



Spinnings

Chesterfield Historical Society Newsletter

Number 33

Spring 2013

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The booklet on the History of Chesterfield Town Hall is currently being completed as well as a photo album on the 250th Anniversary Celebration. Sewall Rugg papers are being cataloged and preserved. A mill walk is being planned for Fall 2013 – more information on this walk will be available at a later date.

History can be communicated effectively by storytelling. In an effort to collect and preserve these Chesterfield stories, the society plans to hold a series of Roundtables. Audrey Ericson and Susan Tracey held the first of these recently on the topic of weather disasters affecting Chesterfield. Memories of recent floods and the Ice Storm of 2008, especially its effect on Road's End Farm and the mammoth equipment brought into restore power, were recounted and preserved audio-visually.

PHOTOGRAPHS NEEDED OF THE 250TH CELEBRATION

We have some wonderful photographs of the parade, car show and presentations; however, we need photos of the dramatizations that took place in Town Hall and of the children's games. If anyone has photos of these events, please let us know. We would like to have copies made so that we are able to complete our 250th Anniversary celebration album.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY BEGINNINGS

In 1946 a committee consisting of Chester Burnham, Robert Goodrich, Jessie M B Joslin, Rachel Bowman, Wakefield Dort, James Atema and Vanetta Emery was appointed at a town meeting to locate historic sites in town and report its findings at the regular town meeting in 1948.

In 1948 it was voted that the Historical Committee should place markers at the birthplace of Chief Justice Harlan Fiske Stone and the house of the first Chesterfield settler. It was voted to raise \$500 to carry out these recommendations. At a meeting in 1948 it was voted to accept a gift from Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dunbar of a piece of land on which the Harlan Fiske Stone Memorial stood. It was also

proposed that the Historical Committee be allowed to spend its funds for historical purposes. In 1948 the new Historical Committee consisted of: Shirley Bevis, Chairman. Winston Cray, George White – replaced after his death by his son Clifford, Newton Darling, James Atema and Vanetta Emery.

On October 13, 1973 Vanetta Emery was appointed to head the Chesterfield Historical Committee. The Chesterfield Historical Society was formed on September 18, 1974, with Vanetta as president, and incorporated on July 7, 1975. That newly formed group then joined the Association of New Hampshire Historical Societies. Monthly programs of historical interest were scheduled. In 1975, the Society got permission to use a small room in town hall for storing their collection. In 1983, Neil Jenness was elected president of the Historical Society and is still president today. There are twelve members of the current Board:

Cornelia “Neil” Jenness – President
Peg Fegley - Vice President
Clifford “Skip” White - Treasurer
Audrey Ericson – Recording Secretary
John Hudachek - Corresponding Secretary
Tracey Edwards
Les Nicholas
Dave Smith
Susan Tracey
Shirley Vittum
Rolland Vollbehr
Pam Walton

In 1998, the new Chesterfield library was constructed and the Historical Society moved to the old library which it is renting from the town. The Historical Society’s hours are: Thursdays 9:30 A.M. – 12 noon and Sundays 2:00 – 4:00 P.M and by appointment.

WHAT CAN YOU FIND AT THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY?

We want you to know about the numerous books we have covering a variety of topics, most can be borrowed. Please come in and research whatever interests you. We have:

- Extensive information on the **Civil War** including regimental histories and letters from Chesterfield soldiers
- Many volumes on the **local town histories**
- Information on the **Revolutionary War** and local **Native Americans**
- Quarterly reports from the **New Hampshire Historical Society**
- **Almanacs and books** on art, autos, barns, blacksmiths, boats, houses, housekeeping, lumbering, medicine, mills, Pilgrims, resorts, schools, spinning, stores, textiles, clothing, tools and woodworking

- A large collection of **Genealogy** books including information on **local families**
- **Scrapbooks, photos**, previous Chesterfield Historical Society **calendars, newspaper clippings** regarding Chesterfield happenings and its residents that have appeared in newspapers
- **Chesterfield Town Reports** from 1866 – present, with a few exceptions
- A series: **New Hampshire: A History** and books of **New Hampshire Historical Fiction**
- Archives on various **organizations** and **businesses**.

VOLUNTEER PROFILES

NEIL JENNESS, current President of the Chesterfield Historical Society Board, was born in Portland and grew up in Falmouth, Maine. She attended the University of Maine majoring in Biochemistry. She and her husband Peter moved to Spofford in 1973 and are the parents of two grown daughters. Neil was a partner in Country Artisans located at the Colony Mill Marketplace for 25 years. She became active in planning the 1976 Bicentennial in Chesterfield and at that time also became involved in the Chesterfield Historical Society. She has been President of the Historical Society since 1978. She has seen the Society go from being housed in a closet in Town Hall then moving to the American Legion and most recently moving to its current location in the old town library building. Neil is extremely knowledgeable about historic sites and events which have taken place in Chesterfield and has conducted many tours of some of these sites for both school children and adults. She is currently planning to do a tour of historic mill sites sometime in the fall of 2013.

AUDREY (Chickering) ERICSON, Secretary of the Historical Society, was born and has lived in Chesterfield most of her life. She attended local schools and received a degree in education from Keene Teacher's College (now Keene State College). She married Harry Ericson in 1954 and taught school in Claremont, Walpole and Chesterfield for many years. She initially taught for a 5 year period and then took what she calls a "17 year maternity leave" to have and raise her 5 children. Many local residents were taught by Audrey during her 20 year tenure at the Chesterfield School. She has been volunteering at the Chesterfield Historical since her retirement from teaching in 1994. Audrey is our go-to person when it comes to identifying people in old photos. Her memories and experiences growing up in Chesterfield are of great value to the Historical Society.

CHESTERFIELD ARCH BRIDGE COMMITTEE RESUMING MEETINGS

Meetings of the Chesterfield Arch Bridge Society were discontinued during the winter months. The first meeting of 2013 will be held on April 24th at the Riverside Hotel at 7 P.M. Anyone interested in the efforts the Society are making toward beautifying and preserving the bridge are invited to attend. The bridge society is looking forward to again planting flowers on the bridge this spring. They are also sponsoring a contra dance on the bridge June 15th.

Attached you will find a form to enclose with your 2013 dues. Contributions are also most gratefully appreciated! Volunteer help is always needed. See you in 2013!

Chesterfield Historical Society
P.O. Box 204
Chesterfield, NH 03443-0204

The Chesterfield Historical Society thanks you for your past support. To join in 2013 or to contribute, please complete this form and return it to:

Chesterfield Historical Society
P.O. Box 204
Chesterfield, NH 03443-0204

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____ Email Address _____

I/We enclose \$10 (individual) _____ or \$20 (family) _____ membership \$25 (group) _____

I/We enclose \$ _____ for help with the work of the Historical Society

Comments/Items to Share: _____

I would be interested in helping with:

Buildings and sites _____ Genealogy _____ Research _____ Old Photos _____

Date entering _____ Scrapbooks _____ Cataloging _____ Other _____

Our hours are Thursdays 9:30 – 12:00 noon and Sundays 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
For more information call Neil Jenness (363-8018) or Audrey Ericson (363-8856)