



Williston Historical Society Bulletin

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“Every individual is an historical figure.”

Founded 1974

S. & J. Burroughs, Editors

Save the Dates

June 18 & 19 – Vermont History Expo

Tunbridge Fairgrounds

July 3 – Annual Ice Cream Social

July 4 – Annual Parade & Festivities

Officers

President: Terry Macaig
Vice President: Brenda Perkins
Secretary: Marlene Price
Treasurer: Jon Stokes

Director

Stephen Perkins
Adriene Katz, Collections Manager/Archivist
Bob Bradish

WHS Needs You!

Vermont History Expo – The theme this year is “H2O: The Power of Water in Vermont History”. Our display will feature Williston’s Northern boundary – the Winooski River. We are looking for photographs of the river as it Borders Williston with the ability to scan images.

Annual Ice Cream Social – Always in need of volunteers for this event!

July 4 Parade – WHS is planning a float again this year. Ideas, help in construction and riders/walkers are needed!

Report from the President

Dear members:

The Williston Historical Society has a new and improved web site up and running. It is in its infancy, so check frequently for changes and additions! Find it at willistonhistorical society.org

Besides the new website we are moving forward on several projects:

WHS recently acquired a grain measure. It is featured in Dick Allen's article in this newsletter. The measurer is on display at the Dorothy Alling Memorial Library in the Vermont Room. Also on display are several coverlets that Adriene Katz has pulled from the permanent collection.

Under the able leadership of our Collections Manager/Archivist, Adriene Katz, the Society is working to identify and archive the contents of several photo albums. If you are familiar with Williston and many of her people, especially in the 1960's, 70's, and 80's, we would appreciate your help.

We are interested in your ideas for our member meetings. please send your thoughts on subjects for programs, lectures and performances and/or if you wish to volunteer to macaig@msn.com or call 878-3872
adriene.katz@gmail.com or
brendaperkins135@yahoo.com

Thank you for your membership. Terry Macaig, President

Please update your email addresses and phone numbers

The board of the Williston Historical Society is looking for better ways to communicate with WHS members in regard to upcoming events and items of interest in and around our community. We currently have email addresses and phone numbers for many of our members, but that list is incomplete.

If you have not recently updated your email address with the WHS, please do so by sending your current email address to Bob Bradish, who is now maintaining the membership list. You can do this by sending an email to Bob at robertdonab@myfairpoint.net. or by calling him at 872-8775

Please be assured that you will not be deluged with emails or phone calls from the WHS.



Grain Measure Manufactured by Brown Brothers in North Williston, c. 1887

By Richard Allen

This grain measure was made by the Brown Brothers in North Williston, Vermont around 1887. *Walton's Register* records that the Brown family was involved with butter tub and butter box manufacturing in North Williston from 1875 to 1899. Reed Brown, the father (1810-1878), and three sons: Bertram Fay, Byron Briggs, and Roswell E. Brown all had a hand in this industry at one time.

From Hamilton Child's *Business Directory of Chittenden County, 1882-83* we learn that Reed B. Brown & Son's butter tub manufactory was originally established by Wilkins & Loggins in 1872, who conducted the business for about two years, before it was taken over by the Browns. In the early 1880s they employed ten men manufacturing \$12,000.00 worth of butter tubs per year.

A single listing in *Walton's Register* for 1887 notes that grain measures and oil can jackets were produced by the Brown Brothers. This grain measure is a four-quart container that could be used to ration out a specific amount of feed for an animal. It was purchased by the Williston Historical Society from an antique dealer in Stratham, New Hampshire via eBay in February 2016. An oil can jacket, also made of wood, protected a can of oil from puncture and the ensuing fire hazard.

Paul Wood, a noted Vermont expert on 19th century farm implements, wrote in an email that, "The Williston Historical Society has acquired a well-made, iron-reinforced grain measure. It has the typical bentwood side fastened by nails. Although such devices could measure any dry granulated (typically agricultural) material, a principal use was to measure the miller's portion – the fraction of grain kept by the miller in payment for grinding the grain. Measures could be purchased in nested sets – for example, 2, 4 and 8 quarts. Also, double measures were made – for example, 2 quarts on one side and 4 quarts on the other. Measures were also made in larger bushel sizes,"

North Williston was a busy industrial section of Williston after the railroad came through in 1849-1850. There was a grist mill, Smith Wright's cold storage plant, a saw mill producing lumber and shingles, a cheese factory, a creamery, as well as Brown's general store, post office, school, and railroad depot. The Williston Historical Society financed the research behind the book, *North Williston: Down Depot Hill*, which details the families, individuals, and businesses that made North Williston unique.



North Williston Train Station



Pete & Pat Peterson 1986

Notes from Jeneva P. Peterson on the North Williston Train Station:

On October 31, 1843 the General Assembly provided for a railroad that would pass through Chittenden County. It was completed in 1849. The first train went over the tracks in November of 1849, terminus Burlington. Central Vermont acquired the railway in 1882.

The railroad station in North Williston was on the South East side of the tracks next to Staple's house [the last white house before the tracks heading towards the river]. The freight station was across the tracks. Freight service was stopped in the late 1940's and the railroad station was torn down. Passenger service ended soon after, also in the 1940's.

Pete [Jeneva's husband] and I may well have been the last people to get off the 'Sleeper' from New York City in Williston. I'm not sure of the exact date, but it was in the '40's. When purchasing our ticket in New York City we noticed that Williston was still listed as a stop on the time table, so we bought tickets for Williston. As we approached North Williston we spoke to the Porter because we were afraid the engineer would just pass on through and go on to Essex junction. The Porter replied, "We never stop here!" Pete said, "Well we bought our tickets for Williston" and showed him our ticket stubs. The Porter pulled the brake cord and the train stopped in North Williston.

After exiting the train we started to walk up the road, as our home is at the top of North Williston Hill. Emily Staple, who lived in the house by the tracks, was surprised to hear the train stopping since the "sleeper" usually just blew its whistle as it went through. Emily, a nurse, was just getting ready to leave for work at the Mary Fletcher Hospital in Burlington. She wondered who was getting off the train and so came to the door to see. When she recognized us she said, "Just a minute. I'm just leaving for work and will take you up the hill."

The next time table issued did not list a stop at Williston, Vermont.

