

NEWS FROM NICKWACKETT

VOL. 5 NO. 3 RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 1998

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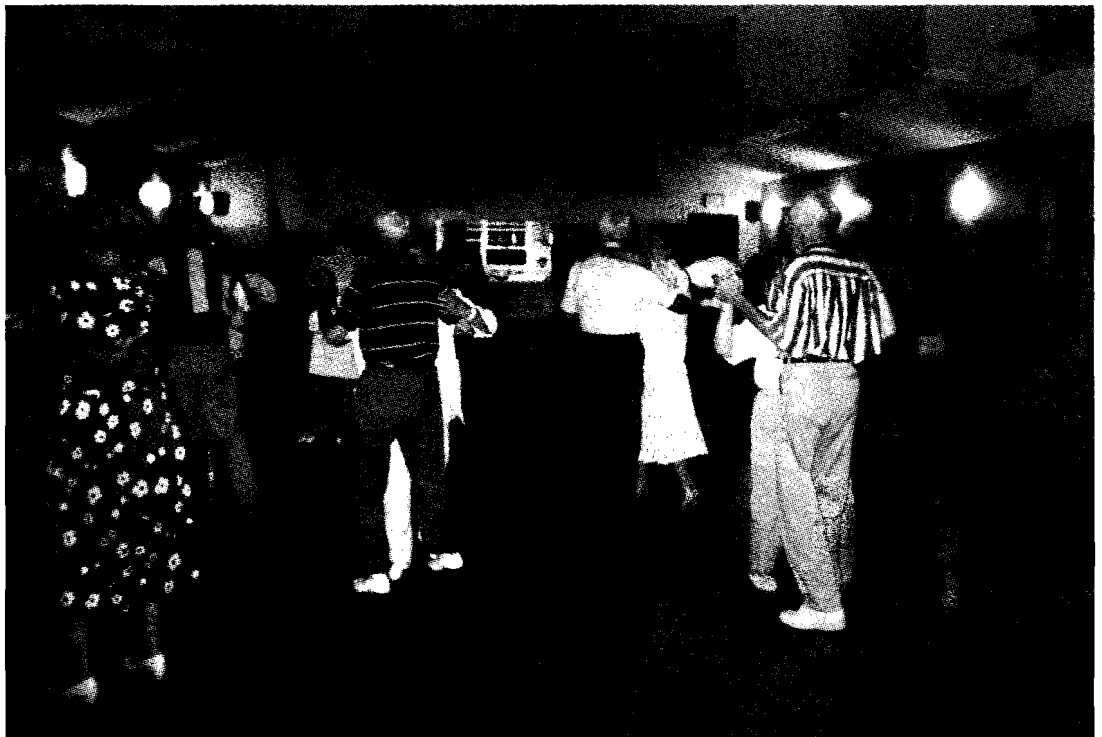
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SUMMER DANCES WELL-RECEIVED



This past summer the Society held a series of nine weekly dances at the Godnick Senior Citizen Center featuring taped music of two different big bands each evening. Attendance averaged over 45 people a night with a low of 34 on night four and a high of 64 on night eight.

The Society's rationale for this program was a concern that a part of Rutland's cultural heritage was being lost. Do you remember dancing at the Casino at Lake Bomoseen? Attendance and the quality of the experience at the summer dance series have convinced the Program Committee that this effort did meet a need. Therefore the Committee plans to continue these dances next summer.

The Society's hope that there would be some intergenerational mix at the dances was fulfilled. A two-year old girl came with her mother and danced with her grandmother. A nine-year old boy was brought by his parents because he loved big band music. A group of teens came to swing at the first dance and swing they did. People in their 20's and 30's came to dance to music that was popular before they were born. People in their 60's to 80's were regular attendees.

Not everyone was able to dance. A lady with her cane and a gentleman in his wheelchair came only to listen. Many dancers and listeners alike enjoyed the social occasion to chat with people that they had not seen in years. *(Continued on page 2).*

(Summer Dances continued from page 1) A number of attendees were summer visitors to the Rutland area. Comments such as "It brings back wonderful memories" and "It made me come alive again" were common to many participants.

The Committee wishes to thank the Rutland Recreation Department and its personnel for their gracious assistance. We also wish to thank Ted Whalen who volunteered to man the free refreshments and Jim Davidson who provided the taped music.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual Business Meeting of the Rutland Historical Society will be held on Thursday 15 October 1998 at the Fox Room of the Rutland Free Library. The business meeting, which includes reports and the election of officers and directors, will start at 7:30 p.m. At approximately 8:00 p.m. Donald Wickman will present a lecture on "Letters to Vermont From Her Civil War Soldier Correspondents To the Home Press." Don is the author of a two-volume work on this subject. The public is invited to attend the business meeting and/or the program.

SLATE OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS NOMINATED

Pres. Elaine Purdy	Dir. (2 yrs) Pat McCormack
V.P. Helen Davidson	Dir. (2 yrs) Alan Shelvey
Sec. Gloria LaMontagne	Dir. (2 yrs) Dorothy Whitford
Treas. Thomas Carpenter	

Continuing Directors are: Alex Alexander, Jacob Sherman and Morris Tucker

Submitted by Mary Segale
Chairperson of Nominations Committee

FALL PROGRAMS

The Program Committee of the Society has announced the following Fall program series. All programs will be held at the Fox Room of the Rutland Free Library which is located on the northeast corner of Court and Center Streets. This facility is handicapped accessible. Please note that the days and starting times for the programs vary for each meeting.

WED 7 OCT 98 "Getting Excited About Oral History" - Dr. Joanna Gillespie - 7:00 p.m.

THUR 15 OCT 98 Annual Business Meeting - 7:30 p.m.

"Letters To Vermont From Her Civil War Soldier Correspondents To the Home Press" - Donald Wickman - 8:00 p.m.

All are welcome to attend the business meeting.

WED 28 OCT 98 "The Battle of Hubbardton and Ongoing Research At the Site" - Len Lumsden, Hubbardton Battlefield Site Interpreter - 7:00 p.m.

TUES 17 NOV 98 "The Last Years of the Rutland Railway: the Caverly Era" - Heaton L. Bullock, former Sales Representative for the Rutland Railway - 7:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE CORNER

Chairpersons

Archives Committee
Alan Shelvey - 775-4168

Artifacts Committee
Eleanor Elwert - 773-3417

Building Committee
Morris Tucker - 773-7356

Exhibit Committee
Jim Davidson - 773-7525

Finance Committee
Tom Carpenter - 773-3626

**Historic Preservation
Committee**
Ann Singiser - 773-8172

Library Committee
Ann Glagola - 775-1302

Membership Committee
Helen Davidson - 773-7525

Personnel Committee
Mary Segale - 773-2326

Program Committee
Pat McCormack - 747-0243

Public Relations
Kendall Wild - 773-8687

Publications
Jake Sherman - 775-2784

Research
Dorothy Whitford - 773-3219

President
Elaine Purdy - 773-6819

Society Historian
Mary Segale - 773-2326

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The old Nickwackett Fire House, home of the Rutland Historical Society, becomes busier with each passing year. Far from being a static repository for bits and pieces of Rutland history, the Society is steadily increasing its services to the community. Archival and research materials are available for public use during open hours Mondays from 6 to 9 pm and Saturdays from 1 to 4 pm. Special visits and tours are available upon request.

During the past year the Society has hosted school, college and senior groups as well as organizations such as the Sons of Union Veterans. Genealogy researchers and tourists are regular visitors. Society members have participated in educational programs in City and Rutland Town schools. West Rutland students received assistance in setting up a web site of their town history. Speakers have also been provided for service organizations.

Exhibits during the year included: World War I experiences and art work of John P. Clement; Patch-Wegner history; the Bates House fire and the Strong family portraits and history. The Society's annual meeting in October featured a lecture on John Cain's architecture presented by Kathryn Brownell. During the meeting, Carmine Pacca was honored for his exceptional service to the Society as host, guide, speaker and committee worker. Pacca's knowledge of early Rutland history is legendary.

Programs offered by the Society included: Ed Barna on Vermont's covered bridges; Donald Wickman on Vermont's Civil War flags; David K. Smith on native Vermont humor and Kendall Wild on the World War I journals of John Clement. A weekly summer program of big band music was introduced this year at the Godnick Senior Center in cooperation with the Recreation Department. Jim Davidson hosted and provided music from his personal collection. Davidson, who contributes countless hours to the day by day operations of the Society, has been given the honorary title of Curator by an appreciative board of directors.

Four newsletters and four Quarterlies were published. Quarterlies included: "Charles A. Hayles: A Man Out of Time" by Donald Bordeau; "John P. Clement, Personal Recollections of the Great War" edited by Kendall Wild; "The Civil War Diary of Charles B. Mead" edited by Elaine Purdy; and "The Pine Hill Stone Crusher and Early Stone Crushing Practices in Rutland, Vermont" by Paul J. Crossman, Jr.

The costume collection has been catalogued, photographed and placed in archival storage. The Livingston Native American collection has been similarly documented and will be shown in a series of exhibits scheduled for the coming year.

In April the Society cooperated with the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation in erecting a site marker honoring Rutland native Martin Freeman, first black college president in the United States. The site at 46 North Main Street was donated and landscaped by First Vermont Bank. The marker was dedicated by Mayor Jeffrey Wennberg, Dr. Russell W. Irvine of Atlanta, Georgia, who first recognized Freeman's importance, and the Rev. Robert Curry of Grace Congregational Church, UCC.

The largest expense incurred by the Society was for painting and preservation of the building's exterior woodwork.

As the Society approaches its 30th anniversary in 1999, long range planning has begun with a view to easing transition into a new era. A drive for increased membership and volunteerism will be conducted as present members strive to maintain the vitality of the Society and its mission of preservation and education.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine G. Purdy, President

SALE : See white insert for details on Quarterly back issues sale.

30th ANNIVERSARY

In August 1999 the Society will celebrate its 30th Anniversary of organization. In preparation for that anniversary, the Society is developing a number of celebratory activities:

- (1) The Society will offer a special sale of back issues of its Quarterlies from 1 September 1998 to 31 December 1999. See the white insert with your Newsletter.
- (2) The Society will be mounting a major membership drive, seeking to double its membership. Any new membership now will cover the rest of this year and all of 1999.
- (3) A committee is working on the development

of an Internet Web Site for the Society. More on this in future issues.

(4) A committee is working on the development of a regular half-hour talk/magazine show on Channel 15 (The Rutland Public Access Cable Channel) which will provide new programming every other week. More on this in future issues.

DISCOVERED

Ross Lalancette of North Street found a marble plaque face-down in Tenney Brook near Rotary Field. With the help of Jimmy Watson and Daniel Peer, they carried it home. Ross has given it to the Society. The inscription is; "1775 - Fort Rutland Vermont - Liberty or Death". It does not appear to be official or old. Does anyone know of a parade or program in which this may have been used?

**THE FACILITIES OF THE
RUTLAND HISTORICAL
SOCIETY ARE OPEN ON:
MONDAYS 6 - 9 PM
SATURDAYS 1 - 4 PM**

DUES SCHEDULE

Sponsor	\$50.00	Students	\$8.00
Contributing	\$20.00	(18 & under)	
Regular	\$10.00	Senior citizens	\$8.00
		(62 & up)	
Life Membership			\$200.00
Memorial Membership			\$200.00

**RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
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Jim Davidson - Editor

Your dues are paid through the year on your mailing label.