

# NEWS FROM NICKWACKETT

VOL. 7 NO. 4 RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2000

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## ANNUAL MEETING

On 19 October the Society held its annual meeting at the Holiday Inn. The Holiday Inn provided meeting space in their Frost Room as a courtesy. Prior to the meeting they also provided a discounted dinner package for persons attending the annual meeting. Members had an opportunity to view over 60 photos reproduced from the collections of the Society that have been beautifully framed and now enhance the restaurant walls. Prior to the meeting the Society recorded still photos on video tape for a number of attendees. The program on Caring For and Sharing Family Photos by Michael Dwyer and Jim Davidson, with invaluable assistance by Karen Sanborn, was well-received.

## ELECTION RESULTS

At the Annual Business Meeting of the Rutland Historical Society on Thursday 19 October 2000, the following officers and directors were elected by the membership:

Pres. Helen Davidson  
V.P. Dorothy Whitford  
Sec. Jacob Sherman  
Treas. Thomas Carpenter

Dir. (2 yrs) David Nettleton  
Dir. (2 yrs) Karen Sanborn  
Dir. (2 yrs) Morris Tucker

Continuing Directors are:  
Alex Alexander, Michael Dwyer and  
Angela Hinchey.

Michael Dwyer has been elected by the Board as Chairperson.

## MENTOR MEETS WITH SOCIETY COMPUTER CATALOGERS

Last year before the Society entered upon the computerization of its collections catalog, Deborah Haynes of the Hood Museum at Dartmouth College provided a workshop on software and hardware selection. As a result of this workshop the Society's Computer Committee made a selection of Past Perfect as its software and a Dell computer as its hardware. The Archives and Library Committees have spent the year 2000 familiarizing themselves with the computer and the Past Perfect program. Each committee has begun the computerization of the Society's library books and document boxes. The Ad Hoc Glass Plate Committee is about to embark on cataloging the photographic collection.

On 15 November Deborah Haynes returned to spend a day with the above committees as a follow-up to the initial meeting a year ago. This follow-up meeting was prompted by the Rutland Society's initiative in leading the way among local societies in computerizing their catalogs. A number of questions and some good general discussion left the Society's committees feeling very positive about their entry into the computer world.

Both the initial meeting in 1999 and the follow-up meeting in 2000 were funded by the Vermont Museum and Gallery Alliance, of which the Society has been a long-time member.

## "HISTORICALLY SPEAKING" ON CHANNEL 15 IN RUTLAND

The Society continues to produce "Historically Speaking" on Channel 15. A new program is presented 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. Call (802) 747-0151 for further information.

Episode # 18 - Tom Carpenter presents an overview of the types of coins, stamps, and paper money which were used by the North and South prior to, during, and just after the Civil War. The coins shown include the half cent, various one, two, three, five, ten, twenty, twenty-five, and fifty cent pieces as well as dollar coins and various gold pieces. The Confederate one cent and fifty cent pieces complete the coins section. Various stamps, both United States and Confederate, are covered as well as various Internal Revenue stamps. Paper money of obsolete banks, United States currency and Confederate currency are depicted. The program includes some Canadian coins and paper money of the period.

Episode # 19 - The Ad Hoc TV Committee edited and shortened a 1994 video tape which documented the selecting, cutting and transporting of the 1994 National Christmas Tree from Vermont to Washington, D.C. The Green Mountain Bulldawg Chapter of the Antique Truck Club of America was prominently involved in the moving of the tree. The program is introduced by Tom Carpenter. Thanks to the original video, the program is replete with seasonal music and makes a very timely piece. The program concludes with seasonal best wishes from the Rutland Historical Society.

## SOCIETY HONORS ELAINE PURDY

At its Annual Meeting on 19 October at the Holiday Inn, the Rutland Historical Society honored Elaine Purdy, outgoing president, for her leadership and many contributions to the activities of the Society. Elaine is an active member of the Exhibit Committee, serves as Co-Editor of the Quarterly, and also has served wherever and whenever needed. She now has added the Archives Committee to her list of services to the Society.

## ELDER HOSTEL PROGRAM

On 19 and 25 September Jim and Helen Davidson presented a program based on the John Phair murder trial ["Rutland Murder Mystery - 1874", Quarterly XXIII No. 4] to the Elder Hostel Program sponsored by the Castleton Old Homestead. The program participants became a mock jury to discuss and judge the case based on a reading of the Quarterly article. The discussions and deliberations were a great hit with all.

## 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

David Nettleton - 438-2689

#### Library Committee

Ann Glagola - 775-1302

#### Membership Committee

Jim Davidson - 773-7525

#### Personnel Committee

Mary Segale - 773-2326

#### Program Committee

Michael F. Dwyer - 483-6993

#### Publications

Jake Sherman - 775-2784

#### Research

Dorothy Whitford - 773-3219

#### President

Helen Davidson - 773-7525

#### Society Historian

Mary Segale - 773-2326

## VISITS AND VISITORS

Charles Gibson, consultant to the Downtown Partnership, visited the Society on 18 September to get some visual sense of the community and its history. Mr. Gibson is working on a signage program for the Partnership. On 25 September, Jim Davidson represented the Society at a focus group meeting of local representatives at the Downtown Partnership.

Paula Sagerman, historic preservation consultant, visited the Society on 28 September as part of her research on the brick buildings on Columbian Avenue for Rutland West Neighborhood Housing Services.

The Becomings has recently purchased Fern Cottage which was the home of Zulma DeLacy Steele, daughter of Julia Dorr. Representatives of The Becomings have done a significant amount of research at the Society which has resulted in identifying the date of the construction of the building, the names of the local builders, and the architect. It was also found that sketches and floor plans for the building had been published in an architectural magazine, a copy of which was found. With persistence and a little luck, amazing results can occur from research.

Members of the Rutland Country Club visited the Society in connection with their plans to publish a book on the history of the Country Club in 2001, their 100th Anniversary. The Society was able to identify a number of photos that might be used in such a publication.

On 26 September Jim Davidson presented a slide program on Rutland History for the Twilight Homemakers Club of Rutland at the Society and on 20 October a similar program was presented for The Fortnightly, also at the Society. The program was also presented at Mountain View on 6 October and at The Maples on 12 December.

Rutland County and Bennington County local historical societies met at the Wallingford

Historical Society on 30 September. This was the initial regional meeting of local societies in the area. Jim and Helen Davidson represented the Rutland Historical Society. On 21 October Jim Davidson of the Rutland Historical Society and Bob West of the Manchester Historical Society represented Rutland and Bennington Counties at a meeting at the Vermont Historical Society. As a result of the Montpelier meeting there will be a presentation to the Rutland-Bennington group in January 2001 on the topic of obtaining grants.

Monthly musical visits to Eden Park by Jim Davidson continue.

On 24 October the Rutland Historical Society hosted a regional organizational meeting at the Society for Expo 2001. Although the Society is supportive of the Expo concept, it was recommended by the Exhibit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors that the Society would not try to participate in this year's event. In May the Society will be hosting the Annual Meeting of the League of Local Historical Societies in Rutland. It was felt that this and other summer activities might overextend the Society this year.

On 1 November the Society hosted the Vermont Historical Society's local discussion of the Generation of Change (1820-1850).

## PRESERVATION TRUST CELEBRATION

Beneficiaries of the Vermont Preservation Trust were invited to exhibit materials related to their particular grant as part of a gala anniversary at the Shelburne Farms on 10 September. This anniversary commemorated the past activities of the Preservation Trust. The Rutland Historical Society produced a booklet of photos showing the before and after facets of the Society's reconstruction and preservation of the Nickwackett Fire House as its home from 1989 to 1993. A copy of this booklet can be viewed at the Society at the Building Exhibit. The Preservation Trust provided a modest but important grant to the Society under its Third Century Program which assisted in the rehabilitation of the building.

## SINGALONG

The Society will again be a participant in the First Night program on 31 December 2000. The Society will present taped music by Mitch Miller. Words to the songs will be on handouts and the songs will be led by President Helen Davidson. The Singalong will be held at the Rutland railroad station at 6:00 p.m. and again at 7:00 p.m. Come enjoy a lively community sing.

## NEW EXHIBIT

In January the Exhibit Committee will open a new exhibit called "Seven Generations of Rutland's History". This exhibit will offer a photographic collage of some of the unique facets of Rutland's history from its first settlement in 1770 to 1980. This will include people, places and events that have made Rutland what it is today. Each generation represents a 30-year block of time. The exhibit will run until June.

## GLASS PLATES

The Society has received over 400 glass photographic negatives from an estate where the residue of the Brehmer photographic studio and its predecessors had been stored since the 1940s. The negatives include material from the early 20th Century and into the 1920s and 1930s. A few items go back to Rutland's first and second photographers of the Civil War era.

*NEWS FROM NICKWACKETT* is a quarterly newsletter produced by the Publications Committee of the Rutland Historical Society, 96 Center Street, Rutland, Vermont 05701-4023. Tel. (802) 775-2006. Jim Davidson - *Editor*

## 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

An Ad Hoc Glass Plate Committee has been working during the summer and the fall to inventory these items. The Committee will now work on having prints made of the most significant items and properly storing all the items. Any donations toward the cost of prints and storage containers will be gratefully received.

## PHOTO REPRODUCTION PROGRAM

The Society's Photo Reproduction Program is moving along in great style. Rutland historic photos can be seen at Applebee's, the Community College of Vermont, the Factory Point Bank, the Holiday Inn, and Sweet Tomato's and now a number of individuals and small businesses have expressed interest. The newly refurbished City Hall and Aldermanic Chambers are scheduled to have historic photos for their facilities.

The Society provides a free service in selecting appropriate photos and getting them reproduced. The reproduction costs and the framing are the responsibility of the client. As the program expands the whole community becomes an exhibit space for Rutland's history.

## IT'S TIME TO RENEW

As the old year leaves us, it's time to renew your membership in the Society for the year 2001 unless you happen to be one of those who renewed for multiple years or chose to be a life member. A "00" on your mailing label means that it's time to renew again. As you prepare your check for membership, don't forget that gift memberships keep giving throughout the year. Why not give a friend a membership? It is a wonderful way to bring old Rutland memories to both young and old no matter where they now live.

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