

# CAMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER FALL 2009

### *Old Home Day Returns in a Big Way*

*submitted by Paul Yelle*

It was worth the year and a half of monthly meetings and additional subcommittee meetings for the 20 or so Old Home Day committee members. With the prodding of Lester Mitchell, Hannah Joyce and Kevin Hamilton took on the task of leading the group. It started with a handful of people and grew to more than 20 members. This being the first Town Celebration since 1967, there was a lot of ground work that needed to get done. As Kevin H. is fond of saying, "We have Campton's best and brightest working on it, which is a key ingredient." Also key was Buddy Thibeault guaranteeing months ahead of time the great weather that we had. Although he may still head the parade committee, he is passing the torch on weather guarantees.

The day started with a sanctioned 5K race/fun walk from the Campton Fire Sub-Station on Rt. 175 to Campton Elementary school. Seventy-six contestants braved the course. Wishman's Hill was particularly scary with that giant bear at the top. Dave Moriarity was the chairperson for the race committee. The race was followed by the parade from Owl Street to Campton Elementary School. With all of the new laws and regulations, this turned out to be a tough one to organize. Buddy Thibeault was the chairperson of the very capable parade committee. Walt and Shirley Stockwell passed out 200 American Flags for spectators to wave proudly. The parade featured floats, cars, animals, and, of course, the hearse driven by Wes Avery, whose father and horses pulled the hearse in the last Old Home Day in 1967. Dennis Prescott escorted the proud grand marshal, Lester Mitchell, in a beautiful vintage Rolls Royce.

The Campton Elementary PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) organized the carnival at that point, featuring vendors, kids rides and games, food, and live music courtesy of Jim Aguiar. The parade committee was led by Michelle and Tom Bilodeau. At the same location, Jr. Joyce led some pick up softball games on the school fields.

Meanwhile, we (CHS) had the Old Town Hall, and current CHS headquarters, hopping. Charlie Martell was a very patient instructor as he showed and allowed participants to spin wool. He is also an instructor of such things as broom making, tin smithing, black smithing and more. It is worth checking out his web site: [charliemartel.com](http://charliemartel.com). George Short kept us guessing with cool but unusual tools. Judy Landry, Pat Barker, Ann Knowles, and Nancy Mardin put together an ice cream social that served about 150 people. Julie Quesnell did two historic tours of Campton with Reed Harrigan driving Robertsons' bus. Paul Yelle did his best to lure people in to share stories and memories both old and new. The photo contest pictures scrolled on the big screen inside and antique cars were on display outside. This committee was led by Paul Yelle and Judy and Ron Landry.

The day culminated in a dinner/dance at Waterville Estates. Kountry Express kept us hopping while the A+ program watched over the kids in a spare room. Kevin Hamilton was the leader on that committee.

Heidi Johansson led the way in putting together an awesome Continued on page 7



## Awarding of Campton Cane

*submitted by Walt Stockwell*

News Release - Campton Historical Society - 8/22/09

The concept of awarding a ceremonial cane to the oldest resident in town dates back to 1809. It was started by Edward A. Grozier, Publisher of the Boston Post newspaper. He distributed 431 of these "Boston Post Canes" to towns in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Campton's cane was destroyed in a fire in 1931. In 1991, the Campton Historical Society reinstated the idea, and acquired two "Campton Canes", one for distribution, and one for display. Campton persons have been honored this way since then, and the most recent honoree died this year.

Recently, in a ceremony at the Historical Society, the Campton Cane was passed to Mary Ann Davis as the most senior person in town. Mary Ann celebrated her 100th birthday in July. The ceremony was attended by members of the society, and her family.

She was born in Ireland, moved to Toronto for a year when she was 17, and has lived in various states in the U.S. since then. In 1954, she moved to New Hampshire, and since 1976 has lived in Campton with her son and daughter-in-law, Robert and Sharon Davis. Mary Ann has 6 sons, 16 grandchildren, and many great grandchildren, including 30 in Ireland. Most of her working life was as a housekeeper. An avid vegetable and flower gardener, she planted 250 gladiola bulbs every year until she was 98 years old.

We are pleased to honor Mary Ann Davis as the current holder of the Campton Cane.

NOTE: The photo shows Nancy Mardin, Secretary (left front), and Judy Landry, President (left rear) of the Campton Historical Society. On the right is Mary Ann Davis, and her son, Robert Davis.



# Flag Day

Walt Stockwell set up a display of over 30 historic flags, an exhibit of patriotic memorabilia and helped Scout Troop 58 dispose old flags using the prescribed method of burning.



## WE'RE ON THE WEB!

**WWW.CAMPTONHISTORICAL.ORG**

### CHS Officers and Directors

Judy Landy, President

Ann Knowles, Vice President

Nancy Mardin, Secretary

Mary Durgin, Treasurer

David Bartholomew, Program Director

Walt Stockwell, Curator

Sandy Decarie, Curator

Robert Mardin, Librarian

#### Directors:

Reed Harrigan

Pat Barker

Brenda Boisvert

Georgia Campbell

Scott Stephens



*Campton History (Part 3)*

*Excerpts from a journal by George Durgin*

**October 24, 1891** The greatest ornament of our village is the erection of a two story building by Dr. Muchmore. We understand the first floor will be rented as a tenement for family use.

**April 23, 1892** Some 25 men are tenting on Mr. Jesseman's intervale, patiently waiting for a rise in the river, so as to enable them to start the drive of logs.

**April 22, 1893** The public library which was started three weeks ago is now open every Saturday from 2 to 5 in the afternoon at the Town House.

**January 11, 1913** Notwithstanding the severe storm of last Friday, about 50 gathered at the Town Hall to witness the dedication exercises of the new building recently erected by the Campton Grange.

**October 30, 1926** Beebe River – the new boarding house has been completed for some time, and the new houses are all completed.

**April 13, 1929** Campton Village – Water conditions being good, the Parker Young Company drive is booming, and the pond is nearly full of pulp.

**January 27, 1944** An unusual accident occurred last Friday afternoon at Blair Bridge, when a loaded logging truck crashed through the flooring of the bridge. The truck, owned by Draper Corporation, was driven by Hollis Willard of Campton and accompanied by Eldon Westover also of Campton, who escaped serious injuries.

**March 13, 1958** During their town meeting, Campton voted for the discontinuance of the Livermore Bridge which has been condemned by the state.

(to be continued)

*Submitted by Walt Stockwell, Curator*

***EVERYBODY'S GOING TO THE FAIR***

*by Fred E. Beane*

*in the New Hampshire Union*

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Citizens of the Commonwealth. Get some super-duper, triple-exploding, non-such petrol into the pink tinted, family limousine; slap a helping of borrowed, but well strained kerosene into the old hopping jalopy; cut yourself a sturdy leaning and walking cane from those nearby swamp alders, or simonize the old hitch-hiking, pointing thumb and be ready!

For, as usual, everybody's going to the fall fairs. That is, all of those excepting the ones who have fallen into a cyclone hay-blower, or have dentists' appointments for having the old aching molars yanked. And why not? Where, we ask, can a feller or a gal, aged one to a hundred, have so much fun, see so much, do so much, and bring home so much to talk over the coming year, as at one of "them there" fall fairs.

You'll be privileged to see the big sow, the big cow and how! All is, bring along some assorted corn plasters in one pocket, a bottle of your favorite horse liniment in the other, plenty of aspirin and headache powders, and a big family lunch basket.

There'll be horse pulling, ox pulling and shoving, midways featuring everything from dancing fleas to giant hogs, and from bubble gum to hula-hula girls – and back again.

Can't tell you about all the features, folks, for there are too many. All we can warn you is if you stay home, you're going to be mighty lonesome. What's more than that you'll have all the chores to do for yourself and your neighbor if on the farm, and if in the city, will be expected to take every dog for a block around for a walk. So remember the dates, citizens, and if you can't find enlightenment, entertainment, and plenty to talk about at the fairs, where, may we ask, are you going to look for such things?

*Excerpted from The New Hampshire Troubadour of September 1949, that was published by the State Planning and Development Commission. This wonderful little monthly booklet about all things good in New Hampshire, has recently been re-introduced under Publisher Robert J. Finlay, with support from the Finlay Foundation.*

# Old Home Day



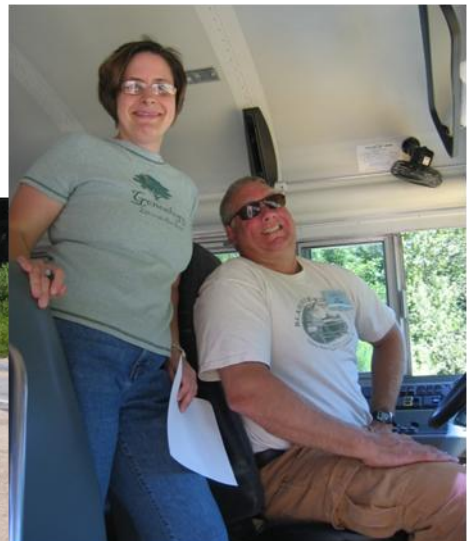
The Campton Historical Society would like to thank the many people who donated their time and energy to make the return of Old Home Day in Campton a success beyond our expectations. We have heard tons of positive feedback about the demonstrations, bus tour, ice cream social, seeing the hearse in the parade, and more! For all of the volunteers – a big thanks from CHS.



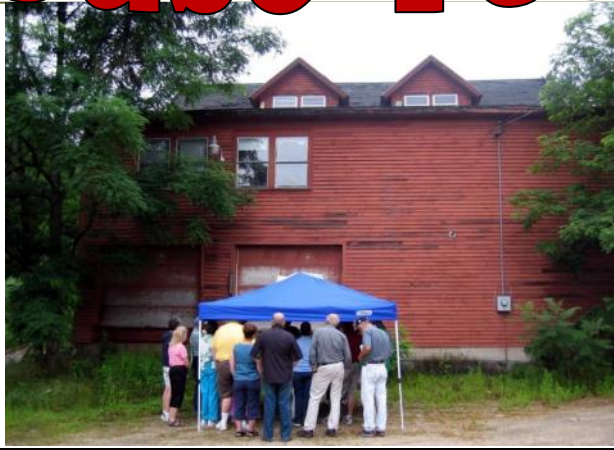
Top left – Charlie Martel

To the right – George Short

Bottom right – Julie Quesnell and Reed Harrigan



# House Tour



Walt Stockwell put together an excellent, informative, hands on presentation of the Dole Mill. Gary Benedix fielded all sorts of questions about the hydro plant from the curious visitors. Cynthia Clarke wowed the crowd with a tour of the beautiful Clarke House B&B. Leah Gray gave tours of her special place and we enjoyed a delicious pot luck lunch there as well. Thanks to all the people that made this day possible – it was enjoyed and will be remembered by many.



# Concert and Supper

The Spring Music this year featured Celtic music. Left to Right: Roger Burrige on fiddle, Chris Stevens on the anglo concertina and Chris Murphy on the bodhran

The ham and bean supper held prior to the concert.



## Genealogical Research

The society recently received a wonderful booklet of the McCoy family, entitled "Memories of Home", compiled by Doris McCoy Phinney. This donation was made possible through the insight and agreement of the children of Archibald and Nora McCoy. It is a one of a kind journal, painstakingly assembled with a lot of research and love. We are grateful for this record, that will help genealogical research today, and in the future.

Historical Societies are a primary source for research of family histories. We receive many inquiries from across the country through our web site. Unfortunately, we do not have a good "people file" to be able to answer many of these inquiries.

Consider this recent request from a Vermont resident. He writes, "Please pass on my sincere thanks for the researcher who located

*submitted by Walt Stockwell*

the information on the Holmes family. The material you sent helped me to set aside some guess work that has bothered me over the years." Of interest is that the information we submitted did not come from our files, but from a resident member of our society who frequently stops by on our work day, and who was able to fill in some blanks for us. Thank you Bob.

The person seeking this information concludes with "My hope is that the society will put out the word asking for other early settlers to share their family histories with ... and for that I wish you success." **Consider this article as putting out the word.** You have the knowledge and the opportunity to help us and future generations of researchers. Call Walt at 726-3813, or stop by to visit any Thursday from 9 to 4. We need your help.

## Genealogy on the CHS web site

Robert Mardin compiled about 2,000 names of his family history into the computer using a program called Family Legacy. Now you can all view his hard work for free. Go to our web site—[www.camptonhistorical.org](http://www.camptonhistorical.org) and click on Digital Library. There is a link there for the free version of Family Legacy. The deluxe version costs money and in return gives you all sort of additional tool and reports. Once you have Family Tree installed on your computer, you can download the Cook Family Tree from our web site and explore the Cook family tree. Thanks for sharing Robert. If you have a family history you would like to share, call Paul Yelle.

## Swamp Maple

By Pauline Chadwell

Oh, lovely is the gemmed array  
Of woodland trails in rich display.  
With golden coins, white birches shine.  
And emerald tones are etched on pine.  
The sapphire lace of clear skies weaves  
Its pattern through oak's ruby leaves.

But, none of these can dim the glow  
Of one swamp maple that I know.  
In dazzling sun, or rain filled gloom,  
Its brilliance flows into my room,  
Autumn lives a while with me  
In lavished splendor of one tree.

From The Flower Grower

From The New Hampshire Troubadour of October 1949, that was published by the State Planning and Development Commission. This wonderful little monthly booklet about all things good in New Hampshire, has recently been re-introduced under Publisher Robert J. Finlay, with support from the Finlay Foundation.

## Does Anyone Know a Leatherman?

The hearse needs some minor repairs and maybe you can help. The leather seat and foot backing need to be replaced. If you know of someone that would be able to do that, please send their information along to us.

## Photo Contest

Part of CHS's Old Home Day this year was to have a photo contest to help preserve Campton's history through photography. We would like to do that again, but this year have all of the pictures taken from this past summer through the next summer. The details of the photo contest are not ready yet, but I am putting this here in hopes that we receive more photos of Campton - especially from events and subjects that we usually do not cover. For technological assistance, do not hesitate to call Paul Yelle at 536-5995. Thanks in advance.

## New Events Added

December 11th - Friday - A musical evening with Jim Aguiar/Cookie swap.

January 15th - Friday - Potluck, popcorn and a free flick, *Steep*.

Flyers will be in the mail as usual, but to be the first on your block to get all the details, click on the events link on our web site.

## NEW ARTIFACTS AT CHS

*BUT, what is it? In what category do we exhibit it? What is its use?*

Send your answer to our curator at [flagman13@roadrunner.com](mailto:flagman13@roadrunner.com), or call 726-3813, or stop by for a visit any Thursday from 9 to 4.

This is one of a group of artifacts from Charles Nelson, in memory of Frank and Florence Nelson. They include an old Air Castle battery operated radio, a metal 4 dozen egg carrier, plus vises and materials used in the home to sew covers on baseballs and softballs for Draper Maynard Company, and many other valuable artifacts.

We have also recently received many papers, old newspapers, and a three legged stool from John Dole, continuing his many contributions.

And several items for our growing farm exhibits. The Stickney family has brought in many, including a dehorner for bulls, a milk can, and others. Mary Durgin has contributed a large farm rake and a Syracuse chilled plow. You may have noticed these in the field next to the carriage shed. These are the start of a major exhibit. We need all of your farm related donations to make it complete.

Dick Giehl has donated a file of Personal Deeds of Langdon Foss.

Our needs are varied. Look around, in your barns, cellars, attics, and drawers. What can you donate or loan to the Campton Historical Society to help us carry out our mission of preserving Campton's past?

Contact Walt at the above numbers. We appreciate your help.



### *Old Home Day continued from page 1*

booklet. It was not only informative and an excellent keepsake, but raised lots of money with the advertising.

A BIG THANK YOU goes out to all those volunteers that made this a very special day. If anyone has photographs of this or any other event in Campton they are willing to share, please send them in to us. If you would like to be a part of the committee or learn more about what it involves, don't be shy—drop a dime.

### IT'S MEMBERSHIP TIME!!!

It is time, once again, to become a member of the Campton Historical Society. We have had another great year with good programs and fellowship. With your help, we will have another outstanding year.

Membership dues help with the cost of programs, newsletters and maintaining the building, which has increased with the expansion of use.

We are looking forward to your support; send your check today. Mary E. Durgin, Treasurer

#### Campton Historical Society

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

P.O. Box 160, Campton, NH 03223

Single Membership – \$12.00       Family Membership – \$20.00

Yearly membership is from October 1 through September 30.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Campton Historical Society and mail to PO Box 160, Campton, NH 03223

#### Members

Enclosed is my check for dues.

This check also includes a donation to support projects to be done in the Old Town Hall, headquarters of the Society.

# Campton Historical Society

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