



HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Wheeler House
20 Main Street, P.O. Box 754
Hollis, New Hampshire 03049
(603) 465-3935
hollishistoricalsociety.org

Autumn 2014

Dear Members,

We hope you had a splendid summer full of outings with family and friends, interesting discoveries....and relaxation, too!

It's been an exciting and busy summer at the Wheeler House and Always Ready Engine House. Here's an overview of what we've been up to:

- **The 100th Birthday of the Wheeler House:** *Sharon Howe* headed up a committee comprised of: *Pat Coughlin, Martha Davis, Bette Finnern, Mary Pease, Diane Rizzo,* and *Jeanne Smith-Cripps*. This hardworking group created different monthly displays at the Wheeler House throughout the summer in celebration of this notable birthday.

The celebration kicked off in June with a powder horn display. Then, in July, we had Revolutionary War Re-enactor, **Jim Hayden**, demonstrating the art of scrimshaw



Jim Hayden

work on powder horns. Mr. Hayden also brought along a replica kit showing what a soldier would have carried in the War of Independence. During July, there was a bandbox display. In August, the highlight was a display of hair jewelry, wreaths, and braids. October brings us Concealment shoes.

Sharon treats attendees to lemonade and cookies. Now really, folks, what more could you ask for?! Interesting displays, fascinating speakers, and goodies! Perfection! To end the year, on the afternoon of December 7th, we plan to have a festive, old-fashioned Christmas Open House. Save the date, and keep your eyes peeled for more information.



Wheeler House

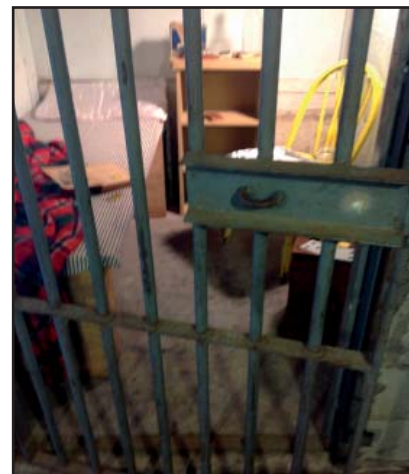
- In the Lucy Beebe Garden, a large crab apple tree, infected with fire blight, was removed by the town crew....for which we thank them very much. The Colonial Garden Club of Hollis will be replacing the tree. *Diane Rizzo*, as always, has the garden and window boxes looking wonderful.
- *Sharon Howe* and I, plus several of our members, and a couple of other folks were invited by the Hollis/Brookline High School librarian to talk with students about Hollis and Brookline and what life was like in these towns when we were growing up. The library had several books about Hollis on display and the Hollis Historical Society donated a copy of *Hollis Seventy Years Ago*. It was a very rewarding and enjoyable experience and something I hope we can do again.
- New Hollis Historical Society Director, *Tom Worcester*, and I are participating in a two-year project called *Patriot Paths* sponsored by Freedom's Way National Heritage Area. Two New Hampshire towns, Milford and Hollis, plus some Massachusetts towns, are researching what our individual towns did, and how and what they voted on at town meetings a few years prior to, and leading up to, the Revolutionary War. We will also select a person from our town, during that time period, and follow their actions preceding, during, and immediately after the War of Independence. It's a fascinating project! The purpose is to bring to light stories not seen in history books about our individual towns. And each and every town has a fascinating story to tell. You'll be hearing more about this project and our town's part in the Revolutionary War as this exercise continues. (Tom, who is a computer whiz, put together a fabulous paper, with photos and graphics, for this part of the project).

Production Staff

Design: *Fredricka Olson*
Editing, Layout
& Photography: *Bette Finnern*

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING *(continued)*

- Another, current generation Worcester brother and Hollis Historical Society member, **Charles Worcester**, participated with me in a two-day workshop, put on by Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, Massachusetts Historical Society, Milford, NH, Historical Society, and Pepperell's Lawrence Library. This dynamite workshop was called **Old Towns/New Country**, and highlighted what was going on after the Revolution in our own towns and on the national front. A lot of brainstorming went on at the workshop which will hopefully lead to projects and programs in our local communities. It's amazing how local historical documents in our individual towns connect with ones from other towns. **Charles Worcester** and **Polly Cote** of the Milford Historical Society led participants on a most informative walking tour of downtown Milford.
- Are YOU interested in attending workshops and enjoying thought-provoking programs? If so, please send us your e-mail address. When opportunities become available, and programs come up, we'll e-mail you the details. Learn something new...it's mind-expanding....it helps your Historical Society....and it's fun!
- In September, the Hollis High School graduating class of 1964 had their 50th reunion. The festivities included a tour of the Wheeler House (complete with photos of their class and classes immediately before and after them, from the Hollis Historical Society archives), and a visit to the Always Ready Engine House.
- The basement of the Always Ready Engine House, which contains one of the town's old jail cells, opened this summer with a display of Hollis police memorabilia, on loan from several past police officers. Many thanks to **Jim and Sandy Belanger**, **Phyllis and Bud King**, and **Joe Harlan and his son** for loaning us artifacts to display. We also thank **Marilyn Wehrle** and **Joe Harlan** for making the room dividers and **Joe** for all his cleaning and painting. Super job! Plus we have the cell all outfitted and ready for occupancy. Any takers? Don't worry -- we haven't found a padlock and key yet, so incarceration is a very temporary situation. And bail is always an option, with bail money benefitting your Hollis Historical Society (it's tax deductible, too)! All kidding aside, we've had a lot of visitors to the display and great fun. So, if you feel like turning yourself in -- for whatever reason -- we're ready for you the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, 1pm to 4pm, now through the end of October. (It's a unique photo opportunity..... wouldn't your friends and family love to see a photo of you behind bars?)



Always Ready Engine House
Jail Cell



Pine Hill School House

"Jail House" in the Always Ready Engine House. These gigantic safes are full of fascinating records, which we are diligently working on accessioning. **Dotty Hackett** heads up this massive accessioning job with help from **Bob Cushman** and myself.

- Our website, created and manned by **Bette Finnern**, is generating a lot of interest, genealogy requests, and general history questions. Take a look at it -- I think you'll be impressed.
- We're trying to raise money to make seriously needed repairs on the ice house. If you have any ideas for fund raisers, please let us know. We have a committee and could use some more committee members, so please give us a call.
- HELP! We need help with displays/exhibits at the Wheeler House and the Always Ready Engine House. **Martha Davis** will show you the ropes and a lot of us will lend a hand. Perhaps you and a friend would like to pitch in and do it together? There's a wide variety of props to help your creativity. So please call us.

- **Sharon Howe** has been opening her Pine Hill School House on the first Sunday of the month, from 1pm to 4pm, June through October. So there's still time to visit this fascinating one room school house. It's a perfect little time capsule.
- **Martha Davis** and **Jeanne Smith-Cripps**, with help from **Bruce Hardy** and **Joe Harlan**, put together a fascinating display, **Barns and Farms of Hollis**, in the upper level of the Always Ready Engine House. It's not too late to see it!
- The Town of Hollis gave the Hollis Historical Society their three safes, along with the contents of each, this past March. Two are located in the lower level of the Wheeler House, and the third is part of the display in the



Front of Town Hall Safe

HISTORICAL TIDBIT -- "Warning Outs and Vendues"

"In colonial New England (and in old England), the town was responsible for the welfare of all who were legal residents. One became a legal resident by being born in a town, or by residing in and paying taxes to the town for ten years. If you were not born in a town, it could be difficult to become a legal resident. Towns were very wary of becoming responsible for someone who might become poor, as the care of that person would then be chargeable to the town and would have to be paid for by increased taxes. Towns regularly 'warned out' any poor person who tried to settle and shipped poor dependents who did not have a legal settlement back to their town of origin.

Those who did have legal residence in town and who became impoverished could expect that their townsmen would take care of them. But this was not a pleasant fate. The poor were literally 'auctioned off' (or vendued) to the person at town meeting who would charge the LEAST to take the poor person into his family. The poor person would get room, board, clothing, and medical care, and the master of the family would extract whatever work he could from his charge. Being 'vendued' was humiliating. It also broke up families (each member was vendued separately; older children might be put out to work on apprenticeship indentures), but it did insure a minimum of care for the poor.

At the turn of the 19th century, 'poor farms' started to be established (almshouse, or workhouse in urban settings).

*(The above information was presented by Historian, **Mary Fuhrer**, during the Old Towns/New Country two day workshop, put on by Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, Mass. Historical Society, Milford, NH Historical Society and Pepperell's Lawrence Library. Laws varied somewhat from State to State (MA & NH) as you will note below).*

WARNING OUT IN HOLLIS, New Hampshire (below, as reported in ***The History of Hollis, New Hampshire, 1730 to 1879*** by **S.T. Worcester**): "By a law of the province of 1719, and continued in force long after the Revolution, all persons having dwelt in a town for three months, without being legally warned to depart, became inhabitants, and in case of inability to support themselves from sickness or other cause, were required to be relieved by the town. By the same law, the town could protect itself from the risk of the liability for the support of all newcomers by warning them to leave town within the three months after their first coming." By an act passed in 1771, the time for this warning out to leave was extended to one year. If a person so removed, afterwards returned, he could be dealt with as a 'vagabond,' and sent to the house of correction.

All newcomers, indiscriminately, appear to have been exposed to these inhospitable notices, whether likely to become paupers or not." Some of the people warned out between 1767 and 1774 were afterwards soldiers in the Revolution. Not all persons warned to leave obeyed the summons to leave, nor does it appear that they were expected to do so. Many Hollis soldiers, whose names were found in these warrants, remained in town and became substantial freeholders and valuable and respected citizens. "It is but just to say that this odious and barbarous custom had the sanction of a general law of the province, and I find no reason to believe that it was executed more offensively in Hollis than in other New Hampshire towns." (So far, in research of town history and old town meeting minutes, no mention of "vendues" has been found for the town of Hollis, as yet).

**The Wheeler House is open
Monday and Wednesday afternoons
from 1 to 4pm, year round.**

As well as the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, June through October.

**The Always Ready Engine House is open
the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month,
June through October.**

**Both museums are available for tours at other times,
by special arrangement,
by calling (603) 465-3935.**

NOW.....WHAT'S COMING UP AT THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY?

- **Phyllis Houle** has been crocheting up a storm, and crafted a handsome afghan that she generously donated to the Hollis Historical Society for a raffle fund raiser. We have raffle tickets at the Wheeler House, so please stop by, call, or see us at Old Home Days for your chance to win this beautiful handmade afghan.
- As of this writing, we have 186 members! Do you have some friends or neighbors who might like to join our merry little band? Let us know and we'll send them an information packet.
- **NEEDED:** a person to head-up the Refreshment Committee for our programs. There are already people who have offered to make cookies, but what we need is someone to organize the refreshment table. **Lydia Schellenberg** has handled this job for years, and we can't thank her enough for all her years of wonderful service, but now it's time to turn the reins over to someone else. There are only five programs a year.....and you've already got a team of cookie makers.....so PLEASE give us a call; we really need some help!
- **OLD HOME DAY:** The Historical Society will have a booth at Hollis Old Home Day, September 13th. We'll have books for sale, old ephemera, some free give-aways, and raffle tickets for sale for the handsome afghan created and donated by member **Phyllis Houle**. Thank you again, Phyllis!!
- **BARN TOUR:** Save the date: Saturday, September 27th, for the **HOLLIS BARN TOUR** presented by the **New Hampshire Preservation Alliance**, **Freedom's Way National Heritage Area**, and the **Hollis Historical Society**.



Afghan by Phyllis Houle

Starting at 10AM, at the Lawrence Barn, it's **Interesting Features of New Hampshire Barns**, an illustrated lecture by **John Porter**, co-author of **Preserving Old Barns**, with a welcome by **Steve Taylor**, former Commissioner of the N.H. Dept. of Agriculture, Markets and Food.

In addition, the **Hollis Heritage Commission** will have a terrific display of photos showing old barns and farming in Hollis, on display at the Lawrence Barn.

12 PM-4PM: self-guided tour of seven Hollis barns, with knowledgeable docents at each barn, describing architecture, and other interesting features. Plus your own **Always Ready Engine House** will be open with their Hollis Barns and Farming display.



Worcester Barn

REGISTER NOW by calling 603-224-2281. For more information go to www.nhpreservation.org.
TICKETS: \$30/\$40 . A \$5.00 discount for tickets purchased by Sept 22nd.
BOX LUNCHES: will also be available for purchase with prior arrangement.

In closing, we wish you a wonderful Fall season and look forward to seeing you at our 2014-2015 line-up of programs. We have some terrific presentations on the agenda for you, so bring your friends, family and neighbors.....it's all free, entertaining and enlightening. Hope to see you soon!

Fredricka Olson
Fredricka Olson, Curator