

BRIDGEWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Nov 2016

Issue No. Ten



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Monthly meetings

held last Tuesday
of each month at
6:30 p.m.

Old Brick School House
12 North Bridgewater Road
Bridgewater, VT 05035

www.bridgewaterhistory.org



Aircraft Flash, Charlie Page, 2nd Book

Ground Observer Corps

In 1950 because of the lack of radar coverage and the threat of a Soviet bomber attack on the U.S., the USAF initiated "Operation Skywatch" and brought back the GOC that had been effective in WWII. By 1952 there were 750,000 volunteers. The Bridgewater Post was maintained exclusively by the Houghton Family of Bridgewater Corners. They devoted thousands of volunteer hours to this effort. Later both Bob & Walter joined the Air Defense Command as members of the USAF & VTANG. With the installation of the SAGE radar network the program was curtailed in 1959.

Letter From the President

Polly Timken, President

As the weather turns colder, we start to move indoors both physically and mentally. While it's time to put the garden to bed and prepare the house for the onslaught of cold weather, it's also time to take stock of the busy summer we just had.

Our exhibit "Downstream: Wool, Lumber and Gold" was well received at the Vermont History Expo. Our group put together a great show and although it's always hard work, it continues to be well worth the effort. Visitors from all over the State and elsewhere get a glimpse of what we have to offer.



Expo visitors, George Smith (R) and his nephew



Charles Lindbergh
in Springfield, VT
July 30, 1927

We opened our lecture series with Laura Purdy talking on "Eugenics in Vermont", followed by Walter Houghton with "Aviation in Vermont". Jere Daniell covered the machine tool industry in Springfield, and Peter Thompson gave us a fascinating lecture on the geology of Bridgewater. We are happy with the great response to our events and are already working on next year's schedule.

Our membership continues to be extraordinarily supportive. Not only have they donated some fascinating artifacts that add so much to our story, but they have also been extremely generous as shown by our very impressive annual fund numbers.

I can't thank all of our members and the Board enough for the hard work and support provided this summer. We look forward to next year with confidence that comes from a job well done.



Jere Daniell speaking on
Springfield's Machine Tool

Holiday Farm

By Walter Houghton

In the Vermont Beers Atlas 1886, the Holiday Farm it is listed as the residence of S.S. Barrows. I do not know when it was built or anything about the family. My connection to the place is more recent. Sometime after World War II, Mr. A.L. Humes purchased it and used it as a part time residence. Mr. Humes was a prominent Wall Street attorney. He would frequently come up from the city (NYC) and bring friends. When I was about 13 years old (1953), their local overseer, Mr. Harold Perkins, hired me to mow the lawns and do odd jobs around the place after school. I must say this was a perfect job for me as I lived down in the "Corners" and rode my bicycle up there. I too fell in love with the place and treated it like it was my own!

When Mr. Humes died, his son John continued on. John was also a Wall St. attorney. To honor his father, John & Jean formed The Humes Foundation with the idea of developing a summer camp for NYC kids to get out of the city and enjoy Vermont. By 1955 we had built their cabins and shower house up back and later the dining hall. Each year we would bring two groups of 60 kids up in July and August. These kids were from very poor backgrounds, maybe from Harlem, Jersey City etc., with no family or some one in prison. We had counselors of various backgrounds. One that stands out was Jack Donoghue, a former Army Ranger, who was the H.S. basketball coach that discovered Lou Alcindor (Karem Al Jabar!) Jack later became coach at Holy Cross. Our mission

was to ensure that these kids had fun and that they did. I have often wondered what their future was like and if Holiday Farm had any positive influence on them. I hope it did. One met with a tragic ending. Ritchie Lancaster, later came back as a counselor, joined the Army and was killed as a door gunner in a Huey helicopter in Vietnam. I usually look him up whenever I go to the Vietnam Wall! I think there is a memorial rock up by the shower house. I haven't been up there for years.

During all of this I was still the gopher/handyman, carpenter, taxi driver, counselor. And sometimes if the girls had to leave the kitchen cook and serve the noon meal! What a great job for a high school kid and instilling responsibility!

I can't say enough for John and Jean Humes for what they did here and for those kids. I loved them and their boys like they were family. My reward was to occasionally fly to the "Big City" and later when I was in the Air Force on Long Island I would go to their estate in Glen Cove for the weekend. As I said John was a prominent personage and politically well connected. He became Nixon's ambassador to Austria!

I joined the Air Force right after high school at age 17. The day before I left I made once last circuit around the property and sat down by the barn and cried my eyes out! I loved that place so and all that we did there. I missed it almost as much as my own home and family. What a privilege to have grown up there in that valley.



Holiday Farm
Barn and Cabins
Sept 1958



The House on Bridgewater Hill

Judy Stearns – Author and researcher

David Stearns – Helpful Editor

“It is a howling wilderness” proclaimed the young wife of Thomas Lamb in 1795 as she moved with her husband to Bridgewater Hill. It was possible that constant squabbling in Bridgewater over roads, bridges, and taxes, and the fact that the land was being sold cheaply through a foreclosure sale, were what drove him to resettle up on that hill. Thomas was 29, his young bride, Asenath, 22. They had married in 1789 when she was but 16, and when the resettling took place she had already borne eight children of whom nothing is presently known.

Through the years Thomas built the house, barn, sheds and whatever else was needed to farm the land, while Asenath had seven more children, until in 1813 she and two of her young ones died of spotted fever. Thomas and Asenath and six of their seven children born on the Hill are buried in the Bridgewater Hill cemetery across the road. Samuel, their third child born on the Hill, was thirteen when his father very quickly found a new wife, Anna.

Through the years the Lamb household had changed and kept changing, and in 1836, when he was seventy, Thomas sold the house to Sam and presumably lived there until he died at eighty-five. Meantime Sam had married a young woman named Sarah Stearns in 1838 and over the years they presented Grandpa Thomas with eight grandchildren. The house must have been busy

and happy, a far cry from the early years. In 1869 Sam sold the house to his daughter, Ellen and four years later she sold it to someone who was not a Lamb. In doing so she became the final Lamb family member to own the house on Bridgewater Hill. Or was she?

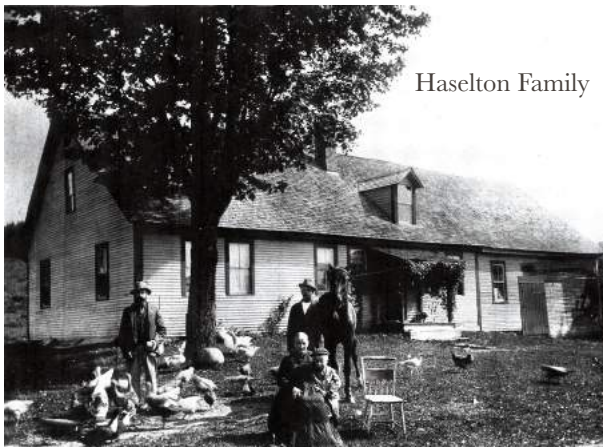
There were several owners, including the long time Heseltons, and by 1972 the once proud and busy house was abandoned and in grave distress.

But, on a warm day in April 1972, as the car pulled its way up the long winding narrow road, little did anyone know that David Stearns, perhaps a rightful owner of the house was about to arrive in search of some Vermont property. It had been exactly one hundred years since the house had been first sold out of the Lamb family and now it appeared that another Stearns might be returning, a Stearns who

it is believed to be related to Sarah Stearns. Does Sarah have a special star in the sky that looks down on the top of the hill? Could it have possibly winked down a message to David? “This house should be yours.”

It is now 2016 and David has owned the house for forty-four years and jointly with his brother, John Stearns and sister-in-law, Judy for the past thirty-eight years. They, along with children, many friends, and extended family have made it the happiest and most beautiful of homes, and a loved refuge for all who share in the sentiments written on Sarah’s gravestone across the road:

“She is tasting the blissful rewards that our Father so kindly has given to the peace loving children on earth and in the glorious Kingdom of Heaven.”



Haselton Family



Winning

By **Ernest Kendall**

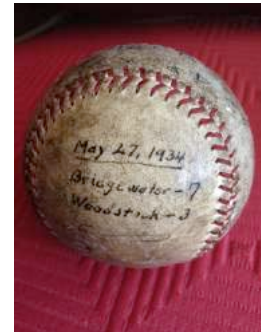
After reading your recent 'Baseball Issue' of the BHS Newsletter my sister, Linna Kendall Kite offered to donate this baseball (photos attached) to BHS. The ball was kept as a favorite memento by my father, Charles Kendall, who played (first base) for the Bridgewater Town team during much of the 20's and 30's. (He also may have managed the team during some of this period?).

Bridgewater fielded a very competitive team during much of this period, due in part to their ability to recruit woolen mill employees and Plymouth CCC camp workers. (Bridgewater used to scrimmage the CCC camp team on weekends, with refreshments (donuts) provided by my mother, Helen Kendall. and others.

Perhaps their most cherished victories were against Woodstock. (At least one game against Woodstock ended in a bench-clearing brawl, which impacted personal relationships for a long period thereafter.) This baseball records one such victory (Bridgewater 7, Woodstock 3) on May 27, 1934.

The baseball is signed by many of the Bridgewater players from the game:

George M(*aynard*)
 Roy Snow
 "Chick" Robinson
 Ken Shurtleff
 "Chick" Wells, 3-B
 Featherstone
 Jim Ranschousen
 B(Ben). Hoisington
 F(Frank). Blanchard
 Ump. - Red (*Frechette*)



The game was written up in the 'Woodstock News' section of the May 31, 1934 as follows:

Vermont Standard,

Bridgewater 7, Woodstock 3

The Bridgewater team secured a victory last Sunday over our local team in a very interesting and closely contested baseball game. The local boys were unable to solve the pitching of Robinson, who was ably assisted by catcher Flinn, drafted from Plymouth CCC camp. For Woodstock, Ingraham, with J. Johnson catching, held the visitors to two runs to Woodstock's three at the sixth inning. Bridgewater came through with four runs in the seventh and one in the eighth, but Woodstock was unable to connect with the ball. Next Sunday Lebanon plays at Vail Field.



Annual Renewal Membership Form

We welcome new members and would love to have you join the Bridgewater Historical Society, Inc. The table below lists the yearly dues which are to be renewed each January. The Society depends on dues and fundraising to finance all activities. Please choose the level where you feel the most comfortable. Fill out the form that is below and mail it with your payment to:

Bridgewater Historical Society
P. O. Box 98
Bridgewater, Vermont 05034-0098

BRIDGEWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

_____ Initial _____ Renewal Date _____

Level of Membership

_____ Student	\$3.00
_____ Senior (age >62)	\$6.00
_____ Individual	\$10.00
_____ Family	\$20.00
_____ Contributing	\$50.00
_____ Donation	

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email address: _____

Receipt Requested: Yes No

The Bridgewater Historical Society is classified as a 501(C)(3) public charity. As such, your donation is fully tax deductible.

2017 Membership Form

Recognize anyone?



Bridgewater Woolen Mill
workers



Bridgewater Post Office
1934

Curator's Corner

Elbert Stevens Saw Mill Dailey Hollow – Bridgewater

The photograph of the Elbert Stevens Saw Mill was given to the Historical Society by Don Gilman. It shows Elbert and his team of oxen ca. 1910. The sawmill was only part of a business that included a cider mill, jelly house, circular saw mill, carriage and stretcher mill, water wheel and evaporator. All of the buildings are gone now, but the site is across from what is now the Oldenburg camp Dailey Hollow.



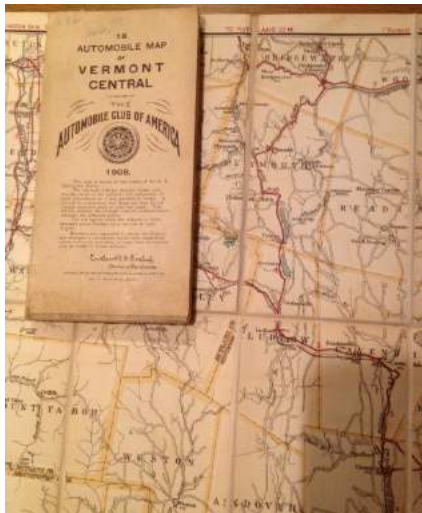
Burr McIntosh, a renowned photographer from NYC known for his work documenting celebrities, took the photograph.

He had a theater and film career, starring with Lillian Gish in “Way Down East”, D.W. Griffith’s silent movie filmed in Hartford, VT in 1920. His visits to Vermont may have led to his taking this photograph.

At the Vermont History Expo in June of this year, the Hartford Historical Society featured an exhibit on the filming of “Way Down East”. It was nice to swap information with them, as they hadn’t known about Burr McIntosh and his photography studio.



Darrell Thompson and family gifted their great-great grandfather, DeAlgeroy Thompson, Civil War Sharps Rifle and accessories. DeAlgeroy served in Company E US Volunteer 2nd Sharpshooters regiment.



1908 Vermont
Automobile maps
gift from Wick & Rodi York



Royal Typewriter used by
Florence Earle Frost at Putnam Construction
and Plymouth Cheese Factory
Frost Family

Additional recent gifts



Shuttle and bobbin from the
Bridgewater Woolen Mill
donated by Robert Rosenberger



Holiday Farm
 new dining facility
 Brenda Needham, Dolly Houghton, Claudia Harris
 Oct 1960

