



Members of the Montgomery Historical Society, including Pat Farmer suspended in a bosun's chair, install a new set of hands on the front clock face of Pratt Hall.

Montgomery Clock Back in Working Order

Pratt Hall, the former Episcopal Church in Montgomery, is a landmark that can be seen from the hills and valleys of this town nestled in the northern Green Mountains. It was completed in 1835 and the clock added in the decade after the Civil War. The clock informed the local farmers and mill workers routines and called the faithful to Sunday worship.

The church, known as the Union Church and St Bartholomew's served as a place of worship until the congregation declined to the point that the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont sold it to the newly formed Montgomery Historical Society in 1974. The building was in rough shape. The Society had the clock, bell, and tower removed, then in the mid-eighties it was rebuilt and the clock and bell restored and reinstalled. This work included fabricating new clock faces and hands, as well as other parts of the tower using dimensions derived from old photos. It kept time pretty well until the summer of 2006.

"The clock kept stopping, usually at noon/midnight so we consulted the experts and they advised us we probably had a warped hand" said Society Chairman, Scott Perry. "We did some trouble shooting and isolated the front face as the problem, then this past May the hour hand on that face fell off." Since then the Society removed the rotting hands, fabricated new ones, and installed them. "We were lucky to have a willing member with sailing experience and the equipment to safely ascend the tower and do the work from a bosun's chair."

Pratt Hall and the Society host a variety of community events throughout the year including concerts, speakers and art shows. The next will be the annual evening of caroling and stories on December 22nd. For more information visit their web site at www.montgomeryvt.us/mhs.htm.