

**Challenge Grant Incentive**

**Adams Academy Building Fund Campaign Continues**

The Quincy Historical Society is justly proud of its fine Adams Academy building.

We would like to pay off the remaining \$45,000 indebtedness before the end of 1975. We must accomplish this task so that we can use our energy and resources to realize the potential of our museum and library.

As further incentive we have a challenge grant that adds fifteen percent to every dollar pledged before the end of 1975.

The Building Fund Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Charles G. Peterson is most appreciative of the pledges already made and urges anyone who has not contributed to consider this essential year end appeal. Please keep in mind that pledges may be paid over a three year period.

Let's begin 1976 in the black.



**FUND DONATION** — The Quincy Education Association (QEA) donated \$1,000 to the Quincy Historical Society's Building Fund formed to complete renovations at the Adams Academy museum and library. From left, are Society President H. Hobart Holly; Anthony Losordo, fund-raising committee vice-chairman; Charles G. Peterson, fund-raising committee chairman; Mrs. Anna G. Robinson, QEA president; and Harold S. Crowley, Jr., past QEA president.

[Photo Courtesy of The Quincy Sun]

**Squantum Park: A Distinctive Part Of Our Heritage**

By GORDON F. NELSON

The Squantum Park area was originally part of Dorchester; in 1792 it became part of Quincy; in the late 1800's Boston took it over; now it is again part of Quincy and coming back into its own as a very distinctive part of our heritage in the historical, geological and recreational fields.

The area's history naturally started with the Indians. Then came the early explorers who viewed it from the sea, and Captain John Smith who mapped it in 1614 and included it in the region that he described as "the paradise of all those

parts." Then came the Pilgrims who landed here on September 30, 1621.

Leaving Plymouth in their shallop on the night of September 28th, the party consisting of Captain Myles Standish with nine other Pilgrims and three Indians, one of them Squanto, sailed for the Massachusetts country, a voyage of about forty-five miles. The progress was slower than anticipated, so it was late in the afternoon of the 29th when they reached the outer harbor and headed toward Squantum, passing many beautiful islands

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OLD SQUANTUM HOUSE at Squam Rock Quincy

## The Granite Rails

As you enter our Academy property, you will shortly pass between two handsome granite posts that formerly stood before the old Newcomb-Adams-Reardon House, where the new Savings Bank is now located. For these we are grateful to the Hon. Paul C. Reardon.

On the edge of the lawn to the north you will see some even more massive pieces of Quincy granite. These are from the Squantum Street crossing of the Granite Railway. They were removed years ago by the Old Colony Railroad when it replaced the old granite construction with wooden ties and steel rails. They were dumped on the Braintree property of Mr. Charles Pappas who presented them to the Society a few years ago.

The major pieces are the massive granite rails on the top of which can be seen the groove for the wheel flange and the mark of the iron flatbar wearing piece on which the cars rolled. This type of granite rail dates from around 1830 when it

replaced the original iron-shod timber rails that did not stand up well under the heavy loads of granite.

The problems with the wooden rails and the decision to replace them with granite is discussed in a report from Gridley Bryant to the Railway's President, Thomas Handasyd Perkins, which is part of the original agent's record book in the Society's library.

The four post bases are also of historical significance. They were used in closing off the railway or the road when the other was in use. They had to avoid an accident at a crossing since no one knew the liability situation involving a railway common carrier and a private vehicle. Thus these relics of the Granite Railway point out that legal as well as engineering features were pioneered here on the country's first commercial railway.

In time we plan to assemble these Railway remains as part of an exhibit that will include our replica of the first car.

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## At The Birthplaces

This Bicentennial year was a special one for the Adams Birthplaces.

We had a record attendance of about 9,400 visitors from 48 states and 29 foreign countries; about 6 percent over our previous high in 1973.

This is of itself worthy of note, but even more significant was the noticeable increase in the recognition of the importance of the roles played by John and Abigail Adams, particularly Abigail, in the events of 200 years ago.

People feel closer to the Adamsses now than they did in the past and want to increase their understanding of them by the intimate experience of visiting the simple farm homes in which they lived and worked during those eventful years.

Many average visitors sought especially to catch the historical message of the Houses this year, but there were special visits too. Before the Houses were even open for the season, we had the band from Concord, California. These youngsters were on their way to Concord, Massachusetts where, on April 19th, they

escorted President Ford to the Old North Bridge. Also early was the visit of Mrs. Lonnelle Aikman whose excellent story of Abigail Adams as a Patriot in Petticoats appears in the National Geographic for October.

We had a succession of filmings, some of which you will see on television in the coming months. We recall Lee J. Cobb strolling through the Houses and reflecting on the events of 200 years ago as John Adams might well have done in his time. Then there was E. G. Marshall working in the heat of floodlights on one of the hottest days of the summer. Finally in October came Mrs. Elaine Holdorf of Omaha, Nebraska, who depicts Abigail Adams in Bicentennial functions in her area. Dressed in her costume she visited and was photographed in the home surroundings that Abigail Adams knew, thus giving her a better understanding of the person she is portraying.

And so the Little Red Farmhouses that are always an important part of the Adams story, are part of the Bicentennial story also.

## LOOKING AHEAD . . .

\* During the coming bicentennial year we can look forward to a series of articles to be written by our historian, Mr. David Day who will inform us of Quincy in 1776. He will speak to the part its leaders played in the Revolution and the life of the Quincy area at the time.

\* Dr. George Horner will contribute an article concerning the preservation of historical places.

\* Cooperative efforts between the Quincy Public Schools and the Society will

materialize in the form of study kits to be used by Quincy teachers and also with an Immersion Week for elementary school children which will focus on a comparison of Quincy's past and present. Children participating in the Immersion Week program will be part of the Elementary Laboratory Center at the Lincoln Hancock School.

\* We will anxiously await new exhibits at our museum, the current one, Christmas Past will run through the end of January.

## A NAME

When this NEWSLETTER was first published six issues ago, we asked for suggestions for a better name — one that would be descriptive and distinctively Quincy.

The response has been

very gratifying with many interesting ideas, but none that stood out as the natural that we are still seeking.

So it remains NEWSLETTER, a good name until a real brainstorm comes along.

# Christmas Past An Exhibit Full Of Charm



Antique toys reminiscent of the turn of the century. The tree is trimmed with popcorn and cranberry, corn husk dolls and candles for illumination.

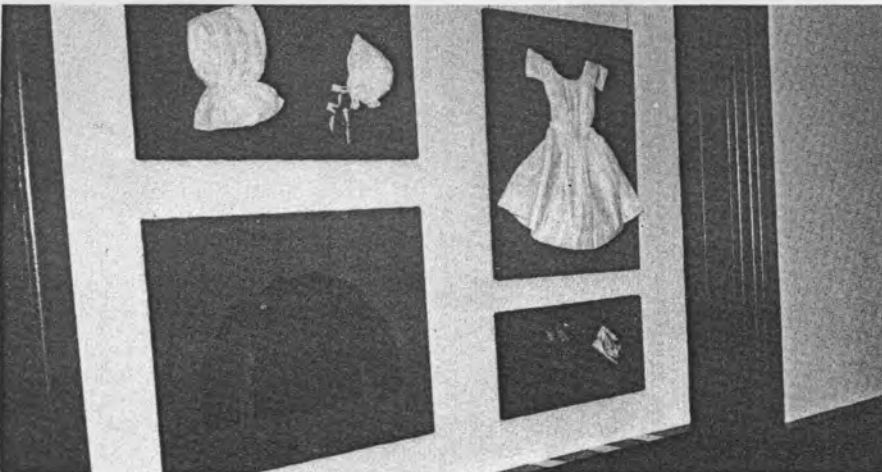


Clown and toy animals from The Brown Collection circa 1905.

[Photos by Peter Jabailey a Quincy High School Student]



Dolls - Native Dolls from the Laura Cameron Collection.



Children's clothing - from the Society's antique clothing collection.

The Society wishes to thank Mr. Carl Deyeso, Co-ordinator of Language Arts and Social Studies for arranging for these photos to be taken.



Santa Claus mechanical bank from the William O'Connell collection.

# Squantum Park: A Distinctive Part Of Our Heritage

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on the way.

The shallop reached the "bottom" of the bay" and anchored for the night off the tip of what is now Thompson's Island. Standish landed there with a few of his men and named it "Island of Trevore" for one of his group.

It was in the morning of September 30th that they reached the shore of the present Squantum Park. On the beach they found some lobsters that they boiled and feasted upon; a forerunner of shore feasts for which Squantum was to become famous. Shortly after their meal they met the owner of the lobsters, an Indian woman with whom Squanto conversed, and gave her payment for them. She was not of the local Indian group but a follower of the Sagamore Obbatinewat who lived in the Savin Hill area. He was the man whom they were seeking, and so they departed and continued up the Bay.

To commemorate the Pilgrim visit of 1621, the Myles Standish Cairn was erected in 1895. On September 30th of that year a large crowd gathered on the high point of the Park for the laying

of the cornerstone. The promoter of the project was Mrs.

Lillie B. Titus of Squantum, and the tablet tells us that the cairn was erected by the Daughters of the Revolution, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the Quincy Historical and Bostonian Societies.

There were bands and speeches, and the cornerstone was laid by Mrs. William Lee, State President of the Daughters of the Revolution, and Mr. Charles Francis Adams, the historian, President of the Quincy Historical Society. A line was formed and each person selected a stone from a large pile and placed it in position as masons on hand secured it.

The copper box was prepared by the Quincy Historical Society and contained, among many items, the account of the Society's organization and Mr. Adams' address when he became its first president, a facsimile of the Society's charter and the charter members' agreement to associate, extracts from the Society's bylaws, photographs of Mr. Adams and Samuel A. Bates, the Society's Vice President, and a catalog of Adams Academy.

In spite of vandalism and being struck by lightning, the cairn has survived as an impressive monument. During the Second World War the United States Government took over the area for a NIKE site, and the Cairn was moved from the summit of the Park to a location nearer the shore. A fairly recent attack by vandals resulted in severe damage and the loss of the copper box. The city has done an excellent job in repairing the stonework, but the box and its historic contents are still missing.

Squaw Rock and the great stone head may have been first recognized by John Smith or Myles Standish or Squanto, but its significance as a natural phenomenon and the geological importance of the Park area are known worldwide.

This ancient glacial deposit is a composite of several masses of rock called tillite which forms the profile of the head that can be seen from the proper angle.

The rock mass was formed during the Carboniferous Period

of the earth's history which is estimated by geologists to have occurred between 250 and 300 million years ago. This rock exposure is a continuing source of interest and study by geologists from all over the world. In early days it was known as The Chapell Rocks.

When the North Quincy area was settled as part of Dorchester, the Park's seventeen acres became owned and occupied as farmland along with the rest of Squantum. The old house there was probably built by Richard Butt who died in 1694 and later occupied by his heirs. It became the property of Remember Preston who sold it in 1776 to Joseph Beale.

It became part of the extensive Beale family holdings that eventually included much of Squantum, and Thompson's Island. During the Beale ownership the old house was leased and became famous as the Old Squantum House. In 1854 William Crosby Reed purchased the Park property, renovated the Old Squantum House and renamed it Reed's Hotel. After William Reed's death in 1863, his sons Warren and William operated the resort until 1880 when it was purchased by Paul Butler, son of the famous Benjamin Butler, Civil War general and Governor of Massachusetts.

A few years later the City of Boston took the property by eminent domain for recreation purposes, and also took Moon Island for a sewerage project. The use of the Old Squantum House as a boarding house for the sewerage construction workers ended its prestige as a famous resort. The Old House became run down and the property neglected. In August 1915 the structure was gutted by fire and soon after demolished. In 1974 the Park property was returned to the City of Quincy, and is now once more a recreation center.

Over the years Squantum became famous for recreation, outings and sea food, with the activities centered around the Old Squantum House. People came by horse, carriage, barge,

boat, and later bicycles and street cars. The greatest gatherings were probably those held between the years 1810 and 1826 when Boston merchants and businessmen together with state and municipal officials made a yearly excursion to Squantum.

In 1812 the guests at the Pilgrim Feast included Governor Caleb Strong, Lieutenant Governor Phillips and Commodore Bainbridge. About six hundred persons attended. The cutter WASHINGTON anchored off Squaw Rock and fired artillery salutes in honor of the Pilgrim fathers.

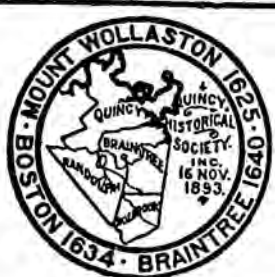
Eventually the Old Squantum House was supplemented with a dance hall, bowling alley, steamer wharf and a clam pit and lobster-bake area. There were many vacationers as well as people on a day's outing.

The fame of this resort is indicated by the following definition of "a Squantum" that appeared in a Nantucket newspaper in the early 1800's. "A party of ladies and gentlemen go to one of our places of resort, where they fish, sing, dance, bathe, sail, eat, and have a good time.

"The food is generally a chowder and baked clams. No one is admitted who will take offense at a joke and any man who speaks of business is immediately reproved, and on second offense is publically chastised. Care is thrown away, politics discarded, war ignored, pride humbled, stations leveled, wealth scorned, and virtue exalted. This is a Squantum."

The essence of Old Squantum Park's appeal as a recreation center was expressed in one of the invitations to the "Ancient Feast": "All who can bring good appetites and friendly hearts are invited to attend and partake of the fatness of the sea and sand."

Today's Squantum Park no longer offers the feasts and amusements of years past, but still to be enjoyed are the fine walks, the magnificent views, the impressive profile of Squaw Rock, and the cairn commemorating the historic visit of 1621.



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