

NEWS FROM NICKWACKETT

VOL. 4 NO. 1

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MAY 1997

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Aerial view of East Creek and West Street after the 1947 flood on June 3rd.

NEW EXHIBITS

The Exhibit Committee has developed the following series of new mini-exhibits: (1) The Nickwackett Fire Station Exhibit is a rearrangement of a previous exhibit but still focuses on the functions of the old Nickwackett Fire Station. (2) Gen. Edward H. Ripley Family Exhibit portrays the post-war life of the family at their home in Mendon. E.H. Ripley was a Civil War General from Rutland who was in charge of the occupation of Richmond at the end of the Civil War. An exhibit pamphlet gives a brief biography of the General. (3) The 1890 Rutland Sanborn Insurance Map Exhibit presents detailed maps of the commercial areas of Rutland and West Rutland. Directories of these places are available in the Society Library for use with the maps. (4) The Howe Scales Exhibit

shows examples of scales which were made in Rutland from 1877 to 1982. An exhibit pamphlet gives a brief history of the Howe Scale Company. (5) The Flood of 1947 Exhibit provides a pictorial display of the flood and its damage. An exhibit pamphlet gives a Herald reporter's eye witness account of the events leading up to the flood and the following day. (6) The 19th Century Ladies and Their Finery Exhibit shows two paintings of Rutland ladies that the Society had restored. A display case of period finery supplements these portraits.

PROGRAM

On Tuesday 20 May 1997 the Program Committee will present "On the Civil War Trail In Vermont" by Jack Anderson. The program will be held at the Fox Room of the Rutland Free Library on Court Street in Rutland at 7:00 p.m.

SOCIETY TROLLEY FLOAT "DERAILED"

The Rutland Street Railway float of the Rutland Historical Society was unfortunately absent from its spot in this year's Loyalty Day Parade. The trolley and the First Republic Brass, which so generously entertain the audience, were ready to go but the rig that was to pull the float broke down. Although a replacement was sought, it was too late to get a substitute. The Society appreciates the help donated by many people to make this happen and hope that next year all will go well and again the Society can entertain Rutlanders with memories of the horse-drawn trolley and the music of the First Republic Brass.

EXHIBIT COMMITTEE SEEKS PEOPLE WITH TV CAMERA AND EDITING SKILLS

The Exhibit Committee is venturing into new waters to present Rutland's history through video programming designed for presentation on Cable Channel 15, the Rutland Public Access Channel. We can use people with video camera skills and people with video editing skills. The Committee has lots of material, pictures and ideas but it needs some people with technical skills or interest in acquiring those skills. Call Committee Chairperson Jim Davidson at 773-7525 if you can help.

VISITS TO THE SOCIETY

School groups and senior citizen groups continue to visit the Society by appointment. Recent visitors have been the students of the Mountain View Community School (K-6) and the students of the 6th grades at the Rutland Intermediate School. A visit next month is scheduled for the residents of The Meadows At East Mountain.

For special groups the Committee is willing to provide a short walking tour, a slide lecture or a guided tour of the current exhibits or some combination of the aforementioned. We would be glad to have your group visit us. The visit and the activities are free although donations to the Society are always welcome. Any group that would like to arrange such a visit should call Jim Davidson at 773-7525.

**DID YOU RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP?**

DID YOU ASK OTHERS TO JOIN?

COMMITTEE CORNER

Chairpersons

Archives Committee

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Artifacts Committee

Eleanor Elwert - 773-3417

Building Committee

Morris Tucker - 773-7356

Exhibit Committee

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Publications

Elaine Purdy - 773-6819

Research

Dorothy Whitford - 773-3219

President

Don Bordeau - 775-2761

Society Historian

Mary Segale - 773-2326

EXHIBIT COMMITTEE REVISES ITS OPERATIONAL POLICIES AND EXPANDS ITS MISSION

For several months the Exhibit Committee has been discussing and revising its mode of operation. In the past exhibits have been designed to present materials on a single theme throughout the exhibit area. This policy has made the work of the Exhibit Committee extremely time-consuming especially when the exhibit changed twice a year. The Exhibit Committee seemed to be on a never-ending treadmill of going from executing an exhibit to planning and designing the next exhibit with little time for any other activity.

Unfortunately, only small numbers of people come to the Society to view the exhibits. A few years ago when the Society presented a video program on Cable Channel 15, the Public Access Channel, hundreds of people watched the program or one of its many repeats. Since then the Exhibit Committee has discussed the advantages of reaching many more people through this medium. But time has always been a deterrent to action.

With this background in mind the Exhibit Committee decided to revise its exhibit operational policies and expand its mission. The Board of Directors of the Society has given its approval to the Committee to test these policies and expanded mission.

Accordingly, the Committee has designed a six mini-exhibit plan which includes: (1) an exhibit on the building which will be relatively permanent; (2) an exhibit on a person or persons; (3) an exhibit on a place or places; (4) an exhibit on things (this would include organizations such as a business, school, club etc. in addition to material objects); (5) an exhibit on an event and (6) an exhibit showing some of the cultural and artistic treasures in the Society's collections. (SEE ARTICLE ON PAGE 1 FOR THE CONTENTS OF THE CURRENT EXHIBITS).

Each exhibit has a small brochure describing the content of the exhibit and in many cases presenting a brief history of the exhibit topic. The six mini-exhibits are designed to be independent so that just one exhibit can be changed as necessary. The plan allows much greater flexibility as exhibits can be opened, closed and coordinated as circumstances may dictate.

The time and energy saved through this new approach should free up time for the members of the Committee to develop and execute appropriate video programming. (SEE PAGE 2 FOR EXHIBIT COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR HELP FROM PEOPLE WITH VIDEO SKILLS OR INTERESTS).

REPRINTS & NOTICES

The National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors, Inc. has been granted permission to reprint the Quarterly "Rutland's Early Clockmakers: Lord and Goddard" by Dawn Hance as an article in a future issue of their journal.

The Temple Israel Center (White Plains NY) Bulletin carried a note and summary of the Quarterly "Growing Up In West Rutland: A Jewish Heritage" by Clara Eisen.

BUSINESS CARDS

In working with the collections of the Society, the Archives Committee has become aware of how valuable and useful a Rutland business card from the past could be. It identifies the person, the type of business and the location.

The Committee is interested in collecting not only business cards of the past but particularly those of the present while they are still readily available, for all too soon the present is the past.

LETTER CONCERNING "FOR THE BUDGET"

We recently received the following information from Michael Barbieri, a long-time member of the Society, regarding our last Quarterly.

"The main reason for this note concerns the latest issue of the *Quarterly* about Charles Mead -- which, by the way, I found very interesting since reading primary sources, especially dealing with the local area, is my true love. There is a comment at the end of the preface which says: The meaning of the phrase 'For the Budget' remains unknown. Well, I may have the answer to that uncertainty. I have seen a mid- to late-17th century reference to a 'Budget or Pocket to

hang by their sides' (or something to that effect) meaning a pouch of some kind. Also, I have a copy of Captain Francis Grose's Lexicon Balatronicum: A Dictionary of Buckish Slang, University Wit, and Pickpocket Eloquence published in 1811 which defines 'Budget' as 'A wallet'. The word is from the French *bougette*, diminutive of *bouge* -- 'leather bag'. Mead is apparently referring to the pouch or book he keeps his papers in. Unlike many other entries which seem to have had specific purposes in mind and which purposes he noted (i.e.: Grammar Exercise), I would bet that those entries 'For the Budget' were done purely for the enjoyment he experienced when writing. It's only a guess but, as with much historical research, an educated guess."

**THE FACILITIES OF THE
RUTLAND HISTORICAL
SOCIETY ARE OPEN ON:
MONDAYS 6 - 9 PM
SATURDAYS 1 - 4 PM**

DUES SCHEDULE

Sponsor	\$50.00	Students	\$8.00
Contributing	\$20.00	(18 & under)	
Regular	\$10.00	Senior citizens	\$8.00
		(62 & up)	
Life Membership			\$200.00
Memorial Membership			\$200.00

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
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Jim Davidson - Editor

If your label has a '96" on it, your renewal is OVERDUE.