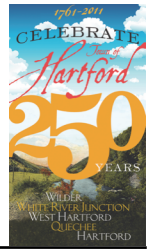




Hartford Historical Society

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

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



Volume 32, No. 1

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

March-April 2019

Warm Memories of South Main Street

By Pat Thurston Rondeau

I was about five years old when we moved to 135 South Main Street in White River Junction. I was thrilled to be so close to the railroad (Right across the road, in fact).

The house was past Patsy Morel's little store, the crossing guard's shack, and the Nutt Lane railroad crossing; then bear right up past the cemetery and two houses down.

I loved the house. It belonged to Fanny Shirley, a daughter of the King family. This was a very old family who had a farm way down on South Main many years ago. Fanny was a tiny lady with glasses, grey/white hair, and a quick stride. She had a kind of bird-like presence and didn't like dogs very much.

The house was a two family up and down place because of the war. Her upstairs consisted of, on the left upstairs, a very large bedroom with two windows and a chair on each side, a large bed table, bureaus, and two closets with a nice rug. In the middle of the house was a small bedroom. Across the hall from the big front room was a room which was made into a kitchen/dining area with a toilet smack dab in the middle with a curtain around it. ("What the heck," I used to think!)

Our place had a garage, shed, kitchen with big black stove, a little back room with a green oil stove with an oven, and a beautiful pantry. We also had a dining room, a nice bathroom, and one bedroom where we four kids slept three in a bed and one crib (sort of!)

There was a nice middle room that was open but used to be a library with a glassed in high bookcase. This my folks converted into their bedroom. In front was a fairly nice sized living room, but had a monster-sized baby grand piano which was taking up a fourth of the room. I always wondered why it was there. Fanny did play it but no one else was allowed to. We had two chairs and a day bed for a couch because of space. We also had a radio.

The hallway was great. It had a very large mirror, clothes rack, umbrella stand with a bench made of wood. On the wall there was a weather monitor where the fluid went up and down to tell what the weather was. The porch was one of my very special places next to the garden out in the back.

Continued on page 8.



Pat Rondeau, second from right, with her father and siblings. Pat's family lived in a house owned by Fanny Shirley at 135 South Main Street in White River Junction.



Getting from Here to There

Presentation by Deborah Lee Luskin

7 p.m. Wednesday, April 10, 2019, at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ in Hartford Village. Refreshments.

From the Editor . . .

Welcome to a new year of preservation, research, and educational outreach with the Hartford Historical Society! Nice to have you with us.

This issue features a wonderful memoir by HHS board member Pat Rondeau about growing up on South Main Street in White River Junction. Mary Nadeau provides a detailed review of our November program on Levi Allen. We also take a look back at Quechee's Riverside and Hilltop cemeteries.

A big thank you to F.X. Flinn who serves the Society as systems administrator. In October, he arranged for the Society to receive a \$2,000 grant from Amazon to cover the cost of using Amazon Web Services (AWS). The Society's holdings are documented in a Museum Archive System (MusArch) residing on a server in the AWS cloud. The MusArch database is used to generate the catalog of objects

available online.

We are also very grateful to Art Peale who kept us plowed out over the winter.

We seem to be missing Town Reports for 1992, 2014, and 2017. Please contact Pat Stark at the number below if you can help make our collection complete.

Society dues are payable after January 1 each year. We invite you to renew your membership or make a gift to the HHS using the PayPal form on our website at hartfordhistory.org. The Board has voted to reinstate a life membership category. Persons sixty-five years or older may now join (or renew membership) as a life member for the one-time fee of \$250 (with board approval). Thanks for your support!

Mary Ann Devins, Editor

Hartford Notes

- In 1961, West Lebanon resident Mrs. Emma Butman recalled how she used to attend Rebekah meetings in White River Junction by boat. Her husband had a rowboat at a landing behind their South Main Street home. When she wanted to attend a meeting, her husband rowed across.
- The First Universalist Society in White River Junction was organized May 3, 1878, at a meeting in Grover's Hall, with E. H. Bagley as moderator.
- The first known school in the village of White River is said to have been kept in Josiah Tilden's barn on the south side of the river about the year 1800.
- The town of Hartland was originally chartered under the name of Hertford in 1761. In 1782, however, the Vermont Legislature, meeting at Windsor, decided to change the name to Hartland, in order to avoid confusion with Hartford.

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.



Hartford Historical Society

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November 2018 Program: Getting to Know Levi Allen

By Mary Nadeau

Our program speaker on Wednesday, November 14, 2018, was former UVM history professor Vincent Feeney, who delivered an interesting and informative talk entitled, “Levi Allen: Ethan’s Black Sheep Brother.” The event was made possible through a generous grant from the Vermont Speakers’ Bureau.

Levi’s tumultuous life is a considerable departure from that of his brothers, Ethan and Ira, both of whom made significant contributions to the formation of our state and nation. Levi was born in Litchfield, Connecticut in 1746, one of seven children. When their father passed away, Ethan, as the eldest son, took over his father’s position as head of the family. This stirred sufficient resentment in Levi that he left home at the age of fifteen to make his own way in the world.

Levi first taught English to the sons of a Dutch settler. When he left that position after two or three years, his employer gave Levi \$100, which he used to purchase 1,000 acres in Saratoga, New York. Soon he was engaged in trading goods with the Indians for animal pelts, which was a very lucrative enterprise.

His next venture involved relocation to what is now the Detroit area, where he established a profitable trade with French settlers, again purchasing animal pelts for resale back East. However, he found them to be a dangerous, rowdy crowd, and in 1768 after traveling to Connecticut with a load of pelts, he decided not to return to the Detroit area. Instead he moved to Ohio, where he conducted a similar business with the Miami Indians. Mr. Feeney emphasized that Levi developed a great appreciation for Native Americans.

Eventually he returned to Connecticut where he started a business with one of his brothers buying pelts and manufacturing leather clothing. Seeking further opportunity, he traveled north by boat to what is now Vermont and joined Ethan and Ira to form a land speculation company. It became known as the Onion River Company after the local Indian name “Winooski,” meaning “onion.” So far, so good.

Then the Revolutionary War broke out, upsetting the Allen brothers’ apperception. Siding with the colonists who wanted independence from England, Ethan was arrested by the British and thrown in prison. Levi asked George Washington for funds to free his brother, but Washington decided to get money to Ethan through other means.

Then, Levi’s life took several unfortunate turns. First, he was imprisoned in Connecticut for counterfeiting.

Later came a dispute with

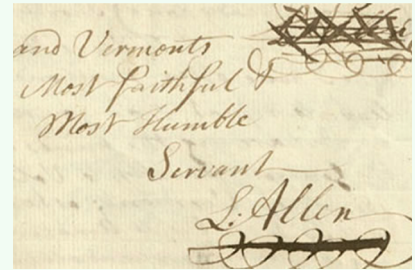
Ethan, who wanted to pay Levi’s profits from the Onion River Company in American currency, which had an uncertain future, rather than in British currency.

By this time, Levi was a Tory and openly affiliated with the British Army. Later, when the Americans secured their freedom from England, Levi had no money, and to make matters worse, the Americans were confiscating the lands of Loyalists. Levi had believed that England would be victorious in the war and reward his loyalty with a grant of land in Florida. Instead, Britain gave Florida back to Spain! Although Levi had earlier imbibed only cider, he was now well on his way to becoming a drunkard.

After the Revolution, Ethan turned his attention to building a lumber business with Ira, who decided that Levi would be a good person to augment the family enterprise in Canada. So Levi was set up at St. John’s in New Brunswick to trade lumber for salt (a vital commodity used to preserve meats and fish). When this business did not go well, Levi decided to sell the family’s timber directly to England. Once there, he began to flounder, drinking heavily, joining a Masonic Order, and flirting with becoming a Quaker.

Returning to Vermont, Levi joined Ira in some land transactions, but Levi felt sure that he had been shorted by his brother in the dealings. Then came the death of his daughter, a blow from which he never recovered. By this time, he was described as a stumbling drunk.

In 1801, while in jail for indebtedness, Levi died. In order to retrieve a body for burial, family or friends were required to pay off any debt owed by the deceased, but apparently nobody was willing to do that for Levi. He was buried in the backyard of the jail in the ancient cemetery where most of the original residents of Burlington are interred. Levi’s grave has no marker.



April 10, 2019 Program
“Getting From Here to There; A History of Roads and Settlements in Vermont”

The difficulties of traveling in Vermont played a significant role in the state’s settlement, development, culture and politics. But Vermonters weren’t always eager to have good roads! Opposition began in 1753, when the Abenaki joined forces with the French to protest the building of a British military road along an established Abenaki trail. Resistance to new roads has continued ever since, from the Green Mountain Parkway to the building of the interstates. Our next program speaker, Deborah Lee Luskin, asks, “Given the opposition, how is it that we now drive cars in all seasons, in all weathers, in all corners of the state?” Deborah holds a Ph.D. in English Literature and has worked as a journalist, novelist, and commentator, among other pursuits. Please join us at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 10, 2019, at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ in Hartford Village.

Please Hold the Molasses

In Hartford’s early years, Reverend Austin Hazen lived in a brick house at the Center of Town. One Sunday, a brother minister came to preach for Mr. Hazen. He came on horseback with his clothes and sermon in his saddlebags. He was shown to his room to get ready for church. Something delayed him, and Mr. Hazen went to see what was the matter. He found him standing in the middle of the room looking ruefully at his clean shirt all stained with molasses. He had brought his own rum and molasses and the bottle had leaked. Mr. Hazen supplied him with a shirt, and they hurried over to the church, where several times during the service, Mr. Hazen’s shoulders were seen to shake with suppressed laughter.

Log Drives on the White River

Reprinted from the *Burlington Weekly Free Press*, 26 April, 1917

Windsor County, White River Junction

The report comes to White River Junction that the mammoth log drive of the American Realty company down the White river and totaling 10,000,000 feet is held up at the headwaters of the stream because of the record-breaking low water for this time of the year. The log driving crew of 150 or more men is laid off to await the coming of higher waters. At Sharon, where the main booms of the drive are located, all is in readiness and, once there, the logs could soon be sent down the remaining stretch of the White River and into the Connecticut without special difficulty. Ordinarily it takes some ten days to get the logs into the Sharon river pond from Rochester. There is no log drive down the Connecticut this year and for this season there will be no special need to hold the logs at Sharon or elsewhere above Bellows Falls, the destination of the logs.

Curator’s Corner
By Pat Stark

During our winter closure (open by appointment only) we have been rearranging our displays and storage, endeavoring to find more space for the collections! We have acquired a wonderful (used) roller shelf to make our photographic notebooks, etc. more accessible. A “Re-opening” party will be held in the spring and we hope our new look will be met with your approval. Meanwhile, donations continue to come in to be processed and stored, and we are making a dent in the backlog.

Hartford Historical Commission Update

The Hartford Historic Preservation Commission has finished the White River Junction Historic District Update, adding several properties on South Main Street and Maple Street. We are very excited about our next project on local cemeteries. We have hired a team to do research and interview key folks. We are starting the process to do a survey of the historic homes on Worcester Avenue, Demers Street, and Victory Circle.

White River Falls Saw Vicissitudes Over the Years

From the *Valley News Centennial Edition* 1961

The name "White River Falls" was the earliest name given by Hartford's pioneer settlers to designate the two falls of the Connecticut, the "upper" and the "lower," at the present village of Wilder. The reason for this name was because of its nearness to the mouth of the White River. It occurs many times in the old town charters and business transactions for the numerous mills, locks and canals built there in the early years of Hartford's settlement.

Mills Olcott was a member of the class of 1790 at Dartmouth, and a man of much enterprise in business. For years his name appears on the records of transactions, connected with this great water power. In later years, the name of "Olcott Falls" was substituted for that of "White River Falls."

When the Proprietors Committee from Connecticut came into the township in 1761 to lay out the boundary lines, they commenced work at the northeast corner of the town, "at the marked tree standing near the head of White River

Falls" so the very beginnings of Hartford took place by this magnificent water power.

The mill privileges at the lower falls were utilized on both sides of the river as early as 1785. In Tucker's *History of Hartford*, one can read of property along the river banks and water privileges, changing hands to a bewildering degree. There were corn mills, grist mills, sawmills, and a fulling mill, which was used to process cotton into cloth.

The name of Mills Olcott of Hanover appears in 1807 as one of the incorporators of the "White River Falls Co." Mills Olcott was a member of the class of 1790 at Dartmouth, and a man of much enterprise in business. For years his name appears on the records of transactions, connected with this great water power. In later years, the name of "Olcott Falls" was substituted for that of "White River Falls."

Locks and a canal were located on the Lebanon side of the river. The cellar holes of several houses in that vicinity remained until quite recent times (1961), with lilac bushes growing nearby, reminders of an old home and its forgotten owner.

There used to be a two-story house (the only one then standing in the present village of Wilder) which was called the "boarding house." In 1865 Israel Gillett III, of Hartford and Horace French of West Lebanon erected a paper mill on the west side of the river, near the "upper falls," where they manufactured paper from straw until 1872 when the mill was washed away.

In 1881, by an act of the New Hampshire legislature, the old title of "White River Falls Co." was changed to "Olcott Falls Co.," and on August 10, 1882, this company began the work of constructing a dam across the Connecticut river at the "upper falls." A pulp mill was completed August 26, 1883, the property of the International Paper Company.

Israel and John Gillett of Lebanon, Connecticut, were among the first settlers in this part of the town. They built a cabin in 1769, just south of where the International Paper Company's office once stood. The Wilder plain was then covered with magnificent old growth pines, which were later cut down and burned to clear the land. The first winter these brothers kept their oxen in Dothan, where in summer they had cut hay on a meadow cleared by beavers. They went up every day on snowshoes to feed the oxen.

Over 100 years ago, some children digging a cave in the western bank of the river by the falls, found deep down under the roots of a very large pine stump, a lot of curiously wrought pottery. They kept this for a time to furnish a play house. Perhaps they were relics of some Indian encampment, but the riddle of this strange discovery was never solved.

The present name of Wilder was brought about in the town warning for 1898 – Article IV - "to see if the Town will vote to change the name of the village heretofore known as "Olcott" to the name of "Wilder" in accordance with the request of the late Charles T. Wilder, through whose beneficence an Iron Bridge is in process of construction across the Connecticut River at that point."

With the completion of the Wilder Dam by the New England Power Co., in 1950 the upper and lower falls were covered by deep water, the site of the Gilletts log cabin on the west side of the river, and the canal on the east side, were entirely obliterated.

The activities of the Gilletts, Zerah Brooks, Mills Olcott, and many others at that particular spot of the Connecticut, belong to another day – When the need for electric power was unknown in the world.

Quechee's Riverside and Hilltop Cemeteries Preserve Memories of Early Residents

By Scott Fletcher and J.S. Dow

When Sarah Hammond Marsh died in 1771, she became one of Hartford's first early settlers to be buried along the Ottaquechee River next to Quechee Village. Her original marker no longer exists and was, perhaps, removed when her name was added to her husband's headstone in 1813.

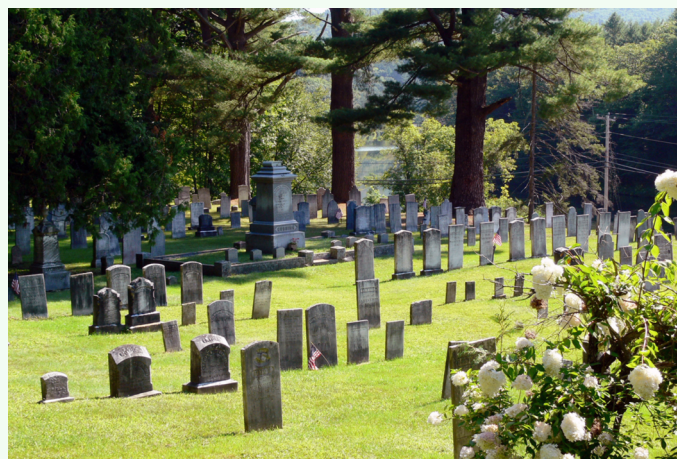
The earliest legible headstone in what is now known as Riverside Cemetery in Quechee marks the grave of three year-old Abida Marsh who died in 1774.

Another early headstone is that of Mary White Strong who journeyed to Hartford from Lebanon, Connecticut with her husband Solomon. Howard Tucker's *History of Hartford* notes that Solomon and Mary hosted the first warned meeting of Hartford's proprietors in 1764. She continued to be active in the community until her passing on June 10, 1777. Tucker lists only four other graves in Riverside Cemetery before 1800 when Solomon Strong died. He now rests in the Center of Town Cemetery next to his second wife.

Many other notable Hartford residents can be found in Riverside Cemetery. One is Colonel Joseph Marsh, Vermont's first lieutenant governor, who died in 1810. Another is U.S. congressman William Strong, son of Benajah and Mary Strong, who died in 1840. In 1886, Albert G. Dewey, founder of Dewey's Mills, was interred in Riverside.

As Quechee Village prospered, Riverside Cemetery grew and graves began to be added up the hill across the Old Quechee Road where they are mostly hidden by trees. This section, carved from the edge of a pasture, was known as Hilltop Cemetery and it soon outgrew Riverside Cemetery.

Today, Hilltop continues to see some demand for plots although this has greatly declined with the rising popularity of cremation. In 1889, Howard Tucker



On Decoration Day, top, Hartford residents honored veterans by placing flowers on their graves in Riverside Cemetery. Riverside Cemetery, above, and Hilltop Cemetery, opposite, are maintained by the Quechee Cemetery Association.

In 1888, subscriptions were offered so the association could raise \$599.50 to purchase a hearse. In 1890, a hitching post was installed at a cost of one dollar.



Hilltop Cemetery still has a few available grave sites. The cemetery ledger records a payment to W.S. Bragg in 1877 for construction of the hearse house in the background, which still holds a variety of historic items.

reviewed the records of Hartford's cemeteries and noted that the "Cemetery at Quechy Village" was the town's largest with 232 graves.

At some point, the Quechee Cemetery Association was formed, which maintains careful records going back to 1871. Scott Tinkham, owner of Tinkham's Store in Quechee, was one of the association's first known secretaries.

The association's earliest ledgers record generous gifts for cemetery maintenance and improvement. Quechee resident William S. Carter gave the association \$500 before being interred in 1873. Gifts were also received from William S. Dewey, J.C. Parker, owner of the Quechee Mill, and many other residents.

In 1877, there was a payment to W.S. Bragg for building a hearse house, which still stands on the edge of Hillside Cemetery near the Waldorf School. In 1888, subscriptions were offered so the association could raise \$599.50 to purchase a hearse. Axes, rope, and other items were purchased for digging graves, lowering caskets, and trimming trees. In 1890, a hitching post was installed at a cost of one dollar.

In 1898, a tomb and flight of stone steps were set into the hill next to the Riverside Cemetery. The old tomb was demolished when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers raised the flood plain in 1960. The federal government provided funds to build a new tomb across the Old Quechee Road using the original capstone.

For a time, the Quechee Cemetery Association held annual meetings at the parish house across the river from the mill. In the early Twentieth Century, the association paid five dollars a year to meet in the Quechee Library, which is the small brick building in the village. Clarence Billings kept meticulous notes for many years.

Today, the Quechee Cemetery Association meets once a year to face the challenges of rising costs and declining revenues. Tabitha Manley serves as president. As sexton for the past fourteen years, Larry Hudson sells

plots, makes funeral arrangements, and oversees maintenance. The job was previously held by his father and, before that, by his grandfather. Jim Dow serves as secretary of the association.

In reviewing the ledger for the period from 1920 to 1958, Dow noticed that three axes were purchased during those years for a total of about \$7. He discovered what may have been the last of these axes during a visit to the hearse house with Larry Hudson last year. "I've never seen an axe so completely worn out," he says. The top of the blade was rounded off and ground down at least two inches in the course of digging in the ground and cutting through tree roots. The hearse house is cluttered with old items that Dow suspects hold clues to local history.

The association currently receives \$3,000 a year from the Town of Hartford but upkeep regularly exceeds that, especially since mowing can no longer be contracted to the Department of Corrections. Even with the deferral of needs such as signage and road surfacing, the association's endowment is only projected to last a few more years.

Even though the association will soon need more financial help from the town, Dow hopes they can continue to manage the cemeteries without the town needing to hire an administrator as they did in Lebanon, NH. "The town could not be expected to maintain the cemeteries as cost-effectively, or with as much care, as local residents," he says.

I really remember this time because I had a crossed eye and had to have surgery before I went to school. It was really scary for me. I remember my Grammie Minnie made a very special bath towel for me to take to the hospital. It was white with a crocheted large violet basket sewed onto it, which she had filled with a washcloth, toothpaste and brush, soap, and a little bottle of perfume. Lovely!

I also had my first communion there. I don't remember the date, but I sure remember the after effects! My Grammie Thurston bought me a pair of patent leather Mary Janes which I adored and was so proud of. One of these was lost when we moved to 189 South Main, and I was broken hearted.

Fanny was a funny lady in many ways. I remember her walking downtown and when she saw two dogs canoodling, she would kick them with her tiny feet and say, "if I can't get it, you can't!" I spent a lot of time asking what's "it?"

That old monster piano in the living room was played only once that I can remember. A friend of Mama who had just lost her husband in a submarine disaster came for a visit. Fanny asked if she would like to play it. The woman burst into tears and said she would. She played *The Old Rugged Cross* and everyone cried.

Mama and Daddy had a friend who worked at Goodyear in Windsor and he would bring us great gifts from their Christmas Party. My baby sister got her middle name from his wife, Rose, who made a delicious thing called 74's. It's doughnut holes with nutmeg sauce poured over them. Super!

A friend of Mama who had just lost her husband in a submarine disaster came for a visit. Fanny asked if she would like to play the piano. She played The Old Rugged Cross and everyone cried.

I remember my Dad joining the military in April, and my Mom wanted to kill him. He had four kids and didn't have to go! But go he did. His tour was over in six months and he came home.

I remember when President Roosevelt died. "Who was he?" I asked my mom. She told me and I was sad for everyone. I remember standing on the porch when V.J. Day was announced. All the trains and engines were beeping and clanging with people making V's and hollering!

Mama even let Betty and me go down to Patsy Morel's little store! I got a chocolate candy bar with nuts. As I munched it down, my sis screamed, "You got a worm on your teeth." "I have not," I yelled at her. She yelled,

"You do ... look." I looked at the candy bar and sure enough there was one half of a worm on it. I threw the candy bar down and vomited on the porch steps!

One cold February morning in 1944 I was awakened by a squalling baby. The nurse came pushing a blue carriage into our dark room. Charlene Poulas, our friend and nurse said, "Here is your baby sister." She said that I said, "Take her back." I'm not sure – it was 3:00 a.m. and I was sleepy.

Patty Romano lived next door and sometimes we played together. They had a great "Club House" with candy in a bowl. Next door, on the other side, was a tall, thin red headed girl that I liked a lot. Her mom worked at the bakery and often brought me a box of goodies that were left over and my favorite was fig bars. When they moved, I never saw Annie again.

Next to the cemetery was a duplex with the Plamondons on one side and Billy Benjamin on the other. His mom gave my mom her mother's imitation Hudson Seal coat. (I still have the multi-stone clasps). Billy and I would play war and get the enemy.

I was standing on the lawn on the cemetery side of the house when Marion Plamondon told me the stork had just delivered a new baby brother to my house. I looked up and saw a big crow, and I did not think that stork could carry a baby. I found later that a stork is a different thing altogether. This was in September 1945 (Labor Day). Marion took me to see my new baby brother and I decided to keep him.

At a very early age I fell in love! A very tall Greek in railroad cap and overalls used to walk with his lunch box under his arm. He took long strides and had a lovely accent when he talked to us kids. I was just in first grade and I loved him. I told Charlene, the nurse about him and she smiled and said, "I will tell him ... he is my



Fanny Shirley owned 135 South Main Street and lived upstairs from Pat and her family.

husband.” I had a large heart-shaped candy box, and I put cutout pictures in it. I waited by the sidewalk, handed it to him, and he bent down and said, “Thank you so much little one.” I walked on air for a week.

Two houses down from my home, at the foot of Mountain Avenue, was one of the most beautiful mansions I have ever seen. The Cameron house has been a place in my memory all my life and being a poor kid, it was a dream. I was in the

Mama was going from the dining room to the kitchen and started screaming, “Rod, come quick!” There in the kitchen, a skunk was sashaying back and forth.

front hall only once and maybe the kitchen.

Remembering is so much fun. I remember one time that I find very funny even now. Mama was going from the dining room to the kitchen and started screaming, “Rod, come quick!” Daddy replied, “Stop screaming, I’m here in the pantry.” The pantry door into the kitchen was a Godsend. Daddy looked into the kitchen and demanded, “Bernice, back up

very slowly and be quiet!”

There in the kitchen, a skunk was sashaying back and forth. Daddy saw the door to the shed was open and quietly backed out of the pantry then into the dining room as Mama backed slowly into the dining room. Daddy grabbed apples and bread from the pantry and raced through the dining room and bedroom through the hall and out the door of the porch and around the house. He then pitched the food into the shed! One hour later the prancing skunk padded out to his banquet. Needless to say, we kids caught heck for leaving the door open. I do not know how the little bugger fared. No one ever told us.

During these times, a furrier came down from Burlington and a few women bought fur coats on installments. One of these ladies was a friend who had an experience with one of the fellows. She was broke and he kept bugging her for a payment after a few had been missed. One day he had enough and went to her home to talk with her. The doorway was in a sort of alcove with the living room window to the right. He continued to knock, and Min did not answer. She had positioned herself on her hands and knees under the window. Just as he turned to leave, he looked at the window and right into Min’s eyes. She gave a wave, stood up and the fur coat went with the furrier back to Burlington. Min never was embarrassed and joked about it. Two years ago, I drove down South Main Street and the house with the window was there and I had to laugh.

Strangely enough, I do not remember us having an ice box until we moved to 189 South Main Street. We used lots of canned milk.

We four older kids had the measles before the little ones were born. I can still feel the awful sick feeling and vomiting everywhere. Mama put newspapers on the floor and Daddy would pick them up. The worst memory I have is of a small bronze lamp with a flame in the bottom with an attached bowl held over the flame. It was creosote that was in the bowl and the whole place smelled awful.

Save The Baby and Vicks made us as comfortable as possible. We knew that the lamp on a tall bureau in the bedroom made us all get better faster. It fumigated our house and our lungs! I always thought there should have been a better smell, but later I met up with sulfur and it was just as bad.

I remember Christmas 1945 so well. Daddy was home from the Navy and the war was over. My folks splurged. We had two new babies and Daddy went back to work for Central Vermont Railroad, so money was coming in. Daddy worked part time for Clement and Amelia in the market, so we were doing better. Christmas morning, we were allowed into the living room and there was the most gorgeous Christmas tree with lights, tinsel and two beautiful dolls, one in pink and one in blue. I stood there transfixed. Betty ran in, in awe. Finally, she went to the doll in blue. Mama asked, “What’s the matter Patty, don’t you like her?” I was so happy I grabbed the doll and went into Mama’s arms. I said, “Mama can I keep her? I’ll call her Susie.” My Mom hugged me tight and said, “Of course, she is all yours and Susie is a pretty name.” Susie got a new wardrobe



Pat has fond memories of Christmas in 1945. The war was over, her father was home from the Navy, there was a gorgeous Christmas tree in the living room, and Pat got a doll she named Susie.

Continued on page 11.



“Hats Off” to Our Local Business Supporters!

Benefactors

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Cloverleaf Jewelers

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Society dues are payable after January 1 each year. Please return this form or use the PalPal form at hartfordhistory.org. Thanks!

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Hartford Historical Society
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Memberships run for a calendar year (Jan-Dec).

Individual \$20.00 per year
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 Mail this completed form, along with a check payable to Hartford Historical Society, to:
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THANK YOU!

Hartford Historical Society
BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Memberships run for a calendar year (Jan-Dec).

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Corporate/Business: \$50 ___ Patron: \$100 ___ Benefactor: \$250 ___ Other: _____

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THANK YOU!

every year. She became a sort of an alter ego. Even when I wanted seconds of goodies, I would ask, "Can Susie have some too, Mama?" I still have Susie and love her to this day!

One day while walking home from school, my older sister Betty got into a disagreement with Beverly Picard and I felt Beverly was beating up my sister, so I joined the fray. I bopped Beverly over the head with my lunch pail and we went home ... but had we won?

It was just about supper time and someone was at the door. Mama went to answer it and invited a lady in. I wondered who the heck she was. I did not have to wait long as she said, your kid hit my kid over the head with a lunch pail and she pulled Bev out from behind her. She had had a bloody nose.

My mom turned to me, grabbed me by the arm, and said, "Is that true?" I nodded my head and Betty began to bawl, "She only was helping me!" Mom turned to Mrs. Picard and Bev and said, "I am so sorry. Is she

OK?" She was. Mama turned to Betty and me and said, "You two apologize to her and I'll deal with you later!" We both apologized and they left.

Mom did deal with us. Our britches were smoking, and we were told to behave and learn to talk problems out, not beat people up! Beverly later became one of my best friends and I try to talk a situation through instead of fighting. I get sick to my stomach in confrontations.

I nearly forgot one rather frightening memory. A cyclist was coming down Mountain Avenue (Now Sykes Mountain Avenue) when he lost his brakes and did a header over the fence down onto the Railroad property. Of course, we little ones with big ears, never were told the outcome. We heard it was a twosome but who knows. I'll bet there was a sore puppy or two for a few days. I guess I'll close this part of my South Main Street experience and follow up later with my memories of 189 South Main Street.

Long Range Planning Committee Report

By Judy Barwood

We are in the process of getting proposals to add a handicapped ramp to the back of the Garipay House, which would enter into the kitchen area. We are also awaiting proposals to renovate the downstairs bathroom to make it handicapped accessible and to redesign the kitchen area. Hopefully, this will be completed by spring. The next newsletter will update the progress on these endeavors.

Norma Parrott Hamel

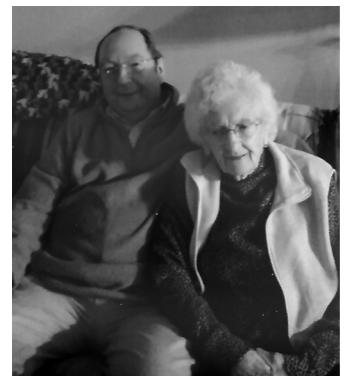
By Roy Black

Norma Parrott Hamel celebrated her ninety-seventh birthday on December 28. My wife Maryann and I visited her at her home in Wilder on the day before her birthday. She was a joy to visit. She is interested in most everything and remains quite active.

When I was a young boy, I first met her as she was a neighbor. The Hamel family lived in the last house on Gillette Street overlooking the Connecticut River and the Black family lived on the corner of Passumpsic Avenue and Elm Street. The two streets are near one another and her brother, Milton Parrott and his wife Doris and their three children, Tom, Jerry and Karen lived on Elm Street. I grew up with them.

As a kid I was impressed with Norma's warm and friendly personality. I had not seen her in many years because she and her husband Roland had bought land in Thetford and built a home there that they occupied until Roland's passing. Norma decided to sell her home and buy a condo in Wilder where she still lives independently. She has never lost her wonderful personality.

The day we visited, we brought her a gift as well as a gift from Mary Nadeau of the Hartford Historical Society. Hers is a life well lived.



Roy Black visiting with Norma Parrott Hamel. In 2018, Norma was recognized by the Hartford Historical Society as the town's oldest resident.

Hartford Historical Society

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HHS Calendar

THE GARIPAY HOUSE MUSEUM will be closed from November 1 until May 1. For an appointment or donation, please call 802/296-3132. Our phone will be monitored once a week.

MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS are open to the public on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Garipay House at 2 p.m. (Please check for exact date.)

BUGBEE HISTORY HOUR is on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the Bugbee Senior Center in the library, 1-2 p.m.

Wednesday, April 10, 2019 – “**Getting from Here to There,**” presented by Deborah Lee Luskin. 7 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village. Refreshments.

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 - “**Louis Sheldon Newton, Highly Acclaimed Architect from Hartford Village,**” presented by Martha Knapp. 7 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village. Refreshments.

Wednesday, September 11, 2019 - “**One Room Schoolhouses,**” presented by Steve Taylor. 7 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village. Refreshments.

The **Genealogy Center** on the second floor of the Hartford Library is open by appointment only during the winter. Mary Ann Devins will be happy to assist you in exploring the resources we have and in accessing information from *The Landmark*, which we have on microfiche. Call the library to set up an appointment.