

MADISON CASCADES SAVED

At the closing on Tuesday, January 20 at the offices of Freedom Title and Closing a deed to the Madison Cascades was conveyed to the Town of Madison in behalf of the Conservation Commission, to be held "in perpetuity." Thus was concluded the results of months of fundraising to meet the selling price of seventy thousand dollars, toward which the commission had subscribed thirty thousand. The balance, plus enough to cover part of the amount needed to complete a survey or other costs associated with owning the land, was donated by more than eighty individuals, including many members of the Madison Historical Society, the Madison Cascades Association, Dr. Sandra Brown for the White Mountain Waldorf School, and others.

The property was part of the William and Carrie Kennett Estate, which was inherited by their daughters Ruth Kennett and Dorothy Kennett Dupont. Mrs. Dupont gave land to Madison along the East Madison Road nearly thirty years ago. Her heirs sold the Cascades land, consisting of just under thirty acres to Madison. It is reached across the original grant from Mrs. Dupont, and over the right of way through land owned by an abutter. For over a hundred years the public enjoyed the walk across what was then mostly open field to view the swirling passage of water as it tumbles toward the bridge on the East Madison road and on into Silver Lake. The roots of forest trees have somewhat curtailed drainage into the gorge where the granite lies exposed in smooth bench like contours, but after a heavy rainstorm hikers can still enjoy the rushing flow. Overseeing the property will be done by the Conservation Commission in accordance with forest best management practices.

One of the special pleasures in acquiring the Cascades was that the purchase was signed by Jennifer Hocking for the Conservation Commission. Her father, Richard Hocking, a member of the Commission until his death three years ago, had long dreamed that this historic site could be kept open for the public to enjoy, as it had been for so many years, and he had tirelessly worked to make that happen.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS - MAKES
CDS OF: SKETCHES"

David Emerson, curator of the Conway Historical Society, has made disc copies of several "Snowvillage Sketches," for MHS, recorded from the original studio "platter" records. In exchange for receiving these recordings for their archives the Library provided good quality reproductions on CDs. The original records were discovered in the Conway library.

A BIKE RIDE ACROSS AMERICA

Our March 17 program, to be held at the Chick Room at seven, will feature an illustrated adventure story by Sue Barnes. Last year Sue biked from Washington State to New York State, a trip that took her through some of the most historic areas of the USA and lasted 77 days. Plan to attend and hear about being on the road and camping at night, with your gear and yourself carried on two wheels for more than three thousand miles!

In April at the schoolhouse Carol Lyman Bachelder will recount Silver Lake memories, including stories of her mother's days as postmaster down by the station. Carol met e. e. cummings there as a youngster, but only when she was a student at the University did she learn that he was becoming one of America's most famous poets.

HYMN

You are
continuous from before
the first star.
When the last star has gone
You are still
One. E.F.B.B.

FOR MY HUSBAND
ON HIS BIRTHDAY

Knee deep in memories we stand.
You touch my hair,
I take your hand
And hear a silent whip-poor-will
Sing from a ravished hill.

There is no music - -
The harp is quiet now - - -
All around, the silence hoards
itself, and is free,
At last, of any compulsion.

So we are met into silence,
and live in silence,
Hoarded down, hoarded down
into this definite, quiet space
Of love.

-From STARLIGHT.

A book of poems by
Elvira Francis Babbitt Banfill.

Elvira Banfill and her husband Elwood live "way down" in Maine. They are faithful members of the MHS, and a few years ago I had a good visit with them when they sat in my kitchen while I was making bread.

Elwood's family name is well known in Madison and Conway history. I have been deeply impressed by this poet's work, and have her permission to include selections in our newsletter. Elwood has agreed to share anecdotes and memories about Banfills in Madison for a future issue.

The Madison Historical Society Newsletter is published four times a year. Submissions are always welcome.

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USES OF PAINT IN OLD HOUSES

Floors - nearly always painted, especially downstairs. Often brightly so, although brown hues prevailed. Natural wood finish is a modern preference, and many old floors have lost their original coloring.

Doors, Casings, baseboards - usually painted. Baseboards sometimes had the same coloring as the floor. Greenish hues popular after 1835.

Sheathing - little evidence of its use by mid-19th century; popular in concealed areas, 18th - early 19th century. Usually painted. an interesting variation is the Wolfeboro Historical Society House where sheathing predominates throughout.

I have seen only one early house (built 1815) that shows no sign of paint on any surface. Located in S. Chatham. Very rare.

Our ancestors liked paint, and they used it everywhere, including red on ladderbacks. So many early chairs were stripped clean fifty years ago (and I plead guilty) that original red painted furniture is worth five times what a stripped piece sells for today. DON'T remove the paint, or any original finish, no matter how ugly it looks to you! (See Antiques Roadshow)

TRIOLET

Sweet - sweet - ah sweet
The white-throats sing.
Through wind and sleet,
Sweet, sweet, ah, sweet,
Come the swift feet
Of laughing Spring.
"Sweet - sweet - ah, sweet!"
The white-throats sing.

E.F.B.B.

YOUNG PILGRIMS AT
PLIMOUTH PLANTATION

This past November the third graders at Madison Elementary School had a field trip to this famous site of early American history. The students "were asked to pretend they were one of the pilgrims that came over on the Mayflower and write a pretend letter to a relative they left back in England," says teacher Nancy Spaulding. I agree with Mrs. Spaulding that they "did a great job on these letters." We can't print them all, but here are a few, including some excerpts. Your editor was "overcome" by the frequent references to chamber pots.

November 1627

Dear Cousin Grace,

When I was on the Mayflower it was scary because when the boat rocked it felt like it was going to tip over. It was also cold and damp and crowded. It took 60 days to get to the new world.

My life at Plimouth Plantation is busy with chores. I milk the goats, and help take care of the garden. Today I polished the brass kettle. I played a game after my chores. It was called knickers.

The date is November 19, 1627, and it is getting cold. Winter will be here soon. tomorrow I will be helping bring firewood into the house. We will have to have lots of firewood to keep us warm for the winter.

Mother and I will be bringing in the food that we harvested from our garden. I hope it will be enough for the whole winter.

I met a new friend. she is a feather girl. Her name is Nika and she does not speak the same language. We meet at a special

tree in the woods. Then we go play a game. I taught her how to play knickers.

Fare thee well,
Mem Morton

By Brooke Elliot

* *

November 19, 1627

Dear Uncle Jim,

I'm terribly sorry you had to stay in England and I wish you could be here in the new land, although it is still hard to live here. But at other times it is fun, but not on the Mayflower because people were seasick and had to get sick in the chamber pot. The food on the Mayflower was dull. All of us made friends and worked together on the voyage.

When I go out to the fields and get wheat, I say my hands hurt, but then I think it is worth it for the harvest. Now that we live in the New World, it is a good life, but hard work. I help harvest the garden and many other chores each day.....

Written by Josh Hill

* *

November 30, 1621

Dear Grandad Fred,

When we went on the Mayflower in 1620 it was cold and damp. the food was scarce. We only had one day in the week where we got meat. It's so uncomfortable on the lower deck because the chamber pots stink with everyone getting seasick. My friend and I have gotten seasick three times a week. One of the storms blew us off course. Instead of landing in south Virginia, we landed in Plimoth. Only the men went off the ship and we waited a month before we moved off of the ship into the fort. Then we voted for Mayor, and guess who it was? My dad, William Bradford!.....

Written by Dana Phillips

November 19, 1627

Dearest Father,

The journey on the Mayflower was difficult. We endured many hardships. The conditions were confining. The tempestuous seas caused many to suffer from sickness from the motion of the ship. As you can well imagine, I was quite pleased that my duty did not include dumping chamber pots. Provisions were plentiful when we departed but by journey's end, I wished for more variety of food.

Here at Plimoth life is fine. We have a fort that we use as a courthouse, hospital, and a church. It was hard work building our houses because it was cold and wet. We lived on the ship while we were building the fort and our houses. Before we started building, all the men decided to write some rules for everyone to follow. We called it The Mayflower Compact and we signed it on the ship. We decided that William Bradford would be governor.

I want to know how you are doing, so please write soon. I will be looking for your letter on the next ship to the New World.

Yours,

Miles

Written by Torin Laliberté

* *

November 19, 1627

Dear Uncle Josh,

..... I keep busy with a lot of chores at the plantation. I help with cooking, planting and sewing. I am nine now and things are more fun now that Dad got married to Miss Pots. We are hoping that she will have a baby boy and we will name him Tim.

Love,

Mem

Written by Megan Vitters

November 19, 1627

Dear Samantha,

It was a long, cold winter. I worked and worked until I had to go to bed. I talk to my doll. It was scary on the Mayflower because there was not a candle to be able to see through the night. The wind was running wild and it was a bit damp and soggy on the boat. I changed the chamber pot six times.

My poor father died of hunger and sickness during the winter, so my mother married sir John Alden. I have learned to call him Father. I hope that soon he will make me real chairs.

I have actually seen feather people. They were doing this strange dance. A little girl noticed me, so I ran away as fast as I could, but I left my doll. The little girl I mentioned, picked it up.

Mother is having a baby soon! I will try my hardest to help when I am needed. We are hoping it is a girl. If it is, we are going to name her Sarah Alden. If it is a boy, we will name him Timothy Alden. I think both names are fine.

Mother hasn't been feeling well, so my chores are doubled. The goat is very stubborn. When I milk her, she kicks me. I swear I have scars from her.

I have learned how to sew and plant. I made a sweater and a blanket for the baby. It's made of wool from our sheep. I sleep with it sometimes. It is very cozy and warm. Sister is well. Many have lung sickness and we are praying that they don't die as so many have.

Your cousin,
Deborah Alden

Written by Deborah Lawson

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November 20, 1627

Dear Cousin Zachery

It has been three years that we have been here. It has been great except for the voyage. The voyage was hard and scary. The deck was damp from the rain. It was cramped because there was a lot of people in the lower deck. A windy storm blew us off course. The food was bland. The voyage was very rough from the storm. The people on the ship could get the sea sickness and a sickness like scurvy and they could get lice. The chamber pot is the place where we would go to the bathroom and where you would vomit.

Now I will tell you about where I am now. All the girls and boys have to wear layers of clothing. Girls and boys stand at dinner because the parents have earned the seats. One of the chores I do is to pound the spices. The spices also make the house smell good. At the end of the day, I learn my abc's with my mother.....

Love,

Mary

Written by Lauren White

* *

November 1627

..... I try to help mother as much as I can by milking the goats, pounding the spices, baking with her, and sewing clothing. It is time now for the midday meal, which is supper back in England. I must lay the cloth on the board that we use as a table and I will serve my parents and eat standing with them at the table.....

Written by Gabriella MaGuire

* *

In Memoriam

Doris Ashton

Bob De Iulio

November 1627

.....We build houses, fence barns and furniture with wood we get from the trees we cut down. We have to do chores like get wood for the fire and water to drink. We sew our clothes by hand.

By Marci Williams

* *

November 13, 162

.....Sister has caught the sickness of the lung and mother, father and I are crossing our fingers that she'll live. I help mother churn the butter and she tells me to fetch water and be careful of feathered people. On the way I lay down and look at the sky. When I came back home, mother teaches my abc's. I am glad we brought some things from England, like corn, thread, blankets, spices and ink for writing letters.....

Written by Lindsay Sirois

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November 1627

Dear Cousin Julia,

.....Yesterday, my mother sat down beside me and I learned some of my ABC's. My chores are very hard as I must help my mother cook, milk the goats, feed the chickens, planting and making my bed.

Written by Brittney Hackley

* *

November 20, 1627

Dear Grandfather,

.....The town we live in has a church and many houses. My favorite house is our house because it is big and it has a good fireplace. The bed is comfortable. It was hard work building the houses. There are lots of chores to do like cutting wood for the fire, hunting for food and getting water from the spring...
Written by Liam Fortin