

July-Sept 2009

# THE GEORGETOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## *From the President*

We were fortunate to see the reopening of the nearly complete Harry L. Murch Park in time for the Memorial Day Commemorative Celebration. This was made possible by the citizens of our Town, the CPC, Historical Society and Commission, the Highway Dept and numerous contractors who volunteered their time and equipment to make this vision a reality. The historically appropriate maple trees line the street while the Veterans' Memorials and flags of the Armed Forces add to its significance and visual appeal. We look forward to seeing the completion of the Park and to the repairs to our Brocklebank Museum House and Shoe Shop that are now possible by CPA grants given to the GHS by the Townspeople at our last Annual Town Meeting. When completed, these too will provide further evidence of the value of Townspeople's choice to support the CPA Program in our Town in order to make Georgetown a better place.

Historical Society board members have come across a trove of original documentation on **Col. Joseph Kimball** of New Rowley. It turns out he was a Colonel in the cavalry of the state militia. At the Phillips Library in Salem, there is a box full of diaries and personal papers dating from the ca. 1790s to the 1880s. He appears to have been a carpenter-housewright who worked on many buildings in town, and went to caucus, temperance and Masonic meetings. We also note a "Jos. Kimball" and another "J. Kimball" or two along Elm Street on the 1830 map, and are looking for more documentation on which J. Kimball might have lived at each location. The Col. Joseph Kimball papers are worth a close look with a lot of town history in them regarding homes, public buildings, events shop and other work done by Joseph Kimball in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In Union Cemetery on-line data we found his gravestone

with its remarkable carving of a hand holding a hammer (see illustration). The same detail was found on his son Walter's stone. Also nearby are his wife Mary's and other childrens' stones. We would be glad to know whether there are any descendants that may have more information on Col. Joseph Kimball who was so instrumental in the founding and building of Georgetown. We also expect to have copies made of the papers for use by the local Historical Commission in documenting the early nineteenth century buildings of Georgetown along Elm St. as well as downtown Main St., Central and North Streets. A forthcoming Massachusetts Historical Commission survey and planning grant will allow further documentation of all these homes along Elm St. and downtown. We appreciate the significant part all of the volunteers have played in making all of these community preservation efforts possible.

Regards,  
Rick Detwiller, President, GHS

Union Cemetery

Georgetown, MA

"His record in on High"

**COL. JOSEPH KIMBALL BORN**

**Feb. 21, 1798 Died Aug. 21, 1881**

[Note the hand-held hammer bas-relief. Joseph Kimball was elected Representative to the General Court in 1838 – Gage *History of Rowley*, 1839.]



## *3rd Graders from Penn Brook School Visit the Brocklebank*

Approximately 140 3rd graders came to the museum in June on their annual visit. It was a great time and the weather was terrific. A big thank you for the volunteers who joined us to make this event such a success!



## *New Information on our friend Cuffee Dole*

Cuffee is back in the news. The earliest known document mentioning an African American is being sold by a Yonkers, NY antique dealer. It's a Warrant issued for detaining Cuffee Dole in a dispute over \$8 on July 4, 1776, when on this day of our independence, he is serving under Gen. George Washington during the British siege of Boston. This document (despite the charge of which there are no more details and was likely dropped) drew out more important facts of Dole's life including his honorable military service, which spans from 1776-1780 and includes serving on the Pawlet Expedition, the battle of Saratoga, the personal staff of Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, and was possibly in the same company of those who witnessed the first U.S. flag being flown. The July 4th document is signed by Aaron Wood, another prominent leader of the revolutionary period. (For more information on our local hero, you can buy the book "A Respectable Man of Color—Beyond the Legend of Cuffee Dole", by Christine Comiskey. Visit the [GHS website](#) for more info.)

### *Article References:*

- \* Emailwire.com. *Press release 23927. 1776 Black Document Discovered. A Story of Freedom for July 4th.* Posted June 22, 2009.
- \* Bell, J.L, Boston1775blogspot.com. *Cuff Dole: wanted man.* Posted June 26, 2009 from <http://boston1775.blogspot.com/2009/06/cuff-dole-wanted-man.html>
- \* Comisky, C. Discoverer of the Warrant and author of "A Respectable Man of Color-Beyond the Legend of Cuffee Dole, Mar 2008.

## *What's It?*

What's a "What's it?" you ask? Something found in Georgetown that may or not have an explanation of what it is or what it does. We have here a stone, approximately 8" long, found amongst some old tools in a Georgetown resident's basement. What's interesting about the stone is that it has a "handle" that fits an adult hand perfectly. Considering Georgetown was known for its shoemaking and the size of the stone fits inside of an adult shoe, one could conclude it's a tool for making shoes. But, there is no evidence of another tool chipping at it to form its shape. So, does anyone know "What's It?".

*Let us know your ideas of what it might be or was used for.*

## **Unknown Stone**



## *Museum Information*

### **Schedule of Museum and School House Visits:**

The 2009 Brocklebank Museum and Schoolhouse will be open for guided tours this summer on Jul 12th and 26th; Aug 9th and 23rd; Sept 13th and 27th; and Oct 11th. Come and learn about the early life of Georgetown. If you have a historical interest, become a guide and help us to tell the stories of the early days. Call Beverly at 978-352-8526 for more information.

Do you have your own stories or suggestions? We would love to hear from you! You can email us at [info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com](mailto:info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com) or mail us at:

**Georgetown Historical Society, P.O. Box 376, Georgetown, MA. 01833.**

### **Other items of interest**

- JOIN US ON FACEBOOK! Search Groups, “Georgetown Historical Society”.
- VISIT OUR WEBSITE [www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com) to see more information about GHS and upcoming events.

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### *Can you help GHS?*

The museum is in need of a canister type vacuum. If you have one that you could donate, please email or call us to let us know.

Would you like to help GHS with various projects? Please email or call us to participate in carrying out any number of upcoming programs or projects. Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

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### *Calendar of Events*

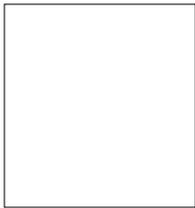
**Sep 16<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm, Peabody Library: Tom Mahlstead on local artifacts found in this area.**

**Sep 18-20<sup>th</sup>: Georgetown Days and Ice Cream Sale.** *(Please consider assisting at the Museum during this event—we could use your help!)*

**Sep 18-20<sup>th</sup> & 25-27<sup>th</sup>, events all over Essex Co: Trails & Sails - Great events all over historic Essex County. Go to [www.essexheritage.org/ts/index.shtml](http://www.essexheritage.org/ts/index.shtml) for more info. Brocklebank Museum open 1-4pm.**

**Nov 12<sup>th</sup> 7pm, Peabody Library: Anthony Sammarco, A Delicious Memory from the Past: The Baker Chocolate Company.**

**Dec 2 @ 7pm, Peabody Library: Annual GHS Meeting.**



The Georgetown Historical Society  
P.O. Box 376  
Georgetown, MA 01833

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## Georgetown Historical Society

### **Officers**

*President:* Frederic Detwiller  
*1st V. Pres:* Terrance Hart  
*2nd V. Pres:* Beverly Knapp  
*Secretary:* Sylvia West  
*Treasurer:* Joe Knapp (*Acting*)  
*Curator:* Stephen Keene

### **Board of Directors**

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Joe Knapp  
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Charles Keilty  
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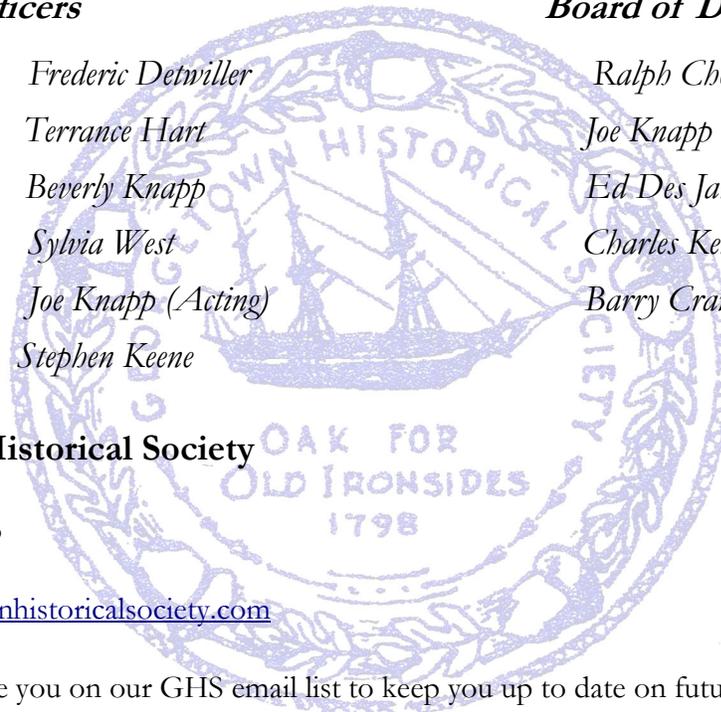
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We would like to include you on our GHS email list to keep you up to date on future events. Please go to [Georgetownhistoricalsociety.com](http://Georgetownhistoricalsociety.com) and click on the "Join our Mailing List" link