



In 1894, the town of Middleborough asked 24-year-old George Philbrook to manage the new water-wheel power plant on Wareham Street later adding the gas plant on Vine Street. “Manufactured” gas from coal was the main source of lighting at that time. Mr. Edison’s electricity was a risky technology that powered only downtown street lights on moonless nights.

For the next 50 years, even while working as a fireman and eventually fire chief, Mr. Philbrook grew the operation that provides energy for all of the conveniences we take for granted today: electric lights and refrigerators, radio and television, hot water and eventually natural gas for central heating. When others called for selling the operation again and again, Mr. Philbrook believed in this town’s ability to meet residents’ needs and make use of electricity and gas for the greater benefit – to support a vibrant and growing modern community.

For his belief and perseverance, we owe a debt of gratitude to a devoted public servant – a father of town power and progress.

George A. Philbrook

Dedicated October 7, 2012