



Volume 23 Issue 1

January 2020

Aggie News

From the Editor

Dear fellow Aggies, in this issue of the Aggie News we again highlight the old and the new regarding our beloved Aggie. Our Buy a Brick Fundraiser for Larkin Cottage is underway. We would like to sell about 1,000 bricks for the Cottage and we only need about 800 more. We can get this done. (with your help)

We spotlight several Instructors/Alumni within this issue. We have a blacksmith, a conscientious objector, an athlete who knows how to roll, an instructor/alumna who has a daughter in the FFA, a wonderful instructor who gave 34 years to the Aggie and finally a police chief. We also feature the school's meteorologist. For the first time we have an article from a dog.

A special thanks goes out to Bill Oliver for sharing his dad's letters and photos. Also, Jim and Ronald Beard, grandsons of Carleton Stearns for supplying photos and news clippings of a true Aggie instructor who devoted his life to education. Carol Collins with the wonderful story about her grandfather, Director Mostrom.

When I took over the position of editor, Charles Main told me to slow down, you will run out of stories. I can tell you the stories just keep on coming, thanks to all those that contribute.

Don't forget that the dues page is very easy to fill out and send out to Charlie Main, Class of 1956.

If you have a story you would like to share on someone you would like to see in the spotlight, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Pete Tierney, Class of '75 email peter.tierney57@outlook.com phone 857-888-9924
Home address, 120 W. Grey Stone Street, San Tan Valley, AZ 85143

Newsletter graphic by Yetti Frenkel '78 <http://yeti.com/>

A Message from our Alumni President:

Did you know that there are two types of nostalgia, “reflective nostalgia” and “restorative nostalgia”? If I were to put Aggie Alumni into two groups, these are the groups I would put them in. With reflective nostalgia one does not have a yearning to recreate a moment from the past but simply enjoy the memory and move forward. On the other hand, restorative nostalgia is more of a desire to relive the past and going back in time, when life was good. I understand both of these “emotions”.

In my opinion both of these forms of nostalgia are good. They both bring us good memories, granted some of these memories may be a “false memory”. Regardless of the type of nostalgia we have, there are students going to the “New” Aggie today and for years to come. It would be best to celebrate them and their future accomplishments by helping them in any way we can. Being an alum should not be someone who sits around reminiscing about the past but one who is willing to help the future alum that are in school now.

As you are well aware, Larkin Cottage is being rebuilt. With this rededication to one of our alumnae the school is bridging the past with the future. Students of the school will build the new building and will get to know about her sacrifice. They will learn about many other alumni who went on to serve our country with distinction. Most importantly they will learn that each student, alumni, educator, administrator and all personnel at the school hold a key to their success. It may take several years for some students to come to this realization. When they do, they will be filled with (you guessed it) nostalgia.

I am asking each and every reader of this letter to [buy a brick](#) to ensure the students of today know we support them, today, tomorrow and well into the future. If you have the funds without breaking the bank you can always donate more money, we won't stop you. If you are shy, you can buy a brick in the name of another person, it could be a classmate or a teacher or even the lunch lady. Think of someone from the Aggie who had a major impact on your life. I bet you can think of at least one. I can even envision someone buying a brick in memory of their horse or a cat. That will be OK. Click here to buy a brick. <https://thatsmybrick.com/essexaggieaa>



**PETER J TIERNEY
PROUD ALUMNUS
CLASS OF 1975**

Seeking support in making our Alma Mater the best it can be.

Essex We Cheer Thy Name

Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School is working to rebuild the Catherine Larkin Memorial Practice Cottage. Second only to Smith Hall, Larkin Cottage is the oldest building still standing on the South Campus. Built in 1950, Larkin Cottage was used for many years as a practice cottage for the Essex Agricultural Homemaking School.

The new Larkin Cottage will serve as a multi-use facility, including a historical museum, service kitchen, office space, an exhibit hall, a learning lab and function space. This new building will hold up to 150 guests for meetings and events.

Funds to finance the Larkin Cottage rebuild will be supplied by grants as well as private and corporate sponsors. Your generous gift will allow Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School to help finance the rebuild and give a new life to Larkin Cottage.

Purpose of the expansion of the Larkin Cottage:

- ☐ Learning space for Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School students
- ☐ To be built by students
- ☐ Agricultural museum to showcase key artifacts from agricultural education on the North Shore and events sponsored by the alumni association
- ☐ Community meeting space to hold events evenings and weekends
- ☐ Expanded use of North and South Campus for student learning

Funding:

- ☐ Operational budget for building materials and construction costs
- ☐ Fundraising campaign
- ☐ Engraved brick selling
- ☐ Donations of goods and services from outside sources



Alumni in the Spotlight/Richard Wright, Class of 1969

Fire & Hammer, By Eric Stanway

“Reprinted courtesy The Keene Sentinel.”

Despite the flash and glamour of this high-tech world where computers and cell phones rule the roost, there are still a few hardy individuals who insist on doing things the old-fashioned way, holding onto the legacy of times past, when each piece was created with care, precision and love.



One of these is Richard C. Wright of Smith River Smith, who still toils away in his blacksmith shop in Troy, turning out hand-forged custom pieces and museum-quality reproductions of Colonial-era artifacts. On most days, he can be found working away at his forge, pounding out strips of metal into gorgeous one-of-a-kind pieces, a battered top hat perched perpetually atop his head.

“I made my first piece at the agricultural high school in Hathorne, Mass., way back in 1965,” he explained. “I then spent 10 years in the military, where I taught myself the machine shop trade, and pursued a career as a prototype machinist and toolmaker.

Richard Wright of Smith River Smith

“I worked for a couple of places in Woburn, Mass., until they went Chapter 11 and I had to find other venues. In all, I worked as a toolmaker for over 30 years.”

Wright then decided to rekindle his interest in blacksmithing by volunteering at various museums around New England, including Muster Field Farm Museum in Sutton and The Fort at N. 4 in Charlestown. In 2001, he achieved his long-time goal of having his own blacksmith shop, moving a historic timber frame building from Swanzey and restoring it as a working shop at his residence in Hill.

He also performs various demonstrations of traditional blacksmithing at various fairs throughout the region, including the first Fitzwilliam Fantasy Faire last fall.

“I moved to Troy in 2014, when I set up this expanded blacksmith shop,” he said. “I’ve been creating pieces for museums and other institutions steadily since 1999. I also go out and do demonstrations with a temporary forge, modeled on a pattern dating back to the 15th century, along with a set of bellows. It’s basically a wood fire in a box, scaled down to about half-size from the traditional forge.”

Wright said that most of his sales come courtesy word of mouth, although a few local businesses have also decided to support his efforts.

“Granite Roots Brewery, here in town, has decided to stock some of my bottle openers in their mission to support local artisans,” he said. “I’m also making hooks for a lady out in Indiana. “Right now, I’m producing some cressets, which people also call fire baskets. These are metal cups, mounted or suspended from a pole, containing oil, pitch or a rope steeped in rosin. They date back to medieval times, when they were used for lighting.

“They were also employed in coopering, where they were used to sweat the oak, so they could get the barrel band on. Traditionally, people would use pine knots to fuel them, though there are other alternatives.”



Wright said that blacksmithing occupies pretty much all of his time these days, as it has become a full-time occupation.

“This used to be an avocation, but, due to the overhead costs, it’s become more of a vocation,” he said. “Finding a real niche can be difficult, as it’s hard to price these pieces when so many other pieces are available from abroad. Whereas those are mass-produced, however, these are hand-crafted, and are the results of a lot of research.

“I prefer to work in the style of the 18th and early-19th centuries, on the whole. I can do modern pieces for people who don’t own a Colonial home, but this is really where I’m most comfortable.”

Wright’s life has changed markedly in the last few years with various notable events, particularly his marriage to his wife, Pat, a native of Troy, N.Y., in 2015, after the couple met at a blacksmith hammer event. He feels his destiny is on an even keel these days, but there are always new adventures just around the corner.

“You just never know where your hammer will take you,” he said.

Smith River Smith can be reached at 998-1737 or follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/smithriversmith Inquiries regarding custom orders are always welcome.

Alumni in the Spotlight / Wendell F. Oliver, Class of 1916

Reprinted with permission from the American Friends' Service Committee



Wendell F. Oliver

When World War I broke out and the U.S. instituted a draft, there was no such category as “conscientious objector” for those opposed to war. Young Friends like Wendell F. Oliver who were drafted but refused to take up arms usually were jailed, even though they argued they were willing to do their fair share of duty—if that work didn’t “simply release another man to train for fighting.”

As Wendell’s father wrote, “What we and (he also) fear is that he will be asked to take some form of non-combative service which would be equally objectionable from the Friendly point of view.... We are very solicitous that he shall be placed in some position where his principles will not be violated.”

As those young pacifists awaited court-martials, Friends worked to carve out the conscientious objection exemption—leading to the birth of the American Friends Service Committee.

In Wendell’s case, his 1918 application to serve with the Friends Reconstruction Unit (a civilian service program) was approved, and he was assigned to the Tree Distribution Project in the war-blasted countryside of France.

(Editor’s note; Wendell’s brother Theodore, class of 1917 was with the American Friends Reconstruction Unit as well.)

Wendell’s work in the devastated war areas of France was full of interest and worthwhile. At one time the sum of \$8000 was spent for the purchase of 25,000 fruit trees, which were distributed, five trees being given to each family in the Argonne section. Wendell and Henry Stabler also with the Friends Reconstruction Unit were placed in charge of this work. The project was called the Verdun Project. Before the war he was employed by the William F. Moon Nursery and Seed Company of Morrisville, Pennsylvania, with whom he planned to take up his work at the end of his service in the sales department.

(Editor’s note; you can substitute the word Friend for Quaker as a point reference. If you wish to understand more about the Quakers, please watch this video, about the 9 Core Quaker Beliefs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3H08cyXVYDw>

FROM CAMP DIX.

153rd Dep. Brigade, Co. 14, Bat. 4th, Camp Dix. Well, here we are! Got here about 10.30 yesterday morning, and finally got up to headquarters about 12.30 and had dinner. It was good and went to the spot. Just before dinner I had a chance to speak to the captain and told him my position. After dinner and vaccination and inoculation were over, we went for our kits.

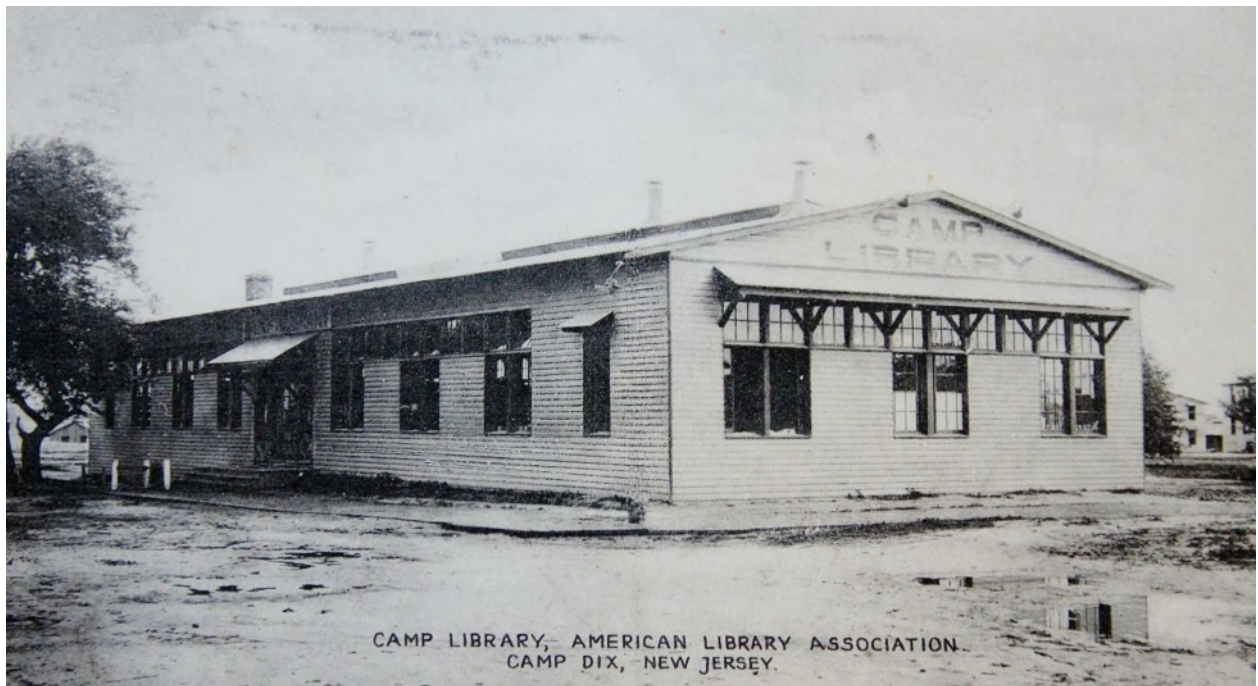
The captain spoke to me there, asking me why I was opposed to service. I told him the story. He, of course, couldn’t see it. Said I’d either obey his orders or else be subject to court martial,

and subsequent six years in prison. I showed him Secretary's Baker's ruling, but he seemed inclined to disregard it. He said he didn't know how I was going to make out, as those that wouldn't work shouldn't eat. He said other things to try to scare me, but I "batted not an eye." I told him I was afraid I would have to be a trouble to him, as I must refuse to wear a uniform or do any military service. Some other officers standing around insinuated I was a coward, and that because we "C. O.'s" all put up the same objections "it looked bad."

Finally, he ordered me escorted to orderly room in above barracks, and here I am in a 12 by 12 room with another C. O., a devout young fellow, not a Friend. We are "segregated." We can't even go out of the room without an escort. Last night we were escorted to supper after the others were all through. We got half portion, for, as we overheard, that was more than we deserved. Having no light, we retired early. Of course, we momentarily expect something to happen, but suspense—why, I am an expert by this time when it comes to suspense!

It would be much easier to go with the crowd. How I would enjoy the zip of the training and like its physical beauties. I don't know who would rather stay pent up in a 12 by 12 room than get out and exercise! But I'll stay here for some time before I'll be a part of the military machine. But give me a chance to do civilian work and see how long I'd stay here.

Whatever may befall us we know is for the best. Think of us taking things philosophically,



trusting for the best, and looking for that brighter day when we can again breathe the air of freedom and perform a useful duty for humanity. Thank thee for thy interest. Just had a nice visit from an officer who happened by. He seemed sympathetic and pleasing to talk to.

Very sincerely,

Wendell Oliver. Tenth Month 22, 1917.

American Friends Service Committee, 20 S. 12th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Date: January 7, 1919

I Wendell F. Oliver of 69 High Rock Street, Lynn, Massachusetts in undertaking service with the American Friends Reconstruction Unit of the American Red Cross hereby agree, as follows;

1. (a) To serve with the Unit for the duration of the war, reserving, however, the right to terminate my service at the expiration of one year from the date I shall leave the United States, or at the expiration of any period of three months thereafter, by giving to the Director of the Unit notice in writing of my intention so to do at least three weeks prior to the date of such termination, provided however, that the director of the Unit and American Friends Service Committee, or either of them, shall have power at any time without previous notice to terminate my service with the Unit if in his or their judgment such termination seems advisable.

2. During my service in the Unit:

- a) to obey all rules, regulations and orders issued by the Director of the Unit or by the American Friends Service Committee, or by any person deputed by him or them, provided, however, that I shall not be obliged. to violate my conscience;
- b) to perform any work required of me diligently and to the best of my ability and to be the best loyal times to the best interests of the Unit;
- c) not to correspond directly or indirectly with any newspaper, magazine, periodical or press association without written permission from the Director;
- d) to comply strictly with all censorship regulations of the United States.

3. To return to the Director of the Unit or to the American Friends Service Committee at the termination of service, or at any other time upon his or their demand, all papers, documents, insignia, etc., given to me as a member of the Unit.

4. Upon the termination of my service with the Unit to return forthwith to the United States unless written permission is given to me by tile Director to remain in France.

5. In the event of my death or injury to me or my property by accident or otherwise, neither I nor any other person shall make any claim against the American Friends Reconstruction Unit, or against the American Red Cross, or against the American Friends Service Committee therefor.

I understand and agreed

- a) that my service in the Unit is voluntary and unpaid unless otherwise agreed in writing by the American Friends Service Committee;
- b) that the American Friends Service Committee will provide me during the term of my service in the Unit with my necessary equipment, food, lodging and travelling expenses, provided, however, that no such provision shall be made while I am on leave of absence from the Unit;

July 24th, 1919

Selections from the Letters of W. Oliver.
A Visit to Bethelaincourt.

Next day I took our Chesterman, the agricultural investigator, for a run up north toward Verdun. First we went to Brabant where we have an équipe (Group of people gathered together to work together) and where we saw two 2-horse teams at work preparing for oats an enormous field and then on over the hills to Dombasle, where the building department is at work getting quarters livable for the returning refugees and where we since have installed a tractor and where work has started in real earnest. Thence we took a spin over to Bethelaincourt, winding up over a hill which appears on the map to be about 290 metres high, or nearly 1200 feet. From the summit, in all



Dombasle, all hitched up for the field.

directions lay spread out miles and miles of beautiful country, rolling fields and woodlands, and it seemed hard to believe that in that panorama had taken place within four years the greatest suffering of mankind in history. Along the road were all kinds of war materials and the fields were furrowed with the wheel-tracks of many wagons. Amid one bit of wreckage, the cold raw wind tossing her hair and whistling through her scanty clothing, stood a little girl and we wondered what errand had brought her there, so far from habitable quarters. Down the north

side of the hill we rolled and into the village of Bethelaincourt, and through it to a farm where the American troops were quartered. There we salvaged a big can of tractor oil and while "Chesty" was interviewing the refugees who had returned I searched around and found a wicked-looking trench knife marked U. S. and a German spiked helmet like you have all doubtless seen in pictures. Back to Bethelaincourt we went and found the mayor, who was about the only person yet returned. While "Chesty " was talking with him I strolled about. There was the church, which sat on a knoll a matter of ten feet higher than the road with a wall holding up the embankment about it. The church yard was all undermined with dug-outs right under the old graves, and at one end was quite a strong fortress. I went into one of the dug-outs which was quite a spacious room with benches about for folks to sit on during raids. Back of the church is a graveyard and many of the tombstones were tipped over and shattered and nicked by shrapnel. I walked up the village street and into some of the houses that were in sufficiently good condition to house troops and found things just as the soldiers had left them when they moved out. It is the saddest village I have been in. Soldiers gone, and no civilians back. Utter desolation. If I had had my home, there previous to the war I could have sat down and cried. Almost I could have anyway, for the horror of it all was appalling. I salvaged a perfectly good Ford tire to keep expenses down and we rolled out of the deserted village, over the hill and to our Dombasle équipe, where we were requisitioned for an hour afterwards to do some hauling for them, then we bumped off, over the most terrible bit of road I ever hope to meet.

Alumni in the Spotlight
Mishaps of a Mission Motorcyclist, by Wendell Oliver, Class of 1916

Monday, October 13, 1919

The road of the Argonne has suffered from the war as have the villages and towns they connect. From shell and heavy motor transport they are pitted and scarred. Such routes as these try the patience of motorcyclists, and the following week's experience is not more pertinent to the writer, perhaps, than to others. All drivers figure an hour in the garage to one on the road.

Of all the thing that induce old age, a motorcycle takes the lead. are a safer than most people think, because when one is in the garage there isn't much that can happen. Since I got my machine, I haven't found out whether I'm an investigator of certain lacking elements in French landscape primarily and a student of motor mechanics secondarily or the other way about. Anyway, I divide my time between the two quite evenly.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsytkj6HOBw>

To begin with, I just had to have a motorcycle to carry on my work. So, I got one with great halation road off one fine day and all was well. The next day things were lovely too, except that on the way back from Chalon the chain came off. Inconvenience number one, not serious, but merely at the head of the list of inconveniences to follow. The gasoline tank took occasion to go dry too, a little later, come to think of it, but I managed to coast to within 200 feet of the nearest oasis. I found the spring about dry and purchased the last of the stock available in the town, so they said.

The real trouble started this week. I forgot to tell you the number of the machine is thirteen, which if in its self-sufficient explanation. Anyway, later that day I had a flat tire which enabled me to get a little much needed exercise in the shape of a hasty walk home beside the beast, which displayed much of the anxiety to get home usually attributed to a hungry horse. Now that the hind is all fixed up, all will be smooth sailing, with no more troubles.

So, on the second day I devoted the morning and part of the afternoon to the things' hind foot, necessitation the removal of the entire rear works. The critter needed a new sprocket and chain and so I took advantage of the opportunity to replace the worn ones with a new outfit. Not being a mechanical genius, I did it partly with my mouth, asking questions. Anyway, it finally got



Wendell F. Oliver on his motorcycle.

done, with the advice and consent of the council, as it were. Then came a speedy trip to Chatel, where I arrived at the Aggie meeting in time to hear the closing remarks.



Backyard ruins, Verdun, Spring 1919

Bright and early the next day I set out for Verdun and down the Meuse if I hadn't investigated a peculiar squeak, I'd have enjoyed the day a whole lot better. As it was, did investigate and found to my chagrin that one side of the front fork was broken just below the handle bars. It wasn't a danger of collapse so long as the other side held, so I proceeded with all caution to Varennes and anchored for the night. On the fourth day, the morning found me again in the Grange garage seeking more advice and counsel.

Instead of viewing the landscape and interviewing the village fathers of the Verdun hamlets, therefore, I spent the day till three p.m. with a comrade

struggling over the particulars pertaining to putting on the new fork of the animal. In midafternoon I set out again, thinking that at last I should labor on my supposedly regular job unmolested by side issues. It was a beautiful moonlight evening that commenced at 5 p.m., thanks or otherwise to the return of the sun time, and so I made up a little for lost time by canvassing till a little after 8 O'clock. Made it to Chatel safely, but noticed that something seemed to be wrong with the gears. (Editor's note; Canvassing was done with the mayor of the town to access the needs of the families concerning livestock and other agricultural needs.)

On the fifth morning I labored in vain to find the reason why I couldn't release the clutch enough to go into low gear, and finally went to Varennes on the machine, which would "marche bien" (works well) if the gears were shifted while it was in motion. There is a slight amount of vivisection revealed which revealed the mystery. A refractory nut had worked loose, that was all. So that day was halved again, but I got a good road trip into Savigny and St. Morel to see some workers on the French Red Cross in the afternoon, so it wasn't so bad after all.

The next morning, I got up with the feeling that surely all was now well and that a full day lay ahead. Full day was right. Now with a motorcycle it is usually he who kicks the hardest that gets what he wants quickest, namely; started. So, I no sooner arrived at the machine and had finished feeding it than I started to kick, and I kicked it so hard that I broke the pedal off the kick starter. Well, that clamed my ruffled spirits considerably. I couldn't fix it, so I decided to let gravitation take the place of the kick starter. Artificial gravitation was provided for the get-away by some husky Aggie lads, as the natural variety was lacking on the spot, and the motor ran merrily. Then it was found necessary to inflate the rear tire a little, so rather than strain the huskies again I decided to do the pumping on the next hill, where, after the operation was completed, I could coast down and start the motor. I reached the hill, stopped the motor, get the pump, attached it to the

valve, and lo, and alas, the trusty pump that worked so nobly the last time I used it, was broken irreparably. That calmed me considerably more. Back to Chatel after a pump that would work went I and got one and recommenced.

Now the main idea in the gravitation starter business is to go over roads where there is no danger of stalling the engine. Consequently, I hadn't proceeded over twenty minutes up through the Argonne when I ran into the worst bit of road for miles around. First it was deep and slimy mud that all but stalled me once, and afterwards made it necessary to supplement the motor by pushing the machine out of the worst places. Then it was ruts, so deep that the cross bars of the sidecar dragged on the ground. Somehow, I got through without losing the motor, which would have meant a wait until somebody came along, and that doesn't happen often in the Argonne Woods.

The next bit of excitement came when the handlebar caught inside my raincoat on a sharp turn in the road, and if the buckles hadn't given way just when they did, I would have landed in the ditch, somewhat mixed up.

True to a premonition that I would get a puncture on some level stretch or road, I did, a little later, when I ran a 3-inch nail in the rear tire, necessitating two patches. All the time during this process I had to keep the motor putting away lest I spend an uncomfortably long time on the road after repairs were complete. Of course, I was in a hurry, especially in view of an approaching shower. Accordingly, when I held a patch in my hand to let the "essence" dry, put on the clean patch, a gust of wind blew it off and it landed butter-side down in the road, and gathered quite a collection of real estate. This incident pacified me greatly and after a repetition of the same performance a minute or two later with another patch, I was completely calmed down. Got back to the Grange anyhow without further incident.

Yesterday, I thought I would fix the kicker, but after getting a whole lot of nuts off, and finding what a job it was, thought better of it and decided that I had best not spend all day on that job, but do a bit of much needed canvassing instead and fix it later. So, I went canvassing, got caught in a cold, cold sleet storm, but made the rounds, came in with a broken side car spring and a loose chain somewhere that made a powerful racket. So tomorrow I have another day with my major course of motor mechanics, and after tomorrow surely everything will run alright, and I'll have no more trouble.



Wendell F. Oliver, taking a break.

Mission Horticulturists to Restore Ruined Orchards. November 13, 1919
by Wendell French Oliver

Fruit trees for the "regions *dévasté*,"—Should we accept the offer of the Tree Club of America and undertake the project of getting together \$8000 worth of stock and distributing it in the damaged villages? This question was raised in the monthly Agricultural Meeting, held at Chatel Chehery, in the Ardennes on Ninth Month 2nd. Should we? There was no doubt as to the sense of the meeting. Scarce was any proposition met with more enthusiasm. Appointments were made, and the Horticultural Branch of the Mission de la *Société des Amis* came into being, its personelle Henry Stabler, of Sandy Springs, Md., and the writer, both previously in "active service," horticulturally speaking.

It was agreed that no time was to be lost in the commencement of the work. That very afternoon the wheels were put in motion and plans were being made. The writer found his co-workers superintending the sawing of the Grange-le-Comte Winter supply of fuel, when we arrived at headquarters. He was anxious to be under way. We must start at once.

The relief folks were having their bi-monthly meeting at Grange next day and some of the ladies from far away had already arrived. I happened into the Aggie office just as two ladies from near Rheims were pleading their villages' need of trees, meanwhile innocent of the plans in progress, to the Aggie chef. "Oh, we are so glad,"—this on learning of the scheme. The news soon spread, and as it spread the demand for trees grew. This lady's village lost its trees for fire-wood. This lady's village lost its trees by shells; this one's by gas and so on. The "Tree Club of America," what a fine institution.

At Grand Pre there is a fruit grower. We must consult him as to varieties and as to the most likely sources of supply. Next morning, we did, and found him most anxious to be of aid. With the help of a catalogue he made up a comprehensive list of varieties adapted to the region.

Apparently, from testing the fruits of existing trees little care has been taken in the past in the choice of varieties, and cider is about all most of the fruit is good for. Being somewhat temperately inclined ourselves, and for other reasons, we hope to introduce into the district apples that will please the eye and tempt the taste in their natural state. In other words, we are going to give the apple a reputation in the Meuse, Argonne.

At the "*Syndicat Central des Agriculteurs de France*," a fine old man with long white hair was delighted to help us in our quest of nurseries, and supplied us with the names of three leading concerns whom he could especially recommend. Two were just outside of Paris, below the *Porte d'Orléans* and one was at the city of Orleans. The next morning, once we had cycled through the environs of Paris into the comparatively open country, we found ourselves in the midst of nursery plantations. *Pépinières* —that's the French word for nurseries —surrounded us, and we were confused by the number so that we hardly knew which to visit first. It was decided to merely casually inspect the many small places we passed en route to Bourg-la-Reine, where our first scheduled stop was to be made.

Our ride through this nursery country thus took us past block after block of fruit trees of various shapes and sizes, as well as past masses of ornamental material, for the nursery business about Paris mostly caters to the high-class city trade. Unlike our home nurseries, the nurseries of France are all chopped up. Here a block of an acre or two and there another block, and between the blocks, the small plantations of perhaps a half dozen other nursery men. That accounts for the difference in cultivation of blocks side by side. One nursery has suffered more from the war than another.



Entrée du Parc de Sceaux. Bourg-la-Reine

At Bourg-la-Reine we made our first call. We were given very kind attention and shown about freely, seeing very much that was interesting. I prefer, however, to omit details, and take you directly to Chatenay, where we arrived soon after completing the Bourge inspection. It was here that we saw a really wonderful French nursery, such as one reads about back home.

The approach to the nursery was made through a winding, narrow road, the curves of which were utilized in the production of pretty landscape effects, with big shade trees in abundance. Through a gate, and

we were in the midst of an evergreen park that I could not possibly describe to you. Evergreens of the most delicate shades of color and of graceful shapes—firs, cedars, cypress, spruces—the rarest of the rare, planted as specimens and in groups, and all blending to harmony. Some were allowed to follow their natural tendencies, others were trimmed to shape. One, a yew, presented itself as a Japanese pagoda, perfect in every exterior detail.

Some of the most striking specimens were the giant cedars of Lebanon and Mt. Atlas Silver Cedars that punctuated the sky-line, and one of the most curious, a weeping variety of the latter which though its height was nowhere over seven or eight feet, sent out its several graceful branches twenty feet from the centre stem. At the office, overlooking this wonderful garden, we were given an English-speaking guide, who took us first to the model fruit garden, a display of trained trees arranged artistically, and intended as an example for the wealthy clientele. Here inside four walls, on which were trained varieties of fruit according to their adaptability to the exposure, were literally hundreds of varieties of common fruits. There were cordons, and pyramids, and all the rest, and on them fruit in abundance, and such fruit! Some of the more tender sorts were protected by glass shields.

The Fruit Nursery was reached after a pleasant three-kilometer ride, part of the way along a boulevard shaded by two double rows of Carolina Poplars. In peace times it contained nearly 100 acres of fruit trees, but just now part of it is given over to the raising of food crops, However, even now it is a sight to behold. The centre drive divides the long rows of trees which stretch for 300 metres on either side. It was inspiring to behold these long rows of scions, cordons, pyramids and the like, but the tige trees were the most impressive. In rows straight as an arrow each tree as perfect as if cast in a die, they stood as testimony that the reputation of French Horticulteurs is not without foundation.

Our search for trees has taken us to Orleans, Tours and Angers. We have met a number of the leading nurserymen of France and have inspected the veritable parks that comprise their nurseries. We have been impressed with the exceedingly fine type of men that comprise the nursery

personelle, men that inspire one's confidence. Our sympathies have gone out strongly toward them because of their heavy war losses. One fine old man told me of the fine lot of shade trees that he had developed—big trees for quick effects—the result of years of care, which he had given to the hospital nearby for firewood. And now, one of their big pre-war markets, the German, is gone, and on top of it all, as the most unkindest cut of all, America has barred their product. They show us big quantities of fine plants raised expressly for our market and inquire as to why it cannot enter the country. They feel the action of the government to be more because of a desire to keep the money at home, and to make the nursery business of America independent than because of the fear of the importation of insects and diseases which they claim fumigation safeguards against.

As I finish this article in Paris, I am glad to be able to report that we have found sufficient stock to assure the carrying through of the project, that prices are lower than anticipated, and that, at the present exchange rate, we look forward this coming week of placing orders for upwards of 15,000 trees, apples primarily, but also pears, cherries, and plums, and with the five per cent, discount allowed for prompt payment to add to this a quantity of filberts, which are very prolific here and which can be reasonably purchased. In Orleans, Tours and Angers, as well as near Paris, we were impressed with the progress that has been made in the rejuvenation of a business that had been practically neglected for five years. As one man told me, "This Spring we had everything to do." While naturally everything has not yet been done, still enough has been accomplished to give some idea of the wonderful methods of plant culture that existed prior to the war.



Orchard destroyed by shell and gas.

Editor's note;

Bill Oliver and Miriam Swartz, two of Wendell's children as well as the American Friends' Service Committee were the main sources of this article(s) about Wendell and his work in France during The Great War. We only printed 10 pages here. I am sincerely considering writing a full book about Wendell French Oliver.

When Wendell wrote about his trip to Germany in November 1919 he stated; "If we are truly pacifists, if we really want to see war swept from the face of the earth, I believe we should fight, and we should fight, not the unfortunate victims of a system that precipitates war, but the very system itself. Not through force of arms, but by that more successful and Christian weapon, education."

John F. Kennedy has been quoted as saying; "“War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today.”"

Director Smith Resigns, August 1940



Fred A. Smith, our Director and friend, will terminate his active service at the School on August 31. During the twenty-seven years he has contributed much to the agriculture of Essex County through what he has called—"new venture in education." Knowing- agriculture from having lived it, Mr. Smith inculcated in those about him a deep respect for farming and rural life.

In way of biography, Mr. Smith was born in Lynn, Mass., June 6, 1871. His father Henry H. and mother Emma (Keene) Smith were natives of Maine. During the Civil War his father served in the 1st Maine Calvary and later in the Navy.

Mr. Smith graduated from the Lynn Classical High school in 1889 and from Massachusetts Agricultural College in 1893. After graduation he engaged in the vegetable gardening and florist business in Lynn with his father. He was Superintendent of Parks in Hopedale, Mass., and later was associated with Manning Brothers in developing the Lynn Park System. From 1905-13 he was Superintendent of the Rice Estate in Ipswich. His work in developing this property known as "Turner Hill Farm" soon placed him among the leading farmers of the County.

In 1913 when Essex County Agricultural School was opened Governor Foss appointed Mr. Smith a member of the Board of Trustees. In May 1913 he was chosen to become Director of the School. The position the School holds today as the center of agricultural and homemaking interests in Essex County is a tribute to the one who has guided its course through the years.

Mr. Smith has been active in civic and agricultural organization. He is an honorary member of the Ipswich. Grange, a member of Chebacco Pomona Grange, Danvers Rotary, Essex Agricultural Society and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Mr. and Mrs. Smith (Frances Mary Knowland) were married on July 10, 1899. They have three children: Helen Frances, -wife of Robert M. Neal, Instructor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin; Mildred Elsie, -wife of William B. Norton, Instructor at Boston University, resides in Wellesley Hills; and Harold Knowland, a graduate of Clark University, who resides with his parents on Maple Street, Danvers.

We bespeak the wishes not only of the Staff here at Essex Aggie but of Director Smith's many friends herein Essex County, for improved health, and many years of leisure. (by George E. Gifford)

A note from Director Smith dated May 1924

The problem of "what shall I do" does not bother the boys and girls in the vocational schools. They are always doing worthwhile things and at the same time they are getting an education. After a few years of school, they easily find employment in the work for which they have been trained.

Every boy and girl of fourteen should consider the part they are to play in the work of the world. The vocation which seems to make a strong appeal should be carefully studied. What does it offer? Its advantages and disadvantages should be weighed carefully. After the decision has been made, see it through. Do not waver; do not quit. Success comes to the one who perseveres.

If you are interested in any branch of agriculture or homemaking, we would be glad to talk with you. This school offers a four-year course in agriculture and a three-year course in homemaking. There is a special course in homemaking covering a period of one year for high school graduates. A three-year course in agriculture is offered to more advanced students. Tuition is free to residents of Essex County. Now is the time to apply for admission.

Faculty/Director in the Spotlight/Harold A. Mostrom

By Carol Mostrom Collins

Harold Augustus Mostrom was the director of Essex County Agricultural Institute ("Essex Aggie") from August 26th, 1940 to 1958 and I am proud to say he was my grandfather.

Harold graduated from Massachusetts College of Agriculture in 1916 and worked for four or five years as an Agriculture Extension Agent in New Hampshire and possibly also Vermont until he contracted tuberculosis. Because he had a growing family, he took a job at Essex Aggie as a science teacher and education manager. This was in 1922.

My grandfather was the Aggie's meteorologist. He kept records of the day to day weather at the school. Once in a while I would accompany him to the weather station. He emptied the rain gauge and used the sling psychrometer with the wet and dry bulb to measure air temperature and dew point from which the humidity could be calculated (or looked up in a table).



Harold A. Mostrom



Sling Psychrometer

My grandfather enjoyed children and also teaching, not only in the school setting. He was a diligent gardener, focused on vegetables which my grandmother preserved. My grandmother Mary was the flower gardener, but I'm sure my grandfather helped her with her garden.

I was the oldest of his grandchildren and perhaps the only one old enough to benefit from his tutelage. I remember spending a week with my grandparents without any of my siblings during which time he taught me how to prune tomatoes, (I found a sucker that he'd missed, which made me feel good!), taught me how to mow the lawn to get a very nice even result, and how to catch a fly ball. He also taught me how to fish and I probably got my love of golf from him.

After my family moved to Indiana, my grandparents drove their new car out to see us and then brought my two sisters and myself back to Danvers. My father, mother and little brother followed when Dad took his vacation. During the trip East, my grandfather handed me the maps and taught me how to follow along on the map and also to navigate. Also, along the route he would point out the various crops and grains growing along the highway.

My grandmother, Mary Adelaide nee Sanctuary, was an active member of the Women's Axillary and yes, she did win many ribbons for her flowers.

In the summer of 1958, my grandfather's mandatory chest x-ray showed something on his lungs. Since he had previously had tuberculosis, the doctor assumed that was what he had and placed him in the tuberculosis sanatorium. When, after three months, he hadn't gotten better, the doctor finally realized that he had lung cancer, at which point it was too late for successful treatment. My grandfather was never a smoker.

My grandfather was born on August 6th, 1895 and died on December 20th, 1958 at the age of 63.

School Notes, April 28th, 1952

Two CARE gifts of hand tools and a "bullock" plow were sent to India by the Future Farmers of Essex County Agricultural School in Massachusetts. The boys were amply rewarded when the recipient of the hand tool package sent them the following letter:

THE "good shepherd" agricultural mission Director: Rev. Maxton D. Strong Tanakpur, U. P., India

Essex Chapter of the FFA
Essex County Agricultural School
Hathorne, Mass., U.S.A.

Dear Friends:

We are very happy to have received through CARE, New Delhi, a package of hand tools donated by you. I am sure you will be glad to learn how they have been disposed of.

These tools have been taken back 100 miles into the Himalayas to the end of the motor road in our truck. From there they have to be transported further on a narrow mountain trail by coolie or pack horse to the town of Dharchula. There they will be distributed among a group of Indian Christians by a missionary who works with them. These Christians are very poor and oppressed. They do a little farming for themselves but mostly hire out as farm laborers. The custom is that they must furnish their own implements when working for others, and the merchants who rent them the tools charge an outrageous rental. Therefore, by having their own tools, and superior tools at that, they should be in a position to make more money and to be more in demand because they do better work. We know they are very grateful to their fellow Christians across the sea who have made this possible.

We, ourselves, are "missionary farmers," coming from farm homes in Oklahoma and Iowa. My wife belonged to the 4-H Club there, and I was a Future Farmer in Oklahoma.

Here at the base of the Himalaya mountains in northern India, right on the border of restless Nepal, is a vast area of heretofore mostly uncultivated land. The Government has granted us 160 acres, and we have begun a training farm for Anglo-Indian young people. Boys and girls between the ages of 15 and 20 with parents of different races (European fathers and Indian mothers) come here to learn mechanized farming methods and homemaking. While here they are taught how to follow Christ and live a real Christian life, and we seek to instill in them the desire to give their lives into His service. Most of them are orphans or unwanted children brought up in orphanages.

We wish to thank you very much for the gift of these implements, which has made it possible for us to minister to those around us who are in great need of bread for their bodies and need of the Bread of Life for their souls.

In the service of Christ, MAX AND SHIRLEY STRONG

(The Editors would like to commend the FFA of Essex County Agricultural School and all others here unrecognized, for acts such as this. Certainly, that part of our motto, "Living to serve," has a deeper meaning for them.)

<https://www.facebook.com/IndianOrphanage/videos/10155486645009419/>

School Notes, Homemaking Department, January 1920

The Thrift leaven is working. The purchase of thrift stamps goes on and the girls realize they must earn to save. Many have secured work for pay during the Christmas vacation.

Ten girls from the Third-Year class and the High School Special Group have volunteered to act as Leaders of the County Home Economics Clubs in Cooking and Garment Making under the supervision of Mr. Ernest Howard, County Club Leader. During the past month they have had conferences with Mr. Farley and Miss Norris of Massachusetts Agricultural College and with Miss Parker of Manchester, who is helping them work out the program for their meetings.

The First-Year girls have presented two short plays for the Thursday morning assemblies during the past month.

The Third-Year girls prepared the supper for the football team celebrating the close of the season. The boys showed their appreciation of the cooking both by their appetites and by the presentation of a huge and beautiful box of chocolates—a present which was very pleasing.

The piano continues to be a source of unfailing good cheer. It is in constant use before school, after school and noon times. Everyone wonders how school ran without it.

(Editor's note; something to think about on a cold winter's day)

Steamed Chocolate Pudding

3 tbsp. butter
2 1/4 cups flour
2/3 cup sugar
4 1/2 tsp. baking powder

1 egg, well beaten
2 1/2 sq. unsweetened chocolate
1 cup milk
1/4 tsp. salt

Cream butter add sugar gradually, and egg. Mix and sift flour with baking powder and salt and add alternately with milk to first mixture then add chocolate, melted over hot water. Turn into well-greased mold. Steam two hours.



Alumni in the Spotlight / Chris Slavin



The [2019 Ring of Kerry Charity Cycle](#) was most difficult ride I have ever done. I have done century rides before, and even went into this one thinking that it would be about the same even a bit easier. Not that doing 100 miles is ever easy. This one was 108.7 miles. What's another 8.7 miles, right? After all my centuries were in the White mountains of New Hampshire, and I had done training rides in Vermont.

The Ring of Kerry is long, and the hills grind up in a steady ascent for 5-8 miles. The descents are long, fast, and filled with sharp turns. The road surface is really rough, making the pushes up hard from the resistance of the ragged road, and the ride down vibrates your whole body.

I was alone for a lot of it, and it is amazing how easily the stark and rocky terrain of some areas can seem like it is actively trying to defeat you. It is not just harsh, even on a mild day like it was, it has a personality and temperament. Incredible experience.

Here are some photos to start. Nollaig was incredible. He was there waiting at various points with Earle, and I never knew where he would turn up. He scrambled high I to craggy hills to get photos that show the terrain and evoke an understanding of how hard this ride is in a handcycle.

The final bring to [Moll's Gap](#) was pure torture. To say it was slow was an understatement. I fought for every rotation of the crank, and my gears were audibly straining and creaking. At the top of the Mol's would be 8 miles of descent to the finish in Killarney at a blur of speed, and that kept my spirits up. I was so excited when I saw the sign for Mol's Gap. I had not conquered the climb, but I clawed my way to the survival point. Then after 2 miles I heard the grinding of metal,

a snap of a cable and I came my front wheel was jammed. The shifting was gone, and my hand pedals spun freely without moving anything. Phil, my escort for the last half of the ride got out assessed the situation that this was "catastrophic equipment failure". There was no field repair for this. My ride was finished with 6 miles of the downhill that had kept me mentally going, unused.

The ambulance was behind us by chance, and between the two crew and Phil, they were able to lift me out of my bike and load me into Phil's van. My arms were completely unusable at that point, and if it were not for them I would have had just sat there until my demise. A monument to all those that road the gap after me. Like the list climbers on Everest! I had not realized how cold I was until that point. I don't have normal temperature control, and the wind and the mist of Mol's sucked the heat out of me. I think I was so focused on the muscles in my arms, shoulders and back that I did not notice the cold seeping into me.

I was driven across the finish line, with ambulance escort in front, and Nollaig and Earle behind.

I wish it had gone differently, with the thrill of speed at the end and glory at the finish, but I got a different satisfaction, and an ending I didn't suspect. I rode further than I ever had before, held on through the most difficult climbs in Ireland, had the support and encouragement if Phil, Nollaig, Earle, and the Michael the sweep van driver. Success does not always occur as we envision, but we know it when we see it; and feel it.



The road to Coomikista

Earle the Service Dog at the Boston Museum of Science. November 22nd, 2019

Yesterday, as part of our adventures, we went to the [Museum of Science, Boston](#). As some of you already know, I am a big fan of acquiring knowledge and I love to share what we discover! Remember last week we found the Worcester Art Museum by accident.

Chris likes the Boston Museum of Science, and she has been going for almost 50 years. Can you imagine?!

I need to share with you why we did not have a great time, and had to leave. First, I will say that it had some, but little to do with the actual museum.

BMS does school and club group sleepovers, and during the day there are lots of school groups. That has been happening for years and years. We got there early, at 9am. This meant the overnight groups were still there. Then around 10am the day school visits came in. Unfortunately, the groups were not very good at sharing space. There were bags in the pathways, and children laying on the floors. There were so many students that they were crowding all the areas and standing on the ramps to watch the live demonstrations. We could not get through because no space was left for a person in a wheelchair to get by. Chris could not wheel her chair because there were bags and people about.

Even worse, really the worst, was all of the children who were calling to me, pointing at Chris and I, and patting and poking at me. We are very patient. We know that many children and adults have not encountered Service Dogs, and have little awareness of etiquette. The thing is, all of these children had chaperones with them. Adults who should know better. More than a few adults were drawing attention to us by saying things like, "Look at the dog!", as if we were just another exhibit. Chris was so annoyed at first, but she just became angry when she paid extra money to see BodyWorks. She was told there would be no school groups, but as soon as we went through the entrance there were children sitting and laying on the floor doing worksheets. We couldn't even get near the exhibits. Kids were calling to us. Saying loudly "Is that a dog?! There's a dog!". They would reach out to me, and touch me, and Chris was doing her best to get me through the gauntlet.

We had to leave. It was so disappointing. I was overwhelmed, and I NEVER get overwhelmed!

The other disappointment was that there were many exhibits that could have been made accessible, but were not. Much of the signage for the exhibit was placed in ways that made it difficult to read. Furniture and stools were attached to the floor and it prevented a wheelchair user from accessing the exhibit.

We have been here many times and while we can usually accept that not everything is accessible, it was all compounded by having 1600 school children who were truly overwhelming the space.

We met several wheelchair users and Chris asked about their experiences, and aside from the Service Dog issue, they had similar problems.

The ticketing counter was very nice, and refunded our admission, but we still had to pay \$17 for parking. I just wanted to share some of the disappointments and challenges that we sometimes face. Chris said she has such fond memories of the museum, including Spooky the Owl. She wants these students to have similar memories, but it isn't fair that they are not being taught to respect community space, and other people.

I am sorry I don't have as many interesting things to share with you, as I usually do. We really had trouble learning and discovering on this trip.

(Editor's note; Earle is a yellow Labrador Retriever Service/Assistance Dog, trained through N.E.A.D.S., Dogs for Deaf and Disabled Americans, in Princeton, MA.)

[NEADS \("NEADS Inc", formerly known as National Education for Assistance Dog Services and Dogs for Deaf and Disabled Americans\)](#)

How can a Service Dog help a person with a disability?

The tasks that Service Dogs can perform include:

- ☐ picking up dropped items
- ☐ retrieving objects from tables or counters
- ☐ turning light switches on and off
- ☐ pushing automatic door buttons
- ☐ tugging doors and cabinets open
- ☐ standing and bracing for stability during a transfer
- ☐ barking on command for help
- ☐ getting a cordless phone in an emergency
- ☐ and more!

Service Dogs accompany their partner [wherever they go](#), including the workplace, shopping and traveling. These dogs provide a degree of independence that many people with a disability have never had before. Not having to depend on another person is a priceless gift.



Earle the Service Dog

Essex Tech students build classrooms at their school

"Reprinted courtesy of the Salem News"

DANVERS — Some incoming Essex Tech juniors could have spent their summers on the beach or working odd jobs outside their trades.

Instead, since the end of June, 20 young women and men have been going to school. But instead of going to class, they have been working to renovate eight classrooms.

They are learning how to put a skim coat on walls, hang drywall, install outlets in horsehair plaster and swing a sledgehammer.

They are doing so on the second floor of the school's iconic Smith Hall administration building along Maple Street, across from the main campus.

And, they are earning \$14 an hour working eight hours a day.

For many, this is the first time they have ever been paid to ply their trade and be held accountable for their work, said Essex Tech carpentry instructor Robert Conard, who is helping to oversee the job.

The students, along with their instructors, are fixing up a total of eight classrooms in an under-utilized space formerly occupied by the school's transportation department.

Superintendent-Director Heidi Riccio said the space was in need of work. Some of the electrical system was made up of the old knob-and-tube wiring.

"So, the goal is, is that once these are all renovated, we can not only use them for the community, but we'll be able to offer classes here as overflow classes," Riccio said.



Juniors Luke Bye and Robin Englin

The eight new classrooms will help Essex Tech accommodate adult day learners and a new career and technical education program involving a partnership with Peabody and Salem high schools through the Smith Family Foundation. In the upcoming school year, the plan is to have about 30 juniors, 15 each from Peabody and Salem attend a half day of academics at their schools, and a half day studying construction or advanced manufacturing at Essex Tech. It's a program the school has piloted with Gloucester.

"Those expansion efforts, the classrooms can be done here," Riccio said.

The goal is to help the school accommodate more kids. The school's modern, \$133 million campus across the street from Smith Hall, which was also part of the former Essex Agricultural School, opened in 2014 with the merger of the former North Shore Tech, Essex Aggie and Peabody's high-school vocational programs. The school has about 1,400 students, but it receives more than 1,000 applications for about 350 slots.

While the first floor of Smith Hall serves as Essex Tech's administrative offices, the second floor was underused and in need of updating.

To do something about that, the school won a \$165,000 grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, a state economic development agency focused on growing the Bay State's clean energy sector. It took one year to plan the work, and students also had to apply to the program and take courses to be employable.

"And so it's a Learn and Earn grant," Riccio said, "And it is about teaching students renewable energy, sustainability techniques and they are earning money as they do it."

"By working hand-in-hand with Massachusetts high schools like Essex Tech, we can expose students to valuable experiences in STEM education," said Craig Gilvarg, a spokesperson for MassCEC. "A highly-skilled workforce is critical to the continued success of the Commonwealth's vibrant clean energy industry, and the Learn and Earn program will fuel future growth by helping these students develop an important base of knowledge as they explore career opportunities."

The state money supported the payroll for the students to work this summer. About \$35,000 was used for materials, including new LED lighting and split-system air conditioners.

"What they are learning is sustainability techniques, but more importantly is they are also learning how to work together," Riccio said.

Four different trade occupations at the school are working together: plumbing, electrical, carpentry and HVAC. The students are all incoming juniors, which means they have yet to have a co-op experience where they can gain on-the-job skills.

Riccio said all the students, including the future plumbers, HVAC technicians and electricians, did the demolition work. They also had to hand carry every piece of new drywall up two flights of stairs.

But, they are also getting the experience of working with someone from another trade. It's an experience that could carry them through tough economic times, Riccio said.

"The more you know and the more you can do in cross-trade areas, the more valuable you are to the employer," Riccio said.

"This is awesome, this is the best thing that has ever happened, it such good experience," said Bailey Hartigan, 16, of Beverly. She normally studies carpentry, but through this work she has learned skills she can use later on in life, such as wiring.

"And, this morning, I learned how to put an outside outlet on the hallway," Hartigan said. Isaiah Reyes, 16, of Peabody said hauling drywall up two flights of steps was "definitely an experience." He and Hartigan were cutting and installing drywall.

"But, this project is really good. I love it. You know, it teaches me a lot in my trade," Reyes said. "I can use it in the future to better myself and better my knowledge with everything." It's good experience, he said, given they have yet to have a co-op experience.

"To be here gives us a little experience just to get us ready for our trade," Reyes said.

Conard said the project is good for students from different trades to be able to work together.

"The best thing is the kids get to see what other kids do," Conard said, "and the electrical kids get to see what is involved with the framing and they have all been doing the demo, so that was pretty cool from the beginning."

Staff writer Ethan Forman can be reached at 978-338-2673, by email at eforman@salemnews.com or on Twitter at @TannerSalemNews.

"Reprinted courtesy of the Salem News"

School Notes, December 11th, 2019

At approximately 2:30 pm today there was a motor vehicle accident on Route 62 at the west exit of campus. Police and emergency medical services from Danvers and Middleton arrived quickly to the scene. No students were directly involved in the accident; however, one motorist was transported to the hospital. It appears that this accident was caused, in part, because there were several cars waiting to turn left out of the west campus exit. As we have explained in previous communications, ***the west exit from campus is a right turn only***. This decision was made to ensure that students and caretakers can safely exit the campus.

While this was a challenging day for our school community, there were heroes among us! When the accident occurred, three students emerged as first responders. Glenn Sanphy, grade 11 in Plumbing, Anthony Ferraro, grade 11 in Plumbing, and Gabryel Diniz, grade 11 in Auto Collision assisted in medical response and the traffic flow. These young men, two who are volunteer firefighters, jumped into action and came to the aid of an injured motorist. They will be recognized at the January School Committee meeting as a “leader among us.”

School Notes, October 20th, 1919

The saddest event in the student history of the Essex County Agricultural School occurred Monday, resulting in the death of 14-year-old Hallett Brooks, of Wenham. At about 12.45 P.M. several students were returning to the school grounds. An automobile approached, unnoticed by the student, and while attempting to cross the street, he was struck by the car.

He was taken promptly to the Danvers State Hospital, and his parents, Fred H. and Annetta C. Brooks, were summoned. He had, however, been so badly injured, that help –was impossible, and death soon followed.

This student had proven himself a boy of much promise. Straightforward and upright, he was held in highest esteem by teachers and students alike. His classmates had chosen him to represent them in the Student Council of the School, this being the most responsible class position. His untimely death has cast a shadow of gloom over the School. Its members join in deepest sympathy with the bereaved family.

Homemaking School

Foods Notebook

**A reproduction of the cookbook
that was used in the Homemaking School Foods class
Published by the Essex Aggie Alumni Association 2004**

Essex County Homemaking School, 1914 –1962

In the interest of preserving an important part of the history of Essex Aggie we have reproduced a cookbook. This book was used by all Foods students of the Homemaking School.

With its loose-leaf style binding the cookbook allowed for constant updating as needed. This version of the cookbook represents the pages that were in use in 1958 and includes pages that were originally produced in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. All design elements of the original book have been preserved as much as possible so this book (with the exception of clearer type instead of the old typewritten pages) is very close to the original. The page revision dates have been preserved (when available) so that the reader can see when the page was last revised.



Thanks to Barbara (Clark) Townsend '37, Florence (Bartlett) Hellen '43 and Louise (Lanford) MacDonald '58 for donating their cookbooks so that this restoration could be accomplished. *Charles Main, Class of 1956, Essex Aggie Alumni Association*

Pete Tierney can email you a copy of the PDF version. All you need to do is send him an email at peter.tierney57@outlook.com

High Lights of an Interesting Day, May 2nd, 1930

By Emma True Thurlow

May the second, a party of fifty enjoyed an Essex County Extension Tour under the direction of Miss Marion P. Crawford, who was assisted by Mr. Francis C. Smith, County Agent and Mrs. Mary McIntire, County Clothing Assistant. The purpose of this tour was "To show the many influences which contribute to the making of Better Homes—beauty to recall to our minds the part played by the early settlers of Massachusetts toward laying the foundation for Better Homes in America." We would like to give you a picture of some of the interesting places we visited.

Our first call was at the Danvers home of Mr. Henry B. Morse, which is a modern colonial type house. The keynote of its attractiveness lies in its arrangement of rooms, with the living room and the dining room in the rear and the kitchen in the front of the house. Thus one enjoys in privacy the beauty of lawns and gardens, as the greater proportion of the grounds are to the rear of the house, while the kitchen with its trade entrance is conveniently located near the street. A disappearing' stairway gives access to the third floor. Truly this home has the charm of the colonial combined with the comforts of modern arrangements and labor-saving devices.

The Dean-Fuller house, built in 1718, has been restored by Mr. Francis S. Breed of Lynn. Formerly part of it had been used as a cattle-shed, but now it again discloses to light of day enormous fireplaces, beamed ceilings and walls. There is perfectly restored pine furniture to delight the eye, twelve Lincolnshire chairs and a "Sawbuck" table, once marred by milk cans, but under skillful hands has become a glorious addition to the beamed dining-room with its corner cupboard.



Revealing to us treasures of Sandwich glass. It is a home which had descended into degradation, yet mercifully has been returned to its former position as an American home.

At the Kelsey-Highlands Nurseries, in East Boxford, the offices are located in a hundred-year-old barn. The specialties here are rhododendrons, azaleas, and mountain laurel. The weather-vane of the barn is modeled along the lines of a sailfish Mr. Kelsey caught in Florida waters.

(Editor's note: the Kelsey-Highlands Nurseries is now the Kelsey Arboretum.)

Our next stop was for luncheon, with the South Groveland women as hostesses. From there we passed to the pasteurization plant and attractive roadside stand of Mr. Robert Sawyer of Haverhill. Here we discovered how quickly milk can pass from 140 degrees to 70 degrees and be bottled without touch of hands. We all enjoyed the courtesies shown at the roadside stand.

At the Cherry Hill Nurseries of West Newbury. Mrs. George Thurlow opened her home to us that was built in 1731, and explained the overcoming of certain home management difficulties by installation of modern plumbing, kitchen cabinet, electric range, and electric refrigerator. We admired the beamed ceiling gas of the living rooms, the tireplaeps, the Chippendale ladder-back chairs, as well as a lovely old desk. Hepplewhite chairs and a real lowboy. Upstairs a canopy-top bed and a quilt 120 years old greeted us. (Editor's note: Cherry Hill Nurseries, in West Newbury, was established in 1832, and closed in 2000.)



At the Toppan House of Old Newbury, built in 1670 we saw the hearthstones brought from England, and plaster made from lime found at Devils Pen. This house is rented by the Sons and Daughters of the First Settlers of Newbury and has a very interesting collection.

At our last visit to the Spencer-Pierce House of Little's Lane, Old Newbury, the hostess, Miss Eliza Little, truly fascinated us with the history of the house. The architecture is of an early English type with a somewhat Spanish tendency in the hall. The two-sectioned door was set in an arched effect and the windows were in arched recesses. The hall, with its floor of squared brick, was papered with a quaint design of boats, haying scenes and taverns. Truly, the beautiful furniture, the jeweler, and early colonial glass seem at home and a perfect complement to their charming background.



Christmas Greetings, from 1930

Christmas seems to be one of those holidays unlike other holidays. It's something like Sunday, but people forget to worship in the customary way. But they do worship — indeed they do. Everyone is happy—and glad to be alive and grateful for the candy canes and Christmas trees. Christmas is not only a holiday—it's a season—an important season more outstanding- than just Fall or Autumn. It's a season of soft lights and Christmas wreaths, of gentle music and tender stories. Once again, we welcome Christmas—remembering that it is Christ's birthday.

Cow Tunnel, by Sandy Nichols Ward

Reprinted with permission from Remembering Danvers, October 29th, 2017

Rob Jackson, a classmate who lived in the Danvers Highlands during most of his childhood, recalls running through a “cow tunnel” with his friends. Recently he showed me on a map the approximate location of that old tunnel.

He says the tunnel was under Route 1, connecting from the Endicott Farm (East of Route 1) to property just below the Danvers State Hospital, in a low nearly wetland (pasture), that seemed to be on or near the lowest portions of the original Watson Farm, West of Route 1.

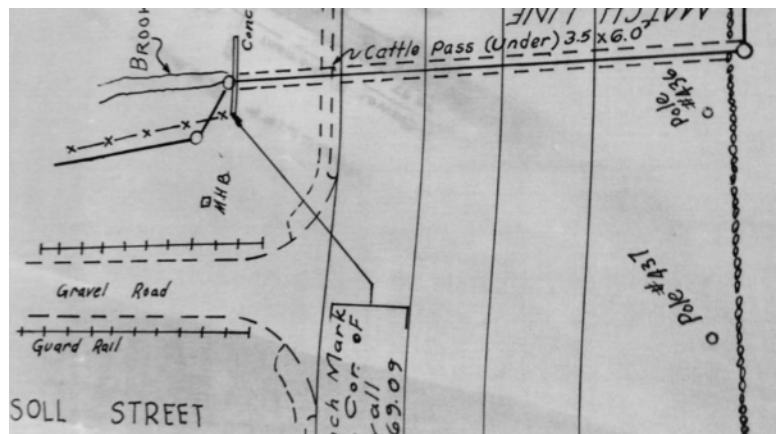


Some years ago, from memory, he had drawn a sketch of the tunnel. I saw his sketch for the first time on October 19, 2017. He says it is not drawn to scale.

Rob also had used an image from Google Earth (left) to draw in the location of the cow tunnel under Route 1. He wrote in an email, “The big yellow dot marks the location of the tunnel’s East end. The short narrow road in the photo shows it be about 30 to 50 feet North of the yellow dot is actually the far end of the original Ingersoll Street that ended at Route 1.

Update: Rob recently requested information from the Town of Danvers. He reported that Rick Rodgers, Town Engineer, and Miriam Contois, Technical Administrative Assistant, and others of the engineering staff for the Engineering and Electrical Division, Town of Danvers, were most helpful. They showed him “A Plan and Profile of State Highway in the Town of Danvers” – dated 1948. He examined various prints depicting the overall changes made (or to be made) to Route 1 that included the stretch of roadway in the vicinity of the junction of Ingersoll Street.

The 1948 plans show a “Cattle Pass” under Route 1 exactly where Rob had marked “cow tunnel” on the Google Earth image.



In 2009 Rob had explored the area, trying to find evidence of the old structure. He found the east end of the tunnel (now blocked and took these next photos.



After meeting with Rob, I wrote a summary of what we know about this cow tunnel. I've submitted the piece to the Danvers Herald, and hope it may draw comments from other people who have information about cow tunnels in Danvers. We'd like to learn about the history of this cow tunnel, when it was designed and how it was originally used.

Mr. Richard Trask, Danvers Archives, recalled reading something about cows and Route 1 in Endicott family papers written early in the 20th century, when that farm was very active. He checked and found a May 1922 letter from attorney Ira Ellis to William C. Endicott mentioning "conditions on the turnpike running through your mother's estate" and questioning "whether or not the District Engineer had remedied the condition of the head of Ingersoll Street so that cows could be driven across the Turnpike. If in reply to this letter you shall advise me that the cows cannot be driven



across the Turnpike...If in reply to this letter you shall advise me that the cows cannot at present be driven to the pasture I will take up this matter with... and will endeavor to impress upon him the urgency of the situation and the injury that is being caused through the delay in remedying it."

Steve Burnham added in the Comments Section;

Hi Sandy - there was another cow tunnel in Danvers running under Route 128 connecting Conant Street to Folly Hill. When we were kids, we'd ride our motorcycles and dirt bikes from Cherry Hill to Folly Hill by means of that cow tunnel. The Conant street entrance is very close to the entrance road to the Cherry Hill Industrial park (the entrance closest to Danvers) and the Folly Hill entrance is near the road leading up to the water storage tank at the top of the hill. Now that it's Fall and the undergrowth is dying off, I'll see if I can get some photos of the entrances and send them to you. I've been told the entrances are blocked off, but I'd still like to see them. Hope this helps

Alumni/Instructor in the Spotlight/Pamela (Knowlton) Braseth, Class of 1977

FFA... Little Did I Know

When I put on that blue and gold jacket for the first time 45 years ago, little did I know.

Little did I know that women had only been officially allowed to join the National organization for the last 5 years. Essex Chapter had them in FFA back in the 30's but I didn't know that either.

Little did I know how much I would learn and travel through my membership. All around New England, for competitions. To Chicopee and Kansas City for conventions. Vermont and Washington DC for leadership conferences. To England for an exchange program that had us living on farms in England and then opening our homes back in the states in exchange.

Little did I know that I would work to eventually earn my all the FFA degrees including my American Farmer Degree and go on serve as Essex Chapter and Massachusetts State Advisor, receiving Honorary Chapter and State Degrees.

More important than all of that though, little did I know the friendships that would form and continue to this day.



Pamela (Knowlton) Braseth



Top - Martha McGrail (MA)
Middle - l-r Pat Hall (NH), Kathy Peterson (CT)
Bottom l-r Ken Sima (MA), Pam Knowlton (MA), Elin Duckworth (AZ), Maria Jasper (NH)

Recently at the National FFA convention in Indianapolis, Indiana (yes, no more Kansas City, the place of so many convention and rodeo memories) they began celebrating the 50th anniversary of Women in FFA. On the stage during the opening session they honored Elin Duckworth Miller a former National Officer from Arizona elected 40 years ago as the 3rd ever female national Officer.

Very nice, but why should that matter to an FFA member from Massachusetts, be celebrated by a member from Essex Chapter? Through FFA, which way back then was still Future Farmers of America, I learned that it would also come to mean Friendship Forever Associations. You see, Elin and I are just one example of how two people from opposite sides of the country form a friendship that has lasted 40 years. Our jobs, our families have seen us both criss cross the county and live around the world but that bond, that friendship formed back in our FFA days has stood the test of time.

She is only one example of FFA friendships in my life that have been made and lasted. I am fortunate to count a former NH State President my friend for even longer and she too, traveled from New England to work far from the states we called home but our friendship is one of the treasures I hold dear from those days.

Back then, a group of us formed the NEFFAFFS. That was the New England FFA Friendship Forever Society. Members from NH, Mass and Connecticut were the original members. We travel to conferences together. We traveled for fun together. We expanded the group with FFA friends from New Jersey to Arizona.



Bree Braseth

I don't think we were unique. I hope we weren't and that it hasn't changed. I believe friendships and connection is the best thing that comes from an FFA membership. But as far as being unique or whether or not that has changed, I'll let you know. You see:

45 years after me, my daughter has put on her 1st blue and gold jacket and she's on her way this week to her 1st District competition in Idaho, representing her chapter in the Creed Speaking Contest. This will be what I hope is the 1st of many trips through FFA and I wish her as much fun, as much experience and as many friends in the coming years that it brought to my life. I don't think I'll be here 40 years from now to report back, but I think she and her future friendships will be.

Letter to the editor;



Joan (O'Neil) Townley

I enjoyed the article about women in FFA in the newsletter but didn't see mention of the fact that my sister, Joan Townley (O'Neill) Class of '61 was the first woman elected President of an FFA chapter in 1958 or 9. We went to the Annual Convention in Kansas City and Dick Mottolo of '60, the Vice President, had to cast all the votes during the convention because women weren't recognized nation-wide as full members. It was thought that the female contingent should all belong to FHA, Future Homemakers of America.

We also had a Rifle Club in those days and we would shoot "postal Matches" with other schools in New England. Most of us bought our Mossberg .22 caliber target rifles through the school. We would shoot a set of targets at the range in the school basement and mail them to the other schools and they'd send theirs to us. Each school would score the competitor's targets and we'd exchange the results by mail also, hence, "postal" matches. Joan once shot a perfect target, 11 bullseyes, and two other women were among our best shooters as well. Try bringing a rifle to school these days and the result would not be pretty.

Enjoyed the whole paper and looking forward to more.

Dennis O'Neill '60

Faculty in the Spotlight, Carleton McIntyre Stearns

Reprinted with permission from the Danvers Herald / Gatehouse Media New England,

(editor's note; There are two articles that are reprinted here, the first about Mr. Stearns and his time at the Topsfield Fair and the second about his so-called retirement, which he served his community in time of need, and always found time to love his wife and children.)

The following is a quote by a Dorothy Day who lived and worked the same time, different places as Mr. Stearns. She could have been speaking of Mr. Stearns.

"What we would like to do is change the world--make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, the poor, of the destitute--the rights of the worthy and the unworthy poor, in other words--we can, to a certain extent, change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world. We repeat, there is nothing we can do but love, and, dear God, please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbor, to love our enemy as our friend."

— Dorothy Day



Carleton McIntyre Stearns

Article one, October 7, 1981

To some, the excitement of the Topsfield Fair is in the lightbulbs whirling around on the midway rides, or the country and western singers crooning onstage.

But to Carleton Stearns, Sidney Porter, class of 1934, and Hugh Wiberg, the glamour of the fair is the gleam on the check of a perfectly-formed green pepper or in the size of a squmpkin.

All three men were at the fruit and vegetable building on the Topsfield Fairgrounds last week, preparing for the fair.

Carleton Stearns, 84, is the sole judge of the home garden, commercial growers and junior fruit and vegetable exhibits.

A Danvers resident, Stearns has been associated with the fair for 60 years, has been judging for at least 20 and was the head of food production for Essex County during World War II.

And for Stearns, every fair is a reunion with his former students from Essex Agricultural and Technical Institute, where he taught vegetable gardening and math for 34 years.

Sharp Eyes

According to his co-workers at the fair, Stearns has sharp eyes and searching fingers when it comes to judging vegetables.

“He’s Stearns by name and stern by nature,” says 69-year-old Sidney Porter, a former co-worker with Stearns at Essex Aggie and chairman of the Junior Department in the fruit and vegetable building.

“I have always tried to maintain quality,” says Stearns, “and I may be throwing out my chest a little bit, but I was a strict disciplinarian in class. I wouldn’t tolerate fooling around and cheap talk. I got rid of kids who wanted to fool so I could teach.”

When he is judging, Stearns can tell what an ear of corn will look like without taking off its husk, and he tests for earworm, a corn pest, by feeling with his thumb near the silk. With his knife he makes small cuts in the beets to look for white streaks. In an early beet the white streaks are permissible, in a late beet they are not.

When Stearns looks at the fruits and vegetables on the plate for an exhibitor, he checks for color, shape, trueness to type and freedom from disease and blemishes.

No Thumbnails

Despite the heated competition in the fruit and vegetable building, Stearns says he doesn’t think any of the exhibitors try to slip a thumbnail into each other’s tomatoes.

The smaller fruits and vegetables are exhibited in plates of five and the larger vegetables in plates of two. The produce is judged for how standard it is in size.

“I look for uniformity,” says Stearns, “I am not interested in freaks.”

At the very end of the long row of tables is a 376-pound sumpkin, flanked by other sumpkins of lesser weight.

Sumpkins are the creation of Hugh Wiberg and a frivolous bee.

Wearing a pale-blue V-neck sweater, under which is hidden a t-shirt with the words “Sumpkin King” emblazoned in black letters, the 46-year-old Wiberg explains that sumpkins are a combination of Big Max pumpkins and Giant European squashes. Wiberg had both growing in his garden in Wilmington but didn’t realize that they were close enough to be cross-pollinated.

Some wandering bee showed him it could be done, and after some experimentation with water and fertilizer, Wiberg soon had some very big sumpkins on his hands.

Record Breaker

This year’s 376-pounder is a record breaker, as far as Wiberg knows. The flesh of the record sumpkin is about six or seven inches thick and it is so big that it has crushed itself with its own weight and is flat on the bottom.

Wiberg discovered the sumpkin a decade ago and since then he has started what he calls a “semi-formal sumpkin fan club.” Through radio shows on agriculture and various other outlets, Wiberg figures he has distributed sumpkin seeds to about 20,000 gardeners.

To support himself, Wiberg works as a customer relations manager at Dennison Manufacturing in Framingham.

“I grow sumpkins to relieve my anxieties at the end of the day,” he says.

Article two, June 13, 1985

At nearly 90 years of age, he's busier than most working folk. Mr. Stearns philosophy is to keep busy and keep mentally alert. When Carleton Stearns retired from teaching at Essex Aggie it provided him with an opportunity to vary his experiences. And, nearing 90, he's still experiencing life.

"My hobby nowadays is visiting the hospitals, nursing homes and even private homes" he says "I've been doing it for more than 25 years.

Stearns first began his sick calls as a lay assistant to the minister of the Maple Street Church and continued as senior deacon and emeritus there and the First Church of Danvers.

"I've been a member of the Congregational Church 75 years" he says. "I call on anyone anywhere, people tell me about friends, and I go to see them." Stearns has a prescription for making them feel better. "I get people to reminisce and not think about their aches and pains" he says.

"I get them started by telling some of my own experiences, like riding a stagecoach to summer camp in New Hampshire. That's why I've been successful in my calling."

Carleton Stearns will celebrate his 90th birthday next Wednesday. He was born in Melrose of Scottish ancestry. His McIntyre grandfather, James, a wood carver, carved the eagle which used to grace old Boston City Hall.

Stearns graduated from Melrose High School in 1913 and the Massachusetts Agricultural School in Amherst in 1917. The Army followed for both himself and his twin brother Fred, how died 23 years ago.

"I enlisted in Boston but was trained in hospital work in Bellevue Hospital in New York" he says. "I was stationed as part of the American Expeditionary Forces, overseas in France, East of Paris, in Bazailles-sur-Meuse. I remember a soldier in the surgical ward, at the American Base Hospital, No. 116, who had one of the worst cases of mustard burn from head to foot I ever saw. He suffered terribly before he died." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Expeditionary_Forces

Although Stearns had Bachelor of Science degree from an agricultural school, he had no practical experience in farming. After his discharge in 1919 with the rank of sergeant, Stearns set out to get that experience.

Practical Experience

"I worked in market garden farms like Clark, Watson and Connors Farms," he says. "I oversaw 60 women on a 60-acre farm in Revere. I had three or four years of practical experience."

In 1922 Stearns shared his knowledge by becoming a teacher at Essex Aggie. "I commuted by train from Melrose to Danvers," he recalls. "I then took the trolley from the square to school. On the way back, I had dinner in a restaurant in Danvers where the new Atrium is going. I took the 6 O'clock train back."

On September 8th, 1923 Stearns and Ruth Dennett, a member of his church and a fifth cousin of poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, were married. Their move to Lindall Hill ended his long commute.

Today after several in-town moves, their present home on Conant Street is filled with pictures of their three daughters and their families, including eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Stearns taught for 34 years in the vegetable department at the Aggie. "I trained boys to grow vegetables in 10 acres," he says. "It included land on the turnpike once owned by General

Israel Putnam. We removed the lid of his well every time we farmed the land. If there had been enough water in that well, we would have used it for irrigating purposes, but there wasn't."

Those were busy years for Stearns. He ran the original farm stand, no run by the Future Farmers of America, served as secretary to the Roadside Stand Association of Massachusetts, became judge at the Topsfield – this being his 64th year – earned his master's degree, was treasurer of the Aggie's credit union and taught mathematics there.

A Disciplinarian

"In my teaching, I was a very strict disciplinarian," he says "I wouldn't tolerate any cheap talk or jokes. It paid off because I earned a lot of respect. Boys who have long since graduated still look me up."

After retirement in 1956, Stearns taught or tutored math in all the local schools, including Danvers High School, St. John's Preparatory School, and in a private school in Sacco, Maine.

"I haven't tutored in about eight years," he says. "If anyone comes along and needs help, I'll help them, I still have my math books."

Stearns also has definite ideas about teaching math. "I don't believe in those computers that they're putting into the school systems," he says. "Students have to learn to add, subtract, multiply and divide. That's what mathematics is."

Although Stearns saw action in World War I, he served his country in a different way during the second World War. "I served as chairman of Food Production for Essex County," he says. "I organized people in each town and city and worked with them."

"In Clifton in Marblehead and the Towle Manufacturing Plant in Newburyport. I taught classes in growing vegetables. I used dairy and poultry raiser to help instruct people in case they had problems in raising heifers for beef and pigs for pork."

Stearns also had a weekly radio show on gardening on WESX and later, WLAW. Once a month he was on WEEL, WNAC and WHDH.



Carleton and Ruth Stearns

"The first day in a building on Atlantic Avenue, they closed me in something like a telephone booth. There I was talking to the world. I was scared blue."

Stearns is so busy he consults a business, not a social calendar before making appointments.

He instructs voters in the use of voting machines in Precinct 2, has his own garden, paints and hooks rugs. He is a 60-year Mason, Past Patron of Eastern Star, member of the Historical Society, Friends of Glen Magna, the Senior Citizens Committee and writes for the Ontonagon Seniors Newsletters. <https://www.danversma.gov/documents-ontonagon-newsletter-january-2018/>

"I thank God every day for the ability to call on the sick," Carleton Stearns says. "And I thank God for the ability to care for my dear wife."

(Editor's note; There is no doubt in my mind the way Mr. Stearns lived his life had a profound impact on not only the lives of his Aggie students but everyone else he encountered. His legacy is much like a garden, you reap what you sow. He sowed nurture with discipline, we are left with the harvest. Thank you Mr. Stearns)

Alumni in the Spotlight / Gavin Keenan, Class of 1973

What could be more funner than working in the summer.

The title refers to the bygone memory that many of us have of entering the work world as young kids, fourteen and fifteen years old. Then as now, children under the age of fourteen were prohibited under child labor laws from working any job except as news carriers, some farm work or in entertainment. Well, very few kids today have a paper route as print journalism is sadly going the way of the Dodo Bird, and new-age adults seeking back to the earth experiences pay farmers big money for the opportunity to pick their carrots, shuck their corn and milk their cows. And it's probably exploitative to pay kids to entertain us.

In my day, summer work had one purpose – money. My two older brothers went to the Essex Aggie, Kevin and Dennis. Kevin, the eldest, aspired to a life of a poultry farmer, probably somewhere in the far reaches of rural Maine or North Dakota. He got sidetracked in his quest to become another Frank Purdue and made a career as a Veterinarian – Pathologist in Pennsylvania. Dennis, the middle one who caused all the trouble, craved all things mechanical; tractors, fast cars (borrowed, bought or otherwise obtained) junkyards, and big trucks. His mechanical aptitude got him into the Air Force and eventually attracted him to the world of firefighting. He spent thirty-two years with the Logan Airport Fire Department working in all aspects of the profession, from crash crewman to fire-boat captain to Assistant Chief.



***Kevin Keenan,
Class of 1965***



***Dennis Keenan,
Class of 1968***

As for the baby of the family- after doing nine years of hard time under the stern supervision of the Sisters Saint Chretienne at Saint Stanislaus School on Washington Street in Ipswich, I was ready for a looser, Age of Aquarius type high school experience. In 1969, the Aggie had obvious appeal to me. I had noted my brother Dennis always had cash in his pocket, due to an Aggie student's requirement to have full-time summer jobs in "appropriate, agricultural-related fields." And the best part was that summer at the Aggie commenced any time after April 7, when school got out. Five months out of a classroom and a paycheck every week. Sign me up!

The first step to legitimate employment was to secure that very prized working permit from the local school department. For those of my era, this meant a trip downtown to the Superintendent of Schools office located upstairs in the Tyler Block above Quint's Drug Store. Mr. Stella was the Superintendent at the time, and I presented myself to his very helpful secretary and announced the reason for my visit. Sensing I was a little on the numb side, she produced the permit application, which I recall was a green colored card, and patiently instructed me that I needed to have my perspective employer sign off on the from, then get a doctor to sign off that he had examined me from head to toe and deemed me capable of the work intended, and finally get my mother's written approval. With great pride and expectations, I returned the completed document to the Superintendent's office. The permit apparently remains in effect to this day, for after fifty years and a dozen different jobs, I'm still working.



Kevin, Dennis and Gavin Keenan, 2017

Child labor laws then as now prohibited youths under sixteen years of age from performing certain hazardous jobs considered too dangerous for their age. Today, workers under eighteen cannot drive a vehicle, use saws, wood chippers or work on a roof. The under sixteen crowd is prohibited from using power-driven machinery, riding in a vehicle unless seat-belted, loading and unloading trucks and climbing a ladder. Waiting on tables, scooping ice cream, poring coffee and bagging groceries are about all that seems left for enterprising young folks to do.

My first officially sanctioned employment was as a groundskeeper for Doctor Stavros when he owned what is now Candlewood Farm on Essex Road in Ipswich. I was fourteen and for a \$1.10 per hour, I mowed, raked, hauled, lifted, pushed, pulled and performed a bunch of other manual tasks related to keeping the outside of his stately home presentable. He had a Farmall Cub tractor which he patiently instructed me how to operate without killing myself or anyone else. He was very tolerant in allowing me to stall it out, jack-knife the trailer and dig ruts in his lawn. After a while I managed to run the thing without creating too much damage to his property while dodging the many errant golf ball blasted from the duffers at Candlewood Golf Course across the street.

The Doc could give me only twenty hours of work per week, which was fine with lazy me, but the Aggie Dons were breathing down my neck to get the required forty or return to the school for a summer of mucking out the cattle stalls. Holy Cow did that get my attention! I searched high and low and as fortune had it, landed on the summer crew for the Ipswich Park Department. This was forty hours a week at a \$1.40 per hour, with a promised raise to \$1.60 if I didn't screw up and get fired. In those days, the Town was a significant source of employment for Ipswich youth, with perhaps twenty-five or more of us working for the Park, Recreation, Cemetery, Highway, Forestry, Electric and Water Departments. The next largest employer was Crane Beach – Castle Hill. Others found work at Marini Farm, Hill's Department Store, the A&P, Dairy Queen, Yello-Glo Bananas, their parents' businesses, etc.

Some considered Town work as a last resort, intended to keep idle hands and minds occupied and out of mischief, at least for the daylight hours. The cream of Ipswich youth; those hoity-toity athletes and scholars, floated to the top of the summer job hierarchy and

enjoyed a more prestigious racket as Crane Beach lifeguards, maintenance crew workers and reservation rangers, an early iteration of rent-a-cops. While we mowed the parks, pulled the weeds, dug the holes, picked up the smelly trash and painted playground equipment, they enjoyed surf, sand and endless views of pretty girls. All right, I'll admit those guys working at the beach were smarter, better-looking and more athletic than me by a long shot, but how unfair! I suspect that the seeds of a future cynical policeman were sown in this humus of envy and resentment.

Apparently, child labor safety rules were liberally interpreted by the Town then. A typical day with the Park Department would begin with a half-dozen or more of us dangling from the tailgate of a town truck loaded with lawn mowers, trimmers, axes, chain saws, shovels and other sharp-edged or otherwise hazardous equipment, bumping along the streets to do the dirty work of keeping the Town's landscape in pristine condition. Sprained fingers, lacerated limbs, blistered, sun burnt skin (we didn't have sun screen then) insect bites, hornet stings and poison ivy infestations were a daily occurrence. It just seemed natural.

The Park Department work was interesting and diverse for a young kid. One day we would be mowing Bialek Park or the South Village Green. The next day we would be setting out the boardwalk leading from the residents' lot at Crane Beach, or cleaning and painting the inside of the Beach House for the up-coming party season. Jim Daly was the boss then, he seemed to be everywhere at once and very adept at catching me loafing off. He got my number early, and often fingered me for the misdeeds that I pulled and some that I didn't. But his judgement was final, and I certainly provided him a wealth of reasons to think the worst of me.

My laziness is likely what prompted an eventual transfer to the Forestry Department, which was the most dangerous and demanding assignment in summer municipal labor. We teenagers worked as the support staff to local legends Armand Michaud, Joe Racine, Chuck Foley and Rolly Chapman; the big men who cut the trees, trimmed power lines and manned the chain saws, sky-lifts, and brush kings. We would drag or carry the cut logs and brush to the chipper and toss them in while trying to avoid being pulled through and ground into kid-burger. Armand was gruff and no-nonsense, but this was only to prevent us from being maimed or killed. Being aware of your surroundings and the operations taking place was the rule and if you were not paying attention, he got your attention, loud and clear.

There was good reason for this. As an example, once when my brother Denis worked a summer job for the Water Department, he was riding shotgun on a moving back-hoe when it came to a screeching halt upon striking a raised man-hole cover on Argilla Road. Denis was thrown from the machine, but not without first striking his head against the cabin frame on his way through the windshield. Obviously, this required an ambulance ride to Cable Hospital for a few dozen stitches and a neck brace. He had a full head-wrap bandage as a precaution against a fractured skull and somehow was home in bed before the four o'clock quitting time. Our folks, being old school, didn't even think of a law suit. They just hoped the Town would continue to hire the Keenan boys in the summer.

In my sophomore year, having a justly earned reputation as a slacker, I was optioned off from the Forestry to the Cemetery Department, and would spend many seasons of unrelenting labor under the keen eye of Superintendent Walter Hulbert. The work was boring, mostly pushing a lawn mower or trimming gravestones for eight hours a day. In the hot, humid weeks of August, we hand-cut the overgrown, vertical terraces in the Old North Cemetery using ancient, blister producing sickles, hatchets and sling-blades (just like in the movie). Hornet attacks were common, with a trip to Cable for those suffering severe allergic reactions. Most days, it was a pleasant diversion to get to dig someone's grave. John Kelley, Jim Graffum, Armour Chapman and Lloyd

Irvine were the grown-ups who worked alongside of us, offering wisdom, guidance and a good kick in the ass as needed. I had my first illicit, after work beer with the boys at the P.L.A.V. while employed there. My dirty clothes and sweaty face must have convinced Bob Kroll the bartender that I was reasonably close to legal age, at least for government work.

Walt Hulbert was a hard boss. A former Army Master Sergeant in W.W. II, he was always around, constantly pushing his troops to keep moving. The workday began at 7:00 am, when Walt would collect forty-five cents from each of us for a small coffee and do-nut he would pick up at Marty's on Central Street. Coffee break was at 8:30, no exceptions. Walt would dispense the canteen and hang around until fifteen minutes lapsed then rouse us with, "Well boys, let's get to it." Bivouac was over and any further hydration came from the rusty water spigots dotting the cemetery avenues. I was always a skinny kid then, never weighing more than 150 pounds soaking wet. By the end of a Cemetery Summer, my weight would be down to 135-140 pounds, no matter how much after-work beer I drank.

But with the alleged wisdom that comes with age, I must admit that Walt was a good boss for someone like me who preferred the easy path. It took him a few summers, but he eventually broke me of my natural lassitude, at least some of the time. And when I needed work in the off-season, he would put me on the payroll as much as he could. He was a good man.

The Park Department is long-gone now, and all those summer jobs with it. Today, the Cemetery crew does most of the work with power-driven machinery replacing the sweaty, gawky kids like me who spent their summers pushing a twenty-one-inch full cut Toro mower through the gardens of stone. The work was tedious and hard, but in retrospect, I feel fortunate to have had those experiences. They not only taught me the value of work and money, but perseverance and perhaps some much-needed humility. I was able to pay my way through North Shore Community College and Suffolk University by summer and weekend work. Ten grand and change, with no loans, thank you.

I'm sure many of you can relate to these memories and have your own version to share. I'm going to guess that you may agree that things were better for us then. Today, college tuition's have increased exponentially, and summer wages probably don't pay the cost of one semesters books (if colleges still use books). Rather than grunt work, many parents now want their offspring to accumulate "meaningful" work experiences that will build an enviable resume for admission to outlandishly expensive universities requiring two lifetimes to pay off the student loan debt. Unpaid internships or ones that even charge for the privilege to participate have nudged honest sweat and after-work beer into the recycle bin. And after deep reflection over a cold one, it seems to me that the ongoing experiment we call modern life is taking all the fun out of being a kid. Phooey.



Gavin and Josie Keenan 1978

Some additional thoughts for the Aggie Newsletter: I must add my long-delayed appreciation to the Aggie teachers, administrators and staff of that bygone era. Many of the members of my class (notably yours truly) were unambitious, misdirected and notably unruly. In hindsight, many of us were simply lost and drifting, with little vision of a future beyond having a good time on the weekend. Reasons for this abound as they always do; but we were lucky that many of our teachers saw beyond these indifferent facades and sought to inspire the spark in us to work for something better. They had a hard job, but I would judge them largely successful.

Aggie Alumni who passed away

Mark Baldwin, Class of 1988

https://www.murphyfuneralhome.com/obituary/mark-baldwin?lud=0510CB4215190FC2B25E7B5CD51BBC24&fbclid=IwAR3zPPzMxE_mE_cx1Xkabz6aGiUXjKd7vfowgs-V4AqhYt55LKDJqqSAQRRO

Bruce D. Beeman, Class of 1969

<https://www.lyonsfuneral.com/obituaries/Bruce-Beeman/#!/Obituary>

Kiersten Dominique Danielle Kountze Beathley, Post Grad

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/bostonglobe/obituary.aspx?n=kiersten-dominique-danielle-kountze-beathley&pid=193352330>

Randall K Brown, Class of 1978

<http://obituaries.eagletribune.com/obituary/randall-brown-1075543604>

Mio Jane Cohen, Class of 1981

<http://www.starksfuneral.com/obituary/2173-runoyxvmfg>

Lawrence "Larry" Coyle, Class of 1959

<https://www.claffeyandrota.com/obituaries/Lawrence-Coyle-2/#!/Obituary>

Alvin W. Craig, Board Member

<http://thelocalne.ws/2019/09/28/alvin-craig-obituary/>

Caitlin R. DiFilippo, Class of 2018

https://www.solimine.com/obituaries/Caitlin-Rose-DiFilippo?obId=5282701&fbclid=IwAR1QfzhWOz8p4jIgw15nN7P999KmKIRQ3WrokcoY_KvYl_7R_QUPQJGLnRE#/obituaryInfo

Carol S. (Sanborn) D'Urso, Class of 1958

<http://obituaries.eagletribune.com/obituary/carol-s-sanborn-d-urso-1074743212>

Nancy R. (Wilkins) Earabino, Post Grad

<http://obituaries.newburyportnews.com/obituary/nancy-earabino-1076457097>

John D. Erikson, Class of 1967

<https://www.douglasandjohnson.com/obituary/john-erikson>

Leona Farnham,

<https://ccbfuneral.com/tribute/details/5983/Leona-Farnham/obituary.html>

Barbara H. (Lendall) Fedas, Class of 1950

<http://csnh.tributes.com/obituary/read/Barbara-H.-Lendall-Fedas-107427437>

Lois Fellows, Post Grad

<https://ccbfuneral.com/tribute/details/6543/Lois-Fellows/obituary.html>

James Richard FitzGerald,

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/pearl-ms/james-fitzgerald-8734055>

Joseph M. (Joey) Geoffroy, Post Grad

<https://memorials.morsebaylissfuneralhome.com/joseph-geoffroy/3860050/service-details.php>

Michael Robert Gilligan Sr, Post Grad

<http://obituaries.salemnews.com/obituary/michael-robert-gilligan-sr-1075836411>

Cecelia N. (O'Leary) Green, Post Grad

<http://thelocalne.ws/2019/09/29/cecilia-green-obituary/>

Robert (Bob) Harold Henderson, Class of 1949

<http://obituaries.andovertownsmen.com/obituary/robert-bob-henderson-1075026779>

Barry Higgins,

<https://bowersfuneral.com/book-of-memories/3962960/Higgins--Barry-/obituary.php>

Robert Hubbard, Post Grad

<http://obituaries.gloucestertimes.com/obituary/robert-hubbard-1075135078>

Bonnie C. (Brymer) Kobialka, Post Grad

<http://odonnellfuneralservice.tributes.com/obituary/read/Bonnie-C.-Brymer-Kobialka-107795840>

Jerome F. Lake, Class of 1954

<https://obituaries.eagletribune.com/obituary/jerome-lake-1077489934>

Gloria (Marchant) Lampropoulos

https://www.meaningfulfunerals.net/obituary/gloria-lampropoulos?fh_id=11234

Phyllis Ann (Kawczynski) Landers, Post Grad

<http://www.campbellfuneral.com/obituaries/Phyllis-Ann-Landers?obId=4270415>

John MacDonald, Class of 1957

<https://www.cochranfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/John-Macdonald-4/#!/Obituary>

Paul E. McKinney, Jr.

<https://www.brooksidechapelfh.com/obituary/paul-mckinney-jr>

Elizabeth Houston MacGibbon Nelson, Class of 1934

<https://www.dahlfuneralhome.com/obituary/elizabeth-nelson>

Mrs. Claudia L. (Cary) Snow, Post Grad

<http://odonnellfuneralservice.tributes.com/obituary/read/Claudia-L.-Snow-106989410>

Bradley Elwin Sherman, Post Grad

https://www.caledonianrecord.com/community/deaths/bradley-elwin-sherman---obituary/article_6d9d3d0e-5ca8-5738-8b70-d65b3926e3b6.html

James Arnold Springer, Post Grad

<https://www.itemlive.com/obituaries/james-a-springer-56/>

Richard “Dick” Anthony Steeves, Class of 1971

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/lynn-ma/richard-a-steeves-8923629>

Joseph John Taliger, Jr., Class of 1954

<https://www.solimine.com/obituaries/Joseph-John-Taliger-Jr?obId=8109416>

Karren Williams, Post Grad

<https://www.lyonsfuneral.com/obituaries/Karren-Williams/?fbclid=IwAR3TMmCAMEiVlZFxMTIrrM4Ow5kCnZFnRtjTh7FyitdRMJmPjNzSQvhao4#!/Obituary>

Mona S. Williams, Post Grad

<https://www.dewhirstfuneral.com/notices/Mona-Williams>



Essex Aggie Alumni Association Membership Registration Form 2020

Membership dues for 2020 will still be \$20.00

Term of membership is Jan 1 to Dec 31

Please fill out the form below

We need your support



Member Name and Address: (Please Print)

Class of _____ High School Division (____) College Division (____) School Staff (____)

First Name _____ Maiden Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Work Phone (____) _____ Cell Phone (____) _____

E-Mail _____

Please register my membership for 2020

I am enclosing my check for \$20.00 for 2020 Membership: \$ _____

I would like to donate to the General Fund: \$ _____

I would like to donate to the General Scholarship Fund: \$ _____

I would like to donate to the Richard M. Brown Scholarship Fund: \$ _____

I would like to donate to the V. Byron Bennett Scholarship Fund: \$ _____

I would like to donate to the Ellery Metcalf Scholarship fund: \$ _____

Total amount enclosed for membership & donations: \$ _____

(Essex Aggie Alumni Association is a 501(c) 3 organization and donations are tax deductible)

Your membership is important, and we hope you will send your dues today!

Check should be made out to: Essex Aggie Alumni

**Mail this form to:
Essex Aggie Alumni Association
c/o Charles Main
643 Main Road
Phippsburg, ME 04562**

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