



Madison Historical Society Museum - 1884

# Madison Historical Society

S P R I N G 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*

Patricia Ambrose  
*Recording Secretary*

Robin M. Tagliaferri-  
Ferreira  
*Publicity Secretary*

Penny Hathaway  
*Treasurer*

Becky Knowles  
*Curator*

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

What an wonderful spring we are having here in Madison. It started early this year with temps in the 80's in March! It's the end of April and we experienced a little snow this morning, which has now melted. You never know what to expect with this crazy New Hampshire weather!

Roger Clayton has been keeping busy putting together binders of Madison History, most of which

were in the previous possession of Ernest Meader, one of our earlier Board members. We hope to eventually place these treasures into our files for easier access.

Roger also spent 20 hours this winter scraping down the old school bell which was graciously donated by Jan and Glen Eskedal. The school bell is not native to Madison, but came from an old school house somewhere out

west. Chucky Lyman will repaint it black, including the stand it sits on. We want to thank them both for all their work.. Our hope is to eventually place it in front of the Madison Corner Schoolhouse.

We have many wonderful programs this year, and look forward to seeing many of you there.

Hoping for a sunny summer,

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 May 18, 1966.

*The regular meeting of the Historical Society was held on May 18.*

*The meeting was opened by the President with the Pledge of Allegiance and singing one verse of America.*

*The President read a short article by John Gould titled, "A Lovely May Barskit".*

*The Treasurer's report was read and approved and the collection taken.*

*Ernest Meader reported on the result of the work party. The lawn was cleaned up and various other things done.*

*It was reported that the filing cabinet had been received.*

*A letter from the University of Colorado asking for information concerning our museum was handed over to Ernest Meader. Mrs. Ward and Mr. Meader to get information together and answer letter. Copy of letter and answer to be kept in our new file cabinet.*

*Mrs. Lulu Chamberlain and Mrs. Mertie Garrison attended the meeting with Mrs.*

*Jerry Brown. Mrs. Chamberlain and Mrs. Garrison presented to the Society a doll dressed in a family christening dress, over 80 years old. They also gave the Society a hand made wool knit petticoat, as was worn many years ago, to add to our collection of apparel.*

*Also given to the Society by Mrs. Lois Seabury of Conway, were some copies of the London Graphic and the Illustrated London News. These were from a collection of things which were in the Lady Blanche Murphy house on the West Side Road of Conway.*

A notice was read of the meeting of the Association of New Hampshire Historical Societies to be held on June 25 at Strawberry Banke in Portsmouth. This is a new restoration and it was suggested that as many people as possible attend.

After the business meeting was adjourned, Mr. Leon Gerry gave an excellent account of the first 50 years of the town, as Madison, from 1852 to 1902. A copy of his most interesting talk will be kept in the Museum files for those to read who were unfortunate enough to have missed this program.

A social period followed. Mrs. Arthur Gilman and Mrs. Herbert Weston served refreshments.

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#### 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 again 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.

#### **GASOLINE AND BEER FOR BREAKFAST AT THE MINNIE FROST PLACE**

The barn was down at the Frost house long before  
birches and poplar grew up to choke out the farm.  
It was the last farm to rise in our part of town  
and the first farm to go back.

Minnie was an early widow. She lived alone so long  
I can't remember her as Elibeus' wife.

Minnie sailed to Boston from Dublin. She came  
north here from the boat.

Minnie Cronin was a kind woman, not afraid of work.  
She married Elibeus Frost. When he died, Minnie went  
on with sons and finally grandsons.  
When she could get work she went dawn to dusk  
for a dollar a day and wasn't happy unless the work  
was well done, and the folks told her it was.

Every June when our church ladies called she had them  
to tea and pledged her dollar to help causes.  
And she always paid no matter how late. Reverend Drown thought the church ladies might better  
not call on a widow of the other faith and with children  
and not well off. But he was warned how she had things  
all ready each June when the ladies called.

The farm was not a good house, and even while she  
lived in it, it went down.

But she kept up the lilac bushes, and folks stopped  
or slowed down to see her pink roses in the dooryard.

After Minnie died, that was thirty or forty years ago,  
Minnie's clapboards weathered gray then brown then black,  
then the house was where children went to play, building  
out of the lost building.

The stairs were first to go, warped by water  
coming out of the unpatched roof.  
There was not one tread safe. No one, even children,  
saw upstairs the last twelve years.  
Birds slept in the old beds, and squirrels.  
Chipmunks and squirrels will burrow in your mattress when the counterpane is threadbare and yellowed.

Someone will always thrive on what you've given up.  
That's the world's standard of living.

The downstairs fared some better.

Our firemen moved out things before they lit  
the gasoline they put around the house. That's how  
we saw the things. They couldn't bring themselves  
to burn anything so much like history. That's tribute  
to the teachers in school, or just sentiment,  
or Yankee thrift.

The firemen made their decision and the house burned.  
We supported one reason with another: make the town  
safe for adventuring children, and practice on a real house.  
We chose the right day, after rain, and the time of day,  
morning, in case the fire did get away and wanted  
to spread up the back hillside. We'd have light.

Some weren't there early for the pouring on of the gas.  
But we were there, all of us, for the lighting.  
We had to protect our children from the stairs,  
not a tread to trust, and the floors downstairs,  
and the unaired stange [sic] cellar.

The lawyer Mr. Shea said it, "an attractive nuisance."  
That means your children think it's fun.

We were waiting and ready when someone opened a beer.  
A fire outdoors meant beer. The younger men  
went to their trucks and brought what they had.  
It was a toast to the end of the house, greater  
than the beginning, celebrating what was to be no more  
when no one had thought of celebrating what was.

*We had two engines. The pumps were at ready,  
hoses stuck into the well that had been the well  
of the house, in case the fire grew so hot it meant to devour more of the town than the town wanted consumed.*

*How to light it. No one wanted to be blown up.  
We had gasoline and water but more faith in gasoline.  
Our fire chief crept forward behind bushes,  
on his chest, to the old rose bushes and the gray of limbs that bore last drooping lilacs  
choked with impudent new brush, then cast his spark.*

*There was a pause before apocalypse, then the taut  
inhale of breath before a blast, then flame -  
The firemen, imbibing breakfast out of cans,  
trained their hoses, revved their red machines,  
watched for sparks.  
Roof falling brought the expected cheers.  
Every window belched its dragon breath of flame.  
An hour and black walls fell in sparks and smoke.*

*The next June I stopped at pause of woods and rise of lane.  
I stopped unsure of mud but sure I saw a shy show  
of pink roses. The house lay a farewell of charred boards  
and blackened shingles in its cellar.  
Minnie's doorstep spread sharp cal-cined shards.*

*The brush had ventured back. Minnie's roses  
pink and hesitant bloomed where there had been door.  
Memory would not be cheated of those blooms.  
The blaze and blight had left so much of man,  
in this case woman, her house and chimney down  
and fields grown wild.*

*My wife and I stop every year, at least slow down  
on the lane going by. It's hard to know, now,  
that there was a house there, with the wild growth.  
Yet just this June we looked and saw pink roses.  
You might not see them.  
I'm glad we knew just where to look.*

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#### 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.**

#### PRESENTATION ADDRESS FOR SOLDIERS TABLET MAY 30, 1921

**Editor's note:** This dedication speech was recently sent to our Town Clerk, Marcia Shackford from Liz Garrison McReynolds. Marcia called me knowing that this document should be kept at our Madison Historical Society Museum. What great timing, I thought, to get this into our spring newsletter in time for Memorial day. As I read this speech written for those who served from Madison during WWI, I felt much of the sentiments could have been written today as it speaks for all who have served our country. It was written and the speech given by Liz Garrison McReynolds' and Linda Lovering's grandmother, Mertie Lyman Garrison. Mertie was the daughter of Frank and Lizzie Lyman.

I called and spoke with Henry Forrest, who informed me that yes, this tablet is the one on the monument in front of the Madison Church honoring Madison's past soldiers who served our country from the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812

through WWI.

Henry believes that the WWII memorial plaque was added around 1951, with names of others who served through the Korean War, which ended on July 23, 1953, added sometime later.

The WWII painted wooden plaque that used to hang outside the Madison Historical Society was removed last year when the building was painted. Upon inspection of this old plaque we found it to be in poor shape, the wood rotting away due to the elements. It is now stored inside the building waiting to be repaired and re-hung indoors to preserve it.

Henry also mentioned that he is on the Veterans Monument Committee, which has been created to add all our veterans that have served since 1953 and to include corrections for others that were not listed previously. The committee also hopes to repair the WWII memorial plaque that is at the museum. The committee has set up a fund for these purposes. Please send donations to the **Veterans Monument Fund**, c/o Madison Town Hall, 1923 Village Road, P.O. Box 248, Madison, NH 03849.

The dedication as written by Mertie Lyman Garrison:

*It is with a feeling of pride and Gratitude to God that I stand here today and on behalf of the "Silver Lake Woman's Club" present to our Town this Memorial Tablet, which bears the names of 24 of our noble young men who answered their countries [sic] call, and went forth to suffer and die, if need be to save this fair land from the invasion of a most cruel foe.*

*Some of them were on the open seas exposed to the perils of submarine warfare, some were on the foreign fields and stood in the very thickest of the conflict. Others lay in beds of sickness in our camps and hospitals battling wills, disease, and pestilence, with no loved one near to comfort them. But Thank God all but two of them were permitted to return to us, bearing but few bodily wounds,*



Pictures showing front side of the Veterans Monument situated in front of the Madison Church as it stands today. The WWI and the WWII with the Korean War tablets are on the backside of the monument.  
Photos courtesy of Mary K.W. Lucy

some without a scratch, but victorious over the cruel Hun, and with the Stars and Stripes still proudly floating "O'er the land of the free and Home of the Brave."

I say I am proud to be here today first because no Loyal American citizen can help feeling proud to know that their own Town furnished it's share of brave young men to go forth to save not only this "great republic" but the whole world for Democracy.

I am proud to be here because many of these boys are very near and dear to me. Some made so by the ties of blood, others by my association with them in our little Sunday school. For four years or more several of them met me each Sunday morning in this Church, and we studied the word of God together and I tried as well as I knew how, to teach them their duty to God and man. Once each year at least I had them in my home, and we spent a happy afternoon together. I loved that class of boys and they merited my love, for they were the finest class of boys I have ever seen. Always kind and obedient to me, faithful in the performance of every duty and while life lasts there will be a tender spot in my heart for each and every one of them.

Three of them made the supreme sacrifice and gave their young lives for their country in this awful war. Perl Clifford Boyd, and George Arthur Leavitt - have their names on this Tablet to perpetuate their deeds of bravery, but owing to the Laws of our State concerning Soldiers Memorial Tablets, one could not claim the name of George Gray for he had gone to Maine to live and went into the service from there, but he was one of my boys and just as much a Madison boy as the others. And I would not feel right if I did not mention his name and drop some tribute of love and respect to his memory. Pearlie sleeps on foreign soil where Poppies grow far from home and loved ones. In the land, but we cherish his memory and today we wear this little poppy in loving memory of him and all our noble boys who sleep in "Flanders Field." As the years roll by and these memorial days come and go let us never forget to give to both living and dead the full measure of Honor and Respect due them. Always remembering that by their heroic deeds and sacrifices we are still a "free people."

May 30, 1921 Mertie L. Garrison

#### Madison Historical Society 2010 Meeting Programs

Meetings held at the Madison Historical Society Building at 7:00 PM unless noted. Read the "Conway Daily Sun" for notices and any changes for each month's program.

#### May 20 "A Tour of the Notches: White Mountain Art, History and Nature"

Presented by Bob Cottrell

#### June 17 NHHC Humanities Program Sponsored with the Friends of Madison Library

##### "Your Hit Parade"

Presented by Calvin Knickerbocker  
Madison Library—Chick Room

#### July 15 NHHC Humanities Program "Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn"

Presented by Thomas C. Hubka

#### August 19 "Bindles, Gut Robbers, and Beans Everlasting"

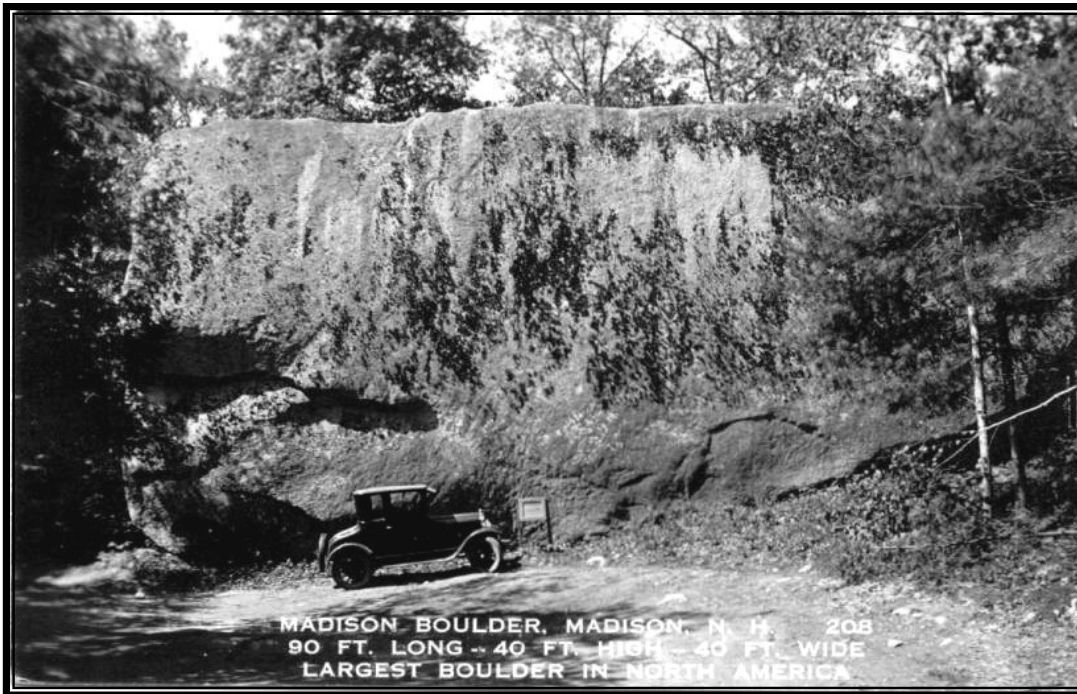
Presented by Dick Fortin

#### September 16 "Ranger Companies of Colonial New England"

Presented by Adam & Mary Spencer

#### Old Home Week:

August 8 6 – 7 PM Blueberry Fest  
August 10 Tues. 2-4 Museum Open House



This old postcard reads:

MADISON  
BOULDER,  
MADISON, N.H.

90 FT. LONG -  
40 FT WIDE

LARGEST  
BOULDER IN  
NORTH  
AMERICA

### THE MADISON BOULDER

**Editor's note:** My sister-in-law came across this typewritten paper in some of my mother-in-law, Barbara S. Lucy's belongings. It was written by Ralph R. Acker, date unknown.

According to Ray Stineford, Ralph taught school in Wellesley, Massachusetts. In the 1930's Ralph was a cook at Camp Allegro during the summer months while school was out. In the late 1950's when Ralph retired from teaching, he moved here to Silver Lake. Ralph and his wife lived at the old Carlyle Chick house, currently owned by Nancy Carlson and Joe Ferreira.

Ray also noted that Ralph was instrumental in reviving and reorganizing the Madison Historical Society in 1967. As compiled by Ralf R. Acker:

*The Madison Boulder, one of the largest known erratic boulders in the world, is located at the end of a good dirt road about four miles south of Conway on Route 113 and two miles north of Madison Village on Route 113. This road, about one and a half miles long, leads west through a sandy, scrub oak section across the railroad tracks to a more wooded area and onto a State Geological Site. (An "erratic boulder" being one that has been transported from its original site to another site.)*

*The Boulder is more or less rectan-*

*gular in shape, composed of a porphyritic granite. Porphyry is a fine grain rock with few larger crystals scattered through out, that was formed deep in the earth of a molten mass of granite. The measurements made by various persons differ greatly as do the estimate[s] of weight. The writer thinks the figures given in the book published by the New Hampshire State Planning and Development Commission entitled, "The Geology of New Hampshire, Part One Surficial Geology" and written by James W. Goldwait and his sons, Lawrence and Richard, about 1957 are the most reliable. These scientists estimate the boulder to be about 83 feet long, 37 feet high and 23 feet wide and to weigh about 4,700 tons. Scientists believe that the glacier, about 20,000 years ago, brought this boulder down from Albany ledges about two miles to the north-west, though some think that it may have come from Mt. Willard in Crawford Notch about thirty miles to the north-west.*

*Up to 1880, the largest known boulders were on the east side of the Pawtuckaway Mountains in Nottingham, N.H. In 1887, two geologists, B.F. Clark and C.W. Wilder, examined and measured the boulder; previous to that time the local inhabitants and hunters must have been the only ones aware of it.*

*If one takes the time to wander a short way through the woods north of the Boulder they will find an old road and a couple of old cellar holes showing that at one time people lived in this section of Madison. Wild flowers of all kinds abound in the woods and the visitor is asked to be careful not to pick them. Enjoy them in their natural habitat, take pictures of them, then leave them for others to enjoy.*

*In the early part of this century, the boulder was a place for picnics and sightseers. Some of the men of the town tell how they, as boys, climbed tall trees close to the boulder to get on top and enjoy the limited view from there. It was quite an occasion when the proprietor of one of the numerous summer boarding houses, would take his guests to the "Boulder" driving out with a span of horses and carry-all. At one time there were steps to the top so one could get the thrill of standing on top of the "Boulder." In recent years these steps have rotted away and have not been replaced.*

*Since the State Recreation Department has made this a Geological Site many improvements have been made and more will be made as people make use of this facility. Under the rules and regulations of state parks etc., flowers and shrubs are not to be picked or disturbed.*