

# The BallardVale Gazette

Newsletter of the BallardVale Historic District Commission

Volume 4, Number 3

BallardVale, Massachusetts

November 2004

## TREE LIGHTING

Only the hardiest BallardValians managed to dig out from last year's snowstorm in time to attend the annual tree lighting on the BallardVale Green! This year, snowstorm or clear weather, the tree lighting will be held on Sunday December 5 at 5:00pm. Join neighbors and friends for holiday cheer and song. Dogs are welcome, but please bring them on a leash. Hot chocolate, cider and cookies will be provided by members of the BallardVale Historic District Commission. So bundle up and bring your singing voices and holiday spirit.

## ADOPT A FIRE HYDRANT

The winter season is coming and so is the snow! The Gazette would like to remind residents again this year to locate the hydrant or hydrants nearest your home and keep them clear of snow with each snowfall. "Adopt" a hydrant and keep it accessible or share the job of shoveling with a neighbor. Clear a 3' circle around the hydrant so that all the ports are accessible, and remember to clear a path to the street for the fire hose. Help the Andover Fire Department keep your home and BallardVale safe this winter.

## HALLOWEEN PARADE

A pink dragon, a purple dinosaur, a little red apple, pumpkins, pirates and a

rhinoceros. These were just some of the creatures and characters enjoying the Halloween parade in the center of BallardVale on Friday, Oct. 29. Just as she did last year, Jan Holden organized a parade and an hour of treats at the playground. "There were probably 35 kids and as many adults, and lots of new faces this year," Jan reports. "It's definitely geared more for the little kids and they have a great time. They love wearing their costumes more than once and playing outside in the playground under a veil of darkness." Jan and other parents plan to hold the parade again next year on the Friday night before Halloween. Look for posters next October announcing the time, usually 6-7 pm, or call Jan Holden for more information.



A pirate and dinosaur at the Halloween parade!

## **RUTH SHARPE PRESERVATION AWARD**

In February 2004, the BallardVale Historic District Commission established the Ruth Davis Sharpe Preservation Award to honor the late Ruth Sharpe. Mrs. Sharpe was a lifelong BallardVale resident who dedicated much of her life to being the custodian of BallardVale's rich history and advocating for BallardVale's preservation as a vital and living part of the Town of Andover.

The Ruth Davis Sharpe Preservation Award will be given annually to an individual or individuals, including businesses or organizations, who have made significant contributions to preserving and protecting the historic character and unique history of BallardVale. The recipient will be selected by the members of the BallardVale Historic District Commission. Anyone can submit a nomination.

The first two recipients of the award were Ruth Davis Sharpe (posthumously) and was accepted by her sons, for her lifelong contributions; and Robert and Stephanie Branca for their thoughtful and successful renovation and revitalization of the mill building at 200 Andover Street in the heart of BallardVale. Awards were presented at the Spring Social held this past April.

The Commission is seeking nominations for the 2005 presentation of the Ruth Davis Sharpe Preservation Award to be given at next April's Spring Social. If you would like to make a nomination, please send it to M.P.Bogan, 139 Andover Street, Andover, MA 01810, or by email at [mpbogan@comcast.net](mailto:mpbogan@comcast.net). Let us know who you are nominating and write a brief description of their contribution. Please include your name and telephone number so that we can contact

you for further information if necessary. The deadline for nominations is February 1, 2005.

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## **BLOCK PARTY 2004**

BallardVale's annual block party was held on another fine September afternoon. Everyone's favorite DJ Ted Teichert entertained the crowd with music and kept them on their toes with games such as "Egg Toss". Our thanks go to Wyeth for providing grills; the "grill masters" for tending the fires and cooking; local businesses Sunday's General Store and Spinners Pizza for providing ice and pizzas respectively; Elm Street Automotive for providing portable toilets; and for all those who donated money and helped set up and clean up.

To contribute money or to be involved in the planning of next year's party, please contact Chris and Diane Huntress at 978-475-7738 or [chuntress@comcast.net](mailto:chuntress@comcast.net). Checks should be made out to "BallardVale Block Party".

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## **PLACE YOUR AD IN THE GAZETTE**

Since the beginning of the year, the BallardVale Gazette has become a self-supporting newsletter. The March issue was sponsored by Elm Street Automotive. Owner Ron Abraham is a BallardVale resident. The July issue was sponsored by another BallardVale resident, Prudential realtor Sherry Kirby. If you would like your ad seen by the 400+ recipients of the BallardVale Gazette, call Mary (M.P.) Bogan, Gazette Editor, at 978-474-1910 or send an email to [mpbogan@comcast.net](mailto:mpbogan@comcast.net) for more information. Also let us know if you have an idea for an article or something newsworthy you'd like us to share in future issues of the newsletter.

## WE'VE BEEN ASKED...

### *Can a house be torn down in the BallardVale Historic District?*

A "tear down" refers to the practice of purchasing a property to demolish the existing house in order to build another. In the current climate of low interest rates, escalating property values and limited building sites, many communities are experiencing an epidemic of tear downs where houses in good condition are being demolished. In addition, the current trend to build bigger and bigger homes threatens housing that is affordable and manageable for singles, couples and families. However, unsound and uninhabitable housing can be detrimental to a community. Houses that are structurally unsound may be appropriate candidates for demolition.

The demolition and rebuilding of a home in the BallardVale Historic District falls under the review of the Historic District Commission, and requires very serious evaluation and consideration. As stated in the review guidelines of the Commission: "The purpose of the guidelines is to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of distinctive historical buildings and places...through the maintenance and improvement of such buildings and places and the encouragement of appropriate and compatible design in this area."

Demolition of a building in a historic district is a serious concern. Equally important is the issue of what will be built to take its place. The design of a new house or building should reflect the character and architectural integrity of the houses around it. Size, scale, proportion and placement of a house on its lot are just some of the issues that require careful consideration.

Applicants should be aware that there is a presumption toward retaining all buildings in the historic district. No one should purchase a property in the historic district with the expectation that the existing building can be torn down to build something "better". Applicants will be required to satisfy certain requirements as stated in the guidelines, including an engineering report detailing structural issues of the current building; a financial analysis and statement; research of the historical and architectural significance of the current structure; and detailed and comprehensive plans of the proposed building. The rigorous review of this type of project is intended to safeguard historically significant, as well as affordable, housing in BallardVale and to guide its growth and transformation.

And as is always the case, each application to the BallardVale Historic District Commission is reviewed on its own merits and without prior precedent. If you have questions about this type of project, please contact a member of the BallardVale Historic District Commission.

Chris Huntress, Chair, 978-475-7738  
Diane Derby, V.Chair, 978-475-0125  
Bruce Taylor, Sec., 978-475-1615  
Richard Bowen, 978-475-6986  
Ron Abraham, 978-470-2616  
Perry Raffi, 978-474-4288  
Mary Bogan, Gazette Editor, 978-474-1910  
Jim Sheldon, 978-475-4915  
Sherry Kirby, 978-475-5030

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## MEMORIES WANTED

Do you recall Anderson's Chicken and Turkey farm located on BallardVale Road? Ruth Perry of Tewksbury is researching family history and would love to hear from you if you recall this turkey farm. Please call her at 978-851-3538 with information.

The November 2004 issue of the BallardVale Gazette has been sponsored by Huntress Associates, Inc., a Landscape Architecture and Planning firm located in Andover, Massachusetts. We have over twenty years of experience in the design of outdoor environments for college, university, municipal and private clients. Our professional services include:

- Campus Planning
- Historic Landscapes
- Athletic & Recreation Facilities
- Land Development Project
- Zoning & Permitting Services

Principal and founder, Christian Huntress, has worked with clients throughout the New England Region. Mr. Huntress, a Registered Landscape Architect, has served as a guest lecturer for the Center for Rural Massachusetts on subjects including innovative zoning techniques, community character and historic preservation. Our extensive experience in permitting, cost estimating and construction documentation provide a significant resource to our clients who depend on us for site design and master plan services. For more information please feel free to visit us at [www.huntressassociates.com](http://www.huntressassociates.com)

### CALENDAR

<b>Nov. 11 (Thursday)</b>	<b>Veteran's Day Ceremony, BallardVale Green, 11:00am</b>
<b>Dec.1 (Wednesday)</b>	<b>BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting</b> Town Offices – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm
<b>Dec. 5 (Sunday)</b>	<b>Annual Tree Lighting, BallardVale Green, 5:00 pm</b>
<b>Jan. 5 (Wednesday)</b>	<b>BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting</b> Town Offices – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm
<b>Feb. 2 (Wednesday)</b>	<b>BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting</b> Town Offices – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm

## BallardVale Historic District Commission

*Andover Town Offices  
36 Bartlet Street  
Andover, MA 01810*

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***See you at the Tree Lighting on December 5!***