



# THE WYMAN JOURNAL

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*President's Message:* I am excited to report to you that on June 30th John Goff, our preservation architect, completed work on the Francis Wyman House Preservation Skills School Study funded in part by a new grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation (See story p.2). John Goff will present the results of this work at the Francis Wyman Association Annual Open Members meeting to be held at the homestead on Saturday October 4th. I am interested in members' thoughts and input and hope you can come to participate. I am hopeful for a beautiful New England Fall day to show off the house.

Another exciting event this year was the rededication of the Hancock - Adams - Wyman Rock in Billerica, MA. The site commemorates the night of April 18, 1775, when John Hancock and Sam Adams found shelter from the British at the Amos Wyman Homestead. A couple years ago vandals stole the bronze plaque and this year the Billerica Historical Society replaced it with a granite stone. (See story p. 3)

The Francis Wyman Elementary school 3rd graders enjoyed their annual tours provided by Board members Rebecca Lofgren (in costume as Pamela Wyman circa late 1700's) and Pam Meppelink last Fall. This summer, we held open houses on the second Saturday of each month except August when we participated in "Celebrate Burlington" on the Common with clay marble making, quill pen writing and some other old fashioned activities.

Rebecca initiated and completed a Grant application to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to begin the process of cataloging and properly storing the FWA collection. We have a wealth of information and artifacts from Rev. Ralph Tucker and others. The intent is to create an inventory, catalog the items, determine appropriate storage and then manage the "inventory". We were not successful in obtaining the grant but hopefully this initial effort gets our foot in the door and we'll try again this year. I also applied for a \$100,000 grant through the Cummings foundation (of Woburn) for house repairs and outreach activities but was not successful. Maybe next time.

We have been making some progress cleaning up the yard. The storage container has been moved to the tree line and much of the excess wood has been removed. The good pieces have been stored in the shed and covered with tarps. The old barn foundation has been cleared of brush to make it clearly visible and an interesting feature on the property. Most recently I have authorized the replacement of our aging fire alarm system.



Jon Wyman and Sharon Kettlewell

Mike Tredeau of the Burlington Historical Commission continued his great support at school tours and open houses. He continued his studies of our stone chamber and produced a new video presenting his thesis that the stone chamber is part of an ancient Native American ceremonial chamber that aligns with celestial events.

Financially, we have about \$24,000 in the bank, but with annual expenses of \$5,000 plus the \$5,000 we had to match for the grant, we can especially use your support. The fire alarm and first year service will run \$1,000. Our wish list includes projects that would cost about \$500,000 or more, so keep those cards, checks and Paypal donations coming. Keep us in mind for your will, memorial donation, trust or other estate planning tools to ensure our future preservation and management of the property and the association (a generous endowment would be nice!).

We took some hard hits to the board last year. John and Jonell Kenagy moved out to Washington State. We miss Jonell's boundless energy running projects at the house. Rebecca moved to New York and is a Park Ranger on Governors Island. Sadly, we lost Dave Meppelink to cancer a few weeks ago. He had set up our web site and Paypal account. We look forward to Pam's return to her energetic and entertaining outreach activities.

We can always use more help on the board and are especially interested in people who live close to the house to help with checking in on the house. We can also use some IT help with the website, internet/e-mail/Paypal business as well as advice on appropriate social media strategy to improve our two-way communication. Hope to see you at the annual meeting. Bring your kids and grandkids... we need to create the preservation passion in the next generation. RSVP is not required but we'd like to know how many to expect. Please e-mail me at [jon@wymanassociation.org](mailto:jon@wymanassociation.org) or any of the other board members shown on the web site.

Thanks for your great support.

**Jon Wyman** President, FWA

## Francis Wyman Annual Open Meeting Saturday October 4, 2014



***Please Come! Hear News of Our Grant Projects!***

10am	Tours of Francis Wyman Homestead.
11am	Meeting
12 noon	Family Photo
12:15	Lunch (Bring your own lunch and chair. Beverage & dessert provided.)
1pm	Speaker: John Goff, FWA Preservation Architect of Salem MA

### ***Preservation Skills School Study Complete***



John Goff completed our National Trust Grant study in June after a ten month journey into our past and possibilities for the future. The study grew out of an idea that the house could be used as a lab for nearby preservation schools and technical schools to perform small, teaching projects and we'd get the benefit of low cost work to preserve the house.

The study explores our founder's life, Benjamin F. Wyman. Having located his family's pre-1745 home in historic Lancaster, MA, we learn that Benjamin fought in the Civil War, was widely traveled as a salesman for Leatheroid products and was an active preservationist who ultimately founded the Francis Wyman Association. His travels across the country connected him with other Wymans

who were interested in genealogy and historic preservation. These relationships undoubtedly helped him assemble interested Wymans and the capital to found FWA and save the house at the turn of the 20th century. Benjamin's birthday was May 25, 1839. The study proposes a founders day, historic preservation activity in May each year in honor of Benjamin's work as well as naming preservation skills education program: The Benjamin F. Wyman Preservation Skills School.

The assessment of operating a preservation skills school opened several doors for new relationships and expertise. We pretty much concluded that we could not open and operate a conventional school at this time as there are too many costly logistical concerns to overcome, such as parking, restrooms and a classroom with heat. We explored relationships with the Apprenticeshop (Bath, ME), Longbranch School (Bowdoinham, Maine), Boston Architectural College, North Bennet Street School (Boston), and the Timber Framing Guild. We do believe we could provide the house as a sort of teaching lab to some of these organizations and receive some benefit, either in the form of work accomplished at the house or remuneration for the use of the property to hold classes. Lectures or classes could include: historic preservation, carpentry, window repair, painting, fire restoration, well sweeps, tanning, and various Native American topics.

We also connected with the Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness (MCNAA). They visited the property and were briefed by Mike Tredeau from the Burlington Historic Commissions about his studies and theories regarding our beloved stone chamber. It is significant but the origin and purpose remain a mystery. Mike believes it is an ancient Native American ceremonial chamber due to its archeo-astronomical alignments. The MCNAA were also impressed by our connection to the Native American culture due to our proximity to the Praying Indian Village and Caleb Cheeshahteaumuck witnessing Francis' purchase of the Coytemore Estate 1665.



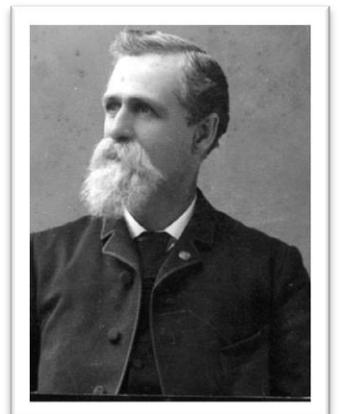
We believe we could further our preservation relationships by hosting preservation conferences at the house to provide preservation contractors the opportunity to demonstrate their trade, collaborate and share experiences. We could establish heritage preservation loop trails which would link several Wyman and other historic sites in the region. We could host Wyman and regional history and ancient technology lectures, as well as living history reenactments similar to the flax demonstrations and presentations at recent annual meetings.

One shortcoming of starting a school or hosting events is the lack of a proper venue. During the North Bennet Street School visit, they were fascinated by the house but also noted the value of our existing 19th century, colonial revival shed. They expressed concern for its condition and in interest to help bring it back. The south side was partially repaired and shored up a couple of years ago but a lot of timbers are suspect, roof deck boards are rotting and we are using tarps to cover the door opening. It has no foundation and the North side is in danger of collapsing. The study makes the case for providing a suitable foundation and rebuilding the timber portion to the original colonial revival design and layout. The east portion could be used for classes and demonstrations while the west end could be a secure space for storage and administrative functions.

The study considers Well Sweeps in depth and discusses the history, as well as various types and purposes. There are many possibilities but we need to continue with our plan to erect one similar to the 19th century photos of the one on the east side of the house. The next step is to commission an archeology study to investigate the areas where we will have to disturb the yard in that location. The cost will be about \$10,000 unless we can obtain some student help, possibly Boston University, who participated in the last "dig".

We should consider honoring some anniversary years by hosting preservation events and raising funds for specific accomplishments (Wellsweep, Shed Repair, New Barn, House Interior cleanup and repairs). The anniversaries include:

Benjamin F. Wyman's birthday was May 25, 1839. 175 years in 2014.



Benjamin F. Wyman

Caleb Cheeshahteaumuck first Native American to graduate from Harvard University (1665) and also (cont. p3.)

Francis Wyman purchased the Coytmore Estate in 1665; witnessed by Caleb C. - 350 years ago in 2015

Francis Wyman House initially built in 1666 – We’ll be 350 years old in 2016!

The results of the study will be further presented at the annual meeting where we can discuss the merits of the various proposals. It certainly provides a wealth of opportunities that we believe the FWA membership as well as the National Trust for Historic Preservation and other benefactors could support.



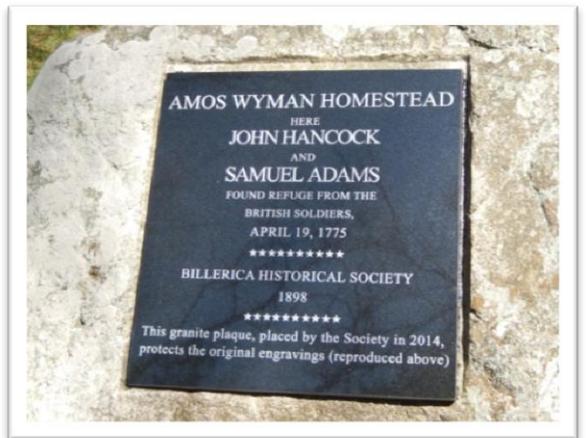
UNITED WE STAND: Billerica Colonial Minute Men Capt. Bill Brimer (left) and Richard MacKay (right) flank five members of the Francis Wyman Association near the Amos Wyman Homestead site marker in the Billerica rededication ceremony on April 19, 2014. From left to right: FWA President Jon Wyman, Pamela Meppelink, Karen Saucier, Caroline Miller, and Virginia Mucciaccio. (photo by John Goff)

**Hancock/ Adams Monument Rededication**

Over thirty people gathered on Saturday April 19, Patriots Day, at the Amos Wyman Homestead site in Billerica for the “Hancock-Adams Refuge Monument Rededication ceremony” a community service project of the Billerica Historical Society cooperating with the FWA. The Amos Wyman House site is one half mile west, walking

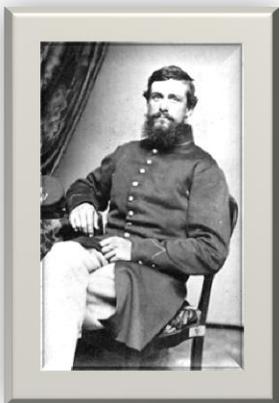
distance, of the Francis Wyman House in Burlington. A new granite plaque was unveiled marking the site where America’s Revolutionary War Patriots John Hancock and Samuel Adams took refuge with the Wyman family to escape British capture. A large stone boulder and marker originally placed in 1898 by the Billerica Historical Society and a rubble foundation are what remains of the homestead today. A previous bronze plaque was stolen in 2012. The site is owned by the Billerica Historical Society.

Amos Wyman, b.1723 d.1797, great, great grandson of Francis Wyman, and his wife, Billerica farmers, provided refuge and refreshment to Sam Adams, John Hancock and betrothed Dorothy Quincy Adams who had escaped the British as the redcoats marched to battle in Lexington April 19, 1776. Fischer



**Proposed Heritage Trail Links Francis Wyman and Amos Wyman Historic Sites**

The goal to re-establish a formal foot trail between the two historic Wyman sites is strongly advocated by Mike Tredeau chair of the Burlington Historic Commission, Maria Seminatore president of the Billerica Historical Society and Jon Wyman president of FWA. The foot trail would be on the site of an old colonial road that once linked the two towns. The heritage trail linking the Wyman sites would be the ‘core and first segment’ allowing both towns access to multiple historic sites according to preservationist John Goff.



**Benjamin F. Wyman (b. May 25 1839, d. May 8 1927) Founder of the Francis Wyman Association which was organized in 1899, incorporated in 1902. He was first president serving for 20 years. Descendant of Benjamin W. Wyman I, son of Francis Wyman. 6th generation. A Civil War veteran, farmer, leatheroid salesman and inventor. Born and lived in Lancaster MA. Third generation to live in his father Charles’ and great grandfather Nathaniel Wyman’s house 1742 which still stands on Neck Rd. FWA is one of the first family associations in America. The FWA Board of Directors has decreed May 25 as “Founders Day”.**

*The Francis Wyman Association Wishes to Thank the Following Donors:*

- |                         |                      |                   |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Founders</b>         | Thomas Merritt       | Ann T. Schutt     |
| Martha Wyman Bermingham | Jonell & John Kenagy | John Bryant Wyman |
| Beth Wyman Dwyer        | Elizabeth Lane       | Jon C. Wyman      |
| Kenneth Goodsmith       | Walter Newman        | Wyman Youth Trust |
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What's this???

Find out at the Annual Meeting – October 4th

Please join or renew your annual membership to the Francis Wyman Association. Your contributions are very important to us, appreciated, and used wisely. All donations are tax deductible. Thank you.