The Appalachian Mountain Club publishes a monthly magazine, Outdoors, which is focused on hiking in the White Mountains. My interest was stimulated when they reprinted an article from their 1897 book: *Walks and Rides, In the Country Round About Boston, covering thirty-six cities and towns, parks and public reservations, within a radius of twelve miles from the State House*, by Edwin M. Bacon, published for the Club by Houghton Mifflin and Company in 1897, which was on the shelf at the Robbins Library. The text that follows was taken from the Turkey Hill walk:

**Arlington, Turkey Hill**

Boston to Arlington (from Bowdoin Square) through Cambridge by electric car, 6½ miles; by steam car [Boston & Maine, S. Div.], 6 miles. Fare, electric car, 5 cents; steam car, 13 cents.

Arlington... occupies a broad valley and picturesque hill slopes. Its loftiest hill, Arlington Heights (310 feet), near the southwestern boundary, commands a widely extended view; and Turkey Hill, the second in height (200 feet), lies on the north side. Its jewel is Spy Pond, one of the loveliest pieces of water in a region of pleasant ponds.

The ride from Boston to Arlington Centre by steam car occupies about twenty minutes, by electric car forty-five minutes. The electric car ride is much the pleasanter, being mainly along the wide Massachusetts Avenue, well favored with trees through and beyond North Cambridge, passing historic spots, and as the town is approached affording agreeable views.

On the left side of the avenue the opening of Forest Street, at the right (where we are to turn for our rural walk to Turkey Hill and beyond, after we have “done” the Heights), is the Robbins Spring house, a popular bicycle stopping-place where water and other refreshments may be obtained. Arlington Heights is easily mounted by the fine road called Park Avenue. From the broad summit we have a brilliant view of the surrounding country in its frame of hills, with Boston and the harbor in clear outline, at the east, and in other directions Monadnock, Wachusett, and more distant mountain peaks. The most extended prospect is from the water tower... This hill was Circle Hill before a land company christened it Arlington Heights (in 1872), and at the time of the Revolution, and before, it was part of the chain of lovely elevations known as the Welsh Mountains.

Returning to Massachusetts Avenue and going back to Forest Street, we take the latter street and turn our steps northward. After crossing the railway, the street becomes a charming country road winding over highlands from
President’s Corner

Summertime represents a time when things at the Society pause to slow down a little bit... except for Jason Russell House tours, of course! Since summer is a season to take a pause, I thought it appropriate to report some facts and figures about our Society’s past year to give you an idea of how we are doing as an organization. Special thanks to Sara Lundberg and Doris Birmingham who pulled these figures together for me.

- Total paid memberships: 234. This includes family memberships where couples are listed together and ignores the small number of life members. Therefore, the total number of individuals in our Society is larger, but is difficult to compute using our current bookkeeping methods.

- School groups (the 3rd grade program):
  - 360 children participated in our 3rd grade program this year.
  - Six out of Arlington’s eight schools sent classes: Bishop, Dallin, Peirce, St. Agnes, Stratton, and Thompson.
  - Since each class must come on a separate day, we had 15 total visits.
  - To manage the large number of students, 18 member volunteers helped.

- Jason Russell House tour guide program (2016 season):
  - Total number of guide volunteers on roster: 30.
  - Total number of tours given: 153.
  - Total number of visitors to the Jason Russell House: 617. (Compared to previous years – 2015: 491; 2014: 531; 2013: 530.) The visitors included 60 children and 35 descendants of Jason Russell.

- Collections: We currently have 15,285 collections records in our database. It’s not straightforward to correlate that number with the exact number of items in our collection (some records cover multiple items), but it does provide a measure of our collection’s strength. (Compared to 12,440 records in January 2015.)

- Membership income this year: $10,295. (Compared to last year: $7,525.)

- Annual appeal donations: $20,070. (Compared to FY 2015-16: $16,492)

The figures show that we hold an important position in the town of Arlington, and are doing well as a society. However, our annual expenditures are around $60K, of which about one half comes from yearly income (memberships and donations). The rest comes from our endowment. At the moment we are financially stable, but we rely on our endowment too much to guarantee our long-term future. Please bear this in mind when you receive your annual appeal request this fall. And if you are enjoying membership in the Society, please consider encouraging your friends and relatives to join!

Finally, I want to say a big thank you to all our volunteers—board members, trustees, and regular volunteers—who lend a hand to keeping the society active and vibrant. We would not be able to offer the quality programs and activities which we do without the many participants who freely give us their time and energy. I find it remarkable that we are able to do so many things on such a limited financial base; it’s our volunteers who make it possible.

Stuart Brorson, President

---

**We are pleased to announce that we have been awarded another grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission through the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund. The fund supports the preservation of properties, landscapes, and cultural resources in the Commonwealth. This $25,000 grant will help us to complete the urgently needed repairs and structural stabilization of the Jason Russell House, as identified in a study detailed in our Spring 2017 newsletter. A portion of the matching funds are provided by the Town of Arlington Community Preservation Act. If you would like to assist with matched funding by making a donation, you may do so by calling the Society office at 781-648-4300.**
which are frequent picturesque vistas through the open-
ings of the trees. Turkey Hill, rising in easy slopes at the
right of the road, is soon reached. Following the cart-
road which curves along the sides of the hill, and footpaths
mounting it gradually, we come to the summit. Here is a
rocky tip well shaded,
but sufficiently open to
disclose a wide prospect
of town and country
below. At the left lies
Arlington in its fine set-
ing; in front are fair
fields, woodlands, hills,
and vales, and beyond
the outlines of distant
mountain tops; at the
right, stretches of
woods, here and there
broken by pastures and
well-tilled farms. It is a
less extensive view than
that from the loftier
Arlington Heights, but
more diversified. The
hill is used by the Sig-
nal Service. It is called
Turkey Hill from the
fact that once wild turkeys abounded here with other
game, and it was a favorite hunting-ground.

The walk today is no longer pastoral as described above.
Arlington is a suburban town, with our open spaces found only
in parks, and long-distance views blocked by buildings. Develop-
ment of Turkey Hill began in 1912 with Turkey Hill Terrace a
25 acre subdivision. The major landscape feature on Turkey Hill
(351 feet, top of tower) is the two-million-gallon Turkey Hill
water storage tank at the summit. It was built in 1945, and is
owned by the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority
(MWRA). The tank is supplied by pumps located at the Brattle
Court Pumping Station located off Washington Street. The Tur-
key Hill tank and Brattle Court pumps, the Spring Street Pump-
ing Station and Walnut Hill Storage Tank (Lexington) provide a
redundant system to insure reliability of our water supply. (This
information was obtained from Mark H. Johnson, Director of
Metropolitan Water Operations and Maintenance,
MWRA.)

With the advent of cell phones and microwave
communications, tall struc-
tures such as water storage
tanks are used in cellular
networks as a site for
transmitters/receivers.
Space on the Turkey Hill
storage tank is rented to
communications companies,
and the MWRA shares the
revenue with the town.

The walk from Massa-
chusetts Avenue to the
Turkey Hill Reservation is
about a mile. You can get
there by car, on foot, or by taking the MBTA's No. 67 bus
which operates between Alewife Station and Turkey Hill.

In our Society archives, there is a paper written by Edith
Rice about the history of Turkey Hill, and read before the Soci-
ey in February 1929. An annotation to her paper, dated 1950,
indicated that plans were being made for the Turkey Hill water
tower to be as attractive as the one on Park Avenue. We are
still waiting.

Howard Winkler
Past President, Arlington Historical Society
About the Society

The Arlington Historical Society was established in 1897 as a collecting and educational organization. In 1923 it began operating the Jason Russell House, a major battle site of the first day of the American Revolution—April 19, 1775. Open weekends from April to October.

The Arlington Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the Jason Russell House and the Society’s collections, and to discovering and sharing information about Arlington’s history. The stories of individuals, families, and events associated with the town are interpreted in the Society’s collections, programs, and Smith Museum exhibitions.

OFFICERS
President – Stuart Brorson
Vice President – Pamela Meister
Vice President – Patsy Kraemer
Treasurer – Alan Jones
Assistant Treasurer – Angela Olszewski
Clerk – Christine Bird

DIRECTORS
Doris Birmingham • Linda Cohn
Paul Fennelly • William Lyons
• Rosemarie Smurzynski

TRUSTEES
Peter Howard • George Parsons
• Al Stevens

The Arlington Historical Society is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.