

NEWS FROM NICKWACKETT



VOL. 18 NO. 2

THE RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

JULY 2011

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CIVIL WAR EXHIBIT AT THE SOCIETY

The current exhibit at the Historical Society building is devoted to the Civil War. With limited space available, it was decided to focus on Rutland area citizens who participated.

The first of two large display boards looks at how the country at large affected the local area during these turbulent times, beginning with information about John Brown's body coming to Rutland on the way to his final resting place, with his widow staying overnight at the Bardwell, and ending with information about Jefferson Davis, and later his wife, traveling through Rutland after the war on their way to Canada. In-between these accounts are other examples of the country at large involving or affecting local citizens. An excerpt from the diary of a Vermont soldier describes Rutland area soldiers marching through New York City as they headed south.

The second display board includes information on the "local cast" of participants in the war from the well-known Ripleys to lesser-known soldiers. One particularly touching inclusion was the diary entry of one soldier followed by the diary's final entry, written by the soldier's brother to make note of his death. A resolution about the soldier, who was only 19 at the time of his death, written by his former classmates, and printed in the Rutland Herald, further drives home the impact the war had on many local families.

Also included in the exhibit is the "Revised Roster" of all local citizens who served in the war—in a display case that allows for each page of the roster

to be viewed—as well as a collection of books that touch on the topic, including a 2-volume history of Vermont in the Civil War and a book by one of the Ripleys that gives an account of his actions during the war. While these books are not available for individual perusal, information is given as to how to locate their texts online, read them there, and even download them free.

The final piece in the exhibit is a large stained glass window from the Memorial Hall (current site of the Rutland City post office) along with photographs of the men for whom the Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall Posts No. 12 & No. 14 was named. There is also a photo of the area's remaining Civil War veterans taken from a 1914 film.

The public is welcome to visit the exhibit during the Society's operating hours and a member will always be on hand to assist with any questions that may arise. There is a free printed exhibit guide available.

HISTORY DETECTIVES

The "History Detectives" episode that was filmed at the Historical Society and Chuck Piotrowski's house earlier this year aired on Vermont Public Television on Tuesday July 19 and Thursday July 21st!

The episode is available as video on demand at vpt.org. "History Detectives" episodes are also available for viewing on the PBS Video Portal (<http://video.pbs.org>) and as PBS mobile apps for iPad and iPhone.

“HISTORICALLY SPEAKING” ON CHANNEL 15 IN RUTLAND

The Society produces a new program each month. The series includes interviews and historical pictorial material in a rather flexible TV magazine format. The programs can be seen Wednesdays at 4:00 PM, Thursdays at 1:30 PM, and Fridays at 7:30 PM. DVDs of past episodes can be obtained from 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. Personal pickup is available. Call (802) 747-0151 for further information. Consult the Society website (rutlandhistory.com) for a complete listing of past shows.

To watch the current or previous episode of “Historically Speaking” in streaming video on your computer: (1) go to the Society website (rutlandhistory.com), (2) click on “Historically Speaking,” and (3) click on the second paragraph which will link you to the Video On Demand Library on the PEG-TV website. In the search box at the top of the video player, type in “Historically Speaking” then click on the magnifying glass button to the right. You should get a choice of the two most recent programs.

Episode # 117 – “The Rutland Jewish Community”

Jacob Sherman was the guest presenter for this program. He offered a brief history of the early Jewish community including the various locations where they met before acquiring the old Baxter Library where the synagogue is currently located. He particularly discussed the growing role of the women in the Rutland Jewish community.

RUTLAND IN RETROSPECT ON CD

We are delighted to be able to offer a digital version on CD of the out of print book *Rutland in Retrospect*, originally published in 1978 by the Rutland Historical Society and Academy Books. It is 176 pages chocked full of old Rutland images, each with descriptive text. And don't forget, *Early Families of Rutland, Vermont* is also available on CD. Both are in PDF searchable file format. The cost of each book is \$20 including shipping and handling. Please send your check to Rutland Historical Society, 96 Center St., Rutland, VT 05701.

LONG RANGE PLANNING UPDATE

The Long Range Planning Committee has met twice since the Winter newsletter and has completed the draft version of a 3 Year Plan. They hope to approve it within the next few weeks and publish it soon after that.

COMMITTEE CORNER

Chairpersons

Building Committee
Mickey Kelly - 773-9402

Cemetery Committee
Chris Book - 773-6252

Collections Committee
Tom Carpenter - 773-3626

Exhibit Committee
Chuck Piotrowski - 770-4088

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
Helen Davidson - 773-7525

Society Historian
Mary Segale - 773-2326

**Technology and
Telecommunications
Committee**
Chuck Piotrowski - 770-4088

Website Committee
Doreen McCullough - 776-5232

President
Carolynn Ranftle - 855-8219

Board Chairperson
Clifford Giffin - 773-3743

SURVEY RESULTS

Thank you to all that provided us with feedback by taking our survey. We want to share the results, which are based on 53 survey respondents (28 online and 25 printed).

Top reasons for visiting the website were to take the survey (36%), to see what is available/new (21%), and family research (14%). Reasons for a physical visit to the society were family research (39%), and to buy quarterlies, see exhibits, and donate material (total 33%). Most people found all or some of what they were looking for in both. About one-third of all respondents watch the Society TV shows, with *Historically Speaking* being the favorite at 24%.

The website's most valuable features were *Quarterlies* (45%), *Tidbits* (35%), links and *Historically Speaking* (each 30%). The top items people would like to see on the website are *Photographs* (92%), *TV Programs*, *East/West Parish Records*, *Letters & Diaries* (each 48%), and *Directories*, (28%).

Age 65+ made up 84% of the printed survey respondents compared with 44% for online. 86% of the printed survey respondents indicated that their membership depended on receiving printed publications; whereas 92% of online respondents would still consider membership if publications were electronic.

Percentages are based on the number of people responding to a particular question.

Respondents had many positive comments as well as suggestions, each of which will be taken into consideration. The survey will continue to be available if you wish to participate.



WEBSITE REPORT

Recently there have been two major additions to the content of the Rutland Historical Society website (rutlandhistory.com):

(1) "Rutland Tidbits" – Starting June 10, 1999, Helen K. Davidson wrote a weekly column called "Tidbits from Then and Now" for the Rutland Historical Society. The individual articles were published in "Sam's Good News" a weekly free Rutland area newspaper. The first 600 articles are organized in groups of 50. Each 50 is searchable within the group. These can be found under the tab "Rutland Tidbits."

(2) "The Village of Rutland Reports (1868 – 1893)" give a report of activities within what would become the City of Rutland. These are in a searchable PDF but the viewer is cautioned that with old type fonts the searches may not always work. These reports can be found under the "Historical Resources" tab.

The Website Committee is working on some reorganization items within the website. Viewers will note that the "Historical Miscellany" tab is now called "Historical Resources." The new tab name seemed to be clearer as to the contents and the contents have not changed. New improvements will be coming periodically.

DONATING DIGITAL PHOTOS

Over the years we've saved our photos in a format representative of the times. As a result the Society has some wonderful images spanning 150 years of Rutland history. But today, most of us rarely print our photos. They remain on digital cameras and computers. Eventually, we may delete them to make room for more, or they are lost when we replace our computer or camera or phone. What does this mean for the Historical Society? If we don't start capturing these images now, future generations will not be able to enjoy them as we have enjoyed photos saved by our predecessors. Please consider sending (email or US post) or dropping off at the Society your digital images of identified or identifiable Rutland (Rutland Town, Rutland City, West Rutland, or Proctor) places, events, or people. As with other donations, they will be come the property of the Society upon donation. The email address to use is president@rutlandhistory.com.

SOCIETY OUTREACH

April 6 – Jim and Helen Davidson offered the “What’s It?” program for Triad. Triad is a program of information for Seniors. The “What’s It?” program challenges the audience to identify objects from the past and their use.

April 16 – Bill Powers conducted a historical hike and talk on Hawk Hill in Brandon.

April 28 – Jim Davidson attended the first meeting of the advisory group for the UVM Newspaper Digitization Project that was held in Burlington.

May 1 – The Society presented a float in the Loyalty Day Parade that honored Rutland men of the American Revolution and the Civil War.

May 9 – Jim and Helen Davidson attended the PEG-TV Annual Meeting.

May 10 – Bob Ranftle represented the Society as liaison at the meeting of the Rutland Sons of Union Veterans in preparation for their Civil War Program on May 21.

May 10 – Jim Davidson, Carolynn Ranftle, and Clifford Giffin provided an introduction to the collections of the Society and a tour of its facilities for the staff of the Rutland Free Library.

May 12 – Bill Powers helped prepare a presentation and provided visual graphics support for a presentation given on dowsing by Clarence Decker to the Chittenden Historical Society.

May 14 – Jim Davidson manned a Society exhibit at the public program of the Rutland Railway Association at their Center Rutland home.

May 19 – Bill Powers led a hike to the 1957 Army airplane crash in Chittenden just off the Long Trail. He provided an account of the recovery and the subsequent finding of the crash site 52 years later. This was for the benefit of Michael Kruse, a reporter for the St. Petersburg, Florida Times, who wrote a feature for the Father’s Day edition of the Times regarding the crash and the subsequent finding.

May 19 – Tom Giffin made a presentation on old cemeteries and their care to an LDS church group in Clarendon that is planning a cemetery restoration project.

May 22 – Jim Davidson made a presentation on how local historical societies are changing at the Tinmouth Old Firehouse for the Tinmouth Historical and Genealogical Society. He and Helen Davidson concluded with a presentation of the “What’s It?” program.

June 13 – Carmine Pacca and Jim Davidson made a presentation at the Rutland Intermediate School on the American Revolution.

June 14 – Jim and Helen Davidson attended the Rutland Chamber of Commerce mixer held at the PEG-TV studios. Helen won a \$75 gift certificate from Backroad Bus Tours for the Rutland Historical Society.



DON'T FORGET YOUR 2011 DUES

DUES SCHEDULE

\$8 Student, \$8 Senior (62+), \$10 Regular,
\$20 Contributor, \$50 Sponsor,
\$200 Lifetime (Individuals only)

THE FACILITIES OF THE RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARE OPEN ON:

MONDAYS 6-9 PM

SATURDAYS 1-4 PM

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