

THE BALLARDVALE GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALLARDVALE HISTORIC DISTRICT
COMMISSION

Vol. 12, No. 1

BallardVale, Massachusetts

Spring 2015

New Playground Under Construction

Set to open in time for summer fun

The decades-old, deteriorating playground at BallardVale Park, at the corner of Clark Road and Andover Street, is currently getting a much-needed facelift. (For a diagram of the playground plan, see pages 4 and 5.)

"We've been working on this for about a year," said Andover Deputy Director of Plant and Facilities Ed Ataide. Desmond Landscaping in Andover is the contractor for the construction project, expected to be completed at the end of June.

Ataide said the new playground, which was approved by the BallardVale Historic District Commission in February, would have started in April but groundbreaking was delayed by the



slow snow melt. Rusted and broken playground equipment will be replaced and reorganized into two separate areas — one for 2- to 5-year-olds and another for 5- to 12-year-olds. The area designed for

younger children will include equipment that is made to resemble a train car, with a small slide built in the rear.

A larger area for older children will be equipped with climbing ropes along with large spiral slides and obstacles to maneuver through. There will also be three swing sets, including a swing designed for toddlers, and a sandbox.

Also in the plans is a connecting asphalt pathway between the play area and the basketball court, but the court itself will remain as is, as will the T-ball lot.

Two large maple trees were damaged during construction and had to be removed for safety reasons, but Ataide said that they will be replaced with three elm trees.

Ataide said he had originally requested \$450,000 from the town to fund additional improvements to the playground, including the construction of a shade shelter at the playground.

Ellen Townsen of the Andover Conservation Committee, who has led the playground reconstruction project along with Ataide, has taken a role

in pushing for additional funding for the octagonal shade shelter and other additions (see page 7 for a complete list).

“Anyone who uses the playground in the summer will tell you that a shade shelter there is really needed. We’re confident we can raise the money,” said Townson. Melanie Woods Krance designed and

runs the gofundme page. To donate, visit gofundme.com/PlayBallardvale.

Spelling variations in Ballardvale. The community is spelled *Ballardvale*, the BVHDC uses *BallardVale*, and according to the architectural plans, the park will be *BallardVale Park*.

Leaky, Creaky Old Windows?

Informing the “Repair or Replace” Discussion

After last winter, many homeowners with drafty windows are primed for a weather-tight upgrade. They know firsthand that ill-fitting windows, improperly glazed windows, and poorly insulated and haphazardly weather-stripped windows mean a chillier house and bigger heating bills.

Replacement windows are typically marketed as the smart energy-saving answer. And if those ads are getting your attention, it’s good to know that there’s an alternative that’s almost certainly a better all-around investment for your old house:

“The cost to restore a hardwood window is

about \$800,” says Tom Barber, of Thomas Barber Restoration and Construction in Lynn. “A comparable new replacement will run \$900 to \$1,200. And a restored window can equal or surpass anything on the market in energy savings.”

In a presentation at Memorial Hall Library in April, Barber explained the window restoration process, describing the steps involved, recommending products, and answering questions from homeowners.

He also pointed to another reason for saving the windows you have. “New windows are not appropriate for many old homes,” he said. “I hate to see beautiful old windows at the curb.”

“A restored window can equal or surpass anything on the market in energy savings”
— Tom Barber

The BVHDC agrees. “The loss of original windows detracts from a building’s appearance, compromises its historic authenticity, and devalues it irreversibly,” says the Commission’s Historic Window Guidelines.

For Barber, sticking with your current windows can pay off in longevity. He pointed out that antique windows were made from old growth timber that’s denser and more weather resistant than today’s tree-farmed softwoods. “Most old windows are made of heart pine,” he said. “Many have lasted 100 years or more, and with a little TLC they are good for another 100 easily. Most replacement windows come with a 20- or 25-year warranty — there’s no comparison.”

Besides starting with superior materials, old windows were made with intrinsically strong mortise and tenon joinery, built to last and easily repaired. And with a refurbished weights and pulley system, they will open smoothly and close tightly for years to come.

And what about the energy savings? According to an engineer cited in the BVHDC Historic Window Guidelines, the energy payback for replacement windows is 15 years, minimum — about the life span of a vinyl replacement window.

And when you look at the bigger replacement energy picture — accounting for manufacturing, mitigating the environmental effects of the PVC in vinyl, shipping, installation, and removal of the old but still serviceable windows and adding them to the landfill — the expenditure in energy and environmental consequences is considerable.

Repair and restoration, on the other hand, is DIY or done by local craftspeople using existing materials with few other resources.

“We can’t build our way out of the global warming crisis,” said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. “We have to conserve our way out.” Saving those original old wood windows is the hands-down earth-friendly choice, conserving both the building’s character and the environment.

The BVHDC and the Andover Preservation Commission recommend that historic windows be restored whenever possible and supplemented with unobtrusive storm windows. — The BVHDC Historic Window Guidelines.

Meet a Neighbor

A chat with Peter Traneus Anderson



If you haven’t yet met Peter Traneus Anderson personally, you may have noticed him having lunch at the Ballardvale Cafe or strolling the neighborhood, wearing his characteristic kilt

and carrying his cane.

An electronics engineer by profession, he holds several patents and has many

interests, including the history of the railroad in Ballardvale. Train travel is important to Mr. Anderson, and our neighborhood train station has been his jumping off point for numerous trips around the country.

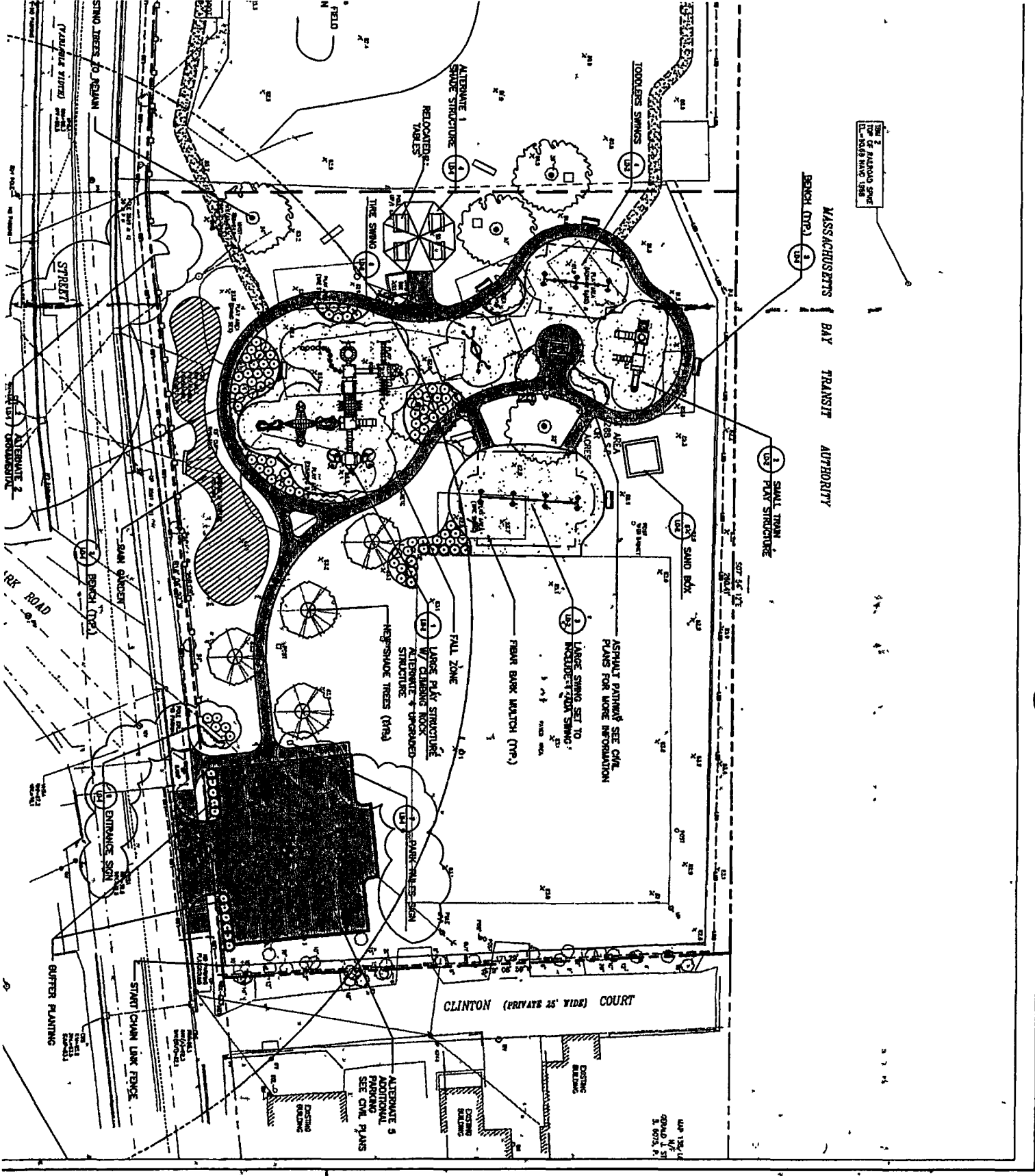
Have you always lived in Ballardvale?

I was born in New York City and grew up in New Jersey. I lived 24 years in Burlington, Vt., but not the first 24, so I’m not a Vermonter.

Where do you live now?

Since December 1999 at 42 River Street.

continued on page 6



THE 2' RAILROAD SPUR
LINE 1888 WAS 1888

MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BENCH (TYP) 1, 2, 3

SMALL TRAIN
SMALL PLAY STRUCTURE

SAND BOX

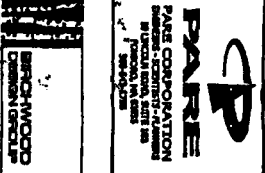
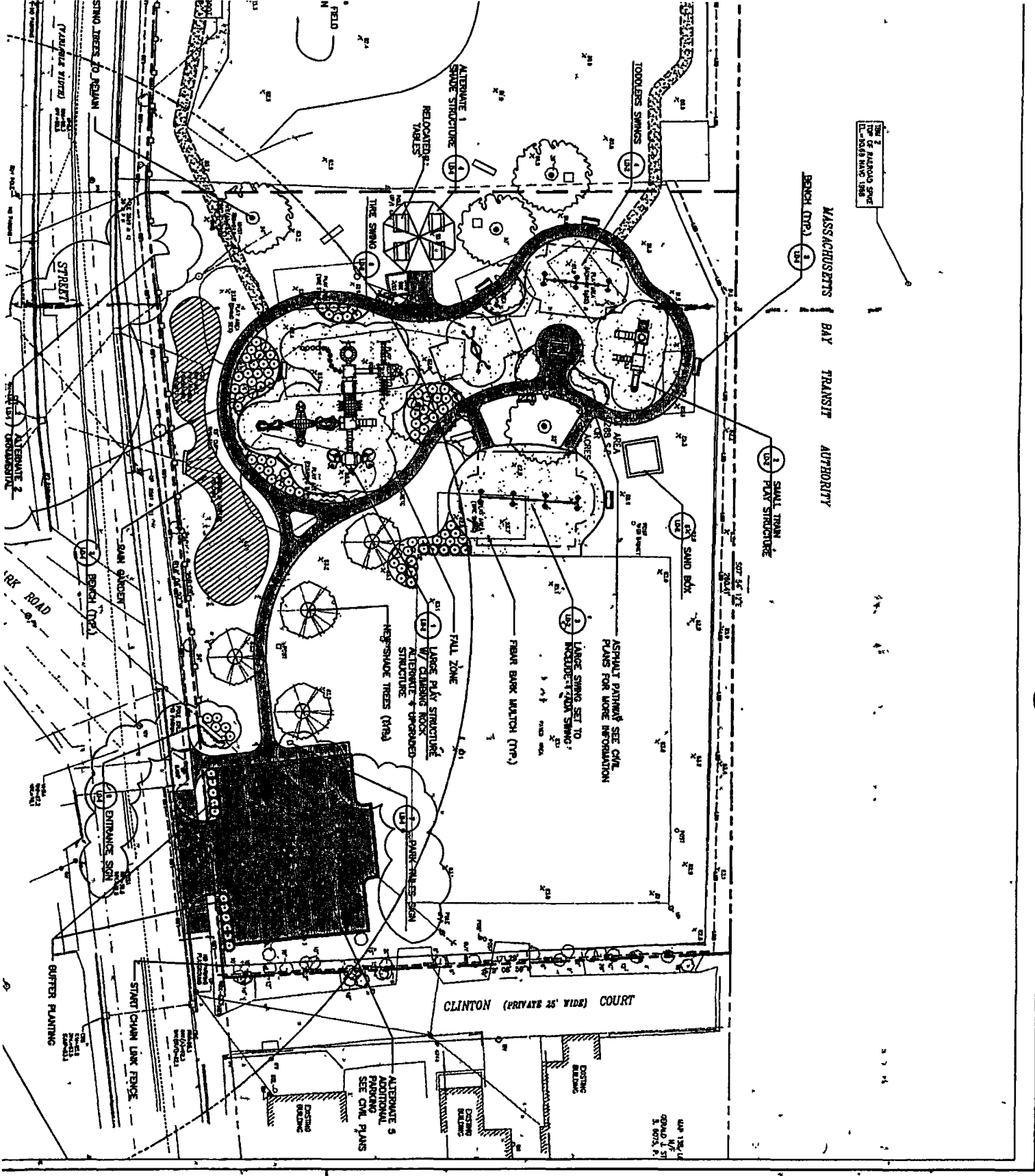
LARGE SHING SET TO
MODERATE-TILT SWING

FIBER BARK MATCH (TYP.)

LARGE PLAY STRUCTURE
W/ CLIMBING ROCK
STRUCTURE

CLINTON (PRIVATE 25' WIDE) COURT

ALTERNATE 5
ADDITIONAL
PARKING
SEE CIVIL PLANS



PARE CORPORATION
 250 WASHINGTON STREET, SUITE 100
 WILMINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01974
 508-653-2525

BallardVale Park
 164-168 ANDOVER STREET
 ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

PERMIT
 SUBMISSION

SCALE: AS SHOWN
 SHEET NO. 1 OF 1
 DATE: 12/15/10

Meet a Neighbor *continued from page 3*

Do you have family in the area?

None are local. They are in Connecticut, Vermont, New York, and Ontario.

What do you do for a living?

I'm a retired electronics engineer.

What interests keep you busy?

Reading (mostly nonfiction and technical), walking, swimming in Pomp's Pond, train trips, computers, radio, electronics, and open-source software and hardware.

What do you like about Ballardvale?

It's a good walking community. I last drove a car in 1971 and rely on the commuter rail train and an occasional taxi to get around.

What's the story behind the kilts you wear and the walking stick you use?

I started wearing a kilt in 1976 for Scottish country dancing. I started making my own a few years later. I also have a Utilikilt [a brand of U.S.-made kilts for rugged wear] and a few Amerikilts [also U.S.-made kilts].

I make my own long kilts for the winter, and regular kilts for the summer. I find a kilt is very comfortable, warm in cold weather and cool in warm weather. For a description of how I make a kilt, you can visit my website: <http://home.comcast.net/~traneus>.

I carry the four-footed cane because my back sometimes goes out unexpectedly. When that happens, the cane is a big help. In the winter Yaktrax (rubber webs wrapped with steel springs to strap on shoe soles) and the cane also help a lot walking on ice.

Village Stories, Old and New

Hit Song for Ballardvale Cousins

It was such a popular song that countless baby girls in the post-Civil War generation were named for its beautiful heroine. In fact, if you search the song title, "Daisy Deane," expect more hits about real people than music — a measure of how much this sad ballad of love and grief resonated with its wide audience (Daisy herself, and the flowers she outshines, all fade in the end).

The story of the 1863 song and its composers was part of the Andover Historical Society's 2014 "Lest We Forget" exhibit commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.



The song's composers, James Ramsey Murray and Thomas Fergus Winthrop, were sons of Scottish craftsmen who immigrated to Ballardvale to work in the mills. Murray's father, Walter, was said to have been the first spinner in a Ballardvale Mill in 1836.

Both cousins served in Andover's Company H during the Civil War, and both survived the conflict. Winthrop went on to a career in railroads, and ended up in El Paso, Texas. Murray stayed with music, eventually working for the publisher of "Daisy Deane" in Cincinnati.

FAQs

Ask the BVHDC (BallardVale Historic District Commission) . . .

Where can I find wavy antique glass to replace a broken windowpane?

Replacement panes are available right in the neighborhood, thanks to BVHDC member Diane Derby, who has collected a stash of old windows just for that purpose. She's happy to help homeowners keep their historic windows, and there is no charge for the glass. Contact Diane at derby01@comcast.net.

Go Paperless!

To receive the next issue of the *BallardVale Gazette* via email, send your name, street address, and email to Karen English: kfeenglish@gmail.com.

Playground Wish List

Before plans for the playground upgrade now underway at BallardVale Park were drawn, meetings were held last fall to give community members an opportunity to express their ideas on what the new facility should offer.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the funds available for the playground upgrade won't cover everything on the list of community requests. To close the gap, Conservation Commission member

Ellen Towson, who has been working with Andover Deputy Director of Plant and Facilities Ed Ataide on the project, has spearheaded a fund-raising effort. Melanie Woods Krance designed and runs the [gofundme](http://gofundme.com) page.

The first item to be funded will be an octagonal shade shelter. Here's the complete list in the order the items will be added as needed funds become available.

1. Shade shelter.
2. Ornamental fence along the front (Andover Street).
3. Stone dust path around the T-ball lot. (The T-ball lot itself is not part of the upgrade.)
4. Upgraded climbing structure
5. Additional parking.
6. Black chain-link fence on remaining three sides.

If you would like to support the effort to fund the wish list, visit gofundme.com/PlayBallardvale.

Questions? Suggestions? Feedback?

If you have a question for the BallardVale Historic District Commission or a suggestion for a topic you'd like to see covered in a future issue of the *BallardVale Gazette*, please contact the editors:

Karen English / kfeenglish@gmail.com
Joë Halpern / joehalp@gmail.com

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Andover, MA 01810

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ANDOVER, MA
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➤ ***Special Feature: New Playground at BallardVale Park***

CALENDAR

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| June 3 | BallardVale Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting
Town offices, second floor conference room — 7:00 p.m. |
| July 1 | BallardVale Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting
Town offices, second floor conference room — 7:00 p.m. |
| August 5 | BallardVale Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting
Town offices, second floor conference room — 7:00 p.m. |
| September 2 | BallardVale Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting
Town offices, second floor conference room — 7:00 p.m. |

*Confirm BVHDC meeting dates and times at andoverma.gov or contact Diane Derby:
derby01@comcast.net.*