

NEWS FROM NICKWACKETT



VOL. 24 NO. 4³

THE RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2017

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ANNUAL MEETING

This year the Annual Business Meeting of the Rutland Historical Society will be held on Friday October 20th at 7:00 PM at Tuttle Hall on the campus of the College of St. Joseph. The brief business meeting will be followed at 7:30 PM by a showing of the enhanced 50-minute 1941 silent movie film. (See details of the film on this page). The film and annual meeting are open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

There will be a public invitation to the community to view this free film. Encourage your friends and neighbors to join us for this special program.

NOMINEES

Pres. – Jake Sherman

V.P. – Lloyd Davis

Sec. – Audrey Allaire

Treas. – Helen Davidson

Dir. (2 yrs) – Barbara Giffin

Dir. (2 yrs) – Corey Kennedy

Dir. (2 yrs) – Doreen McCullough

Continuing Directors are:

Alvin B. Figiel

Richard J. Guyette

Dr. Andrew P. Zak

Submitted by Mary Segale, Chair-person of the Nominations Committee

SPECIAL PROGRAM

The team of Ben Burdge and Ray Mooney has produced an enhanced version of a silent film that was originally produced by the Rutland Lions Club in April 1941.

The original film was sent to Rutland members of the Vermont National Guard stationed at Camp Blanding, Florida, who had left Rutland the month before. The film was intended to share views of Rutland and its people to provide a "touch of home."

The new version has added music from that era and identifying narration and additional historical notes by Raymond Mooney. Ben has improved footage quality and added many "now" photos of places seen in 1941. The mostly color film with some black and white segments has many shots of a busy downtown and the fire station with apparatus roaring in and out. The film includes the RHS and MSJ bands marching to added music, movie theaters, churches, and much more. The use of this amazing footage would not have been possible without the assistance of the Rutland Historical Society, the Vermont Historical Society, and the Vermont Lions District 45.

ANNUAL SALE

On Saturday and Sunday October 7th and 8th the Society will hold its annual sale at the Society from 10 to 5 each day.

AGAIN, WE NEED YOUR "UNWANTED" ITEMS for the sale. NO CLOTHING, PLEASE. Please deliver your items during the week before the sale. Personnel will be available on Monday evening between 6 and 9 PM, and Wednesday and Thursday afternoons between 1 and 4 PM. If you need pickup assistance, please call 773-7525.

Unsold items may be retrieved on the 9th of October between 1 and 4 PM.

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 4PM, Thursdays at 1:30PM, and Fridays at 7:30PM. 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 # 157 – "A Mystery Painting".

The Rutland Historical Society received a gift of a painting that upon closer inspection led Angela Hinchey and Carolyn Ranftle into a research project that determined the painter was Alvah Bradish, who painted the portrait in 1857. Further research led to the high probability that one of two sisters is the lady in the portrait. Jim Davidson hosts the program that offers a fascinating research trail.

RUTLAND RAILWAY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL RAILROAD SHOW

The Rutland Railway Association will present its 6th Annual Train Show on Saturday, September 30th at the Athletic Center of the College of St. Joseph from 10 AM to 3 PM.

The show will feature model railroad displays and swap and sales opportunities. The Rutland Historical Society will set up a computer monitor to demonstrate the society's free website and its resources available to modelers and railroad history buffs. Another monitor will demonstrate the Rutland Newsliner disc that contains a complete collection of the Rutland Railroad company magazine from 1952 to 1960. Copies of the disc will be available for purchase at \$10 each.

COMMITTEE CORNER

President

Jake Sherman – 770-0927

Board Chairperson

Barbara Giffin – 779-1669

Curator

Jim Davidson – 773-7525

Membership Secretary

Robert Perkins – 773-0184

Society Historian

Mary Segale – 773-2326

Chairpersons:

Collections Committee

Ron Hemenway – 775-6581

Program Committee

Jim Davidson – 773-7525

Publications Committee

Jake Sherman – 770-0927

Research Committee

Rosemary Bradley –
773-9411

Website Committee

Doreen McCullough –
776-5232

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

The past year has been a busy and fulfilling one for the Rutland Historical Society. Because of the hard work and dedication of the Society's members and volunteers, progress continues to be made in the enhancement of our collections, the preservation of our history using the latest digitizing techniques, and in conveying our story to the general public.

Among the many notable accomplishments of the year was the completion of the scanning of the Town of Rutland Annual Reports from 1893 to the present. Thanks to Carolyn Ranftle and Clifford Giffin, of the Scanning Committee, and Website Committee Chairperson Doreen McCullough these reports can now be readily accessed on the Society's website. Doreen was also responsible for scanning the Proctor Village and Proctor Town reports and the 1,000-page Vol. 5 of Hemenway's Vermont Historical Gazetteer.

Robert Ranftle and Fred Remington have served as the Society's representatives in arrangements with the Rutland Herald as it plans its move to Grove Street. As a result, the Herald generously gifted the Society with over 30 bound volumes that fill in gaps in our collection. The Publications Committee has been active with Jim Davidson and Carolyn Ranftle providing weekly photos and Fred Remington and Mickey Kelly occasional tidbits for "Sam's Good News." Will Notte has edited the Society's newsletter and Helen Davidson provided proofreading for the Society's quarterly publications. The past year's quarterlies have included a calendar featuring advertisements drawn from the 1916 and 1917 city directories (winter issue); "Women Writers of Rutland" by Rutland native Stephanie Billow, a member of Smith College's Class of 2019 (spring), and two authored by Society member David Zsido on "Proctor American Legion Post 6 Baseball History" and "The History of Mac Steel" (summer and fall).

Ron Hemenway, chair of the Collections Committee, has been busy cataloging and accessioning all new gifts. Committee members Michelle Kaufman, Tom Carpenter, and Jim Davidson have worked on cataloging the Marvel Swan

collection of area genealogical data. In another project, Carolyn Ranftle and Angela Hinchey have been devoting one morning a week to examining, photographing, and repacking items from the Society's textile collections.

The past year the Program Committee continued the Society's monthly "Historically Speaking" program on PEG-TV, hosted by Jim Davidson. All of these programs dating back over nearly two decades are available on our website. Especially notable this year was a special production of Ray Mooney's memories of growing up in Rutland that was produced by the team of Ben Burdge and Ray Mooney. The same team also provided a sound track and narration for a 1941 silent film of Rutland originally made for Rutland troops training in Florida.

The Research Committee, chaired by Rosemary Bradley, deals with hundreds of queries from all over the country, most of which are genealogical in nature and involve a good bit of effort and time. Rosemary Bradley, Bill Powers, Audrey Allaire, and Randy Brown not only tackle these questions but serve as hosts during the Monday evening open hours. Also much appreciated is the time put in by Saturday afternoon hosts whose ranks include Helen Davidson, Carolyn Ranftle, Doreen McCullough, and Ron Hemenway. Additional volunteers are always welcome as hosts.

The problem of how to protect the Society's irreplaceable collections has been shouldered by an Ad Hoc Disaster/Recovery Planning Committee chaired by Robert Ranftle and includes Carolyn Ranftle, Tom Carpenter, and Jim Davidson. A comprehensive report was drafted by the chairman and submitted to the board.

A Human Resources Committee, temporarily chaired by Jim Davidson, is seeking to attract new and younger volunteers through an active program of community outreach.

The Society continues to participate in major community events such as the Halloween Parade that this year will feature our very own "Nickwackett Nick" in a first-rate new costume
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT CONTINUED

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purchased by Ben Burdge and his wife.

Special thanks are extended to the Membership Secretary Bob Perkins and to all those who contribute above and beyond the basic dues. Special appreciation also goes out to Helen Davidson who has undertaken the responsibility of Treasurer. She has been aided by Assistant Treasurer Mike Messier who has prepared the monthly reports for the Board and Tom Carpenter who has prepared the annual federal report required by our non-profit status.

Society has been ably led this past year by board chairperson Barbara Giffin and loyal officers and board members.

In conclusion, the Society thanks the city for its ongoing financial support and attention to the building and grounds as well as the community for its support. As can be seen by the above report, it is only through the commitment and expertise of dedicated members and volunteers that the Society can carry on its mission and activities. We continue to have great need of volunteers in all areas of the Society's work. Though much has been accomplished, many potential projects await.

HALLOWEEN PARADE AND ITS HISTORY

The Rutland Halloween Parade will be held on Saturday October 28th this year. The Rutland Historical Society will, as usual, be a participant. The Society's mascot, Nickwackett Nick, will again parade but with a brand-new outfit. Society members, in Halloween costume, will again distribute candy. Halloween music will accompany the banner bearers. Society members who wish to either carry the Society banner or help with candy distribution should call Jim Davidson, Program Chairperson, at 773-7525.

The Rutland Recreation Department has recently dedicated a fascinating new small museum at their North Street Extension location. The museum idea was triggered by the discovery of a number of eight-foot high painted panels that were used in the early days of the Halloween Parade. These panels copied the images of the 1940s through 1970s comic book characters in their colorful larger than life persona. The comic book industry produced stories that featured the parade and many in the industry came to Rutland for the parade.

The Recreation Department museum has erected these panels on the walls in one classroom and along other corridor walls. There are some exhibits of the comics of the era that provided Rutland with national notice.

The museum can be visited during business hours from 8 to 5 on Mondays through Fridays. It is all a free view of the early history of the Halloween Parade.

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

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