

Oxford Historical Commission Timeline 8/1/25

Town of Oxford – The Beginnings ⁴



No formal act of incorporation of Oxford has been found. Its first mention was on May 31, 1693 when “Daniel Allen of Oxford” was chosen representative to the General Court. The site of the town is near the middle of the territory known as “Nipmuck”, “Nipmug” or Nepmug Country”. The first movements towards a settlement in this section was made in February 1680.

On May 11, 1681, the General Court empowered William Stoughton and Joseph Dudley to inspect “the matter of the land” and inquire into the validity of the Indian titles. Acting under the authority of the Court, these gentlemen later purchased certain Indian lands and the deeds of conveyance, dated February 19, 1681 – 1682, were presented to the Court on May 27, 1682, and by it confirmed. History states that this grant was ratified to Dudley & Company on January 11, 1688. The place was named Oxford after the city of that name in England. The plan comprehended about 65 square miles, including besides the present Oxford, the larger part of Charlton, about one-fourth of Auburn, one-fifth of Dudley and several square miles of the northeasterly portion of Southbridge. On December 8, 1731, the farms of Josiah and Theodore Kingsbury and adjoining land of Isaac Larned were annexed to Oxford. When Dudley was incorporated on February 2, 1732, a part of Oxford was included. On November 22, 1734, on petition of the town, Dudley’s farm was annexed to Oxford. On November 21, 1754, the district of Charlton was established, which took from Oxford all of the original grant lying west of a line one mile west of the “Village line”. On June 23, 1773, certain families were “erected into a precinct” called the South Parish of Worcester, and the district became the town of Ward on April 10, 1778 (now Auburn). On January 9, 1789, the estates of Isaac Moffit and two others were annexed to Oxford from Charlton. On February 18, 1793, a part of Sutton was annexed. On February 6, 1807, the Oxford South Gore was annexed, but was later included in the town of Webster, incorporated March 6, 1832. On February 13, 1809 twenty-six acres belonging to Amasa Kingsbury were annexed. On March 22, 1838, “the Oxford North Gore”, comprising 738 acres, was annexed; this lay between the north line of Oxford, as it then existed, and the Leicester south line.

- 1633 – John Oldham was the first white man to travel on Oxford soil.
- 1681 – William Stoughton and Joseph Dudley empowered by the General Court to inspect the land
- 1682 – Deed of conveyance granted to William Stoughton and Joseph Dudley
- 1686 – 1687 – Settled by the French Huguenots
- 1693 – Daniel Allen chosen as representative to the General Court
- 1696 – Johnson massacre
- 1708 – Captain Rene Grignon moved to Norwich, Connecticut and presented the Huguenot Bell to the Town of Norwich on April 27.
- 1713 – Settled by the English and Incorporated
- 1714 – Eight-rod way established
- 1721 – First Congregational Church established
- 1726 – Abijah Moore graduated Yale, the first college graduate from Oxford and the only known resident of Central Massachusetts to receive a degree from Yale under the first charter.
- 1728 – Ebenezer Learned born
- 1731 – The farms of Josiah and Theodore Kingsbury and adjoining land of Isaac Larned were annexed to Oxford.
- 1731-1732 – Dudley set off

1733 – The first mention in the records of a school.
1734 – Manchaug Farm annexed
1734 – Dudley Farm annexed
1738 – The Oxford North Gore, comprising 738 acres, was annexed; this lay between the north line of Oxford, as it then existed and the Leicester south line.
1755 – Charlton set off
1771 – Josiah Wolcott erected a milepost on his property marking the spot as 53 ½ miles to Boston
1774 – Oxford Militia march, with other towns, on the Worcester County Courthouse
1778 – Ward set off
1785 – Universalist Church established – The oldest Universalist Church in the world
1789 – Moffit Farm annexed
1789 – Colonel Alexander DeWitt born
1791 – Hudson house built. Now it is the oldest house in Oxford
1793 – Kidder land annexed
1797 – First Masonic Lodge was formed
1801 – The first post office was established
1807 – South Gore land annexed
1809 – Part of Charlton annexed
1816 – Andrew Sigourney house built
1817 – Mary DeWitt Freeland born
1818 – Colonel Alexander DeWitt house built
1821 – Clara Barton, founder of the Red Cross, born 1820 – George F Daniels born.
1824 – Independent Oxford Militia formed to be called the “Oxford Invincibles”
1828 – First documented Catholic service in Oxford
1829 – George Washington Sears “Nessmuk” born
1829 – Dinah, a faithful slave, died
1829 – First meeting of the Methodist Society
1832 – Webster set off
1835 – Methodist Society established
1836 – First documented service of the First Baptist Church
1838 – North Gore annexed
1840 – Norwich and Worcester Railroad began operations with a station at Texas Depot
1850 – Clara Barton’s summer home was built
1857 – St. Roch’s Catholic Church established
1863 – First documented service of Grace Episcopal church
1866 – Allen Joslin house built
1869 – Elliot P. Joslin, M.D., pioneer in diabetes research, born
1873 – Town Hall relocated from the North Common to Oxford Center
1880 – Dr. Harry A. Allard, a scientist and plant expert, born
1884 – Silsby Horse Drawn Steam Engine “Huguenot 1” delivered to the Oxford Fire Department
1884 – Huguenot Memorial Society erects a cross and pedestal monument dedicated to the memory of the Huguenot settlers on 8.5 acres at the site of the original fort
1886 – St. Roch’s Parish established
1886 – The first cattle show in Oxford takes place
1887 – 50 post and lanterns were set for streetlights
1888 – The “Huguenot Steamer No.1 Company” was formed to operate the steamer
1890’s – Selectmen approved a Trolley line be built through town
1892 – History of Oxford published by George F Daniels
1894 – History of Oxford published by Mary DeWitt Freeland
1896 – First documented service of St. Ann’s roman Catholic Church
1896 – Memorial tablet in memory of Colonel Alexander DeWitt placed on the walls of Memorial Hall
1900 – Turner Block built
1901 – Edwin A. “Michael” Bartlett, world famous dramatic tenor, born in North Oxford
1906 – Ballard Block built

1906 – Dedication of St. Ann's Catholic Church

1907 – Oxford D.A.R Chapter established

1907 – Bounds between Oxford and Charlton established

1907 – Bounds between Oxford and Millbury established

1908 – Bounds between Oxford and Auburn established

1908 – Mr. George E. Kimball contacted Mrs. Clara A. Fuller, Regent, D.A.R, for the purpose of organizing a bicentennial planning committee

1911 – A monument was erected on Camp Hill by the General Ebenezer Learned Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution to recognize the encampment of three regiments of Federal troops under the command of Colonel Nathan Rice in 1799

1912 – The town voted to observe the Two Hundredth Anniversary in 1913

1913 – Bicentennial Celebration

1914 – The Oxford District Nursing Association was formed

1923 – The Huguenot steamer was replaced by a motorized fire engine

1928 – Webster – Oxford Airport in South Oxford was in operation

1929 – Charles Linberg landed in Oxford, Massachusetts to refuel

1926 – Clara Barton fresh air camp was started

1940 – St Mary's Assumption Albanian Orthodox Church establishes a monastery at Hodges Village.

1940 – Henry Donelin and James Mcyntire opened Henry's Diner (Now Carl's)

1940 – Al "Beartracks" Javery starts a seven season career as a pitcher for the Boston Braves

1953 – Oxford Little League established

1955 – Greenbriar flooded from Hurricane Diane. 112 Families are relocated in 1958 - 1959

1959 – Dedication of the Buffumville Dam

1966 – Oxford Airport on Federal Hill opened

1967 – Great Northeast Blackout - 11/9/67

1972 – Town charter adopted.

1972 – Carl's Diner opened (Formerly Henry's)

1960 – Dedication of the Hodges Village Dam

1976 – John Wheeler appointed as Town Manager

1977 – Route 395 through Oxford is opened

1977 – Paul Masterson appointed as Town Manager as of September 2, 1977

1977 – Dennis A. Power appointed as Town Manager as of November 30, 1977

1978 – First documented service of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

1978 – Blizzard of '78

1980 – Town Hall rededicated

1980 – Oak Hill Bible Church moved to Oxford and the first documented service

1991 – Laurel Thatcher Ulrich received the Pulitzer Prize for "A Midwife's Tale – The Life of Martha Ballard" based on her diary 1785 – 1812

1994 – First documented service Tabernacle of Praise Assembly of God

1996 – The North Gore District 8 Schoolhouse, built in 1872 in Merriam District, was moved to Joslin Park

2001 – Neelu and Ishwar Sharma founded the Sarva Dev Mandir Hindu Temple

2002 – Huguenot Steamer returned to Oxford

2007 – Joseph M. Zeneski appointed as Town Manager

2010 – Carl's Oxford Diner, Hodges Village Dam, The Clara Barton Birthplace, and the Huguenot Fort are listed on Massachusetts 1000 Great Places.

2010 – Oxford Senior League All Stars (15 and 16 year olds) win the state championship

2010 – Greenbriar Reunion and dedication of commemorative sign

2010 – Stone monument erected in North Oxford by Glen Krevosky

2011 – Oxford Main Street Historic District approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission

2011 – Dorothy Barrie appointed Knight of National Order of the Legion of Honor by the French World Government for her service as an army nurse at the 16th General Hospital during the Battle of the Bulge in War II.

2012 – A portion of Buffalo Hill, Dr. Joslin's summer home, preserved for agricultural purposes

by the Trust for Public Land.

2012 – Oxford's Junior League Baseball team won the state championship.

2012 – 1976 time capsule opened.

2012 – 300th Anniversary Huguenot pageant held at the Huguenot Fort

2013 – Oxford's 300th anniversary celebration

2013 – Great and General Court of Massachusetts established 1713 as the date of incorporation for Oxford.

2014 – Oxford designated a Purple Heart Community

2014 – Historic 1796 home at 253 Main Street burned down.

2014 – Oxford received flags from the U.S. Capitol flown on July 8 and July 15, 2013

2014 – American Flag in recognition of Oxford's 300 Anniversary and previously flown at U.S. Capital presented to Town for display in Selectman's Room

2014 – Town Hall Clock Tower structure repaired with funds authorized at town Meeting and a Department of Veteran's Services Grant partially covered the cost of consolidating the Civil War Tablets located at Memorial Hall entrance

2014 – Heating systems of Town Buildings upgraded by converting to gas systems wherever gas mains are available

2015 – Brian M. Palaia appointed as Town Manager

2015 – Joyce Sirard resigns after 28 years as Chairman Oxford Bandstand Committee

2015 – Two major blizzards of 2015 with 55" of snow resulted in extensive property damage and traffic delays

2015 – Tenth Annual Concert and Picnic at Huguenot Fort

2015 – Woodward School declared surplus and RFP request issued for proposed demolition

2015 – A Web Cam was installed at the Greenbriar Baseball Field to monitor activities of a Pair of Ospreys nested in that location

2016 – Timothy A. Kelly retired after thirty-one (31) years as Library Director in Oxford Public Library

2016 – Oxford High School progressed in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System from Level 3 to a Level 1 and the District progressed to Level 2

2016 – The Master Plan for the Town, last updated in 1976, has been updated by the Master Plan Update Committee (a Steering Group)

2016 – Harrington Hospital Urgent Care Facility was put in operation at 78 Sutton Avenue

2016 – Tony Troiano becomes President of Bandstand Committee

2016 – Grand Opening of the Oxford Splash Pad at Carbuncle Pond with substantial funds from the Cecilia J. Smolenski/Millette Charitable Funds. Town Funds were appropriated to rebuild the bathhouse

2016 – May Olney White passed away in July at the age of 108. She helped to establish the Oxford Historical Commission in 1970. May was also the recipient of the "Boston Post Cane" as the oldest resident in the Town

2016 – Conversion from heating oil to natural gas for the Senior Center was completed in the fall. Six buildings have been converted and one more building on the gas line remains, namely the DPW Headquarters on Main Street

2016 – The Oxford NJROTC Drill Team and Color Guard earned Best School of League Season, 1st Place Overall Honors in the Southern New England Drill League in the Unarmed Division and 2nd Place Overall in the Armed Division

2016 – The Oxford NJROTC received its 16th Naval Service Training Command Distinguished Award of its 17* years in existence

2017 – Oxford had the first Full Time Female Fire Chief in the State of Massachusetts, Sheri Bemis who retired after 30 years of service with the Department

2017 – The Oxford Police Department upgraded its ability, for the first time, to be shown the location where a 911 call has originated

2017 – The Oxford High School NJROTC is the only known unit in the Nation that is currently allowed to teach non-cadet students a course specifically developed for cadets enrolled in Junior ROTC programs

2017 – The Town's negative bond rating issued since 2014 was removed as a result of financial ch2017 –

2017 – A new Town Master Plan was completed and adopted which focuses on setting of goals for the Town for the next decade or two - A Master Plan Implementation Committee was established to establish short time goals from the Master Plan

2017 – Police Chief Michael Hassett retired after serving 7 years as Chief and 32 Years in the Department - Lieutenant Anthony Saad was appointed as the new Police Chief

2017 – Finance Director Donna L. Foglio retired after 34 years with service in the Finance Department

2017 – Construction began in the fall on a new Carbuncle Pond Beach House

2017 – The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) monument, after 15 years, was finally located at a permanent Town location, corner of Maple Road and Rawson Avenue

2017 – A large stippling drawing of the Huguenot Monument on Fort Hill Road drawn by Anne Marie Moscoffian Richard, former Town member now living in North Dakota, was presented to the Town by the Huguenot Memorial Society of Oxford

2017 – The 12th Annual Town Picnic & Concert at the Huguenot Fort in September was sponsored jointly by The Oxford Historical Commission and the Huguenot Memorial Society of Oxford

2017 – The Town School Committee awarded the SPED transportation contract to Van Pool which will eliminate repair and replacement costs of vans

2017 – The School Committee Technology Department implemented a 1.1 Chromebook program where High School students were issued a Chromebook that they could take home - The Chromebook integrates well with the existing Google Suite System

2018 – An old tree in front of the Oxford Free Public Library was dying and needed to be cut down- Local artist Wayne Yacino was chosen to carve Architectural objects on the approximate 10-foot stump of the tree-The Main focal point of the carvings is a wise owl on the stack of books

2018 – Town Manager, Brian Palaia resigned, Dennis Power was assigned as Acting Town Manager until Jennifer J. Callahan the new Town Manager began her service on September 18, 2018

2018 – Palermo Drive, the street at the Community Center was named after deceased Major League Umpire Steve Palermo who risked his life and was shot in the back while attempting to break up a robbery in Dallas, Texas

2018 – The Town received a \$2.5 million Mass Works Grant for major road and sidewalk work - Massachusetts Lt. Governor Karyn Polito was in attendance upon receipt of the grant and to celebrate the spirit of partnership which is enabling the Town to move forward

2018 – Oxford FIRE-EMS member Tom Walsh was honored by the Worcester Bravehearts along with St. Vincent Hospital at a baseball game for his work in Emergency Medical Services - He was a dedicated Fire Dept, member and served the Town for over 38 years

2018 – The Town is one of the few Police Departments in the Commonwealth to establish a formalized drone deployment program by meeting FAA guidelines and protocols for operation of drones

2018 – Since the Master Plan was adopted, several goals and recommendations have been achieved - These include re-zoning of Leicester Street from R-4 Residential to General Business and combining the Central Profession and Central Business Zoning Districts to establish a single Village Business District

2018 – Board of Selectmen honored longtime Selectman John G. Saad for forty (40) years of service to the community

2018 – Storm drainage improvements and roadway reconstruction was completed on Locust and Clover Streets and sidewalks were added to the Chaffee School area

2019 – The Board of Selectmen proclaimed August 7, 2019 as Purple Heart Day

2019 – Noteworthy Building Permit was issued to IPG for Building # 7 at its World Headquarters on Old Webster Road

2019 – New Fire Chief Laurent R. McDonald was sworn in on November 21st

2019 – Department Ceremony held on May 18, during Police Week to honor Officers and Police personnel whose names are listed on the Chief Harold J. Hartland Memorial

2019 – The Greenbrier Osprey Web Cam captured the activities of a pair of Ospreys and their three chicks in their nest next to the baseball field-Unfortunately, one chick did not survive

2019 – In May, Tri-Valley decided to move the “Meals on Wheels” Program out of the Senior Center to a space on Liberty Lane

2019 – On June 10, 2019 the Council of Aging voted to change the name of Oxford Senior Center to Oxford Social Center. (Later to be renamed back to the Oxford Senior Center on February 2, 2021)

2019 – Lieutenant Dorothy Taft Barre was recognized as the “Guest of Honor” at the Annual Oxford Veterans’ Day Luncheon. Lieutenant Taft received the “French Legion of Honor” Medal award while serving as a registered U.S. Army Nurse during the “Battle of the Bulge” in World War II

2019 – The Branding and Wayfinding Committee emerged out of the Updated Master Plan accepted by the Town, charged with identifying Oxford’s unique qualities

2019 – A new addition in the Oxford Public Library, Early Learning Center, “Connie’s Comer”, donated by a generous donation from Connie Croteau who served at the Oxford Public Schools for 38 years

2019 – New traffic control signal and road improvements were constructed on Main and Harwood Streets. Project funded through grant funding from IPG Corporation and a Mass Works Grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

2019 – Oxford Public Schools provide (ELL) English Language Learning services to students identified as having a language other than English as their primary language

2020 – Having been promoted to Assistant Town Manager in 2019 from the Board of Selectman’s Office, Karen Crandell retired after providing exceptional constituent services to Oxford residents for over a quarter of a century

2020 – DPW Director Sean Divoll was presented to the Board by the Town Manager as the first Employer of the Year Award for his outstanding Administrative leadership and collaboration across departments

2020 – Oxford designated a Green Community and to receive \$163,880 in funds from the State to make energy reduction improvements

2020 – Fire Station #2 in North Oxford was opened with a full-time staff in March for the first time since 2007, previously manned on temporary basis

2020 – This year the Oxford Fire Department was chosen by the Department of Fire Services to house one of the six Commonwealth’s Hazardous Materials (Haz/Mat) Emergency Response Units. Oxford was chosen for its central location and access to major highways

2020 – COVID -19 had major impacts on Town activities, from March through December 59 ceases were detected in Oxford, 549 confirmed and 42 probable cases. Major adjustments had to be made. Work, schooling and meetings were done remotely using Zoom, social distance restrictions were enforced at churches and other gatherings, such as outdoor sporting events and beaches, etc.

2020 – Board of Health Inspector Thomas Purcell retired in September after 43 Years of service to the Town in various capacities

2020 – As of July, Access Oxford a corporation providing Town cable Programming had dissolved and replaced with a new position as the Town’s first Media Production Coordinator

2020 – Oxford Zoning By-Laws amended to add “Large Scale Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems” 2020 - The OHC was informed in April by a Mr. Robert Grzyb of Dudley, MA with an offer to construct, donate and install a new wooden flagpole at the 1872 North Gore District 8 School House located on Joslin Park. The flagpole was erected in the Fall of 2020

2021 – Long- time resident and Selectman John G. Saad passed away on July 9, 2021. John gave much of his time to the community, he called home. The community he loved and for the residents for whom he deeply cared. John’s dedication to Oxford shined in many ways and was exhibited for over 40 years

2021 – Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Town of Oxford saw a shift to the “new normal” of running a forty-plus million-dollar Municipal operation

2021 – State Representative Joseph McKenna was able to obtain a \$50,000.00 earmark for the North Station roof project within a State bill known as “An Act Relative to Immediate COVID-19 Recovery Needs”

2021 – Through the Mass Executive Office of Energy and Environment, a grant was obtained of \$55,275.00 for planning and design of the dam project at McKinstry Pond. The dam was considered to be in poor condition

2021 – In May, the Town held a public auction for properties obtained through tax title foreclosure. Six properties were sold for the sum of \$650,000.00

2021 – The Police Department acquired “K-9 Zax” during 2021. Officer Ryan Kasik was assigned as his handler. Upon completion of a 17- week training, the Department and Zax were given a bulletproof vest by the Massachusetts Vest-A-Dog program

2021 – As of 2021, the Oxford Police Department has a Department Chaplain, Mr. Robert Cross . Robert is a resident of Oxford and a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran who proudly served in the Gulf War

2021 – Members of the Oxford Historical Commission (OHC) provided a set of conditions and repeatedly met with the DPW and the contractor as the demolition and reconstruction of the “Sacarrappa Road Culvert and Retaining Wall Replacement and Sacarrappa Road Widening Project progress. Total cost of the project was \$950,000.00

2021 – Members of the OHC mourned the loss of Dr. Joyce Clements who served on the OHC for many years. Even though she moved away from her adopted town she remained an active presence in the activities of the OHC and the Huguenot Memorial Society of Oxford

2021 – The DPW completed roadway reconstruction and drainage improvements on Sutton Avenue from Orchard Hill Drive to Sacarrappa Road for a total cost of \$ 683,000.00

2022 – Oxford contracts with a new energy supplier, “Direct Energy” for both Basic and Green supply Products at a considerable savings for the citizens. Contract covers two-year period (2022-2024)

2022 – Two Public Land Auctions were held during 2022, one held in May which netted \$225,000 and one held in October which netted \$250,000

2022 – The Commonwealth’s Executive Office of Economic Development made a formal announcement of a \$2.8 million grant funding award for the Route 20 Sewer Extension Project at TC Controls at North Oxford

2022 – There were 30 applicants for the newly revamped 2022 Senior Tax Work-off Program. The Town was able to fund 13 positions

2022 – Chief Anthony Saad and the Oxford Police Department hosted the 2022 Animal Control Officers Association of Massachusetts Academy. Animal Control Officers throughout the State were in attendance

2022 – Animal Control Officer Ed Hart travelled to Poland on two occasions to help animals and their owners that were fleeing the war in Ukraine. He was also deployed to Kentucky to rescue animals displaced by the floods

2022 – The newly installed aeration system at the Splash Pad at Carbuncle Pond performed as anticipated and prevented closure of the beachfront due to algae blooms

2022 – In September, the Oxford Community Center organized the first Townwide yard sale. Over 60 households registered their addresses

2022 – Several different eradication/management techniques were evaluated at the Knotweed Management Project at McKinstry pond. Knotweed is a widespread non-native evasive plant in Oxford

2022 – Formal dedication was held in May of the new 26 foot wooden flagpole at the 1872 School House located on Joslin Park. Delay of the dedication was due to COVID -19 restrictions. It was built and offered to the Town by Mr. Robert Grzyb from Dudley, MA. Oxford DPW provided a base for the flagpole and other contributors to the operation were L&L Concrete, CAS Services and Capone Iron Works

2022 – The last of the three Huguenot Oak trees located on Huguenot Road alleged to have guided the Huguenot Settlers back and forth to their homes in the 1680’s had to be removed. Parts of the limbs and trunk were saved for building of artifacts

2022 – Oxford Cable Access has been improved to provide higher quality presentations of Town events and municipal meetings

2022 – Ralph W. Miller passed away after serving over 20 years on the Oxford DPW and on the Fire and Police Departments for nearly 40 years

2023 – For the third year in a row, Oxford received the “Distinguished Budget Presentation Award” from the respected Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada. Oxford is one of approximately three dozen communities in Massachusetts to receive this national distinction

2023 – Oxford received \$500,000 towards the French River Regional Shared Use Path. The proposed project will traverse north to south over an abandoned railroad bed and existing trails

2023 – Oxford will receive \$491,211 over a 16-year period to help in its fight against Opioid and substance abuse. This resulted from a \$26 billion settlement by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

2023 – MassDOT commenced work on the \$106 million Route 20 Reconstruction Project to improve safety and traffic operations in Oxford and Charlton

2023 – In early June, DPW director, Jared Duval resigned and in October, Kevin Duffy was hired as the new DPW Director

2023 – This past year, Ed Hart, the Assistant Animal Control Officer, received the prestigious honor as the 2023 Animal Control Officer of the year from the Massachusetts Society of Cruelty to Animals and the Animal Rescue League of Boston

2022-2023 – The Annual Town Meeting in May 2023 approved \$350,000 for replacement of Ambulance 1 and \$300,000 for replacement of Ambulance 2. Ambulance 1 was expected to arrive by mid - March and Ambulance 2 was delayed until December 2024

2023 – The Oxford Conservation Commission helped coordinate the newly formed Grow Native for Pollinators Campaign and volunteers and supporters built a pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at 450 Main Street. The garden includes native plants and was host to many butterflies, moths and bees

2023 – The Oxford Historical Commission planned three historical walks in the fall. Joseph Beaulieu provided a guided walking tour through Greenbriar, Terry Cummings and Thomas Siplas excursion followed along the French River and the third walk planned with the Last Green Valley was postponed until 2024

2023 – The Oxford NJROTC Cadets completed 1837 hours of community service and over 482 hours of school service which has directly resulted in scholarships from the Executive Board of American Legion of Massachusetts Boston Office

2023 – Bay Path accepted a class of 314 freshmen in September of which 36 grade 9 students were from Oxford

2024 – Roger Bacon Jr. dedicated over three decades of service to Oxford. Serving as math teacher, coach, guidance counselor, assistant principal, and principal for 13 years. Roger’s profound commitment to community service earned him the title of “Mr. Oxford”. He passed away on April 17, 2024

2024 – Town of Oxford hosted it’s first French River Trail Visioning Session on February 21st at Carbuncle Beach House. In 2023, the Town of Oxford received a \$600,000 state grant towards a proposed French River Trail over an abandoned railroad bed and some existing trails

2024 – Town of Oxford partnered with Civic Plus to upgrade the existing website platform and launch its new Town website to bring residents a new experience and level of engagement

2024 – Meridia Incorporated was chosen as the vender to provide an Electronic Voting System for the Town of Oxford. The initial product run occurred at the 2024 Special Town Meeting of October 2nd. It was well received

2024 – The Town DPW was awarded a \$206,100 grant to transform the former Barton Street municipal garage into a pocket park

2024 – The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs awarded the Town of Oxford \$1,000,000 towards the reconstruction of the McKinstry Pond. State Officials classified McKinstry Pond as a Significant Hazard Potential structure

2024 – The Lowes Pond Dam reconstruction project saw considerable progress in 2024 with the filing and approval of all necessary permits. Since the dam was abandoned by its owners, the Town of Oxford took ownership through the Land Court process and reconstruction is expected to begin in the Spring of 2025

2024 – State Representative, Joseph McKenna nominated Senior Center Director, Laura Wilson,

as a Commonwealth Heroine. Director Wilson and Representative McKenna attended a Statehouse Awards Celebration on June 14th, 2024

2024 – Debra Light, Executive Assistant to the Police Department retired after 33 years of service to the Town of Oxford at the Police and School Departments

2024 – A new pollinator-friendly garden was planted at the Senior Center by volunteers on Earth Day with the plants provided by funding from The Last Green Valley

2024 – “Let’s Talk Oxford History” were informal discussions led by the Oxford Historical Commission held at the Senior Center on each second Tuesday of the month. Invitation was open to the public

2024 – The blue-green algae issue at Carbuncle Pond was evaluated and treated by the Town of Oxford, the State of Massachusetts and private companies. The evaluation included analyzing the road water drainage into the pond and looking at specific phosphates in the pond sediment

2024 – From the 12th through the 19th of April, twelve NROTC Cadets travel to Paris and Normandy France and London, During the trip, the Cadets experienced local cuisine and visited many historical sites

Oxford Notables

Gabriel Bernon (1644 – 1736)



1644 – Born in La Rochelle, France of an ancient Huguenot family

1673 – Married Esther Le Roy (who died in 1710)

1686 – Fled France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes led to his religious persecution

1688 – Arrived in Boston via Amsterdam and London with the intention of establishing a settlement at Oxford, Massachusetts; a plan that had evolved through his meetings with other refugees when in London. Bernon's financial support made the settlement a reality for other French Huguenot families who sailed to America with him, but he chose to settle in Boston. He was responsible for the settlement of thirty French Huguenot families and provided for a grist, saw and wash leather mill, and a church on Mayo's Hill. The Oxford settlement was abandoned in 1696 after an Indian attack in which four of its members were killed. Attempts were made to re-establish Oxford in 1699, but it was abandoned permanently due to Indian threat in 1704.

1697 – Relocated to New Port, Rhode Island

1706 – Moved to Providence, Rhode Island

1712 – Married to Mary Harris

1712 – Moved to Kingston

1721 – Sold the Oxford grant to Thomas Mayo

1736 – Died in Providence, Rhode Island

Huguenot Fort

Late 1680's - Fort built
1704 – Fort abandoned
1819 – Fort owned by John Mayo
1881 – Huguenot Memorial Society established and the land and fort was deeded over to the Huguenot Memorial Society
1881 – The land and fort was deeded over to the Huguenot Memorial Society
1884 – Huguenot Memorial Society erects a cross and pedestal monument to the memory of the Huguenot settlers on the site of the original fort
1884-1979 – Under the care and management of the Huguenot Memorial Society of Oxford
1979 – Huguenot Memorial Society of Oxford conveys eight and one half acres of land, including the site of the Huguenot Memorial and the remains of the fort, situated on the northerly side of Fort Hill Road, to the Town of Oxford to hold said land in perpetuity upon the charitable trust:
The Town shall forever retain and use the premises as a memorial to, and to appropriately perpetuate the memory of, the early Huguenot settlers of the Town for the benefit, enjoyment and historical enrichment of the citizens of the Town and other members of the public; the land to be under the care, custody, management and control of the Town's Historical Commission established pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 8D: or act thereon.
1979 – Field stone altar erected in the north field of the Huguenot Fort and a Time Capsule is buried
1980 – Dedication of the altar
1984 – Evaluation by Boston University
1985 – Huguenot Fort accepted by the Massachusetts State Register of Historic Places.
1988 – Huguenot Fort accepted by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, for listing in the National Register of Historic Places
1989 – Archeological evaluation project completion report published.
1989 – Preservation restriction granted
2000 – Tour of the fort in conjunction with Archaeological Week
2003 – Boy Scout earns Eagle Badge for clean up work at the fort
2004 – Work sessions conducted by Huguenot Memorial Society, the Oxford Historical Commission and near by residents to improve the entrance to the land
2005 – Boy Scout earns Eagle Badge for clean up work at the fort
2005 – Work sessions conducted by Huguenot Memorial Society, the Oxford Historical Commission and near by residents to improve the entrance to the land
2006 – Town picnic at the Huguenot Fort
2007 – Proposal submitted to the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority to restore the field stone wall fronting the site of the fort
2010 – Stone benches and interpretive sign Installed

Ebenezer Learned (1728 – 1801)²

1728 – Born in Oxford, Massachusetts
1749 – Married Jerusha Baker
1750 – Inherited 200 acres known as *Prospect Hill* and built a home there
1756 – Lead his militia company to Fort Edward at lake George during the French and Indian War
1757 – Contracted smallpox
1758-1794 – Served as Selectman
1774 – Appointed Colonel of the militia
1775 – Led his Minutemen to Boston to join the Battle of Lexington
1775 – The Massachusetts Committee of Safety named him a Colonel and authorized him to organize the 4th Massachusetts Regiment. The regiment was subsequently adopted into the Continental Army.

1775 – Given command of Dorchester Heights by General Washington
1776 – First to enter Boston after evacuation by the British
1776 – Resigned his commission due to poor health
1777 – Returned to duty, named Brigadier General, and fought at Saratoga
1777-1778 – Commanded a brigade of Massachusetts's troops at Valley Forge
1778 – Resigned his commission due to poor health
1779 – Represented Oxford at the Massachusetts Convention
Served as a Judge of the Common Pleas for Worcester County, Massachusetts
1783 – Elected as a representative to the Massachusetts General Court
1801 – Died in Oxford, Massachusetts

Colonel Alexander De Witt (1789 – 1879)²

1789 – Born in Oxford, Massachusetts
1804-1808 – Clerk at Merino Manufacturing Company in Dudley, Massachusetts
1818 – Moved to Franklin, Massachusetts
1818 – Manufactured cotton thread with partner Doctor Nathaniel Miller
1818 – Named Colonel of the 3rd Regiment of the 2nd Brigade
1820 – Married Mary Makepeace of Franklin, Massachusetts
1824 – With brothers Stearns, Hollis and Archibald opened a mill in Buffum Village, Oxford
1826 – Worthy Master of the Third Lodge of Masons
1828-1830 – Served as Selectman
1830-1833 – Served as Town Moderator
1830-1834 – Elected as State Representative
1832 – Served on the School Committee
1840-1844 – Served as Town Agent
1842 – Served as Town Moderator
1842-1851 – Elected as State Senator
1843-1848 – President of the Oxford Bank

Director of the Worcester Merchants and Farmers Insurance Company,
Director of the State Mutual Life Assurance Company
President of the Mechanics Savings Bank
President of the Mechanics National Bank
President of the Worcester and Nashua
Railroad Director of the Providence and
Worcester Railroad Director of the Norwich
and Worcester Railroad

1853 – Delegate from Oxford at the State Constitutional Convention
1853-1857 – Elected as a member of the Free Soil Party to the U.S. House of
Representatives
1857 – Purchased the Old Huguenot Mill
1857 – American's Party candidate for Lieutenant Governor of
Massachusetts 1858 – Founded the Oxford Fire Department
1865 – Purchased the Wallis Mill
1879 – Died

Clara Barton (1821 – 1912)¹



1821 – Born in Oxford, Massachusetts Taught at District School No. 91839

1852 – Organized public schools in Bordertown, New Jersey

1854 – The first woman to work in Patent Office in Washington, D.C.

1861 – Cared for the wounded from the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment and assisted in the care of the wounded after the battle of Bull Run

1862-1865 – Served in the battlefields: Cedar Mountain, Chantilly, South Mountain, Spotsylvania, Wilderness, Belle Plain, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Petersburg

1864 – Assisted Dorence Atwater in marking 13,000 graves at Andersonville

1865 – Organized at her own expense the search for missing men

1868-1869 – Toured the U.S. and met Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone, Julia Ward Howe and other women interested in the suffrage movement

1870 – Served with the International Red Cross in the Franco-Prussian War

1873 – Awarded the Iron Cross by Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany

1876 – Started the First American Red Cross Chapter in Dansville, New York

1887 – Appointed to represent the U.S. at the International Conference, Karlsruhe, Germany

1881-1904 – Became the first president of the American Red Cross

1881 – Authored the “American Amendment” which distributed relief not only in wars, but also in famines, floods, earthquakes, and other disasters

1882-1883 – Provided relief from the Mississippi floods

1883 – Appointed Superintendent of the Women’s Reformatory in Sherborn Falls, Massachusetts

1884 – Distributed relief in the Ohio and Mississippi River floods

1885 – Provided relief in the Texas famine

1886 – Provided relief in the Charleston earthquake

1888 – Provided relief in the Florida Yellow Fever Epidemic

1889 – Assisted with relief in Johnston, Pennsylvania

1893 – Distribute relief in Sea Islands, South Carolina

1896 – Supervised the Red Cross mission to the Armenian Massacre, Turkey

1898-1900 – Provided relief in the Spanish-American War

1900 – Assisted relief in the Galveston, Texas disaster

1903 – Received the Russian Recognition of the Order of the Red Cross by Czar Alexander
1904 – Resigned as President of the American National Red Cross
1905 – Became the president of the National First Aid Society
1912 – Died at Glen Echo, Maryland

George Washington Sears “Nessmuk” (1821 – 1890) ¹

1821 – Born in South Oxford (now Webster)
1833 – Worked on a commercial fishing vessel
1840 – Signed on a three year voyage for the South Pacific
1857 – Married and had three children
1861 – Was a sharpshooter in the Civil War
1866 – Traveled up the Amazon River, following the route of Louis Agassiz
1870’s – Became a major proponent of light weight canoeing
1880’s – J. Henry Rushton built the *Sally Gamp* for Nessmuk. Developed the “Nessmuk Knife”
Popularized “Nessmuk Garlic Cheese Bread”
1880-1893 – Wrote articles for *Forest and Stream* called Nessmuk’s “Adirondack Letters”
1884 – Wrote *Woodcraft*
1887 – Wrote *Forest Runes*
1890 – Died. A mountain in northern Pennsylvania is named after him. A stone marker
commemorating him is at the entrance to the 200 Sportsmen Club

Elliot P. Joslin, M.D. (1869 – 1962) ³



1869 – Born in Oxford, Massachusetts
Attended Leicester Academy, Yale College
1891-1895 – Attended Harvard University
Won the Boylston Society prize for work later published as the book *The Pathology of Diabetes Mellitus*.
Conducted Postgraduate work at Massachusetts General Hospital
First doctor in the United States to specialize in diabetes and was the founder of today’s Joslin diabetes Center. He was the first to advocate for teaching patients to care for their own diabetes, an approach now commonly referred to as “DSME” or Diabetes Self-Management
Education. He is also a recognized pioneer in glucose management, identifying that tight glucose control leads to fewer and less extreme complications.
1898 – Started private medical practice in Boston’s Back Bay
1908 – In conjunction with physiologist Francis G. Benedict, carried out extensive metabolic balance studies examining fasting and feeding in patients with varying severities of diabetes
1910 – Built summer vacation home on Buffalo Hill
1916 – Published monograph *The Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus*.

1918 – Published *Diabetic Manual — for the Doctor and Patient*

1922 – Insulin became available as therapy, and Joslin's corps of nurses became the forerunners of certified diabetes educators, providing instruction in diet, exercise, foot care and insulin dosing, and established camps for children with diabetes throughout New England.

1940 – The first hospital blood glucose monitoring system for pre-meal testing was developed under his direction and was the forerunner of modern home-monitoring systems.

1946-1966 – Challenged the government to do a study in the town of his birthplace, Oxford, later confirm Massachusetts. The study was started in 1946 and carried out over the next 20 years. The results would Joslin's fear that the incidence of diabetes in the United States was approaching epidemic proportions

1952 – Joslin's group practice became officially known as the Joslin Clinic.

1956 – The office was moved to its current location at One Joslin Place in Boston

1962 – Died in his sleep on 29 January 1962 in Brookline, Massachusetts.

Edited by Peter J. Smith, Colonel A. Russell Pytko and other members of the Oxford Historical Commission.

1. Webster, Dudley, and Oxford During the Nineteenth Century by Paul J. Macek and James R. Morrison
2. History of the Town of Oxford Massachusetts by George F. Daniels
3. Wikipedia
4. Daniels History of Oxford
5. May White
6. Town of Oxford Annual Town Reports