

Washington Historical Society Newsletter

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

FALL 2012 EDITION

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President's Message.

As we wrap up another successful year I look back on our activities and accomplishments. In the short term we have been active in the creation of the Meetinghouse documentary. The sales have been outstanding; beyond everyone's dreams. We have already had to reorder more copies as the original 200 went quickly. They make wonderful gifts by the way. Tom's photographic eye for the cover photo has made the difference, making the entire project stand out prominently. We are indebted to Carolyn Russell, too for her outstanding work. We have donated one thousand dollars to the Meetinghouse Fund, and two hundred to the Humanities Council from the proceeds of the DVD.

In August the WHS participated in the Meetinghouse celebration with displays and exhibits.

Our special Thanks go out to Tom Talpey for holding down the treasurer's job for 17 years. If he had held on for 3 more years he could have retired with a full WHS pension! Elaine Crandall has volunteered to take on the job of Treasurer. And Vivian Hunter will be retiring from her seat on the Board of Directors.

I'd like to thank Jim G. for doing a good job of mowing the museum grounds this summer and for being on call for Barn duty.

Richard and Rachel C. were steadfast hosts at the barn this summer and have my heartfelt thanks. All of the various hosts at the museums are thanked too. We could not function without these dedicated volunteers.

This summer we 'accidentally' hosted the quarterly meeting of the NH Old Graveyard Assoc. at the SDA Church. Gwen and I handled that function with information on our cemeteries and with a tour of the Old Cemetery. Refreshments were supplied by other members also.

In October we hosted the Monadnock Historical Society's Forum, which consisted of 19 members of the Historical Societies of Cheshire County. Gwen and I have been attending some of their recent quarterly meetings and find them worthwhile for networking and interaction.

The daunting task connected to Clara's diaries, although completely transcribed, continues to be worked on. "Clara" has been appearing in other circles, telling interested folks about her life here in Washington a century ago. The Program Committee provided us with a delightful mix of very well attended programs.

And of course I want to thank the meeting attendees and our members and other supporters for their continued interest in the Washington Historical Society.

I'd like to thank also Phil Budne for his past work with our website and announce that we have a new webmaster and he has been busy moving material, updating and adding information. We will soon be ready to announce the new site.

In the long term, in our thirty years of existence we have formed the first Historical Society for Washington. We started with a vision and nothing more. We have collected, cataloged, preserved, and displayed so many items that we now maintain three museum buildings. Remember the phrase "if you build it they will come"? Well we did, and they did. People tend to hold on to things for posterity, until there is a place that will keep it for posterity, and that is us, the Washington Historical Society. The donations of material things continue to come in. And everything is educational for young and old; the way it should be.

One thing that I have pondered over the years is why there weren't more natives interested in the Society, but upon reflection, possibly fifty percent of the natives are involved, all three of us!

In closing I would like to pray for every one of you to have a very safe, healthy, and happy winter, and a Blessed Holiday season. I look forward to seeing you in 2013 with energy and ideas to share with us.

God Bless you all.

Phil Barker

The Chickering Piano

article by Gwen Gaskell
photo by Jim Gaskell

An antique Chickering piano was recently given to the Historical Society by David and Monica Wood, the present owners of the former home of Clara M. Hurd and later her granddaughter, Jeanette Hurd Meier. The serial number on this piano indicates that it was made 1835-1840 by the Chickering Co. Boston MA.

Jonas Chickering was born in Mason, New Hampshire, in 1798. In his teenage years he was an apprentice to a cabinetmaker in New Ipswich who, in 1817, accepted the job of restoring a "square grand" piano. The cabinet was restored but not the instrument, which had suffered the ravages of time and a trip across the ocean from England. Jonas was enthralled by the piano and was able to restore its health. That experience turned his direction in life to one of research and experimentation building pianos.



- Jonas moved to Boston at the age of 20 to work with John Osborn, a piano builder who built the first upright piano in Boston. In 1823 he left Osborn and joined James Stewart, starting the Stewart & Chickering Co. on Tremont St. in Boston. Before long Stewart decided to return to Europe, and thus began the Chickering Piano Co.
- Chickering's first piano is in the Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI.
- Chickering's fame spread as he built more pianos. In 1830 built his first upright piano, with his own improvements but styled after English instruments.
- Also in 1830 he entered into partnership with John McKay, a sea captain who made frequent trips to South America, taking Chickering pianos to sell and bringing back fine rosewood and mahogany to craft into piano cases. In 1841 MacKay disappeared at sea in a tropical storm. Chickering & MacKay went back to just Chickering.
- In 1837 Jonas developed the full iron plate, bringing in tuning stability. Then, in 1845 he developed over strung construction and with these 2 improvements the modern piano was born.
- In 1851 Jonas Chickering was given the highest award at the first International Exposition. This was one of over 200 awards Chickering received over the years.
- During this time Jonas married and had 3 sons who learned the piano building business with their father. When he died in December 1853 at 55 years of age, the sons took over the business.
- Sons Thomas, Frank & George took a piano to Rome to the home of Franz Liszt and soon other artists were giving praise to Chickering & Sons pianos.
- In 1896 the last of the brothers died and the business floundered until 1903 when it became part of the American Piano Co.
- Eventually the Chickering name became Wurlitzer, then Baldwin who now owns the Chickering name, but by 1908 had ceased production of all Chickering pianos.

Now, we all know that where there is a piano, almost always, music is needed and in Boston the piano and music companies were next-door neighbors. In 1840 Oliver Ditson was 23 years of age and was working to develop a music store. Musical culture in America was then in its infancy. In 1844 Ditson moved to larger quarters and the next year hired a lad of 15, as "boy of all-work" for \$1.50 per week. The boy was John C. Haynes and he so proved his worth that on his 21st birthday in 1850 he was made a participant in the profits of the store and in 1857 was made a business partner of Oliver Ditson & Co. In 1864, P.J. Healy & G.W. Lyon were established in Chicago by the capital of Oliver Ditson & Co. They became the honored name of Lyon & Healy. John Haynes had a branch called Bay State Guitar Co. that made guitars called "Pullmann" that are rare now. In Dec. of 1888 Oliver Ditson passed away. He was known as the pioneer of music publishing in America. The surviving partners, John C. Haynes, son Charles Ditson and executors of the estate, organized with Mr. Haynes as president.

Mr. Haynes, being a very wealthy man, needed a secretary and so sometime before 1880 hired Fred O. Hurd, the son of Shubael and Clara May Hurd, of Washington. In 1881 Fred married his boss's daughter, Jennie, and they built a lovely home in Wellington MA. Fred remained the private secretary to Mr. Haynes until May of 1907 when Mr. Haynes died. After Mr. Haynes' death Fred took care of the business of Mrs. Haynes until her passing. Fred's wife Jennie passed away in 1897.

It was mentioned in Clara's Diaries occasionally that someone "played for singing" but the piano was not specifically mentioned. It could be that it had been part of the home before she kept a diary, or, it could have been Jennie's piano and was moved to Washington when the family gave up the Wellington home. I guess we may never know, as those who may have been able to tell us have "crossed the river."

In the spring our piano will need to be tuned and we are looking for a tuner. If you know of someone, please let us know. We want the piano ready for guests to play when they come to the museum next summer.

An East Washington Storekeeper's Daughter, A Civil War General and the Duncan-Jenkins Trust

by Tom Talpey

Among the visitors in Washington during the 225th Anniversary Celebration of the Meetinghouse was Nancy Grandin, accompanied by her husband, Joseph Campolietta, and their daughter Kate. Nancy is the Great Great Granddaughter of Julia A. Jones and Samuel Augustus Duncan, who were married in the East Washington Baptist Church on Christmas Day in 1867. Their first child, Frederick Smyth Duncan, was born in East Washington the following year and Nancy is descended from him. (Nancy still owns the "christening dress" used for that child and Kate was baptized in it!)

Through the courtesy of one of our members, Ron Roy, Sexton of the church, I joined Nancy and her family on a tour of the family grounds, the church and the cemetery. The house in which Julia grew up was located along the road below the East Washington Baptist Church. Her father, Solomon E. Jones, was prominent in Washington affairs and the well liked proprietor of a store nearby. The house itself had burned in 1913 and all that remains today is the gate to the property, still maintained by the present owner, however, as a memorial of the spot. In a letter preserved by the Duncan descendants, the Washington Fire Chief stated that "all that remained after the fire was the bath-tub!" The actual church in which the couple was married had also burned down, in April of 1877, less than 10 years after their marriage. The church building was rebuilt the year after, however, and we were able to stand on a spot inside the present church, which must be very close if not identical to the spot on which the ceremony took place! Samuel volunteered near the outbreak of the Civil War and went on to play an important role in the War when President Abraham Lincoln commissioned him as Colonel in command of the 4th US Colored Infantry. He was brevetted as a Major General for his meritorious service when discharged. He went on to become a founding partner in a prestigious patent law firm in New York City.



Nancy Grandin and her daughter beside the Duncan gate. East Washington Baptist Church is in the background.

In the cemetery we had more success. The gravestone of Julia's parents, Solomon E. and Harriet S. Jones, still stands in a prominent place in the graveyard and we were easily able to locate that! The accompanying picture shows Nancy, her husband and their daughter, fifth and sixth generation descendants of Solomon and Harriet, standing in the pouring rain next to their ancestors' grave.



The connection to the Duncan-Jenkins Trust is a bit more complicated. Julia's and Samuel's fourth child was named Alice B. Duncan. In 1904 she married MacGregor Jenkins, who became a prominent lecturer, author and publisher of the Atlantic Monthly magazine. They had two daughters, Julia D. and Sarah E. (Sally), neither of whom married. The daughters lived for many years in East Washington, in a house which had been purchased by Julia as a summer home, next door to the one which had burned.

*The original Duncan House
in East Washington.*

*Photograph from an
8 x 10 glass plate negative
taken by Manahan.*

*Courtesy of
Hillsborough Historical Society
M-P-M Collection.*



After Sally died in 2000, the Duncan-Jenkins Trust was created and endowed by her last will and testament. The purpose of the trust is to benefit the schools, staff and graduates of Washington and Hillsboro-Deering School districts by adding enrichment above and beyond what taxpayers are expected to finance.

The career of General Samuel Duncan in the Civil War and his life-long romance with and marriage to Julia Jones has been documented in two recent books.

A Regiment of Slaves, The 4th U.S. Colored Infantry, by Edward G. Longacre, published in 2003 by Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, and

Our War, Days and Events in the Fight for the Union, by Mike Pride, published in 2012 by the Monitor Publishing Co., Concord, NH..

Upcoming Historical Society Programs

Mike Pride, author of *Our War, Days and Events in the Fight for the Union*, will be the speaker at our monthly meeting in June 2013. Other programs for next year include Jack Noon, with a program entitled Cannon Shenanigans and NH's Muster Day Tradition in July and Steve Taylor, speaking on the Romance and Reality of NH's One Room Rural Schools in August.


Next Summer in the Museum

The displays in the Washington Historical Society Museum change every year and next summer we will feature "Organizations in Washington" over the years (Past & Present). If you have suggestions or memorabilia that we could use in a display, please contact us.

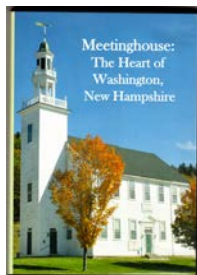
Gwen Gaskell at 495-3231, or jimgwen@gsinet.net

ITEMS FOR SALE
FEATURING FAVORITE LANDMARKS OF
WASHINGTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Please order by mail, or call: Elaine Crandall (603) 495-3416, ecrandall@verizon.net
 Tom Talpey (603) 495-3284, ttalpey@gsinet.net
 Gwen Gaskell (603) 495-3231 jimgwen@gsinet.net

ITEM DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Tote Bag. This custom designed tapestry tote bag depicts the much photographed buildings on our Town Common. Tapestry woven in an array of beautiful colors, it measures a generous 17 1/2 inches square. Long 25 inch handles are easy on the shoulders. Lined, with inside pocket.	\$30.00
Pillow. Featuring the East Washington Baptist Church, the pillow is covered in tapestry woven in an array of beautiful colors. It measures a generous 16" x 16" and is offered with hunter green backing.	\$25.00
Puzzle. Our 494-piece, 14" x 19" puzzle is an aerial photograph of the Washington town center by Bill St. Pierre. A limited edition collectible.	\$5.00
Mug. White ceramic mug with sketch of the three steepled buildings in the center of Town. They are 11 ounce and can be used in the microwave and dishwasher. White mugs with black print.	\$5.00
Trivet. 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.	\$15.00
Gustine Hurd Images Postcards Two postcards have been generated, using copies of very old photographs taken in the early 1880s by Gustine Hurd. Also available as single fold notecards packaged in sets of four, including envelopes. Two of each or all four of the same image. Both the postcards and the folded notecards are 5 1/2 x 4 1/4 inches.	50¢ each \$5.00 per set
 Glass Medallion – Suitable for a window hanging, depicting the Town Hall. Adapted from an early 1880s wet plate photograph made by Gustine L. Hurd. These 3 inch diameter medallions are available in Blue or Green.	\$5.00 each

DVD Available



Meetinghouse: The Heart of Washington, New Hampshire

Few structures say “New England” as eloquently as does a classic eighteenth century Meetinghouse. The small hill town of Washington, New Hampshire, claims such a Meetinghouse. Erected on the 4th of July, 1787, it is still the heart of the town. In this film the town opens its heart to the world. It displays 225 years of affectionate, sometimes contentious, interplay between generations of Washington citizens and the Meetinghouse on the Town Common.

\$20 per DVD Shipping is: \$3 for one DVD plus \$2 for each additional.

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

This photo essay is dedicated to Carolyn Russell and her team of well over 100 volunteers who conceived of and produced the celebration and the outstanding meetinghouse video.

225th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION Washington Meetinghouse August 11, 2012 www.washingtonnh.org

*Town Crier
Jim Hofford
and wife Ellen*



*Selected photos contributed by
Andrea Bailey, Bert Bodnar,
Charley Eastman, Fran Greene,
Sue and Bob Hofstetter,
Brett Kellerman, Leslie Lewis,
Michael Pon, Monica Scanlan,
Hunter Vanaria & Sally Watters.*



The stage curtain in the auditorium



*Tour guide Ron Jager in
the rafters*



*Annie Bissonnette
ringing the bell*



View from the belfry



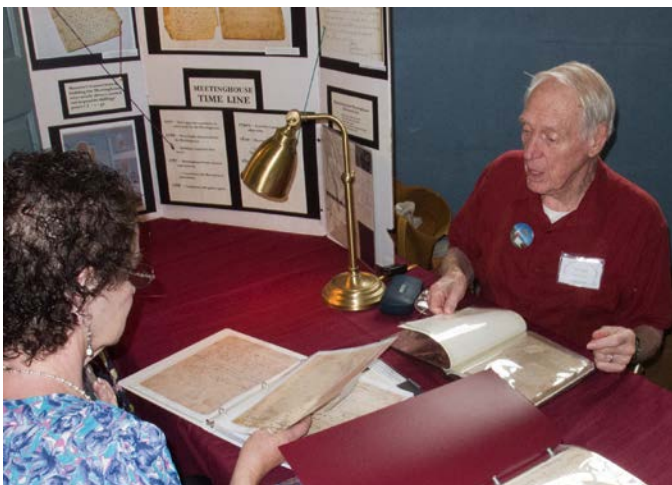
*The way it was done
when the
Meetinghouse
was built.*

Phil Barker prepares the lumber.

Blacksmith Gary LaRose.



“Captain” Richard Brockway & Ellen Hofford



*Tom Talpey & daughter Sarah
looking at old records*





*Joan Phipps
sold her produce.*

A bountiful harvest



*Gwen Gaskell
demonstrating spinning*



*Cookie Lady
Dale Moser*



*Arline France
demonstrating rug hooking*



Becky Denslow and her jams





The quilts on display at the church



June Manning & Dale Moser enjoying the ice cream social

Selectman Guy Eaton thanking Carolyn Russell for her hard work



The Jager Brothers



The church choir.

At the Movie Premier

Senator Bob Odell.



Washington Historical Society Officers

President:	Phil Barker (495-3640)	⋮	Barn Committee:	Phil Barker Richard Crane, advisory
Vice President:	Jack Sheehy (495-3066)		Museum Committee:	Vivian Hunter Charlotte Treadwell Gwen Gaskell
Treasurer:	Elaine Crandall (495-3416)		Newsletter Committee:	Gwen Gaskell Tom Talpey Barbara Gaskell Betty Talpey
Secretary:	Volunteer Needed		Program/Publicity Committee:	Jack Sheehy Jim Crandall
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Board of Directors	Bob Evans (495-1060) Jim Crandall (495-3416) Tom Talpey (495-3284)			
Auditor:	Charlie Fields			
Webmaster:	Brett Kellerman			

Email: washingtonhistoricalsociety@hotmail.com

Yes, we have an email address and would like to hear from you about any issue that you feel concerns the Washington Historical Society. We are always open to suggestions for programs that would be of interest for future meetings or things that would enhance our purposes.

Also, we would like your email address so that we might send notices of upcoming programs or events. We are considering sending future newsletters by email to make things easier and less expensive for us and quicker for you. The best way for us to get your accurate address would be for you to send us an email, Thanks for doing so.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES are \$5 for an individual and \$10 for a family (including children under 16). The membership year is August 1, 2012 through July 31, 2013. If you haven't sent us a payment since last June, your membership may have lapsed. In that case there will be a reminder note slipped into this newsletter; if our records are not correct please let us know. 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, P.O. Box 90, Washington, N.H., 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: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone No. Winter: _____ Summer: _____

Email _____

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.



Enjoying activities at the Meetinghouse Birthday Celebration

