

# A Weston Timeline

(Taken from *Farm Town to Suburb: the History and Architecture of Weston, Massachusetts, 1830-1980* by Pamela W. Fox, 2002)

## 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY



*Eva Warren and Helen W. Cutting try out Percy Warren's first automobile.*

**1900-10** Electricity arrives in many Weston homes. By 1910, “those who desire can have all-day lighting now.”

**1 9 0 0** First documented automobile in Weston belongs to General Charles Jackson Paine, who purchases a “double seated motor carriage” in 1900 and has it shipped from Ohio. It is “notoriously unreliable” according to the General’s daughter. The first automobiles are a novelty available only to the well-to-do.



**1900** First Weston Public Library building opens on Boston Post Road.

**1901-03** Weston Aqueduct and Reservoir is constructed. This major public works project is part of a regional plan designed to supply water to the Boston metropolitan area.

**1905** The town's second subdivision, Silver Hill, is developed beginning in 1905. Money is provided by stockholders who purchase shares in the Weston Land Association. A total of 89 lots are laid out.

**1905** Pigeon Hill School moves from Waltham to Pigeon Hill Road and provides a private school elementary education for Weston and Waltham elites. In 1924, it moves to Meadowbrook Road and changes its name to Meadowbrook School.



**1905** Weston Athletic Association incorporates as a stock company and builds a town pool on land on School Street just south of First Parish Church, contributed by Horace Sears. The pool continued in use until after World War II.



**1908** A small two-room primary schoolhouse is built for the four primary grades and promptly enlarged two years later by adding a brick first floor (now Brook School Building B).

**1908** Weston's first fire station, an all-concrete structure designed by Alexander S. Jenney, is constructed on North Avenue. Horses have to be borrowed from a nearby farmer. The station is used only until 1917, when it is closed to save money during World War I. The use of motorized apparatus makes the station unnecessary.



*Above: The 20 X 60-foot concrete town pool on School Street was used from 1906 to 1950. Boys and girls always swam at different times. Center: This one-story primary schoolhouse was enlarged two years later by inserting a brick floor underneath. Below: Weston's first fire station still stands on North Avenue.*

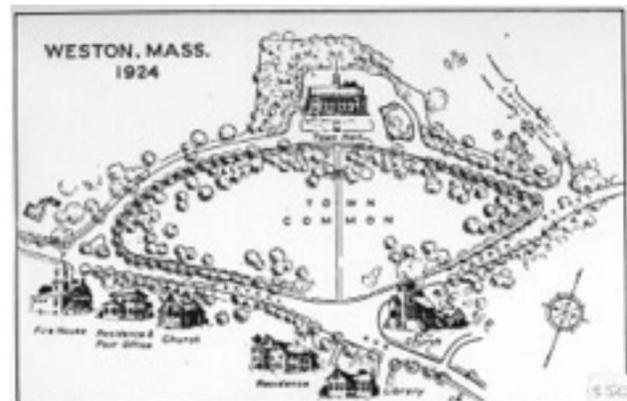


*Hillcrest Boys, photo c. 1938*

**1909** Marion Case establishes Hillcrest Farm, later renamed Hillcrest Gardens. She calls it “an experimental farm” devoted to scientific agriculture and to “training the American boy to a love of the soil.” Hillcrest functions as a practical school of agriculture. The boys have a daily study hour and are required to keep journals and write a paper presented at the annual Labor Day picnic. Hillcrest operates until 1942.

**1911** Edward P. Ripley founds the Weston Grange, Patrons of Husbandry. Grangers are primarily farmers and sponsor social events and an annual fair each October.

**1912** Town adopts the Town Improvement Plan, which is implemented over the next decade. The Town Green is created out of swampland, a new “Townhouse Road” encloses the Green, and new town buildings are constructed.





**1913** Weston marks its 200<sup>th</sup> birthday with a three-day celebration including a parade, historical pageant, sports and games, exhibits, and a band concert.

**1914** The town's second fire station, designed by Alexander Jenney, is constructed to serve the Town Center. It is part of the Town Improvement Plan and uses the same brick material and Georgian Revival style chosen for the new Town Hall.



**1917** The new Town Hall is designed by Bigelow and Wadsworth in the Colonial Revival style.

**1917-18** First Weston Boy and Girl Scout troops organized.

**1917** St. Peter's Episcopal Church builds its first church, located in the Town Center. The congregation remains in this location until the present church is constructed in 1959.

**1918** An estimated 147 men and six women from Weston serve in World War I. Six are killed in combat.

**1918** Robert Winsor turns over 422 acres to the Weston Real Estate Trust and sells 50 acres to Weston Golf Club, which thrives in its newer, larger site and adds value to Winsor's farm fields.

**1919** Women's Community League formed with dual goal of providing wholesome good times and opportunities for education and community service.

**1919** St Julia parish is established to serve the town's Catholic residents. Two years later, the parish builds a stone church, designed by the architectural firm of Maginnis and Walsh.

**1921** Dedication of a new flagpole just east of the new Town Hall.

**1922** Poor Farm is sold.



**1922** Transition from horse-drawn to modernized transportation is largely complete. The last horse-drawn school barge is replaced by a motorized bus.

**1924** The private elementary Pigeon Hill School moves to Winsor Estate and is renamed Meadowbrook School.

**1924** Pine Brook Valley Golf Club opens on land formerly belonging to three estates. Francis Foster's "Doublet Hill" mansion is remodeled as a clubhouse. Pine Brook was among the first Jewish golf clubs in the country, established in an era when Jews were discriminated against at other country clubs.

**CHILTERN HUNDREDS**

CHILTERN HUNDREDS is part of a group of large family estates on the border line of Wellesley and Weston, overlooking the Charles River valley. The owners of these estates are developing a tract of about 150 acres as a beautiful residential section, under certain social and building restrictions. CARLTON HILLSIDE is separated from the congested suburban districts by these large estates and by the Charles River Reservation of the Metropolitan Park, a river valley a mile and a half long.

THE FALLS  
THE BRIDGE

Wellesley Falls Station, on the B. & N. R.R. four track main line, has twenty trains a day each way, with numerous express, twenty-five minutes to South Station. All lots within half a mile of the station have gas, electricity and water, with frequent bus highways.

**mid-1920s** Chiltern Hundreds subdivision is laid out by Arthur Shurtleff (later Shurcliff) on land formerly belonging to estate owner Charles Wells Hubbard, who felt that Weston ought not to be just for the very large landholder.

**1928** Town adopts its first zoning by-laws. Minimum lot size is set at 10,000 square feet.

**1929** Weston Saddle and Bridle Club is incorporated as one of several pony clubs and riding schools operating in Weston from the 1920s through the post-war period.

**1930-33** State Road By-Pass is constructed, requiring the removal of thousands of cubic yards of peat and replacement with sand and gravel.

**1930** Riverside Golf Course (now Leo J. Martin) opens as a public state-run golf course located largely on former Hubbard Estate land.

**1931** Cambridge School opens on Lexington Street as a progressive private high school.

**1932** North Avenue School, last of Weston's one-room schoolhouses, closes after the 1931-32 school year.



**1932** The third Weston High School building (now Brook School Building C) is completed from designs by Ralph Harrington Doane in the Georgian Revival style.

**1933-40** Federal Depression-era programs employ workers in water department, school, and recreational projects.

**1936** F i r s t p u b l i c kindergarten opens in the central primary school.

**1937** Sweeping by-law revisions establish A, B, and C residential districts. Lots are required to have minimum street frontage.

**1938** Weston Scouts Inc. is formed to provide and maintain suitable headquarters for Boy and Girl Scouts. Scout House is built in 1941.

**1938** Hurricane of September 21 leaves seven-eighths of New England without power and uproots or snaps an estimated 275 million trees.

**1938-40** Weston is the site of a second major water supply project serving the Boston Metropolitan area: the Hultman Aqueduct and Norumbega Reservoir.



**1942-44** Five hundred and twenty five Weston men and women serve in the Armed Forces during World War II and 21 were killed or missing. On the home front, residents collect scrap metal for the war, plant “Victory Gardens” and make-do with rationing.

**1945-70** The number of school-age children increases 363%, from 635 pupils to 2,937. Town embarks on 25-year school building program resulting in five new school

complexes. School appropriations increased 288 percent, including debt service.

**1948** A spectacular fire in April at Weston High School destroys the roof and guts the interior, with damage estimated at \$650,000. Students attend afternoon sessions at Waltham High School. High school is reconstructed as an elementary school.



**1949** Town installs World War II memorial plaque on the boulder next to the flagpole and bronze honor role plaque in the upper town hall.



**1949** J. Ward Carter appointed to the newly created position of executive secretary to the board of selectmen and town accountant. Carter served as town administrator until his retirement 52 years later in 2001.

**1950** Classes begin at the new Weston High School (the town’s fourth high school building, now Field School) in January.



**1950-60** Construction of the Kendal Common neighborhood of Modern style homes.

**1951** Memorial Pool opens.

**1951** Route 128 opens in the Waltham-Weston area. Approximately 41 acres in Weston was taken for the construction.



**1953** New cement block municipal garage provides space for the highway department.

**1953** Town Forest Committee is formed and identifies Jericho and Highland Street as potential town forests. The committee makes its first purchase, in 1955, of 147 acres of Paine estate land east of Highland Street.

**1954** New zoning by-law are designed to curb growth by increasing the lot size required to build. Much of the remaining developable land was put in Residential Class A, requiring a minimum of 60,000 square feet. As a second growth control measure, the town increases buying of conservation land.





**1955** Weston Forest and Trail Association founded to protect open space, develop and maintain a trail system, and encourage study of nature and conservation. WFTA is one of the pioneer organizations in Massachusetts dedicated to the preservation of land.

**1955-75** In response to tremendous growth pressure, Weston adds 1,300 acres of protected open space to the 50 protected acres owned in 1945.

**1955** Country School, designed by Hugh Stubbins Jr., opens as an elementary school and wins awards for its one-story Modern design. (demolished in 2001-03)

**1957** The Massachusetts Turnpike opens from the New York State line to the Weston tolls. The extension into Boston is completed in early 1965.

**1959-60** Woodland School, designed by Hugh Stubbins Associates, opens as an elementary school. (remodeled in 2001-03)

**1959-61** Rivers School purchases the Loker Farm and moves from Newton to Weston.



*Above: Purchases of conservation land; Center, Country School; Below: Woodland School. Right: Rivers School.*

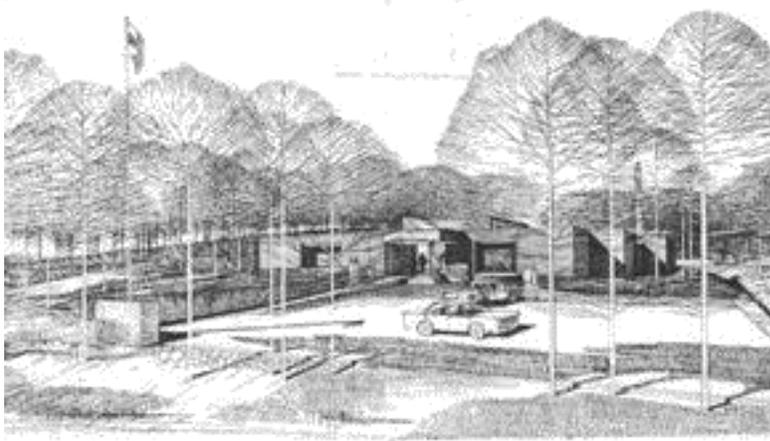


**1961** Opening of new Weston High School, the fifth high school building in the town's history, on land purchased from the Paine Trust at South Avenue and Wellesley Street. The 1950 High School becomes a junior high and Building C an elementary school. The 1961 high school was remodeled in 1997-98 and a new science wing is now under construction.

**1960** In the decade between 1950 and 1960, the school population in Weston increased 143%.

**1967** Fire station built at Ash Street and South Avenue to serve the south side.

**1969** Opening of the Weston Junior High School, designed by Cambridge Seven Associates. The building was remodeled in 1998-99.



NEW HOME OF THE WESTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

**Late 1960s** First footpath (sidewalk) constructed in Weston, along Conant Road.

**1974** First police station completed from designs by Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson and Abbott. Previously, the police station was located in the basement of Town Hall.



**1980** Land's Sake is founded as a private non-profit organization to help manage town's conservation land and involve residents in productive use, and takes over earlier youth programs operated by the town under the Green Power name.

**1994** Transfer Station constructed.

**1995** New Weston Public Library completed.

