Herbert Atkinson

Herbert Atkinson is a historic icon of Sudbury who, with the help of his wife Esther, played a large role in making Sudbury into the town it is today. Herb first put Sudbury on the map when he began making soil test kits at his home and then expanded and created Sudbury Laboratories. Since the Atkinsons had no children they donated their wealth and land to the town of Sudbury by creating the Sudbury Foundation which is still thriving to this day.

Born in the West: Herb was born in Seattle in 1894 and his wife Esther in Spokane in 1887. Herb attended college at the University of Washington and there he met Esther. While at school, according to John Tafts’ book, Herb’s first job was a municipal position at a licensing office in Seattle. While he was working there he studied subjects he found interesting all the way from agriculture to accounting, with a goal of a career in insurance.

They then moved to Denver Colorado. At this time Herb became interested in the Sundstrand Adding Machine and began working there. Also while in Denver, Herb became friends with a sheep farmer and became interested in owning his own farm and raising sheep.

Came to Sudbury: When brought to Boston for work, Herb and Esther lived in the North Shore briefly until they found the town of Sudbury. In 1928 they bought the large old Perry homestead which is known today as the Babe Ruth House, located at 558 Dutton Road. It is a 19th century colonial style home and at that time had 100 plus acres. Herb and Esther fixed up the farm, started to raise sheep, and did some general farming while Herb continued his work with his company.

Community interest: While all this was happening, Herb and Esther still found time to go to church and be involved in the community; they went to all three of the churches in Sudbury but joined the Unitarian Church.

Business grew: At first it was just the two of them making kits, Esther was Herb’s assistant while Herb was in charge of building the kits. When Herb’s soil kits tests became popular he expanded and created Sudbury Laboratories.

Soil Test Kits: Herb wanted to start planting beans. A neighboring farmer named Harvey Fairbank, told him the land there was not good for growing beans and that he would need to get his soil tested. Herb then turned to chemist friend Carl Draves who explained that due to a common local condition, the soil is acidic and each field would need to be tested. Herb decided to experiment with soil test kits and began making them at his home and barn. He developed the kits based on formulas created by agronomists at the University of Massachusetts. The kits identify deficiencies in the soil - like lime, nitrogen, phosphorous and potash - and tell the tester how to blend the correct balance of fertilizer to increase growing.

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What Makes Sudbury Sudbury? Wetlands along the river.
President’s Letter

The Loring Parsonage is a historic treasure and in 2014 the society conducted a feasibility study for rehabilitating the Parsonage as a History Center and Museum. The resulting recommendation was that this 300 year building be restored and opened to the public to be regularly enjoyed. The estimated cost of rehab and restoration was about one million dollars.

Unlike most historic towns, Sudbury has no History Center and Museum telling the town’s important role in the history of America, starting with the earliest settling of New England, the King Philip War, the Revolutionary War, the Civil War and the industrialization of America. The Sudbury Historical Society has collected and accessioned thousands of objects, documents, maps and photos attesting to our heritage. The society’s collection of nearly 50,000 items includes the 10,000 maps and plans of the city of Sudbury, the surrounding towns and the region.

The Sudbury Historical Society plans to complete this project by the end of 2015 and will prepare the Parsonage for opening to the public in the next year. For those interested in learning more about Sudbury’s history, please visit our website, sudbury01776.org. The President’s Letter, Sudbury History Center, Closer to Reality, Fall 2015

Stewart Hoover
President

Stud unreasonable, and representativeness will make a significant contribution to the vitality and spirit of Sudbury. Over the next year the Historical Society Inc., along with the Historical Commission and other town boards, will be working on this project so that Sudbury will finally have a place where our history and heritage can be displayed, further researched, and made accessible to all who live in and visit this truly special community.

Stewart Hoover

Sudbury Historical Society, Inc.
2015-2016 Calendar of Events

Unless noted, programs are free for members. A $5.00 donation is suggested from non-members. Refreshments are provided by the SHS Hospitality Committee following each Town Hall program.

2015

Friday, September 11 – T-wisted Frozen Yogurt Fundraiser, 410 Boston Post Road, 3:00–9:00 pm. 15% of sales will go to support the SHS. Join us at dusk by the outdoor movie screen to watch clips of Sudbury’s own Rex Trailer on his TV show, Boontown.

Saturday, September 12 – Olde Time Community Fair in the Town Center, 10:00 am–4:00 pm. FREE. The SHS will host “Pies at the Parsonage” (a pie eating contest) and display our replica Native American wettu with a demonstration of the Three Sisters. Be sure to get your picture taken in the rocks by the Town Hall.

Saturday, September 26 – Colonial Faire sponsored by the Sudbury Companies of Militia & Minute and the Sudbury Ancient Fyfe and Drum Company, Longfellow’s Wayside Inn, SHS Booth from 10:00 am–4:00 pm. Admission $2.

Saturday, October 3 – Walking Tour of Wadsworth Cemetery, 74 Concord Road, 10:00 am. FREE for SHS Members, $5 for non-members. Tour guides Elin Neiterman and Sally Hild will point out memorial art and architecture, burial sites of Sudbury’s notable citizens, and explain burial customs and how this quiet sanctuary evolved and is maintained. Parking at the cemetery.

Saturday, October 17 – 3rd Annual SHS Tag Sale Fundraiser, Sudbury Town Hall Lawn, 9:00 am–3:00 pm. Donations of sale items will come now through the sale date. Call Stewart Hoover at 978/443-9023 or Ursula Lyons at 978/443-9638 for arrangements.

Sunday, November 1 – Early Maps of Sudbury: Who Made them and Why, Lecture and Exhibition at the Town Hall, 2:00 pm. Speaker Jan Hardenbergh will discuss his newly published book, Historical Maps of Sudbury, Massachusetts. Maps will be on display from the collection of Robert Maier.

Friday, November 6 – Musicians of the Old Post Road Concert “Earthly Baroque,” First Parish Sudbury, 327 Concord Road, 7:30 pm. Contact MOPR at www.oldpostroad.org for tickets.

Saturday, December 5 & 12; Sundays, December 6 & 13, 10:00 am–4:00 pm and Wednesday, December 9, 6:00–9:00 pm. – “Hosmer Goes Hollywood” Open House, 299 Old Sudbury Road. Visit the Hosmer House. The SHS will be decorating the front bedroom with a favorite children’s movie theme. Come and see our “story!”

Sunday, December 20 – Christmas Caroling on the steps of Town Hall followed by a Party with Santa and Mrs. Claus, 3:00–5:00 pm. The U.S. Marines will collect new, unwrapped gifts for Toys for Tots.

2016

Wednesday, January 13 – Benefit Night at Bertucci’s Restaurant, Wayland Town Center Plaza, 14 Elissa Avenue, 11:00 am–9:00 pm. Dine in, carry out, or delivery. Bertucci’s will donate 15% of the receipts to the SHS. Bring your family and friends!

Sunday, February 7 – A Little Bit of Sweden, A History of Svensk Kaffestuga, illustrated talk at the Town Hall, 2:00 pm. Speaker Elin Neiterman, granddaughter of the restaurant’s owners, will discuss the history of the restaurant that stood at 394 Boston Post Road. Special assorted Swedish refreshments will be served after the program. Come and share your recollections.

Sunday, March 6 – The League of Women Voters: Helping to Shape Sudbury’s History for 60 Years, illustrated talk at the Town Hall, 2:00 pm. Speaker Elin Neiterman, with Lisa Forsberg, granddaughter of the restaurant’s owners, will discuss the history of the restaurant that stood at 394 Boston Post Road. Special assorted Swedish refreshments will be served after the program. Come and share your recollections.

Wednesday, April 6 – Ezekiel How: Innkeeper, Soldier, Citizen. At the Wayside Inn, Time TBD. Join the SHS at Longfellow’s Wayside Inn as Retractor Dr. Tony Howes details Ezekiel How’s involvement in Sudbury life before, during and after the Revolution. In honor of the Inn’s 300th Anniversary, partake in a special prix fixe dinner and enjoy our program.

Tuesday, April 19 – Red Cross Blood Drive at the Town Hall. Times TBD. Be a part of an old Sudbury tradition.

Founders Circle Members Event. Date and Location to be Announced.

Saturday, May 21 – Home & Hearth Tour fundraiser – Details to follow.

Sunday, June 5 – History of Wolbach Farm in collaboration with the Sudbury Valley Trustees at Wolbach Farm, 18 Wolbach Road, 2:00 pm. Photographer Alice Wellington will discuss the history of the Wolbach Farm and family and how SVT evolved. SVT will lead a walking tour following the lecture.

For more information, visit our website, sudbury01776.org, or Facebook, call 978/443-3747, or e-mail director@sudbury01776.org.
Save the date: Walking Tour October 3

Enjoy hearing how the Wadsworth cemetery evolved. Learn about the notable Sudbury people buried there, and about burial customs and the art and artistry of monuments, memorials, grave stones and cemetery architecture.

Thank You and Welcome

The SHS would like to extend a heart-felt thank you to Daphna Cox who is moving on from the Board of Trustees. For the last few years Daphna assisted with collections accessioning and our educational programs and she helped facilitate lay-out and editing of recent issues of our Sudbury Chronicle newsletter. We will miss her ability to wordsmith and her keen eye for detail as well as her positive approach to all things SHS. Many thanks, Daphna.

We are pleased to welcome Katina Fontes as a new Trustee. An anthropologist working on accessioning projects and organizing our institutional filing system and cemetery architecture. Her many interests through his life, including boating. The soil testing kits were doing so well Herb decided to move into the marine field and make numerous products to be distributed all over the world.

One new product was “Skeeter Skats” which was praised by a Sudbury resident who was at war. Lefty Mullins wrote from Africa that the product was needed there. Herb Atkinson’s interest in soil testing kits was sent here from Belford New Jersey which was found in the wreckage from Hurricane Katrina. The kit was sent here by its discoverer Bryan Afier. It arrived slightly rusty with a few broken bottles but the SHS cleaned it up.

A Sudbury Soil Test Kit

The Sudbury Laboratories in 1934. There he employed a few people to work with him. Sudbury Laboratory grew and prospered as the years went on selling millions and millions of kits around the world. The kits sold very well because they gave people the ability to test their own soil without having to hire someone to do it. People appreciated this convenience.

Herb had many interests through his life, including boating. The soil testing kits were doing so well Herb decided to move into the marine field and make numerous products to be distributed all over the world.

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References: The Sudbury Historical Society reference library contains books with this information. Also various versions of Herb’s soil testing kits are in the Society’s collections. One was sent here from Belford New Jersey where it was found in the wreckage from Hurricane Katrina. The kit was sent here by its discoverer Bryan Afier. It arrived slightly rusty with a few broken bottles but the SHS cleaned it up. The Sudbury Historical Society reference library contains books with this information. Also various versions of Herb’s soil testing kits are in the Society’s collections. One was sent here from Belford New Jersey where it was found in the wreckage from Hurricane Katrina. The kit was sent here by its discoverer Bryan Afier. It arrived slightly rusty with a few broken bottles but the SHS cleaned it up.

Sources: Sudbury 1980-1989 100 years in the life of a Town, Written by Curtis F Garfield.
Membership Form

Please complete your form and mail with a check made payable to the Sudbury Historical Society, 322 Concord Road, Sudbury, MA 01776. Be sure to list your name as you would like it to appear in our records.

Name(s):

Address:

Town, State, Zip:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Check membership category:

___ $15 Student (age 21 and under.)
___ $30 Individual
___ $50 Family

Founders Circle:

___ $100 Peter Noyes Supporter
___ $150 John Nixon Champion
___ $250 John Goodnow Patron
___ $500 Josiah Haynes Patron
___ $1,000 Israel Loring Benefactor

___ I am interested in volunteer opportunities.

___ I would prefer not to join at this time, but here is my contribution for

$_________________ to help preserve time, but here is my contribution for ___ I would prefer not to join at this time.

___ $1,000         Israel Loring Benefactor
___ $150            John Nixon Champion
___ $100            Peter Noyes Supporter
___ $50
___ $30

Check membership category:

___ $15 Student (age 21 and under.)
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___ $1,000 Israel Loring Benefactor

___ I am interested in volunteer opportunities.

___ I would prefer not to join at this time, but here is my contribution for $_________________ to help preserve Sudbury history.

From the Director

The lazy days of summer have come to an end. These past months were indeed enjoyable, but I can assure you that they were anything but lazy at the SHS. Our volunteers have been working diligently. The Collections Committee has rearranged our work spaces, making them more functional for researchers, archiving and access-sioning. (We’re ready to welcome new volunteers.) Our entire accounting system has been updated with new software - not an easy task over countless hours. The History Center and Museum project has gained new momentum through our legislators’ tireless actions and with determination the best use for our Town Hall. It has been a pleasure to see everyone hard at work, together getting us closer to our goals.

Be sure to note our 2015-2016 events calendar planned by our Program Committee. Included are traditional programs such as the Carol Sing and Sunday afternoon lectures in the Town Hall. Several talks touch upon 20th century subjects such as the Svensk Kaffestuga Restaurant, the history of the League of Women Voters and history of Wolbach Farm and SFT. New programs at new venues are also planned. In October we will lead a walking tour of beautiful Wadsworth Cemetery. In April there will be a dinner and talk at Longfellow’s Wayside Inn. And, given the positive response we had last May, we will hold another House Tour. What we can be most pleased about with this array is how much the SHS is working in concert with other institutions to produce something special. Sudbury has a lot to offer.

We hope you will see something of interest. We encourage you to tell your friends about the SHS, to invite them to our programs, and to possibly join our membership. To achieve what we dream will take community support. We appreciate yours about the SHS, to invite them to our programs, and to possibly join our membership.

Sally Purrington Hild

Community Partners

Israël Loring Benefactors

Bostan Design Guide
Canzello Greenhouses Inc.
The Coach/it's Not Charitable Foundation
Merrill Lynch, The Kenney Group
The Sudbury Foundation
Josiah Haynes Patrons
Intrum Corporation
Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati
N.B. Taylor & Co.
Salem Five

John Goodnow Sponsors

A Blade of Grass
Bemis-Mower Simon & Co.
Berkeley Hathaway/Stephen Real Estate
Camp Swanaro
Duck Soup
Fireside Real Estate
Law Office of Lisa Droynkin
Live Simply
Lotus Blossom Restaurant
Mango Tree Artsians
Reina Garcia, D.M.D., P.C.
Sudbury-Cultural Council
Tails by the Wayside
Walker Development

John Nixon Champions

Anne Hendks, Keller Williams
Christie Stabile
Interstate Gas & Oil Corp.
Kathleen Wyman, Coldwell Banker
Marlborough Savings Bank
Rusty’s Tree Service
The Krown Handyman
Woven Art

Peter Noyes Supporters

AAA Limousine
Acupuncture Family Practice
Encore Construction
The Concord Review
Frogal Flower Sudbury
Kirk Dental
Mia W. Fitzgerald, DMD
Orchard Hill Sudbury
Rachel Bodner, Coldwell Banker
Steven D. Cohen, D.M.D., P.C.
Slomen Insurance Agency
Sudbury Extended Day, Inc
The Optical Place
Ti-SALES Inc.
Village Forward
Wayside Inn Corporation
Friends of the SHS

L.P. Bartlett Co.
CJ’s Gourmet Pizza and Grill
Sudbury Pizza Place
Sudbury Villagers
Trader Joe’s
T-Wizled Frozen Yogurt

Volunteer Spotlight:

Peter Ademo

Peter Ademo is a volunteer who comes to SHS through the Crossroads School in Natick. The school works with 85 different school districts to help special needs students. The school’s vision is to “To ensure every student leaves Crossroads more skillful, confident, productive, and independent.” It helps its students transition to adulthood with skills to be productive members of society. Work is a big part of that. The students learn job skills by working at various locations. Prior to SHS Peter worked at a local farm.

Crossroads contacted SHS several months ago to see if an opportunity for work was available. There is always work at SHS and we happily agreed to his coming. With a job coach, he works for an hour on Mondays to help maintain our space. He sweeps, vacuums, dusts, and moves boxes. He also helps with odd jobs as they come up. In the future we will try different jobs to broaden his capabilities. It has been a great match and we are happy with his work.

Sudbury On the Web

On the web are many ways to keep updated on what is happening at the Sudbury Historical Society:

You can "Like" The Sudbury Historical Society on Facebook. “Like” our posts and share them with your friends. We post our upcoming events, historical news stories, and share photos of our collection not on display at the Society.

While you’re on Facebook, check out a fun site, “If You Grew Up in Sudbury” to hear stories of growing up in our wonderful town.

Follow us on Twitter at Sudbury Hist Society @Sudbury_History

Visit our website at sudbury017756.org.

We have new visitors to our site every week. We even have visitors from overseas from as diverse locations as Tunisia and Iraq.

E-Mail us at info@sudbury017756.org
Welcome New Members!
(since January 2015)

Susan Berry
Frank Burk
Heather Clement, Tails by the Wayside
Alexa and Peter Crowe
Laura and Neal Dowling
David Elliott, Village Forward
Margaret Fotakis
Joyce and Pierre Frick
Amber and Josh Hillman
Susan and Robert Iuliano
Todd Jewett
Lindsay Nicholson
Alison Phillips
Herbert Rosen
Janice Rudolf and John Emery
Debra Zurka

Volunteer Spotlight: Caitlin Roberts
I have been volunteering at the Sudbury Historical Society since July as a summer intern.

As a history major and resident of Sudbury the SHS was what I was looking for this summer to get more experience in the historical field. I also wanted to learn more about my town’s history.

I worked on two projects – The main project was a research paper on Herb and Esther Atkinson of Sudbury using items found in the SHS collection (see page 1 for the story). The second project was a new reference brochure for researchers.

Without being a volunteer at the SHS I never would have known the amount about Sudbury’s history as I do now.

Having graduated from Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School in 2013 I currently am a student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, anticipating graduation in 2017. I would like a future career in the history field in either a historical society or a museum with the ability to educate others.

I have a passion for American history. However, at school I study a wide range of history from western thought to the history of nature and conservation. I also love to volunteer and help people, which is why I joined a sorority at my college.

I found it surprising how much information is located within the SHS’s collections and how much you can learn in such a short time.

A recent photograph Facebook posting of an object from our collection had people guessing. Do you know what it is?

It’s a rare stamp moistener!

Tails by the Wayside
By Heather Clement
Back in 1999 when my house was on the market, I was driving by the Adam Howe Jr. House and farm here in Sudbury and just had to look into it. I grew up in Townsend Harbor, MA in a c.1704 antique colonial. We had lots of land and animals. At the time of my drive-by sighting we were living in Wellesley with no land and not in a very exciting home. SOLD !!!

For the past 16 years in Sudbury we have raised two children and lots of pets including, goats, chickens, alpacas, bunnies, dogs and cats. Our farm at 882 Boston Post Road lends itself nicely to both. Most of the members of my book group have pets. I started taking care of their pets when needed and it turned into a business for pet care and boarding in 2004. Since I am located next to the historic Wayside Inn, I named the business “Tails by the Wayside” borrowing from Longfellow’s Tales of a Wayside Inn.

My husband grew up in Seattle but was lured by the charms of Boston and its historic surrounds. Thankfully he’s very handy! Maintaining the integrity of our home has been forefront and will always be ongoing.

We recently joined the SOHOE (Sudbury Old Home Owners and Enthusiasts) where we meet once a month at someone’s home or at the Wayside Inn. We share information and give referrals for skilled craftsmen who can help us maintain our homes. All are welcome and you don’t have to own an old house to be part of this fun informative group.

Kudos to The Sudbury Historical Society. All involved are doing a great job and we are happy to be a part of this much needed organization.

New Book
A book Historical Maps of Sudbury, Massachusetts has been self published by Jan Hardenbergh.
It is on display in upper town hall at the offices of the Historical Society.

The book is large and in full color, with glossy paper and contains 35 maps for years ranging from before settlement to 2014. There are Sudbury street maps, open space maps, a watershed map, and maps of beyond Sudbury that illustrate map making technique, and other things. Many maps have commentary or explanation on facing pages.

Some of the maps have been pictured in The History of Sudbury, Massachusetts by A. S. Hudson and in Sudbury a Pictorial History by Laura Scott, but in Jan’s book the maps are much larger and colored the same as the original. The second printing of Jan’s book is sold out, but interested people may peruse the display copy at the Historical Society and request information relating to a November printing.
It was quite a surprise to Sudbury when the Friendly’s Restaurant on Route 20 closed in July. Sally Hild learned of the closure on Facebook late at night the day it closed after just morning she stopped into the store earlier that day. First thing the next restaurant and where workers were dismantling the give two posters to the SHS as a remembrance of the Sudbury and one could have some wall posters for the Friendly’s was happy to collection. There were two historic poster, a baseball team from the early century, had been enlarged from History is cool when you’re eating Frozen Yogurt!

**Attention Shoppers!**

The SHS would like to thank all of our members and friends who shopped at Whole Foods Market in June during our 5% shopping day. At no cost to the customer the store gave 5% of the day’s sales. Your purchases have benefited the SHS greatly. We are pleased to report that due to your efforts, and the generosity of Whole Foods Market, the SHS raised $3,170. Many thanks. It was good to see you at the store.

Please mark your calendars for another benefit at T-wisted Frozen Yogurt in Sudbury to be held Friday, September 11 from 3:00 to 9:00 p.m. Mention the SHS and 15% of all sales will go to the SHS. Join us - History is cool when you’re eating Frozen Yogurt!

**Tag Sale**

The Historical Society TAG SALE will be on Saturday, October 17 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. On the front lawn of the Town Hall. Offered for sale will be treasures and items contributed by SHS members and friends. Items are now being accepted.

Got stuff? The SHS is looking for donations of items to sell such as home furnishings, housewares, books, or holiday items – we cannot accept clothes, text books, or electronics, however.

If you would like to contribute, please call the event coordinators at 978-443-9023 or 978-505-0426 to arrange for pick-up. Items may also be dropped off at the SHS in October.

**Tag Sale**

By Russell Kirby

August 6, 2015 phone conversation with Russell Kirby with Peggy Fredrickson. The conversation was prompted by a donation to the Society of fifes that had been made by him.

Yes, I made fifes in Sudbury. I made 23 fifes from wood salvaged from the Wayside Inn building after the fire. The complete set is in a box and has never been sold. One is on display in the Tap Room at the Wayside Inn.

I made hundreds of other fifes too from salvaged wood – some from wood from the Constitution.

It started in about 1970 when I was a hobby woodworker and in the Ancient Fife and Drum Company. The fife master thought we should graduate from plastic to wood fifes. The salvaged wood from the Inn was available, but it was fragile, ridden with bugs, and would be very hard to work with. We thought it would be very expensive to hire a fife maker to use that fragile wood to make all fifes.

I researched to find how to make a fife, but there wasn’t much information available. So I borrowed a fife made by A Mr. Close who had made many fifes for the military. They were recognized to be of good quality. I researched, measured, made lots of tests and experiments then made fixtures for producing the fifes. I made 23 from the Inn wood. Six were from chestnut. There is no telling how old that chestnut was it could go back to the first Innkeeper.

Making the metal ferrules at each end took skill and equipment. Bill Volheim was part owner of a company that made pewter figurines. A jeweler, Dick Fozen made two ferrules of sterling silver. They were used to make a mold to cast duplicates in pewter. Another member of the Fife and Drum Corps was an artist, Leslie Longworth. He made a medallion showing the Wayside Inn and a horse. That medallion was put on each fife.

Making the fifes was a labor of love – I’ve never enjoyed any project so much before or since. The two silver ferrules were put on one fife which is mounted over the fireplace in the tap room at the Inn.

It wasn’t all fun – late one night my last cut released thousands of carpenter ants into the house. My wife came running with insecticide and we had quite a scramble to get rid of those ants.

The old wood was so fragile it didn’t seem safe to play, but I rubbed it with boiled linseed oil – hundreds of coats. It firmed up and played very well.

In 1971 we made our first appearance with them. It was at the Deep River Muster in Connecticut. After the performance a man came running off the field. He loved the sound of the fifes and wanted to know where we got them. He encouraged us to have a muster at the Inn. That was in July 1971. We had our first muster that September. He came up and helped us organize, some of the best groups from Connecticut came up and that got our Annual Musters off to a roaring start.

P.S.

We appeared in Symphony Hall on Colonial Night at the Pops. The Minute Man Council suggested a Combined Corps of a man from each of the companies. We didn’t think that would work so well since sometimes the same piece is played differently by a different group. We thought it would be better if one Corps was selected and they practiced to make a good performance. No other group wanted to do it to Sudbury stopped up.

Minutemen bought out the floor and came in costume. Frank Koliupis the Innkeeper was there with Arthur Fiedler. Everything connected with those fifes has been fun.

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