

What is Old is New Again!

At the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1676, Thomas Eames and his family were living at a place that would later become part of Framingham, Massachusetts. While Eames was away in Boston- seeking military protection for his family and farm, his homestead was attacked by a band of Native Americans whose cache of food had been pilfered by colonists. Thomas Eames' wife and five of their children were killed in a Nipmuck raid. Four children were taken captive – two later returned. This marker stands today on the Mt. Wayte site of the "Eames Family Massacre." The hillside marker is above Farm Pond in southeastern Framingham, Massachusetts.



In the mid 1600's, the Eames family was one of seven English families living in the present-day town of Framingham, Massachusetts. The original settlers, the Algonkian-speaking natives known as Nipmucks, had long since moved away from the area due to a decrease in their numbers brought on by internal tribal warfare, small pox and other deadly European diseases which had affected their potential for survival. The dwindling tribal members of Nipmucks consolidated their diminishing villages for personal defense, collected their most precious belongings and settled in neighboring areas outside of present-day Framingham.

The site of the “Eames’ Massacre,” was originally named for Richard Wayte, a military man who lived in Boston in the 1600’s. His bravery and outstanding soldiering during the Pequot War (1634-1638) was rewarded in 1658, with 300 acres between Farm Pond and the Sudbury River, including the hill now known as Mt. Wayte (Herring, 29). .



Thomas Danforth, Deputy Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony in the late 1600’s, purchased the land from Richard Wayte by 1669, and incorporated it into his personal collection of growing farmland that history has recorded by the various names such as “Mr. Danforth’s Farms,” “Framlingham,” and “Framingham Plantation.” Danforth named Framingham for his birthplace in England: Framlingham (the “l” in Framlingham is silent, which is why Framingham today is spelled without the silent letter.)

Deputy Governor Danforth granted Eames permission in 1671, to build a house, a barn, and to farm on his land – the ill-fated “old Wayte grant.” After Thomas Eames’ family was murdered and their home and barn burned down in 1676, Thomas Eames never returned to Mt. Wayte to live. Eames was awarded a substantial land grant east of Farm Pond as the Nipmuck Natives were ordered to relinquish some of their dwindling land-holdings in a court settlement following King Philip’s War.

Two hundred years later, In 1834, plans called for the railroad to pass through Framingham Center, but several men with special interests in the turnpike and stagecoach line were opposed to that route. Thus the rails were laid two miles further south, in South Framingham. The larger and technologically advanced (for the day) wooden railroad

station was built in 1848, replacing an earlier station. Trade brochures at the turn of the century used this map to advertise South Framingham's rail hub. Six lines (over 100 trains a day) converged to make Framingham the center of a regional rail network. The railroad transformed the social and economic life of South Framingham and eventually put the stagecoaches and turnpike out of business.

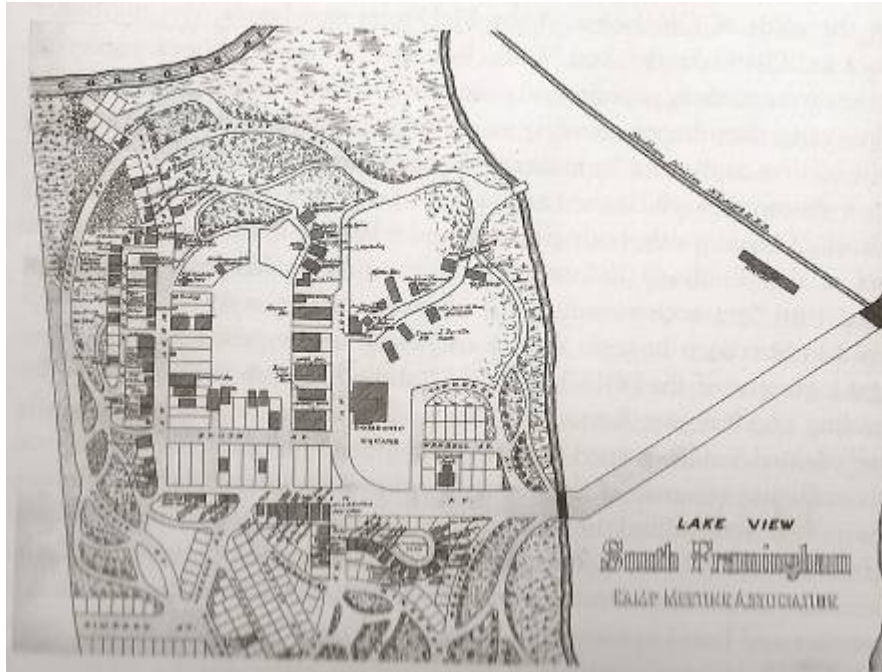


In 1874, The New England Branch of Chautauqua, a highly popular adult Evangelical - Methodist Christian education movement in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, arrived at the rural outskirts of Framingham known as Mt. Wayte and Farm Pond. The Chautauqua movement brought entertainment and culture and religious studies for the whole community: a center for education, religion, and the arts; with speakers, teachers, musicians, entertainers, preachers and special performers of the day. Ten-day sessions were held back-to-back, April through August.



The New England Branch of Chautauqua at Framingham, also known as Lake View for its view of Farm Pond, featured cultural, educational, and recreational

opportunities in addition to religious studies. The Chautauqua bells rang each morning at 6:30A.M. to waken campers so that they might greet the sun as it rose over beautiful Farm Pond. The bells called all to meals, celebrated festive occasions, and signaled good night at 10:00 P.M. Participants could enroll in a four-year religious program designed to educate Methodist Sunday-school teachers (Herring, 207).



(Chautauqua map from archives of FHS Collections)

Small, privately owned, Victorian cottages, many of which still exist today, soon replaced tents as the popularity



of Chautauqua grew. Thirty-room dormitories and a



dining room with seating capacity for three hundred were also available.

Thirty trains a day provided transportation from all over New England - an important element in the growth and success of the rural Chautauqua sites. As the

railroad gave way to cars and entertainment went to the way of radio and movie theaters, the decline of Chautauqua was inevitable. The Chautauqua bells on Mt. Wayte were last rung on Armistice Day, 1918.

Ground was broken on June 2, 1943, for a military hospital named in honor of Dr. Harvey Cushing of World War I fame. Cushing General Hospital was located adjacent to Farm Pond, at the foot of Mt. Wayte. Special trains brought soldiers wounded in World War II directly here from hospital ships. The hospital contained 1,750 beds - however, accommodated up to 3,200 patients following Battle of the Bulge.



(photo from archives of FHS Collections)

Cushing Hospital was on the USO entertainers' circuit. USO entertainers such as Bob Hope, Benny Goodman, Irving Berlin, Roy Rogers, Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy, and heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey were a few big-timers who did much to cheer up wounded soldiers at Cushing General Hospital in the mid-1940's (Herring, 289).



CUSHING GENERAL HOSPITAL
1944 - 1946



HERE CAME THE WOUNDED FROM
MANY BATTLEFIELDS OF
WORLD WAR II



MORE THAN 13,800 SOLDIERS
WERE TREATED AND CARED FOR
IN 95 BUILDINGS ERRECTED ON THIS SITE
BY THE U.S. WAR DEPARTMENT



ONLY THE CHAPEL REMAINS

NAMED FOR
DR. HARVEY W. CUSHING
FAMED NEUROSURGEON AND WW I ARMY SURGEON

★ FREEDOM IS NOT FREE ★



CUSHING VETERANS HOSPITAL
1946-1955



VETERANS OF
THE UNITED STATES ARMED SERVICES
CAME HERE FOR HEALING AND CARE
PROVIDED BY A GRATEFUL NATION
CASUALTIES FROM THE KOREAN CONFLICT
WERE TREATED HERE FROM 1950 TO 1954

CUSHING STATE HOSPITAL
1955-1991



BUILDINGS ON THIS SITE PROVIDED
CHRONIC CARE TO AGING CITIZENS OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
AND SERVED AS A GERIATRIC
RESEARCH AND TEACHING CENTER



The hospital was also used as a work site for German prisoners of war. Cushing hospital was operated by the U.S. War Department until 1945, at which time it became a Veterans Hospital and remained so until 1955. The U.S. Government then relinquished the 110 acres and all of the buildings to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for use as a Geriatric State Hospital. It remained a state run facility until 1991, when it was determined that the maintenance of the hospital was too costly for the state. The Town of Framingham razed the site following the abandonment of the buildings and it is a beautiful green space and park today. The Cushing Chapel is the only building still standing as a reminder of the connection to World War II.

Mt. Wayte and Farm Pond have seen many transformations over the past 400 years: from pastoral farmland, to a religious commune, to a federally built hospital and then back to pastoral land used as a town green space. What is old is new again!

Bibliography

Barry, William. *A History of Framingham, Massachusetts, Including the Plantation, from 1640 to the Present Time.* Boston: James Munroe, 1847.

-This book can be difficult to plough through. It is cumbersome and dull but well equipped with the Framingham history details one may need to complete a research paper. Definitely not a “coffee table” book.

Callahan, Raymond J. *Framingham Historical Reflections.* Edited by Martha Dewar and M. Joan Gilbert. Washington, D.C.: McGregor and Warren, Inc., 1974.

-Short and concise descriptions of a select few historic events in Framingham’s history. Not a complete history of the town, but a good resource for the most famous events. I found this book in the Framingham History stacks of the town library. It is available as a resource only; one may not check it out of the library.

Drake, James D. *King Philip’s War: Civil War in New England, 1675-1676.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999.

-There are literally hundreds of books to choose from for details of King Philip’s War. I chose this book for its readability and short passage that included an account of the Eames Family. It’s an interesting non-fiction book that can be read in a weekend.

Herring, Stephen W. *Framingham: An American Town.* Framingham, MA: Framingham Historical Society, 2000.

- A very readable, story-like account of the history of Framingham with a few maps and illustrations. This book was especially helpful with ample historical maps illustrating the change of the land use throughout Framingham’s history.

Parr, James L, and Kevin Swope. *Framingham Legends & Lore*. Charleston: The History Press, 2009.

-And what would be a research paper about Framingham without our own team member's recently published book? The portion of my paper describing Framingham's Chautauqua movement was largely procured from Jim Parr's book. I also had the opportunity to meet with Kevin Swope (co-author) at the Framingham History Center (formerly the Framingham Historical Society).

Temple, Josiah H. *History of Framingham, Massachusetts, 1640-1885*. Framingham, MA: Town of Framingham, 1887.

-This is the alpha and omega of Framingham's history! A very dense book written over a hundred years ago with details and accounts one cannot do without when reading or writing about Framingham. The language is weighty and at times awkward, but manageable. Included in the back cover/pocket of the book are historical maps of Framingham. The maps were too detailed for my personal use for a 3rd grade lesson, but could very easily be substituted to raise the grade level and interest of the lesson. Without this book, my research paper would have been nearly impossible!