

Narragansett Historical Society



September 2015

Events and Meetings for 2015

Summer / Fall

OPEN every **Tuesday night at the Museum from 6-8pm**

Sept. 23rd Meeting 4th Wednesday in the Document room

26th Engine Show cars, engines, tractors, music and more 10 to 4pm

Oct. All Month display "Death becomes her" features mourning dresses, jewelry, and hair wreaths

28th Meeting 4th Wednesday 7pm in the Document room

31st Pumpkin Festival Noon to 9pm

Nov. 14th Suggested Sponsor and Volunteer appreciation day. 4-8pm at the building

18th Meeting 3rd Wednesday in the Document room

Dec. **6th Jack Frost Festival Sunday** from 1-5 Parade at 4, tree lighting at 4:30. Bake sale, open house, wreath sale, raffle drawing.

16th Meeting 3rd Wednesday in the Document room

*****2016*****

Jan 27th Meeting at the High School Library 7 PM

Feb 24th Meeting at the High School Library 7 PM

Feb 27th Cabin Fever Collectors Show at the

Baldwinville Legion Noon To 5pm

On the Common
Templeton MA

Check Us Out at: www.narragansetthistoricalsociety.org and on FACEBOOK

Sponsored by

These are our 2015 sponsors. If you would like to sponsor our efforts to save the Historical Society and preserve Templeton's past, contact us at the email on the bottom of the page.

Our sponsors make it possible for us to continue our mission to preserve the artifacts handed down through the generations and to restore the building where they are displayed for the public to enjoy.



Gift DONATIONS

The Society is proposing anyone interested in donating items to the Society in the future consider having it in Archival Condition. This will better preserve the item for future years

DONATIONS ACCEPTED

YES! I would like to make a donation to the
Narragansett Historical Society
I/We have enclosed a check in the amount of \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Thank You

Narragansett Historical Society and send to
NHS, PO Box 354, Templeton, MA 01468.

Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Engine Show

**September 26th
from 10-4pm.**

Volunteers are needed to help organize, cook, set up, and park the many cars which will fill the common. Contact us at our email listed on the previous page if you are available in any capacity.

If you have an engine, tractor, motorcycle, vintage or classic car, or anything motorized we want you to come and show it off.

A swap meet will be set up if interest allows. Motor related, no yard sale stuff please.

Vendors contact us here as well.



Pumpkin Fest

**October 31st
Saturday 12 to 9pm**

This is definitely one for the kids, especially those of us in our second childhood. Pumpkin carving, music, games, costumes, food and drink, and fun, fun, fun. I heard the marching band is coming! And a haunted walk out back in the sunken garden when it gets dark. Stay tuned for more details as it gets closer, we will need all hands on deck for this day of spooky fun.



Kite Day

Our first go fly a kite day was a success due to our volunteers who set up and sell hot dogs, chips, and drinks to the 50 plus people that came down to give it a go. At least 35 kites took to the skies and a few came crashing down to the ground. You needed at least 150 feet of line to get the strong winds anything less was a struggle, but everyone there was having fun trying. Kids, and adults running from one side of the field to the other to attempt a successful flight. When the winds died down, everyone grabbed the sticks and created giant bubbles then over to the MOC tent to make paper airplanes for their pilot debut.

\$185.00 in all was raised during the sunny afternoon at Brooks farm. It was a free event created to bring family and friends together just to have fun. Special thanks goes out to Nicholas Houston who took on the task of mowing the field with help from his family.

Donation / Loan

There are two books in my father's estate that I believe have some historical significance. One is an album of black and white pictures of the Wright's Tavern, my family home on the common in Templeton, MA. The other is a larger album titled "I See the Red House". These books, from the estate of George Pushee, were created by Charles Flood and tell the story of his renovation of Wright's tavern in the 1930s. Given to us until the house is sold, if it is properly restored the family suggests these books go with the house. Linda Mercer



Charles Allen Goodnow By Virginia Strahan

An “annoying” teenage boy who wouldn’t stay away from the railroad office near his home in Baldwinville went on to become a successful railroad executive in the late 1800s in the west.

Charles Allen Goodnow, ancestor of Virginia Strahan of Baldwinville, rose from a telegrapher for the Fitchburg office of the Vermont & Massachusetts Railroad to vice president of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad. An intelligent force in the railway world, he was born in 1854 in Baldwinville, son of Josiah Britton Goodnow and Abigail Richardson (Wheeler) Goodnow. He grew up on what was then North Main Street, Baldwinville, and now 21 Bridge Street.

Goodnow’s grandfather, Abijah Wheeler, was born in 1775 in Templeton to one of the earlier town settlers. Goodnow’s mother, Abigail Richardson Wheeler, grew up on Ladder Hill and attended the private school for girls taught by Mrs. Lucy Richardson, mother of Moses W. Richardson, who donated the Templeton Inn to the town. According to her obit, Mrs. Goodnow was “named from Mrs. Richardson, her middle name being Richardson.”



Charles Allen Goodnow

The story of Goodnow’s rise is reported in an undated newspaper clipping from an old family scrapbook, originally an 1850 ledger from the Gilman Day and Edwin Sawyer Co.

"An interesting anecdote is related of the boyhood days of Charles A. Goodnow, whose native place is Baldwinville, and who has been appointed general manager of the Chicago, Rock Island & Quincy Railroad at a salary of \$25,000 a year (more than \$500,000 in 2014, according to Measuring Worth, a service for calculating relative worth over time).

"Mr. Goodnow, when a boy in his teens, was the cause of much annoyance to the officials at the Baldwinville depot of the Vermont & Massachusetts Railroad. He spent all his spare time around the station and was frequently ordered away and told to stay away. He did not heed these orders, but persisted in hanging around. He was a bright youngster and managed to pick up much on telegraphy and after a while was able to receive and transmit. He was not employed there, however. His education was limited to graduating from the Baldwinville High school.

"Mr. Roddyman was the telegraphy operator at the time that young Goodnow hung about the Baldwinville station. On one occasion, young Goodnow was in the telegraphy office, when Mr. Roddyman stepped out for a moment. The Fitchburg office called up Baldwinville and asked for some information. Young Goodnow, being able to give the desired information, confidently ticked back the answer. Fitchburg noticed a difference in the way the reply was transmitted and immediately inquired as to whom was the sender. Goodnow gave the call of Mr. Roddyman. The call was doubted. Later, Mr. Roddyman returned and he was asked for an explanation, which he gave. Immediately, Mr. Roddyman was told to send the boy to the Fitchburg office if he wanted to work.

Goodnow Continued

"Young Goodnow, then 15, accepted the invitation and then commenced his rise to his present high position. He went from Fitchburg to the Hoosac Tunnel (in western Massachusetts) and served as telegraph operator there during the construction of the 4.75-mile tunnel (the longest railroad tunnel in North America at its completion in 1875). He was afterwards transferred as train dispatcher between North Adams and Greenfield, Mass. From there he went west, with the Chicago, Rock Island & Quincy Railroad, where he has risen to his high and remunerative position."

However, Goodnow's rise didn't stop where the newspaper article ends. In 1884, he entered the service of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad as superintendent of construction, later becoming division superintendent, assistant general superintendent and general superintendent. In 1902, he left the St. Paul line to become of the general manager of the Chicago Rock Island & Pacific and upon the re-organization of that company in November 1903, he went to the Chicago & Alton as general manager. On Jan. 1, 1908, he returned to the St. Paul as assistant to the president, and in 1917, he was elected a vice president of the company.

During his later term of service with the St. Paul, he was in charge of the great electrification of locomotives in Montana through the Rocky and Bitter Root Mountains. Goodnow also had charge of the construction of the branch lines in Montana and of the Puget Sound & Willapa Harbor line in the state of Washington, as well as the executive car ferry system of the company operating between Seattle and important industrial centers on Puget Sound.

Goodnow died in 1918 at age 64 from heart failure while in Seattle, Wash., on business connected to the electrification of the railroad. Just before his death, he announced that the work on the western end of the road was progressing so satisfactorily that electric locomotives would be running into Seattle from Othello by July 1, 1919. He is buried in Evanston, Ill.

In 1900, after receiving a report that his mother was dying, Goodnow and his wife quickly returned to Baldwinville in his private railroad car, which created quite a stir in town. He later donated \$100 to the Baptist Society of First Baptist Church, Baldwinville, for its new pipe organ fund, in memory of his mother, who was a long-time member of the church.





“A moment in time”

by: **Harry Aldrich Jr.** *Historian*

BACK IN TEMPLETON

When I returned to Templeton, my life style was a little different. I was happily married now and started a family. I had accepted a job with Sears Roebuck at a new shopping mall in Springfield and eventually took a transfer to the catalog store in Gardner. We had built a home next to my parents on a lot that they gave us to build on. With the help of my dad and a couple of friends we built a six room home and still live in it today. My dad was a mason and did all the masonry work for me. He was 73 at the time and my chimney and fireplace was the last one he built.

After I got out of the service I joined the fire department in town. I had firefighter training in the service and thought I could be useful to the department. My dad was a member when I joined but he retired a month later. There were quite a few older members on the department at the time and it was hard to get appointed as the older members did not want to give up. This started to change a couple of years later and more of the younger men were able to get on. The four fire stations worked together more and trained together in town and at a training area in New Hampshire. In the late 70s, Richard Paine was appointed chief and one of the first changes he made was naming the department, The Templeton Fire Department, with four stations being number 1, 2, 3, and 4. He also set an age limit of 65. No man could stay on after reaching the age of 65. This created some openings and I was appointed deputy chief in Station 1 and held the position for 25 years. He eventually reduced the number of officers too and dropped back to one deputy by not replacing them as they retired.

In July of 1978, I left Sears and accepted a job as foreman on the town new sewer department. Because the system was new there were very few problems at first so I worked with the water department most of the time. In the meantime, I took a course on Wastewater Collection Systems from The University of Sacramento and completed it. I eventually became superintendent of the Sewer Department. I retired in 2000 as Superintendent of the Highway, Water and Sewer Department.

Templeton has pretty much been my life.

President's Page

By: Brian P. Tanguay



Our events continue to grow and give the community a place to go and enjoy an old fashioned afternoon. The first "Go fly a Kite" in the Brooks field was a great success for family groups, friends, and members. MOC run by Sonya Wirtanen was pleased to set up and help with the fun. Now we shift gears and get ready to rumble on the common with our 3rd Engine and Car show featuring the Central Mass Steam and machinery association. The food tent will be set up and our main building will be open to the public.

Please take some time and come to any or all of the events our volunteers are working so hard to make a success. You may find one that you would enjoy working on as the saying goes "the more the merrier". We will finish the year with the Pumpkin Fest and the Jack Frost Festival and in between we are working on an appreciation evening in November to thank our many sponsors and hard working volunteers and please don't miss the "Death becomes her" display put on by Virginia Strahan all during October.

We truly enjoy working hard to create a successful fundraiser while not losing track of the fun aspect of volunteering. There are many ways to get involved, don't be shy. The more you visit the building the more you will want to share with your friends and the new members stopping by for their first time.

"Death Becomes Her"

"Black is becoming; and young widows, fair, plump and smiling with their roguish eyes sparkling under their black veils are very seducing." – Robert de Valcourt, *The Illustrated Manners Book*, 1855

Coming up right after the 3rd Annual Vintage Car, Engine and Tractor Show will be "Death Becomes Her," an exhibit on the change in the style of mourning clothes during the mid 1800s to the early 1900s, including the Civil War, when many women decided against wearing mourning clothes because there had just been too much death. The exhibit will be open Tuesdays and Saturdays in October, with a presentation by a costumed interpreter (a 60-something widow dressed in black) at 2 p.m. each Saturday. On display will be three of the historical society's framed hair wreaths, as well as hair jewelry, along with other objects of mourning, as a lead-in to the Pumpkin Festival. Fashioning human hair into jewelry and wreaths was a popular craft during the period, a way for families to honor and remember their dear departed. And an "experienced" young widow, dressed fashionably in black, could be quite a catch as a wife, especially if she had money. Come and see.



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Find us on Facebook—Search for **Narragansett Historical**. It's filled with the History of Templeton, Baldwinville, Otter River and East Templeton. Pictures, stories, and faces of the people who lived here years ago. Some new images will be shared also of around town. Take a look, add a comment, or ask us a question. Friends have been sending images to us and posting online. We fill out the history to go with the photograph and post it for your enjoyment.

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT
 NEWSLETTER ARE WELCOME
 any time.



Sign up soon **1,030 friends and counting!**

Meeting Notice: 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM unless otherwise advertised.

September 23rd 7pm in the Document room

October 28th 7pm in the Document room

November 18th in the Document room 7 pm

Narragansett Historical Society
 P.O. Box 354
 Templeton, MA 01468

