STONE HOUSE TAVERN UPDATE

On April 24th the Chesterfield Historical Society (CHS) with the support of 150 generous community members finalized the purchase of the Stone House Tavern.

Many thanks to all who supported the project with gifts of all sizes! We could not have raised the funds so quickly and saved the Stone House Tavern without your confidence in our organization, our mission, and our project!

With a variance granted from the Zoning Board, we’ll be opening the Stone House Tavern Museum to the public when work to comply with codes has been completed. We anticipate having regular public hours by 2020.

Once open, parts of the Stone House Tavern Museum can be toured, and guests will learn about the family who built it and the contributions they made to our community. We hope you’ll come out to engage in our on-site programming and interpretive displays when the Stone House Tavern Museum opens to the public.

Our next step to creating a vibrant public space is to make significant repairs to the Stone House Tavern, including working on the foundation, slate roof, and chimneys. We are seeking support from governmental, foundation, and private sources. In fact, we recently applied for a $25,000 rehabilitation grant from LCHIP (Land and Community Heritage Investment Program) and are seeking backing from the local business community as well—both to match the rehabilitation grant and to establish a Sustainability Fund for ongoing preservation of the Stone House Tavern.

We are in the process of planning for our furniture needs for the tavern. We could use some small tables, standing lamps and card tables. If any of these items could be from the 1800 or 1900s, that would be great, if not, that is also fine. Please come in to the Society on Thursday from 9:30 a.m. – 12 noon or on Sunday from 2 – 4 p.m. to let us know what you are thinking of donating. Or you may call Neil Jenness (363-8018).

“Every time we’re given the opportunity to save something of historical significance – like the Stone House Tavern – we should take it, because it’s a chance to preserve a piece of our American Story.” Ken Burns
Descendants of Moses Smith Visit CHS

Almost every Thursday there is one or more persons or families who request help from CHS with family genealogy. June 14 was no exception. Scott and Debbie Leone and daughter, Tristen, from Boston, Mass. visited CHS with questions about his descendants from Chesterfield. The surprise was learning that Scott is a direct descendant of our first settler, Moses Smith! Neil Jenness and Audrey Ericson were elated to share numerous records. Upon leaving, a photo was taken of the family and Rae Egan in front of CHS. You see, Rae too is a direct descendant of Moses Smith!

WE LOOK FORWARD TO OUR VISITORS

Recent visitors to the Historical Society included Randy and Laurie Brooks from Lewiston, Maine. They came to give us a Benjamin Pierce Improved Patent Warranted Accelerating Wheel Head Randy had discovered when clearing out a storage area. The label was clear and legible and read:

Made by Benjamin Pierce, Chesterfield Factory, NH. Particular care must be taken to Keep them dry when used. They must be kept well oiled and when new bands are required, they must be made smooth and even Spindles warranted cast steel.

Per Leslie Nicholas “Cast Steel meaning that the part in its "full size" was cast in a mold, and not lathe turned from bar stock as it would be today, a little filing and a little touch of emery cloth and the part was done.”

In April we were pleased to receive as visitors from California a descendant of the Mead Family, Frances Stephenson, with her husband, David. Levi Mead came to Chesterfield from Lexington in 1801 having purchased what is now Clifford (Skip) White’s house on Route 63 here in the center of Chesterfield, which Mead kept as a tavern. In 1816 Levi built the “Mead Tavern.” Randall, in his History of photos and an extensive genealogy of Chesterfield, includes Levi’s exploits at the Battle of Lexington when he was only 15 years old. Our visitors shared photos and an extensive Mead genealogy.
LAKE WANTASTIQUET

Have you ever heard of a Lake Wantastiquet in NH? Sounds like a section of the Connecticut River by West Chesterfield Village. A 1921 newspaper article states that the Lake is frozen over opposite the Dummerston station so that the mail can be brought across on the ice to this town. Does anyone know about this lake? If so let us know.

OUR BLACKSMITH IS BACK

Article from the Cheshire N.H. Republican (c. 1930)
Lee Higgins, our blacksmith is back at his old shop again, after spending a few months in various parts of Massachusetts, where he went with an eye to locating there; but he says Chesterfield is not the worst place on the map to do business in, so the shop will be opened from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m., and all will be accommodated, and a first-class job guaranteed, no matter how small.

ANOTHER MYSTERY


Section on “The Island” P. 41

“A ferry service run by photographer Hayes Bigelow went from the island [location of the Hinsdale bridges/route 119 over the Connecticut River and the Island Park Pavilion] to Crystal Park in Chesterfield, New Hampshire and on up to Putney. His boats also went down to Vernon. Boating enabled people from the surrounding communities to partake of the many exciting events on the island.”

We would like to know: Where was “Crystal Park?” Does anyone know?

WELCOME TO A NEW VOLUNTEER

Susan Provencher has been working at the Historical Society to update our files of newspaper articles about Chesterfield residents and local events. Susan’s father’s family was originally from Kittery, Maine and her mother was from Chesterfield. Susan has lived in Chesterfield since she was four years old. She attended the Chesterfield School and graduated from Keene High School. She is the mother of two boys, grandmother of six and the great grandmother of two. As a teenager she worked at Douglas Toys and did her share of babysitting. She was also employed at Timken for 20 years and worked part-time at Sherman’s Store in Chesterfield. Susan presently has eight dogs, one of which goes to church with her frequently and is a hit with the entire congregation. In the hot weather, you can find Susan lounging in her pool. We are pleased that she has chosen to become one of our regular volunteers.
HISTORY OF PISGAH

On Wednesday, June 13th the Chesterfield Historical Society with the Friends of Pisgah presented “The History of Pisgah” to a capacity crowd of 78. The program included an introduction by Kim Nilsen featuring the area’s 41,000 year history, an update on hikes by Lynne Borofsky, and a movie entitled "Pisgah: A Place Apart". We want to thank all who attended and made the evening a major success.

Calendar of Events

**Wed. July 25th**

**7PM**

**Chesterfield Town Hall**

*What is at the Bottom of the Connecticut River*

For over 30 years, master diver Annette Spaulding, has been exploring the depths of the Connecticut River. During this time, she has found historical artifacts and shipwrecks including a Native American petroglyph (rock carving) at the confluence of the West and Connecticut Rivers. During this program, she will share some of the stories about her discoveries and display some of her recovered artifacts.

**Wed. Aug 8th:**

**7PM**

**Chesterfield Town Hall**

*Rudyard Kipling Revisited*

This program looks into the life of Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), an intensely private and complex man. It is part lecture, part living history, and part storytelling, by award winning storyteller, Jackson Gillman. Sponsored by NH Humanities To Go.

**Wed. Aug 29th**

**7PM**

**Chesterfield Town Hall**

*Moved & Seconded: Town Meeting in NH*

Drawing from her extensive research, Humorist Rebecca Rule, will touch upon some of the characters who keep the drama cracking, and explore the rituals, traditions, and history of this purely New England institute. Sponsored by NH Humanities To Go.

**Wed. Oct 17th**

**6PM**

**Chesterfield Town Hall**

*Annual Meeting of CHS*

Potluck, Elections and Update on the Stone House Tavern Progress!

All are welcome to these free programs.

For more information visit our web-site:

http://www.chesterfieldhistoricalsociety-nh.org
THE PRESERVATION OF CHESTERFIELD’S HISTORY DEPENDS ON MEMBERSHIP

Membership renewals are normally sent in January. Our request is quite late, because we have worked diligently in recent months to purchase the Stone House…and have been successful!

It is now time to address our membership. This year we are offering membership categories. The form can be found on the next page.

The CHS Board knows that everyone does not have the same ability to support our organization. If you are unable to give at the “Friend” level, but wish to be a member, donate as you are able; we value your membership.

As you decide your level of membership, remember that dues income is needed to continue to offer presentations and to collect, preserve, and display our town’s artifacts and ephemera. We hope that our events, exhibits and participation opportunities appeal to you. We welcome your enthusiasm and involvement.

Facts of Interest

1. CHS purchased the Stone House on April 24, 2018. A progress report will be available later this summer (check our website).
2. Audrey Ericson’s book on our historic Town Hall (cost is $10) and the 2018 CHS calendar (reduced to $6) are available for purchase at CHS.
3. CHS facts of interest and upcoming events:
   a. CHS is open Thursday mornings (9:30-12:00) and Sundays (2:00-4:00) to preserve/catalog ephemera, and assist visitors.
   b. Programs on Scuba Diving Historical Finds in the Connecticut, Rudyard Kipling (a favorite author of Gustie Pierce, Town Meetings in NH, and the Hurricane of ‘38 will be offered later this summer and fall. Again, mark your calendar!
   c. A video on Madame Sherri, part of a TV pilot, has been posted on the CHS website: chesterfieldhistoricalsociety_nh.org.

Chesterfield Historical Society (CHS) Membership Form

Whether individual, family, or business, as you choose your membership dues level, remember that CHS preserves the past for you, your children, your grandchildren…and your great grandchildren!

Membership Dues Levels (Individual, Family, or Business)

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<th>Dues Level</th>
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<td>Morris and Sallie Friedsam Preservationist</td>
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