The SEHS lost two of its founding members this year. Richard Card and Doe Sprogis were both integral members of our organization for over 40 years and their impact on the South End cannot be overstated. Their passing is a great loss to us as an organization and we will use this newsletter and the next to remember their impact on the neighborhood. We will start by honoring Dick Card, our founding President and long-time Historian, and we will dedicate our next newsletter to Doe Sprogis’s memory. Our hearts and thoughts go out to the families and friends who were affected by the deaths of these two wonderful people.

Richard Card and Doe Sprogis were both integral members of our organization for over 40 years and their impact on the South End cannot be overstated.

A native of Maine, Richard Card (known to us at the SEHS as Dick) was born in Bath in 1932. He lived in Maine for his entire early life, moving to Boston to pursue graduate school. After his graduate studies, Dick settled in the city permanently. He worked for The First National Bank of Boston, where he would stay for 33 years, first as project director in Systems (continued on page 3)
Dear Friends,

Every season in the South End has its own special charm, but Autumn is my personal favorite. The crisp fall air is perfect for enjoying a pastry and hot beverage in any of our neighborhood’s wonderful cafes, and the brightly turning leaves lend a festive air to the South End’s many well-treed parks. The fall is also the season of our major fundraiser: The South End House Tour, which is coming up in just a few short weeks. We’ve been working hard on this year’s tour, which is promising to be our most exciting yet, and I am very excited to share it with all of you!

I am also excited to announce that my husband, Evan, and I are expecting our first child in early December. I will be taking a short leave while we get to know the newest addition to our family (and the Historical Society’s youngest member!) and will be returning to the SEHS in early March. In the meantime, our dedicated Board of Directors will keep the organization running with the help of a temporary Administrator. You can, as always, direct all inquiries to admin@southendhistoricalsociety.org or call us at 617-536-4445.

On a somber note, this year the South End Historical Society has lost two of its oldest and most dedicated members, Richard Card (Dick, to us at the SEHS) and Doe Sprogis. We are dedicating this and the next newsletter to their memories. This newsletter is focused on Dick’s impact on the neighborhood; he was the Historical Society’s founding President and long-time official Historian. Our next newsletter will focus on Doe, another founding member of the SEHS and, along with Dick, the original signer on our Articles of Incorporation. We are profoundly sad over the loss of these two wonderful people and hope that you will join us in celebrating their memories and their dedication to the neighborhood they both loved dearly. Though they are gone, we know their legacies will live on for a long time.

Stacen Goldman, Executive Director

SEHS Executive Director Stacen Goldman and her husband Evan on vacation in Costa Rica in 2014.
was that expansive." More than once she would come back
from her own outings curious about something she had
seen and she would stop by Dick's house, "I'd come back
from a walk and ask him, 'Dick, what's the story behind
that?' and he'd just give you the whole story."

Generous as he was with his knowledge, he was nonetheless
careful with his collections, recognizing their importance
to his own scholarship and to the neighborhood. Local
writer Alison Barnett remembered, "He'd invite me over to
his house where he'd find what I was looking for, usually
leaving me downstairs while he went upstairs to get it. If I
wanted to make a copy, he'd go with me to Mail Boxes, Inc.
on the corner. When the day came that he let me take
his house where he'd find what I was looking for, usually
leaving me downstairs while he went upstairs to get it. If I
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He was an authority in the neighborhood. Dick's attention to
detail and dedication to scholarship come as no surprise. Not only was he the Valedictorian of
his High School, but he was a winner of the State of Maine
Scholarship to Bowdoin College, where he would graduate magna cum laude in 1954. He would later go on to study
Business Administration at the graduate level at Harvard
Business School. He was clearly bright, hard-working, and
curious. In many ways, his intellectual curiosity expanded
beyond the reaches of his own mind. It was the fuel that
drove a multitude of neighbors, scholars, friends, and even
the SEHS to their best potential.

Dick was also intensely community-oriented. He was
involved with an astonishing number of neighborhood
groups – his official obituary had a list 15 organizations
deep. He served actively on the boards of organizations
dedicated to building community, preserving architecture,
teaching history, and supporting the arts. The list of titles
he held is equally impressive: President, Chairman,
Historian, Founder. It's really no wonder he was chosen
one of 350 "Grand Bostonians" at Boston's Jubilee 350,
in recognition of his contributions to his neighborhood.

He demonstrated this commitment to community
in unofficial ways as well. He was often out in the
neighborhood walking his dogs, running into friends
along the way. He knew everyone and was always making
connections between neighbors. Once he got to know you,
Dick would never forget your name, your interests, or
your birthday. He was always thoughtful, sending cards
for birthdays and holidays, sharing gifts, and supporting
local causes. As Maryellen told me, "he was always
generous with his time, talent, and treasure."

In fact, "generous" is the word that comes up the most
when asking people about Dick. Hope Shannon told me
that he never shied away from a request, "[he] always
made time for me and my questions." Maryellen later
echoed this, "I feel very blessed that he was in my life. He
was a dear friend and neighbor, and held anything for
you." Thoughtful
as he was, he
never wanted to
be a burden on
others, making
great efforts for
his neighbors
and never asking
for anything
in return.

For all his authority in the neighborhood, Dick
always remained humble. He didn't advertise his
accomplishments or ask for praise. Though he
painstakingly restored much of the interior of his home
himself, he never let on to admirers how much work he
put into it. When he manned the SEHS office for the
annual South End House Tour in 2009, he spoke to nearly
every person who passed through the door. Hope, who
was with him at the office that day, told me, "I'll never
forget Dick sitting in the parlor, people surrounding him,
answering visitor questions about neighborhood history
and his role in the establishment of the SEHS. He was too

The South End in the MFA

Thank you to everyone who came out to our spring fundraiser, The South End in the MFA. Over 60
members came to the MFA for a cocktail reception and silent auction. Following the event, attendees
were invited to tour the Museum's galleries with our South End in the MFA guidebooks, which explores
the history of the South End through the lens of the MFA's fine and decorative arts collections.

Did you miss the fundraiser but still want to take our South End in the MFA self-guided
tour? You're in luck!
Guides are on sale in the SEHS offices for $5.
Purchase a guidebook and you can take the
tour anytime you like – perfect for a weekend
outing, date night, or entertaining guests!
modest to identify himself as the SEHS’ founding president but I made sure people knew. The visitors were fascinated by what he had to say and were even more awed when they found out who he was.”

Even in his later years, Dick remained young at heart. He had a wonderful sense of humor and he was never afraid to share it with his friends. Cards and gifts from Dick always included a humorous touch and he relished an ongoing prank war with his good friends and neighbors, Dave and Doe Sprogis. Over the years, Dick and the Sprogises would deck out each other’s homes for the holidays with outlandishly ugly wreaths, pink flamingoes, and garish inflatable decorations. He also had an incredible sweet tooth.

His love for both pranks and sweets merged on his favorite holiday, Halloween, which was consequently also his birthday. On Halloween night, he always sat on his stoop with a bowl of candy at the ready for trick-or-treaters… like some ice cream? and open his freezer to reveal rows of ice cream cartons. His love for both pranks and sweets merged on his favorite holiday, Halloween, which was consequently also his birthday. On Halloween night, he always sat on his stoop with a bowl of candy at the ready for trick-or-treaters, making sure to have a few extras left over at the end of the night to satisfy his own sweet tooth. He saw dinner as a necessity, but dessert was a pleasure. When friends were visiting, he would often ask “would you like some ice cream?” and open his freezer to reveal rows of ice cream cartons. His love for both pranks and sweets merged on his favorite holiday, Halloween, which was consequently also his birthday. On Halloween night, he always sat on his stoop with a bowl of candy at the ready for trick-or-treaters, making sure to have a few extras left over at the end of the night to satisfy his own sweet tooth. Dick remained active at the SEHS very late in his life. Hope in the SEHS office and spending time traveling in Maine, where he would live out the rest of his days. It sold his South End home at the end of 2012 and returned to Maine, but the trips (and the stairs in his 5-story row house) became difficult. Due to ailing health, Dick finally sold his South End home at the end of 2012 and returned to Maine, where he would live out the rest of his days. It was very painful for him to leave the South End behind, but in that time, it certainly has not forgotten him.

By the time I began working at the South End Historical Society, Dick had already moved back to Maine. Although I never knew him myself, I still feel his presence in the office every day. Many of the most interesting pieces in our collections were donated to us by Dick during his lifetime. Without him, I wouldn’t have the historic maps I reference for all manner of research inquiries or the incredible Everett Letters, which are (as far as I know) the only comprehensive account of life in the South End in the 1850s.

The following is a walking tour written by Richard O. Card, founding President and longtime Historian of the South End Historical Society. This tour was originally published in the March 1986 Newsletter of the South End Historical Society. It has been edited slightly for length. Content that is no longer accurate is noted in brackets.

(All photos owned by the SEHS)
Turn left onto Rutland Square. Here you will see one of the narrow South End street parks. Such parks follow the English plan of urban squares, rather than the French plan of broad avenues (which became the main influence in the Back Bay development). The houses on both sides of the Columbus Avenue end of Rutland Square have high front steps to the parlor level, with English basement below. Starting with number 23 and 24 (on the left and right respectively) the remaining houses to Tremont Street all have less formal main entrances close to street level.

On the left side of the square, numbers 7 through 23 are unique examples in the South End of a wedding of Rococo and Gothic styles. It would be difficult to call the archways over the front doors anything but Rococo – especially with the flower blooming in the center. Yet the groups of five narrow windows in each wooden bay are distinctly Gothic in feeling, and the half-timbered sort of decoration suggests Eastlake. [Charles Locke Eastlake was a British architect and furniture designer and one of the principal exponents of Modern Gothic style in the 19th Century] Perhaps we should just call it all Victorian eclecticism which happens to be pleasing to the eye.

Across the street, at number 28, for more than 35 years lived Louise Chandler Moulton and her husband William. He was a partner in the publishing firm of Lincoln and Moulton, and later an editor of The Youth's Companion, while she was a world famous writer and poet. Although her fame has not survived the years, she wrote extensively and was in her own day a celebrity who enjoyed the friendship of much of the literary and artistic world. Louise Chandler Moulton lived on Rutland Square until her death in 1908, entertaining so many notables that her home itself achieved some notoriety as a literary salon.

On number 13 you will see a plaque put up by the Heritage Guild to honor Butler R. Wilson (1861-1939), a prominent Black attorney admitted to the Boston Bar in 1884 and president of the Boston Branch of the NAACP from 1916-1936. In the mid-60s, Arthur Ducharme, who then owned this house, cut open a safe found under the kitchen floor. In it were found scores of letters to Wilson from such notables as Frederick Douglass, Hannibal Hamlin, Henry Cabot Lodge, John Greenleaf Whittier, Wendell Phillips, Sarah Orne Jewett, and Edward Everett Hale, as well as a ticket to the 1888 Republican National Convention…

As you stand in front of the Moulton House, it is probably a good time to look back at the spire of the Union Methodist Church, a spire which the Moultons would have watched going up. The perspective is a pleasing one.

Further along on the same side of the square, notice the stylized female heads over each entrance, from number 4 through number 24.

On number 43 Rutland Square, Walbridge Field, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court lived for many years – continuing here well after the square had fallen from its original fashion. (His was a high stooped house from which the steps were lost in a later modification.) Across the street, at number 28, for more than 35 years lived Louise Chandler Moulton and her husband William. He was a partner in the publishing firm of Lincoln and Moulton, and later an editor of The Youth's Companion, while she was a world famous writer and poet. Although her fame has not survived the years, she wrote extensively and was in her own day a celebrity who enjoyed the friendship of much of the literary and artistic world. Louise Chandler Moulton lived on Rutland Square until her death in 1908, entertaining so many notables that her home itself achieved some notoriety as a literary salon.

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At Tremont Street turn right and proceed to West Concord Street.

Only the end buildings remain of the block which once stood on your left, the others having been demolished to build the fire station. This row was once known as “Poet’s Row” since each of the eight houses originally had a carved wooden head of a different poet over its portico. No trace of these wooden head remains, though you can see where one was attached.

At the corner turn left onto West Concord Street.

The New Hope Baptist Church, on the corner, is an active congregation, preserving through careful use another architecturally important South End Church.
Walk now down West Concord Street to Shawmut Avenue.

Tremont Street Methodist-Episcopal Church, later New Hope Baptist Church, 1912

After well over a century of activity, this church, with its two asymmetrical towers, was much admired even in its own day, and copied by other architects.

This building was designed by architect Hammatt Billings and built in 1860-61, as the Tremont Street Methodist-Episcopal Church. Billings used Roxbury Puddingstone as his material, and expanded upon the revival of 14th Century English Gothic style.

On your left, just before you cross Newland Street (a narrow street that is frequently mistaken for an alley), once stood a Boston public school originally called the Rice Primary School. This was later renamed the Louisa May Alcott School, and stood until the widespread demolition of the 60’s.

Across Newland Street is a little park containing a modern sculpture called “Cityscape III,” done by Miriam Knapp in 1984.

Now cross Shawmut Avenue and proceed along West Concord Street to Washington Street.

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Across Newland Street is a little park containing a modern sculpture called “Cityscape III,” done by Miriam Knapp in 1984.

On your left, as you cross, note one of the relatively few surviving original cupolas, which may be seen on the corner house.

On your right, midway between West Concord and Worcester Streets, stands a remnant of the famed Deacon House. This mansion was designed by Charles Lemoulner, and built in 1848 for Mr. and Mrs. Edward Preble Deacon, though paid for by Mrs. Deacon’s wealthy father, Peter Parker. It had the first mansard roof in Boston – possibly the first in America.

On your right, midway between West Concord and Worcester Streets, stands a remnant of the famed Deacon House. This mansion was designed by Charles Lemoulner, and built in 1848 for Mr. and Mrs. Edward Preble Deacon, though paid for by Mrs. Deacon’s wealthy father, Peter Parker. It had the first mansard roof in Boston – possibly the first in America.

One entered into the courtyard of the Deacon house from West Concord Street, through a gateway in the surrounding brick wall, and driving under a porte cochere. [a covered entrance for vehicles] Inside this “swell Paris house out on Washington Street” was an elegance dazzling to austere Boston. The great entrance hall had a gallery running around its upper level, and there were also an elegantly furnished drawing room, ballroom, dining room, and boudoir. The back of the house, facing towards Worcester Street, had windows extending along its entire first floor level.

Caroline Gardner Cary, in her Memories of Fifty Years, says that “What I especially remember were the boudoir — walls covered with quilts satin, ceiling dotted over with butterflies — and some beautiful panels by Fragonard…Beside a beautiful ball given there, I especially remember some charming small dances, ending in a supper, announced to us by tall Frenchmen in livery.”

Mr. Deacon was without visible property, as Miss Cary noted, hence father-in-law Peter Parker continued to pay the bills. As extravagant furniture orders went out to Paul, the upholsterer of the day, neighbors said that this was really “robbing Peter to pay Paul.”

The Deacons did not live here long, but travelled to Europe, where the dashing Mr. Deacon died. Mrs. Deacon and her son returned to Boston for a time, but she was called “too queer to be popular,” and soon left permanently for Europe. With the deaths of Peter Parker, the Deacon house was sold at auction in 1871. A set of decorative panels from the house — by Claude-Nicholas Ledoux and originally in the Louis XV Hotel de Montmorency — were sold in the 1871 auction and may now be seen in the French rooms of the Museum of Fine Arts.

By 1875 this building housed an elegant restaurant, said to rival Delmonico’s in New York. In 1881 the Massachusetts Normal Art School (established in 1873 to train drawing teachers for the public schools) took over the entire house for what eventually became Massachusetts College of Art. After a fire (about 1888) gutted the building, it was drastically modified into a dance hall and club rooms. The “1897, Deacon Halls” sign now visible from Washington Street dates from this reconstruction. [the sign is no longer present] By that time it had been hemmed in by other buildings on both the West Concord and Worcester Street sides, and in front was built a one-story structure housing Pond’s Restaurant.

The Pond’s Restaurant portion today house Siegel’s Paint and Supply Company, which bought this and the connecting Deacon Halls (now used for storage) in 1945. Customers still occasionally come in and tell of the days when the likes of Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey would entertain at the Deacon Halls nightspot, and fragments of its onetime grandeur may still be found in the interior. [The Siegel’s building is now gone, but started roughly where the wrought iron fence on Washington Street stands now and extended across the entire footprint of the adjacent building, Deacon Halls is now luxury apartments]

Deacon Halls ca. 1970, as it would have looked at the time Dick Card first published this walking tour

It is interesting to note that Edwin Parker Deacon, son of the original owner, lived on into the present century, [meaning the 20th Century] though confined to the Waverly Asylum for many years following his killing of a man falsely accused of being his wife’s lover.

The tour ends here. ☯
South End House Tour!

Tickets can be purchased the day of the Tour at the Boston Center for the Arts Plaza Theater, 539 Tremont Street.

Advance Tickets: $25
Day of Tour: $35

All proceeds benefit the South End Historical Society

www.southendhistoricalsociety.org/

Natalie King

A cozy cashmere scarf thrown over shoulders, stepping out of your apartment and it’s off to face the autumn day. There are many beautiful things about living in the South End - the restaurants, chic boutiques, and some of the best neighbors around. Walking down the tree-lined streets, the homes, from ornate Italianate to more reserved Federal style, create a sense of time and history that is the real charm of living here.

 Cooler temperatures inspire chic reinvention of personal style and home decor. There are many decor elements that can be incorporated to highlight the historic elements of your home, or to moderate a deeply traditional space. Living a modern lifestyle in a historic home is something that takes a bit of restraint and balance in design. Often, modern can become too cold and disconnected from the Victorian exterior, and historically relevant interiors can look too much like a museum. As with many things, it’s good to treat your gut and let yourself be drawn to what catches your eye and heart.

 Certain design elements are perennially in style: a crystal chandelier, marble, wood floors, large windows, and silver tea sets. These elements conjure feelings of timeless grace and are excellent investments in terms of finish work and home accessories.

 Just as clothing can create a sense of time and history, or you crave a bit of lightness and drama, while Benjamin Moore Horizon 1478 is a sure-but-pale gray to lighten a space. Think of your home as many different incarnations of the same style. One room can exhibit harmonious blends of gray and cream, while the next can carry the same color scheme but offer a bit more opulence with touches of velvet or a tall floral arrangement in chinoiserie. Add liveliness to a space with touches of verdant – be it a rich moss, subtle jade, a ring of chartreuse and rich and timeworn emerald.

 Home that you love.

 Whether your space calls for more drama or minimal elements to create the mood that reflects your taste. A quick trip to Pioneer Goods on Tremont Street is the perfect place to snap up a vintage find to add rustic touches of velvet or a tall floral arrangement in chinoiserie. Add liveliness to a space with touches of verdant – be it a rich moss, subtle jade, a ring of chartreuse and rich and timeworn emerald.

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 Home that you love.
Volunteer Opportunities

Want to be more involved with the SEHS?
We always need new volunteers! We have opportunities for volunteers in: the SEHS newsletter, fundraisers (Spring Ball and/or House Tour), collections, office tasks, preservation, history related projects, programs and events

Interested or have questions?
Call Stacen Goldman at 617-536-4445 or email her at admin@southendhistoricalsociety.org.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Our membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. If you have not yet renewed for 2015, please do so soon. Individual memberships are $25 and family/dual memberships are $40. Additional opportunities to support the Society include the supporting membership at $100 ($60 tax-deductible), the patron membership at $150 ($110 tax-deductible), and the benefactor membership at $250 ($210 tax-deductible).

Checks for membership payments can be made out to South End Historical Society and sent to the same at 532 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, MA 02118. Or you may visit our website at southendhistoricalsociety.org/membership and renew online with a credit card.

All memberships that aren’t renewed by May 1st are considered lapsed and membership benefits will cease.

Cast Iron Questions?

Need help restoring, repairing, or replacing your cast iron fence? The South End Historical Society can help!

Call or email us at 617-536-4445 or admin@southendhistoricalsociety.org for more information.

Historical Society Takes Stance Against BRA Urban Renewal Plan Extension

Boston’s Urban Renewal agency, The Boston Redevelopment Authority, is currently seeking to extend Boston’s urban renewal plan agreements, including jurisdiction over the South End and its historic district. This jurisdiction was established in the mid-20th century to address “blighted areas” in the city and involves, among other things, an extension of the BRA’s eminent domain rights in the district.

On July 14, 2015, the Directors and Officers of the South End Historical Society voted unanimously to oppose the Boston Redevelopment Authority’s proposal that its Urban Renewal Plan be extended, and that one of its “project areas” include the South End. Visit www.southendhistoricalsociety.org to learn more about the Urban Renewal Plan extension and to read the full text of the Historical Society’s letter of opposition, sent to BRA Director Brian Golden and copied to Mayor Walsh, Governor Baker, Boston City Council, and our State Representatives.

We highly encourage all interested SEHS members, South End Residents, and South End Neighborhood Associations to draft and submit their own letters to the BRA, City Council, and Mayor’s office regarding the extension of the Urban Renewal Plan Area in the South End. Whether you are for or against the measure, it is important that the South End makes its voice heard during this process. 🎉
The South End Historical Society Newsletter ❖ Fall 2015

Remembering Richard Card

South End House Tour

Historically Beautiful Décor for Stylish Living

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pg 12

pg 13

South End Historical Society
532 Massachusetts Ave.
Boston, MA 02118