

Capertown Gazette

An Upton Historical Society Newsletter

January 2026 Edition



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Thank you to our 2026 Community Sponsors



Friend of the Museum Level



Historical Society Team, 2026

Museum Officers

President.....	Scott Garland
Vice president.....	William Taylor
Secretary.....	Lisa Brochu
Treasurer.....	William Taylor
Corresponding Secretary.....	Joan Burrell
Board members.....	Russell Wood, Joan Burrell
Past President.....	Tom Bair



Museum Committees

Membership & Sponsors.....	Barry Lynn
Collections.....	Scott Garland
Special Projects...	Gabe Norwood, Scott Garland, Barry Lynn
Facebook.....	Ellen Arnold
Hospitality.....	Russ Wood
Website.....	Barry Lynn
Newsletter.....	Scott Garland, Seema Kenney, Gabe Norwood



Museum Staff

Tom Bair	Larry Doucette	Joan Burrell
Barry Lynn		Scott Garland
Gabe and Jackie Norwood		Russ Wood

Society President's Letter

These are exciting days for the Upton History Museum & Historical Society as we strive to engage those interested in Upton's fascinating history and the legacy of its people. Upton possesses a unique position in Our Nation's Story, from the pre-1600's settlements, through the settlement of the New World, through the American Revolution and our break from Mother England, the Industrial Revolution, the expansion west, The great and horrific American Civil War, World Wars, the evolution to electricity and transportation, and now modern communications. We have a lot of great stories to tell, visuals to present, and interactive hands-on activities to enliven our efforts and to meet our Mission Statement.

Our theme for 2025-2026 is to recognize and celebrate the 250th beginning of the American Revolution. Activities will have this historical significance incorporated into most programs.

I would like to thank Tom Bair for his tireless commitment to the UHS over the past 30 years! Tom served as Treasurer originally, but also as President for many years in which he brought the Society into the modern era by transitioning our inventory into database storage, maintaining open museum hours three days a week, and promoting our student outreach program. Tom will continue to manage the Society's museum and our volunteers who commit many hours to entering data into our Past Perfect inventory program as well as greeting visitors on a regular basis. I would also like to thank our volunteers who work every week at the Museum for the benefit of the Society including Larry Doucette, Joan Burrell, Barry Lynn, and others.

We are committed to bringing a vibrant, educational, and entertaining series of programs to the public. We are committed to solidifying our membership base, our sponsor's benefits, and our involvement in community projects and efforts to ensure the preservation of Upton's Heritage.

Society President's Letter, cont.

To date we have received over 100 signatures from Upton residents supporting our effort to move our Museum into the first floor of the Knowlton-Risteen Building. This is a friendly petition, to be presented to the Board of Selectmen encouraging said move and supporting the Selectmen in their effort to address ADA compliance issues in this space. We will work with the Board of Selectmen and the Upton Historical Commission to apply for a grant to help make this happen. The petition will provide evidence to grantees of the community support behind this effort.

Our remaining programs for the 2025-2026 season will include memories of those who we have lost over the years, whose contributions to Upton have resulted in making Upton what it is today, a place that you can always call home. It is our goal to present programs that are attractive to our Veterans, our Public Servants, and those who have made Upton what it is today. UHS is involved in the following preservation and public history projects:

Preservation efforts:

- Seth Wood/Clarence Forsberg Boot Shop restoration
- Discussion on the preservation of the Arba Thayer Wood home and barn
- Relocation of the Museum
- Preservation of the First Cemetery
- Enhancement of the Carl Paulson stained glass window
- Supporting the preservation of historical buildings

Public History efforts:

- Heritage Day Fair for 2026
- Data preservation of all Museum holdings
- A new student friendly ABC book of Upton's History
- Collaboration with a local writer to produce a children's local history book

Scott Garland, President - Upton Historical Society

Our Recent Donations



The original brass bell from the Upton Steamer Co. No. 3 steam fire engine, 1900-1916. The bell was mounted on the rear of the engine and would be rung by the engineer. Donor: James and Lois Clark, Hopkinton, MA



A pair of the original Wood's Pharmacy work tables from 1955 were recently donated by Rebeca Trudeau and her mom who reside on Plain Street ! We just love these original pieces from the pharmacy, complete in their chippy blue paint with Formica tops. We remember one of these tables being located near the pharmacy section.



Our Recent Donations, cont.



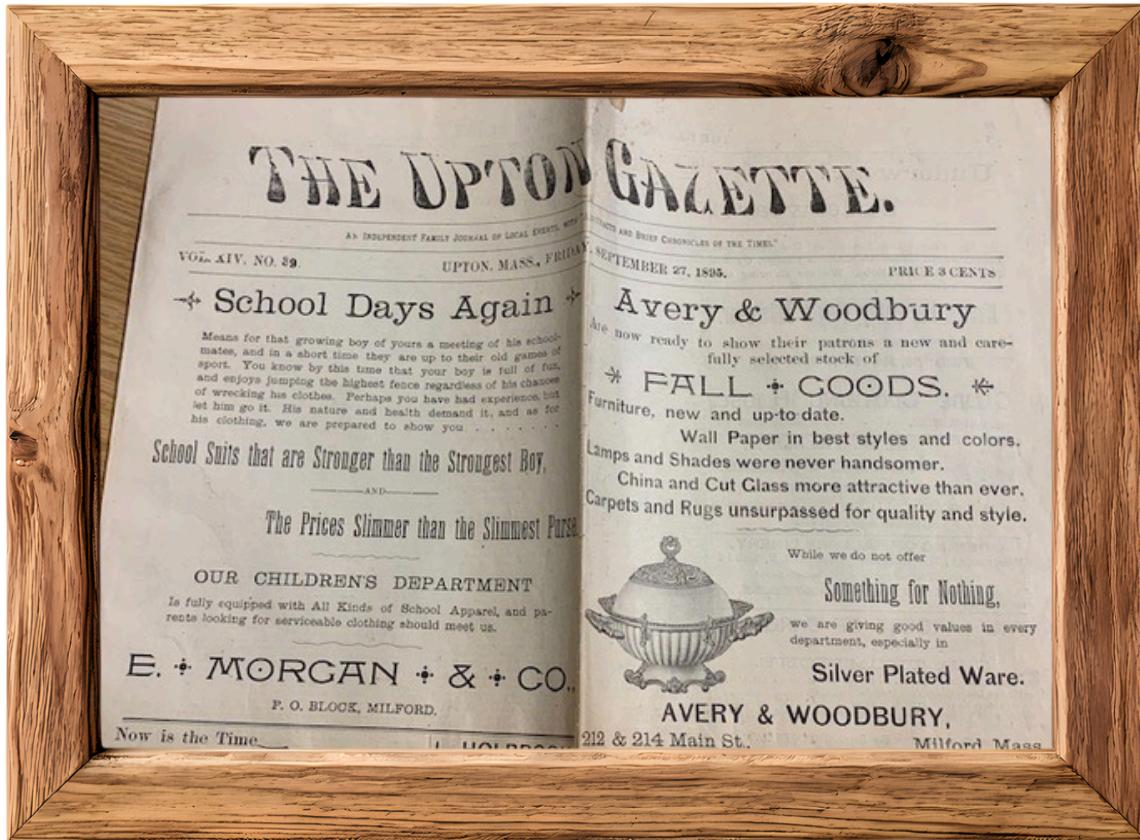
The Aaron Hutchinson family, formerly of 21 Grove Street recently donated this one of a kind relic of the Upton High School that burned in 1944. This desk and chair were in the building when it burned. They were salvaged by Aaron's grandfather following the blaze. They are charred but make a great story!



One of two original paintings by Craig Weinfuss of 8 Hazeltine Road depicting Upton Center Town Hall and United Parish Church as seen through the Carl Paulson stained glass window in the Knowlton-Ristein Building. Beautiful Realism art work. Thank you Craig!



Our Recent Donations, cont.



Donated by Scott Garland, this original "The Upton Gazette" newspaper is dated September 27, 1895 and was purchased from Aubrey Ballou by Scott in 1970.

Thank you our Upton community
members who have shared our
incredible local history with the public!

From the Historical Commission

The 1st burial ground in Upton was established June 28, 1735 at the 1st town meeting. A committee of 4 men laid out and built a burying ground on the north side of Old Marlboro Road (located near the intersection of Grove and Mendon Streets). The 1st burial was in 1740 and last in 1846. Numerous soldiers of the French and Indian and American Revolutionary wars are buried here. Our 1st lifetime minister and 1st doctor are buried here. After 285 years, the cemetery is in need of restoration.

The Upton Historical Commission has started work. Many stones are broken; some are being repaired with the help of Gravestone Guardians (a non-profit organization). Stones have been cleaned and straightened. Plans are in place to remove some large pine trees, install walking paths, a new gate and sign. The property was cleaned of overgrown brushes and weeds. The cemetery has been professionally surveyed and mapped. Every stone has been documented and researched. The information gathered will be made available to the public.

Annual Heritage Day Fair

Our Annual Heritage Day and Fair was held on September 26, 2026. This past September we had a full day of activities and a full Common with overflow spaces at the Knowlton-Risteen Building. It was a huge success and vendors expressed their gratitude on how well it was managed, all thanks to the coordination of outgoing President Tom Bair. The United Parish Church reported one of their busiest Heritage Days, The Historical Society sponsored a bus tour of Upton Center, Main Street, West Upton Center, the First Cemetery, the Boot Shop, Heritage Park cave, and Upton State Forest. This year's bus was donated by the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School and a generous donor covered a portion of our liability insurance! We will be booking soon for next year's fair to be held on Saturday, Sept 26, 2026. We have reserved space at both the Town Common and lawn of the Knowlton-Risteen Building. Call 508-529-6600 and leave a message if you have any further questions.

Boot Shop Restoration Project



These are exciting times for the Society as we continue to work on several important tasks. The 1788 Seth Wood Boot Shop/Clarence Fosberg Forge is undergoing a major renovation under the direction of Linda Gay. All artifacts were removed to the old library for identification and inventory management. The building's structure has been addressed with carpentry upgrades to ensure that it will be around for decades to come. It has just received a fresh coat of paint, the original period door has been repaired and a protective outer door installed to help preserve it, and the rare hand set multi-pane windows being secured with a plexiglass protective cover. We will be holding an Open House in May of 2026 to celebrate and share this work. Photo is of Dave O'Brien who recently installed the new sign with volunteer Bruce Sweeney.

Society Programs, 2026

Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at 6:00 PM - At the Upton Community Center. We will be hosting the National Park Service who is responsible for transcribing from original hand written documents of widows pensioner records into a National database. Revolutionary War Vital Records Transcription Event – “Won’t You Help Tell My Story”

Registration for the event is now closed. Thank you to all those who have volunteered!

Friday, January 23, 2026 at 6:00 PM At the United Parish Church, a pot luck supper and remembrances of Gloria Shea and George Kennedy. **(THIS IS A MEMBERS ONLY EVENT – SIGN UP FOR MEMBERSHIP TO ATTEND)**

Thursday, March 26, 2026 at 6:30 PM - At the Upton Community Center. Daughters of the American Revolution “(DAR)” program by “Millie” Williams, President of the Deborah Wheelock Chapter, DAR will make a presentation of what the DAR is all about and how you can join if you are a female descendant of a Revolutionary War Veteran. During this program we will be honoring Abolitionist Polly Dean Bradish, a DAR eligible woman who harbored fugitive slaves right here in Upton.

Thursday, April 23, 2026 at 6:30 PM - At the Upton Community Center. The Declaration of Independence, a program commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the original signing with a local perspective comparison of the original documents from surrounding towns demonstrated by the History 2 Class of Nipmuc Regional High School.

Saturday, May 2, 2026 from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM - At the Upton Community Center. Three professional antiques appraisers will welcome the visiting public to have their antique items professionally appraised for a small fee. Visitors will be allowed to sell the items should they choose to do so. Open to all.

Society Programs, 2026, cont.

Saturday, May 23, 2026 from 11:30 AM until 1:00 PM - Our Annual Meeting and Election of Officers at the Kiwanis Beach Pavilion. A members only event that will include a picnic lunch followed by a bus tour to the newly renovated Boot Shop.

Sunday, May 24, 2026 from 10:30 AM until 1:00 PM - Boot Shop bus tours starting from Upton Town Hall parking lot to the boot shop with historical narration along the way. A public event with donations accepted but not necessary. Sign up required by calling the UHS at 508-529-6600 or emailing us at UptonHistoricalSociety@hotmail.com

Thursday, June 18, 2026 at 6:30 PM - “Wanderings with Wayne, World Hiker”. Wayne Garland, an Upton son, Class President of the Class of 65' and a Platoon Leader from the Vietnam War, will tell his exciting story of hiking through many parts of our World including thousands of miles through England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, Guam, Vietnam, and the Appalachian Trail from Key West to New Foundland, Canada and many other places encountering bears, alligators, and freezing blizzards.

Tuesday, July 14, 2026 at 6:00 PM - At the Upton V.F. W. during a regular car show we will host a program titled “Remembrances of Westboro Speedway, from an Upton Perspective”. We will celebrate the lives of George “Tucker” Summers and his son Ricky Summers, champion race car drivers of the local circuit. The program will feature the Summers family, the son of the former owner of Westboro Speedway, and members of pit crews who will tell their stories. Featured will be an original race car in its original condition once owned and driven by Tucker Summers.

Welcoming New Members

Welcome to our newest members! Since September 2nd our Membership has tripled in size! Amongst our newest members we welcome the following who have reached out to become active volunteers for our museum including:

- Barry and Patty Lynn. Barry and Patricia have already proven their sincere commitment to the UHS and our Mission. Barry has taken on the position of Chairman, Membership and Sponsors and has done an outstanding job in signing on both new members and sponsors. Barry resurrected our Membership List and just kept going, ensuring that all of our members receive immediate acknowledgement and updated UHS activities including our ever-expanding offering of programs. He created, and we implemented, three Sponsorship levels, providing benefits based upon gift given. Barry has also taken on the responsibility as Chairman of our Website. Barry and Patricia were instrumental in making our recent Open House a major success, bringing interested people into our museum, many of whom subsequently joined the Society. Barry created a coloring book for our youngest visitors who were entertained with coloring Upton historical pictures. Our Mission will include further offerings for our youngest members.
- Dave O'Brien. Dave has recently come on board after meeting us at the Bloomer Girls Fair. Dave brings to the table a valuable and energetic workers assistance and has already made results with our Boot Shop renovation and help in the museum.
- Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Sweeney. The Sweeneys joined as a result of the Open House. Bruce has already assisted with the Boot Shop renovation project.



Welcoming New Members, cont.

- Gabriel and Jackie Norwood. Recent Upton residents, Gabe and Jackie came to the Society just recently to research their recently purchased “Stoddard” home on High Street, for which we had quite a bit of information for them. Gabe has already volunteered to be the Chairman of our newly created Special Projects Committee which will encompass both our Programs and Special Projects such as the soon to be published ABC Book of Upton, the Boot Shop renovation, our efforts to move the Society Museum to the first floor of the Knowlton-Risteen Building, and several other ongoing projects. Gabe has an extensive background in Museum Studies and program presentation planning and delivery including heavy focus on the American Revolutionary Period. He is a graduate of Franklin Pierce College and is presently enrolled in Museum Studies through John Hopkins. Jackie brings extensive knowledge in cyber security and has expressed an interest in making our museum a kid friendly environment.
- Patrick Rosendale. While Patrick has previously been a member of the Society he has been busy with being a great dad and an excellent educator of elementary-aged students. As a Civics and History teacher at St. John’s in Shrewsbury, Patrick has gone much further than teaching in the classroom, he has become immersed in making history real for students, including a recent venture in to writing a children’s history book focusing on our very own Emma Eames and the celebration of July 4th ! The UHS is working on collaborating with Patrick in getting this book into publication. Patrick is an active appointee of the Upton Historical Commission.



Thank you to all our new members!

Outreach Opportunities

MEMBERSHIP AND SPONSORS

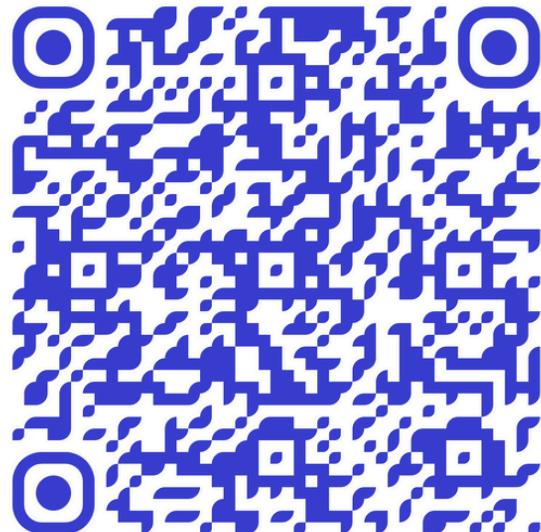
Membership helps with our daily expenses and presentation of programs. It also helps us to meet the goals of our Mission Statement. To become a member please contact us via one of the methods listed stated below. Individual Membership is \$25, Household \$35, Senior or Student \$20, and Lifetime \$250. Recently added is a QR Code that allows people to sign up for Membership.

We have returned to the “old fashioned” tradition of issuing Membership cards, hand-written by our Corresponding Secretary, Joan Burrell. We think it’s a nice hometown touch. If you are a member and have not received one please drop us a line via email, phone, or a visit.

We have a growing list of Sponsors. If you own a business or Corporation and would like to become a Sponsor please contact us via one of the methods below. There are currently three levels of Sponsorship including Preservation Partner for \$500, Community Supporter for \$200, and Friend of the Museum for \$100.



Scan this QR Code to
become a member and
sponsor Upton's
incredible local history!



Outreach Opportunities, cont.

WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE

Our Facebook page is managed by Ellen Arnold. Recent activity included over 7000 views of our Upton Police Department history event a photo of Chief Dan Bates capturing many views, second was a photo of the families and members of the Upton Police Department gathered inside the Town Hall, and third a photo of Donna Seitz Bishop wearing her dad's Police Sergeant Badge at the program. Our Website address is uptonmahistory.org and is managed by Barry Lynn.

GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

If you need assistance with your genealogical research, please reach out to Seema Kenney to schedule an appointment at the museum. Her best contact is by email at: inquiry@seema-able.com



Contact Us!

Mailing address

Upton Historical Society
P.O. Box 171, Upton, MA 01568

Over the Phone

508-529-6600

By Email

uptonhistoricalsociety@hotmail.com

Our Website

<http://www.uptonmahistory.org>

On Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/UptonHistoricalSociety/>

Museum Location

2 Main Street - Across from the Town Hall

Museum Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10 AM to noon. Second Saturdays 10 AM to 1 PM. Other times by appointment.