



HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Wheeler House
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Winter 2016

“ Human kindness has never weakened the stamina or softened the fiber of a free people. A nation does not have to be cruel in order to be tough.”

---- Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Dear Members,

We hope you're enjoying a wonderful winter and wish you health and happiness in this year ahead! All kinds of exciting things have been going on since our last newsletter.

ATTIC TREASURES

Attic Treasures has been a huge success for the Historical Society. People have been so generous in donating items and in buying all the wonderful treasures. Last year we made \$4,577.06. The money is going towards conserving some of our artifacts.



We've compiled a list of some of the artifacts that need conserving and will be taking these items for estimates. They include several samplers and a painting. We have a lot of items that need conserving and are taking this one step at a time, thanks to

the success of Attic Treasures. To everyone who donated, purchased, and helped price and sell, THANK YOU!

ATTIC TREASURES RE-OPENING: Attic Treasures will re-open June 4, 2016. We will be operating the same days and hours as last year, the first and 3rd Saturdays of the month, from 9am to 1pm. *****Note: We will start accepting donated items beginning April 18th.***** If you need help getting your donations to us, or have questions as to what types of items we accept, please call the Wheeler House at (603) 465-3935 and leave a message. We can also use help pricing and selling during open days. So, if you have a hankering to be a shop keeper, give us a calla whole new career may be waiting for you.

LUMINARY NIGHT

Your Society participated in Luminary Night on December 12th in Hollis center....and what a beautiful night it was!

Board members helped assemble the luminary kits, and then gathered to light them and celebrate the start of the Christmas Season.



Photo by Jennifer Marandola

NEW ROOF

The ice house, the little building behind the Wheeler House, where Attic Treasures is housed, is getting a new roof **ThanksTo Cindi Owning and Jeff Taylor**, owners of **Viking Roofing**. They have offered to re-roof the building for **FREE!** We cannot thank them enough for this incredibly generous offer. So, if you need any roofing done, please consider these great folks at **Viking Roofing**.

NEW PURCHASE

The Hollis Historical Society had the opportunity to purchase five (5) antique, inscribed, woodworking planes -- all different -- that were made by Hollis residents **L. W. Farley**, **B. Farley**, and **G.W. Manning** in the 1800s -- for \$1,000. It's not often an opportunity like this comes along, so be sure to check them out. They will be on display this summer at the Always Ready Engine House.

Production Staff

Writer: Fredricka Olson
Editing: Sue Birch
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CUB SCOUTS

Hollis Pack 12/Den 1 - Wolf Scouts visited the Always Ready Engine House on December 13th for a tour with **Anna and Sue Birch**. As part of their work towards learning about the community and the history of Hollis, they came to see the Always Ready Engine House, visit the old Hollis jail cell, the hearse, and played a short guessing game, "WHAT IS IT," with some old Hollis artifacts.

The boys enjoyed seeing the picture of Cleasby's Store, which is now Monument Square Market, and after the tour they visited the old ice house and talked about the history of the ice business and then played in Little Nichols Park.



Article & Photo by Anna Birch

NEW DISPLAY AREA

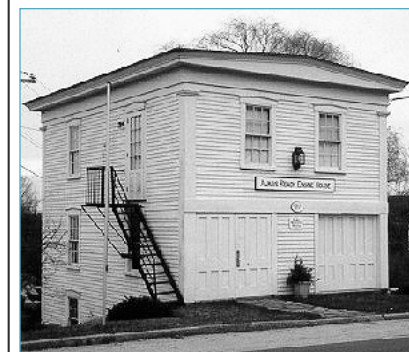
Due to an incredible amount of hard work by **Joe Harlin** and **Ed Walker**, the Hollis Historical Society has a new display area. The SUMMER KITCHEN display area is in part of the basement/garage area of the Wheeler House. It will be ready for viewing this summer. **Martha Davis** will be setting up the display with some fascinating old artifacts. If you'd like to help her, please give us a call. THANK YOU, **Joe** and **Ed**, you did a fabulous job!

ON A SAD NOTE

Six of our long-time members have passed away: **Jerry Walsh, Jackie Sommer, Shirley Cohen, past president and director Julie Tyska, Norma Woods, and Inez Morrison**. They will all be greatly missed.

HIDDEN TREASURES

The Hollis Historical Society will be participating in the Freedom's Way National Heritage Areas HIDDEN TREASURES program on May 14 from 10am to 3pm. Enjoy "Always Ready and Still Standing – One Building's Legacy of Community Pride, Purpose, and Preservation" at our own Always Ready Engine House. We will be showcasing the oldest public building in Hollis, and its unique Greek Revival architecture.



Visitors will be able to tour all three levels of the building and view our handsome town hearse, fire equipment, old tools, general store items, old photos of Hollis, Veterans Wall, Grange Corner, and old jail cell, to mention but a few of the many items on display.

The Hollis Heritage Commission will also be participating the same day, with a display at the Lawrence Barn. So bring your friends, family, and neighbors....and make a day of it! It's all free and open to the public.

LAWRENCE BARN LOFT DISPLAY

If you haven't seen the new loft display at the Lawrence Barn Community Center....be sure to check it out. Thanks to the dedicated work of **Mary Lou Ward**, visitors to the barn will now get to see a wonderful variety of old artifacts, most of which would have been found on an old working farm in Hollis.



Photo Courtesy of The Nashua Telegraph

Mary Lou handled this huge project from start to finish. This was not a Hollis Historical Society project, but several of our members helped out, and **Mary Lou** is one of our members, too!

RAFFLE

Don't forget, we still have two raffles going on. One for a gorgeous quilt made and donated by **Nancy Bell**. Plus a handsome, adjustable candle stand made and donated by **Art Rockwell**. Tickets are available at the Wheeler House and during our upcoming programs. Drawing will be at our Annual Meeting in May.



Historical Tidbits

With this a presidential election year, one can't help but think back to when it all started, the American Revolution, and our brave forefathers. From extracts in "The Town of Hollis, New Hampshire in the War of the Revolution" by Samuel T. Worcester, we find the following:



"A special town meeting was held in Hollis November 7, 1774 more than five months before the battle of Lexington, the following preamble and resolution was adopted:

"Preamble.-We the inhabitants of the town of Hollis having taken into our most serious consideration the precarious and most alarming affairs of our land at the present day do firmly enter into the following resolution:

That we will at all times endeavor to maintain our liberty and privileges, both civil and sacred, even at the risque of our lives and fortunes, and will not only disapprove, but wholly despise all such persons as we have just and solid reasons to think even wish us in any measure to be deprived of them."

Just who were some of these brave men? From an original descriptive roll of Capt. Dow's company, showing ages, height, and complexion of fifty of his men, it appears that Jonathan Powers, the oldest of them, was 60 years of age, and that the youngest was Peter Cummings, who was but 13. The next youngest was the fifer, Noah Worcester, Jr., long afterwards known as Noah Worcester, D.D., and as one of the originators of the Massachusetts and American Peace Societies, who was but 16 the November previous. The next youngest was Phineas Nevins, killed in the battle, who was 17. Five of the others were but 19. The two oldest next to Powers were each 48; and the average age of the rest of the men was about 25 years.

And what were some of their physical attributes? Fourteen of the fifty men were of "dark" complexion; the remaining thirty-six being described as "light." The three tallest of the men were 6 feet in height. The shortest was the boy Cummings, who was but 5 feet.

What were they paid? It appears from the payroll of Capt. Dow's company that the private soldiers were paid two pounds, equal to \$6.67 per MONTH, or nearly 24 cents per day. In addition, from a copy of an original receipt, now in the office of the Secretary of State in Boston, it appears that the soldiers in Capt. Dow's company received the military coat voted by the Massachusetts Congress in the spring of 1775, to 'eight-months men' as a bounty.

Tories: Four of the citizens of Hollis were known as loyalists, or Tories, one of whom for a time was imprisoned for disloyalty. The remaining three left the country early in the war, and they, with many others, were forbidden to return to the country under penalty of death.

After the end of the war, the British Commissioners, in their negotiations for peace, were persistent in their efforts to provide for the return of the banished adherents of the crown, and the restoration of their confiscated estates. A special town meeting in Hollis was called to consider this subject in the spring of 1783. 'And to see if the town would give their Representative any instructions in the respect to the Absentees from this State and their returning.' The following excerpt, copied from the record of that meeting, shows the sentiments of the people of the town on this question found expression in language more vigorous and emphatic than forgetful and forgiving:

"The minds of the people being tried in respect to the Returning of those MISERABLE WRETCHES under the name of Tories, Absentees, or Conspirators,

Voted ...unanimously that they shall not be allowed to return or regain their forfeited Possessions.

Voted...that a Committee be chosen to give the Representative of this Town particular Instructions which may convey to him the unanimous sentiments of the people in respect to the Absentees above mentioned."

So there you miserable Redcoats! (Sorry...got caught up in the moment)

In an article by Bill Hudgins in the AMERICAN SPIRIT Magazine, he states that New England and New York troops were generally taller than their compatriots. Foreign-born troops averaged 1.5 inches shorter than those born in America.

In this same article, contributor "Selesky examined records such as payroll receipt books to compare the number of those who could sign their names to the total list of soldiers. About 80 percent of Northern troops could sign their names, compared to about 50 percent in the middle states and only 30 percent in Virginia."

One thing is certain though, whatever their age, height, coloring, or level of education, WE ARE FOREVER IN THEIR DEBT!

In closing, I'd like to remind everyone that all of our programs are free and open to the public.....so bring a friend, neighbor, relative....and have an informative and enjoyable evening out. (And yummy refreshments, too!)

Our next program is March 17th at 7:30pm at the Lawrence Barn. **Nancy Bell** of Hollis will be presenting **The Love and Labor Behind Every Handmade Quilt**. Historical, political and personal events have inspired generations of quilters. Come hear the story and see these masterpieces in progress and completed. We look forward to seeing you at this interesting program.

Best regards,
Fredricka Olson, Curator

Could There Be a New Life for the Farley Building?

Thanks to a generous donation of \$500,000 by **Richard Stahl** of Hollis dedicated to the renovation of the Farley Building, this historic old building may have a new chapter in its life. With that said, I thought you might like to know a little bit about the original benefactor of the Farley Building, and the building's history, the building which over the years has also been called the White Building and the Old High School. The following information is taken from **The History of Hollis 1730 – 1879** by **S.T. Worcester**:



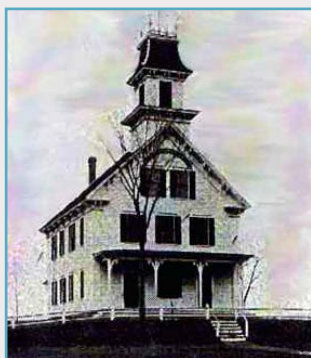
Mary Farley

“Miss Mary Sherwin Farley, daughter of Capt. Christopher P. and Mary (Sherwin) Farley was born in Hollis, Nov 2, 1813. Her father was a grandson of Lt. Benjamin Farley, one of the earliest settlers in Hollis, and followed the business of tanning, by which he acquired an ample estate. January 18, 1813, he married Mary Sherwin, daughter of David Sherwin of New Ipswich, who died about two weeks after the birth of her daughter, Mary.”

Mary's father became devoted to Mary, whose *“life in her infancy seemed to hang upon the most slender thread.”* In fact, her health was never vigorous. *“In her girlhood, she could rarely join in the pastimes of those of her own age, nor was she ever able to attend regularly upon the school terms.”* Although when she was fifteen, she spent one year at a boarding school.

“Mary and her father were almost constant companions. She accompanied him on his walks and rides, became familiar with his interests and business – in this way, gaining practical knowledge and habits of thought, which helped to form her character, and were of great value to her. After her father's death on July 22, 1848, she continued to live at the paternal homestead, til her death, July 27, 1875.

“In matters of business she was methodical and exact, manifesting more than usual insight and good judgment in the management of her affairs. She passed a life that was not eventful but marked by acts of kindness and charity. Mary had a strong affection for children and young people. She encouraged their efforts for improvement and often gave them substantial aid. She was at all times deeply interested in the property and welfare of her native town, and especially in its public schools, and besides her other benefactions for them, during life, bequeathing by her last will, a fund of near \$10,000. for the endowment and permanent support of a High school.” With the stipulation that within two years of her death, Hollis purchase a suitable lot and erect a high school.



Original Farley Building (1877)

From a 2006 Hollis Times article by Karl Johnson, it is noted that by 1818, Hollis had 14 school districts, one-room school houses scattered across the town. In 1874, they were organized into the Union School District. Then, in 1876, the town voted to accept the bequest of Mary Farley and its stipulations.

While the new school was being readied, Aurora Lodge No. 49 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows obtained a lease for the third floor of the building, which they used until the Lodge left Hollis in 1973.

As you will note from the photos, the school underwent several additions. Plus the old District 8 schoolhouse was moved from the north end of town and attached to the rear of the building. (It's still there!)



Farley Building (1921) - Second Addition

During WWII, children at school saved waste paper and metal containers to help the war effort. Karl Johnson states that *“...pupils in grades seven and up were sometimes excused from afternoon classes to help harvest crops at local farms. A cannery was set up in the school basement to preserve local produce for school use.”*

Johnson writes, *“...the post war baby boom produced a dramatic increase in school age children, the old school simply couldn't accommodate the growing number of pupils,”* so, in 1950, the lower level of the town hall was used as a first grade classroom, until the new elementary school was ready to accept students in 1952. In 1958, the tower on the old high school was struck by lightning and had to be removed. And the old school bell that had hung in the tower, sadly, was given away. In 1962, a new high school was built (our current Middle School), and the Farley Building was used for art, language and special education classes until 2006. Since then, it has been empty.

By whatever name you call it....the Old High School, The White Building, or the Farley Building.... it has served us well. In fact, it holds the memories of seven generations of Hollis students. Even now, in its sad and empty state, it retains a special character. Whatever your feelings about this building, I think we can all agree that this special location in the center of our beautiful town of Hollis deserves a handsome, well cared for structure that does our village justice. A building, whatever its' use, that will provide new and wonderful memories for a whole new generation of people.



Farley Building (1904) - First Addition



Farley Building - Today