

NEWSLETTER



Holderness

Historical Society

Fall 2013

Volume XXVII

2013 OFFICERS

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Wishing You a
Joyous Holiday
Season!

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FIRE!

At the 2013 Town Meeting residents authorized the purchase of a new \$413,000 pumper fire truck. It is hard to believe that until 1932 Holderness did not even have a fire department. Volunteer bucket brigades tried their best to put fires out or at least to keep them from spreading.



(Photo from the postcard collection of Peter Francesco)

We don't have much information about earlier fires but we do know that on September 17, 1906, much of the center of town from the current Walter's Basin site past the Squam Lake Marketplace was wiped out by a fire which set ablaze hay in Mr. Long's barn loft. According to an article in the Plymouth Record, Mr. Long owned a barn, store and house (where Walter's Basin is today) as well as three power boats which were docked behind his place. All were destroyed as were the house, store and barn of N.B. Whitten to the west along with a dozen boats which were rented to tourists. The Holderness Library's books were upstairs at the store and all except the 18 in circulation were lost. Across the road the house, store, bowling alley and poolroom of E.F. Gay were destroyed, too. The bridge caught fire and suffered \$76.70 worth of damage according to the 1907 Town Report but was saved by the bucket brigade as were the post office and the home of Robert Curry across the channel and the Asquam Transportation Company dock where Squam Boat Livery is now located. By November 3, the paper reported that "E.F. Gay has a good start on his new store" and "the lumber for N.B. Whitten's store is arriving daily and the prospect is good for the building up of our recently burned business section..."

Another large fire burned some of the Mount Livermore (The Towers) Hotel in 1923. The grand hotel, built by Benjamin Jewell, had been in operation for 30 years across Route 113 from where the Holderness Town Beach now stands. The beach itself was part of extensive hotel grounds. According to the August 11, 1923 edition of the Plymouth Record, the fire began in the barn about 1 am and by 3 am, the barn, main building and annex had been consumed. Staff and guests escaped in their nightwear; their trunks were thrown from the windows. Annex furnishings were

Text here

The President's Corner

This summer, partnered with the Holderness Library, we presented three New Hampshire Humanities Council programs, which were well attended. In addition, on July 13th Beverlee Carpenter demonstrated and talked about spinning at the Historical Society, while her husband, Bruce Carpenter, welcomed visitors to their farm to meet the Owl Brook Alpacas. We are presently working on the schedule for next year's programs. The schedule of 2014 Programs will be listed in our spring newsletter.

This summer the museum had a special exhibit, the Summer Camps of Holderness and Squam, in which items from camps present and past were displayed bringing back memories for many of our visitors. We would like to thank all of you who donated and lent us items for this exhibit.

At a regular meeting in July the Holderness Historical Society board members proposed changes to the society's By-Laws. The proposed changes were voted on and approved at a brief open meeting on August 14, 2013.

We have continued cataloging our books and pamphlets in our research/library area to make researching families, cemeteries, camps, and other historical events and places simpler.

Your continued support by way of membership dues and contributions helps preserve our town's history. 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. Your ideas, suggestions, and help will be enthusiastically welcomed. Please contact me, or any other member of the team, if you can help or for more information.

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Continued from page 1

Burleigh Farm provided a team of oxen which was able to save the ell of the hotel by pulling it away from the blazing building. The Ashland Fire Department is credited with having helped save "much property". Forty guests stayed in the remaining building with the bowling alleys used for kitchen and dining room. The hotel continued to run until 1938.

In October 1930 a stove fire destroyed the main and dormitory buildings of Camp Algonquin on Bennett Cove. The boys' camp had been running since 1886 and Dr. Edwin DeMerret, age 82, was in residence at the time. He lost much of his life's work in the blaze.

Watching property go up in flames was almost commonplace but, according to Tink Taylor's "Holderness Fire Department: A Brief History," it was the loss of lives which finally galvanized the community. Seven members of the Avery family died in a tragic March 1931 fire on South River Street. Subsequently, a volunteer fire department was organized and a 1931 Model A Ford truck outfitted as a pumper truck carrying 25-30 gallons of water. It was purchased for \$1335.00. From that time on, the Town Meeting has voted support for the Fire Department. The first chief was Howard Moore followed by Lloyd Perkins, Kip Hawkins, Dick Mardin and now Eleanor Mardin.

Since then there have been many serious fires: three more lives have been lost--Mona Avery (1979), Edith Plant (1981) and Patricia Harris (1985). There has been property damage at the Holderness School (1934), Gardner Barn (1956), Squam Boat Livery (where in 1968 a NH weights and measures inspector unknowingly poured gasoline into a fill pipe no longer connected to gas tanks but located just above the compressor for the bait shop refrigerator and caused an explosion), Grossman's Lumber (early 70s), Greenleaf Farm (a case of arson in the late 70s), Moon Island (where the Ham house was struck by lightning in 1982), Rockywold (1961 and 90's), Squam Meadow Apartments (2007), Camp Minnetonka (2010), house fires on Coxboro Rd. (2011) and White Ash Rd. (2012) and Riveredge Marina (2013). Town Reports also list many smaller fires as well as forest fires on West Rattlesnake (70s and 90s) and Mt. Livermore (90s) which members of the department have fought.

Originally the Town paid rent to Davison Garage (located where Squam Lake Automotive is today) for equipment storage. Upon the completion of Holderness Central School in 1961, the Bridge School building became the Fire House. When more and bigger equipment became necessary, the new Fire House was built in 1997 across Route 3 on the site of Nestlewood Cottage which was burned as a training exercise.

The department has been providing first responder rescue service since its early years. It has had certified EMTs since the early 80s. Following the flood of August 2008 where a camper was lost on Ames Brook in Ashland, a swift water rescue team was organized and trained. There have been multiple calls for rescues at Livermore Falls.

Today the Fire Department has 9 officers and 21 firefighters as well as EMTs and paramedics, some of whom have both certifications. Since 1961 it has been part of the Lakes Region Mutual Aid Fire System so it assists and gets assistance from area towns. That organization also provides dispatch services and dues are \$28,000 annually.

The services the department provides today are more than the townspeople of 1906 could ever have dreamed. We thank the Fire Department for 81 years of service.

Information for this article came from interviews with Fire Chief Eleanor Mardin, Deputy Chief Earl Hansen, Susan Webster, Laura Heath, Barbara Currier, Peter Francesco, the Ashland Citizen as transcribed by Bernie Hughes, Holderness Town Reports, the 1908 Register and a short history of the Fire Department written by Tink Taylor in 1980.

Missy Mason

Treasurer's Report

We bought a new printer/scanner in June in hopes of being able to scan any photos or news clips our members are willing to share with us and museum visitors. Otherwise, we have paid our usual expenses: insurance, security, phone, electric and oil. Our advertisers pay most of the cost of printing and mailing our newsletter. We especially thank the Audrey Hillman Fisher Foundation for their recent grant. Each year we just break even thanks to the dues and donations provided by our loyal supporters. We thank you all!

Genealogy

Patti Evans of New Lenox, IL visited in September to look at our information about her ancestor Andrew Smythe and see Trinity Church where his family were members.

We researched Orlando Keyes and family for Ross Peot of Texas. Keyes was killed at Chancellorsville in the Civil War and his name appears on local veterans' memorials. He was a brother-in-law of Col. Thomas P. Cheney of Ashland as well as Ora Brown, owner of an Ashland store.

Tom McKenna of Pennsylvania inquired about his ancestor, Chester B. Shaw, probably born here in 1822. We were able to tell him about the Shaw Cemetery on Hardhack Rd. and various Shaws who might be related. In looking at the censuses for that era, we were surprised to see how many families named their sons for Arthur Livermore, a NH congressman and judge and son of Samuel Livermore.

If you are researching, you can find entries in findagrave.com about people who lived here in the past. Bernard Hughes and Wavel Fogleman have submitted their research to the site.



Summer Celebration

The historical society joined with the Town to have a celebration of summer with music and fireworks. The weather was problematic which postponed the celebration but fortunately it did take place at the end of the summer and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. We thank those of you who supported the celebration with contributions. We are hoping to have another Summer Celebration next year.

Building Report

Special thanks to Board members Dodie Greenwood and Cynthia Murray who went above and beyond when they cleaned and waxed our meeting room floor in advance of last summer's speaker series! Masonry work done last fall has curtailed the number of "critters" gaining entrance. The museum has shut off water for the winter and uses minimal heat but it can be raised if anyone would like an appointment to visit. (Call 968-3334.)

Photo Collection

We were excited to receive two leather-bound albums documenting the summers of 1902 and 1903 from Patricia Bitterman, a relative of Carol Louise Tilden and Jack Restall who took the photographs of scenic views, boating and hiking parties and local "camps."



Picture from photo collection shows the Steamer Chocorua at the Holderness Bridge in the Summer of 1902.

Squam NHRP Committee

The Squam NHRP Committee, chaired by Betsy Whitmore, meets under the auspices of the Squam Lakes Conservation Society. Their consultant, Elizabeth Hengen of Concord, received news in April of acceptance of Camp Ossipee, Livermore Cove, into the National Register of Historic Places and in June of Rockywold-Deephaven Family Camps. The committee has donated copies of Mrs. Hengen's detailed documentation of these historic camps to the historical society.



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Our website has been up since June and we are continuing to add to it. You can find pictures of objects in our collection as well as information about local buildings in our "Driving Tour of Historic Holderness."

Jen O'Neill of moxdog.com did the technical work.

Flowers on the Bridge

Many thanks to all of you who contributed to the **FLOWERS ON THE BRIDGE** fund!! We hope that you enjoyed them as you crossed the bridge or passed beneath it by boat.



The watering 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 Holderness Historical Society with *Flowers on the Bridge* on the memo line. Thank You!!

Liz Greason & Cynthia Murray



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Holderness Historical Society Field

Trips in 2013

Owl Brook Alpaca Farm & Spinning Demonstration

On Saturday, July 13th, Holderness residents, Beverlee and Bruce Carpenter, owners of Owl Brook Alpacas, graciously invited visitors to share their spinning and meet their alpacas. Beverlee, who has been spinning for 12 years, demonstrated and talked about the process at the historical society. Bruce welcomed visitors to their farm to meet their eight alpacas. It was an informative learning experience and we thank them for sharing their knowledge and expertise with us.

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

3rd Graders from Holderness Central School Visit Historical Society

On October 30th the third graders from the Holderness Central School accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Beth Allain and Ms. Stacy Frizzell, visited the Historical Society. They had an opportunity to explore the museum and the building. They learned some of the history of our building and town and were able to explore the many exhibits. After returning to their classroom they discussed what they had experienced during their visit and will be sending us a few items to add to our scavenger hunt, which had been created by a previous third grade class.



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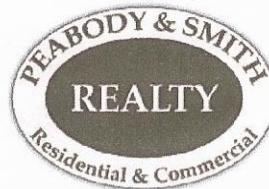


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