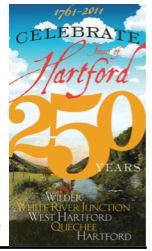




# Hartford Historical Society

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

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



Volume 28, No. 1

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

January-February 2015

## The History of White River Paper Company

*Compiled by Tammy Ladd from information that appeared in various articles written about the founders and owners of the company and from current-day interviews*

*Part 1 of 2 parts*

George Williston Smith (1842-1905) was an ambitious, hardworking young man who had grown up working in the family business, E.K. Smith & Sons Bakery. At the age of fifteen, he became a traveling salesman, hitching up the family delivery wagon and traveling throughout the area taking and delivering orders.

By 1867 George was welcomed into the family business as a partner by his father, Everett K. Smith. Seeing the advantage of positioning the business close to the railroad tracks, he relocated E.K. Smith and Son Bakery from Hanover to White River Junction. Four years later, in 1871, the partners invested their profits into the construction of a new, two-story brick building at the corner of Bridge and Main Streets. The new location enabled them to grow, and the name was changed to Smith & Son Crackers. The plant grew to be

the largest industry in White River Junction, employing 75 people, including 9 traveling salesman covering Vermont and New Hampshire.

George had become a shrewd businessman, and as the owner of the Smith Cracker and Candy Company, he had the foresight to see the advantage of supporting additional building and



*Hanover Crackers' delivery "truck", once a familiar sight*

the development of resources in the local community to attract workers to the booming town. He was instrumental in the building of the first high school and municipal building in Hartford and donated funds to the State Fairgrounds

(located on what is now Sykes Mountain Avenue). In 1886 he became president of the First National Bank of White River Junction and bought the Vermont Baking Company.

*(continued on page 3)*

### "CABIN FEVER" SPECIAL EVENT: "WAY DOWN EAST"

Our Winter Fundraiser: a 1920 silent classic film starring Lillian Gish, portions of which were filmed locally. If you haven't seen this fantastic movie, here's your chance!

**Saturday, March 21st, 2 p.m.** at the Cornerstone Community Center

1615 Maple St. in Hartford Village - entrance by donation

# From the Chair . . .

Articles that have historical significance to the Town of Hartford have a way of popping up on e-Bay. How these items became scattered across the country is a mystery, but we should make every effort to bring these valuable artifacts home to reside in our museum at the Garipay House in Hartford Village where they belong.

Some interesting recent acquisitions that have come to us through e-Bay include a variety of postcards depicting such topics as a West Hartford street scene from 1911, the Dewey Corporation in Quechee, the Congregational parsonage in West Hartford, the White River Junction School taken during the 1927 flood, two Green Mountain Studios cards of the Hartford Grammar School and one of the Watson house in a spring snow storm dated 1907. Sometimes the postcards are inscribed with interesting information, such as the one of Tinkham's Store in Quechee dated 1912 and mentioning the outbreak of smallpox in that community. Another had been sent to Kate Morris, daughter of one of the first owners of the Hartford Woolen Mill, when she was at graduate school in Cambridge, signed "Mama". We have a letter signed by John Dewey, written on Dewey Corporation stationery in 1899, a glass canoe inscribed "White River Junction" and a souvenir dish in the shape of Vermont that is decorated with a painting of Quechee Gorge. Another recent e-Bay purchase was a railway ticket box marked "J.P. Eaton, VCRR" and containing a distance table inside the cover.



**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.**

Up to now, a few generous Society members, seeing these treasures offered for sale, have purchased and brought them to the museum, while other items have been procured using money from our modest general fund. To retrieve more of these precious historical artifacts, the board would like to establish a "Lost and Found e-Bay Treasures Fund".

Anyone wishing to make a contribution to the fund may bring it to the Garipay House during our weekday hours or mail it to: Lost and Found Fund, Hartford Historical Society, P.O. Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047. All donations made to the Society are tax deductible.

Please remember to pay your annual dues. Member dues play a significant role in keeping the Society afloat. To save money better used for other purposes, no notices are sent through the mail. The only reminder you will receive is through this newsletter. If you haven't already done so, please renew your membership at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

Mary Nadeau, Chairman of the Board



## Hartford Historical Society

Post Office Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047-0547

<http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

[hartfordhistoricalsociety@myfairpoint.net](mailto:hartfordhistoricalsociety@myfairpoint.net)

802-296-3132

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(continued from page 1)

In 1879 Samuel L. Farman moved to White River Junction from Claremont, New Hampshire, where he had worked in book publishing for thirty years. Samuel rented a space in the basement level of the Smith & Son building from George and started a business selling paper products and supplies to local printers. Farman's small paper business was the fore-runner of White River Paper Company.

Within a couple of years, the two entrepreneurs joined their business knowledge and experience, and on April 19, 1881, Smith and Farman formed a corporation and named it White River Paper Company. A fire in 1884 led to the construction of a three-story facility (beside

the present Tip Top Building) that included stables for the company's teams of delivery horses and additional smaller buildings needed by the expanded enterprise. Their products, housed in the local freight depot, were destroyed by fire in 1888, resulting in a loss to White

River Paper Company of more than \$4,500 in paper goods. Despite this setback, the firm prospered under Smith and Farman's joint management until George W. Smith died in 1905.

In 1907 the firm relocated across the street to the newly built Barnes Building (next occupied by Greydon Freeman and today by Provisions International). White River Paper Company occupied the first floor, while the second



Building signs in this photo show White River Paper Co. in basement of Smith & Sons building at corner of Bridge and N. Main Streets in WRJ

## CURATOR'S CORNER

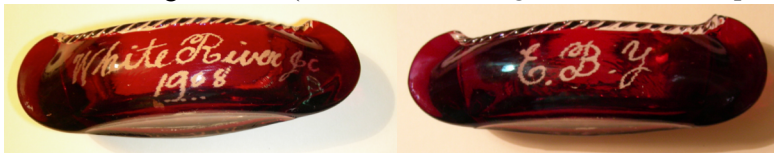
by Pat Stark

Acquisitions continue to come in. Mary writes in her chairman's column about the recent e-Bay additions.

The 1908 canoe is fascinating. Who (or what) was E.B.Y.? Other items of interest are two of John St. Croix's cameras, several photographs and other documents from Hartford High School, the Spofford family records and the usual miscellaneous photographs and post cards,

including several showing Sol Levenson working on his murals at the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon. All of these items add to our knowledge of Hartford's past. We are always

grateful to donors who think of us as a safe depository of their family records and artifacts.



Recent e-Bay acquisition: a red ruby glass canoe

The Garipay House Museum continues to be open Monday through Friday from 9 to 1. Stop by when you can and view our/your latest treasures!

floor was rented out to dentists and doctors that included in later years Dr. Bentley Neal, a local physician who became a fixture at Hartford High School sporting events. The third floor of the building was used as the Masonic Hall.

J. Pratt Kimball and George Gates Nichols, two employees who had joined the firm in the late 1880s assumed ownership in 1911 following Farman's death. Nichols was the great-grandfather of Michael and Jeffrey Lyford, who owned the business until March, 2014.

George Gates Nichols (1871-1943) from Concord, New Hampshire, joined the company as an employee of the White River Paper Company in 1888. He married Ethel Gertrude Watson, and they had one child, Laurence Watson Nichols. In 1946, three years after George Nichols' death, his partner J. Pratt Kimball retired.

It was during the Kimball/Nichols ownership period that the Great Depression occurred. Manufacturing companies were forced to ration their products due to the decrease in the flow of money into the economy. Ed Nichols remembers his father telling him that many customers would have hoarded paper products, but the wise owners determined that they could avoid this by allowing their customers to purchase a percentage of their previous year's purchases. In addition, rather than decreasing their employee force during the hard times, the owners made a unified decision to keep everyone on the



*In 1907 the firm relocated across the street to the newly built Barnes Building (1905)*

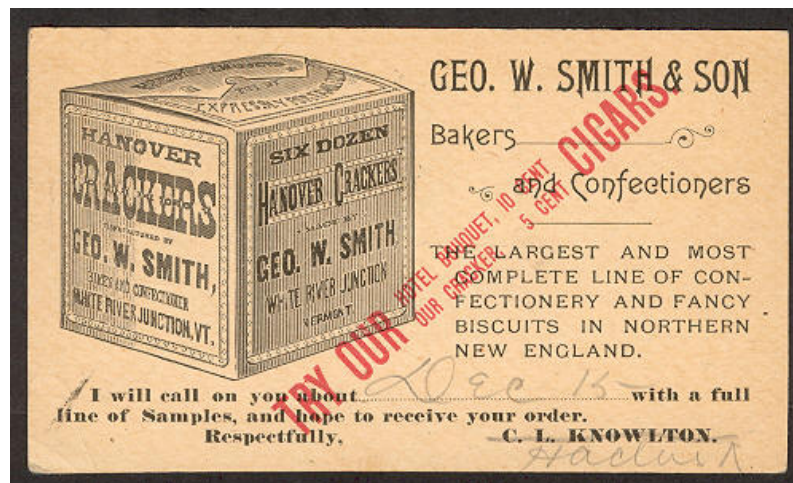
payroll but to cut work hours, enabling everyone to continue earning a meager wage rather than to lose all source of income. (During this same period, the Smith Cracker and Candy Company was forced to close due to lack of sales. Its building was razed in 1942.)

Once J. Pratt Kimball retired in 1946, two employees of the company, Robert Whitney, who had joined the firm after returning from World War II, and Laurence "Nick" Nichols, the only child of the former owner, purchased the company. In 1935 Nick married Mildred Eliza Warner, and they had two children, Ann and Edward. At the age of ten, "Ed" began working in the family business and continued every summer until he graduated from college. His job included loading and

unloading trucks and railroad cars at their warehouses. At that time, inventory was housed in two locations on Railroad Row, one across from the present-day Polka Dot Diner and the other across from Twin State Fruit Company.

Ed graduated from high school with Charlotte McKinney and Carolyn Isley. These women went to work at White River Paper Company shortly after high school in the early 1960s and, with the exception

of one year when Charlotte and her husband, Jerry Lyman, lived in Burlington, they spent their entire working careers at White River Paper Company until retiring in 1913.



*A Geo. W. Smith & Son business appointment card*

*(To be*

# Robbery at Tinkham's Store

*Submitted by Mary Ann Devins*

(Part three of four parts)

Quechee, Vermont 1900

*Interstate Journal & Advertiser tells us a story in their April 1900 issue published by Cummings Printers of White River Junction, Vermont.*

## The Midnight Fight with the Robbers

Deputy Sheriff Eugene A. Thomas had been talking with sheriffs Stearns and Whitaker, who had come over the mountains from Rutland on the trail of the stolen team. The two officers had just returned to Bridgewater for the night, where the last clue of the stolen team had been obtained.

About ten minutes after their departure, Mr. Thomas received word by telephone of the robbery at Quechee and that the men had escaped on horseback, going toward Woodstock by the road on the north side of the river. Putting two and two together, Mr. Thomas decided that the men were the horse thieves.

Hastily procuring a team with Hial C. Thompson, who is employed at Jones Livery Stable as the driver, he proceeded down the north side of the river in the hope of intercepting the raiders.

They passed the fairgrounds, down by the fine country residence of J. Foster Rhodes, and along the road leading to Taftsville. The night was dark. The sleeping occupants of the farmhouses along the way little dreamed that a bold robbery of the regulation western type had been perpetrated and that the robbers had escaped and would soon pass that way. The crack of revolver shots, shouts and the clatter of hoofs was to be their rude awakening.

The drowsy chirp of countless crickets and the occasional call of some night bird were the only sounds. The occupants of the carriage buttoned their heavy coats closer about themselves. It was cold driving. It might be a long drive and a fruitless one.

"Stop"! The horse is pulled upon its haunches.

There at the side of the road in the heavy shadow of the trees are the figures of two horsemen. The light of the lantern shows the cowboy hats and leggings of the robbers. The leader reigns up the bank to ride past. The carriage horse on which he is mounted does

not respond as quickly as the trained pony of a lifelong bandit.

In an instant, Sheriff Thomas is over the wheel and has him by the wrist. "I am an officer and you are under arrest. Get off that horse," he commands pressing his revolver against the man's side for emphasis. The robber struggles to get free.

To pull his man from the horse would be to pull the horse over onto the officer on the sloping bank. It is all in a moment. "(Expletive) you," shouts the horseman in the rear, swinging out of his saddle, "Let go of him, or I'll drop you." "Shoot him, shoot him," exclaims the prisoner. The sheriff turns just in time to



**WHERE SHERIFF THOMAS MET THE ROBBERS.**

see the flash of the revolver in the hands of the man in the rear and fires his own at the assailant. The ball from the robber's pistol put out Officer Thomas' lantern and passed downward through his fur coat.

(The ball which put out Officer Thomas' lantern passed through his fur coat and lodged in the side pocket of his inner coat, where it was found with a piece of the brass burner embedded in it.)

The frightened horse at the sheriff's side gave a leap, the rider wrenched himself from Thomas' grasp and they flew up the road at a gallop amid a fusillade of shots in which all four men took a hand, Mr. Thomas firing twice at the man in the rear and then emptying his gun at the escaping horseman.

The second robber abandoned his horse, jumped the fence and ran toward the river. In the darkness pursuit was impossible. The officer directed Thompson to go to the village of Woodstock, two miles away, and give the alarm, while he tried to get the remaining horse to prevent its recapture by the fugitive.

As Thompson galloped for home he saw the horse of robber number one just ahead of him and discovered that it was riderless. The leader had also

taken to the woods. The horse ran to the village where it was caught.

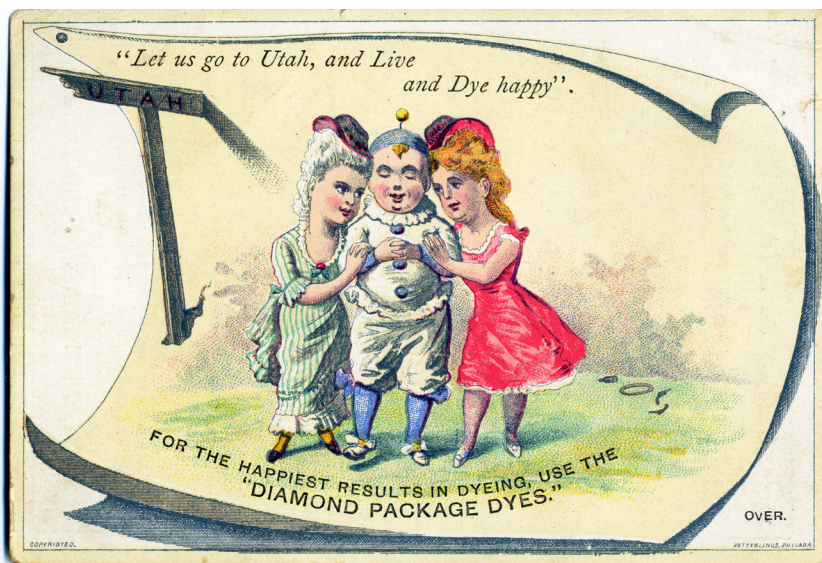
Mr. Thomas secured the horse of the second robber, and Elmer Sherwin, who lives nearby, drove the sheriff to Woodstock, leading the captured horse behind. On Thompson's arrival, parties of men were sent out from Woodstock, Bridgewater and Quechee and spent the rest of the night searching for the fugitives. Both men succeeded in eluding the officers, and nothing further was heard from them for several hours.

*(To be continued...)*

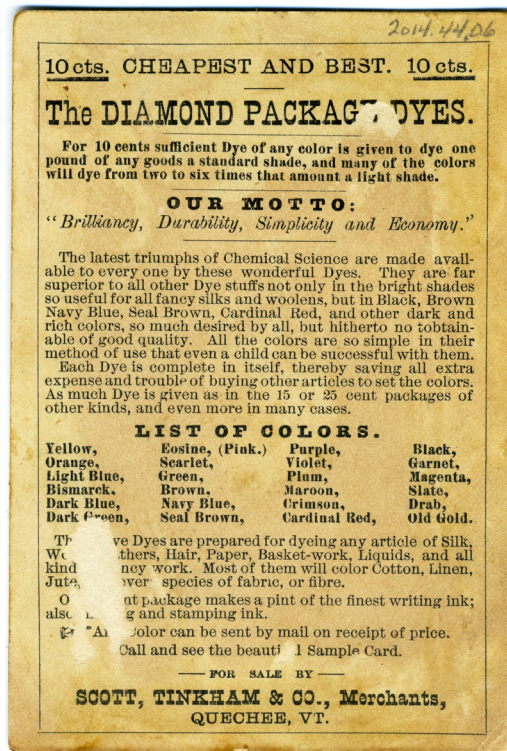


*The site where the bold robbery of the "regulation western type" was committed!*

**THE POSTCARD ABOVE AND TRADE CARD BELOW ARE TWO OF OUR RECENT E-BAY ACQUISITIONS LINKED TO TINKHAM'S STORE**



*This interesting little trade card for Diamond Package Dyes given out by Scott, Tinkham & Co. Merchants (front and back sides shown here) depicts a clown with his two gals -- a nice play on words and not so subtle social commentary of the time aimed at the plural marriage lifestyle practiced by some Mormons in early Utah*



## Please Notice This



*continued...)*

## Membership Fees Are Payable Every January

*It's that time again...*

Your check payable to the Hartford Historical Society may be sent to:

(See Membership  
Application on page 11  
for your convenience!)

HARTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
ATTN: TREASURER  
P.O. Box 547  
HARTFORD, VT 05047-0547



Thank you for your continued support!



## "Hats Off" to our Local Business Supporters!

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We appreciate the following sponsors who make it possible to print the newsletter in color by offsetting the additional cost:

JAS Auto  
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# GLORY DAYS 2014

By Martha Knapp



Each fall the Hartford Historical Society enjoys participating in “Glory Days of the Railroad” held in downtown White River Junction. At the 2014 festival on Saturday, September 13, we were surprised to be assigned an indoor booth and were initially concerned that people might not be able to find us. Fortunately, that didn’t happen, and we had numerous visits to our new exhibits and buyers for our home baked goods.



*Mary Nadeau, Susanne Abetti and Carole Haehnel taking care of our Glory Days exhibits*

Our exhibit featuring the Great Train Wreck of 1887 was upgraded. The Historical Society now has all but four of the original set of photographs of the disaster taken by H.H.H. Langill of Hanover, New Hampshire, that he offered for sale at the time of the wreck. At Glory Days we sold sets of our original copies for \$10.00. These photographs are a small portion of the many offerings we have available for railroad historians.

Nearby were other interesting exhibits, one being



*One of the many displays to enjoy at the Glory Days event*

an entire railroad and village made out of Legos and powered by electric terminals.

The village drew a big crowd, and as people passed by, many decided that they would like a little history lesson and some tasty treats as well.

Toward the end of the day, the weather took a turn for the worse with cold winds and heavy rain, underscoring the benefit of being inside a building this year.

The Railroad Enthusiasts were due in town for their annual meeting the following week, so we sought and were given permission to keep our exhibit in the storefront windows of the bingo hall on the main street.



*Hartford Historical Society exhibit in downtown White River Junction for the Railroad Enthusiasts’ annual meeting*

Glory Days of the Railroad is always a wonderful way that our town brings people together. See you at Glory Days 2015!

*All Glory Day photographs courtesy Chris McKinley*



## Muriel Farrington “Retires” as Editor of our Newsletter

After serving as our newsletter editor for nearly the entire lifespan of the Historical Society, Muriel Farrington is stepping down from that position. As a charter member of the Society, she launched the newsletter in 1987 and continued to produce it through 2014 with the exception of a three-year period during the last decade.

Muriel was also active on the board of directors until 2000, and



*Muriel Farrington is recognized as a significant contributor to the success of the Hartford Historical Society*

she is remembered for having presented one of the Society’s first public programs, which was given in the Vermont Room of the Hotel Coolidge, entitled “Archaeology’s Potential Contribution to Hartford’s Written History”. As the Society’s designated archaeologist, she conducted a research project at a site in the Old King’s Highway area of Quechee.

Thank you, Muriel, for your many years of dedicated service!

## Philippe Bouthillier Wing is Dedicated

The dedication of the Philippe Bouthillier Wing of the Wendell A. Barwood Arena, held on Sunday afternoon, December 28th, was well attended. “Mr. B”, as he was known to several generations of Hartford students and residents, introduced hockey to Hartford High School during the 1960s and literally built the first outdoor rink. Later he was instrumental in the development of the BOR building, enclosing the walls, replacing the wire fencing with hockey glass, installing a refrigeration system and purchasing a Zamboni. In addition to building the first high school hockey team, Mr. B. developed feeder teams of students in the lower grades and started a team for high school girls. In his “spare

time”, Mr. B. taught chemistry for over forty years at Hartford High School.

Coach Todd Bebeau wanted to host a high school tournament during the holidays and his mentor Coach



*The Historical Society lent its display featuring “The Godfather of Hartford Hockey” for the dedication event*

Bouthillier's death gave him a cause for organizing one. When he heard about the new facilities and ceremony he wanted to keep Phil's memory alive through annual revivals of a two night four-school hockey tournament. Thus the first Philippe H. Bouthillier Holiday Classic was held on this occasion. Bebeau

told the Valley News that the items chronicling Bouthillier's contributions to Hartford Hockey came courtesy of the Hartford Historical Society. We were very happy to be a part of this occasion.

# 2014 Children's Christmas Party

By Martha Knapp

The majority of the participants of this event are Grandmothers. They bake the cookies and they make the mittens. My Grandmother did intricate crochet. However, when my mother became a grandmother, she began to knit mittens. She had always baked cookies.

Nowadays, most children wear gloves that are commercially made of waterproof fabrics -- some leather, some manmade with nylon and polyester materials and padding and filler. They cost money and are manufactured by machines. So it is fitting while passing our history to our children, to let them experience how things were in the olden days when we were children by permitting them to put their little hands in these cozy mittens and getting their thumbs in the right place.

This year Grandmother Extraordinaire, Mona Bouthillier, not only knitted the biggest batches of mittens for the day, but she came dressed in a sequined Santa's elf costume that everyone adored.

We look forward to this day for weeks. We eat cookies and drink hot cocoa and mulled cider and enjoy each other's company while waiting for the inquisitive youth to come and enjoy the museum we are care-taking for them until they are ready to take over the responsibility. When the children come in, we enjoy observing their fascination as we wind up the old metal train



*Mona Bouthillier modeling her Santa's elf attire in front of the Garipay House tree*

and set it whizzing around the track. They love our historic school desks and read the old fashioned books placed on them. They get very curious and ask many questions.

This year we had many toys left over from our yard sale. Our staff went through, cleaned them, tested them, replaced batteries and sewed stitches here and there as needed. We placed them around the tree and invited the little visitors to pick out what they wanted to bring home. Each child found something that was special to him. They also

enjoyed trying on mittens and selecting just the right size and color.

We still have some mittens left. It's a long winter, so if any one of you missed this event (and we know how busy it is during the season) drop by and pick up a pair that we'd be very happy to share.



*Children showing off their mittens with Santa's elf under the tree*

# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

- Individual \$20.00 per year
- Senior \$15.00 per year
- Institutional \$30.00 per year

- Family (same address) \$25.00 per year
- Senior Family (same address) \$20.00 per year
- Special Gift of Support \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Names: \_\_\_\_\_

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Questions/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

*The Hartford Historical Society is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.*

Mail this completed form, along with a check payable to Hartford Historical Society, to:  
Hartford Historical Society, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047-0547

THANK YOU!

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## BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code: \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Special Opportunities for Higher Levels of Support*

Silver Sponsor: \$500 \_\_\_\_ Gold Sponsor: \$1000 \_\_\_\_ Platinum Sponsor: \$2500 \_\_\_\_

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## Hartford Historical Society

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**This newsletter is printed in color  
through the generosity of  
The Clerkin Agency PC**



*Samuel Farman delivers his paper products to area printers--read about the history of the White River Paper Co. inside this issue!*

## HHS Calendar

*Upcoming Programs, Meetings and Events*

### **OPEN HOUSE at the Garipay House**

(excepting Holidays and inclement weather) M-F 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. or by appointment. To be sure we are open, check for the flag outside the building or contact us mornings at 296-3132 or email us at [hartfordhistoricalsociety@myfairpoint.net](mailto:hartfordhistoricalsociety@myfairpoint.net) For an appointment, call or email us or contact Pat Stark at 295-3077 M-F from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

### **MONTHLY MEETINGS open to the public:**

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month – **The Hartford Historical Society Discussion Group** at the Bugbee Center at 10:30-11:30a.m.

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday – **Hartford Historic Preservation Commission** meeting at the Municipal Offices, 171 Bridge Street (now temporarily located at 35 Railroad Row), White River Junction at 4:30 p.m.

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday – **HHS Board of Directors Meeting** – at the Garipay House, 6:30 p.m. (Please check for exact date.) For more information, contact Mary Nadeau at 295-2123.

**Saturday, March 21, 2015** – Winter Fundraiser: "**Way Down East**", 1920 silent classic film starring Lillian Gish. 2 p.m. at the Cornerstone Community Center, 1615 Maple Street, Hartford Village. Entrance by donation.

**Wednesday, April 8, 2015** – Round table discussion on **Growing Up in Hartford Village in the '50s and '60s**. 7 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village. Refreshments.

**Wednesday, June 10, 2015** – **Looking Back at the Civil War (From the Comfort of Our Times)** by Ralph Epifanio. 7 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple St., Hartford Village. Refreshments.

**Saturday, August 15, 2015** – **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Abenaki and Indigenous Peoples Honoring Day**, 11 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Lyman Point Park, 167 Maple St., White River Junction.

**The Genealogy Center**, located upstairs in the Hartford Library, is open Monday afternoons from 1:30-3:30 p.m. and on