

NATHANIEL THOMAS MILL HISTORY

Chronology of Hanson Bicentennial Committee 1973-1977 &
The Nathaniel Thomas Mill Project 1976-1983
Acquisition of the site by the Town of Hanson Dec. 7, 2010

By Margaret (Peggy) Kitchenham
2019

Nathaniel Thomas Mill
Liberty St. Hanson, Massachusetts
Prepared by Margaret (Peggy) Kitchenham in 2019

USA Bicentennial 1976 Events – 1974-1983

January 17, 1974 – Article in Silver Lake News reports a Hanson Bicentennial Committee planning meeting was held at the Silver Lake Auction Gallery, Hanson.

It was noted that events would begin in the spring with a Logo Contest at the Indian Head Middle School, organized by August Silva, Art teacher, selectman and member of the committee.

Also, the Fifth Grade Students of team teachers Beatrice Binns and Donald Alcombright researched and designed a two year 1975-1976 Bicentennial Calendar which was sold. The Art Consultant was teacher Dee Pollard.

Gad Hitchcock Sermon Reenactment, May 1974
Bicentennial event

Sons of Liberty Play, Nov. 1974
Bicentennial event

Fashion Through the Ages Show, April 1975
Bicentennial event

Bicentennial “Christmas in the Country” House Tour, Dec. 1975

Bicentennial Ball, Jan. 1976

Bicentennial Bicycle & Doll Carriage Parade, July 3, 1976

Bicentennial Field Day Race & Events, July 3, 1976

Bicentennial Parade, July 4, 1976

Nathaniel Thomas Mill Dedication, July 3, 1978

Devil & Daniel Webster Play, July 3, 1978
At newly dedicated Nathaniel Thomas Mill

The Mill Wheel for Nathaniel Thomas Mill, installed and dedicated, Nov. 17, 1983

Later Events-

-Annual Art/Craft Shows , Farmer’s Markets & Garden Club Sales

-Civil War Reinactment- 1990’s

-Periodic Plays by Recreation Committee-

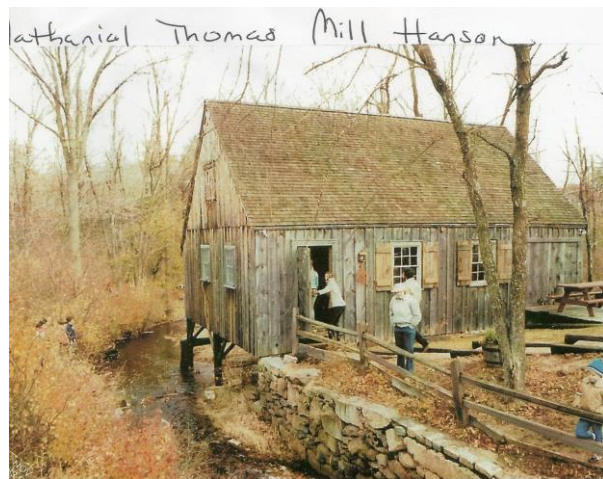
-Acquisition of the site by the Town of Hanson Dec. 7, 2010

- Installation of a Memorial Bench for Frank Sawyer & Fred Miller 2016

The Nathaniel Thomas Mill Project 1976-1983
Acquisition of the site by the Town of Hanson Dec. 7, 2010

By Margaret (Peggy) Kitchenham

In 1973 the Bicentennial Committee was formed by the town to plan activities for the celebration of the Nation's Bicentennial (200th Birthday) July 4, 1976. Susan Webster was Chair of the full Committee and Rich Newey was Co-chair. Sue did an exceptionally fine job. Other members were Betty Archer, Margaret (Peggy) Kitchenham, Maureen Lindquist, Charlotte Vayo, Karen Dalton, Sheila Carney, Donna Lund, Linda Archibald, Mary Deckamn, Claudia Babbitt, Mary Beddell and Bonney Newey. In addition to official members many others helped enormously over the years, including spouses and children and especially, John (Jay) Webster, Richard (Dick) Archer, Christopher Kitchenham, Philip Lindquist, Paul Vayo, Peter Dalton, and Edward Carney. Meetings were held at the Stella's Auction Gallery on East Washington St. The Committee organized a number of wonderful events to be held over the next few years, some to raise funds for the Bicentennial and the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Project, but many just for celebration and enjoyment and to remember the past. It was a very special community celebration!



The Nathaniel Thomas Mill Bicentennial Project – (Building Dedicated July 4, 1978) The site is across from the Hanson Town Hall, on the Indian Head Brook. It was the location of the first dam in Plymouth County used to provide power for a waterwheel. The dam was built in 1695 by Col. Nathaniel Thomas of Marshfield, who purchased 250 acres in 1680 from the Indian Sachem Wampatuck, and also a later 100 acres on the Indian Head River. A saw mill was built shortly thereafter for his son Issac. It was the site of the first conservation measure to protect the herring run in 1703. The mill was in the Thomas family until 1829. It burned in 1839. The current mill is the fourth on the site. A Photo of 1907 Thomas Mill from the 2003 “Images of Hanson” by Donna McCulloch Brown, a 1980 Brochure on the History of the Site and a page from the “Town of Hanson History” are attached as Addenda.

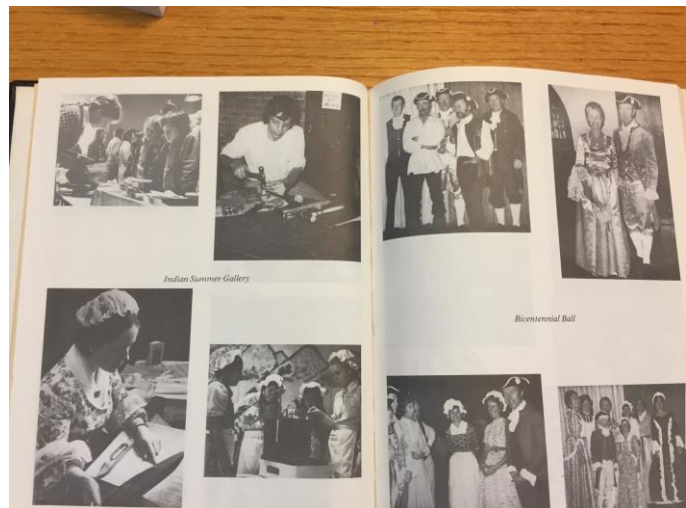
A group of local men, led by Horace Atwood, Robert Andrews, Sr, Frank Sawyer Sr., Anton Slaney, Clifford Locke, Sal Napolitano, Alvin Reid, and Edward Lundberg, had wanted to do a recreation of the original Mill since 1966. They had submitted a grant application to the State for the recreation of a mill on the site of the original Nathaniel Thomas Saw Mill. The grant was denied for not enough financial detail. The Bicentennial Committee took over the project in 1974, with Margaret (Peggy) Kitchenham as chair of the Mill Project, and worked with the men to refine the plan and develop more concrete numbers. The resubmitted plan was accepted by the State and grant funds of \$3,860 were received. The Hanson 1974 town meeting voted matching funds for a total of \$7,000. It was an exciting project!

Over the next year or so, the men developed the plan further. The original foundation stones were all that was left of the original building. These were reused and lumber donated by the town and others was milled by Mr. Locke. Frank Sawyer, Sr. was the overall construction foreman. He supervised volunteers to do the floor framing and Horace Atwood, Town Building Inspector, supervised the upper framing. The

lumber was hand adzed to provide an authentic beam and wrought head nails were used for the wallboards. A group of volunteers including Allan, Richard, Phil & David Clemons, Chris Kitchenham, Peter Dalton, Kenneth Sharland, Kenneth Thompson, Edward Savage, Fred MacDonald, Phil Huntley, Jay Webster, Leo Downey, Rodney Brunsel, Karl Baresel, Walter Engstrom, John Edwards & Sons, Peter Huska, Kenneth Wollage, Kenneth Thompson, Norm Forgit, Chester Archibald, Ed Spionney, Ed Young and the Hanson Highway Department worked on Saturdays to construct the building. Grading was donated by Bill Farrell and Jack Casoli of Hanson and John Walsh of Pembroke. Hard work, but fun too!

The ladies of the Committee provided lunch and ran a series of events to raise the funds needed for the project and for historical education. It was an exciting time and built a lot of community spirit.

May 19, 1974 - **Gad Hitchcock Reenactment** at the Hanson Congregational Church on High Street. Everyone came in costume. Introductory Remarks were by George (Dick) Archer, Rev. Heigham read portions of a sermon (attached) given by Gad Hitchcock, the first minister of the First Parish in Hanson. The organist was Elizabeth White. The Bulletin for the service (attached as Addenda) included a summary of the life of Dr. Hitchcock, who assisted in the framing of the Massachusetts Constitution, from the Bryantville News, August 1912. The full text may be read by googling: Gad Hitchcock Sermon.



Sept. 7, 1974 - **Thomas Mill Sign Raising**, to place the sign for the project provided by the Massachusetts Bicentennial Committee, at 4:30 pm, followed by an Old Fashioned Box Picnic Supper on the park by the Town Hall. During the fall, there was also a Poster Contest in the schools, won by Tom Zak, a third grader in Miss Perry's class. His letter and artwork are attached in an Addendum.



Mill construction foreman, Frank Sawyer, Sr. & wife Olga

Oct. 5, 1974 - **Indian Summer Gallery Craft Show.** The first of five annual craft shows held in October at the Maquan School in Hanson to raise money for the Bicentennial and the Thomas Mill Project. The chair was Betty Archer of King St., Hanson. Some of the area craftspeople who participated were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Needham of Hanson. He did leaded glass, and Alice Needham, a native of Sweden, created lovely silk note paper and cards and stenciling on furniture. Shirley Kelley of Hanson made corn husk dolls and ran K.B. Kreations floral shop at Hanson BPM. Charles Crocker of Halifax made sand candles. From Hanover, Dot Jerna did painting on wood and jewelry and David Crosby did metal art. These shows were a lot of fun and helped revive interest in old-time crafts.



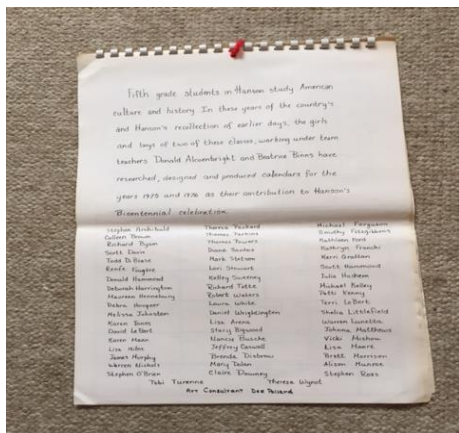
Dorothy Baresel

Sue Webster



Nov. 11, 1974 - **Sons of Liberty**, a highly acclaimed one-act play, was held at the Whitman Hanson Regional High School auditorium. The program views the events of the revolutionary period through the eyes of eight different individuals. It was made available through the Massachusetts Bicentennial Commission. This was a fabulous, interesting evening, but we didn't have photos.

Two year **Bicentennial Calendar/Coloring Books for 1975/76** were sold for \$2.50 and were available at the Seven Elves Gift Store at Walkey's Corner. They were designed by Hanson fifth graders and featured black and white drawings depicting Hanson history and colonial life. **The Tom Tom Campfire Troop**, led by Linda Dudley and assisted by Peggy Hansen dressed in costume and helped sell the calendars. Troop members included Kelley Dudley, Susan Powers, Peggy Hansen, Kara Showstead, Michele Gray, Patricia Brennan, Polly Hall, Heather Grindle, Jennifer Mann and Laura Gianini. On June 17, 1975, the Hanson Campfire Girls also planted a **Buttonwood Tree** on the Town Hall grounds in memory of the three buttonwood trees that were planted two hundred years earlier by Jeremiah Stetson in front of his home on King Street at the Hanover line. As he worked, the noise of cannons booming at Charlestown during the Battle of Bunker Hill could be plainly heard. At the time of the Bicentennial, at least one of the original buttonwood trees was still before the house. Youth were an important, wonderful part of all celebrations!



Jan. 1975 – **Quilting Exhibit** co-sponsored with the Hanson Public Library. Heritage needlework-patchwork and quilting were presented. Ann Marie Holsinger, home economist for the Plymouth County Extension Service presented the program. There was also an exhibit of quilts owned by area residents, including a quilt made by 30 women of the First Congregational Church to commemorate its 225th anniversary, owned by Mr. and Mrs. David Showstead. This was a wonderful, colorful program!

Feb. 1975 – **Colonial Crafts That Matter Show** at the Maquan School. Crafts demonstrated included the Campfire Girls & Blue Birds demonstrating candle-dipping, butter churning, and making pomander balls, Ann Marie Holsinger, County Extension home economist, working a loom; Dorothy Baresel showing her “Bargello” fabric work. There was soap and bread making, quilting, crewel, chair caning, black-smithing, and corn husk dolls. Susan Webster was chair and displayed her herbs and talented flower arranging.

Crafts That Matter
The Hanson Bicentennial Committee has sponsored the first of its series of craft demonstrations which will demonstrate the art and craft of the past. The show will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Maquan School in Hanson, near the Hanson Public Library.

Artists to display their work at Indian Summer Gallery II
The Hanson Bicentennial Committee has sponsored the second of its series of art exhibitions which will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Maquan School in Hanson, near the Hanson Public Library.

Silversmith
Hanson silversmith George Dahlberg will demonstrate and sell his expertise in the art of silversmithing at the Indian Summer Gallery at the Hanson Maquan School, Room 18 and 19.

Blacksmith
Blacksmith George Dahlberg will demonstrate and sell his expertise in the art of blacksmithing at the Indian Summer Gallery at the Hanson Maquan School, Room 18 and 19.

April 23, 1975 – **Fashions Through the Ages** at the Maquan School presented authentic dresses from the colonial period to the present from the collection of Mrs. Phyllis Keith of Bridgewater, including Civil War uniforms loaned by Richard Newey. Fashion commentators were Nola Meiggs of Whitman and Jane LeGros of Hanson. Pianist George H. Howard of Hanson set the mood for each period, ranging from Stephen Foster to “The Sting”. Models included Erin Carney, Margot Howard, and Kimberly Meiggs for the young set and adults Sue Webster, Shirley Stella, Sue Ann DeFrancesco, Claudia Babbitt, Rita Fogg, Bonney Newey, Jane Le Gros, Nola Meiggs, Kathy Stella and Nancy Howard, with male fashion shown by Thomas and Phillip Stella and Paul Carney. The event was enthusiastically chaired by Sheila Carney.

Fashion Through the Ages Show, April 1975
Bicentennial event

Nathaniel Thomas Mill Dedication, July 3, 1978

Peg Kitchenham & Sue Archer

July 5, 1975 – **Spirit of 76 Block Party** co-sponsored by the Jaycees and featuring the festive music of “The Townsmen. A Bicentennial Flag was presented to the town to be flown at Town Hall.

Oct. 4, 1975 – **Indian Summer Gallery II** (See Oct. 1974 above). Additional Hanson artists who displayed work were Francine and Suzanne Meinhold, potters and Jean Hoder, hand painted plaques.

Dec.4, 1975 – **House Tour**, “Christmas in the Country”, starting in the Country Store, recreated by Walter Engstrom in the barn of his white New England farm house at 640 Whitman St., tickets were \$2.50. Babysitting was by the Hanson-Pembroke Mother’s Club at the Congregational Church. Houses included the Cushing House on E. Washington St., the Webster House on State St., the Kingsley home on King St., the Mann home on Winter St., and the Schellenger home on Andrew Lane. Refreshments were Served at the historic & beautiful Cushing House. This was a very special event, full of Christmas cheer.



Feb 20, 1976 – **Bicentennial Costume Ball** – Ridder Country Club, with music by Jerry Seeco, and cocktails, a buffet and dancing till 1:00. Chaired by Maureen Lindquist, Linda Archibald and Claudia Babbitt. Most people came in costume and a wonderful time was had by all! A reward for good work.

ON DAILY ENTERPRISE—FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1975

HANSON

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Tickets Are Available For Bicentennial Ball

HANSON - The Bicentennial Ball will be held on Feb. 20, at the Ridder Country Club. It is hoped that many people will come in costume although this is not required. A wonderful evening is being planned and the committee is hoping for an excellent turnout.

Tickets are available from any of the following committee members: Maureen Lindquist, 284-0727; Claudia Babbitt, 441-3319; Linda Archibald, 441-2882; or other ball committee members including Charlotte Vye, Nancy Flower, Joe Webster, and Mary Madala. They will also be sold at H. H. Krasnow at Walley's Corner. Tickets are eight and must be paid for in advance. Committee members suggest that they would make an excellent Christmas gift.

Music will be provided by Suede of Green. There will be a cocktail hour from 7 to 8 p.m. with a buffet at 8 p.m. Dancing will be from 9 p.m. to 1 p.m. with coffee and Omelet at midnight.

Maureen Lindquist

HANSON BICENTENNIAL COSTUME BALL

Ridder Country Club

February 20th, 1976

Cocktails 7-8 Buffet 8-9 Dancing 9-1

Music by Jerry Seeco

Photo credits: Peg & Chris Kitchbaum; Betty & Dick Anden

HANSON

Business Page 1, 224-4174

Bicentennial Field Day Is Scheduled Saturday Here

HANSON - As part of the Bicentennial celebration, a field day will be held at the Hanson and Indian Head Schools on Saturday, July 11. Field events for those in Grades K-8 will be held from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in which time prizes will be awarded for the following events:

From 10 to 10:30 a.m. there will be a bubble gum blowing contest with field events to begin again at 1. Prizes for afternoon events will be awarded at 2:30 p.m.

All 4th graders will be a great country fun for all ages with field events for adults scheduled from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Field events are being sponsored by the Boy Scouts of America and P.A.L. Events are divided into six age groups: Kindergarten and Grade 1; Grades 2 and 3; Grades 4 and 5; Grades 6 and 7; Grades 8 and 9; and Grades 10, 11, and 12.

All day field events for everyone include basketball and hockey events and tournaments. Other all day activities are a 4th annual rodeo, a baking contest sponsored by the Hanson Grange, refreshments by P.A.L., Rough Riders, the Massachusetts 4-H group and the Children's Welfare League.

Prizes in the doll carriage parade will be awarded for the prettiest, best organized and most bicentennial carriage. All children from toddlers through Grade 8 are invited to participate.

The 5th grade A.A.U. race is open to all Hanson residents. No registration is necessary for the race - sanctioned Hanson numbers.

HANSON JAYCEES

Bicentennial Block Party
Town Hall Grounds

8 PM - Friday July 2nd
(Rain date July 3rd)

Music by "BRANDYWINE"

Concession Stand - Hot Cogs, corn on the cob, watermelon.

Beers, mixed drinks, soft drinks

BRING YOUR OWN BEVERAGES
& LOUING E CHAIRS & JOIN

THE FUN !!!!

Block Party Set at 7:15 Town Hall

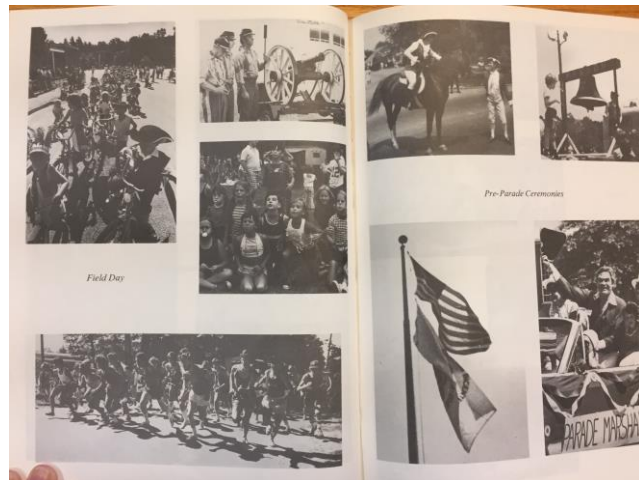
HANSON - A gala, all-entertainment block party will be held on the town hall grounds the evening of July 5, from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. as part of a year-long program of Bicentennial events in Hanson.

Co-sponsored by the Jaycees and the Hanson Bicentennial Committee, and called "The Spirit of 76 Block Party," the affair will feature good dance music by "The Townsmen," free admission, a buffet, as above, and alcoholic beverages and other refreshments.

Big zippers and lawn spears which would be loaned for the occasion are being sought. Anyone willing to help should contact Peggy Kitchbaum at 441-3311.

July 2, 1976 – **Bicentennial Block Party**, 8:00 pm on the Town Hall Grounds, co-sponsored with the Jaycees who applied for a one day liquor license and sold hotdogs and light snacks. Music was provided by “The Brandywines” This was a fabulous start to a wonderful, fun filled weekend!

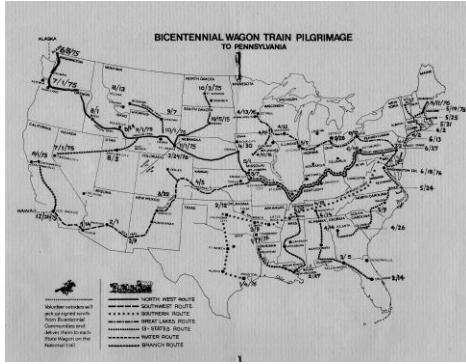
July 3, 1976 - **A Bicentennial Field Day**, chaired by Phil Linquist, began at 10:00 am with an AAU sanctioned five-mile race, organized by the Lions and open to Hanson residents. The race started with a shot from a canyon of Marc Valentine of Halifax. After the race, were a day of old time field events on the Indian Head and Maquan School grounds, including races and events for all ages, including all kinds of races, doll and bicycle parades, a baking contest run by the Hanson Grange, a watermelon contest and a children's barnyard. Food and light beverages were handled by the Police Athletic League and beer was sold by the Kiwanis. There was a party that evening at the home of Patty Stearns, Selectwoman.



July 4, 1976 – Events began with a **Bicentennial Ecumenical Service** at 6:00 am on the town hall grounds. All Hanson clergy participated, with Rev. Robert Heighan of the First Congregational Church coordinator of the service, Rev. John McLaughlin of St. Joseph the Worker Church delivered the message and Elizabeth C. Fulton was organist. Members of local choirs lead the singing. At 2:00 pm, Hanson participated in five minutes of nationwide bell ringing to commemorate the Bicentennial. A 16-inch bell donated to the Thomas Mill was rung at this time. **The Bicentennial Parade** was organized by **Wayne Wright**. It began at the Maquan School, went down School St. to Liberty, right on East Washington St. and ended at the E. Washington St. School, with a reviewing stand at the Town Hall. There a horse rider delivered the Declaration of Independence, read by Rep. Charlie Mann. There were floats, town bands & the Hingham Militia. A time capsule by Indian Head Middle School students was to be opened on the US 300th anniversary. At 6:45 pm, **The Bicentennial Park** across the stream from the Thomas Mill was dedicated. The chair of the Park project was Betty Archer, with professional landscaping assistance donated by Philip Huntley and many volunteer hours. The mill itself was under construction but was not completed and dedicated until 1978. The three days of celebration ended in the evening with a **Band Concert** on the Town Hall grounds from 7-9 pm, followed by a campfire and community sing. Comments by Sue Webster, Bicentennial Chair are in an **Addenda**. The culmination of a very special weekend!



Hanson Girl Scouts supported the Bicentennial effort in many ways. 10 Scrolls for the **Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage** were presented at a special encampment in E. Douglas, Massachusetts to be carried on the Northeast portion of the train, consisting of 5 state wagons from Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont and Massachusetts. Pony Express Riders will also visit communities that are not on the wagon train route to receive signed scrolls of rededication to the nation's founding principles. Theresa Kahalane, Brownie Troop 239, Nancy Williams, Girl Scout Junior Troop 450, Karen Sullivan, Cadette Troop 276 presented the 10 scrolls for Hanson. The scrolls will travel to Valley Forge, PA where they will be on display until Labor Day. Then they will be microfilmed and put in a time capsule to be opened at the nation's tercentennial. (Addenda – Full brochure of the Bicentennial Wagon Train)



Selectmen sign Wagon Train Scroll

Cadette Girl Scout Troop 276 sponsored the **Doll Carriage Parade** with 30 participants, at the Bicentennial Field Day. 100 Scouts participated in the **Bicentennial Parade** in five separate units. In a car driven by local Administrator Janet Keene, were distinguished members, Mrs. Dorothy Baresel and Mrs. Dorothy Campbell. The third unit was "Uniforms from the Past" led by Joan Colley dressed as Juliette Low, founder of the Girls Scouts. **The Girl Scout Float**, "Heroines of the Past" followed, with three scenes 1) Louisa May Alcott, author of "Little Women" 2) Madelaine de Vercheres who defended a Quebec fort for 8 days against Indians and 3) Sacajawea, the 16 year old Indian girl who guided Lewis & Clark across America. Susan Webster, Bicentennial chair presented a first prize award for the float to co-chairs Mrs. Dawna Colley and Mrs. Carol Robinson at the Band Concert. Other committee members were Louise Buitenhuys, Lorraine Edwards, Angela Erben, Carolyn Galambos, Ruth Ann Gidley, Janet Keene, Mary Jane McPate, Janice O'Brien and Mary Ann O'Brien.



1976 Town Report



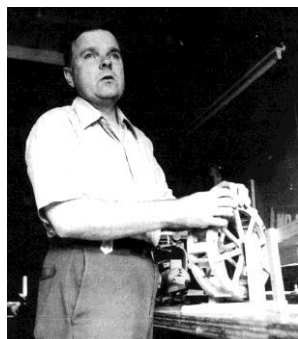
Girl Scout Float

July 3, 1978 – was **The Dedication of Nathaniel Thomas Mill** completed building to Frank Sawyer Sr. and Robert Andrews. A wood-burned plaque of the mill, on lumber from the building, was presented to the Selectmen by Chris Kitchenham. Special recognition was given to Alan & Richard Clemons for overseeing construction after the death of the foreman Frank Sawyer, Sr. Also thanked were Herb Sayce and Ed Savage for help with plumbing and wiring, Phil Huntley, Casoli Sand and Gravel and Wyman Nursery for landscaping, and members of the Hanson Highway Department and Charlotte & Paul Vayo for the brochures. The building was open with displays of quilts by Girl Scouts and woodburning by Chris Kitchenham. The dedication was followed by a band concert and a performances of the play "**The Devil and Daniel Webster**", directed by Wesley Blauss, and starring Hanson youth Danny Webster. The next day July 4, included a five-mile road race and a Jaycee sponsored **Block dance** at the town hall.

Olga Sawyer cuts the ribbon & Peg Kitchenham reads the dedication of the Mill to Frank Sawyer, Sr. and Robert Andrews, Sr. (Text of the dedications of the Park & the Mill are attached as Addenda)

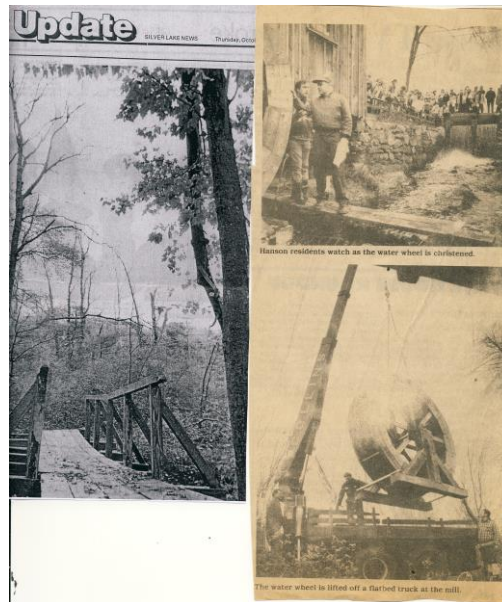


Nov. 17, 1983 – The Mill Wheel, a 10 ft. breast wheel weighing about 2 tons, was installed and dedicated. The project was led by Frank Sawyer, Jr. in memory of his father, Frank Sr., who had been foreman of the construction of the Mill Building in 1976. Frank Jr, who was blind and Fred Miller a friend who was also disabled, visited many mills together. They designed the breast wheel which was best suited to the site. They built a small model to guide them on the larger project, which was constructed in Frank Sawyer Jr's barn workshop on State St., where he built picnic tables for a living. Those assisting the project were, Peter Dalton, Kenneth Sharland, Chris Kitchenham, Rodney Brunsel, Allan, Richard & Phil Clemons, Robert Fuller, Bob Dylan, Frank Schellenger, Edward Young, Norman Forgit, David Clemons, James Bierwert, Walter Engstrom, Kevin, Brian & Keith Hagberg. Paul McFee designed a machine to move the wheel and Collins Crane of Brockton did the transport. In a parade including the Indian Head Band, the transport of the wheel from the Sawyer barn on State St. to the mill site on the Town Hall Pond was also made possible with help of the Hanson Fire and Police Departments, and support from other town officers and departments. What a wonderful conclusion to this great project!



Frank Sawyer, Jr

with model of N. Thomas Mill Wheel he designed.



Later Mill Events

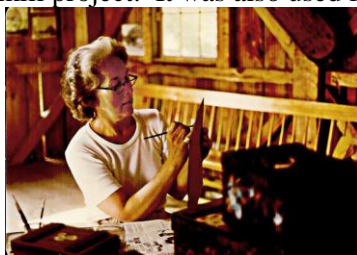
Susan Webster was chair of the Full Bicentennial Committee from 1973-1976. The Activities held during this period are listed above. (Many pictures are inserted in that section.)



Jay, Danny & Sue Webster



Peg Kitchenham was chair of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee from 1974 to 1981, when her work at the Senior Center and as Director of the Hanson Housing Authority necessitated her leaving the Committee. The Mill building was dedicated July 4, 1978. For several years after its dedication, the Mill was open on Saturdays during the summer with different craft people showing and explaining their work. On several occasions there was an area blacksmith, Martin Klein of Vulcan Forge, Hanover; local potters, Suzzane & Francine Meinhold, who also taught a pottery class there; stained glass work; painted tole ware; stenciling; wood burning by Chris Kitchenham; candle making; and corn husk dolls. The Annual Indian Summer Gallery Craft Show at the Maquan School continued to be held to raise funds for the Mill until about 1980. Frank Sawyer, Jr., Betty Archer & the Clemons family were of great help in supporting the mill project. It was also used for several plays and rented for private parties.



Chris Kitchenham, Wood Burning



Betty Archer was chair of The Mill Committee 1981-1986 . Frank Sawyer, Jr., who built the wheel, was on the Committee at that time, also Allan and Richard Clemons. For about 3 years in the late 80's, a wonderful Juried Art Show, was held at the Mill, assisted by Donna Lund and Peg Kitchenham. The head judge was Ed Colley, Director of the Art Department at Whitman Hanson High School and a local cartoonist with the Patriot Ledger (Surburban Cowgirls). He recruited noted area artists to assist with the judging. A student art show was also held in a tent on the Bicentennial Park. Also during this time, Betty Burke taught art classes. Peter McLaughlin and Scout Troup 34 did fall clean-up. Phil Huntley built a footbridge across the stream to the park, and Dave Clemons built the loading ramp. Work on the water wheel was started and Kathy Patton joined the Committee, also Betty Burke. Dave Clemons and Peter Dalton continued as members.

Frank Sawyer Jr. was Mill Chair from 1986-1988. The flume leading water to the wheel was installed and the wheel began turning on Dec. 6, 1986. Farmer's Markets were held and Ginny Young joined the Committee. Work on the Parking Lot was done by the town, and Howard Dillon joined the Committee.



Betty Archer & Frank Sawyer



1988-1998 – No Town Reports were turned in by the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee.

1995 - Hanson's 175th Anniversary - Chaired by Catherine Kuchinsky, then a Selectman, many wonderful events were held, among them a Photo Contest at the Nathaniel Thomas Mill, on October 21 & 22. The contest was coordinated by Carol Connelly, owner of C.& J. Camera, which was located at Shaw's Plaza. The entries were judged by Carol and by Paul Fortin, a magazine photographer and resident of Hanson. Prizes were donated by C& J. Camera and a reception at the Mill included Historic photos of Hanson as well as contest photos. The July 4th Parade went past the Mill, and it was open. A Booklet on the 175th Anniversary with many pictures was published. The cover was a wonderful folk-art portrayal of the Hanson Town Hall, painted by local **Artist Kathy Ferrara**. Signed prints were sold during the 175th Anniversary as a fundraiser. After that event, she very nicely allowed the prints of her painting to be sold as a fundraiser for the Nathaniel Thomas Mill.

175th Anniversary
Hanson, Massachusetts

The Year in Review



1820-1995



Lee Baker was Nathaniel Thomas Mill Chair from late 1990's-2002. His wife Marcia Baker, Donna Brown, Howard Dillon, & Frank Sawyer, Jr. were very active. Allan Clemons remained active and did a great deal to maintain the premises. Matthew Murphy joined in 2000 and helped put new sod in the Mill Park. The Hanson Garden Club, which has an annual spring sale, installed a ceiling fan for cooling. Marcia provided the following information about this active and enjoyable period of the Mill's history.

"I do have the info on the Environmental toilet we installed. Some one said it is no longer able to be used. We had two Eagle Scouts do major projects for the mill. Zachery Wassmouth rebuilt the sluiceway and got it working again so the wheel that Frank Sawyer built would work again. Also Tommy Bergeron, son of Kathy and Lee Bergeron, who live in the house Frank Sawyer grew up in on State Street, Hanson, earned money and had the bridge installed to go from the front of the mill to the meadow without walking on the street. We also had the walkway in front of the mill worked on.



We had a campaign for folks to buy a shingle to help defray the cost of the new roof. They were something like \$1 a piece, 5 for \$3, or may-be more. .. We also put all new windows, window boxes and lights in the building. Lee and I devoted almost a decade to the Mill. It holds a special place in my heart. Donna Brown continued to take over the rentals after Lee and I left the committee. "

-Marcia Baker

Civil War Reenactment - Sometime in the 1990's, a local Civil Reenactment group of the 2nd Company Plymouth, held a two day reenactment on the Nathaniel Thomas Mill site. Norm Harbinson of Kingston said, "Everything we do and wear is authentic, so people when they ask us what it is like, we know...Six soldiers sleep in each 8'x8' tent...They are called pup tents, because they weren't big enough to hold a dog." The men wore green wool coats of the Sharpshooters, the elite unit of the Union Army. The woman's costumes were sewn by Sue Johnson of Hanson. Marion Prior (84) of Meeting House Lane, Hanson was part of the reenactment. It was both an interesting and a fun event.

All-authentic
Group re-enacts life in a Civil War camp



Norm Harbinson and Civil War reenactors of Kingston and Marion L. Prior, 84, of Hanson wear off their Civil War-era gear during the reenactment of a Union encampment Saturday on Thomas Mill in Hanson.

Marion Prior

1999 Events – A Mill brochure from 1999 lists the following events:

- April 3, - Come Nibble with the Easter Bunny, \$2.00 admission
- May 1 - Open House – Get free seeds for Pumpkin Contest on Oct. 2 at Heidi's Hollow Farm
Sign up for the August Saturday Farmer's Market
- May 8 - Hanson Garden Club Plant Sale
- May 13 – Historically Hanson – Middle School 6th Graders using a state grant will study Mill
And other Hanson buildings with picnic lunch at the Mill.
- May 22 & 23 – Lion's Club Yard Sale
- June 20 – Father's Day at the Mill – Brass Caboose & Old Colony Railroad Club with G-scale train layout.
- July 10 - Tea Party & Doll Show - American Girl Dolls – free admission, tickets for lunch \$5.00
- August 7 – Opening Day of (Nathaniel)Thomas Mill Market - 10:00-3:00 every Saturday thru Oct.. 30
There will be fresh produce, craft items, baked goods. Coordinated by Marcia Baker. Table rental \$7.00
Special events on Market Days were KID'S DAYS with "Marmelade" the clown and "Curious Live Creatures", a VNA Teddy Bear Clinic, and a Family Photo Shoot.
- Sept. 25 – The Joint is Jumping – "The Sounds of Yesteryear" with Bruce Young's old gramophone and live music by "Heather & Jeff". Tickets \$5.00.
- Oct. 23 – Adult Hayride & French & Indian Re-enactment by Mary & Steve Ostrowki & friends. Period food
Will be service. Tickets \$10.00.
- Nov. 6 – Annual Craft Fair – locally make crafts, baked goods, snack bar,. Tables \$10.00.

Mill Committee members: Lee Baker, Chair; Marcia Baker; Donna Brown; Howard Dillon; & Frank Sawyer, Jr.

Plays at the Mill

The very talented Wesley & Joanne Blauss (teachers for many years at Hanson Indian Head Middle School) have produced many plays at the Mill over the years as part of the Recreation Committee. These have involved both youth and adults and have been a great source of community & fun!

“A Christmas Carol” 1985 - Dan Webster played (Srooge), Tom Savage (Bob Cratchet), Mary Puleo (Mrs. Cratchet). Other cast were: Alicia & Alayna Erben, Debbie Blauss, Ellen & Andy Galambos and many others.

“The Devil & Daniel Webster” 1978, 1986, and 2017. The first was July, 4, 1978, as part of the Dedication of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Building. Weekend events included a parade, road race, band concert and two performances of the play at the Mill. The second was in 1986, and the cast included Dan Webster (in the title roll) Jeff Josselyn & Bill Benjamin. Most recently, a 2017 production starring Nick Donohue (Daniel) and Jim Hickey (Scratch).



Alayna Urban & Dan Webster 1985



1978



2017 Devil & Daniel Webster cast

(Sent by Wesley Blauss with photos) Here are two more Mill photos for the history of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill. These two photos are from 1991, Christmas at the Mill. Joanne Blauss and Cindy Fish decorated. It was part of a House Tour to raise money for Camp Kiwanee. Carolyn Baker Galambos and Nathaniel Blauss were among the featured "players." Carolyn made the quilt, hanging behind them on the wall. The exterior photo is by Chuck Fuller, Kathleen Mitchell Fuller's husband, I believe.



Carolyn Galambos & Nathaniel Blauss



Chuck Fuller, photographer

The Farmer's Market on Saturdays late in summer, continued at the Mill for a number of years from 1999 to 2010 at least and included local produce (Lapinsky's corn), baked goods and crafts people.

Matthew Murphy was Mill Chair 2002-2003. His family and children Jared and Kyle helped with landscaping. Donna Brown & Frank Sawyer, Jr. continued and Lee & Marcia Baker were thanked for many years of service to the Committee.

2005-2007 - No Town Reports were listed by the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee.

Donna Brown was Nathaniel Thomas Mill Chair 2004-2013. Donna had already served on the committee for some time. When the town acquisition of the property was in process in 2009, Sylvia Salas and Iris Morway joined the Committee. In 2011, Arthur Corbett and Richard Flynn were appointed. Kathy Bergeron & Frank Sawyer Jr. were on a "Friends of the Mill Committee." Improvements were made to the outside lighting. The Hanson Garden Club continued its spring sale and a fall Pie Tasting was held 2008. Allan Clemons remained active and in 2011 repaired the wheel so that it could operate again. Thank you to Alan and the Clemons family for their many years of help and support!



BRISK BUSINESS: Members of the Hanson Garden Club were busy on Saturday during their annual plant sale at the Nathaniel Thomas Mill. Wendy Benoit, Georgia Parros, Joan Godwin, Sandy Gustafson and Elaine Wright display geraniums for sale.

Town Purchases Nathaniel Thomas Mill Site –Dec. 7, 2010

The new Community Preservation Committee in August of 2009, voted to place on the Town Warrant in October 2009, as one of its first projects, to approve the purchase of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill property, and place it under the care and control of the Hanson Conservation Commission. When the mill building was built in 1976, the site was leased by the Hanson Conservation Commission for 99 years for \$1.00 per year from the owners at the time, United Cape Cod Cranberry Co. The current owner, Don Ellis, had sent a letter to the Conservation Commission offering to sell the property to the Town for \$69,000.

While the Town Meeting did vote in October 2009 to purchase the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Property for \$69,000, questions were raised afterward by the Selectmen about water rights. After considerable time and discussion, the Selectmen voted to have the purchase brought up again as Article 19 of the 2010 October Town Meeting. Again the purchase was approved by voters and was finalized on December 7, 2010 when Board of Selectman chair, Chris Colcolough signed the purchase documents.

Addenda - The Hanson Express did an excellent job covering the issues. Several of their articles are attached as Addenda.

In April of 2011, following meetings with many Town Committees, the Conservation Commission issued a **Nathaniel Thomas Mill Draft Stakeholders Working Agreement**, outlining the responsibilities of various parties for the maintenance, use and promotion of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Site, now that both the land and site belong to the town. A copy of this extensive Agreement is available in the Conservation Office at Hanson Town Hall.

Sylvia Salas was Nathaniel Thomas Mill Chair beginning in 2013. (At this time, the Annual Report on the Nathaniel Thomas Mill began to be carried as a paragraph with in the Conservation Commission Report) In 2013, a Special Town Meeting authorized a Revolving Fund for maintenance and beautification at the Mill. Marcus Linn was appointed to the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee in December of 2015. (He was also on the Historical Commission and helping to coordinate the Town's 200th Anniversary in 2020.) The Mill was rented many weekends and is available for private functions.

Meadowbrook Gardening, Whitman Spruces up N. Thomas Mill

In 2012, Steve Alexander of Meadowbrook Gardening in Whitman learned that the Mill was in need of some major cleanup to improve both the appearance and security. He volunteered a crew of his men and equipment to help. A wonderful work day was held including Donna Brown, chair and Sylvia Silas members of the Mill Committee and Phil & Alan Clemons and members of the Conservation Committee.



Bench Honoring Frank Sawyer, Jr. & Fred Miller for Wheel

In August of 2014, a generous memorial donation of \$5,000 was received in memory of Frederick Lyman Miller, from his sister, Dorothy Magoun of Northboro. Fred Miller and Frank Sawyer, Jr. had designed and built the Mill Wheel which was installed in 1983. Franks' father, Franks Sawyer, Sr. had been the foreman of the construction of the Mill building itself in 1976. The donation was to be used to help the preservation and appreciation of the Mill Wheel in honor of both Fred and Frank, who had both overcome handicaps in life and been an inspiration. The Mill Committee, chose to install a Bench In Honor of Fred Miller & Frank Sawyer, Jr. in the Park, facing the Wheel, on Sept. 13, 2016. The remainder of the donation will be used to help replace the wheel, a project which is slated for about 2019. Addenda-letter from Fred Miller's family about \$5,000 donation.

**Jenny & Frank Sawyer & Fred Miller
At Saugus Iron Works 1980**

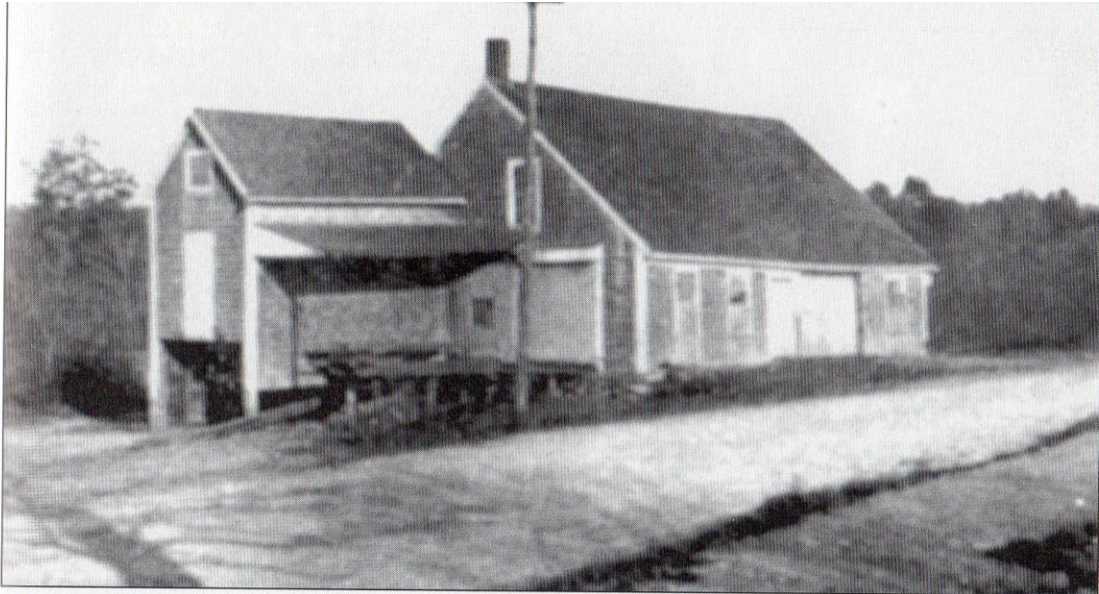


Index of Addenda

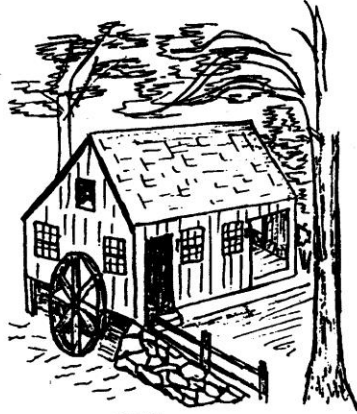
- 1. Site Information - A Photo of 1907 Thomas Mill from the 2003 “Images of America-Hanson” by Donna McCulloch Brown, & a 1980 Brochure on the History of the Site**
- 2. “Hanson Town History” page 83 (Site History)**
- 3. Portions of a sermon given by Gad Hitchcock, the first minister of the First Parish in Hanson. Read by Rev. Heigham May 19, 1974 at Gad Hitchcock Reenactment at the Hanson Congregational Church on High Street. (The full text may be read by Googling: Gad Hitchcock Sermon)**
- 4. The Bulletin for the service, included a summary of the life of Dr. Hitchcock, who assisted in the framing of the Massachusetts Constitution, from the Bryantville News, August 1912.**
- 5. Logo Contest Winner, Tim Zax, 6th grade, Hanson Indian Head Middle School 1974**
- 6. Bicentennial Wagon Train Brochure 1974**
- 7. July 4, 1976 Comments by Susan Webster, Bicentennial Committee Chair**
- 8. Hanson Town Report, Bicentennial Committee 1976 –**
- 9. Hanson Town Report - 1976 Bicentennial Report & Photo (4 Pages)**
- 10. Hanson Town Report 1976 – Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee**
- 11. Comments at the July 4, 1976 Dedication of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill & Park by Margaret (Peggy) Kitchenham**
- 12. Completed Nathaniel Thomas Mill Dedication- July 3, 1978 (two years later)**
- 13. Nathaniel Thomas Mill Wheel Dedication Nov. 1983 –(3 pages from Silver Lake News)**
- 14. Nathaniel Thomas Mill Brochure from 1998 showing activities**
- 15. Town Buys Nathaniel Thomas Mill Site 2009 – 2010 – 3 news Hanson Express articles**

Addenda

- 1. Site Information** - A Photo of 1907 Thomas Mill from the 2003 “Images of Hanson” by Donna McCulloch Brown, a 1980 Brochure on the History of the Site and a page from the “Town of Hanson History” are attached as Addenda.



Thomas Mill, across from Wampatuck Pond on Liberty Street, is one of Hanson's earliest building sites. Col. Nathaniel Thomas either received 250 acres in payment for surveying the Major's Purchase tract or bought land from local Native Americans. In 1695, Thomas completed the first dam in Plymouth County for powering a waterwheel. The Thomas family operated the mill until 1829. The building shown here burned in the 1920s. Hanson's 1976 bicentennial project volunteers launched a new mill construction project shepherded by Frank Sawyer Sr. The waterwheel was designed and its creation was supervised by Frank Sawyer Jr.



Artwork by
Chris Kitchenham
About 1983

A small brochure
With this information
Was used at the Mill
for several years.

HISTORY OF THE MILL SITE

The History of the Town of Hanson gives two versions of how the Mill site came to be in the Thomas family. The first states that Col. Nathaniel Thomas, in surveying the lands of the Major's Purchase, early noted the possibilities of the Mill site and was satisfied to receive 250 acres in payment for his services. The second indicates that Col. Thomas purchased of the Indians a large tract in the vicinity. Regardless of how the land was acquired, the beavers had already built a partial dam on the Indian Head Brook. This Col. Thomas completed in 1694-1695 and it was the first dam in Plymouth County to be used to provide power for a water wheel. A saw mill was built shortly thereafter for Nathaniel's son, Isaac. In records of 1712 and 1716, the mill was called "Colonel's Old Mill." In 1722 it was recorded as Edward Thomas Mill. He was Isaac's son. It was in the Thomas family from 1695 until about 1829.

It was then sold to Benjamin Hobart of Abington who put in machinery for cutting tacks for the shoe industry. The mill was burned in 1835 but was rebuilt and continued making nails and tacks until 1848, when Nathaniel Cushing bought two-thirds of the building for a trunk factory; Ezra Phillips buying the other one-third to continue the tack business.

The mill was later sold to Henry Brigham of South Abington who made tacks there until it burned again in 1859. It was rebuilt and used as a saw mill by E. Phillips & Sons until about the turn of the century. Its later owners have been the Lot Phillips Company of West Hanover who disposed of it in 1910 to the Wampatuck Cranberry Co. The present owners are the United Cape Cod Cranberry Company who have given the Hanson Conservation Commission a ninety-nine year lease and permission to construct a replica of an early mill on the site.

Quite a business center developed near the mill during the years. There was a grist mill built in 1737 across the road. The site of the Hanson Town Hall was a general store. Across the road near the corner of Winter Street was a blacksmith's shop, owned by one of the Thomas'; and nearby on Liberty Street was a shoe shop.

SAW MILLS

Perhaps the earliest and most profitable industry employing more than one man was lumbering. Before the days of the mill, the logs were felled, squared by hand with an adz, a two-hour job for an experienced man, and then smoothed with a broadax. The early settlers sawed logs into planks laboriously in two-man teams using a "pit saw" set in a frame. The "sawyer" worked on top and the "pitman" on the bottom. A skilled team cut no more than one to two hundred feet a day.

The first water-powered mills used an up and down saw with a verticle blade about six feet long and six inches wide with a series of jagged teeth spaced about two inches apart. The saw frame attached to a crank by a pitman rod. The crank attached to the water wheel shaft. The machinery in the early mills was placed across the center of a building which was twice the length of the longest log to be sawed.

Early mills were often the center of the social and economic life of the community and the miller or sawyer an important man. No substantial community arose without a saw mill, and usually a grist mill was close by.

From the
Hanson Historical Newsletter
April 3, 2003

CHRONOLOGY OF TOWN SET OFF FROM PLYMOUTH COLONY
TO INSTITUTE THE TOWN OF HANSON (Cont.)

The Major's Purchase:

These bounds were so loosely defined, it caused arguments and contention in the several towns until 1784 when the proprietors agreed to choose three men as a committee to resurvey the lands to settle the matter. They selected one man from Middleboro, one from Pembroke, and one from Duxbury. Their work must have been well done and to the satisfaction of the proprietors because the record shows that their survey was accepted. The bounds they drew up have never been changed. Each man was rewarded with a substantial grant of land for his services.

The grant of 250 acres of lands given to Nathaniel Thomas in 1680 is important to us because it comprises a large part of the town of Hanson. In 1694-95, Nathaniel Thomas bought from the Indian Wampatuck 250 acres more and, according to tradition, he also received the "right" to use water from Maquan and Indian Head Ponds and brook to build a dam (thought to be the first dam in the country) which for generations was known as the Mill Pond and is now called Wampatuck after the old Indian Chief. Upon this dam Nathaniel Thomas erected a saw mill for his son Isaac Thomas.

As the settlers moved away from the coast seeking land for agricultural purposes, they were attracted by the fertile soil, the green meadows, the natural resources such as the

3. Portions of a sermon given by Gad Hitchcock, the first minister of the First Parish in Hanson. Read by Rev. Heigham May 19, 1974 at Gad Hitchcock Reenactment at the Hanson Congregational Church on High Street. (Full text may be read by googling: *Gad Hitchcock Sermon*)

EXCERPTS FROM GAD HITCHCOCK'S SERMON

"The passage, however, which stands at the head of our discourse, supposes the people to be judges of the good or ill effects of administration; - and as the wise king of Israel is the author, it may, perhaps, have the more weight. - "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice." - they are sensible of their own happiness in having men of uprightness, honor and humanity to rule over them. - Men, who make a proper use of their authority - who seek the peace and welfare of the whole community, and govern according to law and equity, or the original rules of their constitution. - "But when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." - they are dissatisfied and grieved, when contrary to reasonable expectation, and the design they had in forming into civil society, it turns out, as the history of states and kingdoms authorizes us to say it often does, that their rulers possess opposite qualities - are inhuman, tyrannical and wicked; and instead of guarding, violate their rights and liberties."

"The vices of a ruler pervert the due exercise of his authority, to the disadvantage of the community; and mark his public conduct with oppression and ruin. And we are not to think it strange, if the people fall into perplexity and mourning in consequence."

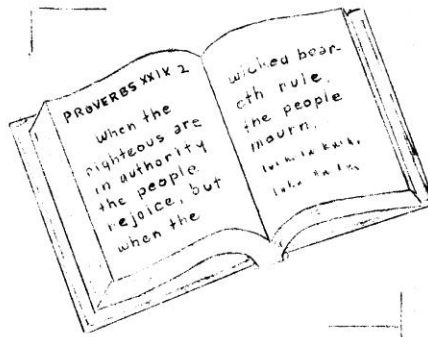
"But there may be a failure in some one or more of the governing parts, in respect to public measures, and the art of governing. - And when this happens, though it be but in one, since each part is strictly necessary to constitute the legislative body - it greatly wounds the state - embarrasses affairs - and is productive of general uneasiness and discontent. - The people soon feel inconveniences rising from jars and interference among their rulers - and as they have an indubitable right, they take it upon them, to judge what, and how far any thing is so, and where to fix the blame."

"Supposing it to be universally admitted, that if rulers contrive and attempt the ruin of the publick, it is the duty of the people to consult the common happiness, and oppose them in such a design; it must follow, I think, that the grounds of publick unhappiness would be removed, and those inconveniences, which by mistake are represented as the consequence of this doctrine, prevented; for, on this supposition, the worst of Princes would learn to do that out of interest, which the best constantly do out of a good principle and true love to their subjects - No Prince would have any persons about him to advise and incite him to illegal or unjust actions - and if he had at any time been guilty, he would, upon the first representation, and without being forced to it, readily acknowledge his error, and set all things right again."

4. The Bulletin for the service, included a summary of the life of Dr. Hitchcock, who assisted in the framing of the Massachusetts Constitution, from the Bryantville News, August 1912.

- "HOW GREAT THOU ART"
- O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power through out the universe displayed.
- CHORUS:
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God to Thee;
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee
How great thou art, How great thou art!
- When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze;
- CHORUS
- And when I think that God His Son not sparing,
Sent him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin; -
- CHORUS
- When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art!
- CHORUS

Bicentennial Worship Service



Hanson
Congregational Church
May 19, 1974

- Bi-Centennial Worship Service
Sunday, May 19, 1974 - 7:00
- Organ Prelude
- *Opening Hymn: "HOW GREAT THOU ART"
(Back of leaflet)
- Prayer
- Remarks by George Richard Archer
- Sermon: "An Election Sermon" by Rev. Gad Hitchcock
Delivered by Rev. Robert H. Heigham
- Closing Prayer
- *Closing Hymn: No. 323
- *Benediction
- *Congregation will please stand.
- ORGANIST: Mrs. Elizabeth White
- FELLOWSHIP COFFEE HOUR WILL FOLLOW IN THE PARISH HALL.
- Front Cover Design: Mrs. Dorothy Baressel
- Printing of Bulletin: Mr. and Mrs. John Davis

Gad Hitchcock

"The choice of Mr. Hitchcock as a pastor was a wise one and he seems to have been a man of exceptional ability, even at a time when country pulpits were often filled by men of marked talents. His was a strong character, patriotic, fearless in the denunciation of wrong, genial and hospitable, withal somewhat eccentric, a man of considerable wit, and a pastor who won the love and respect of his people. He was a native of Springfield, where his ancestors had settled as early as 1644, and on his mother's side he was descended from Gov. John Willis of Conn. He was born in 1719, graduated from Harvard College in 1743, and received the degree of D.D. from that institution in 1787. He married Dorothy Angier of Cambridge who was connected with many of the old Cambridge families.

Dr. Hitchcock was a member of the convention which framed the Constitution of Massachusetts in 1780, and he also preached the election sermon before the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company in 1764. He sometimes served as chaplain during the war of the Revolution and he is said "never to have shunned the dangers to which the soldiers were exposed."

For more than 55 years Dr. Hitchcock ministered to the people of the West Parish, who revered and honored him. This West Parish is now Hanson and he was the first Pastor of this Church. He died in August, 1803, and is buried on the old Burial Hill in Hanson.

(From the Bryantville News, August 1912)

5. Logo Contest Winner, Tim Zax, 6th grade, Hanson Indian Head Middle School 1974



I chose the mill for my logo because many people owned them so it was a common sight in this area in the 1700's.

The mill saved a lot of time and hard work for the people. Instead of grinding your own grain and sawing your own wood, the millers could do it for you.

Many families would probably have been very very poor if the mill had not been invented so it was an important industry.

The main source of energy in the 1700's was the mill and now, two hundred years later, the U.S.A. has an energy crisis. If we still had mills, the U.S.A. would not be in such a situation.

TIM ZAK
GRADE 6

6. Bicentennial Wagon Train Brochure 1974

Once more we'll take to the wagon trails.
But this time we'll head *Eastward*.

Back to the Cradle of Liberty. A pilgrimage to the birthplace of the nation. To rededicate the faith of the nation's citizens to the same principles which inspired their forefathers.

Briefly, the Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage to Pennsylvania is a replay of history—in reverse. A train of covered wagons—one wagon for each State—will cross the country, west to east, adhering as closely as possible to historic trails and wagon routes.

With the cooperation of the ARBA, the Wagon Train Pilgrimage will be offered to all officially designated Bicentennial Communities as an element for their Bicentennial celebration.

The Pilgrimage will serve as the cohesive thread for the Bicentennial Communities.

Volunteers from the North American Trail Ride Conference and local riding groups will serve the wagon train as mounted escorts and outriders. These "Pony Express" riders will branch out from the State Wagons to reach communities not on the main trails.

The outriders will bring back scrolls from each Bicentennial Community signed by the citizens reaffirming their belief in the principles upon which this nation was founded.

The entertainment around the campfire will be reciprocal. School bands, local glee clubs will be invited to perform. Weather and scheduling permitting, the Wagoners will put on a musical Wagon Train Show composed specially for the Pilgrimage. The evening will conclude with campfire sing-alongs and country hoedowns.

The Wagon Train Pilgrimage provides an opportunity to direct attention of local schools to the heritage of each Bicentennial Community. Awards will be presented to school children for outstanding essays on their local forefathers who pioneered the paths through the wilderness during the founding days of our country.

The Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage will terminate on July 4, 1976 at Valley Forge Park in Pennsylvania. It will encamp there for two months during the height of the Bicentennial celebration. Millions of people are expected to visit the park during the period. They will be invited to join the wagoners for the daily and evening activities.

The North American Trail Ride Conference, whose volunteers serve as outriders for the Wagon Train, plan a coast to coast Pony Express relay timed to arrive at Valley Forge simultaneously with the arrival of the National Wagon Train.

Logistics

Each State will be supplied with: an authentic covered wagon—altered somewhat to withstand the rigors of modern road beds; two teams of horses and relief horses; harnesses, and all necessary hitching equipment; a station wagon and house trailer; and clothing for the State's wagoners.

Each State will be asked only to supply the Wagoners to represent the State during the six-month Pilgrimage. Preliminary research indicates that these crews will be readily available as volunteers from carriage, wagon, and horsemen associations or farm groups.

The State covered wagon will tour its home state from the State Capital to a junction point with the National Wagon Train. It will stop in cities, towns, and hamlets to receive the signed scrolls . . . the rededication of faith in America.

While enroute, the State wagon will inspire historic ceremonies. Schedule permitting, it could join parades, visit State Parks, shrines, fairs and civic events.

Eventually the State wagon will join Bicentennial Wagons from other States in a massive Pilgrimage to our Nation's birthplace where the signed scrolls will be enshrined.

The Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage is a program that reaches out to all the people of the Nation. One that involves everyone in a dramatic display of democracy in action. It is an event which will be remembered as the people's celebration of the Nation's 200th birthday.

An exceptional, exciting adventure.

The Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage will be one continuous exciting event.



The national Wagon Train Pilgrimage will be conducted in five separate segments, each segment funneling into the main wagon train heading Eastward. They will follow as closely as possible such well-known historic routes as the Oregon and California Trails, Gila, Mormon, Santa Fe, Old Spanish, Natchez Trace, Wilderness, Old Post and, of course, the famous wagon road, Lancaster Pike. These routes will be cleared in advance with the necessary authorities.

Each segment leaves on a different schedule after June 8, 1975 to arrive in Valley Forge by July 4, 1976 (see attached map).

Cooperation and support of statewide horsemen, wagon and carriage groups will provide maintenance and care for the wagons and the horses while on the trail.

Each of the five Wagon Train segments will be operated by a Wagon Master and two assistants, a public relations professional, an activities director, and a show cast of six.

Financing and Budget

The Bicentennial Commission of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has provided the funding to establish viability of the program and to complete its initial stages. The balance of the funds will be secured through sponsorship of business and industry and marketing and merchandising income.

American Revolution Bicentennial Administration



The Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage program will be conducted with the complete support and cooperation of the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, the Federal Bicentennial coordinating organization.

"The only truly national coverage program that we have exclusive of television media possibilities is the Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage to Pennsylvania."

7. July 4, 1976 Comments by Susan Webster, Bicentennial Committee Chair

We are going to pause now in the middle of our festivities to reflect for a few moments on the true reason for our being here today.

American, as you know, was not born in an instant—it did not burst on the scene like a gigantic firecracker. America was born of many hundreds of years of man's devotion to freedom—to political, religious, economic, and social freedom.

It took much sacrifice and heartbreak to make America. It took courage, hunger, hard work, ingenuity, and war. It took extraordinary men of vision and high intelligence to make the final decision to break away from the Mother Country and to frame their intentions for freedom and then ultimately to frame a government of the people, by the people and for the people, that would bring into being a country

such as the world had never before witnessed—a country where men and women are born free and equal, where they have the opportunity to fight against injustice, to attempt to right wrongs committed against them, where they can, if they will, be the masters of their destiny.

This afternoon at 2 o'clock, the bells will be ringing across the nation to celebrate our 200 years of unparalleled freedom. At the same moment that we are ringing here in Hanson, the Liberty Bell will be ringing in Philadelphia.

I ask you to pause during these 5 minutes to think of yourselves as a small integral part of our great nation. For as you are listening to the bells so also will millions of Americans across the country be listening to the bells. The bells are to remind us of our glorious past and to help us rededicate ourselves to a future in which we as Americans will remain free and masters of our destiny—a future where God, brotherhood, communities and families can again become a divine force-giving to our country the great strength it had 200 years ago.

We need to become again a nation of people who care—who will work hard to make for ourselves the kind of communities in which we wish to live—who will work hard to keep our country strong.

I therefore ask you, before you listen to the bells, to listen to that great document which made us free men and which, after all, is what this whole day is all about.

Reading of the Declaration of Independence.

July 4, 1976 Comments by Susan Webster, Bicentennial Committee Chair On the dedication of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill.

I Stand here tonight with mixed feelings. First of all, I am thrilled beyond words that our dream of reconstructing the Nathaniel Thomas Mill as a permanent reminder of our Nation's Bicentennial has become a reality. It is only one month short of three years since a group of us met in Sheila Carney's Library to begin planning our town's Bicentennial celebration. At that time, 1976 seemed so far in the future, and now so soon it has come and gone.

I am most happy, and I know I speak for the rest of the committee too, that most of our plans have come to successful fruition. But I can't help feeling a little sad, that it is all over. It was a lot of hard work and much frustration, but those of us on the committee had the enjoyment of making many new friendships, working with many town officials committees, and with many community volunteers. I think that we all feel that we are now truly a part of the town.

The Hanson Bicentennial's main object over all these years was primarily to foster a community spirit—to bring the people of Hanson together in meaningful community activities. That we sponsored about 20 different activities in those 3 years and that we are here this evening to dedicate a building erected primarily by volunteer labor is evidence that we were at least somewhat successful.

It is our wish that the spirit of the Bicentennial will remain here in our town for many years to come and that this building—our monument to a great nation and our community—will become an integral part of our various community activities.

To all of you who have had any part in making our 3 year celebration a success, we say "Thank you." There are many people without whose help the mill would not have been built. But so much credit has to go to Peggy Kitchenham who pulled up the project when the Bicentennial Committee was about to drop it, who got us the grant from the state, who kept the records and did all the work which enabled our volunteer workers to get the mill built.

8. Hanson Town Report, Bicentennial Committee 1976 –

Hanson Bicentennial Committee

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen
and
Citizens of the Town of Hanson:

The main object of the Hanson Bicentennial Committee over the past three years was, primarily, to foster a community spirit—to bring the people of Hanson together in meaningful community activities. That we sponsored around twenty different activities in those three years, and that we succeeded in building a replica of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill as our monument to a great Nation and Community is, we feel, evidence that we were at least somewhat successful.

Our activities began with a logo and poster contest in March of 1974. The Logo Contest was won by Tim Zak, a 6th grader. His logo subsequently appeared on the cover of the 1974 Town Report. Miss Perry's third grade class won the poster contest, and the little Town Crier was used as a poster to announce all Bicentennial activities.

The students of Mrs. Binn's and Mr. Alcombright's 5th grade classes made a calendar depicting historical events in the Town of Hanson. The Bicentennial Committee had the calendar printed and sold copies as a fund raising project.

In April a very successful land clearing was held at the Mill Site followed by the re-enactment of the Rev. Gad Hitchcock sermon in May. This was a sermon delivered by the Rev. Gad Hitchcock, first pastor of the First Congregational Church, on Election Day, May 20, 1774, in Boston before General Gage and the General Court. In it the Rev. Hitchcock expressed his displeasure with British rule and gave evidence of growing resentment among the colonists. Rev. Robert Heigham portrayed Gad Hitchcock for the occasion, and many townspeople attended dressed in colonial attire.

In October the Bicentennial Committee presented the first of three Indian Summer Galleries. These Arts and Crafts shows were held for the purpose of exposing people to, and giving them an appreciation of, many of the old crafts which are being revived, and also some new Arts and Crafts.

In January, 1975, the Bicentennial Committee, along with the Public Library, sponsored a lecture and demonstration on Quilting, given by Anne Marie Holsinger of the Plymouth County Extension Service.

February of 1975 saw a presentation of "Crafts That Matter," another Craft show, with the main emphasis on practical and homemaking Crafts and demonstrations.

"Fashions Through the Ages" was presented in May, featuring authentic clothing from the 1860's to the present from the collection of Mrs. Kenneth Keith of Bridgewater. Also included were Civil War Uniforms loaned by Richard Newey, and reproductions of Colonial Attire.

On July 5, a "Spirit of 76/75" block party was held at the Town Hall jointly sponsored by the Hanson Jaycees and Jayceettes and the Bicentennial Committee. An official Bicentennial Flag was presented to the Town for being designated a Bicentennial Community.

Indian Summer Gallery II was held in October.

In December the "Christmas in the Country" House Tour featured several of Hanson's interesting old and new homes, along with a Country Store.

The Bicentennial Costume Ball was held February 20, 1976, at Ridder's Country Club, with dancing to the music of Jerry Seeco.

In the Spring the Girl Scouts helped to collect signatures for the scrolls that were going to Philadelphia on the wagon trains—scrolls reaffirming the American citizen's faith in his Country and its ideals. The Campfire Girls aided the Bicentennial Committee by selling souvenir pewter spoons. Work was begun on the Mill.

June saw the construction of the Bicentennial Park, adjacent to the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Site. Work was supervised by Phil Huntley. Also, a Bicentennial Garden of red, white, and blue Petunias was planted in front of the Town Hall. The flowers were donated by Wyman's Nursery.

July 4th was as wonderful and exciting a weekend as we had hoped it would be. It all began Friday night with a second block party sponsored by the Jaycees and Jayceettes.

On Saturday an old fashioned Field Day was held at the Maquan and Indian Head School fields. The Lions Club sponsored an AAU sanctioned road race, which was started with a shot from the cannon of Marc Valentine of Halifax. Games, contests, and rides were held all day, with refreshments sold by the Kiwanis and the PAL Football League. The Hanson Grange sponsored a bake sale, and the 4H Club provided a petting barnyard for the children. The Recreation Commission did much to make this day a success.

Sunday, July 4, began at 6 A.M. with an Ecumenical Church Service at the Town Hall.

The afternoon's festivities began at 1:30, also at the Town Hall. A time capsule was prepared and sealed by students of the Indian Head School. It will be stored in the basement of the school, and is to be opened on America's 300th birthday.

The Declaration of Independence was read by Winston Jewitt, and at 2 o'clock the Town of Hanson joined in a nationwide ceremony of bell ringing by ringing an old fire bell which the Fire Department had refurbished for the occasion.

The parade began, and included floats from many organizations and churches in Town, the Hingham Militia, the Jerry Seeco Band; as well as a contingent of drummers from the Indian Head and Maquan Schools, the Fire Department, and various antique vehicles.

At 6:45 the Bicentennial Park was dedicated. An American flag was donated by the Hanson Girl Scouts and was raised on the site.

At 7:00 the evening's activities began with a band concert at the Town Hall, followed by an old-fashioned sing-along led by Lou Borghesani, and ended with a bonfire—or campfire if you will. Estimated attendance: 2,000!

The third Indian Summer Gallery was held in October. At about the same time work was resumed on the mill, and continued throughout the Fall, with Frank Sawyer supervising the project.

9. Hanson Town Report - 1976 Bicentennial Report & 4 Photo Pages

The last event of our Bicentennial year was the Mill dedication and carol sing held Sunday, December 19th around a campfire at the partially finished Mill. A small tree, planted in the Bicentennial Park, was lighted for the holidays.

The construction of the Nathaniel Thomas Bicentennial Mill is well underway, and should be completed this Spring. All materials for the roofing, windows, and electrical work on the building itself have already been purchased. The Mill will be equipped initially with a woodburning stove, and a shingle mill donated by the Cedar Bedding Co. of Hanson. When finished, the Mill will be open to the public on a periodic basis as a Museum and Craft center, and will be available for use by Town groups for meetings and functions.

It is the wish of the Bicentennial Committee that the spirit of the Bicentennial will remain here in our Town for many years to come, and that the Mill and park will become an integral part of our various Community activities.

To all of you who have had any part in making our three year celebration a success, we say thank you. It would be impossible to give due credit here. But all of you—and there were so very many who were willing and eager to help have done much to enrich your community.

America, as you know, was not born in an instant; it did not burst upon the scene like a gigantic firecracker. America was born of many hundreds of years of man's devotion to freedom: to political, religious, economic, and social freedom.

It took much sacrifice and heartbreak to make America. It took courage, hunger, hard work, mistakes, ingenuity, and war. It took extraordinary men of vision and high intelligence to make the final decision to break away from the Mother Country and to frame their intentions for freedom; and then, ultimately, to frame a government of the people, by the people, and for the people that would bring into being a Country such as the World had never before witnessed; a Country where men and women are born free and with equal opportunity, where they have the chance to fight against injustice, to attempt to right any wrongs committed against them; where they can, if they will, be the masters of their destiny.

We need to become, again, a Nation of people who care—who will work hard to make for ourselves the kind of communities in which we wish to live, who will work hard to keep our Country strong.

Let us hope, then, that the memories of this special birthday celebration will remain with us, as a Community and as a Nation, and that we as individuals will keep watch to see that our basic honor, decency, justice, and freedom will remain with us always.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Webster, *Chairman*
Bicentennial Committee

**Bicentennial Committee
Financial Report**

Town appropriated, Expenses:	Committee Raised	Expended
\$500.00	\$5,223.01	\$4,282.57
Mill project appropriated:	State Grant	Expended
\$7,000.00	\$3,624.10	Park: \$1,074.00 Mill: 6,329.21
	Total:	\$7,413.21

**By The Honorable Board of Selectmen
Town of Hanson
A PROCLAMATION
1976**

WHEREAS:
Admiral Albert S. Barker, U.S.N. was descended from the Barker family who settled in Hanson when the Town was still a part of the Town of Pembroke, and

WHEREAS:
Admiral Barker served his Country faithfully and with distinction in peace and in war, and

WHEREAS:
Admiral Barker was the officer selected to command the U.S.S. ENTERPRISE in the work of deep-sea soundings throughout the oceans of the World as well as in the conduct of other scientific research which contributed valuable data for hydrographical and scientific reference material, and

WHEREAS:
His loyalty to the Baptist Church remained throughout his lifetime as evidenced by his gifts and his presence whenever possible, thus indicating his continued affection for the place of his birth, and

WHEREAS:
Admiral Albert C. Read, U.S.N., nephew of Admiral Barker was also a son of the Town of Hanson, with loyalty and affection for the Town throughout his lifetime, and

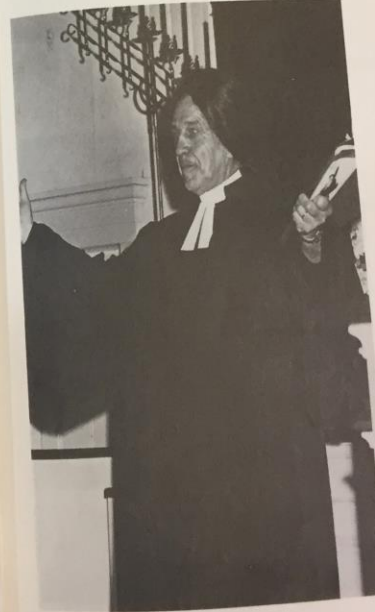
WHEREAS:
Admiral Read achieved World-wide recognition and honor by being the first man to make a successful flight across the Atlantic Ocean in the NC-4 on September 27, 1919,

THEREFORE:
I, Patricia L. Stearns, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen and Chief Executive Officer of the Town of Hanson do hereby proclaim this day, November 11, 1976, the day on which we honor our war veteran's, as the day also on which the Townspeople of Hanson do commemorate the contributions to their Country of Admiral Barker and Admiral Read, as witness thereto the Hanson Historical Society has erected a plaque bearing the words:

**IN MEMORIAM
HANSON'S ADMIRALS
ALBERT S. BARKER
ALBERT C. READ**



Gad Hitchcock Re-Enactment



Fashion Show



Indian Summer Gallery



Bicentennial Ball

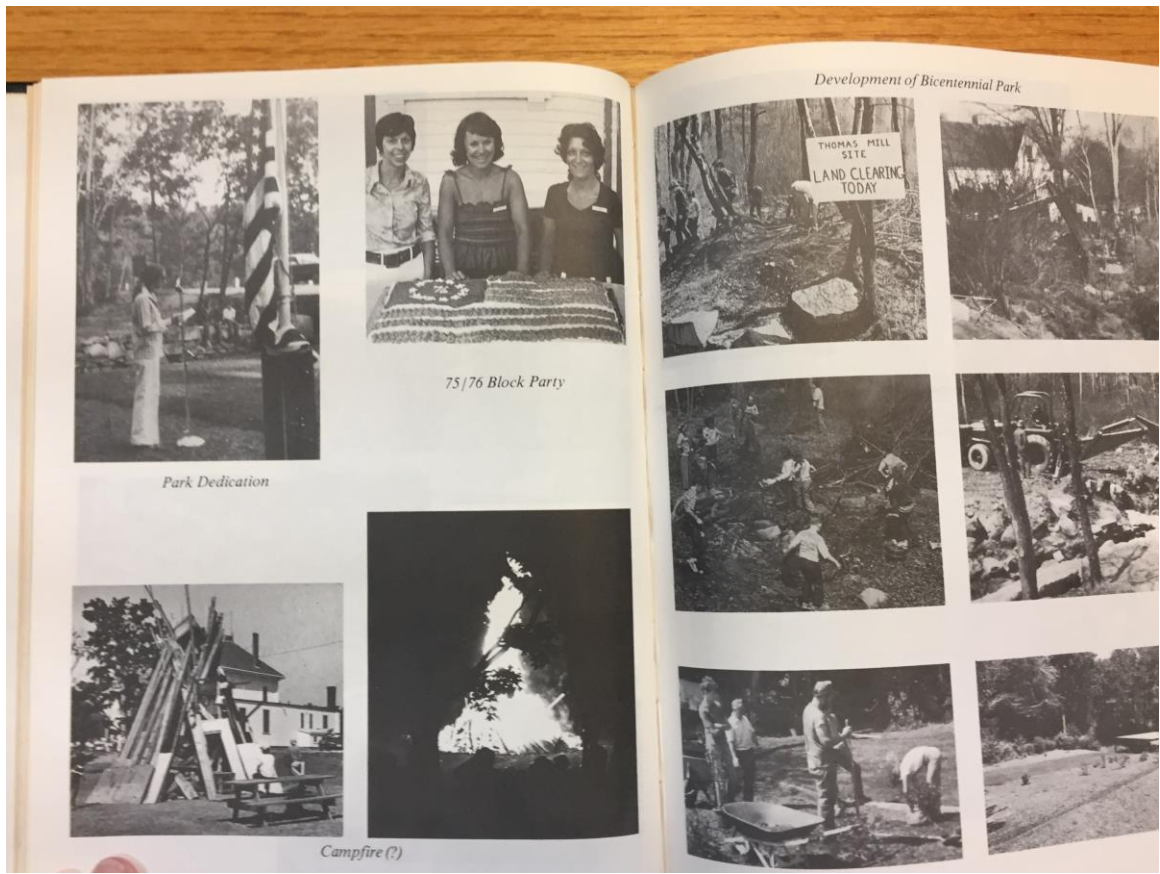


Field Day



Pre-Parade Ceremonies



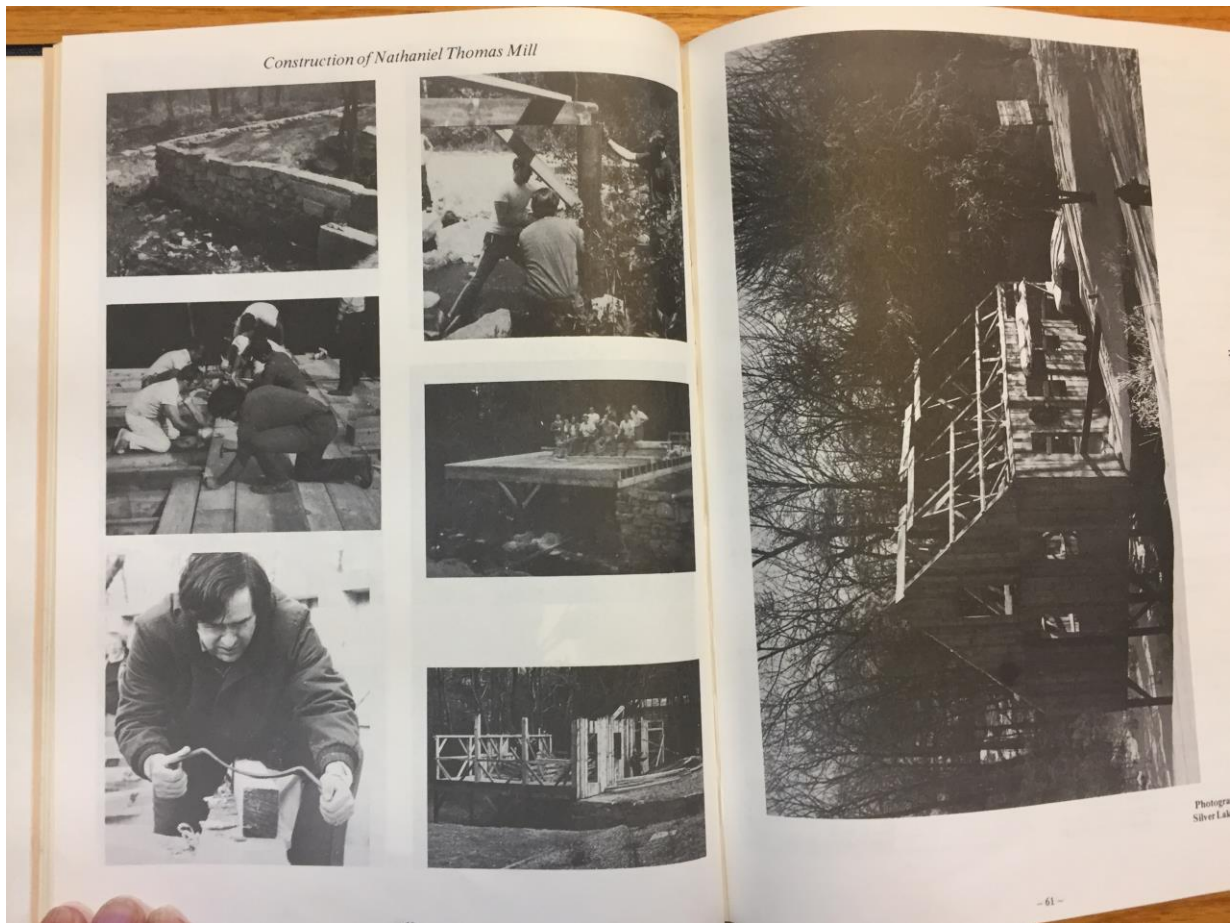


75/76 Block Party

Park Dedication

Campfire (?)

Development of Bicentennial Park



Construction of Nathaniel Thomas Mill

Photograph
Silver Lake

10. Hanson Town Report 1976 – Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee

The lower field has been seeded and playable for the year. A new and larger backstop was put up on lower field. A fence was put from left field to center.

Fencing was painted along the street side of the fields. The dugouts at the upper field were damaged by vandalism to a cost around \$400.00.

We hope next year to fence in the upper field, that should prevent horse riding and motorcycling all over the field to prevent damage to the field and to save money for the taxpayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Memorial Trustees:
Donald Botteri,
Chairman
Matthew Glynn
Edward Decouto
John Drayton
Donald Siereveld

Town Forest Committee Report

The Town Forest Committee met informally during the year to resolve minor problems. The fields were mowed and trash picked up.

Many hiking and camping groups used the forest during the past year. Regulations covering all town lands also apply to the Town Forest.

We wish to thank the various committees and departments for their cooperation during the past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Clemons, Secretary
Peter Nawazelski
Robert Robohm

Report of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen and the Citizens of the Town of Hanson

The Mill Committee was created by town meeting vote in January, 1977, to preserve, promote and develop the Nathaniel Thomas Mill and the Bicentennial Park and Garden sites. It was funded by the transfer of \$1,440.44 remaining in the Bicentennial Committee Account and earned by that Committee, and \$3,220.89 remaining in the Bicentennial Project Account for mill construction.

During the year ending June 30, 1977, the Mill Committee expended \$1,071.16 to beautify the Bicentennial Garden Site at the front of the Town Hall. The lawn was reseeded, an attractive new perennial garden was planted, and new shrubs were placed at the foundation of the building. The Committee is pleased that other town organizations hope to further the beautification work it has begun.

In addition, \$419.29 was expended on further mill construction. A balance of \$3,170.88 was returned to the town. As of June 30th, the roof, walls and windows of the building were completed and the mill was fully enclosed. During the remainder of 1977 the electrical work should be completed and in the Spring of 1978, work on the water wheel, foot bridge to the park and mill landscaping should be underway.

The Mill Committee hopes to have the mill open one day a week during the late Spring and Summer, with craft demonstrations, historic displays, art exhibits and science classes utilizing the building and grounds. Anyone interested in helping with such projects should contact the Committee.

The members of the Mill Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank some of the individuals whose volunteer efforts during the past four years of planning and construction made the mill a reality.

Planning

In Memoriam — Robert Andrews, Sr., without whose interest and efforts the project would not have materialized.

Anton Slaney	Clifford Locke
Horace Atwood	Edward Lundberg
Sal Napolitan	Alvin Reid

Construction

Frank Sawyer — whose leadership, knowledge, enthusiasm and example inspired us all and transformed a dream into a reality.

Richard Clemons	Rodney Brunsell
Alan Clemons	Walter Engstrom
Kenneth Sharland	John Edwards & sons
Kenneth Thompson	Peter Huska
Edward Savage	Kenneth Wollage
Fred Mac Donald	Edward Young
Phil Huntley	Edward Spinney
Chris Kitchenham	Norm Forgit
Peter Dalton	Karl Baresel
Jay Webster	Chester Archibald
Leo Downey	Hanson Highway Dept.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Sawyer
Mary Deckman
Peggy Kitchenham
Sue Webster
Betty Archer
The Mill Committee

Report of the Hanson Historical Commission

The Hanson Historical Commission was authorized by a majority vote of the townspeople and established through appointment of its existing members by the Selectmen's office. The following members have been appointed to serve terms of various periods.

Mr. Patrick Sherwood, Jr. - Chairman
Mr. Charles Leverone - Vice-Chairman
Mr. Richard Newey - Treasurer

11. Comments at the July 4, 1976 Dedication of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill & Park by Margaret (Peggy) Kitchenham

Read by Peggy Kitchenham, July 4, 1976 For the dedication of the Nathaniel Thomas Bicentennial Park

America was founded with dreams of a better way. It was founded through sharing -- of food, of labor, of self; through hardwork and pride in craftsmanship; through communities joining together to make their dreams come true. We need these qualities as much today as we face a complex and changing world.

The Bicentennial Committee began this park & mill project in the hopes of fostering some of this spirit of sharing and cooperation in Hanson. Our dream has come true as we watched hard work become fun and new friendships be forged. For those of us who have been involved in the work, it has been a rewarding and thoroughly enjoyable experience. We hope many of you will share with us the work yet to be done.

This particular site was selected for its links with the past-- it was the site of the first conservation measure in Plymouth County, adopted in 1702 to assure the Herring run. It was also the site of one of the first dams and sawmills in the county, built in 1695. While the site was selected for its past, the park is designed for the present and future--a permanent reminder of our heritage and an area for recreation and relaxation.

As we officially open this Hanson Bicentennial Park to the public, we would like to express thanks to all the individuals and town groups who have joined in the work.

Would Phil Huntley step out here with us? We would especially like to express our appreciation to you Phil for your work in developing plans, coordinating and directing the work on the park. Please accept this token of our appreciation.

And now, Girl Scout Representative Kerrie Robinson, who has the honor of being Outstanding Girl Scout for 1976 in a Junior Level, will make a presentation to Mrs. Susan Webster, Chairman of the Bicentennial Committee.

Read by Peggy Kitchenham, July 4, 1976 For the partial dedication of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill

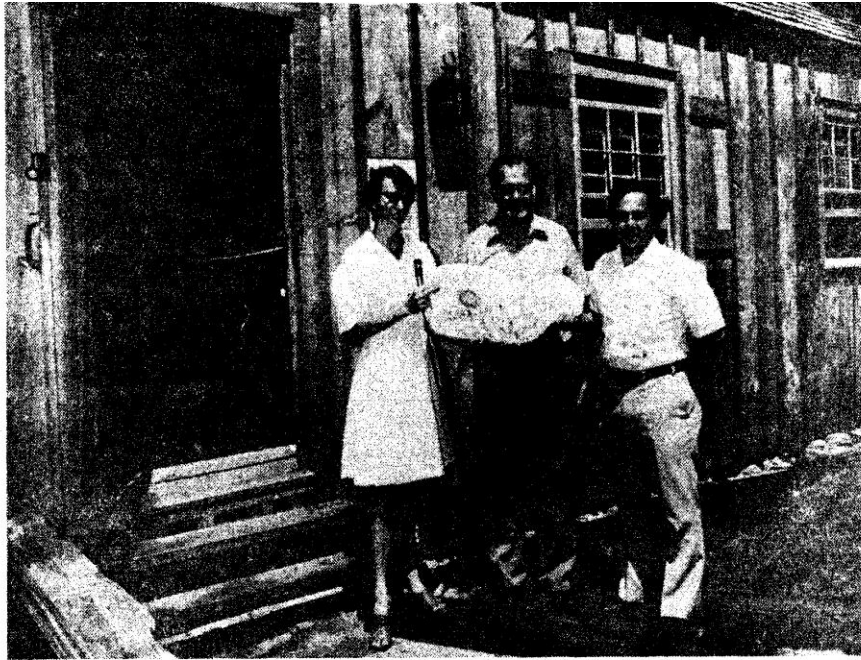
We are pleased this evening to acknowledge the efforts of many individuals and groups who have given of their time and effort to assist the Bicentennial Committee in making this weekend a success.

A separate acknowledgement ceremony will be held when the mill is completed and dedicated to thank the many groups and individuals who are working on the mill and have assisted with other Bicentennial Activities over the past two years.

There is one individual who deserves the special thanks of all of us for her commitment to the idea of a very special Bicentennial for Hanson, her belief in the possibilities of community cooperation, her example of involvement and hardwork over the past two years as Chairman of the Bicentennial Committee. For a job well done, may I say on behalf of all of us--Thank you Susan Webster.

And Now, Sue Webster and Betty Archer will present the awards and certificates for this weekend. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ So as not to unduly delay the Band Concert, The acknowledgement certificates and awards may be picked up at the end of the band concert while the camp fire is being prepared.

12. Completed Nathaniel Thomas Mill Dedication- July 3, 1978 (two years later)



MILL DEDICATION — Margaret Kirchenham, and Hanson selectmen Edmund Spinney and Anthony Aveni display wood-burned sketch of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill in Hanson during

dedication ceremonies in front of the mill yesterday. Kirchenham was chairwoman of the mill committee. (Photo by Bruce W. Kelly)

Reconstructed mill dedicated

HANSON — An idea developed in 1966 became a reality yesterday when the reconstructed Nathaniel Thomas mill was dedicated.

Funds were not available when the idea was conceived in 1966 to reconstruct a replica of the mill on the original site on Liberty Street. The location is also the site of the first dam in Plymouth County used to provide power for a waterwheel. The bicentennial committee took over the idea in 1974. Funds were voted at town meeting to match a state grant for a bicentennial project and volunteers have been working ever since to complete the construction.

The mill was dedicated to the late Robert Andrews and the late Frank Sawyer Sr. "whose examples of public service and concern were not limited to the mill project. It was for both of them one of the last and most physically concrete examples of their willingness to give of themselves." Margaret Kirchenham, mistress of ceremonies at the dedication, said. Olga Sawyer, Mr. Sawyer's widow, cut the ribbon officially opening the mill to the public.

Volunteers

Planning for the project was headed by Andrews and Sawyer was construction foreman of the many volunteers who helped bring the idea to fruition. With the exception of the masonry work for the foundation and the milling of the lumber all the labor was volunteered. The beams were hand adzed and wrought head nails were used for the wallboards. All joints and beam construction used are typical of mill building of the 17th and early 18th centuries.

A wood burned sketch of the mill, donated by Chris Kitchenhams, was presented by Mrs.

Hanson

Kitchenhams to selectmen. The plaque on which the sketch has been burned is from wood used to construct the mill.

There is still work to be done on a waterwheel, bridge to the park and a nature walk. The lumber for the waterwheel has been cut

and is aging. A park on the bank of the stream next to the mill was dedicated July 4, 1976.

Displayed in the mill are old tools and pictures of early Hanson. The mill will be open from 2 to 5 p.m. each Sunday afternoon during the summer at which time the work of different

local artists and craftsmen will be featured. Yesterday, Kitchenhams demonstrated wood burning and the Girl Scouts had a display of quilts.

Flag raising

During the dedication the American Flag and Bicentennial flag were raised by Girl Scouts Andi Galambos, Bonnie Troune, Ellen Galambos and Patricia Fitzgibbons. The invocation was given by the Rev. Robert Heigham. Mrs. Kitchenhams gave special recognition to Alsn and Richard Clemons for their effort and guidance during the past two months; Herbert Sayce and Ed Savage for help with the plumbing and wiring; Casoli Sand and Gravel and Wyman Nursery for landscaping; Jack Colclough's CETA workers; and Henry Letto, Alfonso Skipper and Jack Darin of the Hanson Highway Department, also Charlotte and Paul Vayo and Friends and the Mill committee for help with the brochures and pictures in the mill.

Following the band concert last night the recreation commission presented two performances of the play the "Devil and Daniel Webster," directed by Wesley B. Lewis.

Holiday observance includes road race

HANSON — Community observance of the holiday included a five-mile road race, field day, block dance, dedication of a bicentennial project, band concert and two performances of the Devil and Daniel Webster.

A Jaycee sponsored block dance in the town hall parking lot by the shore of the pond brought the days activities to a close.

Yesterday the Nathaniel Thomas Mill was dedicated.

July 3, 1978

Thomas Mill Wheel erected - Tribute to years of work and effort

By NANCY PAIGE EMERSON
Staff writer

HANSON — Smashing a bottle of champagne against it, Frank Sawyer, Jr. christened a 10-foot diameter oak wheel the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Wheel. Then, with a push, he spun the wheel to cheers from the crowd.

The placement of the completed water wheel on the mill brings to fruition another phase of the mill project begun during this country's bicentennial celebration. The mill rests on the site of one of Hanson's first mills, 290 years ago.

It was appropriate that Sawyer christen the wheel, because he's the one who determined its style and was the driving force behind its 2½ years of construction at his shop.

His major role in the project graced it with a special sense of continuity as it was his father, Frank Sawyer, Sr., with Robert Andrews, Sr., and Antone Slaney who began the serious planning, site work and first construction of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill in 1976. A plaque inside the mill dedicates it to the efforts of Sawyer and Andrews.

With professional help from Col-

ins Crane and Rigging, the wheel was secured in place quickly and capably by Edmund Spinney, Pater Dalton and Kenneth Sharlandas as they slogged through the river. The wheel had been accompanied from Sawyer's barn to the mill by a police cruiser, a fire truck and the Indian Head School Band.

Inside, members of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee and the Taka Wacha Campfire Group served hot mulled cider and cookies to the freezing crowd. Displayed in the mill building were photos and slides of the mill project from its inception and a series of photos and documents from the town's early history loaned by the Hanson Historical Society.

Mill 'widows'

More than 30 citizens assisted with the original clearing of the site in 1976 and in February, 1977, a Thomas Mill Town Committee was formed. Landscaping, education and social activities were led by Betty Archer, now chairman of the mill committee; Susan Webster, Margaret Kitchenham; and Mary Deckman. Sawyer's mother Olga wanted everyone to know that the

project was done only because of the dedicated help of the women on the committee and the wives who lost their husbands for days at a time to this creation.

In the last six years, in addition to the construction of the mill and the wheel, a footbridge was constructed across the river, a flagpole and shrubs have graced the adjoining park, and an easy-access ramp has been added to the front of the building.

Begun as a town project, mill ac-

tivities have been funded since 1981 by the Friends of the Mill. Maintenance and programs are provided by the Thomas Mill Committee.

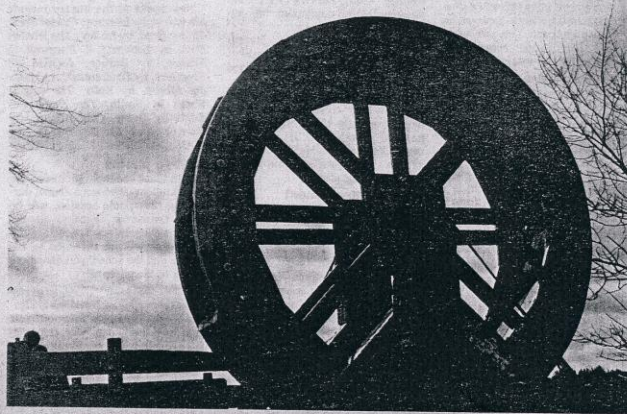
Assisting Sawyer with the wheel were Fred Miller and a crew consisting of Peter Dalton, Kenneth Sharland, Rodney Brunzell, Chris Kitchenham, Allan Clemons, Robert Fuller, Richard Clemons, Edward Young, Norman Forgit, David Clemons, James Bierwert, Walter Engstrom, Kevin Hagberg, Brian

Hagberg and Keith Hagberg. All expressed their appreciation to town officers and departments, especially water, fire and highway, for their assistance with various phases of the water wheel construction.

What next?

Committee members kept the mill open until 3 p.m., and a steady stream of visitors browsed. Sawyer spent the day there.

Asked how he felt, Sawyer replied "Happy that it's done. Now, I'm thinking of what to do next."



In transit

The new Nathaniel Thomas Mill water wheel last weekend, en route to its permanent home at the

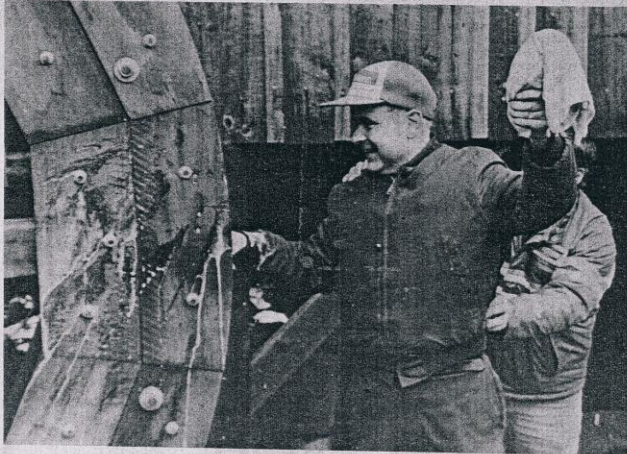
mill in Hanson. (Staff photo by Ed Santilli)



Steady...

The new Nathaniel Thomas Mill wheel is adjusted during installation at the mill in Hanson last

weekend. (Staff photo by Ed Santilli)



Christening

Frank Sawyer, acknowledged as the driving force behind the Thomas Mill water wheel's com-

pletion, christens the wheel with a bottle of champagne at Saturday's celebration. (Photo by Ed Colley)

Photos by
Ed Santilli and Ed Colley

★ Thomas Mill

Continued from page 1
and surrounding towns.

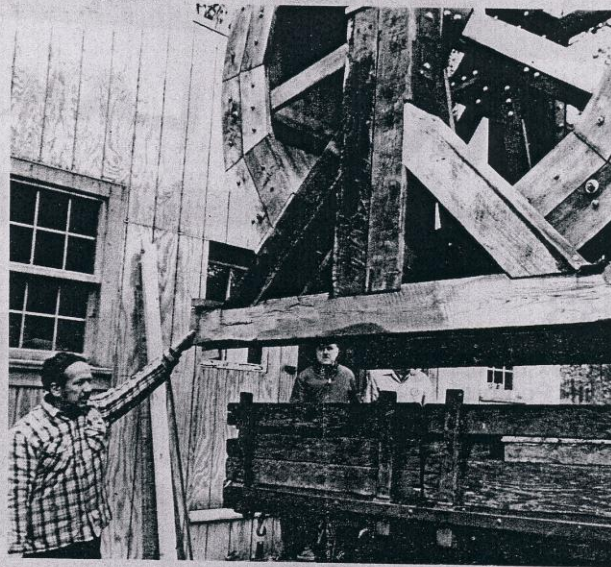
Many have given uncounted hours of work. The moving force behind the water wheel construction has been Frank Sawyer, Jr., assisted by Fred Miller. Included in their crew were: Peter Dalson, Frank Schellenger, Kenneth Sharland, Rodney Brunzell, Chris Kit-chenham, Allan Clemons, Robert

Fuller, Richard Clemons, Ed Young, Norman Forgit, David Clemons, Jim Bierwert, Walter Engstrom, Kevin Hagberg, Brian Hagberg and Keith Hagberg.

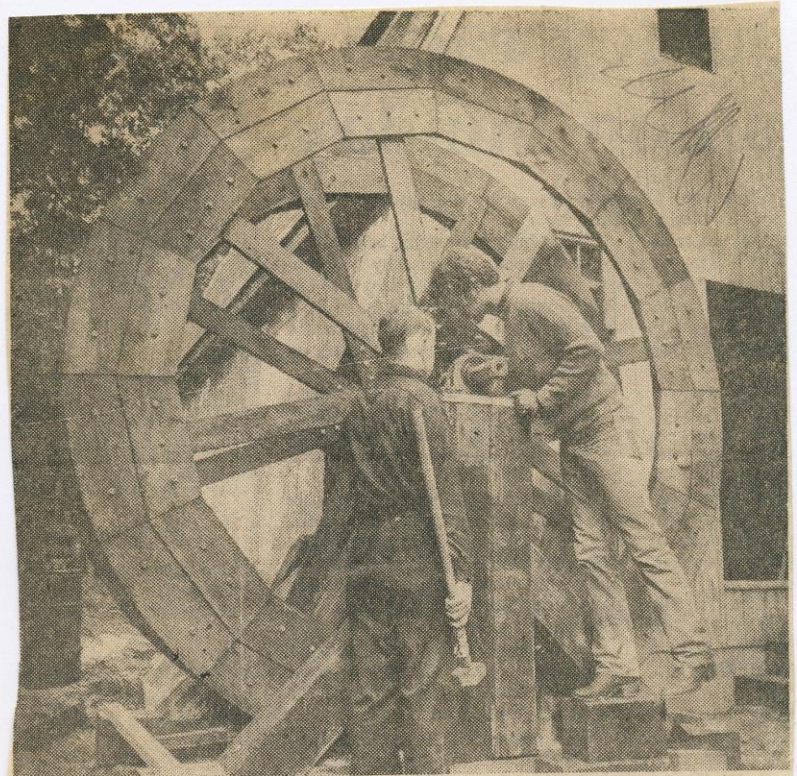
Great appreciation is also to be expressed to town officers and town departments, with special thanks to the water, fire and highway departments.



Replica of mill



Wheel is loaded on truck



Staff photo by Beбето Matthews

Wheeling

Frank Sawyer Jr. and his nephew Kevin Hagberg check the water wheel they've constructed for the Thomas Mill in Hanson.

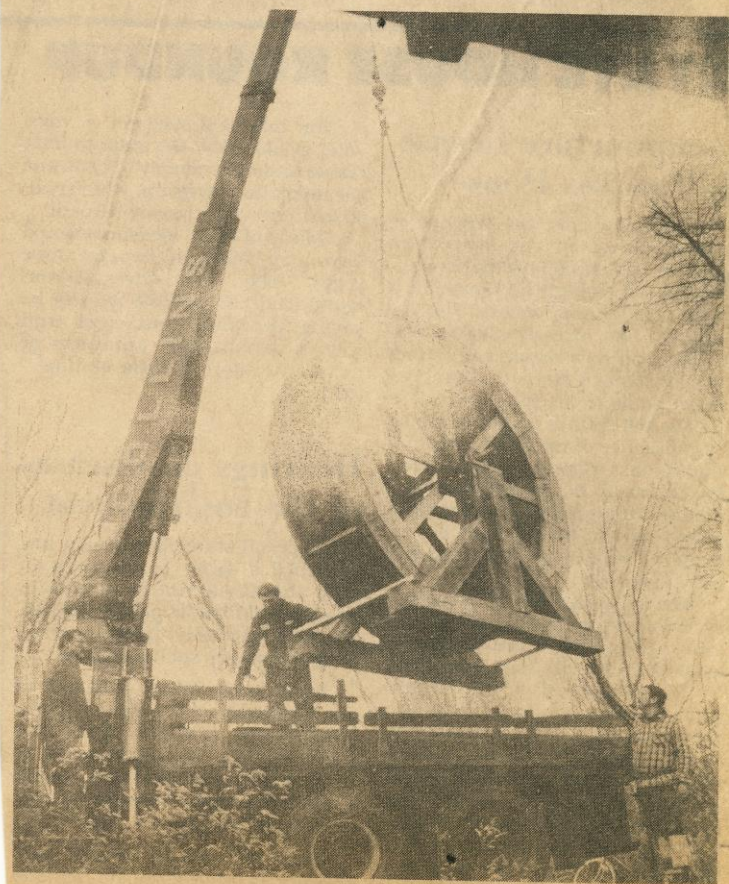
Update

SILVER LAKE NEWS

Thursday, Octo



Hanson residents watch as the water wheel is christened.



The water wheel is lifted off a flatbed truck at the mill.

14. Nathaniel Thomas Mill Brochure from 1998 showing activities

October 30 BEDTIME STORIES FOR "CHILDREN" 18 YEARS & OLDER
7:30 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.
Come and have some scary stories read to you by Wes Blauss. We will have hot & cold beverages and cake for your enjoyment. Purchase your tickets early as seating is limited. Tickets cost \$5.00 and may be purchased at the Mill during the Saturday Marketplace, the Town Hall or by calling Marcia Baker at 293-2992.

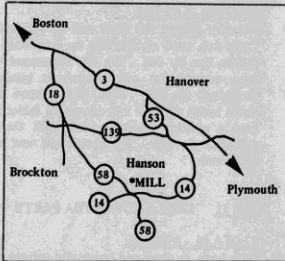
November 7 ANNUAL CRAFT FAIR
9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Featuring locally-made crafts, bake table, snack bar, etc. To rent a table, call Marcia Baker at 293-2992. Table rentals are \$5.00. Once again, featuring "Harvest Soup" from the Olde Hitching Post Restaurant and Tavern.

The Mill is available to rent for \$25.00 per day. It is a great place for birthday parties, anniversary parties, wedding showers, etc. Organizations are welcome to use the Mill for fairs, flea markets, plant sales, etc. (The Mill is equipped with running water and electric toilet)

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THOSE WHO BOUGHT A "SHINGLE" FOR OUR ROOF PROJECT. THIS YEAR WE ARE SELLING RETAINING WALL BLOCKS IN HOPES OF IMPROVING OUR FRONT ENTRANCE. DONATIONS WILL BE \$5.00 PER BLOCK OR \$3.00 FOR A CAP.

NOTE: All events are subject to change, if necessary.

Directions to the Nathaniel Thomas Mill:



"Four Season Photo Contest" entry dates:


Apr-May-June '98	July 13 - 18
July-Aug-Sept '98	Oct 12 - 17
Oct -Nov-Dec '98	Jan 18 - 23
Jan - Feb-Mar '99	Apr 8 - 15

Bring to C&J Camera, Shaws Plaza, Hanson

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Lee Baker, Chairperson
Marcia Baker 293-2992
David Clemons 293-7717
Howard Dillon 293-6412
Frank Sawyer 826-8734

20th ANNIVERSARY
NATHANIEL THOMAS MILL
Hanson, Massachusetts
Rt. 58, by the pond



"BRIDGING THE FUTURE"
Events Calendar
1998

Mill artwork by Chris Kitchenham

April 18 OPEN HOUSE "BRIDGING THE FUTURE"
10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Displays of layout, old pictures, calendar of events, sign-up sheets for "Marketplace" tables. David Clemons will be on hand to share the history of the present Mill.

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Meet our own "Nathaniel Thomas." Wish list donations may be made at this time. Free refreshments. Come and catch the vision we have for the Mill.

KICK OFF
"FOUR SEASON PHOTO CONTEST"
Sponsored by C&J Camera
Shaws Plaza, Hanson.
Details and contest rules are available at C&J Camera or at the Mill during planned activities. Photos are to be taken of the Mill from April 1998 through March 1999. One prize for each season will be awarded at the Nathaniel Thomas Mill Photo Show on April 17, 1999. Entries should be submitted seasonally to C&J Camera. (See back page for entry dates)

May 9 HANSON GARDEN CLUB "MOTHER'S DAY PLANT SALE"
9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.
(1) Come see the variety of plants on sale. What a great gift for Mother's Day!
(2) Also, the Mill is sponsoring a "Giant Pumpkin" growing contest. Kids age 14 and under can sign up to receive seedlings (will be ready for pick up in June). The contest date is September 26, 1998. Five prizes will be donated by Heidi's Hollow Farm, Hanson.

June 21 FATHER'S DAY AT THE MILL
1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Hanson's largest fire truck will be on display. Come one, come all, and join the fun. Ride the bucket, one by one. The fire department will have various fire safety handouts available throughout the day. Also, Kids picture this: Come inside the Mill and decorate a folder and have a polaroid picture taken with Dad to remember the day. The photos will cost only \$2.50 each.

July 11 DOLL SHOW & TEA PARTY
11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Step back in time and enjoy the private doll collection of Pat & Phil Randall. Featuring dolls from around the world, doll furniture, doll houses, etc. Admission is only \$1.00. A tea party & light lunch featuring cold soup, fresh fruit and finger sandwiches will be available for an additional charge, as well as tea cakes donated by Coffee Express.

August 1 OPENING DAY OF THE THOMAS MILL MARKETPLACE
10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Every Saturday from August 1 thru October 31. You will find fresh produce, baked goods, cut flowers, hand crafted items, lunch, etc. Tables are available for \$5.00. We are always looking for new vendors, especially sellers of produce. Tables are available to rent by the week or for the season. The "bake table" may be rented by an individual or by an organization. For further information, call Marcia Baker at 293-2992. Does your garden produce too much? Bring your extra veggies and fruit to market. (open pricing)

August 28 DOWN BY THE OLD MILLSTREAM
7:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.
The "South Shore Savvy Quartet" will perform. This promises to be an enjoyable evening as we listen to old-time music and enjoy a picnic supper. The cost is \$10.00 for the show and supper. Seating is limited so be sure to buy your tickets early. Tickets are available at the Mill Marketplace, at the Town Hall or by calling Marcia Baker at 293-2992. Make checks payable to "The Friends of the Mill." The evening's sponsors are The Cafe Deli, Don's Barber Shop, Myette's General Store, Carol's Beauty Nook, Head Start Hairstyling, Main Street Hair Design and L. A. Hair Design.

September 18 FAMILY PHOTO SHOOT
1:00 P.M. and on Appointment Only
Sponsored by C&J Camera, Shaws Plaza
Photos will be taken inside or outside the Mill. Bring your own props, including your pet, auto, motorcycle, costumes, grandparents, best friend, etc. This is a great opportunity to take early Christmas photos. \$9.95 buys 2 regular size 4X6 photos and 1 size 5X7 photo. For more details, call C&J Camera at 294-0202.

October 3 TAVERN NIGHT AT THE MILL
7:30 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.
Our guest will be Ms. Lynn Feingold who is a regularly featured ballad singer at Blanchard's Tavern in Avon. Lynn will be singing adult tavern songs of long ago. The \$10.00 tickets include refreshments and are available at the Mill Marketplace, the Town Hall or by calling Marcia Baker(293-2992)

15. Town Buys Nathaniel Thomas Mill Site 2009 – 2010 – 3 news Hanson Express articles

CPC to vote on Thomas Mill

*Hanson Express
Aug 20, 2009*

Applicant has answers for board's concerns over project

By MEAGHAN GLASSETT, EXPRESS STAFF
MEAGHAN@HANSONEXPRESS.COM

The Community Preservation Committee has a tough decision to make when it comes to which projects they will be funding this year, one of which is the town's possible purchase of the Nathaniel Thomas Mill.

The owner of Thomas Mill, Don Ellis, has offered to sell the property to the town for \$69,000.

However, Acting Town Administrator Merri Marini said that price seems high.

"Sixty-nine thousand dollars is a lot of money. The property was purchased eight years ago for \$31,000," Marini said.

Back when Ellis purchased the property there were concerns over a septic system going on the property, Marini said. Since then the Title V rules have changes and could possibly allow a septic system, which may be why the property is valued higher.

The town's assessment for 2010, one of three assessments

continued on page 11



COME ON DOWN: Deborah DeDominici displays products from Lemon Thyme Farm at the farmers' market at the Nathaniel Thomas Mill in Hanson. The market is open Saturdays from 9-11 a.m.

Will town purchase mill?

2 continued from page one

done on the property, came in at \$200,000. An assessment from Success Real Estate in Marshfield was between \$80,000-\$125,000. Rosen Realty assessed the property at \$119,000.

The town is currently in its 40th year of a 99-year lease of the mill, which is used for community activities. The town pays \$1 a year to lease the property.

Marini said that with the town in the middle of the 99-year lease she doesn't think it is necessary to purchase the mill.

"[The end of the lease] is quite a distance out," she said.

Though they had submitted a letter of support for the project, selectmen brought several concerns about the mill purchase to the Community Preservation Committee meeting on Aug. 5. One was about water rights, the second was about deed restrictions and the third was about the existing lease.

Bruce Young, a member of the Historical Commission and one of the project applicants, said the town needs to understand that at the end of the lease they will have nothing, including no water rights.

"[The town] does not own the mill. It does not own the property. It does not own the water rights," Young said.

By just leasing the property, Young said, the town could be evicted at anytime. Owning the property would give the town the water rights.

"The water rights go back to the days when the original mill was owned by Isaac



Selectmen presented some concerns over the Thomas Mill projects to the Community Preservation Committee at the CPC's last meeting last meeting.

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Thomas," Young said. "The water rights allow the owner the right to dam, dike, divert and otherwise use the water flowing out of Wampatuck Pond for whatever purpose they see fit. Those are the basic water rights that have continued to follow ownership of property for over 300 years."

Marini said there have been some questions over the water rights and that the current owner feels he has the water rights. She said it might be a good idea for the town to hold off on purchasing the mill until the water rights are straightened out.

In the application, project supporters proposed a deed restriction that would preserve the site as conservation land. Both the Historical Commission and the Conservation Commission are named in the application and felt it was a good idea to put a restriction on the property to protect it, Young said.

Included with the application are letters of support from the Open Space Committee, Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Hanson Conservation Commission, Hanson Historical Commission, Historical Society, Hanson Garden Club

4 and Green Hanson.

At last week's CPC meeting, the Board of Selectmen also questioned the building's historical significance because it was built in the 1970s after the former building burned down.

Young explained there have been three different mills on the property up until the last mill burned down in the 1920s. The mill was reconstructed in the 1970s with the same architectural design as the previous mill. The current mill also was constructed from the same type of hand hewn lumber as mills in the 1600s.

The lease was drawn up in 1970 in anticipation of the bicentennial in 1976. The mill was to be the main attraction,

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Young said.

"A lot of hard work and dedication went into the design. The work was done by town volunteers," he said. "The mill is a labor of love."

The mill was reconstructed historically correct, right down to the water wheel, according to Young.

"It's the only surviving example of what a mill building looked like in the town of Hanson in the late 1600s," he said.

Young said as far as the application for Community Preservation Act funding, all that is required for the historical aspect is that the local Historical Commission deems the site or location historical.

Trouble with the Mill

12/30/2010

By DAVE PALANA, EXPRESS STAFF
DAVE@HANSONEXPRESS.COM

Hanson voters approved the purchase of the Thomas Mill by overwhelming majority at the October 2009 Town Meeting, but confusion kept the Mill in the news for most of 2010.

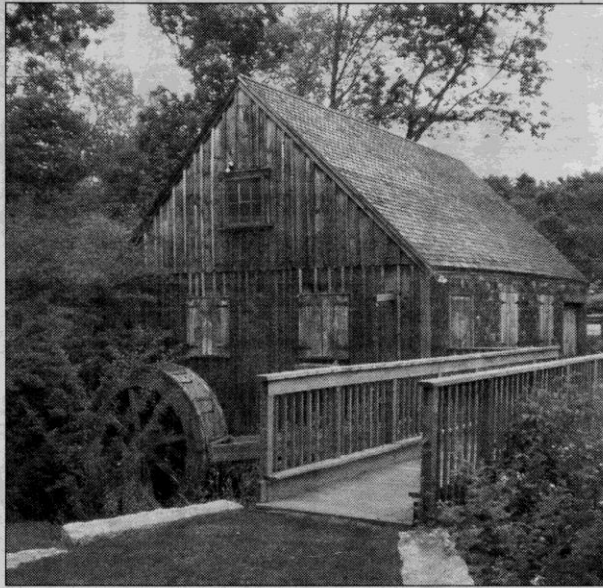
TOP STORIES OF 2010

In April, members of the conservation and historical commissions were still looking for answers for why the purchase hadn't happened.

According to the Selectmen, the deal had stalled due to confusion over water rights to portions of the Indian Head Brook, and town counsel was looking into the matter.

However, Thomas Mill owner Don Ellis and his attorney, Gene Grumont, said town counsel have been "reluctant to return any calls or e-mails that are made." Grumont, who represented Northern Cranberries during Ellis' purchase of the mill, presented the board with a package of information on the title deeds and said he hoped to meet with town.

The selectmen continued to hold hearings with the frustrated members of the commissions through the summer, with the board eventually vot-



Town voters agreed to purchase the Nathaniel Thomas Mill in 2009, but controversy over the title sent the issue back to Town Meeting last October.

ing to place the purchase of the mill back on the warrant for the October special Town Meeting after receiving a letter from town counsel Jonathan Eichman of Kopelman and Page regarding issues posed by members of the CPC.

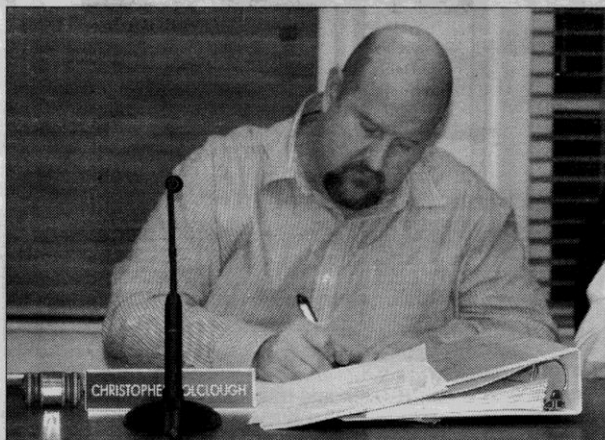
Eichman said that encumbrance on a deed is "a standard concept in property law" and said it is possible for water rights to be conveyed to another property owner. He went on to say it would be "unlike-

ly" that a second title opinion would yield different results and said the only way for the issue to be definitively settled would be in court.

The board had already unanimously voted to place the Mill purchase on the October special Town Meeting and voted unanimously to recommend the purchase. Though Town Meeting approved the purchase in 2009, the board and Read said they wanted to get another vote from Town Meeting because of the confusion over the water rights.

Town Meeting voters were still in favor of purchasing the Mill, and approved the new article to purchase the Mill at a reduced price of \$59,000 due to the surrounding question of water rights. The owner said three inquiries concluded that the water rights belong to the mill property. The property assessment value was \$166,800.

The mill officially became Town of Hanson property on Dec. 7, when the selectmen officially signed the purchase documents during their meeting.



Board of Selectmen chairman Chris Colclough signs the purchase agreement for the Thomas mill in December, finalizing the town's purchase of the property.