



Madison Historical Society Museum - 1884

Madison Historical Society

S P R I N G 2 0 0 9

P R E S I D E N T ' S L E T T E R

W I S H L I S T

1. An extra Board member or two.
2. Lap Top Computer.
3. Donations towards expanding our Tool Shed for more exhibit space.
4. Donations toward the Building Restoration Fund.

Executive Board

Mary K.W. Lucy
President

Linda Drew Newton
Smith
Vice President

Robin M. Tagliaferri-
Ferreira
Secretary

Penny Hathaway
Treasurer

Becky Knowles
Curator

I am hoping by the time you receive this issue of our newsletter the snow has finally melted here in Madison, the crocuses are in bloom, and the daffodils will soon be too.

As of March 23rd we now have \$14,117.31 in our Building Restoration Fund that is in our Money Market account. This does not include the funds that we procured through the Town in the past. The Board recently decided to hire a professional painting company to paint the exterior of our Society building, which has needed a new paint job for many years. We also decided that at this time we will wait to repaint the metal roof.

Put May 16th on your calendar for our 2nd Annual Flea Market Fundraiser at the Madison Fire Station from 9:00 until 2:00. Price per 8' table and space will be \$20, or an 8' space alone is \$15. To reserve a space or space with a table please call Linda Smith at 367- 4640. We are adding a bake sale to increase our revenue this year. If you can help out please bake up some goodies for us to sell. If you just want to help us out by assisting with set-up or take-down, manning a table, or whatever, please let Linda know. We can always use extra help.

We are still looking for three members who will be interested in being part of the

Nominating Committee to be selected at our May meeting. The duty of the Nominating Committee is to nominate candidates, whose consent to serve on the executive board has been obtained, for each office to be filled at the annual meeting in July. The officers of the Society are elected for a term of two years. If you are interested in being part of the Nominating Committee or would like to be a member of the Board, please contact Linda Smith.

My apologies go out to Pat Ambrose whose name I inadvertently had not included on the membership listing in our 2009 program brochure.

Happy Spring!

Mary K.W. Lucy

BLAST FROM THE PAST

This is taken from one of our old Secretary's meeting minutes notebooks. These meeting minutes are dated May 15, 1968.

Fifteen members of the Madison Historical Society met on May 15 for its monthly meeting. Mrs. Charlotte Hamilton, Vice President, presided.

It was suggested by Ernest Meader that the few documents we have on the White Meeting House be given to Mr. Keith Henney for the

records of Eaton. It was unanimously voted to do this.

It was voted that the secretary write a note of appreciation to Mr. Henney for the records and documents he has given to us.

Mr. Meader reported that 60 members of the Madison School, with faculty, visited our museum and Mrs. Giles and Mr. Harvey complimented the Society on the fine collection it has acquired over a period of ten years.

Mr. Meader also reported that some books and other articles had been given to the Society by Mrs. Nellie Tyler Campbell. A book dated 1885 was given by Mr. Donald Hayes and geographies which Mr. Acker had planned to bring to the Society were given by Mrs. Acker.

A report made by Malcolm McNair regarding the sign to be erected at the ball field. It was suggested that one be made similar to those used in

the National Forest, on dark walnut with letters indented and painted white. It will stand at right angles to the road with lettering on both sides so it can be seen by anyone coming from either direction. It will read:

**John H. & Millie P.
BURKE**

Recreation Grounds

The motion was passed that the Directors proceed to have this sign completed and erected.

The death of Mr. Ralph Acker, one of the Society's most active members was noted and the motion was made that the Society draw up a Resolution to Mrs. Acker for his services to the Madison Historical Society and the Association of Historical Societies of New Hampshire.

The secretary read a letter from the Association of Historical Societies of N. H. asking that we list the historic assets in our town for a preliminary survey prior to a state sponsored survey. It was suggested that we list the Old Town Pound which was in existence before 1852, the church, the plaque in front of the church bearing the names of all the service men from Madison back to the boulder, the Blaisdell grist mill at East Madison and the Madison Historical Society Building which was previously the Madison Town Hall.

Mr. Meader introduced Percy Blake of Chocorua, a former resident of Madison, who spoke on the History of County Government passing into history, and why it is passing into history. Mr. Blake stated "Every day we are losing more and more and more of our birthrights. He quoted many interesting facts and statistics of Carroll County with some comparisons of costs between 1900 and today. He also listed some of the dangers of losing our County Government structure.

Hostesses for the social period which followed were Mrs. Alice Ward and Mrs. Hazel Drew.

Leah Kennett, Secretary

DUES

Please take a moment to review your mailing label. The date of your last membership payment appears above your name. We would hate to have you miss out on an issue of our newsletter. Thank you to all who have already renewed their memberships.

MAILBAG

Editor's note: We welcome all stories and memories, long or short to add to the newsletter. Please e-mail to Mary Lucy at:

ghostduster@roadrunner.com

or by mail to: Mary Lucy, 534 Moores Pond Rd., Silver Lake, NH 03875.

MAILBAG

It all started when May Ward mentioned she had an old cookbook written by Haydn S. Pearson entitled, **Country-man Cookbook**, printed in 1946. I was intrigued about this author whose Uncle Theodore grew up here in Madison, so I went on-line to Amazon to see if I could locate this book. I found several of his books for sale and purchased a copy of his book, **Country Flavor**, printed in 1945. This book has a collection of his wonderful short (one page) essays on country life. Many of which could fit the lives of those who once lived the country life here in Madison. Hayden wrote a collection of books and was a frequent contributor to the New York Times.

One recent winter day I received a package in the mail from Arline Harmon Parker. To my surprise this package contained copies of two newspaper articles written by Hayden Pearson that Betty Harmon Bue had sent to her a long time ago along with a story by Betty about her memories of the Pearson family. About a week later Arline sent me an even larger package that Betty had sent to her about the Pearson family. It contains many of the Pearson family's recollections of living here in Madison. Many of these stories will be printed in future newsletters.

Feb. 2009—The Pearson Family, an interesting family in New Hampshire

Theo and Carrie Pearson and their 13 children were a most interesting family in our small town of Madison, NH, especially the fact that they had 13 children born from 1901-1924. They were very poor, all the children were very bright. They lived in a small, old farmhouse about one mile from the center of town on top of a very steep hill, with Lyman Mt. behind their home. We called Lyman Mt. Pearson's Heights and often went there to pick wild berries and enjoy the view of Mt. Chocorua. Their old home had at least one barn, several outbuildings, a barber shop and was very primitive with no running water or inside bathroom for many years. Best of all it had the most outstanding view of Mt. Chocorua, our beloved mountain we all loved, that overlooked our town. The climb up the hill was well worth the view at top. This old home was built probably prior to 1850, and in fact, it belonged to one of my Flanders ancestors, a very old Madison fam-

ily. My cousins and I spent many hours on this same hill, sliding on antique double runner sleds when we were teenagers.

Carrie was nine years younger than Theo, b. 1883, and apparently they had met at the New Hampton Literary Institute in south NH when she was just 19 years old... he may have been her teacher. She had never lived in Madison, but Theo was born in Madison in 1874. His family had moved to Madison from Massachusetts in the later 1800's for the clear air and the mother's health. Carrie and Theo came to live with his parents around 1903 with their first two children. Theo was a teacher, a musician, a farmer, a preacher and a barber; in addition to all these talents, he was a bee keeper and raised fancy poultry. In the years between 1901-1924, Theo and Carrie had 13 children. Their youngest child May, b. in 1924, was my friend in high school. I can't imagine how Carrie, who was very musical, managed that huge brood with so little financial resources... it is said she had a "great spirit and faith in God" - she needed it! The whole family were very faithful members of our Baptist church, the only church in town, and they came down the hill to church every Sunday, rain or shine, in horse and buggy... the children of course walking. Theo was the church organist and choir director, and Carrie sang alto in our small choir. As a teenager I stood beside her in the choir and could follow her strong alto easily.

When Carrie and Theo moved to the house, there was no running water in the house, but a deep well nearby, so whoever went by the well carried in a bucket of water; there was a "4-holer bathroom" in the shed.

Carrie was a tiny lady, under 5', sparkling eyes and always wore her hair with a braid on her crown. I'm sure she was the nurturer in the family and the glue that held the family together. She became quite matronly as she got older—who wouldn't with all those children?

Theo's two sisters lived together down at Madison Corner after their husbands died—Aunt Edie and Aunt Millie, as we called them. Aunt Millie had one son who died young, and Aunt Edie had no children. I used to stay with them at night when I was in high school to earn extra money - they were afraid to stay alone and must have felt safer with a younger person around... I don't think I was much protection! Aunt Edie was afraid of fire and she kept her old house ice cold in the winter so I was always glad to leave in the a.m. to go to school. In later years, Carrie and Theo stayed with the aunts in the winter months when living up on the hill became too difficult. I am sure the sisters helped with Theo's family when the going got tough.

Theo was really a ladies man though he never did anything inappropriate that I ever heard of. He was interested in young people and often coached some of the high school students for their yearly prize speaking contest at high school - I was one of his pupils.

When I went home about 5 years ago to my sister's funeral service I took Melinda, Tim and my niece Nancy up to Pearson's to refresh my memory and to show the kids a little history - it was a cold, clear winter day, and the fields were heavy with snow. The trees in the old orchard across from the homestead

were bare and the ever present Mt. Chocorua was wreathed in its winter beauty, spectacular to behold. Imagine having a view like that from your living room window, ever present through the changing New England seasons - beautiful at any time of year... always changing.

My cousin Roger [Clayton] was driving us and went up to the old house to say hello and introduce us to the present owners, a photographer and a nurse. They have renovated the old house, modernized it and are very interested in its history. Just being inside the old place triggered the many memories of the good times I spent there during high school and my friendship with May and her brother Nat and her parents, who never seemed to mind having an extra person at their dinner table. The house is beautifully restored, furnished with antiques, the old floors polished and open beams exposed in the main part of the house. I wish we could have seen the upstairs room where May and I slept in the girls room. My, would Carrie be delighted with the modern kitchen and inside bathroom.

All in all, it was a good experience to visit this old homestead and remember the Pearson family as I knew them; I always admired their tenacity and ability to survive the tough times they encountered and their ability to enjoy life along the way. I believe every one of the 13 children went to college and must have earned their own way for the most part.

Theo died at age 76 [1950] and Carrie, bless her heart, at age 95 [1978]. She was one remarkable person.

This is how May saw her mother when she wrote her memories of her childhood on Pearson Hill... "She loved birds and flowers - she always had flowers blooming in her yard during the summer - a wonderful nurse who took her children through numerous childhood illnesses, using natural/herb type medicines. She was a magician who took odds and ends of food from the cellar and pantry - we used very little grocery purchased food except for flour, sugar and dry cereal to cook - everything else came from our farm. She made birthdays such a special occasion that we never realized there were no presents... just the traditional spankings. She was kind and understanding to all, and she didn't have favorites, children or grandchildren. I am deeply thankful to have had a mother like that - in her diary she wrote, "Thank God for my family."

I myself am glad to have known this remarkable family.

Betty Harmon Bue

The picture at right is of Carrie Pearson in her kitchen at the Pearson homestead in 1944. From the collection of Betty Harmon Bue.

Country Correspondence

Visit To Aging Relations Recalls Events Of The Past

By HAYDN PEARSON

MADISON, N. H.—In the course of a year, each of us has days that for one reason or another are outstanding. It will be a long time before I forget the day that Blanche and I had with Aunt Edith Chick and Aunt Carrie Pearson on the old Pearson homestead here in this beautiful mountain town.

Aunt Edith, Father's sister, is 88, and Aunt Carrie, Uncle Theodore's widow, is 82. They spend the summer months on the old farm on Pearson Hill, about two miles from the village. In the winter they live in Aunt Edith's Cape Codder on the knoll behind the post office.

Perfect Day

It was a memorable day for me because I felt closer to Father for those few hours than I have for a long time. It was a perfect mid-autumn day, a warm, blue sky, white-cloud day. From the front yard of the old house built against the hillside, there is a magnificent view of Mount Chocorua. Many a time when we were living in Hancock and looked at the Temple Range across the Contoocook Valley, Father would say that no mountain had the distinctive skyline of Chocorua.

I can remember reasonably well the old Pearson farm in 1906 when I was five. There were open fields below the house, and a large open pasture on the hillside above. Now all is closed in; Nature has repossessed that which man took for his own use for a period. The tall, gaunt apple trees below the house are crowded by birch and pines; but the old trees still live, with suppliant arms reaching high. And a few small apples will fall for the deer and porcupines.

Grandfather Theodore Carleton Pearson bought the farm in 1873. It was great grandfather John who lived in Newburyport, Mass., and originated Pearson's Pilot Bread. Grandfather Theodore's second wife was Rhoda Ann Whittier, second cousin to John Greenleaf Whittier, the poet, and some day when I have a few hours, I shall try to figure my relationship to the poet.

Little Farming

Father had four full brothers and three full sisters. He was born in 1865, before Grandfather bought the Madison farm. "It has been a complete change," Aunt Edith said, as we talked in the

large, low-ceilinged living room. Fifty years ago this was a real family farm. We had all kinds of livestock, raised many crops and did lots of canning and preserving. Now there are very few farms in town. Summer people have bought the places. I can remember that one day a girl friend and I drove 40 miles over to New Hampton to see your Father graduate from the New Hampton Literary and Biblical Institution. That was the name of the school. And your Uncle Theodore walked the 40 miles more than once when it came his turn to go to school."

Aunt Edith and Uncle Bert ran a summer boarding house in Madison for many years, often having as many as 25 or 30 guests. In those long-ago days, summer boarders came for a month or the summer. In "Statistics and Gazetteer of New Hampshire" published in 1874 it says, "Madison is quite a resort for all lovers of New Hampshire scenery. There are about 500 visitors who spend a part or the whole of their vacation in this town."

In that year there were lead and zinc mines in town, about 12,000 pairs of shoes were made, and clothing to the value of \$20,000 was manufactured. There were two hotels and the Portsmouth, Great Falls and Conway Railroad went through the town. Madison was settled in 1785, but not incorporated until 1852. In 1860, the population was 826; in 1900, 529; in 1950, 478.

I am glad that Blanche and I had the day with Aunt Edith and Aunt Carrie. It was good to see them and to talk family, good to live for a few hours there on the old farm where Father grew up. He loved the country and country life as does his son. He loved the mountains, the wild life and Nature. As I look out on the mountains from Sunny Acres I feel very close to Father when I remember his words, "I wouldn't be happy if I couldn't lift my eyes to the hills."



HAYDN S. PEARSON

Haydn Pearson was born in New Hampshire, graduated from the University of New Hampshire and got his master's degree at Harvard in 1930. He has lectured extensively and written on country life subjects for numerous magazines and newspapers. He is a regular contributor to the *Rural New Yorker*, the *New York Times*, the *Farmer's Weekly* of London, England; the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and the *Providence Journal*.

Hattie Lyman's Cookies

1/2 cup molasses
1/2 cup sugar
2/3 cup melted fat
1 beaten egg
Beat together well. Sift:
1 cup flour
1/3 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon ginger

Mix this with the first mixture. Then add 1 cup rolled oats and mix again.

Drop from a teaspoon and bake in a 325° oven for 20 to 25 minutes.

Newspaper article from unknown paper. Circa 1965.



This recipe was taken from Haydn S. Pearson's book, **Countryman Cookbook**, page 256. Courtesy of May Ward.

The picture above comes from the inside cover of the book, **Country Flavor. 1945.**

