



**PROCEEDINGS**

OF THE

**BROOKLINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**FOR 1957-1958**

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OF THE  
BROOKLINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
FOR 1957-1958



BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS  
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY  
1959

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**OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES  
1957**

**PRESIDENT**

MRS. HARRISON G. BRIDGE

**VICE PRESIDENT**

DR. HAROLD BOWDITCH

**TREASURER**

J. FREDERICK NELSON, 347 Harvard Street

**CLERK**

LEA S. LUQUER, 34 Griggs Road

**TRUSTEES**

Donald K. Packard, Miss Elizabeth Butcher,  
James M. Driscoll, S. Morton Vose, Miss Maud Oxenham and  
Officers ex-officio

**COMMITTEES**

FINANCE— J. Frederick Nelson, *Chairman*  
Edward Dane,  
*President, ex-officio.*

ROOMS — Mrs. Bertram K. Little, *Chairman*  
Mrs. J. Frederick Nelson, Mr. Daniel Tyler, Jr.

LIBRARY— Miss Elizabeth Butcher, *Chairman*

PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS —  
Dr. Harold Bowditch, *Chairman*  
Charles B. Blanchard, Samuel Cabot,  
Francis A. Caswell, James M. Driscoll,  
Miss Mary Lee.  
*President and Clerk, ex-officio.*

MEMBERSHIP — Mr. Donald K. Packard, *Chairman*  
Miss Julia Shepley, Mrs. Lea S. Luquer.

DELEGATES TO THE BAY STATE  
HISTORICAL LEAGUE —  
Miss Margaret A. Fish, Miss Mary Lee,  
Mrs. George C. Houser.

## SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1957

The Annual Meeting was held on January 20th, 1957 at the Edward Devotion House.

President Bridge presided and called the meeting to order. Her report for the past year was read and approved. The Treasurer read his report which was approved and accepted. Mrs. Little read her report for the Committee-on-Rooms. It was moved and seconded that a vote of thanks be extended to Mr. and Mrs. Nelson for their hospitality on such occasions.

The following were proposed and elected to membership:

Mrs. Philip Cowin, Mrs. Roger Ernst, Mrs. J. Harvey Hilton, Mrs. Mark R. Kimball, Miss Stella Obst, Bishop and Mrs. Anson Stokes, Jr., Mrs. Bertram Waters.

The Nominating Committee submitted the following list of members to serve as Clerk, Treasurer, and as Trustees throughout the year:

Mrs. Harrison G. Bridge, Dr. Harold Bowditch, Miss Elizabeth Butcher, Mr. James M. Driscoll, Mr. Lea S. Luquer, *Clerk*, Mr. J. Frederick Nelson, *Treasurer*, Miss Maud Oxenham, Mr. Donald K. Packard, and Mr. S. Morton Vose. Signed. Mrs. Forsyth Watson, *Chairman*, Mr. James A. Lowell, and Mrs. Theresa Putnam.

Delegates to the Bay State League.

Miss Margaret Fish reported on the fall meeting held at the old First Parish Church at Roxbury and made a number of remarks about the Rev. John Eliot and of his efforts to work among the Indians of his day and to have the Bible printed in their tongue.

Mr. Daniel Tyler spoke briefly regarding the preservation of the old Putterham School and suggested that a Committee be appointed to keep an eye on its welfare. Mrs. Little requested that a copy of Mrs. Ira Rich Kent's book: "*The Brookline Trunk*" be sent to Mrs. Barclay of the Bay State League.

Mr. Augustus W. Soule then gave a most interesting talk upon the subject *Recreation in Brookline*, which was carefully recorded and he later answered questions from the floor.

Refreshments of good hot cocoa and delicious sandwiches, prepared and served by Mrs. Nelson, were greatly appreciated by the forty-eight members who attended.



During the year the Trustees held two meetings. In view of the fact that, for some time Mrs. Bridge had been desirous of resigning, her resignation was announced at the time of the Spring Meeting and accepted with reluctance. Subsequently Mr. Donald K. Packard was elected to serve as President.

The Spring Meeting was held on Sunday, May 19th at the residence of Dr. George Cheever Shattuck, 450 Warren Street, and was very well attended by the many who enjoyed their view of this lovely place and its grounds.

The Fall Meeting was held on the evening of November 4th at the new Branch Library near Coolidge Corner. Some thirty-five members turned out to hear the speaker, Mr. Abbott Lowell Cummings, tell about some of the many things to watch for when viewing an old house of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries.

Note must certainly be made of the very generous gift of five thousand dollars bequeathed to the Society by Miss Josephine Wilder.

Respectfully submitted,

LEA S. LUQUER,  
*Clerk.*

## REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

### FIFTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING, JANUARY 20, 1957

By now all our members have the Society's Proceedings for 1954 - 1955. We regret that the publication was delayed, but there was a great deal of work involved, due to the amount of material to be included, and the quite extensive editing needed on the manuscripts of both the men's and the women's panels. I should like to thank our clerk, Mr. Luquer, for all his time and efforts spent in getting the papers checked, procuring the tavern illustration for Mr. Dana's paper, and seeing to the publication. I trust you all feel as I do, that it was well worth while, and that we are fortunate to have recorded the thoughts of several of Brookline's old-time residents who are no longer with us.

During the year we have lost by death the following members :

Mr. Nathaniel L. Amster, a Life Member  
Mr. Frederick C. Bowditch, Jr.  
Mrs. Edward D. Brandegee  
Mr. Gorham Dana, a Life Member  
Mrs. Nina M. Forbes  
Mr. Carl M. Goodspeed

Mr. Lindsley Loring  
 Mr. William D. Paine  
 Mr. Henry Ware  
 Miss Josephine H. Wilder

As to further changes, two members, (Mrs. Richard Sweet and Miss Joyce Tyler) have resigned, and four new members were elected. Mr. Daniel Tyler, Jr. has become a Life Member.

At our last Annual Meeting, Miss Lilly C. Moberg, its Director, read her paper on "The 50th Anniversary of the Visiting Nursing Service of the Brookline Friendly Society". Miss Moberg added to the interest of the occasion by wearing one of the old-time nurse's uniforms.

On January 21st, the Saturday following our meeting, this Society was host at the winter meeting of the Bay State Historical League, held at the Devotion School. Approximately 250 members attended and quite a number visited this house. We had excellent help from the Boy Scouts (of Troop 6) who were on hand to greet and usher the people as they arrived Saturday morning, and the Girl Scouts who served later as guides in this house and also helped at tea time.

The morning was taken up by the League's Business Meeting, and we provided the speaker of the afternoon, Mr. Bruce Lancaster, a writer of historical novels, whose subject was "The 19th of April of '75". Dr. Harold Bowditch, our Vice-President, gave our greetings to the League and introduced the speaker. The Hospitality Committee, under Mrs. George C. Houser's capable direction, and with the help of other members, including Mrs. Henry Batchelor, Mrs. Harold Bowditch and Miss Elizabeth Butcher among others, did a wonderful job of serving refreshments at the close of the meeting. They also provided lovely flowers and plants on the tables at the school to make it look attractive. We are most grateful to them and to the School Committee for their cordial cooperation and extreme helpfulness in allowing us to use the Devotion School cafeteria's dishes and trays for our tea. It proved to be a most successful day.

Our Spring Meeting was held at Pierce Hall, where our own member, Mr. Donald Packard, spoke from his extensive knowledge of old clocks, and illustrated his talk with excellent colored slides. Again we have our hospitality committee to thank for the welcome punch and cookies which they served.

While we are on the subject of food, I cannot close this report without getting down in print some mention of the delicious hot chocolate, dainty sandwiches and cakes which are al-

ways provided for us at the conclusion of this Annual Meeting. Mr. and Mrs. Nelson make this building not just the Society's House but a Home, and if we seem to take their delightful 'collation' for granted sometimes, I assure them it is only because we would miss it so if we did not have it, and we really are appreciative and do thank them most sincerely.

RUTH POND BRIDGE,  
*President.*

**THE BROOKLINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT**

Cash and Securities on hand January 1, 1957		
U. S. Series K Bonds .....	\$2,000.00	
Brookline Trust Company .....	982.95	
Brookline Savings Bank .....	2,138.72	
		\$5,121.67
Receipts for 1957		
Bequeathed by Miss Josephine H. Wilder .....	\$5,000.00	
Membership Dues .....	509.00	
Gifts .....	20.35	
Sale of "Old Brookline Houses" .....	12.80	
Sale of "Proceedings" .....	2.25	
Interest on U. S. Series K Bonds .....	55.20	
Interest on Savings Bank Deposit .....	64.62	
		\$5,664.22
		<u>\$10,785.89</u>
Payments for 1957		
Secretary's Expense .....	\$66.90	
Treasurer's Expense .....	1.75	
Publishing 1956 Proceedings .....	280.72	
Speaker — Autumn Meeting .....	25.00	
Collations .....	12.56	
Chair Rentals .....	7.20	
Insurance .....	7.80	
Bay State Historical League Dues .....	4.00	
New England Council Listing .....	2.00	
Bank Charges .....	.18	
		\$408.11
Cash and Securities on hand December 31, 1957		
U. S. Series K Bonds .....	\$2,000.00	
Brookline Trust Company .....	1,119.24	
Brookline Savings Bank .....	7,258.54	
		\$10,377.78
		<u>\$10,785.89</u>

Respectfully submitted,

J. FREDERICK NELSON,  
*Treasurer*

January 17, 1958



## BROOKLINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ROOMS

The following meetings have been held in our headquarters, the Edward Devotion House, during the past year :

JANUARY 15 — Brookline Historical Society,  
annual meeting

APRIL 19 — Usual Patriot's Day exercises

NOVEMBER 13 — Hannah Goddard Chapter,  
Daughters American Revolution

Our guests have included the following: in May, three fourth grade groups from the Devotion School totaling about 100 children. Children from this school come in often, in two's or three's, to take pictures or to do special assignments. We have also entertained groups from the following schools: Lawrence, Baker, St. Aidan's, Sacred Heart Academy, and the Allston public schools. It seems regrettable that the private schools in Brookline do not offer their students the privilege of visiting this house in connection with their school work.

Other visitors have included Troop 6 of the Boy Scouts; a group of eight librarians arranged for by Miss Aimee Draper, librarian of the Putterham branch library; and two visitors from Arlington, Vermont and Meriden, Connecticut.

The only significant item of upkeep has consisted of repairs to the hot water heater.

Six copies have been sold of the Society's publication *Some Old Brookline Houses*, and three more are now on hand to meet future requests.

Respectfully submitted,  
NINA FLETCHER LITTLE,  
(Chairman, Committee on Rooms)

## A TALK ON "RECREATION WITHIN THE TOWN"

by

AUGUSTUS W. SOULE

I'm afraid I can't live up to my introduction, but I'm only too happy to come and speak about recreation. I think, as long as this is an Historical Society, I should begin with one or two historical facts. I think nearly everybody knows that the Municipal swimming pool — Municipal Bathhouse, it is called — was the first one built in the United States by any town. It was built in 1896, and in 1956 we tore it down, so it lasted just sixty years. It cost \$40,000 with all its equipment. We have voted \$751,000 to build a new Municipal Pool . . . it shows how things have changed in relation to price. I believe also, and I'm not sure of this, that we've had the very first playground in this part of the country, the present Cypress Street Playground, which runs from Cypress Street to in front of the high school. I'm not sure whether Mr. Tyler would know that one, but I think that that was the first; if it wasn't, it was one of the very early ones.

Now, I think most of us somewhat confuse recreation with athletics. And I think in this group I am safe in saying that some of the athletics would not be things that we would want to take part in. On the other hand, perhaps a quiet game of checkers or backgammon, or just sitting and reading, would be called recreation. Recreation, in other words, is a part of the Tyler appropriation. It's all supported by our tax dollars, and it has to do with the spare time of our children, grown people, and each citizen in the Town. It's quite a large business. I think many of you would be startled to realize that \$200,000 in a year is what is spent on recreation. Just to give you a general idea of the size: the Staff itself — we have a Director and an Assistant Director, we have two Supervisors (one is a man and one is a woman), we have eleven Recreation Leaders, general, so-called, and that is, they teach whatever we ask them to teach, and they are on the year-round staff. Also, there are two assistant Recreation Leaders. Then, in the Swimming Pool itself, there are two Supervisors (those people that hand out the towels and charge the fees (fees are charged of those people who use the Pool but are not residents of Brookline — it is a small fee), two Life Guards, three attendants, an office force; we have a Senior Clerk and two Assistant Clerks; we have Custodians (which is a handsome, fancy name for janitors), one Senior Custodian and three Junior Custodians, and four Janitoresses. Then, we have a pianist, who plays live music,

I suppose we'd call it rather than canned music as it is referred to nowadays. The pianist plays for the various gymnasium classes and things of that sort. And that goes the whole year round. And, then, in the Summer time — I must go back a little bit here. There used to be until fifteen years ago, when it was called the Recreation Commission, two Commissions: one was called the Gymnasium and Bathhouse Commission (it ran the Gymnasium and the Bathhouse) and the other was called the Playground Commission. The Playground Commission took charge of outdoor athletics for ten weeks in the Summertime and, again, if you go back, the thing all makes sense because there were schools in the Town. Always when schools were in session, which was from a little after Labor Day until, perhaps, late May or early June, there were athletics for all those involved in the school program. But the minute school stopped, then there is nothing going on at all. So, this Playground Commission was organized to run a program of ten weeks in the Summertime to take care of all the school children who were not in school, and that was combined with the Gymnasium and Bathhouse Committee fifteen years ago as the Recreation Commission, and in that Summer program, in addition to all these year-round employees, we take on thirty-four more people, for just that ten-week session.

We have twenty-nine different playgrounds. I don't think that many of us guessed that we had more than ten, but we've got a good many of them. I'll list them here in a minute. But, in that ten weeks in the Summer, there is a very active program which functions under the supervision of these regular staff people and the thirty-four other people. In addition to that, we take on in the Spring eight additional people because then, in spite of the school program, which is over, I think, by 3 o'clock in the afternoon, there is a good deal of daylight left and the children require supervision and use of the playgrounds. One of the playgrounds is right here at Devotion School. Where the population is heaviest, there are eight of these playgrounds to supplement, not take the place of, the school program. This, of course, utilizes eight additional people beyond our regular year-round staff.

And, then, more recently still, and I don't say this with any unkindness at all, there was a time when the School Department was very jealous of their buildings; they had a building and they had a gymnasium in it, but when school was over, they locked that door and that was the end of it. But in fairly recent times, they've been very cooperative.

We have an evening program. They don't like us to have it when the children should be home studying and that's perfectly

understandable. But, Friday night, for instance, and Saturday night, or even Sunday night, if anybody wants it those times, we are allowed to use their gymnasium under our supervision. What we do is to hire their school recreation person who knows the children well and he/she works for us that evening. When we use the gymnasium, we use their janitor and, in that way, he is responsible to the school for the condition of the gymnasium.

We also have four year-round recreation centers; one (they're all old school buildings, by the way), one is the Winthrop School, rather near to Brookline Village, down there on Boylston Street; one is at the old Rivers School property, which we bought some years ago, called the Eliot Playground; one is at Chestnut Hill near Hammond St. (that happens not to be in a school building; it's an old fire station); and the fourth one, of course, is at the Gymnasium itself, which goes on the year round. So, there is the general picture.

Now, here is the financial part of it, and then I'll get down to some of the details. The salary list alone is \$157,000. That's quite a lot of money, and, yet, the people are rather underpaid if you compare what a fellow who works with a pick and shovel on the Street Department . . . . the first day he is taken on, he gets more than many of our Recreation Leaders get who have graduated from college and have degrees in Physical Education. And you say to the Leaders, "If you want more money, then you must become a ditch-digger or something or other." It isn't quite in line, but, then, I know why (or at least, I think I know why that is). The rest of our program is made up of lottos, twilight league games, and all that sort of sport. It breaks down in our budget in this way: there is about \$17,500 going for that. And on account of the new pool being opened, we have a large item here of new suits. They are going to have a Spectators Gallery and some of the men, perhaps, who are here have been to the men's and boys' time and have seen the bathing suits. They are very scanty and, so, we bought some new ones, hoping that the parents will come in sometimes and see their children while actually taking part themselves.

We have one or two people on pensions and that runs to \$3,000. The swim suits, the fuel and cleaning bills, and all sorts of things like that have nothing to do with salaries and comes to almost \$20,000. And, then, we have a certain amount of office equipment and things of that sort, which is around \$3,000. That's the only part you might call capital outlay; buying baseball bats and gloves and balls and basket balls, etc. which become worn out — they get very hard work.

Now, getting around to the program itself. When school opens, each pupil is asked to take one of these little activity

schedules home so that at least the ones that go to school know what is going on. This schedule provides the program for the whole year: full time recreation centers (I've mentioned that there are three of those in addition to the Gymnasium itself). And, then, Monday through Friday, they have morning play groups. On this, I think I'll digress for a minute. The morning play group is a rather new outgrowth; perhaps, within the last eight or ten years. At the school down on Boylston Street, we have a certain number of paid employees, as I have indicated, and for some reason or other, the girls' classes on Friday evening were falling off in attendance. I think that if I had a daughter that lived in that neighborhood, I, perhaps, wouldn't want her to go out Friday evenings either, or any other evening, for that matter. One of the mothers said, "Why don't you start a play group in the morning? There are a lot of little bits of children here." And, so, we did exactly that. We used exactly the same personnel, the women particularly, and had them re-trained by the kindness of some of the nursery training schools in our neighborhood. This has grown to such an extent that we now have five of these groups . . . . twenty-five children in each group. We used to take them on the basis of what we thought was the greatest need, ones that were nearest by, or ones that came from large families. But, we have since been told that this isn't the way to do it — on this tax dollar. No matter if you're rich or poor, no matter if you live nearby or far away, you should have as much chance as anybody else. As a result, we have had to limit it, because the demand was so great, to those children (this was entirely arbitrary) who had reached four years and eight months of age by the 1st of October. I think that's it; then you can go to kindergarten; and that's run by the school. So we start with those who are not four years, eight months old on the first of October and run back a full year. We have to have birth certificates, and what-not, and in this way, we have formed five groups. Now, each group has about twenty-five children, making a total of one hundred twenty-five children. This group is very popular. Some of them think it's a glorified baby-sitting idea, but I assure you it isn't because they have a lot of fun together and the parents have been exceedingly kind in saying to us that, and I guess it is true, too, their children, having had that one year, are much better adapted when they enter kindergarten and get a lot more out of their first year of school. And that's what evolved from a program which wasn't going too well. This is the kind of progress and advancement the Recreation function is continually striving for.

Monday through Friday, we've got all sorts of programs: girls from six to ten, girls eleven and over, boys from six to ten,



boys eleven and over, older boys and men, Saturday morning activities, Friday evening activities—all sorts of activities. It's quite a full program. Here is a sketch showing how the outside of our new swimming pool will look, which is a very plain wall. It's exactly where the old one was. The statistics are shown, but I won't go into them.

There are all sorts of part-time centers which I've mentioned. We're using the Lincoln School, Pierce School, the Baker School; And then we have shower schedules. That seems funny to some of us in this room, but there are a great many people, especially in certain parts of the Village, where shower-baths are just non-existent, where there aren't too many bathtubs, and sometimes they are used to store the coal in or something of that sort. So that this program of showers is very worthwhile. You'd be surprised how many people come and take showers, and don't do anything else; just come and have a shower there. We give them a towel and a piece of soap and they go home very happy. Again, this is the general idea of what's going on. That's mostly through the school year.

Then, in the Summer, the Summer program comes around. I spoke about the ten weeks in the Summer. At this time, we hand out this Program here. And, that's the map of Brookline and in each one of those little black boxes is a playground and we've got twenty-nine of them. Some are very large; they are called play fields when they're big enough to be more than just a playground. One is just an ordinary sized house lot, which is on Brook St. It happens to be just about the best one of all in the Summertime because it is in the center of a very congested population, and they just have a wonderful program there. This program shows where the playgrounds are and they're all numbered. And it shows the acreage of some of them. For instance, the one that I spoke about on Brook St. has .1% of an acre, which is 1/10 of an acre; whereas the Amory Playground, many of you know where that is, is 8.2 acres; the Eliot Playground, that's the old Rivers School, is 10½ acres. That's nowhere near fully developed. So, we've got some very fine playgrounds. And, then, it shows the facilities and it would take too long to read these. It shows everything that goes on—swings, slides, sandboxes, jungle jims, wading pools, etc. all through every part of this thing. Now, that's only the facilities that are there. There's another thing: recreation for all age groups for all seasons of the year to provide play. And, then, it indicates that there is a Training Institute for instructors, etc. And, on the back it shows a typical daily schedule. Back in the summertime, that would be worth reading. It runs from 8:45 a.m. until 12 o'clock, and from 12:15 to 1:30 (that's the

luncheon period; we don't serve luncheon—but, our instructors have to have their lunch, so this is a little layoff during the middle of the day). The children go home and come back again at 1:30, and it runs right through 'til 4:45; then, the Twilight League takes place at 6:30 which runs to 8:30. So, the life of a playground supervisor or a Recreation Leader General is a very active one, and if you're with children all the time, and some of you perhaps deal with children or grandchildren, you find it pretty wearing once in a while. My daughter's children are in my care at the present time while she's moving from one house to another. So, from this angle, too, our Recreation people are underpaid, you can see. This whole program is, timewise, staggered. Most of us that work, work from 9 'til 5, and that's the end of it. Our Leaders have one morning period and then they have an afternoon period and then they have an evening period. Something is going on all the time from 7:30 'til 10 at night every single day including Saturday. So, their program is a very varied one. The type of thing that they do and the places in which they do it varies, of course, on account of the population and that brings up another point that is awfully difficult for us to know. For instance, Amory Playground is a fine playground, and for years and years and years, at the start of this summer program, we would allot two people, a man and a woman, to supervise that playground and nobody showed up at all. It may be that the people who live in that immediate neighborhood are well enough off that they go away for the Summer, taking the children with them, or something. And until the Housing Development we hadn't had a very good attendance in this playground, and it is almost one of the best playgrounds we have since we've had it made into a playground rather than a mud hole. It was 30 or 40 solid feet of mud to start with. Since the Housing Development for the veterans was built, which is just off St. Paul Street and Egmont Street, the playground is, of course, more frequented. And that shows that no matter how well developed your project is or how much you have in the way of facilities, it's not used except for the bigger children. When they're big enough to ride a bicycle, we find that if you have a good baseball field and they want to play baseball with a hard ball, they'll go somewhere different to have that. It's not true with the little children . . . you've got to have the playground within easy walking distance or else they don't get there at all. The parents have to bring them most of the time. Now, I've rambled on through the thing. And, now, every month we get one of these, which we mail out to all sorts of people and this particular one happens to be for the month of January, 1957, and I think I will read it because there is a great variety of things here; for instance, first is the date,

January 2, 1957, and on this date Adult Card Club takes place at 7:30 P.M. at the Brookline Avenue Center on Wednesday. Then, there's a Senior Basketball Men's Club on the 2nd; the Junior Art Club; the Golden Age Program (I want to stop here a minute and speak about that).

The Golden Age Program is a movement that is going on all over the State and all over the Nation, I presume, and the statistics are very extraordinary — they really are. I think in 1900, there was supposed to be, oh, five or six million in the U. S. that were 65 or over . . . now, there's something like 20 million people 65 or over; and in another five or ten years, there will be another ten or twelve million more, on account of these wonder drugs and things of that sort; I'm not fooling, really, now, the people over 65 are going to be a very substantial part of the population and some of you may remember at one of the Brookline forums there was one man who projected this thing and said, "Now, some of you people here will be around in the year 2000." It seems to me you might just as well say 5000 or 10,000, but that was true . . . they would be there. And then he went on to say that on account of all these things and the longevity of people nowadays, that these people were going to be, and that they already were, a very substantial part of the population in any city; that there had always been a very large segment with leisure on their hands but not any money; namely, the children. The children have all sorts of time on their hands but if they have 5c or 10c a week, that's about as far as it goes; they can buy a little bit of candy or something but not so with these people at 65 or over on account of pensions which, of course, has largely come into existence recently; they not only have leisure but they have money, too, and they can travel—they can do all sorts of things. They are really available to do things and by-and-large many of them are rather lonely people; their own families have died off or something of that sort so that within the last, I guess, five years—I'm guessing now a little bit—we started a Golden Age Club . . . we call them all sorts of things: Senior Citizens, Golden Age Club, and various other names, and they are really an extraordinary group; they have the best time you ever saw; they all have hobbies, they have dinners which they give, they always have a Thanksgiving Dinner, and they have all sorts of things going on, and they need a place that's called a 'drop-in' center, where it is on the ground floor, where there should be toilet facilities, and where there should be two or three rooms really; one for quiet games, another for playing their radios loudly enough for some of the deaf people to hear, and the television going on in the same room, etc.; and that is the thing we haven't got yet. There is not a single building in the Town owned by the Town

where we can find this kind of place for them. When you spoke about your little schoolhouse, it's probably too far away, but we are very anxious to find a 'drop-in' center for these older people. Those who could go by automobile would find it easy to get to, but it should be somewhere near the Village. That has been a very active club and a thing that brings tremendous joy and enthusiasm; they have all their own officers. I'm in that age. I could become a Golden Ager perfectly simply. You don't like to be pushed around, so to speak; we find that if we have a very smart and attractive young girl, and we've got many of them in this program, because many of these people are women, and say, "Well, now we're going to do this; now we're going to do that." — and we automatically move over there and so that . . . you don't like that. If you just let them drop in and do what they want to do, they have a perfectly wonderful time, and their own officers plan all these different things for them. In the Summertime we take them all down to Marblehead for a day or we take them some other place in busloads. And they just have the best time you ever saw. I'm digressing too much.

Then, there's a Girls Art Craft Club (I'm just trying to give you an idea of the variety of things); there's Square Dancing (for boys and girls in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades), Fine Art Class for Grades 3 through 8, Dramatics Club, Modern Dance Club, Girls Baton Class (if you're going to be a Drum Majorette, you've got to learn how to do that,), Basketball for boys, Business Girls Bowling League, Women's Card Club, Mother's Club Meeting, Business Girls Basketball, Exercise Class, Tennis Class (these are all for business girls), Badminton Class, Girl Scouts Badge Program, Checker Tournament, Ping Pong Tournament, Junior and Senior Winter Camping, and we'll stop there, too, because just this last weekend we had 85 boys and girls who left here Friday afternoon and went up to the Sargent Camp, which as you probably know is now part of Boston University, for skiing and they had a wonderful time and it cost only \$15 apiece. They were gone from Friday 'til Sunday night. That's another thing that's run under Recreation. That's real serious exercise, when you go out skiing as many of you know.

We have a Midget Hockey League; we have Roller Skating parties. We had one of these the other night for the first time. This is all in the way of improvements; roller skating ruins the gymnasium floor. In ordinary roller skating you get marks that you never get off, but they've got a new kind of something, perhaps plastic, and a man came and suggested that he would bring the skates, some on shoes and some not on shoes, and we try a program. So, we said "All right, we'll try that on Friday night." And we sent out notices to the 6th, 7th and 8th grades

of all the different schools. Well, I went over there and, honestly, I never saw such a bedlam in my life . . . there were 400 children that got inside — that's all the skates they had there — and there were about 500 who were inside all right, and they were yelling and screeching round in the corridors and up in the running-track that you can get into to look down; it was just the most terrific bedlam you ever saw so this last time we had it, we had it for just one of the grades at a time and that went over big. Now, this is something new. We ought to buy skates, probably, and have them ourselves. We keep trying to find something new and this thought brings me to what I should have said in the start — we're only delighted if anybody has any ideas; there are only five of us on the committee and we can't be everywhere and we don't have all the good ideas either, so we'll be delighted if we hear things that we think could be helpful, or things we haven't done before, or things that, perhaps, we should quit doing and replace with something else. The committee, itself, and I think that is a part of its strength, I really do, is appointed by the Selectmen. We don't have to run for office and so the makeup of the thing — why I'm on it, I don't know exactly — but I'll tell you why the others are on it; I've been Chairman, by the way, since it started 15 years ago. Charlie Bemis, whom many of you know in this room, has been for a great many years a Director of the National Recreation Association and is very highly qualified to know about all these things; Mrs. Briant L. Decker, we've had her on now for about four or five years and she's just wonderful for the women's and girls' activities — they never were as good as they are now — she for many, many years was in charge of the athletics at the Winsor School; Thomas P. Kendrick, a doctor, and chairman of the School Committee — so at every one of our meetings he is there and we know what the School Department is doing for athletics and they're aware of what we are doing, and in this way we can cooperate very well with one another. We always used to have a member of the Park Department . . . Well, I'll say who this past person is: Milton Linden, who lives in South Brookline. He's an excellent person. We always used to have an appointment by the Selectmen of one of the three Park Commissioners, but my wife can testify to the truth of this, I don't know — we talk too much or something — but we often have our meetings run after 12 o'clock at night; we've had two different appointees come and we've just worn them out, and they've just backed out and resigned. So, there's a very peculiar situation here in Brookline — in most places which have recreation, there is the joint Park and Recreation Commission and the Recreation is a part of the Park Department. The Park Department owns all of these playgrounds unless they're owned by the School. They have the maintenance of them and they



have all the physical care and upkeep of the thing. And the Recreation Commission plans the activities and supervises them, so that there is a very close tie-in and everybody thinks we're sort of 'passing the buck', as the Army expression used to be, when we say, "Oh, no, that doesn't belong to us. You should go to the Park Department about that." And then you go to the Park Department about something and they say, "We don't have anything to do with that; that's the Recreation Commission." And, it's still very confusing. We have nothing whatever to do with the Golf Course, for instance, which is certainly Recreation. It was started by the Park Department. They run it, hire and fire the people, and do everything about it; we have nothing to do with it at all. On the other hand, Tennis — one year, they have it, another year, we have it. It's finally back to them now. They are doing it because it's so much easier; they know whether the courts are ready to play on and whether they're not. So, the appointment of this group, I think, is quite representative of the various activities we offer. And that brings me to one other minor thing and then I'm going to quit and answer questions if there will be any. A good many years ago, we made a very unofficial, (I'll go back on that a little bit) — This National Recreation Commission was asked to make a survey of Brookline and, I think it was in 1943 or '44, which they did, and although they were complimentary about the historical part of it, that we had the first swimming pool, etc., they were not very complimentary about the way things stood just then because they said we had a good many areas that weren't properly developed and that we were way behind the times; we needed a million dollars; so, you see, it's really better for the Town that all the budgets have to be approved by a Citizen's Committee, a Committee of Thirty. Well, you can't have a million dollars; that's not possible, at all. But, for the next ten years, perhaps you can have \$100,000 each year, and so, we had to make our plans — what we ought to do and how we were going to spend it. But, we never did get our million dollars because the time has run by now about twelve years, and many of those years there was a kind of economy streak and we cut our budget as everybody else did. At that time, one of the things that the Commission said was that we should try to have a closer union between Park and Recreation, that we should set up an advisory council, and some of you perhaps remember that the Advisory Council and Recreation Commission is just now being taken over as a subdivision of the Brookline Community Council, and we've had that for a good many years. And, then, this final thing was — we had what was the Recreational Planning Committee, which consisted of our top man, Jim Lynch, as the Director of Recreation, Dan Warren as the Head of the Park

Department, Tom Hines as the Head of the Recreational part of the School Committee, Walter Devine, the Town Engineer and he necessarily has to draw all plans and do all that sort of thing, and the final person is Seth Heywood, who is the paid Director of the Brookline Taxpayer's Association. Those five are consulted always if we want to buy a new piece of property. So, what will we do? We have sandboxes and swings; we have a hard-surfaced area which we call an all-purpose area — you can do everything on it. Do we have a baseball field, a football field, and what? So that, that very unofficial committee is almost the core of the whole business as far as the growth of the thing is concerned. They haven't any standing at all, all they can do is to tell us what they think we ought to do, and then the Park and Recreation Commissions follow it up. I'm afraid this has been a very rambling talk and I'm afraid that, having been on that for fifteen years, I could talk for fifteen years but I think now is the time to stop, but I would be delighted if there are any questions that I could answer, or to try to answer them for you.

*Question: What do you do about contract bridge? Do you play that anywhere?*

*Answer:* I really don't know. A lot of these things that I just don't know, I really just can't answer. It doesn't seem to be on that schedule for January, does it? We could do it easily enough because we've got all sorts of rooms open. We have these buildings open until 10 o'clock every night, if these people could get there. It wouldn't need much supervision. We'd need only a room to sit down in, a room that's lighted and heated. I think that if anybody could get the thing up . . . .

*Question: Isn't there anyone whom we could call to find out?*

*Answer:* Yes, the Gymnasium itself is where the office of Jim Lynch and the staff, so to speak, stenographers, etc., is located. And, that's Aspinwall 7-3575. That number is in the telephone book. There's another unlisted number because they have to have telephone connections with all these activities. But, at the same moment, I say that if any of you wanted to go skating, we'd say, "Call the Park Dept." That is true, because the Park Dept. sprays the skating areas and they know if it's all right to skate or not. It's continual confusion, even in our minds; we get mixed up sometimes about who is supposed to do

what. But, there's no reason at all why we shouldn't have bridge clubs.

*Question: I was wondering what is going on in the way of activities at Larz Anderson Park. Is that going to be for skating?*

*Answer:* Well, there is very good skating there; there has been all these weeks. It usually freezes a little quicker than some of the other skating areas. It's very shallow. We do have a great many activities there. I didn't mean that we weren't using it. We have spent very little money on it, but it is a Park, in the first place, of course, and the only thing that is in this budget for this next March is the \$100,000 for the development of the Larz Anderson Park. We all agree that . . . .

(interrupted here by a woman who says: "I noticed that. I wondered what that was for.")

*Answer:* That's called Plan A. The area roughly around the two ponds there. Well, the Polo Field, so-called, is directly next to the Pond and between those two there are lots of apparatus like swings and sand boxes and things and little fireplaces and tables and it is greatly used for that. But we want to develop that so that we can have baseball, perhaps, and various other things on that flat spot, the Polo Field. They want it very much. Olmsted Bros. have been asked to fill in the lower pond, but we're very much against that as there aren't too many ponds anyhow.

*Question: How about a ski hill? They did have that.*

*Answer:* They did have that and I think that might be operating now. To tell the truth I have not been by there since this heavy snow.

*Question: How steep is it?*

*Answer:* Well, it's a rather gentle slope for real skiers, but on the other hand, it's about the only slope we've got in town that's any place you can ski at all except the back of the Brakeman place, which isn't, I guess, in Brookline . . . . that's probably in Boston. I hope that's going, but I really don't know. We've got to have a good many better facilities. We want a little shed of some sort down near the pond where

you can warm your feet, anyhow, if you're skating and have a fire in front of it, and things of that sort. This is all in the development plan and every time I've spoken at the Devotion School here, and I spoke a little while ago when they had the Head of the Police Dept., the Park Dept., and Recreation Dept. and somebody else, and they wanted to know why we couldn't do all this. Well, really, as we began to think it over, we've really done more for this school than we have for some of the other schools and you just have to say, "You've got to be patient" and that just isn't what they want. They want something right away quick. It seems a lot of money and it is but it doesn't go around very well in twenty-nine different playgrounds and these two or three buildings we own.

*Question:* Mr. Soule, does the Golden Age Group support its own activities?

*Answer:* Yes, it does. It does and it does not. For instance, if they have a Thanksgiving Dinner, they support it entirely. They have entertainers, etc. and they charge for that. They do not attempt and we don't expect them to, to pay for the busses if we take them down to Marblehead or something else. There's a certain amount of expense and in our budget this year; there is an item for the rent of some place (we're thinking of two or three places; one of which Mrs. Little would know very well; it's the part that the nurses use in the Brookline Nursing Society who have now moved up to their up-center building. That room would make a very nice one in certain ways except it's hard to get at. There's a traffic problem there, etc. So, we expect to have some expense on the Recreation Commission just as we do for other groups. They're not entirely self-supporting, but they do a great deal to support their own activity.

And I think I've talked long enough, and I again thank you for giving me the pleasure of addressing you.

## **"SOME REMARKS ABOUT THE HISTORY OF 450 WARREN STREET"**

By GEORGE CHEEVER SHATTUCK, M. D.

The house where we are meeting today was built in 1830, or thereabouts, by Colonel Thomas Handasyd Perkins for his daughter, Eliza, and his son-in-law, Samuel Cabot. The property on which it stands is part of the large estate owned at that time by Colonel Perkins. Only this part, which belongs now to my brother Henry Lee Shattuck and to me jointly, has remained in the family.

Mrs. Samuel Cabot lived to be very old and after her death the place was taken over by her daughter Elizabeth Perkins Cabot and her husband, Henry Lee. Their daughter, Elizabeth Perkins Lee, married my father, Dr. Frederick Cheever Shattuck. My mother took the place as part of her inheritance after the death of her mother. My brother and I have inherited it in like manner.

Colonel Perkins was only 35 years old when, in 1799, he bought this land on Sweetbrier Lane, now Warren Street, but through trade with China and other parts of the world, he was already a rich man. He transformed what must have been a farm into a fine estate and built a house in the Jamaica planter style and an extensive array of greenhouses. In the greenhouses there were nectarines and grapes of various kinds as well as camellias and other plants, some of which, rare in those days, had been imported by Colonel Perkins.

All but one of the greenhouses have been pulled down but on some of the walls which remain standing there still grows ivy brought by Colonel Perkins from Warwick Castle, England. A low wall beside the garden path is topped by a row of perforated porcelain tiles of greenish blue color. Obviously Chinese, they must have been imported by Colonel Perkins through his branch office in Canton, China. Mention of the fruits and flowers in Colonel Perkins' greenhouses can be found in horticulture magazines published about 1930, in the American Camellia Society Yearbook, 1953 and in the Yearbook of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1955. These articles contain references to early publications describing Colonel Perkins' estate.

We have a photograph of the original house of Samuel Cabot as depicted in a sketch. Where the sketch is, I do not know. It shows a cottage built of wood with a long sloping roof, pointed gable windows and a veranda covered with vines. The Samuel Cabots soon altered the house radically. The masonry and the mansard roof go back to them.



My wife made a collection of old photographs of the various rooms in the house which date back to the occupancy of the Cabots. They show the changes in furnishings made by each generation.

#### "THE VARIETIES THEATRE"

This theatre was built more than 100 years ago by Samuel Cabot for the benefit of his son-in-law Henry Lee and other members of the family who enjoyed amateur theatricals. Many performances were given here up to the time of the Civil War when the young men were called to the Colors and the women undertook war work of various kinds at home. We have found many of the early play bills. They show that most of the performances were light and humorous. Sheridan's "Rivals" was a favorite and, when Fanny Kemble was fulfilling an engagement in Boston, she took the part of Mrs. Maloprop *en amateur* in this theatre. Because the theatre is so small and the audience was so close to her, she suffered from stage fright.

In those days, the footlights were a row of gas burners at the front of the stage. Nearly twenty-five years ago when my wife and I rehabilitated the theatre, we put in the electric lighting. The old scenery, most if not all of which had been painted by members of the family, required little repair. The backdrops were found under a trap door at the back of the stage. My mother thought that the stage-curtain was painted by Edward Cabot. He was an architect and one of her many first-cousins.

The parlor and the library were considerably altered by the Lees but a photograph which was taken during the days of the Cabots shows the two Chinese Lowestoff urns which still stand upon the mantle piece in the parlor.

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In the course of the talk by Dr. Shattuck,  
Mrs. Shattuck's lantern slides of the house were shown.

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#### DATES OF OWNERSHIP OF 450 WARREN STREET

1. Land bought by Colonel Thomas Handasyd Perkins in 1799
2. Samuel Cabot, 1854-1885
3. Henry Lee, 1885-1909
4. Frederick Cheever Shattuck, 1909-1931
5. George Cheever Shattuck and Henry Lee Shattuck, 1931-

**DATES OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS OF OWNERS**

Thomas Handasyd Perkins, 1764-1854 (Age 90 at death)  
 Sarah Elliot, ----1852

Samuel Cabot, 1784-1863 (Age 79 at death)  
 Eliza Perkins, 1791-1885 (Age 94 at death)

Henry Lee, 1817-1898 (Age 81 at death)  
 Elizabeth Perkins Cabot, 1823-1909 (Age 86 at death)

Dr. Frederick Cheever Shattuck, 1847-1929 (Age 82 at death)  
 Elizabeth Perkins Lee, 1846-1931 (Age 85 at death)

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE GARDENS**

1. American Camellia Society Yearbook, 1953, p. 44, includes early references.
2. Massachusetts Horticultural Society Yearbook, 1955, p. 34
3. Treasury of American Gardens, Harper Brothers 1956, p. 68
4. Cabot History and Genealogy by L. V. Briggs, 1927
5. Camellias in America, p. 36, H. H. Hume, 1846
6. Memorial History of Boston, edited by Justin Winsor, Vol. IV, 1881, p. 625

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