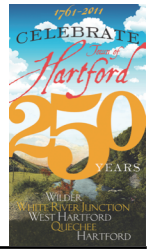




# Hartford Historical Society

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

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



Volume 32, No. 2

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

May-June 2019

## More Warm Memories of South Main Street

*By Pat Thurston Rondeau*

I do not remember that we kids were told we were moving or any sign of anticipation by our parents. We were just there! We did not have a car so I don't know if we came by carrier pigeon or what.

I just remember a very large kitchen with our old black stove to the right and two doorways on the left with a huge square thing on the floor. We went in back of the stove to the stairs. At the top there was a small room with half a window under the eaves to the left, a hallway with a bathroom on the right, and an under eaves closet on the left. There was a door with a wall straight ahead and a doorway to the bedroom on the left with a small closet. That room is where we five kids slept, all snuggled together! It was an old iron bed with decorations on it. The coup de grace was a blanket made of wool men's suit samples about four by six inches. Itch was all I could feel but the cold crept in too.

My mom's sister had worked for a tailor in Hanover, learned the trade, and "inherited" many samples of wool. God knows we needed blankets so she and Granny Minnie made them out of all the wool. I didn't appreciate the itch but did the heat.

The next night was like a magic wand had swept through the upstairs! The little hallway was knocked out and the whole upstairs was open. There straight ahead was a bedroom with a door to a hall with stairs down on the left and a walk-in closet on the right. Then a bedroom on the left with a closet and front window. Straight ahead was a nice room with a front window and closet. A dream house with two sets of stairs and plenty of room!

Where the beds came from I do not know. We only had one for Mom and Daddy, one for us, and an old crib for Jimmy! We all ran around, in and out and up and down, exploring. Back downstairs, Mommy and Daddy were dancing around with baby Jimmy between themselves. They loved the big old house and had dreamt of it. A blue and yellow kitchen with dark oak cabinets with metal pulls. They became the Kem-Tone twins and splashed

*Continued on page 8.*



*Patty Rondeau's mother and siblings. Younger sister Charlene held Patty's doll Susie while she took the picture outside their home at 189 South Main Street in White River Junction.*



***Louis Sheldon Newton; Highly Acclaimed Architect from Hartford Village***

***Presented by Martha Knapp***

7 p.m. Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ in Hartford Village. Refreshments.

## From the Editor . . .

Welcome to this compendium of local history. It's great to connect with you in print and we also welcome you to join us at our website or during open hours at the Garipay House. Things are always changing and we would be glad to show you around.

This issue features more memories by HHS board member Pat Rondeau about growing up on South Main Street in White River Junction. In our last issue, Pat lived at 135 South Main Street and now she has moved up the street to number 189. We think you will find it interesting and Pat invites readers share their memories with her by calling the number below right.

This issue also offers a few memories from Bodie Kelton about his father Charlie who was a local businessman, politician, radio host, and circus empresario. Some of you may remember Charlie's elephants, pony wagons, or chimpanzees. Or his radio

show where he hosted such prominent Vermonters as Madeline Kunin, Bernie Sanders, and Patrick Leahey.

Our newsletter staff invites you to keep us posted if you go south for the winter and when you return. We can either hold your newsletters or try to get them to you. THANK YOU!

We also invite suggestions for the newsletter. Perhaps you have a historical tidbit or family story. Please let us know!

Finally, a reminder that **Society dues are payable after January 1 each year. If you are due, we hope you find this red text compelling!** There is a renewal form on page ten of this newsletter or you can use the PayPal form on our website at hartfordhistory.org. Thanks for your support!

*Scott Fletcher, Editor*

## Hartford Notes

- In 1819, the town of Hartford produced the equivalent of one barrel of cider for each resident according to Tucker's *History of Hartford*.
- What and where is Dothan? Dothan was a hamlet in north Hartford along Christian Street and up the hill toward the Jericho district along Dothan Brook. The area was named by Rev. Aaron Hutchinson who preached at the meeting house built on the hill in 1789. Church members later joined the Hartford Congregational Church and the meeting house was demolished. Dothan had a one-room school until 1909 when students began attending a new elementary school in Hartford Village. The Dothan school is now a private residence. Some of the land along Dothan Brook is being restored as a wildlife habitat by its owners who maintain a website and invite respectful use of trails by the public.



## Hartford Historical Society

Post Office Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047-0547

<http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

[info@hartfordhistoricalsociety.com](mailto:info@hartfordhistoricalsociety.com)

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.

# **“Getting From Here to There”**

## **April Program Looks at History of Vermont Roads**

*From notes by Pat Stark*

Indigenous people traveled across Vermont for centuries before European soldiers and settlers appeared, according to Deborah Lee Luskin who spoke to a gathering sponsored by the Hartford Historical Society at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ on April 10. Many of their trails became the roads, highways, and interstates we use today.

When British soldiers captured Fort Ticonderoga from the French in 1759, General Jeffrey Amherst wanted to bring English settlers to the area and establish a new trade route to Canada. So he ordered troops to build a road connecting Lake Champlain with the Fort at Number 4 on the Connecticut River in Charlestown, NH. Soldiers cleared trees and built bridges to create what is known as the Crown Point Road. When the road was finished after two years, settlers began to map new towns and adopt roads and paths used by Indians for hundreds of years, according to Luskin.

She noted that Vermont’s geography and climate have always challenged travelers. This, in turn, impacted the settlement of the state and the development of commerce. Some of these challenges remain.

While some of Vermont’s legislators proposed a state system of roads in the early 1800s, most Vermonters resisted state taxes and opted to build and maintain their own roads. In time, private companies proposed linking towns with turnpikes. Between 1796 and 1806, 91 turnpikes were chartered in Vermont as residents widely preferred tolls to taxes. Travel was free to local residents while other travelers paid tolls.

Many of these ventures proved either unprofitable or impractical and many turnpikes were abandoned or turned over to towns or counties that attempted to maintain them, “for the public good.” Between 1836 and 1870, only sixteen more turnpikes were chartered and not all of them were built.

In 1823, the Erie Canal provided a commercial link between Canada and New York City. River travel seemed preferable to turnpikes, but efforts to navigate the Connecticut River failed and no practical river route to Lake Champlain was ever charted.

But in 1848, railroads began to link Vermont with

New York and Boston. Towns located on these routes could ship wheat, wool, cloth, and whiskey to domestic and foreign markets. In 1851, refrigerated cars began to carry milk, cheese, vegetables, and meat. Railroads brought new forms of commerce, an influx of people, and significant social advances in areas such as education and healthcare.

But change was on the horizon. In 1898, there were only two cars in Vermont. In 1904, there were 743 and in 1913 the number had grown to 4,500. Vermont’s dirt roads could only be used part of the year.

State legislators imposed the first tax on gasoline in 1923. In 1927, Vermont issued a tax for hard-surface roads but tried to avoid federal funds as voters struggled to maintain local control. A devastating flood in 1927, however, made federal funds necessary as Vermont struggled to clean up debris and replace dirt surfaces with asphalt.

In 1933, state legislators proposed building a north-south artery across the state called the “Green Mountain Parkway.” President Franklin D. Roosevelt committed federal funds for the project through the Works Progress Administration and the proposal was approved by the Vermont legislature, but then it was ultimately defeated by voters in 1936.

Vermont roads remained mostly state-supported until President Dwight Eisenhower proposed a nationwide system of interstate highways. Again, there was some resistance in Vermont but, ultimately, President Eisenhower’s plan was adopted with the federal government paying ninety percent of the cost. Ground was broken on Interstate 91 in Vermont in 1958 and the interstates were completed over the next two decades at a cost of one million dollars per mile.

Much like the railroads in the Nineteenth Century, the interstates brought huge commercial and cultural changes to Vermont. The ski industry flourished and, with it, came an influx of seasonal residents. Vermont’s population quickly became more economically diverse and some longtime residents noted a decline in the rural culture and quality of life.

So one is reminded of what the Abenaki said when they heard of plans to build a road from the Connecticut River to Lake Champlain. “If you build this road, we will no longer remain friends.”

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## ***Annual Meeting and Open House, May 19***

Our ANNUAL MEETING will be on Sunday, May 19 at 2 p.m. at the Garipay House. We will be voting on a proposal to add a category of Life Membership for those over 60 years old for \$250. We will be discussing a proposal from Gwen Tuson and Leonard Morse regarding the historic Morse home on Christian Street. All are encouraged to bring finger foods to share. There will be a special sale of items before and after the meeting, as well as an open house featuring new exhibits. Beverages will be supplied.

### ***“Louis Sheldon Newton, Highly Acclaimed Architect from Hartford Village”***

Join Martha Knapp on an illustrated tour of prominent buildings in Hartford, Woodstock, Hanover, Lebanon, and South Royalton designed by Hartford’s own Louis Sheldon Newton. Newton was born in Hartford Village in 1871 and spent the first part of his career in the town. His work includes a redesign of the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ where the program will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, June 12, 2019.

### ***Musical Ode to the Railroad Disaster***

We were recently informed that a 98 rpm record was once released on which a local resident named Tuttle sings a song recounting the Hartford railroad disaster of 1887. If you remember this record, or have a copy, please let us know. You can call 802/296-3132 or email us at [info@hartfordhistory.org](mailto:info@hartfordhistory.org). Thanks!

### ***The UVM Boulder*** (Reprinted from *The History of Hartford* by William Howard Tucker)

During the construction of the Vermont Central Railroad between West Hartford village and the point just west of the boundary line between Hartford and Sharon, a blast disclosed an enormous pot-hole seventeen feet deep, the fissure leading to it from the surface of the rock above being about six feet in length. Side by side within this hole lay two granite boulders. These were taken out by the workmen, who, not appreciating their great value, rolled them into the dump or embankment near by. This fact came to the engineers in some way, and they unearthed the buried treasures. One of these proved to be a beautiful sphere two feet four inches in diameter, and as perfect and symmetrical in outline as any piece of lathe work. The other was irregular in form, and nearly as large as its companion, but this was not removed. The story of this discovery having reached the ears of Prof. Edward Hitchcock, the celebrated geologist, he, with his class in Dartmouth college, made a journey to West Hartford to see this unequalled sphere of granite—Nature's own handiwork. Subsequently Gov. Paine, president of the Vermont Central Railroad, sent this stone by a two horse team to Burlington, Vt., where it was placed in front of the college buildings. (Editor’s note: U.V.M. President Matthew Buckham called the boulder a symbol of the formative impact that four years of training should have on unskilled and uninformed students.)



### ***Trivia Comes to Wilder***

On March 7 the Hartford Library, Wilder Library and Hartford Historical Society joined to present a HISTORY TRIVIA NIGHT at the Wilder Library. A lot of fun was had, goodies eaten and much learned about the History of our state and town. Prizes were provided by the Vermont Historical Society/Hartford Library and the Hartford Historical Society. Our Grand Prize Winner was Brian Smith. Our Restored Grange Curtain was displayed and enjoyed also. We hope to offer this fun night in each village in the future—with all new questions!

### ***In Memoriam***

The Hartford Historical Society sends our condolences to the families of members Susan Foster who died on January 17, and Minta Koloski who died on March 12. We deeply appreciate their dedication and support.



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## Noah Hazen Taught His Hometown About Education

Noah B. Hazen was born in Hartford in 1841, spent his adult life as a prominent citizen here, and died at home in 1910. He is remembered for serving as Hartford's superintendent of schools for many years and revitalizing the Sunday school program at the Congregational Church.

Hazen attended Kimball Union Academy in Meriden, NH and Dartmouth during the troubled years of the Civil War. Graduating in 1863, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was stationed in Virginia as the war ended. He then moved to the Midwest and worked as a surveyor on the Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad. Returning to Hartford, he married Alice Susan Dutton who was also a graduate of Kimball Union Academy.

As superintendent of schools for twenty years, Hazen transformed education in Hartford by improving school buildings, developing a regular graded course of study, distributing free textbooks to all students, and setting standards for the training and performance of teachers. In 1879, the town approved \$600 for him to buy textbooks and the following year voters authorized him to spend an additional \$100 a year on books and materials.

As the superintendent of the Sunday school at the Hartford Congregational Church, Hazen created popular programs that boosted attendance for 36 years. He was assisted by his wife Alice who served as

secretary of the school.

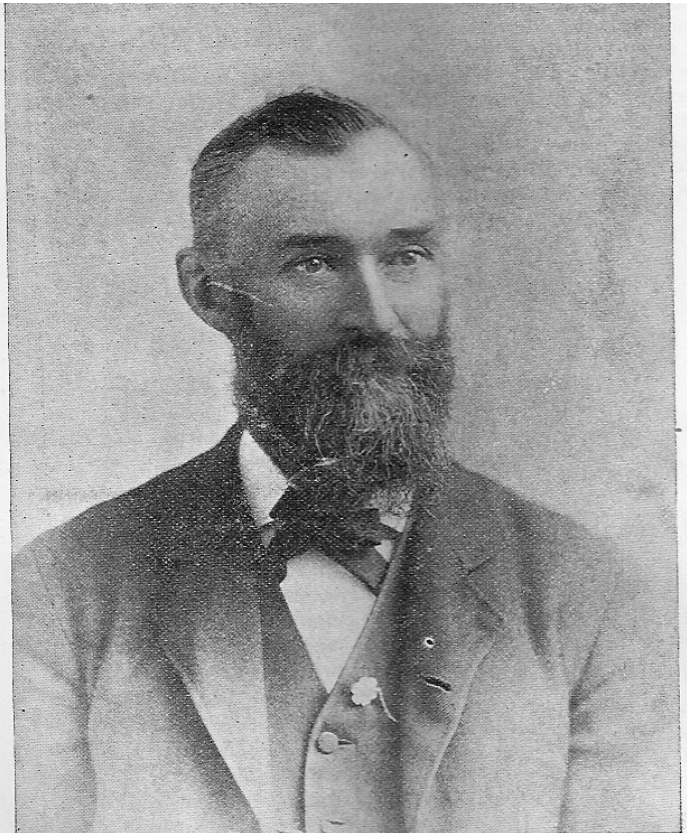
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**Noah Hazen transformed education in Hartford by improving school buildings, developing a graded course of study, distributing textbooks, and setting standards for the training and performance of teachers.**

The school offered programs at all age levels including kindergarten. The school had a chapel with a piano, and a library was established. A course of study

known as the Bible Study Union Lessons provided a scholarly look at the Bible. A wagon was dispatched to those without transportation, and lessons were available for those preferring to study at home.

Noah and Alice Hazen had six children. With encouragement from their parents, five went to



*Noah Hazen believed that both secular and religious education would be beneficial to Hartford. He was assisted at the Sunday school by his wife Alice.*

Kimball Union Academy and all were college educated.

In 1887, Noah Hazen began a two-year term in the Vermont Legislature. Afterward, he opened a real estate agency in White River Junction while continuing to serve his church. In 1905, he became a founding trustee of the Hartford Cemetery Association. He also became a trustee of Kimball Union Academy and served for several years as the school's treasurer and chairman.

Noah Hazen was remembered with this thoughtful obituary. "Mr. Hazen was an optimist. He genuinely loved his fellow men, and no service to ameliorate the condition of anyone in suffering or sorrow was too arduous for him. He was active, progressive, interested in the welfare of the community in which he lived, and always a power of good. The world was better for his having lived in it, and many will hear of his death with genuine sorrow."

# The Rise and Fall of Ringmaster Charlie Kelton

By Scott Fletcher

In a satellite view of Connecticut Valley Auto Auctions in Hartford, one can see an octagonal hippodrome that Charlie Kelton built in 1963 to house an eight year-old elephant named Shirley.

“My dad was a wannabe circus owner and had sawdust in his veins,” says his son Bodie who was just eleven at the time. “Dad got hold of a man in Michigan and bought the elephant and a truck. He named the elephant Shirley after my mother.”

Charlie said he bought Shirley to promote his trucking business in Hartford. But Bodie says his dad just loved elephants. He spent hours training Shirley and soon found two more elephants, Missy and Diamond.

When he came to Hartford from Westminster, VT in the 'Fifties, Charlie delivered milk and then started a moving company. In 1960, he acquired three old farms on Route 14 and poured the foundation for a new business. “Typical Charlie,” Bodie recalls, “he poured the foundations with no permits or anything. Then the town came out and he got things approved.”

On the property, Charlie established a GMC truck franchise and sold the whole agricultural and industrial line for International Harvester. Then came the hippodrome made with Unadilla laminated rafters. They called it the round barn. When International Harvester introduced a new line of Cub Cadet Tractors, Shirley was the star of their debut in Hartford. Eventually, Charlie owned nine auto dealerships.

Charlie displayed the elephants at promotional events and often took them on the road to events like the Hartford Fourth of July Parade, the Woodstock Homecoming Parade, the Rutland Fair, and the Cowtown Rodeo in Canaan. The biggest event of the year was the Northeast States Fair in Springfield, MA.

For big events, Charlie took everything he had including elephants and miniature wagons pulled by ponies. Bodie recalls he once took thirty ponies to the Rutland Fair. Bodie's mother and sister rode on the wagons while he helped with the animals and equipment. Charlie loved music and musical instruments so he acquired player pianos and calliopes and pulled them around with ponies.

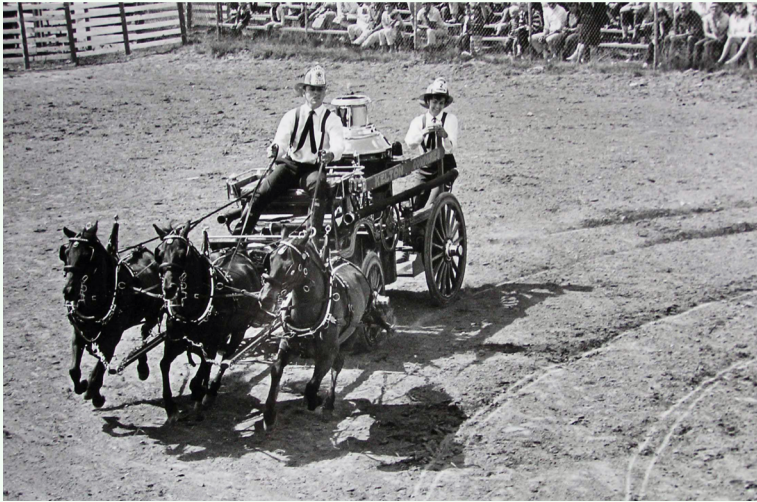


*Top, Charlie Kelton's elephants Shirley, Diamond, and Missy. Shirley is being led by Charlie's daughter Leslie. A chimpanzee named Simon is perched on Shirley's head. Following Leslie Kelton are Dick Ballou and Wendle Sweet. Below, Shirley helps Charlie introduce a new lineup of Cub Cadet garden tractors. Circus owners Remo and Irene Cristiani consulted with Charlie on training and acquired his elephants in 1970.*

When the Budweiser Clydesdales filmed a holiday commercial in Woodstock, they lodged in Charlie's barn. Then Charlie purchased a Clydesdale hitch that he used to chauffeur Nelson Rockefeller around Woodstock during his run for President.

Later, Charlie acquired a chimpanzee named Simon that his wife Shirley raised. Then there was a second chimp named Sam who was raised by Bodie's sister Leslie. Then, they added a third chimp named Samantha. When Charlie started a motorcycle dealership, he filmed a commercial featuring Simon





*Charlie took wagons and pumpers to events like the Cowtown Rodeo at the Canaan Fair. This pumper wagon is driven by Dick Ballou and riding on the back is Charlie's wife, Shirley. One of Charlie's first ventures was a moving company. He went on to own nine auto dealerships, serve on the Hartford School Board, and represent Hartford in the state senate.*

getting up in the morning, going to the dealership, and choosing some new riding apparel. They took the chimps to visit schools and Bodie's mother Shirley once took Sam to a radio show called *Breakfast at the Hanover Inn*.

With a growing business and flair for promotion, Charlie found himself hosting a daily radio show called *The Country Store*. The radio station called Charlie at his office at 6:45 a.m. every weekday where he held forth on whatever interested him. The show lasted 28 years and his guests included Bernie Sanders, Patrick Leahey, Madeline Kunin, and Jim Jeffords. Bodie remembers that a lot of farmers listened to the show in their barns. "They loved Charlie because he was in the milk business," he says.

During the Watergate scandal, Charlie shared the positive view of a Canadian commentator with his listeners. "Well," the Canadian said, "the Americans have their troubles now but they put Watergate in the storefront window and worked it out right in front of all of us."

Bodie recalls that his dad had a restless mind and was always looking for a new challenge. So he got himself elected to the Hartford School Board and served for thirteen years. Charlie was chairman of the board for twelve of those years and Bodie remembers that many of the meetings took place at the barn.

"Dad was a big proponent of what they call the Tenney property," says Bodie. "Doc Tenney was a veterinarian and the property where the high school is was all the Tenney farm. So the board approved buying the property and Charlie was chosen to go see Doc Tenney." Bodie remembers his Dad used to say, "When I got there he was milking. It was four in the afternoon. I said, 'Doc I'd like to talk to you,' and he

said, 'Well Charlie have you got any money?' And I said, 'I've got a check in my pocket if it's agreeable to you,' and he said, 'Let's sit down and look at it.'" So Charlie purchased the property where Bodie would later attend high school. Charlie was also instrumental in building the swimming pools at the high school by working with local resident Sherman Manning.

Sometime later, Charlie won a seat in the Vermont Senate where he called himself an Aiken Republican in the style of Vermont senator George Aiken. In the midst of a promising run for lieutenant governor, however, Charlie's world collapsed.

On October 19, 1987, the NYSE lost 508 points as part of a global market crash. As a result, Charlie's assets lost value, he was unable to get new financing, and he entered a desperate period trying to keep his companies afloat. "We did everything we could," remembers Bodie. Charlie liquidated his dealerships and finally managed his accounts in a way that led to his conviction for bank fraud. He also began a struggle with prostate cancer. Charley served six months in a minimum security facility in Pennsylvania.

After his release, Charlie moved back to Westminster, VT where Bodie helped him start a small truck equipment business that kept him busy until his death in 2015 at age 91. Bodie's mother Shirley, Charlie's wife of 70 years, lives in a memory care facility in Springfield where she fondly recalls their many good times. When Bodie visits, she often asks, "Have you seen Charlie?"

Bodie says that prison was hard on his dad but he was glad to put bankruptcy behind him and pay his debt to society. And after prison, he carried on. "You'd ask how he was doing and he'd say, 'Oh, fighting the battles,'" remembers Bodie.

it everywhere! I was cold a lot but we had a Chinese Red rocking chair next to our black kitchen stove and I would cuddle in a quilt Grammie gave me and read a lot.

About two days later, our neighbors met us in the drive. Sumner and Anne Lyman were super neighbors and Jerry their son was my brother Jackie's best buddy. Anne was a charmer—a lovely woman with dark hair and porcelain-like soft skin, and a southern accent to melt your heart. She was from South Carolina and Sumner's family had a farm in Jericho. He looked like a college boy with blondish crew cut and a wide smile.

Jerry was a corker of a little boy and he and Jackie got into a pile of trouble. (I guess little brothers are supposed to.) One day Sumner had been working on the roof and left the ladder up. Daddy and he had been shooting the breeze when a surprise was in the making! Sumner had his back to the ladder and he was facing Daddy. All of a sudden, Daddy's eyes got huge looking over Sumner's shoulder. Jerry was heading up the ladder like a monkey. Daddy yelled 'NO!' Sumner turned

***I screamed and Sumner leapt through the door—I mean actually came through the screen door and yanked the mask and kerchief off Betty's head!***

around as Jerry hollered, "Hey Daddy!" Sumner put his arms out just as Jerry launched himself into the arms of his Daddy! There was a big THUD as Jerry and his Daddy fell over on Sumner's back. My Daddy leached to see if they were O.K.! They

were but it took awhile for Sumner to catch his breath. He still held his son in his arms while saying, "Jerry, I told you to never go up the ladder—never, never--We will talk about this!" I never heard what happened.

Jackie and Jerry had a lot of fun together. They were caught in a web of girls but really had their fun in their ways! I remember when a man who I believe worked for the railroad had a pen of chickens at the end of the street. His name was Jerry too—I believe. It seems Jerry (our Jerry) and my brother Jackie used to sneak over to harass the chickens. One time they saw Jerry coming and took off lickety split but Jerry saw them and discovered a few of his chickens were woven into the chicken wire and squawking like crazy. He got there in time to release them, but was naturally very angry. He shortly came to our house and told Mom and Daddy the tale of woe. Both sets of parents (mine and Jerry's) educated their boys. Smarting butts were really needed for this cruel behavior.

Another memory about the Lymans is a lot more scary. Betty, my older sister, and I were dressed up for "Beggar's Night" in handmade costumes. Betty was a witch with a mask that had



*Pats Daddy Roderic Artemis with her little brother Jimmy and Kate the singing beagle.*

some hair on it--plus a kerchief around her hair. The Lymans had a long porch and we were standing on the ground next to it playing with our pumpkins, which were on the edge of the porch floor. As we looked into the jack-o-lanterns, Betty reached for some matches. I yelled, "You aren't supposed to have them!" She looked at me and scratched a match.

Immediately, the hair on the mask and her kerchief flamed up. I screamed and Sumner leapt through the door—I mean actually came through the screen door, and yanked the mask and kerchief off Betty's head! Lucky girl only singed her eyebrows, but later her butt was singed with a strap. Mom and Daddy were very scared, as was Sumner, but we all hugged Sumner and thanked him averting a very terrible tragedy. He was our super hero—He was flying when he exited the screen door.

We really missed Anne, Sumner, and Jerry when they moved. We were told Anne really missed the South and who could blame her? Many years later, Jackie told me he had seen Jerry when he visited family. My very favorite memory was when Anne showed us her wedding picture. She was so very beautiful in the dress of a queen. Her dress and train was puddled in front and she



carried a huge bouquet of flowers.

When they moved, Mr. White bought the house, took off the porch, and redesigned the whole house! I liked Mr. White. He bought Aunt Jen O'Neil's house and raised rabbits. He gave me a huge white one, which we loved but later gave back so she could raise a family. I think our golden Cocker Spaniel Jiggs was the real reason we gave her back.

There was a time when we used to try and guess what would happen. Who would be buying the house? Would the kids like us? Would we like them? Would they have kids we could play with? Oh yes! We really were anticipating what we would do with the new people. I think my folks needed coffee buddies too. They were young and hard workers. They both loved to dance and my Daddy skated like an expert (on the ice anyway. I do not know about roller skating.)

After awhile, we got a wonderful surprise, Marion, Bernard, little Bernie, and Sally moved next door. They were the Plamondons from 135 S. Main. Our friends Marion (Min) and Bernard (Hon) were our old friends except Sally who was a new little girl in their family since we had last seen them. Bernie was a handsome lad who grew into a handsome man who went into the movies.

Sally was an adorable little blond with a cleft in her chin. She and my kid sister Charlene were adorable little dolls and best friends in kindergarten. The nuns at St. Anthony's were their teachers. I remember them all dressed up in white rabbit suits and pink ears. Of course Min and Mom had a great time dressing up their dolls. They even had home

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**Min and Mom had a great time dressing up their dolls. They even had home permanents called "Charm Curls." The curls were very tight and smelled like a combination of eggs, ammonia, and sulphur.**

permanents called "Charm Curls" that came in brown paper and looked like tiny straws with string through them. The curls were very tight and smelled horrifically like a combination of eggs, ammonia, and sulphur. But curls were cute on those little dolls. My permanent made me look like a Cocker Spaniel. (I even called it my Jiggys look.) I hated going to school with that "do" but my Daddy said, "I'll bet Dale Evans

would like to look like that." But it didn't help. I had a mirror!

My doll Susie was my very special buddy and I told her everything I ever thought or wondered about. Speaking of dolls, I remember one that Sally had. Her name was Ama-Sandra. I'm not sure if that was her official name or if Sally named her. You see she was a Christmas catalog dolly and has a very unique history. Daddy worked under Charlie O'Brien at the post office and they had a party on Christmas eve and Min said, "Please Rod check the last mail for Sally's doll, she wants it so badly." Daddy was a pushover for kids and wanted to help make Sally's Christmas better.

So, he and the postal crew went through packages and even the rubbish bin. They finally found the doll and Daddy brought it home to Min with a triumphant grin and twinkle in his eyes. He also had that whiskey glow! I do not remember what Bernie got for Christmas but they were spoiled by love and lots of do-dads!



*Eva and Joe Gregoire were wonderful neighbors and talented gardeners.*

Min cooked lovely cookies and was so very generous. She had some very lovely dresses and always wore the perfume "White Shoulders" or "Heaven Sent."

Hon was a handsome man who worked for the railroad. Min made beautiful granny afghans and worked in her tiny flower garden next to the big rock out back next to the hill. She really loved glads and she and Ma Byron were almost beside each other while working in their little gardens. Ma did glads too and also Irises and even a Peony or two. Pa was a golf boy. He loved it even when tortured by angina he kept a going! He was so very nice to everyone, but Ma really had that old patient way with us kids. But she never let us get away with rudeness or disrespecting in her presence!

Awhile after the Plamondons moved in, we gained a neighbor on the other side who were a French couple—Eva and Joe Gregoire. They became a very special part of our life. Eva had lost her left arm

*Continued on page 11.*



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

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  Family (same address) \$25.00 per year  
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  Senior Family (same address) \$20.00 per year  
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THANK YOU!

due to a severe infection in her throat. This was before penicillin so it nearly killed her. But she did not let it stop her. She worked like a horse and loved strongly with her big heart. Cooking was an area she excelled in and flowers were all encompassing in her life. She shared every part of her with the tribe of kids next door and the love was returned with gusto.

Her flower garden was an immaculate row of soldier-straight plants. She helped me with my five-foot patch of coal cinders under the cellar window. She would give me little plants and seeds from her garden but they were erratic in my patch. But she would say, “Oh Patty, your Bachelors Buttons make mine look sick and look at those Zinnias! Of course I ate up her loving effort but I’m not sure I really completely believed it. But I had to admit my blue Bachelor’s Buttons were the prettiest thing because I love blue—it is my favorite color even now.

One day Eva was cleaning out the old barn after moving in. Lord, what a dusty and dirty job! I saw a beautiful wash pitcher and bowl that she was going to throw away. As my eyes lit up, Eva said, “Patty, you worked so hard helping me, would you like it?” I squealed yes and Eva asked Mommy if it was O.K. She said, “Yes, but she has to take care of it.” I said I would and carried them home one by one. They are still beautiful and make me very happy when I look at them.

I have a small washstand my Grandpa Campbell made to go with it. He found a slab of marble to make a top and used brass rails as towel racks. Grandpa was a finish carpenter and had made a lot of furniture in all colors and shapes.

Joe’s vegetable garden was the envy of all the neighborhood. Tomatoes the size of teacups with not a blemish in sight. His potatoes were gorgeous big ones with, again, not a single thing wrong with them. Their home was small, tidy, and very pretty.

Eva was a great lady. One summer, my Mom had a miscarriage with complications and was on bed rest for a very long time. Eva came to the rescue! She kept tabs on us kids with help from Min. She brought Mom her lunch every single day. They were very great, healthy, delicious meals. Daddy had to work but, with Eva’s help, we kids were not traumatized. We just thought Mom was tired and had to nap a lot. Later when I also lost a baby, I could better understand what my Mom had gone through and how blessed we were to have Eva.



*Patty’s house at 189 South Main Street as seen across Eva and Joe Gregoire’s carefully tended flower garden.*

I have always loved dogs and remember a little beagle that could sing and yodel like any cowboy. She belonged to Evelyn and Stanley Peck. At a weekend party, Evelyn played a record and the music of “Saber Dance” soared out on the summer breeze! When a loud echo was heard, folks looked at each other with a, “What the heck?” There on the porch, with her head thrown back, was a little beagle wailin’ her heart out! From then on, Kate (Daddy nicknamed her after Kate Smith.) was always called on for an encore!

Ma Byron was a middle-aged woman with “used to be red” hair. On her left temple was a very large growth that grabbed you at first but her Irish way of no-nonsense and show of affection and discipline gathered you to her heart and her to yours. Ma lived two houses from ours and held a collection of kids in awe with stories and games on her front porch. With a pat, hug, or kiss, she gave us cookies and Kool-Aid as she called out Bingo numbers.

Death made another trip to South Main Street when Ma and Pa’s son Benny was killed in World War II. He was brought home in a flag draped coffin to rest in the living room of his old home. It was a very sad scene with people on the sidewalk as the hearse moved slowly down the street. His mom and dad were very sad, but they were glad he was home.

I still have many more memories to share. They just pop in with smells, or colors, or words, or music that set the visions in my head, ears, nose, or mouth. I am terribly happy I can remember all the things that helped to make me who I am. Even bad memories can help us be thankful for all we have and people we have been fortunate to have known!

I drive down South Main Street now and remember how very beautiful it was.

## Hartford Historical Society

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### HHS Calendar

**During summer months, THE GARIPAY HOUSE MUSEUM will be open on the second Sunday of the month from 1-4 p.m., or when the flag is flying on Tuesday or Friday, or by appointment.** For an appointment or donation, please call 802/296-3132.

**MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS** are open to the public on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Garipay House at 6 p.m. (Please check for exact date.)

**Saturday, May 4, 2019 – Work Day at the Garipay House.** 1 p.m.. Help is greatly appreciated.

**Sunday, May 19, 2019 – Open House at the Garipay House, 1 p.m.. Annual Meeting,** 2 p.m.

**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 Fridays from 2-6 p.m. or by appointment. Please call Carole Haehnel at 802/295-3974. She will be happy to assist you in exploring the resources we have and in accessing information from *The Landmark*, which we have on microfiche.