

Madison Historical Society

Fall 2023

WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP . . .

Years ago the Boston Post Cane used to be awarded to the oldest citizen in towns. However, Madison's cane disappeared, so, in 1929 the Silver Lake Women's Club of Madison reestablished the tradition with the presentation of a cane with an engraved head to Enoch Drew. A few others received it after that, but the Madison Historical Society has not (yet) been able to compile a complete list. Here is what we have found since we were given the cane in 2018. **DO YOU KNOW OF ANYONE ELSE?**

1929 Enoch Drew
 ? Edith Chick
 1944 Emma Gerry
 1947 Hattie Chick
 1981 Alice Stacy Arnold
 1989 William A. Harmon
 ? Alice Ward
 1996 Mildred Nason Frost
 2018 Oscar Comer, Jr.
 2021 Jeannette Dube



Alice Stacy Arnold

**SCHOOL
DAYS**

www.madisonnhhistoricalsociety.org



THANK YOU...

for another great summer season featuring our exhibit MEMORIES OF MADISON and a series of three musical performances at the foot of the lake...also our blueberry bake & book sale and booth at the Madison Old Home Week Craft Fair. In spite of rainy weather and road closures, we were happy that we got to see a lot of people. If you missed it, you can see the highlights in a slide show on our website.

We regret that Director Linda Lovering is retiring, but we wish her well, and we had a little celebration for her on the last day of the exhibit. We trust that she won't be a stranger. We do want to welcome Joy Gray to the board, and she has already wowed us with her technology skills.

**We hope to see you at the
 MADISON PTO 31st Annual
 Craft Fair - Dec. 2, 9 am—1 pm**

SCHOOL DAYS is the theme for our 1st display at the Madison Elementary School this school year. We love sharing history and are just thrilled to have a wonderful place to share with the students, staff and visitors.



WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!

1951

What would you have been having for hot lunch in 1951? The following appeared in the 1951 Madison Annual Report:

MADISON HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Our hot lunch program sponsored by the Madison Parent Teachers Association has been most successful. We were very fortunate in securing Mrs. Frank Nason as cook. She carried on her work with efficiency assisted by Mrs. Arthur Gilman and Mrs. William Kennett with the buying and the menu planning.

From February 5, 1951 to April 20, 1951, lunches were served at a cost of 15 cents per lunch per child if one or two children in the family. If there are three or more children in the same family the cost is 10 cents per child per lunch. Federal reimbursement of 7 cents per lunch per child for the first month and 5 cents per lunch per child for the remainder of the hot lunch period plus the receipt of 200 lb. of potatoes, 100 lb. dry beans, 65 lb. cheese, 5 smoked shoulders, 8 cans honey, 6 cans peanut butter, 6 cans peach jam, 8 bu. apples, 40 lb. butter, a case of orange juice, prunes, flaked fish and 2 turkeys helped to defray the cost of the meals. Potatoes, cabbage, macaroni, cookies, string beans and blackberries were also given by parents and friends. The following is a typical week's menu:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| MONDAY | luncheon meat, mashed potato, squash, bread and butter, apples, milk |
| TUESDAY | macaroni and cheese, beets, peanut butter sandwiches, apple sauce, milk |
| WEDNESDAY | beef stew, bread and butter, jello, milk |
| THURSDAY | vegetable soup, chopped corned beef, sandwiches, cookies, milk |
| FRIDAY | creamed fish, mashed potatoes, carrots, butterscotch pudding, milk |

Mrs. Nason was paid \$15 per week and volunteer help was given her each day. Mrs. Frank Shaw was appointed to look for volunteers and the following women responded to her call:

Mrs. John Gilman, Mrs. Carlos Parker, Mrs. Everett Grames, Mrs. Ivan Wilkinson, Mrs. Moses Whitney, Mrs. Louville Martin, Mrs. Alton Lovering, Mrs. Ralph Burroughs, Mrs. Harry Elliott, Mrs. Mark Nickerson, Mrs. E. Milton Hoyt, Mrs. William Kennett, Mrs. Donald Hamilton, Mrs. Fred Frost, Mrs. Loren Shackford, Mrs. Robert Colcord, Mrs. Arthur Gilman, Mrs. Carroll Grace, Mrs. J. Roland Lyman, and Mrs. Guy Nickerson.

The \$400 appropriated by the town was used in the purchase of the fine gas range, for the installation of hot water and a payment on the Philco refrigerator. The PTA finished payments on the refrigerator and purchased other equipment and utensils.

1932

What did the school do during the DEPRESSION? From the 1932-1933 Madison Annual Report:

REPORT OF SCHOOL HEALTH WORK FOR MADISON from the Superintendent of Schools

The Town of Madison, like all the other towns in the land, is feeling the effects of the depression in many ways that can not be demonstrated by statistics. The general economic condition is rather obvious to all who will take the trouble to examine figures. But the subtle, far reaching—but none the less dangerous—effect of this economic crisis reacts directly upon the health of children.

With a realization of this truth a large part of the school health program has been concentrated upon this phase of the work. The foundation was laid last Winter and Spring, with food and clothing needs receiving first attention. Milk was furnished one family by the Woman's Club. The same service has been continued all this year by interested neighbors. Food budgets were made for families with very limited incomes and due to careful planning they are faring well. Free seeds furnished by the State Unemployment Relief Committee resulted in gardens that would take care of the vegetable needs in the diets of eight families. Five large boxes of clothing have been distributed to needy children, including layettes for two new babies. Red Cross flour has been available to those who needed it to supplement their own supply.

During the past year with very limited funds furnished by the Red Cross, the Woman's Club, the Mothers' Club and a few private pockets, thirteen of the worst cases of diseased tonsils have been operated upon, fifty-seven children have received partial or complete dental corrections, and five children were fitted to glasses long needed. However, there remains a large group of children who normally would receive prompt attention by the parents but are unable to be done this year due to reduced finances. There are seventy-four children who need dental work, thirty-six who need tonsils out, and two with serious vision defects who are unable to afford glasses at present.

In spite of the many difficulties encountered there seems to be some progress in the health conditions in the schools. A brief summary of the past three years of work will demonstrate this:

| | 1930-1931 | 1931-1932 | 1932-1933 |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| # Pupils | 127 | 142 | 144 |
| # defects | 225—1.7 per pupil | 247—1.7 per pupil | 178—1.2 per pupil |
| # corrections | 55—24% of defects | 114—46% of defects | 33—18% of defects |
| # without defect | 18—14% of all pupils | 61—43% of all pupils | 46—31% of all pupils |

1917

Maybe these were your great-grandparents...

Report of the Superintendent of Schools from the 1917 Annual Report:

VACCINATION. All school children enrolled in town, have presented certificates that they have been vaccinated, or were not fit subjects for vaccination, or had submitted to the process three times or had had the small pox. The enforcement of the vaccination law caused quite a good many absences at the beginning of the school year. Those children who are to enter next fall for the first time should be vaccinated early enough in the summer so as not to interfere with school attendance.

TRANSPORTATION. The only pupils transported this year are the two little girls from East Madison to the Nickerson school and the four from the Tasker district to Conway.

EYE AND EAR TEST. School children in the district have been tested as to sight and hearing with the following results: number tested 54; number found with defective eyes 16 (31.4%); number found with defective hearing 9 (16.6%). Eight cases of defective eyesight and nine cases of defective hearing were serious enough to call the parent's attention to the fact.

ATTENDANCE. The tardy marks are excessive. It means an average of nearly seven marks for each child. The registers show that the marks are caused largely by three or four families. The teachers have used all means except the law to reduce the number. We are informed by the State Department that tardy marks, in the eye of the law, is the same as absence and the parents can be prosecuted for not sending the children to school on time.

Some parents say that the absences are due in part to inclement weather. This is probably true and the balance is due to sickness, the most of which comes in the cold winter weather. Why not attempt to solve this problem, in a measure at least, by beginning the schools earlier in the fall—the first of August—and closing as we now do the last of June or the first days of July? The school buildings are now screened so that the children will not be annoyed by flies; the roads will be in better condition; and the weather much more comfortable for the children. This arrangement would give no school from about the middle of January to the first of April—the period when the greatest number of absences occurs. Is it not worth trying?

STATISTICS.

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Number of children in town between 5 and 16 years | 93 (53 boys, 40 girls) |
| Total number registered October 30, 1916 | 76 |
| Average number of weeks in the school year | 35.75 |
| Average daily attendance of all schools together | 70.52 |
| Average daily absence | 8.92 |
| Average membership | 79.44 |
| Per cent of attendance | 88.79 |
| Number of pupils not absent or tardy during the year | 3 |
| Number cases of tardiness | 291 |

2023

CONGRATULATIONS TO KENNETT HIGH SCHOOL ON THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY!

As many of you took part in Kennett's celebration events, we are reminded that creating a high school is no easy task.

MADISON HIGH SCHOOL graduated its first class in 1923, but it was a struggle to get that far. Not everyone was in favor of it for reasons expressed in the following interview.

1923

Below are excerpts from Madison High School graduate Ruth Shackford's interview of Mildred Nason Frost on April 7, 1992 when she would have been in her late 80s.

1992

Mildred: ...we lived right across the street from the hall.

Ruth: ...& then what did you do after...you went to school...the high school started in the ice cream parlor & then it went to the town hall?

Mildred: Because it got so many kids from Tamworth, Ossipee & Freedom...we were 21 in the ice cream parlor & that's too much. So we went to the town hall & had to have a English teacher—Miss Quimby came then.

Ruth: How many years were you there?

Mildred: I don't think more than one.

Ruth: Then the school was built?

Mildred: A big fight. (laughs)

Ruth: Tell us about it.

Mildred: Oh, a big fight. Like the people who'd already put their kids down in Milton or up in Fryeburg, they didn't care anything about a high school, you know. It was a real fight. Like Fred's father—he'd put two kids to Parsonsfield & he didn't care about, you know, having a high school but anyway, we got it.

Ruth: And you were one of the first graduating class?

Mildred: Yup.

Ruth: And the others were...

Mildred: Martha Kennett & Florence Pearson. And I saw Martha this summer. You know, she didn't come to the reunion. Jerry brought her up the next day.

Ruth: Too bad she couldn't come.

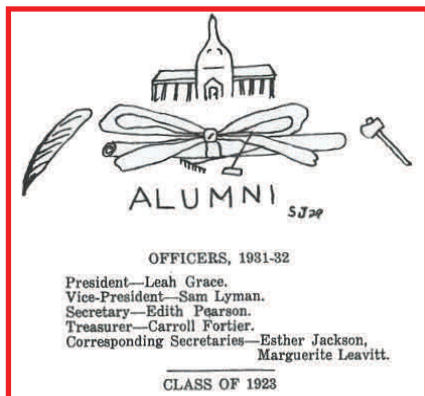
Mildred: She really wanted to.

Ruth: So that was 1923. And then what did you do?

Mildred: Got married. (chuckles)



In fact, Mildred wrote a comprehensive easy-to-understand history of Madison High School for her high school reunion of 1931-32, which follows:



In the year of **1920** many of the people in Madison felt the need of a High School in town for those that wished to attend.

A meeting was called to be held in the ice cream parlor, then run by F. B. Nason. All people were asked to be present.

As a result of this meeting, it was decided to start a high school if a suitable place could be found. Mr. Nason then offered to give the use of the ice cream parlor until the next spring, when it would again be opened for business. The soda fountain was boxed in with new wall board. Two tables and some chairs were brought from the Town Hall and the tables covered with wall board. These, together with the soda fountain, were painted brown.

The soda fountain was used by the teachers as their desk and also held extra supplies. Blackboards were put up between the windows. As there was a furnace and the room was light, we were very comfortable.

Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, who lived at the Lead Mine, were asked to come as teachers, as they both had taught school before coming to Madison.

They agreed to try the work and the school year was started with much enthusiasm. There were twelve pupils to start school that fall: Noah Ward, Tom Granville, Arthur Gilman, Roland Lyman, Roland Ward, Austin Savary, Madeline Martin, Marion Towle, Orice Bunker, Florence Pearson, Martha Kennett, and Mildred Frost.

We were all very fond of our teachers and the work went along very smoothly through the winter.

Our teachers found, however, that the school work, together with their home work was proving too strenuous for them as they had three children at home. They taught until the spring term when Mr. Conner from Center Ossipee was engaged. At the beginning of this term we lost a few of our classmates.

In May the class moved into the Town Hall as there was much work to be done in the ice cream parlor before it could be used for the summer trade.

During the first year we had no printed scholarship and attendance reports.

Mr. Conner gave us printed slips each month stating our rank and attendance and at the end of the year we had slips giving rank and attendance and telling how far we had gone in each study. During the first year we took the Classical Course as follows:

Latin—First book, Gate to Caesar, Book 2.

Algebra—Through Quadratics

English—Grammar, Composition, Letter Writing, Spelling, "Evangeline," and "Lady of the Lake."

History—"Modern Progress"

Science -"Everyday Science."

The scholars presented the play, "The Deacon's Second Wife," that year which was very successful. Mrs. Reynolds worked very hard coaching us in our parts.

The school year finished with every one feeling that it had proved very satisfactory to the scholars and their parents and it was hoped we would have more scholars in the fall.

At the beginning of the second year in September we had Mr. Jackson as Superintendent, and Miss Quimby came as English teacher the following year. They have been with us since that time and are largely responsible for the success and good standing of our High School.

New scholars came that fall, some from other towns.

As the school increased in size, there were many in town who wanted a High School building. At the Town Meeting in March it was brought before the meeting, and in spite of much opposition on the part of many of the townspeople, the vote was carried and the new school building was started.

While the building was under construction we continued our classes in the Town Hall and though our equipment there was not of the best and we were in close quarters, many of our happiest school days were spent there.



While Mr. Conner heard his classes in what is now the kitchen of the Town Hall, Miss Quimby held her classes in the main hall. Sometimes her class was seated in a circle around her, each scholar carrying his or her books and papers in his arms.

A boys' basketball team was started and many interesting games were played with other schools.

As Mr. Conner was a very fine pianist, we delighted in hearing him play and also singing to his accompaniment.

Mrs. Conner was a very beautiful singer and often entertained us with fine solos.

Our second year of High School drew to a close with everyone looking forward with anticipation to beginning work in our new school building.

We began work in the new building with thirty-six scholars.

Early in the year the "Knights of Good English Club" was organized, which met every Friday afternoon. We wished, through this club, to improve ourselves in literature, art, science, and the vital interests of the day.

The first issue of the "Madisonian," our school paper, was edited in the fall.

We then started a Students' Council, which was composed of three members from the junior class, two from the sophomore class. This council was to have the interest of the school at heart and work for its advancement.

The school received three fine gifts from the Silver Lake Woman's Club and the Mothers' Club which were a beautiful piano for the main room and a large clock for each recitation room. We also received many fine reference books.

The new building was very pleasant and we were very proud and happy in it.

In November the High School was dedicated.

Mr. Pearson, who was chairman of the building committee, presented the building to the School District which was accepted by Mrs. Emma Kennett, as chairman of the School Board, and the keys were turned over to Mr. Conner.

Over a hundred people were present at this dedication and a very fine program was enjoyed followed by refreshments.

During this year the play, "Turning the Trick," was presented with great success which was largely due to Mr. Conner, Miss Quimby and Mrs. Reynolds.

In the year **1923**, our first commencement exercises were held, Three girls graduated in this class.

Since then a class has been graduated every year and Madison High has sent forth many fine boys and girls.

Many have married and many have gone on to higher institutions and all have a deep love and fond remembrances of Madison High.



MILDRED (Nason) FROST, '23

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Madison Historical Society
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