

WAITSFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY Annual Report 2015

The Waitsfield Historical Society originated in 1970 by Ruth and Fletcher Joslin with the purpose being to discover, collect, preserve and exhibit artifacts, papers, photos and other materials which relate or illustrate the historical interest of our town. Thankfully, with the help of fundraisers by the Historical Society and a grant, the town was able to purchase the Gen. Wait House. In this historical building, we are able to have our office/storage room and the exhibit room to display our collections. We are a volunteer organization that relies on memberships and donations to cover our operating expenses. We have programs, potlucks and meetings, which are all open to the public. On occasion we will run a fundraiser as we are hoping to start work on the Dairy/Horse barn, which will be an exhibit of farm life in the 1800s. To have our town “father’s” house, which he built in 1793, is something we gladly share with the public, especially our school children. This also requires volunteers who are interested in their town history and are willing to give a few hours of their time, whether to attend our meetings or help at our programs. We are presently in need of a Program Chairman.



Photos courtesy of Sandra Reilly

This year our annual Potluck was on May 6th. The subject, “School Daze circa 1900s” brought much participation and laughter from the audience. The panel consisting of Mary Alice Bisbee, Kevin Eurich, Steve Joslin, Bob Henry, Fred Viens, and Irene Mehuron shared their memories of attending and in Irene’s case, teaching school in the Valley. There were photos of the old one-room schoolhouses and the Village School on display. These photos were mostly from glass negatives donated to the Society and Jack Smith took on the project of transforming them into

slides. The process was a long one but he succeeded to transform 800 of them for which we have John Williams to thank. There were meetings inviting people to see if they could identify any slides. At our Potluck, it was noticed a few photos had been reversed in the process and we now have Kevin Eurich and Steve Joslin to thank for helping to correct and also title many of them. We thank Jim Dodds, our Webmaster, for getting them all on our Web site and hope to have the titles included.

On Sept. 27th, we had the opening of a new exhibit in the Wait House, "19th Century Furniture & Quilts". Our "semi-retired" curator, Judy Dodds put this together, with the help of the Board members, to display the wonderful local antique furniture and quilts of the 1800's in our collection. This exhibit will be displayed for at least a year.

We are moving forward with preparing our entire collection of items to be entered on computer. A rather long process ahead but the benefits will be worth the effort.

After entering the "Festival of Lights" display contest, we are proud to say, we took 2nd place in the "Decorating a Structure or Window" category and the \$300 award was donated to the Inter Faith Council.

Our meetings have been changed to the first Wednesday of the months of Feb., April, June, Aug. & Oct. at 1:00pm at the Wait House unless otherwise noted in the Valley Reporter and our Web site. Our last meeting of the year was held at Jack Smith's house.

Our Board members are Lois De Heer, Pres. & Treas., Peter Laskowski, Vice Pres., Barbara Mansfield, Sec., Bob Burley, Sue Dillon, Judy Dodds, Ruth Pestle, Sandra Reilly, Shirley Viens, and Jack Smith, Historian Emeritus.

Anyone interested in joining the Historical Society, taking on a position, or wants to learn more about our Society, please contact Lois De Heer at stepback@gmavt.net.

Respectfully yours,
Lois De Heer, Pres.
waitsfieldhistoricalsociety.com