

Hartford Historical Society

The Garipay House • 1461 Maple Street
Hartford Village, Vermont 05047

HARTFORD • QUECHEE • WEST HARTFORD • WHITE RIVER JUNCTION • WILDER

Volume 22, No. 1

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

September-October 2009

Tales of the School to Close

Reprinted from the Quechee Times, Spring Issue, 1994 by Sami Izzo

When the Quechee Elementary School closes for summer vacation, it will close for good. For the past year, the students have watched as the new Ottaquechee School grew into shape at the far end of the field behind the school.

For these students, it is an exciting change. The little village school has been overcrowded for years. The noise level affects everyone. Imagine sitting in a second or third grade classroom which share a wall with the room used for physical education, music, and art. Try to keep a kindergartner's attention as the kids pass by, laughing and talking and just being kids, going out for lunch recess. And so on, and so forth, the reasons for building a new school have been put to paper and discussed long and hard, the die cast, and the new school nearly complete.

But this is also a passing. After 74 years, the Quechee Grammar School will be no more. And like other endings, it has its melancholy moments. Though I've only been involved in the school community for seven years, I find that throughout this year, there's been many a moment that I thought, "This is the last

time." for some annual event going on, from the Math Week to the Halloween parade.

I will also find myself asking just what is so valuable about this school, and is it possible to bring it to the new school? Happily, I think yes. But to make sure I was thinking straight, I asked a few people who had been around for a much longer time, what the school has meant to them..

Dawn Reed has taught second graders in the same room at the same school for twenty-three years. Fresh out of Castleton State College, Quechee was her first, and has been her only, school. In her twenty-three years, she feels the students really haven't changed much, always a wonderful group, willing to learn, but kids all the



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NEXT PROGRAM

Wednesday, September 9, 7pm at the Greater Hartford Church of Christ in Hartford Village. The talk is on Alec Turner: A Trek from Slavery to Freedom presented by Jane Beck followed by refreshments. 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford United church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village.

From the Chair . . .

Everyone seemed reluctant to accept the gavel, so here I am again speaking on behalf of the Board—this time extending congratulations to Board Member Randy Dickson and his wife Dawn, married in July. Our very best wishes for a long and happy union.

We hope that by the time you read this perhaps some of you will have seen the Garipay House featured on CATV8. Our appreciation to Outreach Co-coordinator, **Steve Giroux**, for his willingness to document not only the resources at the Garipay House, but also the Gen Center and even the cemeteries! You can also go to www.catv8.blip.tv to view it. Thanks also to **Bill Wittik** for hosting a radio program on Cross Talk

Live which was aired several Sunday evenings. If you have other suggestions for publicity, please contact our new Publicity Chair, Susanne Abetti.

We are all working diligently to increase our membership. Have YOU recruited at least one new member? Remember, we are a non-profit organization; memberships/donations are tax deductible. NEW MEMBERSHIPS received now will not expire until December 2010.

Looking forward to seeing you at our program on September 9 and on September 12 at Glory Days. You're invited to bring goodies for our BAKE SALE - upstairs in the American Legion Hall, 9-2. If you would like to help 'man' our booth, please contact Pat Stark.

Dorothy Yamashita, Chair

Congratulations

Ice Cream and a Prize-winning Teacher

Congratulations to Cathleen Newton, Dothan Brook School, who recently won a Presidential Award in Mathematics and Science Teaching. She is looking forward to the coming school year as she assumes new responsibilities as the literacy coordinator for the district and continues to teach half time in the second grade at Dothan Brook.

The pictures of school buildings in this issue are a reminder that most buildings are still constructed in a traditional manner: rectangular - with hallways lined with classrooms. Money probably dictates the physical structure of the school.

Towns still struggle with the age-old problem....how do we get the best education for our money? By providing outstanding teachers - like Cathleen!



Hartford Historical Society

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<http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

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OUR OLD SCHOOL BUILDINGS

With the opening of our schools for the school year, I have included photos of our old wooden school buildings [with the exception of the old Quechee school – it isn't wood!] The Russtown and Dothan Schools are the only ones we do not have a photo of, Russtown, Hartford Academy & Wilder are no longer standing, and Jericho is the only one in public use- the rest are residences.



See how many you can match with the photo! [I'll have the answers in order of the photos in the next issue!]

- Brockway
- Center of Town
- Centerville
- Christian Street
- Hartford Academy
- Hillside
- Jericho
- Quechee
- West Hartford
- Wilder



Do you remember this?
The song School Days was written in 1907 by Will Cobb and Gus Edwards.

*School Days, School Days
Good ole Golden Rule Days
Readin' and Ritin' and 'Rithmetic
Taught to the tune of a hick'ry stick.
You were my queen in calico,
I was your bashful barefoot beau
And you wrote on my slate "I love you Joe"
When we were a couple of kids.*



(Continued from page 1)

same. Rumors still persisted as she started teaching, that Quechee was a school of country kids, but she found it a school population with a variety of family backgrounds, and which centered on a strong spirit of community. What has changed in those two decades has been some of the methods of teaching, from a lecture method to more hands-on, play-based teaching which she sees as more effective and conducive to learning.

In 1971, the year Dawn Reed first started, so did the teaching principal Dotie Manchester, who taught fourth grade as a teaching principal. Manchester felt then, and still does now, as a substitute teacher, that Hartford is one of the best places to reach. She saw a strong school, where the teachers were in charge, the students generally from solid, two-parent families, a school where the PTA was a key in providing activities and improving the school, an agenda which the PTA continues to fulfill to this day. There were walking field trips around the village as well as the traditional out-of-town trips to the granite quarries and State Capitol.

Dotie Manchester and Dawn Reed came to a school which was very similar to the grade structure today. From 1971 to 1985, the school had four grades. Kindergarten started in 1985, the school had four grades. Kindergarten started in 1985. However, before then, from the beginning of the school's existence in 1920, the building housed, first ten grades, then gradually dropping grades, as they moved into the High School and Middle School at White River Junction, down to four.

Pat Rice, now in her 90th year, and retired to West Hartford, was a teacher and teaching principal at the Quechee Grammar School from mid-1920's to 1971. In those years, Quechee was a thriving village, with two woolen mills, three general stores, a pool hall, barber shop and community center. The children came from the village and surrounding farms, and went to the Quechee Grammar School, where there were ten classes in the four rooms. First, second and third were taught together, fourth, fifth and sixth together, with seven/eight and nine/ten for the older students. Beyond that, students who chose to go on went to the High School in White River Junction.

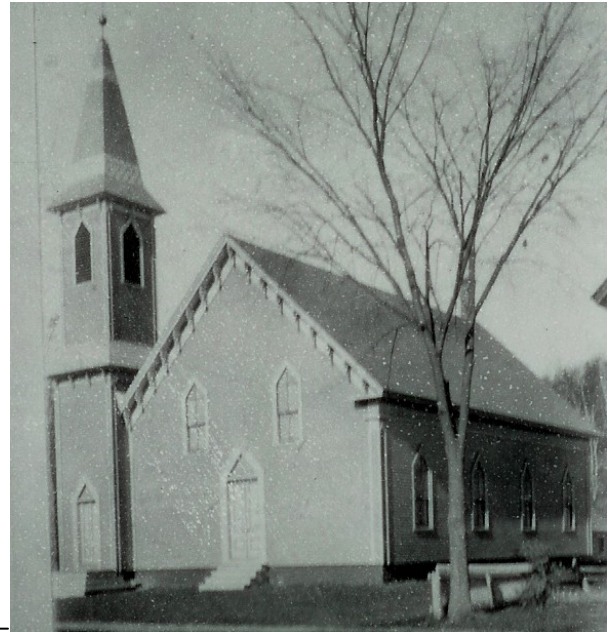
For Mrs. Rice, it was a wide variety of duties, teaching all the subjects to multiple grades. But the essence of education was, just like today, finding ways to help the students learn. Though nowadays, there are technical terms and jargon, it all boils down to the same quality which marks good teachers. She would "joke with the children, treated them like human beings, and see progress in their efforts". If she had a child who was puzzled, she would ask him or her what was most interesting to do, and work with that subject, to solve whatever studying problem was going on. Seventy years later, good teachers still do the same.

And this is how it was for the students in the school, like James Westover, who started first grade in 1929, and whose grandson, Kevin, is now in second grade. Just a Quechee resident, Pauline Russell, started a year earlier, and went through the Quechee Grammar School land on to White River Junction for 11th and 12th grades, a bit of a scary proposition back then, to go to the big school, but it was fine once she got to know it. Mrs. Russell recalls a richer mixture of learning in the mixed class school environment of her school years, with Latin and French a part of the school day, when the older grades were there. And there was, again she recalls, a sense of community spirit which has continued throughout the 74 years.

It was fun, talking to teachers and students from years gone by. I almost wanted to keep on talking to others still around. But that's impossible, and I have no answered my question.

What is important in this village school, and Hartford Village School, and through small towns of America, is a sense of place. The community is important in the school, and the school in the community. Parents, teachers, students past, present and future, all weave a web of life together, that their importance to each other is implicit, is understood even when not stated. Everyone cares. And that will continue, no matter what the building, which the grades, and where the students come from, as long as everyone continues to keep that community spirit. From Mrs. Rice, having students come to celebrate her 90th birthday after 50 years away, to next year's kindergartners at the newest school of the Town of Hartford next September, the thread is still strong.

CURATOR'S CORNER



Right—Universalist Society; Left— Later converted to the IOOF Hall.

Amazing Mysteries! The Lost has Come Home! A couple of weeks ago I received two phone calls, one of which immediately filled me with excitement – the second's excitement waited until later.

Item #1 – first some background. Some of you remember the old IOOF hall on Maple Street – formerly the Universalist Society. The building still stands, but is an apartment house and its former 'glory' [see photo] cannot be guessed at. I had been told about a plaque that hung in the hall, but I could not find anyone who knew where it was. As it was assumed it was with the state 'or something', I filed it in the back of my mind with many other mysteries that I don't have the time to pursue. Now to the phone call. A lady called and said she found this plaque in the house they just purchased in Canterbury, NH – would we like it? So she delivered it to me a couple of weeks later. How did it ever get to southern NH??? We are so very glad it is back in town where it belongs!

Item #2 – the same week I received another call, this one from Castleton State College asking if I'd like a few Hartford items they found in their collections. [I just LOVE those kind of calls!] When they arrived, there were two items that I found VERY interesting: One is a copy of an Address given here in town by Samuel Pingree on July 4, 1876 with a wonderful description of the Town's early settlement and governance. The other is a copy of the Methodist Church's 75th Anniversary booklet which had hand-written on the cover "Hartford Historical Society" and on the inside "Donated by Kay Littlefield June 28, 1952"! I have found only a few traces of our former Historical Societies, and it is exciting to find another little piece, AS WELL as to welcome an item back 'home'! What ever happened to the records and collections of the earlier societies?? How did these items get into the Castleton college collections?? No one seems to know.....

News and Notes

- Be sure to check out the website creatinghartfordVT.com if you haven't yet. Our high school students did a great job – including interviews- combining computer technology with history! We look forward to more from them this coming year.
- Have you noticed any of the **Historic District Signs**? We have not raised the funds needed to get them all up, but there is at least one for each district. If you would like to make a contribution OR have questions please contact Matt Osborn, Hartford Planner at 295-3075
- **C. Arabelle Rice's** gravestone now has her death date – thanks again to all who contributed to this project.
- **Old books** – we have a list of folks looking for old Hartford Yearbooks, St. Croix & Tuckers Histories, etc. If you would like to be added to the list [or have old copies you no longer want] please contact Pat. Thanks
- **More Old Books** – we also have a few items we would love to sell – anyone have an e-bay account that would be willing to help us out?

HONOR ROLL

Judge Henry F. Black

He is known for his public service to the town of Hartford, the state of Vermont and the legal profession. Born on March 23, 1906 in Newport, Vt., he was educated in the Newport schools, graduating in 1924. He went on to graduate from Norwich University in 1928, married soon after graduation, and in 1932 received a law degree from George Washington University.

He has a long list of public service in town, so of which is:
Town moderator
Chairman of the first Planning Commission
Trustee of public funds
Windsor County State's Attorney [1938-1941]
Vermont Superior Court Judge [1941-1949]
President of the Vermont bar Association [1956-1957]
Member of the Board of Governors American Bar Association and the American College of Trial Lawyers

He died in August 1977.

HONOR ROLL

Harry A. Black

Born in November, 1938 in Hanover, NH, he attended the Hartford Schools, graduated from Kimball Union Academy in 1957, Allegheny College in 1961, and George Washington University in 1966.

He served in the Army for 2 years in France, and married Leslie Morse in 1969.

Public service:
Town Moderator
Vermont Judge Advocate for the American Legion
Active with Hartford athletic teams including ice hockey
Active member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

In Memory of:

Nathaniel 'Nate' Perry

He was a Friend of the Historical Society and a 'fixture' in Hartford Village. He will be missed by many of us.

d. June 26, 2009 – age 88

The Hartford Historical Society Board of Directors would like to offer its condolences to the family and friends of Nate.

Mary Phillips Hyde

Condolences also to the family of Mary Phillips Hyde [Mrs. Asa] who died July 9th.

Commercial/Institutional Members:

Meeting House Furniture Restoration – Jonathan Schechtman
Hartford Memorial Middle School – Anderson Thorpe

Membership rates:

Individual: \$15

Family [same address]: \$20

Senior: \$10

Senior family: \$15

Commercial/Institutional: \$25

Junior membership – No fee but needs a sponsor [contact Dorothy Yamashita]

WILDER - by Roy Black

Notes [far from complete] from the Program taken by
David F Ford

Rogers Rangers went over the falls [called White River falls due to it's proximity to the White River] and were thrown into the river with all equipment.

Canals and the locks were built around the falls by Mills Olcott.

In 1880 all property and "riparian rights" went to a man named Crocket

Charles T Wilder and French Chandler founded the paper company. Wilder was from Attleboro. His Sister married the president of International Paper Company. Charles Wilder had a wife and daughter who predeceased him. Wilder is one the first communities in the area, perhaps in the state that was surveyed before it was built.

The office building was a handsome, stone building and a railroad siding was constructed to the mill.

He paid his help well, built boarding houses and company houses for their use. He planted the maple trees along Norwich Avenue.

In his will he left money to Mary Hitchcock Hospital and to Dartmouth College, as well as for the Wilder club & Library and the iron truss bridge across the Connecticut River.

The Wilder mansion is still in the village of "East Wilder", NH, today, north of the motel.

Roy showed off his childhood home, built by F P Campbell in 1897, sister to the Wilder Brothers. Passumpsic Avenue. A neighbor was Henry Leavitt, the policeman in the famous photo of Calvin Coolidge at the White River Junction Depot

The log drives were described and pictures shown of the horses, flat-boats, cook-house and of course, logs. The Wilder picnic area overlooked the river and was often a camp site for the log-drives.

The island in the Connecticut was called "Nigger Island"; Dartmouth had the name changed, eventually.

Old pictures of "Main Street" in Wilder were shown. Lewis Sheldon Newton designed the Goold house in Wilder. There were two churches in Wilder, Methodist and Congregational.

Christian Street was talked about.

Stonecrest Farm on Christian Street had "Profit-Bred" Chicks [Barred Rocks, R.I Reds, Leghorns, Wyandotte] their motto was: "Breeding for a Profitable Lay"

Charles Hazen farm was built in 1775. Workmen were shingling the house on the day of the Battle of Bunker Hill, and heard the cannon's roar. The granite posts on this farm were put into a brook, discovered and put back into place. Fire burned the barns in 1964, and set the roof of the house on fire as well. The House was saved.

The Christian Street School is now a caterers - it was a small, white clapboard building.

The Gillette Farm - The small brick house on Christian Street has recently been sold. The window of the Nichols house across the street was taken from the old Dothan Church - first church in Harford.

The Wilder chapter of the Ku Klux Klan was advertised in 1929 in the *Informatore*. The corporation asked to do business in Vermont. "The Applications do not state the business to be done within the State of Vermont. Anything to be done within the meaning of the word business." Reproductions of the *Informatore*, the local Italian-English newspaper, were shown. Guerino Filosa was the newspaper editor from Wilder.

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HHS Calendar

Upcoming Programs, Meetings and Events

Wednesday, September 9 – Alec Turner: A Trek from Slavery to Freedom presented by Jane Beck followed by refreshments. 7:00 pm at the greater Hartford United church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village

Saturday, September 12 – Glory Days of the Railroad in downtown White River Jct. – Look for our table & bake sale in the American Legion Hall.

Wednesday, November 11 – Vermont History through Song presented by Linda Radtke

Ongoing Monthly Meetings

First Tuesday (May through October) - Open House - Garipay House, 1461 Maple Street/Route 14, Hartford Village, 6:00 - 8:00 PM. The public is welcome to visit the Garipay House and see items from our collection on display. Volunteers are on hand to give tours and answer any questions.

Second Sunday (May through September) - Open House - Garipay House, 1461 Maple Street/Route 14, Hartford Village, 1:30 - 4:00 PM. The public is welcome to visit the Garipay House and see items from our collection on display. Volunteers are on hand to give tours and answer any questions.

Third Wednesday - Hartford Historic Preservation Commission Meeting - Hartford Municipal Building, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction, 4:30 PM.

Fourth Tuesday - HHS Board of Directors Meeting - Garipay House, 1461 Maple Street [Route 14], Hartford Village, [or the Hartford Library from October through April] 7:00 PM. For more information, contact Dorothy Yamashita, Board Chairman.