



The Chronicler

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

Camp Alice Merritt in the Spotlight

come to these amazing presentations and find out why!

Annual Membership Meeting

May 18, 7:00 pm, E. H. Town Hall

Nellie B. West Building being renovated at the Camp!

Hear from our selectman, Wade Cole and project chairperson, David Faye. There are many Hartland volunteers that have been very busy preserving a treasured part of our past for the benefit of today's and tomorrow's residents.

Who was Nellie B. West?

Hear from Elaine Lowengard, a lifetime Girl Scout who came to the Camp for the first time as a Brownie in 1936 and many times there after.

Camp Photos and Memories Requested!

- ◇ Do you have any photos from the Camp property or your Girl or Boy Scout days? HHS would like to scan them to use in a slide show.
- ◇ Do you have memories of your time there? HHS would like to capture them.

*If you answered **yes** to either of these questions and would like to share please call Joanne at 379-1610 as soon as possible. **You could also bring your photos to the May 18th presentation.** We will have a photo scanner available at that time.*

Camp Alice Merritt Day

Sponsored by The Hartland Historical Society & Town of Hartland

June 10, 1pm, Camp Alice Merritt

- ◇ Come and see restored 1930 OTCA canoe owned by and used at Camp being launched in pond!
- ◇ Who was Alice Merritt? Joseph Merritt, her grandson, to tell it all!
- ◇ Slide show of Camp Merritt "Then and Now".
- ◇ Nellie B. West Building being dedicated!
- ◇ Local & past Camp Girl Scouts mark 100 year anniversary of Girl Scouts with a sing-a-long.
- ◇ Local Boy Scouts to participate - walking tours to old campsites.
- ◇ Girl Scout Uniform Exhibit and Jack Roarke's 1930 Model A "Woody" on display.

OF INTEREST

Do you know who owned the property before Camp Alice Merritt?

Nellie Cowdry sold the property to the Hartford Girl Scout Council in 1924.

Memories of Clifford L. and Nellie Reed Cowdry as recalled by Gordon C. Wright of East Hartland

Clifford L. Cowdry¹ b. in Hartland 1852 and d. 1901, was a direct descendent of Moses Cowdry¹ who came to Hartland in 1769. Moses built and lived in Hartland. He sold to his son Moses who then sold to his son Lester. In 1870 Lester and his son Clifford built the pond and possibly the farm house that was located where the Girl Scouts' Kip Hall stood. Clifford married Nellie Reed who was b. 1857 in West Granby, CT. They were farmers and worked many acres of land. They had one son, Ellis who died of the flu in 1918. Ellis was a good friend of Fred Wright, Gordon's dad. Ellis was a motorcyclist and took Fred and his wife Catherine to Long Island in a side car in 1917.



Clifford built onto the house of Nymphas and Florence Wright, Gordon's grandparents, in 1884. The older part of this house is documented by the State as the oldest building in Hartland (1760). The older portion was moved back with the newer portion build on top of the older foundation. This house still stands at 279 Hartland Blvd., East Hartland and is owned by the Wright family.



Sometime after 1918 the Cowdry farm house burned down. Ernest Brown, Nellie's hired hand, built a one room house for Nellie, where the Lillie's live today at 208 Hartland Blvd. In 1924 Nellie sold a one hundred and thirty-two acre tract to the Hartford Girl Scout Council for \$5,000. This included the pond and property reaching past the other side of Skinner Road. In 1928-29 Nellie's small house burnt down. Because of this, Nellie Cowdry moved in with Nymphas and Florence Wright and stayed for a year or so. Nellie and Florence were

great friends and were known to spend their days quilting together. Gordon recalls Nellie making quilts for him and his sister Edna while she was there. (*Note: Historical Society Gaylord House collection has patchwork quilts made by Nellie.*) Nellie's next home, a 6 room house with a porch across the front, was bought from Sears Roebuck. It was assembled by Leonard Ransom of East Hartland. Currently the residence of the Olsen's, this house with additions, still stands at 196 Hartland Blvd.



Florence Wright & Dorothy Mueller



In 1925 the Girls Scouts built "Kip Hall" on the ruins of an old farmhouse. In the 1930's Doc Emmons of East Hartland built a new dam for the pond. Ernest Brown, who was caretaker of Camp Alice Merritt, drained the pond each year. Gordon also remembers working for Ernest for 25 cents an hour spraying apple trees, raking and mowing hay from the property of Camp Alice Merritt to the Hawley property of today.



Janet (Betty) Mueller Pearson, Gertrude Stickney Lilliendahl, Roberta, Ruth and Shirley Simmons (granddaughters of Frank and Ada Gould) were among the campers at Alice Merritt in the early 1930's. They were Nellies' summer time neighbors and were known to call her "Auntie" or "Annie".

Nellie Cowdry coped with shingles in her later years and left the house when Ernest Brown died in the 1940's. Willis Hayes bought the property, moved in and took over as caretaker for Camp Alice Merritt. Nellie died in 1955.

*Clifford and Nellie Cowdry are buried in the East Hartland cemetery. Their only son, Ellis is buried in Granby.

Note: Hartland Church records show the spelling "Cowdery" until 1883 when the name Emeline "Cowdry" appears even though it appears as "Cowdery" for other family names. The Historical Society's Gaylord House collection holds calling/visiting cards for both Emeline and Nellie Cowdry. Hmm, mystery of why the spelling changed.

1. Source: Mary Bryant Alverson Mehling in her book "Cowdrey, Cowdery, Cowdray" published 1911 by Frank Allaben Genealogical Co., p. 78 on Moses Cowdery

Mose⁸s Cowdery (1731-1813) was born Charlestown, Massachusetts, dies in West Hartland, Connecticut. He married 1st about 1757 in Connecticut, Martha Bushnell born 1731 in Saybrook, Connecticut, daughter of Josiah Bushnell and Martha Jones. Martha died 1803 in Hartland, Connecticut. He married 2nd 1806, Lydia Baldwin born 1735.

Moses⁸ moved from East Haddam in 1756, and after several changes finally settled in Hartland, Connecticut about 1769 and joined the church 1771. In about 1772 he erected a log house, and another in 1780 which he sold to his son Moses⁹ in 1797. In 1837 Mose⁹s sold it to his son Lester, who later built another which continued in the family as late as 1896. The first two of their children were born in East Haddam, Connecticut. The others in Hartland, and when the 1790 Census was taken there were two males over 16 and 5 females in his family.

Moses⁹ born 1773 in Hartland, died 1852 in East Haddam, CT. He married Zeruah (spelled Geruah in Hartland Church records) Phelps 1787 in Hartford. She was born 1776 in Hartland and died 1861 in East Haddam, CT. Of the ten children of Moses⁹ and Zeruah, Lester Cowdery (1814-1889) born in Hartland marries Emeline Emmons born 1816, in Hartland, CT 1839. Lester and Emeline have 3 children, one being Clifford L. Cowdery (1852-1901).

Society Santa Celebration Struggles Sans Stoltze *(pardon our alliteration)*

On the morning of December 10, all manner of sighs and declarations of anxiety were being uttered in preparation for the Hartland Historical Society's Annual Santa Breakfast. "Oh no, we forgot about numbering the tables. Yikes, where are the Santa Helper aprons? The name tags are missing!" This was our first attempt to fly solo without the guidance of Joan Stoltze, past president of the HHS and event organizer extraordinaire. Joan has taken a well-deserved retirement from her duties, but we missed her guiding arms as we tried to pull off the breakfast without a hitch. Nevertheless, tummies got full of pancakes and sausage, the kids shopped for their moms and dads in the Santa Store, and children still whispered their holiday wishes into Santa's ear. But it just wasn't the same without Joan and her better half, Leon. One thing that never changes—we are grateful to all the kids and adults who volunteered to make our biggest fundraiser a success.

Hartland Elves: *Hannah Murphy, Liam Murphy, Caroline Watson, Ryan Fairchild, Josh Fairchild, Conner Fairchild, Tyler Fairchild, Devon Gomez, Chad Lillestolen, Elise Lindgren, Michael Way, Greg Wilcox, Maddie Bedard, Matt Rukstela, Oliver Burke, Kyle Jansen, Cara Ferro, and Morgan Blake*

Adult Volunteers: *Chuck Osborn, Gary Lovell, Neil Mueller, Rob Davis, April Seidman, Susan Pearson, Tammy Meyers, Katelin Meyers, Jeff Fairchild, James Parmelee, Ada Mae Parmelee, Carol Evonsion and Bill Murphy*

East Hartland Firefighters: for graciously allowing us the use of their facilities.

HHS TO RECEIVE GRANT

"Thank you to The Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut and the Connecticut Humanities Council for grant money in support of Camp Alice Merritt Day".

Hartland School Essays

In honor of our town's 250th Anniversary, The Hartland Lions Club sponsored a writing contest for students at Hartland School. Three examples were chosen that best described what makes Hartland so special. The youngest writer was **Alyssa Maiga** (Kindergartener) who at the time of the contest was Mrs. Klopfer's student. She is pictured with her poster. Another writer was **Sydney Palinkas**. At the time of the contest, Sydney was 10 years old and a student in Cece Kendrick's 5th grade class. **Chad Lillestolen**, a 7th grade student of Mrs. Alicata last year submitted his poem for the contest.



Alyssa Maiga with her winning entry

I Love Hartland

by Alyssa Maiga

I love swimming at the girl scout pond with my family.

The Surprise Visitor at Hartland Pond

By Sydney Palinkas

"Can we go to Hartland Pond? Please?" I begged mom, anxiously waiting for the answer. She hesitated, still boiling delicious macaroni and cheese on the warm stove. "Come on!" I urged, tugging on the cuffs of her jean shorts. "I won't ever ask again." Mom looked at me doubtfully, then stared at the golden sun breathing heavily. Just as she was about to say, "No," I tried Plan B. I tilted my head slightly, and made my eyes as wide as they would go. Then I pulled down my lip, and pressed my hands together to make a prayer sign. Mom rolled her eyes and cried, "Oh, fine! Let's go to Hartland Pond!" I raced all around the living room, one circle after another and twirled past the pot of lunch. I leaped through the air and with that, squeezed my mom tightly along with a thank you. "THANK YOU SO MUCH!" I screamed, and dashed to my room. I quickly heaved on my swimsuit and waddled out the door.

I leaped into the car, and in a flash, we were arriving at Hartland Pond. "C'mon mom! C'mon!" I screamed, jumping up and down. I grabbed my towel and flip-flops and raced down the rocky path. I threw my towel down in the fluffy sand and with a splash; I cannonballed into the depths of the lake. "Ahh!" I breathed as my head popped up above the surface. "What a day!" I flipped my goggles over my head and strapped them to my eyes. Then I dropped into the icy water once again. I did flips and turns, back hand springs and hand stands...all underwater. I swam around some more desperately trying to catch the tiny minnows and sunfish. Then, I glided over to the deep end and stopped, staring at something.

A thin, wavy-like creature slithered over to a large rock in the water. A look of pure horror spread across my face like someone had jumped out from behind a corner saying, "boo!" My heart started to beat like a drum, and I soon realized that this scary creature was...a water snake. Thoughts flew through my mind. Should I

get out? Should I scare it away? Should I continue to play? I tried to move, but I couldn't for some strange reason. But somehow, I managed to get to shore. "MOM! MOM! I panted, holding my side. "Th-th-there's a...a" "A what?" my mom questioned. But there was no need to answer because before we knew it, it had slithered to the sandy hills of the beach. "AAAH!" we both screamed, and ran to the car. We didn't hesitate, not at all. Mom turned the wheel, pushed the gas, and started driving back home.

I watched as the moon slowly came up and lit up the night sky. I heard footsteps behind me and turned around to face my door. "Phew!" my mom sighed as she came through the doorway. "You've had quite some day, haven't you?" she said. "I sure did! – water snakes, swimming, wow!" Mom smiled at me lovingly as she gave me a hug. Who knows what adventure I'll have tomorrow, but nothing will beat what happened today. Nothing. I thought silently. Nothing.

I Hear Hartland Singing

By Chad Lillestolen

I hear Hartland singing the tunes of young and old
With the rhythm of basketballs drumming
The wind humming
With birds and children singing since long ago.

Our year starts in the crunch of snow
With the singing of friends 'round the Christmas tree
Hear us laugh and play
Hear us have so much fun we never gray.
Listen to the yelps of happy children
As spring comes near,
Always a bit late
But it's a relief when it's here.

The sucking of mud underfoot
And trickles of temporary streams
Rustling squirrels in the bushes
Listen to our happy screams.

A green, no more gray
No more hollow sound of empty trees
Here comes the time
When you hear more than you see.

The brushing of grown cubs in the trees
Signal that summer is here.

I hear the pecking birds
The zip of mosquitos near.
As soon as it all started,
Soon it all shall end.
Some sounds will be gone
Along with certain sights
Fall
Is just around the bend.

I hear the crunching leaves
The hollow tap of cold ground.
All that was once in trees
Is quietly falling in mounds.
I hear the "whoosh!" of heavy winds
The dry blow of loose coats battling the breeze
And the crunch of fresh apples
With brigades of birds in trees.

As it started it shall end
With the crunch of snow
And the singing of friends
Build a snowman
Hear it fall
Here in Hartland
A great town for all.

I hear Hartland singing the tunes of young and old.
With the rhythm of basketballs drumming
The wind humming
With birds and children singing since long ago.

Hartland Memorabilia Available at Your Fingertips

If you are on the prowl for gifts with Hartland connections, visit our website (www.munic.state.ct.us/Hartland/Historical.htm). There are a variety of great Hartland items available. Come to one or all of our annual events to purchase (May meeting, June event, July Carnival/Wednesday, August Blueberry Picnic, October meeting and Santa Breakfast).

Due to Sales and Usage tax guidelines we are only permitted to sell 5 times a year to be tax free.

Each year we will decide which 5 events will be used.



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 East Hartland, CT
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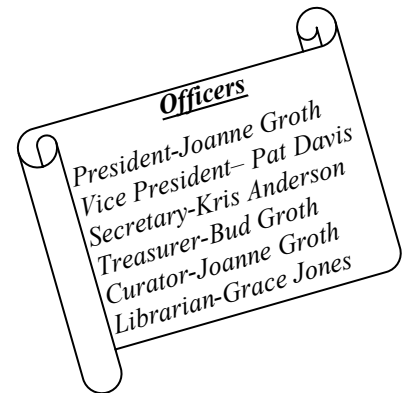
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The Hartland Historical Society's mission is to discover, procure and preserve whatever historical facts may be available relating to the civil, military, literary, cultural, and ecclesiastical history of the town of Hartland; and to investigate and 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 (no charge)

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| May 18 | Spring Meeting, 7pm, Town Hall |
| June 10 | Camp Alice Merritt Day, 1pm, Camp Merritt |
| July 25 | Fireman's Carnival-this night only |
| August 12 | Blueberry Picnic, Gaylord House |
| October 14 | Fall Meeting, 1pm, Town Library |
| December 8 | Santa Breakfast, Fire House |



Oral History Notice

Friends, Hartlanders, Countrymen (and women!), lend us your ears. We are recruiting excellent listeners to chronicle the oral history of our town. If you love a good story, why not take advantage of this opportunity to record the tales of the living treasures of our town? Contact Joanne Groth at 860-379-1610 for further information.

The Gaylord House



Hartland's town museum located at 141 Center St. in West Hartland, will be open for visitors beginning May 6 and every first Sunday of the month through October. Our docents will guide your trip down memory lane anytime between the hours of 2 and 4 PM.

The next time you visit, see if you can discover the answer to this question:

What human body part was often used as home decorative art? Look for the answer in the next edition of **The Chronicler**.