



Artifacts and Fiction

The Montgomery Historical Society Quarterly Newsletter

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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

Montgomery History Quiz:

The Tcherny Illumination shown in this newsletter is from a page of George Baker's translation of Volume 2, Book 44, Chapter 22 of Titus Livius' (Livy) "History of Rome", which covers the period of about 180 B.C. to 160 B.C. The page recounts the appointment of Lucius Aemilius Paullus to take over as Roman commander in the Third Macedonian War in which he triumphed in 168 B.C. His last appointment before he died was as one of only two Roman censors. What was a censor?

Covid 19 Status Update

Under current rules each person in Pratt Hall must have 100 square feet (see State of Vermont rules for Arts, Culture, and Entertainment Organizations). We figured out we could have no more than eighteen people in Pratt Hall's nave with three more in the chancel.

Given those limitations the Board decided to cancel the remainder of our events for 2020. This includes the Holiday Happiness activities and Candles and Carols, normally our most crowded events. We know things could open up a bit but are doubtful, and it really isn't fair to plan and ask people to commit to us when there is probably better than a 50-50 chance we would have to cancel.

We also had two weddings booked. One was postponed until next year and the other, scheduled for this month, was postponed indefinitely.

We were able to provide a venue for the Conservation Commission's Mum Sale though and we will definitely decorate the outside of the building for the Christmas holiday.

Thanks for your understanding and continued support.

Scott

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE STILL OPEN

This year's membership drive remains open. Our numbers are down, no doubt due in part to the impact of the virus. You can renew / join online anytime. **THANK YOU!**

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

As of this writing Pratt Hall's new paint job is almost done. This included replacement of some clapboards and trim. This project was assisted by a preservation grant made possible by a partnership between the 1772 Foundation and the Preservation Trust of Vermont.



The Men-with-Tools put a coat of Rosewood Oil on our new deck and will add another. Two more bricks were added to the walkway since the last newsletter.

The Men also jacked up the corner of the Heaton House. A new railing by Steve Hathaway will be added comparable to the previous one. We've also commissioned a couple of small grab bars (small railings) on either side of the door.

A recent routine insurance inspection resulted in three findings. Two are already taken care of but one will require a new fuel oil tank in the crawl space of the Hall. We are working with our oil dealer and have a general estimate of about \$2,000.

HISTORIC SITE MARKERS

We were surprised to learn all of our nominations of the covered bridges and Pratt Hall (Union Church) for the familiar green Historic Site markers all passed muster in the first round of State evaluations and might all be approved with installations beginning this Spring. The project manager for the State informed us she might have spoken too soon. Still we're hoping to see some installed in 2021.

HISTORY QUIZ ANSWERS

The censor was a magistrate in ancient Rome who was responsible for maintaining the census, supervising public morality, and overseeing certain aspects of the government's finances. The power of the censor was absolute: no magistrate could oppose his decisions, and only another censor who succeeded him could cancel those decisions. The censor's regulation of public morality is the origin of the modern meaning of the words "censor" and "censorship"
Source: Wikipedia.

THIS QUARTER IN MONTGOMERY HISTORY

October 1971 - Montgomery School House Toys established.

November 1952 - Crescent Theater sold and became the Grange.

December 1909 - Fire destroys Nelson and Hall tub mill. Rebuilt and newly equipped with electricity.

1977 –
St. Bartholomew's
renamed after
young man pictured
right. Photo
donated by George
and Mary Roberts.



Larry Pratt

CARL TCHERNY'S LOVE LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF MONTGOMERY

Montgomery has long had a reputation as a mixing bowl of sorts. Old timers, farmers, hippies, artists, foreigners, ski bums, eccentrics, young and old have found homes here and made it a vibrant community. One such person was Carl Tcherny.

Carl was a world renown Illumination Artist. He practiced a medieval art form which involved calligraphy, and colorful drawings often adorned with gold leaf, which embellished the margins of manuscripts. Carl and his wife, Peg an accomplished artist in her own right who specialized in restorations, honed their talents in New York before moving to the Hazen's Notch Road in the Center. They worked on documents for the Queen of England and the Pope. Carl also did his own stylized creations of animals and letters for locals. Many had their initials painted by him.

In 1996 as he struggled with his health, he decided to thank the Town who had supported his work and life in Vermont. He donated one of his last works to the Town, accompanied by a heartfelt letter. Both were featured in the 1996 Town Report and are shown in this newsletter. In 2014 we featured Carl's unique work in part of our Vermont History Expo exhibit, "Creative Montgomery".

The illumination, a copy of a page of an ancient Roman history, was displayed for years at the old Main Street Town Office, but the current Town Clerk and Selectboard needed to find it a new home due to the scarcity of wall space in the current PSB office. In September they agreed to donate it to the MHS.

We hope to do a small exhibit on Carl's work as soon as the virus restrictions permit, and are working with the Library to exhibit it there as well. Our thanks to the Town.

Dear friends of Montgomery Center,

When one makes his peace with his maker, many thoughts surface to remind us of how blessed we are. Your friendship to me over the years and your respect for both Peg's work and mine have been a source of recognition which we could not take for granted. For the many years of affirmation - I Thank You. For the many years of quiet and loyal friendship - I Thank You. For many years of encouragement - I Thank You.

It has been noted by Ralph Waldo Emerson that "The power of a man increases steadily by continuance in one direction. He becomes acquainted with his own tools and learns the favorable moments and favorable accidents. Time gives a great addition of power just as a falling body acquires momentum with every foot of the fall." Time, talent and the power of art have been my gift. And thus, today, you, my friends, are the living witnesses to this gift from myself to the community here in Montgomery Center. Ages to come may ask who Carl Tcherny was, when they do, I hope this gift to the village will be a fitting testament of my affection for you all. It involved a process much like love itself. It began as an idea and with basic tools and understandings it was fleshed out. As the perception was developed, then indeed what one loved in a discovery one could offer as a reality of the myriad manifestations of the great lover whose love has no end. And to you my loves, I offer you on this day when my passing on is celebrated, a work I humbly consider a triumph from my life's work. I thank Him for having loved me so much that I would have the privilege to share His love with you in this way. "Ad Multos Annos" in our friendship for each other.

Carl Tcherny

**Carl Tcherny
Illumination**



Union Church
1831
St. Bartholomew's
1897
Pratt Hall
1907

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We hope this newsletter is a pleasant diversion from all the mayhem and stress visited on us all by the COVID 19 virus.. **Thanks for your support.**