# NEWSFROM NICKWACKETTER THE RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER JULY 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

# PLANNING REFRESH

Page 1

Planning Refresh

Page 2

"Historically Speaking" On Channel 15 In Rutland

"Historical Moving Images

Committee Corner

Page 3

Website Report

Music Finale at the Palms

Page 4

Outreach Activity

Online Financial Transaction Survey Results You may remember that we started 2011 with a long term planning committee and resultant three-year plan. We are now well into the third year of that plan and have decided that it is time to refresh it with some new ideas, to evaluate how we have done, and to apply insights we may have gained over the period. The time has come to look ahead to the next three years and beyond.

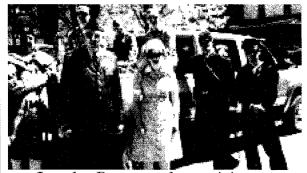
As you have undoubtedly read in our newsletters, we have had wonderful successes in some areas and made great strides in others. Digitization has been our foremost achievement, and we have gone far beyond what we may have hoped for a few years ago. Our focus on governance has paid off as well, resulting in revised by-laws, copyright, privacy and ethics statements, renewed financial scrutiny, and a closeto-completion Disaster Recovery Plan with implemented safety procedures for building and visitors. Our businessas-usual activities, such as collections cataloging, answering research inquiries, and producing programs and publications continue to flourish.

However, efforts to bring in new volunteers to transfer knowledge and to share or transition some of the work of the long time volunteers have met with less success—but not because of lack of effort. And the regular membership base has decreased; a phenomenon that many organizations are experiencing.

At the recent planning meeting, board members were asked to present their vision of the Society in five and ten years. All presented worthwhile ideas. Besides continuing digitization efforts, many suggested increased community outreach, particularly in the schools. It was proposed that we make direct contact with teachers – informing them of what we can offer and how we might supplement their curriculum. Involving students in the history of their own town might promote a lasting interest and provide potential volunteer contacts among teachers and students.

Digitization has made information globally available 24/7, but we should not ignore the appeal of hands-on, person-to-person sharing and caring for history and its by-products. The local community needs to be made more aware of what we offer via interesting exhibits, both at the Society and other community locations.

There is much more work to do on the planning front to implement any new ideas. We hope to be tackling this in the next several months. As we move forward, we will plan for the future while continuing to care for the past.



Loyalty Day parade participants (see Outreach Activity on page 4)

# "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 # 99 [The master copy of the original program was lost. This is a reshoot of the original program] Chuck Piotrowski is the guest presenter of a program on the history of electricity in Rutland called "Electric Rutland." The program includes some of the technical progress in generating and distributing electricity, the issues of mergers and advertising and creating a public awareness of electricity.

## HISTORICAL MOVING IMAGES

The Society is pleased to announce that over 120 half-hour "Historically Speaking" episodes, over 120 three minute episodes of "Moments in History," and the nine episode series called "Notes from the Past" can now be viewed through the Society website (rutlandhistory.com). Go to "Historical Moving Images" and then select which series you wish to view. The Internet Explorer may give you an error message but the programs can be watched if you use the Mozilla Firefox browser, the Sahara browser, or the Opera browser, all of which are free downloads. They can also be viewed using the VLC program which is another free download.

# COMMITTEE CORNER

#### President

Carolynn Ranftle – 855-8219

#### **Board Chairperson**

Pam Johnson – 345-0603

#### Curator

Jim Davidson – 773-7525

#### Membership Secretary

Robert Perkins – 773-0184

#### **Society Historian**

Mary Segale – 773-2326

#### Chairpersons:

#### **Collections Committee**

Tom Carpenter – 773-3626

#### Human Resources Committee

Pam Johnson – 345-0603

#### **Program Committee**

Jim Davidson – 773-7525

#### **Publications Committee**

Jake Sherman – 775-2784

#### **Research Committee**

Rosemary Bradley – 773-9411

#### Website Committee

Doreen McCullough – 776-5232

### WEBSITE REPORT

Numerous changes have been made to the website since the report in our April Newsletter. We'll begin by making you aware that The Finding Aid By Person/Family has been recently updated and available for searching. A formatting revision and addition has been added to our Civil War Resources under "Historical Resources." The List of Rutland Men Liable to Military Duty (1862) has been reformatted to generate a faster download time. Newly added is a List of Rutland Men Liable to Military Duty (1863). In our Historical Resources section we have added a new item "RUTLAND REFERENCES IN ACTS & RESOLVES STATE OF VT." The Acts and Resolves Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont contain information on corporations formed by a special act of the legislature. Incorporations that relate to Rutland or Rutland County were extracted and compiled into this document by the Rutland Historical Society. Due to the length of this document, it has been uploaded to Internet Archive to take advantage of their quick viewing and searching capabilities.

Our commitment to digitizing issues of the Rutland City Directories through the effort of hard working volunteers—who painstakingly scan each page—continues. Our website now has the Rutland Directories from 1872-1986 available for viewing through Internet Archive.

The Society's uploaded film files continue to grow. Each of the nine episodes of "Notes From The Past" is available for viewing through Internet Archive. "Notes from the Past" is a series of episodes jointly developed by Jim Davidson for the Rutland Historical Society and Caleb Wright of Channel 21 at PEG-TV, Rutland's public access government channel. The series focuses on political and economic issues of the past that have a relevance to similar issues today. As with any of our film episodes, just click on the maroon episode number to be linked to the film.

(Suggestion for Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome users. An easy way to view our film episodes if you encounter error messages is to double click "Ogg Video" on the left hand side. The film will start immediately and you can have a full screen by selecting the full screen icon on the right.)

## MUSIC FINALE AT THE PINES

After 17 years of providing music on a regular basis to residents of The Pines, Jim Davidson has played his last song there. Jim started this program in 1996 by bringing selections from his own music collection for the residents to enjoy. They gathered in their wheel chairs, and in some cases beds were rolled in. Jim began each program with the lyrics from Henry Jerome's lively melody, Nice People:

Nice People, Hello and Good Cheer. Nice People, We're glad that you're here.

He then played an hour of music he thought the audience would remember from their younger days, such as Guy Lombardo or Dora Hall. The music brought joy to the patients, who responded by mouthing the lyrics, tapping their feet, and in some cases shedding a tear or two remembering the past. In a few cases the music would bring a reaction from a patient who had been previously unresponsive.

After an hour of musical remembrance, Jim played the closing lyrics to the Nice People song:

Nice People, the dancing is done. Nice People, We've all had our fun.

Nice People, We're going, we're going. Nice People, We'll be back again soon – so long.

Although Jim will continue to play music for the Pines' end of year holiday parties, his monthly programs have ended and they will be missed by all.

## **OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

On February 21, 2013, Bill Powers gave a presentation on the Ethan Allen Cave for the DAR at Rutland Historical Society. On the February 27, he attended the Hawk Hill Committee Meeting. On March 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 10th he spent a total of 12 hours clearing brush at the junction of Red Trail and Old Brandon Road. Bill also wrote an article entitled "Brandon's Forgotten Civil War Veteran" for the Brandon-Pittsford Reporter of March 13, 2013.

Jim Davidson and Carolynn Ranftle made a power point presentation for the TRIAD program for Senior Citizens at the Godnick Center on April 3, 2013. The program was well-received by the approximately 80 seniors in attendance.

Bill Powers researched and wrote a history of the Kendrick Pond Dam in Pittsford which was submitted to Ethan Swift of the Vermont Agency of Natural resources.

On May 1 Jim Davidson was master of ceremonies at the formal dedication of the Vermont Historic Sites marker commemorating the life and accomplishments of George Schmitt, early Rutland aviator. The 30 guests included Schmitt family members and a representative from Columbia as Schmitt had been the first pilot to fly over the country. The marker is located near the main entrance to the Rutland Fairgrounds on South Main Street.

On Sunday, May 5th, the Society participated in the 50th Annual Loyalty Day parade. The Society entered a presentation of men and women who have served the community from the American Revolution to today. The parade entourage included people in uniforms from the American Revolution, the Civil War, World War I, World War II, a woman in a military nurse's uniform, men and veterans in uniform from the Vietnam War era and a uniformed service man from today's army. The theme focused on the fact that although the uniforms change through the years the loyalty of those wearing the uniforms never will.

On May 14th Bill Powers and Brian Lindner presented a program on the 1957 airplane crash story for the West Rutland Historical Society which was attended by 25 folks. Jim and Helen Davidson attended the PEG-TV Annual Meeting on May 15th.

Jim was invited to make brief remarks on May 30th at the dedication of the Vermont Historic Sites marker at the Center Rutland Railway Station. The marker is located at the head of Depot Lane on Route 4 West.

## ONLINE FINANCIAL TRANSACTION SURVEY RESULTS

Thanks to all that completed the survey regarding online payment options. There were 58 responses. In answer to the questions on the survey - 86% use a computer & email at least weekly; 44% prefer to pay membership dues online; 42% would prefer to make monetary donations online; and 46% would prefer to make purchases online. The results are not too surprising considering the rapid trend toward electronic financial transactions. Even taking into consideration a maximum margin of error; if we apply these percentages to our total membership, the numbers would be significant. The results will be taken into consideration in our Long Term Planning discussions.

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

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. William Notte -Editor