



HARTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

• HARTFORD, VERMONT 05047 •

HARTFORD • QUECHEE • WEST HARTFORD

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION • WILDER

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March Meeting . . .

The Hartford Historical Society's March 9th meeting will be held at The Half Penney Inn, Handy Road, West Hartford.

The Half Penney is one of the original Hazen properties in Hartford. The ell, that looks like a new addition, is actually the original part of the house. It was a log cabin built in 1775. The brick addition was added by Levi Hazen in the early 1800's. All the bricks for the addition were made on the property.

Many original features are still evident. There is the double crane fireplace and bake oven in the diningroom, woodwork and old window panes and wide board floors are throughout the house.

The Meeting will be

Wednesday, March 9, 7:00 PM

at the Half Penney Inn, Handy Road, West Hartford, VT.

Carpooling Available. See details inside.



The Bridge at Hartford, Vermont as shown on a Holiday Greeting Card Photo of the early 1900's.

Old deeds will be on display at the meeting. They are difficult to read, but members will have fun recognizing some familiar names that have been affiliated with the property for the last 200 years. Who was the Widow Bramble?

It appears that the Hazen family sold the property to the Pratt family in 1912 for \$6,000. Then the property went to the Handy family. Somewhere along the line the Bassetts acquired haying rights to the meadows.

In 1947, Harold McLean General Counsel to the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad purchased the property from the estate of Beatrice Handy. This was to be a summer home but was rarely used. People growing up in West Hartford at the time refer to it as the "haunted house" because the shutters were closed over the windows most of the time. This may have been the best thing that could have happened to the house. It was not gutted and modernized by 50's standards.

In 1964 the Towne family of Greenwich, CT. purchased the property also to be used as a second home. Central heat was installed for the first time. Did they really discover an underground railroad hiding place when putting in the heating pipes?

In 1987, Robine Wymans and Colin McAlister acquired the property. They renovated the animal pens off the ell into a kitchen and a wet bar area.

In 1992 Gretchen and Robert Fairweather, living in Hartford Village, purchased the property with the intent of opening a bed and breakfast. At that time bathrooms were put in all the bedrooms, the garage and loft attached to the ell became private living quarters and the building was brought up to state fire and health code regulations. The inn opened in June of 1992.

The Fairweather's wanted the name of the inn to have some historical significance. It was learned that when all the farm animals were free range, the Hazen brand was a half penny. Hence the name Half Penny Inn.

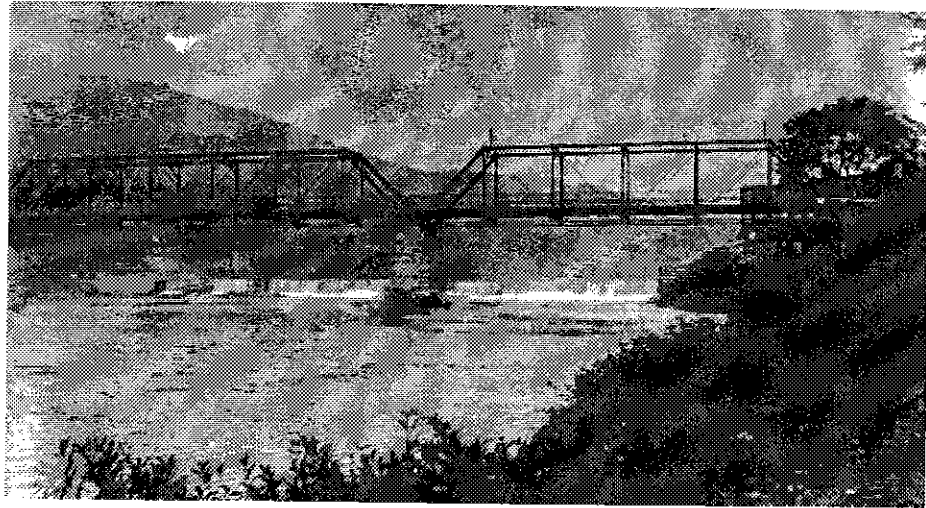
— Gretchen Fairweather

The Bridge At Hartford, Vermont

After the program at the November meeting of the Hartford Historical Society, I remembered an interesting story about the bridge at Hartford Village which went out in the flood of 1927.

After the flood waters ripped the bridge from its foundations, it floated down the river and came to rest just off our property where the Hartford Woolen Company, Inc. was located. There it remained for many years.

In 1947, I returned from the U.S. Army to work in the woolen mill with my father, Morris Cone. At that time we needed to replace the old posts which supported the building, to accommodate heavier, more modern equipment which we wished to install. For this we needed steel I beams, but at that time after the war these were impossible to find or purchase. We had a brilliant idea. We hired a welder, a tow truck, cut up much of the useable I beams which had held together the old bridge, and installed them in the woolen mill as



The Bridge At Hartford, Vermont, looking north.

supports. The mill burned in 1976 and the beams were part of the rubble which was bulldozed to clear the land after the fire.

There were, however, ten I beams which had been removed from the bridge, but not used at the mill, and these are still in use. I purchased a cottage on Lake Morey in 1962 and used these ten beams to level up the building; they are still in place there.

I believe that the remains of the bridge were finally cleared out by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1960's. when they blasted large blocks of rocks in the river to deepen the channel and reduce the hazards of future floods.

— John C. Cone

From the President:

Carpooling will be available for the March 9th meeting to be held at the Half Penney Inn in West Hartford. Please park your car in the parking lot of the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ. We need to depart by 6:45 p.m in order to be at our destination by 7 p.m.

For directions to the Inn, please call me evenings at 295-2123 or contact Fred Bradley at 295-3819.

The Society wishes to thank Mrs. Loretta Garipay for her recent gift of \$1,000. We are most grateful for her generosity.

The May 11th meeting will be held at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ. This will be our annual pot luck supper, followed by the business meeting and election of officers. The program for the evening will feature a presentation by Jim Kenison on the history of the movie theaters in town and the people who worked in them.

In Sympathy:

We extend our sympathy to the family of Paul Bennett,
one of the original members of the Hartford Historical Society.

Our sympathy also goes to Esther Batchelder
on the death of her husband.

Recent Gifts

The Society thanks the following individuals for their recent gifts:

Pat Stark, two programs and a booklet from the 75th anniversary of the Methodist Church in White River Junction, memo pad holder from the 1940's, hunter's ammunition belt from the 1940's, book of patriotic songs from 1909, cereal box eye mask from the 1960's, cigar box flags from 1916.

Woodstock Historical Society, picture post cards of Hartford scenes.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bennett, five receipts of local businesses from 1917.

Debbie Schechtman, fourteen photos of the interior of the Dutton house in Quechee just before it was demolished.

Town of Hartford, 1974 map of the Upper Valley with local business ads, Quechee Chamber of Commerce posters from 1993, and a picture postcard with an overview of White River Junction.

Mr. and Mrs. Chet Gadzinski, prisoner of war report from the YMCA from World War II, original deed of James Butterfield who owned property in Hartford (dated 1827) which formerly belonged to Priscilla's grandmother, Mrs. Baxter Roberts.

Photos in this issue are from the Hartford Historical Society collection.

HARTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Office: Room 110, Municipal Building, White River Jct., VT 05001

Hours: By Appointment

Mary Nadeau, *President*, 802 295-2123 • Dorothy Jones, *Vice President*, 802 295-2701

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of March, May, September and November at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, Route 14 in Hartford