

# Chronicle

Susan Goganian, Chronicle Editor  
sgoganian@beverlyhistory.org 978.922.1186

Newsletter published quarterly for the members, friends, and benefactors of the Beverly Historical Society & Museum

117 Cabot Street, Beverly, MA 01915  
978.922.1186 (voice)  
978.922.7387 (fax)  
www.beverlyhistory.org  
research@beverlyhistory.org

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## The President's Letter

Dear Members:

What a special spring and summer!

For Arbor Day, we were the recipient of three very generous gifts of time and expertise from local arborists. Mark Flagg of Flagg's Landscaping and Ann Bennett of Savatree worked on our trees at Hale Farm. Our prized, beautiful, old Tulip Tree has been pruned and is in the best shape it has been in years. On one of the hottest days of the summer Cape Ann Tree cleared the Balch House property of 4 truck loads of debris left over from last summer's storm. Many thanks to these companies for their generosity and hard work. It is truly appreciated!

We started the summer with a very special event, *An Evening with Eleo*, which Nancy Benevento and her family generously and graciously hosted at their spectacular seaside estate, the former home of Eleo Sears. The venue, Peggy Franck, the author of *Prides Crossing: The Unbridled Life and Impatient Times of Eleonora Sears*, a great committee, the music of Gid's Giddy Four, an old car and tennis players in vintage attire, set the scene for a fun and memorable evening. Many thanks to all who made this fund raiser such a success, raising a much needed \$20,000, the largest amount we have ever raised with an event!

The support of you our members, the volunteers, Sue and Darren, other staff and the local community are the reason we are able to accomplish all that we do to preserve our special collections and houses. Many thanks to all of you! Please keep up your support!

We are now looking forward to the fall and our Old Planters Reunion.

Sincerely,

Babette Loring  
bloring@gmail.com



Another mystery image from our collectin. A photograph of two young women on a swing being pushed by a young man with a white house and hammock in the background. There are also a few women on the porch and a young girl in the foreground. The photographer is unknown. If you have information about this image, please contact us.

# From the Director

Dear Members:

We have had a very busy summer, and are looking forward to an even busier fall season. One of the highlights was our spring fundraiser. The pictures on the front page don't begin to convey what a wonderful event we had on June 17. *An Evening with Eleo* was successful on many levels, and much fun for those who attended. And there is no way to adequately thank Nancy Benevento and her family, without whom this great party would not have been possible. We've already begun discussing next year's event; more information will be available soon.

As noted below, our project to inventory the collection is moving apace. Every group of records or objects that we catalog provides a significant benefit to researchers. It also helps us, because it allows us to be much more efficient. And since we always have

too many projects going on, it also helps us to serve you, our members, better.

By the time you receive this, we will be just days away from the Old Planters Reunion. I hope many of you will be joining us. We've given a lot of thought to the kind of program that would appeal to those of you related to our early families, and the many others (like me) who are interested in their stories. I'd be interested in your comments, as we hope to do something similar in 2012.

The Balch House is featured in a new book, *Old Homes of New England*, a collection of extraordinary photographs of some of the area's most important early structures. It is available in our shop. Please note that we are having a party to celebrate the publication of *Beverly Revisited*, a new book from Arcadia Publishing, which includes almost 200 images from our collection. The staff

and several volunteers put many hours into this project last winter; I think you will be pleased with the result. If you can't wait until the party, the books will be here by mid-September. We have several other new items in the shop as well, and it's not too early to be thinking about holiday gifts!

Finally, we have had some challenges. We are doing some work at Hale Farm this summer, including a National Grid energy assessment in the hopes of reducing our very high fuel costs. And, unfortunately, just this week we had a major water problem at the Balch House, which requires us to replace aging iron pipe under the front lawn. So your support is needed now more than ever. Many thanks if you have already given this year; if not, a contribution in any

Sue

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## Collections Update

The Beverly Historical Society's collection continues to grow with every passing day. Recent donations include several published family genealogies; Boston & Maine Railroad material; Woodbury family and Barter family photographs; three pieces of flatware from the Queen Hotel; and a collection of Bucci family photographs and documents. The forks and knife from the hotel are quite rare and a tangible reminder of history, not only of the hotel, but of the event that destroyed it. Many people are unaware that the Queen, a luxury hotel, stood on present day Independence Park. In the 19th century city-dwellers began trekking to the coast to enjoy the ocean breezes and seaside recreation. To satisfy these visitors, Beverly businessman and realtor Israel Lefavour built the Queen Hotel on Lothrop Street in 1889 at a cost of \$73,000. Just two and half years later the 110-room five story building caught fire and burned to the ground in a spectacular blaze – seen for miles. The hotel was never rebuilt and the property became known as Queen Park. In a 1906 letter to the mayor, Charles Woodberry related the historical significance of the property and its strong connection to the American Revolution and suggested that the property's name be changed to "Independence Park." In 1907,

the Board of Park Commissioners acted on Woodberry's recommendation and Independence Park was born. The only reminders of the glorious Queen are a few photographs, newspaper articles, postcards of the park that carried its name, and now these recent donations.

The recently-acquired Bucci donation is the first significant collection of one of the most important figures in 20th century Beverly. Charlie Bucci was the longtime proprietor of Bucci's Market on Rantoul Street, where he was known for his generosity and thoughtfulness, providing customers with food on credit when they did not have the money to buy groceries. He served as city assessor, and was also a member of the Beverly School Committee. Bucci was the founder of the 13 Black Cats and Charlie Bucci's Lousy Band and was known for his portrayal of Santa Claus for over thirty years, including in Beverly's longtime Santa parade. This collection, donated by his son Charles, includes a panoramic photograph of the 1948 Beverly High School football team's trip to Washington D.C. and a testimonial written in Italian by Dr. Richard Alt, the superintendent of schools, to Charlie Bucci in recognition for his service on the school committee. This dona-

tion helps us to tell the story of both the Bucci family, and many other families of 20th century Beverly. These are a few examples of artifacts and documents, generously donated to the Society, that allow us to preserve Beverly history for future generations to learn from and enjoy. If you have anything with a Beverly connection that you are interested in donating, please contact me at [dbrown@beverlyhistory.org](mailto:dbrown@beverlyhistory.org) or (978) 922-1186 x203.

Darren Brown, Curator of Collections

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## Update on the Archives Project

Our project to inventory our collection has now been underway for several months. Archivist Susan Milstein, with the assistance of interns, has made significant progress. At this point, 230 pieces of furniture and 50 textile items have been inventoried and photographed. In addition, the papers of Katharine Peabody Loring (more than 1000 individual items) have been flattened, placed in acid free folders and boxes, inventoried and a finding aid has been created. We have begun work on the Rantoul Papers; 1700 papers have been processed, inventoried and a finding aid created.

# Old Planters



## Membership Newsletter of the Balch House Associates

Curator of Collections Darren Brown is choosing documents and objects for our upcoming exhibit, *The Path of the Old Planters: the Legacy of Beverly's 17th Century Families*. The Balch family is well represented among the furniture, textiles, household objects, letters and images. The exhibit opens officially on October 5, but attendees at this month's Old Planters Reunion will get an advance look at our preview reception.

Our collection includes letters between Rhode Island merchant Joseph Pope Balch and his wife Laura, written while he was serving in the Second Brigade of Rhode Island, under General Ambrose Burnside. We have an image of General Burnside and his officers, including Balch. The letter below is one of several letters from Joseph to Laura.

Camp Sprague  
Washington, Thursday, June 20, 1861

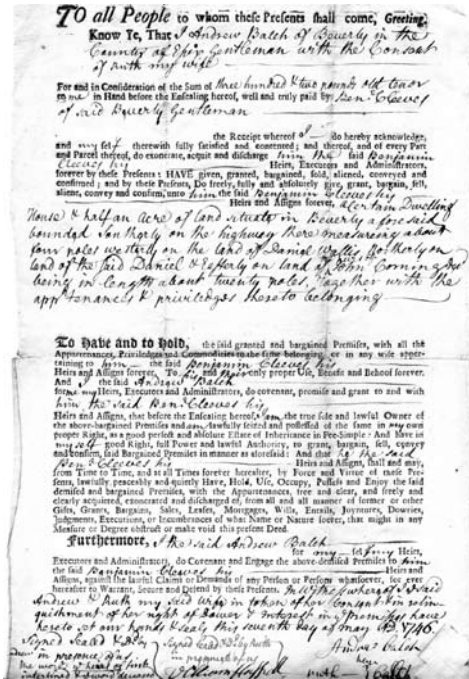
Dear Laura:

You will see by the date of this letter that I am in my military home again. I wish I was with you in my family home again. I wish I was with you in my family home, with you on my knee, the boy on the floor--rolling over, attempting to walk, creeping and laughing, Mamie near amusing herself drawing pictures to send to her father to remind him of \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday afternoons. . .

And for another document with the Civil War theme we have a photograph of Amory Otis Balch, son of John and Mary (Chaloner) Balch, who was born in Maine in 1848. He enlisted at the age of 16, was a lieutenant in the 36th United



States Colored Infantry, and fought at Fredericksburg, Antietam, and Blue Mountain. The circumstances of his death are confusing. Galusha Balch writes in his book that Balch died in September 1866, but the notes on the back of the image state that he died as a prisoner of war.



A wonderful deed, shown here, between Andrew Balch and Ben. Cleeves for "a certain dwelling house and half an acre of land situate in Beverly. . ." also mentions Daniel Wallis and John Corning as adjoining property. The deed states that Andrew had the consent of his wife Ruth to this arrangement. The deed is dated May 7, 1746, and Mr. Cleeves obtained said property for the sum of 302 pounds.

And we're also including a beautiful sampler, shown below, done by Tabitha Balch, (1779-1838) the daughter of William and Rebecca (Bailey) Balch, and a sixth generation descendant of Old Planter John Balch.



It's Time to Enter the Balch Thanksgiving Raffle!



The raffle winner and five guests will share a very special early American Thanksgiving dinner in the extraordinary surroundings of the 17th century Balch House on Thursday, November 18, 2010. Enjoy a delicious homemade seasonal menu served by Society volunteers in period dress. Those lucky enough to have won tell us that it is an unforgettable experience. And, you're helping to preserve the Balch House and our other houses and collections.

Tickets are \$10 each, or 3 for \$25. All entries must be received by November 5. Drawing will be held November 6 at Cabot House.

Two runners-up will receive Balch-themed gifts. Proceeds from the raffle support the Society's historic sites, collections and education programs.

For information or to purchase tickets, contact us at: 978-922-1186 or info@beverly-history.org. Ticket forms are also available on our website, beverlyhistory.org and our Facebook page (Please become a fan!).

Balch House postcards and lucite magnets are now available from our shop.

## *Newsletter of the Walker Transportation Collection*

A lot of people today don't realize that at one time you could take an electric trolley car trip from Boston all the way to Bangor, Maine using transfer tickets, with the longest distance between connections being a mile and a half walk. All for a 5 cent token. It would take you a couple of days, but you would eventually get there. One local Beverly resident did just that back in the early 1900s.

The trolley car was an important part of getting from point A to point B starting in the late 1800's and reaching its zenith during the 1910s. Beverly had a number of horse-drawn rail cars running down Cabot, Rantoul and Hale Streets. These lines were soon converted to electric street car lines, with the first run on July 3, 1897. For 40 years these cars, first run by the Bay State Street Railway and later the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway Companies, transported thousands of people through the streets of Beverly.

The advent of the automobile started to erode ridership in the late 1910s and into the 1920s. This, obviously had a huge effect on the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway's bottom line, and they started to phase out the trolley cars and replace them with the more efficient and versatile bus.

This change came to Beverly on February 28, 1937. It was to be a very quiet transition from the street car to the bus, with no planned events to mark the transition. Simply another business day, but by midnight on that day, approximately 1,000 people showed up at Ellis Square to bid farewell to the once ubiquitous trolley car. There were a lot of firecrackers, cheers and car horns beeping, waiting for the last electric street car to run from Salem. That last traction orange colored car slowly moved up Cabot Street ringing its bell and whistle. Eastern Mass. Street Railway #7020 showed up at Ellis Square to popping flashbulbs from cameras and a cheer from the crowd as they swarmed the trolley. Jerry King, the regular motorman, then handed the controls off to



Charles McCormac, manager of the Salem District of the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway, for the rest of that trip. Once at Gloucester Crossing, 60 people were lucky to squeeze their way onto #7020 for the return trip to Salem. Among those passengers were Norma Knowlton, Florence Boucher, John Rogers, Jack Lyons, Edward Foley and Henry Gadreau. Also on board were Edith Aucone, Phillip Cashman and Phillip Olson. On another note, due to the historic significance of the night, apparently there were pieces of the seats and other "loose" parts from #7020 that disappeared, and with that a way of life in Beverly ended.

The photo shows Inspector John "Dick" Brennan starting the last car from Town House Square in Salem for the trip to Beverly, marking the end of trolley service on the Salem Division of the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway. Dick stayed with the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway as an Inspector for the buses for some years. Please check out other photos of the last day of trolley service in Beverly in the newly-

published book, *Beverly Revisited*, part of the *Images of America* series. You can also see more photos down at the Walker Transportation Collection.

We also had an enjoyable day for the Celebration of Transportation on Saturday, August 14, 2010. We had a number of antique cars present along with The Gerry #5 engine, a hand tub that the Marblehead fire department used as its premier pumper in their effort to fight fires. The Gerry #5 was delivered to Marblehead on July 1, 1845 and fought its first fire that November. Also on display were four Wilbur Frey model locomotives, and a 1930s voice-controlled model boat. Thank you to all who helped out on that day.

Respectfully submitted by,

David Fletcher  
 Curator, Walker Transportation Collection  
 Vice President, Board of Trustees

# Events

**\*\*\*\*\*Please note:**

The Cabot House will be closed on Tuesday, September 28.\*\*\*\*\*

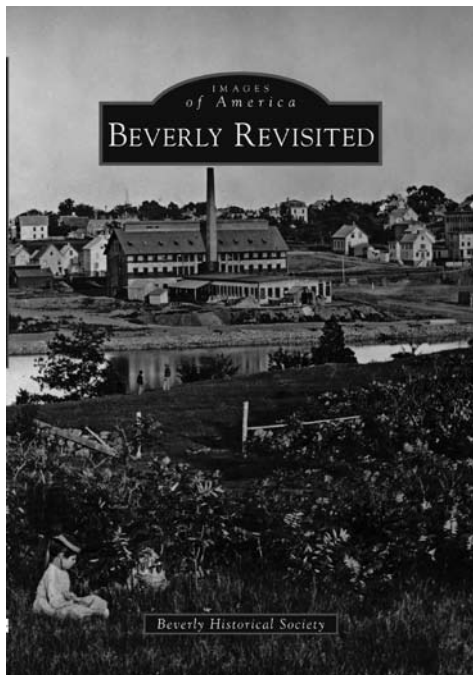
New exhibit in Memorial Hall

## The Path of the Old Planters: the Legacy of Beverly's 17th Century Families

Please stop by the Cabot House beginning Wednesday, September 29, to experience our major new exhibit on Beverly's early families and their impact on Beverly since the community was first settled. View dozens of artifacts from members of the Balch, Conant, Herrick, Larcom, Ober and Thorndike families, among others. Rare documents seldom seen outside our vaults, paintings, furniture, tools, and decorative objects will illustrate Beverly's settlement, important maritime heritage, and the growth of industry.



## Join us as we celebrate the publication of our new book!



**Wednesday, September 29, 6:30 pm.**

RSVP by September 27 to 978-922-1186 or  
info@beverlyhistory.org.

Books available at our shop in  
mid-September. Paper; \$21.99.

**Tuesday, October 5**

## Walking Tour of Old Centerville

Join historian Fred Hammond for an engaging walk in the neighborhood. Meet at Centerville School, 17 Hull St. \$5/free for members

**Saturday, October 30**

## Tour of Central Cemetery 9:00 am

Join BHS Curator of Collections Darren Brown and members of Beverly's Open Space and Recreation Committee for a special tour of one of the city's most important landscapes. Cemeteries offer a quiet place for passive enjoyment of historical open space as well as songbird and wildlife observation. What better place to spend the day before Halloween than in a burial ground? \$5/free for BHS members

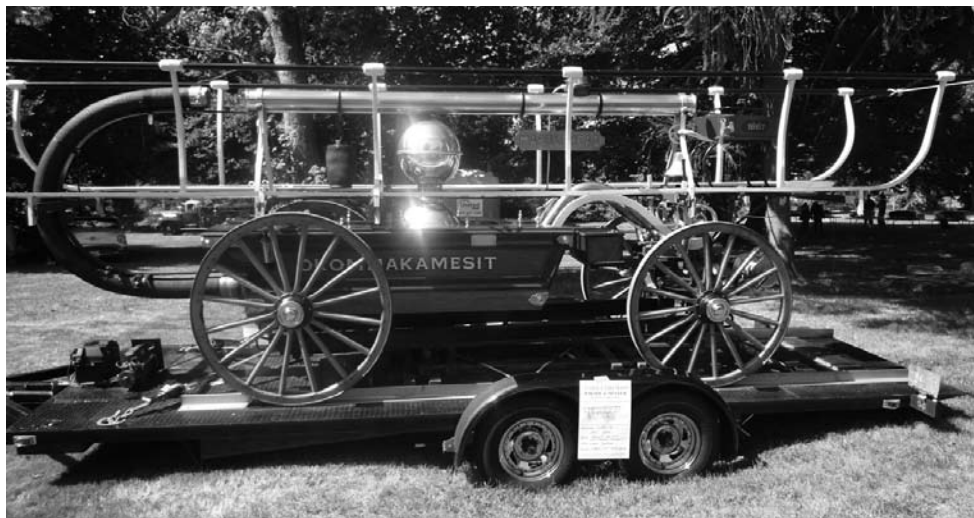
## Fall Open Houses Noon - 4pm

Visit the **Balch House** (448 Cabot Street) and decide for yourself if David Balch really saw witches in his bedroom. Stop by **Hale Farm** (39 Hale Street) and explore Beverly's role in the witch era. Guides will lead tours of Hale House and the Ancient Burying Ground nearby. Come over to the **Cabot House** (117 Cabot Street) to see our new exhibit, and pick up one of our books about the witch era. Admission is free for all.

## A Celebration of Transportation

August 14, 2010

Visitors had fun at Hale Farm for our 2nd Celebration of Transportation. One of the stars was the pumper below; maybe next year we can see it in action! We also had a great Cabot's Attic sale that day; if you weren't there you missed some historical bargains.



The 1861 Okommakamesit #2 pumper, owned by the OKO'S Veteran Firemans Association of Marblehead.



## Volunteer Spotlight

### Calling All Members!

Congratulations to our 2010 Volunteer of the Year, **Nancy Peabody Hood**. As many of you know, Nancy has been welcoming visitors to the Balch House for many years. Her depth of knowledge about the Balch Family and the early history of Beverly, and her gracious manner make for a wonderful tour. Many visitors stay in touch with her, local schoolchildren consider a field trip to the Balch House to be a highlight of the year. The Society is very grateful for all her efforts.

Elsewhere in this issue you will see the announcement for the publication of our new book, *Beverly Revisited*. This project would have been entirely impossible without a supreme effort by several of our longtime volunteers, although I think they consider it to be a labor of love.

And a note of thanks to all our committee members, who spend many hours each year advising the staff on important issues, and helping us to accomplish an amazing amount of work for the size of our budget and staff. If you'd like to join them, let us know.

For more information on volunteer opportunities, please contact us at 978-922-1186 or [info@beverlyhistory.org](mailto:info@beverlyhistory.org).

The Beverly Historical Society needs your help! We have three wonderful sites and an extraordinary collection, but a small staff. If you can give us a few hours each month, we have work for you. Monthly projects will be posted here. Information on others will be sent by email. You will receive our gratitude (and refreshments) for your efforts.

#### Saturday, October 2 10 - 11 am

Join garden subcommittee member Jeanne Murdock at the Balch House for a brief project. Contact Jeanne at 978-922-6729 to sign up, and for details.

#### Saturday, October 30, noon - 4 pm

Help us welcome visitors to our three historic houses, which will be open free of charge. This is the last day of the season for the Balch House and Hale Farm. Assistance is needed with a variety of projects. Join us in sharing Beverly history with the public.

#### Saturday, November 6 11-3 pm.

Enjoy a beautiful fall day at Hale Farm and help with the annual leafraking project. Please bring a rake and 5 leaf bags (we'll have more). Kids welcome! Raindate 11/13.

## New Beverly Historical Society Members

### Thank you!

The following members have recently joined our Society, or have renewed their membership at a higher level. Please consider raising your membership category at the date of your next renewal.

#### Sponsors

*Beverly Simmons*

#### Patrons

Gail Nelson and Peter Tarr  
Meredith Johnson and Al Lavoie  
Susan Wise  
Thomas C. Woodbury

#### Family Members

Mr. & Mrs. Eamon Fennessy  
Jerry Guilebbe  
Debrah Heller  
Dr. Stephanie Moore  
Barbara Packales  
Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Smallhorn  
Martha Smeallie  
Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Todd  
Kemble Widmer  
Lee and Catherine Yaffa

#### Individual Members

Robert V. Balch  
John Beckvold  
Charles T. Bucci  
Sally Howlett  
Valerie McCaffrey  
Cindy Modugno  
Andrew Plummer  
Patricia H. Wahl  
M. Dwight Winkley

#### Senior/Student Members

Sarah Fuller  
Ardith Maney  
Patricia H. Wahl

*The Cabot Shop*  
at the Beverly Historical Society and Museum

The Cabot Shop has an extensive collection of publications on Beverly history, as well as maps, genealogical information and unique gifts for the history lover in you life.

Additional items are listed on our website, [www.beverlyhistory.org](http://www.beverlyhistory.org)

978-922-1186

The Cabot Shop,  
117 Cabot St.

Beverly MA 01915-5107

### Not a member yet? Please join us!

Members receive free admission to our historic houses, discounts on shop purchases and research services, advance notice for events, and our quarterly newsletter. Your membership supports the mission of the Society, and preserves Beverly history for future generations.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$30 Individual    \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Family    \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Patron

\_\_\_\_\_ \$250 Sponsor    \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 Benefactor    \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 Life (65 and over)

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Contact us at 978-922-1186 to pay by credit card

# History for Real!

Visit one of the Beverly Historical Society and Museum's historic properties to learn about Beverly's fascinating history. Or stop by the Galloupe Research Library and explore your family's story

## **Cabot House 117 Cabot Street**

The 1781 home of merchant John Cabot, becoming the Beverly Bank in 1802. The building features two floors of exhibits, including:

*Beverly and the American Revolution*  
*Doors Hast Thou Opened for Us: Significant Women of Beverly*

Museum Hours:

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 10 -4  
and Wednesday 1 - 9. Library open Tuesday  
and Saturday, 10-4 and Wednesday 1-9.



## **Balch House 448 Cabot Street**

The Balch family lived on this site in the 1630s, and tradition states that this house was built in 1636. Explore four rooms, including the "Great Hall" thought to be the first room constructed and the bedroom where David Balch thought he saw witches in 1690.

Open Tuesday-Saturday, noon to 4pm,  
through October 30, 2010. Contact us for off  
hours tours (minimum admission \$20).



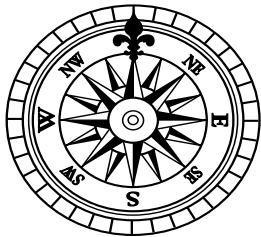
## **Hale House 39 Hale Street**

Built by 1694 for John Hale, first minister of Beverly, this house was originally four rooms, with property that extended to the ocean. Additions in the 18th and 19th centuries reflect the changing lifestyles of the Hale Family. Tour the first two floors, including the kitchen, parlor, and several bedrooms.

Open every Saturday 11am - 3 pm, through  
October 30, 2010. Contact us for off hours  
tours (minimum admission \$20).



**Beverly Historical Society  
and Museum**  
117 Cabot Street  
Beverly MA 01915-5107  
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# Chronicle

Fall 2010

MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER OF THE BEVERLY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

## An Evening with Eleo

What a wonderful evening! Members and friends of the Beverly Historical Society gathered at historic Rock Edge on June 17th for a very special fundraiser. Thanks to our incredibly generous host, Nancy Benevento (a former Society trustee) guests had the rare opportunity to enjoy the same view as the inimitable Eleo Sears, former owner of the estate. It was an especially appropriate location, because Rock Edge was built 100 years ago. Thanks to our generous donors, the event raised more than \$20,000 for the Society's programs and collections. We also made many new friends.



Our first glimpse was the tennis court, which unfortunately was not the site of a match with players in period dress because of rain earlier in the day. A 1934 Packard was parked in the circular drive. A stroll over a charming footbridge brought us to a festive tent on the upper terrace, and a spectacular view of the Atlantic. The gardens were beautiful; it truly was a magnificent setting.

Guests enjoyed delicious hors d'oeuvres and cocktails provided by Creed Caterers, and listened to the nostalgic sounds of Gid's Giddy Four. Peggy Miller Franck, author of the recently published *Prides Crossing: The Unbridled Life and Impatient Times of Eleonora Sears* was there to talk about her research and sign books. Barby Almy provided these spectacular photos, and many others. Guests received a treat from Prides Crossing Confections as a memento of the event.



The incomparable John Sears related a few Eleo tales, and Nancy Benevento shared the story of how her family came to acquire Rock Edge. A few guests had their own Eleo stories to tell. Perhaps we created a few new stories that evening. If you weren't able to join us, members will receive first notice for next year's event, to be held at another wonderful Beverly spot.



### We couldn't have done it without you . .

Special thanks to our event committee, who worked hard to make *An Evening with Eleo* a success: Susan Barry; Mary-Anne Benevento; Nancy Benevento; Katie Bull; Madilyn Coluntino; Virginia Currier; Wendy Drinkwater; Meg Erickson; David Fletcher; Cara Hutchins; Joan Johnson; Lisa Lillelund; Babette Loring; John Margolis; Mimi McFadden; Susan Oleksiw; Beth Payson; and Molly Ryan.

And many thanks as well to our sponsors: Danversbank; AMG; Essex Alarm; Glovsky & Glovsky; Landmark School; Salem Five; Beverly Cooperative Bank; Communications Ink; and J. Barrett Realty.

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