



THE ANNISQUAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

7 Walnut Street
Annisquam MA 01930

Visit the Firehouse

The Firehouse is closed for the winter and will reopen in May 2018. To visit this winter Contact: avhistorical@gmail.com

Admission

Admission is free but donations are gratefully accepted.



Rogers of Rogers Lane

By Rita Littlewood Teele

If you ask people from Annisquam which road to take into the village, they immediately mention Leonard Street. “Turn left at the church.” But after continuing past Rockholm and Norwood Heights, the road divides and Walnut Street sweeps rightward and upward to give off Squam Rock Road and Adams Hill Road before heading back to rejoin Leonard Street. If, by chance or choice, you are on Walnut Street, you can use Rogers Lane, alongside the Village Hall, to get to the bridge at the end of Bridgewater Street and then turn right on River Road to the Market and the Yacht Club.



Photograph courtesy of Elinor Teele

**Leonard was a minister,
Walnut is a tree, but who was Rogers?**

I had long assumed that the lane was named after Elliott Rogers—member of an established Gloucester family, co-author with Melvin Copeland of *The Saga of Cape Ann*, brother of Martha Hale Harvey and stalwart supporter of the Annisquam Historical Society until his death in 1970. I was completely wrong,

I’m not sure how I stumbled on the information that there had been an “Annie Rogers” who was instrumental in her support of the Annisquam community. But with a little digging through the tangible records (and helped immeasurably by information that is now online) I was able to find out more about the unassuming Miss Rogers.

Continued next page...

Annette Perkins Rogers, 1841-1920, was the only child of wealthy Bostonians, Henry Bromfield Rogers and Anna Powell Mason Perkins Rogers. Henry Rogers was the son of a prominent mercantile family and had enough resources that, after practicing law for a few years, he was able to devote his life to philanthropy and good works. Over her own lifetime, Annette Rogers followed in his footsteps.

As a young lady of means, Annette joined art classes that were conducted by William Morris Hunt in his Summer Street studio in Boston. Fourteen of the students formed a group, known as “The Palette” (*In Memoriam Annette Perkins Rogers 1841-1920*. Printed by Thomas Todd Co. Boston MA. <https://archive.org/details/annetteperkinsro00unse>)

These young women went off together every year in apple blossom time to sketch from nature. It is possible that Annette first came to Cape Ann when Hunt had a summer studio in Magnolia after 1877. (Knowlton, Helen M. *Art-life of William Morris Hunt*. Published 1899, Boston by Little, Brown & Co.)

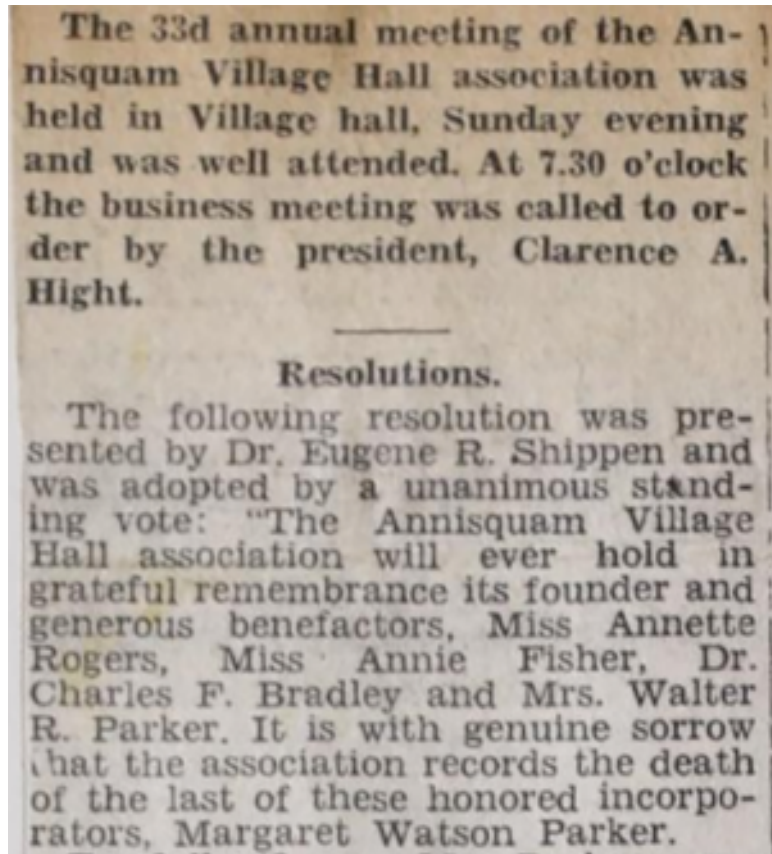
It is also documented in the memorial book, cited above, that Annette came to stay in Annisquam at “The Paintbox”, (at the end of Cambridge Avenue and later called “Beach Cottage”) for summer art lessons with Charles Woodbury. In later years, she stayed at “Tideway,” her summer home on stilts at the edge of the river. Her guests included Alice Curtis whose painting of irises in the pasture hangs in the Village Hall.



In the photograph above, looking towards Cambridge Beach, “Tideway” is the house on the far right. “Beach Cottage” is to the left of the flag pole. In the foreground is the old quarry, now the tennis courts of the Old Wharf Lot. (Image AHS1147 is the property of Annisquam Historical Society)

During their summers in Annisquam, Annette Rogers and her companion, Annie Fisher, were very supportive of community projects. In 1979, Ruth Ricker Pappas wrote of Annie Fisher's involvement in the village. (<http://annisquamvillagelibrary.org/history.php>)

It is apparent that the couple was on good terms with both Dr. Charles F. Bradley and Margaret (Watson) Parker, a wealthy art collector, who also summered in Annisquam. In 1902, these four donated the money needed to buy the building from the estate of John Davis that is now the Annisquam Village Hall. The newspaper article below is from September 1936.



1893	Dec. 15	"	"	et ux et al	Clara Benton	"	1397	134	"	(Annisquam) Arlington St. & way 5/7 undiv.
1902	Nov. 17	"	"	Est. (& Plan)	Anna P. Rogers et al Trs.	"	1688	503	"	(") 1st Leonard & Walnut Sts. 2d -

Note that Annette's name is misspelled "Anna" on the above entry from the South Essex Registry of Deeds, Salem, Massachusetts.

In 1924, four years after Annette Rogers died, a letter was sent to the Mayor and Aldermen of Gloucester. The expertise of Sarah Dunlap in finding and photographing the document in the Gloucester City Archives, is gratefully acknowledged!

Annisquam, Massachusetts
August 21, 1924

Honorable Mayor and Board of Aldermen
Gloucester
Massachusetts

Gentlemen:

The following owners, abutters, and nearby land owners hereby petition that Rogers Lane, Annisquam, which runs between Walnut and Leonard Streets, adjoining the Village Hall, a distance of approximately 150 feet, be accepted by the city as a public way, and respectfully request a hearing upon the subject.

The facts in connection with this lane are that a few years ago some twenty residents of Annisquam purchased the strip of land in question and built a connecting street through this space, which they have been operating since that time. Previously, it had been necessary to make a very sharp turn from Leonard into Walnut Street at an extremely dangerous point.

Rogers Lane, named for Miss Annette P. Rogers, who has benefited Annisquam so much, has been maintained by the owners, but it was really intended for the use of the public and is used by them very generally, and the owners feel that the lane should be taken over by the city, and they are willing to donate to the city this land, which with improvements thereon cost the owners about \$800.

Very respectfully submitted,

Charles F. Bradley Owner

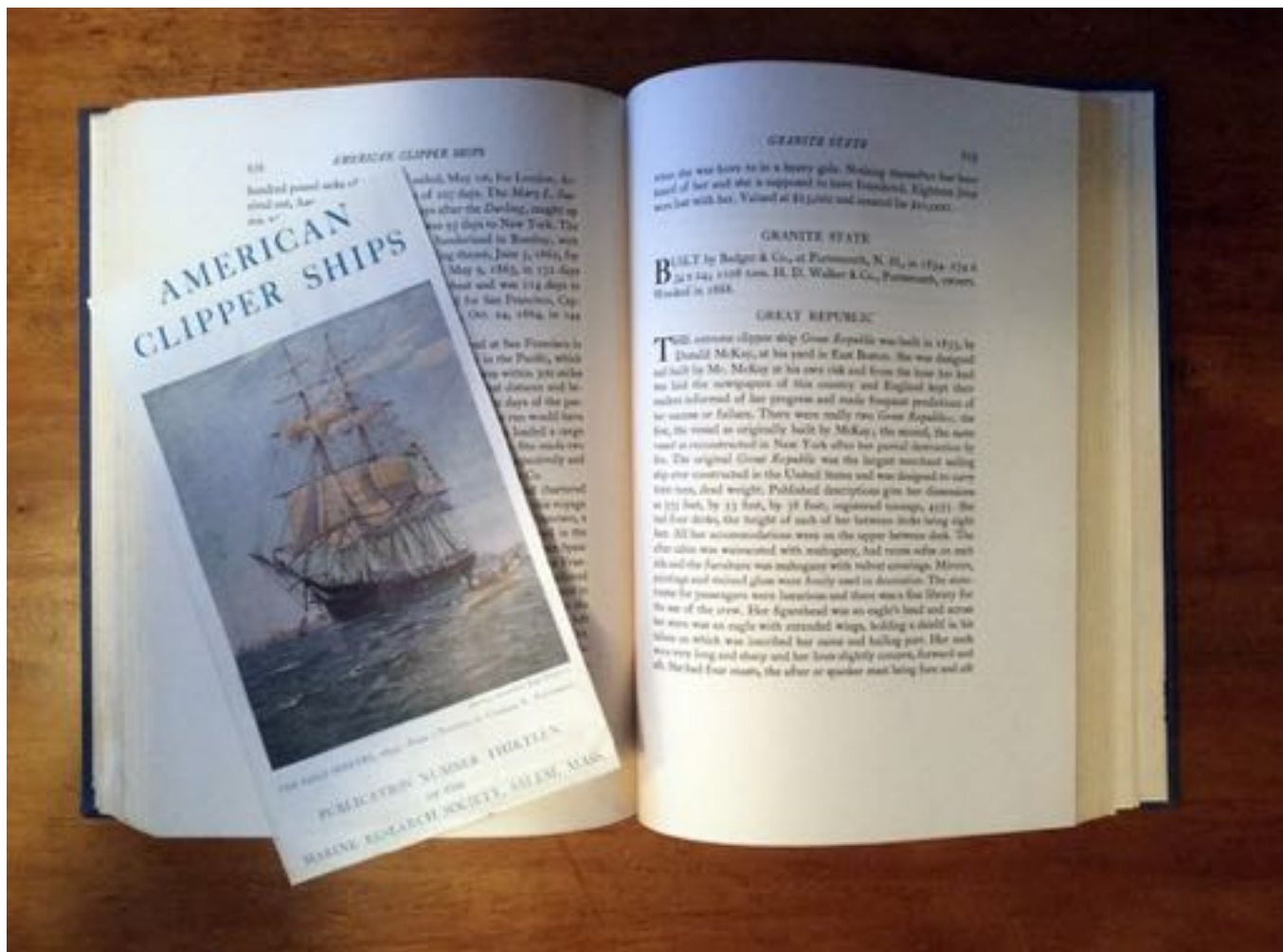
ANNISQUAM ASSOCIATION, INC. }

By Charles F. Bradley } Abutter
President

Susan S. Parker
Secretary

Society Receives Two Major Donations

By Rita Teele



The Annisquam Historical Society has been the recipient of donations that deserve public acknowledgement by way of this newsletter.

Don K. Usher Jr. and Sue Usher Lange have donated items that belonged to their parents and that remain in the Firehouse. As most of you know, Don K. Usher Senior contributed his knowledge of Annisquam to the society and the community over many years. We are lucky to have those of his papers that were left in the filing cabinets. Some of his articles and notes were included in documents that were scanned for inclusion on Digital Commonwealth. However, for lack of labels, we do not know how many other items he might have given. The family has been very generous at allowing the AHS to now own what was, or might have been, their parents' property.

In addition, **Sue, and Jerry Lange**, her husband, sent us some beautiful books from Don K. Usher's estate:

The two volume set of **American Clipper Ships. 1833-1858** by Howe and Matthews, published 1926-27 by the Salem Marine Research Society

The two volume set of **American Merchant Ships. 1850-1900** (Series One and Two) by Matthews, published 1930-31 by the Salem Marine Research Society

The three volume set of **The Sailing Ships of New England. 1607-1907** (Series I, II, III) by Robinson, Robinson and George, published 1922-28 by the Salem Marine Research Society.

All are rare books, very valuable for their historical and pictorial content, and each is in excellent condition. They have been transferred from AHS to the locked cupboard of the Annisquam Village Library for safe keeping, but they are accessible for perusal and research within the library.



Photo by Robert Russell

Captain George Edward Lane's traveling desk

When Susanna Hackett Taylor came to visit her mother, Sarah Hackett in late October 2017, she presented the AHS with a ship captain's traveling desk that she had had in her possession for many years and used as her jewelry box. This is a very special gift; the brass plate on its lid is engraved with the name of Captain George E. Lane. He was a member of the famous Annisquam family of sea captains: his father was Captain Gideon Lane, and his uncle was Captain Oliver G. Lane. The desk came into the family through Sophronia Fellows Pulcifer Lane.

Her first husband, Captain Charles Lane (son of Oliver G. Lane) had died in Brazil. Captain George E. Lane, cousin to Charles, was a widower. Sophronia married George, and the desk remained with descendants of the Pulcifer branch of her family, down to Susanna.

Squam Quandary by Rita Teele

What is the actual name of the two story edifice, between the Annisquam Exchange and Village Hall, that houses the stagecoach, file boxes full of documents, historical postcards and photographs, paintings, carvings, an old safe, a large pot belly stove, Native American arrowheads, botanical specimens, old toys, clothing, china, ephemera, magazines, etc. etc.?

Ask three Davids: David Pearce refers to it as the "Historical", David McAweeney favors the "Museum", David Teele calls it the "Hysterical." (Sigh) Others have called it Deluge 8 or Hose 8.

David McAweeney asked why we should not have an Annisquam "museum". My reasons follow: a couple are related to legal issues, while others are purely subjective.

In ancient Greece, a museum was a place or temple dedicated to the Muses, the divinities associated with the arts; it was a building set apart for study and the arts. Then committees, associations, and governments got involved. According to the ICOM Statutes, adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria on August 24th, 2007: "A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment."

The public includes able-bodied and disabled people. The American Disabilities Act (ADA) provides a "clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities" so that people with disabilities may participate fully in society. This law applies to all public accommodations,

including museums. It affects how museums operate regarding the public – providing both physical and intellectual access to its resources — and it has an impact upon a museum's employment practices. A museum is almost always a non-profit organization. As such it is dependent on outside funding, sometimes from grants, some of which are federal, some from the state. Funding is not provided, if the institution does not meet specific requirements.

Our physical plant, an antique building, does not have the facilities required for access by all. The two steps to get in the front door, then two steps down, and the steep staircase to the second floor are barriers. We do not have toilet facilities, or indeed, any running water inside the building. (That is not to say that we should not try to make access possible for all.)

The word "museum" can conjure up words such as "old-fashioned" and "boring", although places like P.E.M. and Cape Ann Museum are adapting to the times and delivering history in a completely different format than dreamed of by their early founders.

In Annisquam, we have an amazing collection of documents and artifacts. More importantly, we have many decade's worth of marvellous stories from people who lived here. The artifacts are accessories to those lives. I believe that we should think of our Society as being the historical voice of the village. Publishing our documents online, accessible to all, will support that effort. Artifacts in our collection can be used in presentations and exhibitions to expand the stories. Such events can be put online to aid in public access.

Is everyone happy with calling the building the Firehouse--an honorable New England name?

Two Numbers in Search of a Building

By David Teele

Now that we have dealt with what to call the building that must not be named, we next have to deal with its street address. Until quite recently, the firehouse lacked a number visible from any direction. Observation, casual or otherwise, had somehow missed this.

Imagine for a moment that you are the Gloucester Fire Department responding to a fire alarm (and we have one) in a heavy, winter snow storm: “a small white building exactly where?” The listed number, 34, marked the village hall on Leonard Street.

Faced with this challenge, we contacted the City Engineer’s Office. They too, had no record of a number for the building. They, most obligingly, made a site visit and determined that the address from now and for always is and will be “7 Walnut Street”. The building now sports a tasteful, and rustproof, number “7”.

As a codicil, careful perusal of the city atlas of 1899 showed the engine house (yet another possible name) comfortably located at number 7 Walnut Street.



Discovering Perspectives An AHS Community Survey

By Holly Clay Smith

Last Fall, the Annisquam Historical Society (AHS), intent on breathing new life into its operations and outreach, sent a questionnaire to community members. Intended to solicit residents' impressions about the Firehouse and the AHS collections, the Survey was designed and widely distributed by AHS member Marilyn Short. The questions probed beneath the surface of assumptions, drawing out specific feedback on a range of matters. Marilyn's formal power point summary lucidly reports the Survey results. Follow-up meetings have provided a forum to discuss AHS's potential to play a meaningful and decisive role in articulating Annisquam's history, preserving material, documents, artifacts and architecture and drawing participation within the Village and beyond.

Responses demonstrate areas of interest for Squamers. Peoples' stories, past and present, carry particular appeal. These include the lives of artists, notable individuals, settlers who founded the Third Parish and established a meetinghouse (now the Annisquam Village Church) and many more who contributed to the rich community fabric. Histories of properties, both commercial and residential, also draw interest.

As far as overall operation is concerned, resident knowledge varied. Over 99 percent of respondents indicate awareness of AHS and about 80 percent know its collections are housed in the Firehouse. Only roughly 25 percent know the Firehouse open hours and even fewer have a strong sense of the collection content. Two-thirds have visited the Firehouse; a third have not. People pointed out that the number of participants would grow, should the Firehouse be open more often. Accessibility will be enormously augmented, in any case, as AHS redoubles efforts to build the ongoing document and photo digitization program.

Other responses indicate how AHS could best function to support the community. Over two-thirds rated AHS's role as a storehouse for historical material as "very important," while slightly less than half deemed information about a "shared" past and guidance about history as "very important."

The Survey also inquires about activities and outreach. Respondents favor historic presentations on focused topics and would enjoy social gatherings for history buffs. They even suggest AHS could inspire a collective village-wide sense of ownership and pride in our historically authentic village-scape.

Other steps that respondents endorse include:

- ~ building a "researchable, online archive" (66 percent of respondents)
- ~ offering "educational opportunities to learn more about" Annisquam history (64 percent of respondents)
- ~ displaying objects so they are available for viewing (63 percent of respondents)
- ~ providing online purchase of historic photographs (61 percent of respondents)

Further comments note that people want to understand how AHS could better secure the collections. AHS continues to research options, including ways to add or develop efficient means of climate control.

AHS greatly appreciates community members taking the time to fill out the questionnaire and is gratified that so many responded positively. The results will help the Historical Society Committee steer a course that respects Annisquam's unique history, villagers' shared heritage, the village's architectural gems and the time and inclinations of those who will use the Firehouse collections and support ongoing efforts for sustainability. With 116 respondents willing to consider making financial contributions to AHS and almost 50 willing to become more involved, AHS is encouraged and will continue to fine tune strategies and operations to benefit Annisquam and the people who live here.

We have copies of the Survey Results Report at the Firehouse. It will be available for perusal during spring/summer open hours or by request at avhistorical@gmail.com.