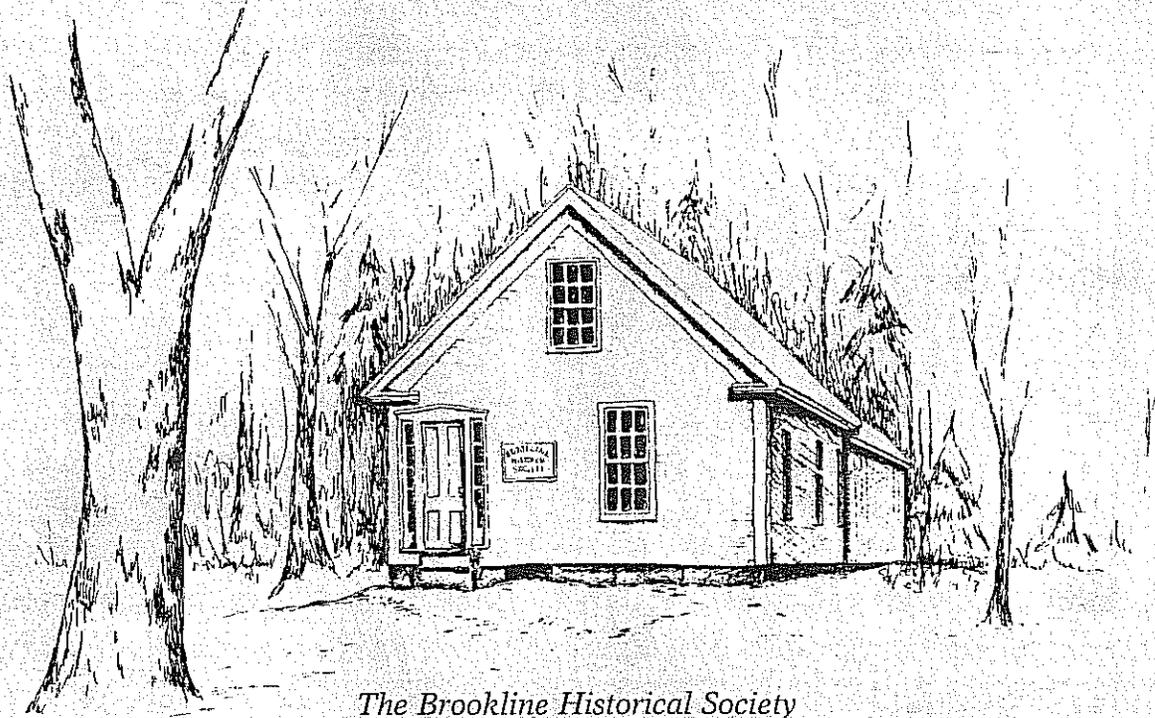


Brookline New Hampshire



The Brookline Historical Society

Two hundred twenty-five years

1769-1994

Brookline, New Hampshire

*"I followed signs, and then I found this place.
It's not what I imagined I would find:
They told me Brookline was a massive borough,
One of the busiest towns in Massachusetts.
This isn't that. Sorry, can you tell me
Where I went wrong? And then I'll let you back
To your raking. You've got your work cut out."*

*"You've got more ground to cover than I do.
You're only off by fifty miles, I'd say.
You're north of Boston now. You're in New Hampshire.
I can't see what you've got in there for selling,
But chances are great that we won't need it here."*

"Brookline, New Hampshire? What's Brookline, New Hampshire?"

*"A little hilly town, that's nestled north
Of the state's southern border, on the line
With Townsend and with Pepperell, Massachusetts.
The woods of Mason mate us on the west.
To the east is Hollis, good for apples.
To the north is Milford, good for shopping.
We've got a river called the Nissitissit.
We've got a pond named Muscatanipus,
And Big and Little Muscatanipus Hills.
'Little' looks over the valley of the town
With its fine churches (white but when it snows);
And 'Big' has panoramic views, at least
In centuries when our quick trees are cleared.
The town was founded upon a rock, and that rock
Is granite. It's always there just under
The surface or poking through and making shapes
Like Rock Ramond and the Stone House, and
Devil's Den. The people in this town
Are what I'd call a better than average crop.
That means not rotten, but not pretentious either,
Just fine, and full of healthy summer colors,
Or these colors here, I'd call our passion,
As true as crocus flowers to the spring.
It's a little town, with room, and you,
Or anyone else, can live here if you want."*

*"That's good. Good; I'm glad for you, but I
Had better be going before it gets too dark."*

- Sidney L. Hall, Jr.

THE 225TH ANNIVERSARY BOOKLET COMMITTEE

JUDITH H. BENNETT, *EDITOR*

CAROL A. CONNOR

M. KATE RICCI



Contributors to this booklet are as follows:

Sidney Hall, Jr., Peter W. Bennett, Miriam S. Jepson, Peter G. Webb,
Carol A. Connor and Judith H. Bennett

The cover was designed by Georgeianna Tebbetts

Our thanks to all who graciously donated their pictures and their recollections
of the past twenty-five years to make this booklet possible.

BROOKLINE'S BICENTENNIAL

At 10:00 a.m. on the morning of August 9, 1969, the resounding boom of three cannon shots echoed through the village, signalling the official beginning of Brookline's Bicentennial parade.

Thousands of spectators massed along Main Street to watch nine different Drum and Bugle Corps companies, three Drill Teams, baton twirlers, antique cars, clowns and many local floats march from the Pine Grove Cemetery up to the Ball Park. The floats were built and decorated by such groups as Friends of the Library, Corey's Gulf Station, the Garden Club, Camp Tevya, the 4-H Club, the Grange, the American Legion and the Boy Scouts. The float produced by the Bicentennial Committee itself featured Brookline's World War I Veterans Wilfred Soucy, Eldorus Fessenden, Grover Farwell, Sr. and Wilfred Bouchard. Perhaps the most poignant memory of those who were there was the sight of the then 82-year old Florence Barnaby joyously leading the parade on her fully decorated bicycle.



Florence Barnaby, 82, leading Bicentennial Parade

The parade was not the only event in town, however, by a long shot. Organizers had begun planning for the event in 1967 in order to make certain that the days of August 8, 9 and 10 were truly a celebration to remember. They were.

Some events took place on Friday, beginning with a coffee at the Youth Center and PTA-sponsored Children's Parade, followed by an afternoon of Field Events. Over 100 children marched, rode bicycles and pushed carriages behind the Elks Trojans Juniors marching unit from the Youth Center up Milford Street to the Ball Park where the costumes, bikes and floats were judged by three parent volunteers.

That evening a baked bean supper put on by the Church of Christ on the town common drew 500 customers for hot dogs, beans, cole slaw, apple pie, cheese and home-made root beer. After dinner most Brookliners took off for the two

dances planned for that evening. A Teen Dance was held at the Old Mill in South Brookline, while a square dance exhibition was conducted for the "older folks" at the Fire House. At 9:15 an intermission was held at both sites for all to watch a fireworks display set off from the old race track on Route 13.

The next morning the huge parade opened the day's festivities, which also included an exhibition by the Lafayette Artillery Company, a program for children with Ring-a-Ding the clown, and the dedication of the World War II Memorial on the town common. The monument was unveiled by Dorothea Beaubien, who had had the honor of unveiling the World War I Memorial in 1919.

New Hampshire Governor Walter Peterson was on hand to dedicate the Memorial and to officiate at the Beard and Bonnet judging contests later that afternoon. In addition, the number one silver commemorative coin minted for this occasion was auctioned off and won for \$250 by Clayton Hobart of Nashua.

For dinner that night the Brookline Fire Department and the American Legion presented a chicken barbeque at the Ball Park to over 1,400 townspeople and guests. An accompanying band concert was provided by the Townsend Military Band, a group which had played in Brookline for the town's 150th celebration back in 1919. One member of the band that day, Donald Shattuck of Ayer, Massachusetts, had actually participated in that first concert.



*Gov. Walter Peterson presiding as judge of the
Beard Growing Contest for the Bicentennial*

Between six and seven o'clock that evening, the Nashua Sky Divers made several jumps at the Ball Park to the delight of the concert and barbeque attendees.

The Bicentennial Ball began at 9:00 p.m., lasting until 2 a.m. at the Old Mill in South Brookline. Nearly 300 adults gathered to dance to the tunes of Kenney Kombo and to join their friends and neighbors for a rollicking good time.

While things began to wind down by Sunday, August 10, there were still activities going on in town which included a coffee hour sponsored by the Church of the Infant Jesus at Town Hall and a special worship service at the Church of Christ. A family picnic at the Ball Park was held at noon (in the rain), and once the skies cleared, horseshoe pitching and softball games took place. The men's softball team, the Brookline Aces, played two games against a pick-up team calling themselves the Town Fathers and a second group entitled the "Other Team". The Aces split, winning the first match but going down to defeat in the second.

Throughout the weekend, the Brookline Public Library featured exhibits of prints by Joan Jackson and paintings by Margaret Brown. In addition, the Church of Christ provided a display of old Bibles, records, pictures and articles made in Brookline.

The three-day festival was packed with events involving every group and organization in town. Decorative bunting was hung on the town buildings and many private homes throughout the center of the village, while beards became the norm for the "men about town".

For one whole weekend, life was one non-stop celebration filling every day and most of the nights. In the process, Brookline's Bicentennial was transformed from a mere historical event into a town-wide celebration of unity, with an emphasis on pure, unadulterated fun.



*Daniels Academy Building decorated for
Bicentennial weekend*

BROOKLINE STATION

Today Brookline Station sits quietly beside Route 13, gazing out at the traffic from under its gabled roof, much as it did a century ago. Inside the station there have been many alterations over the years, but on the outside little has changed. Because of this, a casual passerby has no trouble picturing the little depot at another time, with townspeople in long skirts and bonnets, sideburns and black bowlers set to welcome the big black locomotives as they pulled the freight and passenger cars up to the platform.

Built in 1892 by the Brookline and Pepperell Railroad, the station instantly became the center of commercial activity for the little town, shipping local freight as far away as Boston and Worcester, Massachusetts. It was also the focal point for social activity, with the arrival and departure of relatives and friends. The station agent was the telegraph operator as well as the baggage handler, the stove stoker and the ticket seller. There were three stations in Brookline, but the "old depot" was the lynchpin of the local system.

At one point at the turn of the century, over seventy to eighty cars a day regularly left Brookline Station for Boston loaded with ice, lumber and granite. Passengers, too, headed for the big city by using the rails. Several years ago, the late Nason Fessenden of Brookline remembered the excitement in town over the station.

"The people of Brookline really wanted a railroad," he recalled. "The only transportation they had going to Boston and to any other cities around the Merrimack River was the Merrimack Canal. And so when they started to have railroads, well, everybody wanted one. When it finally happened, it was a big moment in town, I can tell you."

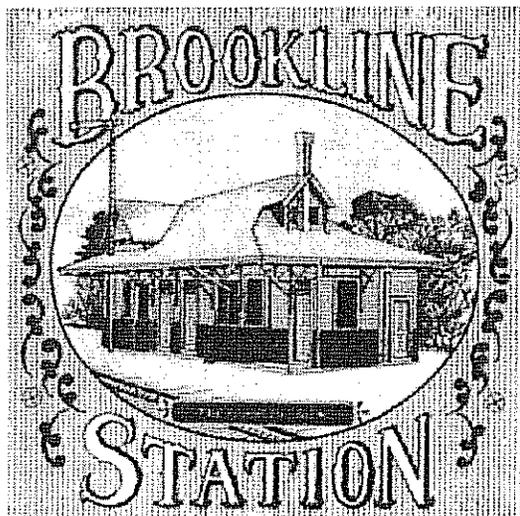
"I practically lived with the railroad," he continued. "My father was a station agent and a lot of mornings I'd get up and help shovel off the tracks."

Because of the rise in private transportation, making it cheaper to send goods by truck than by the rails, the railroad industry went into a decline halfway through the twentieth century, thereby phasing out the smaller stops along the lines. Brookline became one of these casualties.

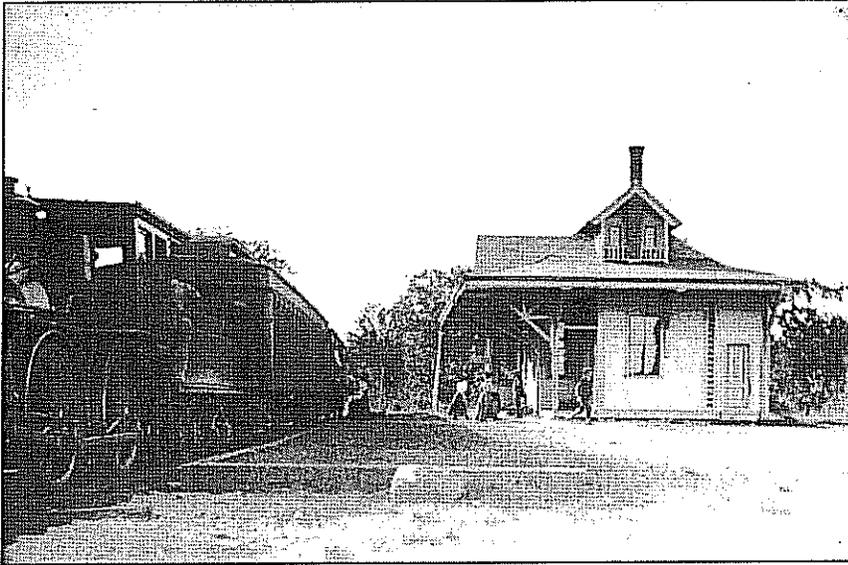
The station itself, however, remained and was purchased by Lawrence E. Corey in 1946 who turned it into a restaurant and snack bar. In this way, the station continued to serve travellers along this part of the old rail line from Massachusetts to points north.

The building remained an eatery until 1985 when Dr. Jack Polidoro, a folksinger and songwriter, purchased it and renovated the inside, making it his home. "Brookline Station" became the title of the singer's first album, released in 1984, as well as its lead song.

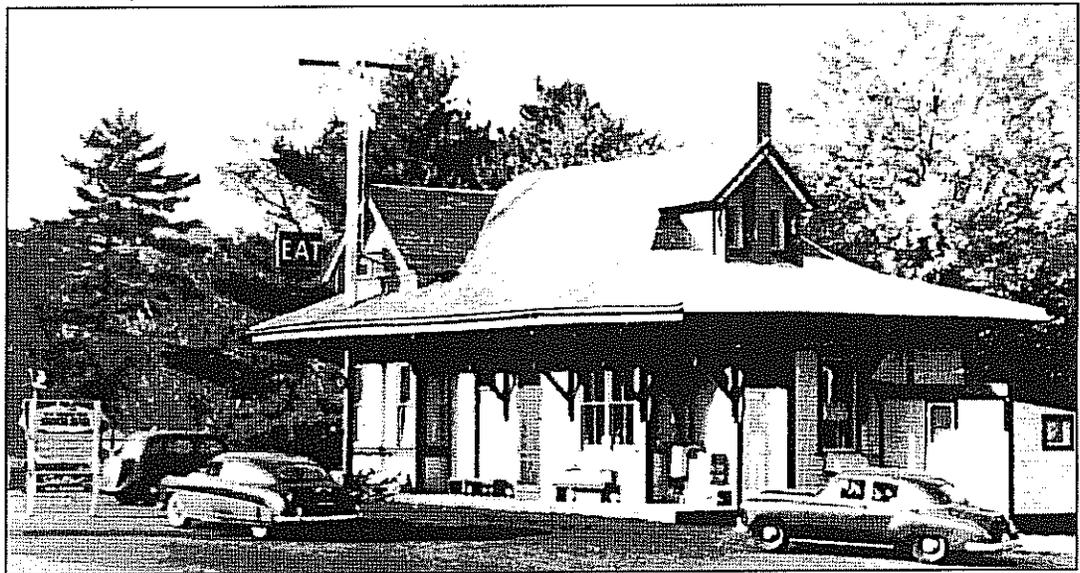
Nowadays, at the ripe old age of one hundred and two, the spiffed up and restored little depot remains one of Brookline's more unique historic buildings. In its berth beside the busy highway, watch the world flow by its front stoop. For all of us, it is a reminder of another era—the physical vestige of a time when the "Iron Horse" was Brookline's link to the outside world.



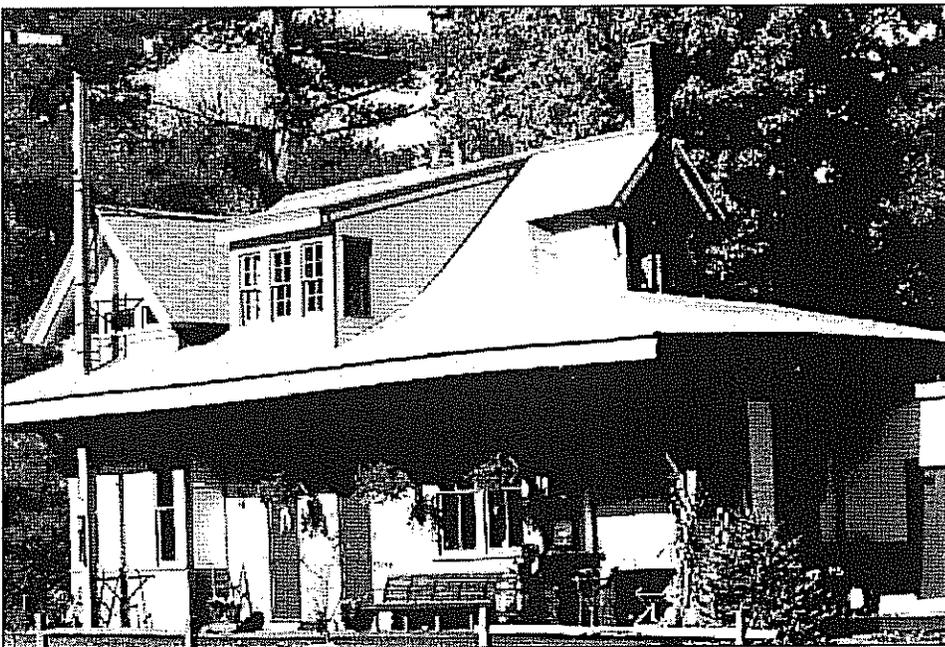
was Brookline's link to the



*The Railroad Station
welcomes passengers
in the early 1900's*



*The Depot as
a Snack Bar in
1954*



*Brookline Station today
as a private residence*

BROOKLINE'S POST OFFICES

Adaptability is the key word to keep in mind with regard to the history of the Post Offices in Brookline. From the days of 1769 when townspeople travelled to Amherst to collect their mail to the current new building on Route 13, village Post Offices have ranged the length and breadth of Main Street, finding locations in many homes and businesses before finally settling down in the latter part of this century.

The first building that could actually be termed a Post Office was the little house which was located next to the current Ambulance Bay. The mail was received and distributed from this building from approximately 1892 until 1913. From then on, the little building became a private home until late summer 1992 when it was donated to the town by resident Tom Moran and moved up to the Ball Park to be used as a concession stand.



The little Post Office at work in the early 1900's

Before that time mail was collected by numerous Postmasters who switched the post offices between their own homes and the Town's two different stores, depending upon each one's own political affiliation.

From 1914 until 1965 the residents collected their mail at A. A. Hall's Store (now the Brookline Village Store) on Main Street. By 1964 it was clear that the Postal operation needed more space, so it was then moved to the other end of Main Street, settling into newly renovated quarters in Eddy Whitcomb's store.

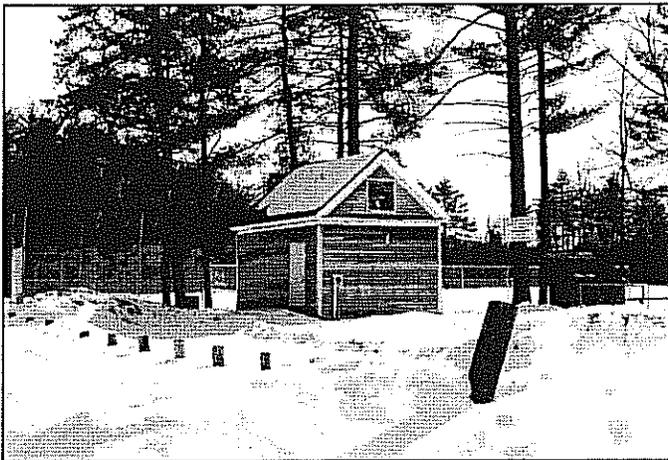
The Post Office remained at Whitcomb's for almost twenty-five years, and townspeople became accustomed to picking up their mail while watching the life of the town flow by from behind the two large picture windows at the front of the building.



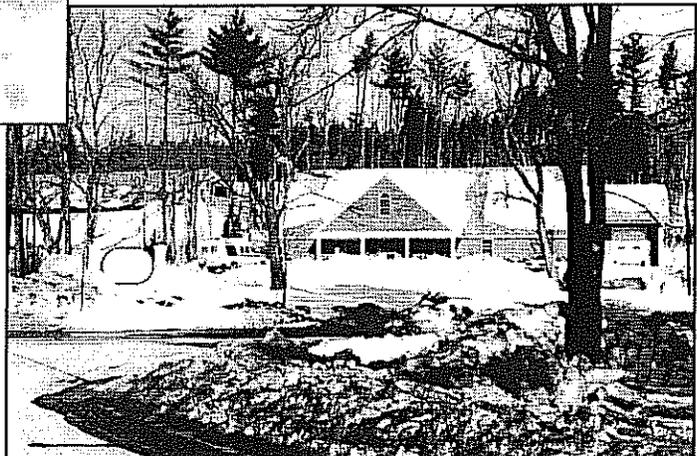
The Post Office, which is now the Creative Cottage Children's Preschool, decorated for the Bicentennial

By the mid 1980's the growth of the town and the shortage of space for more Postal boxes necessitated another change. So, for the very first time since the early nineteenth century, the Brookline Post Office moved its operations off of Main Street and away from the center of town. The new facility, located on Route 13 near the corner of Milford Street opened in 1989, providing the town with more than three times the space as the previous location.

With all of this movement of buildings, it is clear that while necessity has sometimes played havoc with tradition, it has also created a desire to preserve our historic buildings, even if we must adapt their uses in order to do so. In illustration, Whitcomb's building has become a children's pre-school, while the historic little Post Office now sits at the Ball Park, ready, able and willing to begin its new career.



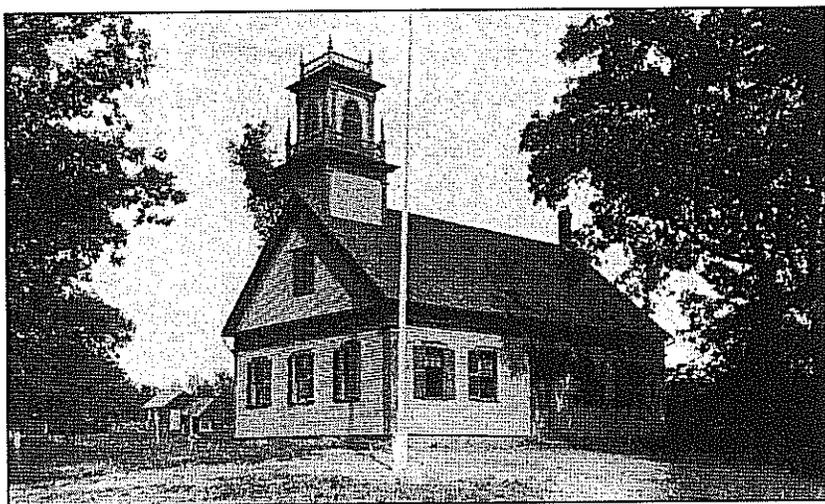
The new concession stand at the Brookline Ballfield



The new Post Office which opened for business in 1989

BROOKLINE SCHOOLS

The first schools in these parts featured hornbooks, Bibles and swamp maple ink. Students clad in homespun began to learn their letters at the age of four and sometimes didn't finish until the ripe old age of 25. Teachers came and went, paid from fifty cents to a dollar a week and were largely hired to keep order in the classroom as much as to teach anything. From an initial budget of \$20 in 1783, to a Bicentennial budget of over \$260,000, Brookline residents will be voting this year on a local budget of approximately \$1.7 million dollars.



The Milford Street Schoolhouse served as a primary school for 111 years

Clearly, times have changed. For today's students, the word "apple" creates mental pictures of round floppy disks instead of red, ripe presents for the teacher. A missing homework assignment results in a detention instead of a whipping or a dunce cap. Obviously, in 225 years we have come a long way in our approach to education, but what changes have taken place in our schools during the most recent two and a half decades?

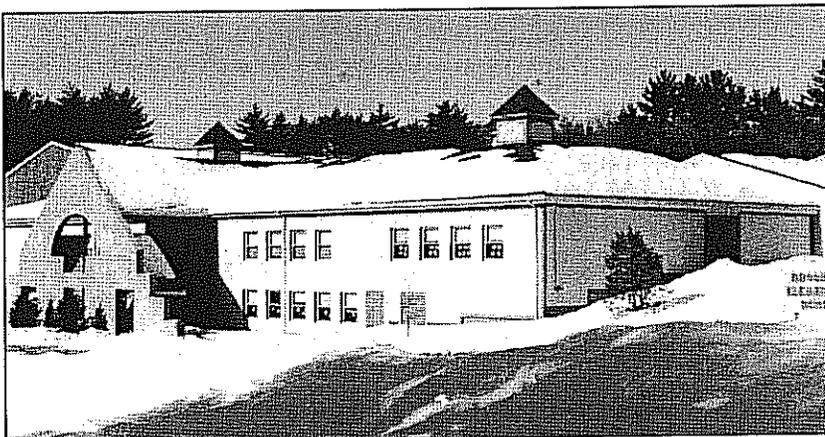
A quarter of a century ago Brookline's total school population

stood at 348, and the town was preparing to embark on a new system of educating our nearly 150 secondary students with the town of Hollis.

A twenty year AREA agreement, approved in 1969, provided that Brookline would send all students in grades 7 through 12 to the Hollis Junior and Senior High Schools. This agreement replaced a twenty-year association with the city of Nashua, which was abandoned because the phenomenal growth within that city had filled those schools to the bursting point.

Brookline, at the time, had just built a six-room addition to the current elementary school enabling the town to house all of its students under one roof for the very first time.

The history of education in Brookline reads something like a travelogue with schoolhouses appearing and disappearing all over town. At one point in the year 1850, there were seven school districts placed within these sixteen square miles; and it wasn't until 1884 that the town voted to combine all of the schools into one district. Even then there were still four schools in operation, three primary schools and one grammar school. The grammar school was housed at the Daniels Academy Building from 1914 until 1968. One primary school, the Milford St. Schoolhouse, (now a private, uninhabited residence) remained in use for 111 years until the current elementary school was built in 1962.



The front entrance to the Brookline Elementary School

Today Brookline's school population currently stands at 530 and is growing steadily. A new secondary school arrangement in the form of a Cooperative School District with Hollis was ap-

proved by the town in 1989 and provides Brookline with two seats on the seven-member Cooperative School Board. This is the first time that Brookline voters have ever had representation on a secondary level school board.

The Brookline Elementary School has felt the first impact of the town's growth, with the construction of two new additions over the past seven years. In 1987, several classrooms, a gymnasium, a library, a music room, and art room were added to the basic structure; and five years later two more classrooms were built into the school basement. A third addition of six classrooms will be proposed by the Brookline School Board this spring. Some growth estimates show that if the population continues to increase, Brookline may need to study the possibility of constructing a second elementary school within five years.



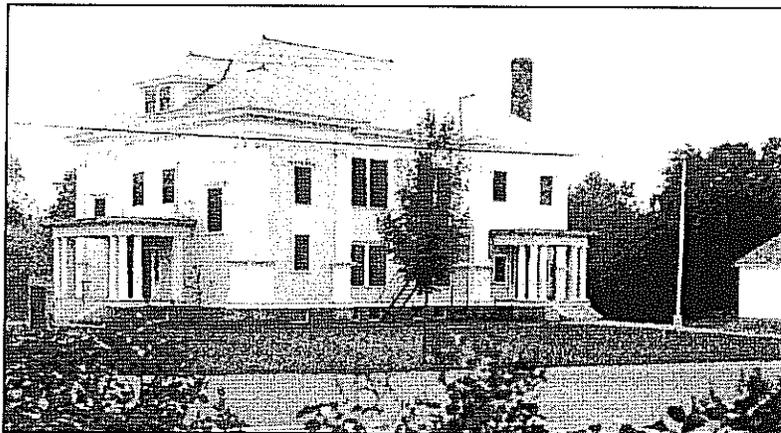
The first Brookline classroom was housed in this private residence at the top of Meeting House Hill

One of the strongest support systems found in any school is that of the local parents. In this the Brookline Elementary School has truly been fortunate. A rejuvenated PTO, formed in 1985, has provided enrichment programs such as the Artist-In-Residency workshops, programs from the Society for the Protection of N.H. Forests, the N.H. Historical Society, Odds Bodkin and many other events. In addition, the PTO has added substantially to the school library, built a new playground and assisted teachers in purchasing books and other items for the classrooms. PTO fundraising over the years has spawned many entertaining town events such as the Ice Cream Socials, Pizza Nights, and the Service Auctions.

For twenty-five years, Richard Maghakian has been in charge at the Brookline Elementary School. Principal, Math teacher, emergency custodian, basketball commissioner and coach, bowling supervisor, lunch money counter and disciplinarian, he has done it all. Maghakian has watched the school expand and change to meet the needs of his students.

"Back in 1969 and the early seventies, the students entering school had just begun to be influenced by educational TV," he recalls. "Such programs as Sesame Street had a tremendous impact. The students were entering school knowing letters, numbers, etc. This made the school systems modify their curricula."

"In 25 years we have added physical education, art and library to the curriculum as well," he continues, "and for the future, I feel that a great deal of emphasis should be put on technology and information systems curricula to keep us up to date with advances made in these fields. Although teaching methods and the buildings have changed quite a bit in 25 years, the kids have essentially remained the same—enthusiastic and cooperative."



The Daniels Academy Building housed the Town grammar grades from 1914-1968

BROOKLINE POLICE AND AMBULANCE

Prior to 1960 Brookline residents relied on emergency transportation to nearby hospitals in the form of hearses provided by local funeral homes. Eventually it was decided that this "on the spot" medical care could be improved upon; so in 1960 the Town purchased its own transport in the form of a second hand hearse, relying on the Fire Department to provide the emergency medical services needed.

By the early 1970's, regulations governing this sort of system made it necessary to search for another alternative, and the town entered into a regional service with the towns of Amherst, Hollis, Milford, Wilton and Lyndeborough. The cooperative group hired out the service over the years to several private contractors based in Milford. Slow response time became a major problem, and by 1976 opposition to this program came to a head. At that point the Town voted \$3,000 to fund a 24 hour, all-volunteer ambulance service in Brookline.



View of old Post Office and new ambulance bay, Main Street, early 1900's

The Brookline Volunteer First Responders began coverage in early 1977, and the town's first real ambulance went into operation on August 1 of that year. The old Fire House became the new Ambulance Bay, and the group responded to 50 calls that year.

However, as the town grew, the emergency crews found it more and more difficult to provide coverage with a dwindling number of volunteers. In 1988 the town voted to change gears again and hired two paid attendants for daytime coverage, continuing to rely on volunteers for nights, holidays and weekends. In 1993 alone the "new" ambulance crew responded to nearly 130 calls in town. This was a tremendous increase from 1989, when there were 54 calls.

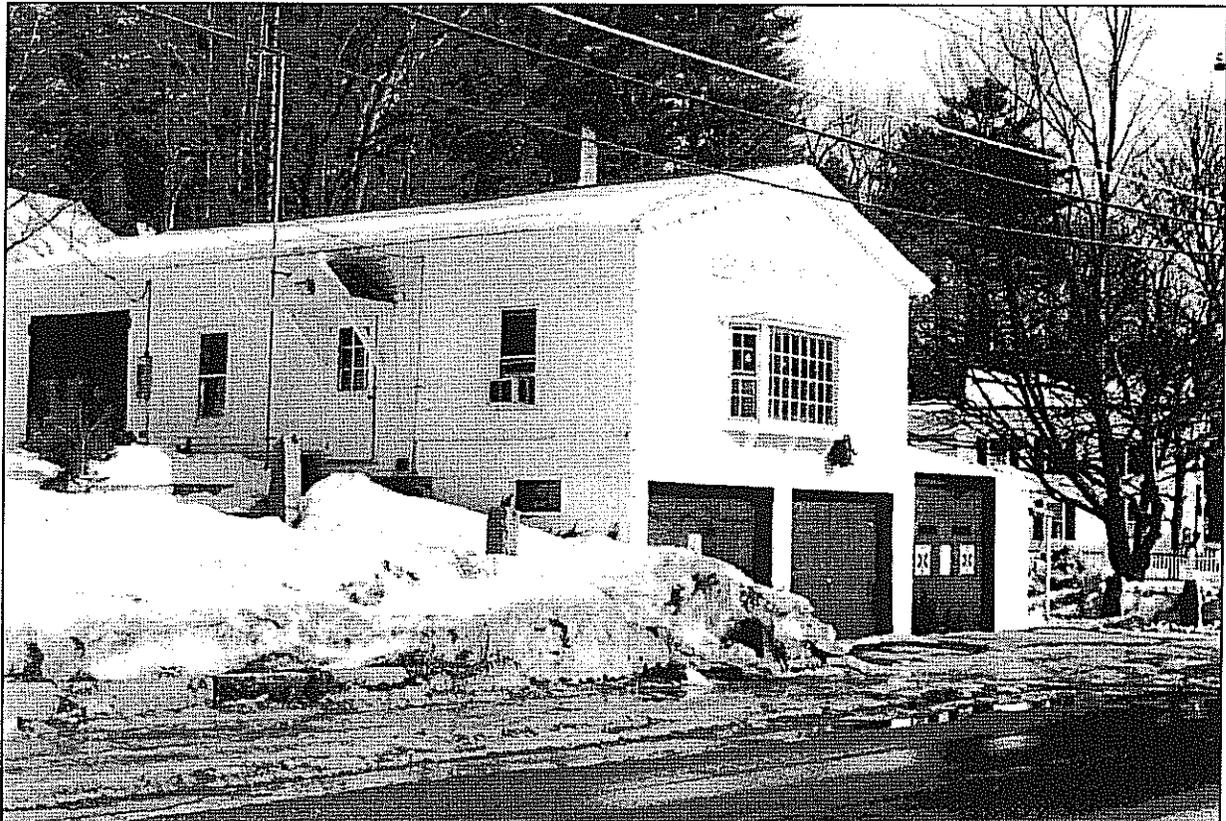
The Brookline Police Department has also undergone some extraordinary changes in the past twenty-five years. In 1969 there were six part-time officers employed by the town, including the Chief of Police himself, who had to be re-elected at Town Meeting each year. Today there are four full-time officers including the Chief and six part-time patrolmen. In 1970 the department answered to 800 complaints, while in 1993 the number is close to 2,000.

The late 1980's can be singled out as a period of major reform within the department. In 1986, the town voted to make the job of Police Chief a full-time position. It was only twelve months later that the town again voted to change the job. On a recommendation from then Police Chief Donald Shattuck, the town voted to change the post from an elected position to one appointed by the Selectmen.

Due to the renovations to Town Hall in 1992, the Police Department is now operating out of new, expanded quarters in the basement, providing for the first time 24 hour, "on the street" coverage to the residents of Brookline. The Police Patrolman's Association, which was organized in 1986, has provided the funding for such projects as the drug awareness program, DARE, which is annually provided to the students at the Brookline Elementary School.



The old fire station decorated for the Bicentennial, 1969



The current Brookline ambulance bay

THE BROOKLINE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

A growing desire for the conservation and preservation of our natural resources resulted in the formation of the Brookline Conservation Commission in 1966. The first members were appointed by the Selectmen and included Thomas Moran, Willard Cummings, George Farwell, Alfred Hall and Kenneth Russell. In the early 1970's, Albert Palmer and Raymond Pearson joined the Commission and for many years were its backbone and its guiding lights.

The Commission and the Town got a big boost in 1971 when Harold and Ruth Taylor granted a conservation easement for 70 acres off Cleveland Hill Road for use as a wildlife sanctuary. Canoeing, hiking and fishing were permitted by the Deed, but the area was primarily designated as an educational and recreational area for those interested in studying and observing nature. The Conservation Commission was designated to maintain and to monitor the land.

In 1973, the town voted to establish a Conservation Land Acquisition Fund and for many years appropriated \$500 or more to help with this project.

The Conservation Commission also publishes "Our Place," the conservation newspaper edited by Sidney Hall, Jr.. First printed in 1985, it is free to every Brookline home and is funded through donations from banks and area businesses. "Our Place" contains timely conservation articles, the Hour and Place of town and organizational meetings and DID YOU KNOW?— brief glimpses into the sometimes forgotten past by Miriam Jepson.

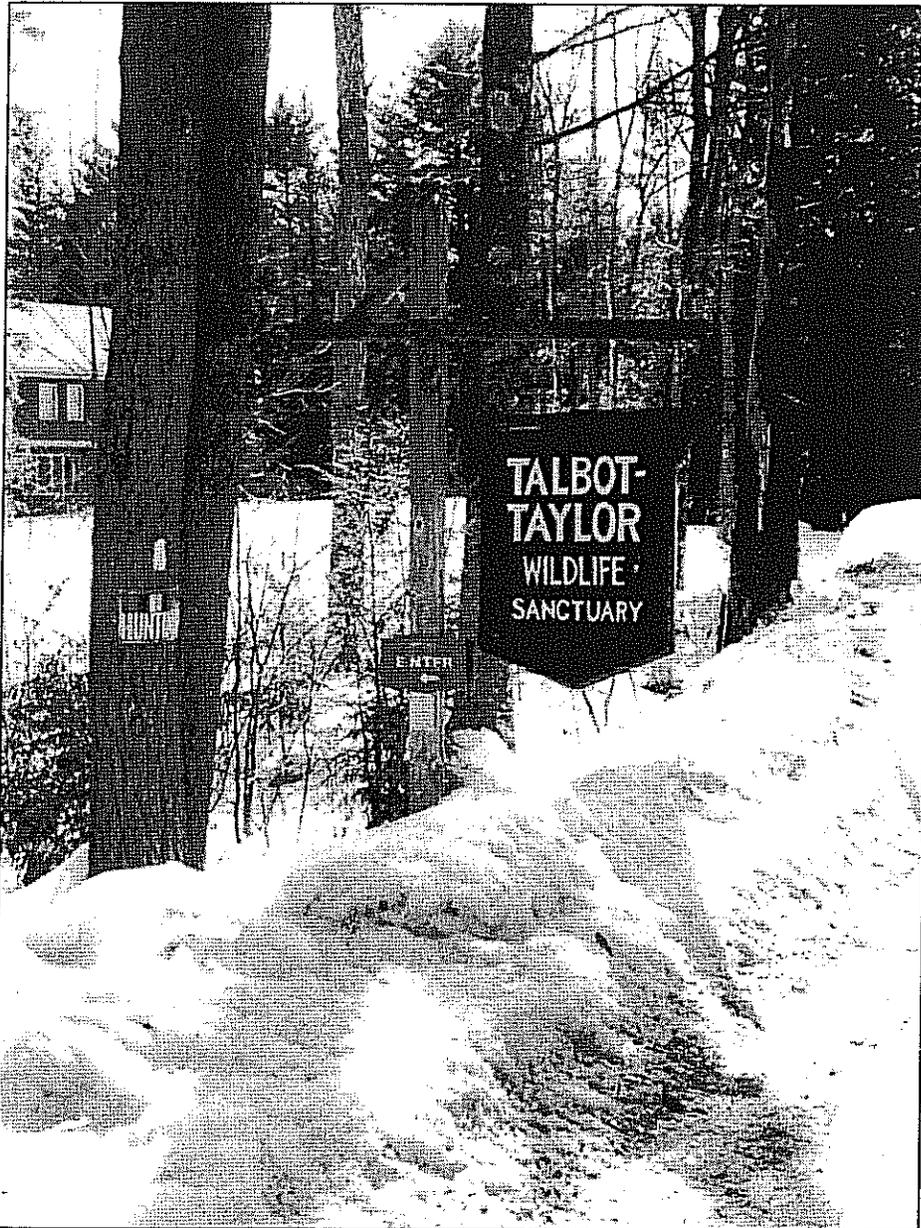


Florence Palmer deeds 73 acres to the Town of Brookline in 1986. Selectman Peter Webb accepts the gift for the town

A second wildlife sanctuary of 73 acres was donated to the Town in 1986 by resident Florence Palmer, and the Conservation Commission took on the task of cutting and maintaining the hiking trails.

Much of the original trail work for both wildlife sanctuaries was accomplished by the members of the Youth Conservation Corps, the junior arm of the Commission, which was formed in 1985. This group has provided the younger members of the community with experience in many outdoor activities including trail building, path clearing and plantings.

Conservation work in other areas of Town planning has included the designation of eleven prime wetlands and the passage of both a Wetlands Ordinance in 1987 and a Aquifer Protection Ordinance in 1989. In addition, Commission members review both dredge and fill applications as well as subdivision and site plans for the Planning Board. Members are responsible for walking the area noted in the proposed building application to report on any wetland conditions.



The entrance to the 70 acre Talbot-Taylor Sanctuary off Cleveland Hill Road

The Commission has also recently initiated a Brookline Tree Planting Project which includes the planting of trees, shrubs and flowers around the town. The landscaping of the new Library on Main Street was done by Conservation Commission members in conjunction with other local volunteers.

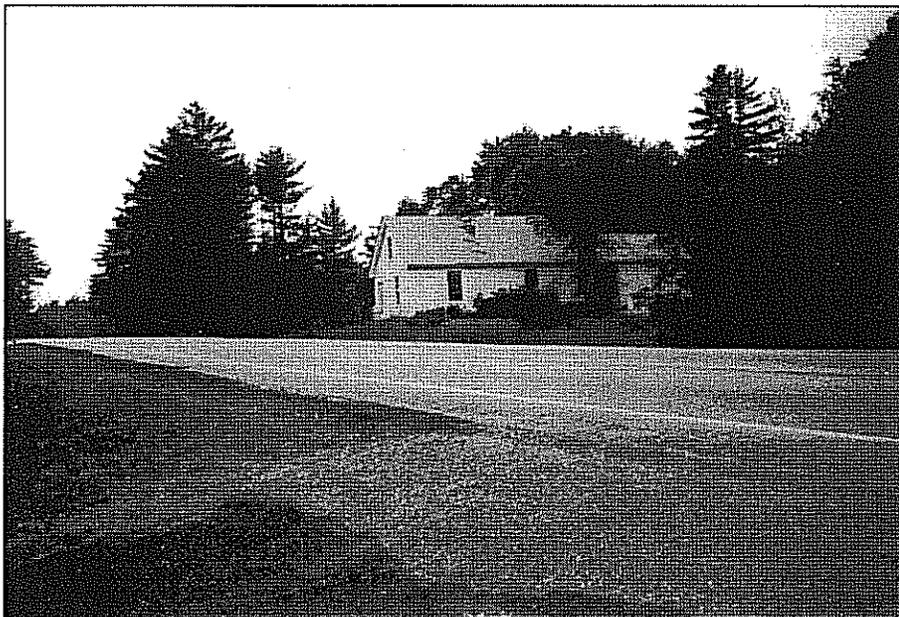
In the almost three decades of its existence, the Conservation Commission has assumed many responsibilities, from its role as part of the subdivision development process to the maintenance of our two wildlife sanctuaries. The tremendous commitment of time and energy taken on by this one organization has served to make our community more responsive to the protection and preservation of our natural resources here in Brookline.

THE BROOKLINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE FLORENCE BARNABY HOUSE

From the early eighteenth century to the early twentieth century, water powered sawmills operated in southeastern Brookline. In 1854, business partners Noah Ball and William Smith purchased from Andrew Rockwood the "Tarbell mill privilege," land on which a mill had been located since 1741. The property purchased consisted of ten acres along Stickney and Wallace Brooks," on the north side of the road from Rockwood's Mill to Brooks' Mill," northwest of the present intersection of Averill Road and Route 13.

A modest but sturdy house was built on the property in 1855 on a rise overlooking Stickney Brook. Shortly thereafter, a 3/4 acre lot was set off with the house. For the ensuing century, the property changed hands about ten times. For fifty-four of those years it was owned by members of the Barnaby family.



The Florence Barnaby House on Route 13 prior to its move

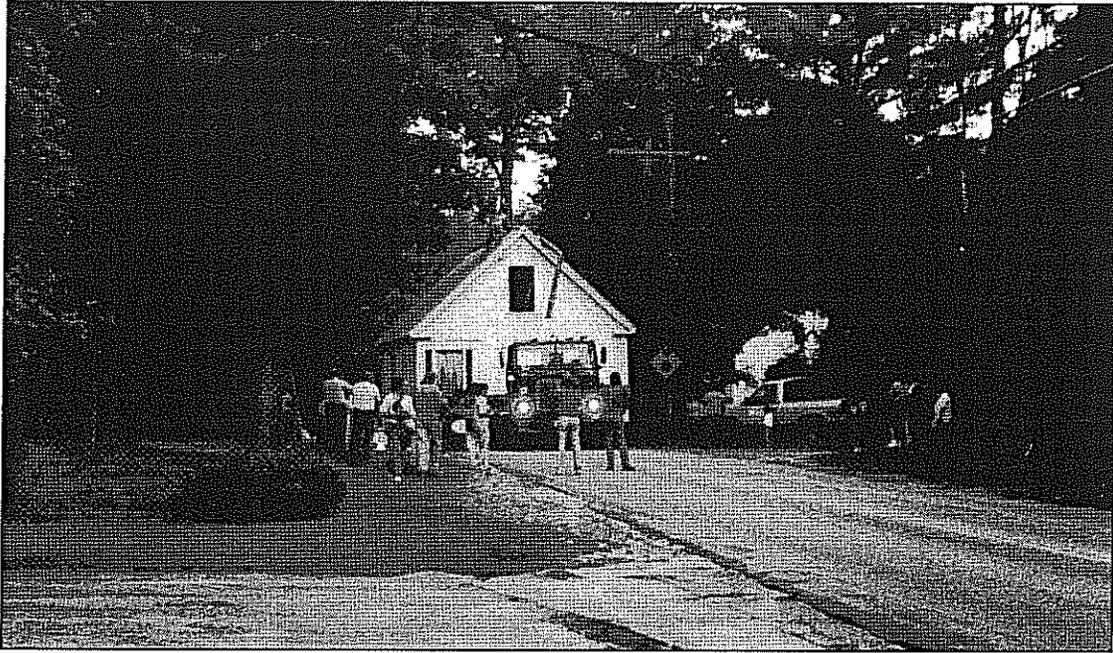
As of 1971, the little house continued stubbornly to resist the modern incursions of central heating, electricity and indoor plumbing, as had the house's vigorous sole occupant, 84 year old Florence Barnaby. Even at that time Mrs. Barnaby, affectionately regarded for her gentle but resolute independence, routinely pedalled her cherished bicycle fifteen miles to and from Townsend for groceries.

Perhaps because of a decline in the population of such hearty souls, by 1990 the house sat vacant, forlornly facing the increasing pace along Route 13. When the property was purchased for potential commercial development, the fate of the Barnaby house was in serious doubt. Luckily, the fledgling Brookline Historical Society had been looking for a home.

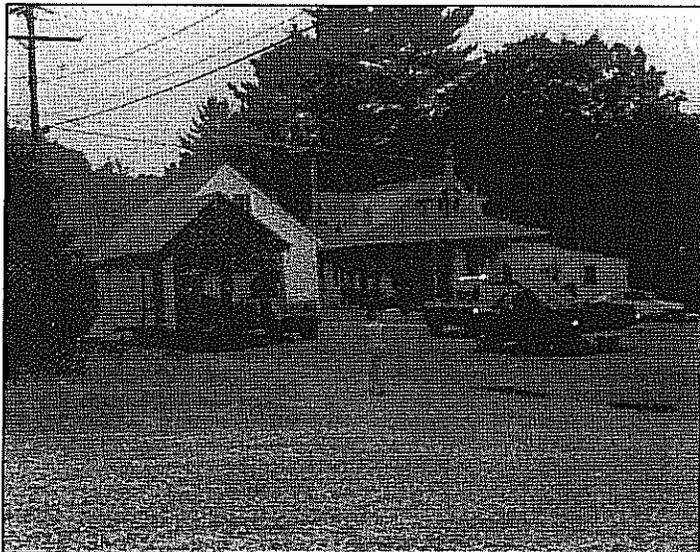
After some earnest fund raising and a special town meeting, the organization found the little house a new home. Jacked up from its foundation, the building was set on wheels. Before sunrise on Thursday, July 16, 1990, the house embarked on a slow trip north on Route 13 and through a tight squeeze up the west side of Meeting House Hill Road. After a considerable struggle with the soft earth, the venerable structure was successfully lowered onto its new cellarhole, on what remains of the town common property near the crest of the hill.

Meeting House Hill's new neighbor now looks forward to another infusion of energy and funds for restoration. The Historical Society is hopeful that the town's 225th birthday will provide

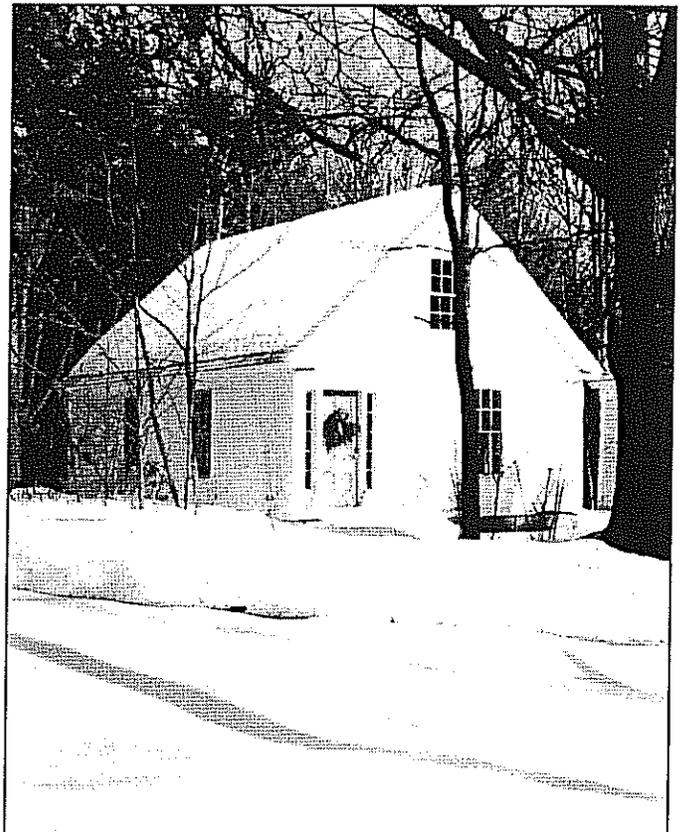
the occasion for this effort. When complete, the building will serve the town as a repository, a meeting place, and will provide space for the re-creation of domestic life in our town's past. So doing, the little house promises to serve as a proud memorial to the heritage of the Brookline family.



A worker sits atop the Brookline Historical Society's new home as it moves up the west side of Meeting House Hill



The Barnaby House moves past Brookline Station



The Brookline Historical Society at its present location adjacent to the site of the Old Meeting House

BROOKLINE'S VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire has always been of grave concern to the citizens of heavily forested Brookline, and much of our local history is punctuated with stories of these infernos wreaking havoc on businesses and homes.

Battling the steam sawmill blaze in 1852, the Meeting House fire in 1915, and the great ice plant razing in 1935, the volunteer Fire Department has been on duty since its inception in 1826.

Eighteen men answered the call that year to form Brookline's first Fire Department and responded to alarms with a hand machine or "hand tub" which used water provided by leather buckets to douse the flames.

From such beginnings, the volunteer fire department has grown to where a total of twenty-five firemen, three fire engineers, three lieutenants and a Captain now answer calls with five trucks and an air pack refill system. From the Ambulance Bay on Main Street to the current garage behind Daniel's Academy, the department's surroundings have expanded, increasing with the size of the vehicles needed in these more modern times.

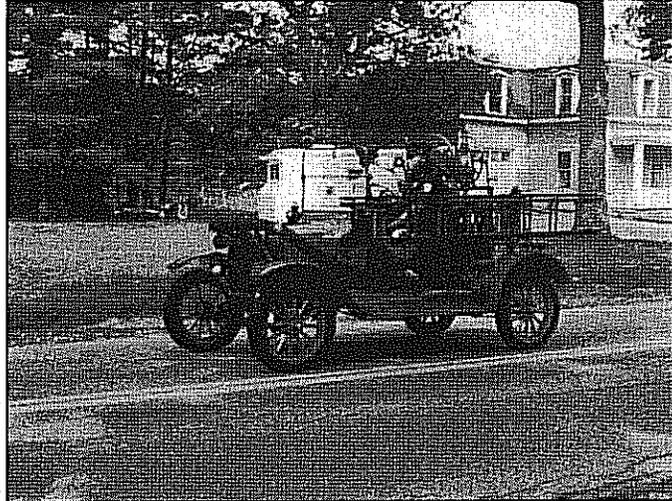
The current fire house was built in 1968 with the hope that it would be sufficient for the town for many years. It was not to be, and in 1980 the department added onto the building. The construction of this forty foot by forty-two foot addition was an example of Yankee ingenuity and small town spirit.



The "new" Brookline firehouse decorated for the Bicentennial

so in 1983 the volunteers went into the "Sunday morning breakfast" business cooking up eggs, bacon, homefries, pancakes, sausages and french toast to rave reviews around town. Once a month townspeople can visit the Fire House, meet with neighbors and enjoy the camaraderie inherent in this group.

In twenty-five years, the number of department members has grown slightly while the number of calls has fluctuated widely from a low of 41 in 1969 to a high of 93 in 1988. Most recent numbers put the average number of calls per year in the low seventies—a far cry from the



1919 fire engine which has been restored by the fire department

Current Fire Engineer, Charlie Corey, was a fireman at the time.

"The town gave the fire Department \$8,000 for the addition," he recalls "and then everybody pitched in. People let us cut trees on their land, and we had them made into boards at Bingham Lumber. Tapply Lumber supplied us with wood to finish the inside, and lots of people helped us with the loan of heavy equipment, framing, pouring concrete and things like that. The town really came out for us."

After the completion of the addition, it was decided that the department needed more cash to finish off the new space and to purchase new equipment;

department's earliest records in 1867, which recorded a total of sixteen calls. New trucks were purchased in 1979, 1980 and 1984; but the department has held onto its past by keeping and storing the engines purchased in 1919, 1929 and 1939 respectively.

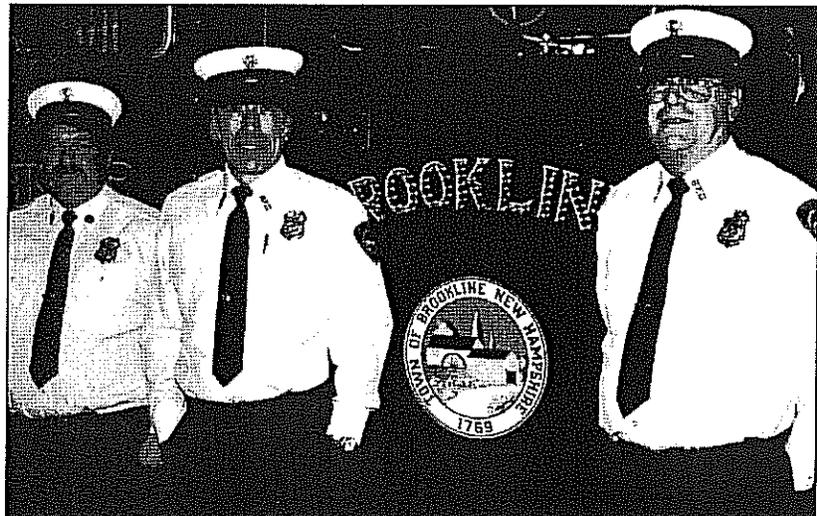
Yet, while our volunteers are still on call around the clock and fighting fires is still as necessary today as it was in 1826, some things have changed. Paperwork has increased; and, according to current firefighters, the technology in recent years has progressed in leaps and bounds— a fact that is ultimately to the firefighter's advantage.

"Our training is better now, and we are all more safety conscious," explains Corey. "Our newest truck has a six-man enclosed cab so that all are riding inside now instead of on the back of the bumpers. There is also more awareness of toxic fumes and how to avoid them. All this means that it's safer for us, and that's good."

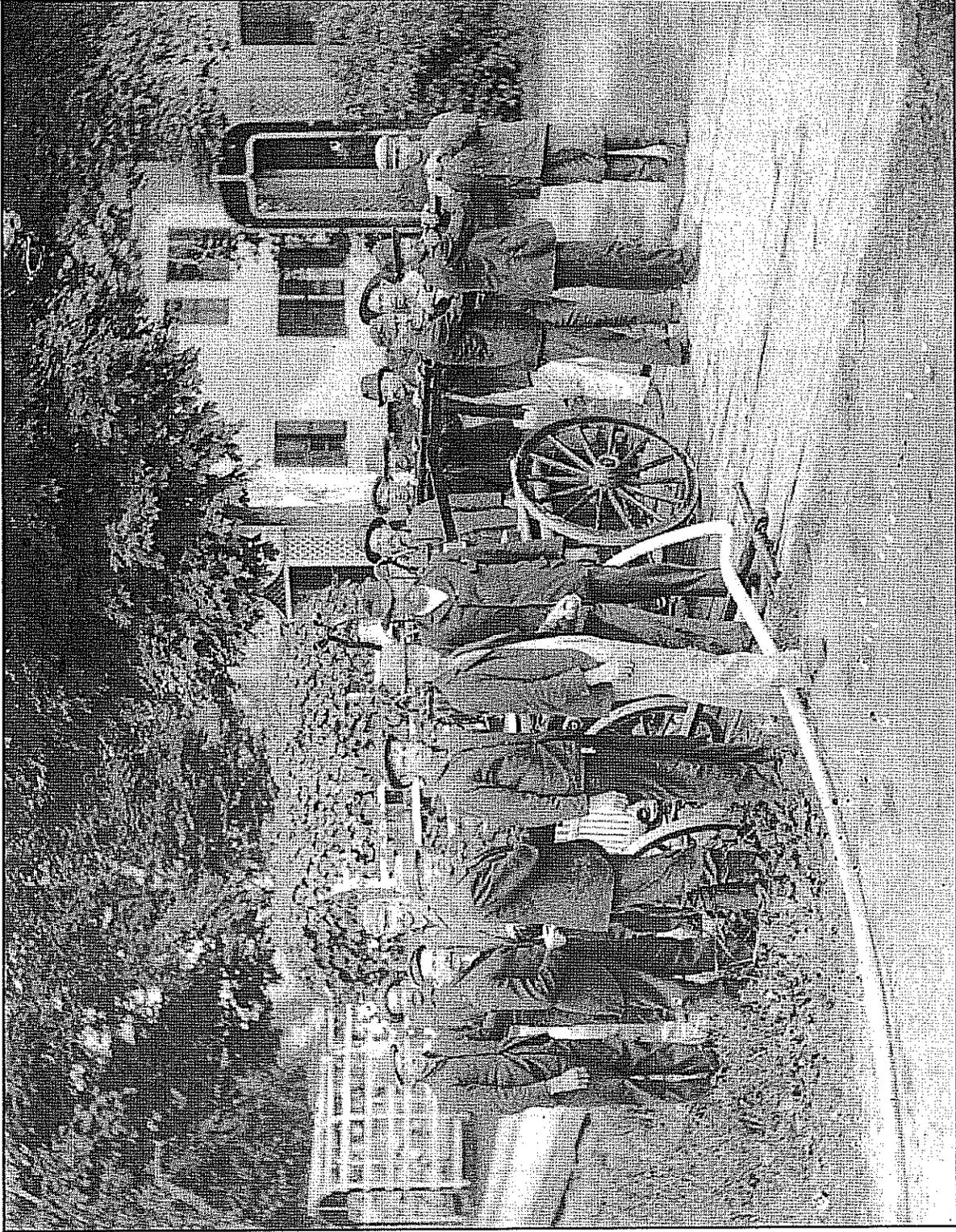
"The training and equipment have gotten better," agrees current Fire Chief Ray Kecy, "but the Fire Chief doesn't fight fires any more. All he does is paperwork, both State and Federal. This job has become more of an administrative position now than it was twenty-five years ago."



Brookline Fire Department Honorary Members: (back row) Eddy Whitcomb, George Farwell, Grover Farwell, Jr., Willard Cummings, Donald Burke, Erwin Corey (front row) William Ingraham, Ross Jensen, Orville Fessenden, Alan Fessenden (missing) Terry Denehy, Ture Heline, Norman Homoleski, Sr., Norman Homoleski, Jr.



*Brookline Fire Engineers:
Assistant Chief Charles Corey,
Chief Ray Kecy, Assistant Chief
Ronald Denehy*



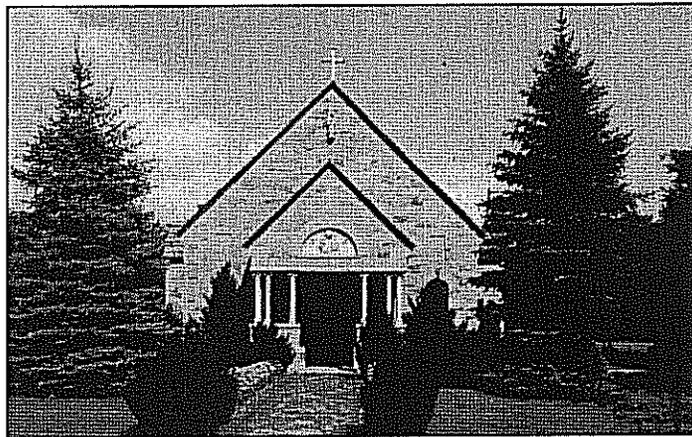
The Brookline Volunteer Fire Department with the original 1826 hand pumper

INFANT JESUS OF PRAGUE

Even though Infant Jesus celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, the Catholic Church has been part of the Brookline community for more than a century. From the time that the first Mass was celebrated at the home of Callahan O'Connell in 1893 until the dedication of the Church of Infant Jesus of Prague in July of 1943, Mass was celebrated whenever and wherever possible. Tarbell Hall, which was located over Tarbell's General Store, currently the Brookline Village Store, was used for a while along with the Frank E. Kilduff Post #74 of the American Legion.

The dream of having a church here in Brookline became a reality through the hard work and determination of many people, but in particular Dr. Charles A. Bruschi of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Dr. Bruschi purchased the property adjoining the Legion Hall, and the construction was underway. The name for the new church was chosen by Dr. Bruschi in recognition of his special devotion to the Infant Jesus of Prague.

The church is eclectic in style due to the nature and origin of the gifts received. For example, the



The Infant Jesus Church

Holy Rosary Church in South Boston was being razed at the time, so Dr. Bruschi acquired the pews and the stained glass rosary window (made in Germany) for the new Brookline church. The outside columns of Tennessee marble had once been part of the Westminster Hotel in Copley Square, Boston, Massachusetts. Dr. Bruschi got the church bell from a New Haven Railroad locomotive. Upon completion of the church, a year and a half after construction began, the entire unit was deeded over to the Diocese of Manchester free of debt.

As the church community grew and its programs and activities expanded, the need for a meeting place became evident. Once again, the community pulled together and a building was added to the back of the church in 1984. The building was named Bruschi Hall in honor of Dr. Charles A. Bruschi. This hall has complemented the Infant Jesus Church in administering to the corporal as well as the spiritual needs of its parishioners and the entire Brookline community.

Today, Infant Jesus sponsors and participates in many different programs. Religion Education classes and various activities are offered to the youth. Volunteer programs such as Share, Good Beginnings and the Prayer Line are available. For the last 49 years the Church has sponsored the "social event of the year," otherwise known as the Penny Sale. It is the only fundraiser the Church hosts with the proceeds going to the Share program and a refurbishment fund for the Church. This successful event is well attended by not only the Brookline community, but by our surrounding neighbors as well.

The Infant Jesus Catholic Church has grown with Brookline over the last 100 years and anticipates a continued growth and involvement with the community.

BROOKLINE RECREATION

For such a small community, Brookline has always provided its residents with a wide array of recreational activities—from swimming and baseball in the summer to skiing and skating during the winter months. Fishing, of course, is available during all four seasons. In the past twenty-five years, however, the town has seen improvements to the ball park, a new ball park, the demise of the skiing industry, growth in the swimming programs and new basketball and soccer leagues.

Overseeing some of these activities is the town's five-member Recreation Commission, which was formed in 1969, about the same time that the town acquired the swimming area on Lake Potanipo.

The Grove, as it is now called, was a gift to the citizens of Brookline from the Eli and Bessie Cohen Camp Foundation. Approximately 1.33 acres of land with 200 feet of frontage on Lake Potanipo was set off from Camp Tevya for the town to use as a town beach and boat launch. The Recreation Commission has been responsible for running the swimming program and making improvements to the beach area. From a beginning membership in 1969 of 129 families and 104 swimming students, the Grove in 1993 served 242 families with over 200 children participating in the swimming program.

Another responsibility acquired by the Recreation Commission at its inception was the upkeep of the town ballfield. Baseball has been an important part of the spring and summer seasons since at least 1906, and the ballfield itself was a gift to the town by four residents back in 1909. In 1970 it was decided to fix up the ball park, and a land survey was conducted by resident Tom Moran. The survey indicated that there was space for two ball fields at the park, and work began that year to create a diamond for the men's softball league and the little league programs.

Members of the men's softball team, the Brookline Aces, furnished most of the manpower in removing trees and brush, laying pipes for drinking fountains and completing the clay base paths, pitcher's mound and backstop. In 1973, the Recreation Commission received Federal matching funds from the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation to begin work on what is now the Babe Ruth field. The two-year program included the construction of observation fences and bleachers for both fields. In 1991 a third baseball field on Oak Hill Road was finished, and although intended primarily for the use of the men's softball team, the Brookline Bulls, it has also been used by the girl's softball league.



STANDING: Gary Jensen, Tom Moran, Ross Jensen, Paul "Chuck" Hamilton, Mike Menchion, Larry Maylin, Norman "Butch" Homoleski FRONT: Stan Reynolds, Steve Homoleski, Jr., Don Fusco, Bill Ingraham

Baseball is one sport that seems to avoid the vicissitudes of the times since, here in Brookline, it has always been popular among both the adults and the children. This was never more true than today, with over 200 youngsters participating at some level of the game. In 1970 there were three junior league teams and both a men's and women's (Brookline Patriettes) softball team in town. Today, there are six instructional league teams, eight junior league teams, three girl's softball teams, a Babe Ruth team and the current men's softball team.

Forget the return of the robin, because in Brookline, it's the phrase "Play Ball" which truly signifies the arrival of spring.

The somewhat longer season of winter has also been a busy time for sports enthusiasts. Lake Potanipo, while once an economic boon to the town because of the ice business situated there, has also been a recreational bonanza allowing Brookline residents to skate, fish, snowmobile and ice-boat across its 350 frozen acres. Towering over the southeastern end of the lake, however, is the site of what was once home to another Brookline winter sport—downhill skiing.

Big Bear Ski area, located on Little Potanipo Hill, was first developed in 1935, opening to the public in 1936. From the earliest rope tows to the more sophisticated T-Bar installed in the 1960's, the mountain was a popular center for local residents as well as those from surrounding towns. In the early 1980's the hill was purchased by resident James Swisher and renamed Musket Mountain. Unfortunately, by the mid-eighties, a lack of snow for several consecutive winters caused the mountain to close. Since that time, the lodge at the base of the hill, now owned by Eddy Whitcomb, has housed several restaurants, an antique shop, a craft shop and a dance studio. The mountain itself was sold in 1992 to a private individual who built a home at the top.

Basketball in the new Brookline gymnasium



The addition of a gymnasium to the elementary school in 1987 spawned a successful basketball program, which began in the winter of 1988. Originally for grades three, four, five and six, the program has now expanded to include an instructional league for the readiness through second grades, a junior league for grades three and four and a senior league for grades five and six. In addition, girls and boys travelling teams from the fifth and sixth grades play interscholastic games against teams from the surrounding areas. In 1993-94, over 180 children were involved in this program, and the sounds of whistles, buzzers and running feet reverberate through the gym every Saturday morning (game day), beginning at 8 a.m.

The organization of a Brookline soccer league in the fall of 1993 put the town ballfield back to work in the off-season, with ninety two players registered from the readiness through fourth grades. Sixteen teams took to the field for a half season of instruction and a half season of competition. Organizers were astounded by the degree of interest, skill and enthusiasm shown by these first-year participants. Clearly, soccer is here to stay, becoming the third team sport to be offered, staffed and refereed by parent volunteers.

THE YOUTH CENTER, THE CHURCH AND THE LIBRARY

Recent key developments in Brookline's town center have seen the conversion of the old Methodist Church into the new Town Library as well as the construction of a large addition to the Church of Christ.

The Methodist Church was originally constructed in 1859 on land conveyed to several Brookline citizens under the strict condition that it "be used and occupied for the purposes of a 'House of Worship for the Methodist Episcopal Church.'" If it ever ceased to be used for that purpose, the deed read, the land would revert to the original owner, Joseph C. Tucker.

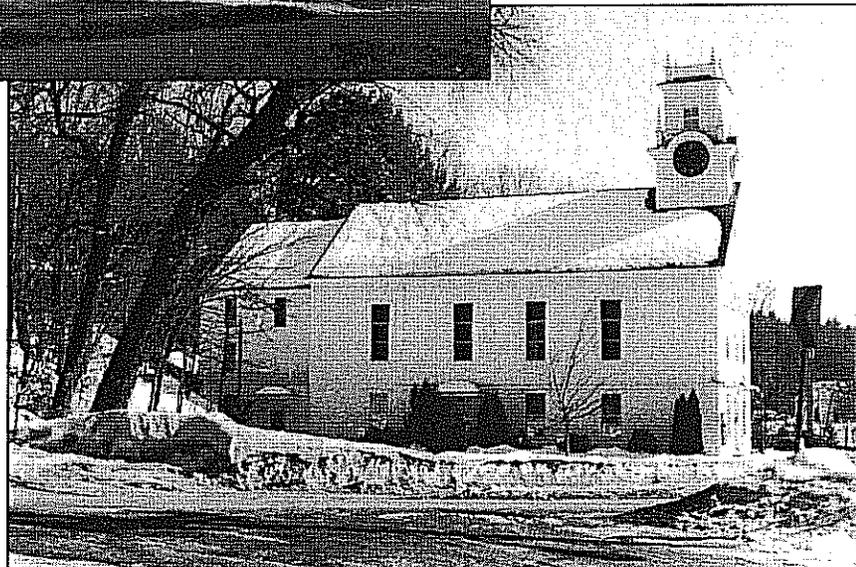
The building was used as a Methodist Church until 1951 when the two Town churches merged. For the next forty years, it functioned as an activity center for both the Town and the church youth groups, until both the Church of Christ and the Town decided to expand their facilities. These separate actions left the Church with a mortgage and the Brookline Library with no place to go.

In 1992 the Town voted to purchase the Youth Center from the Church for approximately \$25,000 in order to renovate it for use as a Town Library. The Church, meanwhile, was able to complete their new three-story addition with the proceeds from this sale.

Before the transfer of property and funds could be accomplished, however, there was some significant legwork that had to be done. Because the Methodist building had not been used as a



The Church of Christ then . . .



. . . and now

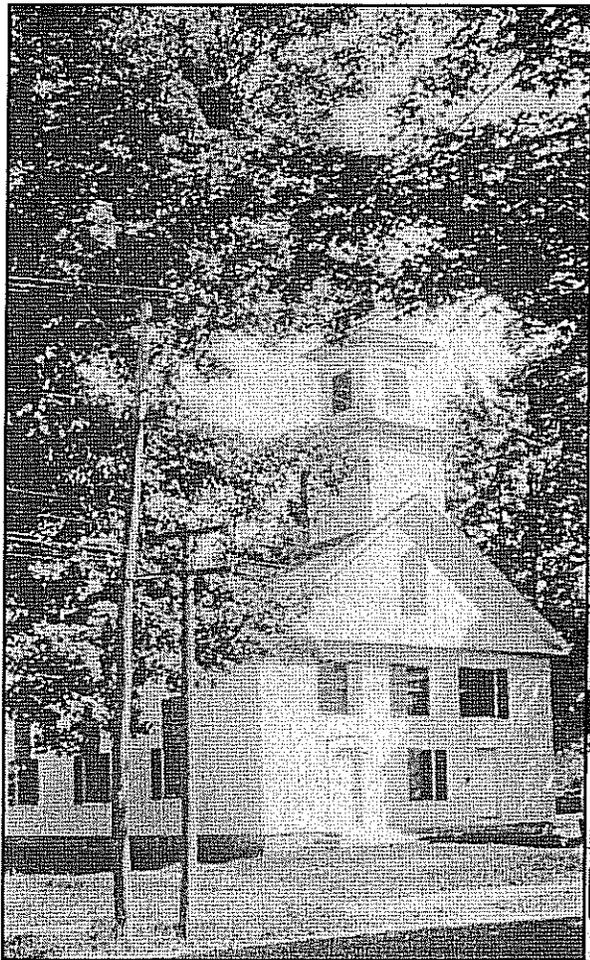
house of worship "and for no other purpose" for a period of time, it was necessary to have the heirs of Joseph C. Tucker release any interest in the property to provide the Town with a clear title.

Armed with only the deed and the probate records of Joseph C. Tucker, resident Midge Chandler and Library Trustee Ellen deGuzman began the extensive search which culminated in a twenty hour, day-long trip to New York and probate searches in both Suffolk and Queens' counties. To everyone's relief, there turned out to be only one heir, 74-year old Lionel Weatherall of Munsey Park, New York. On August 24, 1992, 133 years after the original conveyance, the sole heir of Joseph C. Tucker graciously released his interest in the property so that the library could be built.

In the meantime, the Church of Christ had begun construction of its new addition, utilizing congregation members to clear dirt from under the cellar and to rip apart the old kitchen with crowbars and hammers. On May 16, 1993, the addition was opened to the public and residents were able to view the new classrooms, nursery, youth area and kitchen.

The elderly Youth Center went under construction in the fall of 1992 and was ready for occupancy by June, 1993. In 1991, the Friends of the Library re-formed after a three-year hiatus and were instrumental in providing funds, labor and support during the move.

The Library houses not only books now, but meeting rooms, a reading area and some Town memorabilia. It is a pleasant place to congregate, and many organizations as well as individuals are still discovering this new "meeting house" in the center of our town.



The Methodist Church as a house of worship and currently as a public library



TOWN ACTIVITIES PAST AND PRESENT

As times change, so too do the activities which appeal to our sense of fun and our ability to share leisure time together as a town. It isn't as easy now to gather everyone under one roof or in one place at one time; but the essence of a small town is its ability to share most things, and this ability to share the good times has clearly not become a lost art.

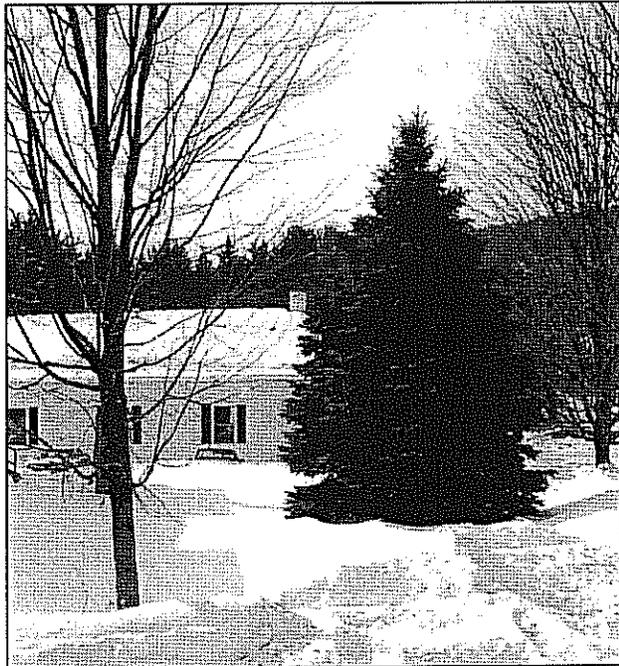
WINTER CARNIVAL - Begun in February, 1960, and originally sponsored by the PTA, Winter Carnival was an annual event for 25 years. The first carnival featured a Friday night basketball game at the old Youth Center between the married men of town and the bachelors. Cross country skiing races at the ball field, and ice skating events at the lake all culminated on Saturday night at Daniels Academy with a "Valentine Ball" complete with a King and Queen of Hearts. Over the years, ice fishing contests, snow sculptures and Friday night sledding on Meeting House Hill were added to the weekend, providing two full days of winter activities for young and old alike. Several years of poor weather and a lack of both ice and snow finally halted Winter Carnival in 1985.

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING - The Christmas Tree Lighting program, while relatively new in its current form, is in part the renewal of an older town tradition called the Community Christmas Tree, which ended in 1977. Back then most of the town organizations donated money and time to put on a Christmas program inside Daniels Academy, complete with a singing program by the elementary school students and a visit from Santa Claus. Each child would return home that night with an orange, a small present and a candy cane.

Using the blue spruce tree on the town common planted in 1968 by the Boy Scouts under the direction of the Community Christmas Tree Committee, the current volunteers take care of having the lights strung and the wreaths and roping added to Town Hall. They are also in charge of making sure that Santa is available to ride into town on a fire engine to visit with the younger members of the community. For several years, a group of community members formed a Brookline Chorus which provided a carol sing indoors prior to the actual lighting of the tree. More recently, the carol sing has been taking place outdoors around the tree itself. Since 1984 the tree has been lit each year by a member of the Brookline community chosen by the amount of time and energy he or she has given to town activities over the years. Tree lighters have included Grover C. Farwell, Miriam Jepson, Geraldine Phillips, Willard Cummings, Nason Fessenden, Phil and Madeline Shattuck, Alpha Hall, Orville Fessenden, Betty Hall and Donald Burke.

FOURTH OF JULY - Fireworks were first organized and sponsored by the Brookline Historical Society in 1988. Townspeople gathering at the town beach were treated to the display which was set off from the opposite side of the lake in conjunction with Camp Tevya. A group of community members has taken on the responsibility for this event, and it continues to grow each year.

OCTOBER'S EVE - In 1990 the Recreation Commission began this event at the town beach for a selected weekend in October. The group provides a bonfire for toastables, sing-along music, mulled cider, hot chocolate and hay rides through Camp Tevya.



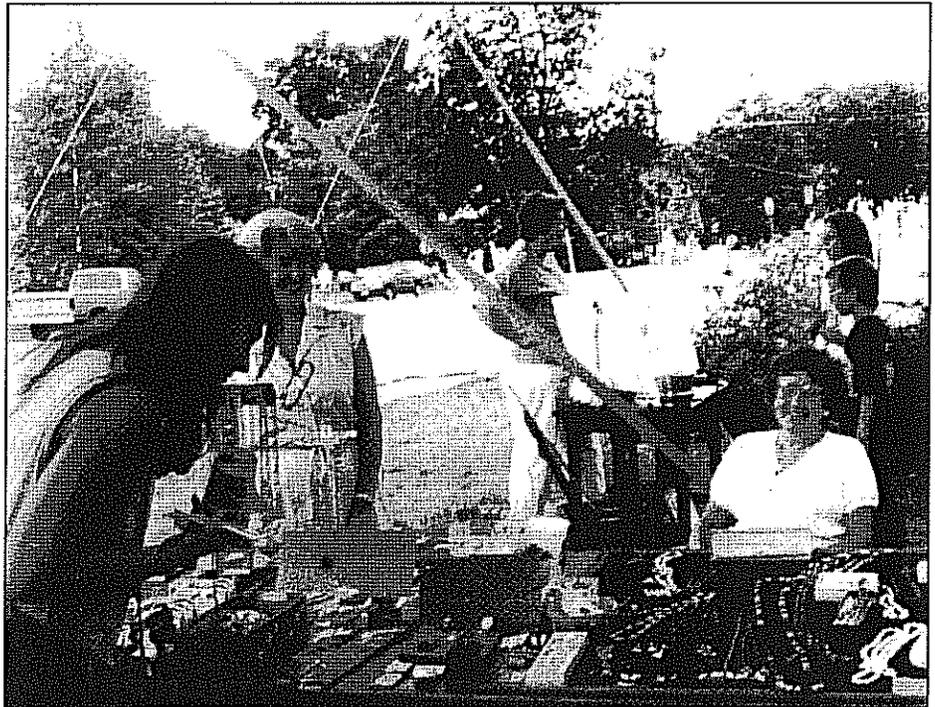
The blue spruce next to town hall, currently used for the Christmas tree lighting ceremony

FISHING DERBY - February, 1994, will mark the second annual town wide Fishing Derby to take place on both Lake Potanipo and Melendy Pond. Sponsored by the Recreation Commission, prizes are awarded for the biggest bass, trout, pickerel and perch with a special category for the biggest "miscellaneous" fish.

THE WAY OFF BROADWAY PLAYERS - Started in 1973 as an offshoot of the Kids Playhouse, a children's thespian club, the Players have put on such productions as Barefoot in the Park, Plaza Suite, Harvey and Animal Crackers since assuming their current name in 1981. Housed at the Daniels Academy, the group produces an annual performance on the first or second weekend of April.

CHURCH OF CHRIST FAIR - The Church Fair is a well-known summer attraction about town, having begun in the early 1950's as a way to pay for needed repairs on the church building. Usually held during the first weekend in August, the Fair includes a Children's Parade, road races, games, a snack bar, an auction and sales of crafts, rummage and books. The event culminates with a chicken barbeque in the evening.

*Scenes from the
annual Church
of Christ Fair*



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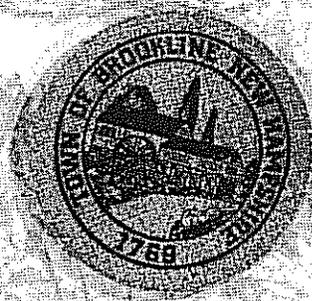
Can you name the players from this early 1950's Brookline Eagles baseball team?

Answer to be revealed in a future issue of The Brookliner.

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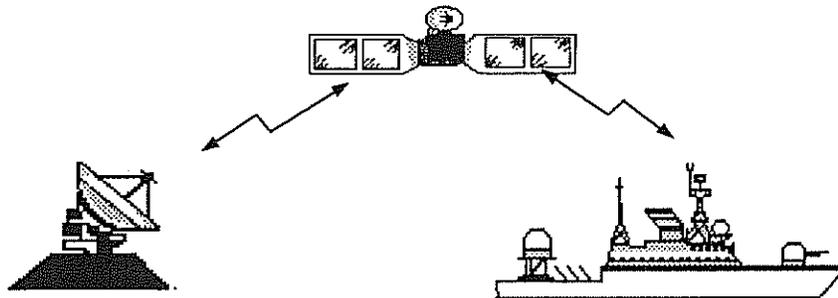
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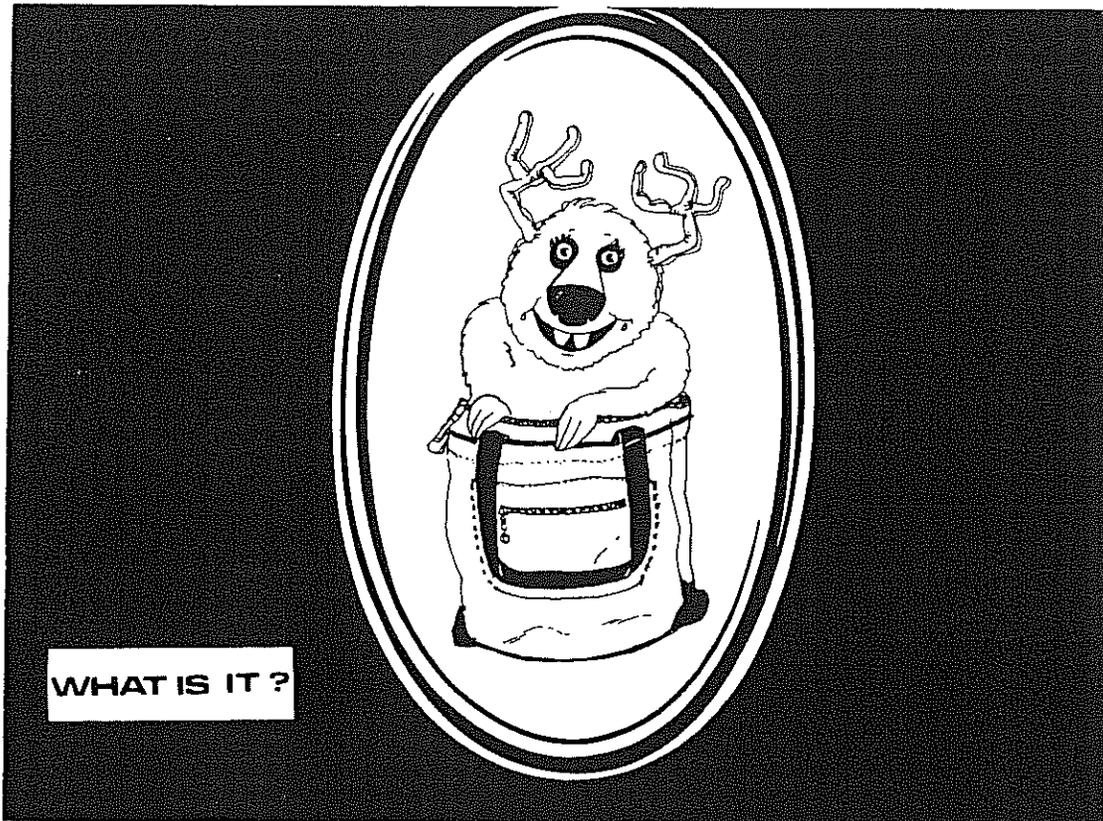
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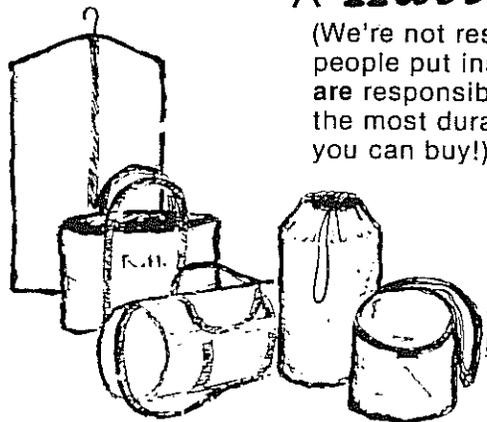
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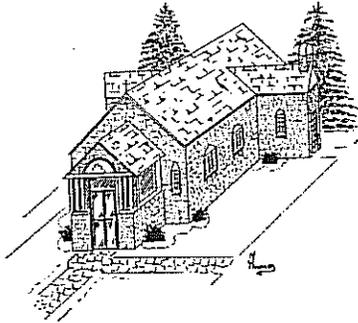
Back Row: Brian Fessenden, Bob Eldridge, Jack Nolan, Paul Dougherty

Middle Row: John Sullivan, Bill Dulac, Paul Hakala, David Putnam, 2nd Lieutenant Nick Fantasia, Mark Fessenden, 1st Lieutenant Peter Kinney, Tom Jarvis, Rich Dombrowski, 1st Lieutenant Curt Jensen, Steven Whitcomb

Kneeling: 1st Lieutenant David Farwell, Chief Ray Kecy, 2nd Lieutenant Francis Dougherty, Jr., Asst. Chief Ronald Denehy, Asst. Chief Charles Corey, Captain Scott Knowles

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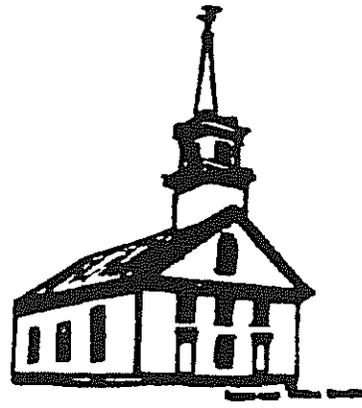
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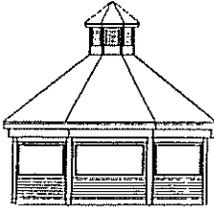
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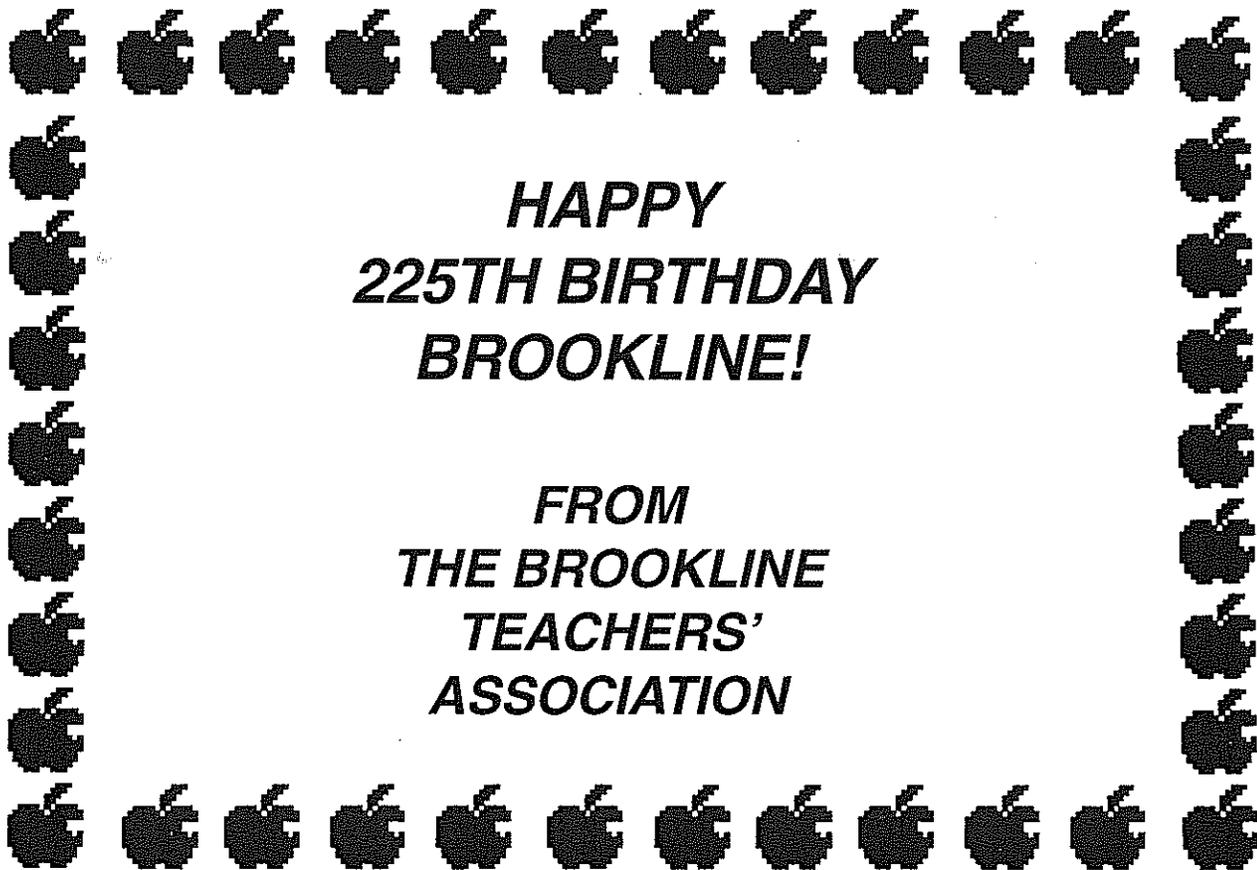
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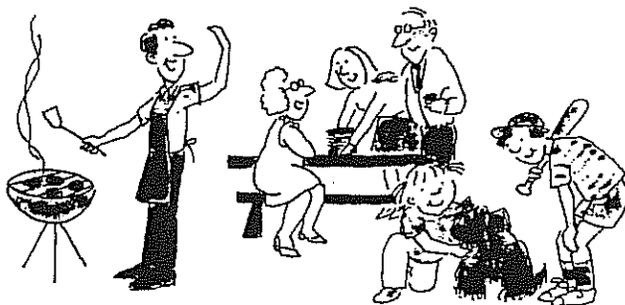
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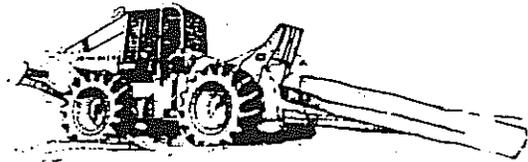
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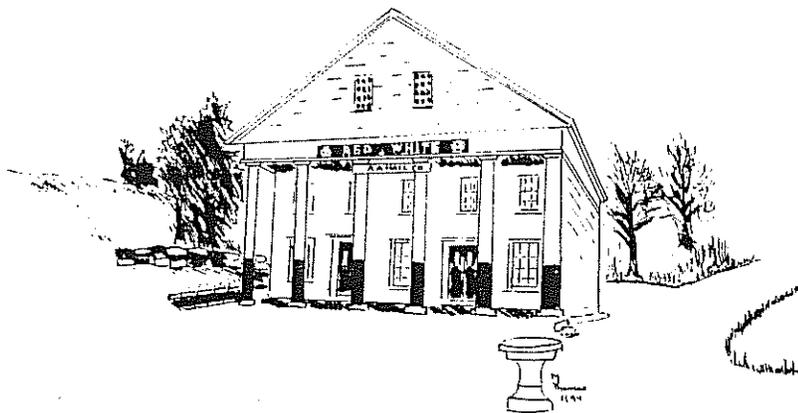
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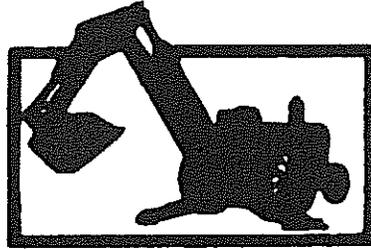
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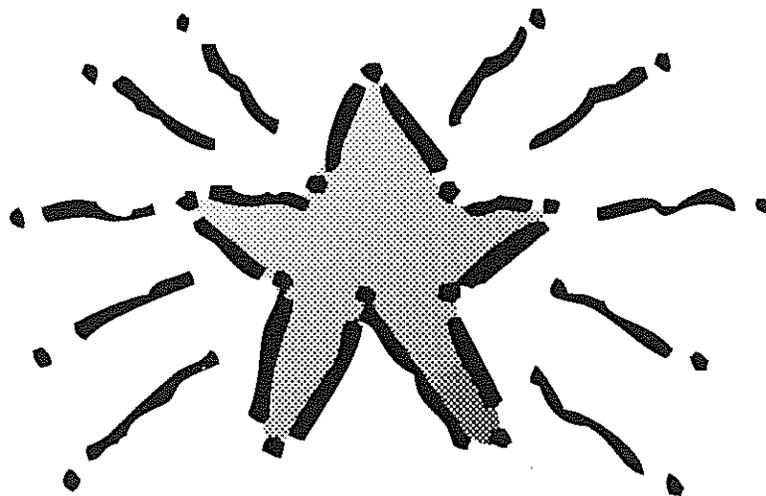
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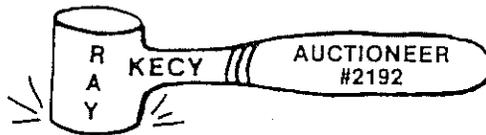
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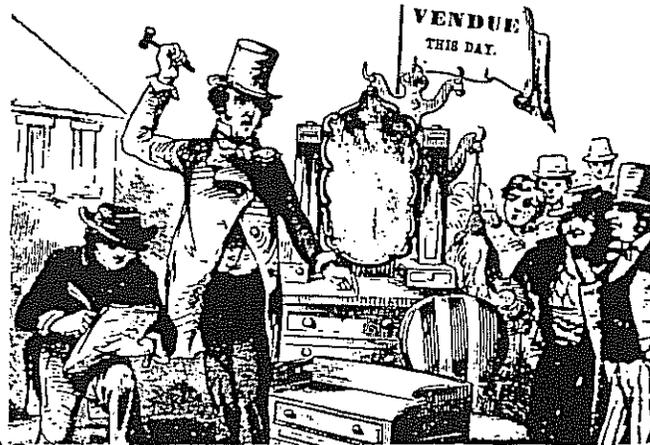
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