



# Hartford Historical Society

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

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

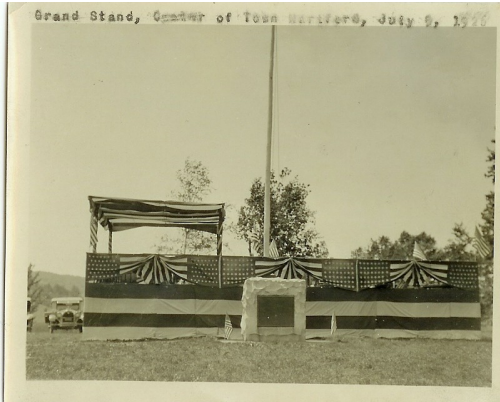
Volume 22, No. 5

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

May-June 2010

## Decoration Day [or the First Memorial Day in Hartford, VT]

From *The Landmark*, April 15, 1882



A little less than a year ago a move was made in Hartford by some of the survivors of the civil war, to organize an association of the honorably discharged veterans with a view to the due observance of the day set apart by the national as well as state law, for the proper commemoration of the survivors, and preservation of the memory of those who gave their services and their lives to save the nation in its four years of utmost peril. A society was organized in May, 1881; articles of association were adopted, officers chosen, and the secretary of the association opened a record of the articles of association of "The Hartford Memorial Soldiers Association," - its members, officers, and proceedings. It offers membership to all honorably discharged soldiers and sailors of the war of the rebellion, or any previous war in which our country has been engaged.

Its present membership is about 30. On last memorial day, May 30th 1881, immediately upon its organization, exercises were held at the cemetery between White River Junction and Hartford village, which, for lack of time were quite informal, and details were sent to the several cemeteries in other parts of the town (except Quechee where similar exercises were held) to decorate the graves of soldiers in each.

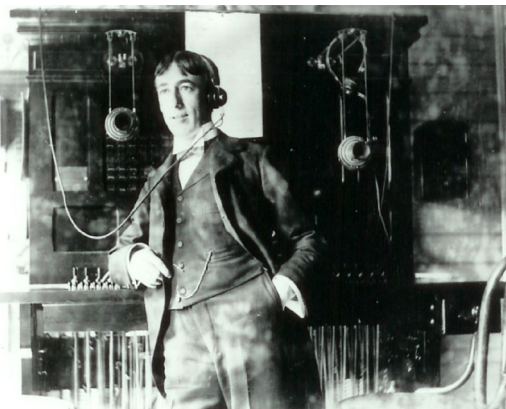
It is proposed to commemorate the coming anniversary Tuesday, May 30th, 1882, in a manner befitting the occasion, which a united people has set apart as a holiday on which the living may gather to strew the

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## NEXT PROGRAM

### The White River Junction Telephone Operators...in their own words

Our next regularly scheduled program meeting, to be held on Wednesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, will highlight the women who served as telephone operators in the White River Junction office. We are grateful to four former operators, Kay Wilbur, Ann Rogenski, Carolyn Cheney and Lucille Spauling, who so graciously allowed themselves to be interviewed for this program so that the story could be told in their own words.



The New England Telephone Company opened its first office in White River Junction in October of 1894. It was located in the Junction House, on the site of the present Hotel Coolidge. We have a picture of those original operators in their long skirts and Gibson Girl hairstyles, sitting on tall stools before the "cord board", ready to make connections for their customers. Operators sat just inches away from each other, and when a call came in, they an-

*(Continued on page 4)*

## From the Chair . . .

Those of us who have attended Vermont History Expo in the past were happy to learn that it will be held again this year at the Tunbridge Fair Grounds on June 26 and 27. Of course, the Hartford Historical Society has a space reserved! This is the same week-end that many of you will be participating in the Hartford High School Alumni activities, and as I reflected on the joy of such occasions and the Expo theme: "Back to the Land, Again" I recalled earlier days when reunions often meant picnics!

Those were the days when in this area one could have a picnic just about anywhere. A Sunday drive usually meant putting the ice cream freezer in the back of the car, and the kids could take turns cranking! Sometimes on a hot evening, we took supper and had a picnic in the park at the weekly Band Concert. People still picnic, but it is likely that vendors will be providing the food!

Here in the Hartford area, there are still many acres of land where residents may hike and picnic. When I discovered that the Hartford Parks and Recreation Department is the only one in New England to be accredited by CAPRA, a national organization, I contacted Director Tad Nunez who is providing us full support for the Vermont History Expo exhibit:

"Picnics are Forever". We can only touch upon the history and development of our local parks at the exhibit, but any information or stories you can share with us will be added to the collection and used to add a section to the Book Update on our parks.

We are still searching for **PICNIC PHOTOS**; it's not too late to add more to our collage. Please submit a copy (or Pat Stark can scan it for you) with location and family name(s) by June 1st. Feel free to include a story, if appropriate.

We have picnic baskets and equipment galore that date back as far as 1940, but if you have anything of pre-WWII vintage you would be willing to share, please let us know....especially an ice-cream freezer!

Our **Annual Meeting** is scheduled for June 9, and it is time to elect a new President and a new Treasurer. Our current Board of Directors is willing to continue, but we always welcome additional members!

**PLEASE share your time and talent with us and help your society.**

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Meeting June 9<sup>th</sup> at the Hartford Church.

Dorothy

## FROM OUR COLLECTIONS:

This issue I am featuring a not-so-old artifact donated recently. Many of you will recognize it [sorry it is not in full color!] as the recent Winter Olympics brought this past event to the mind of several folks. This plastic banner was waved along the route of the Olympic Flame as it passed through White River Junction in 2002 on its way to Salt Lake City, Utah. Just another reminder that History Happens Today!



### 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
Susanne Walker-Abetti	802-295-9687
Randy Dickson	802-280-1780
Carole Haehnel	802-295-3974
Martha Knapp	802-295-2713
Peggy McDerment	802-295-9687
Joyce Miller	802-295-2025
Bill Wittik	802-295-9683

**Newsletter Editor:** Muriel Farrington 802-295-6511  
[newsletter@hartfordhistory.org](mailto:newsletter@hartfordhistory.org)

**Archivist:** Pat Stark 802-478-1110

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flowers of spring over the graves of the country's defenders. The number of living soldiers in Hartford is small; while the graves of their fallen comrades, though few in our home cemetery, are far more numerous about the hospitals, the prisons and fields of strife in the south land, than most people of this peaceful day, even among their own townsmen, are aware. Of the first company of one hundred, raised in Hartford, organized in our midst—and sent to the front in July, 1861, ("F" Co., 3d Vt. Regt.,) nearly half fell in their first battle, and dyed the waters of the Warwick with their best blood, when less than nine months in service. Forward, thence to the first engagement, from Yorktown to Appomattox, in Maryland and Pennsylvania, to drive the invader south, and on the soil of Virginia, Carolina and along the shores of the Gulf and the banks of the Mississippi, from the first alarm of war, till the final shout of victory, men of Hartford fought and fell with no ambition but the unity of their country, the supremacy of its laws, peace and prosperity for the generations to follow their sacrifice. Is it not fitting that they be remembered? That their achievements be cherished as a boon to the living, and their graves strewn with flowers by the loving hands of a rescued and prosperous people, saved by their loss, rescued by their devotion, made "free indeed" by their valor?

It is in contemplation [sic] now, to make this, the coming anniversary, a celebration worthy of the cause it commemorates. Col. Thomas O. Seaver, who was its captain in 1861, led the first of Hartford's volunteers to the defense of the nation's honor, has been invited to deliver the commemoration address, on the coming decoration day, and has accepted the invitation. It will be a pleasure to the survivors of that command to listen in peace to the voice of their veteran commander, and it ought to be no less a pleasure and privilege to those of us who enjoy today in fullest measure the fruits of their work, without the bitter experience which they must ever hold in remembrance.

For the occasion in 1881 more than half of the money needed for its expenses was contributed by the few surviving comrades of those whose memory the day recalls, though there were many instances of generosity by their fellow citizens which they remember with gratitude. The executive committee of the society now proposes to issue tickets with their purpose endorsed upon them, in order that those of their fellow citizens who esteem it a privilege to aid in the cause, may be enabled to do so; and it is hoped that such, and such only, will contribute as are able to give, and are disposed to aid freely, and not grudgingly, to commemorate the worthy deeds of those who shed their blood that the nation might live, and enjoy with peace "a new birth of freedom in all its borders." These tickets will be found during the month of May at such places in various localities as to be within the reach of all who desire to aid in the cause. They are not tickets of admission, but commemorative of the occasion. The price will be twenty-five cents each, and a record will be made in the books of the association, giving the man and number of tickets taken by each person who invests. No other means of raising funds for the expenses of the occasion, except by society assessments will be adopted. Any number can be had by any individual, and all are cordially invited to attend upon the exercises of memorial day, whether patrons of its expenses fund or not. Notices will appear in due time.

## **CURATORS CORNER**

My topic this issue is Exhibits. I hope by now you have seen some of the Post Office Exhibits [which are also in the Bugbee Center and outside the Town Clerk's office] – the theme is Families That have Changed [or at least had a great influence on] Our Town. Next year I hope to feature our Founding Families for the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration.

The History Expo in Tunbridge is happening this year, and their topic is 'Back To The Land – Again'. The Board has decided to feature our Parks—which are not all the same as in the past! We are hoping some of you will have photos of past picnics that we can scan to use in the exhibit. If you do, please contact me. It should be an interesting exhibit, and I hope you can get up to Tunbridge the last weekend in June to see it and all the other great displays and activities there. Thanks

Pat Stark

*(Continued from page 1)*

swered by saying, “Number, please”, and then would reach up to plug in a second cord. Sometimes, they tell us, it was a very long reach.

Even though their customers couldn’t see them, operators were required to dress in full business regalia, including nylons and high heels. During World War II, when nylons were unavailable, these intrepid women simply put makeup on their legs and continued business as usual!

Working conditions were comfortable during the winter, but in the summer, the heat was sometimes overwhelming. There was no air conditioning, and fans couldn’t be used because they would blow about the little slips of paper that the operators used to keep track of calls. One operator tells of sweat dripping off the end of her nose as she worked.

During the pre-dial phone era, operators knew everybody in town and everybody’s business. They would make wake-up calls, give the correct time, transfer calls and even hunt people down. When the whistle on the fire station blew, the board would light up like a Christmas tree, with everyone wondering what was on fire. This continued until 1979 when the office was computerized and the cord boards became obsolete. Then, in 1961, dial service replaced manual service and phone callers no longer had to go through the operators to make local calls.

The information that the four former operators shared with us will be presented in a Power Point format. Their stories are often humorous and always interesting. We hope that you will join us.



**Mystery Item:** Does anyone know what this is? Found near an old house site. It is made of wood, generally rounded on “top” side and flat with no beveling on “bottom” side. Car keys are put there for scale. Let Pat know if you have any ideas. Muriel Farrington found it.

**WANTED:** Someone to serve as **part-time Treasurer** for the Society. Position starts in June and the duties are: Deposit checks, Pay bills, Track monies, Report to board monthly, Prepare end of the year report + Turn profit/loss statement & balance sheet over to accountant yearly for income tax preparation. Please contact any of the directors if you have questions or are interested.

**THANKS to Norma Adams** for identifying the two band members in the last issue’s Mystery Photos as Marjorie Gauthier & Burton Shepard! We still don’t have an id on the clarinetist.

## **Symposium on Sustainability: Retrofitting Historic Buildings to Save Energy**

June 4, 2010

Vermont Technical College, Randolph, Vt.

Information and registration: [www.ptvermont.org](http://www.ptvermont.org)

# HARTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## HONORS DOT JONES

The Hartford Woman's Club hosted the Hartford Historical Society on April 1, 2010 with a special Dot Jones celebration. The group was privileged to preview an interview with Dot in her home—filmed by CATV8—to be released at a later date. Dot was presented with a certificate naming her as an Honorary Director of the Hartford Historical Society, and her name will be added to the Honor Roll.

Dot has helped to instill a sense of history in the youth of our town by talking with them about what school was like 'back in the olden days' of the 1940's for several years. Her first-hand stories of her teacher, Mira Davis, and her sense of humor made those old school days real for the children.

Dot was born on September 21, 1921 on the family farm in Hartford, Vermont. She graduated from Hartford High in 1939, earned her Physical Education Degree from Posse College in Weston, Massachusetts and Temple University in Philadelphia. Later in the 1960's, she received a Masters Degree in Guidance Counseling from Keene College. Dot taught in Bellow Falls Vt. for 40 years—serving 25 years as gymnastics instructor, and coach and later 15 years as guidance counselor.

She married Bradley Jones, her high school sweetheart, who was an Air Force pilot. Dot returned to Hartford to care for her aging mother, and has maintained the family homestead ever since.

Sports, especially basketball, are her real love, and some of her fondest memories are of coaching both the school teams and the 'town basketball team'. She was inducted into the Bellows Falls Hall of Fame.

She has been active in Delta Kappa gamma, Eastern Star, Hartford Women's Club, Hartford Historical Society [serving as Vice president and president for many years], the Grange VNA, National Honor Society for Women Educators, Hartford Library Trustee and has served as Hartford Lister.

Dot grew up with a sense of independence and was not hesitant to stand up for her beliefs. She had high expectations of her students, and they learned to play by the rules of the game. In her own words, there was "no fooling around" in my classes! Yet her compassion for students led her to earn a degree in guidance counseling, when this was a relatively new field in education. Dot did not hesitate to visit students in their homes, even though conditions sometimes shocked her. Although she never taught in Hartford, her career was outstanding, and Hartford can be proud to count her as a Senior Citizen.

### **Commercial/Institutional Members:**

Geo Barns

Hartford Memorial Middle School

Kibby Equipment

Lovell's Sugar House

Hartford High School

Main Street Museum

Meeting House Furniture Restoration

### **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]

# HARTFORD CELEBRATES!

In preparing for our Big Birthday Bash next year, here is an outline of our former Anniversary Celebrations. If you have any ideas for next year or would like to join the committee, please contact either Pat or Susanne, who are on the 250<sup>th</sup> Committee. Thanks

## WHAT ANNIVERSARIES HAVE BEEN CELEBRATED IN THE PAST?

- Hartford Charter – 7/4/1761
- Declaration of Independence – 1776
- Republic of Vermont – 1777
- Statehood – 1791

## HOW DID WE CELEBRATE?

### 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY:

- 1911 – *Charter* – Pageant and Center of Town monument dedication
- 1926 – *Independence* – Reenactment on the Town Green, perhaps a Parade?
- 1927 – *Republic of Vermont* – Pageant at Fairgrounds
- 1941 – *Statehood* – Speech at Town Meeting with play and music, and Special July 4<sup>th</sup> events

### 200<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY:

- 1961 – *Charter* – Parade in White River Junction, Field Day at School Complex
- 1976 – *Independence* – Center of Town Walk-A-Thon
- 1977 – *Republic* – Parade in White River Junction
- 1991 – *Statehood* – Craft Fair at Elks, Street Fair in White River Junction

## HOW WILL WE CELEBRATE our 250th ANNIVERSARY??:

- 2011 – *Charter*
- 2026 – *Independence*
- 2027 – *Republic*
- 2041 – *Statehood*

## Hartford's 250<sup>th</sup> - A report from the committee:

Many possibilities are under discussion for events to occur in most months next year and in most villages. One of the exciting ideas is to create a 'memory year book' with captioned photos of all events – available for purchase in time for Christmas giving!. We would love to have someone agree to be our 'official photographer' – although captioned photos from anyone will be accepted – and someone to be in charge of that project if possible. ALSO – we are still hoping to get the Updated Hartford History book out before next summer. To do that, we need folks who are willing to EITHER call our business folks [list will be provided] to find out what has happened with our businesses, organizations, churches etc. since 1975 or otherwise come up with that information; AND we need folks willing to go through our files, etc. and write up brief paragraphs on topics not covered in John St. Croix's books – such as the Native American presence, Leisure activities, bridges, housing, etc. If you have any questions, suggestions, comments please contact Pat Stark. With your assistance this will be a quality product! Thanks for considering what you can do for our Birthday Bash!



2005.14.61A 1995  
David Laurin Class of 1975



Bill Brown - Class of 1968  
Alumni Weekend 1998  
2005.14.57

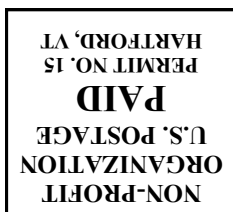
# MEMBERSHIP LIST

as of 12 March 2010

( Includes new, renewals and Life members)

Abetti, Susanne & George  
Adams, Norma  
Abbott, Collamer  
Aher, Jim & Diana  
Arnold, Jeff & Noreen  
Ayer, Mary  
Barwood, Wendell & Judeen  
Beckett, Esther  
Bedor, Ruthie  
Belisle, Kevin  
Berezin, Iris  
Bettis, Michael & Phyllis  
Bettis, Susan  
Black, Roy  
Blake, Roger E. Jr  
Boeri-Boyce, Jennifer –  
Blood, Janet  
Blood, Nancy  
Bohi, Charles W.  
Book, Raymond & Rebecca  
Briggs, Bonnie  
Brown, Dennis and Mary  
Brown, Jean  
Bradley, Edward & Marie  
Clifford, Cameron  
Close, Virginia  
Coogan, Debbie  
Coppock, Chuck & Laura  
Cramer, Kenneth C.  
Cronce, Carol  
Cusson, George & Kay  
Devins, Mary A.  
Farrington, Muriel  
Fifield, Raymond T. & Betty J.  
Filosa-Morton, Clementine  
Follensbee, Robert  
Ford, David  
Gallagher, Richard  
Gadzinski, Priscilla & Chester  
GEO BARNS  
Goodrich, Roberta  
Gould, Jeanette  
Haehnel, Carole  
Hammond, Philip & Gloria  
Hardy, Dwight & Carol  
HARTFORD HIGH SCHOOL  
HARTFORD MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL  
Hazen, Alice  
Hazen, Barbara  
Hazen, John  
Henderson, Richard M.  
Heroux, Ron  
Hinckley, Elaine C.  
Houghton, Dwight & Norma  
Janisse, Kathy & Lani  
Jones, Dorothy

Kelton, Joan  
KIBBY EQUIPMENT  
Knapp, Brent & Martha  
Knapp, Dave & Marcia & Eric  
Lagasse, Steve  
Lane, Edward Jr & Carol  
Lebrun, Nancy  
Lehman, Ralph  
Lerner, Fred  
LOVELL'S SUGAR HOUSE  
Lutz, John & Ruth  
Lyman, Harris C. and Mary  
MAIN STREET MUSEUM  
Martin, Virginia G.  
Mahoney, Colleen & Chuck Monahan  
McCrackin, Mark  
McDerment, Brian  
McDerment, Peggy  
McKinley, Chris  
MEETING HOUSE FURNITURE RESTORATION  
Miller, Raymond & Joyce  
Nadeau, Mary  
Newton, John & Margaret  
Nichols, Edward & Donald  
O'Connor, Carleton  
O'Donnell, Peter  
O'Hara, F. Peter & Sabina G.  
Patch-Slegeitis, Alberta  
Pippin, Beverly  
Plattner, Robert & Georgia  
Plume, Dr. Stephen K.  
Ricard, Lorna  
Richard, Steven: Patti, Lauren, Katie  
Rogenski, Ann S.  
Santaw, Emily  
Schechtman, Jonathan and Deborah Doyle-Schechtman  
Shambo, Bill & Phyllis  
Shambo, Sue Ellen  
Smith, Sandra F.  
Smith, George W. Jr  
Spydell, Janice  
Stark, Pat  
Stone, Gordon  
Symancyk, Kate & Theresa  
Taylor, Robert  
Therault, Norman & Nancy  
Therault, Ron  
Watts, Claire B.  
Thorp, Andersen  
Weinberg, Marvin & Nancy  
Wilbur, Kay  
Wittik, Bill & Carolyn  
Wood, Regina  
Wright, Elinor  
Yamashita, Dorothy  
Zacharski, Leo & Pat



Hartford Historical Society  
POST OFFICE BOX 547  
HARTFORD, VERMONT 05047  
Return Service Requested

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## HHS Calendar

*Upcoming Programs, Meetings and Events*

**Summer OPEN HOUSE at the Garipay House** – May - September:

The First Tuesday of the month 6-8pm

The Second Sunday of the month 2-4pm

Or by Appointment [call pat at 295-3077 M-F 9-4]

**Wednesday, June 9** Annual Meeting and program featuring the *White River Junction Telephone Operators* - in their own words, followed by refreshments. 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village

**Saturday & Sunday, June 26 & 27** – Vermont History Exposition at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds

*Ongoing Monthly Meetings*

**First Tuesday** (May through October) - Open House—Garipay House, 1461 Maple St/Rt 14, Hartford Village, 6-8 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 from 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 Bldg, 171 Bridge St, White River Junction, 4:30 pm

**Fourth Tuesday**—HHS Board of Directors Meeting—Garipay House, 1461 Maple St/Rt 14, Hartford Village, (or the Hartford Library October—April) 7:00 pm. For more information contact Dorothy Yamashita, Board Chairman.

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