



Hartford Historical Society

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

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

Volume 16, No. 4

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

May 2004

Exploring Origins of Old Expressions

Wednesday, May 12, 2004

7:00 pm at the
Greater Hartford Church of Christ
Hartford Village

The May meeting of the Hartford Historical Society will be held on Wednesday, May 12, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. in Hartford Village at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ.

Our guest speaker, Randy Dickson of Orford, New Hampshire, will give an illustrated talk on the origins of old words and expressions that have become embedded in our American vocabulary. His presentation will include a sampling of seafaring, Biblical, Shakespearean, early American and "work" terms that evolved in places like mills and farms.

Randy's collection of between 30 and 40 books on the subject have helped him demystify common expressions like "chock a block full", "read the riot act", "pay the devil", "pig in a poke", "mind your P's and Q's" and "the best thing since sliced bread". So far, he has traced more than 250 terms, and the list keeps growing.

When he isn't busy teaching Industrial Arts at Hartford High School, Randy operates Back Roads Safari, a unique Upper Valley homestead and history tour. The scenic 2-hour tour includes old homesteads, abandoned mill sites and other local points of interest. Much of the travel is done on bumpy old roads that were originally the King's roads, built after the end of the French and Indian War.

Come to the meeting for an evening of fun and entertainment, and to discover the real meanings of those everyday expressions that tumble from our lips. See if you can stump the expert!

P
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By Hook or By Crook

Expressions and words
of the past, and their many
possible origins and meanings.

presented by

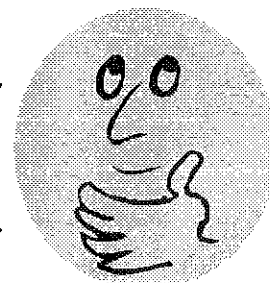
Randy Dickson

"Pay
The Devil"

"Mind Your
P's & Q's"

"Get
A Horse!"

"Best Thing Since
Sliced Bread"



WEDNESDAY EVE • 7 PM

May 12, 2004

United Church of Christ, Hartford

FREE - *All Welcome!*



HARTFORD
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Come see our collection at our Open House

the 1st Sunday of the month from 1:30-4:00

and the 1st Tuesday of the month from 6:00-8:00 pm.

1461 Maple St./Route 14, Hartford Village, Vt.

Free. 802-296-3132.

Book Project Update

The Society's board of directors has undertaken the ambitious task of updating the pictorial history of Hartford which was last published in 1974. Thirty years have elapsed since that last printing, and the objective is to document and chronicle the changes that have taken place throughout our town during that period.

An organizational meeting was held at the

Garipay House on Sunday, May 4th, to launch the project. Volunteers offered to coordinate the gathering of information and pictures for each of the five villages, while others at the meeting offered to assist them. In addition, a number of residents offered their help with the book project at Town Meeting in March where the plan was first unveiled to the public.

Anyone else who is interested in helping may contact any of the directors listed in this newsletter. Thank you for your consideration.

2004 Exhibits/Displays

The various Church Buildings in our town - both past and present - is the **topic for the displays this year**. The display at the **Garipay House** features a few artifacts and photographs from our churches. The **post office displays** [Hartford, Quechee & Wilder] will be featuring our church buildings in more detail - be sure to check them out! **They change about every 6 weeks**.

John Lutz is once again doing our exhibit at the **HISTORY EXPO** at Tunbridge Fairgrounds in June - I understand the topic will be the **MILLER AUTO Dynasty**.

At the Garipay House we have assembled the **'Bugbee Loom'** and are creating a **HOME TEXTILE INDUSTRY** display with our other artifacts. Come check it out.

2004 Elections

There will be a short business meeting at our regularly scheduled meeting in May, and the main topic will be our annual election of Officers and Directors.

Our current slate of Officers and those Directors whose terms are expiring have agreed to run again. We do encourage nominations from the floor, so if you or someone you know is interested in taking a more active part in our Society, please let Dot Jones or Mary Nadeau know.

OPEN HOUSE hours - the first Sunday afternoon of the month - 1:30 - 4 pm and the first Tuesday evening of the month - 6:00 - 8:00.

Officers

Chairman	Mary Nadeau	295-2123
Vice President	Norman Lyman	295-2061
Treasurer	Peggy McDerment	295-2357

President	Dot Jones	295-2701
Secretary	David Ford	295-7105
Membership Sec	John Lutz	295-5467

Your Board of Directors

John J. Clerkin	295-1365
Noel Vincent	295-5932
Fred Bradley	295-3819
Sue Ellen Shambo	296-2230
Alice Hazen	295-2481

Tom Houghton	296-2470
Eva Vincent	295-5932
Bob Follensbee	295-3649
Everett Smith	295-3277

Newsletter: Editor: Muriel Farrington

Printing: John Lutz

Letter to Grace Parsons

Sent in by David Ford

Stephen Perry, letter to Grace Parsons, his cousin; 20 November, 1927, Hartford Historical Society, 2003.35.01,

Original spelling, uncorrected typed ms.:

[stationary]

Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Vermont

Office of Deputy Secretary Hartford, Vermont

[typed] Dear cousin Grace:

It certainly is nice of you to be thinking of us in our times of stress and strain and to write such a nice little letter to us. Conditions in Vermont in many places are quite terrible but fortunately, we have not been hit very hard here. Compared to what happened in Waterbury or West Hartford, our affair was sort of Sunday School picnic. About 6:30 our boss mechanic heard over the radio that conditions in Waterbury Montpelier were pretty bad. At 7:00 he found our river was rising. This was Thursday night, November 3. He telephoned to Morris who stopped for me. When we got to the factory, the water was just beginning to come into the basement. We called in a crew of men and moved out the dyed wool we had stored there. Before we finished, the men were going about in water well above their knees.

About 10:30 I decided to come home for a change of clothing. The water was still rising but we did not expect any great trouble. While home I thought it would be a good idea to get some coffee and sandwiches to take to the mill with me. Before I had them ready, the mill bell rang calling the men in again. Before I had left, the water was coming up fast enough so you could actually see it rise. I got back over to find that we were moving the finished goods out of the finishing room. The highest water on record with the "old timers" was six inches on the finishing room floor. How we worked to get those goods up to the next floor. We didn't have the elevator for the water forced us to put out the fires and let off the steam. The men were very loyal and we worked hard. But before we finished there was water on the floor of the finishing room. Having moved the finished goods and dye stuffs the men tried to save a new generator which we had just uncrated ready to install. There were other things standing about which we moved onto tables to get them out of the reach of the water. I don't suppose I will ever forget how I

walked down the length of that finishing room in water above my knees, looking for things I left behind. In places the water rushed in so fast that it was difficult to stand. While we were working word came that the West Hartford bridge had gone out and we heard it hit our bridge.

When we had finished the moving, we, Morris and I, went out to look at our bridge and we decided that the better part of valor was to keep off it. So we retired to the office to eat our sandwiches and drink our coffee. The water was still rising. Occasionally there were loud crashes and we would rush out to see if the bridge were still there.

It was certainly was terrible to watch that water. About 2:30 our little stenographer came in. She lives at the Junction and wanted to see what was going on. Through her we were able to send word to Alice and Jessie of our state for before this time our telephone had gone out of service. Alice, fortunately, had not expected that I would return. At four o'clock the final crash came and with electric flashes, the bridge went. The water still rose. Morris and I took the books from the safe and started for a farmer friend who lived in the hills. We expected that the mill would follow the bridge into the river. The water must have reached its highest point just about this time.

Coming back the next morning after a very refreshing breakfast we found the mill still standing. The water had come within two or three feet of the weave room floor - the street level - and was seven or eight feet higher than any record of living residents. Friday afternoon we were able to cross the White River at the railroad bridge at White River Junction and join our families. Saturday we were able to enter the mill. I hope I never see such a sight. There was mud on the finishing room floor four feet deep. In the center the floor had given way. There was mud every where. The dyehouse was a wreck.

For two weeks we have been working to repair the damage done. We do not dare estimate the cost. We do know that our style will be cramped for several years to come. But two weeks after the flood we were able to

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

weave cloth which speaks wonders for the energy of my brother-in-law.

Here in the village there were no lives lost and with a few exceptions, no great damage done. Two miserable tenement houses across the river were washed away and some barns and sheds. One of our tenement houses is a wreck. The damage to the town, by the loss of two bridges and wash out of the roads will probably be in the neighborhood of \$300,000.00. In White River Junction quite a number of families were made homeless and some were taken out just in time. I am glad to say that our boat aided in some of the rescue work. We have been so busy with our own troubles that I have not been able to get around to see the damage done. I do not think the papers have over stated it.

The Dartmouth boys have not been in our village. They have done some good work at the "Point" about a mile below here and they also have done some fine work at West Hartford, which village is a wreck. There the river, I understand, took the main street for its channel and just played havoc.

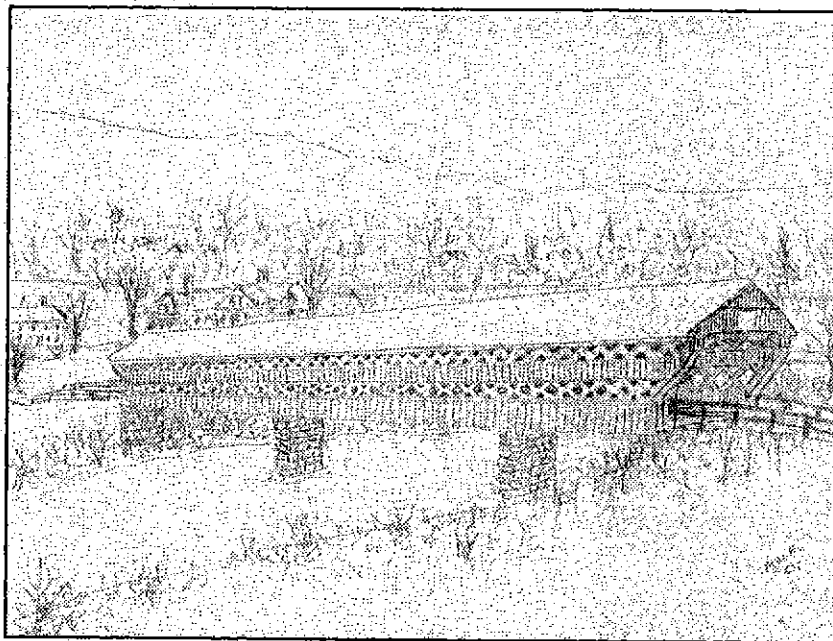
Alice and I wanted to see you when we were down country last time. The trip was a hurried one. We hoped to make another this fall but Alice had her tonsils out and one thing and another held us here. Now we can't afford it. But we will come to see you all sometime. We remember your nice visit with us last fall and want to have you repeat. But we

realize that we must do our part.

The boys are all well. Alice is tired. Peter is still a very heavy care. He does not walk and weighs slightly under a ton. This certainly has been a year to remember! Please give my very best regards to all of your family. If you think that this letter would interest the people in Worcester, by all means send or take it up to them. A flood is not a thing easy to write about. I have seen all the water I want to for some time. I don't think I will ever forget that raging river which so easily picked up our bridge, carried it a quarter of a mile and left it a tangled mass of ruins.

Sincerely yours,

[signed] Stephen



Covered Bridge in White River Junction — this one taken out by log jam.

Old Photo Days

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

SUNDAY JULY 11, 2004

1:30 - 4:00 PM

At the GARIPAY HOUSE

COME bring your old photos of people, places or events in our town. We can scan them while you wait and return them to you. Review the photos we already have in our collection and perhaps identify some of the mystery folks or events! Or just stop by to look at photos, our permanent collections or tour the house.

Upcoming Events

May 17, 2004

The Lebanon Historical Society has invited us to attend their monthly meeting which will be held at the Soldier's Monument on North Park Street at 7:00 p.m. The speaker will be VPR columnist Joe Citro, co-author of "Curious New England".

June 26 and 27, 2004

Vermont History Expo, Tunbridge, Vermont. Check the local newspapers for details.

July 11, 2004

Photo Day at the Garipay House, 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. Bring your interesting old photos and help us identify mystery photos in the society's collection.

Donations

- Omitted from the list of donations was an enlarged photograph overlooking Olcott Mill and Village donated by Rebecca Young Book - our apologies! This is a wonderful view!
- Jim Kenison donated some school-related things to the HHS. Among them was a class prophesy from Hartford High - not sure of the year - but their prediction for the "future" was for 1935! For one thing, they imagined sky scrapers in downtown WRJ! Some of the names may be of grandparents or great grandparents of people still living here.

Kudos!

To **Muriel Farrington**, the editor of our newsletter. Thanks for a job well done over the past several years! Muriel's successor is Jim Kenison who will begin his duties with the next issue. We wish him well in his new endeavor.

To **Phyllis and Sue Ellen Shambo**, our refreshment coordinators. These kind ladies have been setting up, serving and baking most of those delicious cakes and cookies that we enjoy so much after our program meetings. Their efforts are certainly appreciated!

To **John Lutz**, our newsletter printer and membership chairman. John volunteers his time and furnishes the materials to produce our newsletters and the colorful posters that advertise our meetings. He also keeps track of current membership and seeks ways to attract new members.

To **Bob Follensbee**, our volunteer groundskeeper and handyman. Bob, who was a personal friend of the Garipays, takes loving care of the house and property. He contributes many hours of labor each year and serves on the building committee.

To **Pat Stark and Priscilla Gadzinski**, our archivists and preservationists. Together they skillfully preserve and catalog items that are donated to the Society so that they will remain in the best possible condition for generations to come. Pat also sets up the interesting displays in our area post offices and keeps the Garipay House clean and well organized.

Thank you!

Hartford Historical Society

POST OFFICE BOX 547
HARTFORD, VERMONT 05047



NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 15
Hartford, VT

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, MAY 12, 2004

Greater Hartford Church of Christ
Hartford Village • 7:00 PM

"Orgins of Old Words and Expressions"

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*John Freitas in left
Mrs. William Allen (Wilder) directing*

2000.17.27



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Can you help identify these people? Archivist Pat Stark will appreciate your help!