

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2018

LOOKING BACK AT THE BLIZZARD OF '78



There was a good group present at our meeting at the library with Tony Petrarca as a gracious guest speaker. Although only 13 years old at the time, he gave us a meteorologist's perspective of the storm, showed a film clip produced by WPRI and answered questions from the audience. A number of those present told stories of their experience during the storm, and we displayed a number of newspapers and photos from that week that we have in our archives.



At the same event Dr. Scott Molloy, of the Heritage Harbour Foundation, presented the Society with a grant for the publication of the book, *The Warwick Railroad* in recognition of its unique contribution to the recorded history of Warwick. The book, written by Henry AL Brown, Don D'Amato and David Tremblay, is available for sale at our office at the John Waterman Arnold House.

WARWICK RAILROAD

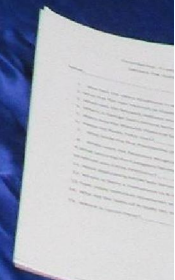
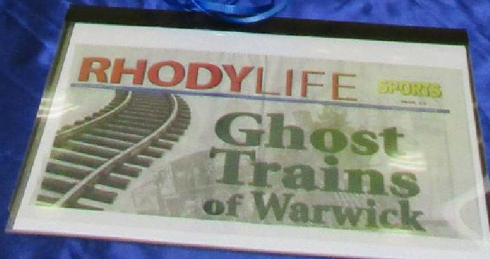
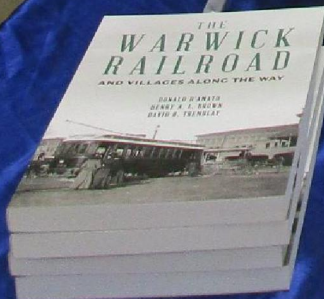
* THE WARWICK RAILROAD WAS INCORPORATED ON MAY 29, 1873 AND COMPLETED NOVEMBER 28, 1874.

* THE ORIGINAL RAILROAD WAS ONLY 8.5 MILES LONG AND HAD 4 STATIONS AT THAT TIME WHICH EVENTUALLY EXPANDED TO 18 STATIONS.

* ON MAY 29, 1877 IT BECAME THE RHODE ISLAND CENTRAL RAILROAD COMPANY, BUT IN 1881 WENT BANKRUPT AND WAS SOLD TO THE NEW YORK, PROVIDENCE AND BOSTON RAILROAD COMPANY FOR \$45,000.

* THE SECTION OF THE RAILROAD BETWEEN BUTTWOODS AND APPONAUG WAS ORIGINALLY OPERATED BY HORSE DRAWN CARS.

* THE RAILROAD WAS CONVERTED TO ELECTRIC TROLLEYS AROUND 1899.

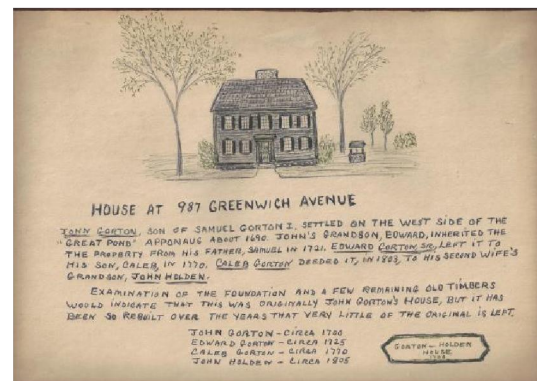
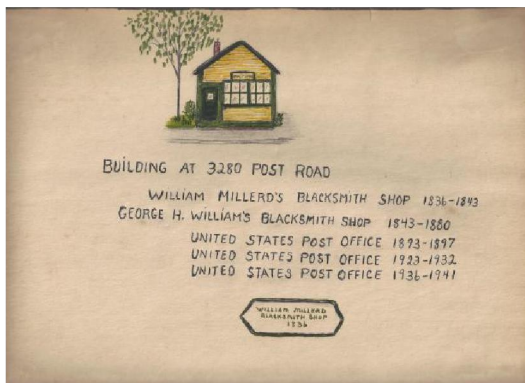


DOT MAYOR COLLECTION

For many years we have been aware of the existence of her paintings, some of which were used in her book *I Remember Apponaug*. Unfortunately no one knew what had become of them as they had not been seen since her passing in 1986. They were recently found in storage at the Museum of Fine Arts and donated to us. We now have them on display at the Arnold House.



Shown below are just two of her many miniatures that make up the collection.



The following documents were found with her paintings. They had apparently been part of a display at the Museum sometime in the 1980's or 90's.

Dorothy Mayor (Dot to those close to her) was the grand dame of Apponaug. She was born in 1909 in Warwick and never left. Her career began as a writer, having two mystery novels published by 1948. She was penning her third when Charles McKay, then Superintendent of Warwick Schools, called on her to teach at Warwick Veterans Memorial High School. She could only be hired on a part-time basis, as married women were not hired as full-time employees in 1949.

Her 34-year tenure was not without controversy. She introduced a scandalous class entitled, "Health and Family Life", which addressed sex education.

Mayor retired from the school system in 1975, and began a new career in painting. She produced numerous paintings using her hometown of Apponaug as her backdrop. Her paintings reveal a naïve, folk-like nostalgia for a time long past. Her works are meticulously researched; some are taken from vintage postcards, some from City Hall records, some from personal memory. There is no sign of modern life; trains, horse-drawn carriages and Model A's are the transportation of the day. In Dot's Apponaug, it always is as it was.

Ms. Mayor died in 1986, and some of her works were acquired by the Museum with the help of Warwick historian Don D'Amato. The park next to St. Barnabas' Church was dedicated to her in 1987.

She describes the 1977 painting to your right, "Main Street (Post Road), 1894":

"I can remember when there was a candy kitchen, variety store, ice cream parlor, hardware store, two grocery stores, restaurant, drug store, cobbler's shop, and barber shop all within the short stretch between the corners (Apponaug Four) and the Town Hall"

WAR. BEACON - TUES 10/14/1986

Artist, teacher, activist; Dot Mayor left design on Warwick

By DEBRA KALIAN

She was a teacher, author, artist, patron of the arts, historian and a leader in the preservation and improvement of her beloved Apponaug Village.

Warwick native, Dorothy Mayor, who was always associated with Apponaug, died on Sunday at Kent County Memorial Hospital at the age of 77.

Those who were close to her in Warwick remember this woman not only for her personal qualities and talents, but her commitment to Apponaug and her ability to round up community spirit.

Alice Holland, who serves on the Board of Directors for the Apponaug Museum and knew Mayor through the Apponaug Area Improvement Association, which she formed, called her "an extraordinary woman."

She recalled her friend's championship basketball ability, her work as a successful author and her long teaching career.

"She had an excellent sense of humor. She had a keen sense of history. She loved Apponaug," said Holland.

"But she was not one to brag about her accomplishments. You sort of learned about the things she did quite incidentally," she added.

Mayor has a long list of accomplishments that span many years and interests.

She was born on July 16, 1909, the daughter of the late William E. and Maude P. (Aylesworth) Compston. Both

of her parents were direct descendants of Rhode Island founder, Roger Williams.

She grew up in her grandfather's big blue Victorian house in Apponaug while her mother worked as the librarian at the Apponaug Library. During her years at Warwick High School, Mayor was a star basketball player. She went on to earn her undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of Rhode Island. Then returned to Warwick to teach home economics at Warwick High.

Offered the opportunity to double her salary (\$900) a year she moved to Hanover, N.H. to teach home economics.

She moved to Buttonwoods after her 1941 marriage to Thomas Mayor at Warwick Central Baptist Church. When her husband died in 1966, Mayor moved back to her grandfather's house.

After marrying Mayor hoped to return to teaching full time, however, the department would not permit it, there being a policy of only employing non-married women on a full time basis. But the department was desperate for teachers in her field and reinstated her full time status in 1952. In 1964, she became supervisor of Health and Family Life for the Warwick School system.

She has been credited for having the foresight and innovation for creating courses in family life, and child



DOROTHY MAYOR

(See DOT MAYOR page 3)

OUR TEXTILE COLLECTION

We continue to inventory our collection. These are a few of the interesting items we have come across in recent weeks.



UPCOMING EVENTS-ACTIVITIES

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| April 14 | 9 am | Cemetery Day-Brayton Cemetery Clean-up |
| April 15 | 2 pm | Rangers Armory 175 th Anniversary |
| April 28 | 9 am | Cemetery #3-Post Rd, Pawtuxet Clean-up |
| May 2 | 7 pm | Roberta Humble SECRET RHODE ISLAND-Library |
| May 26-28 | | GASPEE DAYS |
| June 9 | 12 N | Election of Officers-Arnold House |
| September 27 | 7 pm | Ron Barnes PAWTUXET RANGERS-Library |
| November 6 | 7 pm | Les Ralston CIVIL WAR-Library |

What is past is prologue---Shakespeare