

# MILTON Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 Number 1

April 1984

## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR...

Welcome to the first issue of the Milton Historical Society Newsletter. I hope you will find it fun and informative. A periodical newsletter has been recommended by the membership committee as a means of keeping our members and others informed of our needs, goals, and activities.

As many of you know we had a busy and interesting year in 1983. We hosted another successful Historic Homes Tour including the following homes; Charles Barsalow (Main St.), United Church Parsonage (Main St.), Kevin Endres (School St.), Bernard Reagan (Main St.), and the former Pidgeon home (Westford Rd.). We were able to share many fine speakers and other programs organized by the program committee (John FitzGerald, Chair). But our biggest project of 1983 was the beginning of the cemetery restoration at the Checkersberry graveyard. We have been joined in this effort by several other civic groups in town and we have been able to make a noticeable improvement. Collectively we have put in over 370 person-hours and it shows.

We are in hopes that this newsletter will keep all of our members and friends up to date on all our projects. We are including many nonmembers on our mailing list in order to help stimulate community awareness and support.

Speaking of support, I am pleased to say that the sponsors listed on the sponsor's page have made it possible for us to put this newsletter in your hands at no cost to our general fund. With their tax deductible contributions we are able to produce, print, and mail our message to you. My personal thanks to each of them as they lead the way in support of a real community spirit here in Milton.

So, read on, and enjoy ...

Bob Hooker, Editor



MUSEUM REPORT...

The Milton Museum opened to the public in May of 1979 and is housed in one room on the third floor of the Clark Memorial Building on Main Street. Sponsored by the Milton Historical Society, the museum contains a variety of objects from the nineteenth century and early to mid twentieth century.

Special exhibits are on display for a three month period, and have featured dolls, old bottles, fans, antique tools, school desks, and ink bottles.

Many items have been donated to the museum by former Milton residents and present ones, and include wedding gowns, an antique clock, old trunk, pictures, furniture, and scrapbooks. Other items are on loan.

Our new fireproof file cabinets have been received and will soon house our collection of rare photographs and glass negatives.

Everyone is welcomed to visit the museum on Saturday from 1pm to 5pm, or schedule an appointment by calling Mrs. Ruth Ryan.

Ruth Ryan, Curator

SPECIAL NOTE...

Anyone who has items of historical interest to Milton, especially photos, that they would like to lend or donate to our collection please contact Mrs. Ruth Ryan or Mrs. Jane Fitzgerald.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT...

I have been requested by President Robert Hooker to present a brief summary of the minutes of the monthly meetings. Since our newsletter is to be published 4 times a year my reports cover a three month period - in this case, January, February, and March of 1984. I have endeavored to retain the pertinent and more interesting parts of those reports and eliminate the less interesting and "housekeeping" items.

January 4, 1984

The regular monthly meeting was held at the American Legion hall with 16 members and guests present. Jane FitzGerald spoke briefly on methods other similar groups are using to raise money. She said that our group should explore methods of funding other than by dues.

It was reported that the roof of the Museum is still leaking and apparently will not be fixed in the near future.

President Bob Hooker read a letter from the Preservation Institute for Building Crafts concerning a series of workshops in the Windsor area starting January 21 st.

The business meeting was closed at 8:15 pm.

February 1, 1984

At this meeting Ruth Ryan reported that 343 people registered at the Museum in 1983. This number was down slightly from 1982.

Jane FitzGerald, Ruth Ryan, and Edna Frye volunteered to work on the grade school history contest.

Robert Hooker called for the formation of a finance committee and asked the following people to serve on it: Robert Hooker, Edna Frye, Stanley Henry, and Ruth Ryan. They decided on a time and place for their first meeting.

President Hooker reported that we are in receipt of a check from I.B.M. in the amount of \$1740.00 for the purchase of fireproof filing cabinets and other accessories to store our collection of rare photographs and glass negatives. This money represents a grant from the Community Relations Office in recognition of an employee's voluntary community efforts, in this case, Bob Hooker.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

March 7, 1984

At this meeting it was decided to make an effort to publish a newsletter 4 times a year.

The report of the finance committee, consisting of a proposed budget and proposed fundraising activities, was read and accepted. One method of raising money discussed was to have a series of penny bingos. Stan Henry suggested that a penny bingo just prior to Easter would be both desirable and feasible.

Edith Holden and Gwen Brown have volunteered to work on the grade school history contest.

President Hooker stated that the fireproof filing cabinets purchased with the I.B.M. grant money will be delivered soon. He also announced that the meeting next month (April 4) is our annual meeting and that the election of officers will be held at that time.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Stan Henry, Recording Secretary

COMMITTEE NOTES...

History Contest: Again a good turnout this year with over 100 entries. The winners will be awarded their prizes at the May meeting. The families of the winners will be invited to join us.

Cemetery Restoration: With spring at hand we will be painting the fence at Checkerberry and getting ready to hang the new sign. We hope many of you will be able to join us in a simple ceremony on Memorial Day, May 28, followed by an open house at th Legion Hall.

Finance: Our Penny Bingo in April was a success; our thanks to all those who helped in any way. Look for our next two fundraisers, a raffle at the Milton Country Fair in June, and another Penny Bingo in July.



## HISTORIAN'S REPORT. .

### Speakers...

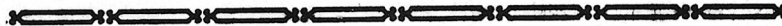
Our monthly meetings at the Legion Hall are accompanied by interesting and informative programs. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm.

The guest speaker in January was Rolfe Stanley of the University of Vermont Geology Department, who narrated slides of Milton's geological history. He included the development of Arrowhead Mountain and Cobble Hill. He noted that the mountains in Vermont are the result of the collision of matter some 460 million years ago.

The guest speaker for February was Edward Vonsitis, Civil War expert, who gave an informal talk on Civil War history and Vermont's part in the war. Mr. Vonsitis said that some 34,000 Vermonters served in the army, with 5200 killed or missing in action. General Stannard of St. Albans was a prominent officer in the war as was General Hastings Ripley of Rutland. Vermont's monetary share in the Civil War was over nine million dollars, the speaker said. The Civil War began on April 23, 1861 and ended on April 9, 1865.

The program hour at the March meeting was given over to an extended business session when budget matters were decided upon. During refreshments, the group reviewed pictures of early Milton, contributed by Mrs. Velma Powers and Mrs. Jane FitzGerald.

Ruth Ryan, Historian



### GRADE SCHOOL HISTORY CONTEST...

If you have children or grandchildren in the 4th, 5th, or 6th grade in the Milton school system, you have probably heard about the contest which we conduct annually in these grades. All 4th grade pupils enter this contest, as it is considered a part of their study of Vermont during the latter part of the year. Students in grades 5 and 6 are encouraged to participate voluntarily. Prizes are awarded for the best entries in each grade, and the winners receive them at the May meeting of the Historical Society.

This is the fifth year of the program, and the students are now at work on their entries. A committee from the Historical Society, working with the teachers involved, decided on the format and content of the material to be used. Our aim is to interest our youth in Milton's two centuries of history, as well as the story of Vermont from its early days. It is also a good opportunity for the pupils to learn how and where to locate information at school, in the library, and in the museum at the Clark Memorial Building.

One section of the entry must be an essay on a topic the student chooses from a given list. Parents may help on the other sections, if necessary, but the essay should be the work of the student alone.

Edna Frye; history contest committee

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SPECIAL NOTE...

At the annual meeting in April election of officers was held. The results are as follows; President, Bob Hooker; Vice-President, John FitzGerald; Recording Secretary, Stan Henry; Corresponding Secretary, Jeanne Henry; Treasurer, Edna Frye; and Historian, Ruth Ryan.

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AS WE LOOK BACK...

In The Beginning

The town of Milton, chartered on June 8, 1763, was not settled until after the Revolutionary War, February 15, 1782.

On that date, five sturdy pioneers namely, Amos Mansfield, Absalom Taylor, William Irish, Thomas Dewey, and Leonard Owen, armed with courage and the map of their claims, arrived in Milton. Here they founded homes for themselves and for future generations.

## AS WE LOOK BACK (CONT'D)...

In 1788 the town was organized when the trails were replaced by officially laid out roads, and the six mile square township was made into five divisions. At the organizational meeting William Irish, who settled near the present iron bridge, on land now owned by Paul Paulsen, was moderator; and Enoch Ashley was elected town clerk. The selectmen were Samuel Church, Elisha Ashley, and Absalom Taylor, the latter having settled on the present Harold Littlefield property.

The population increased rapidly from 300 in 1795 to 1,548 in 1819.

By 1806 a school had been erected, and a church stood on the site of the present ambulance building on Main street. A cheese factory was in operation in the southeast corner of Milton, now known as Marr's Hollow, and a tannery stood at the foot of Tannery Hill and River Street, once known as Leather Lane.

Ruth Ryan, Historian

"They came to Milton when the  
land was new,  
When the lordly pine and the  
hemlock grew,  
In the place where the town  
now stands."

## BICENTENNIAL QUILT...

In the winter of 1981-1982, a quilt marking the 200'th anniversary of the town's settling, was made by the members and friends of our Historical Society. The quilt, now on permanent display in the Museum, consists of 28 squares depicting the early people, places, and events of the town. The center of the quilt is dominated by a large map of the new township. In each issue of this newsletter we will show a sketch of, and describe one or more quilt squares. Lorinda Henry, who designed many of the squares and sewed the large map, will provide the sketches.










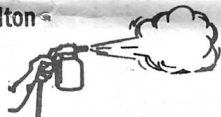

Country Store  
Designed & sewn by Kathy Henry

The first square chosen shows the old country store with it's wonderful array of merchandise from rubber boots to horse collars, and a dusting of cracker crumbs which often covered the floor. A pot bellied stove on a zinc mat shed rays of warmth and cheer from the center of the store, where the men of the town met to swap news and discuss politics and the weather. Salt salmon, strong cheese, and Castile soap all contributed to a satisfying, unique aroma difficult to imagine in these days of the super-market. This quilt square was designed and sewn by Kathy Henry.

Ruth Ryan, Curator

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When you do business with our sponsors, please take a minute to tell them that you appreciate their support of our 1984 newsletter.

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### Membership...

Individual -- \$5.00

Family ----- \$7.50

Student ----- \$1.00

(under 18 yrs.)

Membership is open to anyone interested in our goals and purposes.

Dues may be mailed to the Treasurer, Mrs. Edna Frye at RFD # 2, Milton, 05468. They are due each year in April.

### Meetings...

The Milton Historical Society meets on the first Wednesday of each month at the American Legion Hall on route 7 in Milton at 7:30 pm.

### Museum Hours...

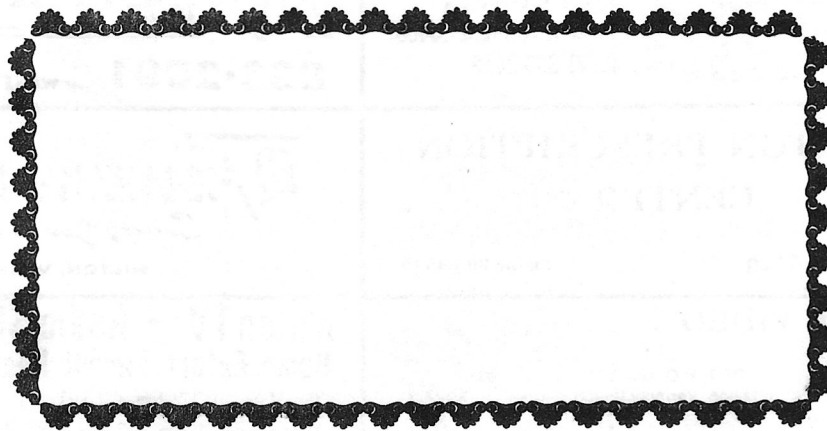
The Milton Museum is located in the Town Office Building, the Clark Memorial, on Main Street. It is located on the third floor with an elevator access. The hours are 1 to 5 pm on Saturday, or by appointment.

### Newsletter Staff...

Editor, Bob Hooker; Artwork & Layout, Lorinda Henry

Contributors, Stan Henry, Ruth Ryan, Edna Frye.

Milton Historical Society  
RFD #4, Milton, Vt.  
05468



PROGRAMS AND EVENTS...

May: 2nd - Monthly meeting, awards for history contest,  
Speaker; Cornelia Denker education consultant  
from Vermont Historical Society, editor of  
Green Mountaineer.

June: 6th - Monthly meeting, speaker to be announced  
22-24th - Milton Country Fair, Raffle, Antique farm  
machine display by Eugene Towne

My apologies to all for the lateness of this first issue.  
They say the first issue is always the hardest. I'm sure  
there must be at least one or two of Murphy's Laws at work  
here!

Bob Hooker, Editor