



# Gardner's Beacon™



SALEM PLANTER

Thomas Gardner Society, Inc.    Founded 2010



[Volume XIV -- Issue 1](#)    -- Holidays 2024

We wish our readers a wonderful 2025. Again, we ask this question: what happened in 2024? For starters, while ending our 14<sup>th</sup> year, we find that the [250<sup>th</sup> of the U.S.](#) is closer. That will be a major theme next year. For last year, we summarize the activities with posts from our blog.

## Activity

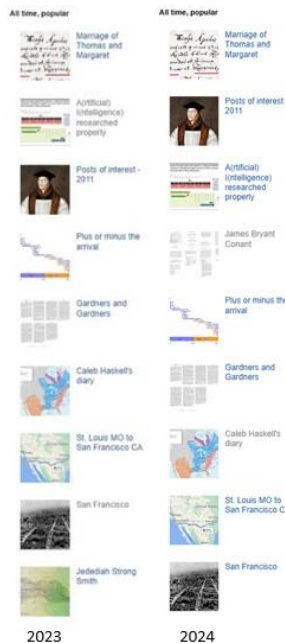
Our first post was in September of 2010. By early 2011, we were ready to start [Gardner's Beacon](#) which has published yearly since then and which has a volume this year of fourteen.

Our [post metrics](#) show an average of three per month through 2017 when they went up to seven on the average. We have had a larger post size since there was a lot of material to cover in the beginning. Too, many times much of our material was added as dated Remarks in the posts. For instance, our main post on [Dr. Frank](#) (which contains pointers to on-line copies of his books – 1907, 1933) has Remarks from 2011 to 2019.

One post ([Gardiner that was](#)) has research information about the barque Bostonian which was built and owned by a Gardner relative and which wrecked off of the Oregon coast. This post is fairly lengthy and contains data related to open issues that need to be resolved

We continue our work in family history and genealogy as well as having a focus on New England as a whole. The image shows the most popular posts (which are a side-bar on the blog) at the end of 2023 and 2024. The “Marriage” (from 2014) post has been at the top of the list since 2016. At the end of this post, there are links to the most popular posts shown in the image.

The most pressing issue deals with “origins” which have been a focus from the beginning. With further digitization of records, we can hope that matters will clear up. For a summary of the situation, see this Post: [Restart, somewhat.](#)



The image shows icons for a list of the “All time, popular” posts since 2011 for two years: 2023 and 2024.

The most popular post deals from 2014 reports our findings on the [Marriage of Thomas and Margaret](#).

The newest post on this list is from 2023. There are several posts from 2021. The other posts are older with the earliest from 2011.

This information was updated in early 2024. We expect to get further into this important research in 2025.

Now, let us look at STEM and related themes. Following that, there will be a brief look at the Nobel view.

## LSU, College of Science

We have adopted technology as a focus where our definition aligns with STEM as a popular topic. This spring, [Dr. Alfred L. Gardner](#) was honored for his work by the College of Science at Louisiana State University (LSU). Our post ([More than STEM, we need MSET+](#)) provides pointers to material about the event. Too, it uses “MSET+” which is to bring mathematics (M) to the fore as one of the foundations for science (S) and as crucial to engineering (E) and technology (T). The “+” represents many things one of which is philosophy. A recent post ([Nobel, Chemistry, 1901](#)) looks at how the theoretical (to be discussed) views across disciplines is awakening an interest in philosophy. One benefit that might arise with GenAI/LLM is a whole new paradigm of study.

When did America start to provide the work of scientists and other achievers in a noticeable manner? We have mentioned many contributors over the years and will collect those into a report. Our interest is the history of STEM fields as the progress maps to the U.S. experience. Too, there will be the New England focus.

## Further American examples

We look forward to finding and writing about early examples of New England contributions to the world of STEM. One early contributor to the field was [Count Rumford \(Benjamin Thompson of Woburn, MA\)](#) who was born in the colonies but went back as a Loyalist to England during the Revolution. The Count was one of the earliest researchers in



the topic of heat/energy (thermodynamics); he was very successful and later provided funds to support advancement through prizes and for improvements at Harvard, including an academic chair.

[Josiah Willard Gibbs](#) stands out through his work related to how the notions of heat/energy apply in chemistry. From Yale, Gibbs collaborated with [James Clerk Maxwell](#) who was a well-known mathematician / physicist of Scotland. See post ([Science of technology](#)) for a few details. There are several major themes to discuss, such as: science as we know it now is new with a history that we can trace; and, later, there was a heavy American influence in science.

## Technology

We have written several posts on technology over the past few years, many times pointing to the [Gairdner Foundation](#) of Canada. Two years ago, OpenAI let loose its ChatGPT. Prior to that, we saw an accumulation of game victories: chess; Jeopardy; Go; ... and probably more. With that focus, one can argue that games and life do not match up, except superficially.

On the other hand, since WWII, there has been another aspect to applied mathematics making its impact on our lives and culture. Game theory has found application everywhere and has been covered in media. One movie dealt with John Nash (see [Beautiful Mind](#)) and his life.

Getting back to GenAI, there are several ties to various types that have been introduced. We settled on Bard which became [Gemini and is of Google origins](#). These systems consist of, in general, software and hardware that manifest notions out of applied mathematics. Whether there is "intelligence" involved is (and has been) a matter of discussion starting with definitions. But a critter emerging? Or, getting to advanced modes of meaning and understanding?

Our position from experience is that these systems need to be thought of as tools assisting humans. [USDOD in 2023](#) cautioned about this regarding its own processes. Enhancing human intuition, one report noted, is the focus.

We got interest in the announcements from the Nobel Committee this year. Two of their Prizes relate to GenAI. The third involves advanced computing.

## Following the Nobel Prizes

Three of the [2024 Nobel Prizes](#) recognize computing. The Prize for Physics tied the neural approach of machine learning (AI) with work in mathematical physics. As such, this work sets the proper focus which will be to bring mathematics into general view which may dampen some of the rhetoric of broader themes much of it associated with artificial intelligence (a misnomer). The Chemistry Prize honored work in computational modeling of protein folding, again having been accomplished through use of an underlying mathematical framework. Finally, the Nobel Prize for Medicine brings focus to work in computational biology being involved with the study of microRNA. The hope is that the Nobel nods will help establish a better overview that makes sense.

## Miscellany and information

During this coming year, we will continue to focus on history, genealogy and technology. Given our focus points, subsequent posts will review what has led up to the start of our 15<sup>th</sup> year, review technology related material, and discuss where this focus will be going.

[2014/09/thomas-and-margaret](#) -- [Dr. Frank A.](#) wrote ...: ..., *that her maiden name was Fryer (or Friar), ...*

[2011/12/posts-of-interest-2011](#) -- As a means (an attempt) to freeze a point in time ...

[2021/07/ai-researched-properly](#) -- An ongoing concern is that we need to have a technical focus for a while ...

[2021/08/james-bryant-conant](#) -- Several times, we have mentioned someone ...

[2013/03/plus-or-minus-arrival](#) -- With the last Beacon, we started an "[annals](#)" approach which will be useful ...

[2010/09/gardners-and-gardners](#) -- In his book ([pages 1-3](#) 1907, [pages 1-7](#) 1933), Dr Frank ... lists Gardners ....

[2021/05/caleb-haskells-diary](#) -- What got our attention ...on a [history page](#) ...on 5 May 1775, Caleb Haskell ....

[2021/06/st-louis-mo-to-san-francisco-ca](#) -- The 250th of the American Revolution gives us a chance ...

[2023/04/san-francisco](#) -- San Francisco ... is a well-known destination by land and by water ...

Gardner's Beacon™ is published by the Thomas Gardner Society, Inc. ([TGSoc.org](#)).