

DOVER

Other Town Reports

2023



Report of the **Town Library**

Board of Trustees

Erin Rodat-Savla, Chair

Rob Andrews (*effective June 2023, to fill unexpired term*)

Adrian Hill (*resigned June 2023*)

Peter Hoffmann

Judith Schulz

Amea Tejani

Tracy Tobin

Bethany Klem, Library Director

It has been a year of updates and renewal at the Dover Town Library. Without forgetting our commitment to an open, welcoming, and person-centered environment, the Library has also embraced new events, technology, and services to fulfill our mission to “educate and inspire all members of our community.”

Community Engagement

The community, its members and its organizations, are at the heart of everything the Library offers. While most activities take place inside our building, we’ve added more outreach opportunities this year, including a vibrant presence at Dover Days and new collaborations with the Dover-Sherborn Middle School and Dover-Sherborn High School. Inside the building, our long-standing partnership with the Council on Aging has led to another excellent year of reading with the PageTurners Book Club, and new partnerships with other regional libraries has greatly expanded our virtual programming offerings. The Library also participated in the national Banned Books Week with a “Freedom to Read” read-in featuring special guests State Senator Rebecca Rausch and U.S. Representative Jake Auchincloss.

Strategic Plan

Amid all the other enhancements and developments at the Library, Trustees Erin Rodat-Savla and Judy Schulz have joined Library Director Bethany Klem in launching a new Strategic Plan. The process involves conducting detailed research into community data and needs, and Dover residents have been generous with their time and insights. The Strategic Planning Survey opened in November and yielded more than 200 responses filled with valuable information, as well as offers for further conversations. The Strategic Planning Committee expects to file the new plan with the State of Massachusetts sometime in March 2024.

Technology and Outreach

Several updates have positively affected the underpinnings of Library services this year. Upgraded Internet connections, new self-checkout software, and a new online catalog from the Minuteman Library Network have all improved access to Library resources. The semimonthly newsletter we revived last year is going strong, and we've added Wowbrary, a service that notifies subscribers and website visitors of new items added to the Library's collection in the prior week. Most excitingly, the Library spent the latter half of the year working on a new logo as well as a new website that will be ready to launch early in 2024. The new site is mobile-friendly and adds a host of features that make our collections, events, and services far more accessible than our previous website.

Collections

Collection development is a never-ending process for any library. Our staff takes pride in curating fresh, relevant, and useful materials for our community, and this year has seen several new additions. Visitors can now browse collections of non-English language materials in our new World Languages collections for both adults and children, with many selections in Spanish and Chinese, among others. We've also continued to dramatically expand our Overdrive Advantage collections of ebooks and e-audiobooks, leading to shorter wait times for digital materials. Wi-Fi hotspots are another new addition to our Library, which means that community members have more access to freely available Internet on the go.



Dover Town Library. Photo courtesy of the Dover Town Report Committee.

Two new gifts to the Library are also worth mentioning: Beatrice Adams bequeathed to the Library two canine statues created by Amelia Peabody; we're grateful for her generosity in expanding our collection of Amelia's works. We also received a pastel work by local artist, Virginia Precourt, courtesy of Joan King. The statues are on display at the lower entrance to the Library, and the pastel will be hung inside as soon as we have adequate hardware to mount it safely.

As participants in the Minuteman Consortium, we also offer our patrons a wide selection of online digital content covering many disciplines, including arts and music, business, culinary arts, economics, entrepreneurship, environment, health, gardening, psychology, religion, science, and more. Library-funded databases are free and accessible through our website 24/7 from home and work. Highlights of the digital collection include news sources like *The Boston Globe*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times*; research support via Ancestry.com or ConsumerReports.org; learning opportunities on Great Courses or Mango Languages; and a wide array of reading and entertainment on Overdrive/Libby, Hoopla, Kanopy, and Qello.

Governance and Policies

Policy updates continued this year, and the Trustees approved new rules for use of the Community Room. At the state level, legislators considered bills governing ebook pricing and book banning, and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners added new questions about challenged materials to libraries' annual reports to state and federal agencies. Book challenges were a common theme in the state this year: In September, every public library in the state also received a FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) request seeking information about all materials that received challenges, reconsideration requests, or complaints since January 2021.

Facilities

Although the Library is so much more than a building, our physical structure is critical to our ability to fulfill our mission. The majority of our building, constructed in 1968 with a major addition in 1995, is aging as well as it can. Two notable exceptions had an impact on public services this year. First, our HVAC system came to the end of its useful life and failed cooling equipment led to an early closure one day in April due to excessive indoor temperatures. Malfunctions in the heating equipment have led to increased fuel oil bills and manual overrides of the blowers. Thankfully, voters at the May 2023 Annual Town Meeting approved funds to allow the Building Maintenance Department to redesign and replace the heating system over the current and subsequent fiscal years.

Second, parts of the elevator are also at the end of their useful life, and our elevator was out of order for four months between June and October due to a failed component in the computing system. We're glad to have it operating reliably once again.

As always, Library staff members are pleased to assist with reader's advisory, help pick a great book, place a hold, or answer questions. We are a team of professionals dedicated to the community, and every day we strive to build a meaningful collection of materials, to offer engaging programs, and to make the library a worthwhile experience and destination. Visit us at www.dovertownlibrary.org or call us at 508-785-8113.

Library Statistics for Fiscal Year 2023

(July 2022–June 2023)

State Aid awards	\$13,770
Gifts and donations	\$57,891
Trust fund balances	\$636,622
Circulation	95,391
Library visits	71,860
Items loaned to other libraries	24,272
Items borrowed from other libraries	12,116
Holdings	171,285
Registered borrowers	3,071
Programs offered	431
Program attendance	24,450



*Mike Bent's "Little Voices, Big Change" magic show.
Photo courtesy of the Dover Town Library.*

Report of the
Cemetery Commission

Mariah Riess, Chair
Carol Jackman, Secretary
Fred Sears

During 2023, 18 families bought grave lots at Highland Cemetery: two one-grave lots, 10 two-grave lots, and six four-grave lots. The income from the sale of these lots was \$17,400 and the perpetual care income was \$64,600, for a total income of \$82,000.

Forty-two funerals were held in 2023, of which 29 were cremations and 13 were full burials. Seven of the funeral services were for veterans who had served in the U.S. Armed Forces. A total of \$24,900 was collected for these funerals, representing \$6,000 collected for regular full burials, \$5,400 for cremations, and \$13,500 for the surcharge revenue for holiday and weekend burials. Income from setting foundations and markers was \$16,600. This year, our cemetery gator was replaced, and the old one was auctioned off for \$8,500.

The Town of Dover is very fortunate to have Lawrence (Rusty) Dauphinee as Cemetery Supervisor. His caring way with families who are undergoing difficult times is truly appreciated. The Highway Department assists us on an as-needed basis and is another invaluable asset.

Memorial Day is the day that Highland Cemetery seems to have the greatest number of visitors, and as a town we are very thankful for everyone's support. We thank the George B. Preston American Legion Post 209 Auxiliary, who with the assistance of Boy Scout Troop 1, planted the geraniums at all the veterans' graves and ensured that the flags were in place for the Town ceremony. We also want to thank the Memorial Day Committee for its work each year on the beautiful ceremony conducted at our Memorial Star by the front flag. Additional thanks go to the Town for budgeting the funds needed to buy the plants and flags.

This year, we installed a commercial-grade solar light for the back flag. We also pruned trees, but unfortunately had to cut down some of our aging trees. The Meditation Garden received additional plantings, and we hope to add more.

Citizens are reminded they may contribute to our gift fund, which goes toward the beautification of the cemetery. All donations are greatly appreciated and tax deductible.

Report of the **Historical Commission**

Anne Reitmayer, Chair
Sierra Bright
Gene Hornsby
Jane Moore
Geoffrey Sauter
Ellen Weinberg

The Historical Commission was established under Chapter 40, Section 8D of the Massachusetts General Laws for the purposes of preserving, protecting, and developing the historical and archaeological assets of the Town of Dover. Composed of up to seven members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, the Commission administers Chapter 96 (Demolition Review) of the Town of Dover General Bylaws. The bylaw's aim is to encourage owners of "preferably preserved historically significant buildings" to seek ways to preserve, rehabilitate, or restore such buildings rather than demolish them, with the intent of preserving the cultural heritage of Dover.

In 2023, the Commission reviewed eight permit requests for the demolition of existing houses and other structures, none of which were deemed to be historically significant. Also in 2023, it reviewed a permit request that had been made in December 2022, for demolition of an existing house, which it deemed to be historically significant.

Lastly in 2023, Stephen Kruskall and Richard C. Eells resigned their positions on the Historical Commission as Chair and Secretary, respectively. Both had served on the Commission for many years and worked hard to carry out its mission. The Commission deeply appreciates their contributions. We welcomed two new members, Geoff Sauter and Ellen Weinberg.

Report of the **Council on Aging**

Robert G. Cocks Jr., Chair
Maureen Dilg, Secretary
Reverend Peter DiSanto
Betty Hagan
Gilbert Thisse
Geraldine Wise
Cindy Holmes
Annemarie Thompson, Associate Member

Janet Claypoole, Director
Nan Vaida, Outreach Coordinator
Amea Tejani, Program Coordinator
Jennifer James, Administrative Assistant

The Dover Council on Aging (COA) was established by the Town in 1976, pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 8B of the Massachusetts General Laws. COA programs and services are designed to meet the educational, social, and health and wellness needs of Dover's seniors and the families who care for them, in coordination with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs (MEOEA). As of 2023, there were 1,503 residents aged 60 years and older in Dover, representing approximately one quarter of the Town's population. The COA supports seniors and their families through information, support, outreach, advocacy, transportation, and health and social programs. In 2023, more than 730 people were served.

Caryl Community Center

Due to the ongoing renovation project at Caryl Community Center (CCC), the COA offices remained in their temporary location in the Town House Fireside Room. Programs were held at the Town House, the Dover Legion, the Most Precious Blood Church, the Dover Church, St. Dunstan's Church, the Town Library, Powisset Farm, and Chickering Elementary School. We thank our partners for sharing space with the COA.

Senior Transportation

In 2023, the COA provided more than 220 rides to seniors and residents with disabilities who qualified for the MetroWest Ride and discounted JFK Transportation Services rides to COA programs, medical appointments, and other MetroWest destinations, as well as to Boston for medical appointments.

Programs and Classes

COA programs were held in person, virtually, and in hybrid mode at multiple locations in the Town. Fitness classes moved to a hybrid model and included Strength & Stability, Stretch & Flow, Chair Yoga, Mat Yoga, and Mindful Movement & Stretch. The COA and Parks and Recreation have suspended Pickleball while the CCC is closed. The Kingsbury Club in Medfield extended senior swim classes to COA members, while outdoor fitness included local guided walks and kayaking on Farm Pond. The COA hosted Nature Talks and Travel Talks on a wide range of topics. Dian Seidel, author of *Kindergarten at 60: A Memoir of Teaching in Thailand*, shared her retirement adventure of teaching young children overseas. Local speakers spoke on the cultural celebrations of Chinese New Year and Diwali, India's Festival of Lights, which also included a special dance performance by a Dover resident. The Art Show at Ivana's Art Loft featured works by Dover seniors and local artists.

Other COA programs in 2023 included Mah Jongg, Let's Paint, Card Making, Knitting, Chit Chat Tea, and Senior Coffee & Conversation. Classes under the Lifetime Learning series, sponsored by the Friends of the COA (FoCOA; www.coafriends.org), included Russia and Ukraine Explained, Beginner Ukulele, Fun with Ukulele, American Artists and the Landscape, and Music Appreciation. The COA also hosted a NASA Solar System Ambassador series featuring: Return to the Moon—Forward to Mars; A Look Back in Time: The James Webb Space Telescope; and Hidden Figures: Women of NASA.



Paddling crew at Farm Pond. Photo courtesy of the Dover Council on Aging.

The COA co-hosted the Pageturners Book Club with the Town Library and co-sponsored, with the Westwood COA, monthly cooking classes at Powisset Farm, a trip to Quebec, a Long Island Lighthouse cruise, and a trip to Cranberry Bog with a Cape Cod canal cruise.

In-person travel returned with trips to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Providence Performing Arts Center, Peabody Essex Museum, Sedgwick Gardens at Long Hill, Cape Ann Museum, Mosesian Center for the Arts, Norwood Theatre, and Hammond Castle Museum, as well as a Cambridge Architecture cruise. Musical programs featured Dover-Sherborn Middle School (DSMS) student George Leon on piano and a holiday concert by Dover-Sherborn High School (DSHS) a cappella groups DS al Coda, Noteworthy, and the Harmonic Imbalance quartet.

In 2023, the COA added historical programs focused on New England, with: The History of Howard Johnson's; Boston's Thanksgiving Traditions; and Plimoth Patuxet Museums' 13,000 Moons and 12,000 Years: Wampanoag History Past and Present, as well as New England General Stores with journalist Ted Reinstein. The COA partnered with the Dover Historical Society on programs presented by local residents that included The Dover Union Iron Works, The Birth of Civilization: Life 15,000 Years Ago in the Mediterranean, and The Early Bronze Age of Cyprus.

Intergenerational programs continued with students reaching out to seniors. The Dover Mothers Association recruited children to decorate meal delivery bags. Chickering School fifth-graders created table decorations for the monthly luncheons. DSMS students performed Irish step dances at the St. Patrick's luncheon. The Dover Boy Scouts Troop 1 shoveled snow and shared holiday wreaths. The Girl Scouts crafted holiday wreaths and delivered them to seniors' homes, while Brownies and Daisies created valentines, cards, and artwork. DSMS students assisted at the Dover Police Holiday Brunch and decorated homemade wreaths, delivering them to seniors and singing carols. DSHS Community Service students provided tech support, created Halloween decorations, baked cookies, raked leaves, and shoveled snow. The Dover Church Men's Group delivered buckets of sand and salt for icy steps and walkways to 28 seniors.

Other Senior Services

Outreach Coordinator Nan Vaida, RN provided support and resources to seniors and their families. She and COA Director Janet Claypoole coordinated with the Police and Fire Departments to check on isolated or at-risk seniors. In partnership with Springwell Elder Services, the COA offered home and community services and facilitated the medical-equipment loan program. The SHINE program (Serving the Health Information Needs of Everyone) provided free consultations on Medicare for enrolled seniors and info sessions on Medicare plan options to new beneficiaries.

The COA staff devotes tremendous time to helping seniors cope with changing health conditions, assisting family caregivers, locating resources, facilitating the transition from hospital or rehab settings to home, and

helping elders maintain their dignity and independence as they age in place. It works with seniors and families in crisis and the Police Department on elder abuse and elder-at-risk situations and also on distributing free visibility vests for seniors out walking.

The COA acts as the Town's Financial and Energy Assistance Coordinator to provide support to residents. Ms. Vaida offers state and federal resources and advocates for residents coping with energy/utility emergencies and food insecurity. The COA also coordinates the Senior Property Tax Work Off Program, recruiting workers for Town departments in return for up to \$1,500 applied toward property tax bills.

Luncheons and Meals

Monthly senior luncheons offer opportunities to enjoy a meal, socialize, and celebrate holidays. In 2023, lunches featured local Irish step dancers, meteorologist Jason Brewer, musician Sean Fullerton, Community Center Building Committee Chair Ford Spalding, Town Administrator Michael Blanchard, and Police Chief Peter McGowan (retired). The Thanksgiving luncheon served 99 seniors, with meals delivered to the homebound. Grab & Go Meals curbside service provided an extra monthly meal given rising food costs. The Dover Church and the COA held the Holiday Concert & Cookies, distributing more than 800 wrapped treats baked by 30 volunteers and presenting DSHS a cappella groups. About 60 seniors regularly participated in the popular Grab & Go Meals biweekly pick-up of bread donated by Blue Moon Bagel Cafe, which included a farm stand with fresh Powisset Farm vegetable from June to November. The Dover Police Association's Holiday Brunch was held at Chickering School, where officers cooked breakfast for more than 85 seniors and delivered to the homebound.

Grants and Gifts

In 2023, an MEOEA grant partially funded the COA's fitness programs and supported our Administrative Assistant's position. FoCOA underwrote programs such as Nature Talks, Travel Talks, Lifetime Learning, trip transportation, and offerings of farm-fresh produce.

Other Activities

The COA continued to offer its Talk with the Town series to allow Town departments to update the community. Speakers included the Police Chief, Town Administrator, Assessor, Planning Board members, Chickering School Principal, Parks and Recreation Director and Commissioner, Library Director, and the Director of Public Works. The weekly COA e-newsletter promoted events and facilitated online program registration. The COA also attended Community Center Building Committee meetings on the CCC renovation, and it served on the Community Benefits Advisory Committee at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital-Needham.

Volunteer Assistance

In 2023, 178 volunteers spent 1,504 hours assisting the COA by delivering meals, helping at luncheons, teaching classes, providing office support, baking cookies, delivering salt/sand, providing technology assistance, and distributing meals, breads, fresh produce, and more under all weather conditions. We could not provide our programs and services without the time, energy, and enthusiasm of these volunteers—our most important asset. Their generosity and kindness are greatly appreciated.

The COA honored team member Sue Sheridan as she retired in June 2023 after 20 years of employment with the Town of Dover. Jennifer James joined the COA in December as Administrative Assistant.



COA volunteers. Photo courtesy of the Dover Council on Aging.

Report of the Cultural Council

Judith Schulz, Chair
Antonio Saenz, Secretary
Deni Auclair, Treasurer
Shashi Chawla
Stefanie Leahy

The Dover Cultural Council (DCC) administers funds that it receives each year from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), the state agency whose mission is to “promote excellence, access, education and diversity in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences to improve the quality of life for all Massachusetts residents, and to contribute to the economic vitality of our communities.” These funds, which originate as annual appropriations of the Massachusetts Legislature, are awarded in the form of grants to individuals and organizations that support the MCC’s mission and provide cultural benefit to the Dover community.

Under the MCC’s Local Cultural Council Program, the most extensive grassroots cultural support network in the nation, the DCC awarded \$8,303 in grants for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23). This figure is larger than usual, reflecting that some money for programs was carried forward from previous years because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Grants awarded include, but are not limited to:

- **Dover Diwali** (\$900)
- **The Dover Foundation: Hello Dolly** (\$903)
- **Dover Historical Society:** Horticultural Habitat Identification for the Sawin Triangle (\$600)
- **Dover Mother’s Association:** Mind & Body Dover (\$700)
- **Dover-Sherborn Schools:** Scott Tarulli, Master Guitarist (\$250); Hip-Hop Song Composition Workshop (\$500); Dover-Sherborn Reads, *The Memory of Light* (\$500)
- **Friends of the Council on Aging:** Sean Fullerton Concert (\$250)
- **Parks & Recreation:** Satur-PLAY in May (\$1,000); Robert Newmarker, Not-so-Spooky Trunk or Treat (\$500)
- **Rehearsal for Life Freelance Players:** Support for fall and spring programs (\$350)

- **Town Library:** Davis Bates, *Raising Our Voices: A Library Summer Reading Performance* (\$500); Pirate Party (\$450); Pamela Means, *The Power of the Protest Song: Our Shared History and Present Day* (\$900)

Information, local guidelines and applications for Dover Cultural Council grants are available at www.mass-culture.org/Dover.



*Cultural Council booth at the Dover Days Fair.
Photo courtesy of Judith Schulz.*

Report of the Memorial Day Committee

Chris Jackman, Chair
Carol Jackman

The Town of Dover has always been proud to conduct Memorial Day exercises on May 30th, and this year was no different. This is when we honor our many Dover veterans who lost their lives in battle or who passed after returning home.

The program, which began at 6 p.m., was attended by many townspeople, as well as members of the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the Dover Boy Scouts Troop 1. The George B. Preston American Legion Post 209 conducted the Posting of Colors, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all, and invited guests were introduced.

Our guest speaker, Lieutenant Brian Michel, U.S. Army, reflected on his 32 years of service to our country. Brian grew up in Dover and graduated in 1975 from Dover-Sherborn High School. After attending college, he entered the U.S. Army and was deployed to Kosovo and Iraq. Now retired, Brian spends his time between Texas and Cape Cod. (Yes, Brian is James “Boomer” Michel’s younger brother.)

Dan Davis conducted the performance of “American Fantasy,” arranged by Mike Story and played by students from the Chickering School, Dover-Sherborn Middle School, and Dover-Sherborn High School. Veterans in attendance were recognized by having them stand, state their name, branch of service, and dates of service. Reverend Dr. C. Maxwell Olmstead of Dover Church then closed the program with reflections on Memorial Day.

The parade to Highland Cemetery took place under the supervision of Grand Marshal Ford Spalding, U.S. Navy. Before entering the cemetery, the parade stopped at Soldiers Monument to place flowers in memory of all Dover’s deceased veterans.

Graveside services were conducted near the cemetery’s Flag and the Memorial Star, followed by a gun salute and the playing of “Taps” by our bugler, Will Goldman. Reverend Peter DiSanto of Grace Church offered a prayer. Ford Spalding and Chris Jackman carried out the traditional reading of names of Dover’s own who died in battle. The parade marched out of Highland Cemetery, returning to the Town House for the Raising of Colors and the closing ceremony.

Special thanks go to everyone who made the event possible, including the Town House staff, the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girls Scouts, and Brownies. The Committee also wishes to thank the Dover American Legion Auxiliary, assisted by the Boy

Scouts, for decorating the graves of all veterans with geraniums and flags, and the Legion for hosting its annual cookout for all parade participants and townspeople in attendance.

It should be noted that the plantings in the urn by the front Flag in Highland Cemetery are in memory of Private Robert O’Connell, U.S. Army.



Soldiers Monument. Photo by Kristen Dixon.

Report of the Department of Veterans' Services

Paul Carew, District Director

The Department of Veterans' Services performs the functions assigned to it by Chapter 115 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Chief among them is the administration of a benefits program provided to veterans and their families in need.

The Department maintains a depository of discharges and records of service for matters to be brought before the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, including claims for pension, compensation for service-connected disabilities, educational benefits, burial benefits, and headstones and markers. The office also processes applications for hospitalization and medical care.

Veterans Administration benefit forms are available in our office at 117 East Central Street, Natick, MA. The director is there to serve our veterans and is glad to provide assistance, including help with filing the appropriate paperwork for applicable benefits. Please call us at 508-647-6545.



Photo by Mary Kalamaras.

Report of the Community Center Building Committee

Ford Spalding, Chair

David Billings

Luciana Burdi

Barry Goldman

Dick Malcom

Terry Sobolewski

Ruth Townsend

Bob Springett, Board of Selectmen Liaison

Woody Weiss, Warrant Committee Liaison

Michael Blanchard, Town Administrator, Ex Officio

Project Professionals

Colliers International, Owner's Project Manager

Fennick McCredie Architecture, Architect

M. O'Connor Contractors, General Contractor

In June 2022, when the original subcontractor bids for the Caryl Community Center (CCC) building project exceeded the amount approved by voters in June 2021 (\$18.9 million) by \$2.9 million, the project was put on hold while the Selectmen determined their next course of action. In November 2022, they asked the Building Committee to rebid the project and bring the results to a Special Town Meeting in June 2023 for a decision on whether or not to proceed with construction. In April 2023, the Building Committee, following the prescribed procurement process, selected the lowest qualified bidder, M. O'Connor Contracting of West Roxbury, Massachusetts, as the General Contractor. By this point, the total project cost had further escalated to \$25,443,800 from \$21.8 million. Throughout the month of May, the Committee held several community information sessions in preparation for the June 3, 2023, Special Town Meeting.

At the meeting, voters approved the construction of the new CCC at the new higher cost by a vote of 220 to 85. A second article sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Commission for an outdoor recreation court and swing set for \$174,000, to be included in the CCC project, also passed (203 to 77). Finally, a third article sponsored by the Selectmen, seeking \$40,000 for costs associated with future operations of the CCC, including salaries and expenses, was defeated (104 to 167).

Once the building permit was received on July 10, construction mobilization began with the establishment of fencing, the installation of a construction trailer, and the abatement of hazardous materials within the existing building. Since July, the following milestones have been met: The 1930 and 1970 buildings have been razed and the 1910 building shored up and ready for renovation. Foundations for the gym, pavilion, and other new structures have been completed and are ready for steel installation in January 2024. Construction is in progress on the underground fire prevention structures and the in-ground plumbing infrastructures. It is anticipated that the final completion date of the new CCC will be in October 2024.

The Building Committee, Colliers International, Fennick McCredie Architecture, and M. O'Connor Contracting continue to jointly monitor the project's progress, with the mandate of staying on time and on budget.



Photo by Tom Zuppa.

Historical Focus

Discovering Amelia Peabody

Perhaps you have noticed her name etched into the millstone monument at the intersection of Dedham and Centre Streets, posed your child for a photo op with the horse statue outside the Town Library, or walked the Peabody Loop trail in Noanet Woodlands. Maybe you have simply heard her name in passing—Amelia Peabody. How many residents today know who she was or what role she played in the life of our town? This remarkable woman's life and legacy seem to be in danger of fading into the mists of time.



Photo: Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Born to a wealthy Boston family, Amelia Peabody (1890–1984) was sent to finishing schools to learn the skills and graces required of a high society lady. But she instead dreamed of living a more robust outdoor life. Upon her father's death in 1918 and mother's remarriage in 1920, the family's sole heir used her inheritance to create a home suited to her interests and values. She purchased Mill Farm on Dedham Street as a rural retreat where she could raise and ride thoroughbreds and work on her art. A passionate, prolific sculptor who studied at the School for the Museum of Fine Arts, Amelia received many commissions and created hundreds of

works, several of which grace our library. She also exhibited her work in group and solo shows in Boston and the Northeast. She was particularly honored with the opportunity to exhibit at the New York World's Fair in 1939 and 1940! Her favorite subjects were nature and athletics, and she took inspiration from scenes and activities here in town.

As Amelia settled further into Dover life, she bought a second farm, Powisset Farm, for breeding livestock, including Hereford cattle and Yorkshire pigs. She bought up tracts of woodland between her two farms, ultimately becoming the largest landowner in Dover with 800 acres of property in her care.

Amelia believed in the health benefits of outdoor living and the importance of preserving nature and open spaces. During her lifetime, her woodland trails were always open to the public. (People in town today fondly remember skiing behind Mill Farm.) The Norfolk Hunt Club, of which she was one of the first female members, staged their hunts in her woods. Ever resourceful, she recycled trees downed by the 1938 New England Hurricane to create a series of horse jumps, now a popular trail dubbed Hurricane Alley. An avid Red Cross worker, Amelia hosted picnic days at her farms for war veteran students.

Her philanthropy was wide-ranging (Boston Children's Hospital, Tufts Veterinary School, Museum of Science, Institute for Contemporary Art), but Amelia was also generous at home. She employed students from Norfolk County Agricultural School and town residents on her farms and offered art lessons to local children. When the Dover-Sherborn High School Band was short of funds for a Disney World trip, she made up the difference, asking only for a pair of Mickey Mouse ears in return.

Amelia's concern for the environment was exceptionally forward-thinking. In 1948, she funded the construction of one of the world's first solar-heated houses—the Dover Sun House (formerly on Powisset Street)—developed by physicist Mária Telkes and designed by pioneering architect Eleanor Raymond, who had also designed the Mill Farm art studio. Amelia planted native species on her properties and served as an officer for both The Trustees of Reservations and New England Forestry Association. Upon her death, Amelia bequeathed some property to the New England Wild Flower Society and, most notably, hundreds of acres (now Noanet Woodlands) to The Trustees. Powisset Farm, also given to the care of The Trustees, has preserved Amelia's "farm forward" legacy through its organic and sustainable farming methods.

In 1981, Governor Edward J. King proclaimed May 16th as Amelia Peabody Day. We might all mark our calendars to remember the day so that our community matriarch's name and legacy truly do not fade into the mists of time. For more on Amelia's life and work, visit the Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund at <https://www.apcfund.org/amelias-story>.

—Zaiga Alksnitis, Dover Town Report Committee