

**Ashburnham 250<sup>th</sup> Committee**  
Thursday, September 20, 2012  
Stevens Memorial Library

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Co-Chair Steve Coswell. Members present: Susan Brennan, Barbara DiVito, Bob Fichtel, Pat Frederick, Patty Johnson, Kate Mahoney and Linda Ramsdell.

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as written.

Patty Johnson gave her Treasurer's report: August's Blueberry Pancake Breakfast drew smaller attendance this year than last, almost certainly due to the rainy weather. While the proceeds were less than had been hoped for, the loss was less serious than it would have been if Cushing Academy had not been hosting the breakfast, supplying food. The Committee is grateful for Cushing's generosity. Of \$1,665.65 gross receipts, after expenses of \$527.40, the fundraiser yielded a profit of \$1,338.25.

Several people at the breakfast had commented that another year, the Committee could charge more for admission. Members at the meeting agreed that this is a possibility.

Bob Fichtel brought a replica, about six inches tall, of the Schoolboy Statue, made in 1953 as part of a welcoming event for returning Korean War veterans. Bob has been in contact with a maker of such statuettes, as a possible fundraising item. He says a limited edition of 120, at a cost of \$25.00 each, could be made in the USA. A larger number would have to be made in China, - not what we want. The Committee discussed possibly asking \$95.00 for each statuette, taking advance orders with a downpayment of \$25.00 each, \$70.00 on delivery. Pricing would depend partly on how attractively the item would be boxed; some buyers might like to display the piece in its package. Production time would be four months - not time enough to have for this Christmas. Promotion of this fundraising project will be discussed at the October meeting.

### **New Business**

The Committee will send a letter to leaders of all sorts of entities in the town: civic, social, faith-based, educational, business, agricultural, environmental, conservationist, trade, artisanal, etc., asking how each would like to participate in the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary observances, between now and 2015. This should be a good means of promoting many local concerns. Another letter will go later to Lions Club, Rotary and Scouts. The Committee will invite Town department, committee, and commission leaders to attend the Committee's January meeting, asking them how each would like to take part in the celebration, and how The Anniversary Committee can help, acting as clearinghouse for the many celebration projects. Kate and Barbara will draft the letter inviting heads of Town departments, commissions, etc. to attend our meeting on Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>. This will be followed up with a nice-looking formal invitation closer to the date. Bob and Kate will work on designing a media packet, promoting the Anniversary activities.

Steve will draft a second letter, to be sent in February or March, soliciting anniversary celebration funds from area businesses.

### **For Spring, 2014**

Anniversary banners, to be mounted on streetlamp and utility poles, will bear names of local businesses, which will pay a certain amount (to be calculated later, based on cost) for the privilege. The Committee discussed best locations, banner size, and message. Banners will be rectangular, anchored top and bottom. Probably not less than two by three feet, the design must be "bold but not busy", legible to persons driving past. Bob, a professional graphic designer, volunteered to donate a design.

### **Parade, 2015**

The largest expense to be covered by the Anniversary Committee will be the parade. Susan has been in contact with the chairperson for the Templeton anniversary parade, to get a sense of a manageable scope for a parade in a town whose size and resources are more like ours than, for example, Gardner or Westminster. Templeton's figures are still coming in; we will know more in a few weeks. The theme for the parade should relate to history – something like "Ashburnham through the Years" or "Ashburnham Then and Now".

We should consult with Chris Demoura at Oakmont, about costs of hiring marching bands. Barbara recommended we begin by submitting an estimated parade budget to the Town. Steve said the Selectmen seem comfortable with \$15,000. Patty said the budget should show figures for parades in comparable towns, for comparison.

### **Total Budget**

The figure Steve cited to Town Manager Briggs for the Anniversary Committee's total budget was \$68,000. Of that, \$19,000 is expected to be covered by the Time Capsule fund left by Mr. Hoffman. Since the warrant article for Town Meeting gives the figure of \$68,000, Steve needs to do a PowerPoint presentation at Town Meeting, showing estimated needed funding to be about \$48,000 to \$50,000; and explaining that the Committee hopes to raise enough to have a surplus with which to reimburse the town at the end of the festivities, having used much of the Town's funds as seed money for fundraising projects. There should be printed handouts at Town Meeting for voters, in addition to the presentation, so everyone is clear about the cost.

### **Committee Projects**

The Committee will take responsibility for four or five major events: the Kickoff Gala; the opening of the 100-year Time Capsule, celebrated with fireworks paid for by the Hoffman fund; a family event such as a barn dance/contra dance; and finally, the parade. There may or may not be a fifth event. Estimated costs: for the Kickoff Gala, maybe around \$11,000; \$6,000-\$7,000 for the dance, and \$35,000 for the parade. Related events, such as a swim tournament at the Pool Club, will be funded by their host organizations.

We need a larger presence at the annual Downtown Day; more than just a table with a small tent.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 PM at the Stevens Memorial Library, to prepare for Town Meeting presentation.

Bob moved to adjourn at 8:43; Barbara seconded the motion; all said "Aye".

Patricia H. Frederick