



MOUNT HOLLY COMMUNITY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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Our mission is to enlighten our community with an understanding of our past to promote an objective vision of the future.

Home of the Vermont State Terrestrial Fossil

Lake Ninevah The Early Years (Part I Of III) by Paul Nevin



Old View from State Access Area

The name Lake Ninevah has only been used since the 1940's, and no, that is not a misspelling. The state made a misprint on the road map and Nineveh became Ninevah. Nineveh is a biblical name and not so flattering a name at that. In Biblical times Nineveh was a sinful city. Before 1940 the lake had many names. Of course, years ago the lake was about half the size it is now. The first name I have seen for the Lake is Patchnes Pond. (circa 1750) It has also been called Beale's Pond and then a number of names associated with its use. It was called Tyson Reservoir and SIC Reservoir (Spathic Iron Works) because the lake was used by the companies producing iron in Tyson. When the iron industry died in Tyson in 1872, the lake eventually became Patch Pond. Mr. Patch owned a 30 acre farm along the east shore of the lake. (circa 1799) Locals also called the lake, sucker pond. Then slowly in

the forties and early fifties it made the switch to Lake Ninevah.

The Crown Point Road passes near the north end of Lake Ninevah. General Jeffery Amherst built the road to connect Fort # 4 in Charlestown N.H. with Fort Ticonderoga.(1759-1760) Soldiers left this wilderness path and watered their horses on the shores of the pond. During the American revolution, cannons from Fort Ticonderoga were hauled over the Crown Point Road. The cannons were taken to Boston to drive the British out of Boston. One revolutionary soldier died during this passage and is buried just north of the lake.

Over a hundred years ago, Moses Townsend operated a 1,500 acre farm on the east shore of the Lake Ninevah. Moses raised sheep, cows, oats, wheat, and vegetables to feed the family. He made most of his living trading cattle and sheep. At one point he drove cattle all the way to the Boston Market. When Moses first came to Ninevah to raise his family, it was a thriving community. Fifty children attended the Hayes School just north of the lake. The area also supported a blacksmith shop, sawmills, and grist mill. As businesses closed due to stiff competition, jobs ceased, and the residents moved away. The Townsend family was one of the last to live in the Lake Ninevah area. The local school closed and the children were taught at home by their mother, traveled to Tyson to school and then attended school at Sawyer Hill School in Mount Holly. A road that Moses constructed along the east shore of the lake and a barn on Sawyer Hill Road are the only surviving structures from the Townsend era. Much of the character of the lake today can be traced Moses Townsend. If Moses had not had his 1,500 acre farm that was passed down through his family, Lake Ninevah could look quite different today. The farm land was not sold until the 1960's when the Wilderness Corporation bought the land.

The undeveloped nature of the lake can be linked directly to Moses Townsend and the Wilderness Corporation. Lake Ninevah has changed in size a number of time. The east shore of the lake is natural. When the lake is drained you can see the remains of an early rock dam about twenty five feet out from the current cement structure.

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Education Committee News

In the 1830's, a local sawmill had a dam erected to provide power for the mill. This dam is on the site of the current dam. The dam has been upgraded a number of times to accommodate a number of businesses including Tyson Iron Company and a number of power companies.



Cow Pasture Used by Ralph Cook

The last power company to own the dam was Central Vermont Public Service. They sold their interests in the dam to the Wilderness Corporation in the 1980's. Today the state lists the lake acreage at 157 acres.

One of the greatest changes around the lake has been the loss of open fields. In early pictures, you can see the large open fields along the northern, eastern and western shores of the lake. The fields on the western shores extended to the top of Bald Mountain. All the livestock and farming that kept the land open ceased operation. Today very little of the open land exists around the lake.



Barn and Pig Pen from Baldy



The Mount Holly Historical Museum has educational programs for grades K – 6. The sixth grade visited the museum in the fall for their program of “Making a Living in Mount Holly.” The program also includes a delicious trip to the Crowley Cheese Factory. The sixth grade also has three in class presentations about the town's history. The third grade visits the museum in the fall for a museum hunt focusing on old farm and home tools. The fourth grade program is about the work of the farm wife. The other classes visit the museum in the spring for their educational programs.

The Kindergarten program is about the Chase Toy Factory. The first grade program is about the history of schools in Mount Holly. The second grade program is about the history of farming in Mount Holly. The third grade program is about the railroad and the discovery of the mammoth. The fifth grade program, about cemeteries, focuses on the different types of head and foot stones as well as the symbols found on stones. The children help clean up the leaves and plant flowers in the town's oldest cemetery for community service as part of the program.

This is the sixteenth year of our writing and art contest for children in grades 3- 6. The winners read and show their pieces at a school assembly near the end of the school year.

Special thanks to the hard working education committee for helping deliver the programs.

Judy Nevin
Education Chair

Artfest 2016

The Mount Holly Community Historical Museum will be hosting **Artfest** August 5-7th. We will be selling the work of Mount Holly artists in the Perkins House Museum in Belmont. The artists work in a variety of media, including watercolor painting, photography, penwork, hand woven baskets, painted silk, woodcarving, shaker wooden boxes, and more.

You can meet the artists and shop on Friday night from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Additionally the museum will be open for sales Saturday 11:00 – 3:00 PM, and Sunday 12:00 to 4:00 PM. Please plan to support our hard working artists who have been so generous with the museum. The Historical Society thanks the artists for their continuing support.

2016**MUSEUM SUMMER SCHEDULE****2016**

Museum Open Each Weekend during July and August ~ Saturdays and Sundays 2 to 4 pm
 Note Additional Special Times on Calendar.

- Saturday, July 2 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
 Sunday, July 3 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
 Monday, July 4 Town Parade and Barbeque at Odd Fellows Hall, Museum open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Saturday, July 9 **"Animal Skins" Presentation by Peter Smith** 2:15 p.m.
 Sunday, July 10 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, July 16 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
 Sunday, July 17 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
- Tuesday, July 19 **Annual Meeting...Pot Luck Dinner** 6 p.m. at the Odd Fellows Hall
Program to Follow
- Saturday, July 23 **"Mount Holly 1850s" talk by Dennis Devereux** 2:15 p.m. Perkins House
 Sunday, July 24 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, July 30 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
 Sunday, July 31 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
- Friday August 5 **Meet the Artists of "Artfest"** 7 to 9 p.m. Perkins House
 Saturday, August 6 **"Artfest"** at the Perkins House 11 - 3 p.m.
 Sunday, August 7 **"Artfest"** at the Perkins House Noon - 4 p.m.
- Saturday, August 13 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
 Sunday, August 14 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, August 20 **"Farmfest" Sheep Shearing, Demonstrations and More** 11 to 2 p.m.
 Sunday, August 21 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, August 27 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
 Sunday, August 28 Open for browsing, 2 to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, September 3 **Baked Ham Fundraising Dinner** at the Odd Fellows Hall 5 p.m.
- Saturday, October 8 **Cider Days** Open for browsing, 10 to 4 p.m.
 Sunday, October 9 **Cider Days** Open for browsing from noon to 4 p.m.

*Visit our website www.mounthollyvtmuseum.org for more event details.
 Like the museum on **FACEBOOK***

Message from the Museum Chair

This past year the museum board worked to host the elementary school visits, provided a variety of programs, and continued to hold our annual fundraisers. It is a pleasure for me to report that the State Historic Site Marker has been erected on Route 103 near the area of the discovery of our State's Terrestrial Fossil and where the last spike was driven to connect the railroad tracks.

Several groups took the museum tour, and were impressed with our collection. We completed successful silent auctions on Cider Days weekend and at our Festival of Lights in December.

Some plans for this season include a presentation on the 1850s in our local history series. We are completing plans for a display of animal skins, and a couple of programs on antiques. Tours of the village and our collection are available on request and we also welcome visits by our home-schooled students.

During the first weekend in August, the board will host our local artists for what has become known as "**ArtFest.**"

We also plan to hold our annual "**FarmFest**" on a Saturday, August 20th.

Please plan to join us at our Labor Day Weekend ham dinner, and at Cider Days in October.

This is the time when we are renewing memberships, and with your help we can improve the exhibits and maintain our educational programs.

The Blacksmith Shop Museum has several permanent exhibits that include farm and blacksmith tools, information on our one-room schools, an old post office, and a surrey that was once used to bring guests to inns in the village. The Perkins House collection includes the home's family history, our town's Civil War artifacts, the photo albums, and our mammoth fossils.

Dennis Devereux for the museum board

