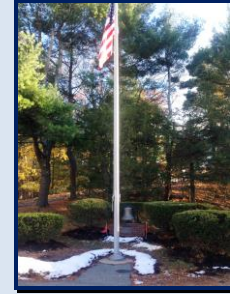


Ponkapoag Bell and Memorial Restoration Project



Historical Significance of William Blake

- ✚ Apprentice for Paul Revere and owned casting companies in private and with partners from 1820 to 1890
- ✚ In 1823 Paul Revere III, Blake and John Sullivan founded the Boston and Braintree Bell Co and became the Boston Copper Company.
- ✚ Revere Copper Company produced Copper sheeting and eventually stainless steel clad copper cookware. Paul Revere III, Blake and Henry Hooper apprenticed for Paul Revere and continued his bell foundry as Boston Copper Company from 1823 to 1830. The company became H.N. Hooper and Co. from 1830-1868 and then William Blake and Co. from 1869 to 1890 - It was during this time the Ponkapoag Bell was manufactured.
- ✚ During this period, Blake made bells for churches in New England and lighthouses as far away as Texas and manufactured first set of chimes in America (previously only in Europe)
- ✚ He and Hooper manufactured cannon for the Civil War - Known as the "Napoleon", it was used in the Pickets Charge by the Rhode Island Infantry to repel the confederate attack.
- ✚ *"Today if you visit almost any one of the civil war battlefields you'll find a brass cannon made in Canton, Mass"* - Canton Comes of Age 1797-1997

"The Ponkapoag Bell"

- ✚ Cast by William Blake & Company in 1888
- ✚ Installed in the Ponkapoag Fire Station upon its renovation and enlargement in 1888.
- ✚ The Ponkapoag Bell was rung to recall and notify Canton's fireman and residents of a fire in town and was integral to the Canton's public fire alarm system.

- ✚ The Ponkapoag Station (known as “Old Shaky” was demolished in 1973 to make way for the building that stands there today at 7 Sassamon Street.
- ✚ The bell was removed for a modern day horn system and the current memorial was built.

Canton Fire Department

- ✚ In 1829 The town voted to purchase Engines, hoses and couplings for the three companies
- ✚ Three Engine companies “of 20 efficient men” were formed in South Canton, Ponkapoag and Canton Corner
- ✚ Canton founded a formally recognized fire department in 1885.
- ✚ Bolivar Street was constructed in 1886 and Ponkapoag was remodeled and enlarged in 1888
- ✚ Ponkapoag became a community hall for the neighborhood and a meeting place for the volunteer fireman.
- ✚ The Department has grown from 3 Fire Engineers overseeing group of volunteers to a full time 53 person career department with a command staff and 48 working firefighter/EMT’s.
- ✚ The annual operating cost in 1885 was \$3,000, mostly for horse rentals.
- ✚ Today the operating cost to run the Canton Fire Department is nearly 5 million dollars.

Ponkapoag Bell Project Plan

- ✚ Design and construct a new Firefighters Memorial utilizing the William Blake bell and plaque.
- ✚ Engage the services of Oliver Brothers from Boston, MA to design and construct the new memorial.
- ✚ Oliver Brothers performed the refurbishment work on the World War I Memorial in 2013.
- ✚ Utilize funds pledged by the Canton Firefighters Association to pay for design costs.
- ✚ Utilize town resources for site preparation and demolition of existing structure.
- ✚ Utilize fire department personnel for maintenance and landscaping.
- ✚ Unveil the bell and plaque at the Station 2 re-dedication in the fall of 2015.
- ✚ Maintain memorial and grounds to be accessible to public 365 days per year.