



# HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Wheeler House  
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www.hollishistoricalsociety.org  
<https://www.facebook.com/hollishistoricalsociety>

Winter 2017

*“Life begins at the end of your comfort zone.”  
Neal D. Walsch*

Dear Members,

We're off and running into a new year and I hope the year 2017 will be a wonderful one for you and your family.

Here's a little overview of what we've been up to at the Hollis Historical Society:

- Volunteers at the Wheeler House have been busy rearranging rooms, getting genealogy files in order, displaying and labeling items, and accessioning donations.
- This past fall, we worked with a group of middle school students from the **Hollis Montessori School**. We helped the students compile information on some past Hollis residents. The students then portrayed the person they researched in a first person presentation at the Lawrence Barn. The program was attended by their parents, teachers, and folks who helped them with research. It was a wonderful program, complete with costumes. In addition, each student interviewed a current Hollis resident, and from those interviews created a booklet containing all of the interviews. They are a remarkable group of students and teachers and a pleasure to work with.
- The **Antique Appraisal Fundraiser**, featuring **Jason Hackler** from the **New Hampshire Antique Co-op**, held last October at the Lawrence Barn, was a great success and attendees seemed to really enjoy the event.



On a sad note, **James Hayden** of Methuen, MA, passed away last October. Jim was born in Hollis in 1960 and was from an old Hollis family, with relatives still in town. Back in 2014, Jim demonstrated the art of scrimshaw work on powder horns at the Wheeler House. Plus he was a Revolutionary War Re-enactor and presenter at one of our programs. Jim's talents were many, including that of the "beloved Sergeant Jim" of the End Zone Militia, which fires muskets to celebrate scores at New England Patriots football and New England Revolution soccer games. His dedication to history was far reaching and he will be sorely missed.

- We've had great attendance at our programs and hope we'll see you at our upcoming presentations.

- Your Board of Directors has compiled a short list of items to hopefully be conserved. They include two samplers and an oil painting. We are now in the process of getting estimates for having the work done. The proceeds from Attic Treasures, the Appraisal Day, and our raffles go towards conserving our artifacts. But conservation/preservation is very expensive, so your participation in our fundraising efforts is critical.



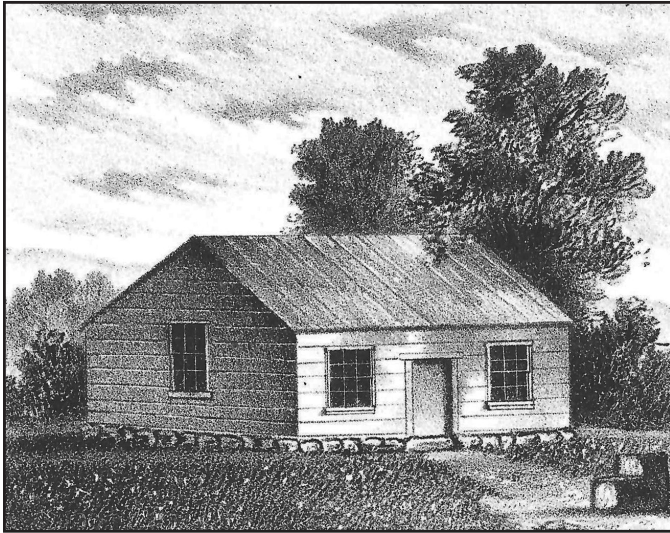
- **Attic Treasures** had another good year, but we need your donations of items to sell this coming year. Small furniture items, lamps, dishes, jewelry, prints, paintings, mirrors, collectible older toys, vintage and antique items, tools, knic-knacs, etc., etc... If you have any questions as to what types of items to donate or need pick-up, please call or email us. We'll start accepting items at the beginning of May and will re-open Attic Treasures the first Saturday in June. We'll then be open the first and third Saturdays of the month June thru October.

- The second annual **Hollis Luminary Night** was a grand success! Beautiful music was playing from the Congregational Church thanks to our own **Marilyn Wehrle**; tractors and wagons bedecked with lights and carrying Santa circled the Common enroute to the Lawrence Barn; and the center of town was a fairyland alight with several thousand luminaries. Even though it was very cold folks strolled around the center enjoying the sights and sounds. The Wheeler House displayed a miniature winter village on the porch, thanks to **Martha Davis**, **Debbe Shipman**, and **Joe Harlin**. Thanks to all the individuals and organizations who participated in this event, spearheaded by **Kimber Harmon!**



# Historical Tidbits

## LIFE WAS TOUGH....AND SO WAS CHURCH!



First Meetinghouse

Long before the separation of Church and State, the early MEETINGHOUSES in New England were the center of political and spiritual life. And the same was true in Hollis. Where now stands the Congregational Church of Hollis/The United Church of Christ in the center of Hollis, used to stand the Meetinghouse, but it was in the Parish of West Dunstable, Massachusetts.

The old Meetinghouse was probably completed in 1741. It was a simple 22x20 foot building with one “glace winder” (glass window), standing on land which was donated by Abraham Taylor. (The same land on which stands the current Congregational Church).

The little meetinghouse was soon outgrown and the second meetinghouse, 50 by 44 feet, was built in 1746, (and although it hadn’t moved, it was now in New Hampshire instead of Massachusetts), and served Hollis until after The Revolutionary War.

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## What’s Coming Up

- We need **PROGRAM** and **FUNDRAISING IDEAS**: This is your Historical Society, so tell us what you’d like to hear presented at our programs. AND...if you have an idea for a Fundraiser, we’d like to hear that too. If your suggestion is used, you’ll receive a FREE book from our “for sale” bookshelf. Just call, write, or email us with your thoughts.
- **COLLECTIONS**: Do you have a special collection you’d like to show off and display in one of our museums? The length of time the collection will be on display can vary. It’s such fun to see all the fascinating things folks collect! So let us hear from YOU!
- **GENEALOGY RESEARCH**: Do you have an ancestor from Hollis that you’d like to research? We may be able to help. This service is free, but donations are gladly accepted. Also, if you’re researching Hollis ancestors for the DAR, we may be able to help you there too. Please remember, research is limited to HOLLIS ancestors only.
- **CURIOUS ABOUT YOUR OLD HOUSE?** If you own an old Hollis house and want to know its history and that of its early inhabitants, we can probably dig up some interesting information. And in some cases, we might even have old photos of houses and their occupants. You never know what’s hidden behind these walls!
- **ATTIC TREASURES**: Aside from needing items to sell in our Attic Treasures Shop, we could also use some help selling on the Saturdays we’re open. It’s fun! Work with a great group of people....and meet some nice buyers as well. Remember, it’s the 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 9am to 1pm, June thru October. (Sign up for one day...or more).
- **RAFFLES**: We are offering three new RAFFLES! And they’re SPECTACULAR! You can see them and buy raffle tickets at all of our programs or stop by the Wheeler House on Monday or Wednesday afternoons from 1pm to 4pm. Drawings will be at our Annual Meeting, May 18th, 2017, at the Lawrence Barn.

### Partial List of Books Available for Purchase

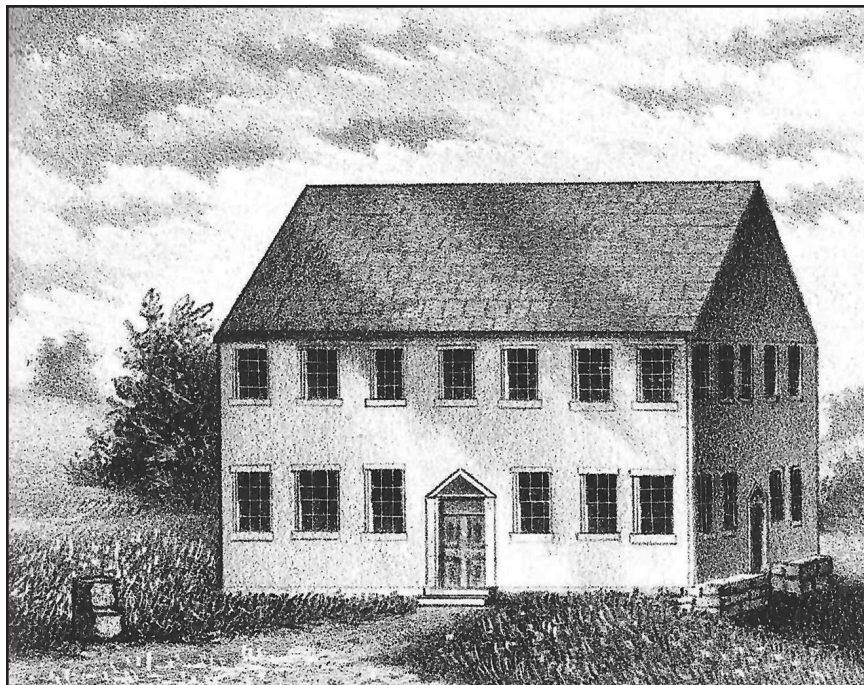
- *Newly republished: Hollis Seventy Years Ago* by Henry Gilman Little. \$20
- **Early Settlers of West Dunstable, Monson, and Hollis, NH** by Charles S. Spaulding. \$35
- **Hollis Family Album 1730 – 1950** by Joan C. Tinklepaugh. A new history of Hollis told through the stories of the families who lived it. \$50
- **History of Hollis, NH 1730 – 1879** by Samuel T. Worcester. \$45
- **Where the Past Has Been Preserved**, Hollis, NH 1879 – 1979, Irene West, editor. \$30
- **Hollis Marriages & Births up to 1900** by Joan C. Tinklepaugh. \$20
- **Peter Powers, Pioneer** by Rudge Nichols and Caroline Poole (this book benefits the Hollis Social Library). \$10

Books are available at the Wheeler House during regular hours. Mail orders accepted when accompanied by a check in the amount of order plus \$4.00 per book S&H, payable to the Hollis Historical Society, P.O. Box 754, Hollis, NH 03049.

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On May 14, 1747, an act was passed taxing all the lands in Hollis at 2 pence per acre for the support of the minister and for finishing the meetinghouse, but limiting the law to four years.

Two years after "Raising Day" of the meetinghouse, a plan of the "Pew Ground," as it was called, was made by a committee appointed by the town and accepted by a vote at town meeting. The men, who at the time paid the highest taxes on real estate, were to have the luxury of owning and sitting in a separate pew, the wife being indulged with the privilege of sitting in the same pew with her husband, upon the condition that the purchasers of the "Pew Ground" should build the walls of their pews and pay 200 pounds, Old Tenor, towards the completion of the building. In 1748, this "Pew Ground" was disposed of by lot.... those entitled to do so drawing for choice (meaning *location*). Mr. Enoch Hunt drew the first choice, paid for it 14 pounds, O.T. (Old Tenor), and chose the second pew at the right hand of the pulpit. For those who could not afford or were not permitted to enjoy the luxury and distinction of pews, there were long seats. With the east side seats being the "men's side" and the west the "women's side." In the making and arranging of these long seats, the committee charged with their construction, directed by Town Meeting to have them made and arranged "according to pay, having regard to age."



Second Meetinghouse

The galleries, the upstairs area of the meeting house, were also divided between the sexes. Each sex even had their own flights of stairs.

Now, in case things got out of hand during church services, there were tithing men, both upstairs and downstairs, to note "all graceless irreverence and decorum – especially in the youthful portion of the congregation." Add to this the fact that there was no heat, except for your own footwarmer – which by the way, if you left it behind in the meetinghouse, would be forfeited to the sexton. And he could sell the footwarmers if the owner refused to pay a fine. (Wow! Our forefathers and mothers were some tough cookies)!

And singing (by a choir) in church? Oh no!! That was not voted in at Town Meeting until 1767. Those early singers must have had really powerful voices... but good ones... because in 1784, they were voted a designated area in which to sing... if -- and it's a big 'IF,' a certain number of them 'give the glass necessary to repair the windows.' (Does that mean they sang so loud they shattered the glass?!)

And lastly, in 1788, it was voted that the area used by the singers "could not be appropriated to any other use and that the singers be allowed to sing once a day without reading."

In 1804, the third church/meetinghouse was built. And around 1830, under a recently enacted law, "church and state" were separated and the "Ecclesiastical Society" was organized to meet the new situation. But that's a story for another time.

(Information for this article was obtained from *The History of Hollis, NH 1730-1897* by S.T. Worcester and some unsigned documents at the Wheeler House).

**BOOKS, BOOKS, AND MORE BOOKS:** Just a reminder that we have some wonderful books for sale at the Wheeler House. NEW books about Hollis and photo note cards of Hollis, plus ANTIQUE books, booklets, and postcards pertaining to Hollis (duplicates from our collections). They all make wonderful birthday, anniversary, thank you, holiday and house-warming gifts. (See the box on page 2 for a partial list.)

**Save the Date!**  
**March 16, 2017**  
**7:30 PM at the Lawrence Barn**  
**The Shaker Box – The Why and How They Were Made**

**Tom Worcester and Brad Wild**  
**both past residents of Hollis**

Tom and Brad will give us a history lesson on the ubiquitous Shaker Box. They will tell us why they were so popular and why the use of them declined. They will do this by demonstrating the techniques and tools of construction, including the use of a steam box to aid in bending the wood. Their talk will culminate with a finished box for us to see.

This program is open to the public and FREE. And bring some friends. Yummy, complimentary refreshments will be served.

Don't miss this fascinating program!



**The Wheeler House is open**  
**Monday and Wednesday afternoons**  
**from 1 to 4PM, year round.**  
**As well as the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month,**  
**June through October.**

**The Always Ready Engine House will be open**  
**the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month,**  
**June through October.**

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



***In closing***, we wish you a safe and happy remainder to the winter....with hopes for an early Spring!

(I apologize to those of you who like the snow!)

Come visit us at the Wheeler House!

Be well and happy,  
*Fredricka Olson*

Fredricka Olson, Curator

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*"Billion dollar idea: A smoke detector that shuts off when you yell....  
"I'm just cooking!"*

*(Author Unknown)*