

# MOUNT HOLLY COMMUNITY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Volume 19      Number 1      June 2012

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

Mount Holly's History is Housed in Two Historic Buildings in the Village of Belmont.

Visit our website [www.mounthollyvtmuseum.org](http://www.mounthollyvtmuseum.org)

## The Runaway Pond of Mount Holly

In Vermont, the term “runaway pond” has come to mean the pond in the Town of Glover that disappeared in 1810. The story goes that when sediment was being removed to increase water flow to a dam, the entire pond emptied and flowed north for nearly thirty miles into Lake Memphremagog. It seems that only one horse was lost in the incident.

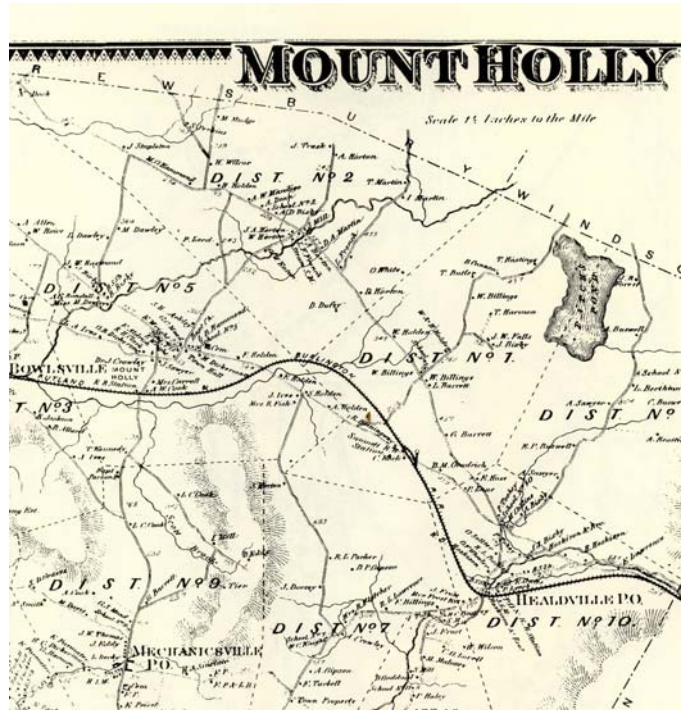


Dawley's Pond on 1854 Scotts map

A pond that disappeared in Mount Holly is a less known story. At the time the Gore was being settled in the early 1780s, there were several high mountain swamps and just one pond. This body of water was located on the Turnpike Road, just below where the Hound's Folly B&B is today. It was common for ponds to be named for those living nearest to it. This pond was known as Dawley's or Randall's Pond, because both families owned land that bordered it. It is interesting that the largest swamp was the site of an early dam used to create Jackson's Pond, better known now as Star Lake. What is presently called Lake Ninevah, formerly known as Beale's and later Patch Pond, was located in the section of Ludlow that became part of the Town of Mount Holly in 1792. The pond on the Turnpike had an upper and lower dam and several mills were erected to utilize the water power to run a sawmill.

Carroll Tarbell's History of Mount Holly mentions the many owners that operated the sawmill powered by the upper dam where the road crossed over the dam. Before 1809, Chancy Clark used the section below the sawmill for fulling cloth. By 1869 the town grand list had a house, shed and mill which were below the dam, valued at \$740, owned by an A.C. Randall. It was likely a combination of wet weather and a lack of maintenance to the upper flume which led to the failure of the dam.

Tarbell's book refers to the freshet of October 4, 1869 that washed away the dam and mill. A fatal accident report lists that Willie Bixby, son of Joseph Bixby, was swept away and drowned when the dam broke. The damage was so extensive that the dam was never replaced so the pond could not refill. Thanks to the research done by Carroll for his book, we know a little more about our pond that disappeared.



Beers map of 1869 after the pond disappeared

## Education Committee News

The education committee has created a new program for the Mount Holly School fifth grade class. This program, about cemeteries, focuses on the different types of head and foot stones as well as the symbols found on stones. The children will help clean up the leaves in the town's oldest cemetery for community service as part of the program.

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 has two programs because the third grade social studies program is the study of Mount Holly's history. During the fall program the children will examine old time farm and home tools. The spring program is about the railroad and the discovery of the mammoth. The Fourth Grade program is about the work of the farm wife.

This is the eleventh year of our writing and art contest for Mount Holly School children in grades 3 - 6. The winners presented their pieces at a program in the museum on June 10th.

*Judy Nevin, Education Chair*



## ARTFEST

As in summers past, the Museum will again recognize the many talented Mount Holly artists and craftspeople with an Art Show and Sale at the Perkins House in Belmont Village. Please join us for this art/craft exhibit and sale that supports our Historical Museum.

**Friday August 3, 6-8 pm**  
**Wine and Cheese Reception**  
**Saturday August 4, 12-4 pm**  
**Sunday August 5, 12-4 pm**

**SUPPORT LOCAL ARTISTS**

## Festival of Lights 2012



For the past seven years the Festival of Lights has been the must-attend-event! Every year people look forward to having a reason to get dressed up and socialize where there is good music, lots of food and fun live and silent bidding. As one of the most important fundraisers, the Festival of Lights proceeds go towards supporting the Mount Holly Community Historical Museum, Perkins House and the Will White Blacksmith Shop in Belmont.

The first Festival of Lights was geared towards raising money for the restoration of the Mount Holly Community Historical Museum. Over the years it has grown to benefit our continuous development of community and educational programs. It is truly amazing that every year we ask surrounding businesses and community members to take the time to decorate holiday wreaths and that every year they take the time to create the spectacular wreaths that are then auctioned off at the Festival of Lights.

This event has taken place at the Roundhouse at Jackson Gore for six years, but due to the devastation from hurricane Irene, we decided to have last year's event at the Mount Holly Historical Museum. As always the support we received was overwhelming. This year we are looking forward to returning the Festival of Lights to the Roundhouse on Saturday, December 1st. Mark your calendars! Call Doris Reiser at 259-2722 for more info.



# The Hearing Tube

## A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Use for a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Device

On July 5, 2012, I woke to discover that the hearing in my left ear seemed to be diminishing. What alarmed me about the situation was that I had lost the hearing in my right ear about 5 years prior and now I was facing the possibility of losing my hearing completely.

Over the next couple of months, I saw three different specialists, tried a number of treatments, and still no one could tell me exactly what was wrong, or if there was a solution to the problem. I felt like I was on a roller coaster, as my hearing went up and down from week to week and sometimes day to day.

One day in August I went to the doctor, wondering how I was going to be able to talk with him about the next steps, as I was unable to hear anything at all that day. He rummaged around in his cabinet and came up with a 19<sup>th</sup> century hearing tube. Miraculously, at least as far as I was concerned, I was able to hear him perfectly with no distortion whatsoever! You can just imagine how momentous this was for me.

As soon as we got home, I began to look on line to see if I could buy such a device and I emailed a group of friends, to whom I had been sending updates on my hearing. Almost immediately, I heard back from Dottie Finnerty, an MHCHM Board member, who told me that the Museum owned such a hearing tube and that she would try to borrow it. A couple of days later, she brought it over and I was able to enter the hearing world again.

Folks who are even a little hard of hearing have experienced the separation and isolation of not being able to understand all that is being said around them. They can't follow conversations, they miss the punch lines of jokes, they can't communicate with someone who may be only a few feet away, and the list goes on and on. For many people this isolation feeds on itself and they withdraw more and more, a situation which often leads to depression.

I could totally understand how this could happen, but fortunately for me that wasn't the case and to a large extent it was due to the hearing tube lent to me by the museum at a crucial point in my hearing loss.

As soon as I got it, I put it to use every chance I could get. It enabled me to have sensible dinner conversations, and allowed me to go out to various events, such as Ladies' Night (see photo), dinner parties and other social events I would otherwise have missed. I even took it to

a meeting I had with a board member from the school where I used to work in New York City. He treated me to lunch in a restaurant in Rockefeller Center and we sat at the shellfish bar and chatted away through my hearing tube!



There is no way I can ever thank the Board of the MHCHM for lending me the hearing tube for the crucial months when I had no hearing at all. Without it, I'm afraid I would have become one of those folks who sinks into depression, because of increased isolation due to a major hearing loss. The generosity of the Board and the effectiveness of this 19<sup>th</sup> century device were gifts for which I will always be grateful! Thank you so much...

### Carol DeVine

#### In Memoriam

##### Nelda Holden

We mourn the passing of our long-time friend, museum board member and faithful Library volunteer. She will be remembered for her humor and positive attitude. Though not a native born Mount Hollyite, she loved her adopted town and her home in Belmont. Nelda was instrumental in the initial reprinting, of the delightful booklet, "Mount Holly, Its Early Days," written by her late husband, Jim. It has been reprinted many more times, the latest with photos added by Nelda. Although very ill, she fought to the end to return to her Belmont home she called "Windy Hill." Her generous smile is etched in our memory.

##### Shirley Wilson

Shirley has passed on after a very long illness. She also was a museum board member for several years. A native of Rutland and a Belmont summer resident, she will be remembered fondly.

# Why Become a Member of Mount Holly Community Historical Museum?

Mount Holly has a rich, rewarding reputation for being a pleasant place to live. Neighborly “community” has always been important here. The Mount Holly Community Historical Museum proudly houses artifacts, books and evidence of life here, as it was and is to this day.



Becoming a member helps the museum in so many ways. Your financial support is necessary for maintenance and physical upkeep of our lovely buildings and properties. Our educational programs include visits from local schools.

Now that a balanced environment is maintained in the Perkins House Museum, many of our fragile items are able to be displayed. In fact the mammoth tusk and tooth exhibit has been permanently installed. Visitors who come to peek at our numerous vintage photos end up sitting at a table poring over them looking for ancestors or images of how they remember Mount Holly and surrounding communities in days gone by.



Beyond your financial support, we love your input! Often we have developed exhibits after hearing requests about items that someone has seen in the past. And of course we love “word of mouth” recommendations. When someone visits after hearing about us for the first time they seem pleasantly surprised with all that the museum offers.

Becoming a member has its perks, too. Perhaps company has arrived...Any member can call and museum docents will be happy to offer personal tours of our museums. Have you ever been on one of our Village tours? There are many surprises and secrets revealed as you learn of our history and connections with families in town.



Our programs are informative, creative and often fun as we highlight the many interests and aspects of life around our area.

## Mount Holly Community Historical Museum

**We are the “keepers of the story.”**

**Have you visited us lately?**

**Is your membership up to date?**

**Yearly Membership is available at many levels:**

**Individual \$10**

**Family \$25**

**Patron \$100**

(for which you will receive a complimentary book)

**Friend \$250**

(which includes a copy of our 1850's panoramic print)

**Sustaining Membership Monthly gift.**

We hope you will join us.

Lynn Anderson and the Membership Committee

# Mount Holly Community Historical Museum Update!

The renovation of the Will White Blacksmith Shop Museum continued with the completion of the interactive Post Office and Country Store display in the former reading room in time for Cider Days. The main exhibit area was also renovated. The new paneling (picture below) on the walls in the main exhibit area is beautiful!



An antique woodstove (picture below) was uncovered during the removal of the old wall board. Why it was hidden in the wall all those years is still a mystery!



New permanent exhibits include a school room nook featuring the original blackboard (picture below) from the old Belmont (Mechanicsville) School and other artifacts used in other one room Mount Holly schools.



In October 2011, The Mechanicsville historic marker was installed and donor plaques were mounted throughout all museum facilities...Thanks to all our Special Museum Donors!



The Will White Blacksmith Shop, after the major facelift, went into hibernation for the winter but Perkins House remained open with the "Festival of Lights" fundraiser taking place there in December. Then starting in January "Winter Life in Mount Holly" showcased our collection of sleds, skis, ice skates, snowshoes and antique pictures and was on display throughout the winter season along with our Chase Toy Factory exhibit. In February, Lynn Anderson conducted a wonderful card making workshop.

*(Continued on page 6)*

We also had many of our vintage seasonal cards, postcards and calling cards on display.

"Festival of Lights" proceeds were set aside for museum window treatments (needed to protect artifacts from sun damage). After much deliberation, UV shades and curtains were ordered for the many Perkins House windows. Thanks to Dottie Finnerty, Doris Reiser and a special thanks to Don Reiser who spent many hours mounting individual shade systems on 15 windows and 2 doors!

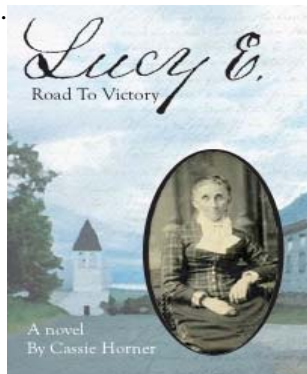
## 2012 Summer Program Highlights

Everybody loves a Parade and our summer season at the Museum begins on Saturday, June 30th, the same day as the annual Town Parade and BBQ that celebrates Independence Day!

We will be open at Perkins House before and after the parade. The custom decorated Adirondack chairs to be auctioned this fall will be on display.

This summer continues our commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Our first program will be held on Sunday, July 15th. Starting at noon Civil War Medical Unit reenactors will set up camp on the village green. We will also have on display at Perkins House our Civil War artifacts.

Our next event will be the Annual Meeting at The Odd Fellows Hall starting at 6 pm on July 17th. Following the always delicious potluck meal will be a program featuring Cassie Horner talking about her book, "Lucy E. ~ Road to Victory". Her novel is about a tough, driven woman, born in the mountain town of Mount Holly, Vermont about 1826. This is the story, based on fact, of her survival through increasingly hard times in Vermont and New Hampshire, beginning with the painful deaths of her father and husband, and her fateful second marriage to a Civil War veteran. Cassie Horner is the co-publisher of Rutland Magazine with her husband, Tom Sink.



**Cover of the book**  
**Lucy E.**  
**Road to Victory**

[www.cassiehorner.com](http://www.cassiehorner.com)

Mount Holly Historian, Dennis Devereux will continue with his Mount Holly History Series on Sunday, July 22nd. The focus of this presentation will be on the 1820 - 1830 decade. On Sunday, July 29th, Dennis will lead a Civil War Veterans Walking Tour that will visit various sites in the village of Belmont.

We will have two evening presentations this summer. On Tuesday evening July 24th, Polly Bartow will talk about the ongoing Tarbell House Renovation. On July 31st, Peter Smith will present a natural history program on Mount Holly's Woolly Mammoth. Both of these programs will be held at Perkins House at 7 pm.

On Sunday, August 12th The History of Quilting will be presented by Community Guild members which will be followed by the Perkins House Donor Quilt Presentation. The Donor quilt design is based on The Chase Autograph Quilt which is part of the museum's collection. The Donor quilt was pieced by Susan Zabransky and the donor names were embroidered by Lory Doolittle. The quilt was then quilted by the Community Guild. The museum will have many of our quilts on display and Guild scrapbooks will be available to peruse.

*All events are on the calendar in this newsletter. Check for added information about upcoming events through the [Chit Chat, Newsflash, our website, www.mounthollyvtmuseum.org](#) and our [Facebook page, Mount Holly Community Historical Museum.](#)*

## FARMFEST A MOUNT HOLLY TRADITION

**Sunday August, August 19th**  
**Noon ~ 4pm**

**Sheep Sheering ~ Exhibitions**

**Village Green ~ Perkins House ~ Blacksmith Shop**



**2012****CALENDAR OF MUSEUM EVENTS****2012**

**Museum Open For Browsing July and August ~ Saturdays 12 - 2 pm and Sundays (after program) 2 - 4 pm**

**Note Special Times on Calendar**

**All Programs, unless otherwise noted, begin at 2:15 pm**

**Year Round ~ 2nd Weekend of the Month**

- Saturday, June 30 Perkins House open for browsing 10 am and after the Parade till Noon  
 Sunday, July 1 Open for browsing 2 - 4 pm
- Saturday, July 7 Open for browsing Noon - 2 pm  
 Sunday, July 8 Open for browsing 2 - 4 pm
- Saturday, July 14 Open browsing Noon - 2 pm  
 Sunday, July 15 **Civil War Medical Unit** on Village Green ~ Starting at Noon
- Tuesday, July 17 **Annual Meeting** ~ Odd Fellows Hall ~ 6 pm Potluck meal with Program following ~ **Cassie Horner** talking about her book, "**Lucy E. - Road to Victory**".
- Saturday, July 21 Open for browsing Noon - 2 pm  
 Sunday, July 22 Program ~ **Mount Holly History 1820-1830** by Dennis Devereux ~ Perkins House ~ 2:15 pm
- Tuesday, July 24 Program ~ **Tarbell House Renovation** by Polly Bartow ~ 7 pm ~ Perkins House
- Saturday, July 28 Open for browsing Noon - 2 pm  
 Sunday, July 29 Program ~ **Civil War Veterans Walking Tour** by Dennis Devereux ~ Perkins House ~ 2:15 pm
- Tuesday, July 31 Program ~ **Mount Holly's Mammoth** by Peter Smith ~ 7 pm ~ Perkins House
- August 3, 4, & 5 **ARTFEST** ~ Friday 6 - 8 pm, Saturday & Sunday 12 - 4 pm ~ Perkins House
- Saturday, August 11 Open for browsing Noon - 2 pm  
 Sunday, August 12 Program ~ **History of Quilting** by Community Guild members ~ Perkins House ~ 2:15 pm  
 Followed by **Donor Quilt Presentation**
- Saturday, August 18 Open for browsing Noon - 2 pm  
 Sunday, August 19 **FARMFEST** ~ Noon - 4 pm ~ Museum and Village Green
- Saturday, August 25 Open for browsing Noon - 2 pm  
 Sunday, August 26 Open for browsing 2 - 4 pm
- Saturday, Sept. 1 **Museum Fundraising Dinner** ~ Odd Fellows Hall ~ First Seating at 5 pm
- Saturday, October 6 Open for browsing 10am - 4pm  
**SITTING PRETTY ADIRONDACK CHAIR AUCTION** ~ 1 pm ~ Perkins House
- Sunday, October 7 Open Noon - 4 pm
- Saturday, Dec. 1 **FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS FUNDRAISER** ~ Roundhouse at Jackson Gore ~ 6 - 10 pm

*Visit our website [www.mounthollyvtmuseum.org](http://www.mounthollyvtmuseum.org)  
 Join us on Facebook **Mount Holly Community Historical Museum***

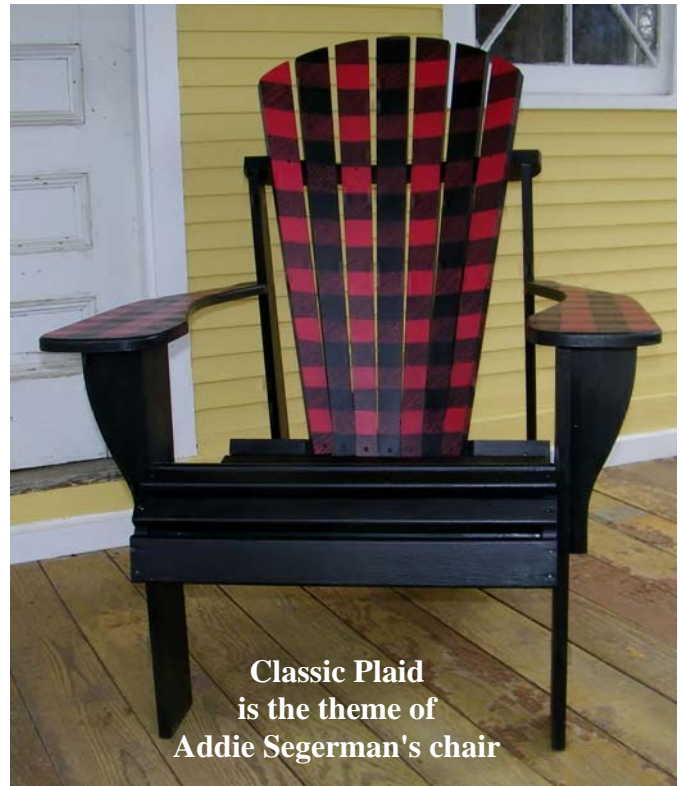
# SITTING PRETTY IN MOUNT HOLLY

## Auction

Saturday, October 6th  
1 pm at Perkins House

Nine very talented artists in Mount Holly have been hard at work during this past spring painting creative and beautiful designs on Adirondack Chairs. The Chairs, made in Vermont and the Adirondacks, were purchased by the Museum for this important fundraiser. The proceeds from this project will help the Museum to provide programs for the community and our local schools. We thank these local artists who have generously given their time and talents to support our Museum.

The chairs will be on display around Town and in Ludlow all summer. They will be auctioned on Saturday October 6, 2012 at 1 pm at the Perkins House. This is the fun Cider Days' week-end in Belmont on the Green. Hope to see you there!



## Labor Day Weekend

### Museum Fundraising Dinner

Saturday, September 1st at The Odd Fellows Hall in Belmont

First seating at 5 pm

All You Can Eat ~ Served Home Style

Adults \$10 ~ Children 11 and Under \$5



Mount Holly Community Historical Museum  
PO Box 17  
Belmont, Vermont 05730

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