

Pawlett Historical Society-2020

President Barry Meinerth's Message Pawlett Historical Society Annual Meeting November 12, 2020

When I have read about the Spanish flu epidemic, I have always relegated it to the “dark ages”, closer in time to the bubonic plague than to the 21st Century. And when pandemic potential illnesses-think ebola, avian flu, H1N1 Swine flu-have occurred, my reaction has always been to thank our epidemiologists and other health care workers who protect us from these potential disasters. Never in my wildest imagination did I envision an illness that could shut down the entire world. Yet Covid 19 did just that. And continues to disrupt our lives, our economy, and kill tens of thousands of people worldwide. A dear friend acknowledges this by the missing contrails once left by jets approaching the United States from Europe. “They’re not there anymore!” Just one of hundreds of things different about 2020.

What does all this have to do with the Pawlett Historical Society? Most significantly, we need to document what Covid 19 did-to our work life, to our social life, to the impact it had on our families-so that future generations won’t have to speculate about these disruptions. They can look at documentation that we provide and realize just how terrible it was and how it affected us and how we responded.

We all have our stories and anecdotes about this. For those of us living in Vermont, we’ve hopefully been spared the worst of this. Still, it has been a terrible thing to experience. It has inconvenienced your society by forcing us to cancel speaker forums, bake sales, historic school house openings! Yet with today’s technologies we continue to meet. Had we ever heard of Zoom before March? We’ve all missed a wonderful opportunity! On February 4th, Zoom stock closed at \$85.79. As I write this on November 5th, it’s at \$493.73, not even its high point. I hope one of you reading this benefitted. Our Annual Meeting on November 12th will be conducted via Zoom. Instructions on how to access this are included on our website-pawletthistoricalsociety.org

PHS business has continued. Judy Coolidge was elected Vice President; Sarah Rath was elected Curator. And while Andy Mahurin had to step down as a trustee, his wife Abbie has stepped up to replace him. We continue with documenting our collections, and even adding to them. Rose Smith’s recent acquisition of post cards showed Pawlett at a very different time in our history.

At our Annual Meeting we’ll have our election of officers, review our financial records, and discuss any current business. And conclude by looking forward to the day we can resume all of our activities in person.

In the meantime, continue to be vigilant; follow the protocols; stay healthy! So we can meet again at our historic venues.