



Artifacts and Fiction

Montgomery Historical Society Newsletter

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Number 51

Scott Perry, Chairman
Bill McGroarty, Vice Chair
Marijke Dollois, Secretary
Mark Baddorf, 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 Oct – Apr

"Montgomery Flood" History Quiz:

1. True or False: The 1997 Flood was worse than the 1927 Flood in Montgomery.
2. True or False: FEMA estimates of the damage to public and private property in Montgomery alone were over \$5 million dollars.
3. True or False: Montgomery tax payers had to shoulder about 15% of the cost for Town infrastructure repairs.
4. True or False: Every road within the Town was substantially damaged.
5. Who was the Incident Commander?

Chairman's Message:

The 20th Anniversary of "Montgomery Flood" of 1997

Do you realize that this year's MHS scholarship winners weren't born when many of you lived through the flood? Same can be said for the last two years' winners too.

When our Board decided we couldn't let this milestone pass without some sort of commemoration, we decided to reach out to the membership and community to see if there were others with ideas. In the process we learned that even though 20 years had passed there were still a lot of raw nerves, with some wanting no part in any remembrance. The trauma was, and is, still too fresh.

The Board formed a committee, Marijke Dollois, Sue Wilson, Lutz Saborowski, and myself, and we put together a modest display of photos, video and ephemera that is meant to be a representation of the flood and damage, and the heroic recovery fueled by community spirit, neighbor helping neighbor, and outside support from individuals, State, and Federal agencies. The committee is indebted to all, with special mention going to Sandy Bowman, Tony & Jody Jones, Lutz and Elsie Saborowski, and Curtt and Lisa Perry for their donations, and loans, of photos and other flood materials.

We had hoped to gather other donations and record some flood stories, oral histories, or even host a panel discussion, but these will have to wait for the next phase. Still, if any of you have items you want to donate or stories to tell please bring them in and get them out of your closet, or off your chest.

Our exhibit to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the 1997 flood will be opened July 15th, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and will be available throughout the Summer. Additional times will be announced and it can be seen by appointment. Keep an eye out for info on our sign, website, and facebook page. As always thank you for your support.

Scott

Meeting of Regional Historical Societies

The Richford Historical Society (RHS) hosted the twice a year meeting of the Franklin and Grand Isle Counties Historical Societies in June. The RHS gave a presentation on the history of the Richford town hall, and the controversy of the Town accepting it, a dilapidated church at the time. Each attendee then gave a short review of what was going on in their organization, and then we had a wonderful lunch hosted by John Libbey in his beautiful Victorian home once owned by Arvin Brown.

Frequently at these meetings Societies bring deaccessioned items to donate to other societies. This time we received a picture of a West Hill barn from the St. Albans museum. The barn formerly served as the Adventist Christian Church. John Libbey donated an 1804 Law Magazine (a book of legal document templates) that had belonged to Joshua Clapp and Otis N. Kelton. Now we know what the proper form for a complaint of "stealing a horse" or "milking a cow and stealing the milk". Our thanks to both. The Fall meeting will be hosted by the St. Albans Museum.

Summer and Fall Events

In late June Pratt Hall hosted a "Friends of the Library" program on the "Orphan Trains" that ran from cities to the country bringing homeless children to "better" lives. Some of the trains brought children to our region, as close as Enosburg Falls. Enosburg native and speaker Dr. Daniel Bean's father was among them and is an authority on the program that ended in 1929.

October 7th Elsie Saborowski will relieve her Oktoberfest dinner. Brats, kraut and more. More details to come.

Our web site has the most up to date info on programs and events. MHS Events

Recent Donations

We recently received a crayon portrait, circa 1870, of Joseph Foster, a Montgomery boy that served in the Civil War, rising from a Private to a First Lieutenant in the 5th Inf Regt of VT Volunteers. Granddaughter Judith Jackson reached out to us via the Internet and provided excellent provenance and biographical information. Thank you Judith!

Memorial Day Commemoration

The Society's annual program was at the upper Center Cemetery and was well attended. Our speaker was Steve Hays. Known for running our "Concerts by the Common" for many years, Steve joined the Navy as a Supply Officer and served from 1962 to 1965 on the USS General William Mitchell and at the Seabee Center at Davisville, Rhode Island.

Our thanks to our roll call reader Sue Wilson, and American Legion Post 42 (Enosburg) for supporting our annual observance, and to Parma Jewett for donuts and cinnamon buns. Yum!

Thanks for Joining the MHS - Drive Continue

It's that time of year we offer our thanks to renewing members and new members, and offer a gentle reminder to join us if you haven't. Last year's membership dipped to 187, 13 short of our 200 goal. Reminder letters will be going out soon. **Please** join or rejoin us... every member matters! You can even do it on our web site. Just click the Membership link

Farmers Market at Pratt Hall in Full Swing

Board member Sue Wilson organized our first ever Summer Farmer's Market and it has been a huge success. Fare includes meats, produce, baked goods, pizzas, bar-b-q, quilts, honey, maple syrup, and more. Thanks to all our vendors and all of our patrons. Stop by if you haven't already. Saturdays 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. through September 2nd. Thank you Sue!



Society Misses 2017 Affinity Donation ☺

Several years ago TD Bank tightened up the rules for their Affinity program adding several requirements to be eligible for its annual donation. In particular, we have to maintain or increase the number of participating checking accounts, **or** have an increase in the aggregated participating saving account balances of greater than 1 %, **every year**. This year our Society missed on both counts, hence no check. This ends a run of seven checks over the last seven years totaling nearly \$45,000. While disappointed we are very grateful for the support TD has given us over that time, and to all of you who have participated in the program.

What can we do? We need more TD Bank account holders to designate the MHS their Affinity beneficiary. They don't have to be members of the Society. In order to receive a check next year we need at least one more checking account while losing none, **or** we need an increase in the aggregate savings of those who've designated the MHS their Affinity partner, of over 1%. You can call Tricia Phelps at TD Bank in Enosburg at 933-4915 if you have any questions or wish to enroll. Tell your friends! The MHS is code J6. It will cost you / them nothing and no personal information is shared with the MHS. Thanks

MHS Annual Meeting

Our bylaws require us to have an Annual Meeting every June to provide a "State of the Society" report and elect Board members and officers. This year's was June 30th. Over 50 members were treated to hors d'oeuvres and desserts prepared by Parma Jewett. Attendees were also able to preview of our commemoration exhibit of the 20th Anniversary of the "Montgomery Flood".

Chairman Scott Perry presided over the business part of the evening and presented his and the officer's reports. One concern is the slight drop off in membership and the need for new Board members. Thanks to your support the State of our Society is very good. We are strong financially, meet our mission goals, and have fun doing it.

This Quarter In Montgomery History

July 1997: "Montgomery Flood"

August 1881: St. Isidores Church consecrated.

September 1819: Joel Clapp ordained as an Episcopal minister.

Engraved Bricks Remain Popular, Sales Continue

People continue to express interest in the engraved brick pavers and we installed 5 new ones in late June. We will continue to sell them as long as there is demand (we can always expand the walkway!). They also can be purchased on line at our History Store page, by calling Board member Pat Farmer, or emailing us. We've also added a map on line, and at Pratt Hall, keyed to both a list by donor and a list by inscription.

Montgomery Flood" History Quiz Answers

1. True. Based on anecdotal accounts and the State Agency of Transportation map of 1927 Road damage.
2. True: August 1997 FEMA estimated \$4.1 in public infrastructure and 1.4 million in private property damages.
3. False. Montgomery taxpayers paid very little for repairs to public infrastructure due in large part to local, State and Federal officials support.
4. True: Every road had substantial damage.
5. Tony Jones was Incident Commander, Louise Feldman was Deputy Incident Commander, and Clement Roger was Roads and Logistics Commander

Pratt Hall Update

After the roof, tower work, and painting last year, no major projects are in the works for Pratt Hall this summer. The "Men with Tools" replaced five Lexan panels in May and member Tim Murphy replaced some rotten trim on the bottom of the tower in June. Our thanks to Tim for his expert TLC.

Scholarship Winners

This year member Jack Quinn and the Society added a second \$500 scholarship in memory of Joe and Irene Scott. Taylor Gratton was selected as its first recipient. Taylor is heading off to Clarkson this fall where he will study Engineering and Management. Avery Ellis was selected for the Lalia Pratt Hays / Amy Booth Meyer scholarship. She will attend Middlebury College where she plans to study Environmental Science.

Both scholarships are awarded to a graduating Montgomery senior going on to further education of any type. Beside the glory, each received \$500 check, a certificate, and a copy of the Montgomery Town History. Congratulations to Avery and Taylor, and to their proud parents.

The MHS Board is...

Scott Perry, Bill McGroarty, Marijke Dollois, Sue Wilson, Pat Farmer, Elsie Saborowski, Jo Anne Bennett, Tim Chapin, Patty Perl, John Beaty, Mark Baddorf, Bob Cummins, & Andre Labier.



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Thank You for supporting the MHS!