

The Making of *History of Chelmsford 1910-1970*

Eleanor Parkhurst
and Fred Merriam

1909

- Eleanor was born on July 27
- Her mother Ednah worked with Wilson Waters who was writing the town history at the time

1919

- Eleanor was active in Girl Scout Troop 1



1928

- “Lieut. Parkhurst” received the Golden Eaglet award



1930

- The Chelmsford Historical Society was formed with Eleanor's mother Ednah as secretary

1955

- Eleanor wrote history features for the *Chelmsford Newsweekly Tercentenary Edition*



1959

- The Heywood-Garrison house was offered to the Chelmsford Historical Society
- The Historical Society board voted to turn it down
- The Old Chelmsford Garrison House Association was formed specifically to preserve and utilize this historic building complex

1963

- The Chelmsford Historical Society, Inc. (a private non-profit organization) was formally incorporated in the State of Massachusetts by:

Adelaide W. Ball	William H. Drury	Lucia W. Norton
Lester W. Ball	Mrs. W. Emerson	George A. Parkhurst
Alfred H. Coburn	Patricia L. Hinckley	Arnold C. Perham
Harold J. Davis	John A. Holbrook	Cristy Pettee
Gordon P. DeWolf	Warren C. Lahue	

1965

- March 8 annual Town Meeting:
- “UNDER ARTICLE 12:
 - Mr. Cristy Pettee moved that the Town vote to have the Board of Selectmen appoint a committee of five persons to make the necessary preparations for the printing and publishing of a Town History from 1916 to date.
- It was so voted.”

1965

- October:
- The Committee to Update Town History first met
- Its members were appointed by the selectmen and sworn in by the town clerk
- George Parkhurst turned down his appointment, and was later replaced by Charles Watt, Sr.

Rev. Roland E. Morin (Chairman)
Mrs. Julia P. Fogg (Secretary)
Frederick Burne
Ronald VanderSchuur

1966

The Committee submitted a list of author candidates at their Jan. 10, 1966 meeting:

Lester Ball	Eustace Fiske	Eleanor Parkhurst
Glenn Blaisdell	Raymond Greenwood	George Parkhurst
Charlotte DeWolf	Levi Howard	Arnold Perham
Bradford Emerson	Ruth Jefts	Edward Russell
Theodore Emerson	Margaret Mills	Caroline Wright
Mrs. Ralph Emerson	Mrs. Arthur Parker	Warren Wright

1966

- The Chelmsford Historical Commission was established (an official town body per Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40 Section 8D) and its first appointments were:

Margaret Mills (Chairman)

William H. Drury

Bradford O. Emerson

Arnold C. Perham

Arthur Englund

Robert E. Picken

Eliot W. Remick

1968

- The Historical Society was offered a permanent home at 40 Byam Road by Mr. and Mrs. Albert C. Murray
- This time, the board accepted

1971

- Carol and Fred Merriam move to Chelmsford
- Good schools, central location

1974

- A Chelmsford Historic District Study Committee was appointed by the selectmen:

John C. Alden (Historical Commission)

John J. Balco (Conservation Commission)

Harold J. Davis (Historical Society)

Jane Drury (researcher for Historical Commission)

Charles E. Watt Sr. (Historical Society)

1975

- Eleanor had only two chapters to go and the Committee wanted to publish the book by 1976
- Here is part of a note from Eleanor to the Committee on June 12, 1975:

I might remind you that to this point I have had no reimbursement of any kind, although I believe a certain amount was to be paid after a part of the manuscript was completed. This will be in your records, I am sure, but it did not come back to me after my submission of it. I am also keeping account of the expenses of using the copying machine, purchase of materials, etc. used in this work and will submit that at your pleasure.

1977

- Eleanor donated her grandfather's blacksmith shop to the Old Garrison House Association
- Opened to visitors September 1978



1980

- At the May 1 annual Town Meeting:
- “UNDER ARTICLE 30 Selectman Paul C. Hart moved that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$18,000.00 to be expended by the Committee to Update Town History under the supervision of the Board of Selectmen, for the publication of an updated History of the Town.
- Motion Carried, unanimously.”

2000

- Eleanor Parkhurst passed away on June 18
- Her will left all her “paper goods” to Jane Drury
- The files (which included the manuscripts) were moved to a vault in Town Hall

2004

- Conversation with John Alden
- Invited to a meeting at Town Offices



2004

- July Historical Commission meeting
- August to December:
- Built a website
- Scanned files by the box-load
- Applied to fill a vacancy on the Commission



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Welcome! The Chelmsford Historical Commission was established under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40 [Section 8D](#) and is comprised of three to seven members. All are [volunteers](#) who are appointed by the Town Manager, and approved by the Board of Selectmen for a 3-year term.

The [mission](#) of the Chelmsford Historical Commission is to preserve, protect and develop public awareness of Chelmsford's historical assets.

Spend some quality time browsing Chelmsford History, arranged by [Street Address](#) from the CHC collection. See:

- Summarized history
- News clippings
- Old photos
- Recent photo updates

Or search the Mass Cultural Resource Information System [MACRIS](#) for State registered historic sites in other Massachusetts towns.



Chelmsford Historical Commission website designed and produced by Fred Merriam

All recent photographs were taken by Chelmsford Historical Commission members

Historical documents, records, clippings and old photos are from the Chelmsford Historical Commission files unless otherwise credited

Last Updated: Friday, Dec 30, 2004 (All PDF files converted to HTML for single page at a time download)

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2008

- Historical Commission was moved to Town Hall for a few months and then back to Town Offices
- Opportunity to reorganize with new file cabinets

2008

- Jane Drury's files were merged in at this time



2008

- A specially identified folder contained key pages: Introduction, Table of Contents, Conclusion
- The long lost Town History @#\$% &%#*!
- Using the Table of Contents, the book chapters were tracked down among dozens of folders

2008

- Scanning with character recognition was a disaster, took 1 hour per page
- Started typing - 15 minutes per page
- Needed volunteers for transcribing

~~Another~~ Special Town Meeting on Jan. 18, 1909, was asked ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ to reconsider ~~the~~ purchase but after some deliberation, the proposition was dismissed. The Annual Town Meeting of March, 1909, extended the time ~~allowed~~ ^{for building} ~~in which~~ the North Fire Commissioners ~~were to build~~ the fire-house. Later that year, \$1656 .10 was spent for firehouse plans (\$20) drawn by William E. O'Neil, and the balance for ~~the~~ ^{construction of the building} by Harry O. Miner and Mr. O'Neil. The building was heated by coal and had gas lighting. Mr. ~~Miner became~~ the janitor at an ~~annual salary of \$50 for 1910 and 1911, reduced to \$25 for~~ some ~~unexplained reason~~ thereafter.

In 1924, a committee was named to buy land for additional firehouse sites and to report at the next annual town meeting. The committee--

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ and M. Edward ~~XXXXXX~~ stated that "the

2009

- January to May:
- Chapters were serialized on the Historical Commission website as they were completed

2009

- June:
- The Historical Commission voted to publish the history in book format
- The chapters were then taken off the website

2009

- July to September:
- Sharon Calitri consented to do the book design, using InDesign professional publishing software
- Microsoft Word is not suitable for hardcover book!
- She started converting Word pages to InDesign
- October:
- We applied for and later received a grant from the Chelmsford Cultural Council to start the design

2009

- Picking a format:
- Waters' History is too thick at 893 pages



2009

- In November, decided on:
- 8.5 x 11 inch book size
- Two column per page
- Photos at 1 column or span 2



2011

- January:
- Writing continued on Business & Industry chapter
- February:
- Chapters 1 through 12 were printed in loose-leaf notebooks for proofreading

2011

- March to April:
- Proofreading was completed, and there was almost no duplication of corrections!

2011

- May:
- Inspiration hit to do an Epilogue chapter
- Needed to tie up the unfinished business mentioned in the first part of the book without having to fill in the missing years

2011

- June:
- Results of first round proofreading now complete
- Business & Industry draft now ready
- Judy Buswick consented to proofread this round
- Epilogue 2010 research underway

2011

- Early December:
- Business & Industry, Epilogue 2010 done
- Judy's corrections now integrated into InDesign
- Mid December:
- Deb Taverna completed the first draft of the index

2011

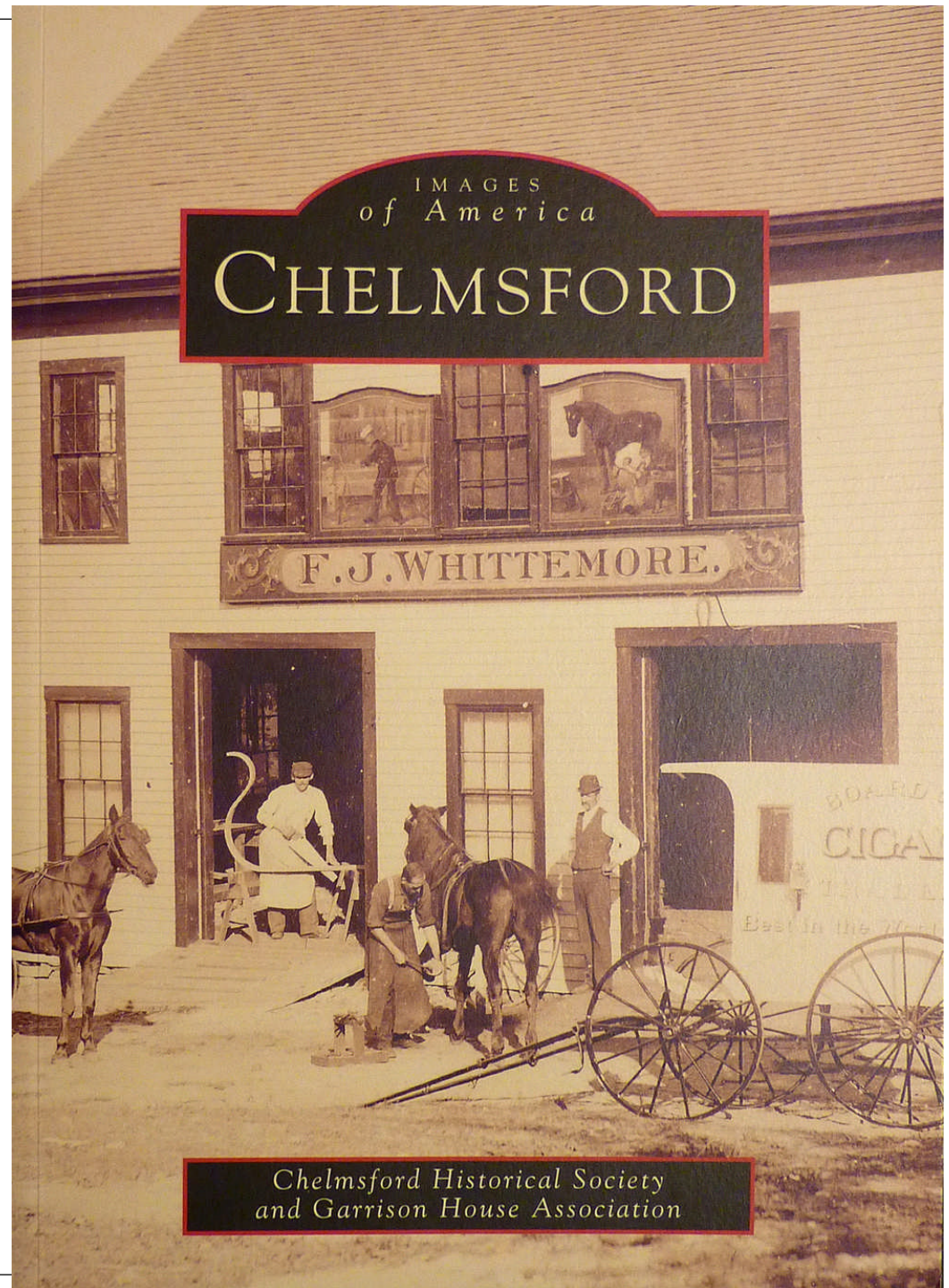
- Late December:
- Sent electronic files to Courier:
- Dust jacket, end papers, case cover
 - Just when you think you're done ...

2012

- January:
- 3d - Sharon sent in the InDesign content file
 - Just when you think you're done ...
- 5th - Sharon sent in corrected files
- 26th - Picked up the books at Courier's factory in Westford
 - Now we're done !!!
- Back to the survey questions ...

2013

- “Images of America Chelmsford Revisited”
- Scheduled publication is late in 2013



*Chelmsford Historical Society
and Garrison House Association*

Thank you all for coming today!

