

NEWS FROM NICKWACKETT

VOL. 6 NO. 4 RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 1999

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SOCIETY ACQUIRES COMPUTER, PHOTO SCANNER AND SOFTWARE

For two years the Rutland Historical Society has participated in a WEB Project with the West Rutland Schools. As a participant in that project, the Society had received the loan of a computer, a photographic scanner and the associated software from the WEB Project. Recently the Project converted this loan into a gift based upon the Society's past use and future plans for use of the equipment.

During the Society's Fall program series, Karen Sanborn, Media Center Director at the Castleton State College Library and a Society member, presented a workshop on using the computer and scanner and the associated software.

This equipment is now located on the main floor of the Society and is available for public use. There is not a printer available with it so users must save their work on a 3.5 computer disk. The public can explore the use of a scanner to capture an image and the use of Photoshop software to modify that image.

Printed instructions for using the equipment and software are available. A prior phone reservation to use the equipment would be appreciated and the Society will then try to have a staff member available to help.

COMPUTERIZING THE COLLECTIONS CATALOG

The Society is beginning to computerize its collections catalog. As in most libraries, the old card catalog is giving way to the new and more efficient computer catalog. Computerization will also make searching much faster and more efficient.

In November the Society hosted a workshop for a number of its committees. Deborah Haynes, from the Hood Museum at Dartmouth College, provided guidance in the discussions which resulted in a decision to move forward with software and hardware selection.

ELECTION RESULTS

At the Annual Business Meeting of the Rutland Historical Society on Thursday 21 October 1999, the following officers and directors were elected by the membership:

Pres. Elaine Purdy
V.P. Helen Davidson
Sec. Jacob Sherman
Treas. Thomas Carpenter

Dir. (2 yrs.) Alex Alexander
Dir. (2 yrs.) Michael Dwyer
Dir. (2 yrs.) Angela Hinchey

Continuing Directors are: Patricia McCormack, Alan Shelvey and Dorothy Whitford. Dorothy Whitford has been elected as Chairperson of the Board.

"HISTORICALLY SPEAKING" ON CHANNEL 15 IN RUTLAND

In June "Historically Speaking" began on Rutland's cable access Channel 15. The Committee began with a new show every other week but has now adapted that schedule to a new show every 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.

Videotapes of the following episodes can be obtained from: Rutland Regional Community Television, P.O. Box 500, Rutland VT 05702-0500. They are \$10 for each episode. Make checks payable to the above. You must provide a self-addressed padded bag with postage. Channel 15 provides the tape. Personal pickup is available. Call (802) 747-0151 for further information.

Episode # 7 - Jim Davidson narrates a series of still photos that were taken in Rutland around 1898-1900 by David Sawyer. David's photos are of members of his family and household, animals and a number of street scenes which include people, vehicles and significant buildings.

Episode # 8 - This program features videotape excerpts from a program on Revolutionary War musicians which was presented at the Rutland Historical Society by George Behnke and two young reenactors. The program explains the uniforms and equipment worn and the use of music for signalling troop actions. A number of musical selections by fifes and drum are presented. On location camera work was by Tom Donahue.

Episode # 9 - Tom Carpenter presents an illustrated program on Banks, Banking and Money which is a video adaptation of a program that he presented at the 1999 Annual Meeting of the Society. The program provides a copiously illustrated discussion of early Vermont coinage and paper money. It also traces the history of Rutland banks including photos of most of them.

HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOKS

The Society is seeking to fill out it's collection of high school yearbooks. We are missing the following from Rutland High School: 1933; 1935; 1938; 1944; 1946-47; 1968-69; 1972-75; 1977; 1979; 1984-85; 1988-89; 1994-99. We need many from Mt. St. Joseph Academy and Proctor and West Rutland High Schools.

QUARTERLY BACK ISSUES SALE

The sale of back issues of the Quarterly will continue until further notice. The Society has had a wonderful reponse to the 1999 sale at one dollar each plus shipping and handling of one dollar per order. Keep the orders coming.

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 Peservation 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

Michael F. Dwyer - 483-6993

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

USING THE SOCIETY LIBRARY

The Library is located on the second floor of the Society. Upon request materials there are available for use on the main floor. A notebook listing the document box holdings is available on the main floor. The Society's holdings include over 1,000 volumes of books, over 125 boxes of documents and numerous maps. There are also over 2,000 photographic images. The Society has a modest collection of artifacts including textiles. There are nearly 300 bound volumes of Rutland newspapers. These are stored in the basement as they are a collection of material that is generally dying from the acids in the papers. Fortunately these have all been microfilmed and microfilm copies are available at the Rutland Free Library.

Research on any historical topic needs to answer the question of "who". The sources for information about people are numerous. One of the easiest and quickest to use, particularly if you have an approximate date, is the city directory. The Society has a collection of Rutland directories from 1867 to 1986. It also has a collection of Rutland telephone books from 1974 to the present. The Rutland Free Library has Federal Census records from 1791 to 1920 on microfilm although these can be very time consuming to use. On the other hand they can be very rewarding in information. The Society has cemetery inscription books published by Margaret Jenks for Rutland, West Rutland, and Pittsford and Proctor. One of the most intriguing sources at the Society is the Rutland City Public School attendance books. These provide teacher and student names for all classes of all the public schools from 1899 to 1963. The high school yearbook collection is also a great source of "people" information. There are Rutland Grand List property tax records year by year from 1815 to 1870 which are on microfilm at the Rutland Free Library. These are easier to use than the census records because they are in alphabetical order. Dawn Hance's *Early Families of Rutland* is particularly useful for seeking people before 1850.

The Rutland Historical Society is not a county society but services the area of the "old" Town of Rutland which today includes Rutland City and Town and Proctor and West Rutland. The Society Library, however, does include Smith and Rann's *History of Rutland County* (1886), Hemenway's multi-volume *Vermont Gazetteer* with index and Child's *Rutland County Gazetteer and Directory* (1881).

The Society's collections include the Beer's Atlas Map of 1869 which shows the locations of homes and the names of the individuals, the Scott's Map of 1854 which offers similar information, a map of Socialboro [a New York Grant that included Rutland] from 1771 and the Plan of Rutland [New Hampshire Grants] probably done in 1794. The Sanborn Insurance maps of Rutland give the size and material of buildings as well as their location. Used in conjunction with a directory, these can be very informative about a building and its occupants. The 1890 map is currently on display. A 1925 map is available. The Society Library has Rutland Town and City Annual Reports and reports from the village of Rutland and the Towns of Proctor and West Rutland. Published tax assessments for the City of Rutland are also available.

The Society Library includes numerous account books and ledgers, a collection of Rutland trainmen's notebooks, some hotel registers and numerous scrapbooks and photo albums. There are minute books of some Rutland organizations and diaries and collections of letters. There are a number of books providing military rosters for various wars and a set of Vermont Law books. The Society's serials collection includes *The Vermonter*, *Vermont Life* and *Vermont History*.

The Society Library is not a circulating library but there are copy facilities available at five cents per copy. The copy machine also produces excellent copies of photographs.

A TRIBUTE TO ELEANOR ELWERT

The following poem was written by Elaine Purdy and presented at the Annual Meeting as a tribute to Eleanor Elwert for 30 years of service to the Society.

Although we've honored her before
We feel we owe her so much more
So here's a toast to Eleanor.
She served as president during transition
When dreams of a new building came to
fruition.

Her work in the library and in collections
Is done with diligence and affection
And it is said she has a knack
For naming every artifact.
When historic buildings start to fall
She's there before the wrecking ball
Snapping pictures to place in the archives
To record where our forefathers lived out their
lives.

Gardener, hostess, she wears many hats
Answering false alarms and battling bats.
Acclaim, affection, we hold in store
For friend and colleague, Eleanor.

FIRST NIGHT SINGALONG

This year the Society will present a Singalong at the new Rutland railroad station at 6:00 pm. and again at 7:00 p.m. This is a part of the First Night program on 31 Dec 1999.

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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

VISITS AND VISITORS

This Fall has been a busy season for Society members. Lloyd Davis, Carmine Pacca and Jim Davidson visited the 6th Grade at the Rutland Intermediate School to present programs. Later these groups came to the Society for a walking tour by Carmine Pacca and a newspaper research exercise by Jim Davidson and Elaine Purdy. The Vermont History class of the Community College of Vermont came for a three-hour program which included a walking tour by Carmine Pacca, a presentation on research by Jim Davidson and a slide program by Jim Davidson and Elaine Purdy. Jim Davidson, representing the Society, was invited to present a slide show on Rutland's past and a brief lecture on "The Point of History" at the College of St. Joseph. Jim Davidson also made slide presentations for the Twilight Homemakers Club at the Godnick Center and the Rutland Singles Club at the Fellowship Hall of the Grace Church. A Cub Scout group was also hosted at the Society with a program. Jim Davidson made a visit to the art classes at the Rutland High School in coordination with the Rutland City flag project and was invited to appear on the WSYB noon talk show in connection with the Society's Solomon Jewett program.

IT'S TIME TO RENEW

As the old year leaves us it's time to renew your membership in the Society, unless you happen to be one of those who renewed for multiple years or chose to be a life member. A "99" on your mailing label means that it's time to renew again. As you prepare your check for membership, don't forget that membership gifts keep giving throughout the year. Why not give a friend a membership?

THE FACILITIES OF THE RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARE OPEN ON:

MONDAYS 6 - 9 PM
SATURDAYS 1 - 4 PM