

Madison Historical Society

Newsletter

PO BOX 505, MADISON, NH 03849

ghostduster@roadrunner.com

Fall 2005

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Time just flies ... yesterday is now today's history! The holidays are drawing near and the snow will be blowing soon. Our last program of the year was just a few weeks ago and Becky and I are busy setting up next year's programs. Time does move fast!

The program we had on the History of Camp Allegro was such a huge success this past spring. Unfortunately, the Madison Television tape of the program was inadvertently erased. However, thanks to Mark Graffam, we were able to tape Dottie Meehan in September giving her history on the camp. I hope we get to watch it soon on Madison TV, and if not, I believe there will be a DVD copy available at the library.

I want to thank Mr. Fred Scruton who has been busy writing out all of Madison's Census information onto index cards. The cards are now available at the museum if you are in search of information on people living in town from 1840 through 1880. Mr. Scruton plans to complete the later years.

I was informed that the Madison Conservation Committee donated the sign at the Madison Cascades trailhead next to the museum. Thank you to all those who were and are involved in saving this town treasure.

The Winter Newsletter with next year's program brochure will be out in February.

Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season and see you next year!

Mary K.W. Lucy

WISH LIST

1. Executive Board Secretary
2. Program Coordinator
3. Vice President
4. Lap Top Computer
5. Donations toward new exhibit displays.
6. Donations of rough sawn timber for the Pound or funds toward the efforts.

7. Donations towards
expanding our Tool Shed
for more exhibit space.

EXHIBIT DISPLAYS

We are hoping to eventually have seven exhibit display cases built for our expanding museum displays. These cases will contain shelves that will be lit and be on wheels to easily move around. On the back there will be extra storage space that the museum needs to store items not currently on exhibit.

These exhibit display cases will cost \$2500 each. Please see the back of newsletter for the donation slip to send your donation towards the purchase of the cases. If you are interested in purchasing one for the Society we will place a nameplate on the case to honor your contribution to the Madison Historical Society.

Executive Board 2005

Mary K.W. Lucy, President
Becky Knowles, Treasurer and Curator
Lisa Olszewski, Publicity
Olive Clayton, Mailings

CORRECTION

Olive and Roger Clayton received an e-mail from Constance Harmon (wife of Bill Harmon) who noticed a name error in my article on the Madison Corner School. In it she writes, " concerning the students from 1859, the list has the wrong parents for Thirza Emma Harmon wrong. They have Thomas Harmon (which is correct) and Mary Lary (which is incorrect)... it should be Nancy Lary."

Thank goodness that this was not my mistake as transcriber since I took that information directly from the book, Around Madison Corner Around 1860, by Leon O. Gerry (page 5). I will also check the original school register at the museum library and place a note in there if that is where Mr. Gerry took his information from. Thank you Constance for correcting the error here.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

This is taken from an old newspaper article, probably from The Reporter, sometime after the Madison Historical Society meeting dated December 16, 1959.

Madison Historical Society

Madison Historical Society had a most interesting and enjoyable Christmas Party last Wednesday night at the Society's meeting place. To save time the business meeting was made as short as possible, which was rather difficult.

Donated to the Society were an old hay-cutter, blade of an early saber, cow-poke, wool-comb, copper printing plates about 1900, bee-smoker, and a forty five star American flag. All these things caused a great deal of discussion concerning who had used them and where and what had happened to them.

*So many of our members do so much work in their spare (?) time. The windows all washed, storm windows washed and put on, stove set up and connected to the chimney, coat rack built, hall swept and made ready for meetings, all these things are done so readily it makes one feel glad they are privileged to live in such a community. Geo. Shaw had charge of the entertainment and soon had various ones popping corn, string it with cranberries, decorating the tree with apples, pop corn balls and real live candles. Recordings of Christmas Carols were tried on a record player but the competition with everyone talking was too much, so the records were dispensed with. Other highlights of the meeting were Christmas stories by Geo. Shaw and Alice Ward. Singing of carols gave everyone a chance to try their voices, but as we had no piano it was a little difficult to start on the same pitch. Regardless, we all had a good time trying. To top the evening there were presents for everyone taken from the generous stockings hanging by the tree. Coffee and honey dipped doughnuts were served by Bea and Harry Harmon with Lou and Arthur Gilman. Our next meeting is January 20, (1960). You had better be there if you want a very enjoyable evening. Within the minutes of that December meeting I found this information:
Martha and Malcolm Kelly donated 45 star flag, Frank Nason donated cow poke and wool comb, hay-knife or hay-cutter and blade of saber displayed by Mark Knickerson and Ernest Meader. Leon Gerry donated copper printing plates. Harry Harmon donated four storm windows, Guy Nickerson donated load cut dry slabs. Bee smoker donated by Lee Drew.*



JOY FARM AT Silver Lake, taken from the Northern Light August 20, 1985

JOY FARM

Back in August, Earl Whitaker approached me and proceeded to let me know that the Madison Corner School is not the only building in town that is on the

National Register of Historic Places, but that Joy Farm is too. The only difference here is that the Schoolhouse is a Town building and Joy Farm is a private residence.

Earl received his information from Herbert Arnold and gave me a copy of the Northern Light front-page article about Joy Farm dated Tuesday, August 20, 1985. The following are excerpts from the article entitled, Joy Farm: e.e. cummings' summer home, written by Kevin Early.

MADISON – The farm sits at the end of a dirt road in the Silver Lake area of Madison. There is a small, unpretentious Cape Cod house situated in the middle of a hillside meadow facing Mount Chocorua with an el attached to a woodshed and a small barn, all dressed in weather-beaten clapboards. A small bronze plaque has been affixed to the dwelling, proclaiming that the house is on the National Register of Historic Places.

What's significant about the house and grounds --- known simply as Joy Farm -- - is that it was the summer residence of a man recognized throughout the world as one of America's greatest poets --- e.e. cummings.

Undoubtedly cummings would have mixed emotions about his home being designated a national historic place. A poet, artist, novelist and social satirist, cummings was an intensely private man who savored his solitude and it was at Joy Farm and Silver Lake that he found that solitude which helped in the creation of many of his most famous works.

Further on in the article:

Born Oct. 14, 1894 and baptized Edward Estlin, young Cummings began visiting New Hampshire as an infant when his father, Dr. Edward Cummings, a Congregational minister, bought the farm in Silver Lake. It was called "Joy Farm" after its previous owner, Ephraim Joy, but as cummings' younger sister, Elizabeth, later wrote --- "it earned the name on its own account." Dr. Cummings put in windows on the farmhouse from which Mount Chocorua could easily be seen, and an extension with a flat roof which the sunset and stars could be seen. It was on that flat rooftop that Estlin (the name he preferred to use) painted oil landscapes and watercolor sunsets. It was at Joy Farm that the Cummings children learned woods lore and were taught self-reliance when exploring the area or boating on the waters of Silver Lake, where once the Cummings children faced great peril.

Further on:

In 1936, Dr. Cummings was killed when the car he was driving was struck by a train at the crossing in Ossipee during a blinding snowstorm. Joy Farm eventually became Estlin's, and a small cottage on Silver Lake his sister's. The young poet continued coming to New Hampshire each summer and it proved to figure greatly in his later works.....

And further on:

It was on a September day in 1962 that e.e. cummings drove his old Ford down to the Silver Lake post office and dropped off the final draft of that book (one in which e.e. cummings wrote and his wife Marion Moorhouse Cummings did the photography of which many of the photos were shot at Joy Farm) when he was stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage. Upon his return to Joy Farm. He was rushed to Memorial Hospital where he died later in the day. His wife continued coming to Joy Farm until her death in 1968, after which the farm was sold. It still sits remote and unpretentious, like its former owner who once expressed his feelings about the farm in a letter he wrote to Ruth Shackford prior to coming to Silver Lake for his summer visit.

“Please thank Buddy for taking such wonderful care of Joy Farm. I guess he knows how much it means to us to feel the place we love best in the world is sound and safe!”

Madison Historical Society Contribution for Exhibit Display Cases

\$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$500 _____ \$1000 _____ \$2500 _____

Note that with a \$2500 contribution the Society will place a nameplate on a display case in your honor.

Please send contributions to:

Madison Historical Society

Attention: Treasurer

P.O. Box 505

Madison, NH 03849

:Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

NEWS FLASH

The Madison Historical Society Newsletters are now on our web page:

<http://ci.madison.nh.us/historical/index.html>

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