



Westwood Historical Society

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Spring 2021 Newsletter

This is the time of year when we ask you to renew your Westwood Historical Society membership. Annual membership (May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022) is \$25/single and \$50/family. A card and envelope are enclosed for you to return.

As a non-profit organization, we rely on donations rather than tax dollars. As a result, membership dues are very important as they help us pay for a portion of our regular costs (e.g., heat, electricity and maintenance) on the 1845 Fisher School plus our program costs. Note that our dues haven't increased in several years, despite our costs going up, so we appreciate your continued support! We also maintain a list and count of our members as it helps when we apply for grants. Any additional contributions we receive (beyond membership) go to larger maintenance projects (e.g., a new roof plus repair of the handicapped ramp and stone wall this past year).

Our Programs

The challenges of COVID-19 have obviously impacted us all. However, through a wonderful partnership with the Westwood Public Library, we were still able to provide new and interesting programs, including:

- **1620: The First Year.** In January, Christopher Daley took us on a virtual adventure back to 1620 and the early days of the Pilgrims.
- **The 100th Anniversary of the "Spanish Flu."** In February, Anthony M. Sammarco talked about the Boston of 1918 and how it compares to today's Covid-19 epidemic.
- **A Legacy of Colonialism via Literature from Those in Exile.** In March, Nancy Milner Kelly focused on today's increasingly diverse world and how the pain of writers displaced from their respective homelands manifests itself in their writing.

A Special Thanks to the Westwood Public Library. We owe the Westwood Public Library a huge THANKS for collaborating with us on our programs this year (including the Quarter Century Award). Once it was clear that in-person meetings wouldn't be possible, we reached out to Tricia Perry and her team. Since then, she and Liz McGovern have been the hosts of all of our programs. They have set up the Zoom process for each, screened out the interlopers, publicized and introduced our programs. We could not have done it without them!

Curator's Corner: Lura Provost

A wonderful collection of Westwood's history was donated by Ann Brown. Her family lived in a treasured 1830 house on the corner of Mill and High Streets for 61 years. Sadly, it is being demolished but Ann donated a photo of her great grandfather, George Gauderer, in front of the house. The house was originally built for the men who worked in the nearby mill. Ann also donated an early cabbage slicer, books from the Colburn School, an antique photo of an early Westwood firetruck, and even various items of women's and children's clothing.

We also want to thank Gary Noyes from Encinitas, CA for sending us an interesting 1956 Zoning map of Westwood along with two photos of their home on Farm Lane in 1950. We so appreciate your thinking of the Society and donating items that build our collection and knowledge of Westwood life. When the Society can have meetings again, we look forward to displaying these new items for everyone to enjoy.

Our 2020 Quarter Century Award: Jack Wiggin

We were ultimately able to celebrate our Quarter Century Award recipient on a beautiful fall day! John (Jack) Wiggin was recognized for his contributions to Westwood for more than 25 years. You can watch the ceremony via Youtube, courtesy of Westwood Media Center:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGTpO2yd6-U>

Jack was born and raised in Westwood and is the third generation of his family to be part of our community. He attended Westwood public schools through the 8th grade and then went to Xaverian Brothers High School. Jack has a total of 14 years with the Planning Board and served as chair three times. He was also instrumental in providing direction for projects such as University Station, the Islington Fire Station and the new Police Station.



Other Committees and Boards include: the Housing Partnership and Fair Housing Committee, Economic Development Advisory Board, Open Space and Recreation Task Force, the Town Centers Planning Committee, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the Community Electricity Aggregation Working Group.

He was the recipient of the John J. Cronin Public Service Award in 2009. Jack was also on the Hale Reservation Board of Directors from 2002 to 2012, serving as Vice President and then President. During that time, he led the development of a master plan for Hale, served as the Chairman of the Land and Facilities Committee and helped launch their first capital campaign. Jack moved to the Hale Corporate Board, where he currently serves, in 2012.

Previous Quarter Century Award Recipients include: Yetta and Alexander Fisher, Barbara and Allan Beale, Donald MacLellan, Allen Baker, Richard Youlden, Ellie and Roy London, Lillian Perkins, Robert Wood, Gordon Youlden, Tom Dunn, Joseph Weider, Emlen and Jim Wheeler, Duncan and Ellen McFarland, Shirley Howard, Joe and Joy Clancy, Irene and Ralph Buonopane, Barbara Friedman, Mike Beaumont, Joan Swann, Lura Provost, Russ and Marilyn Downes, Ann and Jerry Cronin, Joan Murphy, Barbara and Sam Hayes, Tony Antonellis, Charles and Nancy Donahue, and John Pritchard.

Accepting 2021 Nominations. The Westwood Historical Society is now accepting nominees for its Quarter Century Award. The award is presented each year to a person or couple who have made significant contributions to the Westwood community for more than 25 years. The contribution can be in any field, such as education, religion, arts, civic or social service. To make a nomination, please send a letter to the Historical Society describing your nominee(s) and their contributions to Westwood (using the P.O. Box address above). Please send your nominations to us by May 31, 2021, if possible.

Thanks and Remembrances

Special thanks goes to our outgoing Treasurer, Ron Sudduth. He and his wife, Joy, have been great supporters and worker-bees for the Society for at least 45 years. Years back, Joy was Secretary and Ron just retired as Treasurer. They were an integral part of raising money to move and restore the Fisher School, as well as setting up and managing our website. Hats off to Joy and Ron! And, as always, we thank the Westwood Garden Club for changing our wreath each season – even during Covid-19!

We were sorry to hear that our long-time member, George Lester, passed away recently. He and his late wife, Virginia, were both great supporters of the Historical Society and always interested in our programs. We will also miss Stella Easland and Em Wheeler for their support of Westwood's historical past.

<p>Current Board members include: Marilyn Freedman and Lura Provost (Co-Presidents), David MacKay (Treasurer), Paula Meridan and June Cassidy.</p>
