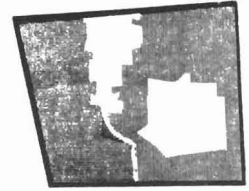


RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Serving the original Town of Rutland chartered in 1761 and now composed of Proctor, Rutland City, Rutland Town and West Rutland.

Newsletter



VOL. 7 NO. 2

96 Center St., POB 6473, Rutland, VT 05702

FALL 1990

BUILDING FUND UPDATE

We are still in need of donations to the Building Fund and are happy to acknowledge the following contributions. All are from Rutland unless noted otherwise:

- \$100 - American Legion Post #31
- " - Henry M. Carris
- " - Computerized Business Services Inc.
- " - Mr. & Mrs. Richard C. Rose
- " - Donald P. Swan
- \$50 - Aronson & Olson Inc.
- " - Chittenden Bank
- " - Conway's Antiques and Decor
- " - Sanborn Partridge, Proctor
- \$25 or less
- Abatiell Foundation Trust
- Arthur's Auto
- Book King
- Joseph R. Bove Agency
- Casella Waste Management Inc.
- Corsones & Corsones
- Lester Hartmann
- Keyser, Crowley & Meub
- Patricia M. Phillips, Brookline, MA
- Marjorie & Kenneth Yates, Hanover, PA

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Rutland Historical Society was held October 25th at the Gilbert Godnick Senior Citizens Center. The program was part of the Recreation Department and the Society's weekly series on Rutland history.

Professor Richard Diehl and a large group of his music students from Castleton College played a Diehl arrangement of Prof. George Mietzke's spirited "Triumphal March". Mietzke was a leading musician, choral director and composer in Rutland from c.1860-1890. Prof. Diehl spoke of his research on Mietzke.

A brief business meeting was held prior to the program with annual reports from the chairman, president, secretary and treasurer followed by the election of officers and directors.

Officers elected for the coming year:
President - Eleanor J. Elwert
Vice President - Jean C. Ross
Secretary - Ernest Hathaway
Treasurer - Thomas Carpenter

Directors for 2 years: Claire Savage, Arch Todd and Morris Tucker. For 1 year: James Davidson

Directors continuing: Joanna Seward and Don Bordeau. Retiring after exceptional service as a Director and Board Chairman was Herbert G. Ogden, Jr.

Despite not yet being in a home of our own we are not inactive. The board meets monthly, genealogy inquiries never cease and sometimes we can help there. Regularly we are asked if we have pictures of some particular building or event and many times we can help.

For example, Pleasant Manor Nursing Home wanted help in planning an exhibit area of historical material relating to the building when it was Rutland Hospital and they were pleased with our suggestions.

We have also picked the contractor who will do the major work in renovating Nickwackett - Giancola Construction Corporation. Permits are still in the process of being reviewed but our hopes are high.



Loyalty Day Parade, May 6, 1990
Float prepared by Joanna Seward

VISITORS

The Editor had the pleasure of meeting three people with Rutland connections recently who were here rekindling memories.

■ Arthur Hayward of West Hartford, CT whose ancestors owned the Hayward Farm - later the State Police Barracks opposite Howard Johnson on S. Main St. - had found out about "Rutland in Retrospect" and wanted five copies. It has long been out of print.

■ Robert B. Grinnell of Paoli, PA visited in August. He grew up here and had many memories to share. His grandmother was Dr. Mary Vail Grinnell who was the first licensed woman doctor in Vermont. His father was Dr. William H. Grinnell who lived at 92 Church St. When the Church St. home was sold one of the items in it was a framed photo portrait of Dr. Mary Grinnell which was eventually passed on to our society.

The society gave the framed portrait to the Castleton Medical College Museum as the more appropriate repository. In the past our society has given the Medical Museum a large glass display case and an invalid's wheelchair.

Intrigued by the information that she was the first woman doctor in Vermont the editor looked up her death date in City Hall records and then found her obituary in the Rutland Herald microfilms at the Library.

She died July 7, 1914 of acute appendicitis at age 59 years. Her home and office were at 22 1/2 Merchants Row. She had graduated in 1883 from the Women's Medical College of Philadelphia. She had studied with Dr. Middleton Goldsmith of Rutland for five years and also at the Women's Medical College of New York.

To prove that Dr. Mary Grinnell was the first licensed woman doctor in Vermont Mr. Grinnell brought the framed certificate to Rutland. It shows the number "1" as well as a printed "him" crossed out and "her" written in on the certificate. It was dated 13 May 1887.

Mr. Grinnell noted that his grandmother made house calls by horseback in the outlying areas. She had a second horse which carried her pharmacy and medical equipment. She practiced here for 34 years.

■ The third meeting with Cornelia Ripley Sherman and her daughter Sally Taylor, both of Mill Valley, CA, was just a delightful round of answering their questions about the Ripley houses and helping them find their way around Rutland. They really didn't expect to see the houses still standing yet they are being lived in.

Cornelia Sherman is the daughter of Thomas Emerson Ripley author of "Vermont Boyhood". He was the son of William Young Warren Ripley and the nephew of Edward Hastings Ripley of whom more later in this Newsletter.

Cornelia Sherman's husband, F. Barreda Sherman, carried on a voluminous correspondence with his father-in-law which he had privately printed in 1988. It covers the period from 1931-1956 and has many observations on world affairs as well as business dealings. It is every bit as literary and fascinating as the correspondence of Edward Hastings Ripley during the Civil War.

RUTLAND GENEALOGY BOOK

"Early Families of Rutland, Vermont" by Marvel Swan and Donald Swan and edited by Dawn Hance is the first volume of our projected history of Rutland. It has more than met our expectations. It is exceptionally well illustrated and two large maps are included. It is still available in hard cover for \$35 and soft cover at \$32 plus \$3.50 postage and handling. Don't miss buying a copy as so many did with "Rutland in Retrospect". It is hard to believe but some natives are only now learning of "R in R" 12 years after the first of three printings.

The next volume of our Rutland history is already typeset. It covers the period of 1760-1860 and hopefully will be published by next May. To make it another prize winner we are in need of pictures from that period which were not used in "R in R". Can any of you help us out?

"The Historic Architecture of Rutland County" by Curtis Johnson and Elsa Gilbertson and published by the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation is available at Book King.

Another book - by a society member - is "Adventuring into Vermont's Past" by Faye Smith Moulton. There are twelve stories dealing with people, places and events in the Rutland area. Fortunately, from the author's point of view, all copies are sold and she does not plan to reprint.

THE CIVIL WAR

The TV documentary on the Civil War by Ken Burns was probably watched by many of our members. It was so exciting to have General Edward Hastings Ripley quoted many times about his experiences in the war. In case you were not aware of it "Vermont General" edited by Otto Eisenshimel (1960) is partly the source of the quotations used in the documentary.

From the book's Preface: "The reader will find these war letters quite out of the ordinary. They not only will provide rare source material for students of the American Civil War but will be enjoyed by all readers who appreciate high grade literary entertainment... There were over 400 letters written by him and many more written to him." (at the Rutland Free Library)

How prophetic! 30 years later they were indeed part of a splendid Civil War documentary. The letters went back and forth between EHR and the family at home in Center Rutland. One wonders how he managed to write so often in the midst of recruiting and training his company and moving from one post to another. From May 1862 through May 1865 was his period of service which included the engagements at Harper's Ferry, Newport Barracks, Chapin's Farm and Fair Oaks.

To cap it all he led the Union forces into Richmond April 3, 1865, and took charge of putting out the fires set by the Rebels, thereby saving the city and restoring order. He even saw to it that Mrs. Robert E. Lee was able to return to her Richmond home and later protected General Lee from the hordes of curious streaming in from the north. Ripley had recently been made a Brigadier General and was all of 25 years old.

PROGRAMS

The society, in cooperation with the Rutland Recreation Dept. has again sponsored a fall series of historical programs at the Gilbert Godnick Senior Center.

The October 4th one was about the War of Rebellion with Dr. David Cross and Dennis Charles making presentations. Many artifacts of the period were on display including a Union soldier's uniform worn by Charles. The original copy of the old soldier's advice "To the Volunteers" is reproduced here courtesy of Mr. Charles. Printed in 1862 it was especially sized to fit into letters sent to soldiers.

TO THE VOLUNTEERS.

AN OLD SOLDIER'S ADVICE.

1. Remember that in a campaign more men die from sickness than by the bullet.

2. Line your blanket with one thickness of brown drilling. This adds but four ounces in weight and doubles the warmth.

3. Buy a small India rubber blanket (only \$1 50) to lay on the ground, or to throw over your shoulders when on guard duty during a rain storm. Most of the eastern troops are provided with these. Straw to lie upon is not always to be had.

4. The best military hat in use is the light colored soft felt; the crown being sufficiently high to allow space for air over the brain. You can fasten it up as a continental in fair weather, or turn it down when it is wet or very sunny.

5. When it is very hot, to avoid melting, or sun-stroke, wet your pocket handkerchief and put it in the top of your hat on the crown of the head.

6. To cure and prevent sore feet, rub bar-soap on the inside of your stockings.


7. Avoid the use of ardent spirits, which are more injurious in a hot than cold climate.

8. Let your beard grow, so as to protect the throat and lungs.

9. Keep your entire person clean; this prevents fevers and bowel complaints in warm climates. Wash your body each day if possible. Avoid strong coffee and oily meat. General Scott said that the too free use of these (together with neglect in keeping the body clean) cost many a soldier his life in Mexico.

10. A sudden check of perspiration by chilly or night air often causes fever and death. When thus exposed, do not forget your blanket.

11. Put this in your pocket and read it daily.

 The above directions having been submitted to me, I heartily concur in the advice and directions.

C. B. COVENTRY, M. D.,
Ex-President of N. Y. State Medical Society.

HOW IT'S DONE — SOMETIMES

In planning our publications it is often difficult to find necessary or appropriate illustrations for the work. The recent Quarterly on the Ratti family proved to be a major challenge.

The Vermont Marble Co. was contacted for the date and a picture of the bas relief of the Last Supper carved by Cesare Ratti but with no luck.

The next step was to see if there were any descendants still in the area. The two Ratti families in Proctor had no information about the Cesare Rattis but suggested trying their relatives in Brattleboro. Robert Ratti was contacted but, regretfully, none of the three Ratti families there knew the whereabouts of Cesare Ratti's descendants.

Information in Gino Ratti's account of the Ratti family indicated the bas relief was in a church in Whitehall. But neither the Whitehall Historical Society nor the Catholic church there were able to locate an altar piece that answered the description.

The Baccei history of the Italians in Proctor, available at the Proctor library, notes that Gino had been principal of the Pittsford High School at the age of 24. No high school annuals were available for that period at the Pittsford Historical Society to verify this. Gino went on to earn a Ph.D in Romance Languages and was on the faculty of Butler University in Indiana according to Baccei.

A call to the University in Indianapolis was relayed finally to Gisela Terrell who is in charge of the archives. She was able to provide information about his career at Butler, the name of the place in Florida to which he had retired after 31 years at Butler and the picture of him on page 47 of the Quarterly.

The Palmetto, Florida directory assistance found just one Ratti listed. It was Mary Margaret Ratti, the widow of one of Gino Ratti's sons and it was she who provided us with the picture of the bas relief of the Last Supper.

Mrs. Ratti also contacted a grand niece, a college student in Boston, who had a family photo album. Eventually we received all we could have hoped for: a picture of Cesare himself for the cover of the Quarterly and a family group picture.

The Quarterly was later in reaching the membership than we had hoped but the detective work was a challenge and clearly worth the effort.

The final Quarterly for 1990 will soon go to the printer. In preparing it we have had contact with Mrs. Dorcas Chaffee of Lyme, NH who provided many of the portraits used in "Early Families of Rutland, Vermont" Her connections include the Gove, Thrall and Chaffee families and we will feature the Jesse Gove family in this last issue.

Jean C. Ross

NECROLOGY



Myra Bagley - Died August 13, 1990. At 102 years she was the oldest member of Grace Congregational United Church of Christ.

Bennett D. Bell - Died March 19, 1990 at age 85. A founder of Kinney, Pike, Bell and Connor, the insurance agency. Active in many civic affairs, he was a charter member of the society as is his widow, Miriam.

Gilbert G. Godnick - Died May 21, 1990, 63 years old. A Life member of the society, Gilly was incomparable.

Bernice S. Keefe - Died March 26, 1987, she was a Life member.

Barbara Mellow - Died May 13, 1990 at 86 years of age. A charter member of the society she worked for 45 years in the commercial department of New England Telephone. She was very active at Grace Congregational Church.

Anna McDevitt - Died January 28, 1990 aged 96 years. A teacher for many years in the public schools, she was a fountain of information on Rutland people and events.

The society has taken the lead in planning for the 1991 celebration of Vermont's Bicentennial of Statehood in Rutland. Presently three major activities are being planned. A Costume Ball to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the ball that was held in Rutland March 8, 1791 at the time Vermont became the 14th State. There will probably be another ball or dance for the younger crowd as well as a ball in West Rutland.

In June a big Festival with ethnic food, bands, games, races, exhibits, etc., etc. at the fairgrounds and no admission charge. In the fall we plan historical treasure hunts for adults and children.

Then in November of 1992 we will celebrate the Centennial of Rutland becoming a city!

New Life members - H. Greg Arthur of Rutland
Robert B. Grinnell, Paoli, PA
Contributing member- Dorcas D. Chaffee, Lyme, NH

Suggestions, ideas, helpers are welcome to come forward. James Davidson, 773-7525, is Bicentennial Chairman.

About Memberships and Addresses: Our membership year is from January - December. We will send you a membership renewal form in December for the 1991 dues. It would be very helpful to have a prompt renewal. In addition we need a prompt notice of your address changes. Quite a few of you winter in the south and we often have to redeem "Address Correction Notices" which means you did not receive your Quarterly. To mail a replacement first class usually costs .45 or .65 cents.

A Bicentennial Quilt has been proposed that would involve having each of the 251 towns in the state contribute an 8 1/2 inch square block with a theme appropriate to their town. It can be pieced, applique, stenciled, etc. When all the pieces are in Jan Snelling will join them together with sashing and then there will be a big quilting bee! Do you remember the beautiful quilts that were made for the 1776 Bicentennial? The society had the privilege of exhibiting many of them.

Dues categories are:

Member_____	\$10	Sustaining_____	\$125
Senior Citizen, 62 & up_____	\$ 8	Business_____	\$125
Student, 18 & under_____	\$ 8	Life_____	\$200
Contributor_____	\$20	Memorial gift	\$200
Sponsor_____	\$50		

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RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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