

# Madison Historical Society

## February 2022



Pictured above are Nancy Harmon (L) and Linda Smith (R) from the Madison Historical Society accepting the gift of the beautiful Maple Grove House sign from Celia Pray. See page 4 for a little bit of its history.

*If you haven't yet, consider becoming a Madison Historical Society member, and if you are a member, we gratefully thank you for your support.*

*You can find membership information and all of our newsletters on our website, as well as slide shows from past exhibits and old postcards.*

*[www.madisonnhhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.madisonnhhistoricalsociety.org)*

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## DEDICATED TO ED BICKFORD ( 1951-2022)

Ed was a former president and treasurer of the Madison Historical Society, best known for his vast knowledge of the town, his hard work and willingness to give a helping hand. He also wrote timely articles for our newsletter, and we would like to reprint the following which appeared in the November 1, 1991 edition. If you were fortunate to know Ed, this sounds just like him.

Who is the richest person? The one with the most money, the most possessions, the most friends, the most accomplishments, the most..... There are probably a number of answers to this question, but it involves more than those dollar symbols. I'd like to try to answer a question here that's been on my mind a long time.

I was getting prepared to go onto a roof, shingling our would be tool shed. Preparing physically as well as mentally and emotionally. I was looking forward to working with some friends, planning the steps as we go along. This was my job. Usually I'd be working under someone else. It felt good to take command rather than take commands. On a trip back to the truck, a friend stopped. He was headed to some type of competitive sports game.

"We are trying to get some guys together. Why don't you come along?"

"I can't, we have just one day to finish with this staging."

"This is Saturday. You worked all week and you work over here week-ends. What are you getting out of it?"

The guy did not get a complete answer. It was hard to explain something like that at such short notice. I do better with a pen and paper late at night when sleeping should be done. We were not being paid by money or anything that could be turned into money.

An occasional thank you or a notice of accomplishment is taken politely but it is not necessary. I would just as soon stay anonymous much of the time. Of course, that is impossible; we like our work to be seen and appreciated. Knowing that you are doing good and that the work is appreciated by some is a form of compensation. The acknowledgement of your work may come farther down the road though, unknowing to you.

An aging farmer after having taken care of a dying apple tree, was planting three trees to replace it. A passer-by asked why he was planting trees, he wouldn't see them mature.

"This tree had good apples. If someone had not planted it before me, I wouldn't have benefited from its fruit. I'm planting for someone else today."

Such it is with Historical Society work. I'm glad there was somebody working here before me. How do we thank them? We work for someone else today. Bring the past to the present and into the future.

People, if you have some spare time, try working on some social event or project. It is rewarding in many ways. The work does not have to be for any particular group as long as it is a group effort and it is not for monetary compensation or personal gain.

It is a good feeling to be a part of the community rather than just living here. See you at our December celebration. If you cannot make that, we wish you a good year to come anyway. December 17 will be the start of the 140th year as a town.

EPB

**THE FOLLOWING WILL APPEAR IN THE TOWN OF MADISON ANNUAL REPORT.**

### **MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2021**

The Madison Historical Society is very grateful to Madison residents for their support. We are fortunate to have the use of the original Madison Town Hall for our museum building which is owned by the Town of Madison. The Town keeps the lawn mowed, the driveway plowed, and pays for the electricity. Even though COVID continued to be a concern, we were able to have a successful summer exhibit called "OUR TOWN. Once Upon a Time", using the old back drop on the stage from early plays. During Old Home Week we had a table at the Craft Fair and a Blueberry Bake & Book Sale. Our three summer programs consisted of outdoor music events at the Lake using local talent. In September, thanks to the Town, we were able to replace the existing ceiling lights with LED lights which will make a huge difference for future exhibits and events in the museum. Also, the Conservation Commission and the Town installed stairs to help prevent erosion to the banking behind the museum and put a pipe in the ground between our tool shed and the museum so that we can add a conduit for electricity to the tool shed. In October we were privileged to present the Silver Lake Woman's Club Cane to Jeannette Dube, our oldest citizen.



The museum will be open from 2-4 every Tuesday from Memorial Day to Labor Day and by appointment. We plan to have monthly programs of community interest and have a new tee-shirt design in the works which we hope to have available this summer, along with sweatshirts for sale. We invite you to visit our Facebook page or website where you can find photos, slide shows, newsletter archives and a lot of other useful information.

**THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

[www.madisonnhhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.madisonnhhistoricalsociety.org)

Board of Directors:

Linda Drew Smith: President    Mary McIntosh: Vice-President

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Nancy Martin, Christina McAllister

*Maple Grove House, Madison, N. H.*



The Maple Grove Farm, built in 1865 had 19 bedrooms and 7 bathrooms. We are not sure who built the house, but Robert K. Chick & Herbert E. Chick were the first listed proprietors.

Robert (1835-1922) and wife Rhoda (1838-1916) were the parents of Herbert E. (1866-1940, who married Edith B. Pearson (1867-1965) in May of 1891. They all entered into the business of farming and entertaining summer boarders. Edith acted as cook and sometimes as waitress.

The Maple Grove House was destroyed by fire, but the date is uncertain (1905 or 1911). It started as a slow burning chimney fire that exploded into flames. Many of the furnishings and other contents were saved. The winter after the fire, the Chicks lived in the Gannett house across the road, which they also owned, and the next summer a new house was built with timber cut from the farm.

The house was almost a replica of the older one with hardwood maple floors in every room. The summer boarder business never resumed on the same scale. In earlier years, sometimes the Maple Grove House had hosted as many as thirty-five guests at one time. The Historical Society is in possession of the Maple Grove Farm guest registry book, which dates back to 1868.

The Herbert Chicks sold Maple Grove in the 1930s. Celia Pray and her husband renovated the house in 2003 into a bed and breakfast but unfortunately it burned July 17, 2013 after they had sold it.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

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Last fall our new ceiling lights were installed and make a huge difference. This is also a good view of the old gym floor from the Madison High School days.



Madison High School baseball memorabilia that was displayed in our 2021 exhibit.

## A CURIOSITY LEAD SEARCH – ALEXANDRE DE ZALIWSKI 1894-1973



(1) To the Madison Historical Society: "Hello! My name is Ryan Mears. I live in Lexington SC and have come into the possession of an old, wooden trunk with "Captain A. de Zaliwski Madison New Hampshire" hand written on it. I'm really just curious about the history of this trunk and its owner. I found a 1940 Census record that said he owned a farm with his wife Rebekah. Can you point me in the direction of anything might tell me a little more about the Captain?"

(2) Reply from Linda Smith: "Hello Mr. Mears. I am curious as to how you happened to have the wooden trunk. Madison, NH is a small community populated with many old New England surnames. Somehow in my memory bank, I thought I recalled my father who graduated from Madison High School in 1940 mentioning a person by that name. Sorry to say, he is no longer with us to query."

"I was, however, able to speak with a long time resident of Madison who was able to shed some light on your mystery man. He remembers having a neighbor by that name living near his family on East Madison Road when he was a child. He recalls his father helping the Captain to clear land for farming. The land is very rocky in that area."

"Tradition has it that Alexander Zaliwski was a Captain in the Czar's Russian Army who escaped during the Russian Revolution and ended up in Madison, NH by 1935. His wife, Madame Zaliwski (believed to be French) tutored students at Madison High School in 'Prize Speaking', a popular subject in those days. She was also known to present lectures in the school and community. As his land wasn't well suited for farming, the Captain moved to the town of Freedom, not far from Madison where his wife passed away and where he is said to have married the widow of a Robert Draper. Their home in Madison was what is currently owned by Judy Burton."

"This is better than any story that we could have dreamed up!"

(3) Reply from Ryan Mears: "First of all, thank you so much for the gift of such an intriguing story. Our sea captain lived a very interesting life from what I gather! Through some of my own research, I did find that he was married in Paris. I have also attached a copy of this naturalization papers. It has a picture of him, which I thought was neat. I also found that he was the town auditor of Freedom at some point."

"As to how I acquired the trunk, my neighbors moved from Freedom two and a half years ago. Apparently, her father bought a house to fix up that had a lot of the captain's things in it (I'm assuming it was his house). They found some gowns that had been used in Hollywood in the 40s and deeds for an apartment on Lake Shore Ave. in Chicago, so apparently they were wealthy."

"The best thing I found out was that there was/is a legend in Freedom that the captain had fled Russia with some treasure that had been buried on his property. If I ever find out more, I will let you know. Thank you so much for reaching out with a wonderful little piece of history."

(4) To the Freedom Historical Society from Linda Smith: "Hello Historical Society Neighbors, I have had a query regarding a Captain Alexander Zaliwski or de Zaliwski who escaped Russia and moved to Madison in the 1930s and into the early 1940s. We believe his wife's name was Rebekah. He is said to have moved to Freedom sometime after that. I am wondering if you may have any records for him. He is something of a mystery to us."

(5) Reply from Freedom Historical Society: "Hi Linda. I am attaching a profile of Alexandre that was completed for our 2021 Calendar featuring Remarkable People of Freedom's Past. Alexandre was featured in the month of June. I hope that this gives you some new information." Roberta MacCarthy, Co-President

## COUNT, RUSSIAN SOLDIER, AND GENTLEMAN FARMER

Captain Alexandre de Zaliwski was born in Odessa into a noble family. His father was Lieutenant General of the Russian Imperial Army, Adam Zaliwski and a Russian Count. The Captain graduated from the Russian Imperial Corps de

Pages, comparable to the U.S. West Point in 1914. For the next four years he served on the Eastern Front as an officer in H.M. Emperor of Russia Cuirassiers Guard Regiment rising to the rank of Captain in the Imperial Russian Guards Cavalry. As a Russian soldier he had a distinguished war record in World War I, where he spent a great deal of time in fierce combat against Germany. He served to the end of the Czarist regime, then with White Russian units, and escaped to Mesopotamia after the collapse of the Russian Government and the rise of the Communist party. He joined the French Army and received the Croix de Guerre in 1919. The Captain's uniform decorations are in the FHS military collection.

After the war he was attached to the Russian Embassy in Constantinople. Later he engaged in banking in Bucharest and Paris, and ultimately in the export business in Paris where he met his future wife, Rebekah Kennett, daughter of the Sr. Executive of the Dupont Company. They moved to the US in 1936. The couple bought a farm in Madison, NH in 1936 on the recommendation of his father-in-law. They moved to Freedom in 1940, purchasing the Josiah Thurston Farm on Burnham Road in the Watson Hill area. He was affectionately known as "Sacha". He became a naturalized American Citizen in 1940.

Sacha lived in Freedom for 33 years and enjoyed raising farm animals and crops. During World War II, he and his Freedom friends manned an airplane spotting station at their hilltop farm and became life members of the USAF Defense Team. He was also civically active in Freedom serving as Town and School Treasurer, Town Auditor, and Tax Collector.

The search for information continues....

Most recently found was a yellow sticky-note describing the house where Zaliwsky lived in Madison. It was in one of Joyce Stevens' books about the houses in Madison. Joyce's work will be a forever-valuable resource. She is another MHS member that we miss very much (1936-2021).



Alexander is in fourth row, third from left



Sacha Person - 370 E MADISON Rd  
Joyce Burtons house  
Built 1825 - just the  
original cap, not the  
current kitchen or  
the ell.  
Arthur Gilman  
grandparents lived in  
the house from 1903-04.  
(R. Gilman 1940-1975  
Rebekah Jane then Burtons)

Madison Historical Society  
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Madison, NH 03849

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

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

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