideas and goals came out of this exercise.

One of the top goals enunciated at that meeting was expressed very inartfully (by myself) as "ramp up the museum aspect of the operation." As a historical society, we are a variety of things. First, we are the steward of the Jason Russell House. Besides that, we are an educational institution, a collecting body, a club, a history museum, and so on. For the last couple of years we have

If you have some ideas for the Museum, I would love to hear them!

concentrated on repairing and restoring the Jason Russell House so that it may continue to teach visitors about Arlington's role in the Revolutionary War. Now that the House is on a good footing, we can turn our attention to enlivening our role as a history museum.

To that end, we plan on refreshing the permanent exhibit spaces. I am pleased to announce that, through the hard work of the Director, Sara Lundberg, the Historical Society has won a grant from the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities to plan an exhibit devoted to the events of April 19, 1775, to be displayed in the Assembly Room. Next year, we will be raising funds and applying for a further grant for the creation and installation of the exhibit.

In the longer term, once the work in the Assembly Room is complete, we will turn our attention to the Smith Museum. If we want to draw repeat visits, we need to be able to have something fresh and new in the Museum every year. Detailed plans for the Museum are currently in the "discussion phase." If you have some ideas for the Museum, I would love to hear them!

My best regards,
Stuart Brorson, President

Battle of Menotomy Re-enactment April 15



Photo by Ron Richmond.

Celebrate Patriot's Day in Arlington this year! The Arlington Historical Society is once again pleased to host the Battle of Menotomy on the Jason Russell House lawn on Sunday, April 15th at 12:00 noon.

Menotomy Minutemen Captain Jim McLean tells us the British companies will include the 4th, 10th and 27th Regiments of Foot this year, there will be plenty of Redcoats. The colonial units will be represented by the Danvers Alarm Company, Gardner's Regiment, Acton Minutemen, and Menotomy Minutemen. Huzzah!

Following the re-enactment, the Jason Russell House will open to the public for tours. Additionally, Arlington's Patriot's Day parade will start down Massachusetts Avenue at 2:00pm.



Volunteer Spotlight - Florentina Gutierrez

We are sad to see former volunteers leave, but happy when they leave for an exciting new career. Such is the case with Florentina (Flor) Gutierrez, who has been doing volunteer work in collections for about a year. Flor has undertaken a variety of tasks from managing and researching one of our oldest collections of documents*, to monitoring for insects, to organizing and general upkeep in collections. Flor has also helped with school programs when needed in the springtime. Her ability to work independently, flexibility, and pleasant demeanor made her an excellent candidate for a new career as a receptionist at Skinner Auctioneer's Boston Gallery. Congratulations, Flor!

*You can find examples of Flor's research and writing in a blog post she wrote for our website at <https://arlingtonhistorical.org/town-meetings/>

AHS Collections

In addition to our programs, the Arlington Historical Society is also a collecting institution. We house a significant collection of objects and archives, caring for over 13,000 items. We continue to catalog and digitize our collections and records so that they may be of use to scholars, researchers, and the public. If you would like to know more about our collections, visit our website at arlingtonhistorical.org.

Recent Gifts of Note

Rick Saul of Dedham donated a collection of items from his Whittemore ancestors, including a large framed writing sample titled "Humility" by Rebecca Russell, dated 1787, and a pair of framed silhouettes dated 1805 of Rebecca Russell Whittemore and her husband Amos Whittemore, Jr. Also included is a silver Arlington Police Chief badge, but the family was unsure to whom the badge originally belonged.

Dennis Sullivan of Framingham donated his Arlington high school letter jacket from the 1965-66 academic year, when the hockey team played at the state championships. Mr. Sullivan was known as "Sully" and wore the number 8 sweater. The jacket was made at Holovak & Coughlin of Arlington. Copies of many photos of Mr. Sullivan and his team during the year were included, as well as the below photo of Sullivan lighting the cigar of legendary coach Ed Burns.



Pairing Past and Present

by Stuart Brorson

The Grand Army of the Republic was a fraternal organization, founded in 1864, for veterans who had served in the Civil War. At its peak in 1890, the GAR had nearly a half-million members. The national organization was dissolved in 1956 after the last surviving Civil War veteran died.



The GAR has a strong connection to Memorial Day. While the practice of decorating the graves of fallen soldiers began before the Civil War, "remembrance days" became more common during and after the war. In 1868, GAR President General John Logan called for May 30th to become an official remembrance day, which eventually led to the adoption of May 30th as a national Memorial Day.



Francis Gould GAR Post 36 was chartered in Arlington in 1881. The local GAR Hall was built in 1894 at 370 Massachusetts Ave. The GAR-related Sons of Veterans organization was headquartered there until 1934. Today it is home to American Legion Post 39. ❖



In December 1917 four soldiers (wearing the U.S. Army's service or "campaign" hat) pose with their Arlington Police Department colleagues on the first step of Robbins Memorial Town Hall.

Arlington Police in WWI Service

by Richard A. Duffy

In 2016, Capt. Julie Flaherty of the Arlington Police Department contacted me for assistance in captioning historical photographs to be displayed as part of the total renovation of police headquarters. The main photograph accompanying this article was a wonderful new discovery for me. In my opinion, it is the best among the rare thematic images of Arlington during World War I. To commemorate the 100th anniversary of our local police officers' military service, this image is now published for the first time in Menotomy Minutes. Unless otherwise noted, quoted passages are condensed from various issues of The Arlington Advocate or town annual reports published in 1917 and 1918.

In 1917, the Arlington Police Department numbered just 17 men, counting both "regular" (permanent) and "special" (temporary-appointment) officers. Having four of them don uniforms of the United States Army spoke to both those officers' individual sacrifice, and that of the police department, which faced increased local duties with a reduced force during the Great War.

Those answering Uncle Sam's call were inducted in the summer and fall of 1917: Daniel P. Barry as a sergeant (see inset), Archibald Bullock and Fred M. Kirlin as corporals, and Edward A. Irwin as a private. All were relatively new policemen in Arlington and bachelors between 23 and 27 years old. In 1916, they were holding jobs as diverse as clerk, printer, trolley car motorman, and taxi driver. Their recent

arrivals had significantly expanded the police department—much-needed manpower, given Arlington's rapid population growth, especially in East Arlington.

The Arlington Advocate reported: "Patrolmen Fred M. Kirlin and Edward A. Irwin have been granted leave of absence from duty for the duration of the war. They enlisted at Framingham in Company C, 5th Mass. Regiment. Irwin [the son of Arlington Patrolman Andrew Irwin] has of late been on duty at the Regent Theatre. Kirlin has [previously] served in Company K of the 8th Regiment [of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia—predecessor to the Massachusetts Army National Guard—where he earned high scores as a marksman]. While a police officer, Patrolman Kirlin has had charge of the traffic on Mass. Avenue at the head of Mystic Street for the last year and his fine physique and soldierly bearing has commanded the attention, not only of the street traffic, but of pedestrians as well."

In 1917, Arlington was still ten years away from having its first electric traffic signal. Kirlin had to contend with trolley car lines on both Massachusetts Avenue and Mystic Street (which did not align with Pleasant Street as it does today), an active steam railroad line, and a mix of horse-drawn and motor vehicles. In a manner of speaking, that traffic assignment was good training to face battle fire coming from all directions.

Most of Arlington's soldiers were sent to boot camp at Camp Devens in Ayer. However, all four of Arlington's

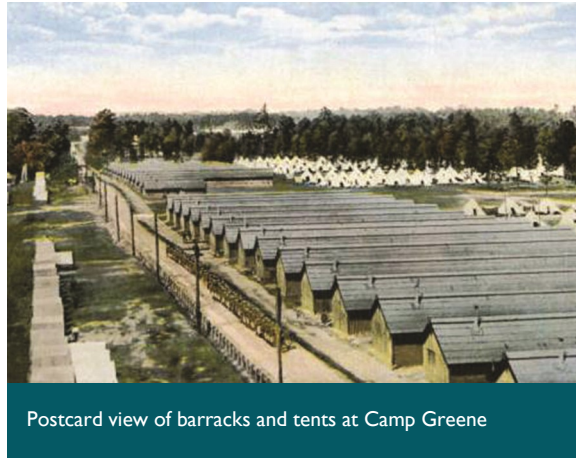
policemen in the Army were assigned to Camp Greene, a massive new military installation just outside of Charlotte, N.C., where they received artillery training as part of the 4th Infantry, along with other enlistees from Arlington and the entire nation. “A number of the boys from the camp like camp life and the climate, but all agree that the towns are ‘dead’ down there.” Charlotte was not the major-league city it is today; in 1917 it had fewer than 40,000 residents.

Many of the Arlington soldiers, including all who had been police officers, were given leave to return home for Christmas, where they were greeted by the newly hung service flag above the entrance of town hall. Some churches and fraternal organizations in Arlington had been flying the red-bordered service flags, with one blue star in the white field for each of their members on active duty. There

were increasing calls over the months for the town to hang a service flag to honor all of Arlington’s “young men” in the military, but the argument against doing so was that, given the frequent increase of servicemen, it would be impractical to keep it current with the appropriate number of stars. A solution was found and when unfurled, revealed that “in the center is a patch with the numerals 310 and around it the stars are arranged in a design. The numerals are so fastened to the flag that they can be easily changed from time to time as more men leave for the war.” If the number or arrangement of the stars ever had any particular symbolism, this seems to have been lost to history. In March 1918 the center patch was changed from 310 to 520—such was the pace of inductions.

As for the occasion of the photograph, it likely was made on Wednesday, December 26, 1917, the day that “Chief of Police Thomas O. D. Urquhart entertained all the members of the police department (twenty strong) at a full course dinner, with plenty of ‘smokes’ to top off with. The table was decorated in the national colors and candles cast a cheerful glow over the festive board. A small Xmas tree, lighted with colored electric bulbs, was placed on the table after the dinner, and on this were presents for the ‘boys’ of the department in service, gifts of the policemen, all of whom ‘chipped in.’ Sergeants Daniel Barry and Archibald

Bullock were presented with wristwatches, Corporal Fred Kirlin a gold signet ring, and Private Edward Irwin a money belt. They were also given military cigarette cases. The boys leave for the south again on Saturday evening.” Upon their return to camp, Kirlin and Irwin received the additional recognition of being promoted, respectively, to the rank of sergeant.



Postcard view of barracks and tents at Camp Greene

Chief Urquhart wrote in a January, 1918, report to the Board of Selectmen “A letter just received by me from the brigadier-general [at Camp Greene] states that ‘the four policemen from Arlington that I have in my command are making good. If the rest of your force are like them I wish I had them all.’”

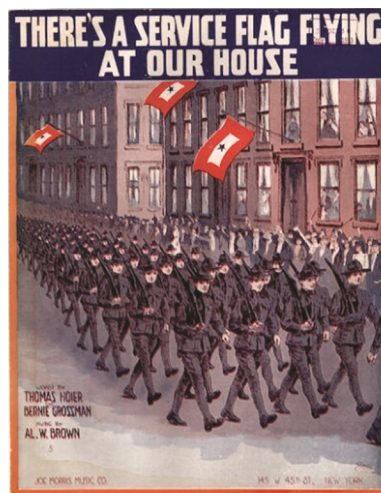
The chief went on to describe the war-related work of the Arlington Police Department on the home front, writing in the harsh prose that prevailed in the era: “your

honorable board has been kept in close touch with local situations which have been many; the alien enemy, pro-German and alien slacker are well known, and a pretty accurate record of each has been made and given to the proper United States authorities; orders have just been issued by the Government to all police departments asking further assistance in this most important matter.”

Happily, Arlington’s policemen-soldiers all returned safely from their war service in France, but only Daniel Barry re-joined the department and remained throughout his working life. The pay of a patrolman was less than the men could earn “in mercantile life” and contributed to difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified officers. Archibald Bullock eventually returned to the force and rose to become chief of police in 1931. Through innovations such as radio-equipped patrol cars, Bullock, in his first year as chief, ushered in the era of modern community policing. Barry and Bullock’s early leadership roles during World War I surely contributed to their distinguished police careers in the decades to follow.

The Arlington Historical Society is eager to hear from family and friends of the police officers depicted in the main photograph, to

help identify as many as possible by name. Please telephone the Society at 781-648-4300 or email richard@arlingtonhistorical.org. ❖



Sheet music cover. (Library of Congress)

Daniel P. Barry (1891-1948)

Readers may have noticed that Daniel P. Barry was a sergeant from the time of his initial Army service in 1917. The reason for this was Barry's active duty just one year earlier. He was part of the "Great Call-Up" of state National Guard units from across the country to defend the US-Mexico border. Following Pancho Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico, in March, 1916, the regular US Army made cavalry incursions into Mexican territory. The National Guard's activities previously had been limited to domestic matters affecting public safety such as local civil unrest, natural disasters, and strikes. Suddenly the country's "citizen-soldiers" were in the midst of an international conflict. Barry was stationed at the critical location of El Paso, Texas, and thus gained military-specific experience that led to his appointment as a "top sergeant" when his was inducted for regular service in World War I.



Barry was a popular Arlington police lieutenant at the time of his death at age 56. The town erected a monument in 1951 to his memory, in the small park at the junction of Warren and Medford streets. It reads: "A wise counselor of youth and a credit to this community in which he lived." ❖

Academy-Maple Walking Tour

Presented as part of Freedom's Way Heritage Area "Hidden Treasures" Program

Richard A. Duffy, historian and author

Sunday, May 20, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.



The original St. John's Episcopal Church was built at the corner of Academy and Maple streets in 1876. Since 1934 the building has been home to the Arlington Friends of the Drama.

We are pleased to participate in Freedom's Way Heritage Area's "Hidden Treasures" program, which features a variety of presentations and activities throughout the month of May. Our program will be held on Sunday, May 20 at 2:00 p.m., with the exact starting location to be emailed to all participants only. To register visit our website arlingtonhistorical.org/walking-tour/

Academy and Maple streets form a compact, centrally located section of an outstanding local historic district. Its fine state of preservation includes a truly remarkable variety of architectural styles, ranging from Greek Revival to exceptional Colonial Revival structures. The stories behind confluence of residential and institutional buildings in this neighborhood offer multiple ways to appreciate significant milestones in Arlington's transformation from country town to Victorian-era suburb. Richard Duffy leads an energetic, insightful journey through a built environment that features one hidden gem after the other. ❖

To learn more about the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, please visit www.freedomsway.org. The many other "Hidden Treasures" programs that Freedom's Way is sponsoring throughout May can be viewed at www.discoverhiddentreasures.org.

Upcoming Lectures

Our regular Tuesday programs are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Masonic Temple, 19 Academy Street (disabled access is at rear).

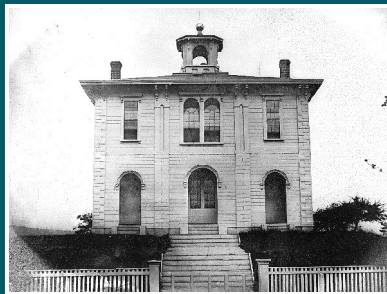


Tuesday, April 24

SCULPTURE IN SERVICE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE: CYRUS DALLIN'S MONUMENTAL TRIBUTES TO AMERICA'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Heather Leavell

Learn how Dallin, through his art and advocacy, pioneered the role of the artist as an agent of social change. To help understand the way towards more inclusive art in America, the focus will be on the history of three of his local monuments: "Menotomy Indian Hunter" in Arlington, "Massasoit Ousamequin" in Plymouth, and "Appeal to the Great Spirit" outside of Boston's Museum of Fine Arts.



Tuesday, May 29

ARLINGTON'S ARCHITECTS

Richard A. Duffy

Learn about historical architects who called Arlington home. Discover the wide variety and evolutions of their designs for homes, schools, churches, and commercial buildings. The emphasis will be on structures that we continue to enjoy right here in Arlington. Plus we'll look at some of these architects' most significant works further afield.

Thanks to our Generous Supporters!

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About the Society



The Arlington Historical Society was established in 1897 as a collecting and educational organization. In 1923 it began operating the Jason Russell House, a major battle site of the first day of the American Revolution—April 19, 1775. Open weekends from April to October.

The Arlington Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the Jason Russell House and the Society’s collections, and to discovering and sharing information about Arlington’s history. The stories of individuals, families, and events associated with the town are interpreted in the Society’s collections, programs, and Smith Museum exhibitions.

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- Vice President – Pamela Meister
- Vice President – Patsy Kraemer
- Treasurer – Alan Jones
- Assistant Treasurer – Angela Olszewski
- Clerk – Christine Bird

DIRECTORS

- Doris Birmingham • Linda Cohn
- Paul Fennelly • William Lyons
- Rosemarie Smurzynski

The Arlington Historical Society is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Contact Us

Office Hours:
Tues-Thurs 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

7 Jason Street
Arlington, MA 02476-6410

(781) 648-4300
contact@arlingtonhistorical.org

Visit us on the web at
www.arlingtonhistorical.org

AHS Newsletter team: Sara Lundberg, Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Carolyn Parsons, Doris Birmingham, Richard Duffy, and Stuart Brorson.

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Arlington Historical Society
7 Jason Street
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