$NEWS\ FROM$ NICKWACKETT

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RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2003

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CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONING PROJECT MOVES **FORWARD**

The plan of the Society to install central air conditioning on the main and upper floors of the Society has Donations are tax deductible. received a huge boost from the receipt of two donation checks. Each check was for \$1,000. For some time now, SPRING PROGRAMS the Society has been setting aside The money on a monthly basis in a announced three programs for Spring. able to assist in this project through a put photos, negatives protecting the collections.

competitive quote which uses new onto videotape. (See story about techniques that allow for the ELMO purchase on page four.) elimination of unsightly ductwork. On WED 7 MAY - Michael Sherman, the space. The cooling unit will be journal placed on a pad outside the building present a program on building through pipes hidden in the This program stairwell. The system will be much through quieter that the current window air Vermont Humanities Council. conditioners and nearly invisible to WED 28 MAY - The Society will offer of the building.

The Society will be able to retire the program. current window air conditioners which will need replacement in the near and all will start at 7:00 pm.

future. The central air cooling system should have a longer life than the window units. unsightly and eliminate the current seasonal storage and re-installation problems. If you would like to help in this project, please contact Tom Carpenter, the Society Treasurer.

Program Committee maintenance and building bugetary WED 23 APR - Karen Sanborn, account. That fund should cover all Coordinator of Media Services at but \$3500 of the estimate. With the Castleton State College, will present a above donations the Society is within workshop for the general public on \$1,500 of its donation goal. Members how to use the ELMO (a visual and friends of the Society who may be presenter) which allows the user to donation will find the project a very videotape. Attendees are invited to worthy one as it will improve the bring items of family memorabilia and efficiency of cooling the building and a blank videotape. These will be used to demonstrate the wonderful possi-Society has received a bilities for recording family history

each floor there will be two outlets past director of the Vermont Hiswhich will disburse cool air throughout torical Society and editor of the VHS History", "Vermont Piping will pump the coolant into the Influenza in Vermont (1918-1919)". of assistance

patrons of the Society. Leasehold a panel presentation by Korean War improvement permission has been veterans to recognize the 50th annigranted by the City of Rutland, owner versary of the Korean War armistice. Michael F. Dwyer will moderate the

All programs will be at the Society

"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. Videotapes of the following episodes can be obtained from Channel 15, 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 # 43 - Tom Carpenter hosts Michael F. Dwyer in a program on "Jewish Immigration To Rutland". The program describes the background of Jewish immigration to the Rutland area from Eastern Europe. It includes some brief commentary on individual families that came to West Rutland and Rutland in the early 20th Century. Mr. Dwyer again directs the viewer on how to find such ancestors on the Ellis Island web site. He notes some of the problems that may be encountered with names. This is the fifth program on genealogy and ethnic groups in the "Historically Speaking" series.

Episode # 44 - Jim Davidson hosts Tim Grover, Associate Professor of Geology at Castleton State College. Professor Grover describes the geologic history of the Rutland County area from 500 million years ago to a more recent time of two million years. He explains what happened during these early geologic times and the causes of the changes that took place. His presentation includes a discussion of the formation of the many minerals under the surface of the earth in Vermont. The mining potential in Vermont is stunning. The present historic era of about 2,000 years pales in comparison to the over four billion years of the earth's life.

SOCIETY OUTREACH

In January Jim Davidson provided a brief walking tour for the Downtown Rutland Partnership on the 13th as they hosted a tour group that was visiting Killington. The next day he also hosted a brief tour for a tour planners group that also was visiting Killington and included Downtown Rutland in their itinerary. Cold weather truncated the tours, but in spite of the cold, there was warm and valuable conversation within the confines of Downtown Rutland buildings.

In March Tom Carpenter visited a kindergarten class at Christ the King School to show them samples of early coins and bills. The same month, Jim Davidson visited two 6th Grade classes at the Rutland Intermediate School to provide information about how and why the original town of Rutland broke into four municipalities.

COMMITTEE CORNER

Chairpersons

Archives CommitteeTom Carpenter - 773-3626

Artifacts Committee Ann Glagola - 775-1302

Building Committee Morris Tucker - 773-7356

Exhibit Committee Jim Davidson - 773-7525

Finance Committee
Tom Carpenter - 773-3626

Historic Preservation Committee David Nettleton - 438-2689

Library Committee Ann Glagola - 775-1302

Membership Committee Mary Segale - 773-2326

Personnel Committee Mary Segale - 773-2326

Program Committee Michael F. Dwyer - 483-6993

Publications Committee Jake Sherman - 775-2784

Research Committee Patty Pickett - 438-2759

Society Historian Mary Segale - 773-2326

President Helen Davidson - 773-7525

Board Chairperson Michael F. Dwyer - 483-6993

SPONSOR MEMBERS FOR 2002

The following either became SPONSOR members in the year 2002 or renewed their previous sponsorship. Others made gifts of \$50 or more in the year 2002.

Banknorth, N.A.

Casella Waste Systems, Inc.

Chittenden Bank Clifford Funeral Home M/M John P. Crowley Dr. Francis D'Auria

Downtown Rutland Partnership Hugh Duffy Coal Company, Inc

Eleanor J. Elwert

Factory Point National Bank Alvin Figiel & Joan Wing M/M William F. Gillam Jr.

M/M Fred Harvie

Heritage Family Credit Union

Drs. Alexander Herzen & Gordon Kelly

Holiday Inn of Rutland

Initial Ideas

Irving Oil Corporation M/M Lee Keirstead M/M Richard Lavictoire

Anthony Marro

M/M William Mather Jr.

Merchants Bank William Notte

Nimtz, Berryhill & Figiel

Owner Services Patricia O. Pool Rutland Herald Rutland Products Inc.

Death and Death and Charakers

Rutland Regional Chamber of Commerce

Sharp Offset Printing Smalley Contractors

Reiko Tuttle

Elizabeth A. Vanstrom

Donald Adams and Robert Cassidy became new Life Members of the Society in 2002.

FROM FANTASY TO FACTS

In the last month the Society has become involved with two research requests that were international in scope. In one case the request for information regarded a horse race from Galveston, Texas, to Rutland, Vermont, in 1886. Our research failed to find any contemporary evidence, whatsoever, about the race and its conclusion in Rutland. This corroborated the research of folks in Galveston, who also failed to find any evidence of the beginning of the race. No contemporary evidence in any other place substantiated that such a race ever took place.

From here The Long Riders' Guild, an international organization dedicated to documenting long range endurance horse races, discovered that the "hero" of the Texas to Rutland race, a Frank T. Hopkins, also claimed to have won a supposed 3,000 mile race across the Arabian Desert. It goes without saying, that Frank won both races. However, the tales of adventure of this "hero" of the West turn out to all be fantasy, albeit fascinating fantasy.

The fact that Touchstone Pictures is planning to release a film called "Hidalgo" which purports that these races are based on historic fact, is of concern to historians everywhere. For those who are interested in the details of the adventures of Frank T. Hopkins, take a look at the web site of The Long Riders' Guild which can be found on the internet at www.thelongridersguild.com. Click on the opening image and select the "Hopkins Hoax" item. It is a fascinating story of how historians have disproved what was purported to be fact. It also has a lesson for all of us. Beware of stories that aren't supported by primary evidence.

In the second case, the Mayor of Rutland City received a letter from France requesting information about a Rutland boy who was killed in the crash of a B-17 in August of 1944 in France during World War II. Fortunately the Society was able to track down a surviving family member and, with her help, to find news items about the real exploits of a real hero, Frank O. Thomas. A French community plans a monument to commemorate the crash of this plane.

So whether the Society is helping to document facts or to uncover fantasies, local history can have an international reach. It is encouraging to the Society to know that its work has wide-ranging value.

SOCIETY PURCHASES ELMO

The Society has purchased an ELMO. What in the world is an ELMO, you may ask, and why would the Society want to have one? Well the ELMO is an acronym for a visual presenter. Still in the dark? A visual presenter is a piece of equipment that enables the user to place a photo or a negative on its lighted table and the presenter's television camera is able to transfer the image onto videotape. Even an object like a coin or a pin can have its image transferred to videotape. The ELMO also allows extreme blowups of the images placed before its camera. For example a stamp or coin can be blown up to fill a television screen. Negatives can be viewed as positives and blown up without creating a positive print. Although the majority of images in the society's collections are black and white, the ELMO can reproduce color images like maps etc. in color.

For some time the Society has made use of this equipment at the Castleton State College Media Center but have always thought how nice it would be to have the equipment in house. An on-line sale of a new ELMO at 25% of original cost caught the attention of Board member Karen Sanborn. Treasurer Tom Carpenter consulted with President Helen Davidson who polled Board members and within hours Tom had made the purchase.

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It is the intention of the Society to make this equipment available for use by the public for family history tapes or historical topics. Many of you have seen results of the equipment in segments on "Historically Speaking".

DANCE AT MEADOWS/GABLES

On Valentine's Day the Society provided an evening of recorded dance music for the residents of the Meadows and the Gables. The program featured music from the 1950s and the 1960s. Over 60 people enjoyed conversation, dancing and an excellent buffet.

EVEN FLOWERS HAVE A HISTORY

Two master gardeners who are preparing a program on Victorian Rutland plantings consulted the Society's photo collection for examples for their slide show. The Society arranged an opportunity for the filming of appropriate slides.

LOYALTY DAY PARADE

The 40th Annual Loyalty Day Parade will be held in Rutland on Sunday, the 4th of May. As always the parade will kick-off at 2:00 pm. The Society is making plans to participate as usual. This year the parade is dedicated to honoring all those who volunteer time and effort to make a better America.

IF YOU HAVE AN
"02" ON YOUR
MAILING LABEL
IT'S TIME TO RENEW

DUES SCHEDULE

Sponsor \$50.00 Students \$8.00 Contributing \$20.00 (18 & under)

Regular \$10.00 Senior citizens \$8.00 (62 & up)

Life Membership (Individuals only)

Memorial Membership \$200.00

\$200.00

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