



# Middletown Springs Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Vol. 41, No. 1

May 2010

## Membership Information

Membership dues for 2010 were due in January.  
Check your mailing label for current status.

Dues (Check one):

Individual	\$10.00	Business	\$50.00
Family	\$15.00	Sustaining	\$100.00
Contributing	\$25.00		

Send to: Pat Hemenway, *Treasurer*  
Middletown Springs Historical Society  
P.O. Box 1121  
Middletown Springs, VT 05757

- Frisbie's *History of Middletown* CD-ROM or photocopy, \$20, post paid.
- Eight notecards with historic photos of Middletown Springs, \$12 post paid.
- *Searching for Ichabod*, by Julie Van Camp, \$18.00, post paid.
- *A Gem in the Hills*, by Frances Krouse, \$25, post paid.

Donations to MSHS, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, are tax deductible.

Visit our website:

www.MiddletownSpringsHistoricalSociety.org

### Business Members

- Blue Cat Bistro, John Rehlen*
- Estelle Ellis, Business Image, Inc.*
- William Emberley, Antique Bottles & Collectibles*
- Friends in Adoption, Dawn Smith Pliner*
- Green Mountain Timber Frames, Dan McKeen*
- Sarah Horne Interior Design*
- Johnson Energy, Tom & Eileen Johnson*
- LaValley Building Supply*
- Jim Marquis, Antiques Appraiser*
- Montvert Real Estate, Nan Gilmour*
- Professional Tile Installation, Jerry Hansen*
- American Logres Theatre, Karen & Leslie Klami*
- Stewarts Dairy*
- Twin Mountain Farms B&B, Annie & Walt Pepperman*
- Williams Hardware, Poultney, Bob Williams*

The MSHS Newsletter is published twice 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, or e-mailed to montvert@vermontel.net.

## New Trustees Elected at Annual Meeting

At the Historical Society's Annual Meeting in September 2009 new Trustee Pat Hemenway was elected to a two-year term. Re-elected to second terms were Shane Thornton and David Wright. Continuing trustees are Dietra Davis, Jon Mathewson, Maureen McCormack and Theron Krouse. Retiring from the Board with sincere thanks from those attending the Annual Meeting were Karen Klami and Patty Kenyon.

At their October meeting Board members elected David Wright, president; Shane Thornton, vice president; Maureen McCormack, secretary; and Pat Hemenway, treasurer.

Brooke Nuckles was appointed to the board at the November meeting and Mark Raymond was appointed at the April meeting

## 2010 COMING EVENTS

- Sunday, May 30 **Middletown Springs Memorial Day Parade, 3 pm**
- Sunday, June 20 **Strawberry Festival, 1 to 4 pm**
- Sunday, Sept. 26 **Annual Meeting, 7 pm**

## Welcome! New Members

**Elizabeth Butler, San Clemente, Calif.**

**NEW SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIPS**

**Anne Pratt Slatin, Stamford, N.Y.**

**Anne Spencer, Shrewsbury, Vt.**

**NEW CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIPS**

**Diane Rae Schroeder, Long Beach Calif.**

**Charles M. Wright, Ankeny, Ia.**

The Buxton name still resonates at Middletown Springs in many descendants and places, and many more remnants can be found with a little research. An inquiry from a historian in Monroe County, Iowa inspired a recent look.

In a July 2009 email, Rosalie Mullinix, Director of the Monroe County Historical Society asked for information on John Emory Buxton and his son Benjamin Buxton, who were involved in developing and operating coal mines for Consolidat-

ed Coal Company in Monroe County and in founding the town of Buxton, Iowa. Rosalie was planning an exhibit and tour of the site of the now defunct town and sought family history of the Buxtons in Vermont.

J.E. Buxton born in 1839, grew up in the family home on Buxton Ave. The present Bush home is on or near the site of this two story brick house. Across the road, Ben Buxton later built the "Bungalow" on the hill, now owned by the David family. According to the *Biographies of Rutland County, 1899*, J.E. taught school as a young man, married and moved to Iowa in 1868 where he worked in the hardware business. In 1869 he went to work for the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Co. He took charge of extensive coal mines in Muchakinock, Iowa in 1881 for the railroad company and, during a strike, he famously led an armed stand off against a group of union miners. During his time in Iowa, he and his family returned to the family home in Middletown Springs each summer.

J.E. retired in 1897 and returned with his family to the home place, Brookside Farm, which he had purchased previously. Settled by his father



*Alpheus Haynes is feted by the citizens of Middletown Springs on his 100th birthday with the Gold Headed Cane and a ride in Benjamin Buxton's Stanley Steamer.*

Luther who had come from Danby in 1825 and who built the brick house in 1832 from bricks "made on the premises," the farm consisted of 300 acres "of bottom flats and undulating hill lands." J. E. built a new barn that still stands on the west side of Buxton Ave. According to Frances Krouse in her history, *A Gem in the Hills*, J.E. acquired three adjoining farms increasing his holdings to 1500 acres, and established extensive apple orchards on West St, a maple "or-

chard," and a large dairy operation. Machinery at his Middletown Cheese and Butter Co. was run by water power from a dam that impounded Spring Lake. The old pond still exists in the hills behind Pete & Shirley Moyer's present farm on the south side of Coy Hill. Ice was harvested there for use in the creamery and for domestic use by neighbors on Buxton Ave. The old creamery building, now owned by Warren Hayes has been converted to apartments.

Buxton's wife was Antha Clift. Her brother, Crocker J. Clift, was Postmaster for many years and appears in several of Dana Carpenter's photos from the period. The Buxton's son, Benjamin C., born in 1867, and raised in Iowa and Vermont, graduated from Northwestern University and was a successful rancher in Nebraska before taking over his father's position as manager of the coal mines at Oskaloosa, Iowa. He had married Ethel Gray, the daughter of Leonidas Gray, one of "AW Gray Sons" who operated the horsepower factory. B.C. developed new coal mining facilities including the company town which he named "Buxton" in honor of his father. His father's sister, Helen B. Henderson, was manager of

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Middletown Springs Historical Society  
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Address Service Requested

At its 27th Annual Meeting in March, the Vermont Museum and Gallery Alliance voted itself out of existence. Founded to build communication between the state's historical and cultural groups, galleries and museums, the vision soon grew to improving the organization and governance of its member institutions and the display and care of their collections. A 1992 National Endowment for the Arts grant to VMGA created the Vermont Collections Care Program which supported an administrative organization and funded 134 grants to cultural organizations over the next decade for museum assessments, planning and conservation treatment and training of museum volunteers. In addition VMGA conducted dozens of workshops and trainings to museum volunteers.

Our Historical Society is a good example of the many local organizations which benefitted greatly from these opportunities, beginning with a General Survey of our building and collection in 1993. A 2000 grant of \$1000 helped us to plan our Museum Storage Room renovation. VMGA then helped us obtain

two \$2500 grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 2002 and 2005 to carry out the renovation and to prepare the artifacts in the collection for safe storage in their new facility.

VMGA expired when the last of the money from the 1992 funding was finally spent. VMGA accomplished a lot statewide but much more remains to be done. Vermont Historical Society confirmed the continued need in 2008 with a written survey sent to over 700 collecting institutions (including historical societies, galleries and museums, as well as libraries and Town Clerks' offices). The survey showed that the condition of buildings and storage rooms is often a major issue, and collecting organizations rarely have up to date emergency plans. Half of these organizations have no security systems, as many have catalogued less than 50% of their collections, and 30% operate on annual budgets of less than \$5,000.

Middletown Springs Historical Society scored high in the VHS survey, thanks to its years with VMGA, but where will struggling organizations turn now that VMGA is gone?

## Elsie Norton Receives the Gold-Headed Cane

In a tradition dating to July 1907 when Alpheus Haynes was honored on his 100th birthday in a celebration on the town green, Else McLaughlin Norton became the 34th person to hold the Middletown Springs Gold Headed Cane. The cane is inscribed "To the oldest person of Middletown Springs, Vt., In Trust." The previous holder of the cane, Donna White, died Nov. 9, 2009.

In a small ceremony at the Post Office on December 12, 2009, Fred Bradley, Select Board Chair, presented the cane to Elsie. The cane may be seen on permanent display in a case at the Post Office with a list of past recipients and a photograph of Mr. Haynes. There one can also explore the latest exhibit of artifacts and ephemera from Elsie's family collection, in a case provided by the Historical Society. Elsie has been preparing these exhibits for 25 years, first in the Library and since 1993 in the Post Office. Her "hobby" contributing to awareness of local history was described in the April 1995 edition of the Historical Society Newsletter.

Elsie resides with her daughter Jean Ann Reynolds on the McLaughlin family farm "Sandy Riverview" on West Street, which Elsie and her late husband Clark purchased from her parents Emory and Grace in 1938. Elsie served as a Historical Society Trustee back in the 1970's and her grandson, Mark Raymond was recently appointed to the Board.



*Photo by Emmett Francois*

*Elsie Norton, seated, was awarded the Gold-Headed cane on December 12, 2009. Helping her celebrate (left to right) are Laura Castle, Jean Ann Reynolds; Fred Bradley, and Shirley Moyer.*

## Maple Festival Celebrates

With delicious maple treats, a demonstration of old-fashioned sugar-making technique, expert interpretation of our fine collection of maple artifacts, and the timely celebration of the season, our twenty-first Maple Festival was a success once again in every way — weather, turnout, good spirits and financial success. Revenue total of \$3,000.

Not only did the Maple Raffle, with 62 great prizes from area businesses and friends of the Society inspire donations, but this year's event featured

a silent auction of twenty specially selected prizes that netted over \$900 of the total revenue. The generous support of our members and friends and first time visitors supported the hard work of the many volunteers who make the Maple Festival happen. Thanks to all who bought a raffle ticket or left a bid!

Credit goes especially to the following donors of raffle and silent auction items. Please thank them again by buying their products and patronizing their businesses in the coming year.

Apple Mountain Woodworking  
Applebee's Bar & Grill  
Aubuchon Hardware, Fair Haven  
Best Moon Caterers  
Birdseye Diner  
Blue Cat Bistro  
Brooke Nuckles  
Bill & Sue Clark  
The Carving Studio  
Herb Childress  
Clarendon Hardwood Bowls  
Lois Dansereau  
Dietra Davis  
Durfees' Sugarhouse Lane Maple  
East Poultney General Store  
Emmett Francois  
Gilmore Home Center  
Grant's Village Store  
Green Mountain Coffee Roasters  
Don Hemenway  
Hermit Hill Books  
Peter Huntoon  
Anne & Bud Krouse  
Judy Lake Lampshades

LaValley's Building Supply  
Perry Lowell  
Mach's Brick Oven Pizza  
Mach's County Store  
Morgan Mountain Organic Gardeners  
Naga Bakehouse  
Price Chopper  
Rising Meadow Pottery  
Riverside Motors  
Rutland Natural Food Store  
R.N. Williams Store  
Sal's South Restaurant  
Sissy's Kitchen  
Slate Valley Museum  
Solarfest  
S.E. Smith Feeds  
Stewarts Ice Cream  
Trolley Stop Restaurant  
Twin Mountain Farms B&B  
Vermont Country Store  
Vermont Sport & Fitness  
Vermont Sweetwater  
Wells Country Store  
Williams Hardware

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the company store in Buxton for several years. She left an estate endowing the Helen Henderson Educational Trust Fund that still provides scholarship assistance to Middletown Springs students.

Around 1900 Ben and his family returned to Middletown Springs where J.E. turned over the family expanded holdings to him. Ben modernized the dairy operation, enlarging the main barn and constructing a piggery and an arched bridge using reinforced concrete, a popular new building material. He built his family a large slate clad "Bungalow" on the hill overlooking the ironically renamed "Justamere Farm."

The operation was such a show place that Ben published booklet around 1905 showing the landscape of the farm, the "lake," the barns, creamery, and other outbuildings. Photos show whitewashed interiors where husbandmen dressed in white uni-

forms milk the herd of 75 pedigreed cows and churn the butter free of tubercular bacilli.

Justamere Farm and Orchards provided needed employment to many town residents through the 1920's. Ben Buxton died in California in 1933. Frances Krouse describes him as "a free-speaking, forthright man... generous and warm-hearted." He played a conspicuous role in the acquisition by the Town of the Adams House, which became the Community House, now the home of the Middletown Springs Historical Society. During roof repairs in 1989 the name "B. C. Buxton" was found painted on the underside of a piece on metal ridge cap, a reminder of one of the town's well know benefactors.

*Thanks to Sally Buxton Jones for her assistance in providing information to the Monroe County Historical Society.*

## ❁ In Memoriam ❁

**LOUISE COPELAND BERTSCHE**, 91, died Aug. 18, 2009 in W. Caldwell, N.J. She was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., the daughter of Albert Woodruff Gray and Frances Louise Copeland, both from prominent Middletown Springs families. Her grandfathers were Leonidas Gray and Henry Clay Copeland and great grandfathers A.W. Gray and Lucius Copeland.

Albert attended Yale College and New York Law School and worked briefly in the New York law office of his relative Brainerd Avery of Middletown Springs before starting his own law practice. Louise and Albert divorced at about the time Louise was born.

Louise attended Brooklyn Friends School and Barnard College. She married William Irving Bertsche in 1940 and had four children. After her divorce in 1973, Louise attended Katherine Gibbs School and worked at Montclair (N.J.) State College, retiring after 17 years.

Her son, William N. Bertsche, died in 2006.

She is survived by her sons, Copeland Gray Bertsche and Robert Alden Bertsche; and her daughter, Louise Ann (a.k.a., Alyce Louise) Bertsche; eight grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

She had recently become a member of the Historical Society .



**STANLEY GARFINKEL**, 88, died February 16 in Atlantis, Florida. He was born in Brooklyn , N.Y. and grew up in Flushing, N.Y., where his parents ran a kosher restaurant and deli. In high school, Stan was a cheerleader and “a red hot jitterbug,” who, with other teenage enthusiasts, danced on the Palace Theater stage.

Stan majored in chemistry and textile science at North Carolina State, joined the Naval ROTC and graduated as class valedictorian of 1943.

He soon entered the U. S. Navy, serving as an ensign on the “Lucky Lansdown.” Despite participating in some famous battles in the Pacific, the destroyer USS Lansdown was never hit by the Japanese navy or air force. The Lansdown was in attendance off the coast of Japan at the signing of Japanese surrender.

Soon after his discharge and return to Flushing, Stan was introduced to Maxine, a not-so-distant admirer. They were married in February 1947. Stan had a career in textile engineering, living in New York City, where Maxine taught in the school sys-

tem for 26 years.

The Garfinkels have had a summer residence in Middletown Springs since the 1970’s, first on Garron Rd. and later building a home on North St. They have been Historical Society members since 1989.

Stan is survived by his wife for 63 years, Maxine; and by two sons, Cliff and David; and by four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

**GEORGE E. HADWEN**, 84, died Oct. 12, 2009, in Ft. Myers, Florida. A native Vermonter and longtime resident of Bennington and Charlotte, George attended St. Lawrence University and served in the U.S. Navy during WWII. He and his wife, Marie published the Pennysaver for 29 years. He was active in Rotary, the Boy Scout Council, Chamber of Commerce and served as a Trustee, Tree Warden and Police Commissioner for the Village of Old Bennington. He developed land in Middletown Springs and was a member of the Society for many years.

George is survived by his wife, Marie, his daughters, Wendy, Jan and Brooke, their husbands, and by five grandchildren

**LORRAINE HUBBARD**, 86, died April 4 at home in Middletown Springs. She was the daughter of Jesse (Hoadley) and Earl Hubbard. She attended Middletown Springs schools and graduated from Ithaca College in 1945 with a B.S. in Physical Education. She received a Master’s degree in 1953 from New York University.



Lorraine was a skilled and admired teacher throughout her career, which began at Draper Central School in Rotterdam, NY. From there she taught at Whitehall (N.Y.) Central School, Port Jervis High School in Port Jervis, NY and at George Washington High School in Alexandria, Virginia. Always wishing to be closer to Vermont, she accepted a teaching position at Shenendehowa Central School in Clifton Park, NY. She taught at the high school there for the next twenty-five years, retiring in 1980. In 1984, Shenendehowa C. S. established a student scholarship award, given each year in honor of both Lorraine Hubbard and her good friend and fellow teacher there, Vannilu Harrison.

After retirement, Lorraine and her long time friend and companion, Arlene Stensgard, moved back to Vermont and lived in the Hubbard family farmhouse on North Street. They enjoyed entertaining and especially enjoyed playing cards with friends. Arlene died in 2006.

Lorraine loved working in her garden and in her flower beds. In her later years, Lorraine much travelled to the Washington, DC, area to enjoy some of the winter months with her good friend, Janet Simmons. They spent many hours playing hotly contested games of dominoes.

She was a long-time member of the Middletown Springs Historical Society and the Community Church. She served as a Trustee of the Congregational Church Corporation for several years in the 1980's.

Lorraine is survived by many cousins and friends.

BARBARA POWERS, 86, died August 30, 2009, in Rutland. She was born in Rutland, the daughter of William and Lydia Hinkley, attended local schools and graduated from Castleton Normal School. She served in the U.S. Coast Guard during WWII. She married John L. Powers and they resided for many years in Middletown Springs in a house that is now the local home of the U.S. Post Office. Barbara was active in the PTA and the Roundabout and was a longtime member of the Historical Society.

She is survived by her children: William of Idaho, Andrew of North Carolina, Lydia Taylor of Middletown Springs, Raymond J. of Pennsylvania, Karen Kirkpatrick of Burlington, Sue Bellew of Middlebury; eight grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

**JANE PURRINGTON**, 95, died Sept. 23, 2009, in Bangor, Maine. She was born in Paris, France, the daughter of the artists Oliver Newbury Chaffee and Mary Cole, who were in France studying Impressionism. Her early life was spent in France, New York, and Provincetown, Mass.

Jane married Richard H. Purrington in 1936. Lt. Col. Dick Purrington was career military man, a U. S. Army Air Corps veteran of WWII and a U.S. Air Force veteran of the Korean War and later worked as a teacher. They resided in Germany and New Jersey and retired to Middletown Springs in 1963. After Dick's death in 1997, Jane lived with her daughter Mary Jane in New Jersey and Virginia.

A talented artist, Jane was a 50-year member of the Historical Society of Early American Design. She was an active member of the Middletown Springs Historical Society where she designed and executed the stenciling in the Stencil Room of the Adams House. She served as a Trustee for several years, 1978-86. She was an accomplished seamstress, gourmet cook, and gardener.

Jane is survived by her four children: Thomas, of New York, N.Y., Mary Jane of Williamsburg, Va., Susan Mulnix of Herndon, Va., and Abigail Geddes of Virginia Beach Va.; and by 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

**DONNA WHITE**, 101, the holder of the Gold Headed Cane in Middletown Springs for 10 years, died Nov. 5, 2009 in Rutland. She was born on Stony Brook in Stockbridge, Vt, the daughter of Myron and Cora S. Brown of Rochester. She married Cecil White in Pittsfield and they lived for many years in Poultney and Middletown Springs, until Cecil's death in 1971. She worked as a seamstress during the War at the

shirt factory in Poultney and in the coat factory in Whitehall, N.Y. She loved to garden, growing a big patch of potatoes even in her late eighties, and to hunt and tell deer stories. She made many quilts, needlework pieces and rugs, and crocheted afghans for her family. Donna was a member of the Poultney Episcopal Church.

She is survived by her son, Myron "Sonny" White, of Poultney; and her daughter, Arlene, of Montpelier; four grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren; nieces and nephews, caregivers and friends, including neighbors Robert Johnson and Gary Moyer.

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## Thank you!

Thank you for your donation to the Historical Society's 2009 Annual Fund!!

Jan & Frank Asch  
Josie & Jere Berger  
Copeland G. Bertsche  
Jane Bickford  
Phil & May Biondi  
Bill & Barbara Bloom  
Marilyn Bobseine  
Raymond Burke  
Dennis & Enid Clark  
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Gail Franz  
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Don & Helen Rogers  
Diane Rosenmiller & Nick Seidner  
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Lisa & Shane Thornton  
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