

NEWSLETTER



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per-am-bu-la-tion (from the Latin, “by means of walking”)

According to a 2010 article by Christopher J. Porter in the newsletter of the New Hampshire Municipal Association, the practice of perambulation dates back to 1651 and the laws of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and before that to England where parishes held “Rogation Day” to walk and check on the integrity of parish boundaries. Holderness perambulation reports list some dates scribed on boundary monuments back to before the Civil War. Local land surveyor Tom Stepp has written about some of his perambulation experiences in the following article.

Town Line Perambulations, Misconceptions, & Modern Surprises

For a little background information, let’s start with a quiz! TRUE or FALSE? (and no peeking below!)

1. In New Hampshire perambulation of town lines is an archaic practice which hasn’t been required by law since 1880.
2. These days all NH town boundaries have been accurately located to modern surveying standards.
3. Holderness town lines have not changed since Ashland broke away in 1868.
4. Modern hand-held GPS units (like Garmin or Magellan) are usually accurate within 5 or 10 feet.

So, how did you do? Actually, all the answers are false!

1. New Hampshire RSA 51:2 still requires that both state and town lines “be perambulated and marks and bounds renewed, once every seven years forever.”
2. Not remotely close! While portions of many town lines have been accurately surveyed, other sections have not been surveyed to standards acceptable even 100 years ago!
3. Actually, the southern boundary of Holderness in common with Center Harbor changed in 2013 as a result of my 2012 field work and perambulation report.
4. The off-the-shelf GPS units like Garmin or Magellan are truly modern marvels and useful tools. However, while they are occasionally accurate to within 5 feet or so, they can also be in error by 200 or 300 feet!

I became involved with perambulation of Holderness town lines in 2010 when I volunteered to be the Holderness representative to check on the lines and corners between our town and Center Harbor. A few months later Walter Johnson asked me if I was willing to be the primary contractor. Not having a clue about the can of worms that awaited me, I said “yes.” After 30 years of working as a land surveyor, one of the aspects of the job which I found to be the most fun was tromping through the woods looking for field evidence---granite monuments or pipes, axe blazes, stone walls, old wire fence, etc. That I would be seeking and documenting stone monuments with scribed dates well back into the 1800s made it all the more interesting.

So join me now as we “walk” clockwise along the Holderness/Center Harbor town lines as I found them. Most perambulations these days are limited to members of two town Selectboards getting together and traveling to the monumented corners, often next to town roads. I wanted to stay true to the intent of the RSA, so except for portions of the Holderness/Center Harbor line in the lake, I walked and took measurements, notes, and photos along the entire town line. While following along it will probably be helpful to refer

Continued, page 2

Continued from page 1

to the adjoining map which shows the eight corners common to the two towns. **Corner #1** is very wet because this northernmost point of Center Harbor is in Squam Lake where it is about 30 feet deep. Brad Washburn, the mountaineer, photographer, surveyor, and cartographer who created the Squam Lake Chart called this four town convergence "Otter Junction" because it is located about 840 feet southwest of the Otter Islands. The town line heads through the lake at about S 7 degrees E to **Corner #2**, an obscure ring of stones near the north shore of Long Island. I should explain here that most town lines and monumented corners are at least somewhat described in previous perambulation reports, but those reports vary widely in detail. I had the benefit of some very good descriptions and sketches done over a 21-year period of perambulation work by Robert Woodward of Laconia. The eastern line of Holderness then heads east of Moon and Bowman Islands, bisects Great Island, and continues to a stone-and-concrete tower built in 1965 by Brad Washburn's survey crew (**Corner #3**) on a spit of land in the southwest corner of the lake. It then heads up to College Road where there is a beautiful granite post (**Corner #4**) with over a dozen years of perambulations chiseled into the stone. From there the line follows some stone walls, diagonally crosses Route 3, goes near an old mill site on Swainey Brook,

and heads down to the southeast corner of Holderness described in two of Robert Woodward's reports as a stone "submerged in a swamp"---Great! That will be a fun one to find! I got my feet wet getting there, but fortunately beaver activity had lowered the water level and the 10"x15"x15" rounded boulder scribed "H", "C," and "1808" at **Corner #5** was not itself under water. From there the common town line does a 90 degree bend, crosses 1000 feet of swamp, and continues at about S 82 degrees W with a few stone wall sections up to a scribed stone (**Corner #6**) on the west side of McCrillis Hill Road. From there west it got very interesting. Corners 5 through 8 define the south line of Holderness and theoretically the four stone monuments form the straight line that has

Corner #4 at
College Road
RRdRoad

appeared on maps since the 1800s. I did record GPS coordinates at all the corners despite the potential error in those measurements noted above. I also had a very good idea what my surveyor's compass should read for a bearing. Heading west from McCrillis Hill Road, I was following a beautiful 1200 foot long stone wall shown on a survey map by local surveyor Peter Hodges as being along the town line. The only problem was that the bearing was off by about 6 degrees so the wall was veering off to the south. Further field evidence showed that a good portion of the 1.1 mile section between McCrillis Hill Road and **Corner #7** at Hawkins Pond Road had a "sag" to the south of as much as 200 feet! At least that was the conclusion corroborated by deed and survey map research. As perambulator, it was not my job to tell the towns where the true town line should be ; I was

"1808" and "H"
Scribes on Corner #5
in swamp

merely reporting what I found in the field and I certainly was not expecting to find evidence which would result in the first change in the Holderness town lines since Ashland broke away in 1868! After a public hearing the members of the two Select boards got together to decide between the straight line boundary vs. the "sag." Wisely they chose to avoid an adversarial relationship and agreed to the location supported by many years of deeds and survey work---the "sag." The straight line choice would have resulted in several large parcels of land which have always been in Holderness suddenly having "back-land" slivers in Center Harbor. The agreement was sent to the NH Secretary of State who passed it on to the State Archives.

To finish our "walk" from **Corner #7** by the Merrill Cemetery on Hawkins Pond Road, the common town line continues generally west for about 4000 feet to the magnificent pyramid-shaped 5 1/2 -foot-tall granite post at the four-town convergence of Holderness, Center Harbor, New Hampton, and Ashland. My field work was complete after I chiseled/scribed "2012" in all the stone corner monuments.



Corner #8 at Four-town
Convergence

So, are perambulations an unnecessary relic of the past, or do they still have a place in the administration of town business? Many towns have ignored the dictates of the law because there is no penalty for noncompliance. In a 2010 article by Brian Burford, who is the records manager for the NH Division of Archives and Records Management, he says that "In the last five years...a town asked the legislature to abolish the requirement to perambulate, asserting that the town line disputes were so long ago settled that there was no longer a need to walk the lines. The very next year, this same town brought a bill before the legislature to settle a boundary with a neighboring town."

Note: A copy of the complete 2012 Holderness/Center Harbor Perambulation Report is available at the Holderness Free Library. Arrangements can also be made for a digital copy.

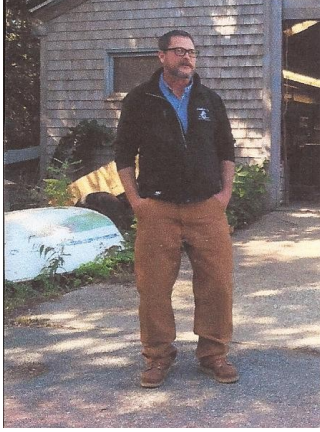
Tom Stepp

Scribe detail on Corner #8



Local Man Helps Preserve History

It was a surprise on a recent visit to Plimoth Plantation to discover that our own Whit Perry and his son, Dylan, are



working there. After several years on the Chesapeake and other coastal locations, including Jamestown, VA, Whit is now director of Maritime Preservation and Operations. He is in charge of the restoration of the Mayflower II. His son Dylan is one of his assistants. His early mentors were Louie Francesco, Bo Perkins and especially his uncle Dave Closson w

with whom he sailed a Lightning and boated on *The Puffin*. Whit started his career with the restoration of an Old Town Canoe. Before his move south, he started Owl Brook Boatworks to build and restore wooden boats.

Fran Taylor

Treasurer's Report

This summer we finished exterior work, replacing corner boards, a rotten window frame and the west portico as well as staining sides and rear of the building. With last year's work on the front facade and the windows inside and out, we have spent nearly \$6000 on maintenance. We have been told our 21 year old roof will need to be replaced in the near future. Doug Ross' PRHS woodshop class built us a new flower box and Earl and Lynn Hansen provided the pretty flowers. We hope you appreciate our spruced up appearance. There was a successful fund drive for the Summer Celebration. All monies go to the fireworks or are retained for future Celebrations. None goes to our operating account.

M. Mason



Summer Celebration

The historical society joined with the Town to have a celebration of summer with music and fireworks. On September 4th the celebration was thoroughly enjoyed by all. We thank those of you who supported the celebration with contributions. We are planning to keep the tradition going with another Summer Celebration next year.

The President's Corner

This summer, partnered with the Holderness Library, we presented four well-attended programs. We are now working on the schedule for 2016 programs, which will be listed in the spring newsletter.

This summer the museum had a special exhibit of steamboats and the Asquam Transportation Company.

We continue cataloging our books and pamphlets in our research/library area to make researching families, cemeteries, camps, and other historical events and places simpler. You can always check our website for programs, exhibits, museum hours, etc.

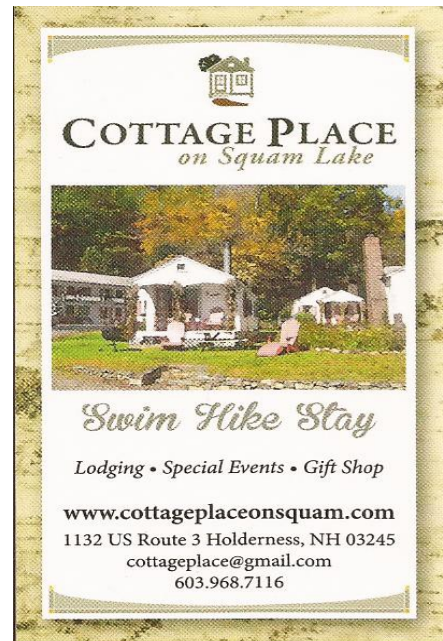
Your continued support by way of membership dues and contributions helps preserve our town's history and maintain our building. If you have not yet renewed your membership, please use the enclosed envelope to do so. We hope that more of our members will become more active in the historical society. We always welcome your ideas, help, and suggestions. Please contact me, or any other member of the board, if you can help or for more information.

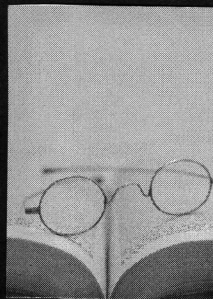
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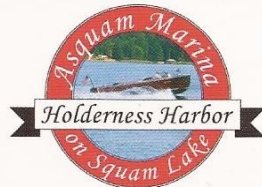
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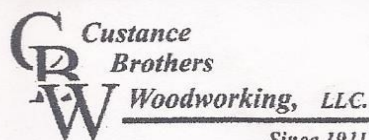
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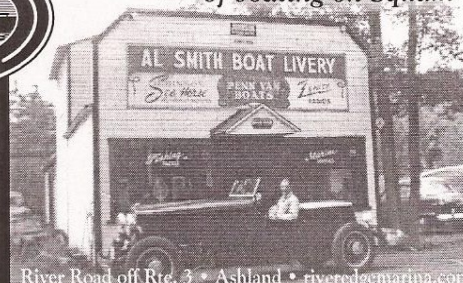
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Holderness Dugout

Work continues for returning to Holderness a Native dugout canoe discovered in Squam Lake in 1939 by three fisherman. Briefly displayed in Tilton (where one fisherman was from), then moved to the Shelburne Museum in Vermont, it has been in climate-controlled storage ever since. We would like to have it back.

Dugouts date back thousands of years to a time when Abenaki and other Native Americans inhabited the shore of Squam, especially along both sides of the river between the two lakes.

Native remains have been discovered on the grounds of the Science Center, along the sidewalk to The Golden Pond Store and behind the post office. In fact, it seems that every time there is digging done in Holderness Village such early remains surface.



The dugout pictured here is at Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, MA.

Tink Taylor

If anyone has an interesting, historical story that you would like to see printed in our newsletter, please let us know.

Flowers on the Bridge

We are pleased that you enjoyed the flowers on the bridge. We appreciate all the nice compliments.



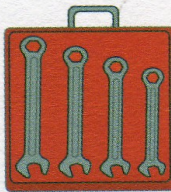
The water system has been drained and the boxes have been covered for the winter. Spring will bring new flowers to enjoy, but donations are always needed. Checks can be made out to the Holderness Historical Society with *Flowers on the Bridge* on the memo line.

Thank You!!

Liz Greason & Cynthia Murray

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Membership Report

It is time to renew your membership! Your support is much appreciated and it enables your society to preserve the history of Holderness as well as present historical programs.

The yearly membership fee is \$15.00 (individual)

\$25.00 (family)

Thank You!

Cynthia Murray

In Memoriam

Joyce Rogers passed away October 10, 2015. She was a long time supportive member of the Holderness Historical Society, faithfully attending meetings and programs.

Joyce was always willing to help out with refreshments, selling goodies at concerts, collecting money for newsletter ads, helping with the newsletter, helping to clean the building and working in the museum.

She served as a director and was the secretary. She organized the activities for Old Home Day. For many years Joyce helped to audit the treasurer's books.

Joyce was a good friend and will be dearly missed.

Gifts and Loans to the Historical Society

Peg Winton has given additional news clips as well as a Holdernes School newspaper from 1951. Bill and Nancy Dailey have also provided news clips and a map of Squam Lake. Woodie Laverack provided copies of letters his teenaged great-uncle George Sabine wrote home during his visits to Toll and Pres Piper in the early 1900s. Peter Thompson gave Asquam Hotel key fobs and assorted pictures and postcards of Squam in the 30s. Gene Ross gave a framed picture of the town center in the early 1900s. Jerrod Mitchell, who loan his steamboat collection for our exhibit last summer, has given an old photo of the *Mt. Washington* before the 1939 fire. Our thanks to them and to John Echlin, Kent Smith, David Thompson and Sue and Peter Francesco for lending items to the steamboat exhibit.

The Whitten House

The Whitten House, originally located on Highland St., is the home of farmer Reuben Whitten, New Holderness citizen who succeeded in raising 40 bushels of wheat in 1816, "the year without a summer," sharing this precious food with his New Holderness neighbors, thus avoiding general famine in the community. To celebrate the bicentennial of this event, the Ashland Historical Society is raising funds for restoration.

Built circa 1800, this house has remained remarkably intact with original woodworking, plastering and historical architecture. The building was relocated in the 1870s near what is now the Packard ball field to be used as mill worker housing until the 1960s. In 1969 it was donated to the Ashland Historical Society and moved to its current location behind the Whipple House Museum.

The Ashland Historical Society raised \$10,000 in 2014 and has rebuilt a damaged wall with original and period lumber and installed a new cedar shake roof and ridge boards. They are currently raising the second \$10,000 to restore/replace the clapboards, window sashes, panes and frames and replace the modern door with a period correct 6 panel door.

As part of the celebration, the Ashland Historical Society will hold an 'Ice Cream Social' on June 5th, the first killing frost of 1816, and harvest a small wheat field adjacent to the Whitten House for an August 2016 Whitten Wheat Festival and "Stone Soup" to commemorate Whitten's generosity and legacy.

The Ashland Historical Society will gratefully accept donations to The Whitten House Fund, PO Box 175, Ashland, NH 03217. See web address for more information www.reubenwhitten.com.

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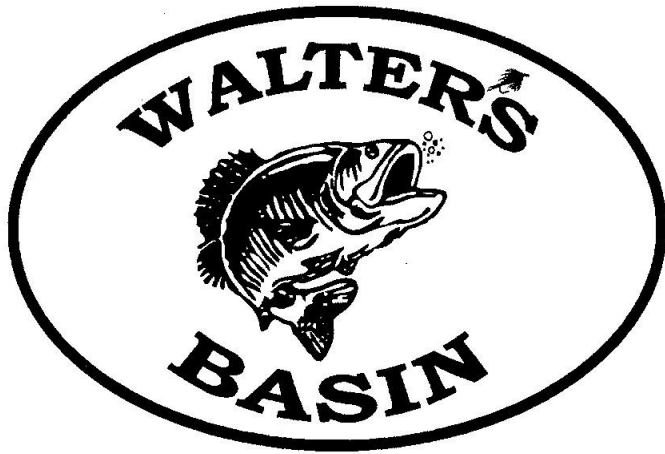
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The ice harvest at Rockywold-Deephaven Camps to gather ice for ice boxes used in summer is a long-time local tradition. It takes place sometime between mid-January and mid-February. Decision on the date is made just a few days ahead. Anyone interested in watching is invited to attend from the second day on. Missy Mason will keep tabs on the date for any historical society members who want to see the process. Call 968-3334 if interested. Prepare to dress warmly and stay back!



Correction

****** An astute reader noticed that we mistakenly listed Camp Algonquin as the predecessor of Camp Deerwood in our article about steamboat stops. In fact, it was Camp Asquam.

Prescription for Joy:

Smile, Breathe Deeply, Relax,
Enjoy, Be at Peace, Trust, Be
Trustworthy, Bend, Plant a
Geranium, Stick it in your Hat,
Have Patience, Love Yourself,
Love Others, Sing and Dance,
Make Music, Slow Down, Stay
Balanced, Laugh Heartily, Have
Compassion, Skip, Count Your
Blessings, Bless Others, Have Fun,
Read a Good Book, Write Your
Story, Nourish your Body, Mind
and Spirit, Twirl, Stretch,
Experiment, Learn a Lesson, Grow
and Change, Be aware of your
Thoughts, Have Good Ones,
Choose Happiness, Smell the
Flowers, Be of Service, Give a
Gift, Be a Blessing, Really See,
Listen, Feel, Touch, Snuggle, Be
Still, Hum, Appreciate Solitude,
Commune with God, Walk in
Nature, Live in the Moment,
Giggle, Release Judgments, Let
Go, Move Forward, Touch, Hug,
Be with a Child, Be a Child, Be
Adventurous, Take a Chance, Be
Happy, Grin, Embrace your
Journey, Have a Vision, Be a
Friend, Make a Friend, Stay in
Touch, Celebrate, Whistle, Be
Grateful, Cherish Life.

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Liv-Slo



On Saturday, July 18th, John Echlin, captain and owner of the Liv-Slo docked his steamboat at the Squam Boat Livery Courtesy dock in the Channel for two hours. This gave people a chance to get to see a steamboat up close. Thank You John for giving people the opportunity get a close look at the Liv-Slo!

Town Plan Historical and Cultural Resources Chapter

After nearly two years of research, discussion and public input, a committee headed by Betsy Whitmore and assisted by town land use assistant Colleen Hannon, saw its chapter adopted by the Planning Commission at its regular August meeting. The chapter will be part of the new Town Plan and can be read on the Town website. Other committee members were Alicia Abbott, Barbara Fahey, Peter Francesco, Woodie Laverack, Missy Mason, Larry Spencer, Bob Tuveson and Kathy Weymouth.