APRIL 2004 Springfield Historical Society’s NEWSLETTER

President’s Message:

Friends and admirers of Dr. Zdenek Bednar will be pleased to know that he will speak at our April 15th meeting at the Libbie Cass Library Conference Room at 7PM. His topic is "A Displaced Person Discovers America in Springfield." He is a product of Charles University in Prague, Hartford Theological Seminary, and Boston University. He is Pastor Emeritus of Wilton, Congregational Church, CT, and has served locally in Keene, Claremont, and Wilmot.

The January meeting was enjoyed by all who braved the bitter cold to hear Judith Moyer’s Talk, “Number Please.” We were proud of the small group from Sunapee Cove Assisted Living who came by van with wheel chairs and walkers.

We are planning to have another Antique Appraisal in October. Our last one was successful and a good time was had by all. Be thinking what you would like to have appraised.

The board has also decided to go ahead with the publication of the Springfield stories from our files. There will be more on this later.

Muriel Tinkham, our archivist, is having difficulty with her sight and needs help with our acquisition committee. We need someone who can clip articles about Springfield from the local papers; someone to supervise the opening of the museum on Saturdays during the summer and organize the host and hostesses who cover the museum each Saturday for two hours during the summer; someone to record material given to the museum, and someone to pass on genealogical information. Muriel has played a varied role in keeping the material organized and researching genealogical information upon request. We need assistance in all these areas. If you can help Muriel, please give her a call.

Without help from our members, we will have to curtail some of our services.

Thank you who answered our call for dues and also for the contributions for the book project and the purchase of raffle tickets on the Lake Kolelemook oil painting. There is still time to turn in the tickets. The drawing will be at the Annual Meeting in July. You do not need to be present to win.

Red dots are still reminders of unpaid Dues! Dues are payable to our treasurer, Trudy Heath, Box 6 Springfield Historical Society, Springfield, NH, 03264.

Patsy Heath Caswell, President

History of Springfield Schools

In past newsletters, the history of ten of the fourteen school districts in Springfield have been mentioned. Roads and transportation being what they were, the district schools were the answer at the time, depending on the population of those sections of town. As a reminder, District #1, Center School, is now the historical society. District #2 was near the Wilmot line on the Fourth NH Turnpike. (4A) District #3 was in the southwestern part of Springfield, west of Starr Lake on what may have been called Schoolhouse Road. District #4 School was believed to be on Shad Hill. Washburn Corner School was known as District #5. District #6 School was also known as the Philbrick Hill School. District #7 School went to Grantham when the state granted them Heath’s Gore. Fowlertown School was #8...
in the southeastern part of town. Number #9 School, or the Morgan School was on the road to Georges Mills, not too far from the New London Road intersection. Stocker or Sanborn Hill School was District #10 and on the Baptist Pond Road near the intersection of the Baptist Pond Road and the Sanborn Hill Road.

This newsletter will continue with District #11 School, also known as the Loverin School. It was located on the Old Grafton Road, on the left-hand side coming from Springfield village direction, a short distance from the intersection of the road going to Aaron’s Ledge.

As with many of the schools, the first register was that of 1857-58. There was one seven week term taught by Lydia Sanborn. Her pay $14.00 including board for this session. There were seventeen students registered.

Miss Sanborn was the only teacher during this school year to make comments about the school and the students. It is difficult reading, because she could not spell, nor punctuate! She complained about the moral habits of some of the students... “The fear (sic) and shame they discontinued their profane language to be renewed when they got home at night. Others were trained up in they (sic) way they should be...” She was more pleased with the new school house that was “conveniently arranged.” Families attending District #11 School were Loverins, Stevens, Lulls, Pillsburys, Hills, Russells, and Flanders.

By the 1860s there were eight or nine students registered at the school. In 1867-68, Marcella Nichols had an unpleasant eight and a half week summer term. There were only eight students in the school, but there seemed to have been a feud between parents who, evidently, tried to put Miss Nichols in the middle. Superintendent James Davis supported Miss Nichols, but had nothing good to say about the district.

There was a seven week summer session taught during the 1881-82 school year. Angie Colby was the teacher. There were ten students ages five to sixteen. There were nine visitors including Miss Colby’s two young brothers, Frank and George Colby, who were registered as students in District #10 School. It is hoped the visit was between the two sessions taught in their school.

District #11, the Loverin School, seems to have closed in 1893. Nelson Loverin was paid $20.00 to transport scholars to school, probably at #13 Maxfield School on the Fourth New Hampshire Turnpike.

District #12, Perley Town School
This school was located in the Perley Town settlement, south of Morgan Pond, and east of the Morgan Pond Brook that flows into Little Lake Sunapee. It was near the New London and Wilmot boundaries.

The school records for 1857-59, show that Diana Abbott taught a six week summer session. This was the first session in all the school districts with no tardy students. The students also had the best attendance records for the school year. Seven of the twelve students attended thirty-two of the thirty-three school days. Unfortunately, maybe due to the winter weather, these students did not keep their “not late to school” from November through January when they were tardy a total of seventy-six times!

Emma Haseltine taught a six week summer session in 1867-68 to eight pupils. Irene Hemphill taught the same eight students for six weeks of the winter term. Superintendent James Davis gave a good evaluation to such a small number of students.

District #12 was still getting good progress reports in 1868-69 under Addie Burpee who was considered to have a good systematic method of instruction. The school committee thought Miss Burpee a model to all other teachers.

By 1887, no money was being appropriated for District #12 School. The remaining children, if any, would have become tuition students in New London.

District #13 Maxfield School
Maxfield School was located on the Fourth New Hampshire Turnpike, (4A) in northeast Springfield on the left side of the road going north before the Heath Homestead location (1993). It was before Shad Hill and the Springfield townline.

The first known register for Maxfield School was the winter term beginning in December of 1857 and lasting until March of 1858. It was taught by Aurilla Howard. There were four girls and ten boys registered. Some of the families attending the school were Flanders, Sullivan, Smith, Heath, Lock, Powers, Melendy, and Lull. Miss Howard was paid $5.00 for nine weeks.

The 1864-65 summer term was taught by Louisa George. She was experienced and knowledgeable, but “lacked in government”... “There were thirty-three students registered. The winter term was taught by George F. Pettingill to one less student. Superintendent Quimby’s advice to the district was... “was as they have a large school, and some good scholars, to be very particular in the
future to have only such teachers as you are sure of their being living active ones...” Obviously this warning was not followed because in 1868-69, Charles McDaniel, assisting Superintendent Daniel Adams, reported that the students did not have enough books and seemed to be idling away their time to poor advantage. He recommended a more energetic teacher.

By 1876, two terms were taught by Hannie Barton. There were twenty students the first term, and six the second term. The first term students ranged in age from three to fifteen. The youngest, Carlos Heath, became this writer’s grandfather.

One of the families boarding teachers, in 1897 was that of Carlos Heath (now grown!) whose homestead was a little distance north of Maxfield School. He was paid $10.50 for boarding a teacher seven weeks. In 1899, Augusta Tyrell boarded for nine weeks at a cost of $13.50. Her pay was $31.50. The Heaths continued to board teachers into the 1920s.

During the 1917-18 school year at Maxfield School, there were seventeen students registered. Mary George taught the first term; Mildred Jackman taught the second term. Florence Gerald taught the third term. Familiar names attending Maxfield School at this time were H. Pauline Bailey, who later transferred to Center School, Fred Bailey, Paul Heath, Vincent Heath, Woodrow Heath, Harland Heath, and Kirk Heath.

In a small community, it was not unusual for the teachers to be related to the students. During the 1918-19 school year, Eliza Tenney taught her Heath cousins by marriage, and the second term, Lucy Heath taught her brothers, Paul and Kirk. The first term, Eliza Tenney often brought her baby daughter, Lena Tenney (Beals) to school.

For two school years, 1920-21 and 1921-22, the Maxfield School students attended Center School. Examples are the three Heath brothers, Paul, Kirk, and Hollis who ordinarily would have attended Maxfield School.

Other times teachers were not too much older than the students as witnessed by H. Pauline Bailey (Rudner, Philbrick) who taught at Maxfield School for the 1924-25 school year. She was approximately seventeen years old and had attended Kimball Union Academy and a summer session at Plymouth Normal School. There were fourteen students at Maxfield School that year.

By 1939-40 there were twenty-three students attending Maxfield School. As well as residents of Springfield, there were children from Grafton, Wilmot, and Belchertown. The teacher was Charlotte Keysar. This writer entered the first grade there for a week or so before transferring to what would be her regular school, Center School.

By the 1943-44 school year, there were more students from Grafton than Springfield attending Maxfield School. Eight students were from Grafton and four were from Springfield. Mabel Pillsbury was the teacher. The last students attended Maxfield School in 1948-49. Maxfield School was eventually sold, moved away from the highway, and turned into a dwelling.

**District #14 School**

District #14 School was located part way up what is now known as the Webster Pass Road to Thorp Hill on the south side of Station Pond (Lake Kolelemook). It was not too far from the intersection with the Bowman Road, and was on the left side of the road going up the hill.

Through most of its existence, there were few students in attendance. In 1857-58, Angie Quimby taught one ten week session to seventeen students ranging in age from three to eighteen. At the end of the 1859 session Miriam Blood (sic) gave an unfavorable report about District #14. She stated that the parents were divided and showed little interest in the school and this reflected in the scholars’ work. She felt it was absurd to have two sessions in a district with just $25.00 and equally absurd to send scholars to a house (so called) not fit for wild animals! School was held on and off again for the next few years. Only a nine week winter term was held in the 1867-8 school year. Mira Andrews taught twelve students and in the words of Superintendent James Davis “…good teacher, good scholars, and as good a school as could be held in a good-for-nothing house.” The last financial appropriation, $38.52, was made to District #14 School in 1868.

**Twentieth Century Changes**

With the closing of Maxfield and Center Schools at the end of 1948, the students and teachers moved into the new Memorial School (honoring Springfield servicemen) in January 1949. It was also the end of the old one/two room schools in Springfield. Memorial School was also a two room school, but modernized with modern bathrooms and a cafeteria! Some different than its ancestors!

The land had been given to the town by summer resident Wilson Wood. Memorial School was in existence through the 1960s and early 1970s. In the 1970s Springfield joined the Kearseage School District. The Springfield high school students began attending Kearseage High School.
in Sutton.
Students before this could go to the high schools of their choice in the surrounding towns.
Gradually the elementary grades began attending elementary school in New London. The Springfield Memorial School closed its doors during the 1972-73 school year. A few years later a very popular kindergarten was opened in the left room of the Memorial Building and is still in existence today (2004). The right room of the Memorial Building became the town offices with a small addition added to the right end of the building. A few years later the fine Libbie A. Cass Library was added to the left side of the building. There were many gains, but the loss was a local school that was the center of the community activities for many years.

SPRINGFIELD STORIES, MEMORIES, HISTORIES ANYONE?
If you have a story to tell or history to share, we would love to hear from you! You are all making memories (maybe even history) out there. Send it to Patsy Caswell, 47 Bliss Mine Rd, Newport, RI or e-mail PatCas1@aol.com

QUOTE:

“He who careth not from whence he came, careth little whither he goeth.”
Daniel Webster