



FOXBOROUGH HISTORICAL COMMISSION

National Register of Historic Places

Inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and a concurrent listing on the State Register of Historic Places is the official list of buildings, districts, sites, structures and objects important in our history, culture, architecture or archaeology.

Criteria for listing include:

- a) association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- b) association with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- c) embodiment of distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or,
- d) likelihood of yielding information significant in history or prehistory.

Properties must meet at least one of the above criteria to be eligible for listing.

The National/State Register recognizes the significance of a property to the community, state and/or nation. National Register listing allows the owners of income-producing properties certain federal tax incentives for substantial rehabilitation according to standards set by the Department of the Interior.

National Register properties are afforded limited protection from adverse effects of federally/state assisted projects.

Listing on the National Register in no way interferes with a property owner's right to alter, manage, or sell the property when using private funds. Under Federal law, owners of private property listed in the National Register are free to maintain, manage or dispose of their property as they choose. Owners have no obligation to open their properties to the public, to restore them or even to maintain them if they choose not to do so.

Individual property owners have the right to object to their property being included on the National Register. If the property is being proposed as part of a National Register Historic District, a majority of property owners (more than 50%) must object to prevent the listing. If a majority of owners do not object, the nomination may move forward and the properties for which there are objections will remain in the nominated district. If a majority of owners do object, the National Park Service may still formally determine the properties eligible for listing, although actual listing will not occur.

Foxborough properties on the National Register of Historic Places

Captain Josiah Pratt House

141 East Street

Captain Josiah Pratt built his stately home at 141 East St. in 1760, 18 years before Foxborough was incorporated.

He commanded one of nine companies which left Stoughton April 19, 1775 following the Lexington alarm. His service was later credited to Foxborough once it was incorporated.

Josiah Pratt served as Moderator for the first Town Meeting in 1778, served on the Board of Selectmen for many years as well as in a variety of town positions.

The Pratt School would be named for the many members of that family which populated East Foxborough.

Amos Morse House

77 North Street

Jedediah Morse built a home in what would become known as Morseville for his wife and two sons, Amos and Simeon.

Simon, in turn, built a 16-room home with a large barn for two of his children, Amos Jr. and Sarah, in 1803.

Amos and his family would occupy the home for many years. In the early 1820s, as straw hat making showed signs of becoming a promising industry in the community, John Cory leased an ell of the Amos Morse House to start a straw shop. Neighborhood ladies gathered there every afternoon to braid straw and make hats.

Otis Cary House

242 South Street

Otis Cary purchased the foundry on Mill Street and built a stately home at 242 South Street in 1843. A town official, Representative to the General Court and State Senator, Otis Cary was also president of the Foxborough Savings Bank, Rock Hill Cemetery and the Foxboro Branch Railroad Co.

His son Otis spent his life in the mission fields of Japan as did his grandson Frank and great grandson, Otis III.

Otis Cary's daughter married Benjamin Boyden and their son Frank was born at the family homestead on South Street. He became one of the most respected names in American education, serving as Headmaster of Deerfield Academy for more than 50 years.

Seth Boyden Home “Oakwud”

135 Oak Street

Seth Boyden, at age 60, left home and answered the call in April of 1775 with Capt. Israel Smith’s Company. Two of his sons, Jacob and Amos, also responded to the alarm of April 19 and marched toward Boston.

He initially purchased land here in 1737, first living in a crude shelter and later a home somewhat north of the present Oakwud which he built c1800.

Seth Jr. was only 17 when, near the end of the Revolutionary War, he sailed on a privateer and was taken prisoner by the British, held until the end of the war.

Seth Jr. had a son Seth who had an interest in optics, chemistry, metallurgy, astronomy and electricity. He would make his mark in Newark, New Jersey developing the process for making malleable iron, designing steam engines for railroads and producing the first daguerreotype (a picture made using silver-coated, light-sensitive metallic plates developed by mercury vapors) in America. Thomas Edison called him “one of America’s greatest inventors.”

His brother Uriah, an engineer of considerable reputation, redesigned the waterwheels to gain more thrust, thus saving the textile industries of Lowell and Lawrence. A sum of money donated to improve the local schools was used to purchase books for the town’s first public library, named Boyden Library in Uriah’s honor.

Ezra Carpenter Jr. House

168 South Street

Ezra Carpenter Jr. was the son of Ezra Carpenter who was among the troops who crossed the Delaware with George Washington in 1775 and the grandson of Nehemiah Carpenter, one of the first settlers of Foxborough.

Ezra Jr. purchased the lot from his father in 1824 prior to his marriage to Eliza Belcher and in 1826 built the typical Federal period five bay Cape Cod-style house that would eventually see the birth of seven children, three of whom died in infancy. His occupation was Yeoman, “one who farms his own land.” He served on the Board of Selectmen for 18 years and held many other town positions. Current owners Phillip and Emelie Bonin received a Massachusetts Historical Preservation Award in 1991 for their work on the house.

Memorial Hall

22 South Street

At the close of the Civil War, the people of Foxborough wanted a “more suitable monument” than just a tablet to honor those who served. They erected Memorial Hall in 1868 and dedicated it to “everyone whose lives were touched by the war.” Tablets include the names of those who fought and died in the Civil War as well as veterans of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.

When opening a free lending library in 1871, the town chose to locate it in Memorial Hall. Two wings would later be added to accommodate the patrons of what would be named Boyden Library which remained there until the present library was opened on Bird Street in 1967.

At the suggestion of the late Clifford and Edith Lane, Memorial Hall then became the home of the newly formed Foxborough Historical Commission, and the building is now the town museum and archives.

Grange Hall 11 Bird Street

Members of the Foxboro Grange erected Grange Hall in 1897 as a multi-purpose building with stores at the ground level and a large auditorium on the second floor for their meetings. The group met there for 31 years. The auditorium also served community needs after the burning of the Town House and Foxborough High School wing in 1900. For many years, Grange Hall and Bethany Church were the only auditoriums sufficiently large for school graduations and similar events. Pat Smith's All Stars, a local semi-professional basketball team, had home court advantage there for many years. The first floor housed both a grain and hardware store. In later years, Girl Scout headquarters was located there as well as the Trading Post.

When the Inman Kimball hat factory burned in 1936, Francis Peterson started the Foxboro Hat Shop in the former auditorium, the remaining link to the industry that drove the local economy through much of the 1800s. The hat shop continued under the ownership of his daughter before passing to his granddaughter who finally closed the door early in the new millennium.

The exterior of the building was fully restored in 1982 as part of its National Register application process for rehabilitation tax credits and was recently refurbished by the Olsen family.

The Pumping Station Pumping Station Road

At the initiative of a group of businessmen, a private water supply district was formed in 1879 to provide water service to buildings and hydrants within one mile of the Common. The size of the district was later expanded and water wells were built in the vicinity of Fales Springs adjacent to Neponset Reservoir. The large brick coal-fired pumping station was erected on the site, pumping water to the standpipe on Glenwood Avenue.

The district was eventually expanded to include much of the community and the Foxborough Water Supply District became an official town entity in 1931. The original pumping station remains in service today.