

The Kristina Nilson Allen Papers

Finding Aid

Last Revised: November 21, 2024

Collection Summary

Collection number: LH.032
Collection title: The Kristina Nilson Allen Papers
Dates: 1870-2024
Size: 2.5 linear feet (5 boxes)
Creator/Collector: Kristina Nilson Allen
Acquisitions info: The collection was donated to the Library in stages starting in 2016.
Language(s): English
Repository: The Westborough Public Library
Processed by: Anthony T. Vaver, 2024

Rights and Access

Access: Collection is open for research

Copyright: Copyright status not evaluated.

Publishing Permission: As a courtesy, please consult with the Westborough Public Library Local History Librarian.

Personal History

Not since Dr. Charles Reed in the early twentieth century has anyone been associated more with Westborough history than Kristina Nilson Allen. Allen has been an active leader of the Westborough Historical Society, has conducted countless historical programs and tours for both adults and young children, and is a seminal author of Westborough history.

Before Allen wrote *On the Beaten Path* in 1984, the only other comprehensive monographic work on Westborough history was *The History of Westborough, Massachusetts* by Heman Packard DeForest and Edward Craig Bates, published in 1891. Many Massachusetts towns have published histories dating to the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, but Allen is one of the few local historians to take on the monumental task of writing a new, updated history of their town decades later. Westborough is indeed lucky to have had such a formidable advocate for its local history, otherwise, much of its history from the twentieth century would have been lost or neglected.

Allen has been active in town politics and organizations throughout much of her adult life. She served on the Westborough Select Board for twelve years and several times as

its chair. She was also a leader of the Westborough Historical Society, a Library Trustee for the Westborough Public Library, an incorporating director and president of the Westborough Community Land Trust, and a co-chair of the 495/MetroWest Corridor Partnership, among others. Starting in 1982, she worked at Clark University in various offices relating to publications, marketing, and development before retiring in 2005. Throughout much of her professional career, she has also worked as a freelance writer and editor for numerous publications and organizations.

Scope and Content Note

The Kristina Nilson Allen Papers is a mix of Allen's writings covering every major period of Westborough history and an eclectic mix of historical materials, most of which are from 1970s and into the 2020s and tend to be underrepresented in Westborough archives.

Some of the most notable materials in the collection include:

- A host of articles and notes by Allen about numerous Westborough history topics.
- Biographical material about important Westborough people, most notably the Forbes family, Olympian Nikki Stone, and Women of Westborough.
- Historical records and documents relating to the library addition, festivals and celebrations, and various Westborough organizations.
- An eclectic collection of advertising and other ephemera dating from the nineteenth and into the twenty-first centuries.

Related Collections:

- [Local History by Subject](#) (LH.001)
- [Historical Papers of Dr. Charles H. Reed](#) (a.k.a., the Reed Collection) (LH.013)

Series Summary

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|----------|--|
| Series 1 | Writing and Professional Life: <i>On the Beaten Path</i> , articles, notes, and other professional records written by and relating to Kristina Nilson Allen. |
| Series 2 | Westborough History: Overviews, People, Organizations, and Topics
Articles, notes, and records about people, organizations, and other topics in Westborough history. Together, they reflect Allen's own specific interests in Westborough and its history. |
| Series 3 | General Historical Records: Ephemera, images, and publications from Westborough history. |

Collection Inventory

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| Series 1: | Writing and Professional Life |
| Box: Folder | |
| 1.01 | <i>On the Beaten Path</i> , manuscript pages |
| 1.02 | <i>On the Beaten Path</i> , 1984 |

- 1.03 *On the Beaten Path* – Plans and Administration
- 1.04 *On the Beaten Path* – Publicity, 1984-1985
- 1.05 *Community Advocate* Articles – Drafts and Notes, 2012-2024
 - Westborough Sleighs
 - Beatrice A. Warburton (1903-1996)
 - Annie Elizabeth Fales
 - Admiral Louis E. Denfeld
 - Westborough Speedway
 - Jack Walkup
 - Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller
 - Mary Ann Brigham (1829-1889)
 - Red Barn Theatre (1938-1958)
 - Edward Howe Forbush (1858-1929)
 - Lillian Grove, “The Blueberry Lady of Denny Brook Farm”
 - Piccadilly Pub
 - Westborough Country Club
 - Gardner Parker (1772-1816)
 - Lake Chauncy Park, 1901-1949
 - The Many Lives of Westborough Weaving, 1902
- 1.06 Historical Papers, Articles, and Notes
 - Historical Papers (List)
 - History of Apples for Second Grade
 - Willow Park Water Cure and Hygienic Institute
 - 1929 Westborough Town Hall
 - Bay State Commons
 - Westborough Town Hall
 - Gilmore Pond
 - Westborough Community Land Trust
 - Horace Maynard
 - Sewing Society
 - Company K
 - Rev. Ebenezer Parkman
 - Art Deco Details in 1929 Town Hall
 - Farms
 - Victorian Pastimes
 - Lake Chauncy
 - Ted Rabouin (fragment)
 - William Sibley House
 - Westborough Then and Now
 - Westborough Industry, Transportation, and Agriculture, 1834-
 - Fannie Hooker Forbes (1860-1946) – 2024 Scholarship
Introduction and an essay
 - History of Westborough Community Land Trust
 - Who was Edward Dunn?

- The Many Lives of Westborough Weaving, 1902.
 - The Multi-Faceted Forbes Community House
- 1.07 Memories of Town (Allen)
- 1.08 Resumes
- 1.09 Praise and Awards, 1984-2003
- 1.10 Thank-You Notes from Children, 1981-1986
- 1.11 Tours (Cassettes), 1980 and n.d.
- 1.12 *Our Town #48 – Kris Allen: Looking Back, and Forward*, 2004

Map Case

Drawer: Folder

- 4.01 *Hometown* articles, 1977-1982

Series 2: Westborough History: Overviews, People, Organizations, and Topics

Box: Folder

Overviews

- 2.01 Historical Overviews of Westborough, 1991-2020
- 2.02 *A Collection of Historical Articles* by Helena Kemp Engberg
- 2.03 Old Newspaper Clippings (Photocopied) – Charles Reed Articles from *The Chronotype* and Others
- 2.04 Newspaper Clippings – Miscellaneous, 1984-2021

People

- 2.05 Published Biographies of Westborough People
- Tom Cook
 - Eli Forbes
 - Judge William Trowbridge Forbes
 - William Mozart McVey
 - Joseph Quick
 - Ted Rabouin
 - John Ruggles
- 2.06 Forbes Family
- 2.07 Esther Forbes
- 2.08 Ashley Hayden
- 2.09 Nipmuc Indians
- 2.10 William Sibley
- 2.11 Nikki Stone
- 2.12 Bee Warburton
- 2.13 Eli Whitney
- 2.14 Women of Westborough
- 2.15 Abduction of the Rice Boys
- 2.16 Annie Fales

Organizations

- 3.01 Westborough Clubs and Organizations – Miscellaneous, 1896-2020
- List of Westborough Civic/Social Organizations, 2002
 - Friends of the Nathan Fisher House
 - Grange
 - The Old Time Club of Westborough

- Thursday Club
 - Westborough Community Chorus
 - Westborough Community Land Trust
 - Westborough Garden Club
- 3.02 Evangelical Congregational Church, 1976-2004
- 3.03 Fire Department and Fires
- 3.04 Westborough Government, 1994-2005
- Committee for Kris Allen (Selectman)
 - 1994 Recycling Handbook
 - Westborough Recreation
 - List of Postmasters
- 3.05 Westborough Historical Commission
- 3.06 Westborough Historical Society, 1890-2017
- 3.07 Library: History, 1923-2008
- 3.08 Library: 1908 Research for 70th Birthday Celebration, 1908-1978
- 3.09 Library: Library Addition, 1978-2024
- 3.10 Lyman School/Westborough State Reform School, 1873-2022
- 3.12 Westborough Player's Club, 1975-1996
- 3.13 Police Department, 2005
- 3.14 Westborough Schools, 1875-1983
- 3.15 Westborough State Hospital, 1907-2022
- 3.16 WAVES: Westborough Abuse & Violence Education & Support, 1980-2010

Topics

- 3.17 Westborough Anniversaries – 250th, 275th, and 300th, 1967-2017
- 3.18 Archaeological Studies, 1981, n.d.
- 3.19 Bicentennial, 1975-1976
- 3.20 Boston Post Cane and Centenarians, 1994-2003
- 3.21 Business and Industry, 1886-2009
- 3.22 American Civil War Reenactments, 1992-2011

Box: Folder

- 4.01 COVID-19 Pandemic, 2020
- 4.02 Robert Daggett Playhouse, n.d.
- 4.03 Westborough Festivals and Celebrations, 2000-2017
- 4.04 Gravestones/Dan Farber, 1923-1984
- 4.05 Farms, 2013, n.d.
- 4.06 Dr. Curtiss Hoffman – Westborough Pre-History (Cassette) , 1984
- 4.07 Historic Preservation Plan, 2022
- 4.08 Memories of Town (Other Authors), 1957-1997, n.d.
- 4.09 Tercentenary Celebration, 1930
- 4.10 Tours of Westborough, 2004-2012
- 4.11 Town Hall, 2009, n.d.
- 4.12 Westborough – Miscellaneous, 2021, n.d.
- History of Fay Mountain Farm & Gilmore Pond
 - The Boston and Worcester Street Railroad
 - Westboro Speedway

Map Case

Drawer: Folder

4.02 Gravestone Rubbings

Series 3: Westborough Ephemera, Images, and Publications

Box: Folder

4.13 Westborough Booklets, 1899-1985

- *Some Views . . .*
- *Souvenir Letter*
- *The Story of the Cotton Gin* by Edward Craig Bates
- *Westboro: A History in Plaques & Statues*
- *A Westborough Blue Book*

4.14 Westborough Calendars, 1906-1994

Box: Folder

5.01 Westborough Chronotype (Newsletter format), 1987-1996

5.02 Westborough Community Profiles, 1889-2016

5.03 Westborough Ephemera, 1884-2022

5.04 Images

5.05 Maps – Commercial, 1999-2008

5.06 Maps – Miscellaneous, 1870, 1975

5.07 Newsletters, 1990-2010

- *Across the Spectrum*
- *One Person's Impact*

5.08 Postcards and Cards

5.09 *The Suppers of the Club* (Recipe Book), 1991

5.10 Westborough Town Directories, 1987, n.d. (see also 3.21 Business and Industry, 1886-2009)

Westborough Digital Vault

- Vault/Digital Repository – Not Yet Added/X - LH032 – Kristina Nilson Allen Papers: Westborough Houses-1950s – from Glass Slides