

South Danvers Wizard.

VOL. V.

SOUTH DANVERS, MASS. WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1864

NO. 38

NEWSLETTER

PEABODY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM – October 2008

Message from the President

Since its very beginning, our Society has published pamphlets, books and articles on various subjects relating to our city's history. Our latest effort is *The History of Peabody: A Definitive History of Peabody 1623 – 1880* by Theodore Moody Osborn as edited and annotated by your president. We have carefully maintained the original text as first written by Mr. Moody and have used footnotes to identify place names, and in some cases clarify the text through the definition of archaic terminology.

The author was born in Peabody, the son of George Abbott and Hannah Sawyer Moody Osborne. Mr. Osborne graduated from Harvard in 1871 and immediately enrolled at M.I.T. to study engineering. Upon his graduation, he worked in Nebraska and assisted in the establishment of the railroad in that state. Mr. Moody returned to Peabody and was soon appointed as the Librarian of the Peabody Institute Library; a position he held from 1873 to 1880. During his time at the Institute, he began the study of the law and was admitted to the bar in 1879 and set up a practice in Salem. Though the practice of law became the primary focus of his life, he had many interests and vocations. He was a musician of note and was a prominent member of the Oratorio Society of Salem. Moody had an abiding interest in all levels of politics, though he preferred to examine the issues of the day and advise others on how best to address them. Mr. Moody had a lifelong interest in history that led to his writing this history of Peabody, first published in 1888. Mr. Moody died in Boston on February 6, 1899 and was by all accounts of the day, greatly missed by his friends and colleagues.

The Peabody Historical Society & Museum, founded in 1896 has long had as part of its mission a commitment to developing within the community an appreciation for local history through education. Toward that goal, we have published this, a second edition of the *History of Peabody*. We hope you purchase and enjoy this well written and interesting book available in town

at our headquarters at 35 Washington Street, the D&R Market on Foster Street and at Borders Books on Rt. 114. Christmas is coming!

William Power, President

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West School students tour Felton Houses

Recently, two third grade classes of students from the West School toured our Felton Houses. Arrangements were made by Society Trustee Dick St. Pierre. Conducting the tours were our President Bill Power and our Vice President Andy Metropolis. We thank Dick St. Pierre and West School's liaison Cathy Ruggerio for making the arrangements. We are always happy to have Peabody's school children tour our

historic houses and learn about what life was like in Peabody's old days.

Annual Holiday Open House

December 7, 2008 (Sunday) 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Nathaniel Felton Jr. House
Felton Street
Peabody, MA

All are invited to our Annual Holiday Open House held at the Nathaniel Felton Jr. House. The house will be decorated for the season by the Peabody Garden Club.

Our Heritage Gift Shoppe will feature new books, i.e Peabody: *Then & Now* by William Power and *History of Peabody, Massachusetts: A Definitive History of Peabody 1623-1880* by Theodore Moody Osborne edited by William Power and Lisa DeFelice. Heidi Dallal will be demonstrating at her spinning wheel. We will be holding our raffle of the Victorian doll donated by Priscilla Watson. There'll be lots of refreshments and time for socializing and renewing friendships as we prepare to welcome the New Year.

Peabody Art Association Holiday Art Show Update

November 16, 2008 – January 11, 2009
Peabody Art Association Holiday Art Show
Osborn-Salata House
33 Washington Street
Peabody, MA
Sunday, Wednesday, & Fridays 12 to 3 pm

The grand opening of the Peabody Art Association's Annual Holiday Show was held on Sunday, November 16 at the Osborn-Salata House. Peabody Art Association President Ruth Mowder reports that this exhibit features art work, and arts and crafts items (created by Art Association members) for sale for \$100 or less per item. So come and see the show. Sign the guest book and be eligible for a door prize. Questions, call Ruth Mowder at 978-531-2860 or 978-531-0805.

Congratulations Heather and family !!!

We are happy to report that our Staff Curator Heather Leavell gave birth to a baby daughter Lucia Madeline on August 24, 2008. Mom and baby are doing well. Heather is currently on maternity leave. Anna Castleman is serving as Staff Curator in Heather absence.

Felton Family descendants from far away pay a visit

Over the last several months we have had several visitors with connections to the Felton family contact us requesting a tour of our Felton properties, their ancestral homestead. Long-time member (and our only member residing in Canada) Marion Smith Tait paid us a visit last summer with her niece, and more recently two visitors from England, Maureen and David Fletcher, came for a tour of the houses of her ancestor, Rev. Samuel Skelton.

Thomas Flint descendant contacts us

We were recently contacted by Bob Flint of Kokomo, Indiana who is a descendant of Thomas Flint, one of Peabody's early settlers. The present day Mr. Flint was visiting our area and said that he understood through family tradition that his forebear once owned a large part of West Peabody. We mailed him a copy of a circa 1700 map from *The Peabody Story* by John Wells indicating the location of the Thomas Flint property and copies of several pages from John Wells' book with information on Thomas Flint.

According to *The Peabody Story*, the area in West Peabody by Crystal Lake and adjoining the Robert Goodell grant was granted to Mrs. Arma Higginson in 1636 and consisted of 150 acres. It was sold to John Pickering in 1652 and to John Woody and Thomas Flint in 1654. By 1692, the time of the witchcraft hysteria, the Flint family was in sole possession of the property.

Sir Thomas Flint of Wales was the first of his family to come to America. His house was built in the 1650s and was located on the site of the former Crystal

Nursing Home (the corner of today's Goodale and Lowell Street, near the intersection of Lowell and Russell Streets). Over the years the Flints were prominent in the affairs of the town and in the military history of Peabody. Sir Thomas Flint was wounded while serving in King Phillip's War. The original Flint house stood until 1874 when it was destroyed by fire.

Bridal Exhibit, a success

*O*ur exhibit of Vintage Bridal gowns and wedding accessories from our extensive collections was held on the weekend of June 28 and 29. It was our first venture into such a two-day event and was supervised and organized by our Costumes Curator Bonnie DeLorenzo. As you can imagine, this was an immense undertaking. We invited many family members of those whose gowns were on exhibit. Bonnie organized an army of volunteers to dress mannequins and assist her in arranging the exhibit. Gowns had to be carefully removed from yards of acid free paper and meticulously fitted to mannequins. The Peabody Garden Club and Evans Flowers provided assistance and advice on the floral arrangements appropriate to the time. This added to the overall appearance of the wedding memorabilia.

*T*he wedding dresses and gowns were displayed in the Felton Sr. and Felton Jr. Houses, the Osborn-Salata House and the Gideon Foster House. Since the Felton family was having its reunion shortly after the exhibit weekend, the display was left up so the Felton descendants could see the dresses worn by their ancestors. This was deeply appreciated by the Feltons.

*T*he oldest wedding dress dated to 1851 and was worn by Sarah Jane Sperry for her wedding to William Henry Felton on June 25, 1851. The gown is a one-piece rust and grey silk taffeta with fitted bodice with cape effect, pagoda sleeves, lace undersleeves, lack collar. It was worn with a white silk fringed shawl. It was displayed in the Felton Sr. House.

*D*isplayed in the same room was the dress circa 1881 worn by Sarah Jane's daughter Mabel Sperry Felton at her wedding to Winslow Brigham Howe on October 12, 1881. Her dress is a two-piece green velvet and taffeta still in very good condition. The skirt is green velvet with a built in back hoop. The bodice is fitted green taffeta trimmed with the green velvet. The

gowns selected for display by Costume Curator Bonnie DeLorenzo reflected the changes in styles of wedding gowns through the last 150 years. Our collection ranges from gowns worn after World War I, long-waisted, slim-hipped gowns of satins and silks de-emphasized the female body, as women broke free in the heyday of the flapper.

*D*uring World War II many brides married in clothes that they could wear again, such as suits of sturdy fabric as well as hand-me-down gowns from their mothers or grandmothers. The 1950s and 60s saw the tradition of the all white wedding with fitted bodices and tiered skirts. The 1950s saw brides married in ballerina length gowns, two to six inches above the ankle. Today's brides have a large selection of styles and fabrics to chose from from simple to elaborate. Brides are free to wear whatever makes them happy whether career-minded, marrying later in life or remarrying.

*O*ther gowns displayed were:

Anna Brigham Howe at her wedding to Frederick Potter on October 12, 1908
Mabel K. Howe at her wedding to Arthur Norman Forbush on October 12, 1933
Nancy Howe Potter at her wedding to David Warwick Ebborn on August 21, 1982
Ellen M. Barber Eaton at her wedding to James A. King in 1885
Elizabeth A. Whippich at her wedding to Frank L. Balcomb on April 19, 1900
Annie Breed at her wedding to William Austin Smith of Brooksby Farm in 1904
Gertrude L. Millet at her wedding to John E. Dunn in the 1920s
Eleanor Frothingham at her wedding to Austin Smith in the 1930s
Martha Gould at her wedding to William Albert Howard on February 14, 1942
Marcia Siegel at her wedding to Albert Cohen on October 15, 1950
Ann Zaorski at her wedding to Joseph Birkner on April 18, 1964
Three generations of gowns: Celia Shuman c. 1929; Faith Shuman at her wedding to Gerald Weiss March 11, 1957; Jill Weiss at her wedding in 1982
Bessie Raymond at her wedding to Henry H. Buxton on July 17, 1896
Barbara Page at her wedding to John Doucette on August 7, 1949
Edith Lincoln Capland at her wedding to Jesse Henry Clay in June, 1901
Louise King at her wedding to Harold Goodridge Childs on June 24, 1933

Mary Theresa Hughes at her wedding to Neil W. Hobey
on April 25, 1934



Wedding gown of Louise King Childs
June 24, 1933



Wedding gown of Barbara Page Doucette
August 7, 1949

Curator's Corner

by Anna Castleman

As you know, Peabody Historical Society and Museum receives new donations from Peabody locals and other patrons of the museum and library on a regular basis. In September, PHS received a series of photographs of Peabody Fire Stations and Peabody Fires from the Wakefield Fire Department.

Below is a photo of South Peabody's Engine 5 Station. On the left, firefighters stand proudly in front of the city's first motorized pumping engine, the American LaFrance triple combination fire engine purchased by in 1916. We are fortunate to know the names of the firefighters pictured. They are left to right John McDonald, Francis Kellet, Al Larrabee, and George G. Hodgdon. Regrettably, the Engine 5 Station, originally located on Lynn Street, was completely destroyed by fire on April 14th 1961. Engine 5 Station also lost its 1940 Mack 750 gallon per minute Triple Combination Pumper in that fire. The only remaining item from the conflagration was the bell from the bell tower. Luckily, by chance it was discovered several years ago in a local junkyard and was restored by the Engine 5 firemen. It currently sits in a place of honor in front of today's Engine 5 fire station on Lynn Street.



Wedding gown of Mary T. Hughes Hobey
April 25, 1934

Other photos from the Wakefield Fire Department Collection include several of the Engine 5 Station, as well as devastating images of the Gnecco & GrillTanning Corporation explosion on May 14th 1964 and the Raymond's Pharmacy fire in Peabody Square. Many of the photographs are tragic while others are snapshots of proud firemen with their firefighting machinery. Peabody Historical Society has an extensive collection of Peabody Fire Department photos as well as other treasured memorabilia in our library and at our firehouse museum on Felton Street. We are honored to hold such valuable photos and relics that symbolize the Peabody Fire Department's tireless efforts to serve and protect the Peabody Community.



Welcome New Members !

Carol & Joseph Leavell of Abington, MA
Eva Melanson of Peabody, MA
Rita S. Edry of Peabody, MA
Maria Prost of Peabody, MA
Janet Moriarty of Lynnfield, MA
Karen McPherson of Lynn, MA
Janice White of Saugus, MA
Josephine D'Ettore of Saugus
Martha Cavanaugh of Peabody, MA

Craft Fair & Apple Bake Report

Our annual Craft Fair & Apple Bake was held on Saturday, October 4 chaired by Bonnie DeLorenzo. We had picture perfect fall weather which drew a steady stream of customers to purchase items from the more than forty-five crafters. The Smith Barn served as a backdrop for the creations of these talented people.

Thanks go out to Bonnie who did her usual terrific job in organizing the countless details needed to make the day a success, and to Maude Hernandez and Margaret Abbott who organized the kitchen. For the first time we offered hot dogs and pretzels from an added feature, our antique pretzel wagon.

Thanks to Mary Hudnall and her committee who ran the Apple Bake held in the Felton Jr. House. There was a large array of pies and other apple goodies many made with Brooksby Farm apples. We are grateful to all who took the time to bake. Members of the ROTC from Peabody Veterans Memorial High School assisted with the parking and did an extraordinary job in directing the often busy traffic. We are grateful for the help of these fine young people.

And once again **thank you** to all our volunteers who helped selling raffle tickets, working in the Gift Shoppe and kitchen. All contributed to the success of our 27th Annual Craft Fair and Apple Bake

Our deepest sympathy to the family of long-time member and friend Jim Stamatelos who passed away last summer. Jim served as Military Curator for many years assisted by his brother Tony. The Society benefited greatly from Jim's expertise in matters military. Our condolences to Jim's family.

Our website: <http://www.peabodyhistorical.org>

Happy Thanksgiving & enjoy the Holidays,

Ann Zaorski Birkner, Editor