



Madison Historical Society Museum - 1884

Madison Historical Society

W I N T E R 2 0 1 0

W I S H L I S T

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

Executive Board

Mary K.W. Lucy
President

Linda Drew Newton
Smith
Vice President

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

So far this winter has been a very mild, but chilly one here in Madison. Hopefully, it will continue this way.

This past summer the members voted in to purchase a new lap top computer for Historical Society use to catalogue all collections we have at the museum. However, we did not have to spend that money since Becky Knowles has graciously donated her old lap top for our use. Thank you Becky!

We have some really interesting programs lined up for this coming season. The MHS 2010 brochure is included with this newsletter, so mark down the programs on your calendar beginning in May. We will be co-sponsoring our June NH Humanities program with the Friends of Madison Library again this year.

Our 3rd annual flea market will be held on May 22, 2010 at the Madison Fire Station from 9:00 until 2:00. Price per 8' table

and space is \$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 will be including a bake sale again 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.

Think spring!

Mary K.W. Lucy

B L A S T F R O M T H E P A S T

This is taken from one of our old Secretary's meeting minutes notebooks. These meeting minutes are dated February 17, 1971.

Our hostess, Mrs. Edith Kennett, opened her home for the Historical Society.

Our Vice-President, Herbert Weston, opened the meeting with a prayer for peace.

We had five guests and seventeen members present.

Collection was \$4.75.

Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were read and approved.

Mr. and Mrs. Vaughan from Boothbay, Maine, were guests of Richard and Kay Hockings.

The Vaughans told many personal experiences they had which fitted in well with the subject of the Post Office Department.

Ernest Meader gave a most interesting and authentic talk on old post offices. Much to our interest were the following items:

The Postal Dept. was started in 1775. Andrew Hamilton was our first postmaster. One of the first routes

came over Route 1, the Old Post Road.

The post office served many functions such as giving out the weather report. In 1789 there were 75 post offices in the 13 colonies.

We believe the first post office in our area was located in the Snell home, which was the house where Marjorie Harding lived. [Now owned by Dave and Laura Aibel, 2010.]

Fred Pearson was the first postmaster at Silver Lake in 1881.

United States Postal Service became law in 1970. [She may have meant 1870.]

Rural deliveries dated from 1896.

Refreshments of assorted cakes and coffee was served by Edith Kennett, assisted by her daughter, Mrs. Joan Sherwood.

Respectfully submitted,
Priscilla Philbrick, Sec.

DUES

Please take a moment to review your mailing label. The due date of your membership 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.

POETRY CORNER

We are happy to bring back our poetry corner after receiving several requests from members to do so. This book of Albert Watson's poetry is on loan from Linda Drew Smith to share with our readers. The book is entitled, Ledge Farm, by Albert L. Watson, Copyright 1977 by A. L. Watson, printed by asc Creative Printing, inc., Hagerstown, Maryland. On the inside cover page it is inscribed, to Ernest Meader of Madison, New Hampshire, who was valiant enough not to decline this dedication.

LAST TRAIN OUT

The railroad said this: we should lose money
To make money only so long. Then close down

They have paved over the tracks
and you may ride through town now
without a jolt

Old photographs show what the railroad was
once.

Or people in town can tell you. Ladies with
parasols
came off from Boston. They and their escorts
thronged the platform.

The farms by the lake were inns. And the farms
higher up,
in the hills, or on Lyman Mountain, changed
rooms
downstairs and upstairs and dug deeper wells.

Three trains on Friday gave warnings with
whistles
to wagons and buggies, and in winter sleighs.
Steam blew up white and tall in winter,
and ladies stepped off in coats and mufflers
just to see town deep in white, crested on pines,
and the lake a great meadow, orange in the
light
that came in late afternoon.

One season and another, this town was a place
to stop off.

Now weeds grow wild where you would count
ties
and buildings are a post office and a ware-
house,
and telegraph poles with unspeaking wires.

Now most comers come summer in cars
and own cottages where they undress.

The last train to this town came tentative
through fogs late in an autumn evening.
Some in town were upstairs but some
were ay supper.

No passengers — one empty car, and a car
that brought freight for Chick's mill —
no person aboard but the engineer.

Some heard that last whistle.
But who heard the retreating grind
of wheels on rusted track when after dark
the train crept back to the yards
and never come again to Madison?
That was the last train into Madison
and the last train out.

No one will say for sure, "Yes, I heard
a passage and saw a swinging lamp."

The little train swayed keeping course
down the long lake shore and out of mind.

MEMORIES OF GROWING UP IN MADISON

As written by Carrie May (Pearson) Schoenfeld. Date unknown. "May" was the thirteenth child born on March 25, 1924 to Theodore Carleton and Carrie L. (Smith) Pearson.

Being the thirteenth in a family is an experience not many people have. In my case, it meant having twelve big brothers and sisters, ranging all the way from 2 to 23 years older than I am. It meant having a lot to live up to, we were a family of achievers, and we were expected to be as good as the older ones, maybe better. Strangely enough, it meant sometimes being lonely, as the older ones were away from home before I was born. I really only remember Nat and Lincoln well from the early years. It meant having parents who were older, tired, suffering from many illnesses of a hard life and old age, parents who were very experienced, but also tired. I don't remember Dad at all as a "fun" person, as many of you [speaking to her brothers and sisters] do. He was a tired, sick man who had (I imagine) his fill of kids and hard work. Mother was kind and gentle as always, but again, tired and not well. I don't feel sorry for myself. I had twelve big brothers and sisters to care for me, and I always felt that you did. I adored and admired all you older ones, the really fun times in my life were when you came home for the holidays and vacations. I lived for those times, Mother planned all your favorite foods, and Nat and I fought to sit beside you at the table. I remember Ruth and Al getting stuck on the hill at Thanksgiving. There were
(continued on next page)



Madison Train Wreck
August 3, 1889

Three of the men pictured
here include:

Lewis Knox, Isa Forrest,
and Frank Lyman.

Original photo given to the
Madison Historical Society
by Carrie Chick Dummer.

enough people around to pull you out. I remember Dad hitching up the horses to meet you at the station. I remember feeling sad and lonely again when you left to go back to school, or your jobs. Nat and I were fairly close as brother and sister, we had no one else to be friends with. Neighbors children were all grown up. Mostly we lived for school, church, and the times you all came home for the holidays.

And of all holidays, Thanksgiving was the best. I'm going to copy a description of that day which I wrote for the *Madisonian* in 1941. [1941 was the year that both May and her brother Nat graduated from Madison High School.]

"Thanksgiving is the grand celebration of the year. We always have a crowd, twenty or more. This forces some of us to sleep on the attic floor, buried in feather mattresses and heavy quilts. We always talk until midnight but it was a strict rule among the children to get up before light and take a walk to build up our appetites. We are supposed to be quiet so as not to wake up the grown ups. But the chairs somehow look very much like the darkness and there were lots of things to talk about. I imagine we acted as a good alarm clock those mornings. Out of doors we made no attempt to suppress our excitement. A pack of wild Indians couldn't have made more noise. We walked, ran and fooled around for an hour or more. Then with wet feet and muddy shoes and empty stomachs we returned to the house. The women groaned to see us coming, but we were there, they might as well make use of us. So we set to work setting the long table and as one of the older ones, I had to wash up the "brats" and get them ready for breakfast.

What a privilege to be allowed to help set the pies on the table. Oh yes, we had a pie breakfast. That's why we are all so ambitious at such early hours. We have apple, mince, raisin, coconut, peach, prune, cranberry, date, squash, pumpkin, banana, lemon, cream, nut, pineapple and many others. We searched the cookbooks for new recipes that we could find ingredients to make. The first course is a big piece of chicken pie covered with rich chicken gravy. This always fills us up, but we have to eat at least four or five other kinds. The men often tried them all. Maybe that's why they were always so helpful after breakfast, untying aprons, pulling hair, etc. The greatest help comes from them when they take their guns and go hunting.



C. MAY PEARSON

Athletics: Basketball Manager 2, Letter 3. 4. Volley Ball 3, 4.
Dramatics: Musical Review 1, Windmills of Holland 2, Bachelor House 2. Dollars to Doughnuts 3, Londonderry Air 4, Nora Nobody 4. Prize Speaking Finals 1, Durham 4.
Madisonian: Exchange Editor 2, Literary Editor 3, 4.
K. G. E. Offices: Vice-President 3, President 4.
Class Offices: Vice-President 2, Treasurer 4.
Plymouth Scholastic Team 4.
Valedictorian, Class Pronheciv.
Magna Cum Laude 1, 2, 3, 4.
Glee Club 1, 2, 3, 4.
May plans to attend college.
"The secret of success is constancy to purpose."

Picture of May Pearson taken from *The Madisonian*, 1941.

Dinner was eaten late, by candlelight. The evening is spent singing, talking, playing games and having the good time that a group of good-natured, jolly, fun loving gang can always have."

We have continued pie breakfasts at Thanksgiving, with a smaller number of pies, but when Fran's family and ours get together we turn up with ten or more kinds. Our sons have carried this tradition to California and Alaska with them.

Other holiday customs that I remember — hiding our Christmas stockings, May baskets, we made them ourselves, put home made fudge in the bottoms, spring flowers in the top. Then we put them on people's door steps and knocked. We ran and hid, and hoped someone would come and hunt for us. At Easter we blew out eggs and filled them with home made fudge.

I spent many hours alone, doing various jobs. The boys were more valuable at other chores, so I did many solitary things. The hours I spent watching cows, away back in the fields. No reading. I made up games to keep myself from screaming with boredom. I told myself stories out loud, and built rooms with stones by the ledges. I'd think I had been forgotten as it started to get dark, but I always was rescued. Picking berries was more fun, but lonely too. But at least there was the pleasure of samples. I guess nothing tastes better than sweet, sun ripened wild strawberries. I can still smell out a patch. And after the long job of hulling them, there was Mother's extra good strawberry shortcake made the only way it should

be, with rich biscuits and cream.

Remember the vinegar and sugar drink we took to the men in the field? What a treat when someone invented cool-aide. I remember the choir practicing at the house, how I loved to listen, and also enjoyed the grape juice drink Mother made from her own juice.

More than anything else I enjoyed the music we had, most of it home made. I liked playing the piano, and learned all that Dad had the patience to teach me. (I still suffer when I think of that low f# that never worked.) When Dad had to miss church for some reason, and it was rare, I felt it quite the honor to play the piano for the hymns. Listening to the Saturday opera broadcast while I helped with housework was a treat — that is when the batteries were strong enough to get Boston. The church music, glee club in high school, singing around the piano — Mother and Dad's beautiful duets. All this helped to make up for the hard work and lack of many comforts. Music is still a very important part of my life, still has the power to take me away from worries and troubles. And now my work in a music library makes it possible to help others who love music as I do.

My least favorite punishment was being set in a chair for a long time. I sat alright, but I sat and hated Dad, or whoever did it, and never felt sorry for my sins. I remember being whipped a few times too. I guess I wasn't the most obedient child, people said I got away with more than

the older ones did. I didn't think so.

Aunt Edith [Edith Irene (Pearson) Chick, wife of Herbert E. Chick] and Aunt Millie [Millie (Pearson) Burke, wife of John Burke] were special to me. They were always kind and never too busy to visit. Remember Uncle Bert's dog who counted? I loved the "piazzas" and the hammock one of them had. When I was in high school I used to stay nights at Aunt Edie's place in the village, if I had something late and Nat wasn't there to walk home with me. I remember her ginger tea, and the cookie jar that always had a treat in it.

I often walked to the village for groceries and kerosene. Often taking eggs and butter to help pay for them. I hoped there would be a penny left to get some candy. Sometimes I went home Uncle John's way and stopped at Webber's ice cream store hoping he'd feel sorry for me and give me a cone. He often did, he was a kind man. I remember feeling very grown up when Lincoln took Nate and me there for a dish of ice cream.

That old dirt cellar! It surely had a smell that still says cellar to me. Wet and full of vegetables, cool in the summer. I was always fascinated by the pond in the corner under the dining room. I was fascinated and yet afraid of it. I knew every inch, and could go down in the dark and get potatoes and carrots and other goodies that kept us from starving through the winter. If it got cold enough outside, we started a fire in an old stove. But usually it stayed above freezing. Remember the small hole on the side near the road, we'd crawl out through it sometimes. But that cellar kept us from starvation in the winter. We had apples, as long as they would keep, winter pears, potatoes, carrots, cabbages, turnips in bins. And all around on the shelves were hundreds of jars of home grown foods, canned by Mother and us girls, fruits, vegetables, jellies and jams, and Mother's marvelous pickles. When the hens were laying heavily, she put eggs down in a large crock in water glass. They were good for baking, not so good for plain eating. And after a hog was butchered, sausage was put down there in fat — after it was cooked, and salt pork cured in more crocks. Meat was also frozen and kept down in the cottage. That's why hogs were butchered after the weather was freezing.

I loved school. It was my social life as well as an education. One room schools — I admire the teachers who seemed to handle eight grades as easily as one

grade is handled now. But as I remember the Mason school, we didn't always have 8 grades. The attendance was small. I remember ten or a dozen there. There were probably 20 or more at the Nickerson school. But the teachers worked out ways of coping. They put two grades together on many subjects, I was moved up until I caught up with a class that was larger. The older children often helped the younger ones. And the classes were pretty much limited to the three R's plus a little history and geography. Music was singing, which we all liked, although I never caught on to the "do-ray-mes". Holiday programs were very important, and I remember Mother and Dad coming in the horse and buggy to hear us sing and recite.

I'm sure we missed some things by going to a one room school. But we had recesses to beat anything that a hundred kids on a crowded cement playground will ever experience. We had the whole outdoors. We played hide and seek up the mountain side and down the fields. We sledded on the hills, we never had to worry about traffic and played ball anywhere. We swung on birches, climbed trees, waded in the brooks. Probably we were glad to sit down and rest and study when recess or lunch hour was over.

Nat and I helped close the Mason school for the last time. I think there were six students the last year we were there. It took Dad a long time to decide what school we'd attend next. It was either the Nickerson school, which had a lousy teacher, or junior high in the village. Rather than expose us to the sinful large town life — we went to the Nickerson school. I remember helping teach the younger ones a great deal. I don't think I learned a lot myself. I was very happy to get to high school. But we had our first hot lunches there, parents took turns once a week bringing in hot chocolate, baked beans, soups. I remember it as a big treat.

The old attic was a treasure chest to me. How I loved rummaging through the boxes of old clothes, and dressing myself and Herman's [May's brother] children and putting on shows in the parlor or barn. I still remember one time Herman brought candy bars to pay for admission to one of the shows. Janice and David were very patient with my bossing them around. I loved the box of old National Geographic

magazines in the attic, the books, the rain on the roof. I think attics should be required for every home, with lots of junk for exploring. I remember the scary times going through the dark eaves leading to the attic over the kitchen. I read everyone of the Elsie Dinsmore books that were stashed away up there, maybe twice. Mother worried that there was too much love in them. I read everything else I could find. I have fond memories of the revolving bookcase in the parlor, and the very crowded book shelves in the dining room.

Remember the cupboard behind the couch in the living room, where I remember were kept very pretty and fragile pieces of dinnerware that we rarely used. And under that couch was my favorite place to hide.

Mother let me cook. And I guess that was the secret. I've always enjoyed doing it. The first pie I made was an apple one made one night when a teacher, Miss Brooks, was invited to supper. (Remember M.I.K.) She certainly had a fine knowledge of child psychology. Of course she had practiced on 12 of you before me. But she made it a privilege to help in the kitchen. And when we had big crowds for dinner, I was put in charge of the children's table, so I didn't mind being away from the grown ups.

Mother was moving slowly and with considerable pain by the time I was the only girl home — I did a lot of the heavy work and don't think I minded. I loved to sit on the box behind the wood stove in the kitchen and visit with her. I always felt close to her, we talked a lot as we worked together. I probably resented having to do the ironing on Saturdays (oh, those hot old sad irons heated on the kitchen stove as we dripped sweat on dad's Sunday white shirts) scrubbing the floor, cooking Sunday dinners while Mother and Dad lingered at church, but I don't remember resenting it. I think I felt an important part of the family, I was needed, there was no one else no help.

I remember Dad in pain with his angina attacks, and how frightened and helpless I felt as we waited for the Doctor to come. I remember the winter that Mother was sick in bed with arthritis for several months. I believe I was a freshman then, I took

over the cooking and much of the house work. Ede came home from teaching on weekends and did the laundry and other things. Dad seemed more patient with me that winter. Perhaps because we had more contact, perhaps because he knew I was trying my best to help. I remember Mother crying from the intense pain, and again crying from happiness when the church sent her a box of delicacies. Someone else, I think Millie, sent a box of good foods, as I remember. I know I goofed on cooking, I remember a cake that never rose, I put on extra frosting and hoped the men would think it was supposed to be that way. Anyway, I don't remember them ever complaining.

I remember when we were quarantined with scarlet fever, and putting every book in the house out in the snow banks in the sun to kill the germs. Mother burned something inside — was it sulfur?

I suppose I could go on for many more pages. I had the advantage of having my memory jogged every time I read the memories of all you brothers and sisters. It is surprising how much comes back. I think the most

important thing to me is that there is a real warm family feeling to my memories. I can't think of anything better that I could remember, and I'm thankful to all you and to Mother and Dad for making it so.

Briefly, my life. I left home at 17, went to New York City to work, planning to attend college. I did take many courses over the years, but never earned a degree. But I learned many other things. I learned about the labor movement first hand, but participating in unions in factories I worked in during World War II. After Max [Schoenfeld] and I were married, we moved to Cleveland, Ohio, and our boys [Daniel and Edward] were born and grew up in a good working class neighborhood that developed poverty and racial problems as the years passed. I raised the boys, participated in PTA and in the Peace movement and the struggles of black brothers and sisters to become equal citizens. In recent years I work part time in a library in a music conservatory, Cleveland Institute of Music, where I do a great deal of work with the students. I also do volunteer work in a neighborhood art center,

where I teach pottery and macramé and other things. I get a great deal of satisfaction from helping people. I will never be a really good potter because my time goes to helping others enjoy this art medium. But a pot breaks easily, and the human relationships I've made through these experiences I will cherish forever.

Editor's note: Thank you to Betty Bue, who has shared May Pearson's memories, along with her Pearson file that will be copied and filed at the Madison Historical Society Museum.

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.

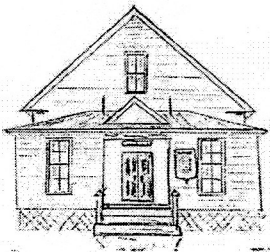
PICTURE FROM THE PAST



This picture was recently sent along with many others from Lois C. Jenkins, who is related the Nickerson family. Thank you again Lois for such a wonderful collection.

This photo is of the house that sits opposite the Madison Historical Society Museum. Lois wrote That George and Erma (Alley) Nickerson and family lived here from 1933—1938. C. 1935.

The house is currently for sale, and has not changed on the exterior since this photo was taken.



Madison Historical Society Museum - 1884

Madison Historical Society
P.O. Box 505
Madison, NH 03849

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

GIFTS

Donations by check or cash - the most direct and immediate way to offer support. Your gift will be deeply appreciated, whether in response to our mailed appeal or at a time convenient to you. As a non-profit organization, all gifts we receive are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Memorial gifts- one of the most meaningful ways to acknowledge the passing of a loved one is by offering a gift as a tribute to a life lived. Memorial gifts become part of our Memorial Fund, which supports the work of the Madison Historical Society. Many times, families include a request for memorial gifts as part of the newspaper obituary. Often, individuals choose to make gifts in memory of their loved ones on birthdays or to mark the anniversary of their passing. A listing of the donors' names and addresses (but not the gift amount) is provided to the deceased's next of kin. Families tell us memorial gift tributes help to bring comfort and solace during their time of bereavement.

***You too can be a member of the
Madison Historical Society.***

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\$5.00 individual or
\$10.00 for family yearly membership
*along with your name, address, phone
number, and e-mail address to:*

Madison Historical Society
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P.O. Box 505
Madison, NH 03849

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