



NOW & THEN

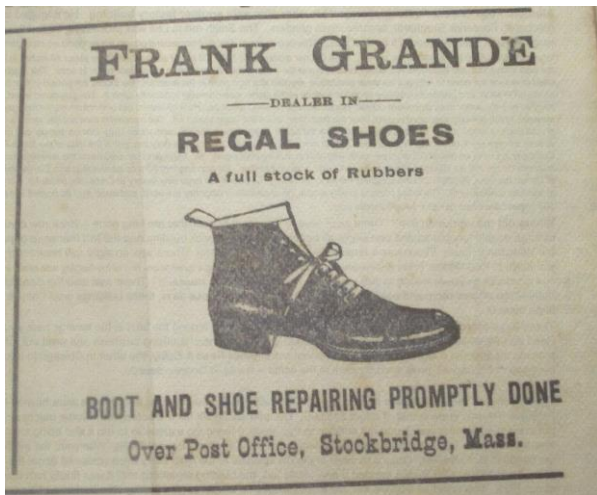
at the
LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
(Downstairs at the STOCKBRIDGE LIBRARY)
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THE CHANGING FACE OF STOCKBRIDGE

Boots are very much in style this year. This old ad (before zip codes) shows where you could have picked up your "Rubbers" or gotten your boots repaired in Stockbridge.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

The Museum & Archives will host two more *Behind Closed Doors* Programs. The programs will be held in the Jonathan Edwards Room of The First Congregational Church at 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 11 – Main Street Doctors – The Taggart House (pictured below left) and the Campbell House (pictured below right), both on Main Street

Wednesday, April 1 – The East End – The Knoll and the Lincoln/Pease House, both on Main Street
Each program also will include a third house that no longer exists.



DID YOU KNOW?

On March 19, 1956, town leaders approved an act that allowed farmers and fruit growers, having obtained the necessary permit, to use firecrackers to control damage to their crops caused by birds. This was added after the word "firearms" in the section of the General Laws. Makes you wonder why firecrackers would be more effective than firearms.

HEATON HALL

By Barbara Allen

In 1896 Mert Heaton Plumb rebuilt the Red Lion Inn after its devastating fire earlier that winter. The new Inn would be nearly identical to the old building but with better accommodations. Soon, it became apparent that the town could handle a larger resort clientele. By that time the Inn had been inherited by Allen T. Treadway, son of Mert Plumb's sister Harriet. He decided to build another large resort nearby.

Treadway purchased parcels of land at the entrance of Prospect Hill that had previously been owned by the Dwight, Field, and Woodward families. (Continued on Page 2)



HEATON HALL (Continued)

He hired H. Edward Weeks of Pittsfield as the architect. Weeks had also been involved in designing the Town Hall in Stockbridge. The general contractor was Lester & Sitcer of Pittsfield. Construction began in May 1903 with a tentative name of *The Hill & Vale*. It was eventually named for Treadway's son, Heaton, who had been given his grandmother's maiden name. Heaton Hall opened its doors on June 25, 1904.



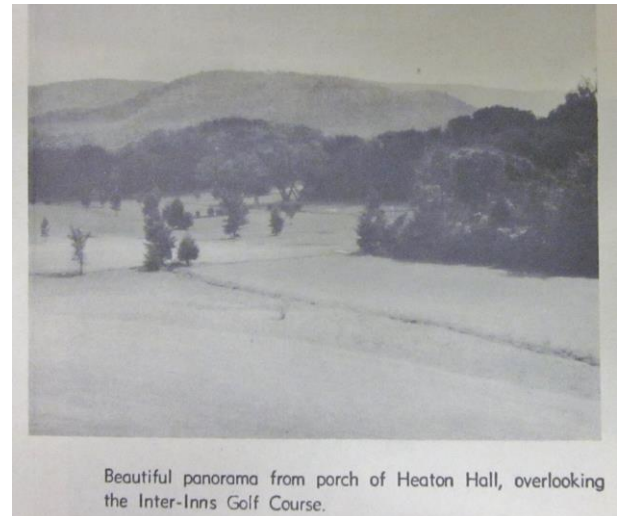
On the lower floor there was a large public dining room and a smaller, private dining area. There was also an office, an assembly room, a ladies' writing room, a gentlemen's smoking room, and several parlors. Upstairs there were bedrooms, many with private baths, and two suites. A tourism brochure explained that "exquisite taste is displayed in the quiet elegance of the furnishings" but at the same time, "especial attention has been given to protection against fire and the house is regarded as a model by insurance companies." The Springfield newspaper enthused about the "large electric light plant, the electric bells, and the elevator" offered as modern conveniences. Heaton Hall's advertisements

boasted that it could accommodate 150 guests in 85 rooms. It also promoted itself as a place to hold conferences and large parties. Guests could enjoy the 20 open fireplaces (*one of the mantles is in the M&A Collection*), listen to the orchestra in the lobby, or sit on the shady veranda that overlooked the town. The more energetic could play the nine-hole Inter-Inns golf course (*pictured right*) on the south side of Prospect Hill Road, shared with the Red Lion Inn or they could rent horses at the numerous liverys in the area.

Over the years, Heaton Hall housed people who traveled to the Berkshires to stay, not just for a week, but for extended visits in the summer and fall. Heaton Hall's guest registers (*in the M&A Archives*) show how personal maids and chauffeurs accompanied the families coming from New York City and the mid-west. There were also "3 day Train/Trolley Excursions" from Boston that cost \$3.50 for the round trip ticket and \$3 per day for the hotel. The Hall was also used for political meetings and rallies while Treadway was running for office as Congressional Representative. Groups such as the Oxford Group and the executives of the Boy Scouts of America met there.

Through the first half of the 20th century, Heaton Hall was the place to be.

(This is how Heaton Hall came about. Our April issue will cover its demise.)



Beautiful panorama from porch of Heaton Hall, overlooking the Inter-Inns Golf Course.



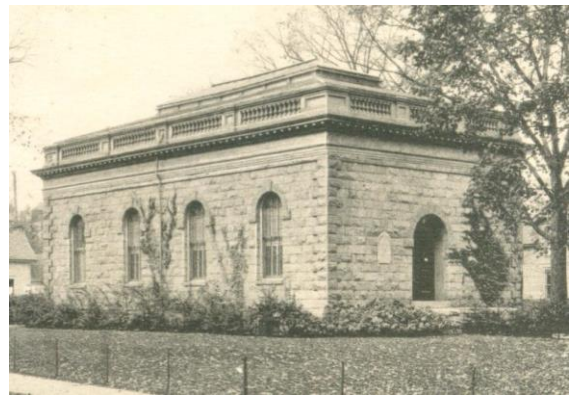
The picture on the left is from the Red Lion Inn Archives. Heaton Hall must have had or sponsored a baseball team at some point. If anyone has any information about who is in the picture or about the team itself, we would like to hear from you.

LIBRARY RENOVATIONS

By Barbara Allen

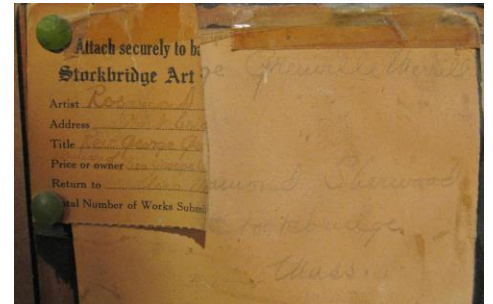
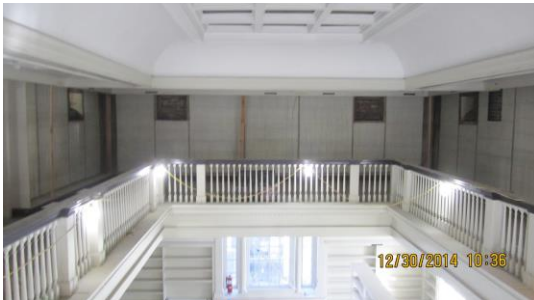
It is fascinating to watch the renovations taking place inside the Stockbridge Library. Not only are we witnessing the third renovation in our building's 151 years (1901, 1937, 2015); but we also are gradually uncovering the history of the Library itself.

Even before the construction crew moved in, we solved a mystery about the paintings that had hung in the lobby. With the help of the Rockwell Museum curatorial staff, each painting was checked and photographed as it came down from the wall. The exhibit labels (*pictured below right*) on the backs of several confirmed what we had only guessed, that local artists created these paintings for exhibition at the annual art show held in the Stockbridge Casino (*the casino building is now the Berkshire Theatre Group playhouse*). These exhibits were held each year from 1909 into the 1930s and were written up in the New York Times.



In the January 2015 issue of *Now & Then*, we highlighted the signed plaster piece and Red Cross sign discovered by the Allegrone crew. At that point we also had uncovered the top of a window arch from the original 1864 building which had been hidden behind the drywall (*pictured left*). We now have a better idea of what it looks like, and the architect will incorporate it into the renovated design.

If you've spent time on the second floor gallery, you know that the only windows were on the south side near the staircase. The other walls were covered in bookshelves. After removing the shelves, we found several spaces where there had been windows throughout the gallery at one time (*pictured below left & middle*). If you look at the post card of the Library showing the 1901 roof (*top of page*), there are places where the windows were hidden behind the trim. With the addition of the new room being constructed in the old attic area over the lobby, there once again will be more light in this area with added windows and skylights.



Downstairs, a wall in the back storeroom was made of concrete blocks embossed with the word GYPSTEEL. None of the construction crew is familiar with this material, so we have a new mystery (*pictured right*). If anyone has any information on this material, please let us know. In the meantime, we'll see what other interesting historic or architectural elements the crews unearth next.



MUSEUM & ARCHIVES TEMPORARY HOURS DURING RENOVATION PROJECT

The M&A office and display area has relocated to 14 Main Street in the Merwin House.

The display area of selected items is open to the public on Fridays and Saturdays from 10-1.

For research or donations, please contact Curator Barbara Allen at 298-4703 to make an appointment. (*If you need to contact the Library, call 298-5501*)