

CAMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring 2009 Newsletter

Campton Baptist Organ

submitted by Michelle Betts



The April 20th program for the Campton Historical Society will be held at 1345 Main Street at the Campton Baptist Church, featuring the antique Wick Organ, that has blessed the Campton community for decades. The organ will celebrate 100 years in the service of worship first at St. John's Evangelical Church of Bellevue, Kentucky, and then as of 1933 at the Campton Baptist Church this coming year. The picture was taken at the KY church circa 1911. Recent years have brought a revitalization of the organ under the talents of Mr. David Greene and his wife Lauri of Thornton, NH, and the ministrations of the Andover Organ Company. The organ has once again become part of regular worship services as of 2007. Original donors who made the gift to the church numbered almost 200 individuals, with such famous Camptonite families listed on the Donor picture as the Doles, the Cheneys, the Broads, the Uhlmans and many more.

The organ is unique. The majority of its type have long since been 'guttled' and the mechanical and pneumatic components replaced by electronic modern components, keeping the pipes as purely decorative. The Wick Organ Company is currently researching their records, believing the Campton Baptist Church may have the only one of its type still in operation in the world. The organ is completely mechanical with the exception of the power used for operating the bellows. This means when a key is pressed, levers open the pipe to allow the air to pass through to create the notes. There are two keyboards, eight ranks of pipes, and couplers that link the two key boards together so more notes can be produced. The swell pedal is used to increase and decrease volume by muffling the pipes. The pipes are built within a box, the boxes open and close based on the use of the swell pedal which in turn increase and decrease the volume. The pneumatic organ, operates using mechanical levers with air produced by the bellows that are in the under the floor of the organ. The Greek word 'pneuma', means 'breath'. Enjoy the program April 20, as Mr. David Greene shares his talents during this special musical and historical program. We will welcome any 'oral history' that community members would like to share. Michelle Betts, former CHS President is currently a Trustee for the church, and would love any historical information regarding the church history community members might be willing to share.

4th Annual Spring Music Concert

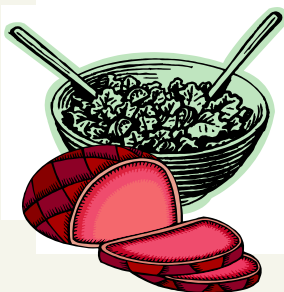
Saturday, June 6, 2009

This year we are going Celtic with some traditional Irish music. Chris Murphy is going to lead a band of three with himself on bodhran, Roger Burge on fiddle and Chris Sterm on anglo concertina. The concert will be at 7:30 p.m.. Admission \$10 per person - \$8 for paid CHS members.

It will be preceded by a Ham and Bean Supper from 6:00-7:00 p.m.. \$6 Adult, \$3 Children under 12, or \$15 per Family

You can check out Chris Murphy at
<http://www.myspace.com/christophermurphyartsound>

The supper and concert are limited seating events.
Advance purchase is recommended by calling Paul Yelle at 536-5995



Campton History (cont.)

Excerpts from a journal by George Durgin

Feb. 25, 1893 The worst storm of the season occurred Sunday night, about 17" falling accompanied by light winds which piled the snow in drifts in many places 10 feet deep. No mail arrived for 24 hours and even then was carried by a man on snowshoes.

Jan. 25, 1901 The ice harvest is nearly completed with 1024 cakes in E. H. Sanborn's house and many smaller ones filled.

Aug. 27, 1904 Old Home Day was a gala day for Campton, and it will always be remembered.

Nov. 12, 1927 At Beebe River, every residence was flooded from 3 to 8 feet deep, and the Finishing Mill was filled to the second story. One side of the Community Hall is caved in.

Mar. 24, 1934 The dam at Campton on the outskirts of Campton Village has been ordered to be re-built by the Department of Agriculture. The construction will be undertaken by the Conservation Corps at a cost of \$30,000 to \$35,000.

April 30, 1938 The 60th anniversary of Campton Grange #93 was observed Wednesday evening at the Campton Town Hall with about 200 in attendance.

May 18, 1961 Another section on Interstate 93 is under construction. The small 2.3 mile stretch will eliminate the dangerous Cook's Corner near the Pemigewasset River on Route 3, and will cost \$960,000. (This section was only two lanes. The other two lanes were built several years later).

Sept. 28, 1962 The old West Branch Schoolhouse on route 3 in West Campton has been changed to a shop for products made by members of the New Hampshire Home Craft, Inc.

Jan. 7, 1965 The famous old red mill, owned by E. Dole and Company for nearly 140 years, ceased production.

(to be continued)

Submitted by Walt Stockwell, Curator

Queries from around the country

submitted by Walt Stockwell

Your Curators and Librarian have a most interesting and sometimes frustrating responsibility. That is to respond to inquiries we receive from many sources. Consider the following topics:

From California – I have a quilt with the words Ellsworth and letters B of S.E., with a date of 7/4/1892. I would like to return it, and am contacting all of the Ellsworth towns I can locate. Can you help in seeing if it came from your area?

We are researching through several contacts in the Town of Ellsworth.

From a Maine author – I would like to know what it was like in your area in the year of 1800 and Freeze to Death.

We have several articles about 1816, the year we had frost in every month.

I recently had a scary experience in a Campton house. People have told me it was haunted, and a man had killed his wife and children here. Can you verify if either statement is true?

Stories such as this tend to be handed down , but we cannot verify that either is true.

What were the original boundaries of New Hampshire before we settled the disputes with Massachusetts and Vermont?

Several articles and references were submitted..

From a New Hampshire author – I am writing a book on steel bridges, and would like information on those past or present in Campton.

This is in process, including pictures from our files.

I noticed this placemat that shows a picture of The Outlook (hotel) in Campton. I am not familiar with it. Can you identify?

Yes, it is at the Ham Farm on Route 3 in Thornton.

You can see from these notes, that we need a comprehensive research library. You can help by contributing histories, people information, pictures, artifacts, etc.. These items could be donations or on loan. We can copy documents and scan photos on-site, so that you may retain the originals if desired. Contact Walt at 726-3813 or by e-mail to flagman13@roadrunner.com

BRING IT ON!

WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.CAMPTONHISTORICAL.ORG

At the annual meeting in November, new officers and directors were elected for Campton Historical Society.

Two former directors are now officers: Judy Landry, President
Ann Knowles, Vice President

Three people new to the Board of Directors are:
Brenda Boisvert, who will be collecting current history for our files.
Georgia Campbell, who will coordinate our docent program
Scott Stephens, will be assisting with publicity

Immediate past president, Paul Yelle, has been appointed to coordinate the Oral History Project, along with Rebecca McCuin

Another new appointment is Sandy Decarie as Curator, working with our other curator, Walt Stockwell, and Librarian Robert Mardin.

Returning directors are Pat Barker and Reed Harrigan.

Nancy Mardin remains as Secretary, and Mary Durgin as Treasurer

Lester Mitchell, Director Emeritus, is our ongoing Historian, and Scott Pulsifer remains our invaluable building and maintenance chairman.

These are the dedicated people who make your society the great organization it is. Contact them with your ideas and comments. The Board meets the first Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m., and the discussions are open to all society members.

Old Home Week

submitted by Walt Stockwell

Old Home Week was created by New Hampshire Governor Frank West Rollins. In 1897 he wrote "I wish that in the ear of every son and daughter of New Hampshire, in the summer days, might be heard whispered the persuasive words: Come back, come back. Do you not hear the call? What has become of the old home where you were born? Do you not remember it – the old farm back among the hills, with its rambling buildings, its well sweep casting its long shadows, the row of stiff poplar trees, the lilacs and the willows?"

Throughout the 19th century New Hampshire's farming towns had been losing population. New England's talent and money were being drained away to build up the rest of the country. The state government was in debt, as were three quarters of the towns.

Rollins called upon the old New Hampshire Board of Agriculture to coordinate something then known as Old Home Week. He had specific goals in mind: he wanted native born to return and buy the many abandoned farms in the state for summer homes. He wanted them to donate money to spruce up the village common, to support the library and the meeting house. And he wanted the towns themselves to awaken from what he saw as a moral slumber. He wrote "There have been, of course, reunions since the beginning of time, but my plan differed from the ordinary reunion in that it was to occupy a week in each year so that each one could make his plans to be back, and was to be recognized by the state as a permanent festival".

He rallied others to his idea, founded an Old Home Week Association, and as Governor of New Hampshire presided over the state's first homecoming in 1899. The state issued its invitation across the nation to its sons and daughters toiling in the cities, in the fields of the Midwest, and the mining camps of Montana.

By 1907 the idea of Old Home Week had expanded from New Hampshire to all of the New England states, New York, Ohio, Alabama, Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and onto Nova Scotia, Ontario and even to Australia. Many towns in New Hampshire continue the tradition of holding "Old Home Days".

The Campton Historical Society does not have many records of these celebrations in town. A newspaper clipping from 1961 describes a weekend of activities. President of the Day, Lester Mitchell, welcomed guests at the Campton Town House on Saturday. This was followed by several speakers, a brief history of the town, and introduction of visiting "Old Timers". After a horseshoe pitching session, attendees moved to the Congregational Church vestry for a smorgasbord. The day ended with dancing at the Town Hall. Sunday saw a church service at the Congregational Church, with the combined Congregational and Baptist parishes, followed by a coffee hour.

(Go to the *Old Home Day* web site) to view a program from 1904, which shows activities for that year, including a parade starting at Blair's Station, and the full day's program of events and speakers. The invitation and program from 1910 is also shown. Perhaps readers of this introduction could supply more information and pictures to add to our records. Contact any of the current Historical Society Board members, or e-mail to flagman13@roadrunner.com



Campton Historical Society

2009 Calendar of Events

March 20, Friday	Dinner 6:00 Movie 7:00	Potluck and movie night - "The Waking of Ned Devine"
April, 20 Monday	7:30 PM	Michelle Betts and David Greene - Campton Baptist Church: history of their newly restored pipe organ and concert. To be held at the Campton Baptist Church.
May 18, Monday	7:30 PM	Marilyn Wyzga, Wildlife Educator, NH Fish & Game - "Beyond Bird Feeders: Landscaping for Wildlife in Your own Backyard." Co-host by Campton Garden Club.
June 6, Saturday	Dinner 6-7 Concert 7:30	Celtic Traditional Concert and Ham and Bean Supper.
June 13 Saturday	10:00 - 4:00	Walt Stockwell - Flag Day Event: Americana Exhibit and old flag disposal ceremony
June 15, Monday	7:30 PM	Christopher Emerson, NH Humanities Council - "Horace Greeley, the Curious Candidate"
July 20, Monday	7:30 PM	Edie Clark, essayist for Yankee Magazine, NH Humanities Council - "Baked Beans and Fried Clams: How Food Defines a Region"
Aug 8, Saturday	11:00 - 5:00	Old Home Day events including antique cars, photo contest, demonstrations, ice cream social, tours
Aug 17, Monday	7:30 PM	Marcia Blaine, Professor of History, PSU, NH Humanities Council - "Runaway Wives: When Colonial Marriages Failed"
Sept 21, Monday	7:30 PM	Sandra LeBeau, NH Humanities Council - "The Mills of Manchester NH and Manchester England"
Oct 19, Monday	7:30 PM	Roger Daniels, Rumney Historical Society - "A Musical Evening with Thomas Edison"
Nov 16, Monday	7:30 PM	Annual meeting and program: Paul Yelle and Richard Mardin - "Beebe River Community and Draper Corporation"

All events will be held at the Campton Historical Society building on Rt. 175 with the except of the April program which will be held at the Campton Baptist Church Rt. 175.

CHECK OUT the Events page of the CHS web site for the latest information.—http://www.camptonhistorical.org/events_schedule.htm

In the works is house tour and picnic similar to last years and possibly another field trip.

Need a Ride to a CHS event?

Don't let getting a ride to CHS stop you from attending a CHS event. Ann Knowles has graciously agreed to coordinate rides to the best of her ability. This is a new offering so please be patient as we work out the logistics and determine the best way to go about this. If you need a ride or would be available to give someone a ride please give Ann a call at (H) 536-1298 and let's see if we can help you out.

Campton Historical Society

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