



# Hartford Historical Society

The Garipay House • 1461 Maple Street

Hartford Village, Vermont 05047

Volume 15, No. 1

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

September 2002

## Hartford in the 1930's and 1940's

### Therriault Family Ventures

September Hartford Historical Society Meeting  
September 11, 2002  
7:00 pm  
United Church of Christ  
Hartford Village

Ron Therriault, a former resident of Hartford and White River Junction, will be our featured speaker at the September 11th meeting of the Hartford Historical Society to be held at the Greater Hartford Church of Christ on Route 14 in Hartford Village at 7 p.m.

Mr. Therriault's parents, Teddy and Grace Therriault, arrived in White River Junction in 1930. Their first business venture here was a diner which they ran during the Great Depression - a time when men would work for a meal. Later, during World War II, they bought a hotel and restaurant business.



During that time, morale and patriotism were high, and local families would hang a flag in their window; they added a star representing each member of the family serving in the armed forces. Mr. Therriault will focus on this period, using old photographs to illustrate his talk.

Teddy and Grace were active members of the

Hartford community: Teddy and his son Teddy Jr. performed a tap dance routine for civic and social organizations in the area. The family was active in the Hartford Elks Lodge #1541, the Emblem Club #150, the White River Rotary and the Lions Club.



We will also hear about some of the family's other ventures, including Teddy's Sports Center and Island Park, a roller rink and dance hall located in West Hartford.

Those of you who have memories of our community during the thirties and forties will want to come and reminisce about the "old days" and maybe share some of your recollections. Those who weren't here then will enjoy this unique opportunity to learn about our community's colorful past.

## 10th Annual Glory Days of the Railroad

To be held Saturday, September 7, in White River Junction from 10 am to 5 pm, rain or shine. For more information, contact Hartford Parks & Recreation Department at 802/2955603 or [www.hartford-vt.org](http://www.hartford-vt.org).

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In Memory of Edgar T. Mead 1922-2001. Director of The Steamtown Foundation in Bellows Falls, Vermont, one of the nation's premier preservation sites for steam-era railroad equipment, later providing the core collection for the Steamtown National Historical Site in Scranton, PA. A National Director of the National Railway Historical Society, Director of the New Hampshire



Transportation Authority from 1974—1976. Published 14 books and more than 100 professional and technical articles in the fields of railroads, transportation, economics and finance. "Over the Hills to Woodstock", the old

White River Junction to Woodstock, Vermont, line, relates the story of this "princely little railroad" which came as closely to fulfilling the American dream of what a shortline standard railroad should be. He saved numerous steam locomotives in the United States, France, United Kingdom and Ireland. The theme of railroads, particularly steam trains, united Edgar T. Mead's personal and professional life.

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Excursion Train Rides

Kiddie Live Steam Train Rides

Rail Cars on Display

Railroad Memorabilia \* Historic Displays

New England Transportation Museum

Oral History Presentations

Classic Car Show \* Photo Contest \* Crafts

Music \* Food \* Entertainment All Day

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Ride AMTRAK to the Festival

Call your local Amtrak station or 800-USA-RAIL

\*

Sponsored By

New England Transportation Institute & Museum, Inc.

Hartford Parks & Recreation Department

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## May Meeting

Cameron Clifford drew record or near record attendance for his presentation entitled "The Hermit: Joe Ranger and the Making of a Vermont Character". Cameron described Joe's life, from early childhood until his death in 1964, giving examples of some of the desperate methods Joe was forced to utilize to survive.

There were many people in the audience who remembered Joe and shared their tales of Joe Ranger as well. One story was told of how Joe put his horse in a neighbor's pasture, explaining to the neighbor how happy the horse would be there.

Cameron spoke of the myths of Joe Ranger which continued to grow following Joe's demise.

## Welcome New Members

- Esther Beckett of White River Junction
- Evelyn & Norris Putney of Wilder
- Jean McLeese of White River Junction

# My Heart on My Sleeve

by Alice Adams McGinnis Mireault

*The Society's Newsletter will be featuring Alice Mireault's book of memories of Hartford, Vermont and on to Belchertown, MA covering 1919 to 1964.*

*Alice has a good sense of humor, and uses it. We hope you enjoy her story.*

*Families mentioned are:*

*McGinnis \*                      Bugbee-Wood Families \**

*Hutchinson                     Hazen Genealogy*

*(\*) with some genealogy*

## Our Home

### Chapter 1

1919 I cordially invite all my family and friends to accompany me through life. Meet the people and realize the events that have influenced me, and perhaps to some extent you, as well.

'Round and 'round the kitchen table I march, humming into a paper-covered comb.

It is dark outside. Doors and windows are closed against the cool fall air. Kerosene lamps lend a warm gentle light and the black iron cook stove gives us a cozy feeling.

Mother is making supper while Dad finishes chores at the barns. A pleasant aroma comes from "warmed-up potato," later known as home fries, along with the rest of supper.

I'm four and a half years old. Since there are no close neighbors, no radio or TV, my full attention is given to daily routine. Life is good for me. With summer gone the air is filled with red and gold leaves blowing from the maple trees lining the highway.

The haylofts hold their sweet scented store of clover and grasses. The recently chopped corn crop packs the silo.

Our herd of about 15 Holsteins does not go to night pasture after P.M. milking. An adjacent mowing serves as night pasture until cold weather when they stay inside.

The woodshed is stacked high with split wood for

the cook stove. "Chunks" fill a big area to go into the living room heater or to be split later.

Mother has been canning all summer-long as vegetables and fruits ripen. She picks wild berries to make pies and shortcakes, jams, and jellies. The shelves against the stone walls of our deep cool cellar are stocked with glistening rows of goodies for winter. The potato bins are being filled as the crop dries under the friendly October sun. Beets, carrots, and other root vegetables are buried in their sand bins. Cabbages are pulled from the ground and hung by their roots from the cellar ceiling. Winter squash and pumpkins have their own bin.

Soon we will go butternutting. This is fun. Dad takes grain bags to gather the nuts. He's happy doing this. He whistles so beautifully and sings little ditties and tells us interesting tid-bits. The butternuts are sticky green hard shelled things we pick up from where they have fallen to the ground. They are about the size of a pullet's egg.

Back home, newspapers are spread on the floor of the room over the woodshed and the butternuts are separated and left there to dry. On a stormy day in winter Dad will climb the ladder and with a hammer crack nuts on a wood chunk. They are now brown and dry. He must hold them on end and do it just right or the meat will be crushed. The meats don't leave their shell willingly. They must be coaxed out carefully.

Mother makes wonderful maple butternut candy. Some of this is sent to a specialty shop in Boston. She also cans young poultry pieces in pint jars to sell there. In springtime Dad ships many gallons of his grade-A maple syrup and other maple products to them. It adds to our meager income. Dairying is not a money maker at this time, and never, really for the small farmer.

### CHRISTMAS, 1919

We're looking forward to Christmas. My big sister will come home from Northfield Seminary for the holidays. She is 16 and has been away since early September.

The day of her return is exciting. Mother is singing Lead, Kindly Light in her wavering offkey voice as she hurries through her work. Dad has "Ol' Dick" harnessed and hitched to the buggy. It's a cold, raw day with just a sprinkling of snow. We are bundled up and Dad tucks he

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lap-robe around me and hands the reins to Mother. Dick is sulky and takes his own time to go the mile to the village station.

We hear the train whistle at a nearby crossing, then it comes into sight. The engine puffs and chugs and blows off steam as it comes to a stop. A conductor comes down the steps -- then, there she is, Dorothy, my Big Sister! She is nearly up to Mother's five feet five and resembles her in many ways. Dorothy's hair is brown while Mother's is a wavy auburn.

You could hardly believe it is the same power source attached to the buggy that brought us here, as that which is demonstrated now. That "poor tired old horse" suddenly becomes white lightning. With suit-case under the seat and her daughters solidly seated, Mother removes Dick's red blanket and unties him from the hitching rail. She backs him away and turns the buggy so it will be straight toward the road. This she does at his head. His Honor puts his ears back. He is MAD! Holding the reins tightly and ordering "Whoa!" sharply, she works her way back and quickly scrambles aboard and none too soon as we are on our way HOME.

Mother tugs and teams valiantly as we clatter over the gravel road with stones flying. Of the approximately one hundred residents of West Hartford, I believe most of them know of the antics of this steed. They never loiter in his path when he is headed toward home.

There is seldom a car on the road, (later State road 14) but should we meet one, Dick rears and puts on a show of fright. Mother calls him a cranky old coot and she chuckles. She likes him and the challenge he offers.

One day as we were leaving Grandma's house he turned so sharply that I flew out onto the roadway. No seat belt! Grandma ran out and gathered me up. I was OK but I suppose I was bellowing. Mother stopped Dick at the store and came back for me.

Dorothy is scared silly of this beast. She makes no bones of stating a preference. If she must ride with him she feels much safer with Dad at the helm.

As Christmas nears Dad brings a nice spruce tree from our wood lot. He is chilly from the cold and has snow on his boots. He is stocky 5ft 8 with a cheery face and a bald head. He is our hero.

The tree sends a seasonal crisp aroma through the house. Mother and Dorothy string popcorn and cranberry garlands to decorate it. They also produce surprising little doo-dads to make it more festive. They help me to make a "spectacular star."

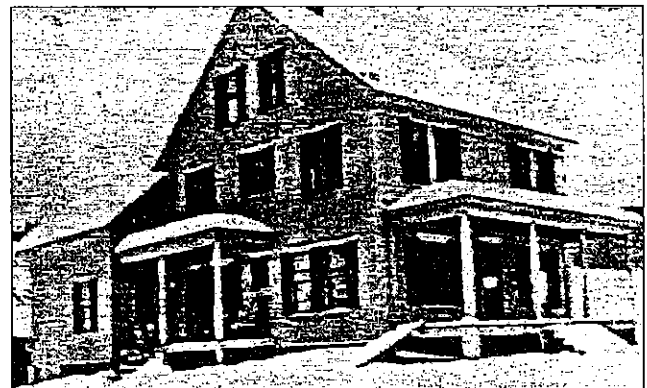
Relatives and friends call to greet Dorothy. Our wall telephone is installed in the dining room which is not heated in winter except for special occasions. So when the phone rings or Mother goes to crank for "central" or a party on the line, she puts on a coat.

Now let me tell you about that amazing convenience, the phone. There are nine parties on the line. Some rings consist of longs and shorts so attention must be given to know who is being called. We are lucky. We are "4 ring 4" which is 4 short rings. There are some curious souls, hungry for excitement to relieve their boredom.

The party line fills that need. When the phone rings they are Johnny-on-the-spot listeners. They know all the town news and gossip and promptly relay it to others. Everyone is generally careful what information they impart. Mother and her sister, my Aunt Annie, occasionally discuss some outrageous subject without a name and wait to see how soon that scandalous information comes back to them and how much it has been embellished.

It's a fun game they play. Central--Florence Pitkin knows all; some is too exciting to contain. But we don't knock Flossie. She will appear later in this story and is a true heroine.

*(To be continued in the next HHS Newsletter.)*



*Our home at Wayside Farm in a winter scene.*

# Still Active, Arthur Stone Celebrates 90th in WRJ

By Harvey Dodd

Printed on Jan 22, 1960, *Valley News*

WHITE RIVER JCT—Arthur W. Stone will celebrate his ninetieth birthday at his Christian Street home tomorrow.

Stone, a civil engineer and a graduate of Dartmouth class of '94, was born in the house he now lives in. He came back here in 1926. Stone is an active surveyor and is still fit and energetic. His only debility is a partial hearing loss. "I'm deaf as a post," he says.

He believes in work: "I've watched these fellows who quit. They don't last long. I go on the theory that you've got to keep working."

Not too many years ago, Stone surveyed the Hartford-Norwich town line. "I don't mind telling you that some of that country was as rough and steep as any I've seen."

He has done much engineering and surveying work for the Town of Hartford, as recently as last summer.

Born in 1870, Stone attended local schools and entered the New Hampshire Agricultural College at Hanover with the intention of carrying on the operation of the family farm. It wasn't long, however, before he was enrolled in Dartmouth. A year after his graduation, he returned for a year of engineering work, which he took at the Thayer School. He graduated as a civil engineer in 1896.

## 'Pretty Lucky'

"I was pretty lucky," he says, "I was in the first class to graduate under President Tucker. He made it possible to get an engineering degree in five years instead of six through taking engineering courses as electives in the senior year of undergraduate work.

In the year before he returned to Dartmouth, Stone worked at the power plant at Niagara Falls.

After graduation he went to work for the Ber-

lin Bridge Company of East Berlin, Conn., and designed bridges all up and down the Atlantic coast. In 1906 he went to work for the Bradley and Sons cut stone company in Long Island City, NY. Later he established two companies of his own in Bedford, Ind., where he met Ann Massman, who was to become the present Mrs. Stone, his second wife.

In 1926 he returned to his home here, selling his Indiana holdings to the Indiana Limestone Co.

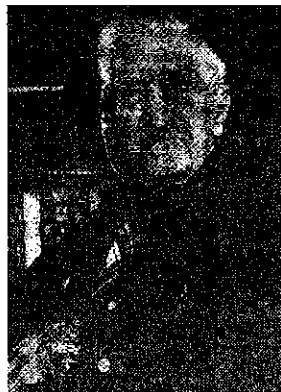
It is rumored around town that Stone was then a millionaire, and that he suffered heavy losses in the 1929 crash. Mrs. Stone denied the story, saying that he had never been a millionaire, but had suffered a loss when an expensive barn burned to the ground.

He was the first man to build a cabin on Lake Morey, a favored fishing spot where he and his family often camped.

In 1925 he donated a 24-foot war memorial to the town of Fairlee. It is in the town park.

Stone has two children by his former marriage, Arthur Dimick Stone, a saw manufacturer in Manlius, NY, and Mrs. Dorie Stone Strunk of Reading, PA.

Far from retiring, Stone is actively engaged in real estate. His primary concern now is the course of the anticipated interstate highway, about which he intends to do something. "The road should go back of that ridge there. It's a scenic route and would only cost a tenth of what it's going to take to buy all this land here. The engineers say they're going to look into the possibility of relocating it."



"But I'll tell you one thing. If they put that road right through in front of the house here, I'm going to sell this place and more out. I don't want to see cars and trucks whizzing by all day."

To honor Stone for his work for the town and his interest in community affairs, the auditors plan a tribute to him in this year's town report.

# Hartford Historical Society

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## Upcoming Events:

- **September 7, Saturday** 10 am to 5 pm, *10th Annual Glory Days of the Railroad Festival*, White River Junction.
- **September 11, Wednesday**, 7 pm, HHS Meeting, United Church of Christ, Hartford Village: *Theriault Family Ventures*.

## Partial List of Gifts

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Black Family History, and Judge Henry F. Black, Material, compiled by R.S. Black | 2001 Black, Roy   |
| Leavitt's Farmers Almanac, Concord, NH—WR Paper Co                               | 1913 Ford, David  |
| Dusty' Miller: A fifty-year GM Dealer—article from Life                          | 1958 Ford, David  |
| Dothan Brook School—photo on calendar  | 1997 Acquisitions |
| High School Drama's Zeitgeist Playser—play by A. Haehnel                         | 2002 Acquisitions |
| UMC Roast Turkey Supper, February 16, 2002                                       | 2002 Acquisitions |

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## Officers:

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