

**NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
SPEAKER SCHEDULE (SEPTEMBER 2016- May 2017)**

**September 23, 2016 “John and Abigail Adams: An American Couple”** by Gary Hylander. During their courtship and marriage, John Adams and Abigail Smith Adams exchanged over 1,100 letters, many filled with intellectual discussions on government and politics considered an invaluable account of the Revolutionary War. Abigail, a fierce advocate of rights for women and African-Americans, was an important partner throughout John's political career.

**October 28, 2016 “History of Route 20” by Bryan Farr.** Stretching from Kenmore Square in Boston to Newport, Oregon at 3,365.3 miles in length, Route 20, is the longest highway in the United States. Northborough's Main Street is a minuscule segment of this historic highway. Bryan Farr, founder of The Historic Route 20 Association, will lecture on the historical and cultural significance of the highway and will highlight landmarks and less-remembered points of interest in Northborough and neighboring communities.

**December 2, 2016 “A Portrait of the Victorian Age: Letters of the Holbrook Family of Northborough”** by Beth Finch McCarthy. Town figure, Levi Holbrook (m. Eliza Grout), was a very interesting character. Beth Finch McCarthy has obtained a small collection of family letters which colorfully illustrate the life and times of Victorian Northborough. Themes include rail travel in New England, private school culture, Victorian medicines, slavery, boarding in family homes, local commerce, infidelity, and the intricacies of being an independent-minded woman in a male-dominated society. This program promises to be a veritable soap opera.

**January 27 , 2017 “The Topographical Engineer and Civil War Era Mapping”** by Greg Webster, Lt.Col. and Commander of the Northeast Topographical Engineers. Greg will present the historical role of the Topographical Engineer during the Civil War, the making of maps and surveys; from scouting and reconnaissance and making of field sketches, to finished map production and methods of map reproduction.

**February 24, 2017 “Tornado! 84 Minutes, 94 Lives”** by John O'Toole. Although the town of Northborough missed the brunt of this disaster many residents recall the devastation of this storm in nearby towns. John, the author of, Tornado, will present the eyewitness story of the June 9,1953 tornado that swept through Central Massachusetts.

**March 24, 2017 “The Great Molasses Flood of 1919”** by Doris (Parker) Blais Bonnell. This horrific catastrophe which occurred in the North End neighborhood of Boston on January 15, 1919 is often a forgotten piece of history. A large molasses storage tank burst, and a wave of molasses rushed through the streets at an estimated 35 miles per hour killing 21 and injuring 150. The event has entered local folklore, and for decades afterward residents claimed that on hot summer days the area still smelled of molasses.

**April 28, 2017 “ The Building of the Aqueduct”** by Norman Corbin and Forest Lyford. The construction of the Wachusett Aqueduct that spans the Assabet River in Northborough began in 1897 as part the public water supply system for the communities of Greater Boston. The aqueduct's route and supporting structures were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.

**May 19, 2017 “Historic Photograph Identification”** by Maureen Taylor. This presentation will help us rediscover our family history one picture at a time. Maureen is a renowned expert in genealogy, historic photo identification, photo preservation and family history research. She is an author on several books, a consultant, seminar leader and a features guest on The View and The Today Show.