



# Swansea Historical Society Newsletter

## The Preservationist

Founded

1941

SWANSEA, MASSACHUSETTS

swanseahistoricalsociety.org

FALL 2025

## Luther Store Update

The Swansea Historical Society Executive Board is moving forward on the repairs needed at the Luther Store. Like with any historical building, you fix one issue and another opens up. Right now, we are dealing with a deteriorating wall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and the beam supporting the wall has weakened due to age, lack of care and being in a building that is not weather tight or climate controlled. With the wall down and steel brackets to support the beam, it will be safer to access the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Unfortunately, in the future, the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor will be used for storage only. To the right are photos with the wall down. The wall will remain down for the time being. We are hoping for more funding so we can rebuild the wall as historically accurate as possible.

This has been mentioned before, over the years there have been numerous items donated to the SHS and Luther Store. Not all the items belong in an 1800's General Store. Unfortunately, we are going to have to weed out some of the items. We cannot be The Swansea Town Museum. The building is not strong enough or large enough to house the history of Swansea. The Luther Store is tired and showing its age. The humidity is taking its toll on the building. We are listening to what the building is telling us. We want the Luther Store around for another 200 years.

### Case High Yearbooks

The SHS was gifted with many copies of the Joseph Case High School Yearbook. With permission from the gifter, we are selling the extra copies to help with the cost of repairs to the Luther Store.



Our goal is to make the Luther Store as weather tight as possible and climate controlled. To do this we need funding. Once our 501c3 status is



reinstated we will apply for grants. We are looking at around \$50,000.00 to make this happen. We will keep you up to date.

## Swansea Historical Society Elections

Congratulations to the newly elected Swansea Historical Society Officers and Executive Board.

### Officers:

President - Cheryl Bogle  
Vice President - Karen Bowen  
Treasurer (acting) - Karen Bowen  
Acting Secretary - Brandon Travers

### Executive Board:

Patricia Redfearn  
Diane Luther Silvia  
Ruth Ann Liggett  
Robert Alford II  
J. Whitney Bowen II  
Kathleen LeBlanc

## Swansea Historical Society Turns 85 in 2026!

The Swansea Historical Society will be celebrating our 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2026!

As part of the year long celebration, we will be having a few events sponsored by the Swansea Cultural Council. These will include:

Tea with Mrs. Gordon 1908  
Women of 1776  
Victorian Gothic Tales by Candlelight

Also in the planning stages are a talk on Canard and White Star Ocean Liners, a Cigar Night and two food events, including a pot luck dinner and a sit-down dinner, all to celebrate our 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

We hope  
you can  
join us!



### Yearbooks cont'd

Yearbooks are \$15 each and can be purchased by contacting Cheryl Bogle at 508-496-9564 or integracrete2@gmail.com.

Available years: 1946, 1948, 1949, 1951, 1953, 1954, 1956, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1973, 1977, 1978, 1981 and 1986

# How Were 150 Foot Ship Masts Moved To Shipyards ?

by Russell Easterbrooks

Once harvested, how were 150 foot white pine logs moved to the shipyards? Many were moved during the winter to take advantage of frozen ground. Their great length and ponderous weight made moving them a challenge.

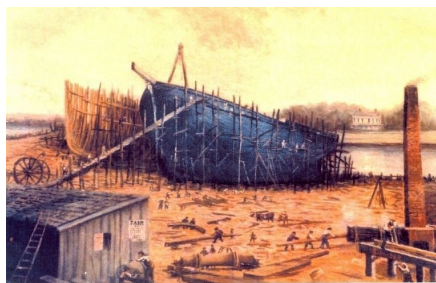


Artwork by Timothy Livingston

Big wheels, often ten feet tall, were made to take advantage of physics the huge wheels provided. This took less power to pull, and the horses were less tired, as the huge wheels rolled over rough ground.

The large end of the ships mast was chained to the axle, which had an eccentric cam on each end. This allowed the draw bar to be pulled down, thus, rotating the cam and lifting the heavy end of the log about a foot off the ground. Then the horses were attached to the draw bar for pulling.

Steep down hill grades had to be avoided, as well as sharp curves in the logging roads to take into account the masts great length, often more than 150 feet.



Notice the big wheels upper left, in this painting of Mason Barney's shipyard. Many of the masts used by Mason Barney's shipyard came from the nearby town of Dighton. There was a very good chance some of these trees were property (until 1776 ) of the king, bearing his mark, "the kings broad arrow."

Larger horses were used to move these heavy ship's masts. They were also use to pull logging sleds over frozen ground to the sawmills.

The smaller logs were cut into beams and planks for the hull of the ships. Once the sawmills had cut the logs into lumber, horse drawn sleds moved the lumber over frozen roads to the shipyards.



Photo from Library Of Congress, "BIGGER HORSES"

*Note: This article is the opinion of the author and not The Swansea Historical Society. It is published with his permission.*

## Pumpkin Patch Event

Our annual Pumpkin Patch Event will be held on October 11<sup>th</sup> on the grounds of the Luther Store.

We swill have a Pie Baking Contest (\$5 entry fee/pie), a Pumpkin Decorating Contest (free), a Children's Straw Game for prizes, apple cider, pumpkin bread and so much more! We will also have pumpkins, hay bales, corn stalks and fall flowers for sale.

If you would like to volunteer to help, please contact Cheryl Bogle at 508-496-9564 or [Integracrete2@gmail.com](mailto:Integracrete2@gmail.com).

Please visit our website or our Facebook page for more information and entry forms. Hope to see you there!



**Decorative Christmas**

**Swag or Wreath**

**With Designer Ruth-Ann Liggett**

at the Swansea Community Center  
260 Ocean Grove Avenue, Swansea, MA

Saturday  
November 8<sup>th</sup>  
1-4 p.m.

Open  
to the public



**\$40**  
Seating is limited  
Sign up today

**\$20**  
non-refundable  
deposit due  
by October 20<sup>th</sup>

REGISTRATION REQUIRED  
Contact Ruth-Ann Liggett by leaving a message at  
774-644-0795 or email: [rliggett967@comcast.net](mailto:rliggett967@comcast.net)

Proceeds of this class support repairs at the Luther Store  
Additional information: visit [swanseahistoricalociety.org](http://swanseahistoricalociety.org)



Please visit our website at [swanseahistoricalociety.org](http://swanseahistoricalociety.org) and click on the "Store" link to see our available items for purchase – mugs, wind spinners, rope bowls and many other itmes!.

Monetary Donations are always accepted! Donations will be used for restoration and repairs only, not for operating funds.

## Upcoming Events

Please visit our website for event details  
[swanseahistoricalociety.org](http://swanseahistoricalociety.org)

**October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

Pumpkin Patch Event

Pumpkin & Apple Pie Baking Contest

Pumpkin Decorating Contest

Luther Store Grounds

**Call now to enter!**

**October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025 10 a.m.**

Annual Abram's Rock Walk with

Professor Paul Cote

Village Park

**October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025 11 a.m.**

Swansea Historical Cemeteries Talk

Swansea Community Center

**November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 1 p.m.**

Christmas Swag or Wreath Workshop

Swansea Community Center

\$20 deposit due by Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>

Contact: Ruth-Ann Liggett 774-644-0795

## SHS Officers & Board

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Vice President - Karen Bowen

Treasurer (acting) - Karen Bowen

Acting Secretary - Brandon Travers

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