



Union Church
1835
St. Bartholomew's
1897
Pratt Hall
1977

Artifacts and Fiction

The Montgomery Historical Society Quarterly Newsletter

P.O. Box 47

Montgomery, VT 05470

e-mail: pratthall@gmail.com

www.montgomeryhistoricalsociety.org

January 2022
Number 69

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Scott Perry, Chairman
Bill McGroarty, Vice Chair
Marijke Dollois, Secretary
Pat Farmer, Treasurer

The MHS Board meets the third Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m., at Pratt Hall May-Sep, and at the Public Safety Building Conference Room or on Zoom Oct – Apr

Recent History Quiz:

- An April 2021 study of mask wearing in northern Vermont found a usage rate of about:
 - 54%
 - 62%
 - 75%
 - 83%
- There was a gender gap observed with women showing more usage than men. What was the approximate difference?
 - 5%
 - 10%
 - 15%
 - 20%
- In 1952 Montgomery was one of several area towns where specimen collection stations were set up. Montgomery would have one each in the Center and Village. What was it for?
 - Mange
 - Mad Cow
 - Diabetes
 - Rabies

An anonymous phantom left a copy of "A Vermont Year in Sonnets" by James Chapados at Pratt Hall. Published this past November, this northern Vermont author took inspiration from several Montgomery venues and his copyrighted poem is included below by permission. What a wonderful gift for the new year.

Hutchins Bridge

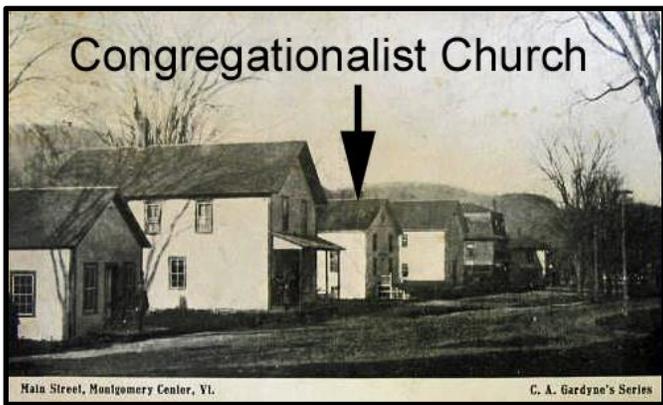
Down hill astride the river stands the bridge.
Once hundreds crossed each day village to mill.
Now only the curious come down hill
To see its roofed timbers span the river's ledge.
Wood latticed shadows hold in its dotage
Joinery of angles and corners that still
Hold in their dust memories no quill
Has writ, moments of love and private pledge.
There is an echo when I step onto
Its worn planks, a rustling as pigeons wake
To my presence. Its shade holds silhouettes,
History's vestiges in earth tone hue.
I see them shaped by joy, by love, by ache
Dancing with the wind and river's spirits.

Hope you and yours are well and optimistic about things to come. Thank you for your support.

Scott

Published by Four Seasons Press & BookBaby Press and available at Amazon.

**TOWN HALL DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR
NATIONAL HISTORIC LISTING**



The picture above is one of the earliest we have of the Congregationalist Church, what is now the Town Hall. We worked with the State on behalf of the Selectboard to secure this eligibility determination, making the building more competitive for preservation grants.

The State Architectural Historian determined the building was eligible for national listing mainly for its architectural history as the Crescent Theater, and remarked on the unusual use of the building going from a church to a theater to a Grange Hall to Town Hall. The Selectboard will need to follow up with a formal nomination, and any preservation planning or project grants.

THREE MONTGOMERY HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Several years ago the Society received a copy of the State's 1983 survey of Montgomery historic structures. We used it in our work on the Town Hall (above). We learned the Town Hall was part of one of the three Historic Districts in the Survey; Montgomery Village, Montgomery Center, and the West End of Montgomery Center.

Structures were included as part of the districts or individually. Fifty-five were identified in town. We've posted an excerpt from the survey on the three districts on our web site and hope to scan the entire 400+ page survey in the future.

BRICKS AND GLASSES

Engraved brick pavers were popular at the MES craft show. We will be placing another order soon. Let us know if you would like one. Order forms can be downloaded from our web store and emailed to us. Our pint glasses are available there too.

2021 MEMBERSHIP WRAP UP

While just short of our membership goal of 200, our 2021 membership rebounded from 2020's low, and we hit a new high in terms of membership revenue. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Our 2022 drive will begin in late March but you can renew, anytime online by clicking the Membership link on our home page. You can use any credit card (processed by Paypal) or your personal Paypal account by clicking the Donate button and following the prompts. New and re-joining former members are appreciated greatly too.

If you have a friend, or family member, you think might be interested please encourage them to consider joining, or consider giving them a gift membership. Please email us if you have any questions.

HOLIDAY HAPPINESS



This year's wagon rides were well attended but the snow didn't start until the last ride headed out to the Comstock Bridge. The library board handed out candy canes and cookies and Pratt Hall was open, but only for warming while people waited. We hope to return our other activities, including Candles and Carols, next year.

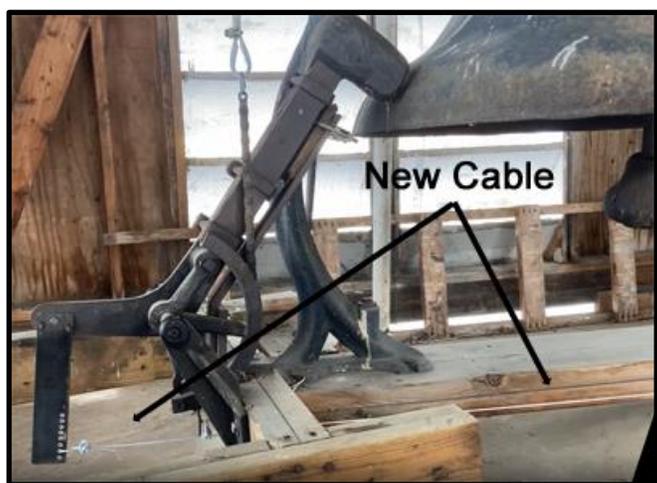


This was Chip and Dale's (right to left) first time in Montgomery and they had never been through a covered bridge before, but they never hesitated. Great job guys!! Our thanks once again to Misty Meadows Draft Horses in Fairfield.

PRATT HALL BELL

Ringling the bell from the ground floor of the entry is no longer possible due to the fragility of the rope and bell wheel, a mechanism that rocked the entire bell so the clapper would strike the inside of the bell. If we want to ring the bell someone has to climb up to it, pull back and release the chime hammer which strikes the outside of the bell.

As some of us have aged, climbing up the tower to manually ring it was getting more challenging, so we've added a cable to the chime hammer that can be operated from below. We can now safely ring the bell from the entry by pulling and releasing the cable, which pulls back and releases the hammer. Video is available our web site.



ARCHIVAL WORK

Several intrepid board members have been working on reorganizing our archives and developing procedures so others can quickly learn how to accession new items. We are using the former Heaton House for processing and storage. It has no heat, tenuous electrical service, and no water.

We really need an improved facility to take better care of these treasures from Montgomery's past and are reaching out for help with design and to eventually build, a modest facility we can use all year. If you have any ideas or advice or connections, we are eager to hear.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE MAY 1ST

Applications for our annual Winston Lewis, and Joe and Irene Scott Memorial Scholarships are due May 1st. All graduating Montgomery seniors going on to future education / training are eligible. This includes technical training, such as a CDL.

COVERED BRIDGES

The September / October issue of Yankee Magazine gave Montgomery's covered bridges as the 12th of "31 Ways to Fall for Autumn". Comstock was pictured but it was taken before the historic marker was added.

The Society's covered bridge pamphlet remains very popular and will need to be reordered next year. We provide them to area businesses at no charge. They are also downloadable from our web site.

HISTORY QUIZ ANSWERS

1. c. About 75% of those observed were wearing masks.

2. c. Women wore masks at about 15% more than men.

Source: Vermont Research News, September 2021. The study was done by people watching commercial areas in the Northeast Kingdom. They also noted a difference by age with those older wearing masks at a much higher rate than younger. The research was being done to support analysis on devising media campaigns to improve mask usage.

3. c. Human Diabetes. Urine samples were taken as part of a program to prevent or treat the disease. Atlas Plywood factories participated in the program. Source: Nov. 13, 1952 edition of the Richford Journal and Gazette.

WINTER LIMERICK

Driveway sliding is a powerful yearn
But steering I never did learn;
I couldn't wait to toboggan,
But drank brandy egg-nogans,
Then crashed and burned on the turns.

YOUR MHS BOARD OF TRUSTEES IS:

Pat Calecas, Tim Chapin, Bob Cummins,
Marijke Dollois, Pat Farmer, Mary Garceau,
John Kuryloski, Roger Lichti, Bill McGroarty,
Patty Perl, Scott Perry,
Elsie Saborowski, & Sue Wilson



Pratt Hall Guardian



Montgomery Historical Society
P.O. Box 47
Montgomery, VT 05470
www.montgomeryhistoricalsociety.org

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN THESE TRYING TIMES