



Hollis Historical Society

Wheeler House

20 Main Street, P.O. Box 754

(603) 465-3935

Hollis, New Hampshire 03049

www.hollishistoricalsociety.org

<https://www.facebook.com/hollishistoricalsociety>

Fall 2018

"It ain't what you don't know that gets you in trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so" Mark Twain

Dear Members,

I hope you had a wonderful summer. Our New Hampshire summers seem to be getting hotter and hotter. Whew-eee! The cooler days of autumn are looking pretty darn good right now.

Coming up, there's a lot to look forward to in our little village: Old Home Days, the Apple Festival, the Historical Society House Tour, Luminaria Night, not to mention your family's Thanksgiving and festive Holiday season celebrations!

House Tour

Main Street is going to be a-buzzing on **October 13th**, when we have a very special **HISTORIC HOUSE TOUR** at the 'Little Mansion' located at **38 Main Street**, followed by a visit to a beautiful barn **NEXT DOOR** at **34 Main Street**, where you'll be treated to **MUSIC** and **REFRESHMENTS**, which will include wine, cider, and sweets and savories. The hours of the tour are **1:00pm to 5:00pm** (*no wine will be served after 5pm*).



38 Main Street

The 'Little Mansion', owned by **Jim and Tracey Guichard**, was built in 1806 by Josiah Conant, a skilled Hollis cabinetmaker. Conant spent three years finishing the

woodwork of the interior (Wait until you see it...it's magnificent!) Half of the second story was originally a dance hall, later used for a reading or writing school, or sometimes for a singing school. Josiah brought his bride, Lucy Jewett, to this house. In 1852, John and Elizabeth Jewett were living in this house until approximately 1885. In 1886, the house was sold at auction to Charles Read. For a while, several tenants lived there.

In the spring of 1910, the 'Little Mansion' was purchased by Franklin Worcester, the same man who gave the town of Hollis the land on which the Hollis Social Library was built, and whose portrait hangs in our Library. Mr. Worcester restored and modernized the house. In the spring of 1911, the house was sold to the Misses Flagg, two retired spinster school teachers, who were descended from Eleazer Flagg, the second Hollis settler. The Flagg sisters, Etta and Abby, who, in their forty years of ownership, made this a house of gracious living. Plus, Etta Flagg, who had been head of the Home Economics Department for the Los Angeles School System for almost 20 years, designed and developed extensive gardens for this home.

After the death of the last Miss Flagg, the house had numerous owners until, in 2016, the Guichards purchased the house and have lovingly worked on the 'Little Mansion' to enhance its original beauty. Once the interior of this gracious old home was completed, the Guichards started working on the gardens, which every gardener knows is a never-ending process. (*Most information from the DAR notebooks at the Hollis Historical Society.*)

After touring this lovely old home, both upstairs and downstairs, you'll wander next door to 34 Main Street where you'll visit the handsome restored barn belonging to **John and Allison Brackett**. The house, which we'll NOT be touring, was built in 1847 or 1848 by Warner Read and Simeon Spaulding, and was run for a while as a hotel. Mr. Spaulding was a 'forty-niner who traveled to California. Unfortunately, his body was found there shot full of arrows.



34 Main Street

Around 1870, the property was purchased by Charles Read (remember him, he's the one who purchased the 'Little Mansion' at auction). Mr. Read had two daughters, one of whom continued to live in this house until her death in 1967. That daughter was Lucinda Read, a well-known school teacher in Hollis from 1890 to 1950. Sixty years! (She even went back to teaching in 1952 as a substitute teacher).

Miss Read started teaching right after her graduation from Hollis High School. The first school she taught in was the Pine Hill School House, a one room school house now located on Ranger Road, and restored and owned by **Sharon Howe**. On her first day of teaching, Miss Read was driven to school in a horse and buggy driven by her father. Soon after, Lucinda Read purchased a horse of her own and rode to school every day of the school year.

The barn originally had four or five horse stalls, complete with trap doors for the manure, as well as an interior privy. Now this beautiful building has living area space, a bar, a pool table...but still the wonderful old beams and woodwork. On October 13th, the barn will be decked out with little tables for enjoying sweets and savories, wine, and cider, and music too!

Tickets for this event are \$20.00 per person in advance or \$25.00 at the door. To order tickets in advance, just call the Historical Society at (603)465-3935. We'll also be selling tickets at Old Home Day.

We can't THANK the Guichards and Bracketts enough for allowing us to hold this fund raising event at their properties.

Proceeds from this event benefit the Hollis Historical Society and will go towards re-shingling the Wheeler House.

This newsletter is published three times a year by the:

Hollis Historical Society
20 Main Street
Hollis, New Hampshire 03049
(603-465-3935)

The Hollis Historical Society is a private, non-profit organization incorporated in the state of New Hampshire.

The mission is to provide an opportunity for all ages to connect with the history and heritage of the Town of Hollis and its residents to gain knowledge and perspective from the past and to find inspiration and purpose for the future. We do this by:

- Acquiring, preserving, and making available to the public, memorabilia and historical materials significant to the Town
- Conduct research and make available historical and genealogical information to interested persons and organizations
- Present educational and informative programs and exhibits for our members and the community
- Maintain the structure and collections of the Ruth Wheeler House and the Always Ready Engine House

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Historical Note

Did you know that **MAIN Street** in Hollis was originally called **KING Street**, then **HIGH Street**, before finally being named Main Street? Do you think it was named King Street due to the fact that before the Revolution there were two prominent Tory families (the Cumings and the Whitings), loyal to King George, who lived on this Street? (*Sharon Howe recently discovered this interesting bit of history while doing some research*).

Wanted/Needed/Help

We're looking for folks to help with the House Tour on Oct 13th. We need folks to:

- Provide sweets and savories
- Help with parking
- Directing folks to the house entrance
- Directing folks to the barn after the tour
- If you can lend a hand, please call the Wheeler House at (603)465-3935, or call Freddi at (603) 465-2884.

Historical Tidbit -- Hollis Social Library

In the early days, being the librarian meant you kept all the books at your own house! (*Now that's something to think about!*)

"The Hollis Social Library was incorporated by an act of the General Court, June 11, 1799, and is believed to be one of the oldest associations of its kind in the State of New Hampshire. The incorporators named in the charter were Rev. Daniel Emerson, Rev. Eli Smith, Noah Worcester and Daniel Emerson, Jr., who, with their associates, were made a body corporate, with perpetual succession, with power to establish and maintain a library, and to make all needful rules and by-laws in respect to it. The original capitol was \$1000. The two last named corporators were authorized to call the first meeting, and under this charter a small library of from one hundred to three hundred well chosen books was soon collected, which number has since increased (as of 1879) to between nineteen hundred and two thousand bound volumes beside pamphlets.



38 Main Street

"The officers of the association consist of a President, three Directors, Secretary, Treasurer, and Librarian, chosen annually. Any inhabitant of the town could become a member of the association, and entitled to the privileges of the library, upon paying an initiation fee of fifty cents, being afterwards chargeable with an annual tax of twenty five cents, afterwards increased to fifty cents. The number of names now (1879) on the list of membership is 167."

"For many years the library was kept at the house of the librarian, who was "ELECTED FROM TIME TO TIME." (You gotta love it!) " Since 1851, the library has been kept in a room, provided and furnished for by its directors, in the Congregational Meeting House." (Information from Worcester's History of Hollis, NH)

Currently, in the summer of 2018, our library has 52,105 titles and 4,652 card holders. (*Good thing the books don't still have to be kept in the librarians' home!*)

Old Home Days

Again this year, on September 15th, your Hollis Historical Society will be set up at Old Home Days. We'll have some of our very best Attic Treasures available for sale, plus Hollis dish towels, raffle tickets, and tickets for the house and barn tour.



Old Home Day 2017

Luminaria Night

Again this year, Hollisites and visitors to town will be able to feast their eyes on hundreds and hundreds of luminarias lighting the center of town.

- On **December 8th, at 4pm**, the candles will be lit!
- Then, at 4:15pm, the chimes at the Meeting House (Hollis Congregational Church) will start playing
- Followed by the tree lighting and carols on the Common at 4:30pm
- Then a tractor parade around the Town Common taking Santa Claus to the Lawrence Barn
- Santa will be at the Lawrence Barn to greet children beginning at 5pm
- There will also be hayrides in Nichols Field
- From 4:15 to 6:30pm, a chili and corn bread meal will be served at the Meeting House (Hollis Congregational Church).
- The traditional annual Hollis Holiday Concert, performed by the Hollis Town Band, will take place starting at 7pm in the Hollis-Brookline High School. Admittance to the concert is the donation of a canned food item.
- The Hollis Garden Club will be selling wreaths by the Town Hall during the beginning festivities.



Luminaria Night 2017

NEW this year, just prior to Luminaria Night, there will be a Front Door Decorating Contest within the Luminary Lighting District. Anyone who buys a luminary candle kit may be included in the contest. A committee from the Hollis Historical Society will be the judges and the winner will receive a copy of *"Where the Past has been Preserved-Hollis, NH 1879-1979"*, plus a free family membership to the Hollis Historical Society **AND** a collection of five antique Hollis post cards.

Museums



Have you seen this year's display at the **Always Ready Engine House**? It's called **"I'LL BE THERE AS SOON AS THE HORSE IS HITCHED!"** It's all about doctoring in Hollis in the early days.... doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists.... even friends and neighbors who came to help when no one else was available. Some of these folks had graduated from medical school; others went for a couple of years; and some taught themselves.

We have some of the very early journals, records, and stories on display. Also, examples of some of the equipment and remedies used not only by the trained professionals,

but also by the townsfolk who came up with their own remedies.

Lynn Schur, Jeanne Smith-Cripps, and Martha Davis created this wonderful display. Don't miss it... it's truly something special! Several people in town loaned us items for the display, which is greatly appreciated.

The **Always Ready Engine House** is open the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, from 1 to 4pm, now through October. The **Wheeler House Museum** is open the 1st Sunday of the month, now thru October, plus every Monday and Wednesday afternoon, year round, from 1 to 4pm.



The museums are available for tours at other times, by special arrangement, by calling (603) 465-3935.

2018-2019 Programs

We have a fabulous line-up of **New Programs** for the 2018-2019 season! They're all **FREE** and **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**. Members will receive the Program Brochure along with this newsletter (which comes out three times a year). Programs start in October and are scheduled for the following dates:

- October 18, 2018
- November 15, 2018
- March 21, 2019
- April 18, 2019
- May 16, 2019 (Annual Meeting & Potluck Dinner)



CHRISTMAS PARTY for MEMBERS!!!

We're having a Christmas Party and you're invited!

So save the date: Sunday, December 16th, from 3:00pm – 5:00pm

The Wheeler House will be decked out for the Holidays
and brimming with tasty Christmas goodies!

Christmas/Holiday Gifts

If you're looking for some very special Christmas gifts, we might have just what you're looking for. We have a very limited selection of some duplicate antique items from our collections. Some of the items include:

- The Hollis Bible
- Hollis Along the Proposed Route of the Electric Railroad
- Happy Hollis Homes
- Plus other booklets

In addition, we have some framed copies of old broadsides and photos, plus antique postcards of Hollis scenes. Quantities are very limited and available on a first come basis. Don't miss this exceptional opportunity. And don't forget about our selection of NEW books about Hollis history, Hollis dish towels, and note cards, too!

Reminder

Don't forget the raffle for a set of six (6) Shaker style stackable boxes, hand made and donated by member Tom Worcester (Yes, his great uncle was Franklin Worcester, mentioned above in a couple of our write-ups!). These handsome boxes all have lids and are graduated in size. They make a spectacular display. You may purchase raffle tickets for these desirable and valuable oval wooden boxes. They may be seen now at the Wheeler House and at our programs. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Drawing will be at our November meeting.



In closing, I wish you a fine autumn, a joyous Christmas, an all around meaningful Holiday season, and a happy and healthy New Year!

Best regards,

Fredricka Olson

Fredricka Olson, Curator

"When your watch gets out of order, you have a choice of two things to do: throw it in the fire or take it to the watchtinker. The former is the quickest." Mark Twain