

## Springfield, Mass ~ Canton, Ohio ~ Hopkinton, Mass?

*"It all started here" ~ Thomas Burke*

February 10, 2008 — Most people who know Hopkinton, Massachusetts know the town as the Start line of the B.A.A. Boston Marathon. But if some people have their way, Hopkinton will join the ranks of Springfield, Mass and Canton, Ohio as the birthplace of a major sport in the area.

George V. Brown, a 1898 graduate of Hopkinton High School, a Hopkinton Selectman from 1913-1914, and a resident of the family's Maplewood Farm at 200 Hayden Rowe Street, is credited with bringing hockey to the Boston Arena in 1910, shortly after its construction, and to Boston University as well, where the MVP trophy bears his name.

Mr. Brown fired the first starter's pistol to begin the B. A. A. Marathon in 1905, and to prove the point, a bronze statue of his likeness is being manufactured at this time, commissioned by the Hopkinton Athletic Association. The tradition is kept alive today, as a member of Mr. Brown's family always fires the pistol. The statue is yet to have a permanent home, but will be featured on display near the Start of this year's Marathon, likely on the Common. This may well tie in eventually with the proposed Marathon Museum on Boulder Capital property on Route 135.

"The early Olympians in hockey and track were B.A.A. members," said Timothy Kilduff, President of the Hopkinton Athletic Association.

"The Boston Arena was the home of the Bruins, but in 1928 the Bruins jumped and went to the Boston Garden, and in the 1930's during the depression, my grandfather managed both venues," said grandson Thomas Burke

"This town has a legitimate tie to the beginning of hockey," said Mr. Kilduff.

"The B.A.A. was a lot more than the Marathon. The B.A.A. Games, track and field, was the money maker — it sponsored the Marathon," Mr. Burke said.

"People always look at it as people from the world bring sports to Hopkinton, but Hopkinton has brought sports to the world. Like Springfield, Mass and Canton, Ohio, Hopkinton is a wellspring of sports.

"It all started here," emphasized Mr. Burke.

*Photo from left, Sculpture Michael Alfano, statue of George V. Brown, and grandson, Thomas Burke.*

