

From: Oliver townsendhistoricalsociety@132565422.mailchimpapp.com
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To: rideout01469@gmail.com



Townsend Historical Society President Chris Barnacoat's Letter:

April 2026





Happy Spring to you all! It's a busy time of the year for all of us and the historical society is no exception. Many projects are underway both inside and outside. Work on the Cooperage continues. Much of the interior has been completed and now the exterior clapboards and trim are being repaired. Window sashes have been repaired and reglazed. Work on the river side of the building will have to wait until the water level has receded, probably late summer.

Ben Hassett, millwright from Harrods Creek, Kentucky, will return to continue repairs to the milling equipment. We can't wait to see the mill working and some grain being ground! Jock Snaith has worked tirelessly over the years to bring about the restoration of these historic buildings.

The interior of the Old Harbor Church Meetinghouse is beautiful and ready for use, but we wait for the necessary septic and water hookup. Landscaping will proceed once the septic disruption is complete. We can't wait for the Grand Opening and for you and the Townsend community to see how beautifully the building has been restored.

A lot has been going on at the Reed House that you haven't yet been able to see. The Reed House Committee has set a goal to have the first floor of the house refreshed and decorated by the end of the year, just in time for our annual Holiday Open House.

Special thanks to Jerrilyn Bozicas for all the work she has done over the past years to make this restoration happen. In the attic samples of the original wallpapers used throughout the house were discovered. Jerry has catalogued and protected all the papers so we now know in which rooms the wallpapers were used. You will be thrilled to see these rooms brought back to life.

The Dining Room has had the ceiling and lower walls and wood trim painted, while the upper walls have been wallpapered with a reproduction of the original 1850's paper that once graced the room. The floor has been refinished and the dining room now looks bright and cheerful and ready for a celebration.

The Parlor is currently undergoing work. The ceiling has been repaired and painted, the wainscoting and door trims painted, and work on the floor will begin shortly. The star of the parlor is the reproduction of the Porter murals that had deteriorated over the years. Artist, Susan Leach, painted replicas of Porter's work onto protective panels placed over the original murals, allowing them to be preserved. Two walls in the room remain untouched to show the

work in the artist's own hand.



The Parlor was a hive of activity in the Reed House and the new mural, ceiling repair, paint and floor work will help to bring the room back to life. The Victorian couch has been gorgeously reupholstered and it was discovered to be dated from at least 1858 and probably older. New orders ...Do Not Sit on the Couch!

The Keeping Room – the heart of the Reed House with its original open hearth and bee hive oven is in pretty good condition. The room will be cleaned and the ceiling and floor painted. This room will represent the early days of the Reed family living in the house in the 19th century.

The Bathroom won't be forgotten. Once a pantry, the bathroom was installed in the early 1920s when electricity and indoor plumbing became available. This room with its very small sink, claw foot tub and pull chain water closet (otherwise known as a loo, throne, or toilet) will be repainted and as we have the sample of the original wallpaper installed in the early 1920 's we are looking into reproducing the paper and installing it on the upper walls where it once was. The wallpaper scene is of sailboats on a pond. Perhaps the Reeds were thinking of sailing on the Harbor Pond?

The next stage will be to work on the entry ways, and the Borning Room (Bedroom).

A very important improvement will be the raising of the granite entry step into

A very important improvement will be the raising of the granite entry step into the Reed House. Anyone who has struggled to “climb the mountain” into the house will appreciate this improved access.

When all is complete our goal will have been achieved and, fingers-crossed, we will be ready to welcome everyone to the Holiday Open House in December.



The beautiful couch (but not for sitting on).

It will continue to be an active time at the THS with several main events happening. Save the dates:

April 12th Sunday 3-6:00 – The Pot Luck Supper and Author Talk by Gary Entwistle about his book “April’s Breeze” will be held at St. John’s Parish Hall in Townsend. We hope to see you there!

May 21 and 22, Thursday and Friday – **Our annual Third Grade Visit**. This is always a fun event and we hope for good weather.

June 20th Saturday 9:00-4:00 - please join us as we celebrate the 250th birthday of our nation with a Parade and Old Home Day celebration on the Common. Be on the lookout for program details at townsend250.org and at townsendhistoricalsociety.org and on social media sites.

September 19 and 20, Saturday and Sunday. The annual Arts and Crafts Fair on the historic Townsend Common. Don’t miss this important THS fundraiser. The popular Bake Sale will return again this year.

October-November – There will be an amazing exhibition of **Gravestone Rubbings** at the Library Meeting Hall. These rubbings were completed by Spaulding Memorial School 5th and 6th grade students back in 1969=1971. We hope to contact some of these former students, and invite them to the exhibition’s opening.

During this time period there will also be several exciting opening ceremonies and open houses. These will include the **Harbor Church, the Cooperage and the Grist Mill**.

Two final notes, I hope you are enjoying exploring the **THS 2026 Commemorative Calendar**. I hope you’ve tried some of the historic recipes, let me know what you think!

Don’t forget to complete your **Time Capsule Kits** and return them to the Library/Senior Center by the end of May. Your Time Capsule Kit will be included and ceremoniously sealed on the Common on June 20th at the 250th Parade and Old Home Day celebration.

All the best for a happy Spring.

Chris Barnacoat

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<https://townsendhistoricalsociety.org>



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Our mailing address is:

PO Box 95, Townsend, MA 01469

Visit our office:

The Reed Homestead, 72 Main St, Townsend, MA 01469

Email:

info@townsendhistoricalsociety.org

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