



Middletown Springs Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Vol. 30, No. 2

Celebrating Our 30th Year!

August 1999

The Story of the Flagpole

by Arthur E. Krouse

A tall wooden flagpole has stood for many years near the Civil War statue in the Middletown Springs Park. We are not certain when the first pole and its concrete base were erected, but it was early in the century. We do know when the current pole went up and about the engineering know-how necessary to accomplish the task, thanks to the recollections of Art Krouse.

The ingenuity used to raise the present flagpole in the Middletown Springs Park in 1947 came from my father, Arthur R. Krouse, Kenneth Moyer, and me, who also carried out the necessary work for roping and securing the pole. The white spruce tree was donated by Jeffrey Powers and with the help of his neighbor, Cecil Dudley, the tree was cut, limbed, and peeled. This very tall tree grew on the Powers farm which is presently owned by Francis Haley.

Although I don't know how the pole was delivered to the Park, I believe that it was brought by a truck and trailer owned by Central Vermont Public Service Corporation based in Poultney. I have also been told that it may have been trucked in on Elmer Moyer's pulp truck and supported by a pole carrier owned by CVPS. None of those who put up the pole were involved with the trucking.

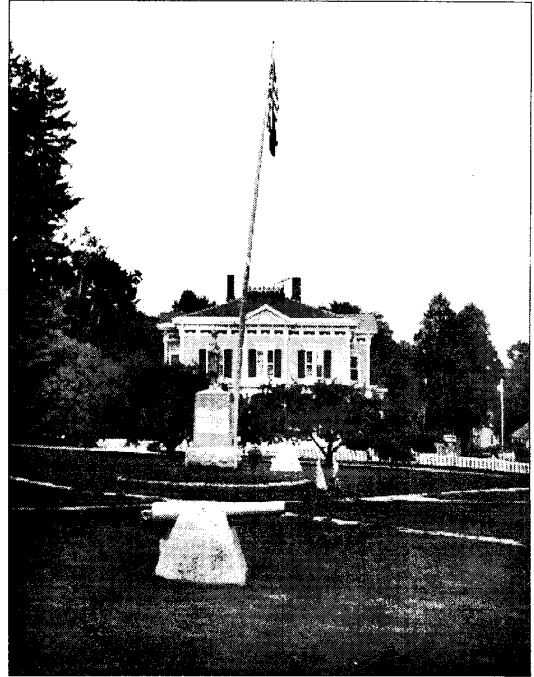


Art Krouse

How was the pole prepared? The first step was to bore through the base of the pole with a hand auger. After that, the pole was painted and

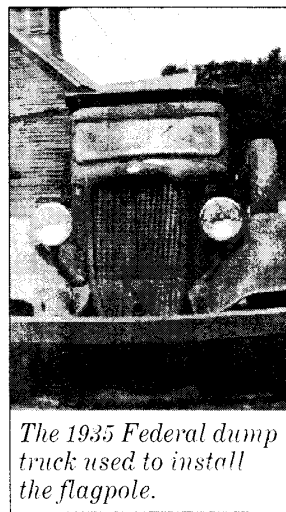
dried for several days. Then a small pulley was attached to the top of the pole and a rope for the flag and the snaps were placed in position before the pole was raised.

How was the pole raised? The pole was moved into position and its base placed in the concrete base of the old pole. The bottom steel pin was inserted into the pole which served as a hinge. We then used the large maple tree near the southwest corner of the Community Church to support a large pulley. The tree was protected from chain damage by several layers of burlap grain bags which were wrapped around the tree. We used a long piece of the braided hemp rope which was about one and a half inches in diameter. The rope was tied at approximately the center of the pole while the remaining end was threaded through the pulley and then brought downward and fastened to the front frame of Dad's Federal dump truck which had been loaded with gravel to provide the necessary traction.



Francis Haley

Where was the truck situated? The truck was placed close to the corner of the Church. Dad and Ken Moyer used hand signals to direct me as I raised the pole. When the pole was upright a second steel pin was placed in the top hole of the concrete base, just at the right moment to avoid the possibility of drawing the pole too far beyond vertical. A ladder was used to remove the hoisting rope from the pole.



The 1935 Federal dump truck used to install the flagpole.

Arthur Krause was born in Middletown Springs and grew up on his parents farm on South Street, now the home of Nan Gilmour. Art currently lives in East Poultney.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

David Wright

SIGNS OF CHANGE

The new marker commemorating A.W. Gray is an attractive addition to the Historic District and gives townspeople and visitors a thumbnail sketch of an important period in the town's history. It is also a sign (forgive the pun) of a new appreciation for the historic fabric of the town still visible in the buildings, cemeteries, roadways, ridgelines and streams. A related sign is the establishment of an advisory committee to the Planning Commission on Preservation of Natural and Historic Resources, based on strong sentiment for historic preservation expressed in a series of neighborhood meetings earlier this year. The committee will offer input for the Town Plan and work to increase awareness of preservation values and opportunities. Interest continues in improving the appearance of the town green (known synonymously as the park in this century). The Congregational Society, which owns the land, has planted new trees and CVPS has donated a Liberty Elm. Emmett Francois continues to work on restoring the carriages which once supported the Civil War era cannons.

And the flagpole, the origin of which Art Krouse explains elsewhere in this issue, calls out for attention. Many have noted that it now lists noticeably to the south and needs repair or replacement. It would be great to see that project completed in time for Memorial Day 2000!



Jane Berger

Volunteers serve shortcake, lemonade and iced tea at the 1999 Strawberry Festival. From left: Bob Johnson, Dorine DeVries, Nick Seidner, Diane Rosenmiller and Diane Conroy.



Emmett Francois

Village Harmony, the traveling summer music camp, performed in the auditorium before a full house on August 23. Larry Gordon directs.

Volunteers For Peace Paint the Adams House

The front of the Historical Society building is looking brighter thanks to eleven young people from an international program called Volunteers for Peace. (Several groups of about a dozen young men and women worked in Vermont as well as many other sites in the Northeast during August.) The Rutland-based group, coordinated by Curt McCormack, one of several groups, built a bridge on the Long Trail in Mendon, helped with a Habitat for Humanity house rehabilitation in Rutland and scraped and painted part of the Historical Society building, the Adams House, in Middletown Springs.

The workers at the Adams House, eight women and three men, aged 18-27 came from France, Germany, Japan, Spain and Turkey. The Volunteers For Peace work exchange program was started in 1982 by Peter Coldwell of Belmont, who is still the director. It is part of network of work camps which began with efforts to rebuild war-torn parts of France and Germany after World War I.

Former trustee Randy Kniffin supervised the

volunteers, and trustee Patty Kenyon coordinated the serving of lunches and snacks donated by MSHS members. President David Wright presented the volunteers with certificates of appreciation at the Village Harmony concert at the Historical Society on August 23.



Emmett Francois

A.W. Gray Historic Marker Unveiled



Ernest Francis

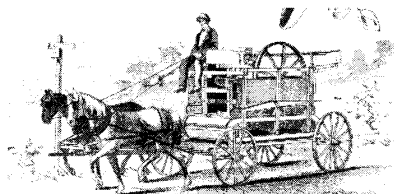
At the celebration on July 24, Jackie Calder, Vermont Historical Society curator and John Dumville, Historic Sites Operations Chief for the Vermont Division For Historic Preservation, unveil the Roadside Historic Site Marker honoring A.W. Gray and Sons at the corner of South St. and Montvert Rd. Looking on are Kay Avery, great-granddaughter of A.W. Gray, Hull Maynard, Rutland County Senator, and David Wright, MSHS President.

The text of the sign reads:

A.W. Gray & Sons

Near this site Albert W. Gray manufactured his horse power treadmills, which he invented and patented in 1844 and 1856. He also invented a corn sheller, patented in 1836, and a machine for making wrought iron nails. For over 50 years the shop, under the management of A.W. and his sons, Leonidas and Albert Y., employed some 60 workers to produce treadmills, threshers, wood saws, ensilage cutters and gasoline engines that were sold all over the world. In 1868 A.W. Gray rediscovered Middletown's mineral springs, which had been lost after the flood of 1811, inspiring a change in the town's name to Middletown Springs in 1885. The Grays bottled and sold the waters, helped finance construction of the Montvert Hotel resort in 1871, and built their own fashionable homes nearby.

The dedication included remarks by Calder, Maynard, and Selectman Francis Haley and a performance in the Mineral Springs Park, a prize-winning skit about the Grays written and acted by Poultney eighth graders, Veronica Parker, Sarah Heald and Anne Roberts. A walking tour pointed out the Grays' homes, the factory site and the Montvert Hotel site.



Notice of Annual Meeting

The Historical Society will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, September 26. The meeting will be preceded by a potluck supper at 6:00 p.m. The Business Meeting, will begin at 7:30 and will include a vote on proposed amendments to the Bylaws of the MSHS. A slide show and lecture by Gaior Davis, Executive Director, Vermont Historical Society, on "The Impact of Technology on Daily Life in Early Vermont" will follow at 8:00 p.m.

Notice of Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws of the MSHS.

Article VII specifies that:

These bylaws may be amended at a regular or special meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of members present, provided the proposed amendments have been submitted in writing to the secretary and copies forwarded to all members.

The following proposed amendments were discussed and approved by the Trustees at their Aug. 5 meeting:

ARTICLE III, Section 1 — Schedule of Dues:

Individual	\$ 8 (raised from \$5)
Family	\$12 (raised from \$8)
Contributing	\$25 (new category)

(Individual Life \$125 and Family Life \$150 remain the same.)

ARTICLE VIII, Dissolution (new Article)

In the event of the dissolution of the Middletown Springs Historical Society, the Society's collection in its entirety shall be given to the Vermont Historical Society.

1999 EVENTS

Sept. 26	6 p.m.	Annual Meeting & Pot Luck Supper
Oct. 3	1 - 4 p.m.	Apple Festival & Library Book Sale

Welcome! New Members

ANNUAL MEMBERS

Patricia Donahue-White, *Pittsburg, Penn.*

Mary Franckowski, *New Britain, Conn.*

Susan Lloyd, *Urbana, Ill.*

David Pockette, *Rutland*

LIFE MEMBER

Bernie Grazulwich, *Bristol, Conn.*

Membership Information

Membership dues for 1999 were due in January.
Check your mailing label for current status.

Dues (Check one):

Individual	\$5.00	Individual Life	\$125.00
Family	\$8.00	Family Life	\$150.00
Business	\$50.00		

Send to: Joel Pliner, Treasurer
Middletown Springs Historical Society
P.O. Box 1126
Middletown Springs, VT 05757

- + Frisbie's *History of Middletown* is out of print.
- + *Historic Architecture of Middletown Springs* pamphlet is available for \$3, post paid.
- + *Views Through Time: Driving through the Rutland Region* brochure is available for \$2.50, post paid.
- + *Vermont Museum, Galleries & Historic Places* is available for \$11.50, post paid.

Donations to MSHS, a non-profit organization, are tax deductible.

Business Members

Thanks to local businesses that have joined MSHS under our "Business" membership category:

William Emberley—Antique Bottles & Collectibles
Green Mountain Timber Frames — Dan McKeen
Jim Marquis—Antiques Appraiser
Mintzer Brothers
Rob Ogus, Tree Surgeon
Southview Arts—Digital Recording Studio
Stewarts Dairy

The MSHS Newsletter is published as many as four times a year for members and friends of the Society. Comments and manuscripts on subjects of interest are encouraged and should be sent c/o David Wright, editor.

Middletown Springs Historical Society
P.O. Box 1126
Middletown Springs, VT 05757

In Memoriam

VIRGINIA F. TURNAURER, 91, died July 3 in Fair Haven where she had resided since a July 3, 1997, lightning fire destroyed her historic home in Middletown Springs. With her husband, Joseph, she moved to town from Connecticut in the early 1970's. Joe died in 1984. She was born in Hartford, Conn., the daughter of Richard and Lillian (Fales) Popham. Ginny was an accomplished pianist who played professionally. She was employed in the psychology department at Lehigh University in Allentown, Pa.

She served as a MSHS trustee and secretary from 1982-84 and was instrumental in establishing the museum in the former Town Library room. She was a Library volunteer responsible for the building landscaping, an active member of the Garden Club, and a member of Fortnightly. She was a choir member and choir librarian at Trinity Church in Rutland where she created sanctuary floral arrangements and an annual elaborate Holy Week display, "The garden of repose," in the Trinity chapel. She was also a volunteer cook for the Rutland Mission and delivered Meals on Wheels.

Ginny's survivors include a niece, Jane P. Godfrey and nephew, Richard C. Popham, both of West Hartford, Conn.

Donations may be sent to Trinity Episcopal Church, 85 West Street, Rutland, or the Rutland County Community Land Trust, 128 Merchants Row, Rutland, VT 05701.

Correction . . .

An obituary for MALCOLM VAIL in the May issue of the Newsletter unintentionally omitted the names of several survivors. In addition to his wife, Shirley, of Hubbardton and daughter, Laurie Vail, of Portland, Ore., he is survived by two sons, Bruce Vail of Hubbardton and Scott Vail of Placerville, Cal; two sisters, Barbara Dwyer of Westminster and Alison Craig of Hague, N.Y.; eight grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

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