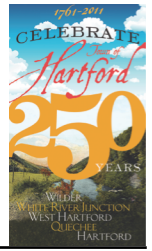




Hartford Historical Society

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

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Volume 29, No. 2

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

March-April 2016

The Vincents of Hartford Village

By Mary Nadeau

At our program meeting last year. "Growing Up in Hartford Village in the 1950s and 1960s," the name Vincent came up many times as members of the audience reminisced about their childhood experiences. The following is compiled with excerpts from the booklet, "History of the Family Vincent," the written memoirs of Lucille Vincent Follensbee and the oral recollections of Laurette Vincent Woodward.

Alondius Pierre Vincent was born in Quebec, Canada, in 1894, a member of the seventh generation of his family to migrate from France in the mid-1600s. These hardy pioneers cleared the land, tilled the soil for farming, supplementing their food supply with nuts, berries, deer and bear. Life was harsh, but they persevered, raising the large families needed to help with the farm work and never



Albondius and Adrienne Vincent were married in Quebec on June 25, 1917. Six of their 14 children still live in the community.

wavering from their fierce devotion to God.

At the age of 23, Albondius married Adrienne LaPort. When an epidemic of diphtheria swept the area in 1921, their young daughter Juliette fell ill to the disease. The local doctor insisted in giving both Juliette and her 11-month old brother Pierre an adult dose of the diphtheria serum with disastrous results. Little Pierre died, and Juliette, although she recovered from the disease, no longer able to talk or walk.

A man of great faith, Albondius brought her to Brother Andre, a noted faith healer in Montreal. He was instructed to pray to St. Joseph for a cure, and after many weekly pilgrimages to the church, Adrienne was overjoyed to find her one-day sitting in the sunshine

Continued on page 6



April Program: Remembering Ralph Lehman

By John Clerkin

John will share memories of Hartford's town manager from 1959-1995.

Wednesday, April 13, 7 p.m.

Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village

From the Chair . . .



Our Hartford Historical Society newsletter has a new editor. He is Scott Fletcher who lives with his wife Mary in a 1780's vintage home in West Hartford.

Before moving to Vermont three years ago, Scott managed the website for UCLA Anderson School of Management. There came a point when he felt ready for a "real change," and he and Mary were successful at finding jobs at Dartmouth. Scott now manages the website at the Tuck School of Business.

On the weekends, they enjoy exploring the area and are looking forward to learning more about local history. We are delighted he is joining us!

I want to thank our past editor and designer, Susanne Abetti, for the excellent job she has done over the past year. Susanne will remain president of the Society, but she had to back away from the newsletter due to her involvement in the family business. Thank you, Susanne, for a job well done!

On July 23, 1895, Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show came to White River Junction. A spur rail line carried 12,000 residents to the fairgrounds where they were entertained by 600 cowboys, Indians, Cossacks, Gauchos and other cultural ambassadors from around the world. Please let us know if you have any family memories or memorabilia from that stirring day.

Mary Nadeau, Chairman of the Board



Hartford Historical Society

Post Office Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047-0547

<http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

Note our new email address:

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802-296-3132

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The Mission Statement of the Hartford Historical Society

To acquire, identify and preserve information and artifacts related to Hartford's past and communicate knowledge of local history through programs, publications, and other interaction with the community.



Third Graders Visit the Garipay House Museum

By Mary Nadeau

Two groups of eager third graders from the Dothan Brook School visited the Garipay House in January to supplement their classwork on the history of the Town of Hartford. Most of them had never before visited our museum, so there were many wonderful surprises in store.

Martha Knapp, our museum director, always enjoys an opportunity to share her knowledge of the history and culture of the indigenous Abenaki people, who have inhabited our state for 15,000 years or more. The children listened in rapt attention as she described what life was like before there were roads, schools, hospitals, supermarkets or building supply outlets in Vermont. "Everything they needed to survive came directly from the woods, the land and the streams," she explained.

The children were fascinated at the concept of a matriarchal society in which women were the principal decision-makers, educators and producers of the "three sisters" (corn, beans and squash) that made up a good portion of the Abenaki diet. Of particular interest was the ancient spear head found by a Hartford resident that rests in a special display case in the area of the museum that is dedicated to displays and detailed information about the Abenaki. Martha passed around a braid of sweet grass, used for ceremonial purposes by most native people. One by one, each child took a sniff of its delightful aroma. Throughout her talk, hands shot up and thoughtful questions were asked.

The boys seemed particularly fascinated by the Eighteenth-Century muskets that hang over the fireplace, and they listened with great interest as Martha explained how they were operated and the purpose of the bayonet positioned at the end of the barrel.

She had set out a display of antique toys, and the children were intrigued with the wooden Lincoln logs and Tinker Toys, popular with generations of American kids in the era before plastic Legos, but the main attraction appeared to be the old fashioned wind-up train. Boys and girls alike watched, wide-eyed, as it sped around the track. They enjoyed taking turns sitting at the school desks and writing on the slate.

Martha challenged them to figure out the purpose of the wooden "wrench" in one of the display cases, and they were surprised to learn that it was used to tighten the sagging ropes on bed frames, leading to the old saw, "Good night; sleep tight; don't let the bedbugs bite." Everyone enjoyed peering into Myra Davis' vintage baby carriage and viewing the photos and artifacts from Smith & Sons factory. They loved hearing about the wonderful aroma that emanated from the Tip Top bakery back in the day. Their teachers recalled going on field trips to Tip Top and receiving loaves of warm, freshly baked bread, which they

THIRD GRADERS *continued*

happily ate with nothing on it!

In the spring, the students will take another field trip to visit outdoor points of interest such as the David Wright tomb on the VA Cut-off Road and the Lone Pine that sits on a hilltop above Hartford Village. Mary Nadeau explained to them the significance of the tree in its day as a source of prime quality white pine seedlings and shared the romantic story of the courtship of Kate Morris and Charles Cone.

One group clamored down the basement stairs to view the Society's Nineteenth Century barn loom, and a second group chose to go upstairs to visit Dr. Garipay's former medical



The children enjoyed hearing the story of Hartford's railroad heritage. Here Martha shows them photos of the Great Hartford Train Wreck of 1887.

“They especially enjoyed the model of an eyeball and the skeleton of a foot.”

office. They especially enjoyed the model of an eyeball and the skeleton of a foot as well as the various medical instruments that were used to treat patients of their grandparents' generation. Several students took turns sitting in Dr. Garipay's chair, pretending to be the doctor, while others played the role of patient. The wall-mounted dial phone was another attention-getter as was the old fashioned adding machine with a crank, used by Dr. Garipay to compute his bills.

Many more artifacts, too numerous to list, were seen during the children's visits. On their way out, everyone was invited to select a pair of hand knitted mittens before they exited with a hearty "THANK YOU!" We were very impressed with their manners and complimented their teachers for a job well done.



Third graders inspect the vintage cash register. Students received hand knitted mittens at the end of their tour of the Garipay House.

School groups, Scout groups, home schooled children and any other groups desiring to learn about our Town's history are welcome to set up an appointment for a tour of the Garipay House. The tours are tailored to the age and interests of the visitors.

The Traveling Abenaki Exhibit Goes to Windsor

By Martha Knapp

The Abenaki exhibit has accumulated many miles, but it still manages to do the job of educating students in all things Abenaki. It was created in 2011, and two years ago was the talk of the Vermont Historical Expo in Tunbridge. It was also very well received at the Main Street Museum in White River Junction, and that is where I met Barbara Rhoades of the Windsor Historical Society who asked me if I might be able to bring it to the State Street School in Windsor.

I made the trip on February 12. The teacher, Theresa Westgate, was very welcoming, and she brought some students to greet me and help bring the exhibit into the classroom. The group

consisted of 50-60 fifth and sixth graders. I hoped that I would be able to keep their attention. That proved to be no problem! They listened attentively and asked many good questions throughout the presentation.

I always begin my talk by explaining why I do this. When I was a student in Springfield, Vermont, I was told that there never were any Indians in Vermont. Other people have given me similar accounts. My goal is to make sure that people educated in Vermont will not graduate without learning about Abenaki history, culture and traditions. There you have it.



Martha Knapp told students at State Street School in Windsor that Vermont has been home to human civilizations for some 15,000 years.

I let the students know about the Society's special annual event, the Annual Abenaki and Indigenous People's Honoring Day. This year will be our sixth such event, and it is scheduled for Saturday, August 13 at Lyman Point Park in White River Junction. This is where everyone can meet Abenaki people demonstrating their traditional arts and crafts. There is even a moose meat barbeque potluck feast.

If any other schools would like to have me visit their classrooms, please contact me at the Hartford Historical Society.

Mystery Solved!

In the last issue of our newsletter, we asked if anyone could tell us when and why the bell that once hung at the Hartford Woolen Mill was used. Margaret Fortier kindly came forward to let us know that it pealed at 7 a.m. when work started, at 12 noon and again at 5 p.m. signaling the end of the workday. In addition, between 5 p.m. and 11 p.m, it was rung every hour on the hour. When asked if the residents didn't find it annoying, Margaret explained that with all the trains running through the village and sounding their whistles, one more "noise" went largely unnoticed. Thank you, Margaret, for sharing this information with us.

and able to walk and speak once again. Brother Andre suggested that they could “repay” St. Joseph by guiding Juliette into becoming a nun, so when she left home at the age of 23 to enter the convent, Albondius declared that St. Joseph had come for his pay.

Seeking a better opportunity for himself and his family, Albondius moved his family to the U.S. in 1922, first to the Enfield-Lebanon area and then to Hartford Village. Their first home in Hartford was an apartment located over Emma Coutermarsh’s store on the main street of the village. Meanwhile Adrienne continued to give birth to her children, adding yearly to the growing family.

Albionus had picked up a few words of English during his last year of school in Quebec, but he soon recognized the need to become fluent in the language. With the help of a book, he mastered the English alphabet and used that knowledge to begin to read words in the “funny papers” (now referred to as the “comics” in our Sunday papers). In an attempt to better himself, he took a home study course in electricity. It was difficult reading the manuals, but even more difficult taking the test in English. Nevertheless, he passed with a grade of 90. His framed diploma hung in the kitchen over the sink for many years. After becoming a licensed electrician, he wired many homes in White River Junction, Wilder and Hartford.

When the couple’s fifth child, Eulalia, was a few months old, the family moved into the home on Pleasant Street (since renamed Elks Street), where remained the Vincent home until 1988. It was purchased from Seaver Wright, “a very good man,” according to Lucille Vincent Follensbee. Mr. Wright allowed her father to make payments of whatever he could afford and never charged a cent of interest. The

children shared two upstairs dormitory-style bedrooms, the smaller one for the boys, and the larger one for the girls.

Laurette Vincent Woodward recalls that there was always a cradle in their parents’ downstairs bedroom for the newest addition to the family and a crib in the girls’ bedroom for the current toddler. The kitchen was large enough to hold a table that could accommodate all sixteen family members.

With a family of that size, it was imperative that everyone pitch in, and each child was assigned a specific job. There was no sexism in the Vincent family; boys and girls alike shared all the chores. Laurette explained that the children were allowed to “trade” jobs, but if the other child didn’t keep up his part of the bargain and do your job, you had to do his and your

own, too, so she soon learned who was reliable for a trade and who was not! There was a system in place whereby each child was directly responsible for the welfare and behavior of the next youngest sibling. She

clearly recalls changing her first diaper at the tender age of five.

Laurette clearly recalls changing her first diaper at the tender age of five.

Lucille, the middle child, was born in 1929. Older sister Mary had heard a baby crying during the night, and in the morning she asked her father about it. He showed her Baby Lucille, explaining that the Indians had left her! Among the neighbors were Grace and Teddy Therriault, who owned a diner in White River Junction. Grace, the mother of three boys, longed for a daughter, so she offered to adopt Lucille. Admitting that she had a lot of children, Adrienne announced her intention to keep them all and recommended to Grace



Alice, Lucille, Laurette, Eulalia, Mary and Juliette Vincent



*Danny, Robert, Andy, Francis, Johnny and Lawrence Vincent
(Paul and Noel were in the service when the photo was taken)*

that she get her own girl the old fashioned way. Grace eventually had a son named Ronald Therriault.

“Noel began raising rabbits, at first just for pets, but later he had a thousand of them.”

space. Again Mr. Seaver came to the rescue, lending Albondius the money to raise the roof, adding space to the bedrooms, closets and a bathroom. This was a fortunate decision because there were still four more little Vincents to come.

After Francis was born, the family took a trip to Quebec to visit the family. A padded board was installed in their Hudson automobile for more seating, and all eleven children managed to fit. Lucille writes that the farms in Canada were like playgrounds. “We got into a lot of mischief! Paul put one of Grammy Vincent’s chickens in the hanging cage that was supposed to cure ‘setting hens,’ but he spun it around and wrung its neck.

We pulled our biggest stunt at Grampy LaPorte’s farm. Mother and Dad went visiting, and we were left on the farm for the day. Our step uncles really didn’t think much of us but finally decided we were worth playing with. They showed us that if we threw green apples at baby pigs, they would squeal. When all the little green apples were gone, little stones worked just as well. In fact, we found out even big stones worked, too. When Grampy LaPorte came a little later, he picked up a whole pail of stones and a crippled little pig. He was real mad at us. He told us to go to our rooms and not to come down until he called us. He said he was going to skin us alive! Having never been promised a punishment without getting it, we began discussing how we were going to look, walking around with no skin to cover our bodies! We waited quietly for him to call us down for our skinning. When our parents came back, he never told them what had happened, and we never came down until we were called to supper. Nothing was said about what we had done, and Mother and Dad found out years later.”

Baby Lawrence, the last of the 15 Vincent children, made his debut in 1940. He soon learned to manipulate his siblings.

Lucille writes, “Paul bought him gum, Mary furnished him with chocolate bars, the rest of us saved our pennies for lollipops, and even Susie (Eulalia) would charge ice cream for him at the drug store!”

Lucille writes, “1942 saw us all in quarantine all summer with MUMPS, MEASLES and WHOOPING COUGH signs posted on our door! This was a regular event by the Health Department. We all took our turn at one then another of them throughout the summer months, and we never left the dooryard. At summer’s end, Dad loaded us all up and we went for a picnic. What a joy to be away from home, to be able to run and yell all day. We really didn’t go very far, just to White River to the athletic field, which is now the high school.”

“While Noel was growing up, he was given a white rabbit by Aunt Rachel. He began raising rabbits, at first just for pets, but later he had a thousand of them and sold them for meat at the local stores. He sold many for Easter bunnies, too.

Next issue, learn what the Vincent children did when they grew up and who stayed in the community.

New Table for our Cash Register

By Martha Knapp

If you have made a visit to the Garipay House, you may have noticed our gorgeous Tiffany designed National Cash Register from the 1800s. Everyone says, "Look at the workmanship!" and "They certainly don't look like the cash registers they make today." That could be said of so many of the items that are manufactured today.

A new piece of furniture was delivered to the museum last week. It's a sturdy, but graceful table designed and built by Art Nadeau to be a permanent base for the cash register. It's made of oak that grew on his property on a hill overlooking Hartford Village and is crafted in the style that was popular in the early Twentieth Century.

"It's a sturdy, but graceful table designed and built by Art Nadeau."

The table and cash register are each quite heavy, so we called on

Gaylord Newcity to help change out the old, rickety table with the new one. Gaylord lives nearby and is always gracious about helping whenever we call on him.

When the table first arrived, all I could say to myself was, "another work of art by Art." I knew the heavy cash register had a wonderful, safe, new base. The finish matched so well and it made such a noticeable difference in our entryway that I couldn't help but begin to think about remodeling the rest of this space that also contains our gift shop.

We recently received a grant from the Mascoma Savings Bank Foundation to continue the upgrade of our lighting from knob and tube and to add new outlets and switches. Pete Schaal and company came to help us identify our priorities in order to make the best use of our funds. Together we decided to add track lighting in the entry room. One of the lights will surely highlight the cash register on its new table. The others will illuminate the items we offer for sale (e.g. books, historic postcards, 250 anniversary souvenirs, "Way Down East" DVDs, booklets of various historical topics relating to Hartford's history and and rugs made on our barn loom. We are grateful to Art and Gaylord and all the other wonderful volunteers who pitch in to make positive things happen at the Garipay House!



Top: Gaylord Newcity and Art Nadeau carefully transfer the cash register to its new oak base. Art Nadeau, below right, made the table from a tree on his property in Hartford.

Regional Resource Center Visit

By Martha Knapp

A class of students from the Regional Resource Center of Hartford High School visited the Hartford Historical Society on January 27. They were very interested in everything they saw and kept me busy answering questions. It was a pleasure to show them so many items that teach about Hartford's past.

“Students appeared to be very interested in everything they saw.”

After returning to school, they wrote me a lovely thank you letter, including a list of everyone's favorite things: Derek liked the vintage cash register because he had never before seen one like ours. Sage liked the doctor's office with samples of medicines, Dr. Garipay's tools of the trade and the big model of an eyeball. Dalton and Brett enjoyed the muskets hanging over the fireplace. Kaley was impressed with the hand-written bank books in the basement. Michael R. liked the hand-cranked victrola. (I played a record for them.) Michael D. liked the paintings, Mary liked the old photographs and Kathy liked the china in the cabinet. I thought it was great that they all liked something different, which meant we have a huge variety of things that interest kids and that has always been my goal. Thanks to Mary Bouchard for planning the tour.

Students from Hartford High School Regional Resource Center view the vintage Tiffany cash register.



Report from the Hartford Historic Preservation Commission

By Pat Stark

The Commission has just finished the second of two Surveys of Historic Structures in the Town of Hartford. The first covered structures before 1920, and this one covers structures from 1920 to 1965. One of the results of the first is that we are now doing a recommended nomination for the Advent Campground.

Some interesting finds from the current survey are the development of Worcester Avenue, formerly known as Watson Plaza, and the Demers "cabins." If anyone is interested in these reports please contact me or Matt Osborn at the Town Hall.



The Advent Campground was founded in 1887.



The Demers cabins were built in 1937.



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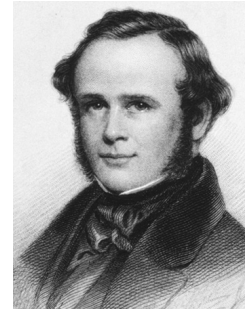
Curator's Corner

By Pat Stark

While Martha is getting our collections inventoried for addition into our new Musarch program (which we hope will be “ready for prime time” before the end of the year), Carole Haehnel has been catching up on the filing of articles in our research file (as well as keeping the GenCenter on track!). We have a new board member and volunteer, known to many of you as Dottie Kingsbury, now Dottie White, who will be attempting to get a handle on our extensive collection of photographs to aid in their usability. We definitely would not go far without the help of our wonderful volunteers (and there is always the need for more!). I’m still trying to get the large collection from the Hartford Women’s Club processed, so it’s probably a good thing that not many items are being donated at

this time. However, don’t let that stop you if you have something you think should be added to our collections!

Did you notice? Vermont turned 225 on March 4. Also, in 1816, Horace Wells who was born in Harford Village and discovered the use of laughing gas as a dental anesthesia, turned one, as did the Garipay House.



Dr. Horace Wells, who first used laughing gas as a dental anesthesia, was born in Hartford in 1815.

Volunteers Serving at the Hartford Historical Society

By Martha Knapp

In a previous newsletter I wrote about the young men who volunteer each week from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. They are still with us and are helping to inventory the items in the Society’s collection. They are very focused on the job at hand and are contributing a valuable service to us.

The Elders who help us are subject to transfer without notice, so I have been surprised when current ones are replaced with new workers. Happily, the transfers are arranged so that someone remains behind long enough to train the newcomers, allowing for a seamless transition. These are the Elders who are currently with us.

Elder Miller

“I’m from the Potato State, Iowa, and I live in a little town called Menan. I like to act and be involved with theatre. I’m currently serving a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. I’ve been out for six months. I love the history of New England and like to help preserve the rich heritage.”

Elder Davies

“I am from the Lone Star State, Austin, Texas. I love being outside and playing sports. I have three younger siblings. I have been a missionary for eight months.

Before I was in the Hartford area, I served in Burlington, Vermont. I really enjoy volunteering at the Historical Society because I get to see a glimpse of New England’s rich and deep history.”

Elder Lee

“I am from Rock Springs, Wyoming. I have been in this area for two months. I love running and being in the mountains. I love handling the textiles and seeing the beauty of the past.”

The Hartford Historical Society is very thankful for their help and grateful for their service to us.



Elders Miller and Davies helping to inventory items in the collection.



Elder Lee.

Hartford Historical Society

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HHS Calendar

Upcoming Programs, Meetings and Events

OPEN HOUSE at the Garipay House

(excepting Holidays and inclement weather) M-F 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. or by appointment. To be sure we are open, check for the flag outside the building or contact us mornings at 296-3132 or email us at info@hartfordhistoricalsociety.com. For an appointment, call or email us or contact Pat Stark at 295-3077 M-F from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

MONTHLY MEETINGS open to the public:

2nd Monday of each month – **The Hartford Historical Society Discussion Group** at the Bugbee Center at 10:30-11:30 a.m.

2nd Wednesday – **Hartford Historic Preservation Commission** meeting at the Municipal Offices, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction at 4:30 p.m.

4th Thursday – **HHS Board of Directors Meeting** – at the Garipay House, 6:30 p.m. (Please check for exact date.) For more information, contact Mary Nadeau at 295-2123.

Wednesday, April 13, 2016 – **Remembering Ralph Lehman** by John Clerkin. 7 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ; 1721 Maple St., Hartford Village. Refreshments.

Wednesday, June 8, 2016 – **History of West Hartford** by Cameron Clifford. 7 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ; 1721 Maple St., Hartford Village. Refreshments.

The Genealogy Center, located upstairs in the Hartford Library, is open Monday afternoons from 1:30-3:30 p.m. and Thursdays from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Carole Haehnel and Ray Field will be happy to assist you in exploring the resources we have and in accessing information from *The Landmark*, which we have on microfiche.