

NEWSLETTER



Holderness Historical Society

Summer 2015

Volume XXX

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HAPPY
SUMMER

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Steamboats on Squam Lakes

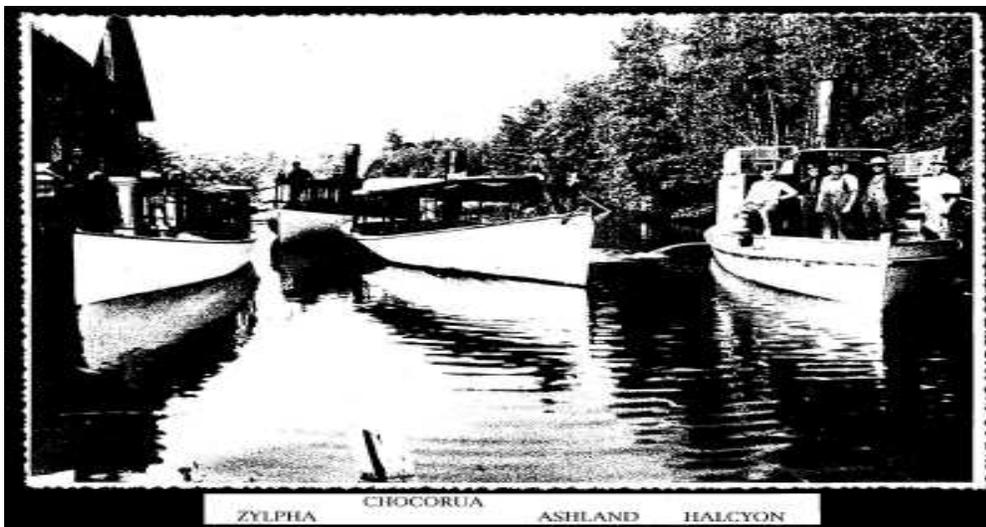
Steamboats first appeared on the Squam Lakes in Sandwich where “Phon” Smith eventually had four freight boats at Sandwich Landing starting in the 1890s. He delivered ice and other freight around the lakes and to Crams Landing on Moultonboro Bay in Center Harbor. In Ashland, Frank Kimball had two boats, the Ashland and the Ossipee in the late 1890s as well.

In the Fall of 1901, a group of Ashland businessmen and summer camp owners from around the lake, reacting to the possibility of an electric railway being built to connect Ashland to Sandwich, incorporated as the Asquam Transportation Company with the intention of carrying freight and passengers around the lakes. The 1904 ledger shows interest payments to the Ashland Savings Bank as well as Geo. Hibbard, F.G. Webster, H.J. Coolidge and J.H. Coit, Jr. A longer 1908 list of shareholders has Dr. J.M. Cheney, Ora Brown and Elizabeth Hughes of Ashland as well as names of some well known summer visitors: Coit, Coolidge, Webster, Metcalf, Rollins, Cochran, Slade, Merriman, Longfellow, Sawyer, Huntington and Dunn.

The company met trains at the Ashland Railroad Station to pick up passengers and freight. Horse-drawn wagons, replaced in 1909 by a gas powered vehicle, delivered them to the terminal on River Street just east of the dam. The company maintained stations at Squam Bridge as well as Sandwich Landing. Guests of the many hotels, boarding houses and camps now had a much smoother, faster ride to their destinations.

The company got off to a fast start by purchasing the 40’ Ashland and the Ossipee from Frank Kimball. The coal-fired 45’ Chocorua built on Lake Winnepesaukee was launched on Dog Cove. When the USPS granted a rural delivery route in 1902, it was the first official mailboat. (See *Asquam Lake R.P.O. Badge* by Tink Taylor on insert) In 1904 former President Grover Cleveland and his family toured on the boat and attended services on Chocorua Island. The 1905 Time Card shows that the boat made regular stops for passengers at 45 camps on the western half of the lakes from Sherwood Forest to Mouse Island.

The 50’ Halcyon was built in 1903 by the Fifiields in their Ashland workshop. It made stops at the big hotels to pick up “excursionists” for lake tours as well as stopping at camps around the eastern half of the lake including Camp Algonquin (now Deerwood), Long Island, Rockywold, Deephaven, Camp Hale and Harvard Point. An excursion around the lake on the regular schedule could be had for 75 cents. According to the Time Card, it was the fastest boat on the lake with a “roomy” lower deck and “no smoke or cinders.” Its upper deck could accommodate 20 passengers once past Squam Bridge.



Continued, page 2

The President's Corner

Teaming with the Holderness Library we will be presenting four programs this year, which you can find listed on a separate page of the Newsletter. We look forward to seeing you in attendance at these programs.

Our special exhibit this summer will be **Steamboat on Squam** and the **Asquam Transportation Company**. If you have any photos of steamboats on Squam that you would be willing to share we would be happy to include all contributions in our exhibit. We can scan the originals and return them to you.

An ongoing project is a collection of pictures and stories of Holderness historic buildings. Does your home or building have a story? Please share it with us. If you have any information that you would be willing to contribute to this collection, it would be most welcome and will serve to preserve our town's history and give it perspective. We are completing the work of cataloging all of our books and pamphlets to make research simpler. Our library area allows people to research families, cemeteries, camps, historical events, and places. Our documentary is another project still in the works. You can view a preview of the documentary and memorabilia of Holderness 250th in the museum on Saturdays this summer.

Thank you for your continued support by way of membership dues and contributions. If you have not renewed your membership for 2015, please use the enclosed envelope to do so. Please join us this year. Your ideas, suggestions, and help will be enthusiastically welcomed, particularly on the Publicity, Museum Docents and Curators, and Program assistants committees. We are a small group of active members and we could use some help. Please contact me or any other board member if you can help or for more information.

Linda Foerderer

FPLinda@aol.com (603) 968-7487 mid April to November 1 or (561) 279-9720 November to mid April.



Continued from page 1

Boats also ferried passengers to Chocorua ("Church") Island for Sunday services. The Venture was gas-powered and docked at the Mt. Livermore landing. "She will do party work and can be hired by the day, hour or for any specified day during the season," according to the Time Card. The Ashland newspaper is full of stories of local groups and their summer excursions.

Both the bridge across the Squam River at the end of Little Squam and the bridge in the center of Holderness were raised three feet in 1903. Even so, the new boats had smokestacks that were hinged to lay flat for passage under the bridges. Julius Smith who worked on the boats after 1914 recalled it taking about four bushels of coal to make the round trip.

Asquam Transportation had several other boats and barges. Mandalay, once an ocean-going steamer, was purchased from "Phon" Smith. The 32' Zilpha appears in the ledgers in 1914. The Kusumpe was built at the Eastman Saw Mill in Ashland and used to haul freight.

The ledgers show a substantial payroll. Many local men worked for the company. His biographer says that George Hoyt Whipple, future medical researcher and Nobel Prize winner in 1934, worked on the boats while he was in college.

Despite doing a booming business in the early 1900s, Asquam Transportation saw less and less traffic as roads improved and numbers of automobiles increased. Just as the company itself bought a 25-passenger "automobile" in 1909 to carry people and goods to its terminal, the Asquam House and Central House Hotels purchased 12-passenger vehicles. The company began leasing and selling off its assets. After 1917 it dealt only in freight and switched its focus to lumber in particular. A former shareholder, Harris Metcalf, owned the Ashland terminal building when snow collapsed the roof badly damaging several boats in 1917. The Nellie J which carried mail and Smith Piper groceries in the 20s was first leased and then sold to R. Tolford Piper.

It has been reported that some of the boats burned and some were sunk in Little Squam. Asquam Transportation Company reorganized as Ashland Lumber Company and was dissolved in the 1930s.

Many of us have enjoyed seeing steamboats on the lake or at the September Lees Mills steamboat gathering (September 4-13 in 2015). Today owners use them for pleasure. The late Lou Francesco, best known of recent steamboat captains, bought a boat named Halcyon on Newfound Lake in the late 70s and converted it from gas to steam. That boat has been sold and will soon be sailing in Vermont. The Rumhound, built on Winnepesaukee in 1898, was on Squam for many years and now sails Long Island Sound. Only the Liv Slo and the Pelican remain to give us a glimpse of the past.



Louis Francesco's Steamboat, the Halcyon, 10/18/2011

This article uses newspaper articles gathered by David Ruell, Ashland historian, the Ashland Centennial Program, interviews with Peter Francesco and John Echlin, mailboat research by Tink Taylor as reported in the Sandwich Historical Society 83rd Annual Excursion booklet (2002) and an article in the 80th publication where Julius Smith described his summer job working for the ATC. Reference was also made to company ledgers in the Holderness Historical Society.

Missy Mason



Summer Celebration

Summer celebration is scheduled to take place on Friday, September 4th with a rain date of Saturday, September 5th. Come enjoy the music and fireworks on Little Squam and celebrate summer!

Treasurer's Report/Building Report

The water is back on and the heat has been turned off so summer has begun! Our members and donors have generously supported us again this year. We did use some of our savings for our window project and painting last summer and will have to use savings to complete exterior work this summer but we certainly want to preserve the building as well as we can. The insurance appraiser has suggested that we consider a new roof when we have the funds. It is not yet leaking but is 22 years old and weather-damaged.

In Memoriam: Bruce Levoy

We remember Bruce Levoy who died in December. He faithfully took care of our flag every day for many years and was pleased to discuss his perspective on Town history.

In Memoriam: Connie Ross

January 22, 2015 we lost a long-time supporter and friend of the Holderness Historical Society - Constance Ann Ross. Connie was a committed member, who with a smile on her face was always willing to jump in and help. You may have seen her elaborate publicity posters or enjoyed some of the quiet ways she went about business, deadheading flowers on the bridge so they would be more beautiful. If you wanted something done you knew you could call Connie, and it would be done well and with great enthusiasm!

A long time member, Connie has been on the board and held offices since 2006, including treasurer, vice-president and secretary. Even when she was sick and in Florida, she continued to play a part.

We appreciate all that Connie did and now miss this special lady, who was fun to work with, and a valuable and dedicated Board Member.

Her obituary is at <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/newszapfl/obituary.aspx?pid=173946913>.

...Meandering down Perkins Lane was a treat.

A **For Sale** sign on what was known as "Musgrove Cottage" was seen.

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From a poem written by Connie & Gene Ross in 1998 entitled "Ross's Retreat"

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Town Plan Historical Resources Chapter

A committee of local citizens chaired by Betsy Whitmore has been meeting for more than a year to formulate a chapter on the town's historic resources for the next Town Plan of Development.

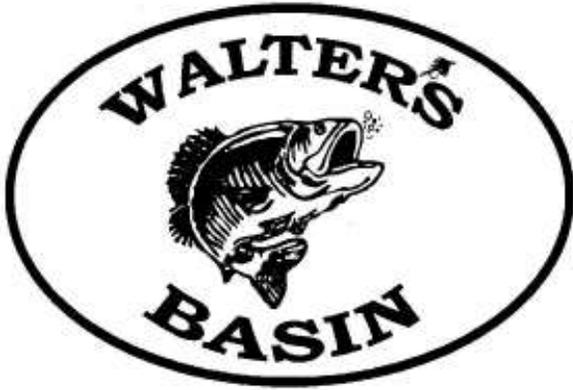
The last such chapter was written in 1984. It led to nominations to the National Register of Historic Places for the Library, the Holderness Inn, the North Holderness Baptist Church (now HHS) and Trinity Chapel. The new draft chapter is available on the Town website and input was solicited at Town Meeting and online. A public open house was held May 12 for input as well. The chapter will be presented at a Planning Board hearing later this year. The committee has formulated some goals for preservation but, should the Board accept the chapter, it will be purely advisory.

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Asquam Lake R.P.O Badge

The United States Postal Service has entrusted to the Holderness Historical Society the Asquam Lake R.P.O. badge worn by the many mailboat clerks dating back to 1902. Through the efforts of 03245 Postmistress, Susan Parenteau, and Tink Taylor, badge # 83213 issued by the transportation service of the Post Office Department, has been formally retired and framed and is now on display in our museum.

R.P.O. stands for Railway Post Office, a service established in 1852 to speed up the sorting and delivery of mail between eastern U.S. cities and St. Joseph, MO, the starting point of the Pony Express. According to the Postal Museum in Washington, D.C. "Railway" eventually came to include mailboat services such as on Squam, Sunapee and (still operating) Winnepesaukee.

On May 19 former Squam Lake mailboat operators met in Sandwich to recall the days that were. Their recollections will be forwarded to the Postal Museum and be made available locally.



Summer Indian Dig at Nielsen's

HHS has paid a fee to the state for our members to participate in an archeological dig that will take place behind Mary Elizabeth Nielsen's home in three sessions.

1st session: June 22 - July 3 Initial opening and laying out of the dig grid.

2nd session: July 6 - 17

3rd session: July 20 - 31 Final excavation.

For more information, please contact Tink Taylor 603-968-3846

Cultural/Scenic Byway Study

Under the U.S. DOT/Federal Highway Administration's Cultural & Scenic Byways Program, Routes 3 and 175 are being inventoried for sites (and sights) that might qualify as historic, cultural and scenic.

If in the future highway improvements or relocations are anticipated, such sites will have to be taken into consideration. In the meantime they will enhance the driving experiences of local motorists and those passing through.

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Many thanks to life member, Peg Winton, for giving us her collection of newspaper clippings regarding Holderness, an essay on "Memories of Mooney Point", and some lapel pins for recipients of the Boston Post Cane. We are not certain who Holderness' oldest citizen is right now. We would be happy to award the cane if someone can tell us the answer and the would-be recipient is willing.

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Having a Gathering?

The Holderness Historical Society Meeting Room is available for gatherings of up to 50 people. There is a fully supplied kitchen and two restrooms. The rental fee varies between \$80 and \$155 depending on the number of guests. Local civic groups may use it without charge. For more information or to reserve, please contact Linda Foerderer 968-7487 or Missy Mason 968-3334.



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Special Exhibit

Our special exhibit in the museum this summer is *Steamboats on Squam and the Asquam Transportation Company*. Richard Mitchell was a steamboat enthusiast. He built and enjoyed his own steamboat, built steamboat models and wrote books and articles about them. His grandson, Jerrod Mitchell, is a Holderness resident who has lent many items from his collection for our steamboat exhibit.



Steamer Halcyon 1903

Photos above taken by Carol L Tilden & John CE Restall

Save the Date

Come see a steamboat close up. John Echlin, skipper of the steamboat *Liv Slo*, will bring his boat to the Squam Boat Courtesy Dock adjoining the Library parking lot on Saturday, **July 18 at 10 AM**. (Raindate is July 19.)

Tink's Notes:

**Livermore Falls

Interest around developing the Livermore Falls Gorge along the Pemigewasset River in Campton, Holderness and Plymouth into a statewide attraction is well underway. Long overdue and often abused, the area has taken on a new priority.

A Friends of the Pemi/Livermore Falls Chapter has been organized, meeting from time to time with local citizens, businesses, abutters and state officials. For now the 41.8 acre reserve is a N.H. state park with plans to protect and develop the sand beach, preserve the historic wrought iron 'Pumpkinseed' bridge and tell the story of all the industry that took place there. Clean-up days and guided tours also occur.

Livermore Falls (once "The Great Falls") is where the King's surveyor, Samuel Lane, in 1750 began his layout of what would become New Holderness. The 36 sq. mile plat he prepared is tied to the falls. In 1769 Moses Little established a series of water-powered mills there: grist, lumber, fulling. In 1774 the first river ferry crossed just above the falls. The year 1788 saw the state's first fish hatchery and in 1812, Arthur Livermore, son of Samuel Livermore, bought out the Little interests.

Fast forward to 1874, following two wooden bridges washed away, came the railroad to Woodstock and on to Lincoln today still skirting the west rim.

By 1886, the iron bridge was under construction with a paper pulp mill in operation there. By the 1960s it was recommended that Holderness recognize such a natural and industrial resource and a decade later the legislature created a study commission with many town residents serving. Two hydro-power dam proposals next and finally a river management protection plan. There is much, much more history. So check out

www.pemigewassetriver/livermorefalls.org.

**Repatriation of Squam's Dugout Canoe

On August 18, 1939 Harold Smith, James King and Horace Wheaton, all of Tilton, in 14 feet of water snagged onto what they thought was a sunken log while fishing on Squam Lake. Once they brought it to the surface they realized it was a boat, an Indian dugout. At 14 feet in length and three feet wide, they exhibited it for a time at a local gas station. It was the custom of local Indians to bury their chiefs in such a boat, sinking it with rocks. The dugout, also known as a logboat or monoxylon, was in remarkable condition considering it might have been thousands of years old but was well preserved under water all that time. The Squam dugout ended up at the Shelburne Museum on Lake Champlain in Vermont. Never exhibited, it is stored in a warehouse. Efforts are presently underway to bring it back to where it was discovered.



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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

A friendly reminder to all members who have not paid this year's dues **NOW** is the time! We do not send out notices and your support is so vital so please take a moment to renew using the enclosed envelope. We would like to thank all of our members who have continued to keep their membership current. Your membership money is important to the financial day to day running of the historical society.

Appreciatively,
Cynthia Murray
Membership Chairman



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FLOWERS ON THE BRIDGE

At long last the warm weather has arrived and it's time to be thinking of planting the boxes on the bridge. This year we have decided to "come out of our box" and do something different!! You will be seeing yellow, red and orange Lantana this year. We think it will be a lovely change and hope you enjoy it.

As always, we thank you for your contributions these past years to help support this project. Any amount, however small, helps to purchase the plants, planting soil and other expenses. A contribution can be made to Holderness Historical Society, PO Box 319, Holderness, NH 03245. In the memo line of your check, please indicate **FLOWERS ON THE BRIDGE**.

Thank you!!

Liz Greason and Cynthia Murray

MUSEUM SUMMER HOURS

The museum will be open on Saturdays from June 27th thru September 5th from 10 AM to 12 noon. Please come visit and explore.

Our special exhibit this year will be Steamboats on Squam and the Asquam Transportation Company.

MAPS FOR SALE

1903 Map of Squam Lake 36" X 31"

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Concord & Montreal Railroad Map of Squam Lake and Vicinity

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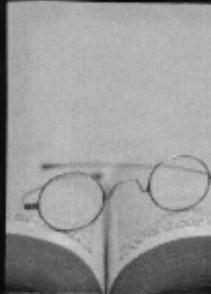


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