

# Madison Historical Society

Summer 2014



**PROGRAM  
SCHEDULE  
ENCLOSED**

***Construction is underway! THANK YOU MADISON FRIENDS!***



**We hope to be on our new  
foundation shortly!**

# BLASTS FROM THE PAST



**From the Town of Madison Annual Report for Fiscal Year Ending Feb. 15, 1910:**

## Miscellaneous Bills

Thomas expense at hospital	36.50
Printing Town Reports	18.00
Stationery	3.94
Board & Care of Henry Hart	30.00
Merchandise for Henry Hart	2.00
Medical Exp. Of Henry Hart	6.00
Digging Grave of Henry Hart	6.00
Burial Expenses of Henry Hart	34.00
Nute high school tuition	54.00
Old Home Week Money	100.00
Work on Snow Roller	7.58
Cutting down roller	3.00
Housing roller	2.00
Pole for snow roller	1.50
Pay District Supervisor of Schools	144.00
Keeping tramps	8.75
Public library money	21.00
Reporting births & deaths	7.00
Drain pipe	12.00
Services district supervisor	75.00
Recording deed	1.40
Order book	1.58
Mortice lock	.25
Team for taking Thomas Butter to Conway Center	2.00
Spikes and bolts	.87
Total	578.37
 Total Receipts	 6,094.86
Total Expenditures	5,280.12
Balance in Treasury	814.74

*What do you suppose Henry Hart's story was? We do learn from the report of deaths that he died May 12, 1909 at the age of 25; he came from Eaton, was listed as a laborer, and his father's name was Frank Hart.*

**From THE MADSONIAN,  
Madison High School  
March, 1925**

## **TRUE STORIES OF EARLY DAYS IN MADISON BY THE SENIORS**

### A Practical Joke - by Ruth Pearson

Singing schools used to be one of the most popular sources of amusement during the early days in Madison. All the young folks attended these, some of them going more for the social part than for the musical instruction.

One night when singing school was being held at the Nickerson School House, a resident of the town was driving up the hill near the school when suddenly a terrified shout of "Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire!" came to his ears. He seized a pail which he had with him and dashed toward the school house, thinking he could help put out the fire. A few mighty leaps brought him to the door. He knocked it open and burst into a roomful of astonished people who were lustily singing,

"Scotland's burning, Scotland's burning,  
Cry Out! Cry Out!  
Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire!  
Pour on water, pour on water."

### 1st Town Meeting in Madison - by Albert Conner

The first town meeting was held, not in the town hall, but at the home of Samuel Banfield in 1774. This was before Madison was chartered as a separate town and was in the town of Eaton, so-called, which included the present Eaton and Madison. They had no warrants to post. A man called "The Town Crier" notified the inhabitants, going from house to house and giving the notice. This was the colonial way of notifying the voters.

We know very little about the business transacted at this first meeting. No doubt the necessary

Officers were elected and such other business attended to as was necessary. From the earliest days the New England town-meeting, that most democratic form of government, has been enjoyed by the settlers.

### **Madison's 1st Fourth of July - by Luther F. Hill**

The first Fourth of July celebration in Madison was held about the year 1875 at the Pearson place. This is on a steep hill a few miles outside the village. The spot selected for the celebration was a hillside in front of the house. The people began to gather in the early forenoon. The day was very hot and the shade of the large maples on the hill was most welcome.

While the older people visited, the children played games and even a few pranks as is the custom on the fourth. The forenoon passed quickly and when noon came, large pans of fish chowder were served. Bread, crackers and doughnuts were also a part of the feast. Much of the pastry was made by kind neighbors.

A few of the men had built a grand stand. During the afternoon the people listened to speeches given from this grandstand by some of the citizens. A gathering like this would be dull without any music. There was no band anywhere near Madison. However, Madison boys formed a band, gathered together what musical instruments they could find and supplied the deficiency.

At the close of the day the people were invited to remain until evening and see the display of fireworks. A few remained but most of them expressed their thanks and returned home to attend to the evening chores. Those who remained had a good time, however.



### **Salt - by Edith Gilman**

In the early days Madison produced nearly all of her own supplies. Farming was then the principal industry. Beside food stuffs, flax was raised and made into clothing. Candles were dipped at home and fuel chopped from the forests. Wooden pegs were used instead of nails because of the scarcity of iron and the difficulty of making them.

One thing, however, which could not be obtained was salt. As there was no railroad, the people were obliged to go to Portland or Portsmouth (either by foot or ox cart) to get this article.

A stage coach route through Madison ran from Portland to Conway. But it was a long way to Portland and required three days to go by team. A trail marked by spotted trees through the forests shortened the trip and often tempted the settlers to make the trip on foot.

At one time a man who lived in East Madison walked all the way from Saco to his home in a single night carrying a half bushel of salt on his back. He had been working for several weeks in Saco. One Saturday night about six o'clock he started for home. He knew salt was needed so he carried it with him. He walked all night following the spotted trees and arrived at East Madison about six on Sunday morning.

### **EDITORIAL, March 1925**

It is seldom that we think of the debt we owe our ancestors. A few minutes' reflection, however, will reveal many things which are ours today because of the sacrifices which they made for us. Theirs was the difficult task of clearing the forests and building new settlements. They endured many hardships and uncomplainingly performed their arduous tasks. Not only do we have a prosperous nation today as their gift but those finer things which are a part of our race - love of freedom, courage to face new issues, perseverance in the face of hardships.

**June 19, 7 p.m.**

**Following brief business meeting  
At the Madison Library Chick Room**

## **CHINOOK**



**The NH State Dog**  
*by Bob Cottrell*

**July 17, 7 p.m.**

**Following brief business meeting  
At the Madison Library Chick Room**

## **GRAVEYARD RESTORATION AND REPAIR**



**Presented by**

**The NH Old Graveyard Association**

**whose mission is "to discover, restore, maintain, map and record inscriptions in the old burial places before they become lost."**

**The Madison Historical Society and The Madison Library are pleased to cosponsor**

## **THE CRAWFORDS OF CRAWFORD NOTCH**

**presented by Carl Lindblade, a lecturer from the UNH Hospitality Department**

**August 21, 7 p.m. at the Madison Library Chick Room**



**The Crawford family moved 'South' from Colebrook and Guildhall Vermont to what is now Bretton Woods. They acquired their first parcel of land for free. From there they expanded their holdings as farmers and hosts. We can safely say they were the inventors of modern inn-keeping, charging for food, lodging and recreation to supplement farm income. Then in a fire they lost everything but their mortgage. This is a New Hampshire story of family enterprise, entrepreneurship, success and tragedy.**

**REFRESHMENTS WILL FOLLOW THE PROGRAM**

***BLASTS FROM THE PAST,  
Continued from The Madisonian,  
March, 1925***



**The Major - by Leda Eldridge**

Shoes in the olden days were made by a cobbler who went from house to house, taking his tools with him. He lived with the family for whom he was working until he finished the work.

Major Jackson, who lived where the Majors now is, was a cobbler of some renown. He once made a bet that he could drive sixty pegs into a boot quicker than a chicken could eat sixty kernels of corn. Everyone knew his ability to make shoes but it was deemed impossible for him to perform this feat.

However, a rooster was secured and great preparations made for the contest. When the appointed time came, Major Jackson and the rooster began the race. It was a close contest but Major Jackson won out by two pegs for when he had driven his last peg, the rooster still had two kernels to eat.



The Majors.

**An Old Stime Story (Chocorua) - by Albert Fortier**

Before steam engines began to be used in this part of the state, there was a tannery and peg mill at Chocorua. This was run by water power. Soon the owner of the mill heard how much better steam would run machinery than water. So he sent to one of the big cities and bought a steam engine. When this arrived at Mount Whittier, a curious throng were waiting to see it. It was then hauled to Chocorua by an ox team.

The steam engine was set up and ran the mill all day. That night at just midnight, the owner blew the steam whistle. That was the first steam whistle ever heard in Carroll County. At the time people were very religious and Seth Perkins, one of the deacons, ran around crying that it was Gabriel's trumpet and that the world was coming to an end.

***Don't Forget  
Old Home Week***

***August 2-9***

***Come see us at the  
Craft Fair on Aug 2  
and Blueberry Fes-  
tival Aug 3***

Please note that your mailing label will tell you when your dues will expire.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Single Membership - \$10.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Family Membership - \$15.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Junior Members (under 18) - free

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior Members (over 80) - free

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Seasonal Address (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Madison Historical Society**  
**PO Box 505**  
**Madison, NH 03849**