



The Chronicler

Newsletter of the Hartland Historical Society, Inc.
Fall Edition 2012

Fall Membership Meeting

Historical Society Roadshow is Coming!!

Sunday, October 14th, 1PM — West Hartland Town Hall

Do you have an artifact or two you would like to know more about?

Bring it to the HHS Roadshow where we will have a panel of very knowledgeable local collectors/enthusiasts give you history, age, value or try to figure out what that mystery artifact might be.

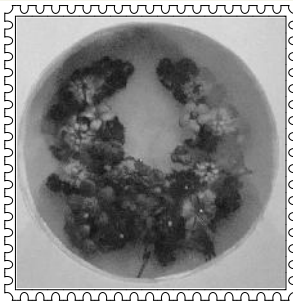
All types of artifacts welcome (military, housewares, farming, glassware, pottery, textile...)

No Charge for this informal evaluation

Have an interesting Hartland item to share? - bring it along and tell us about it.

Gaylord House Scavenger Hunt

In our last edition, we asked you to visit The Gaylord House to find the answer to the question, "What human body part was often used as home decorative art?" Did you discover the hair wreath in upstairs bedroom?



Hair art was a popular art form starting in the 1400s and remained through the 1800s, both in Europe and in the United States. Often, a family member would collect hair from several generations of relatives and weave the hair into a wreath. Most of them were made by wrapping hair tightly around wire and shaping the wire into designs. More often than not, the wreaths included intricate hair-woven flowers and were shaped like a horseshoe—always pointed up, to keep luck in the family. A decorative hair wreath was a way to track a family tree in the days before photographs. And unless the hair gets wet, it stays in the same condition as the day it was cut. Our hair wreath was made by a Miss Lawton from East Hartland.

Could these Lawton relatives be part of this wreath? Giles of the Hollow/W. Hartland, Alfred and Samuel Lawton of E. Hartland were brothers. Giles, Sr. was deeded the Gaylord House 1854-1873. Giles, Jr. married Sarah Hayden and had 7 children. Alfred Lawton married Fannie Blakeslee. They had a daughter Etta and their son Samuel died in the Civil War in 1863. His letter home to Uncle Samuel asks about the girls. Could be that it was Etta or a cousin who made this hair wreath.

OF INTEREST

An Interview with a Hartland Living Treasure

By Monica Cegelka *

I thought I knew a lot about Joan Stoltze's contributions to the town of Hartland. After all, I had known her from my early days in town. We had met on the front porch of Hayes' Store where she was camped out on a chair one Saturday in 1986 soliciting memberships to The Hartland Historical Society. After speaking with Joan for just a few minutes, it was clear that this lady's love and pet project was the Hartland Historical Society, and I was caught up in her enthusiasm. My family's membership began that day and Joan even inspired me to volunteer for the society myself, but I took for granted that the wonderful town-spirited events sponsored by the society would just occur, never considering how much each event depended on Joan's dedication and hard work. However, in doing some research for this article, I had the chance to explore the filing cabinets at the Gaylord House and discovered a myriad of projects that Joan has either volunteered for or, more likely, spearheaded. After putting them down on paper (and who knows how many I have missed), I am awestruck at Joan's loyalty, persistence and the sheer quantity of her work for the Hartland Historical Society and the Town of Hartland.

President 1984-2000 and 2004-2006

Events: Tour of Our Town-1977, Trees for Towns-1986, Photo Contest-1987, Garden and Graves-1997, Pound Ridge, NY trip-2001, Hartland Hollow Tours, Town House Tours, Annual Blueberry Picnic, Santa Breakfast and membership meetings throughout the year **Publications** Coordinator:

Gaines Notes-1985, Paul Crunden

Journal, Hartland Hollow—the

Doomed Town-1991, Calendar-1993,

Hartland Telephone book **Gaylord**

House: Renovation (1984-1989), December candle lighting ceremony,

various exhibits and visits by Hartland school children. **Fundraisers:** t-shirts,

ornaments, notecards, miniature

houses, bricks, souvenir booklet, coloring books, silent auctions, raffles, dinners, etc. **Writer** for "The Chronicler"

Each Hartland Historical Society event represents untold numbers of hours that Joan spent expertly and efficiently planning, organizing, and carrying out details. Leon, her faithful husband who recently passed away, was always by her side lending his help and support. Hartland will be ever grateful for their service. What a privilege to have had the opportunity to interview Joan Stoltze, who is now retired as an officer from the Hartland Historical Society but still is Hartland's living treasure.

Q: How did you get involved with the Hartland Historical Society?

A: I had a friendship with Jean Salling who was president in 1982-84 and became interested in the Gaylord House. As I recall, the MDC was ready to raze it as it was attracting vandals.

Q: What inspired you to get involved with The Hartland Historical Society?

A: Leon, Jack Myler and Bob Mocarsky inspected the house and determined that it was sound but in such bad condition that it could not be saved. Paul Crunden came to the meeting at our house a bit late and was so enthusiastic he influenced the decision to save it. He agreed to oversee the work and I agreed to raise the money.

Q: What is something you'll never forget about your presidency?

A: The opening of the Gaylord House in the summer of 1989. We had hoped to have it outdoors but heavy rain sent us to the West Hartland Town Hall for the ceremony. Paul Eseppi and Paul Crunden had built a platform by the front door for the speakers. NOT USED! People stood in line in the rain to tour the facility after the ceremony

Q: What are you most proud of?

A: We raised \$50,000 (85% or more of which came from within Hartland) by 2 door-to-door fundraising trips around town—50 people worked giving out flyers telling of the organization and of plans for the house; dinners, raffles, bake sales, direct appeals. We worked for the full 5 years while work on the house and its

collection continued. I am also very proud of a home tour we did with 8 stops.

Q: What are you most grateful for?

A: The open hearts of the people of Hartland.

Q: What are the biggest changes from when you began until you retired?

A: Large increase in working (outside the home) mothers. It is more difficult to get the help needed in volunteer organizations

Q: Tell me your favorite Hartland Historical Society story.

A: One Sunday Lee and I went to the house to photograph work in progress. Paul Crunden was there working on the

chimney in the living room. He was mixing cement in a wheel barrow and laying brick. He had me lay 2 at the back of the wall of the fireplace.

Q: *What are your favorite Hartland Historical Society traditions?*

A: I love that we mark the opening of the Gaylord House by the Blueberry Picnic each year on the Sunday closest to August 12.

Q: *Would you like a “do over” opportunity for any event?*

A: I'd make the sun to shine on our opening day.

Q: *If you could do one thing differently, what would it be?*

A: I'd try to get a vice-president to be willing to step up to the presidency after a time in training. It would spread the responsibility and work around more.

Q: *Any regrets?*

A: The loss of people so vital to our work: Pauline Skaret, Peg Jones, Paul Crunden, Agnes Gorse, Georgean Fiehler, Jack Myler, Stanley Ransom (founder of the HHS in 1953), and Charles Stipeck who took the idea of giving the Gaylord House to the town to the MDC.

Q: *Which event or duty did you absolutely hate?*

A: None. I like that our meetings are open to all town residents so they can come and hear information that we offer. I like having individual homes open for tour.

Q: *Did you reach all of your goals as president of The Hartland Historical Society? If not, what would have been left for you to accomplish?*

A: No, I would have liked to have constructed a barn to house some outdoor wagons, etc.

Q: *What is your most fulfilling memory?*

A: It was a real treat to take students over during spring vacation to work on the house. We used crowbars to pull plaster from walls and ceilings, dug mud from the cellar floor and felt good about helping do something for the town. Once we went over just to clean up so the men could go forward again with construction.

Q: *What is your fondest memory?*

A: I was able to read the diary of Mrs. James Pierce (a real look at life on a farm—its activities and troubles). She lived and died on the West Mountain. Her courage as she coped with a cancer and her daily family work was inspiring. I was able to speak to a meeting of the society about her days. We received the diary from a gentleman in Old Saybrook. It covered the years 1899 until her death in 1984.

Q: *What was your most memorable moment?*

A: Besides the opening of the house, I remember most fondly a line of children and animals (under the direction of Ronnie Alicata) coming across the lawn of the Gaylord House from the West Hartland Fire Department to form a small Nativity and mark the lighting of the candles in the windows for the Christmas season. We had a bit of music and served cookies and cocoa.

Q: *What did you find yourself doing that you never thought you would be doing?*

A: Sitting on the sidelines as my body ages and makes active work difficult.

Q: *How have your years of service to The Hartland Historical Society changed you?*

A: They invested me with a deep love and commitment to our town.

Q: *What would you consider to be your breakthrough accomplishment?*

A: We were able to build a core group of workers that could be counted on in every way.

Q: *What have you learned from all your years of service?*

A: That most people respond positively to a direct request for help. They do not respond, generally, to generic pleas for aid. Personal contact works best.

Q: *As a long-time volunteer and president of The Hartland Historical Society, what advice would you give to present and future Hartlanders?*

A: Learn about the history of your town and make sure you give to its organizations from your time and your treasures. It will not stay as we like it now unless we support it.

Q: *What have you learned that you would like to share with the younger generation of Hartlanders?*

A: You inherit good things from the people who have gone before you and your task is now to give to the future advancement of your community. The best friends you make are those with whom you share work and purpose.

Q: *How do you want to be remembered?*

A: As a long time teacher and activist in our community.

Q: *Is there anything else I haven't asked that you'd care to comment on?*

A: I think it is important for each family to belong to the Hartland Historical Society. Your membership says you support our work even if you cannot participate in specific activities.

*HHS member Lynn Osborn contributed to this story



We've Got Mail

Alana Bordewieck asked why Rengerman Hill Road is called Art Hayes Road on early maps of Hartland.

We asked lifelong resident, Hubert Parmelee, to help us out on this one. Although the mystery remains, Mr. Parmelee came up with some fascinating facts. According to land deed records dating back to 1903, Mr. William Rengerman owned a large section of land on the road. However, on a Coast and Geodetic map dating from the 1950s, the road is listed as Art Hayes Road, though no town records list him as a resident. About 70 years ago there was a wooden tower on Round View Acres which was located toward the western part of the road. Anyone could climb up to survey the area. Don't you think Rengerman Hill Road would be the perfect setting for a movie scene about a drive in the country, or a car chase, or at dusk, a scene in a scary flick?

We would like to encourage you to satisfy your curiosity about all things Hartland. E-mail your questions to hartlandhistoricalsociety@gmail.com (please type HHS ? in the subject box) or leave your question on voice mail at 860-595-8021. We may choose a question or two to answer in the next edition of "The Chronicler." We would especially love to hear from the inquisitive kids of Hartland.



Bea Sobol and her sister Elsie

Camp Alice Merritt-- Our Community Gem

A Message from our First Selectman:

The Camp Alice Merritt property has been part of Hartland's History since before the Revolutionary War-- first as a farm, then as a Girl Scout Camp, and now as a town recreation area. In 1992 our town's leaders and residents realized that Camp Alice Merritt would be a treasured asset to Hartland and purchased this very special piece of property from the Girl Scouts. It has served as one of Hartland's swimming areas for many years. When Kip Hall had to be removed, many residents began discussing the future use of the property, especially the Nellie B. West House. In 2008 a committee was formed and plans to renovate the Nellie B. West House as an activity center for recreation, scouting and various other uses was set in motion. The problem, as usual, was how to raise the necessary money. To the delight of the committee, the First Church in Hartland, Congregational made a very generous donation toward the goal of restoring the Nellie B. West House. Now nearly four years later because of the dedication of the Nellie B. West committee, our incredible volunteers and numerous other donations of time and materials, the Nellie B. West House is dedicated to the residents of Hartland. It is very fitting that this has come on the 100th anniversary of girl scouting. Thank you to all past and present that have made this possible. Wade Cole, First Selectman



Note: Since it is not yet completed and no protocol is in place for using the facility, residents are not yet permitted to visit the Nellie B. West House. Eventually Hartlanders will be able to enjoy the hall and read the plaques displaying information about the history of Camp Alice Merritt, the OTCA Canoe, and about all the volunteers who contributed their time and financial support to our town gem, the Nellie B. West House.

Don't Be a Litterbug

One of the Hartland Historical Society's goals is to sponsor the collection of historical articles, pictures and other items relating to the Town of Hartland and to provide a proper place for the exhibition of them. However, the proper place for a collection of garbage is the dump. Please secure your trash in your vehicle as it makes its way to the town dump. Please keep our roads trash free and do your part to keep Hartland pristine.

Hartland Celebrates Camp Alice Merritt Day

As a young girl scout in the 1930s, Natalie Phillips' favorite activity was canoeing at Camp Alice Merritt on Two Ponds. Imagine her thrill when, on June 10, 2012, Natalie, now age 89, once again stepped into an original 1930 Camp Alice Merritt Old Town Canoe and paddled through the calm waters of what is now known as West Pond or "the Girl Scout Pond." Upon disembarking, Natalie exclaimed, "I love it here!" Natalie along with her daughter, granddaughter and great granddaughter, representing four generations of girl-scouts, were among the over 175 attendees at Camp Alice Merritt Day celebrating both the dedication of the Nellie B. West House and the 100th Anniversary of the Girl Scouts.

The day provided the opportunity for former campers and townsfolk to share their tales about Camp Alice Merritt while a reminiscent slide show flashed photos of the camp. (Did you know there was a foot bridge across Rt. 20 to safely carry campers across the busy road and that the cost for attending camp for 2 weeks in 1946 was just 14 dollars?) Girl Scout uniforms and memorabilia from across the decades were on display in the Nellie B. West main hall. Wayne McCutcheon, who restored the maroon 1930 OTCA, explained the mysterious journey the canoe took from Camp Alice Merritt and back again. Visitors had the opportunity to inspect the canoe and locate the serial number that identified the canoe as being purchased for Camp Alice Merritt. Jack Roarke's 1930s Model A Woody, similar to the vehicle that delivered the canoe to the camp, was also on display. A tour of the camp included a Girl Scout sing-a-long at Great Oaks Campsite and the opportunity to hike the camp's trails. Finally current and former Girl Scouts along with local Boy Scouts flanked the maroon OTCA and carried it home to the pond where it was originally launched.



Efforts are underway by the Hartland Historical Society to purchase Mr. McCutcheon's beautifully restored Alice Merritt Canoe. If you would like to support us in our efforts, please mail your tax deductible donation (check made out to Hartland Historical Society: "canoe" in memo) to Treasurer HHS, PO Box 221, East Hartland, CT 06027.

Alice Merritt Camp Song

*Composed and written by
Scout Counselor Marie A. Levan 1940s*

On a rock embroidered hilltop.
Here beneath the cloud flecked sky.
We have reared Camp Alice Merritt
where the freshening winds sweep by.
Here beneath the starry heavens,
where the voice of nature thrills.
High we hold torch of friendship.
Gather strength from purple hills.



Natalie Phillips & Laura Stevens in canoe



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The Hartland Historical Society's mission is to discover, procure and preserve whatever historical facts may be available relating to the civil, military, literary, cultural, and ecclesiastical history of the town of Hartland; and to investigate and preserve such traditions and knowledge as now exist only in the memory of persons. The Society will be responsible for sponsoring and exhibiting the collection of historical articles, pictures and other items relating to the town.

Hartland Resident
 Postal Customer

2012 Hartland Historical Society EVENTS

October 14 - Fall Meeting, 1pm, Town Library, West Hartland - no charge

Gaylord House will be closed after October 14 meeting but can be seen by appointment (860-379-1610)

December 8 - Santa Breakfast, 8-11am, Fire House, East Hartland

Officers

President-Joanne Groth
 Vice President- Pat Davis
 Secretary-Mandy Nurge
 Treasurer-Bud Groth
 Curator-Joanne Groth
 Librarian-Grace Jones

Directors

Terese Gundersen
 Louise Hayes
 Tim Kendrick
 Hubie Parmelee
 George Ryan



Annual Santa Breakfast

Bring your holiday cheer and your appetite to the Annual Historical Society Santa Breakfast. From 8 until 11 AM, eat all the pancakes and syrup you want. Sausages, coffee and juice will also be served. Of course, Santa himself will also be there waiting to listen to your child's holiday requests and pose for pictures. Don't forget to visit Santa's Workshop where children can purchase inexpensive holiday gifts for their friends and family. As always raffle tickets will be sold for a number of prizes that will be on display. HHS items like our famous miniature houses will also be available for sale.

\$6 for adults, \$4 for children ages 2-12, and \$25 for a family--under 2yrs. are free