
	<p style="text-align: center;">The Crier</p> <p style="text-align: center;">of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Glocester</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Heritage Society</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Glocester Heritage Society Job Armstrong Store 1181 Putnam Pike P.O. Box 269 Chepachet, RI 02814</p> <p style="text-align: right;">401.568.1866 <a href="http://www.glocesterheritagesociety.org">www.glocesterheritagesociety.org</a> <a href="mailto:info@glocesterheritagesociety.org">info@glocesterheritagesociety.org</a></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Incorporated 1967.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Volume: One</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Year: 2004</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Issue: Two</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The Glocester Heritage Society identifies, acquires, holds, arranges, restores, maintains, and preserves for posterity buildings, tracts of land and objects of historical, educational, architectural, cultural, and other similar interests of outstanding value within the Town of Glocester, RI.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RI Historic Commission Designates Three GHS Members as Reward Recipients</b></p> <p><i>Harry Anderson, Edna Kent, and Rose LaVoie are to be honored at the State of Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission Annual Conference on Saturday, April 24, 2004 with the prestigious Antoinette F. Downing Award for Volunteer Service.</i></p> <p>This award honors Rhode Island's founding Commission Chairman, who, in the 1950s, helped to inspire the national movement to save historical districts. She is known for the fight against Brown University in its attempt to raze homes along Benefit Street.</p> <p>This service award is generally given to an individual volunteer preservationist who has made a contribution through a lifetime of effort or through a single significant project.</p>	<p>Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Kent, and Mrs. LaVoie have been the driving forces behind preserving two important structures in Glocester: the Evans Schoolhouse and the Dr. Reuben Mason House. The Downing Award has never been awarded to more than one individual before.</p> <p>The 2004 Statewide Preservation Conference offers an education on the subject of historic schools. Participants study architectural alternatives, planning and community issues, advocacy strategies, and architectural history.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INDEX</b></p> <p>Page 2: President's Message Page 3: Dr. Reuben Mason House Revealed Page 4: GHS Goals: the Restoration of Dr. Reuben Mason And the Opening of the Dorr Rebellion Museum Page 5: Looking Back to the Last Quarter Page 6: Presentation Series Page 7: News from the Evans Schoolhouse</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Development Committee Members Sought for Dr. Reuben Mason House Preservation Project</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-mail <a href="mailto:c4tuna@aol.com">c4tuna@aol.com</a> if interested</p>

# The Crier

Dear Gloucester Heritage Society Members and Friends,

We need you now, more than ever. Our treasury is very low due to extra activities at our Headquarters, including high electric and oil bills. Please try to recruit new members and possible send a donation toward the upkeep of our wonderfully restored building.

Your help is needed in planning future fundraisers – our annual Heritage Day and Peddlars' Faire do not cover our needs. Any suggestions? We *do* need a chairperson for Heritage Day.

Grant money has helped tremendously with extensive repairs and equipment, but we have to really pitch in and do more, perhaps with work parties or monetary contributions.

Please join us at upcoming meetings as we plan for the future of the Gloucester Heritage Society: the restoration of the Dr. Reuben Mason House and completion of the Evans Schoolhouse. Invite a friend or neighbor whom you think might be interested in saving our historic sites and treasures.

Yours in preservation,

Rose Lange LaVoie

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## Pledge to Support the Gloucester Heritage Society

Because I recognize that the work the GHS is undertaking in the year 2004 is so visionary and valuable, I am making the following contribution. Thank you, GHS, for the efforts you offer to create a community that is a vital link from past to present, from roots to culture, from self to community.

It is through the efforts of a few that a legacy is formed. I want to be part of that tomorrow. Please acknowledge my gift:

- \_\_\_ **monetary contribution**
- \_\_\_ **work party**
- \_\_\_ **fundraiser**
- \_\_\_ **volunteering for festivals**

Please cut and send this pledge slip and contribution to GHS, 1181 Putnam Pike, P.O. Box 269, Chepachet, RI 02814.

## Board of Directors

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## GHS Goals: the Restoration of Dr. Reuben Mason And the Opening of the Dorr Rebellion Museum

### Steering Committee

She called the room to order. Her eyes were direct and intense. Rose LaVoie meant business, as was her wont. "The Dr. Reuben Mason House!" she nearly chanted. "What are we going to do to preserve this landmark, so it won't be lost like to so many others have?" And so began a meeting of the minds. John Doucette (building committee), Steve Hanley (vice president), Edna Kent (archivist), Bob Leach (architect), Harry Anderson (grants), and Carolyn Fortuna (editor) began a journey to preserve an historic home and democratic idea from loss.

The Steering Committee had its work founded in the physical plant of the structure located at 1111 Putnam Pike, Chepachet. Clearly, much planning would be needed to take what had become inhabitable to a vision of what could become both a renovated sense of the original structure as well as a commemoration to the legacy of Thomas Dorr and his Rebellion against limited voting rights.

The work of the Steering Committee is sometimes tedious and often fascinating. Agenda items have included acquiring signage and insurance; defining what is and is not an exterior repair so as to meet the specifications of the Champlain Foundations grant; security for the building; requests for proposals for phase one work; collaborating with Roberta Randall of the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission; uncovering original architectural details; and informing the public.



### Dr. Reuben Mason: Resident Healer?

The GHS has embarked on a journey to restore the Dr. Reuben Mason House at the gateway to Chepachet Village. While little primary source information exists about the man, Dr. Reuben Mason, a great deal is known about the practice of medicine during the era in which he lived. Honestly, today's HMO member would be horrified to learn how maladies were "cured" during that time!

In the late 1700s, the most popular therapy for most ailments was bloodletting. Some doctors had so much faith in bleeding that they were willing to remove up to four-fifths of the patient's blood. Other therapies of choice included blistering--placing caustic or hot substances on the skin to draw out infections--and administering dangerous chemicals to induce vomiting or purge the bowels. Massive doses of a mercury-containing drug called calomel cleansed the bowels, but at the same time caused teeth to loosen, hair to fall out, and other symptoms of acute mercury poisoning.



Medical Instruments Used in Late 1700s

### "Thomas Dorr and the Road To Democracy," by Stephen Hanley, vice president First In A Series

The word "democracy" is derived from the Greek words "demos," or people, and "kratia," or government. But 800 years ago, the idea of a "people's government" had all been obliterated from human thought. The land, the skies, the seas, and the people all belonged to the King and to no one else. Were it not for the need to defend the national borders and quell the occasional insurrection, matters might have stayed as they were for centuries to come.

But invaders did come, and revolts did occur. The mightiest of monarchs could not stand upon the shores and single-handedly repel armies from abroad. And so the King would contract with powerful landowners for armies to protect the country and the Crown. The payoff for landowners came in the form of titles, access to the King's Court, special dispensations, and privileges not accorded to other citizens.

But what the King could grant, the King could take away. It was a constant source of irritation to the nobles that the emollients conferred upon them for valiant service could not be handed down by them to their heirs but, rather, would revert to the Crown at their death.

Squabbles between nobility and the Crown continued for hundreds of years until one fateful day: June 15, 1215. On that date, a group of powerful nobles went fox hunting with King John of England upon the royal fields of Runnymede. During the afternoon, they contrived to separate the King from his bodyguards and forced him, at sword point, to sign his name to a document granting them the power to keep their titles and pass them down to their heirs. The document also established the Church as a privileged entity within English culture, safe from interference from the Crown.

Of course, the noblemen who confronted King John were just a very small fraction of English population. Serfs and commoners woke up the next day to life very much as it had always been, with the power of government still concentrated among a small number of people at the top. No doubt, the peasantry hardly noticed the difference.

Yet a precedent had been set, and a crack in the absolute power of the monarchy had occurred. The document was known as the Magna Carta and it is enshrined in history as the first stepping-stone on the road to democracy. It is a direct precedent for our own Constitution.

Over the next 600 years, more and more power would filter down into society. In 1842, Thomas Dorr would take another small step in the process that began in England on that day the King went hunting in 1215.

Read more about his heroic struggle in the next issue of *The Crier* in the second installment of this series.

# The Crier

## “Rebellious Riots and Reason,”

by Edna Whitaker Kent,  
Glocester Historian



Were it not for the written observations of several inhabitants and bystanders involved in the last act of the Dorr Rebellion in Chepachet, far fewer personal details would have been known, and the turmoil of that time would have only been characterized as rabble-rousing buffoonery by cartoonists. Depositions from Glocester eyewitnesses to the Dorr Rebellion, logged with Justice of the Peace, Jesse Tourtellot, reveal intimate emotions and valuable insight into that 1842 conflict.

For instance, consider Ara Hawkins' frightful episode: Colonel Swan's troops, after slogging over miserably rutted roads from Scituate, came upon Hawkins' home (present site of Glocester Police Station driveway). To the east were many charcoal "bins" and a cabin. The city troops mistook these for a Dorrite encampment.

Tension rose to a crescendo while Hawkins accompanied a soldier into his barn. Threatened at gunpoint several times, he was saved by the Colonel who wanted to "ask a few questions", and the confrontation eventually began to cool.

The tavernkeeper had his own problems in the village. Jedediah Sprague's lengthy account of the brutish occupation of his hotel includes a detailed list of losses and the sad demise of Lyman Cooley from New York City, who was taken prisoner, went mad, and died in an asylum for the poor in Providence.

From the apothecary shop (site of Christy's parking lot), the good doctor had a clear view of military troops on Main Street. Dr. Clovis Bowen observed the shooting of Bardine and Simmons--neither a fatality --and the pillaging and sacking of the village of Chepachet.

These represent just a brief sampling of the many fascinating stories surrounding the only "civil" war ever in Rhode Island.

Today we are about to launch a campaign to restore the Dr Reuben Mason House. It was there that Benjamin Keach declared defiantly, "I'm Suffrage to the Backbone!" to Colonel Brown's soldiers as they approached the Mason house to engage the building as a Field Hospital.

Dr. Mason's "Mansion House, as he called it, will soon be transformed into the Dorr Rebellion Museum, housing depositions, letters, broadsides, maps, newspaper articles, drawings, and other period artifacts which will reveal in detail the remarkable history of the strife of that time and how it links to our nation's individual voting privileges today.

The date is set to start the Fund Campaign to be held June 5 at the future Dorr Rebellion Museum. The Providence Brigade Band and the Newport Artillery along with local and political dignitaries will attend. Details will be forthcoming.

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## Gardeners' Plant and Shed Sale

Saturday, May 22, 11:00 – 2:00

Replenish your annuals, perennials,  
Shrubs, bulbs, dried plants, select garden  
Implements, and small furniture.

**Glocester Heritage Society**  
1181 Putnam Pike  
Chepachet, RI

Your donation is appreciated greatly.

To drop off during the month of May, contact  
Carolyn Fortuna, [c4tuna@aol.com](mailto:c4tuna@aol.com)  
Or 568-6826

# The Crier

## Looking Back to the Last Quarter

### Gallery of Gloucester Heritage Funded

GHS Receives Preserve Rhode Island - Citizens Bank Mini-Grant Award

GHS is pleased to announce that a proposal to finance creation of ten museum exhibits for the Job Armstrong first floor, to be called the Gallery of Gloucester Heritage, has been awarded by Preserve RI/ Citizens Bank.

These will feature a series of thematic presentation of Society holdings. Each exhibit will consist of a display and a podium for accompanying text-based narration. The displays will be constructed so that artifacts can be removed easily and replaced with other artifacts for the next in a succession of rotating presentations.

The JAS has two floors. The first floor was the primary sales area for the Store. It is at street level and is visible to the public. The second floor was the living quarters for the Armstrong family and is the place where the Archives are presently protected. Financial constraints have prevented the Society from fully utilizing the first floor space, which is roughly 24 feet wide by 60 feet in length, to display the varied and important articles in the Archives in a way that is accessible and attractive to community and public at large.

The technology education coordinator at the local high school, Ponagansett (PHS), Gerald Mailhot, has agreed to supervise his students in construction of the showcases, floorstands, and podiums. Thus, this project will incorporate a new generation of citizens into thinking about heritage. This is powerful: we can provide a concrete linkage between the youngest citizens of the Town and their own traditions and history. GHS members will donate an award to the participating student who demonstrates the greatest interest in this project. Students will be invited to a dedication ceremony of the first thematic presentation of the new historical gallery.

The purpose of the Preserve Rhode Island - Citizens Bank Mini-Grant Program is to help make good things happen for historic preservation in Rhode Island. Grants are made in the range of \$300 to \$1,000, with the average grant being \$500. The GHS grant award was for \$704. The mini-grant program seeks to support small-scale but large-impact projects that may slip through the cracks of traditional funders.

It is anticipated that the display cases will take two school terms to complete. Target date for opening of the Gallery of Gloucester Heritage is April, 2005.

### GHS Web Site News

The revised Bylaws have been posted, and an extensive section featuring the Dr. Reuben Mason House has recently been added to the GHS web site. Items include various newspaper articles, building and restoration information, and interior and exterior photographs. Look for it under "Restoration Projects."

### Membership Report

There are currently 96 active members of the Gloucester Heritage Society --- 14 Life Members and 82 Annual Members. Any changes to your membership listing should be directed to: Frank B. Stevenson, Membership, 142 George Allen Road, Gloucester, RI 02814 or membership@glocesterheritagesociety.org.

### We couldn't do it without you!

The Gloucester Heritage Society relies heavily on the kindness and generosity of its members and friends.

Please allow us to extend a special "Thank You" to the following people for contributions during first quarter, 2004.

Genealogy charts from Elizabeth Clark	Time in Archives, sorting and cataloging from Ann Lowell	Chepachet Athletic Club signs and baseball form Harvey Greenhalgh
		Dr. Reuben Mason House sign painting From Dave Lohr
48 Star Flag for Evans Schoolhouse and bronze Gloucester boundary marker from Glennis and Henry Beltram		1966 Parade Program, school bell, autograph books, grammar school pin, pennant, nutshell library from Bob and Dot Cole

# The Crier

## Presentation Series

### Edna Whitaker Kent and the GHS Archives

Whoever said that history was dry and boring was not fortunate enough to attend a February, 2004 presentation at the Job Armstrong Store. Gloucester Historian Edna Whitaker Kent spoke with passion and humor about long years of GHS's mission to accumulate artifacts representing the culture, history, and character of Gloucester. As she unfolded that story, the audience learned that both the objects themselves and the quests to acquire them are full of meaningful memories.

Notable among the artifacts are a treasure trove of items from the Dr. Potter estate. GHS members, learning of the auction's unique contents at the last minute, implored members attending to put aside cash to cover the cost of bidding against several dealers. In doing so, they saved glass negatives. Most are by Edgar Potter, but his uncle, Frank, would have created the oldest in the collection. Those are dated February 10, 1867, Freshet.

Among other items rescued by the diligent GHS members were a box full of Dr Albert Potter's diaries. These were 2 3/4" x 4 3/4" leather, one-year pocket diaries throughout the Civil War period. Most outstanding are the 1862 Jan-April notations of casualties by Dr. Albert Potter, Assistant Surgeon in 5th RI Regiment in Coastal Service under General Burnside, Army of the Potomac.

Mrs. Whitaker Kent also described other important artifacts within the GHS archives. One is a portrait of Job Armstrong, a framed copy of the original given by direct descendent, David Evans. Others are a Chepachet Cornet Band drum, recently restored by Duquette and Smith from the Providence Brigade Band and a Town Boundary marker, bronze, rescued from an antique auction by Glennis and Henry Beltram.

Clearly, without the foresight and commitment of GHS members, today's archives would not include the rich and diverse representation of Gloucester's past. Thank you to those who have donated, and we certainly appreciate anyone who can contribute today to this collection.

### Robert Leach and Historic Preservations

"So much has been lost, and will continue to be lost, by town growth and pressure on real estate, unless a concerned community dedicates itself to preservation," according to Robert Leach, AIA member of the American Institute of Architects. Mr. Leach, guest speaker at the March, 2004 GHS general meeting, is an architect with the Newport Collaborative Architects. This firm has received more than 40 design awards for historic restoration and design innovation.

Mr. Leach exhorted the GHS membership to have vision and offered insight into four types of preservation projects: 1) conservation, the purest; 2) restoring to a specific period, or fixing problems; 3) adaptive reuse, in which significant parts are kept but the structure is adapted to a different use; and, 4) recreation/ reconstruction, in which a foundation may exist but the original building has been lost; here, a building is erected according to existing records. He spoke about successes and losses, both in America and in Rhode Island.

"I think Jackie Kennedy Onassis summed it up best: 'If we don't care about our past, we cannot hope for our future.' " Mr. Leach reviewed how Mrs. Kennedy Onassis led a drive to preserve Grand Central Station, an architectural wonder and centerpiece of American culture, from demolition. This public space is a "monument to the perseverance of those who built it, a symbol of the irrepressible spirit of the half a million people who pass through it each day" (Gov. Pataki).

Mr. Leach outlined the renovation of Fort Adams, situated at the mouth of Newport Harbor. This masterpiece of coastal defense, constructed between 1824 and 1857, was a vital fortification protecting Newport and Narragansett Bay from enemy fleets. Designed by Col. Joseph Totten and built by Irish immigrant laborers, Fort Adams is a National Historic Landmark and an official Save America's Treasures project.

Another NCA project was the Castle Hill Inn and Resort. Commanding a stunning, 300-degree view of Narragansett Bay, the Inn is a former summer home dating from 1874. From the promontory in front of the resort guests enjoy bay views of the lighthouse, the rugged coast, and Newport Bridge. Renovations included reconstruction of a tower destroyed by hurricane and exposure of original architectural details like windows and shingles.

Mr. Leach ended by reminding the GHS membership that preservation is an extension of environmentalism, in which houses and buildings represent some of our greatest human contributions. Civilization, he suggested, is measured by the extent of such contributions.

# The Crier



## News from the Evans Schoolhouse

It is with sadness that the GHS must announce the passing of Rose Evan McManus, an eighth generation Rhode Islander and direct descendent of Richard Evans, an early Colonial settler of Gloucester, and granddaughter of Evans Schoolhouse founder Daniel. She was 80.

Mrs. McManus was a member of GHS and a lifelong student of history. Always an active community member and educator, Mrs. McManus was delighted to see the schoolhouse moved and restored.

During her lifetime, she spoke with great passion about the legacy of the one-room schoolhouse, and her family asked that donations be directed to the Evans Schoolhouse Fund in lieu of flowers. We thank those who remembered Mrs. McManus.

Donors to the Evans School house fund in memory of Rose McManus

Donald and Dayle Joseph  
Jo-Ann M. Fede  
North Kingston Woman's Club  
Louise and Michael Ferrucci  
Murial and Leo Flood  
John and Vincent Arnold  
John and Sharyn Caldwell  
Marion E. Hunt  
Lois Cooke  
Anna DiPaolo  
Susan Greene

### Needed:

A volunteer to pose as a 19<sup>th</sup> century rural schoolhouse teacher for students from local schools who will come to the Evans schoolhouse on field trips.

Questions? Phone Harry Anderson (934-0511)

### Memories of attending a one-room schoolhouse: Glennis Beltram

Boys entered from the left, and girls entered from the right. Never the twain would meet in the one-room schoolhouse where life GHS member Glennis Hopkins Beltram received her primary education in Hopkins Mills, RI. Yes, all eight elementary grades were represented, but in some years, few children were of the same age to comprise enough students for a particular grade.

"The children listened to the lessons that others were given," Mrs. Hopkins Beltram remembers, "and so some kids skipped a grade. Usually there were four or five children in a particular grade."

Children then were as children are now in many ways. Recess was a popular time of day, and students would scamper around the schoolhouse grounds, curling paper into cylinders to place under the water jug at the bottom of the hill. "But when the school bell rang," smiles Mrs. Hopkins Beltram, "we ran up hill back to class."

The teacher was in charge of all activities. She would organize the students into casts for dramatic productions, teach letters to the littlest students, spread out times tables, read aloud --- everything that was needed for a class roster of 30. Times haven't changed that much after all....

# The Crier

GLOCESTER HERITAGE SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 269  
CHEPACHET, RI 02814



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The Gloucester Heritage Society meets on the third Monday of each month.  
Presentations begin at 7 p.m. Business meeting begins at 8 p.m.

Monday, April 19, 2004	Guest Speaker, David Balfour: "Preservation Principles and Gloucester's Treasures"
Monday, May 18, 2004	Co-Chairs Carolyn Fortuna and Edna Kent: "Dorr Rebellion Day"
Monday, June 15, 2004	Facilitator, Harry Anderson: "The Evans Schoolhouse, Legacy and Future"

Existing members: you'll be notified at time of renewal. We would appreciate it if you would circulate this membership form to neighbors and friends. Thank you for your support!

### Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to the Gloucester Heritage Society.

Single: \$15 Family: \$25 Seniors/ Students: \$10 Contributing: \$50 Patron: \$100 Benefactor: \$250 Life: \$300



**Are you able to receive this quarterly newsletter via e-mail? It would save the GHS publishing and postage costs. If so, please e-mail the newsletter editor at [c4tuna@aol.com](mailto:c4tuna@aol.com)**