



Pawlett Historical Society
P.O. Box 113
Pawlet, Vermont 05761

Visit us at pawlethistoricalsociety.org/
and
Facebook Pawlett Historical Society



SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

Thursday, August 16, 7 PM, Chriss Monroe Chapel, Cemetery Hill Road
Ken Major: The Forgotten Border Conflict: A Pawlet Story
See article on page 3 for more a sneak preview of this event.

Sunday, September 9, 2 to 4 PM, Chriss Monroe Chapel
Ice Cream Social
Enjoy free sundaes and view images by Pawlet photographer Ella Clark (1893-1980).

Sunday, October 7, 2 to 4 PM, Braintree School, West Pawlet
Schoolroom Open House

Thursday, October 18, 7 PM, Pawlet Town Hall
Amanda Gustin: Vermont versus Hollywood, 100 Years of Vermont in Film
*Sponsored by the Vermont Humanities Council
and the Pawlett Historical Society*

All our events are free and open to the public.

Pages from the
**PAWLET
SCRAPBOOK**



Pawlett Historical Society

August 2018

OFFICERS

Barry Meinert
President

Rose Smith
Treasurer

John Malcolm
Secretary

TRUSTEES

Judy Coolidge

Susan Hosley

Theresa Jones

Andrew Mahurin

Ken Major

Keith Mason

Marlee Mason

Matthew Proft

Sarah Rath

Stephen Williams

HISTORIAN

Martha Schoenemann

President's Message from Barry Meinert

We welcome three new members to our board: Susan Hosley, Matt Proft, and Andy Mahurin. We thank them for joining us and look forward to working with them. See page 5 for more information about our new board members.

We appreciate the community's support and participation in our annual June tag and bake sale. This year we raised \$1,800. Special thanks to those who contributed items for sale, especially Bob and Martha Schoenemann, who donated some true antiques.

Our yearly raffle item this year is a small oval side table, made of white oak and ebony, donated once again by Ray Finan, a custom furniture maker in Arlington and great friend and supporter of the Society. You'll find us selling raffle tickets at our events and at the Dorset Farmer's market, Sheldon's market and other nearby venues. Please participate by buying one (or 3) tickets!

The Society has some exciting upcoming programs. On August 16 Ken Major presents "The Forgotten Border Conflict: A Pawlet Story." Ken is one of our trustees. His metal detecting hobby spurs him to research and share this information with others. His programs are always popular — don't miss this one! For a sneak preview, see his article on page 3.

On September 9, 2 to 4 PM, we're having another open house/ice cream Social at the Chriss Monroe Chapel. This follows on the success of last year's extravaganza, which lured folks to the cemetery for free ice cream, provided by Stewart's. Please come visit and see some more of our collection items we will have on exhibit. We'll also be hosting one or two openings of the Braintree School in the fall. The schoolroom has been maintained as it was during the years it was used, from 1852 to 1943.

Watch for more information on our upcoming program on October 18 at 7 PM by Amanda Gustin, Public Programs Coordinator at the Vermont Historical Society. Her talk will be: "Vermont versus Hollywood: 100 years of Vermont in Film." Vermont has been a featured location in Hollywood movies for nearly a century. It has represented many different ideals during that time, and its portrayal reflects both Vermont's own history as well as American history.

Our study of farming in Pawlet and the Mettawee Valley is progressing, and we will have an update for you in the next newsletter. Enjoy the rest of summer!

Barry Meinert, PHS President



Pawlet Town Hall, pre-1940

A Mystery Postcard for the Collection *by Sarah Rath*

The PHS collection committee recently purchased a postcard on Ebay which we were excited to add to our collection. Now that we own it, we are trying to figure out exactly what it is. Pictured below you can see a body of water with several large tents, a few people, a vehicle, a dock.

We thought perhaps there was a CCC camp here in Pawlet. But are none listed on the official records,

and local experts (Platt Herrick and Iva Liebig) have said no.

Was this a private camp? Where on the Mettowee River was it located? Did the circus come to town?! I have feelers out to the Poultney Historical Society to see if they can help. Please contact me at sarahrath18@gmail.com or 802 645-0652 if you have ideas or wish to take over the investigation!

*The mystery postcard was addressed to:
Elmer Doolittle, c/o West Shore House, Beach Lake, Pa.
Postmarked Granville, July 13, 1933*

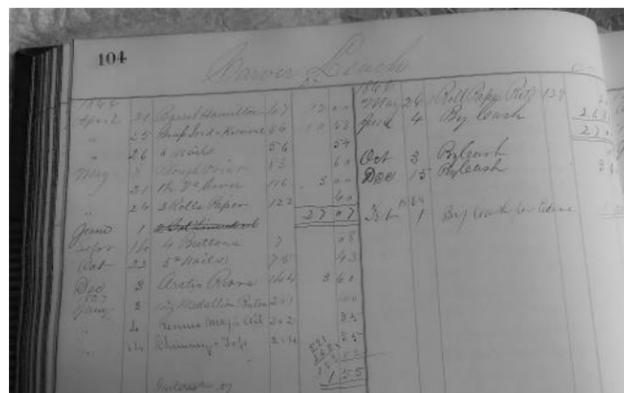


*The message on the back reads:
Junior Doolittle, Camp Mettowee,
Pawlet
"Well Ubs: This is a view of the camp.
The barn is 1/2 mile away. I have three
horses to take care of. There are farms
all around the camp. Write to mother
and I and let us hear about you.
(Signed) Junior"*

Second Graders Learn About General Stores *by Sarah Rath*

Nothing is better than receiving letters from second grade students asking for information about general stores! When we recently heard from Stephanie Pierce's class at Mettowee Community School, I knew we could help them with information and many artifacts dating to the 1800s. Their general store unit included many aspects (math, history, social studies), one of them being their carefully written letters to the Historical Society.

I arrived after they had visited several stores in Rupert, Dorset, and Pawlet. They were full of information and questions! I brought a wooden egg crate, advertisements, photos of the general stores from Pawlet's past, and actual contents from Burdick's Store (shoes laces, suspenders, etc.). One of the most intriguing artifacts was a store ledger dated 1866. After carefully unwrapping this heavy volume we explored some of the pages, noting how



Ledger Page from General Store in Pawlet

handy it is to be able to read cursive writing! One astute student asked if any of his ancestors might be listed, since his family (Leach) has been here for generations. I have since found a Leach page of

General Stores, continued next page

Pawlett Historical Society Welcomes New Trustees

We extend a warm welcome to new PHS Trustees, Susan Hosley, Matt Proft and Andy Mahurin.

Susan Baker Hosley resides in North Pawlet with her husband, Terry, the third generation of her family to live in that location. She attended the West Pawlet school and Granville Central School. After college she lived in Burlington for 12 years and was a department supervisor at the then Medical Center Hospital of Vermont. She returned to Pawlet, completed her teaching certification and then taught math, business and computer courses at the high school level in Vermont and later in New York until she retired in 2017. She was a Pawlet school board member before Mettowee School was built and served again on the Pawlet School Board from 2015 through 2018. Currently she is a member of the St. Frances Cabrini Church parish council in West Pawlet.

Susan says, "As the child of lifelong Pawlet residents I grew up hearing stories of Pawlet's rich past. These stories were often told during meetings of the North Pawlet Sewing Circle held monthly in the North Pawlet School, at Butternut Bend General Store, at neighbors' homes in the

evening, and most often from my parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. We all have a context for history based on our experiences and the oral history passed on to us by family, neighbors, and community. It is important for to chronicle such history before these firsthand oral and pictorial representations are lost. I look forward to being part of this generation of historians for Pawlet."

Matt Proft and his wife Joy moved to Pawlet in 2016 after living in the Manchester area since 1980. His interest in history wasn't ignited within until he began homeschooling his five children.

Matt is inspired every day by Pawlet's history through the home where he lives, the "Griswold Home." The residence has been well-documented in the town's historical archives, thanks to Charlie and Bea Griswold and Neil and Susanne Rappaport. His other interests include salt water fishing, gardening and composting, golf, and living in Vermont with all its amazing landscapes, weather and people.

Watch for Andy Mahurin's introduction in our next newsletter!



Susan B. Hosley



Matt Proft

General Stores, continued

accounts and have sent Logan Leach copies of James, John, Goodspeed, and Carver Leach's purchases: a spittoon, nails, buttons, plough points, "roll paper," boots, codfish, tea, and salt.

We discussed why there were so many stores, why they closed (the advent of the automobile), the traditions of trading and bartering, and how the stores served as social centers.

This partnership with our local school is an ongoing tradition which has changed in recent years to better match the needs of the school. This project also allows us to exhibit and share some of our treasures with the public. Not many second grade students get the opportunity to learn from primary historical sources! Many thanks to Ms. Pierce for developing this outstanding unit.

The Forgotten Border Conflict: A Pawlet Story

By Ken Major

Note: This article is a sneak preview of Ken Major's August 16 presentation, 7 PM, at the Chriss Monroe Chapel on Cemetery Hill Road in Pawlet Village.

Vermont and New York were not always the good neighbors they are now. Almost 260 years ago, the lands around the current boundary between Pawlet and Rupert, Vermont (then part of the New Hampshire Grants), and Granville and Hebron, New York, were part of a larger frontier that would see more than two decades of escalating tensions, legal battles, and then paramilitary violence against person and property.

Over that time, "Yorkers" and those in "The Grants" found themselves deeply at odds, each viewing the other as illegitimate claimants to the land and a threat against law, order, and livelihood. This conflict eventually led to the creation of the Green Mountain Boys, who patrolled this area against New Yorkers and those inclined towards them for years.

Ethan Allen and his men burned down Yorker settlers' cabins in Pawlet and Rupert,¹ and beat, threatened, and humiliated settlers, land surveyors, lawmen, tenants, and Yorker sympathizers all along the Grant towns west of the



*The Trial of Samuel Adams
(woodcut print)*

Green Mountains. One such encounter, the "trial" and punishment of Dr. Samuel Adams in Arlington, was immortalized as a woodcut print in Zadock Thompson's Civil History of Vermont (1842, below, left). In another example, over 100 Green Mountain Boys burned the houses and destroyed the crops of a dozen tenants of a New York patent holder in Panton, Vermont. The historical record contains many such accounts.²

Within a year of the American Declaration of Independence, Vermont had settled on a name and declared itself a Republic, in part galvanized by the Green Mountain Boys and the fight against New York. British loyalists then became a new group for the Boys to harass and eject from Pawlet and other Vermont towns.

For a time, these Tories were able to live safely in what is now North Hebron, but was at the time called "New Perth." Locally, one "Tory Reid" was driven there from Pawlet.³ Tories are reported to have broken a gristmill stone in North Rupert before their departure, and Josiah Cast, a loyalist and town clerk, stole the town's records with him when he fled.⁴ By the early 1780s, with the British army failing in its last bid to retake this part of the world, all remaining loyalists had gone to Canada or beyond.

Conflict between New York and Vermont didn't resolve with the Revolution, the formation of the Vermont Republic, or the eventual defeat of the British. In 1781 and 82, Vermont attempted to annex portions of New York east of the Hudson River, incorporating parts of Washington and Albany counties into the "West Union,"⁵ a plan



Spanish Silver Coins

Border Conflict, continued on page 4

Border Conflict, continued from page 3

which was ultimately abandoned. At the same time, the US Confederation Congress made it clear that the issue of unsettled land claims in this area as well as along the border of New Hampshire remained the final obstacle to Vermont's admittance to the Union.

It would take another ten years for Vermont to finally agree to terms to settle these claims, paying 30,000 Spanish silver dollars to New York to distribute to holders of New York land patents that overlapped with Vermont towns, including Pawlet.⁶ In 1791, Vermont became the 14th state.

The lived experience of settlement along this contested frontier also tells a rich and interesting story. Objects excavated from borderland home sites from the 1770s into the early 20th century reveal some of the lived experience and perpetual hardship involved in life here up until the modern era. And the border has continued to be important; in the early 1900s, an effort was made to survey and renew the NY/VT border, with granite monuments placed at intervals all along it.

In a final ironic twist, much of the land immediately along these borders, once fought over bitterly, has been abandoned, with homes and roads connecting the two states now



Vermont Militia Button, 1830s

forgotten, and those granite monuments already hard to read, being swallowed by the forest just over 100 years later.

My talk will expand on this fascinating border history, adding more detail to the narrative and sharing recovered archaeological objects from home sites in the area to help tell the more personal stories of those present during the settlement, land conflict, Republic, early statehood, and later abandonment of the region.

There will be a free drawing for a number of historical coins, buttons, and other material.

References:

1. Randall, Willard. *Ethan Allen: His Life and Times*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011. Print
2. Hall, Hiland. *The History of Vermont, from Its Discover to Its Admission into the Union in 1791*. Albany, N.Y.: Joel Munsell, p. 164-65. Print
3. Barden, Merrit. *Vermont Once No Man's Land*. Rutland, VT: The Tuttle Company, 1928, xi. Print
4. Hibbard, George. *Rupert, Vermont – Historical and Descriptive, 1761-1898*. Rutland, VT: The Tuttle Company, 1899, p. 25. Print.
5. http://academics.smcvt.edu/vtgeographic/textbook/historical/historical_geography_of_vermont.htm#Vermont's%20East%20and%20West%20Unions
6. Mello, Robert. *Moses Robinson and the Founding of Vermont*. Vermont Historical Society, 2014, p. 264. Print.



Ken Major

Visit us at online for articles, updates, upcoming events and Board of Trustee meeting minutes. See our website pawletthistoricalsociety.org/ and Facebook Pawlett Historical Society