



## Fairhaven High Class '76 40<sup>th</sup> Reunion Newsletter January 2016 Edition

To bring our classmates up to speed of sorts, sharing a few emails from classmates back and forth and this one stated the situation of our 40th reunion most eloquently.

Names are removed to protect privacy concerns.

"Asking an older, more life experienced individual how do you live 'in the moment' I.E. How do you take life in to the fullest extent while you are in it rather than in reflection."

The individual's reply was, "It takes a bit of living, the individual called it, 'realized experienced maturity' ".

We need to strive for every day because we know we are in the present for a short time and then we are past tense.

Thus the moral of the story is 'make it count'

We might say that goes for reunion opportunities as well.

Let's make it special

Best to you all

Class '76 40th Reunion July 23, 2016 www.fshc76.com



Use the 411 page on our class web site for lodging information. <http://www.fshc76.com/WAYPOINT.html>

Have you looked at the FACEUP page on our class site? [www.fshc76.com](http://www.fshc76.com) go to then menu page, then click 'Face Up.

Here is an article from one of our own: Used by permission. **The School at the Top of the Hill by Christopher J. Richard (Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> 2015)**

This was first published in the Navigator on November 15, 2006, just a few hours before the School Committee voted to



recommend the closing of Oxford School. Oxford School, 1900 THE OXFORD SCHOOL that has stood at the top of the hill on Main Street for one-hundred and ten years is really the second Fairhaven School to go by that name. The first, still standing on North Street, is now known as the Old Stone Schoolhouse. The earlier school, the first of the town's district school-houses, was built in 1828 to serve the educational

needs of the children of Oxford Village. Back then, the area that is now called North Fairhaven was very sparsely populated. In the mid-1800s only about two dozen houses were situated between Riverside Cemetery and the present day Acushnet boundary. They were farm houses, for the most part, widely spaced along Main Street and Alden Road. A large parcel of land on both sides of Main Street between the Howland house and Woodside Cemetery was the Town Farm. Some of the school age children of North Fairhaven went to the school at Oxford Village, while those further north went to the Royal Hathaway School, built on Royal Hathaway's property at the Acushnet line. There was no particular push for more residential development in that vicinity because it was relatively inaccessible, lying about halfway between the only two bridges across the river—the Fairhaven-New Bedford Bridge at Bridge Street and the small stone bridge at Head of the River.

During the 1830s and 40s Oxford Village, being closer to the waterfront business areas, grew as a residential neighborhood. In 1847, the little stone schoolhouse on North Street was crowded enough to necessitate the building of another schoolhouse nearby on Oxford Street. The Royal Hathaway schoolhouse didn't stay in operation for many years after Acushnet became a separate town. In the early 1870s it was moved south to the land on the Town Farm that would later be named Benoit Square. That schoolhouse was eventually closed and in 1886, the year after Rogers School opened, it was sold and converted into a home.

As the outlying neighborhoods grew, older students were carted by horse-drawn wagon to Rogers School. Soon, though, a northern population boom would begin, following the completion of the Coggeshall Street Bridge in 1892. The bridge would make North Fairhaven accessible to New Bedford mill workers and their families. In 1893, the town sold 30 acres of the Town Farm from Main Street west to the river to developers. Howland Road, Deane Street, Morton Street, Winsor Street, Morgan Street and Dover Street were laid out, as were Brown Street, Wilding Street, Kendrick Avenue and others. French Canadian and English families moved across the river, followed a bit later by Portuguese and Polish.

The Old Stone Schoolhouse, near the end of its useful life as a school could hold only 50 students in grades one to four. There was no more room at Rogers School, so a second floor room in a former shoe factory building on Main Street opposite Spring Street was outfitted as a classroom at a cost of more than \$300. Thirty-one grade five and six students from the Oxford district were transferred there, where they were taught by Miss Mattie L. Norris. Finally in 1896, the townspeople decided they had to build another, larger school, and on June 1, 1896, the school committee awarded the construction contract to Brownell and Murkland of New Bedford for a two-story building. Later that week, the Fairhaven STAR reported, "The building will be constructed of red brick with red terra cotta trimmings and will be built according to the plans drawn by W.C.



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Collett." William C. Collett, who had been the supervising architect during the construction of the Millicent Library and the Town Hall, designed the school with four classrooms, two on the first floor and two on the second floor. In addition, the plan had boys' and girls' "playrooms" in the basement, each with lavatories. The boiler and coal rooms would also be in the basement. A cupola that was part of the original plan was left off to save costs. The building was scheduled to be completed by September 15. It wasn't until November that students and teachers finally occupied the new building. Although a bit late, the project came in under budget. It cost \$14,929.80. While Rogers School had been a gift to the town from Henry H. Rogers, the new Oxford School was the first of the town's modern era schools to be built with taxpayers' money. "The new structure is a handsome building and one which the whole town, and Oxford especially, may well feel proud," said the STAR. "Although many think that a suitable building might have been constructed for less money, yet the expense, which at the present time may be a drain upon the treasury of the town, is not wasted, and future years will prove the statement. Very few towns the size of Fairhaven can boast of such school buildings." On, January 8, 1897, the official dedication ceremony for Oxford School was held at the Town Hall, beginning at 7:45 p.m. Superintendent of Schools E.B. Gray served as master of ceremonies and Mr. John T. Price, agent for the State Board of Education, gave a speech. Music was provided by pianist Alton B. Paull, with choral selections performed by the high school and grammar school choruses. The school's first principal was Miss Kate Drew, who had been the teacher at the one-room village schoolhouse. In 1903, Miss Myra D. Crowell became the principal and



Oxford School, 1914

served in that capacity until 1930, making her the longest-serving principal in the school's history. So North Fairhaven had a modern, four-room schoolhouse. But still more houses were built and more families moved into that section of town. By 1907, there was talk of building an addition to the school. The process went as far as drawing up plans and securing bids. The town got a short-lived reprieve, though, because the majority of North Fairhaven's new residents were Catholic. St. Joseph's parish, which then served the entire town, expanded northward, building Sacred Hearts

Church. The establishment of Sacred Hearts School and Sacred Hearts Academy absorbed some of the students who would otherwise have gone to Oxford School. By 1914, however, expansion of the public school could no longer be put off. Up until this time, all of the town's seventh and eighth graders were transported to Rogers School. But even with the gift of the Washington Street School in the center, there was just no more extra space. The town, therefore, allocated \$25,000 to add another four rooms to Oxford School. The school was doubled in size at a cost of \$23,232.77, with \$16,466.20 of that going to the general contractor, C.A. Batson. Because of the growing need for a fire alarm signal in that section of town, a cupola was added to the school's hipped roof and the "Paul Revere" bell from Phoenix Hall was purchased for \$100 and installed in it. The school addition brought about the need to hire two additional teachers. Oxford now held students from grades one through eight. After the completion of the Oxford School addition, the growing population of North Fairhaven prompted another use for the building. On May 1, 1915, the Oxford Branch of the Millicent Library was opened in a first floor room in the rear of school. A separate, lighted entrance allowed the library to be open evenings. Mr. Stanley Kendrick was placed in charge of the branch and its collection started with 835 books, 70 of which were in French. The library was open Monday, Wednesday and Friday nights from 7:00 to 8:30. By September, the branch library's popularity led to the opening of a reading room in an adjacent unused classroom and the hiring of an assistant to Mr. Kendrick. The library branch was forced to close in June, 1952, due to the construction of the new addition to the school. Reopened in 1953, the library continued to operate until March of 1957, when it was replaced by the Millicent Library Bookmobile, which made weekly stops at the Oxford schoolyard into the 1980s.

Beyond the establishment of the library branch, Oxford School did not change much between 1914 and the 1950s, though the surrounding area became more developed with housing and businesses. Behind the school, the park property the town had set aside from the old Town Farm in 1912 was, in 1939, dedicated to the memory of Thomas A. Livesey, an avid supporter of local athletic programs. Ball fields and a playground, along with a large steep hill for sledding, kept the area near Oxford School filled with activity year round. Although growth in the northern part of town began to slow somewhat, Oxford School's eighth graders once again had to be transported to Rogers School beginning in 1916 and the seventh graders were moved to Rogers in 1918. In 1921 the town had to build the Edmund Anthony Jr. School south of the Dana farm. It was the post-World War II "Baby Boom" that made the next major impact on the school population. In 1947, Oxford School had two first grades, two third grades and two sixth grades. The trend of double grades and larger class sizes continued and all of the town's schools were running out of space. Plans to enlarge the East Fairhaven School and/or the Oxford School and/or build a junior high school were discussed. In order to lobby on behalf of North Fairhaven and assure a fair share of money was allocated to build an Oxford School addition, a group of residents banded together in the



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summer of 1950 and founded the North Fairhaven Improvement Association. At Town Meeting in 1951, it was voted to build additions to both Oxford and East Fairhaven schools. In September, the school committee awarded Sullivan-Foster Inc. a contract for \$376,204 to build a new addition on Oxford School. At the same meeting a \$295,116 contract was awarded to Olson & Appleby for the construction of the East Fairhaven School addition. The architects for both additions are from the firm of Tallman, LaBrode & Rounseville. Construction began in early October.

The Oxford School addition, which included classrooms, office space, the cafeteria, and a combination gymnasium-auditorium, was completed by the time school reopened after the holidays in January of 1953. The total cost of the new wing ran more than \$51,000 over the original contract amount. With the opening of the addition, a class of seventh graders was moved from Anthony School into Oxford.



Rear of Oxford School, 2007. In 1966, Oxford School was pressed into service as a temporary place of worship. During the construction of the new St. Mary's Church, there was a period of time between the demolition of old church and opening of the new when Sunday Masses were held in the Oxford School auditorium. In 1972, the town first offered kindergarten classes. At Oxford School, this required the installation of a portable classroom behind the school. Miss Laura Clarkin became the first Oxford School kindergarten teacher in the new building in September. In 1976, Jenny Xifaras became principal of Oxford School. She would be the second-longest-serving principal in the school's history. Twenty years

later, Mrs. Xifaras acknowledged Oxford School's one-hundredth birthday with a day-long centennial celebration she organized with the help of a committee of former and present students and teachers. On November 7, 1996, Oxford School's Centennial Celebration was held. A student pageant took place in the morning and in the afternoon students buried a time capsule in front of the building. The day concluded with an evening program, featuring alumni musicians and speakers. The keynote speaker was alumnus, WBZ sports broadcaster and "The Voice of the New England Patriots" Gil Santos, who attended Oxford School beginning in 1944. "My career started here in the first grade with Miss Chase, a wonderful lady. I remember her well," Mr. Santos said. "Miss Chase, of course, put me down in the first row because she thought. . . I talked too much." Another speaker was school committee chairman Louis Kruger, also an Oxford School alumnus. At the time of Oxford School's centennial, student enrollments had been declining for a number of years. While once in its history the school had housed pupils up to grade eight, in 1986 Oxford only had children in grades kindergarten through five. All of the town's sixth graders had been moved into Hastings Middle School the year before. The Tripp and Anthony schools had been closed in 1981 and 1982 respectively. The shrinking school population did not end in the 1980s. "Baby Boomers" seem to have had fewer children, on average, than their parents' generation did. Fairhaven's population has been steadily aging. Recent increases in the number of new homes in town has not had much impact on the number of school age children. In September of 2007, a large, brand new East Fairhaven School is scheduled to open. It will give the town far more school space than it presently needs. By the time this story appears in print, Superintendent of Schools Robert Baldwin will have made a recommendation to the school committee concerning the fate of the remaining elementary schools. Oxford School might soon be closed. If Oxford is now in its last school year, this story will help preserve



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some of its history. If it remains open after 2007, then more chapters may be added by someone from another generation. In either event, Oxford School will be remembered. COPYRIGHT © 2006 by Christopher J. Richard. All Rights Reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced either in print or electronically without permission in writing from the author.

NOTE: There is an Anthony School Page on Facebook if alumnus of that elementary school are interested. No Oxford School Page exists as of this newsletter mailing.

For Reunion Information [www.fshc76.com](http://www.fshc76.com) or



40<sup>th</sup> Reunion of the Class of 1976 July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016  
 Tickets are \$50 apiece. Send Funds  
 (Check/Money Orders) should be sent to "Class  
 76 40<sup>th</sup> Reunion C/O 51 Duke Street, New  
 Bedford Mass. 02740

Remember these Educators (40 years ago)?



Can you name them? Hint: Labs, Math, Loud music!

How about our Junior High educators?



ROW ONE (left to right): Mr. Cormier, Mr. Mailloux, Mr. Fernandes, Mr. Bruce, Mr. West, Mr. Jansen, Mr. Cipollini, Mr. Farnham, Mr. Herdriques. ROW TWO: Mrs. Dow, Mrs. Johnson, Miss Blanchard, Mrs. Brodeur, Mrs. Rapp, Miss Hayes, Mrs. Farrel, Mr. Carter, Mr. Perry, Mr. Day. ROW THREE: Mrs. Tavares, Mrs. Trichler, Mrs. Hiller, Mrs. Travers, Miss Ahlander, Mrs. Rioux, Mr. Fernandes, Mr. Drouin, Mr. Roderick, Mr. Mendell. ROW FOUR: Miss Ring, Mrs. Lyonnaise, Mrs. Medeiros, Mrs. Bryden, Miss Goss, Mrs. Czarnetski, Mrs. Casey, Mr. Demers, Mr. Medeiros, Mr. Kelsey. ROW FIVE: Mr. Joseph, Mr. Brazil, Mr. Linkiewicz, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Matson, Mr. Porter, Mr. Carvalho.

Our Angels of '76 group held our 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas Festival Fund raiser to assist in acquiring funds necessary to obtain memorial bricks for our deceased classmates. The event, which was held on December 12<sup>th</sup> at Fairhaven Town Hall, was successful in raising \$763.00 towards our goal. The Angels are under the direction of John Sharples. Various classmates volunteer time,



items for donation and good old money towards the memorial bricks. FHS Class '76 will be the graduating class with the most real estate at the brick park. When the bricks are dedicated next June, all of the bricks will be place together in one area. This is the goal. At the

risk of sounding like an old recording, if you would like to donate



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any amount towards the Angels '76, here is the address to send any funds to. Angels of '76 C/O John Sharples 872 Tradewind St. New Bedford, Mass. 02740.

In our December Newsletter we read about Janelle "Nelly" Camara from Durfee High. We wish to inform our classmates "Nellie" lost her battle to cancer December 19<sup>th</sup> 2015. She left us peacefully surrounded by her loving family. From the Class 76 Rest in Peace Dear Nelle.

*Dear Classmates and Friends!*

**Our plans for the 40th Anniversary reunion are finalized!**

The celebration takes place on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 at the Waypoint Event Center, on the New Bedford waterfront. Reunion tickets are \$50.00 per person and mail to **"FHS CLASS '76 40<sup>th</sup> REUNION, C/O 51 DUKE STREET, NEW BEDFORD, MA. 02740.**

This includes a buffet style meal which includes New Bedford Scrod, cooked with Apricots in Citrus butter, Chicken Marsala, Carved Marsala Tenderloin Pork with Pineapple chutney and pork gravy. Sides are Smashed (yes, smashed) sour cream and chive Potatoes, Cran-Apple stuffing, roasted seasonal Veggies with Brownie Sundaes with Coffee. Local disk jockey entertainment! Dance the night away with old friends! e host hotel is the Fairfield Inn & Suites New Bedford, 185 MacArthur Drive, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740 USA.

Also check out Class 76's "411" web page for additional lodging arrangements, at [http://www.fshc76.com/ALUM\\_411.html](http://www.fshc76.com/ALUM_411.html). This way you can arrange what works best for your travel needs.

At any time check out the Class 76 40<sup>th</sup> Reunion page for more information. URL is <http://www.fshc76.com/WAYPOINT.html>. Our goal is to hear from every member of the Class of 1976 indicating their plans to join us on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, (2016). Please pass the word of the 40<sup>th</sup> Reunion to any classmates not having email accounts or not on social media or send their contact data [40threunion@fshc76.com](mailto:40threunion@fshc76.com). Reconnect with childhood friends and old classmates. Sometimes, friends are the destination.



Annie, Chris, Jane, Dave and John December 12<sup>th</sup> 2015

Another note on the FHS Memorial Brick Park. Many of you donated to the FHS Alumni Association in memory of Mrs. Martin. With these funds the Alumni B.O.D. purchased a Curb Stone in the Memorial Park in memory of Mrs. Martin. Here is the photo of the stone. If you are attending the 2016 Homecoming breakfast, Alumni President Bob Foster is planning on having a small



ceremony commemorating Mrs. Martin's service toward FHS and the FHS student body at the Memorial Stone after the breakfast.

**FAIRHAVEN**  
HIGH SCHOOL  
Class '76 40th Reunion