

Dublin Historical Society

DUBLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03444 • FOUNDED 1920

Newsletter No. 17 February, 1991

Potluck Supper February 15

Mark it on your calendar. Members and guests are cordially welcome to our midwinter Potluck supper, 6:30 PM, Feb. 15, at the Dublin Community Church vestry. This will be the third of these yearly occasions; it is a pleasant and relaxed way to spend a Friday evening and fend off "cabin fever." Bring a dish, and if there are any questions, call Lucy Shonk at 563-8837.

After supper, at about 7:30, Nancy Campbell and John Harris will give a talk and demonstration on "Preserving Your Family Archives." It will cover the Do's and Don'ts of protecting family papers and photographs from the ravages of heat, moisture, insects, rodents, and migrating acid. Bring along your own old letters, photos, and documents to get the best advice about conserving them.

On display at the vestry will be photographs of Dublin's 1952 bicentennial and other photos and papers from the archives collection.

One item of business will be voted on: changing the date of the September annual meeting from a fixed day to one chosen by the trustees—to allow more flexibility. The text of the proposed change appears in this newsletter, on page 4.

A Very Good Year Roundup Of 1990 Activities

by Lucy Shonk, President

The Dublin Historical Society had another very active year in which a great deal was accomplished. Our four quarterly meetings featured a variety of programs:

February 9. Our second annual potluck supper was held at the

continued on page 2



Edith Page's Garden: Two young girls are seen playing by the fountain and pool of Miss Edith Page's garden off Page Road. The garden is now a ruin and surrounded by forest. This charming photograph, now in our archives, was probably taken by Elise Pumpelly Cabot early in the century. Can anyone identify the two girls? Or give us the date?

Looking Back at Dublin 100 years ago

by William L. Bauhan

The opening of a new decade seems an appropriate time to glance back at some events of 100 years ago, as recorded by the "Dublin correspondent" of the *Peterborough Transcript*. The following quotations are culled from 1890 and 1891 issues, and I have interspersed them with comments (in brackets) to help identify the persons and places referred to a century ago. It is interesting to note that two of the houses mentioned are still owned by the same families: Daniel Catlin's

house by his great-granddaughter, Martha Blagden, and H.G. Woods' by his grandson, Gordon Hayes.

Dublin in the early 1890's was a pastoral community, remote from urban centers, its lake and mountain peaceful and idyllic, and undisturbed by traffic. Route 101 did not exist, except as a winding dirt road between Peterborough and Keene. There were no cars—or trucks—no telephone or electricity; they arrived at about the turn of the century. To travel any distance, you could catch the train at the Harrisville depot. The three livery stables in town dispatched horse-drawn carriages to the station twice daily via the Old Harrisville Road (the new road wasn't built until 1916.)

continued on page 2

Looking Back...

continued from page 1

The Post Office was in Milton D. Mason's General Store (at the Burt's, next to the church); it shuttled back and forth every few years, depending on what party occupied the White House, between Mason's and Gleason's Store across the street. The telegraph office was also at Gleason's. There was no library building; books were kept in the Town Hall.

Dublin's population today is about 1400 (depending on who you ask.) In 1890 it was 582, and in 1790 it had been 901 (when it included part of Harrisville.) Farming, once the town's economic mainstay, had all but disappeared by the 1890's. Second-growth timber was beginning to cover old fields and pastureland. But, as is well known, the town's remoteness, its scenery, and even its abandoned farms proved an irresistible attraction to summer visitors—and economic salvation. During these years the State began advertising abandoned farms and farmland to city dwellers as "country homes" and "gentlemen's estates"—at rock-bottom prices.

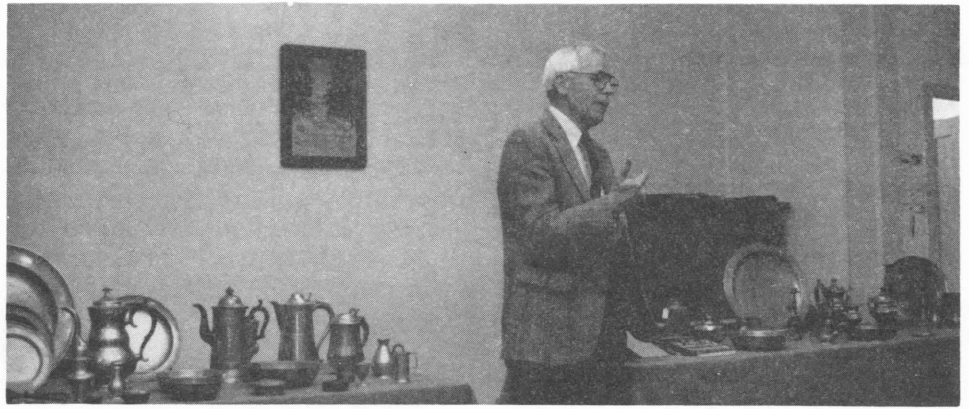
By the early 's 1890's the summer colony was thriving. Overflow crowds filled the Hotel Leffingwell in the center of town, and as seen in the following clippings, a construction boom was in progress. In a little over a decade, beginning about 1880 and lasting until the crash of 1893, this unprecedented building boom had transformed Dublin from an area of abandoned farms to a full-fledged haven for summer visitors. The summer colony was to remain the bulwark of the local economy for the next fifty years or so. Many of these Shingle Style "cottages", both around the lake and in the village, were lost to fire or demolition, but most of them (now winterized) survive today.

1890

July 24— Clesson Gowing's house appears to be approaching completion. [Tom LaFortune's house, Main Street.]

July 31— Carpenters have begun work on Dr. Smith's buildings [now the Besinger's Hedge House], while painters have taken possession of Clesson Gowing's, the hammer and

continued on page 3



February: Dan Walsh and his remarkable pewter collection.



March: Five members of the Warner Oral History Project depicted Rural New Hampshire women at work at the turn of the century.

A Very Good Year...

continued from page 1

Community Church vestry, where Dan Walsh gave an interesting and informative talk on "Pewter in American Life" and displayed many beautiful early examples.

March 28. "It had to be Done So I Did It – Portraits of Rural New Hampshire Women at Work" was the topic of our 2nd program, at the Louise Shonk Kelly Auditorium, Dublin School, given by 5 members of the Warner Women's Oral History Project. A fascinating glimpse of women's lives at the turn of the century, funded by the NH Humanities Council, and a very good turnout.

August 15. The Harrells hosted the summer meeting in their garden at "Glimpsewood" on East Lake Rd., built 100 years ago by Thomas Wentworth Higginson. I had the honor of presenting a talk on several aspects of his life, aided by Elizabeth Pool, who read several of Emily Dickinson's poems.

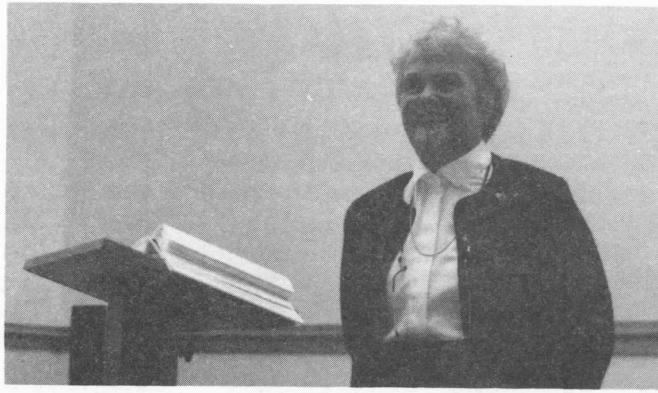


August: The Harrell's garden at Glimpsewood was the setting for program on Thomas Wentworth. Elizabeth Pool read poems by Emily Dickinson.

Ongoing Projects

Archives: Many significant donations of papers and photographs were made to the archives collection this year. Among the major gifts were Hildreth Allison's diaries, collections of papers of the Brush, Gowing, and Joseph Lindon Smith families, and a Hotel Leffingwell register, as well as many other invaluable gifts. Nancy Campell and John Harris are doing a

November: Lois Stabler spoke on the diaries of Dublin farmer Abner Sanger.



October Moving Day: Martha Raymond, Rusty Bastedo, Albert Handy, Linda Bastedo, Tom Wright, and Ned Whitney helped move collections from Schoolhouse to make space for renovations. Not seen is Lucy Shonk who was holding the camera.



August: Following Elizabeth Pool's reading at Glimpsewood Lucy Shonk spoke on the life of Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

highly professional job of organizing and preserving these records.

Cemetery Project: Laura Scott, with the help of several members, continues recording and mapping the cemetery. This project will be the subject of the next newsletter.

Schoolhouse Renovation: The fundraising committee has raised about half of the \$30,000 needed to

restore and renovate the Schoolhouse. Two stages have been completed so far: the foundation has been shored up and rebuilt, and the roof repaired and shingled. In October a group of volunteers moved most of the collections to a safe storage place until the work is completed.

Four newsletters have been prepared and sent out this year.

In December 1989 we printed postcards of six Dublin Scenes. These are being distributed and sold for the benefit of the Society. The price is \$5 for a dozen postcards.

Sharron Monaghan, our vice-president, who is an excellent photographer, has photographed each of our meetings as well as other historical items of interest this year. Several of her pictures appear in this issue.

Our membership this year stands at about 165.

Photographs of the quarterly meetings taken by Sharron Monaghan

Looking Back...

continued from page 2

saw made music upon the timber of Mrs. Wait's house [Steve Avery's, Main Street.]

Aug. 28— We are glad to learn that Col. T.W. Higginson has become a real estate owner in town and is to have a cottage [Glimpsewood] near the lake terminus of Prof. Pumpelly's new road.

Oct. 30— Last Saturday A.M.,...Mrs. Wait's house was found to be a sheet of flame. Only a few doors and blinds were saved, but the house is insured, and it is expected that Mrs. Wait will rebuild.

Nov. 6— Mr. and Mrs. Clesson Gowing have begun to occupy their new house on Main Street.

Nov. 13— Mrs. Wait's second house is framed....

1891

Jan. 8— A party of brother Grangers and carpenters recently met at the new house of C.E. Howe and gave him a lift closing in the outside, all of which was a great and very agreeable surprise. [C.E. Howe's house, on Church Street, burned in 1914; Tom Hyman's house is on the site.]

Jan. 21— It has often been predicted that sometime the city houses in this town would be burglarized. Last fall Miss Page's house on the Derby Farm was entered; some table linen, knives, and one or two other things were stolen. Not long after, the same [thieves] took honey from the hives so that bees will hardly survive the winter. [All that remains of Miss Edith's Page's once extensive farm on Page Road are some cellar holes and the stone ruins of her garden—see photo. She had bought the Derby Farm in 1890, she died in 1916, and her house burned down shortly afterward.]

Mar. 26— Work is going on inside the Waits' old house now owned by Mr. Frothingham. [Kate Phillips's big Colonial house at the corner of Route 101 and Frothingham Road, originally

continued on page 4

Looking Back...

continued from page 3

built by Rev. Edward Sprague.]

May 21- Col. Higginson is in town looking after his new house.

May 21- The Catlin estate is rapidly assuming form and comeliness under the efficient oversight of Mr. Warren Fiske who, with some 18 or 20 men and several teams, is hard at work transforming these beautiful grounds into the most attractive in town. [The present-day Blagden house near the N.W. corner of Dublin Lake, built by Daniel Catlin of St. Louis. Warren L. Fiske (1826-1918), who owned the present Parsonage, had been a schoolteacher for many years and, according to the Town history,

"held every important office within the power of his fellow citizens to bestow upon him."]

June 25- Mr. William T. Piper is established in Mrs. Monroe's house for the summer. [A fine Federal-period mansion on Old Harrisville Road—demolished in the 1930's. Professor Piper, who lived in Cambridge, was the son of Dublin-born Solomon Piper, who made his fortune as a Boston merchant and kept a vacation house on Main Street—now the General Store.]

Sept. 3- There is an epidemic of barn building in Dublin: at Mrs. Derby's [the Lamb house on Main Street] and Mrs. T.J. Eaves [her house is gone, but the barn still stands on

Upper Jaffrey Road—by the entrance to the Handys' driveway], at E.B. Howe's [the Pellerin house, Main Street] and Frank Pierce's [now Marathon House]. Barn additions are going up at Mrs. Wait's [Steve Avery's, Main Street] and M.D. Mason's [the Burts', former General Store]. Carriage sheds are being built by W.L. Fiske [the present Parsonage] and Dr. Faulkner [Old Harrisville Road.]

Oct. 1- Mr. H.G. Wood is having a small fishpond excavated in the meadow south of Schoolhouse No. 2. [southeast of Bond's Corner; the pond is still there on Gordon Hayes' property.]

St. Gaudens Museum seeks pictures of New Hampshire gardens

The St. Gaudens Museum is looking for art works depicting New Hampshire gardens for an exhibition in Cornish this coming summer.

The museum is seeking the loan of paintings, photographs, drawing, watercolors, sketches, and plans, according to a letter received this week from the curator, John Dryfhout.

The Historical Society has been asked to assist in the project and would like to hear from anyone with items to loan. Please contact Lucy Shonk at 563-8837.

Accessions

Since the November newsletter, Nancy Lehmann has given us a collection of twenty-four 19th century school texts and other books, most bearing signatures indicating ownership by members of the Allison family.

Through the kind persistence of Lucy Shonk (Sr.), the estate of the late Hildreth Allison has given us a trunkful of his papers, including 68 years of diaries stretching back to 1909, many photographs and a number of verses not published in *Ornaments of Rhyme*.

Other interesting material has come from Anita Crowell, Beekman Pool and Clint and Joan Yeomans

To all our generous donors, the Society's—and posterity's—grateful thanks.

—John Harris

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws, made September 8, 1990, to be voted on February 15, 1991.

Article Two, Section 4 currently reads:

The annual meeting of the members shall be held on the second Saturday in September in each year. Regular meetings shall be held at such times and places as may be decided by vote of the members at the annual meeting. No notice need be given of the annual or any regular meeting.

Proposed Change:

The annual meeting of the members shall be held during the month of September, the exact date to be determined by the trustees each year. Regular meetings shall be held at such times and places as may be decided by vote of the members at the annual meeting.

This issue of the **Dublin Historical Society Newsletter** has been edited and prepared by Bill Bauhan and Tom Wright. Editors for our next issue will be Laura Scott and Terry Dwyer. Letters, articles, and inquires are welcome.