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Artifacts and Fiction

Montgomery Historical Society Newsletter

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Chairman's Message

Scott Perry, Chairman
Bill McGroarty, Vice Chair
Marijke Dollois, Secretary
Sue Wilson, Treasurer

The MHS Board meets the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30, at Pratt Hall May-Sep, and at the Public Safety Building Conference Room October - April.



Montgomery History Quiz

1. When was the first year a photo was used on the cover of the Town Report and what was it of?
2. When was the first year a color photo was used on the cover of the Town Report and what was it of?
3. Montgomery's namesake, General Richard Montgomery was killed at the Battle of Quebec in 1775. Where was he interred?
4. Where is Montgomery buried now?

Did you ever wonder who cuts a barber's hair? My grandfather was a barber so I knew the answer from an early age... another barber.

Who writes the history of the Historical Society? We do. Next year will be the 40th anniversary of the MHS, another milestone to look back at what we've done. That's why the work of all our Secretaries has been so important. Recently Marijke Dollois took on the task of transcribing all of our Society's minutes since our birth in 1974. This included loads of hand written and typed (on a typewriter) minutes by nine different Secretaries. When Marijke is finished we will have a digital record of all the decisions and activities of the Society we can use as a reference, and we will be able to access it more easily. For example, we recently used the minutes to determine the specifics of the Society's efforts to restore Pratt Hall's stained glass windows in the 90s. There is more on this later in the newsletter. Our thanks to all who've helped us record our work, a job too often under appreciated.

In a similar vein the Vermont Historical Society's (VHS) most recent newsletter shared a little of its own history (there's also a longer article in the current issue of Vermont Magazine). The VHS was established as the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society in 1838 partly over concerns the State was forgetting it's origins, and the key documents and artifacts needed to tell its story were disappearing. Interestingly, in 1863 the VHS passed and promulgated a resolution urging all Vermont towns to write a Town History. Perhaps similar concerns for the towns was made more acute by the Civil War.

Our 1976 history may have been a bit late, a 113 years, but was worth waiting for. Our records show the First Edition, written by Bill Branthoover and Sara Taylor, included a hard cover and paperback printing. Likewise the 1991 Second Edition, supplemented with a new chapter by Joe Sherman, was both hard cover and paperback, and included a second printing of the paperback in 2001. We have an update on our progress on the new Third Edition in this newsletter.

Your membership and support are part of a remarkable legacy to Montgomery. Looking at our own history makes me appreciate it even more. Thanks for your support.

Scott

2013 Scholarship Applications Due Soon

Applications for the 2013 MHS Scholarship are due May 1st. All Montgomery graduating High School seniors are eligible. Applications were mailed to area schools and are also available on our web site.

Great Progress On "Montgomery, Vermont: The History of a Town" 3rd Edition

The manuscript is now at Queen City Printers in Burlington for design and layout (aka pre-press) and we will begin final review soon. It will include a new chapter covering 1991 to 2012 written by Jo Anne Bennet, 8 new appendices, 1 new map and over 50 new photos. All told the new book will grow from about 200 pages to close to 300. The final work will be updating the index, a difficult, and time consuming task, originally done on index cards!

They may be available for Christmas but we can't make any promises. We will be printing 100 hard cover and 400 paperbacks in the first printing. The hard copies for the first and second editions went fast. If you would like to reserve yours please send us a note or email so we know to get in touch when they are available. More information, including pricing, is forthcoming.

2013 Concerts By The Common

Steve Hays sends word he is planning concerts for July 6th, August 3 and 17th. Our thanks to the Eastman Charitable Trust for another grant of \$750.

Steve will be soliciting sponsors and underwriters in May. More details will follow but he confirmed the band "Lake Street Dive" for the 17th. Steve emailed us... "This is an amazing young jazz/pop quartet that I heard on Prairie Home Companion, then enjoyed live at the Iron Horse Theater in Northampton. The group is hot and a worthy successor to Susie Arioli's Band of last summer."

Lloyd Touchette

February brought sad news as the Society lost a good friend. Lloyd Touchette was our contact with the American Legion in Enosburg and coordinated their support to our annual Memorial Day commemoration. Each year at the end of the program he would order the honor guard to "salute our fallen comrades". We salute him.

Memorial Day Commemoration

This year's commemoration will be at the St. Isidore's Cemetery off Route 242 and is tentatively scheduled for May 27 at 10:00 a.m. There will be a speaker, and honors, followed by refreshments. We gratefully acknowledge the support of American Legion Post 42 in Enosburg for their support.

Membership

Our 2013 membership drive is underway and we hope you'll continue to support all the great work we do through your membership. Membership donations have made up about half our income in the last few years, with the other half coming from grants, gifts and sales. The TD Bank Affinity program played a big role but we know this grant will be at least 25% less than in previous years. Our average membership donation is about \$50 but all support is very much appreciated. Thank you.

MHS Annual Meeting

This year's Annual Meeting will be June 28th at 6:30 at Pratt Hall. It will include our usual Social, Business Meeting, and Ave Leslie will be our guest speaker. Ave has been studying Montgomery for the last few years and is writing a doctoral thesis on his findings. He'll be giving us a run down on his research and other thoughts. Please save the date.

2013 Town Report

We received compliments for the Society-provided history of Montgomery's Town Commons for the 2012 Town Report. It chronicles the changing nature of these Town gathering places. It's posted on our web site. If anyone has any good photos or stories involving them we would love to see/hear them. We would love to have a better photo of the Center gazebo.

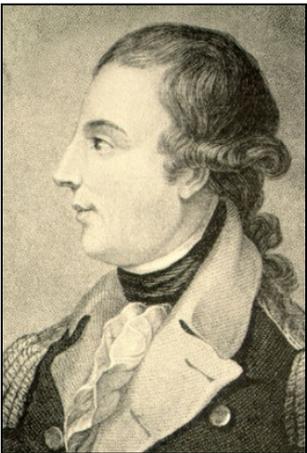
Denise Stepanek Gift

Denise Stepanek's estate made a generous gift to our Stained Glass Window Restoration and Preservation Fund recently. Denise and her husband George were members for over 30 years. She passed away in June of 2011. We are very appreciative of this gift and thank her family for thinking of our community and the Society.

History Quiz Answers

1. 1940. A covered bridge.
2. 2005. Billy Baker Sr. and the new grader.
3. Quebec City. "On January 4, the British committed Montgomery's remains to a grave inside the St. Louis Gate." (with two other of his officers, Macpherson and Cheeseman in the same plot) "The Reverend de Montmollin, the garrison chaplain, performed the graveside service with Carelton and a few the British Officers and Quebec citizens in attendance." Source: " Hal T. Shelton "General Richard Montgomery and the American Revolution From Redcoat to Rebel"
4. St. Paul's Chapel, New York City, NY. "Directly across from what once was the World Trade Center, Saint Paul's Chapel still stands, the oldest public building in continuous use in New York City (1766). There is a memorial at the east window to Brigadier General Richard Montgomery who fell at the Battle of Quebec in 1775, fighting for the Americans. The memorial plaque was erected just a few months after the American army's great loss of General Montgomery. This is believed to be the first congressionally funded, "national" veterans memorial/monument. Montgomery's remains were moved from Quebec City to the Chapel cemetery near the monument in 1818.

The Monument reads: "This Monument is erected by the order of CONGRESS 25th Janry 1776 to transmit to Posterity a grateful remembrance of the patriotism conduct enterprize & perseverance of Major General RICHARD MONTGOMERY Who after a series of successes amidst the most discouraging Difficulties FELL in the attack on QUEBEC 31st Decbr 1775. Aged 37 Years." Source: Wikipedia, retrieved March 2013.



Pratt Hall Stained Glass Windows Evaluated

In February we had our stained glass windows evaluated by Mr. Lawrence Ribbecke of Vermont Stained Glass in Burlington. We thought it wise to get some advice from an expert on how our windows are faring and if there was anything we should be doing.

For those of you who may not know, or remember, the Society funded a 5 year program to remove, restore, and reinstall the windows in the 1990s. This included cleaning, new bits of glass, new lead coming and mortar, and new/rehabbed structural pieces (rods and copper wire) which attach to the window frame and distribute the enormous weight of each panel. The Society spent nearly \$18,000 according to our minutes from the period.

Mr. Ribbecke had never been to Pratt Hall and was very impressed with our windows, particularly the two large pictorials, saying they were irreplaceable. He thought the window of Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen, which is the newest, may have been done by a student of Tiffany here in the U.S.

He pronounced them to be in good shape and indicated the deterioration in some was natural and, unfortunately, unavoidable. He recommended we do some work on the chancel windows' woodwork frames and was also willing to serve as an adviser to us when we begin the repairs to the western wall of the nave. All in all a very informative and encouraging visit.

Excerpted from "Our Town"

By member Esther Varela

It's a nice place to settle down.
People stop to chat in the local grocery store,
The Post Office's parking lot, or even its front door

In our town everyone knows you by name.
In cities, people pass each other as they
Hurry about, and it's not the same.

The beauty of our town can be seen and
Because most are sensible, our town will survive.
It's the quality that makes us what we are, and
such energy and Ingredients keep our town alive.

More Spring Haiku

Thaw, freeze, thaw, freeze, thaw.
Heaves my Toyota ditchward.
March suffers no fools.

Giant mud serpents
Slither o'er chocolate roads
Leaving ruts and fear.

Send us one of yours!

This Quarter in Montgomery & VT History

April 1850 Carlos Parker born in Elmore, VT.
Proprietor of the Montgomery Village Store.
Postmaster for 20 years. Selectman, State
Representative and Senator.

May 1887 Charles Haile GAR Post 95
sponsored first Montgomery Decoration Day.
Precursor to Memorial Day.

June 1923 Modern VT Flag (Coat of Arms on a
blue field) adopted by the VT General Assembly.



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Thanks For Your Support