

The Edmund L. Sanderson Lecture Series presents

The History of Belmont: 1859 to 2009

*With Dick Betts and
Victoria Hasse*

Sanderson Lecture Series

7:00 p.m., Tuesday evening

March 10, 2009

RTN Federal Credit Union

Community Room

600 Main Street

Waltham, MA 02453

*If the weather causes cancellation, an
email will be sent or call 617-448-6706*

*The Weathervane is an
official publication of the
Waltham Historical Society
190 Moody Street
Waltham, Massachusetts 02453
781-891-5815
www.walthamhistoricalsociety.org*

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This year Belmont will be celebrating its Sesquicentennial Celebration. The Celebration Committee in the town has an event planned for each month of 2009, the town's 150th birthday.

An 1843 ice cutting business on Fresh Pond created a need to build a railroad from wharves in Charlestown to Fresh Pond.

Once the railroad was established, the citizens of Waltham worked to have it extended to their village, running through what was to become the Town of Belmont.

Citizens had to go to Watertown, Waltham, or West Cambridge (now Arlington) to vote and attend town meetings. In the early 1850s a group of people joined together and announced a desire to form a separate town. John Perkins Cushing generously contributed to the incorporation expense, on the condition that it be named after his 200 acre estate "Bellmont."

At 3:15 on March 18, 1859, with the ringing of church bells, the Town of Belmont

was born. Two and a quarter acres were taken from Watertown, two-thirds of an acre from Waltham, and newly three acres from West Cambridge. The population at the time was 1,175.

Source: Wicked Local Belmont

Please join us on Tuesday March 10 as Dick Betts and Victoria Hasse tell the History of Belmont from its beginnings as a part of Waltham in 1859, to its current relationship of neighbor in 2009.

Dick Betts was the Town Engineer for Belmont for 42 years, and is currently a self employed civil engineer. He has written two books on the history of Belmont, and is currently working with Victoria Haase on an update to his book on the streets of Belmont.

Mr. Betts was also involved in the first of the Arcadia Publishing books on Belmont.

Ms. Hasse has been involved in the Belmont Historical Society, and lives in the historic Samuel O. Mead house in Belmont.



The Maynard Block and Architect Charles Brigham

A contribution from our Historical Society of Watertown Neighbor, David Russo

Here's a historic fact for you: the now-demolished Maynard Block which was located at 690-700 Main Street was designed by the firm of Brigham & Spofford. Coming to that conclusion was the work of a puzzle master. History is a big puzzle. We don't know the whole picture of any given topic and often have just bits and pieces to help us bring the larger picture into focus. The larger picture I am interested in is Watertown native son and architect Charles Brigham.

Brigham lived from 1841 to 1925 and practiced architecture from about 1857 to 1919--an astonishing 62 years. He was responsible for a number of high-profile buildings, including the rear wing of the Massachusetts State House and the Christian Science Mother Church as well many lesser-known but also important buildings.

The puzzle for me is to try to identify what structures did Brigham actually designed. A relatively straight-forward question it seems but it is actually

fraught with complications and barriers. Barrier #1: building permits in many cities and towns only became necessary around 1900. It becomes necessary to look at alternative sources such as firm descriptions, plans, old advertisements, town reports among other sources to determine who designed structures. Sadly, we may never know all of the buildings that Brigham or any given architect designed.

Barrier #2: even when a building permit identifies one of the firms in which Brigham worked, it is unclear whether Brigham fully designed the structure, partially designed it or had no responsibility at all for the design.

Let's go back to the Maynard Block. Since I am interested in finding any and all buildings designed by Brigham, the best sources are those that are indexed and have a specific focus on architecture. I visited Historic New England and spoke with their research librarian who brought me a list of all of their holdings that referenced Brigham. Jackpot!

One of these reference materials was a book entitled, "Selections from an Architect's Portfolio: John C. Spofford." One of the plates in the book was a picture of the Maynard Block and the reference was "Brigham & Spofford." Other references in the book indicated Spofford designed some buildings alone, so it is likely that both Brigham and Spofford each had responsibility for portions of the design. So the puzzle is almost fully solved, except it is still unclear the degree of responsibility we can attribute to each architect.

History is a big puzzle and it is through the work of ordinary people like you and me that we put the pieces together and tell the story of our community.

David Russo is the Chairperson of the Watertown Historical Commission and is developing a website that will act as a clearinghouse for all information and designs involving Charles Brigham. It's under development but there is currently a list of the designs involving Brigham there, www.davidjrusso.com.

Upcoming Activities and Events of Note

Douglas Carrier, a member of the New England Electric Railway Historical Society better known as The Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, ME has recently written to inform us that in 2010 the only surviving electric trolley that served our community will be moved into the museum's restoration shop. Work will begin to bring it back to its operating glory days from 1901-1927. The Trolley was part of the former Middlesex & Boston Street Railway.

A restoration fund started in 1998 has raised \$70,000.00. The car needs about \$120K to make this a smooth restoration project.



Douglas Carrier, Jr
Project Manager M&B 41
Seashore Trolley Museum
PO Box A
Kennebunkport, ME 04046
617-686-5930
558 Washington Street
Brighton, MA 02135

The National Archives Center in Waltham, MA, announces the receipt of over 1000 volumes of Civil War records previously held in Washington, D.C. These records document of the activities of the Provost Marshal General's Bureau, which arrested deserters, enrolled men for the draft, enlisted volunteers, and compiled statistics on the physical condition of recruits and on army casualties.

These records became available for public use on December 8, 2008. It is recommended that

you call prior to coming, so that the records can be ready for you. In addition, the National Archives offers free access to Footnote.com, which has significant Civil War records; no appointment necessary.

The National Archives is open to the public M, T, W, and F 7 A.M. - 4:30 P.M., Thursdays 7 A.M.- 9 P.M., and the first Saturday of each month 8 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. The National Archives and Records Administration is located at 380 Trapelo Road, Waltham, MA.

Captain Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. Awards Dinner

Sunday, April 26, 2009, 6:00 pm
at The National Archives – Waltham, MA
Keynote Speaker – James McPherson

Sponsored by:
The Civil War Round Tables of Massachusetts,
The Massachusetts Lincoln Bicentennial Commission,
and The National Archives

**Dinner honoring Civil War historian Professor James McPherson
(Pulitzer Prize Winning Author of *Battle Cry of Freedom*)**

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www.archives.gov/northeast/
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House Tour '09

*The Waltham Historical Society's 2009
House Tour plans are now underway*

The 2009 Tour will be held on Sunday, June 14, 2009. To have your home included, please contact Louise Hamilton at 781-899-7625.

An Interview with F. Lee Bailey

By Mary Selig

This article was contributed by Society Board Member Mary Selig. Mary contacted Mr. Bailey and was graciously received by him for this piece. The Society is grateful for his hospitality and consideration, and for Mary's initiative in bringing us news of prominent individuals with connections to Waltham. To both we say "Thank You."

Mention his name and you immediately think of the notorious clients (Dr. Sam Sheppard, Albert DiSalvo, Patty Hearst, O.J. Simpson) that this famous criminal defense attorney has represented.

We have all seen him on TV and in the newspapers over several decades. Yet, sitting at ease in his North Shore home office, with his playful 12 year old Yorkshire Terrier "Boots" by his side, I realized that there is so much more to F. Lee Bailey.

At 75 years old, he no longer practices law but is still as active as ever consulting, refurbishing planes at his Maine aviation company, flying, writing and attending speaking engagements.

Retirement is not in his future, and we can all be thankful for that as he has much more to contribute to an already extraordinary life.

F. Lee Bailey, Jr. was born in Waltham on June 10, 1933 to parents Francis Lee Bailey and Grace Louise Forster. His father was from Charlottesville, VA, a WWI medical corpsman who pursued a career in newspaper advertising and briefly worked for the Waltham Watch Company in the 1940's. His mother was from Natick, MA (a daughter of Aubrey Forster, the first manufacturer of peanut butter). His mother was also a pioneer of early childhood education and founded the well-known "Green Acres Day School" at 439 Lexington Street in Waltham.

He fondly (and with great detail) recalls his early childhood addresses in Waltham. The house at 16 Fanueil Road was the home his family lived at when he was born. He also remembers living at 85 Dale Street and 108 Greenwood Lane (where he watched bricks blow off the chimney during The Hurricane of 1938). His most vivid memories are of the home and day school on Lexington Street, a 32 acre farm with a big barn, woods to roam in, and a large pond with fish. At 8 years old, he had his own workshop

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F. Lee Bailey continued

and there is a chuckle from him as he tells of having a buzz saw that his neighbors were a little leery of. It was a wonderful place for an 8 year old boy to grow up.

His early childhood education began at Chapel Hill School and completed at the Plympton School in the eight grade. Lee left Waltham at 13 years old, to attend school in New Hampshire, but then returned to Waltham while attending college and law school. He lived in an apartment on College Farm Road while attending college.

His amazing legal career has earned him many praises by his colleagues. He has been compared to Clarence Darrow, and has been referred to as "one of the greatest litigators of all time" and "a master of cross-examination" in the courtroom. It is surprising to hear that his law career was not propelled by a great inspiration in his life, but an unexpected reassignment in the Marine Corps.

His military career (from 1952 to 1956) spawned two great loves in his life, his legal career (when he was assigned as a legal officer) and his love of flying (as a jet fighter pilot).

He is a man of many talents and passions who speaks with a father's pride when mentioning his three sons, Ben, Brian and Scott, and with endearing love when he talks about his wife and his late mother. He makes you feel as comfortable speaking with him as if you were his next door neighbor, yet, you leave his presence with an admiration and respect for this former Waltham resident and legal legend, Mr. F. Lee Bailey.

Celebrate with us the Memory of Lill Movsessian on Tuesday, April 28, 2009

On Tuesday, April 28, 2009 the Waltham Historical Society will present a dinner and program to celebrate the Memory of Lillian "Lill" Movsessian.

Sponsored by, and held at, the **Chateau Restaurant**, Master of Ceremonies Lou Nocera hopes to begin raising funds to help in the Society's acquisition of a permanent home for our collection.

You can participate by purchasing tickets to the dinner for \$50.00 per person. 100% of the proceeds of the meal are being donated to the Society by the Chateau Restaurant and Nocera family.

April 7—Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation's Food and Wine Festival.

Call 781-893-5410.

April 22-26—10th New England Regional Genealogical Conference, Manchester, New Hampshire. For information: www.nergc.org.

We extend our sympathy to the family of our long time member Miriam Flaherty who died in January, 2009.



Tickets to this event are limited, and are going fast, so please reserve your space right away by sending your check, payable to The Waltham Historical Society, 40 Gilbert Street, Waltham, MA 02453.

Please indicate the names of those attending, as we plan to have souvenir name tags ready for you when you arrive.

We will also be accepting donation of items for our Raffle. To make a donation, or for ticket information please call:

Sheila FitzPatrick at
781-894-0062, or
Wayne McCarthy at
617-448-6706.

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Homes of Waltham

Now on Display at 760 Main Street

The Waltham Historical Society has an exhibit at our satellite office that shows many of the homes in Waltham that are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Homes that over the years have been lost to re-development, replaced by newer structures, or renovated to like-new condition are depicted in photos from the collection of the Historical Society.

The Society is compiling and documenting homes that still stand in the city, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Some of these homes will be included in the upcoming release of Mort Isaacson's *Driving Tour of Waltham, The Main Street Corridor*.

Check our website calendar or call: 781-891-5815 for more information.



Waltham Historical Society and Charles River Museum of Industry collaborate to create exhibit at Watch Factory



Berkeley, the developers of the former Waltham Watch Factory have asked the Historical Society and the Charles River Museum of Industry to assist with creating an exhibit to adorn the main entrance of their new home.

Together with Dan Yaeger of CRMI, the Society has been collecting and scanning images from our collection in an effort to create the graphics and stories to accompany the display.

The space is scheduled to open on June 1, 2009. As part of the exhibit, plans call for pieces of equipment used at the factory in its heyday to be displayed. The story accompanying each piece will describe its purpose and significance to the process of watch making.

Another important part of the exhibit will be the human aspect of the American Waltham Watch Company. Depictions of the workers will be prominently displayed to give today's employees a connection with the employees of the past.

If you have stories of family who worked at the factory please send them along and we will try to work them into the exhibit.

We will keep you posted on activities as we proceed.

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Official Notice of proposed changes to the By-Laws of the Waltham Historical Society

At the March 10, 2009, a vote will be taken on a proposal put forth by the Board of Directors to change the by-laws of the Waltham Historical Society, Inc., in order to conform to current insurance policies being entered into. The Motion to Amend the By-Laws is as follows:

Motion to Amend

The
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
of the Waltham Historical Society, Inc.
AS RECORDED IN MAY 2007

The proposed changes include:

inserting new articles immediately following ARTICLE 11. DISSOLUTION, and renumbering ARTICLE 12 AMENDMENTS to read ARTICLE 15. AMENDMENTS.

The By-Laws currently read as follows:

ARTICLE 12. AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended, altered or repealed at any regular meeting of the Society, by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting, provided notice of the intended amendment, alteration or repeal be given in the notice calling the meeting.

The proposed Amendments include inserting ARTICLE 12. INDEMNIFICATION, ARTICLE 13. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY, and ARTICLE 14. SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY, immediately preceding the final article number 12. AMENDMENTS, and then renumbering ARTICLE 12. AMENDMENTS to read ARTICLE 15. AMENDMENTS. The content of ARTICLE 15. AMENDMENTS will remain unchanged.

The By-Laws shall read as follows:

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
of the Waltham Historical Society, Inc.
AT MARCH 2009

ARTICLE 12. INDEMNIFICATION

The Society shall indemnify reasonable expenses for an act or failure to act which occurred while a person serves on the Board of Directors, or as a committee member, employee or agent to the extent permitted by Massachusetts law or not covered by Society insurance, provided that the act or failure to act was not illegal or the result of malice or gross negligence.

ARTICLE 13. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Society encourages the support and participation of all interested persons regardless of political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, race, color, creed or national origin, sex or age, or physical or mental handicap.

ARTICLE 14. SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the policy of Society to prohibit sexual harassment of its volunteers, clients, and participants in any of its activities or functions by any person, in any form. All volunteers, clients, and participants shall be given the protection they are allowed by law.

ARTICLE 15. AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended, altered or repealed at any regular meeting of the Society, by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting, provided notice of the intended amendment, alteration or repeal be given in the notice calling the meeting.

Please patronize all our sponsors. Without their support, we would be unable to continue our efforts to preserve Waltham's history for future generations.

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“Thank you” to the Waltham Historical Society for preserving the City’s rich legacy!



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