



Washington Historical Society Newsletter

WWW.WNHHS.ORG

SPRING 2020 EDITION

Washington Historical Society Officers

President:	Bert Bodnar
Vice President:	
Treasurer:	Elaine Crandall
Secretary:	Marian Baker
Archivist:	Gwen Gaskell
Board of Directors:	Susan Fairchild Bill Mulcahy
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 Bill Mulcahy

President's Message

I hope everyone has enjoyed a safe, happy, & healthy winter and is ready for an exciting year of some excellent programs thanks to Susan Fairchild and Bill Mulcahy. A list of the programs with their dates is printed in this newsletter.

One of them is a presentation at our September meeting on stage curtains and will take place upstairs in the town hall. Depending on when the state releases funds for a Moose Plate Grant and providing we obtain one for cleaning the town's curtain, we may get to see a newly cleaned curtain or get to hear how it will be cleaned. Although the cleaning will be supervised by an expert, we may be looking for a few hands to help in the process. And if anyone has some experience writing grant applications or would like to gain some experience, our expert will guide us through the process.

The inside of the town pound was cleared out last summer and we are hoping that some more of the exterior will be cleared away to show off the walls. Eventually, a new sign will be posted in front of it.

Last fall, a couple of painters that the town contacted to get an estimate for painting the top of the town hall also looked at the WHS barn trim & museum windows. We should be getting an estimate this spring and hopefully have them painted before the upcoming Old Home Days, which will be celebrated July 31 and August 1 & 2. If you have an idea or suggestion for our society's participation, please tell a board member, or better yet, come to our April 13 meeting to let us know.

Last year, we failed to have our annual pot roast fund raiser dinner, and we are looking for suggestions, and volunteers, to replace it with another fund raiser.

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President's Message, continued

I hope to see many of you at our pot luck suppers and meetings. I also hope that you will visit the society's museums and schoolhouse this summer. If you'd like to know more about them, the best way is to volunteer to host at them. They are open on Saturdays with a 2-hour shift in the morning and another in the afternoon. The School is only two hours in the afternoon 1-3 PM.

Looking forward to seeing you,

Bert Bodner

In Memoriam—Rachel Crane

On Saturday evening, February 22, 2020 our dear friend Rachel Crane passed on to join her husband Richard. Rachel provided the material and wove the pretty red and white check curtains in our barn kitchen. She helped with cleaning and hosting for as long as she was able. We will miss her ready smile and friendship.

What has been and is Happening at the Museum

By Gwen Gaskell

The first thing I want to mention is the addition of our two new board members. Susan Fairchild and Bill Mulcahy are “eager beavers” ready and willing to dig in and be helpful. Bill has spent the winter reading back issues of our newsletters and making an index. Working with Phil Budne who has been our web master for many years, Phil has always been helpful in putting newsletters and information on line for people to find. He has volunteered and used his own website for which we, as a society are very grateful. THANK YOU PHIL. I for one have no idea how all of that works but it is wonderful to have Bill and Phil working together and they have developed a special site for us. Great job.

Susan took the letters from Russia, from Clara Morey to her Mother, Maria Newman (Clara Hurd's sister) to finish transcribing. Clara's husband was sent to Russia by GE to help with reconstruction after the war. These letters have lots of information and are an interesting read in a notebook, which will be available at the reading table in the museum this summer.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of our friend Steve Crain from Maine last year. He enjoyed visiting us at least once each summer and shared post card pictures with us, telling us that he was going to give us his collection when his time came. Yesterday his son Geoff and daughter Michelle, came with gifts for our museum. Not just an album but 5 big boxes of memorabilia of our town! It will be like Christmas when it warms up enough, even with the heat, to have a helper with a lap top to type up the list as we explore the boxes of treasures. Lots of acquisition work to be done! I am certain of an interesting display this summer as well as featuring a special section of past Old Home Day items. This proves the advantage I have of writing the last article for the Newsletter, last minute items.

I hope you will come to the April meeting where we will have a discussion of the new “Self Guided Tour of Washington Homes”. This will NOT be invading anyone's property or home, strictly a walk by, street view informative walk, or drive, of history and past or present owners with a few items of interest included. Letters have been sent out to the property owners to be included in the tour.

Don't forget to mark the dates for Old Home days on your calendars, and also please remember our pie sale on the 4th of July.

PROGRAMS FOR WASHINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2020

Meeting monthly, April through October at Camp Morgan Lodge

Pot Luck Supper 6:00 - 6:30 pm

Business Meeting 6:30 - 7:00 pm

Program 7:00-8:00

April 13 First meeting of 2020

May 11 Stories, Stones and Superstitions

Presented by Roxie Zwicker, who will speak about decoding the symbolism on ancient headstones, stone carvers, superstitions and funeral rites and rituals through the ages. She is familiar with our Washington area cemeteries and local images and examples will be included in her presentation.

June 8 The History of Agriculture as Told by Barns *This is a NH Humanities Program*

Presented by John C Porter, author of Preserving Old Barns, will demonstrate how barns represent Yankee ingenuity, hard work, and skilled craftsmanship, as well as providing a look to our past that adds to the states scenic beauty.

July 4 Pie Sale at Annual Flea Market on the Common 9-12 (or sell out)

Homemade doughnuts & hot coffee also.

July 13 Granite State Gallery: New Hampshire Art and Artists Through the Years *A NH Humanities program*

Presented by Jane Oneail. NH has attracted and inspired artists since the colonial era. What is distinctive about the art made here?

A special exhibit of work by local area artists is also planned.

July 31—August 2 Old Home Days Celebration

August 10 Jennie Powers: The Woman Who Dares *This is a NH Humanities program*

Presented by Jenna Carroll. This 1 hour illustrated presentation introduces us to Jennies life story, the work of humane societies at the turn of the 20th century and the politics of the Progressive Era (1890-1920) from a local perspective.

New Hampshire is celebrating the 100th anniversary of woman's suffrage this month

Sept. 14 A History of Stage Curtains

Presented by Chris Hadsel—this presentation will include the historic stage curtain in the upper hall of the Washington Meeting House.

****Please note that this meeting will be held in the upper hall at the Meeting House and not at Camp Morgan Lodge****

Oct 12 Final Meeting of 2020

Museum & Barn Hours: July & August, Saturdays 10 am- 2 pm or by appointment any time.
Call Gwen Gaskell at 495-3231

District #5 School Hours: July & August, Saturdays 1 - 3 pm or by appointment any time.
Call Gwen Gaskell at 495-3231

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

Afghan. \$45.00 Featuring scenes of Washington woven into a beautiful memento of our town. It is available in green or blue on an off white background.

Puzzle. \$5.00 Our 494 piece, 14" x 19" puzzle is an aerial photograph of the Washington town center by Bill St. Pierre. A limited edition collectible

Trivet. \$15.00 A 6" x 6" ceramic trivet or tile, suitable for hot or cold, with a leather backing, featuring a color photograph of the three steeped 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.

DVD. \$20.00 *Meetinghouse: The Heart of Washington, NH.* Few structures say "New England" as eloquently as does a classic eighteenth century meetinghouse. The small hill town of Washington, NH 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.

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.

In my article in the Spring 2003 issue of this Newsletter, I stated that I had not been able to find documentation of a toll gate in the town of Washington. I have since found there may, indeed, have been one within the present town bounds. During the survey work in preparation for the enlargement of the Fire Station on Lempster Mountain Road, one of the Selectmen pointed out to me a small plot edged by boulders along the road in the large parking lot west of the new addition. This plot has all the characteristics of a similar plot, known to be a toll gate in the town of Francestown, opposite the Gibson Tavern (pictured in my original article).

In an effort to confirm that the Washington plot was indeed a toll station; and knowing that the Turnpike Corporation was required to submit reports every ten years to the Superior Court; the Selectman and I spent the better part of a day at the New Hampshire Archives in Concord searching for a copy of one of these reports. It turns out that records of the Superior Court from the early years of the 1800s have NOT been indexed, so this turned out to be a rather tedious process! There are twenty-something large boxes of these records in the State Archives, with each case report on a small sheet, rolled up and tied with a ribbon! We were able to get through only TWO of the 20-plus boxes and quickly decided that this was not going to be an easy task. We did, however, come across a toll gatherer's report for a station on the Goshen Turnpike, which gave us confirmation that we were looking in the right place. But with more than 20 boxes still to be searched through, we decided to abandon the task, leaving it for some future searcher, should they want to finish the job. AND, there is the possibility that the plot which was on the survey map was planned but NEVER activated and that a report was therefore never made to the Superior Court.

The plot in question is still there, with its stone wall enclosure, overgrown with trees, and can be seen in the parking lot along the side of Lempster Mountain Road. However, it is now part of the property of the house across the street and as such is on PRIVATE PROPERTY and is due the SAME respect as any private property in town. It can be viewed from the parking lot, but should not be entered without the permission of the owner. As a matter of interest, this property was once the childhood home of a rather prominent Washington man, Carroll Davidson Wright, who was appointed by President Chester Arthur and approved by President Grover Cleveland, as the first U. S. Commissioner of Labor, which has evolved today as the equivalent to the federal Secretary of Labor. An abbreviated biography of him appeared in the Fall/Winter2011 issue of our Washington, NH, Newsletter.

We have a New Address for our Website

By Bill Mulcahy

Our new address is www.wnhhs.org, and you can begin using it right away! For our members convenience, the old address will continue to work for some time to come, but it will eventually go away. We recommend that you switch any saved "favorites" over to the new address soon!!

We are extremely proud of our WHS website! It was created by Phil Budne, who also serves as Webmaster. Phil has hosted and maintained our site for many years without charge - a generous and ongoing contribution to the WHS and all our members. On our website you will find: The hours of operation for our Museum, Barn, and District #5 Schoolhouse facilities; Our calendar of upcoming meetings, special programs and activities; Information on becoming a WHS member; and access to valuable online resources, such as a History of Washington NH and the Washington NH Historical Society, Indexes containing the names of people buried in the various local area cemeteries, and perhaps most importantly, our archive of WHS Newsletters.

Over 40 issues of the WHS newsletter are currently available, dating back to Spring 1998. At the WHS, our goal is to not only preserve local Washington history, but to make that history as easily accessible to you as possible. History that is not readily available to those seeking it is at risk of being forgotten, even lost. To this end, Phil has added a great new option to our site – the ability to search **All** of our content with a single entry! You may access our new site search in one of two ways...

By clicking the **[Search the WHS Web Site](#)** link on our homepage

By clicking the **[Old newsletters, with subject index](#)** on our homepage, and then clicking on the **[Subject Index](#)** link and entering your search criteria in the **[Search the Washington Historical Society Web Site](#)** search box at the top of the screen.

To help you get the most out of the new site search functionality, we have added a deeper explanation about how it works, using real search examples, directly to the **[Search the WHS Web Site](#)** page.

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@hotmail.com