

# NEWS FROM NICKWACKETT

VOL. 14 NO. 3 RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2007

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## ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Business Meeting of the Society will be held on Thursday evening 18 October 2007 at Fellowship Hall of Grace Congregational United Church of Christ, 8 Court Street, Rutland, Vermont. At 5:30 p.m. there will be light hors d'oeuvres followed by a potluck supper at 6:00 p.m. At approximately 7:00 p.m. there will be a brief Annual Business Meeting and the election of officers and directors followed by the program. (See Fall Programs on page 1). To facilitate the organization of the supper, folks are asked to respond by phone or email regarding their attendance and the dish that they wish to bring by Monday 15 October 2007. Contact Jim or Helen Davidson at 773-7525 or [jshkdavidson@comcast.net](mailto:jshkdavidson@comcast.net).

## OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS NOMINATED

Pres. Chuck Piotrowski  
V.P. Jim Davidson  
Sec. Helen Davidson  
Treas. Tom Carpenter

Dir. (2 yrs) Lloyd Davis  
Dir. (2 yrs) Ron Hemenway  
Dir. (2 yrs) Dorothy Whitford

Continuing Directors are:  
Robert Cassidy, Mary Fregosi and  
Patty Pickett (Brogren)

Submitted by Mary Segale  
Chairperson of Nominations  
Committee

## FALL PROGRAMS

**Saturday 6 October 2007 at the Rutland Historical Society at 10:00 a.m. "A Roundtable Discussion of the Pico Raceway of the 1950s."**

The Program Committee particularly invites any of the public who were involved in any way with this raceway, which was located near the present G.E. plant in Rutland Town, to participate in this roundtable. Organizers, sponsors, racers and fans are all invited to participate in an audience open discussion of an almost forgotten location and activity. Chuck Piotrowski will chair the meeting. All interested persons are welcome. Please note the Saturday morning time.

**Thursday 18 October 2007 at Fellowship Hall of Grace Congregational United Church of Christ, 8 Court Street, at approximately 7:30 p.m. "The Treasures of the Society" by Chuck Piotrowski.**

This program will provide a visual presentation of some of the gems to be found in the collections of the Rutland Historical Society. It will include an insight into the range and depth of the Society's materials. This program should be a "don't miss item on your calendar."

**REMEMBER R.S.V.P.  
BY MONDAY 15 OCT  
FOR ANNUAL  
MEETING**

## "HISTORICALLY SPEAKING" ON CHANNEL 15 IN RUTLAND

The Society produces "Historically Speaking" on cable Channel 15. A new program is produced each month. The series includes interviews and historical pictorial material in a rather flexible TV magazine format. The programs can be seen every Wednesday at 4:00 p.m., Thursday at 1:30 p.m. and Friday at 7:30 p.m. DVDs of past episodes can be obtained from Channel 15, Rutland Regional Community Television, 1 Scale Avenue, Suite 108, Rutland VT 05701-4460. They are \$10 for each episode. Make checks payable to RRCT. Include \$2.50 for shipping and handling. Channel 15 provides the DVD. Personal pickup is available. Call (802) 747-0151 for further information. Consult the Society website at [rutlandhistory.com](http://rutlandhistory.com) for a complete listing.

Episode # 86 - This program features a presentation of still pictures of the Long Trail Lodge by David Wright of the Middletown and Rutland Historical Societies. David and his family were intimately involved in the Lodge for many years and David is able to relate many stories connected with the history of the Long Trail Lodge. The Lodge not only had a close connection with the Long Trail but was also a major meeting place for many Rutland groups. Host of the episode is Jim Davidson.

Episode # 87 - In 1941 the Farm Security Administration sent photographer Jack Delano to Rutland to photograph the Rutland Fair. This assignment was intended to photographically document rural life in Vermont. Additional photos by Delano can be found on the website of the Library of Congress. They provide an excellent view of Vermont rural life on the eve of the U.S. entry into WWII. Michael F. Dwyer provides the selection and narration for the program. Jim Davidson is host of the episode.

Episode # 88 - For over 30 years Aldo Merusi was the chief Rutland Herald photographer. His widow left a large collection of the negatives of his photos to the Rutland Herald. Dr. Richard Brown has been placed in charge of a project to scan these negatives to provide viewable prints and to attempt identification of the people, places and events in the photos. The Rutland Historical Society has agreed to help in the identification process. This episode is the first attempt to bring some of the photos to the attention of the public through the medium of television. It is hoped that the public may help in the identification process. The program includes a brief biographical notice about Aldo Merusi and his work. Jim Davidson hosts the program.

## COMMITTEE CORNER

### Chairpersons

### Building Committee

Morris Tucker - 773-7356

### Cemetery Committee

Chris Book - 773-6252

### Collections Committee

Tom Carpenter - 773-0286

### Exhibit Committee

Helen Davidson - 773-7525

### Finance Committee

Tom Carpenter - 773-3626

### Membership Committee

Robert Perkins - 773-0184

### Personnel Committee

Mary Segale - 773-2326

### Program Committee

Jim Davidson - 773-7525

### Publications Committee

Jake Sherman - 775-2784

### Research Committee

Patty Pickett - 775-1706

### Society Historian

Mary Segale - 773-2326

### Technology and Telecommunications Committee

Chuck Piotrowski - 747-5447

### President

Michael F. Dwyer - 483-6993

### Board Chairperson

Mary Fregosi - 459-2723

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Rutland Historical Society continues to flourish in its 39th year, and the Society headquarters on Center Street remain a hub of activity. Here is a summary of some of the highlights of the Rutland Historical Society's past year.

- **Publications:** *News From Nickwackett*, the Society's newsletter, is published four times a year and provides a summary of recent activities as well as upcoming events. Newsletters are mailed with copies of the Society's award-winning publication, *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly*. One of the new 21st Century innovations is for the last Quarterly of the year to be a calendar illustrated with images from the towns that once comprised the old Town of Rutland. Helen Davidson has also continued to write a weekly column entitled "Tidbits From Then and Now" which is published in "Sam's Good News".

- **Historically Speaking:** At press time, 88 episodes of the popular half-hour television program have been created. In May 2007, Jim Davidson, producer of *Historically Speaking*, received, on behalf of the Society, PEGTV's Romeo Award for Best Show. In the near future episodes will not only continue to be broadcast on Channel 15 but they will also be able to be viewed through streaming video accessible through PEGTV's web site. Our television programs, along with the web site described below, bring the Rutland Historical Society to a much greater audience than would have been possible without the advancements in information technology.

- **Web Site:** The Society's web site may be accessed at [www.rutlandhistory.com](http://www.rutlandhistory.com). It features a variety of areas where the viewer can learn about and interact with the Society. The Historical Miscellany and Tidbits from Then and Now areas feature continually changing material. Many people in pursuit of genealogical information interact with Society volunteers through the free Message Board. Last year there were over a quarter of a million visits to the Society web site.

- **Programs:** The Society continues its long tradition of providing live programs. The Winter/Spring 2007 programs included a presentation on multi-ethnic Rutland at the Diamond Run Mall as part of the Martin Luther King Day celebration; a PowerPoint lecture on the Rutland Railroad; remembrances of former mayor, John Cassarino; and a round table discussion about the Rutland Royals pre-war baseball teams.

- **Parades:** Members of the Society, accompanied by Nick, the Nickwackett squirrel, once again participated in both the Halloween and the Loyalty Day parades.

- **Other Events:** On New Year's Eve 2006, the Society continued a long tradition of providing recorded music at the Asa Bloomer Building as part of the First Night celebration. The Society celebrated Rutland's railroad heritage at the the 2007 Vermont History Expo in June at Tunbridge, Vermont. An eye-catching banner showing the Rutland railroad yard of 1879 was a highlight of the Society's booth. Numerous programs have been presented by Society members during the year at engagements for local groups.

It also should be mentioned that numerous visitors to the Society during its public hours have been served by Society members too numerous to name. None of these services could have been provided without the efforts of a core of volunteers who give unselfishly to the Society. In addition to the Board of Directors and Officers, additional members host the Society's public hours and do work on the various Society committees. As donations of papers, photos and artifacts continue to be donated, three Collection groups meet weekly to add these items to the Society's ever growing collections. Thank you all.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael F. Dwyer  
President

## HALLOWEEN PARADE

The Society plans a presentation for the Halloween Parade on Wednesday 31 October 2007. The theme will be "Chasing Ghosts of the Past". Again the Society mascot squirrel, "Nickwackett Nick" will chase down folks carrying stick masks of the faces of Rutland citizens of the past.

There is an opportunity for people of all ages to sign up to participate. Costumes will be a simple ghost costume. (Just a sheet will do). The Society will provide individual masks and signs that identify the Rutland people of the past. Join us. More people means more characters from Rutland history and more fun. Contact Jim Davidson at 773-7525 for information and to arrange for a Rutland face mask. Please sign up by Saturday 27 October.

## SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

On 27 and 28 July 2007 the Society had a tent on Merchants Row for Sidewalk Sales and the Ethnic Festival the next day. Sales and meeting the public were great.

Helen and Jim Davidson presented the program "Made in Vermont" for an Elder Hostel group at the Brandon Inn on 5 August.

The Society gained a great deal of national media coverage from its involvement with the Rutland Creek Path and the proposal to name it for Rutland native son, John Deere. The Rutland Herald gave front page coverage which the Associated Press picked up. Even an Illinois radio station asked for an interview.

*NEWS FROM NICKWACKETT* is a quarterly newsletter produced by the Publications Committee of the Rutland Historical Society, 96 Center Street, Rutland, Vermont 05701-4023. Tel. (802) 775-2006. Jim Davidson - *Editor*

## DUES SCHEDULE

Sponsor \$50.00	Students \$8.00
Contributing \$20.00	Senior Citizens \$8.00
Regular \$10.00	(62 & up)
Life Membership (Individuals only)	\$200.00

## A SPECIAL INVITATION

The Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences is holding its Fall Conference on Saturday 22 September 2007 at the College of St. Joseph in Rutland. The public is invited to attend the three morning presentations in Tuttle Hall at the College which located at 71 Clement Road. The three presentations should have a particular interest for Society members as the theme is "Evidence: Its Problems and Challenges", a subject of extreme importance to those interested in history.

The fact that the three presenters are from the Rutland Historical Society should also make this conference of added interest to the Society and its members.

At 9:35 a.m. Chuck Piotrowski, Corporate Records Manager, Central Vermont Public Service Corporation, professional archivist and Vice President of the Rutland Historical Society will present on the topic: "Evidence: Today and Tomorrow".

At 10:30 a.m. Tom Carpenter, Senior Internal Revenue Agent, Excise Tax Specialist, U.S. Internal Revenue Service and Treasurer of the Rutland Historical Society will present on the topic "Evidence in the Business World".

At 11:30 a.m. Jim Davidson, retired teacher and college registrar, historian and volunteer Curator at the Rutland Historical Society will present on "The Great Horse Race from Galveston, Texas, to Rutland, Vermont: A case Study in Evidence".

Come enjoy some very pertinent programs and support your team of presenters from the Rutland Historical Society. It is a special privilege for the Society to be thus recognized by the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences.

## THE FACILITIES OF THE RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARE OPEN ON:

<b>MONDAYS</b>	<b>6 - 9 PM</b>
<b>SATURDAYS</b>	<b>1 - 4 PM</b>