

# NEWSLETTER



Holderness Historical Society

Fall 2019

Volume XXXIX

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Joyous Holiday  
Season!

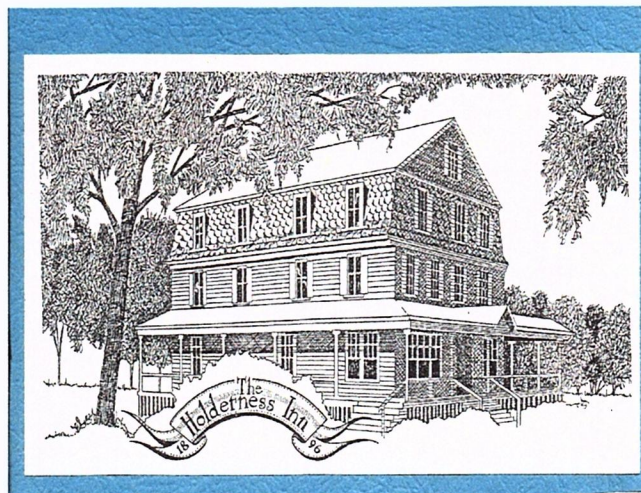
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[www.holdernesshistoricalsociety.org](http://www.holdernesshistoricalsociety.org)

## THE HOLDERNESS INN

The Holderness Inn, a landmark of the town center, now looks nearly as it did when it was built in 1896. It has been totally renovated as the office of Samyn D'Elia Architects. The firm purchased the building from the Science Center in October 2018.

The property on which it stands was part of the minister's lot on the map of the town when Holderness was laid out in 1761. Robert Fowle was Samuel Livermore's tutor for his children and then an ordained



Sketch of Holderness Inn by Erma Rand

Episcopal minister installed by Livermore as priest, first at Trinity (North) Church in 1797 and then at the corner of Rtes 3 and 113. Fowle married Martha Smythe and built his parsonage next door to the church. He was Holderness' only Episcopal minister until his death in 1847. The East Church burned in 1842; Trinity continued in its original place but was rarely used. After Fowles' death, there were additional Episcopal churches: St. Marks. Ashland, was built in 1854. The Holderness School built the Chapel of the Holy Cross in 1884. St. Peter's in the Mount was built on Shepard Hill in 1888 to serve summer visitors.

Since the coming of the railroad to Ashland and the end of the Civil War, tourists had begun to flock to the lakes. John Davison of Ashland was married to Betsy Piper whose parents, James and Sophronia, farmed the land at the base of Mt. Fayal. In 1875 he bought the Fowle parsonage from Fowle's grandson Robert Fowle True to run it as a boarding house. He expanded it to become the Central House Hotel. He also purchased additional land from his in-laws whose property abutted on the north. Central House burned in 1895 and he quickly designed and built the new hotel which opened in 1896. Davison also added several guest cabins. He kept some milk cows and had a large garden for produce and berries for the dining room.

An 1890s brochure from the Watson and Erma Rand Collection touts the beauty of the area and advertises tennis, croquet and riding available on the grounds as well as fishing and a short hike to the peak of Fayal which had an observation tower.

John Davison died in 1914. His wife and then his daughter Ruby took over the hotel. At some point the name was changed to the Holderness Inn. A 1920-25 guest book (HHS Collection) shows guests from New York to Chicago to California. An updated breakfast menu offers fruits, several cereals, every variety of eggs, calves' liver and grilled lamb chops as well as griddle cakes with maple syrup. A 1930 bill charges \$1 for supper and \$1.50 for dinner.

Continued on page 2



## The President's Corner

This summer, partnered with the Holderness Library, we presented four well-attended programs. We are working on the schedule for 2020 programs, which will be listed in the spring newsletter.

This summer the museum presented two special exhibits **Art and Memorabilia of Helen Nicolay** (The paintings are on loan compliments of Patty Sue Salvador.) and a **Dugout Canoe** which was discovered in Veerie Cove in 1939. The dugout became part of our collection this past summer having been donated to HHS by the Shelburne Museum, Shelbourne, VT.

Cataloging of our books and pamphlets in our research/library area to make researching families, cemeteries, camps, and other historical events and places simpler continues. Please check our website [www.holdernesshistoricalsociety.org](http://www.holdernesshistoricalsociety.org) 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 and exhibits. 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.

Linda Foerderer

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*Keep up the Good Work!*

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## In Memoriam

Helen Mathieson died on November 13. Helen who worked at Camp Deerwood as a teenager, had spent many summers at Squam since then. She was a long time donor to HHS.

## Treasurer and Building Report

The water is now off till spring. We do maintain the heat at 55-60 degrees just so objects have a fairly steady temperature. This will be particularly important for the dugout canoe. We should be replacing some of the insulation before winter really kicks in.

Thank you to the generous donors to the Dugout Canoe Funds.

M. Mason

## Excerpts of Central House Brochure

### Central House

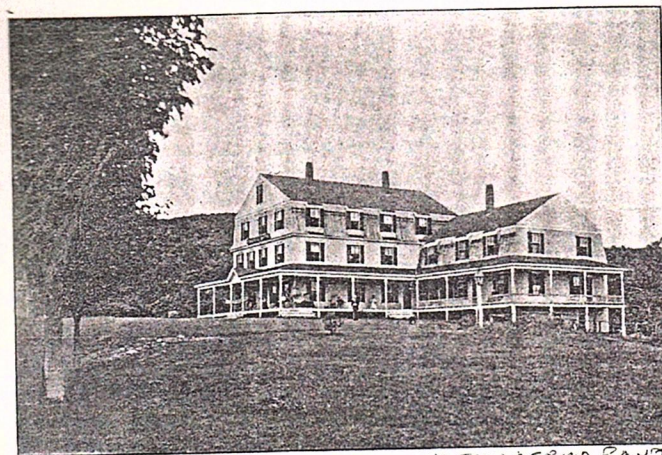


THE CENTRAL HOUSE is charmingly situated upon an eminence fifty rods from the western shores of the far-famed Squam Lakes, in the picturesque town of Holderness and the White Hills of New Hampshire.

The House is finished in hard wood throughout and is in every respect a modern summer hostelry. From the piazzas can be seen one of the finest views in all New England, the green slope at one's feet, fringed with shade trees, the beautiful expanse of the lake with its islands and promontories, and finally, the wooded mountains in the distance. In the background stands one of the most beautiful of New Hampshire's peaks, grand old Fayall, with its observatory, from which a superb view may be obtained.

The complete scene, in its magnitude and grandeur, it may be truly said, is unsurpassed by any in the White Mountain region. The hotel has accommodations

Page 3



WATSON & TRINA RAND  
CENTRAL HOUSE, in the center of a beautiful summer resort COLLECTION

Page 4



Continued from page 1

THE HOLDERNESS INN  
SQUAM LAKE  
HOLDERNESS, N. H.  
July 1, 1930. 192

M H. R. Swasey

To THE HOLDERNESS INN, Dr.

June 17--1--	Supper	\$ 1.00
" 18--1--	Dinner	1.25
" 19--1--	"	1.25
" 21--2--	"	2.50
" 22--2--	Suppers	2.00
" 23--2--	Dinners	2.50
" 24--2--	"	2.50
" 25--2--	"	2.50
" 26--3--	"	3.75
		<u>\$ 19.25</u>

RECEIVED PAYMENT

*Holderness Inn*  
*By Wm. Casella*

BILLS ARE PAYABLE ON PRESENTATION

Bill for meals at the Holderness Inn 1930


Tink Taylor recalls Sunday dinners there where Ruby cooked and served. Steve Rand worked there in the summer of 1958. The inn seemed none too prosperous to him though there was a cook, Mrs. Pritchard, and her daughter working alongside him. He served as bellhop, waiter, chambermaid and lawnmower as well as being responsible for keeping the water tank on the third floor full since there was a gravity-feed system. Once when he allowed the tank to overflow, he could hear Ruby yelling at him from the inn which was 100 yards uphill from the well where he had to turn the pump on and off. He also recalls a "one armed bandit" in the corner of the parlor.

The hotel ran until the 1960's. Ruby had health issues and it was transferred to the Science Center with financial assistance from Frank Webster II in 1967. The fixtures were sold at auction. The Science Center used it for offices, exhibits and classrooms but had outgrown the space by the 1980s and began to look for ways to defray the costs of the building. As early as 1983, a "Save the Inn" group formed. Meanwhile, the Inn had been placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984 via a grant from the Lakes Region Planning Commission. According to Historic Trust nomination author David Ruell, it was significant as a late 19<sup>th</sup> century summer hotel in "a well preserved Victorian vernacular" style.

Ruell described the interiors of the hotel as follows: "The first floor of the main block was used for public rooms while the connected main story of the wing and its additions housed a dining room and the kitchen. The upper stories of both the main block and the wing contained guest rooms." The wing he mentioned was torn down in 1986 while the property was in the hands of the Asquam Development Corporation which had bought it for \$1. Asquam Development had hoped to move the building to Curry Place and repurpose it. When that was deemed not feasible, the agreement specified that the hotel be demolished. First, the wing was torn down. That galvanized public opinion. Barbara Currier who owned the abutting property even threatened to chain herself to the doors should the bulldozer arrive.

With opposition to demolition from townspeople, the Historic Preservation Trust was formed to seek alternatives. The building was offered to the Town for \$1 for use as offices. The town would have had to float a \$300,000 bond for the land purchase and renovation of the building. With much discussion of other Town needs for a Highway Department garage, police and fire stations, Article 4 of the 1987 Town Meeting warrant was voted down 173-112. For many years the Science Center continued to seek solutions for the building. Eventually the Science Center found a tenant in its own nature store and café. That was followed by use as a gallery for local artisans. Finally, Samyn D'Elia purchased the building and restored it. The architects had been part of each group which advocated for saving the building and after thirty-four years, they provided the answer themselves. The Town is very pleased that its landmark still stands.

*Thanks to Janet Robinson for Blake Allen research, minutes, news clips and a John Davison (grandson) letter from the Science Center files, for David Ruell's findings for the Historic Trust nomination, to Ellen King for Town Meeting Minutes and for first person accounts from Steve Rand, Tink Taylor and Ward D'Elia.*

 **HOLDERNESS**  
Squam Lake INN  
HOLDERNESS, N. H.

**BREAKFAST**

**FRUIT**

Oranges Cantaloupes Sliced Bananas Prunes

Shredded Wheat Corn Flakes Grape-nuts  
Quaker Crackles Rice Krispies

Maltex Cereal

**EGGS**

Scrambled Shirred Boiled Poached Fried  
Plain Omelet Cheese Omelet Fruit Omelet Ham Omelet

Broiled Calves Liver with Bacon

Grilled Lamb Chops

Plain Bread Cereal Muffins Toast

Griddle Cakes and Maple Syrup

Tea Coffee Milk Cocoa

Instant Postum

**HOURS FOR MEALS:**

Breakfast: 7:30 to 9:30 Noon Meal: 12:30 to 2:30 Evening Meal: 6:30 to 7:30

Breakfast Menu Holderness Inn

Missy Mason





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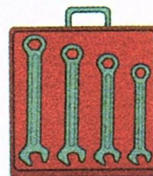
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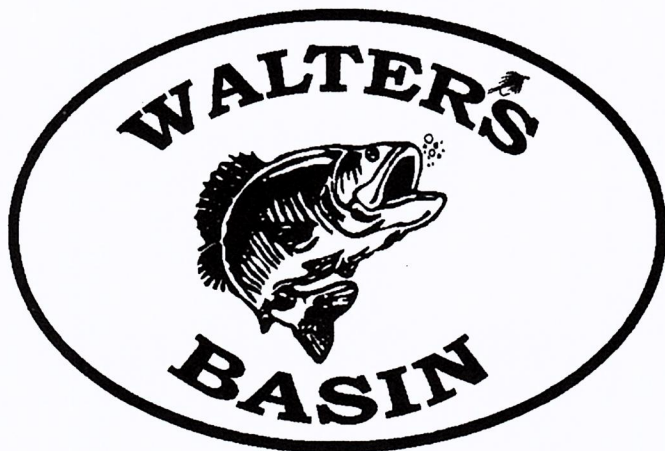
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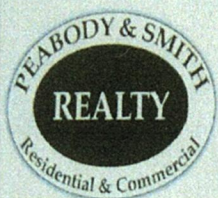


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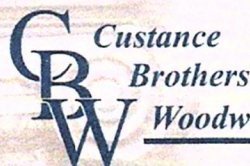
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SDA

**Pictured: The Holderness Inn, Holderness, NH  
New Home of Samyn-D'Elia Architects, P.A.**

Built in 1895, the Inn is one of the few early summer hotels to survive intact in the Lakes Region. Ward D'Elia and Cris Salomon have long admired the building for its history, architectural significance, and importance to the community, and are proud to have the opportunity to renovate and preserve this local landmark.

**Samyn-D'Elia Architects, P.A.**

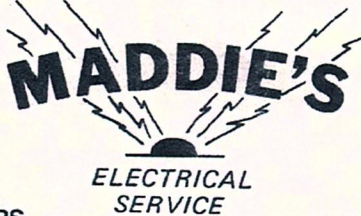
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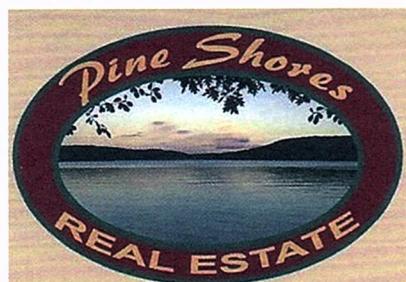


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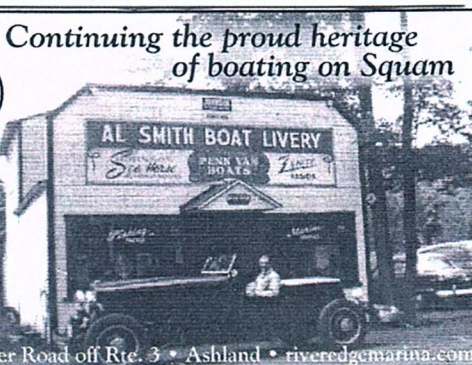
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## Flowers on the Bridge

Many thanks to Tom and Sally Daigneault of Squam Boat Livery for housing our new irrigation pump and paying the electric bill. The irrigation system worked well this summer and kept our Profusion Double Zinnias going. Cindy and Rae from the Marketplace volunteered their gardener Josh for some weekly maintenance so the flowers were in good shape for all the photos they starred in. Liz Greason helped once again with planting and clearing out boxes at the end of the summer. At least two boxes will need to be replaced because the wood has rotted. We appreciate all of your donations since the new pump cleaned out the Flower Account. Please think of us again next spring!

## Unearthed at Livermore Falls

Under the watchful eye of state archaeologist Mark Doperalski with a team of volunteers, some artifacts of Native American occupation were unearthed over the summer at Livermore Falls on the Pemigewasset River, our newest state park. Shards of early pottery, flakes from making stone tools and other evidence have been added to what else has been uncovered there and elsewhere in Holderness.

Much of what has been recovered there through the years, at Davison's Brook, the Nielson property, sidewalk to Cheskey's store and elsewhere, has been carbon-dated to the early Woodland Period of some 3,000+ years ago.



For the second time, state archaeologists and volunteers have uncovered Native American artifacts at Livermore Falls State Forest along side remnants of "The Village," a riverside mill community of 150 inhabitants active until the early 1950s. Artifacts recovered there tell the story of the Holderness folks who worked and lived there.

Tink Taylor

## Membership Report

If you have not yet renewed your membership, please return the enclosed envelope with a check payable to the Holderness Historical Society.

Individual membership is \$15 and family is \$25. Your membership money is important to the financial day to day running of the Society.

## Additions to the Collection

Many thanks to the following donors:

The dugout canoe transferred to HHS by the **Shelburne Museum** was of interest to many summer visitors. We are presently investigating the most accurate and least damaging method of dating this treasure.

**George Ashbridge** of Columbia, SC gave us letters and pictures of his great aunt Dorsey's visits to her aunts Sarah Benners and Phoebe Ashbridge who who owned Pinehurst from 1899 to 1918. We will feature these in a future article.

**Kathryn and Mitchell Drew** gave us additional copies of Holderness Town Reports. They also lent an Abraham Lincoln wooden statue for the Nicolay exhibit.

**George Abbot** who has the Oriole in his Moultonboro barn, gave us a photo of the steamboat Nellie J.

The **Blooms** of Severance Farm sent a video of their home movies from 1927.

Kip Hawkins' grandson **Ken** of Kittery, ME donated his fireman's uniform.

Copy of the Trojano Map showing which buildings were on both the 1860 and the 1969 maps with family names from the **Town Hall Collection**.



Mary Dorsey Ashbridge (Aunt Dorsey)

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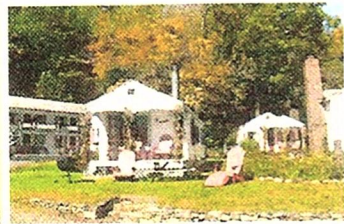
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