President's Message

The next quarterly meeting of the Springfield Historical Society will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, January 11, 2001 downstairs at the Libbie Cass Memorial Library. Patsy Caswell will present the program “The Past and the Present” which will trace the relationship of several families living in Springfield and surrounding areas today to the early settlers of Springfield in the late 1700’s.

The first society pot luck dinner at the meeting house this September was a great success thanks to Janet Roberts, Muriel Tinkham, and Donna Denniston. We will be making plans for another type of dinner in the future. If you missed the first event, try to make the next! Wishing you all happy holidays!

Patsy Heath, President

NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM
from Muriel Tinkham, Museum Curator

Although the museum is closed for the winter months, the short days and long winter nights ahead offer a wonderful opportunity for people to sit by the fire and go through old papers, photos, news clippings and so forth that would be of historical interest for the museum. We are always looking for genealogies, letters, photos (we would be happy to copy your photos and return the originals to you) papers and other historical items. The museum will reopen around Memorial Day and as usual, we can use volunteers to help host at the museum.

“DISCOVERING” MELVIN HILL
by Patsy Heath Caswell

We all know of the famous discovery by Christopher Columbus on October 12, 1492. There was another “discovery” on a beautiful autumn morning October 13, 2000, when Robbie Heath led the expedition of Ed Belfield, his daughter Barbra, son-in-law Todd Bureau, and Patsy Heath Caswell in search of Melvin Hill. This is the highest point in Springfield at 2280 feet. I realize that some of the natives and hunters have been there before us, but it was a discovery of sorts for this group.

We all piled into Robbie’s little red car and drove up to the gate at the Old Grafton Road where we left the car. This is NOT a trip for the faint of heart! Walking up the road was the easiest part of the trip. Up by a bridge (over troubled waters) we turned off to the right and walked west through a “clearing” where the forest had been clear-cut a few years ago. There was a beautiful view of Croydon and Grantham mountain ranges. We then cut up through the woods heading east. That is where it became difficult. The ice storm of 1998 did its damage and made walking very difficult. We went up hills and through swamps where I sank up to my ankles in mud, down into valleys and up more hills when we finally reached what we presumed to be the top of Melvin Hill.

The view was spectacular. Visible from one ledge looking north we could locate Aaron’s Ledge and Bank’s Pinnacle and beyond. We could also see Croydon and Grantham mountain ranges to the west. Walking south and then east to a higher spot on the ridge we had a beautiful view of Ragged Mountain, Kearsage and Mt. Sunapee. Walking along the southwest side of the ledge a short distance, Mud Pond and 4A were below us and off to the west there was a great view of Lake Kolememook. We could see the cars going along Route 114 and could pick out Carbones’s little green cottage, the Dent’s cottage and the Brandow estate on Wood’s Point.

After a short rest, nibbling our snacks, using binoculars, camera, and oh yes, the cell phone, we started down the west side of the hill through very
Top photo: Ed Belfield [pointing], Robbie Heath, Todd and Barbara Bureau

Difficult terrain, up to another ridge, then north until we finally came out down below where we went in on Old Grafton Road. This is not easy walking. We were gone about four hours. The four of us questioned why, if we were on Melvin Hill, the hill across the ravine to the east of us was higher. Robbie discovered after we got back to town that we were not on Melvin Hill, but had "discovered" a foothill leading to it! At that point, I don't think any of us would have had the energy to cross over and climb the real Melvin Hill.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!!!!

Bottom: Looking back toward Lake Kolelemook