

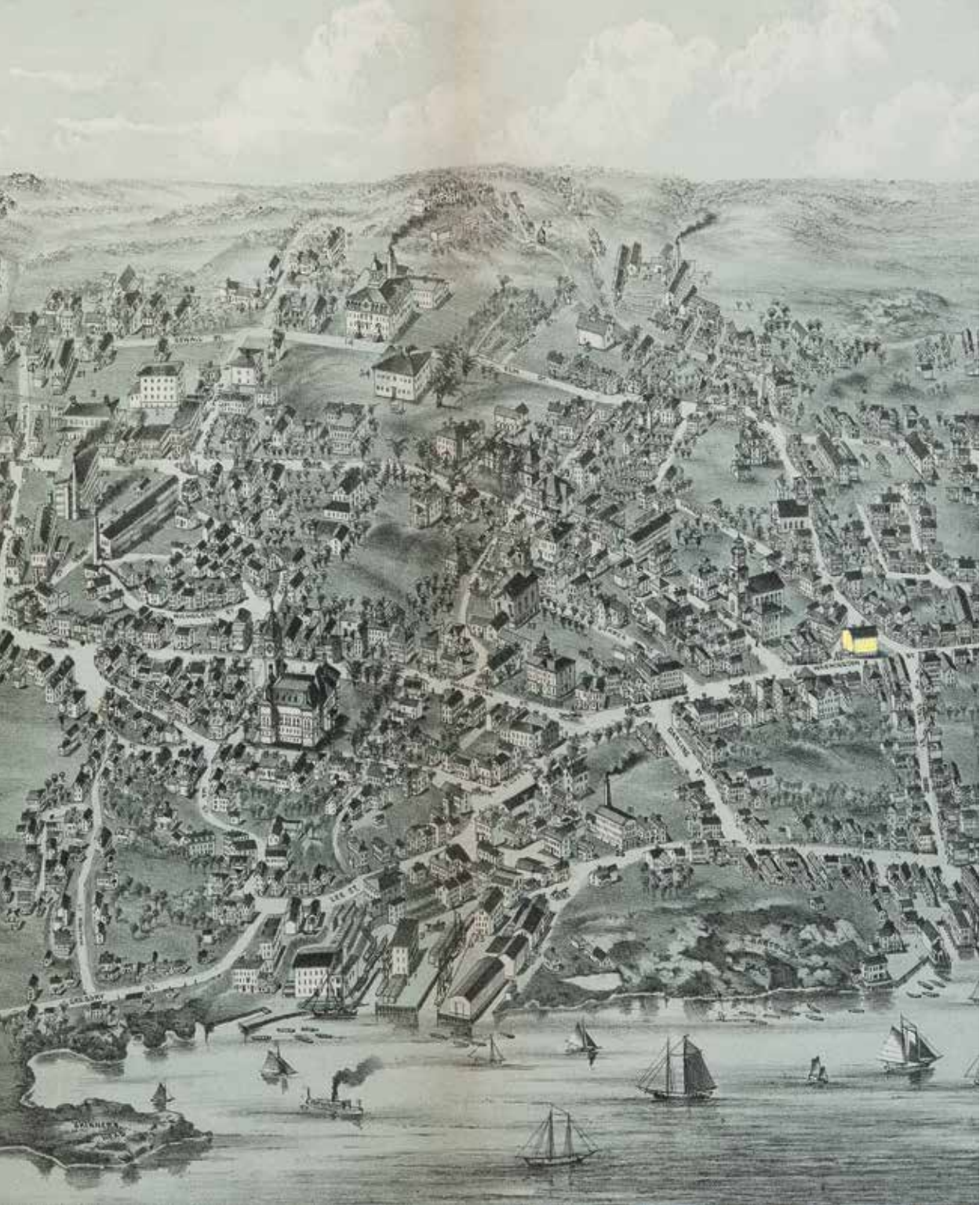
CELEBRATING THE OLD TOWN HOUSE

2013



A COMMEMORATIVE BOOK

sponsored by the Marblehead Forever Committee



Celebrating the Old Town House

Marblehead, Massachusetts
2013



ABOVE: The Velocipede Club poses in front of the Old Town House, c. 1900. A velocipede (Latin for “fast foot”) refers to a human-powered vehicle with one or more wheels. Imagine pedaling these spring-free contraptions down Marblehead’s unpaved streets—rutted, dusty, and after a deluge, muddy. Many of the boys are wearing caps modeled after those worn by Union Army soldiers during the Civil War. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

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FRONT COVER: Postcard of the Old Town House, c. 1900. *Courtesy Christine Nuccio*

BACK COVER: The Old Town House in winter. © *Rob Kipp*

INSIDE FRONT COVER: Map published by M.H. Graves in 1882. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum*

PAGE 1: School children amidst change: horse-drawn carriages, a car, overhead wires, and trolley tracks surround the Old Town House, c. 1915.



ABOVE: This drawing, by Marian Martin Brown, imagines the Old Town House in its original two-story configuration. In March 1727, Town Meeting voted “the Old Town House shall be built on ye land where the Gale and Cagge now stands on.” (Roads, *The History and Traditions of Marblehead*). Stocks are shown in front of the building (this may be artistic license) as well as a farmer herding livestock. According to family records, William Goodwin was invited to Marblehead from Charlestown in 1715 to build the 2nd Congregational Church on Mugford Street. He stayed on in Marblehead where he earned his living as a housewright. He, along with others, then built the Old Town House in 1727. The first Town House meeting occurred on March 17, 1728. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

RIGHT: When viewed from just the right vantage point on Washington Street, the Old Town House looks remarkably like what is known of the original building. © Rob Kipp

In June 2012 Marblehead taxpayers approved funding for structural renovations to the Old Town House, including installation of an interior elevator to provide access for all.

Now, at the final turn of seasons in 2013, we gather to celebrate the reopening of this glorious building. This book is intended as a keepsake to commemorate the Old Town House lest we forget the important role it has played in Marblehead life. We are grateful for the contributions of many townspeople and organizations in compiling the history, stories, and images included in this book. We also thank the sponsors who donated to support its publication.

Please visit the Old Town House and enjoy all it has to offer!

*The Old Town House is
once again available for
town use, celebrations, and
exhibits as intended when
it was built in 1727*



Marblehead Forever Committee

- Kyle Wiley, *Chair*
- Andrew Christensen
- Linda Doliber
- Kerri O’Shaughnessy
- Frffie Welch

Marblehead Board of Selectmen

- Jackie Belf-Becker, *Chair*
- Harry C. Christensen, Jr.
- Judy Jacobi
- Bret Murray
- James Nye



TOP LEFT: The J.O.J. Frost painting "Colonel Glover's Fishermen Leaving Marblehead for Cambridge, 1775." Note that Frost's inclusion of the building's granite foundation is historically inaccurate; it was not added until the 1830s.

John Glover was part of the Marblehead militia before the American Revolution. He became its leader after the death of Jeremiah Lee in April of 1775, when it was the 21st Massachusetts Regiment. During 1775 and 1776 this group was known as Glover's Regiment. The Regiment was of utmost importance during Washington's crossing of the Delaware in 1776, but there were other incidents of equal significance. Under General Washington's orders during the Battle of Long Island in August 1776, Glover and his regiment saved the army by executing a retreat to evacuate over 9,000 soldiers, horses, and weapons by rowing them across the East River to Manhattan under cover of night and a fortuitous cloak of fog. Amazingly, the regiment succeeded with no casualties and without being seen. The maneuver allowed the Revolutionary army to regroup to fight again without loss of life. One historian has referred to this company as "the first truly amphibious regiment in the annals of warfare." *Courtesy Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson*



Gift of Stephen C. Clark. Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, New York. Photograph by Richard Walker.

TOP RIGHT: Glover's Marblehead Regiment reenactors, c. 1975. *Courtesy U.S. Navy, photograph by PH2 Rush Gratowski*

BOTTOM: The current Glover's Marblehead Regiment was reborn as a reenactment unit to represent Marblehead in the 1976 Bicentennial celebrations. Portraying their Colonial counterparts, the reenactors travel the East Coast, celebrating the achievements of Marblehead's fighting fishermen. © *Wednesdays in Marblehead*



LEFT: Men standing in front of the Liberty Hose No. 1 station at the Old Town House. When the Old Town House was raised up, the Liberty Hose Company took advantage of newly available space for the storage of fire equipment for the engines located on Front and State streets. A mourning portrait of recently assassinated President William McKinley is seen above the door, c. 1901.

MIDDLE: The Liberty Hose reel and the Old Town House are decorated in flowers and bunting, 1884. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

RIGHT: Shown here is the O.K.O. band "Celebration of overseas victories" on the Old Town House steps, c. 1917. As the Marblehead Fire Department became well established, the whole town looked forward to the annual fall fire department parade and musters. The Gerrys, the Mugfords, the General Glovers, the M.A. Picketts, and the hose companies competed to pump the longest stream of water. These musters, or "pump-offs," still occur in Marblehead. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson*

According to Marion Gosling

May 9, 1836, Town Meeting voted to raise the Old Town House in order to make room for a fire company, Liberty Hose, and a market in the basement. Town Meeting appropriated \$2,000 for the project. The lower hall (what we think of as the current first floor) was to be used as a town hall and the top floor for one or two school rooms. At a subsequent meeting of the Selectmen and the Old Town House building committee, it was voted that the lowest part of the Old Town House should be constructed using Cape Ann granite. Another source tells us the cost of the granite was \$70.

Robert "King" Hooper gave the first fire engine to the town in 1751. It was named "Friend," and it was certainly that to all who lived in Marblehead. The danger from fire was a constant concern in colonial times. Wood fires heated houses, and all cooking was done at open hearths. Fires large and small were frequent. Women were especially vulnerable, as they did most of the cooking.

When a fire alarm went out in the densely built areas of wooden houses, the response was immediate. All hands responded, whether it was their house that was on fire or not. Everyone realized that any fire was a danger to them, as the flames would spread rapidly if they got a good start. Pumps and wells were located throughout the town. Of course, no one had running water in his or her home.

The first fire engine, and subsequent engines and hand tubs, were water-pumping devices on wheels. In the early days they were drawn by manpower. After being attached to the nearest water source, men would work the device to pump water onto the fire.

The other method of getting water to a fire was by hand-carried leather buckets. The leather handles were preferable to metal, as they didn't get hot the way metal did,

thereby protecting the water carriers. Leather buckets were kept by the door nearest the local pump, ready to be called into action at a moment's notice.

The Marblehead Fire Department was officially established by an Act of the Massachusetts Legislature in 1829. The town was divided into nine fire wards, and 42 men were appointed to be firemen. They each received a badge and were assigned to the various wards. There was fierce loyalty and competition among the wards, each vying to get to the fire first and distinguish themselves.

Whenever fire broke out, all the bells in town rang the alarm, and the firemen and everyone else rushed to help. Leather buckets were still used, but the hand tubs, with their well-oiled leather hoses, could be rhythmically pumped to shoot streams of water onto the burning building. The Fire Department instituted a systematic plan that also hosed down nearby buildings, helped victims escape, and removed personal belongings when possible. The establishment of the Marblehead Fire Department was vital to the town as it continued to grow. *Courtesy the late Marion Gosling, researcher and former Marblehead Historical Society president, and Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson*



In 1649, Marblehead named its first constable. A constable's duties involved collecting fines for stray animals, trespassers, galloping horses "to prevent hurt to children," rowdy behavior, as well as collecting town monies, and corralling the occasional drunk to be delivered to Salem court. By 1720, the town employed five constables; some who were elected refused to serve and were fined five pounds. Criminals were housed in a "gale" where the Old Town House now stands.

Officially organized on April 15, 1853, the Marblehead police department is one of the oldest in the United States. Its first headquarters were on the ground floor of the Old Town House. Town Meeting records from 1856 note that a lockup was provided "in (the) basement of Old Town House for use of police." Town Meeting also approved \$200 for the year's police budget. Around this time the Board of Selectmen ordered the police to "prohibit, strictly, the coasting on sleds over hills and sidewalk" and "the playing of base ball on the Commons" as well as enforce the "Dog Law." In 1874 (well before the era of the car) the police were instructed "the law against fast driving is also to be enforced."

The Marblehead Police Department Museum is located on the ground floor of the Old Town House. *Courtesy Donald A. Doliber, Sr.*

LEFT: A Marblehead police officer shows off his Indian motorized bicycle, acquired by the department. The man, identified as Howard Lillibridge, posed for photographer Fred Litchman sometime in the 1940s in front of the steps at the Old Town House. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum*
 RIGHT: Police Department personnel in the Old Town House G.A.R. Post, c. 1940. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

One of the best-known overnight occupants of the Old Town House jail was stage and screen actress Tallulah Bankhead. While in Marblehead in the 1940s performing in summer theatre at the High School, she was arrested for drunk and disorderly behavior. Since there was no jail cell for women, the police officers incarcerated her overnight in the women's bathroom, posting an armed guard outside the door.

BOTTOM LEFT AND INSET: The horse trough located at the north end of the Old Town House created a gathering place for merchants and vendors, including Giovanni Batista Bacigalupo, known as "Freshy Bake, the Peanut Man." He sold roasted peanuts in Market Square, c. 1900. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission and Marblehead Museum*
 TOP RIGHT: Paine's Boston Express Model T car/van loaded with goods at the Old Town House, c. 1913. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum*
 BOTTOM RIGHT: A horse-drawn hurdy gurdy, most likely operated by a traveling vendor hoping to attract customers (as well as children), c. 1900. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*



The Old Town House area is known as Market Square for good reason. In 1763 the town voted to establish a market in the lower part of the building. The market was open every Tuesday and Thursday until 1:00 PM and until sunset on Saturday. Located at an important crossroads, i.e. the "Highway," Wharf Street, and the Way to the Ferry, the Old Town House has been at a commercial crossroads for 286 years. We know the "Highway" as Washington Street, then as now, an important thoroughfare. Wharf Street became State Street, which leads directly to the Town Landing on the harbor. And the Way to the Ferry went up Mugford Street and eventually led to Naugus Head where a ferry ran from Marblehead to Salem.

Courtesy Bette Hunt, Marblehead Town Historian



In the 1860s Marblehead was a small town of fishermen and shoemakers with long-standing traditions of patriotism and loyalty. In April 1861, three Marblehead militia companies responded immediately to President Abraham Lincoln's call for 75,000 men to join the Union Army and prepared to take the first train to Boston the next morning. On April 16 the earliest train was filled with the first two militias from Marblehead, with the third following on the next train. A fourth regiment was formed one month later. When the first Marblehead militias arrived in Boston they were greeted by an excited crowd, their fifes and drums playing "Yankee Doodle" as they marched to Faneuil Hall. General Hurk's report reads: "The patriotic men of Marblehead were the first to leave home, and the first to arrive in Boston...." The honor of being first was a source of pride for the town, and Marblehead felt it had once again distinguished itself in service to country. The chorus of the town's official anthem includes the lines "...was first in Revolution, was first in '61." *Courtesy Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson*



J.O.J. FROST

John Orne Johnson Frost was born in Marblehead in 1852. After the death of his beloved wife Annie, J.O.J. Frost began to paint in 1922. As he himself said, "Never painted a picture until I was past 70 years young." Frost used materials he had on hand: house paint, wall board, and odds and ends of wood scraps to create his works. He had no understanding of perspective, no knowledge of anatomy, and no particular skill at drawing. When images failed him, he often wrote misspelled descriptions, mostly in white paint, at odd angles all over the paintings. What might be considered artistic failings in fact make his paintings charming, unique, and sought after. Frost did have talent in his ability to compose a scene and record events. He worked tirelessly on his paintings, carvings, and ship models, often putting his work in a wheelbarrow and walking down to Market Square to sell the paint-



ings for 25 or 50 cents, without much luck. Frost eventually built a small building beside his house at 11 Pond Street, which he called his museum. It was covered with his paintings, inside and out, as well as a collection of his carvings and a variety of odd bits of things he had collected over the years. It cost 25 cents to go to the museum, and the proceeds were donated to the Marblehead Female Humane Society. Established in 1816, this society continues to provide assistance to townspeople in need.

Courtesy Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson

TOP LEFT: J.O.J. Frost with one of his paintings, c. 1925. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum*

TOP RIGHT: J.O.J. Frost model of the Old Town House. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum*

LEFT: J.O.J. Frost painting "There Shall Be No More War" of Marblehead Union soldiers leaving for Boston. There is a flag strung between Marblehead and Faneuil Hall; a train also runs between the town and city. The Union ("We don't want war") and Confederate ("Let's have war") causes are pictured middle left and right. *Courtesy of the Lynch Family*





TOP LEFT: The G.A.R. room remains as it was for the last gathering of Civil War veterans held in July 1934. © *Wednesdays in Marblehead*, courtesy Marblehead Museum
 TOP RIGHT: The G.A.R. Bible is open to the chapter and verse of that last meeting.

© *Dennis Curtin*

MIDDLE: Eleven women of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the G.A.R. stand next to the Old Town House steps.

Most are wearing badges on their dresses. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*



BOTTOM: Twelve older men, likely Civil War veterans, sit in a large car parked in front of the south side of the Old Town House, c. 1920. Three men are sitting on the Old Town House steps; one of them has a pair of crutches. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

When the Civil War ended, veterans returned home to a society forever changed. They banded together to form the Grand Army of the Republic (the G.A.R.). The organization was patterned along the lines of many fraternal organizations as a men's group of elected members. They met regularly and raised money through dues and donations to help veterans and their families. They wanted to maintain not a hollow victory of Northern superiority over the South, but a continuation of the United States as a whole.

The national membership grew large enough to have political impact, and the G.A.R. was responsible for legislation that provided pensions for soldiers. G.A.R.-sponsored legislation is seen as one of the first large-scale lobbying efforts in American politics.

Marblehead's G.A.R. Post No. 82 is named after the town's first Civil War battle casualty, John P. Goodwin. The post was very active, and eventually, in 1898, its headquarters were located on the top floor of the Old Town House after the building in which they met was destroyed by fire. It is still there today, deeded to the Marblehead Museum and Historical Society by the Ladies' Auxiliary of the G.A.R.

The Marblehead G.A.R. Post is unique in New England—and possibly the entire United States—because its inner meeting room remains exactly as it was during the time of its use. Frozen in time, 1934, it is the meeting place of many Civil War veterans who came to support each other with friendship, memories, and a financial helping hand. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson, and Bette Hunt, Marblehead Town Historian*





For centuries,

Marbleheaders deployed for duty from this historic place, starting with the American Revolution through World War II. And when the soldiers returned, the townspeople gathered at the Old Town House to welcome them safely home. Many groups of soldiers and veterans have been proudly commemorated with photographs taken on the Old Town House steps.

*Courtesy Bette Hunt,
Marblehead Town
Historian*



TOP LEFT: A group of G.A.R. veterans, dressed in uniforms, stand toward the front on the south steps of the Old Town House. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

TOP RIGHT: Men on the steps of the Old Town House. Five are carrying bedrolls; presumably they are Army enlistees during World War I, c. 1915. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

BOTTOM LEFT: The 19th Marblehead Company of the 24th Infantry 2nd Corp Cadets, 1943. The photograph is labeled "Mass. State Guard 1943." All are wearing military uniforms; most are young men, some carry rifles. The State Guard (now called the State Defense Force) was charged with augmenting civil emergency relief operations but was not deployed outside the state. Also shown is a young man with his bicycle. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

BOTTOM RIGHT: The parade for the crew of the USS Marblehead behind the Old Town House on Mugford Street in 1942. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*



Nathaniel Bliss was Marblehead's town crier until 1871.

In early colonial America,

many towns had no news of the outside world for weeks at a time. Being a peninsula, Marblehead had access to the outside world mainly by sea. The existing roads to Salem or Lynn were not good, and many people had no means of transportation. News from England was often received more frequently than news from neighboring towns. But the 18th century brought better access to news, and by the 1750s most cities had a weekly newspaper or newsletter as well as more reliable mail service.

An innovation in colonial America, borrowed from England and Europe, was the town crier, who had been the chief means of news throughout the centuries. The town crier traveled from town to town at first, then later concentrated his efforts in one place.

It was the town crier's job to call out the news and read

official announcements to the townspeople. Everyone would gather in a meeting place to hear what the town crier said.

Town criers were protected by law, as they sometimes brought bad news such as tax increases. Anything done by the town crier was done in the name of the ruling government, and harming a town crier was considered to be treason. The phrase "don't shoot the messenger" was a real command. The town crier became very important during the American Revolution, as he was often the only source of news.

The term "Posting a Notice" also comes from the act of the town crier who, having read his message to the townspeople, would attach it to the doorpost of the local inn or town hall. Some newspapers took the name "The Post" for this reason, and there are still newspapers called the "Town Crier."

Marblehead's town crier read his notices on the steps of the Old Town House. The tradition of the town crier continued, particularly in small towns, into the early 20th century. There are still many towns that maintain the position of town crier for ceremonial occasions, though Marblehead is not one of them.

Courtesy Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson (including photograph)

INSET: A boy handing out fliers in front of the Old Town House.

BOTTOM: Market Square and the Old Town House on Election Day, c. 1912. *Both pictures courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*



Marblehead's patriotism

and love of freedom is in many ways embodied in the Old Town House. During the years leading up to the Revolution, citizens and town leaders met there regularly as the colonies moved toward independence.

Meetings in this venerable building covered a wide range of subjects including, in 1764, a vote to build a smallpox hospital "in the pasture North westerly from the Alms house about eighty poles distant." A surprising number of Town Meeting votes over the years recognized the importance of education and the establishment of public schools; it is said that there were two school rooms in the Old Town House for a time.

For many years, legal notices and marriage bans were posted at the Old Town House (inset photograph, behind boy), a site for dispensing

information. And of course for many years the Old Town House served as a voting place for local, state, and federal elections. In the early days Marblehead voters had to appear before election officials and cast their votes verbally; paper ballots were in use by 1889.

Courtesy Bette Hunt, Marblehead Town Historian

A vibrant neighborhood has always surrounded the Old Town House. A young John Glover surely ran past the building and its market. Joseph Story, the noted Supreme Court justice, grew up diagonally across from the structure. Early in the town's history, transportation to Salem or Boston was provided by private carriages or company stagecoaches. In 1818, the Eastern Stage Coach Company offered transport to Boston until it was replaced by the Eastern Railroad in 1839. In 1884, trolleys appeared in Marblehead. The first trolleys were horse drawn and the tracks ran past the Old Town House. By the end of the 19th century, horse power gave way to the electric trolley, with different companies providing service for weekend and summer tourists who came to visit the harbor and seashore. By 1937, the era of trolley service had come to a close, and starting in 1939 the tracks were paved over. *Courtesy Donald A. Doliber, Sr.*



TOP LEFT: Market Square, taken from the corner of State Street, showing the stores, trolley tracks, and wires overhead, c. 1905. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*
 TOP MIDDLE: Market Square taken from the Old Town House showing the Lyceum building, c. 1920. The signs on the Lyceum advertise "Moving Pictures" and a "Shoe Shine Parlor." There is a mailbox on the corner of State Street. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

TOP RIGHT: Drugstore of William H. Shepard across from the Old Town House; note the gas street lamp, late 1800s. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*
 MIDDLE LEFT: Travel on horseback in Market Square after a snowstorm, c. 1900. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum*
 MIDDLE RIGHT: The Hinckley building, which was replaced with the Grader building at the corner of Washington and Pleasant streets. The Old Town House is visible in the background. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

BOTTOM LEFT: A horse-drawn trolley on Pleasant Street near Washington Street, c. 1890. *Courtesy Dan Dixey*
 BOTTOM RIGHT: The George W. Grader building, known as Moses Maverick Square, built in 1885. This photograph shows the building dressed for July 4, 1903, celebrations with a banner depicting the sinking of the U.S.S. Maine in Havana Harbor, 1898. *Courtesy Dan Dixey Collection*



TOP LEFT: Scaffolding on the north side of the Old Town House indicates it was undergoing some sort of repair. The trolley tracks help date the photograph c. 1905. The gentleman walking on the sidewalk appears to be scowling at the young boy running in the street. *Courtesy Gene Arnould, Arnould Gallery*



BOTTOM LEFT: In days gone by, moving a house was a regular practice if the need arose. In this case, the process went awry as the house being moved became wedged between a house on Mechanic Street and a tree. Local boys were happy to pose for a picture while workers considered their exit strategy, c. 1900.



Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission



TOP RIGHT: Boardman's Bakery at the corner of Mugford Street and Market Square, c. 1900. It was torn down in the mid-1930s; Hansen's Gulf Station (MIDDLE RIGHT) was subsequently located there. *Photographs courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

BOTTOM RIGHT: A postcard showing the rock steps from Market Square to Mechanic Street before granite steps were built and the alley was paved. The path is still maintained as a public way. *Courtesy Amy Drinker*

Marbleheaders

have always loved a parade or any reason to gather in celebration. In his *A Short History of Marblehead*, Jonathan H. Orne writes that at the conclusion of the American Revolution “At last, peace was declared, and the news was received with ‘ringing of bells, firing of guns and other demonstrations of joy,’ while large tubs of rum-punch were prepared at the town-house for the free indulgence of a joyful crowd.”

The events depicted in these photographs take place at or near the Old Town House. Often there are curious children in the parade route, which is understandably the best place to watch a parade.



TOP LEFT: A July 4 celebration at the Old Town House, complete with marching band and flags, c. 1930. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

MIDDLE LEFT: Market Square, taken from the Mugford Building looking towards the Old Town House. The buildings and street are decorated with bunting and flags. The stores on Washington Street include the Pickering Coal Co. and the Public Market, c. 1920. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

BOTTOM LEFT: A band parades down Mugford Street toward the Old Town House, c. 1935. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

TOP RIGHT: Men and boys dressed in Civil War uniforms stand in front of Boardman's Bakery, Market Square, c. 1910. The roof of Gerry School (1906) is visible. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

MIDDLE RIGHT: A parade of horse-drawn fire wagons on Washington Street, c. 1910. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

BOTTOM NEAR RIGHT: In 1979 the town held a parade to celebrate the 350th Anniversary of its founding in 1629. Shown are the Marblehead High School Band and members of the Class of 1910 in an open car. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

RIGHT: December's Christmas Walk includes the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus by lobster boat. Santa is shown here reading to his admirers on the steps of the Old Town House. © Rick Ashley





TOP: A Humane Society of Massachusetts lifeboat is shown on a horse-drawn wagon at Market Square. Most of the men in the boat are wearing cork life vests. "When The Humane Society was founded in 1786, survivors of shipwrecks might reach shore but often perished because the isolated beaches lacked any protective shelter. To address this problem, the Humane Society established huts and outfitted them with firewood and provisions to sustain survivors until local townspeople came to their rescue."

Humane Society of Massachusetts, image courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission



MIDDLE: A Market Square Association float, with a Chamberlain dory owned by the Transportation Company. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

BOTTOM LEFT: As the United States celebrated its 100th year in 1876, citizens held all sorts of celebrations. In Marblehead, Fourth of July events included the first children's Antique and Horribles Parade. This parade continues today with prizes awarded for categories including "best political commentary."

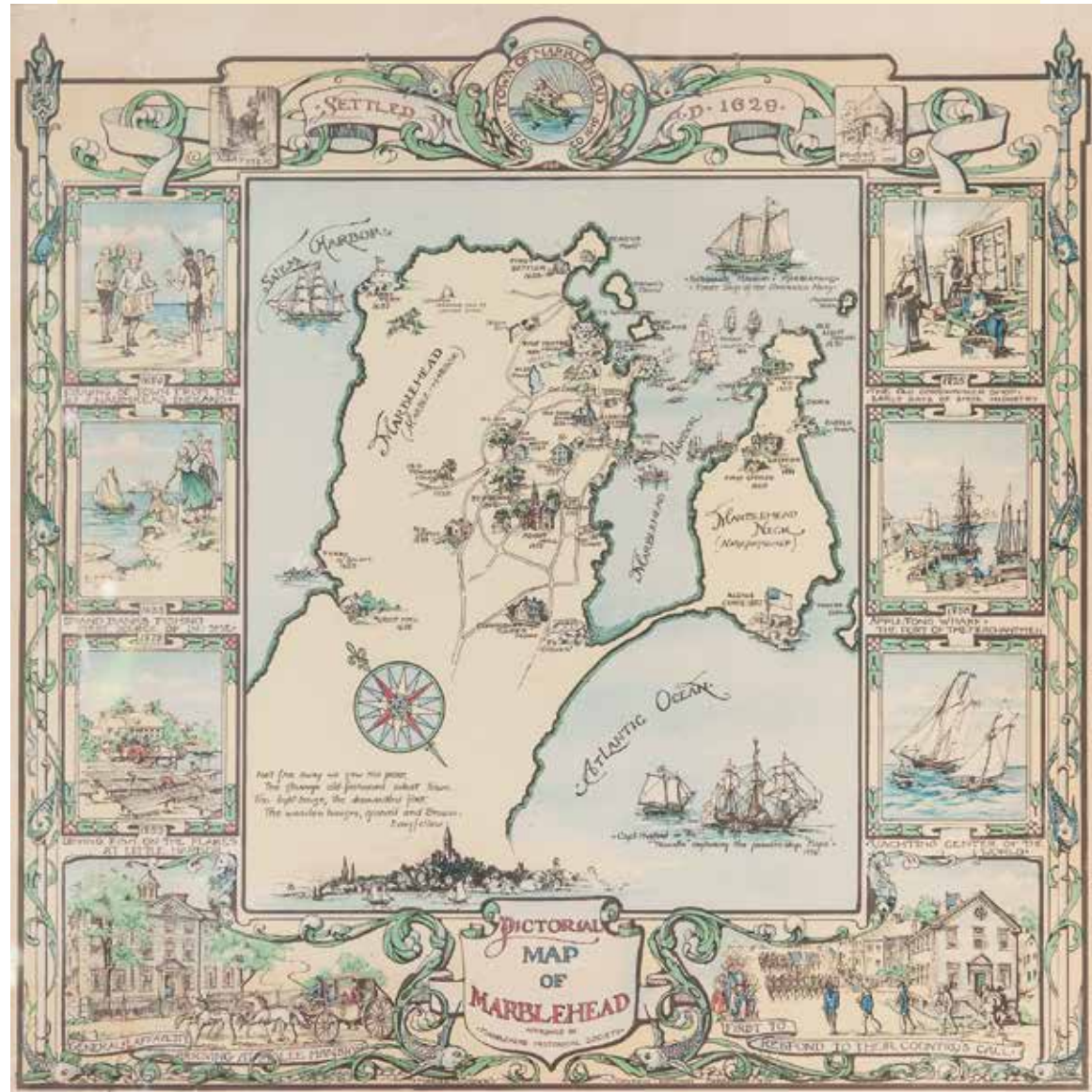
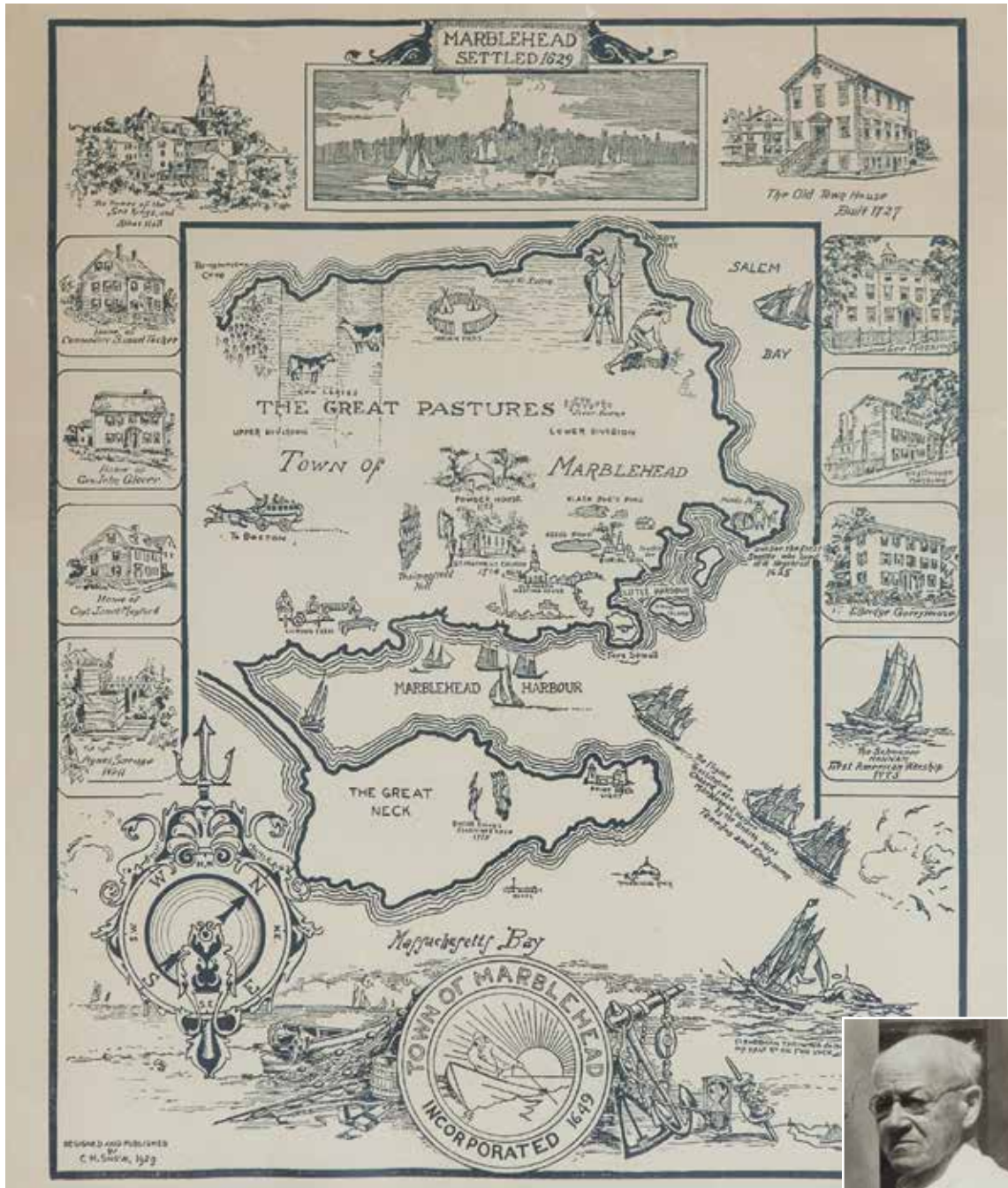
Courtesy Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson
 BELOW: Uncle Sam and a friend at the 2013 Marblehead Festival of Arts. © Rick Ashley



ABOVE: Detail of a large hooked rug owned by Richard Carlson. A second rug of the same design is on display in the front lobby of Abbot Hall; next to it is a plaque that reads "This hooked rug was made by the late Mrs. Lillian Bailey of Marblehead. The project involved a thousand hours of work. Army and Navy uniforms of World War II veterans are used in the borders." *Courtesy Richard Carlson*

As a seafaring people, Headers have often found maps to be a familiar way to interpret their town. The three maps included here all portray the Old Town House as well as other iconic buildings, vessels, and events considered central to the town's history.

The map on page 28 was drawn by Charles "Skeeter" Snow (1864-1945), a lifelong Marbleheader. A 1922 founding member of the Marblehead Arts Association, Snow had a studio at 26 Lee Street. He and his daughter Louise Snow also had an art shop at the corner of Washington and Pleasant streets, known as the "Snow Shop." They sold art supplies and hand-colored prints and postcards that they produced themselves. Snow worked as a printmaker and produced a large number of marine etchings. Snow's work is relatively unknown outside of Marblehead; nonetheless, his images of the town are charming. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson*



LEFT: Map of Marblehead by Charles H. Snow for the town's 300th celebration in 1929. The Marblehead Observer wrote, "C. H. Snow is the Marblehead artist who so thoroughly knows the picturesque highways and byways of his native town." INSET: Charles H. Snow shown in later life. ABOVE: Map of Marblehead by Marian M. Brown, copyright 1929, also created for the town's 300th celebration. A copy is on display at Abbot Hall outside the Selectmen's Room. All courtesy Richard Carlson



TOP LEFT: Three children at the pump and horse trough at the northeast end of the Old Town House, c. 1905.

Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission

TOP RIGHT: The present pump, beyond the bench, was installed in 2000 during the street improvement project, and is intended for seasonal use. © Rob Kipp

INSET: The pump's pineapple handle is a symbol of hospitality.

© Amy Drinker

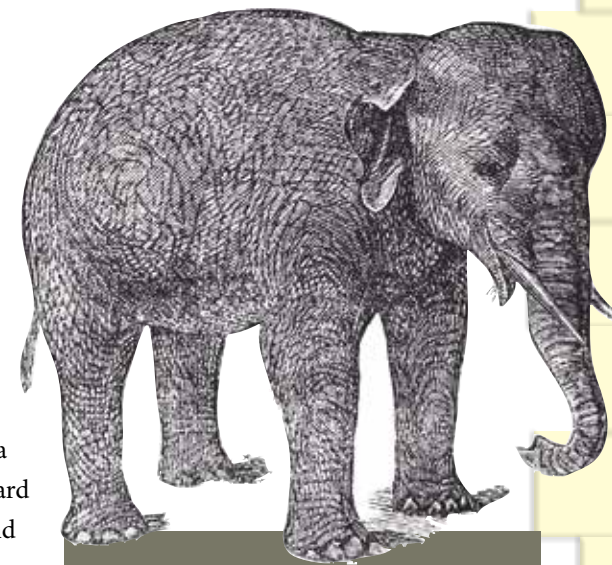
Major hardship

faced the people of Marblehead at the end of the eighteenth century. The fishing fleet was slowly coming back, but embargoes loomed, and the town looked shabby and run-down after many years of an economy slow to recover from the hardships of the Revolutionary War.

Despite all this, things began to perk up in the 1790s. Marbleheaders are a resilient lot, and the fishermen worked hard when the season and weather allowed, and then “frolicked away their hardships during the winter.” (Gamage and Lord, *The Spirit of '76 Lives Here*.)

It caused quite a sensation when Marbleheaders were given the opportunity to forget their worries and see an elephant on its tour of New England. Accounts are unclear as to whether the elephant actually came across town lines, or was in nearby Salem, but he was definitely seen by Marbleheaders. The mammoth mammal ate 130 pounds of food a day and drank 30 bottles of porter (a dark ale or beer) at a time. He pulled the cork out of the bottle himself. The broadside advertising “The Elephant” reads: “He surpasses any terrestrial creature, and his intelligence, makes as near an approach to man, as matter can to spirit....” All for 25 cents for adults and half that for children.

Not long after the elephant’s visit, men from Marblehead would begin to travel to the Far East themselves. Though Marblehead was not a center for the China trade, as Salem was, many men from Marblehead went on Asian trade voyages, either as captains or crew. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum, Pam Peterson*



“The sum of ten dollars was received for the use of the Town House for three days for the exhibition of an Elephant.”

Orne, A Short History of Marblehead

The Elephant

A Source of Water



for livestock, sailors,

and passersby has been a cornerstone of Old Town House life throughout the ages. At a meeting on May 9, 1763, it was voted “To sink a well at the northeast end of the Old Town House for the public service, especially in the case of fires.” For many years the well provided an abundant supply of water for residents, cattle, horses, and ships in the harbor. Upon arrival, captains would often off-load their depleted water barrels so the crew could roll them up Wharf Street (now State Street) and fill them with fresh water at the Old Town House well. Once full, they would roll them back to the harbor, which was, fortuitously, downhill.

“The Town House well was not the only water source in town. With an abundant supply of underground water, Marbleheaders could draw freely from a number of town pumps—Franklin Street, Orne Street and Darling Street were three in the downtown area. In a crowded community of wooden buildings fire was a constant menace.” (Gamage and Lord, *The Spirit of '76 Lives Here*.)

Courtesy Bette Hunt, Marblehead Town Historian

The 'Headers Paint the Old Town House

by Russell Knight

The history of our storied town is a cornucopia, a horn of plenty, a fount from whose inexhaustible depths flows a never-ending stream of memories of days long past. A harbor that once sheltered scores of staunch fishing schooners, sturdy weatherbeaten coasters, and broad-beamed cargo ships now mothers hundreds of sleek yachts, spit-and-polished cabin cruisers, and noisy outboard motor boats. Its shores, once lined with cavernous warehouses, gear-strewn wharves and flourishing shipyards are today a hodgepodge, a mixed blend of uninspiring condos, yacht clubs, and dwelling houses and subdivisions. No vessels laden with sun-cured fish, barrel staves, and fish oil weigh their anchors and lay a course for Europe and the post of the Far East.

Sadly, the changes wrought by time and the dynamic growth of our nation also changed good old Marblehead.

Yet despite an influx of “foreigners” (people from other towns and cities) and “money-hungry developers,” all was not lost. In fact the one trait that has survived is, oddly enough, a trait that, though roundly condemned in many circles, often wins the plaudits of those within earshot of the speaker.

To the uninitiated, this unique trait is known as Marblehead’s “second language”—an awesome blend of soul-searing curses, blasphemous oaths, earthy jibes, unrepeatable expressions, scurrilous comments, and Rabelaisian slurs. Needless to say its constant use by both men and boys rubbed the more pernickety the wrong way. But on one occasion it was put to good use.

This occurred many years ago, when a motion to repaint the Old Town House was introduced at an Annual Town Meeting. Though none questioned the need, picking a color promptly sparked a heated controversy. Some of the voters insisted it be painted white with a gray trim; others wanted it painted yellow with a white trim; while others argued for this and that—coffee-brown, olive-drab, brick-red, plus a wide variety of hues and shades.

Eventually, the squabbling, nit-picking, and bickering caused tempers to flare; within minutes this meeting was in a complete disarray, an uncontrollable bedlam.

At this point an Old Timer decided to bring the matter to a head. Leaping to his

feet and in a voice that rattled the windows he shouted, “Mr. Moderator! Mr. Moderator! I, by Jesus, move that we paint it calf-turd yellow!”

“And by Christ, I second the motion!” thundered another Old Salt.

Gaveling the meeting to order, the Moderator declared, “Ladies and gentlemen, it has been moved by Jesus and seconded by Christ that the Old Town House be painted

calf-turd yellow! Will those in favor of this motion, please raise their right hand!”

© 1989, reprinted courtesy Legend Publications, Marblehead, MA



TOP LEFT: The south side of the Old Town House at sunrise.

© Mike Porter

TOP RIGHT: View from the north-facing attic window of the Old Town House. © Wednesdays in Marblehead

BOTTOM LEFT: The north side of the Old Town House at sunrise.

© Wednesdays in Marblehead

Greetings from Marblehead have been sent via postcard for many years and the Old Town House has always been a popular subject. At times the building's color seemed to change, but this may have been due to the vagaries of printing, not the paint.



TOP LEFT: A 1940s postcard harkening back to an earlier time "60 years ago." Other identical cards reference "75 years ago." Note the flagpole is mounted on the ground, not the front of the building. *Courtesy Marblehead Museum*

BOTTOM LEFT: A postcard published by Richard M. Cook, Marblehead MA, shows the Old Town House, c. 1930. *Courtesy Amy Drinker*

TOP RIGHT: A postcard featuring Marblehead Trolley Trips. Local sites are shown in the windows and wheels. The overhead wire indicates that the trolley is electric. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

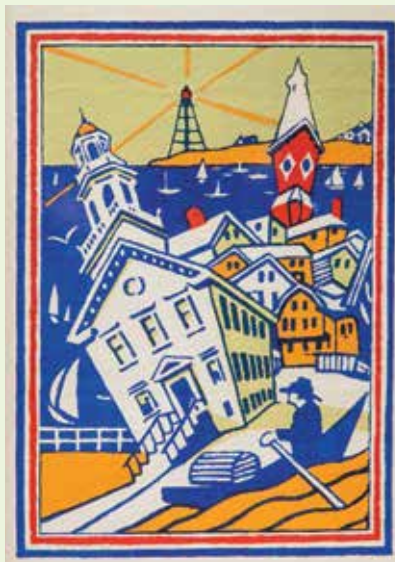
BOTTOM RIGHT: The Lyceum Theater (yellow building) is visible behind the Old Town House, 1920s. *Courtesy Christine Nuccio*

Depicting the Old Town House has captured the imagination of many artists throughout the ages. While Archibald Willard's painting "The Spirit of '76" clearly embodies Marblehead's patriotic fervor, the Old Town House is without doubt the enduring symbol of the town's pride in its American heritage.



TOP LEFT: The Old Marblehead Improvement Association's logo, by Polly Maxon Tritschler. *Courtesy Old Marblehead Improvement Association*
 TOP RIGHT: A Bud Orne rendition of the Old Town House, painted on rock. *Courtesy Marblehead Historical Commission*

BOTTOM LEFT: In September 1994, Penni's Supermarket burned to the ground in a conflagration that threatened to destroy the surrounding area. Thirteen fire departments battled the inferno for over 24 hours. In its wake, a barrier was erected to cordon off the void. Students and teachers from the Gerry School painted a mural on it, which now hangs in Crosby's Marketplace. *Courtesy Rick Ashley*
 BOTTOM RIGHT: A vintage Marblehead Arts Association Christmas card depicting iconic Marblehead buildings and a fisherman in his dory. *Courtesy Richard Carlson*



TOP: Back in the olden days, a car was considered ready for dress when sporting an Old Town House "red flash" vase holding flowers. *Courtesy Richard Carlson*
 TOP RIGHT: A plate from "Ye Olde Historical Pottery" series sold by Marblehead's R. M. Cook store, c. 1900. This plate includes depictions of the Agnes Surriage well, the Lee Mansion, the Old Powder House, and Saint Michael's Church. *Courtesy Richard Carlson*
 BOTTOM LEFT: Pitchers, creamers, and other production pottery often displayed the Old Town House. *Courtesy Christine Nuccio*
 BOTTOM RIGHT: Hestia Creations of Marblehead has long been creating an annual ornament series for the town of most of the historic buildings; the Old Town House has been featured in two as well as a miniature (shown). *Courtesy Amy Drinker*



Collectors love the variety of objects featuring the Old Town House; the excitement of pursuit is matched with the enjoyment of displaying acquired treasures. An unusual Old Town House item (not shown) was a 1984 limited edition wooden replica of the building created by Chris Gurshin to serve as a container for chocolates. *Courtesy Richard Carlson*





LEFT: What is thought to be an original hand-hewn beam of either elm or oak

was revealed during the renovation project on the ground level in the vicinity of the old jail cells. It has been replaced with a steel beam. A section of the original is on display at Abbot Hall. Also discovered in the ceiling above the jail cells was a ramrod for a musket or rifle.

ABOVE: The elevator framing on the building's top floor. *Photographs courtesy Mills Whitaker Architects LLC*

Universal Accessibility

for the Old Town House was made possible through the support of Marblehead residents who overwhelmingly voted approval at 2012 Town Meeting and then at the polls in June 2012. The project appropriation of \$675,168 was reduced significantly by the contribution of \$65,000 from the Marblehead Historical Commission and \$30,000 from Columbia Pictures for one-time use of the building as a movie set. The construction meets the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board regulations for accessibility. Upgrades were made on all floors. Significant improvements focused on the installation of an elevator, new bathrooms, and renovations to the interior that include lighting and historically appropriate doors. Continuing use of the ground floor includes museum space and the American Legion room.

Courtesy Judy Jacobi, Old Town House Oversight Committee

Old Town House Oversight Committee

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Judy Jacobi, <i>Chair</i> | Moses Grader |
| Chris Butler | Bob Ives |
| Richard Carlson | Chris Johnston |
| Jeff Chelgren | Mary Levine |
| Becky Cutting | Tom Saltzman |

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 Marblehead Disabilities Commission
 Marblehead Finance Committee
 Marblehead Festival of Arts
 Marblehead Forever Committee
 Marblehead Historical Commission
 Marblehead Museum
 Marblehead Reporter
 Old Marblehead Improvement Association

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| Theresa Dever | Christine Nuccio | |
| Amy Drinker | Pam Peterson | |

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ABOVE: The bronze plaque at the southeast corner of the Old Town House. *Courtesy Gene Jacobi*

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The Internet Archive: Dedicated to building a digital library of internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form: www.archive.org, www.openlibrary.org

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A tasty Old Town House baked for the annual Gingerbread House contest.
© Gene Jacobi

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