

The Blandford Bugle

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF ALL THINGS GOOD IN
BLANDFORD: GOOD HOMES, GOOD NEIGHBORS, GOOD FUN.

Vol. 3, Issue 4 Blandford, Massachusetts Fall 2014

BlandfordBugle@hotmail.com

The theme of our Bugle this edition is acceptance and tolerance. We are celebrating Halloween soon and this holiday holds different meaning for the folks in town.

Halloween Party!



The Annual Blandford Halloween Party will be held on Halloween this year!
Please join us on Friday, October 31st at the Town Hall

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. trick-or-treating and a "Where the Wild Things Are" story walk in the park
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. games, entertainment, and refreshments in the auditorium

Please contact Cara at caramisslynn@yahoo.com (413) 552-9600 if you are interested in volunteering or donating baked goods! Your help is much appreciated.

Fire Department Looking for Volunteers



Blandford's volunteer firefighters are looking for a few more volunteers to join them in protecting our town.

The positions that need to be filled are interior/exterior firefighters, forest fire personnel, emergency first responder and EMS training is available. There is also a need for storm shelter coordinators, clerical assistance and an event planner and fund raiser.

All positions are volunteer. This is a great way to become involved in town and give back to the community. The Fire Department meets every Tuesday night from 7 to 9 p.m. Stop in and chat with Fire Chief Ed Harvey to see what you can do. Or email him at fire-chief@townofblandford.com.

Second Annual Arts Trail

The second annual Blandford Arts Trail was held on Saturday September 27. The Arts Trail is an open studio event, encouraging the public to meet Blandford artists in their studios. All were encouraged to stop by to visit, see our artists at work in their environment and enjoy light refreshments.



Artists included Eileen Gates of Falls Brook Farm, Cindy Carr, Susan Racine, Sheepgate, clayground, Jeri Hamel, and Ruth La-Prise. Those who took part in the event spent an enjoyable day in Blandford discovering the local talent.

Remember, Earth "without Art" is only EH!

Porter Memorial Library News and Events

Autumn is a great time for visiting your local library if you have not been in during the warmer months. New books and DVDs arrive every week or our patrons can also borrow materials from other libraries through our Inter-Library Loan access. Order books, eBooks, music or movies online or in the library. We have a *How To Order* instruction sheet for you to take home and the best part is the ILL service is absolutely free!

Our patron population has been growing also. Many new library cards were issued during our Summer Reading Program. Has your library card been updated to one with a barcode? If yes, is your information still correct? Feel free to stop in to have us update your library account. There is a tea and coffee table for your enjoyment while you visit. Pets are always welcome!

The History of Porter Memorial Library display was viewed by many and sparked many memories and conversations. Pamela Darrow and Cynthia Montanaro diligently worked for hours compiling, organizing, and setting up the historical displays. Much information and knowledge was learned from the Blandford Historical Society. New and familiar friends stop in to the library to reminisce about former librarians and share library memories.

The “Fizz, Boom, Read and Spark a Reaction” summer reading program was well attended. Several of our young adults volunteered their time and helped to make the program a huge success. Each one volunteered to help the younger participants and had their own special talents to offer. Dylan Bradshaw, photographer; Joey Farber, website design and photographer; Isabelle Grady, culinary artist; Livia Shepard, Ice Cream Scooper Extraordinaire; and John Gaj, guest columnist for the Country Journal and wonderfully talented clarinetist.

READ

In addition to books and movies, Porter Memorial Library has many different and unique items available for you to borrow. There are cake pans and kites on a sign-out basis. There are also hand weights that complement the



library’s Iron Yoga DVD or any of the many workout videos in the library collection. Vinyl albums are making a comeback, so be on the lookout for the library’s music converter turntable that can be used to turn your much loved vinyl album collection into CDs. Details are available at the front desk.

Future displays include a Caldecott and Newbury Award Recipients bulletin board. Patron collec-



tions are still on display. There are marbles, buttons, miniature chairs, and tea towels, oh my! Come in and tell us what you collect. We would love to show it here at the library if you would like to share it. Library staff is preparing the Spooky Library display for Halloween events at the Town Hall. The Spooky Library’s fun house was where trick-or-treaters got free books at the end of their walk through. This Halloween Porter Memorial Library is creating more books and prizes for all ghouls and goblins. See you at the Library!



Hats off!

TO: Anne Holliday and Bob Du-rocher who maintain the wonderfully patriotic display of flags on the upper end of North Blandford road.

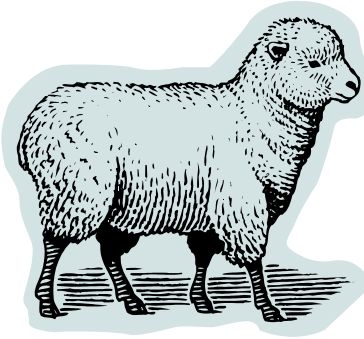
TO: School bus drivers; always vigilant for our youngsters!

TO: The Blandford Country Store and Deli ~ just because! We’re glad you’re there. Thank you.

Sheepgate

Mary Kronholm, Kate Fletcher

Sheepgate will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary next summer. What started as a small venture, has grown and flourished into a local landmark. A Blandford resident for over 40 years, Maureen Costello is the owner and designer who nurtured the shop into its present form.



She and her husband Bob, started with a small flock of Dorset sheep, harvested their wool, carded the wool using a drum carder; for those of us who weren't aware that is combing the wool to remove impurities and straighten the fiber. Once it was clean and combed she would dye it using plants and lichen from her garden and the surrounding forest. Then it was spun on a tradition spinning wheel

and woven on a loom she had set up in the shop. She has created all manner of items and it was during her time involved with a local guild that she sought a way to present her and other artisan crafts for all to share and celebrate.

Going west out of town on Route 23, not too far along, is Sheepgate. Her shop is a peaceful retreat nestled into the landscape, naturally. The wide front deck rises out of the meandering pea-stone path leading to it and when you reach the top step you're rewarded with a comforting view of cool, smooth, moss covered boulders fading into the woods.



Maureen is always on hand to greet guests entering the

shop. Once inside your senses are treated to delightful aromas arising from handmade

soaps and soothing music to salve your soul. She specializes in artisan created hand-woven or felted textiles including garments, sweaters, wraps, scarves and shawls all from naturally dyed wools and shearling products. There are hats and mittens designed from re-purposed knits and woolens. A visit to the shop is almost a lesson in artistry.

You will find a broad assortment of all kinds of hand-worked items that include art, sculpture, jewelry and hand drawn greeting cards, metal work, special stationery from pressed flowers; everything is distinctive and different.

There is a multitude of shearling items designed for warmth – whether your hands, feet or head – there are winter-time warmers for every need. She has boot liners, mittens, gloves, hats, pillows, rugs, full pelts, seatbelt covers and even dusters.

What Maureen has enjoyed most about having her shop on a well-travelled route, have been the myriad of visitors from all over the United States and abroad. She has hosted visitors from every state in the union and 43 different countries.

"I have such marvelous times," she said, recalling visits with her great friends, a group of Harley Davidson riders who use shearling to cushion their motorcycle seats with, making long rides more comfortable. She has had her series of interesting visitors, for instance the fellow who was visiting every town in the Commonwealth and chose Sheepgate for his Blandford stop. Having explained the reason for his visit, he expanded his tale to tell Maureen that he consumed a Sam Adams in every town he stopped in.

"I've had 24 years of wonder," Maureen said. "I never knew what I was embarking on and I wouldn't trade the memories."

She said she learns something from everyone who stops in her shop. A Jazz instructor surprised her with the Ken Burns CD that you often hear in the back-ground when you walk in to browse. From a harpsichordist, she learned that musical scores and weaving plans are compatible. "Some of the greatest weavers have been musicians," she said.

Whether it's holiday shopping, a gift occasion or you just need a short spiritual vacation, stop in to visit Maureen, she's certain to have a special item that will be perfect.

If you ask her, you can even stand on the back porch



A Brief History of Halloween...

By Gale Lascala

My favorite time of year is autumn and my favorite holiday is Halloween, but maybe not for the reason you think.

For me, and many other people, Halloween, or Samhain, is a sacred time; a time when we believe the veil between the world of the living and the world of the dead is thin and communication is quite possible. For those of us who are Pagan—a term referring to country-dwelling folk who believed that everything had life-force and energy, Samhain (pronounced Sow-en) is our New Year. It celebrates the final harvest of crops; a time when food is put up in preparation for winter, when animals are brought in from the fields closer to home.

So how has this sacred time become a night of carved pumpkins, candy and people dressed in costumes? It's a long story.....but I'll try to condense it and explain.

The custom of setting a place at the table for those who have departed is an ancient one. This is where we get the “treat” in trick or treat. It was done with great respect for the dead as ancient people believed the dead visited and helped those still alive. The modern concept of demons and devils was not part of the Pagan religion.

When Christianity began to spread, priests tried to convert the Pagan people but had difficulty eradicating some of the Pagan holy days and festivals. The Church began overlapping its holy days onto the Pagan ones. Priests claimed that the Celtic belief in faeries was evil and that faeries were demons, that the beloved dead were ghosts who would do harm. The Celtic Land of the Dead became Hell—a concept Pagans did not believe in. Pagan holidays such as the Winter Solstice was replaced with Christmas, Ostara was replaced with Easter, the Summer Solstice was the feast day of St. John the Baptist, etc.

The Druids, who were essentially the teachers of those times, were systematically executed under Pope Gregory I. The Pagan religion slowly disappeared and was usurped by Christianity. Those who still wished to practice had to do so in secret.

This leads us to the Witches and The Burning Times. In every village there was a Wise Woman, a Healer, a Midwife, an Herbalist (such as myself). She tended the sick, delivered babies and sat with those on their deathbeds. She was an essential part of a community. In ancient times, women and men were equal in all things. The Clergy began seeking out women and labeling them as Witches—a word referring to a sorceress. History, as you know, saw these women tortured, hanged or burned.

So now we have children dressed up as hags in pointed hats probably not knowing what happened to the millions (yes, millions) of women who were executed.

It wasn't just women, some men and even children were killed also. At one time clergy professed that women had no souls to dehumanize them. This sounds like church-bashing, but it is history.

So, what about the jack-o-lanterns, you're probably asking. Well, originally they were turnips! They were hollowed out and used as candle holders—carving a face in a turnip is pretty difficult. The pumpkin is an American vegetable and the face carving to scare away evil spirits is a modern invention. Remember, the ancient people revered their dead and did not wish to scare them away. The term Halloween stems from All Hallows Eve, celebrated on Oct. 31. All Saints' Day, which now falls on Nov. 1, was originally celebrated on May 13. Again, this was done to overlap the Pagan holiday by Pope Gregory III. Something that is hallowed is holy, so it was a way to try and combine the two holidays.

For Pagan people, this is still a holy day and we celebrate with honoring our ancestors. Sometimes we gather together with ritual and feasting and some celebrate alone as it can be a deeply moving experience. It is not so much a religion as a way of life as we embrace the energy of all things and work to make life better for the planet.



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Halloween Memories...


We asked some of our senior residents in town to write down some memories of Halloween from when they were young. We thoroughly enjoyed reading their responses and we hope you will too.


 I wrote on my neighbor's windows with a candle. I got caught and my mother made me clean our neighbor's windows the next day. Candle wax does not come off easily! Never did that again!

 I put fire crackers on the trolley track, and would run and hide to wait for the fun... when the trolley car came!


 Back when I was a kid people let their car doors unlocked. We collected leaves and filled the car floors!


 I never heard of Halloween as a child. As an adult I put all of the lights on hoping for as many kids as possible at the door!


 Halloween- I remember trying my best to be scary. I wasn't allowed to eat but a small portion of candy each day until it was gone.


 Old Man Nurgar – He was a mean old guy with a vicious dog. On Halloween night if you went to his house, he would send the dog after you. When we got older, we evened the score. We filled a paper bag with dog droppings, put it on his front porch and lit it on fire. He came out and stomped on it in his house slippers!

I only remember going to a few houses in Springfield and returning with a bag full of candy. My mother would monitor my consumption for a week or more.

 I lived in the country and never heard of trick-or-treating as a child.

 We lived on a road that was five miles long. We went from one end to the other trick-or-treating. There were no street lights and cemeteries on either end. We were scared though!

 I never really had a "costume" the way kids have today... just improvised with weird clothing and lipstick and such. I only remember one Halloween party where we played games and bobbed for apples in a bucket of water. I do remember sitting at the kitchen table with an unbelievable amount of candy that all of us had collected and Mom telling us to put the candy away. It was always cold... sometimes we ended up wearing our coats over whatever costume we had created. Mr. Gosselin who lived at the end of our street, loved to jump out of the bushes and scare us. What a character!

 Halloween in the 40's – Halloween was always eagerly anticipated as it was also my birthday. Actually, it was more important than my birthday. Candy was always more appealing than cake. Growing up in a city neighborhood, we were free to roam with friends without supervision from parents. No parent would think of accompanying toddlers and young children door to door. We did not go trick-or-treating until we were of an age when we could roam the neighborhood with five or six friends.

Costumes were optional as long as one wore a mask. I always disliked trying to figure out how to dress and usually chose the mask alone. My brothers threw an old sheet over themselves

and pretended to be ghosts.

Candy took center stage. Sometimes homemade popcorn was given, but never healthy things like apples. We would come home, spill all the candy from our paper bags onto the living room floor and sort it into most to least liked. We ate all we wanted that night and then our mother would take it away and give us each a piece every day until it ran out. To get a healthy stash of candy, we commonly trick-or-treated over three nights.

The lighting and burning of leaves was reserved for Halloween night only. In that time, burning was the accepted way of disposing of leaves and homeowners would rake them into the side of the street and set them afire. When we came upon an unburned pile of leaves, we would push them into the center of the street, light them and run off. I still remember the smell of those burning leaves.

During the first couple of years of living in Blandford, I would prepare for everyone to come to my door. It is a struggle to restrain myself from buying candy anyways as I know I would eat it all myself! - Julie Mueller



Thoughts on Halloween

By Mary J. Powers

I never did like scary things
like horror films and Halloween,
or things that glow or bump at night -
these would give me awful fright.
Zombies and the walking dead
fill me with most awesome dread,
nor do I believe in ghosts and such,
or spirits — at least not much.
Sunshine is what I like, and light,
and happy faces and smiles so bright,
and warm living creatures that gleefully play—
they keep the dark and monsters away.
So I'd rather celebrate the falling leaves
and goldenrod and blowing trees,
leave goblins and ghouls where they belong,
and greet the fall with cheerful song.

Blandford Events Calendar Fall 2014

October

November

Wed	1				
Thurs	2				
Fri	3				
Sat	4		1		
Sun	5		2		
Mon	6		3		
Tue	7	Knitting at Library 2-4	4	Knitting at Library 2-4	
Wed	8		5		
Thurs	9	Yoga at Town Hall 6:30 p.m.	6	Yoga at Town Hall 6:30 p.m.	
Fri	10		7		
Sat	11		8		
Sun	12		9		
Mon	13		10		
Tue	14	Knitting at Library 2-4	11	Knitting at Library 2-4	
Wed	15	ALL BOARDS MEETING 7 pm	12		
Thurs	16	Yoga at Town Hall 6:30 p.m.	13	Yoga at Town Hall 6:30 p.m.	
Fri	17		14		
Sat	18		15		
Sun	19		16		
Mon	20		17		
Tue	21	Knitting at Library 2-4	18	Knitting at Library 2-4	
Wed	22		19		
Thurs	23	Yoga at Town Hall 6:30 p.m.	20	Yoga at Town Hall 6:30 p.m.	
Fri	24		21		
Sat	25		22		
Sun	26		23		
Mon	27		24		
Tue	28	Knitting at Library 2-4	25	Knitting at Library 2-4	
Wed	29		26		
Thurs	30	Yoga at Town Hall 6:30 p.m.	27	Thanksgiving	
Fri	31	Halloween Party at Town Hall	28		
Sat		6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.	29		
Sun		Trick-or-Treating & Story Walk	30		
Mon		Thru Watson Park			
Tue		5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.			
Wed					

Down with the Blue Box...

There is a better way

Tricia Racine

So the other day I was straightening out the shelves at work and making a mental list of what I needed to reorder when I came upon the boxed macaroni and cheese. It amazes me that anyone still eats that stuff; obviously they don't read the ingredients. It's not even cheese in those boxes, it's processed, dried cheese food; plus the macaroni isn't even curved, which I find to be kind of creepy. Anyway, uninformed people have been eating this stuff since 1937 when Kraft unleashed it on Depression stricken people.

Macaroni and cheese traces its roots back to Italy where it is more commonly known as Pasta Alfredo; it was brought across the Atlantic by Thomas Jefferson in the late 1790s. American cooks took this recipe and ran with it, but changed the cheese to the more abundant varieties locally and by 1859 the dish was appearing on tavern menus. (Incidentally the Nahant House in Lynn, Massachusetts was the first to feature it on their menu).

People tell me that they make boxed macaroni and cheese because it's quick and easy; well I bet I can make it from scratch in the same amount of time. Plus my homemade version is not full of preservatives and tastes like actual cheese, because it uses actual cheese. How novel!

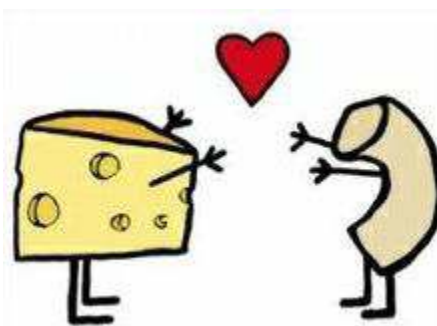
Ready, set, go! Put a pot of water on to boil, this will take about ten minutes; once it boils add salt and one box of macaroni. Cook for about eight to ten more minutes till al dente. This gives me about twenty minutes to make a cheese sauce from scratch; I don't know about you but I think I can do it. Start the sauce by melting a quarter cup of butter to which you add a quarter cup of flour (a roux), cook this for a minute so that it doesn't taste like wallpaper paste. Then stir in a forth of a teaspoon each of Worcestershire sauce, dry ground mustard, salt and pepper. Once this is smooth and bubbly add two cups of milk and bring it to a boil, when this mixture thickens add two cups of shredded sharp cheddar cheese and stir the mixture until everything is melted together. All you have to do now is add the drained pasta to the cheese and mix well; voila homemade macaroni and cheese in about twenty minutes.

So now that I have shown you that no one really needs to torture themselves by eating the boxed version let's turn up the volume. First I'm going to let you in on a little secret; I can't eat plain macaroni and cheese, I need meat in my meals. I love meat and I'm not ashamed to admit it. Hence, I always add some sort of protein to this dish when I make it.

Consider the recipe I just gave you: the basic recipe and everything that follows will just be changes on those basics. There was this woman I used to know who refused to change how she made macaroni and cheese because it was her mother's recipe; how boring, who wants to go through life eating the same thing all the time. (PS she also refused to get rid of her mom jeans, which is almost criminal). Every recipe out there can be adjusted to suit your tastes, just because mom made it a certain



way doesn't mean it always has to be made that way. Anyway, two years ago I tweaked a recipe that ended up being out of this world, Baked Macaroni, Sausage and Gouda. The first thing you have to do is caramelize two and a half pounds of onions in a mixture of butter and olive oil. Once they begin to soften add salt, pepper, a teaspoon of dried thyme and two teaspoons of sugar



and cook until the onions are golden brown, about twenty minutes. (Obviously this version will take longer than the basic recipe). Now omit the mustard and Worcestershire sauce and substitute Gouda for cheddar, all the other steps are the same. Once the cheese sauce is done mix in

the pasta, onions and one and a half pounds of cooked sweet Italian turkey sausage. Pour it into a buttered baking dish and bake at 350 degrees about twenty minutes or until golden and bubbly.

There are a million combinations you can come up with for this dish all you need is a little creativity. The grocery stores all have great international cheese sections where you can find myriad brands and flavors to play with. Try mixing a horseradish cheddar cheese sauce with freshly made bacon bits, or a Swiss cheese sauce with ham and chicken. You can even make your own version of Hamburger Helper Cheeseburger Macaroni by combining cheddar cheese and cooked ground beef. Just please don't let me know that you are using Velveeta instead of real cheese because that it just as bad as making the box version.

I recently saw on television how to turn a sandwich classic into a pot of macaroni and cheese; so let's try a Reuben and Cuban version. For the Reuben add two cups of Swiss cheese to your roux to which you need to add about a tablespoon of spicy brown mustard, one small bag of rinsed and drained sauerkraut and about three quarters of a pound of diced deli corned beef. Stir this all together with a pound of cooked pasta. For the Cuban version add two cups of shredded Swiss cheese to the roux and stir in a tablespoon of yellow mustard. To this sauce add about a cup of diced dill pickles and three quarters of a pound of diced deli ham. Both of these versions have all the flavors of these classic deli sandwiches and are yummy.

Okay, so now that we have made this beautiful pan of cheesy heaven what do we do with the leftovers? Honestly this is not a meal that reheats or freezes well so cooks had to get creative and what they came up with was Macaroni and Cheese Croquettes.

These are very easy to make but they turn a less than figure-friendly meal into a downright sinful one. Start by taking your leftovers and form them into one inch balls, roll them in breadcrumbs, then an egg and water mixture, than back into the breadcrumbs. Brown the balls in oil (canola or vegetable) that is heated to 360 degrees. These are usually served as appetizers.

I hope I have convinced you that making a homemade macaroni and cheese is incredibly easy and versatile. I promise once you get the basic recipe down pat you will never go back to the blue box again.

Sorry Kraft.

Ed. Note: Tricia's family owns and operates Katie's Country Store in Otis.

The Blandford Bugle
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All Blandford things you need to know

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Photo by Mary Kronholm

Blandford Water Department 2013 winning treat table

The Blandford Bugle

Send all communication to:
The Blandford Bugle C/O Recreation Committee
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Or, Drop in the town box outside town hall
Or, Email us at blandfordbugle@hotmail.com

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Editorial Board: Kate Fletcher, Mary Kronholm, Cara Letendre, Linda Smith

This is our last issue of *The Blandford Bugle* for the time being. We hope you've enjoyed reading all things positive about and for town as much as we have enjoyed crafting each issue. To continue this joyful effort, we need help. If you are interested, please contact anyone on the editorial board.