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Chesterfield Historical Society Newsletter

Number 38

Spring 2015

CHESTERFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY

The Chesterfield Historical Society was incorporated in 1975. We will be celebrating this special anniversary by having an Open House at the Society on Saturday, August 15 from 12 noon – 2 P.M. Everyone is invited to come and enjoy our many displays and some light refreshments. If you have never been to the Historical Society, this is your chance to have a look at some of the artifacts that depict the history of Chesterfield. If you have had the opportunity to visit with us, come back, we'd love to see you again.

OOPS! WE GOOFED ON OUR 2015 CALENDAR

Corrections are needed for the August photo in your 2015 Historical Society Calendar. Thanks to Jim Howell, Don Fuller and Benny Schlichting for helping us with the correct information. In checking the Chesterfield Historical Society perpetual calendar for a Friday, August 22nd, we now know that the photo should be dated 1969. It is Pat Pearson and the boys are Butch and Carl Finkenstadt, whose dad owned the Spofford General Store at that time. The red truck is Don Fuller's who has kept that number plate 9409. Please make these corrections on your calendar. Oh, and we still have some calendars available at the Historical Society or library for \$6. Hope you have all been able to be totally amazed with the July photo and news article.

CELLAR HOLE PROJECT

We are looking to identify cellar holes in Chesterfield. Currently we know of several locations of some in the area. We have forms at the Historical Society to be filled out giving us information on cellar holes which other people may know of. If you have any information about one or more cellar holes in the

area, please come in the Society and fill out a form. Our hours are Thursday from 9:30 A.M. – 12 noon and Sunday from 2 – 4 P.M.

CALL PROGRAM PRESENTATION AT KEENE STATE COLLEGE

Susan Tracy, a volunteer at the Chesterfield Historical Society, recently presented the second of two programs on the history of Chesterfield at the CALL (Cheshire Academy of Lifelong Learning) program at Keene State College. This one concerned Chesterfield and the New Hampshire Grants controversy in 1781. We appreciate the extensive amount of research and time Susan dedicated to these programs to make them a huge success. The CALL program is open to all those over 50 years of age. The classes are offered twice a year for 8 weeks per session (spring and fall). There are many and varied selections of courses to choose from at a nominal cost to participants. For more information, call Keene State College and ask for the Continuing Education Department.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

PAM WALTON grew up spending her summers at Spofford Lake. After she and her husband of 34 years Ken retired they decided to move to Spofford full time in 2011. Before retiring Pam taught secondary science in Massachusetts and New Jersey for 30 years. Upon retirement she volunteered for Meals on Wheels for 7 years. Pam presently volunteers for the Chesterfield Historical Society, the Spofford Lake Association, and the Conservation Commission. She also has served on two other town committees. She is an avid tennis player and is Secretary of the Tennis Club. Her tennis team went to the nationals in 2014. We are fortunate to have Pam as a valued member of the Chesterfield Historical Society's volunteers.

CHESTERFIELD ARCH BRIDGE SOCIETY

The Arch Bridge Beautification and Preservation Society had its first meeting of the year. The Society's volunteers plant flowers in containers on the bridge, maintain and water those plants throughout the growing season and plan events that will take place on the bridge during the year. Right now there is a need for volunteers to help with these projects. Volunteers of all ages would be appreciated, however, men volunteers are especially needed. If you are interested in volunteering or coming to a meeting of the Society, please call Lorraine at 256-6350.

ARTICLES FROM THE VERMONT PHOENIX NEWSPAPER

September 7, 1894 – Chesterfield:

An interesting relic was taken from the lake near Dunton & Farr's a few days hence, in the shape of a log canoe, the like of which the oldest inhabitant does not remember. It has a hollow in the stern, to afford a firm seat for the man who "paddled his own canoe." The bottom is also hollowed out on the outside, evidently to prevent rolling, and the forward end is quite pointed in shape. It is thought to be of Indian

workmanship and probably dates back to the days of King Philip, who is said to have made the island his stronghold for his defence. Some of the wood is very well preserved but the action of wind and wave has worn through its sides. Indian canoes of similar style have been found along the sea shore in Connecticut and Long Island. (article taken from the Keene Sentinel)

October 9, 1896: Whisker Cutting

WHICH NEARLY RESULTED FATALLY FOR A CHESTERFIELD MAN WHOSE THROAT WAS CUT "FROM EAR TO EAR."

A Chesterfield man with luxuriant hirsute adornments went to Keene recently with two or three younger men, and all of the party are said to have gazed upon the wine when it was red. On the way home he of the whiskers was sleeping soundly, and his companions thought it would be a great joke to give him a free shave. Taking a sharp knife one of the young men began sawing away upon the whiskers. The victim suddenly attempted to arise, and the knife slashed into his throat, cutting it nearly from ear to ear. The man bled profusely and his companions were greatly frightened. They drove to Dr. Butler's, and leaving their victim on the doorstep rang the bell and hastened away. Dr. Butler on coming to the door found the man very weak from loss of blood, but by prompt treatment was able to save his life. The man is now recovering, but had there been a delay of 10 minutes more in taking him to Dr. Butler's it is probable that the story would have made one of the greatest sensations Chesterfield ever knew.

May, 1896

A baseball nine from Spofford nee Chesterfield Factory, crossed bats with the Centre boys Saturday and were defeated to the tune of 32 to 15. While errors abounded on both sides still the local team clearly outstayed the opponents. The base running of "Bub" Butler was especially commendable.

December 11, 1896

The creamery at Winchester was burglarized the night of Nov. 27, 200 pounds of butter being stolen. Deputy Sheriff Rixford at once began to work on the case and on Tuesday night of last week, accompanied by his son Will and Chas. Capron, made a visit to the house of Elijah Low, who lived in an old schoolhouse in Chesterfield with a Mrs. DeBell and her son Will. The house was reached at 2 Wednesday morning and a narrow-tired wagon and horse with a left hind shoe gone were found in the barn. The wagon tire and the shoes corresponded to the ones that led away from the creamery the morning after the burglary. Mrs. DeBell was cooking chicken, while the two men were in bed, the son having his clothes on. Under the bed was a bag filled with chickens, evidently recently stolen. DeBell was arrested and taken to the Keene jail. He said that Dan and Frank Whittemore of Chesterfield burglarized the creamery. They were arrested, but easily proved an alibi, as they were out coon hunting the night of the burglary. DeBell then confessed again, saying that Low stole the butter from the creamery while he held the horse. Low was arrested and brought to Keene Saturday. He pleaded not guilty at a hearing Monday. Low and DeBell were bound over to the April term of the county court, bail being fixed at \$300 each. DeBell says the butter was hidden in a spring, but it has not been found. Low denies everything but it is thought that he buried the butter as he borrowed a round pointed shovel of a neighbor a few days before he was arrested. Low is 62 years old and DeBell 26.