

August in Boylston News

By Judy Haynes

1776, 1786, 1936, 1986 are all important dates in Boylston history! Every school teaches the importance of 1776, the year our country separated from Great Britain, and we became a nation unto ourselves. While it was April, 1776, that the first call to arms led young men in Boylston, known then as the North Precinct of Shrewsbury, to answer the call and become involved in the Revolutionary War, it was but a mere ten years later that the North Precinct separated from Shrewsbury and became a town of its own.

The incorporation date for Boylston was March 1, 1786, and in the Historical Society collection are copies of Bill of Incorporation, Amendments of Incorporation, the Act of Incorporation and the Layout of the Town, but unfortunately, we have no artifacts originating in that year to denote what celebrations took place that first year. We do know that one hundred years later, and in future celebrations the people looked back and celebrated August in grand style.



Boylston Welcomes Home Its Sons and Daughters Arch
Located at the corner of Church and Main Street
August 1886
BHSM Photograph Collection

The Centennial year celebration of 1886 was arranged, likely to take advantage of summer weather in August, and to recall the memories of those who could remember Boylston's humble, farm beginnings. A book was published with the speeches and a list of all the events that took place that day. The book is available at our historical society library if you choose to read it.

- A RINGING OF THE BELLS AND A FIRING SALUTE AT SUNRISE AUGUST 18, 1886
- MUSIC BY THE WORCESTER BRASS BAND AND A PROCESSION AROUND THE COMMON AND TO THE TOWN HOUSE
- A TABLET WAS PLACED AT THE STONE TOWN HALL (BUILT IN 1830) HONORING VETERANS OF THE MEXICAN WAR AND THE CIVIL WAR
- SCRIPTURES, SPEECHES, AND A POEM WERE READ AS WELL AS THE ARTICLE OF INCORPORATION;
- PRAYERS SAID; HYMNS WERE SUNG
- NOON THERE WAS A DRILL AND A 100-GUN SALUTE FOLLOWED BY DINNER IN A TENT ON THE COMMON
- MORNING, THROUGH AFTERNOON WAS FILLED WITH FIELD SPORTS; RACES; GREASED POLE AND TUG OF WAR

It was a full day of activities for the entire family with something for young and old to enjoy.



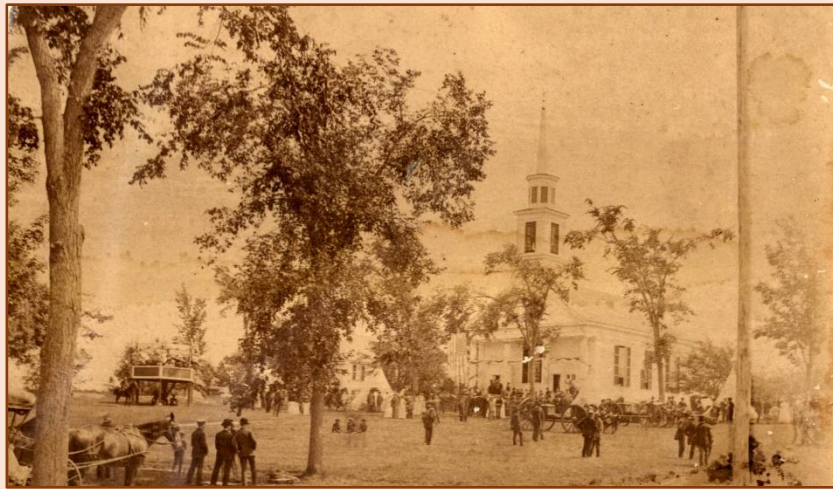
Boylston Centennial Celebrations
*View Overlooking the
Boylston Town Common
Center School on left (current location of
BPL); Hasting Tavern is in center.*

Event Tents of Centennial
*View overlooking Boylston
Town Common from the
Town Hall.
Church Street is to the left.*



By 1936, 150 years were celebrated once again in August, this time over three days:

- **FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 1936**, A BALL WITH ORCHESTRA WAS HELD IN THE EVENING AT THE BOYLSTON MEN'S CLUB
- **SATURDAY, AUGUST 15**, AN ANNIVERSARY DINNER WAS HELD IN THE VESTRY OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
- AN "HISTORICAL PARADE" WAS HELD AT 2:30 P.M. THAT SATURDAY – A PARADE OF FLOATS AND BANDS; FOLLOWED BY SPORTS, SERVICES, DINNER ALL PACKED IN THE DAY
- WELCOME ADDRESS, SPEAKERS, MUSIC, HISTORY 3 – 4 P.M.
- BAND CONCERT WAS HELD 4 – 6 P.M.
- 8:15 P.M. ENTERTAINMENT AT THE MEN'S CLUB AND SO THE DAY ENDED.
- **SUNDAY** BEGAN WITH A MASS AT MORNINGDALE CHAPEL; AND A SERVICE AT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
- 7:30 P.M. AN ORGAN RECITAL FOLLOWED BY AN HISTORICAL PAGEANT AT 8 P.M.



Sesquicentennial Festivities
Overlooking Boylston Town
Common from Main Street
Original Band Stand on left
August 1936



In 1986 two hundred years had come and gone, and to be sure to compete with the Centennial, **The Bicentennial** held events over the entire year. It was a year that took six years of planning which began in 1979! Founders Day (March 1, 1786 -1986) was the beginning of the Bicentennial year. A budget of \$40,000 was appropriated for the year-long events.¹ Compare this to one hundred years earlier when the expenses appropriated were \$150. Novel items such as Boylston coins were produced, T-shirts, sweatshirts were also available as mementoes. A summary of the year's events included:

- FOUNDERS DAY IN MARCH
- A BICENTENNIAL BALL (*in 18th century costume, of course*)
- BANDSTAND ON THE COMMON WAS CONSTRUCTED
- HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPEECHES
- INTERNATIONAL DAY WITH FOODS FROM AROUND THE WORLD
- A FASHION SHOW OF 1786-1986 DRESS
- PARADE WITH MILITIA REENACTORS AND MUCH MORE FILLED A LONG PARADE
- CONCERTS ON THE COMMON

364 Sunday Telegram September 21, 1986

The dotted line shows the 1.7-mile parade route along Main Street (Route 70).

2 1/2-Hour Parade To Cap Boylston Celebration Sunday

The Town of Boylston will cap its 7-month-long celebration of its 200th anniversary with a 2 1/2-hour parade next Sunday that Robert A. Ferrucci, parade committee chairman, says will delight all.

The six-division parade will begin at 1 p.m. from Digital Field and proceed south on Main Street (Route 70) for the 1.7-mile march to Dewey Avenue where the parade units will disband. The parade will be held rain or shine. There is no rain date, according to Ferrucci.

The parade route will be closed to all traffic at 11:30 p.m. and side streets along the parade route will be closed to traffic at noon.

Parking will be allowed along both sides of Route 140, and along both sides of French Drive. Parking also will be allowed along the even-numbered sides of side streets in the Morningdale section of town, but cars will not be allowed to park closer than 100 feet to the parade route. Parking will also be allowed in a large open area adjacent to Wilkinson's Package Store, 210 Main St.

Participants from Boylston in the parade include the Red Knights, the Boylston Militia, the Ladies Auxiliary of the Fire Department, and a contingent of emergency medical technicians of the Fire Department. Boylston Garden Club, Boylston Lodge # F. & A.M., Friends of Boylston Library, Boylston Senior Citizens, the Boylston Grange, St. Mary of the Hills C.Y.C., the First Congregational Church, pupils from Boylston Elementary School and Berlin Memorial School.

Shuttle Buses

Shuttle buses will run from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. along Route 70, French Drive, Central Street, and along Route 140 from the West Boylston town line to the Shrewsbury town line. The buses will stop to pick up riders at designated locations, marked by blue strip signs, that will be made visible along the bus routes. Passengers will be transported to a drop-off area along the parade route. After the parade is over, the shuttle buses will return passengers to the point of origin.

Parking spaces for the handicapped and limited parking spaces for senior citizens have been reserved at Wagner Motors, 87 Main St.

Ferrucci encourages the use of carpools by the public to alleviate parking problems and traffic.

Refreshments will be available for purchase. The public is encouraged to bring lawn chairs to view the parade in comfort.

The number of bands, other marching units, floats and an assortment of vehicles totals just over 100. The total includes approximately 33 bands, 18 marching bands, and a number of color guards.

20,000 Expected

The parade committee anticipates a crowd of 20,000 to view the parade, if the weather is nice. It will be a spectacular parade, Ferrucci said.

The marching bands include the U.S. Coast Guard Band from New London, Conn., the Colonial Navy of Massachusetts Band from Fall River, Coast Regional High School Band from Taunton, R.H., the Bartlett High School Band from Leicester, the Citizens Senior Drump Corps from Burlington, the Community of Jesus Band from Orleans, St. John's All-Girls Band from Chelmsford, and the Stationers Drump Corps of Lebanon.

Among the school bands are Taunton Regional High School Band from Boylston, David Frosty High School Band from Spencer, and the Douglas High School Band from Douglas.

The eye-catching Alpine Temple Shrotoners from Wilmington will bring with them three bands – a brass band, an ornamental band, and a pipe band. The contingent includes an Arab Patrol, a five brigade, brass, military, miniature motorcycles and fun-making clowns.

The Malta Temple Shrotoners from Springfield will also put on an eye-catching performance with bands, and an assortment of miniature and miniature motorcycles whose drivers will perform maneuvers to delight the crowd.

The "Mothers Men" Massachusetts Pageant Queen of 1986, Roxanne Vanaman from Fitchburg, will also be in the parade, Ferrucci said.

One of the colorful marching units will be a U.S. Army contingent from Fort Devens, carrying state flags from

2 1/2 Hour Parade Route
from Shrewsbury town line in Morningdale to Route 140
Sunday Telegram, September 21, 1986
BHSM Newspaper Collection

The year's events were captured in colored photographs and filled 18 loose leaf binders still available for viewing at the historical society library, and in 1987 the best was captured in a hard bound book "A Bicentennial Celebration: Boylston 1786-1986." This, too, is on our shelf at the society's library. Come and browse to rekindle some of your memories.

¹ "A Bicentennial Celebration: Boylston 1786-1986," published in 1987.

Happy 200th Birthday – Boylston, Massachusetts



Boylston Militia



International Day

Parade





Dancing The Night Away



Strawberry Festival – Yummy Pie Eating Contest

Over the years August saw summer fun, activities, and life as one would expect in a small primarily agricultural town except during the war years when news from overseas was precious to local families. Following is a piece of news of what life was like for at least one of the Boylston boys serving during WWI.

A clipping from August 7, 1918, told of how Private Herbert Lloyd Brigham, serving overseas during WWI, received “letters in large size bunches” that caught up with him while he was recuperating in a hospital in France. He had been “gassed” and was also ill with the “grip.” Because mail and communications were slower then than would be with our veterans now, it was also noted he “received four months’ pay, so that he was called Millionaire Brigham Young.”²

Lloyd was apparently a friend to another Boylston soldier as a news clip of May 12, 1918, prints part of a letter from William ‘Frank’ Falby asking “if you get Loyd’s address, send it, so that I can write him. Remember me to all. With Love, Frank.” Falby was in the Signal Corps.³



Private Herbert Lloyd Brigham
World War I
321st U.S. Infantry
Purple Heart Recipient

August, sometimes dubbed “dog days” due to heat and humidity is here. We can enjoy it with no World War this 2023. But soon the sunshine will lessen, and we will look forward to cooler days and school will resume in September.

² from Mary French news clipping scrapbook, no newspaper title, column reads: “Boylston, Aug. 7.”

³ Ibid.

Centennial of Boylston, Boylston, Massachusetts
 Photograph Collection, Boylston Historical Society & Museum, Inc., 7 Central Street, Boylston, Massachusetts
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