

Washington Historical Society Newsletter
 WWW.WNHHS.ORG
 SPRING 2021 EDITION

Washington Historical Society Officers

President:	Bill Mulcahy
Vice President:	Bert Bodnar
Treasurer:	Elaine Crandall
Secretary:	Marian Baker
Archivist:	Gwen Gaskell
Board of Directors:	Susan Fairchild Steve Yusko
Webmaster:	Phil Budne
Barn Committee:	Phil Barker Volunteers needed
Museum Committee:	Gwen Gaskell Volunteers needed
Newsletter Committee:	Barbara Gaskell Gwen Gaskell Contributors welcome
Program Committee:	Susan Fairchild Steve Yusko

President's Message

Spring is a hopeful season. The temperature starts its upward climb, the snow and ice begin to melt away from the hills, valleys and ponds, and the crocus, tulips and forsythia emerge from their winter sleep to cheer us with their joyful colors.

This year the rollout of multiple COVID-19 vaccines is a new and welcome element of Spring hope – the hope for a steady transition back to a freer, more social way of life, filled with renewed interactions with our family, friends and neighbors.

With this in mind, we too have been preparing for a new and better year. We are again offering you an extended schedule of meetings, from January through November, and Susan Fairchild and Steve Yusko have booked a wonderful slate of speakers for your enjoyment. These are currently planned as Zoom meetings, but one or more could be changed to an in-person event ***if conditions improve enough for us to do so safely***. We will continue to keep a close eye on things and will notify you of any changes.

We also plan to offer some level of visiting hours for the Barn Museum and District #5 Schoolhouse during July and August, ***keeping mask and social distancing requirements in place***. We have not yet made any decision about opening our Museum & Archives building -- where maintaining the safety of both our volunteers and more fragile collections continue to be of primary concern.

Our very successful “open-air” Gift Shop will be returning to the Saturday Farmer’s Market on the Common and, we will also be making a special appearance at the Women of Washington “Spring Fling” on Saturday, May 1, at 72 Old Marlow Road in Washington. Please come on by to say hello - and check out our ***beautiful new tote bags***, embroidered with colorful images of either the iconic Washington Bandstand or the WHS sign – your choice!

I continue to welcome you to reach out to me at any time by sending an email to bill.mulcahy@wnhhs.org, and I look forward to seeing you at one of our coming events, or around town this summer. In the meantime, stay safe and stay well!

Bill Mulcahy



Do you recognize this beautiful maple tree at the beginning of Faxon Hill Road? According to the diary of Alice May Hurd, daughter of Clara Hurd, it was struck by lightning on June 29, 1920. If you look closely, you can still see the scar left by the lightning strike so many years ago.

Unfortunately, Eversource has marked it to be taken down due to safety concerns.

Interesting Tidbit from History

When the library was started in 1869 all of the books were covered with brown paper to protect them. This practice continued until August 28, 1920 when "covers" were removed from library books.

A Mystery at the Farmers Market?

We have all heard the saying that one person's "junk" is another person's "treasure". This past year of Covid and being shut in away from others has lead many of us to cleaning out cupboards, closets and even attics or storage spaces. If you are like me, you probably have a few items that, while you don't want them anymore, they are too good to discard. Instead of taking these "White Elephants" to the "Mall" at the Transfer Station, consider donating them to the Historical Society.

Our idea is to hold a special and on-going fund raiser to be a part of the Washington Historical Society space at the Farmers Market each Saturday. There will be just a couple of items picked each week and displayed on our table. You would have to visit our space to see what the "mystery" items are for the day. If you like what you see, leave a bid on the item. Other visitors to our table may leave a higher bid, but you may return as often as you want to increase your bid if you wish. At a specified time, the highest bid wins the item.

Competition could get exciting over some items with people coming back several times to make sure they have the winning bid. It will be fun to see the friendly competition and to make some money for the Historical Society.

If you have something to donate, you can leave it at Gwen Gaskell's home at 3 Faxon Hill Road. Gwen is usually home, but if she's not, leave your items in front of the garage door.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT New Merchandise

The Washington Historical Society is excited to announce that we now have tote bags for sale. This is a large, 14 x 18 x 6 inch tote made of white 10 oz. cotton canvas. It has two 28 inch handles and features pleat accents at the front and back of the bag. It opens to a large main compartment and has two large side pockets that are not as deep as the main bag. It's large enough to be a handy carry-all for visiting the Farmers Market, going to the beach, or carrying crafts.

There are two designs available. One has the WHS sign embroidered on it and has black trim and handles. The other has the Band Stand embroidered on it and features red trim and handles.



The 1941 Fire

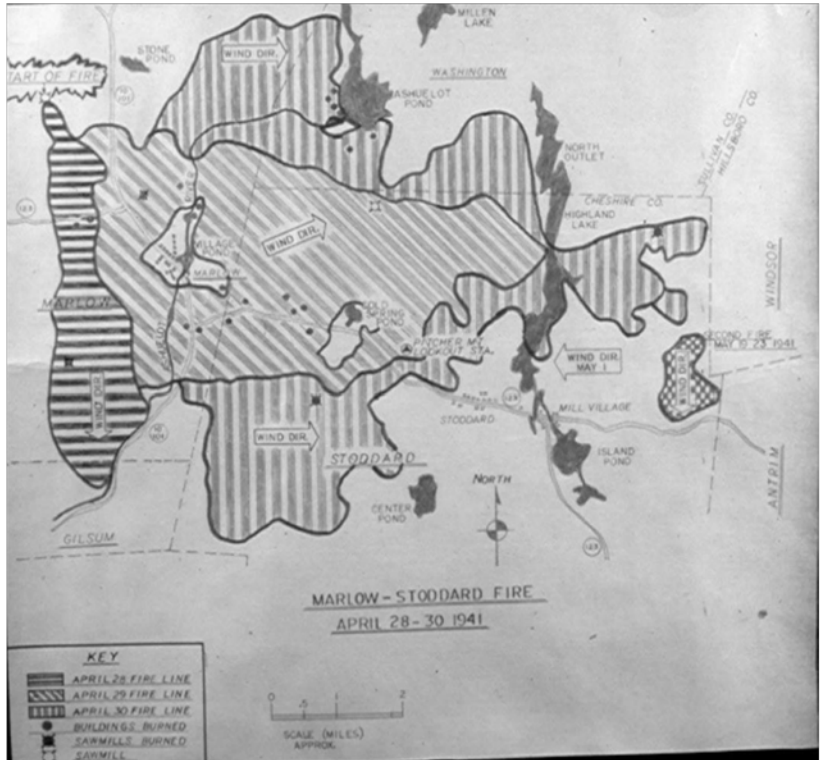
The 1941 Marlow-Stoddard forest fire started at Potwin's portable saw mill near Gustin Pond at 3.20 PM on April 28. The crew was there to take advantage of the opportunity created by the Hurricane of '38.

Due to the unusually hot weather, the Waukesha engine developed "vapor lock" which caused it to ignite. The situation got out of hand quickly.

As shown on this map, prepared by Marlow resident Bill Plotts, the fire spread south. Within the next four hours, the flames would travel nearly six miles into the neighboring town of Gilsum.

In Washington, Abner Barker (father of Gwen Gaskell) was fire chief. On April 30, almost a thousand fire fighters were in Washington alone as the warm wind blew the fire toward the village.

Finally, on May 1 the fire was under control as rain fell that night, followed by snow. 23,350 acres, 17 farms and summer camps, two portable sawmills and the Pitcher Mountain fire tower and cabin had all burned in the fire.



Excerpts from the Hurd diaries.

Thurs. June 30, 1892 A heavy thunder shower, the lightning striking the library and shattering the cupola- tearing off the slates from the roof- we are grateful no greater damage was done.

1908 Bessie Willey Cram had been bitten by a rabid dog and went to NY for rabies treatment.

1911 Will Stammers, Oscar Onella & Mr. Carley are replacing sills and the planking at the Hurd barn. (Now owned by Dave & Monica Wood. It is currently for sale.)

1912 Sept. Men are working on "May Hill" to make State Road. Elgin Wright has purchased the Hiram Hoyt place. (The house & barn across from the fire station.)

1916 Rev. Sargent has been here for the summer and is liked very much. Very devoted to the teacher Violet Vail.

1917 Germans are sinking ships "wholesale". I do wish the war would close.

Programs for the Washington Historical Society 2021

All meetings are currently via Zoom – subject to change

All meetings begin at 7pm Eastern, except July and August, which start at 6:30 pm

Any changes to times or venues will be posted on wnhhs.org and announced through member email

Visit wnhhs.org for fuller detail on each presentation

April 12 Zoom Meeting: The Connecticut: New England's Great River

Author/conservationist Adair Mulligan leads a tour of this great river's journey through New Hampshire and Vermont, exploring its history, natural beauty, and the management of the health of this major river and the vision for its future.

May 10 Zoom Meeting: New Hampshire on High: Historic and Unusual Weathervanes of the Granite State

Historian/author Glen Knoblock offers a fun look at historic & unusual weathervanes on New Hampshire's churches, town halls, & public buildings from earliest times to the present. Glenn will trace their history, practical use and symbolism.

June 14 Zoom Meeting: Family, Memories, Places, writing workshop

Writer/poet Muara MacNeil leads an interactive workshop exploring how the landscapes of our lives shape the stories that we tell. Participants will explore themes of family, memory, & place through sample narratives & short writing exercises.

July 12 Zoom Meeting:

6:30 – Pre election WHS Business Meeting

7:00 – Fierce Females: Women in Art

Following a 30-minute WHS business meeting, Art Historian Jane Oneail examines the history of women in art in brief and then explores the lives, careers & works of several major women artists from the Renaissance to the 20th century.

August 9 Zoom Meeting:

6:30 – WHS annual business meeting and election of officers and Board members

7:30 -- The History of Agriculture as Told by Barns

Following a 30-minute business meeting, author/historian John Potter explains how barn styles evolved to handle the increased productivity required to meet the needs of a growing population & changes in society caused by the railroad and the Industrial Revolution.

September 13 Zoom Meeting: Program to be announced

October 11 Zoom Meeting: Program to be announced

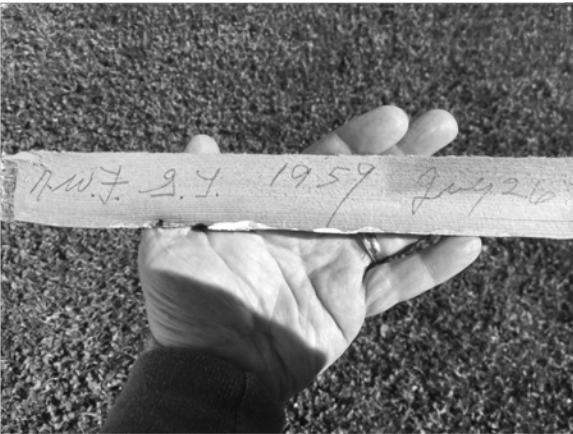
November 8 Zoom Meeting: Our National Thanksgiving: With Thanks to President Lincoln and Mrs. Hale

Sharon Wood portrays Sarah Josepha Hale and Steve Wood portrays President Abraham Lincoln in a living history presentation. Sarah, a Newport, NH native, tells the story of her 30-year effort to have Thanksgiving declared a national holiday. President Abraham Lincoln enters at the end of her tale to read his 1863 Thanksgiving proclamation.

The Old Center Schoolhouse

The past two summers have seen work progressing on the rehabilitation of the Old Center Schoolhouse on the Town Common. First, the building was lifted and a full basement was poured to replace the old crawl space and rocks that held the building up. Then, last summer, we watched as new clapboards were installed and the roof was resingled. With continuing good weather, the building was also painted.

As part of replacing the clapboards on the back of the building, the old fire escape door was removed. While removing the door, a wedge was found which had been inscribed with initials and a date. With a little research, it was learned that the date of July 26, 1959 referred to when the door had been installed. The initials were verified to be the men who installed the door; Norman W. Fletcher, father of Janice Philbrick and George Tewksbury, father of Mary Krygeris. Both women were pleased to verify the initials and an old Town Report had additional information about the 1959 work on the Old Center Schoolhouse.



MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOL PLANT:

Repairs and Replacements	
Norman Fletcher—Painting, Floor Seal, Materials and Labor	513.35
Hillsboro Lumber Co.—Screening, etc.	7.73
Pioneer Off. Appl. Co.—Cl'g Duplicator	2.25
Yeaton & Maine—Cleaning Well	25.00
Silsby & Johnson—Furnace, Pump, Toilet	87.82
E. H. Edwards & Co.—Oil Tank Base	54.99
Wilton Lumber Co.—Door Hinges	8.32
A. Stanley Drew—Toilet Seat	3.79
Total Maintenance of School Plant	\$ 703.25

The inscribed wedge is now a part of the Historical Society's collection. This account in the Town Report shows the Town's ongoing commitment to maintaining the Old Center School.

The Board of Directors of The Washington Historical Society offers our thanks to our President Bill for all the time and effort he has put in this winter on getting the new web site set up and running. We hope to have it accessible by June 1st.

Bill also tracked down the company that makes our afghans that have been so popular. The company we had used changed hands, but we have managed to place an order with the new company and we will have afghans again this summer at the same price.

Bill also found the company that made our new tote bags. He then developed the designs embroidered on the tote bags.

All of these things take time. Again, Thank You, Bill.

Another HUGE Thank You to Phil Budne for providing us with a web site and taking care of it for us for so many years. You have been an invaluable member and friend of the Society over many years.

ITEMS FOR SALE

FEATURING FAVORITE LANDMARKS OF WASHINGTON, NH

To order contact: Elaine Crandall (603) 495-3416 or ecrandall@verizon.net

Gwen Gaskell (603) 495-3231 or jimgwen@gsinet.net

History of Washington. Original reprint. \$20.00

Portrait of a Hill Town. \$15.00

History Package. \$40.00 Includes the *History*, *Portrait* and *Sacred Deposit* as well as a colored picture

Afghan. \$45.00 *Temporarily out of stock.* Featuring scenes of Washington woven into a beautiful memento of our town. It is green on an off white background.

Sketch of the Common by Ronna Safford Kowal—Large \$35.00, Medium \$25.00

Trivet. \$5.00 A 6” x 6” ceramic trivet or tile, suitable for hot or cold, with a leather backing, featuring a color photograph of the three steepled buildings in the center of town. Gift boxed.

Postcards and Notecards of Gustine Hurd Images. \$0.50 each / \$5.00 per set. Two photographs taken in the early 1880’s by Gustine Hurd have been turned into postcards and notecards. The single fold notecards are packaged in sets of 4 with envelopes. Two notecards of each picture or four of one picture.

Glass Medallion. \$5.00 This 3” medallion depicts the Town Hall. The picture is adapted from an early 1880’s wet plate photograph taken by Gustine Hurd. Available in blue or green.

Booklet *History of Camp Morgan.* \$25.00 A compilation of information from multiple sources brought together in one place outlining the history of Camp Morgan from it’s earliest days to the present.

New Walking Tour of Washington Center booklet. \$5.00

New Mugs \$5.00 each. Choose the iconic Town Common buildings or the East Washington SchoolHouse #5.

New Apron. \$17.00. Our wonderful new butcher style apron carries an image of 3 antique eggbeaters surrounded with text “You can’t beat can’t beat the history in Washington, NH.” It’s made of a 7.5-oz, 55.45 cotton/polyester blend and measures 34”x28.” One size fits most.

New Tote Bag. \$20.00. This spacious tote bag is beautifully embroidered with a choice of 2 colorful images -- either the Washington Bandstand or the WHS sign. Made of 10-oz cotton canvas, it has two side pockets, 28” handles, and measures 14”x18”x6”.



All items can be shipped for an additional charge. Call or email Elaine Crandall or Gwen Gaskell at the contact info above to ascertain the amount required. It will be in the range of \$4 to \$10 per package, depending on what is being shipped and your zip code.

Washington Historical Society
PO Box 90
Washington, NH 03280

ANNUAL MEMEBERSHIP DUES are \$10 for an individual and \$15 for a family (including children under 16). For those who would like to contribute more to help us cover our expenses, we have a sustaining membership for \$25. The membership year is August 1 through July 31. We appreciate your continued interest and support of our projects. New members are always welcome. If you would like to join us as a member, please complete the form below and send to THE WASHINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PO BOX 90, WASHINGTON, NH 03280. If you know of someone who might be interested in our newsletter, please let us know or pass this one on to them.

Name: _____

Participating family names: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone # Winter _____ Summer _____ Cell _____

Email: _____

Membership level: \$10 Individual _____ \$15 Family _____ \$25 Sustaining _____

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.

Email: washingtonhistoricalsociety@wnhhs.org