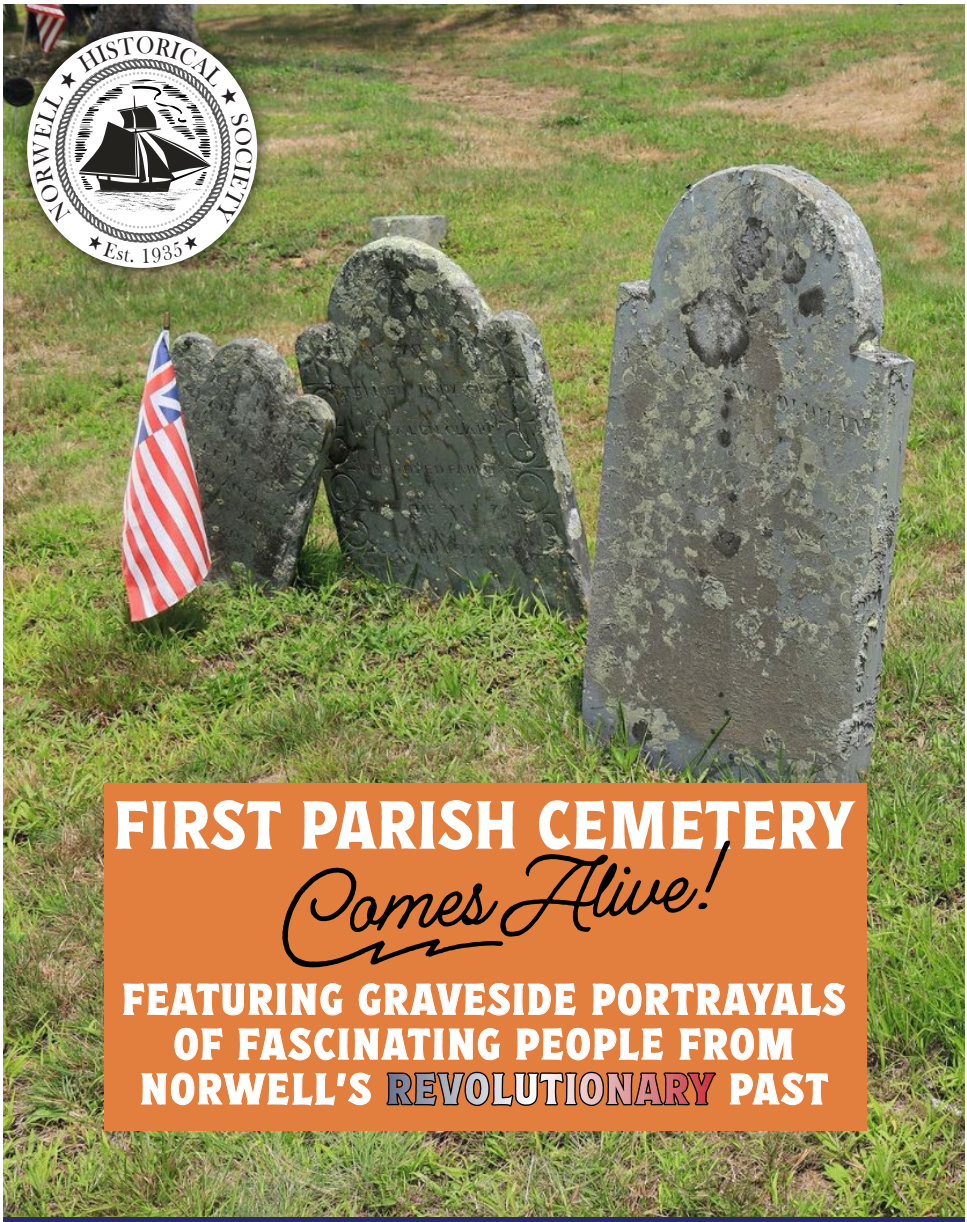


FIRST PARISH CEMETERY *Comes Alive!*

FEATURING GRAVESIDE PORTRAYALS OF FASCINATING PEOPLE FROM NORWELL'S REVOLUTIONARY PAST

2026 TOUR GUIDE

The Tinker's Son

FOOD DRINK MUSIC

Neighbor to First Parish Cemetery
and
generous sponsor of the
First Parish Cemetery Comes Alive! Tour
and of the Norwell Historical Society.

Named for a touching parable and poem penned in 1954 by owner Brian Houlihan's father, Liam, The Tinker's Son is the realization of Brian's dream to deliver authentic dishes from his native Ireland in a home guests will find as warm as their own.

BRING THIS BOOKLET INTO THE TINKER'S SON

Today

for a HALF-PRICE APPETIZER
to celebrate the success of the Cemetery Tour!



A Brief History of Norwell, Massachusetts

For thousands of years, the land that encompasses what is today Norwell was inhabited by Indigenous people. These Natives grew crops, foraged, hunted, and fished in the Assinippi area and around the North River. Around 1617, there was a major outbreak of disease from European explorers and traders that decimated an estimated 90% of the Native population in New England, including the Massachusett Tribe and the Wampanoag Tribe that inhabited this area. There are still descendants of these original inhabitants living on the South Shore today, and there are links to their tribal websites on the Norwell Historical Society website under "Learn More."

In 1634, Europeans who were living around Scituate Harbor came up the North River to settle in what is today Norwell's Church Hill area. Among the first were Robert and Honour Stetson, who were granted land on the North River—some of which includes the Town-owned Stetson Meadows Conservation Area off of Stetson Shrine Lane.

The North River and the Native footpaths were the only practical means of traveling throughout the area at the time of European settlement, so the shores of the North River and the main footpath from the ocean to Assinippi (today's Main Street—Route 123) were the first sections of town to be populated.

Shipbuilding was a vital industry in the North River area until the mid-1800s. The confluence of natural materials (timber from the forests lining the river and iron from the ponds of Hanover and Pembroke upstream) made the tidal river an ideal location, and over 1,000 ships were built at North River shipyards.

In addition to shipbuilding, early Norwell was primarily an agricultural town. Hay was harvested in the salt marshes and used as animal forage. The endless web of stone walls today attests to the former layout of fields and to the previously tree-less landscape—a result of both shipbuilding and fuel needs.

In 1849, residents of the southern portion of Scituate broke away amicably and incorporated themselves as South Scituate. Agriculture remained the primary industry, but shoe factories were built—mostly in the West End—and some large-scale farms appeared.

In 1888, summer resident Henry Norwell offered the Town $2,500 per year for ten years toward the upkeep of the roads, and residents voted to change the town's name to Norwell in his honor.

After World War II, Norwell became less of an agricultural community and more of a commuter town. The construction of the Southeast Expressway in the mid-1900s provided highway access from Norwell to Boston. Home building and, as a result, population increased sharply—roughly 73% of the homes seen in Norwell today were built between 1940 and 1990!

Today, Norwell is known less for its shipbuilding and farming and more for its excellent school system and natural beauty.

For more information on Norwell's history; links to videos, neighborhood histories, and interactive newsletters; and to see old photos of our town visit the Society website.

In order to ensure properly-spaced tours, we ask that everyone remain with their group and follow the tour order. You will be instructed when to move on to the next gravesite.

① NOAH PRATT, SR. (1731–1781) & NOAH PRATT, JR. (1758-1825)

portrayed by Stephen O'Neill and John O'Neill

Noah Pratt, Sr. and his son Noah Pratt, Jr. were from a prolific family of Abington gravestone carvers whose work is easily identified by the use of dark red slate and distinctive male and female portraits. They carved many gravestones in First Parish Cemetery including one for Hannah Richmond Jacob who died March 17, 1776.

② COL. JOHN JACOB (1735–1817)

portrayed by Danny Hannafin

Col. John Jacob, a Scituate mason, father, and Revolutionary War officer, will tell his story—from the siege of Boston to command in Rhode Island and his return to a newly independent nation.

③ PATIENCE CLAP OLDHAM (1685–1724)

portrayed by Cara Hamilton

Patience Clap Oldham lived on River Street with her husband Galen Clap, a ship's carpenter, farmer, and ardent patriot. In her long life she not only raised a large family, but she also saw the birth of a new nation.

④ HANNAH PHILLIPS CUSHING (1754–1834)

portrayed by Marybeth Shea

Hannah Phillips Cushing was married to William Cushing, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court and Justice in the first U.S. Supreme Court. Having no children, Hannah traveled with her husband on his "circuit" throughout the Revolution and later in a newly-formed U.S.A.

A hearty thank you to all of the actors listed in this program for faithfully retelling the stories of these memorable residents.

A special thank you to the members of the Community Preservation Committee and the residents of Norwell who support First Parish Cemetery through CPA funding to regularly refurbish gravestones in this cemetery.

⑤ JUST. NATHAN CUSHING (1849–1866) *portrayed by Bob Hynes*

You may have passed Nathan's Cushing's monument on Main Street (near Lincoln Street) without realizing that he is one of our town's most prominent patriots. Cushing's leadership persuaded the Town of Scituate to join their fellow colonists in opposition to Britain and eventually to arm themselves and fight in the Revolutionary War.

⑥ DINAH COMSETT FREEMAN (1754–1828) *portrayed by Ren Layne*

Dinah Comsett Freeman was a Revolutionary War era matriarch at the intersection of Scituate's Native American and African American communities. Born the illegitimate daughter of a young Mattakeesett mother, she overcame hardship to build the life she wanted and give back to her community.

⑦ REV. DAVID BARNES (1754–1811) *portrayed by Rev. Terry Martinson*

Reverend Dr. David Barnes served as pastor of the Second Parish of Scituate (later known as the First Parish of Norwell) from 1754 until his death 57 years later. Well know as a dynamic preacher, a prodigious walker, and a dedicated peacemaker, Rev. Barnes shepherded his flock through the tumultuous years of the American Revolution.

⑧ THE COLONIAL MIDWIFE STORY

portrayed by Liz Bersell and Annie Massed

Buried at the oldest gravesite in First Parish Cemetery, Mary Ewell Bryant (1685-1724) was the mother of twins who died in childbirth. Together with her midwife, Annie Massed, they tell the story of childbirth and midwifery in the 1700s.

Upcoming Events

CHRISTMAS AT THE FARMHOUSE **1:00 to 3:00 pm**
Saturday, December 12th **at the Jacobs Farmhouse, 4 Jacobs Lane**

Let's finish this historic year with a party for Joshua and Mary Jacobs–whose 300th wedding anniversary would be in 2026. The museum will be festively decorated for the season so you can toast the couple with wassail, and sing along to Christmas tunes played on the newly-restored organ! *This event is free.*

NORTH RIVER HISTORY + HERITAGE POP-UP MUSEUM **11:00 am to 3:00 pm**
Saturday, March 6th **at Cushing Memorial Hall, Norwell Center**

Five North River Historical Societies, the Mattakeeset Tribe, and the North River Watershed Association all join together to celebrate the North River and its history. *$10/adult suggested donation.*

A Brief History of Revolutionary Norwell

What we today call Norwell was the southern section of the Town of Scituate during Revolutionary times. Prior to the Battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775, Nathan Cushing (portrayed today) and Galen Clap (whose wife is portrayed today) helped draft an official resolution for Scituate denouncing the recently-enacted "Intolerable Acts." This resolution passed at Town Meeting and condemned taxation without representation. At that time, the vast majority of the townspeople were patriots, but there was a small and often vocal group of Loyalists (also called Tories) who remained supportive of King George.

The Scituate militia had many members, trained regularly, and after the Battles of Lexington & Concord 212 Scituate militiamen answered the call. Some went north to protect Boston, some helped round up Tories, and others patrolled the coast as British naval vessels were a great concern. Some Scituate militiamen returned home after the Spring of 1775 to tend their farms, while others continued their service. In the Spring of 1776, Nathaniel Winslow's Company (including Col. John Jacob, portrayed today) participated in the siege and eventual British evacuation of Boston.

By the time the Declaration of Independence was signed, most of the Scituate Tories had either recanted their previous loyalty to Britain or moved out of the area, and some of the former Scituate militiamen had enlisted in the Continental Army. But during the winter of 1776–77, state recruitment quotas were assigned to fulfill the need for soldiers. This quota led many to enlist, and encouraged Nathan Cushing (portrayed today) to free his slave Asher Freeman (whose wife, Dinah Comsett Freeman, is portrayed today) so that Asher could enlist for a three-year term.

A number of Scituate soldiers participated in the campaign to liberate British-occupied Newport, Rhode Island, and others enlisted in Nathanial Winslow's 10th Mass. Regiment and fought during the Sarasota campaign in 1777 (including Asher Freeman). Capt. Peter Sears (who is buried at First Parish and will be portrayed next year) served as a Master Carpenter who built and repaired weapons, wagons, and fortifications for the Continental Army.

While the Scituate soldiers traveled to fight the war, those at home continued to farm, build, birth and raise children, and pay taxes. Stories of the wives (Patience Clap Oldham, Dinah Comsett Freeman, Hannah Philips Cushing, and a colonial midwife portrayed today), ministers (Rev. David Barnes portrayed today), and tradesman (Noah Pratt, Sr. portrayed today) are often forgotten in the tale of the Revolutionary War. We hope these stories, along with those of the soldiers and patriots, will give you a full picture of life during the Revolution in what we today call Norwell.

This event is sponsored by the
Norwell Historical Society, who gratefully thanks:

Becky Freed, *Event Chair*

Wendy Bawabe, Becky Freed, Ren Layne, Peg Norris, Stephen O'Neill, Alan Prouty, Karl Swenson, and Janet Watson
for researching and writing the histories of these notable figures.

Laurie Galvin & Carolyn Tatarian
for investigating; traveling to acquire, tailor, and fit; and coordinating all costumes.

Christian Jevne & Becca Griffith
for organizing, communicating, and scheduling.

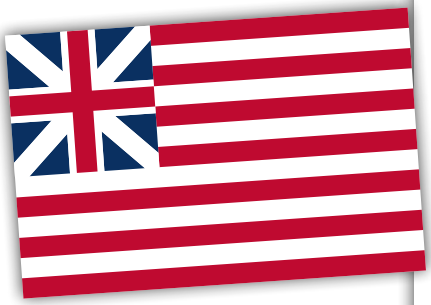
Wendy Bawabe
for welcoming tour go-ers and giving them a contextual background.

Ricki Bowser of The Bay Players
for providing many of the historic costumes.

The Tinker's Son
for underwriting the costs of the tour and supporting the Society.

A special thank you to the First Parish Cemetery Association
for maintaining this beautiful graveyard in Norwell Center
for the public to use and enjoy.

CHECK OUT THE SOCIETY'S WEBSITE FOR MORE HISTORY, PHOTOS, EVENTS, AND TO PURCHASE BOOKS!



DID YOU NOTICE THESE FLAGS THROUGHOUT THE CEMETERY?

Most people think of the Betsy Ross flag (with 13 stars in a circle) as the flag of the American Revolution. But the "Grand Union Flag" served as the flag of the United Colonies from 1775 to 1776. This flag marks the graves of the Revolutionary War veterans buried at First Parish Cemetery.

Thank you to the Norwell Historical Society for showcasing our graveyard each year during the First Parish Cemetery Comes Alive! tour.

FIRST PARISH CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

A private, non-profit organization. (EIN#04-2157228)

If you love this public space in the heart of Norwell Center, please consider donating to the FPCA to help maintain it.



FIRSTPARISHCEMETERYNORWELL.ORG