



Artifacts and Fiction

The Montgomery Historical Society Quarterly Newsletter

P.O. Box 47

Montgomery, VT 05470

e-mail: pratthall@gmail.com

www.montgomeryhistoricalsociety.org

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE:

Scott Perry, Chairman
John Kuryloski, Vice Chair
Marijke Dollois, Secretary
Pat Farmer, Treasurer

We are all closer to "history" than we think. My father's life's work capsulized in a Smithsonian display comes to mind, as do the personal histories of everyone in our community. I continue to be impressed by the enthusiasm and generosity of our fellow citizens and members to share their stories. The America Album quilt below was recently donated to the Society by Carolyn Hesterberg Babcock and will be accessioned into our collection soon. *It is entirely handmade.*

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



Album quilts used blocks with various traditional motifs like eagles, trains and buildings, as well as traditional blocks like "Rose of Sharon" and "Tree of Life". Each quilter usually personalizes one or more of the motifs. In this case, Carolyn included the Montgomery Center School (2nd row). Carolyn also donated a handmade replica of a Civil War potholder quilt which we will be raffling off.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll learn of other recent donations, from a nearly 100 year old Sampler done by Lalia Pratt Hays to the typewriter used by Montgomery born, Vermont Supreme Court Chief Justice, Percival Shangraw.

What is your story? We are all ears.

Enjoy and, as always, thank you for your support.

Scott

History Quiz:

- In 1809 provisions were made for Montgomery's first schoolhouse to be leased. The town would pay rent, probably based on hours of instruction, at:
 - 18 cents/hour
 - 31cents/hour
 - 53 cents/hour
 - 62 cents/hour
- According to a 1960s promotional brochure for Alpine Haven, you could own a compete chalet on a 150ft square lot for?
 - \$7,500
 - \$12,000
 - \$19,000
 - \$23,500

2024 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

We awarded two \$1,000 scholarships in June. Amelia Gratton was awarded our "Joe and Irene Scott Memorial Scholarship". Amelia attended Enosburg High School and will begin studies in Dental Hygiene at Vermont State University in the fall.

The winner of the "Dr. Winston Lewis Memorial Scholarship" was Ariella Chambers. Ariella attended St. Johnsbury Academy and will be going on to college at Loyola University in Maryland to study Business and Nutrition Science.

Each young woman was also presented with a certificate, a copy of the Town History, and a biography of their scholarship's namesakes. Congratulations!

2024 LLHSM ANNUAL MEETING

Three MHS Board members attended this year's conference in White River Junction. It focused on collections with presentations on archival management and care, as well as exhibits. It was perfect timing for us, and we learned a lot.

These meetings normally begin with an awards ceremony and we're proud to report our longtime trustee and Vice chairman, Bill McGroarty, was honored with an individual "Award of Excellence". Bill was one of just two individuals honored. The award judges noted his over 20 years of service to our Society and his view that local history is a key ingredient to achieving a vibrant and flourishing community with a great quality of life for everyone.

MHS individuals and programs have received 15 of these awards over the last 19 years.

MEMORIAL DAY

We gathered at the upper (newer) Center cemetery on May 26th for our annual Memorial Day commemoration. It is the resting place for 75 Montgomery Veterans. The ceremony included a roll call of those 75 and military honors. Our thanks to American Legion Post 42 in Enosburg for support and Post 12 in Richford for placing flags on our veterans' graves.

MEMBERSHIP 2024 SO FAR

Our annual membership drive went into the mail in early March. We send it to every Montgomery property owner and past members, and friends. A reminder letter goes out soon.

Benefits of membership include our newsletters, savings on our books and gift items, and the satisfaction you are giving to a great local organization making direct contributions to our community, whether programs at Pratt Hall, scholarships, or our archives.

Our annual goal is 200 memberships but the more the better. Anyone can join or renew via our web site page if you prefer it over mail.

2024 EVENTS

Farmers Market: Year seven of our Farmer's Market kicked off on June 29th. It will be every Saturday through September 28th, from 9:30 to 1:00 pm. There is still room for additional vendors so if you are interested please contact Patty Perl (326-2176) or Elsie Saborowski (326-4558).

September 13th: Jazz Concert. "New Orleans-style" concert with an all-star band led by tenor saxophonist Jon McBride, accompanied by Dwight Richter on drums, Ted Perry on piano, Connor Young on trumpet, and local, Jacob Racusin, on percussion.

December 1st: Howard Coffin. "Vermont Women and the Civil War." With nearly 35,000 of the state's able-bodied men at war, the monumental tasks of keeping more than 30,000 farms in operation became very much a female enterprise. Funded in part by the Vermont Humanities Council, the Friends of the Library and our Society.

Details on our usual holiday programs will be in our October newsletter.

IN MEMORIAM

Pratt Hall will serve, as the venue for a celebration of life for member Ellen Coolidge. The gathering of her family and friends is planned for July 28th at 11:00 a.m. Our condolences to their loved ones.

We also just learned of the passing of member Bruce Thibaud. He and his wife who died in 2021, were members for most of the last 31 years. We will miss them and offer condolences to family and friends.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

We continue to discover gems from our collection as we catalog our holdings and receive donations. We have just two boxes of clothing to re-accession which will largely complete our initial effort. We have well over 1000 items. Our next step will be to fill in the gaps and quality check our work.

Since the last newsletter we've received a trove of items from the family of Jim and Dee Pratt. This included: a nearly 100-year-old sampler by Lalia Pratt-Hays (seen elsewhere in this newsletter), and a pieced, fabric Village landscape done by Leslie Kominsky ca. 1985, showing Pratt Hall, the Pratt's house, and Fuller Bridge.

The donation also included this ca 1880 photo of the same house in the Village once owned by the Pratts. It was built ca 1840 and still stands two doors down from Pratt Hall.



L to R "Aunt Clara Wheeler, Aunt Hattie Kimball, Georgia Goodspeed Parker, Grandpa Goodspeed". Child far right is not identified.

Our thanks to Kathy Probeck for these wonderful gems from Montgomery's past!

The grandson of Montgomery native, Judge Percival (Shang) Shangraw, donated his grandfather's typewriter to us; it was used for a career of legal work/opinions. Judge Shangraw grew up on West Hill, served in a number of elected and appointed offices, and was Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court from 1972 to 1974.

SENIOR MEAL PRESENTATION 2

On June 17th we did a short presentation to those gathered for the monthly Senior Meal at the Public Safety Building. This was our second presentation to this group and this time we told them how we've been working to organize our archival holdings and why a new safe storage and exhibit facility is important.

We brought two recent accessions as examples of the things we've added to our holdings and why we want to be able to easily share them with the larger community and future generations.

The first was the hand colored Clayton Fuller photo of Montgomery's landscape looking east towards Hazen's Notch. (see the Jan 2024 Newsletter). Clayton was born in Montgomery and opened his photography business here in 1915. He shot many photos of Montgomery (and Vermont) and had a thriving post card line starting about 1925. He retired in 1957. Billy Baker Sr identified the field in the foreground as the site of the current Town Garage. The photo was probably taken from the area of the Village Cemetery.

The second was a cross stitch sampler done by part-time Montgomery resident, Lalia Pratt. Lalia was married to Montgomery-born Larry Pratt and lived in the Village when in town. Her sampler was completed in 1931 and was a copy of one done by her grand aunt, Sarah Jane North, in 1849 at the age of 17.



LIBRARY MONTGOMERY DISPLAY

The "Friends of the Library" display on our town's namesake still adorns the common area walls of the Public Safety Building. The next time you're at the Town Offices or Library take a look.

THIS QUARTER IN MONTGOMERY HISTORY

July: 1817, Congregational Society formed.

August: 1981, MHS decides to replace roof with a new standing seam for \$4,000.

September: 1901, Fire destroys Nelson and Hall tub mill.

HISTORY QUIZ ANSWERS

1. A. The Town would pay 18 cents an hour.
2. Both A. and B. are correct. You could get a chalet in Alpine Haven for between \$7,500-\$12,000.



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WEST HILL OR HILL WEST?

We recently received inquires about the history of these road names. We are told the whole loop was West Hill at one time. Some maps show this.

At some point a demarcation was made at what is now the Hill West Cemetery, that is, West Hill ended there and the rest of the loop was Hill West. Some speculate that the West Hill portion had more development / farms. We suspect it may have had something to do with road maintenance too.

About the time that the Statewide 911 system was implemented the demarcation was moved to the present day which is essentially the halfway point of the loop. (Now the Hill West cemetery is on West Hill Rd!) We're told the people that lived on Hill West didn't want to change the Hill West name.

Can you corroborate this? Have more info?
BTW it still confuses many of us.

2024 Business Members so far...
Black Lantern Inn ~ Community Bank N.A. ~ Ficoceillo Real Estate
Lucky Dog Maple ~ Lutz's Automotive ~ Manosh Properties LLC
N.A. Manosh Inc. ~ Phineas Swann B&B
THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT