



Newsletter

Middletown Springs Historical Society, Inc.

Middletown Springs, Vermont 05757

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER, 1989

Dear Friends:

The summer season began with the ever popular Strawberry Festival held on the Green before the Community House on the last Sunday afternoon in June.

Headed by Priscilla Lane and a large group of helpers, the event served 434 guests, including 77 children. No strawberries were left over, and the net profit was \$850.

On July 9th the Historical Society held its third annual Transportation Exhibit. Nearly fifty items were displayed, including antique cars, trucks, motorcycles, bicycles, carriages, and a marine engine collection.

There were interested spectators from Long Island, New Hampshire and Connecticut, as well as a good turn-out from Middletown Springs and surrounding areas.

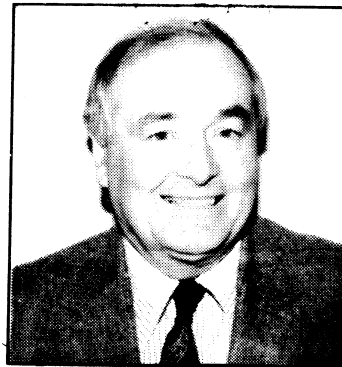
The Museum at the Community House was open from 2 to 4 p.m. every Sunday, and will be through October.

EVENTS TO COME

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for September 28 with a pot luck supper at 6 p.m. and the meeting at 7:30. Four Trustees are to be elected for two-year terms, and the following have been put up in nomination: Earl Haynes, Lydia Taylor, Jean DeVoe, Peggy Forbes and Hank Gobetz. Other names may be offered for nomination by giving them to Larry Roach, Secretary, up to 48 hours before the meeting.

TOWN SUFFERS LOSSES

During the first half of this year Middletown Springs suffered the loss of several active and well known residents.



Edmund S. Ritchie

The death of Edmund Ritchie on May 27 was a serious blow to the Historical Society. One of the founders in 1970, he served as president, vice-president, treasurer, and head of the building committee. Also active in local affairs, he served the town as a selectman, auditor, grand juror, justice of the peace, town agent, and a representative for the Rutland County Solid Waste District.

Four others, whose families have lived in Middletown Springs for many years and who have been active in town affairs, are Alton Leffingwell (1/30), Jennie Powers (4/24), Paul Fenton (5/4) and Hannah Hedding (7/25).

On Sunday, October 1 the Family Apple Festival will be held in the Community House at 2 p.m. There will be games for children, apple dessert tasting, door prizes, and an exhibit of the tools needed in apple raising and harvesting.

NEW GUEST REGISTER IN PARK

A new guest register stand with a box for donations was installed in the Mineral Springs Park by Trustees Theron Krouse and David Wright. It was designed and constructed by Robert Moran and partly funded by gifts from Mr. Moran and Kay Avery.

FOR SALE IN MUSEUM

Historic Architecture of Middletown Springs from the Vermont Register of Historic Places. \$2:50. By mail \$3:00.

Historic Architecture of Rutland County, also from the Vermont Register: \$8.00. Mailed copies: \$8:50

History of Middletown, Vermont by Barnes Frisbie (1975 reprint of the 1868 edition) \$6.00 now. After January 1, 1990 - \$8.00. By mail \$8:50

Membership dues: Single - \$4. Family - \$5. Contributing - \$50. Sustaining - \$50. Life - \$100.
 Donations: Payable to "MSHS Building Fund" \$_____ ; to "MSHS Old Cemetery Fund" \$_____

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Zip</u>	<u>Amount</u>
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Please send checks to Treasurer, M.S. Historical Society, Middletown Springs, VT 05757.

BUILDING REPORT

A crew led by Larry Roach has installed a new "standing seam" steel roof on the Auditorium section of the Historical Society Building. The new roof and the major structural repairs completed earlier are the first stage of complete renovation of the second floor of the Community House which will allow new uses for these long neglected rooms. The auditorium will provide additional space for museum and meetings, with the stage restored and the dance floor refinished.

The Trustees have begun discussions with representatives of the Grange which may lead to that group's reunion in the Grange Room (above the Stencil Room) under a long-term lease.

Expenses to date for renovations total \$10,500. Donations toward the \$25,000 goal come to \$2302, including \$1015 donated in memory of Ed Ritchie. Thanks to all who have given so far!

GOOD-BYE, OLD FRIEND!



After over a year of controversy and public objections, the U. S. Postal Service has moved the Middletown Springs Postoffice from its old home since 1942 to a smaller one which is being renovated to provide more room.

The building chosen, built about 1890, is the oldest one in town, but it is directly in front of the schoolhouse driveway and is also listed as being in the flood plane area.

These facts, together with the town's preference for the former location, apparently carried little weight. The change has been made.

OLD CEMETERY RESTORATION

Stone mason Michael Fannin is scheduled soon to begin the first phase of a two-year restoration of monuments in the Old Cemetery. Town voters authorized \$1500, to be matched a dollar for dollar by donated funds.

The Society has received almost \$850 so far, including \$200 in private donations. The Trustees still seek donations and have pledged to make up the balance toward the \$1500 goal from Society funds in order that the work can be done. The Trustees will ask the Town for a similar matching arrangement at Town Meeting in March, 1990. A perpetual care fund is also planned for future repairs.

IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP UP TO DATE?

If your address sticker is followed by a '88 or '87, please use the slip on the front page to renew membership.

Also, we are sending this Newsletter to those who have signed the guest book with their name and address, or have expressed an interest in the work we are doing. We would welcome your membership!

WHO GETS THE GOLD-HEADED CANE NEXT?

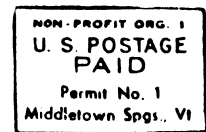
Since its beginning in 1907, the Gold-Headed Cane has been held by the oldest living resident of Middletown Springs. It last was in the hands of Jennie Powers, who died last April 24. Since then it has been in the Town Clerk's office awaiting the next "owner".

Deacon Alpheus Haynes received the first Cane on his 100th birthday, followed by 26 other oldsters to the present time. Their average age was 95. Four were 100 or over, and only one was under 90 years of age.

Six of the recipients were members of the Spaulding family, a name that goes back to Joseph Spaulding, who came from Middletown, Connecticut in 1782, surveyed the boundaries for the new town in 1783, and took the petition for township to the state's legislature meeting at Rutland early in 1784. The petition was granted in October of the same year, and Spaulding was asked to choose the town's name as a reward for his efforts.

In the next month Spaulding headed a committee to figure how much it cost to "get the town established". It was "two pounds, 12 shillings and 7 pence."

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Mr. David Wright
Town 05757