



Washington Historical Society Newsletter

www.WNHHS.org

SPRING 2025 EDITION

Washington Historical Society Officers

President:	Steve Yusko
Vice President:	
Treasurer:	Elaine Crandall
Secretary:	Marian Baker
Archivist:	Gwen Gaskell Ellen Hofford
Board of Directors:	Patricia Martin Bill Mulcahy Ellen Hofford
Webmaster:	Bill Mulcahy
Barn Committee:	Phil Barker Bert Bodnar Volunteers Needed
Museum Committee:	Gwen Gaskell Ellen Hofford Volunteers Needed
Newsletter Committee:	Gwen Gaskell Barbara Gaskell Contributors Welcome
Program Committee:	Steve Yusko Bill Mulcahy

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The end of March brings us warmer temperatures, mud season, and the long-awaited return of spring! And with that we look forward to our Society's rebirth of activities this spring and summer. From January through April we have had varied programs via Zoom, each well-attended and they continued feeding our curiosity and fascination with all things New Hampshire.

Once again we thank all our members, donors, and volunteers for their contributions and gifts. We deeply appreciate your interest and commitment to preserving Washington's history.

And speaking of preserving history I hope to share fun and best practices of collecting, organizing, and sharing your family's priceless memories in the fall newsletter. This will be from a workshop focusing on practical ways to digitize old records, interview relatives, use genealogy tools and techniques for safeguarding your collections.

In the meantime in this issue I have started a series of articles briefly describing contents of the binders currently housed in the glass cases in the Museum. Perusing these research materials can be enjoyable as well as informative, with their many photos and tidbits!

We are anticipating our return to in-person meetings at the Camp Morgan Lodge with potlucks in May through October. We will have speakers covering Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Robert Frost's poetry on farming in NH, Alan Perry's reminiscences on Camp Morgan, the Frank Lloyd Wright architecture in Manchester, and more. Details within!

And we also invite you to visit our three museums in Washington! The Society's Museum and Barn on Halfmoon Pond Road will be open Saturdays, July 5- Sept. 6 10:00am-2:00pm and our Schoolhouse Museum in East Washington also open the same Saturdays, but 1:00-3:00pm. We can accommodate others by appointment.

Welcome Spring!

SCHOOLHOUSE SITES SEARCH 2

by Ellen Hofford

January and February snows piled up in Washington and then came the March melt accompanied by very high winds. Uncovered by the fume “exhaust” from my furnace, crocus and daffodil leaves and buds have sprouted up beside my Wee Hobbit House, hidden behind a fourteen-inch-tall snow wall. It is definitely time to return to the second half of the Schoolhouse site searches of last summer before Spring fully arrives.

On July 25th our team of five: Bill Mulcahy, Steve Yusko, Marian Baker, Kim Stumpf and I followed the East Washington Road northeast from Route 31 to Robinson Pond. We could see from the 1860 and 1892 maps that the New Boston School #8 had been located “near” the dam. Fascinated by the ruins of the old Proctor Mill - very tall walls that still remain, we dawdled to peek into the woods to get photos. Near the pond, also, there is the cellar hole of the I Proctor Building. Scoping the land nearby, we “found” what we thought might be corner stones for a structure 25 by 30 or was the school building location further to the north up the road where the land is no longer flat? It was Phil Barker who clarified the actual location for Bill. Yes, it is farther from the dam than we thought.



PUBLIC AUCTION
Town Hall Washington, N. H.
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26
At 2:00 P. M.
THREE SCHOOL HOUSES
Known as the Wilcox, Ball and
New Boston.
ERNEST M. CAHOON, Chairman
Washington School Board.
14-16

The New Boston schoolhouse, along with the Russell’s Mills-Wilcox Mills schoolhouse (District #7) and the Ball-Farnsworth schoolhouse (District #3) was sold at an auction held at the Town House on April 26, 1933. According to information in Ron and Grace Jager’s **Portrait of a Hill Town**, the schoolhouses sold for \$12, \$1.50 and 50 cents respectively, and were removed from their original locations. District #7 school went to Keene for use as a henhouse and Sumner Ball purchased the school building named for his family.

August 15th took us to the Mountain School #2 (built in 1813) that remains today as part of a home on Half Moon Pond Road about a quarter of a mile from its original site in the Max Israel Tract and is closer to town. As we made the pleasant walk from Martin Road toward Ayers Pond Road, we found the site relatively easily. Along the way the land tumbles into a long ravine on one side and climbs as part of the “hills” around Lovewell Mountain on the other. The school site is level and one can picture the building sitting among the present-day grasses surrounded by saplings.

August 22nd, we considered the huge erratic boulders left by the Ice Age and pondered the “forts” and the “houses” used by the Turnpike-Dole School children beside Route 31. This is the schoolhouse #6 site. Many wild and even cultivated flowering plants still grow there. And the building stood clearly visible from the road until 2014 when it was taken down.



August 29th brought us to the Cherry Valley area with Pillsbury Park on the opposite side of the highway. We were looking for schoolhouse site #9. What was a hunting hut built in the 1930’s remains as a dilapidated structure, complete with graffiti and an old For Sale sign. Again, we found a cellar hole and foundation walls of a barn and out buildings...the Kittredge place... across the road and a bit closer to town. Just recently Bill Mulcahy in doing research for members of the Codman family discovered that old photos they had were of this school house and also the Codman farmhouse which was later used as a school by teacher Mr. Farnham, who came with his wife from Boston for one term...But that story is Bill’s to write.

On September 6th we went to the Faxon Hill Road corner opposite King Street to find the granite base for the compass rock, etched by Carroll Farnsworth when a student there and is now placed inside the Civil War Monument enclosure on Washington's town green. The Ball-Farnsworth School #3 was located in that patch of land. That school house was moved about to sites on King's Street before coming to rest on that sharp corner.

These five are the final school site search locations. The Center School #1 has become our police station and District #5 East Washington School is open to the public Saturdays in July and August from 1 to 3 PM. Even though our town has one modern grammar/elementary school now serving all the children of Washington, we can see what school was like in the 1930's on display on the East Washington Road. Also, as we walk the backroads and byways of our area, we can think about what young people experienced in every season as they walked, after doing chores, up to two miles to get an education, and returned home to do more chores. Every person was vital to keep the family going.

We are planning an Historical Society Museum display of discoveries from last summer's trek to locate school building sites and the East Washington School will have a new display-in-progress about all ten schools. Enjoy.

This picture is of an unidentified schoolhouse. We are still working on finding out more about it.



Memories of Washington By Alan G. Perry

I was just there yesterday, try to visit maybe two three times a year. Having spent all my childhood there, and twenty years vacationing I find a lot of changes, yet so much has remained the same. Sat down by the waterfront eating my lunch in the drizzle, remembering when the Lodge, Wigwam, and other buildings were there and part of a very active Camp, the Camp Bell, the Bugle in the morning and in the evening echoing down the lake. Remembering sitting in Bob Onnela's lap while he made the Ball Field on his bulldozer and him letting me pull the levers, with his help, maybe I was about five years old, couldn't reach the pedals, but I tried. Water skiing behind the Drew Brother's boat, was a beautiful wooden boat, unlike today's boats, believe 35 HP. We had a large group of us who all enjoyed the lake as children. The ride to "Barker's" General Store, in Waldo's old pick-up, after milking the Cow's every night, and delivering the milk. Playing in the Hay Loft on rainy days. Later years taking my grand children to Eccardt's farm to listen to the cow bells and feeding the various other animals. So many good memories. The lake is as clear as ever, and as cold. Seems like more year-round folks living there now, a different generation, and a lot more expensive for sure. I just hope they appreciate it as much as we did. The town itself is so nice, the buildings still look as nice as when I was a child, again a new generation, but the pride is still there. There are so many memories, it's different now for sure, but still remains the same for me. Thank You for keeping my memories alive.

**Calendar of 2025 Meetings
Meetings May-October at
Camp Morgan Lodge**

Monday, April 14, 7:00pm. Zoom only

**Gluskabe — The Magical, Powerful Culture Figure Central to Wabanaki Storytelling
With Native American storyteller and historian Anne Jennison**

In this traditional Wabanaki storytelling presentation, Anne Jennison will introduce Gluskabe, who is at the center of an entire body of lesson stories that are central to the Wabanaki cultures of New Hampshire and the Northeast. Gluskabe is not the Creator, nor is he human; rather he is somewhere in between. Gluskabe has magical powers, is as tall as the white pine trees, and a friend to the Alnobak (the human beings). Layered with multiple embedded meanings, Gluskabe stories reveal the central spiritual and ethical beliefs of the Wabanaki peoples. They teach traditional Wabanaki understandings about how to live in harmony and balance with Mother Earth – and what kinds of things can happen when that balance is disrupted. Each time a Gluskabe story is heard, something new can be discovered.

Monday, May 12: 5:30 potluck/6:30 business meeting/7:00 program

Inez McDermott - Augustus Saint-Gaudens and the Cornish Colony.

By the early 20th century, Cornish, NH, in the shadow of Mount Ascutney, had become a summer haven for artists, writers, architects, musicians and other creative people. At the center of it all was renowned American sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens. While the respite from city life and the area's natural beauty was appealing, even more so was the opportunity for creative people to enjoy each other's company, to share their ideas, to work hard and play hard, all within a days journey to New York and Boston. This presentation will explore the art and life of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and introduce some of the creative artists, writers, architects and others who were drawn to the area.

Monday, June 9: 5:30 potluck/6:30 business meeting/7:00 program

Jeffrey Zygmunt — Robert Frost on the Farm: New Hampshire Farming in 1900 as Told by the Poet

While it makes spoken words sing like sauntering music, Robert Frost's poetry can also help us appreciate the rigor of life on a New England farm in the early 20th century. (Hint: It was hard.) In an exploration of both New Hampshire history and Frost's poetry, author and poet Jeffrey Zygmunt recites a selection of Frost's poems about farming. Alongside each recitation, he provides background on Frost's life, offering insight into the poem's origins, and commentary on the work's artistic beauty, as well as the experiences and emotions it expresses. Participants will join a lively discussion celebrating Robert Frost's unique gift for capturing farm life in poetry.

Monday, July 14: 5:30 potluck/6:30 business meeting/7:00 program

Alan Perry — A Personal History of Camp Morgan.

Alan Perry's father, Donald A Perry, directed Camp Morgan starting in 1946 for 29 years. Alan lived every Summer of his life at Camp Morgan and was also friends with most of the children his age living on the Lake at the time: Ken Eastman, Diane (Crandall) Snyder, and many more. He learned to water ski behind the Drew brothers boat. Milked cows with Waldo Farnsworth, and delivered milk on Waldo's truck. Alan was honored to grow up knowing Chief Henry Red Eagle, both at Camp Morgan, and the many sporting shows that Chief Red Eagle did throughout New England. Over many years Alan has collected about all the history of Camp Morgan available, as well as lived it. He was a Camper, starting at 8 years old in the Cub village, moved on to Pioneer's, Rover's and Ranger Village's, and even became a dishwasher when one quit in the middle of Summer! Most of his youth was Camp Morgan. At the time he had no idea the legacy he was living. It was a different time and era that Alan will generously share with us tonight!

Monday, August 11: 5:30 potluck/6:30 business meeting/7:00 program To be Announced!

Monday, September 8: 5:30 potluck/6:30 business meeting/7:00 program

Jane Oneail - Introduction to Frank Lloyd Wright and NH's Usonian Architecture.

America's most famous architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, created iconic modern buildings across the country, including Fallingwater in Mill Run, PA and the Guggenheim Museum in NYC. What do his revolutionary works look like in New Hampshire and how are they representative of his novel ideas about home design? This fun and fascinating presentation offers an introduction to a world-famous architect, highlights his local work – two examples of the Usonian, his final house type, are in Manchester, NH – and explores how design impacts the ways we live in our homes.

Monday, October 13: 5:30 potluck/6:30 business meeting/7:00 program To be Announced!

Monday, November 10: 7:00pm. Zoom only To be Announced!

Research Binders Available in the Museum — Part 1
by Steve Yusko

Have you ever wondered what resources await to be discovered and enjoyed at the Historical Society's Museum on Half Moon Pond Road? Well, Steve Yusko has started a series of short explanations of what awaits. I have described the binders on the top shelf of the glass-doored bookcase nearest the back by the loom. I have at least 3 more shelves to examine and report in future newsletters. I greatly enjoyed perusing these binders and they are full of so many stories, photo, and tidbits.

Echo Cottage Guest Book (copy; each page enclosed in plastic) "Echo Cottage Was Purchased [on or about 10/29/1885] by Charles Brockway and Fred Brockway, both of Hillsborough, New Hampshire—Edna M. Gage." Located on Half Moon Pond Rd.
Covers: June 2, 1892 to April 21, 1963. 224 pages. With 4 miscellaneous pages of notes.

Washington Makes the News Clippings of articles and photographs from local newspapers, 1880's to the 2010's. (Each page enclosed in Mylar). Approximately 45 pages, double-sided.
11 additional double-sided pages of copies of news clippings from the scrap books kept by Zaida Cilley, the Shedd Free Library librarian for many years.

Washington Old Home Days, 1870-2010 Official Programs and newspaper clippings.

Washington NH Bicentennial 1976 and Old Home Day 1980 Principally black and white and color photographs with inserted notes on loose sheets. In Fragile photo book.

A Photographic Tour of the Bell Tower at the Washington Town House On the occasion of Old Home Days August 7, 1999. Color photographs with explanatory captions.

Washington Old Home Days 1995 All color photographs. With loose pages of penciled notes.

A Christmas Stroll Dec. 5, 1992 A ledger book containing 256 handwritten names, towns, and ticket numbers. Ledger wrapped in red paper: 1995 A Washington Christmas Stroll Remembered, The Washington Historical Society presents A Christmas Stroll of Historic Homes in Washington, New Hampshire through slides narrated by Dorothy Thompson, Mon-day, July 17, 1995, Camp Morgan.

1992 A Washington Christmas Stroll Saturday December 5th 10A.M. till 4 P.M. This book is given to the Washington Historical Society by Dorothy Thompson, photos by Donald McCulloch and Pat Bray. Principally color photographs documenting the exteriors and decorated interiors of many historic homes. Some have accompanying texts offering more details of their history. In 2 volumes.

Washington Events 1992-1997 Many color photographs with a few bearing identifying captions. A few programs and newspaper clippings.

Miss Margaret Hoyt by Gwen Gaskell Margaret Hoyt (1887-19??) was a beloved teacher for 4 years at the Washington Center School. The binder contains 29 transcribed journal entries by Miss Hoyt. They were found in the home of the Hoffords on Faxon Hill Road. Miss Hoyt had lived there earlier. Binder cover has a 1952 black and white photograph of Miss Hoyt and her students taken by Haydn Pearson at the Center School, all identified by the caption. A number of journal entries appear in the Jager's 'Portrait of a Hill Town.

Lovewell New Hampshire: a [radio] Play in Three Acts by James Hofford. July 29 & 30 @ 8 pm Camp Morgan Lodge by Millen Pond, Washington, NH: Celebrating the 2010 Old Home Days. Binder contains scripts of the play, rehearsal-production schedule, theme summary for acts, original program with color cover, and, inserted in a pocket, a complete cast recording of original live performance on a CD.

Hurd Family A scrapbook format of the history, acquisition, and the archive of 40 manuscript diaries of Clara May Hurd in Washington, NH, 1872-1911. Mostly photographs, with some genealogy as well as official documents. Includes a copy of the Swann Gallery auction catalog of Printed & Manuscript Americana, March 18, 2010, lot 172.

Report from the Treasurer

Washington native, Jean Crane (Kenny) died in January in Los Altos, California. She was the daughter of Frances and Pearley Crane. She was predeceased by her siblings, Clayton, Alice, Myrtle, Mabel, Glendon, Doris, Robert, Mildred and Donald. Jean was a lover of the Granite State and particularly Washington. Contributions in honor of Jean were directed to the Washington NH Historical Society. We have received many. One substantial contribution was sent with appreciation for the years of service she provided to her homeowner association. We are grateful.

Elaine Crandall



The Town of Washington was featured in several episodes of Fritz Wetherbee's New Hampshire Chronicle segments on WMUR TV. The Historical Society has added a new webpage that allows easy access to watch these segments and others going back to 2014. Enjoy!

<https://www.wnhhs.org/news>

The WNHHS has openings for volunteers in many areas. One important position has been recently vacated; our yard trimmer, who did a great job for us, has moved and a replacement would be most appreciated. The job is "as needed" and the volunteer can set their own times.

A Postcard in the WNHHS collection

Copied from a WNHHS FaceBook post by Bill Mulcahy

The humble picture post card. Holder of clues to unlocking any number of historical mysteries. Unsung hero to research historians everywhere.

This wonderful example (dated 1906) comes from our amazing Stephen Crane collection of Washington memorabilia, and provides an illustrated answer to that often asked question: Where was Melvin Hixon's general store and post office in East Washington located?

Hixon's store gives us a good lesson on how quickly local history can be lost if it isn't preserved or recorded. The building itself was only removed from its home of over a century in the early 2000's. Well within the living memory of many.

The store was shoehorned into a wedge of land adjacent to the shore of the Mill Pond, at the junction where Bradford Road joins East Washington Road.

As you can see, it sat right at the edge of the road. Despite the addition of asphalt, that intersection remains little changed today. The photographer's camera is set in the middle of Bradford Road. Purlingbeck Grange, not shown, is to the photographer's immediate right. East Washington Road (coming from Eccardt Farm) also comes in from the right, passes in front of the store, and continues on around the "S" curve towards Hillsborough. To the left of the photo, you can see the entrance to the dirt driveway that still winds its way up to the Baptist Church and peaceful East Washington Cemetery today.

Passing by this area now, there is nothing left to remind us of Hixon's store. The next time you are there, paused at the East Washington Road stop sign, look over to your right and remember this picture. You will likely still find it hard to believe that a thriving business and important community gathering place once stood there—but now you know that it did.



Washington Historical Society
PO Box 90
Washington, NH 03280

ANNUAL MEMEBERSHIP LEVELS have changed. If you are already a member, you will receive a notice to renew in the mail or via email. If you would like to join, you can join on-line and pay by credit card or visit the museum.

Donations can be made on-line using a credit card or by check to WNHHS, PO Box 90, Washington, NH 03280.

PLEASE NOTE: As a non-profit historical society, we qualify with many companies for matching grants provided the company you work for or are retired from, supports such benefits.

Please accept my donation of \$ _____ to help WNNHHS continue its work.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____