President's Message

The Springfield Historical Society will meet on Wednesday evening, July 11, 2001 at 7 p.m. in the Springfield Town Hall. The 2nd New Hampshire Regiment Serenade Band will perform music dating from 1861-1900.

Members of the band are seasoned musicians from the Lakes Region of NH and will appear in period costume and uniforms. The band traces its roots to William Pettengill who enlisted in the 2nd NH Regiment, Company G as a musician in 1861. He was the great great uncle of the current band's e flat cornetist, Maryjane Pettengill-Bieniarz. Serenade Bands, usually 6-8 in number, were formed out of the larger regimental band of 24 to serenade the wounded in the hospital and in particular, the officers at night. Our program will feature not only the war songs but also traditional music of the period. Please join us! Refreshments will be served in the Historical Museum following the program. We invite you to walk over and browse through our new acquisitions and have a bite to eat! [see photo of band on page 3!!]


Our year begins with July 1st and ends with June 30th. At the annual meeting in July 2000, the following officers were elected: President Patsy Heath Caswell, Vice President Bob Nulsen, Secretary Donna Denniston, Treasurer Keith Cutting, Board Members Muriel Tinkham, Dickie Hopper and Janet Roberts.

The annual meeting was held in the Meeting House. Ron Garceau, editor of Images, made the presentation. Open house was held after the meeting at the museum.

An amendment to the constitution changed the specific date of the quarterly meeting from Thursday of the second week of January, April, July and October to the second week of those months without specifying a day. The idea behind it was to find a date without conflict when more people could make the meeting. After a year, we have not found a great change in attendance or new faces!

The Board did not take on any fund raisers or new projects believing that our main concern should be the findings of the Facility Committee chaired by Keith Cutting. That is on hold until we get some answers from the selectmen. The historical society is given use of the museum, but does not own the building.

In October we held our first pot luck dinner at the Meeting House. It was a great success thanks to the organization of Janet Roberts, Donna Denniston and Muriel Tinkham. The speaker for the evening was Millard Hunter who spoke about the New Hampshire Units of the Civil War.

Due to undependable weather in January, we have had "in house" programs for the last few years. This January Patsy Caswell presented "The Past and the Present" which traced the relationship of several original settlers to families living in the Springfield area today.

Everyone attending the April program thought it a huge success with the Harvey Tavern Singers who did songs of the Civil War and Stephen Foster. We hope to have them back in the future.

Dorothy Elden and Patsy Caswell are still surveying and recording information from the stones in Old Pleasant View Cemetery. It is a slow process depending on when we can get together. We could always use help! It is really very interesting work, especially if you like history.
Muriel Tinkham has done outstanding work with our museum, artifacts and helping people with genealogy requests. Bob Nulsen has provided us with interesting programs. Keith Cutting has worked to get the background information necessary for the Facility Committee to proceed. You all see the work Donna Denniston puts into the newsletter. Janet Roberts did a great job organizing the October Pot Luck. We’ll miss Dickie Hopper who has decided not to continue on the Board.

We are always looking for people to actively participate either by serving in office, helping with projects, volunteering in the museum for two hours on Saturdays during the summer, or giving us memories or historical stories for the newsletter. Respectfully submitted,

Patsy Heath Caswell, President

Notes from the Museum
by Muriel Tinkham, Curator

Last Wednesday I came across some interesting papers at the State Archives Building in Concord. I made copies of them and brought them home so that I could study them more closely. They are handwritten and rather difficult to read. To understand the circumstances surrounding their being written, you must remember that the original grant from the King of England to Jahn Fisher and 59 other proprietors happened on Jan. 3, 1769 and that one of the conditions of this grant was that there should be 12 families settled by July 1, 1774 and 60 families by July 1, 1779.

Now it is June 19, 1780. The following is addressed to “The honorable George Atkinson Esq. and others a Committee of the General Assembly of New Hampshire appointed to consider the Petition of the Inhabitants and Proprietors of the Township of Protectworth.

Exeter Portsmouth June 19, 1780

Gentlemen

Mr. Wendell having requested me to give the Honourable Committee what Information I could respecting Governor Wentworth’s Interest in the township of Protectworth, on Consideration, I recollect the following Facts;

That in the year 1771, as Y remember Governor John Wentworth, told me he had Lands in the Township of Protectworth, and that he wanted about ten or a dozen Families to settle on the same, he asked me, if it was probable I could procure that Number of Settlers in the State of Rhode Island, for him, to settle his Lands in said Protectworth. I told him it was likely I could get that Number. Accordingly at his Request and on his Behalf, I wrote an Advertisement, I offered as an Inducement to Settlers (agreeable to the Governor’s Directions) to give each Settler, one hundred Acres of Land in Protectworth. The exact Number of Settlers the Governor wanted I cant be certain of, but I think about twelve. But he told me, if there were twenty or more it would be agreeable; as the other Proprietors would be glad to take them on the same Say and I think I advertised for about 20 Settlers. In Consequence of my Advertising, some Persons from that Quarter wrote me They would accept my offer, and I understand they set out to see that Part of the Country, but on their going into those Parts, they found other Lands, more agreeable, as I was informed, and so made no farther Application to me. The Governor to my Knowledge, was urgent with me to get those Settlers for him, as he was extremely desirous to have his Part in that Town, settled as soon as possible; This is all I can recollect after so long Time has lapsed, had I that Advertisement I could be Particular, but the foregoing is the Substance, the Truth of which I am ready to give Oath to, if called on... I am Gentlemen, your most obed and very Humble Servt

To the Hon’ble Committee Oliver Whipple

At Exeter

Summertime on the Farm, 1930’s

Up until residents the 1950’s, many of the natives and of Springfield lived on farms. Some of the larger farms going back generations were Clover Ridge Farm on Philbrick Hill owned by the Colbys. John Philbrick and the Lane families farmed on Sanborn Hill. Del Patten had a farm in the village which is the only one still in operation today. Carl Heath had a farm on the Fourth NH Turnpike, now called 4A. Leighton Philbrick had a farm at the east end of the village before the intersection by the meeting house. Bert Morgan farmed his property at the intersection of the New London Rd and the Bowman Rd, and Joe George had a farm on the Bowman Rd. As World War II came along, it was not unusual to have men such as Robert Collins, Leo Duford and others work in the woolen mills of Franklin, Newport or Lebanon on the night shift and to work their small farms during the day. The smaller farms usually consisted of one or two cows, hay to feed them, maybe a pig, and a garden to feed the family. Tractors began replacing the oxen and work horses.

Hollis Heath, a young man at the time, began keeping a diary in 1928, and did so for most of his life. His entries give us a look at what life was like on the Springfield farm of his father, Carl Heath. In the mid
1990's both Harold Tillson, a nephew of Hollis, and Ed Smith, a young neighbor now living in Alabama, sent me their memories of life on the Heath farm. Hollis attended Enfield High School. To do so, he stayed with an aunt in Enfield during the week, and walked back to school on Sunday and home on Friday afternoon. He was always glad for a ride! Don't picture 4A as it is today. It was much more desolate and difficult to travel at certain seasons of the year.

June was the month to plant gardens. July was haying time. Their days were full. June 13th (1931) is a good example. Hollis spent half of the day working on the road, probably because his father was the road agent! That afternoon he helped to plant one of the gardens. On July 6th (1935) the temperature was 94 degrees in the shade. Hollis and nephew Harold cultivated corn in the front of the house once in the forenoon and cultivated corn over in the field twice. Then they went haying. This went on throughout the summers. Haying season was a busy time and all hands were welcomed to help. Grandmother Heath had to get three full meals a day for the hungry workers. The noontime meal was a dinner, not a lunch. She was famous for her cooking which was simple, but delicious.

On July 21, (1931), Hollis tells of getting in six large loads of hay. Harold remembered the hay being loaded on to the hay wagon with three tong pitchforks. One man would receive the bundle of hay and place it into position, building it up from the corners of the wagon, causing the hay to bind itself. There was often a contest between the guys pitching the hay to reach the top of the load, and the guy on top stacking the load. It was not uncommon for a pitcher to try to grab the stacker as he leaned over and they often fell to the ground wrestling one another! The grandchildren, Ken Tillson, Eleanor and Donnie Heath, and yours truly, had the job of tramping down the hay on the wagon and also in the hay loft to make room for more hay. We did high wire acts jumping from the beams of the hayloft to the manger below.

The days were filled with work that had to be completed, plus taking care of the many livestock, cattle, horses, pigs, hens, and maybe sheep. But life was not all work and no play. On occasion, a carload of men would leave on a Friday night for York, Maine where they would dig for clams and go out on fishing boats for $2.00 a day. After a meal of steamed clams and all the fixings, they would leave for Springfield getting home at daybreak on Sunday morning with a supply of clams and fish brought back in tubs of ice. There were camping expeditions to Grafton Pond where they could camp and fish on the islands. Fishing and horn pouting were favorite pastimes.

On Sundays and holidays there were picnics. Hollis mentioned the family going to Kezar Lake in Sutton on July 4, 1931. Hollis and nephew Harold went to Grantham instead for a baseball game in the afternoon. On July 5, 1937, a carload of Heaths and friends went to Bristol to the fireworks getting back
was a special time in rural New Hampshire that began with the settlement of the town by people who had been mostly subsistence farmers from the late eighteenth century until the mid 20th century. Even though I did not choose it as a way of life, I'm glad to have had the opportunity to be part of it as a child.

_Patsy Heath Caswell_

**Slate of Officers for 2001-2002**

President: Patsy Heath Caswell 1 year  
Vice President: Bob Nulsen 1 year  
Secretary: Donna Denniston 1 year  
Treasurer: Keith Cuttine  
Board: Muriel Tinkham 2 years ending 2003  
Janet Roberts 3 years ending 2002  
Fred Davis 1 year  

Once again it is time to pay your dues!! Our society depends on you for support.

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**Springfield Historical Society Membership**

**Annual Dues July 1, 2001- June 30, 2002**

*New_____ Renewal_____ Gift_____*

_____$10 Individual _____$25 Business

_____ $100 Life Membership

Name____________________________________

Address________________________________

City__________ State _____ Zip_____

Telephone (___)__________________________

Mail to: Springfield Historical Society  
PO Box 6, Springfield, NH 03284

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