

HOW OLD IS OLD

When applying this question to things—papers, tools, wash day inventions, a square grand piano (which is not really square), a pair of spectacles, a heavy, push mower, or a length of firehose the answer is based on one's point of view. Our museum contains examples of all the above, including a tool collection spanning at least a century. An invention in a more efficient logging tool in, say, 1875, had the effect of making predecessors out of date. A gadget for mounting wagon wheels might have been the latest whiz bang invention of its time. But when Gerald Ward brings in tools from the Clayton Ward

Garage days that enabled a mechanic to work on a 1933 Chevie engine, those wagon tools had been antiques for decades. The square grand piano was a kind of musical fluke of its time. It proved to be an invention that could not compete with the traditional design.

So what does old really mean? Perhaps the answer lies in comparing one thing with another. As for Rev. Harmon's old spectacles, styles have changed so much in the last few years that we may find that his are back in vogue.

And what about that Dumont television set your family set up in the living room in 1949? I saw one for sale in an antique shop the other day!

DOCENTS- WE NEED YOU

From the Latin, "docere," to teach, a docent assists people in learning something. In a museum setting docents introduce visitors to the collections, assist them in finding something, and provide a welcoming atmosphere. For several summers Roy Bubb and Isabel Knowles have kept the museum open on Thursday afternoons. Other folks have stepped in as time permitted. But we need two people to provide fairly regular coverage for at least one afternoon per week, or on weekends. You don't have to worry that somehow you won't know the answers. We are not a professional

organization; we just need people who are curious about the past and enjoy looking over artifacts and records about Madison history. Call any of the officers for more information.

HUMOR

I don't have this down quite like the original as it appears in a collection of New England folklore, but I delight in telling it as an example of Yankee taciturnity.

Zeke and his cousin Simm
chanced now and then to pull up at the
same crossroads.

Mornin' Zeke.

Mornin' Simm.

What'd you give your horse for
colic?

Zilphin's 'lixir.

Some time passed before the
cousins met again at the crossroads.

Mornin' Zeke.

Mornin' Simm.

What'd you say you give your
horse for colic?

Zilphin's 'lixir.

Killed mine.

Killed mine.

BOOK REVIEW

Conway, New Hampshire, 1765-1997, by Janet McAllister Hounsell and Ruth Burnham Davis Horne. Peter E. Randall Publisher, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Copyright 1998 The Conway Historical Society. 473 pages text and photos. Index. \$35.00. Available from the Conway Historical Society and from the Conway Library.

The book jacket explains that "This volume evolved from an earlier history, Conway Through the Years and Whither, by Ruth B.D. Horne and published by the Conway Historical Society in 1963."

Books written by local authors about places, people and events known to them personally or from previously printed material are a genre of their own. Free from conventions held to by scholarly presses with all the research documentation required for interpretation, these area histories perform an invaluable service, and present and future generations will appreciate this ready source of information.

Hounsell's table of contents

provides divisions that begin with an early view of the Pequawket (also spelled Pigwacket) homeland of an Algonquin tribe speaking the Abenaki dialect. Later sections deal with just about any subject a reader might be interested in. The book is organized around such topics as Churches, Stores, Hotels, Bridges, and comment is given about them right up to the date of publication. Present day programs, such as the one I carry on known as the Conway Taping Service, is included. Town government and policing are covered. Dozens or hundreds of names fill this remarkably full volume. The book is handsomely bound and jacketed. One might expect to pay a good deal more for it.

Reviewed by Raymond Stineford

HAVE YOU READ YOUR FAMILY BIBLE LATELY?

It's likely that somewhere in your house you have a big old Bible, imposing in bulk and rather intimidating to open. In the last quarter of the 19th century these whopper versions of Holy Writ were based on the 1611 Authorized Version, which we call the King James Bible. Chances are you will find a publication date in the 1880s. Do these old books have

value? Probably not, unless they have some special illuminations or other artwork. Imposing as these tomes are, they are like having a pile of old National Geographics. They were printed by the ton. Since 1900 we have seen many translations, culminating in the latest, the New Revised Standard Version. Protestants, and more Catholics now, recognize that ancient texts must be continually updated to reflect changes in language and research. No, we can't accept your old Bible into our Museum files. You can check its value with a bookseller before discarding it.

OFFICERS OF THE MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President-Raymond Stineford
Vice-president-Mary Lucy
Treasurer-Dolores Messner
Secretary-Tammy Flanagan
Curator-Emily Beaulieu

This newsletter is published four times a year. Raymond Stineford, editor.

Submitted material is invited. The next issue will in preparation in early June. See the next page for coming events, as prepared by Mary Lucy.

Madison Historical Society
2000

All meetings 7:00 PM at MHS building
(unless otherwise noted)

April 27

The Amos Tuck Story: History of the
Republican Party in NH. Video presentation.
Program to be held in Chick Room at Madison
Library.

May 18

Poking Through Madison Museum Artifacts:
Curator's Presentation with Emily Beaulieu.

June 15

"This is the Awfles Mess I Ever Was In"
Women in Waiting on the Home Frontier *
Linda Peavey and Ursula Smith

July 20

5:00 Picnic at Kennett Park
7:00 Annual Meeting & Program
Can you identify these folks and places?
A look through old Madison Museum photos.
Emily Beaulieu - Curator.

OLD HOME WEEK

Tuesday August 8 - Museum Open House
Thursday August 10 - 6 - 7 PM
Blueberry Fest at Elementary School

August 17

The New England Town: "Village and Town in
New England" *
Jere Daniell, Ph.D.

September 21

"Songs America Voted By": Presidential songs
of our past. Jon Kinnaman, Town Librarian
Joint meeting w/ Friends of Madison Library

October 19

Annual pumpkin carving and ghost stories.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

See you in April - 2001

* N.H. Humanities Council funded program

• **Madison Historical Society**
• **Price List**

One of a Kind Items:

Museum Mug **\$10.00**
Member Price
\$8.00

1993 & 1994 Calendars **\$3.00**
(With wonderful old photos of the town.)
Photo of Roscoe Greene **\$5.00**

Book: Around Madison Corner
\$5.00

Maps:

***Matted Maps of Madison or
Eaton (1892)*** **\$15.00**
***Matted Town Description
(1856)*** **\$10.00**

***We are interested in
copies of photos you may have
of Madison Town and its
people as they live and work
today. These photos will be
included in our Year 2000
Time Capsule to be opened in
2100.***

***Please include on the
back of your photos: the place,
names of people, date, event,
etc.. Also, the name of the
photographer and/or person
donating the photo.***
Thank you.