WATERBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY





Volume 20, Number 3

A Swinging Good Picnic

Lamoille River Swingers Bring the Benefits of Square Dancing to Annual Summer Meeting

By Cheryl Casey

The Waterbury Historical Society's July summer meeting and potluck picnic featured a gut-busting array of casseroles, salads, and brownies a la mode, balanced by an hour of square dancing facilitated by the Lamoille River Swingers, of Morrisville, VT.

Club members and local residents Joanna and Steve Caswell opened the program at the Hope Davey Pavilion with a short history of square dancing. Tracing its roots to the choreographed dance sequences of 16th century England and the social dance of 18th century France, square dancing is comprised of a "set" of four couples arranged in a square. Famed automaker Henry Ford is credited with reviving and popularizing square dancing in 1920s America. He saw square dancing as cultivating both good health and genteel manners.

Traditional square dancing uses approximately 25 calls. Western-style square dancing--or the standardized American style, to which the Lamoille River Swingers ascribe--uses about 75 calls. Dances are hosted by local clubs, with regional and national conferences bringing the larger community of square dance enthusiasts together.

Square dancing is considered to have a number of benefits. First, it is physically beneficial in its near-constant movement. Second, the cognitive work of learning new calls and reacting quickly to a caller in the moment flexes the mental muscles. Finally, square dancing is an inherently social activity, emphasizing teamwork and strengthening relational bonds.

Following the Caswell's presentation, club members paired up with picnickers in two squares, for lessons and demonstrations. Lots of smiles, laughter, and foot-stomping ensued!



Attendees at the WHS summer picnic join members of the Lamoille River Swingers on the dance floor at the Hope Davey Pavilion. (Photo courtesy of Camille Mason)

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Former Town and Village Municipal Offices at 51 South Main Street. (Photo courtesy of Skip Flanders)

Missing Friend on S. Main St.

By Skip Flanders

After nearly 200 years there is now a vacant lot on the north side of South Main Street at address #51. The old Community Hall (now the Perkins-Parker Funeral Home) and the Wesley Methodist Church on the north side of the street are missing a longtime friend they have looked at for all their lives. DeConstruction Works has completed taking apart the building literally board by board, shingle by shingle. DeConstruction Works was hired by the Edward Farrar Utility District to take the building apart to maximize the amount of material from the building that could be reused and recycled. Many of the components were saved and sold for reuse.

The Utility Commissioners wanted to determine and document the story of the building and save its place in the history of Waterbury. Early research suggests that the property was owned by Elias Marsh, the oldest son of Waterbury's first settler, James Marsh. Elias was born in 1768 and came to Waterbury with his father, sister Irene, and brother James in spring of 1784. Father James Marsh died on March 29, 1788, while crossing the Winooski River at Bolton Falls while returning from Richmond. James Marsh's wife and children remained in Waterbury. Elias likely built the first house on the site of 51 South Main Street. Elias died in Waterbury on July 6, 1802, and is buried in an unmarked grave in Hope Cemetery. Elias had considerable property and a sizable estate.

Elias's property on South Main Street was purchased by Cephas Wells after Elias's death. It is likely that the front portion of the building was constructed in 1820 to 1830. Cephas Wells settled in Waterbury from Deerfield, Massachusetts in 1805 and acquired considerable property and wealth. Cephas Wells has descendants who continue to live in Waterbury today. Other owners of the house were Cynthia Corse –sister-in-law of Cephas Wells--Thaddeus B. Crossett, Roxanna Crossett, Charles Parker and Craig S. "Rusty" Parker and, lastly, the Village of Waterbury and the Edward Farrar Utility District. Prior to the flood of Irene in 2011, the building was purchased in 1983 by the Village of Waterbury and had been

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1899 Village Sewer Plans Preserved

By Skip Flanders

A copy of the original Waterbury Village sewer plans was donated to the Historical Society by Waterbury resident and former Water Commissioner, Charles "Chuck" Magnus. These 1899 plans were given years ago to Chuck by his grandfather, Charles Morrell, who was in charge of track maintenance on the Central Vermont Railroad. Being engineers, both Chuck and his grandfather knew the value of preserving these plans for history.

The story of these 1899 plans begins with the Village voting on December 12, 1895 to build a water system that utilized water sources on Mt. Hunger and a 570,000 gallon reservoir on Blush Hill. This system, designed by Joel Foster, the Water Superintend in Montpelier, was constructed by contractor Lucian A. Taylor of Worcester, MA in 1896, at a cost of \$30,700.

Once this water system was in operation and serving homes and businesses in the Village, the volume of sanitary waste to be disposed of increased substantially. The Waterbury Board of Health, upon numerous complaints from residents, expressed the need for a sewer system to remove unsanitary conditions, particularly at the north end of Randall Street and Elm Street.

In May 1899, the Village Trustees hired Engineer V R. Nash of Providence, RI to prepare a design of a sewer system serving the Village to eliminate the unsanitary conditions. This design, estimated to cost \$25,000, was presented to the voters at a number of Village meetings. On

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WHS Hosts Local History **Engagement Session** With Vermont Historical Society

September 28, 2019 Steele Community Room 28 North Main Street, Waterbury 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. **Building a Stronger Community**

For over 60 years, the Vermont Historical Society has been providing programs and services to Vermont's local history, museum, and cultural community. Current offerings include the LLHSM annual meeting, periodic workshops, site visits and advice, the Local History Gallery, and more.

In its most recent strategic planning process, VHS identified these services as among the primary strategic areas.

Now VHS is asking for your help in determining what such a strategy means.



Join us at one of the VHS Local History Engagement Sessions taking place over the summer and fall. We'll come together to talk about the role local historical societies and museums play, common obstacles we face, and how we can work together to build a stronger HISTORY historical community statewide.

WHS will be hosting tours of its collections from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. alongside the **Engagement Session, and** again on Saturday, October 26. The Museum and tours are free and open to the public.

Memories of a Waterbury Center **Teacher's Pet**

By Calvin Dow

Runcible. Say the word today in the *New York Times.* My suspect memory banks flashed back to January, 1937. I was in the 7th grade English class of Mildred Benedict. In Waterbury Center, our grade school was in a former seminary building. With lovely architecture and a cupola on top, it was the largest grade school in Washington County.

Mrs. B. was my favorite teacher and, what's more important. I was her favorite student. Pro *merito*, a paragon of deportment and application, according to my report card and me, aka "the teacher's pet." At lunch hour she would call me to her rugged old oak desk where we would play her favorite games of Jacks. I soon learned to ingratiate myself by losing. If my pleasant teacher lost, someone was going to pay a price!

School was out at 3:30. At 2:00 p.m., Mrs. B. would dispatch me to her nearby home on Maple Street. I relished the freedom of trekking through the January powder snow, on school time, pursuing my important mission: placing wood in her parlor stove and lighting a fire so the house would be cozy and warm when Mrs. B. arrived home. While there, I made an inspection tour, looking for clues to what made Mrs. B. tick or tock.

When we first entered her class, she said, "You are not a bunch of kids. In my class you will be called students. You are here to study and learn."

On the blackboard, with white chalk, she copied the famous poem, "The Owl and the Pussycat," by Edward Lear. He was the poet who invented the limerick and also painted and wrote his way through India for one year in 1879. Each student copied the poem on paper, then came up in front of the class to read it, with personal expression. We had to take it home, memorize it, and have our parents initial the paper.

I never forgot this poem and the word runcible, which soon entered the dictionary. I often think of Mrs. B. and the expression, "Good teachers are hard to find."

Artifact Donations

Robert Isherwood:

- Cast iron memorial plaque dedicated to Perry Aldrich, Waterbury High School teacher and WWI veteran
- Framed portrait of Perry Aldrich in uniform

Skip Flanders:

• Two black-and-white photos taken June 15, 1902, of the CVRR wreck, along with an article about the accident by Brian Linder

Brian Lindner:

- 1939 Vermont National Guard Yearbook owned by Hugh Morse of Waterbury
- Copies of old elementary school pictures
- Various news articles of Waterbury events

Carol Allen:

- Six black-and-white assorted photos of Bank Hill taken when roads were dirt, with horse and cart
- Waterbury books, pictures, memorabilia, news clippings, and posters from the collection of her father, Charles J. Adams

Chuck Magnus:

• Original 1899 sewer plans for the Village of Waterbury (see page 2)

Betsy Bishop:

• A paper written by Gleason Ayers in 2009, "The Five-Car Garage on Elm Street)

Waterbury Center Postmaster:

- Map of Rural Free Delivery Route No. 1 (pre-dam construction)
- Postmasters' Account & Record Book, October 1913 September 1916
- Booklets from the Waterbury Center Post Office's sesquicentennial celebration in 1990.

Anonymous:

- Back copies of *Exit 10* newspapers from 1996
- Copy of The Blush Hill Country Club, by Ken Sabin (2006)

Monetary Donations

Jack Carter:

 \$100.00 in support of Yankee Brass Band event

Carol Cook

• \$90.00 general donation

Barb Farr:

 \$100.00 in support of Yankee Brass Band event

Theresa and Gordy Wood:

• \$25.00 for newsletter support

New Members

Carol Cook Philadelphia, PA

Steven Marshall Waterbury Center, VT

Jeanne Alix Piotrowski Waterbury Center, VT

Connie and Mark Tuft Moraga, CA

Claire Williams Danbury, CT Thank you for supporting WHS! MH2i anbbolciud

Featured Edifice: The McIntosh House An Elegant Queen Anne Cottage on S. Main Street

By Skip Flanders

The beautiful, large brick home at 98 South Main St. was simply referred to as "The McIntosh House" by the community of Waterbury at the turn of the 20th century. This story starts with Martin McIntosh, born in 1830 in Ireland. In 1847, at age 17, Martin immigrated to the US, arriving in New York City. He learned the trade of blacksmithing and became wealthy manufacturing and selling iron railings in the city.

completed it will be equal if not superior to any in the Village, certainly so in style of architecture, if in no other respect." In January 1892, Martin and his wife Anne moved into their new house, which the Record described as an elegant Queen Anne cottage of brick, trimmed with granite, and a fine embellishment to that portion of Main Street. Martin installed a large Greely refrigerator in December, purchased from and manufactured by O. N. Cross of Montpelier.

Martin married Anne Maxwell, who also had

immigrated from Ireland shortly after Martin. In October 1855 Martin McIntosh was naturalized a US Citizen. Martin and Anne had two sons, John and George.

They lived in the City where Martin worked at his trade, investing his money wisely. In the 1880 census the family was still living in New York City and Martin, aged 50, was retired from the manufacturing of iron railings due to rheumatism. Martin's brotherin-law. Alexander Maxwell. had immigrated from Ireland and settled in 1850 on a farm in Waitsfield, Vermont. This is the likely reason Martin chose to retire and settle with his family in Waterbury.

In August 1888, Martin purchased a house located at 98 South Main Street from Frank Rolfe. In April 1891, Martin purchased the vacant

lot on the south side of Horace Bruce's house at 100 South Main Street.

Martin wanted to build a new house at 98 South Main Street so he had that house moved from 98 South Main to 102 South Main. Today this house is the law office of attorney Bruce Bjornlund. Thus, the way was cleared for his new Queen Anne-style cottage. Walter Hazeltine, a local expert builder who was working on the Methodist Church at the time, was hired by McIntosh.

Construction of the new house was started in June 1891 and it was reported in the *Waterbury Record,* "the new house was to be of brick, and from the plans shown will, when completed, be an elegant residence." In October the Waterbury Record reported, "work on his new house is progressing finely, and when



The McIntosh's only lived in the house for 6 years, because Martin died on April 13, 1898. Anne died on October 20, 1899, eighteen months after her husband. When Martin died, the *Waterbury Record* opened his obituary with, "Martin McIntosh Dead. Martin McIntosh, one of the wealthiest citizens of Waterbury, died at his residence on Main Street last Monday morning"

Martin left an estate to take care of his wife, his unmarried sister Martha, still living in New York City, and his widowed daughter-in-law living in Northfield, VT. Martin's will also left \$20,500 to his wife's nieces and nephews. The new residence on South Main Street was left to his wife, and he designated 3/4 of the income

from his New York City land and buildings to care for his wife and 1/4 of the income to care for his daughterin-law, Helen A. McIntosh. The remainder of his estate he bequeathed to his unmarried sister, Martha McIntosh, in New York City.

Anne McIntosh was in poor health after Martin's death, and in August 1899, she sold the house to Dr E. G. Hooker of Waterbury, with the condition that Dr. Hooker provide room and board for Mrs. McIntosh for the rest of her life. In an article on the house sale to Dr. Hooker, the *Waterbury Record* reported that the elegant house cost \$23,000 to build. Martin's wife Anne died on Oct 20, 1899. Both of their sons predeceased Martin and Anne. Their younger son, George, died October 31, 1887 at the Waterbury Inn and is buried in

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51 S. Main Street Deconstruction

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renovated for use as the Town and Village Municipal Offices.

The Commissioners have engaged contractor Eliot Lathrop of Bristol, owner of Building Heritage, to document the building's construction techniques to assist in determining the age of the building. When the research and reports are complete the Commissioners will be presenting the history of the building, the construction over time, and the owners down through history at a public meeting. The presentation will include showing of the actual unique timber joints and material used in the construction.

During the next two years the lot will continue to serve an important need to the community of Waterbury by providing for parking for employees, business owners, and guests to Waterbury while the Main Street infrastructure is being rebuilt.



Side entrance to 51 S. Main Street and the Town Clerk's Office. (Photo courtesy of Skip Flanders)





Left: Regular newsletter contributor Calvin Dow as a 7th grade student at the Waterbury Center School.

Above: Author Calvin Dow visits his old schoolhouse in Waterbury Center, a building that once served as a seminary. The cupola that had graced the rooftop during Mr. Dow's student days had by this time been removed during a round of renovations.

(Photos courtesy of Calvin Dow)

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,

What does NQID stand for?

The Veterans' Memorial Day Cemetery Walk started in Waterbury for Fisher-Hunt and Morse, then proceeded to Waterbury Center for Woodard Jr. Is that correct?

[Per my last letter,] the 1920s peddler sold "hot hulled corn," not cider, to housewives. Did you ever trace Mr. Kneeland's arrival in the Center?

Your Connecticut Member Calvin Dow

Editor's Note

Dear Mr. Dow,

"NQID" stands for "Not Quite Independence Day." The town has taken to celebrating the week before the usual July Fourth festivities, with the Rotary organizing a full day of themed activities and music. Of course, there are fireworks at the end!

No luck yet on tracing Mr. Kneeland, but the hunt will soon resume!

This year's Memorial Day Cemetery Walk took place in Maple Street Cemetery in the Center, for all three gravesites.

> Many thanks for your correspondence, Cheryl

Sewer Plans Show Critical Design of Wastewater System

Continued from page 2

July 19, 1899 the project was voted down 109 to 70. The 1899 plans recently presented to the Historical Society are the plans prepared by V R Nash in June 1899.

The need for a sewer system was again brought up for a vote on February 6, 1907. This time it was passed with a vote of 84 to 31, with an estimated cost of \$35,000. When bidding on the project opened on April 23, 1907, twelve contractors vied for the project. The bid was awarded to W. S. Teachout of Essex Junction, with a low bid of \$28,640. The Trustees hired professional engineer John L. Collins of NYC to oversee the construction of the sewer system. The 1907 construction field book of John Collins continues to be used by the public works staff in locating services today.

Construction of the system was to be completed by November 1, 1907. Italian workers were brought in to construct the system/ They lived in a camp on Randall's Meadow and later in the foundry building near the Railroad Depot, now occupied by Washington County Mental Health.

This system was composed of pipes collecting the sanitary wastes and discharging it to the Winooski River at three points. The plans used for construction in 1907 are the same 1899 engineering plans prepared by V. R. Nash and voted down in July 1899.

Much of the water line installed in 1896 in Main Street is in use today. Some of the sewer pipes installed in 1907 are also in service today. Except for the original clay tile service lines, which will continue in use, all of the water and sewer lines in Main Street are being replaced with the current reconstruction.

The longevity and performance of the excellent water and wastewater systems serving the Waterbury community today is due in large part to the wise decisions of the past Waterbury leaders, residents, and professionals in conceiving and building these systems. Both of these systems continue to be critical to the health, welfare, and future of the residents and businesses of Waterbury.

A big thanks to Chuck Magnus and his family for the care and preservation of these important documents in Waterbury's history.



A copy of the 1899 plans for Waterbury's first wastewater system, donated to the Historical Society by Waterbury resident Chuck Magnus. (Photo courtesy of Skip Flanders)

SUBMIT CONTENT

To submit a letter to the editor, stories, or photos for an upcoming issue, email the editor at cheryl.casey1010@gmail.com or send by post to: Dr. Cheryl Casey, 1389 Kneeland Flats Rd., Waterbury Center, VT 05677.

Quarterly submission deadlines: February 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15

McIntosh House a Symbol of Waterbury Wealth

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Hope Cemetery. The older son, John, died of consumption in New Mexico on February 4, 1896. He and his wife are also buried in the family plot in Hope Cemetery.

In looking at the wealth of Martin McIntosh, we find that in 1891 he spent \$23,000 to construct an elegant house and in 1898 he provided for \$20,500 in cash payments from his will to his relatives. According to inflation factors, the \$23,000 spent in 1891 is the equivalent to \$625,000 in 2019 dollars, and the \$20,500 in his will in 1899 is the equivalent of \$614,000. Martin spent a total of today's equivalent to \$1,229,000 from his financial resources and retained ownership of land and buildings in New York City, continuing to earn income to support his wife, daughter-in-law and sister. This land that Martin owned was identified as three parcels, at least one with a building, all located on Manhattan along East 82nd Street and East 85th Street between Third Avenue and Lexington Avenue. The three parcels were 1,444 SF, 4,449 SF and 6,600 SF respectively, for a total of 12,300 SF. We can only imagine what the value of these lots in the heart of New York City were even in 1899.

Martin's sister Martha died in New York City on September 8, 1904, and in her will left bequeaths of \$5,500 to the Presbyterian Church, \$4,000 to her pastor, and the residuary estate of about \$55,000 to nieces and nephews. This total of \$64,500 from Martin McIntosh's estate is the equivalent of \$1,859,000 in 2019 dollars. It appears Martin McIntosh, an Irish immigrant, amassed an estate of \$108,000 in 1904, worth the equivalent of \$3,088,000 in 2019 dollars.

The death of Mrs. McIntosh led to frequent sales of the highly desirable "McIntosh House" over the next few years. Dr. E. G. Hooker, who had purchased the house from Anne, died in 1902, and in 1905 his wife sold



Cemetery monument for the McIntosh family in Hope Cemetery. (Photo courtesy of Skip Flanders)

the McIntosh House to Frank A. Barrett, the owner of the Waterbury Inn. In 1910 the Barretts moved and sold the house to Frank and Daisy Knight. In 1918 the Knights sold the house to Warner Moody and in 1944 Georgia Moody, Warner's wife, sold the property to Arthur Bigalow and later to his son, Paul Bigalow. In 2000, M. Karr purchased the house from the Bigalow estate and it is now the Real Estate Office of Jack Associates Century 21.

It appears the *Waterbury Record* was correct when they reported Martin McIntosh was one of the wealthiest men in Waterbury when he died in 1898. Martin and his family left Waterbury the beautiful, elegant Queen Anne's Cottage home on South Main Street that continues to grace the streetscape in 2019. Martin did not leave any descendants in Waterbury but there are descendants of his wife's Maxwell family in the area. While we have early photographs of the 1892 Queen Anne's Cottage home he built, we do not have a photograph of Martin and his family to remind us of the contribution this Irish immigrant made to the American economy and the streetscape of Waterbury.

Author's note: Information for this article was found in newspaper articles located on newspapers.com, the Waterbury Vermont Land Records, and in ancestry.com files.



NEXT MEETING AND PROGRAM October 23, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. Steele Community Room, 28 North Main Street The Cemeteries of Waterbury Featuring Lesser-Known and Hidden Resting Places

Do you know how many cemeteries Waterbury has? Could you find them all on a map? Please join us for our fall meeting and program, and find out about final resting places you may never have known were there!

This program is free and open to the public. Donations are greatly appreciated. Light refreshments will be served.

Yankee Brass Band Returns to Waterbury



On July 24, the Yankee Brass Band gave its second concert in Waterbury to a lively audience in the Thatcher Brook Primary School auditorium.

The band demonstrates the aesthetics and band music style of 19th century America. Their "historically informed performances" use authentic period instruments, and band members wear uniforms appropriate to the "Golden Age of Bands."

Members of the Yankee Brass Band assemble for one week each summer to give a handful of concerts throughout New England. They last played in Waterbury at the WHS summer picnic program in 2016, at the Waterbury Playhouse in Waterbury Center.

WHS thanks Jack Carter, Barb Farr, and the many who donated at the door for supporting this fun and family-friendly event.

(Photos courtesy of Paul Willard)

Film Screening: The Waterbury Special Local filmmaker Bryce Douglass produced this film documenting the making of the train art sculpture on the bridge at the Waterbury roundabout. The film shows how artist Phillip Godenschwager created the sculpture and explains the techniques involved in its creation. Wednesday, September 25, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. Steele Community Room, 58 North Main Street Q&A with the filmmaker and the artist will follow the screening. DVDs and digital downloads will be available for purchase. The event is free and open to the public. Sponsored by Offbeat Bryce Productions and Revitalizing Waterbury



The History Center is open **Monday—Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Located on the second floor of the Municipal Building in the newly renovated Dr. Janes house, the museum is free and open to the public. The Historical Society's vast collections rotate through the exhibits, which are carefully assembled by our Curator. Stop by and learn something new about Waterbury's place in Vermont and national history!

History Center Acquisition Criteria

Have something to donate to the museum? See if your item(s) meet these criteria:

- Relevance: Well-documented link to the town of Waterbury.
- Non-duplication: Unique to the existing holdings of the collection.
- *Duration:* Intent is to officially add the item to the collection for the WHS to keep or sell (where proceeds will only go to benefit the Society).
- Title and Provenance: Deed of gift or bill of sale should accompany all items.
- *Restrictions:* Items will not be held by the donor to criteria about use, display, or future disposition.
- Physical condition: No extensive conservation required.
- Rights: Transfer of item(s) includes all pertinent rights (literary, property, copyright, etc.).
- Costs: Management and care of item(s) should be financially viable for the Society, or dedicated funds should accompany the donation of the item(s).
- Tax law compliance: Gifts must be in compliance with applicable tax law.

For more information or to begin the donation process, contact: archivistwhs@gmail.com



Donations Welcome - We are a community organization that deeply appreciates the support and interest of our community. You can donate online at our website below.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

\$10 per person \$15 per family (couple and children under 18)

(Check the mailing label on your newsletter to see when your membership expires.)

Please help the Historical Society GO GREEN!

Contact us to opt for email-only delivery. Benefits include cost-saving, paper-saving, and a newsletter in color!



waterburyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com www.waterburyhistoricalsociety.org FB: @waterburyhistoricalsocietyVT

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