



Vol. 2 No. 1 Quincy, Massachusetts Spring, 1975

Official Opening Ceremonies

Adams Academy Open House June 1



The official opening of our Adams Academy Building will take place Sunday afternoon, June 1, with an open house and refreshments from 3 to 6 p.m. and brief ceremonies at 4 p.m.

Invitations will be mailed in the near future. We hope that many of our friends in the historical and museum fields will join with the members on this occasion.

This affair will mark the successful completion of many years of work toward the goal of a truly fine historical building appropriate for Historic Quincy. It will be a "thank you" to the many who have contributed to this end over the years.

Our members and guests will see a very handsome building and be able to visualize the great opportunities that are now open to us through its use:

- The beautiful north room where groups will gather for meetings in an historical atmosphere and where selected exhibits will be arranged.
- The south room in which our fine collection of materials will be displayed to tell the story

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THE NORTH ROOM of the academy makes a handsome setting for display of the Society's collection of early 19th century portraits of early Quincy families. Shown in the photo are portraits of Mrs. Samuel Savil, Mrs. Seth Spear and Rev. Peter Whitney of First Parish Church. The new indirect lighting and spot lights add to the general beauty of the room. Seated at the table is Edith Howlett. At the display case is Eleanor Brown and Mrs. Hall Carpenter. The library-museum committee has been busy preparing for the June 1 open house.

[Doris Oberg Photo]

Historical Library Moved To New Location

The Quincy Historical Society library is the foremost repository of source material on Quincy history, but lack of proper facilities has for years deprived people of the full benefits of this important bit of Quincy's heritage.

On Saturday, March 15, the first step was taken toward

making this library a useful asset to those interested in Quincy and local history.

As part of the Society's move into its new Adams Academy facilities, the library was relocated from the semi-storage space in the basement, that it has occupied for some 40 years to the more spacious second

floor.

The move was accomplished with the assistance of 11 members of Circle K from Eastern Nazarene College as part of their community service activities under the Kiwanis program.

Thousands of books, pamphlets, manuscripts, maps,

photographs, and other library materials, all oriented to our local history, are now properly arranged so that they may soon be available to researchers.

Few local societies anywhere have a historical library of comparable quality. The library started when the Society was

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Thomas Crane Public Library
Quincy, Mass.

An Introduction To 350 Years Of Quincy

By H. HOBART HOLLY

[The following article was part of the introduction of the paper presented before the Quincy Historical Society on January 21, 1975 in commemoration of Quincy's anniversary.]

Three hundred and fifty years ago, the Plymouth Colony was five years old and expanding.

Roger Conant had left Plymouth and was at Nantasket whence he moved the next year to found Salem. Thomas Weston had a trading post at Wessagusset, now Weymouth, William Blackstone resided on the Shawmut Peninsula which was to be settled as Boston five years later. There were other individual settlers scattered along the coast but no settlements.

There was no New Amsterdam, now better known as New York, no Philadelphia, no Baltimore. There was Jamestown in Virginia. The remnants of the plague-decimated Massachusetts Indians had their seat at Moswetuset Hummock. It was in this setting that began the 350 years of Quincy's history that we now commemorate.

The events of 350 years ago here had little historical significance. The trading post established by Capt. Wollaston did not last. It was never intended to. It was just a small group of men, not families. We know virtually nothing about it.

Even the date is approximate; it could have been earlier; but we feel strongly that the 350th anniversary should be celebrated 50 years after the 300th, and so support 1975 as the anniversary year.

The Society has had professional researchers here and in England seeking information on Capt. Wollaston and his expedition, so we may hope that by the end of the anniversary year we may know more about the event. Regardless of what facts may be revealed, the impact of the short-lived settlement was minimal and not lasting. We may, however, rightfully claim this first settlement as the beginning of our history. It was then only a matter of time before permanent settlement would come.

A commemoration of this type is something every community needs on occasion to put its history in perspective. I am not being disparaging when I say that no place needs it more than Quincy. This is because historic Quincy tends to overshadow Quincy history, due to the fact that Historic Quincy is in the present, Quincy history is in the past.

The historic is evidence of history, not history itself. For example, an old house may today be a very important historic site because it has survived to tell its story, while the house that once stood next door may have played a much greater role in history.

There is no conflict between these two concepts; they are complementary and overlapping, and both have their place; but it is important that the role of each be understood and the proper emphasis applied. That is why an anniversary is of benefit to both by reminding us that both exist and that each has its place.

The places on Quincy's Historic Trail and the people associated with them are highly important to our area, and will properly receive special attention this year. Nevertheless, they do not represent, nor should they be considered to represent, the three and one-half centuries of history that we now commemorate.

Their impact on this history

is not to be judged by the same measure as their historic importance, or their impact on other history. Would Quincy today be any different if Chickatabot had chosen to reside north of the Neponset instead of south of it?

How much more than the valuable remains and the name "Furnace Brook" did the first productive iron Furnace in this country leave with us? Did not the Rev. John Hancock have a greater impact on the town's history than did his famous son whom we are justly proud was born and lived his early years here? Did John Quincy Adams, the President, and his son Charles Francis Adams have as much influence in Quincy as the two brothers who later bore those names?

That is a good place to start our historical review of 350 years, for we are talking of people, and it was people who made our history. Everyone who ever had any contact with Quincy made some contribution

to its history. This certainly includes the influence and importance of Quincy natives who gained fame elsewhere. To select the person who had the greatest impact would be fruitless, but the mention of some candidates may provide some perspective.

It is difficult to evaluate the contributions of the early colonial residents, as estimable as these persons were, because there are few criteria by which to judge them. They lived in a simple society, and conditions in neither the town nor the province called for outstanding leaders to emerge. When the time came, the old North Precinct produced John Adams, John Hancock, Josiah Quincy, Jr., Joseph Palmer and Richard Cranch. Few communities can boast such a distinguished group of leaders. Of these, Adams, Palmer and Cranch had a great impact on their town by their influence in the town meeting and other official positions, and as local citizens.

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Open House June 1

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of Quincy's heritage.

• The library where researchers may at last be able to use our outstanding local history resources of information.

With the creation of these facilities now behind us, we can now concentrate on the development of the activities and exhibitions around which

they were planned. In these, like the building itself, our goals are for things outstanding, not just run-of-the-mill. These are already beginning to take shape, and exciting developments may be expected in the near future.

P.S. Please support our Building Fund Campaign so that we may soon have another party when this goal has been reached.

Hancock Cemetery Restoration

One of the city's major bicentennial projects, the restoration of Hancock Cemetery, is being directed by North Quincy High School teacher, Richard Riley.

Mr. Riley is seeking intense community involvement in what he calls an experience in "living history". The project will include restoration and beautification, but will also involve a wide variety of supportive projects ranging from genealogical research to computer programming, [so information can be put into a

data bank].

If you are interested in the project and would like to offer your services, or perhaps even resources, you can contact Mr. Riley through N.Q.H.S. or Quincy Heritage.

The Historical Society is offering supportive services to the project and is making available its library collection for research.

Last summer, Mr. Riley was a director of the Society's Hancock well excavation project on the Adams Academy property.



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Adams Birthplaces Open For 79th Season

Quincy Historical Society opened the Adams Birthplaces in South Quincy for their 79th season on the traditional date of April 19.

They are open daily from nine to five until Sept. 30. The hours have been increased this year to accommodate the larger number of visitors that the Bicentennial is expected to bring.

The little red houses were first opened to the public in 1897 after restoration by the Adams family. Since 1940 the properties have belonged to the City of Quincy to which much credit is due for the fine condition of the Houses and grounds.

Quincy Historical Society owns the contents of the

Houses, and handles the operation. The Society has operated the John Quincy Adams Birthplace ever since 1897, and the John Adams Birthplace since 1950.

The Hostesses in charge of the Houses will be the same as for a number of years: Mrs. John B. Ames at the John Quincy Adams Birthplace, and Mrs. Florence Gamins in the John Adams Birthplace. To take care of the longer hours and greater anticipated crowds, the number of assisting hostesses had been increased over past years.

It is expected that the John Quincy Adams Birthplace will be of especial interest during the Bicentennial, since this was the home of John and Abigail Adams during the Revolutionary War years.

Josiah Quincy Honored

On Saturday, April 26, the Quincy Historical Society honored the memory of Josiah Quincy, Jr. on the bicentennial of his death by placing a wreath on his grave in the Hancock Cemetery.

The wreath was laid by a member of the Adams family, Thomas Boylston Adams of Lincoln, in recognition of the close relationship between John Adams and the man he described as "as ardent a patriot as any of his age and next to James Otis the greatest orator."

Josiah Quincy was but 31 years old when he died off Gloucester while returning from a secret mission to England in the Colonial cause. He died without fulfilling his final wish that he could deliver his message to Samuel Adams or Joseph Warren. The message probably would not have altered the course of events, but it is interesting to conjecture.

The second Josiah Quincy was born in Boston in 1744. At

the age of twelve he moved with his family into the Hancock Parsonage that stood where the Adams Academy now stands. Even before his graduation from Harvard in 1763 he began to prepare himself for the legal profession. He was admitted to the Bar in 1766 and to practice before the Supreme Court in 1768.

Mr. Quincy soon made a name for himself as both a lawyer and a writer. He wrote in the Boston press under a number of pseudonyms as a strong spokesman for the Patriot cause. His eloquence in expressing the Patriot viewpoint made him an important factor in the years that led up to Lexington and Concord. His defense of the British soldiers involved in the Boston Massacre, along with John Adams, gave him high stature as a lawyer.

Quincy can be proud to honor one of the foremost Patriots in connection with the Bicentennial of events that he influenced.

Volunteers Needed To Assist At Academy

Larry Yerdon, our library-museum director, has put out a call for volunteers to assist at the academy.

Volunteers will be needed starting in June.

Interested persons should call the academy [773-1144] Monday afternoons or send a note to Mr. Yerdon, care of the Society, 8 Adams St., Quincy, Mass. 02169.



MOVING UP -- Members of the Circle K Club from Eastern Nazarene College are shown on the Adams Academy staircase, helping to move the Society's extensive library collection to its new second floor location.

[Doris Oberg Photo]

Historical Library Moved To New Location

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founded in 1893, and is still growing today with continuing additions of gifts and purchases.

It contains much unique information that is available nowhere else. Thus it is very important as a research source. It is also a highly significant factor in the Society's overall program to present and interpret our local history to both adults and students.

The Society's library and exhibits of collection materials together are the pieces of Quincy's historical heritage that

will be used in a complementary way to present the story of Quincy and its area in the Society's new building.

The planning for the library and its use has been in progress for some time and has involved consultation with top authorities in the library field. It will still take some time for the Librarian, Mrs. Rudolf O. Oberg and her Library Committee, and the Director, Lawrence J. Yerdon, to make the library fully available to researchers. But a major step was taken March 15.

Quincy 350 Years

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Solomon Willard was probably the next giant to come on the scene. His impact was very different from that of the giants mentioned above. In his development of the techniques that made Quincy granite a practical building stone, and earned him the title of "Father of the Granite Industry", he made a great personal contribution to Quincy; but the credit for the impact must rightly be shared by many other contributors, notably Gridley Bryant and all the granite workers.

This combined contribution, for which Mr. Willard was the person most responsible, gave Quincy national fame and eventually the distinction of being known as "The Granite City", and brought to Quincy, people and cultures that did much to develop Quincy into a distinctive community.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, two civic leaders made outstanding contributions to Quincy that greatly affect life here today.

The Adams brothers, John

Together they led the reform of our school system that brought here Francis W. Parker, another giant in the Quincy story. Together they were most instrumental in founding our public library. Charles Francis was the first president of our Society. It was John Quincy, long a legislator, who reformed the town meeting, a step that led shortly to the city form of government to better serve the needs of the people. Few communities have had more dedicated and influential civic leaders.

Quincy and Charles Francis, were strong individuals who worked together for common ends.

The complexities of twentieth century life, and the vastly larger community, have called for leaders in greater numbers, and Quincy has had many who stood above the crowd. More time, however, must elapse before their impact can be judged with proper perspective.



COLONIAL CAPPED James Ferrera, sixth grade, Gridley Bryant School pupil describes how this First Railway car was used to haul Quincy granite for construction of the Bunker Hill Monument in 1826. Bryant designed both the car and the railway.

First Railway Car On Display At City's Birthday

At the city's recent 350th birthday party and cake cutting in Quincy Center, members and the public generally had a chance to view our Granite Railway car for the first time in some years.

It was displayed on Hancock Street, just south of Granite Street with Society members in attendance, and with students from Gridley Bryant School explaining its workings and significance.

It stood on a trailer of the Highway Department which handled the big job of moving

the car, as arranged by Quincy Heritage.

This full-size replica of the Granite Railway's first car was made from Gridley Bryant's original plans in connection with the historic railway's centennial in 1926. From the interest the car evoked, and with the Railway's 150th anniversary coming up next year, we can hope that Phase Two of our Building Project may progress to the point that the interesting old car may be on permanent display.

Peterson, Losordo Head Fund - Raising Campaign

Companion to the Building Project itself, is the raising of the money to pay for the construction work, and to make funds available to carry on our planned activities. Thus every dollar we raise at this time has a dual benefit.

The fund-raising campaign is all organized, and has been proceeding in low gear.

Campaign Chairman Charles Peterson and Vice Chairman

Anthony Losordo have now planned a concentrated effort to bring the drive to a successful conclusion in the near future.

With the Building now ready for operation, and our Director at work, our sights are on a future that starts now.

Membership Now At 1,076

First Vice President, William O'Connell reports that membership has continued to increase, with the total now at 1,076.

This figure represents

members from nine categories, including 851 annual members and 179 annual sustaining members.

New members are always welcome.

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