

Hartford Historical Society

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

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

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SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

November-December 2009

Remembering Vermont in Song

Looking forward to our November program, reminded me of one of my father's favorite poems called "No Vermonters in Heaven". If you are not familiar with the verse, I hasten to inform you that it's because they all "hiked their way back to Vermont!"

I think many of us grew up singing the song "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia" and grew nostalgic with other Stephen Foster melodies. Maybe that's why in 1907 J.C. Jones wrote "Take Me Back to Old Vermont" with music by H.F. Stafford, published by the Vermont Music Company in Rutland, Vt. - a tattered piece of sheet music recently discovered by your equally "tattered" chairperson! Fortunately, I can't provide an audio version, but here are the lyrics.....

The Chorus:

Take me back to old Vermont
Where plenty smiles on every want.
Amid her winding vales, there let me roam,
By her famous pools and rills,
Marble, slate and granite hills,
And best of all, my old green mountain home.

I:

I long to wander o'er the fields
Where my childhood days were spent,
And climb the nearby rugged hills
And mountains' steep ascent.
To tramp beside the meadow streams
With my favorite rod and fly,
And try my luck and skill again
On the speckled beauties shy.

II:

I long to meet my old schoolmates
Who played truant oft with me;
And raid once more the sugar camps
When the sap is running free;
To ramble through the woodland wild
And the birds and game surprise;
And from the green hills just beyond
Behold Nature's paradise.

**Come Hear Linda Radtke talk
about *Vermont History*
through Song at our
November Meeting.**

III:

I long to join the happy throng
At the shady swimming pool,
And hear the ringing of the bell
Of the dear old district school;
To make the farmers one more call
And invade their orchards rare
And pick the choicest* fruit in sight
Be it apple, plum or pear.

IV:

I long to visit the old store
And the ancient tavern near
And hear again those stirring tales
By some hoary pioneer;
To loiter 'round the old grist mill
When the farmers gather there,
And join my comrades for a lark
At the circus or the fair.

*as spelled in 1907

From the Chair . . .

This is our last newsletter for 2009. By the time you read this, many of you will already have received your membership renewal notices because your committee members don't want you to lose the reminder in your Christmas mail! So if you prefer to wait until January to write your check, **please make a note on your calendar**

If you're having trouble thinking of something different to give a relative who has moved away, perhaps a gift membership with the newsletters would remind them of the good old days in Hartford! Plus a copy of HARTFORD by Frank J. Barrett Jr. [available in the Town Clerk's Office]?

Birthdays are special, even though, in my opinion, they seem to come around too quickly. It was a privilege for the Board to have our President, Dot Jones, present at the September meet-

ing for a birthday serenade. We also welcomed two guests who have expressed an interest in becoming involved in our programs - Martha Knapp and Hilary Reitnauer, each with considerable and different interest, knowledge and experience related to the games we play as we continue to explore, record and preserve Hartford's history. This phrase is not to belittle our activities but to assure you that we enjoy our work and we look forward to many more players. Tell us about your interests and get involved in the game!

Thank you all for welcoming our new members as we meet together for the wonderful programs arranged by Mary Nadeau and for your continuing support in so many different ways. Have a wonderful Holiday Season!

Dorothy Yamashita, Chair

Coming Events

November Program: Vermont History Through Song

Our November 11th program will feature singer/researcher Linda Radtke. Ms. Radtke brings Vermont history to life with engaging commentary about the songs found in the Vermont Historical Society's collection of sheet music. Dressed in period costume, she takes listeners through state history, using the songs Vermonters published in their communities. The program is suitable for all ages. Join us for this interesting and fun program at the Greater Hartford church at 7pm. Refreshments and a chance to talk with Linda Radtke will follow.



Hartford Historical Society

Post Office Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047-0547

<http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

Officers

Dot Jones, President	802-295-2701
Bill Wittik, Vice President	802-295-9683
David Ford, Secretary	802-356-2776
Rich Gallagher, Treasurer	603-727-8418

Directors

Dorothy Yamashita, Chair	603-448-1067
Randy Dickson 280-1780	Joyce Miller 295-2025
Peggy McDerment 295-2357	Bill Wittik 295-9683
Susanne W. Abetti 295-9687	Carole Haehnel 295-3974

Newsletter Editor: Muriel Farrington 802-295-6511
newsletter@hartfordhistory.org

Archivist: Pat Stark 802-478-1110

HOLIDAY MEMORIES

Excerpts from various Oral Histories, edited

ANN CHOQUETTE:

Holidays, oh we were a big family—they were wonderful. The big house we had was ideal for a big family because I don't know how many people could sit at that dining room table and there would be twenty-five people for heaven's sake, Thanksgiving Dinner and so forth.

Christmas—I can remember we had a living room but there were also the two parlors and that's where the Christmas tree was put and of course the presents took up half the room with so many people. First thing in the morning we would open presents.

My mother, we used to kid her that she cooked for an army. She was great. There was always homemade donuts and homemade cookies. I don't ever remember being without. She used to make raised donuts. She would shape them like the shape of an eight and serve them with maple syrup. They were out of this world.

We had two Christmases. We had our own first and then we would go to Gram's. When we were growing up every holiday was at my grandmothers and everybody was there—all of the aunts and uncles and cousins were always together at Gram's.

MILDRED HILL

Yes we used to go up to Graham Hills in Chelsea and chop our own tree, yeah that was part of the day, go up there and of course as far as Christmas and Thanksgiving, we swapped—one year we had Thanksgiving at my folks' house and then my husband's house and then the next year we'd rotate it and have Thanksgiving at the other parents' house and Christmas at the other house so.

NORMAN LYMAN

I remember the Christmas parties at school, all the students had to be in a little Christmas play whether you were scared to death or worse which I was scared to death half the time, and then, step out in front of your friends

of the neighborhood, your parents and whatnot—you'd peek around the corner to see who was there. There was always a nice program for children for Christmas, and they had a Christmas tree and there was a present or two given out. We had one family that was well known in the area, farm people who didn't have any children but they'd always come to the school programs for the children and there was always a present under the tree from those people for every child in the neighborhood.

MARGARET HARLOW

Yes, we always had Christmas at the Dutton house because he had his children come home for Christmas. I guess we had a Christmas tree—I don't remember. As I got older I helped trim the church for the Christmas season with Mrs. Lyman from up in Jericho District. She and I had charge of that and we got to do it of course every year.

I met my husband at a Christmas party. He came from Hanover down to a Christmas party and it was next to the church and he brought me home that night, the next day he came back and wanted to know where he left me, and that started it.

CAROL DEWEY DAVIDSON

I remember at Christmas time and at Thanksgiving we would get into our vehicles and deliver turkeys and other parts of Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner to all the mill workers around Quechee and Dewey Mills.

HERBERT WHEELER

Mr. and Mrs. Briggs opened up their home to us to practice one year as the gymnasium wasn't available. The whole dance band went into their living room and that's where we practiced. We put on, probably, the first Christmas Ball held in Hartford High School and we

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did it in the gymnasium of the old high school at the foot of the hill and it was fabulous to have the parents behind you come in and help decorate that whole gym all in Christmas trees, all in Christmas lights. Christmas trees lined two sides of the gym, a great big tree down front. I had a student singer who sang certain songs like Moonlight in Vermont, etc. Mrs. Alexander helped a student design a big velvet cape that was lined in white satin with a big stand-up collar and the students that year picked five girls in the senior class... this would have been around 1963....they picked five of the girls to run as queen and the others would become her court. The queen that year surprised herself. She wore the cape that she sewed. She was a beautiful seamstress...and it was Cathy Hall. She was selected by her classmates—by the whole school, really—as Queen and so I put the cape on her and the other four girls became her court. We did that one more time...my secretarial class at Hartford High put on another Christmas Ball in the new gym in our new high school.

DOT JONES

I didn't have to worry about anything. My mother of course got discounts at Christmas from Colodny's Surprise store where she worked. We didn't even know there was a Depression because we made a great deal about Christmas, still do, and we always had.

MADELINE WAGONER

I made twenty-one afghans for Christmas one year. I gave them to different people for Christmas.

ALICE SMITH

Oh yes, we used to go to my Grandmother's on my mother's side. We never could wait until they had dinner. I can still see those tables that wide, and I swear she had two of them, and they went the length of the room. They had 8 or 9 children, so there were all of them for Christmas and Thanksgiving, plus me and my sister and the adults.

And then the Christmas tree party, it was a long time before we got to open presents. We

also had popcorn balls. That was a Halloween project I guess. You know, like Crackerjack? Well, I made bushels of that stuff, you put the corn into the syrup and put it in the oven, and baked it, and it turned out good.

LETTIE MORSE

We raised our own hens and my husband took eggs to work to sell and we sold to different ones in the neighborhood, as well. At one time we had over a hundred hens and we gave the chickens as Christmas presents when we were first married and didn't have much money. We'd also collect butternuts and give butternut meats for Christmas presents. It was fun to go out on Sunday, ride some of the back roads where there would be butternut trees beside the road, butternuts around that we could pick up. Beside the tree by our back porch that had big butternuts and along the brook across the road there were several butternut trees where we would collect the butternuts. We would boil them down make our own syrup, too.

ROBERT 'PUD' SIMONDS

Skiing back then, we had to make our own equipment. Rubber bands was what we tied our boots and just shoes on with. I went skiing one time with one of my good friends and we were skiing down through the cemetery and my friend got a brand new pair of skis for Christmas, and he—he ran into a stone and broke the tip of it off. We had to walk down to the village and went to my uncle's house and he welded on the tip so it was alright, but we were happy he didn't have to go home with a broken ski as his father would be upset.

BONNIE BRIGGS

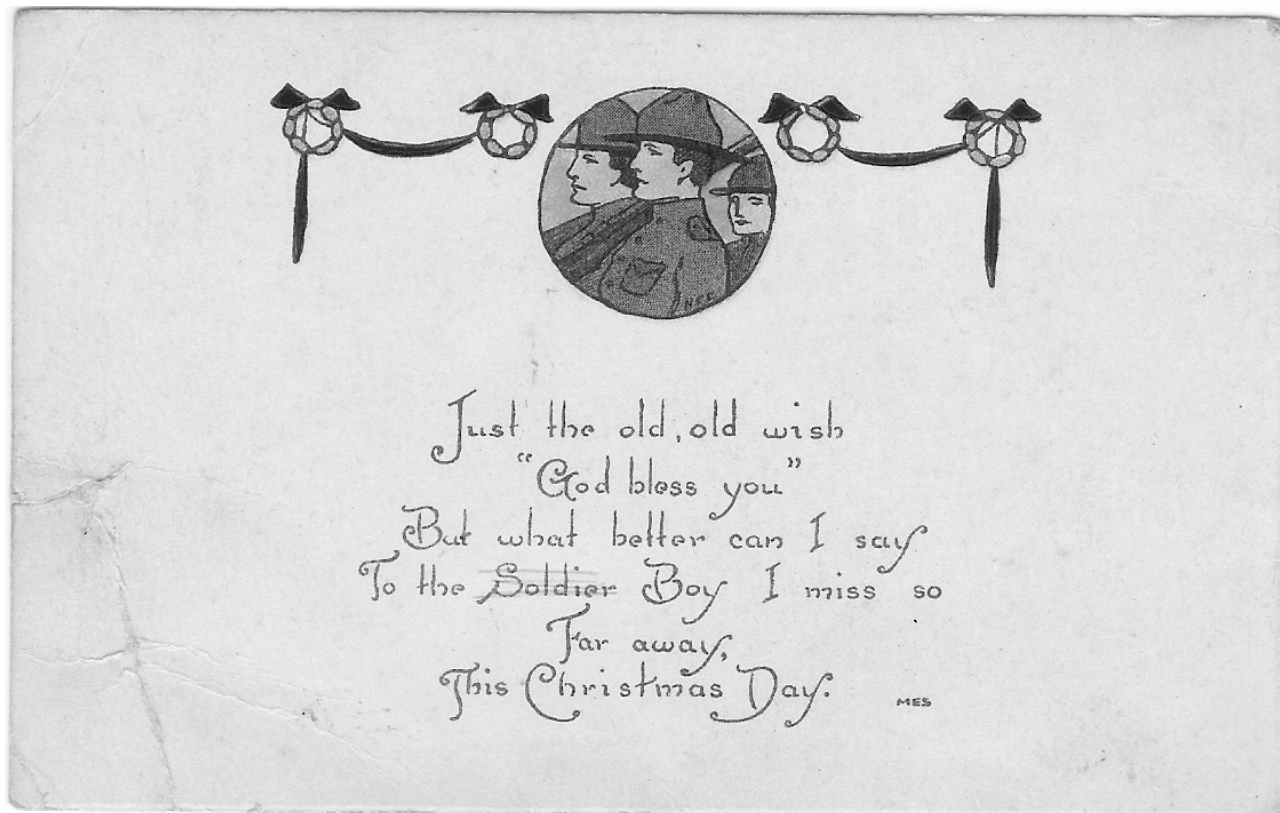
Oh, we just always had a season pass to Dartmouth Ski Way, which is up in Lyme, that was part of our Christmas present for the children that they could ski there all they wanted. If they wanted to go and ski anywhere else they had to earn their own money so if they ever had a chance to get a Pico or Okemo or maybe Stowe just once it was because they earned their own money so they had a chance to ski because of that season ticket.

Curator's Corner

A recent trip to Down East Maine got me thinking about our museum. I visited two 18th century buildings—one a house, the other a tavern. The Ruggles House has always been in the ownership of the builder's family and they have created a foundation to run it. It is a typical house museum – full of wonderful old furniture and furnishings, most original, with a 'no touch' policy. The Burnham Tavern is owned by a non-profit—the last of a fairly long list of owners - with almost no original artifacts although they have an amazing amount of period artifacts. It has a 'looser' policy about handling items. Both have live tour guides [docents] and are certainly worth visiting. Although we do not have a 'house museum' [furnished in one time period] we DO have an old house full of old artifacts from our town with a 'hands off' policy to preserve the artifacts. It was interesting to see what procedures we have in common, and what are different. Of course, the presence or absence of funding was also quite obvious!

The Garipay House continues to have challenges—the latest being a possible need to re-wire the telephone lines to get the Security System up and running again! Hopefully this will be resolved long before you read this. The house will also be closed for the winter but I can be reached at work if anything is needed—info, files, a quick tour! 295-3077. We look forward to opening it again in the spring!

Pat



GENEALOGY RESOURCE CENTER



The Hartford Genealogy Research Center at the Hartford Village Library is alive and kicking! The Center is currently staffed every Monday between 1-5pm. Other hours may be arranged by appointment. Come on down and rekindle the spark of interest in tracing your family tree. We have a growing abundance of local resources. Also a continuing need for volunteers!

Tombstone photo project



Do you have a photo of a Hartford tombstone that you would be willing to donate or loan for scanning? Preferred formats include .jpg and .tif, but others will be accepted and converted. (Please indicate if photo credit is desired.) If donating by e-mail send one photo per message to jetron@comcast.net. We would also be happy to receive multiple photos on CDs. This is a sizeable project and we would appreciate all your help. Non-e-mail photos may be dropped off at the Hartford Village Library during regular hours or to Pat Stark at the Lister's Office in the Town Hall.

HAVE YOU SEEN the Garipay House on your local TV channel 8 or 10? Our thanks to Steve Giroux who is in the process of filming a series about the activities of the Hartford Historical Society. Thank you for your professional presentations, Steve.

For further information, go to www.catv8.org. "Watch our programs"Hartford Historical Society

See the Hartford Historical Society's website at <http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

Commercial/Institutional Members:

Meeting House Furniture Restoration – Jonathan Schechtman
Hartford Memorial Middle School – Jennifer Boeri-Boyce
Hartford High School – Anderson Thorpe
Geo Barns LLC

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]

News N Notes

* The Last Program of 2009 - Wednesday, November 11 – Vermont History Through Song presented by Linda Radtke - 7pm at the Hartford Church followed with refreshments. Don't miss it!

* The Board of Directors would like to Remember the Life of Joe Pogar and offer his many friends and family condolences on his passing after 101 + years!

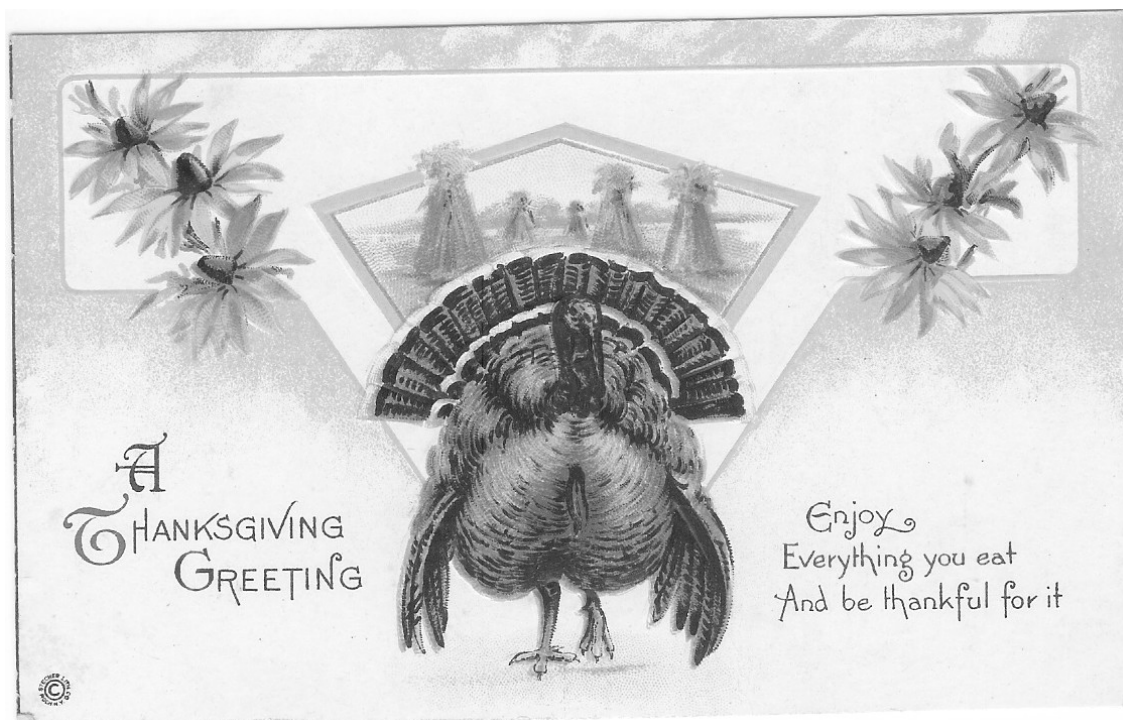
* We have a list of folks looking for old Hartford Yearbooks, St. Croix & Tuckers Histories, etc. If you would like to be added to the list [or have old copies you no longer want] please contact Pat. Thanks

⇒ **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?

OUR OLD SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Here is the order of the photos as printed in the last issue. – Did you guessed them all?

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



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HHS Calendar

Upcoming Programs, Meetings and Events

Wednesday, November 11, Vermont History through Song presented by Linda Radtke. You'll have a chance to talk with Ms Radtke while enjoying our refreshments. 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple St., Hartford Village.

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.