



GATHERINGS FROM THE GREEN

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Director's Report

Thank goodness for savers! In November, eight (yes, eight) bankers boxes full of materials from the Cole/Page family were donated to the museum. It took us until this week to finish going through the rich content compiled by five generations of savers.

The first two boxes were easy. They contained books of local town histories, and some published family genealogies. The next two boxes had color-coded individual genealogies of the Page, Cole, and Jones/Gowell family members. Another box contained family photos, most of which were identified and dated - what a rarity and treat! Two other boxes contained hundreds of letters written between family members, from 1840s-1900. The last box was a treasure trove of "stuff" - diaries, diplomas, newspaper clippings, family deeds, and ledgers - wonderful items to fill in the gaps. We needed to work with a genealogy chart in front of us to make sure we understood the family relationships.

It started with Susan Leavitt who married Josiah Page. She saved letters from her children. Her oldest son, Josiah, went to Minnesota and homesteaded. Another son, John, went to Indiana to teach, and tragically died young while surveying for the railroad as it made its way West. Susan saved letters from her daughters, Susan and Mary. A daughter, Susan Page Cole, saved the letters her son Ernest wrote home from the NH Agricultural College at Dartmouth and from her daughter, Anna May, who went to seminary in Hadley, MA and worked and taught in Massachusetts as a young woman. Susan's sister Mary loved history and writing, and collected a wealth of material on the family genealogy.

Anna May ended up living in the Page family homestead on Winnacunnet Rd and taught school in Hampton until her retirement when she ran a greenhouse. The homestead was a two family house with Anna May's aunt Mary Page

Getchell living on the other side. Anna May also saved letters from her many friends, including classmate Rupert Lindsay, who went off to WWI; and her nephew Everett Shaw, who went west to work the mines and became a geologist.

Ernestine, daughter of Ernest Cole, was a clipper and saved hundreds of articles on Hampton history and events. She took copious notes and recorded family memories and stories on any paper available. She was the recipient of Anna May and Mary's savings. Ernestine's daughter, Carol, who lived in Hampton for a short while as a child, saved those things her mother had felt were so important.

The material came to us in beautiful condition. It doesn't take much to store family treasures in a way they can be preserved and enjoyed for future generations. If anyone is interested in attending a workshop on preserving family documents, email us at:

info@hamptonhistoricalsociety.org, or call and leave a message (929-0781). If we get enough interest we can organize a session on simple but effective preservation techniques.

Savers unite!
Betty Moore

MISSION

The mission of the Hampton Historical Society is to increase public knowledge and understanding of the history and cultural heritage of the town of Hampton, New Hampshire, from its earliest inhabitants to the present generation. We will communicate that history through an active museum, educational programs, and a resource library.

Programs for 2010

A new mission statement will be guiding the Hampton Historical Society in 2010. Public education and community outreach are central to this new mission, and the Society considers these efforts as the primary strategy for achieving a more proactive presence in the Hampton community.

Our goal continues to be to preserve and record Hampton's historical artifacts, and to tell the stories represented by those objects through informative and entertaining programs. What has changed is the proactive manner in which we will be communicating that history.

Each program year, the Society will offer a "how to" workshop that uses an aspect of the historical resources available at the Tuck Museum, or teaches a "how to" skill such as chair making. This year our "how to" workshop will be on genealogical research. The Society does not conduct genealogical research but is a source of information for those who want to conduct independent study.

On Sunday May 16 Harold Inglis, President of the New Hampshire Society of Genealogists, will talk about how one investigates their ancestors. His presentation will be at the Tuck Museum at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Inglis' talk is titled "The Snags & Serendipity of Genealogy". Through stories of his own research and that of others, he will explain how to break down the brick walls that block access to knowing one's heritage.

In April, the Society will increase its presence in the Hampton community with a talk by Hampton's own Lori White Cotter. Ms. Cotter, Hampton teacher, historian and Toppan descendant, will present the long overdue work of Edmund Willoughby Toppan (1808-1845), *Toppan's History of Hampton - The Early Settlers 1630-1730*. This never before published book tells the tale of the early settlers of Hampton, N.H. Ms. Cotter transcribed Edmund Toppan's handwritten notes, updated references and dates, and edited this seminal work on early Hampton history. She will share this history and her efforts to publish it on Tuesday April 20 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Lane Memorial Library on Academy Avenue in Hampton, N.H.

Lori's talk is an example of the Society's plan to offer historical lectures about local history by

local historians, writers and museum professionals.

Another speaker series will be by professional historians. This year that speaker will be Steven Closs. Mr. Closs, a New Hampshire historian, will be speaking on New Hampshire's involvement in the American Civil War, with a focus on the soldiers from Hampton. Mr. Closs has written extensively on New Hampshire's involvement in the Civil War and has a forthcoming book titled *Willing Sacrifice: Granite State Valor during the American Civil War*. His talk will be on Friday November 12 at 7 p.m. at the Tuck Museum.

Our annual meeting speaker will be the mystery writer Brendan DuBois, who will be talking about the use of history in fiction writing. His talk will be on October 14 in the evening at the Tuck Museum. Brendan's talk will be on the lighter side. He will speak about novel writing and how one uses historical research about real places to set the backdrop for stories that are filled with fictional characters and events.

These are our four public programs that follow a more traditional speaker format. They range from scholarly works to lighter fare, with a little how to do for good measure. However, this is now a digital age and the Society also will be using multimedia technology as a way to communicate Hampton's history.

In 2009 Channel 22 taped and broadcast Steve Taylor's presentation "Cows and Communities How the Lowly Bovine has Nurtured New Hampshire through Four Centuries". This was the beginning of our effort to bring Hampton its history through many and varied communication platforms. We will be working on future collaboration with Channel 22 and other upcoming multimedia presentations.

I will conclude with a major long-term effort that the Education Committee is starting this year - an oral history project. Many of us at the Society and in the Hampton community have seen a need to record the thoughts and reflections of some of our lifelong residents. These verbal stories hopefully will become the basis of a multimedia library that will capture the thoughts of long term residents in written documents and audiovisual tapings, so that these first-hand renderings of Hampton's history can become part of the Tuck Museum's resource library.

This oral history effort is in the planning stages, and it will be later this year before it is implemented. Right now we are working on the biographical profiles that will be used to document who the interviewee is, the historical topic areas to be addressed during the interviews, and the interviewing tools to be used - written and audio-visual. Oral history should be more than an entertaining and informative show; it should also be a resource for future study. Therefore, planning is essential to an oral history project, so that the results will not only be an interesting and nostalgic chat, but also a guided conversation that will serve as a historical resource.

The Education Committee has laid out an ambitious plan for 2010, as have all of the museum's committees, and we will make every effort to meet the Society's goal of increasing the public knowledge and understanding of the history and cultural heritage of the town of Hampton, New Hampshire.

We ask that you, the public, support our efforts by attending our programs and periodically clicking onto our website.

Be sure to check out our programs in the Upcoming Events calendar on the last page of this newsletter and post them to your home calendars.

Bill Keating
Co-Chair Education Committee

President's Report

Winter is almost over - not much snow but a few windy storms. Luckily, there was no damage at the Museum buildings; it was good that we replaced the roof on the 1926 and 1960 wings in the late fall.

The work project over the winter was a renovation of the textiles storage room on the second floor. That project is nearing completion. The wallpaper was stripped and the existing shelves were removed. Everything has been freshly painted and shelves are in the process of being returned (every inch of space has to be used!). Thanks go to Ken Lobdell and Jason Moore for their work on this job. We had wanted to install new windows in that room, but budget constraints will push that part of the plan off to next year.

At the November board meeting, the trustees decided to extend the operating hours of the museum during the summer months this year. From June 15 until Labor Day, the Museum will be open Tuesday to Friday from 10 am to 3 pm. We will also continue to open on Sundays from 1 to 4. Many years ago the Museum was open 7 days a week during the summer season, and we want to see if we can improve our community outreach with a longer open schedule. Members of the Board have volunteered to staff the Museum this summer, and we can really use extra help. Please contact us if you would like to help for a day or more

(info@hamptonhistoricalsociety.org or 926-2543). We are also going to print a new brochure for distribution to motels and guest houses in town. This summer's plan is an experiment. The future will be dependent on the number of visitors and volunteers that are attracted.

Another board action was to post our IRS filing (form 990) on the web site. It is, after all, a public document, so feel free to look it over and ask any questions you may have. We also welcome member and public involvement at our trustees meetings. The Trustees meet at the Museum on the first Tuesday of February, April, June, August, October and December at 7 pm. All are welcome to attend.

The trustees are actively engaging the strategic plan prepared last year. One of the key elements of that plan is to improve our financial position by increasing our endowment funds. The income checks from our current endowments arrived in the mail today and total just under \$1,300 for the half year. We really do need to improve on that number.

There are several things that members can consider to assist in increasing our endowment funds. The first is to add the Historical Society to your will as a beneficiary. This can be done as you update your existing estate plan or by a codicil to your current will. The second is to make or continue to make yearly donations to our endowment in the annual appeal. We have added about \$4,000 to the fund in the last two years from your generosity. If you need additional information or have questions please contact us. Thanks for your support!

Ben Moore
President

The Leavitt Family Cradle Given to the Museum

By Elizabeth Aykroyd

The generous gift of Laurence Leavitt of Pownal, Maine has brought the cradle of the Thomas Leavitt family back to Hampton. By tradition many generations of the Leavitt family slept in the cradle, which is in exceptional condition. This gift has given us a valuable glimpse into early Hampton furniture.

The cradle is of pine and is of nailed construction. The nails used are early cut nails, which date the cradle to the very end of the eighteenth century or the early years of the nineteenth century. The elegant hood with its decorative edge is clearly the work of a master joiner. The cradle also retains its original painted finish of reddish-brown (commonly called Spanish brown at the time) on the interior and on the exterior a blue-green, which has now yellowed to a soft olive. An unusual feature is the extended base around the bottom which recalls the moldings on Hampton boxes from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.



Although we don't know just which branch of the Leavitt family was the first to use the cradle, based on its presumed date, we can tentatively suggest that either Thomas Leavitt (Dow #19) or his brother Carr (Dow #20) of North Hampton may, in fact, have made it. We know that both brothers were master joiners who had worked on the fifth meetinghouse in Hampton in 1797. Thomas also is known to have worked on the mansion of Gov. John Langdon in Portsmouth a decade earlier.



An interesting parallel to this cradle is the Rundlet family cradle in the Rundlet-May House in Portsmouth. Although that cradle has been attributed to an unknown Portsmouth joiner, its remarkable similarity to the Leavitt cradle indicates a common origin. Since James Rundlet was building his new house in Portsmouth in 1806-07, just about the time his cradle was made, one of his joiners may have been the maker. Of these craftsmen, most of whom apparently came from the Exeter area, the name of Jacob Marston stands out. As the lead joiner on the house in 1807, he must be considered as the most likely craftsman to have made the cradle. As a Marston he probably came from Hampton or North Hampton, where he certainly knew the Leavitts and

may even have trained with them. Certainly the two cradles are representative of the Hampton tradition of cabinetry of two centuries ago.

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Heartfelt thanks to all of the members who added a donation to the operating fund and/or the Endowment fund this year. We couldn't continue with all of our activities without their support.

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2009 Gifts to the Tuck Museum

- Ice cutting tool; book -"NH and Explorers Guide"; rotary wall telephone; menu from Kennedy's Restaurant; yardstick from Ford Village; items from Hampton Beach riots -police nightstick, riot shell casing, tear gas casing - Percy Annis
- DVD film clips of Miss Hampton Beach historic bathing suit fashion show c. 1950s; research from Revolutionary War testimonials related to John Mobbs Moulton; book, "Hidden History of New Hampshire"; CD - Nudd House history, photos and write up; CD collection of census records for 1790-1930- Candice Stellmach
- 2008 Zoning Map of Hampton; 2008 Town of Hampton Annual Report; 2008 Winnacunnet Co-op School District Annual Report - TM Collections Committee
- Hampton Beach 3" plate ornament,; Hampton Christmas parade buttons; Bicentennial window sticker; Bicentennial wooden nickels; 1975 dog license; souvenir pewter rose medallion - Micki Wardell
- Photo postcard of Edward Tuck; photos of Hampton Center - Cynthia Higgins Gilcreast
- Account book of Jeremiah Hobbs - Lane Memorial Library
- Postcards - Cove Motel and Springfield Motor Lodge, photo Lamie's Tavern c. 1970; misc. photo

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- collection; photos and memorabilia from Hampton Playhouse – via Lane Memorial Library
 - Books - "Franklin Pierce-Young Hickory", "They Knew Franklin Pierce"; collection of Franklin Pierce and Jane Appleton Pierce Memorabilia, repro. photo of Franklin Pierce; postcards – Breakers in Sunset and Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, collection of pins and badges from Hampton Academy; hand saw - Priscilla Triggs Thoen
 - Hand-operated sheep shearer- Bill Bowley
 - Men's vests (3) and tie belonging to Christopher Toppan- Michael Toppan
 - Scrapbook of Hampton Garden Tour 2000 – Catherine Fletcher
 - Connection to Collections Bookshelf Grant Award (17 books, charts, pamphlets relating to museum and collection management) – Institute of Museum and Library Science
 - Brochure from Bendmere Lodge and Cabins- Ruth Hammen
 - Poster of Seabrook Station – Robert Wallace
 - Hampton Academy and High School Trust Financial Statements 2000-2008 – Russell Merrill
 - Postcards - Casino at Night and Greetings – Ann Picariello
 - Portable transistor radio and case – Carol Keating
 - Antique fishing pole – David Cropper
 - Postcards - Vista Motel and Ocean Blvd; books "Field Guide of New England Barns and Farm Buildings", "Preserving Old Barns", "Keep the Money Coming" and "Asking-A Hands-On Guide" Booklet "Starting with Staff – A Guide for the Non-profit Board"– museum purchase
 - Books – Dow's "History of Hampton", Hurd's "History of Rockingham and Strafford Counties"; information on High Street grist mill – Peter Fuller
 - Collection of 350th Anniversary material; Personal Property and Mortgage Deed books; Selectmen's Minutes 1971-2006 – Town of Hampton
 - Block and tackle, woodworking chisel, carpenters adze, weighing scale – Donald Brown
 - Postcard – Mile Long Bridge – Raymond Labrie
 - Box- Bunny's Sandwich Shop – Janice Clermont
 - Paperweight WHS Alumni Assoc.; commemorative medallions – June Eaton
 - Photograph of Adeline Marston House – Nathalie Potts
 - Photograph of K.N. Ross Express Truck; information on Nudd Homestead (Hampton Beach)- Roberta Golledge
 - Photographs of damage from Hurricane Carol (1954) – Martha Williams
 - Collection of materials from the Page/Cole/Jones/Wygant and related families. Including town histories from Kittery, Rye, Rochester and Hampton Falls. Genealogy books from the Cole, Brown and Page families; diary of Anna May Cole, record of Hampton deaths, E. G. Cole account books, Congregational Church memorabilia, Cole family diplomas and research papers;. Individual family genealogies organized by Ernestine Cole Wygant and Carol Felter on Cole, Page, Jones and Gowell family members. Page and Cole family photographs and tintypes, family deeds, business materials, account books. Family correspondence from 1840-1950s (300+); and materials relating to Hampton history including commemorative newspapers – Carol Felter
 - DVD – "Cows and the Community" from HHS June program 2009 – Channel 22
 - Wall hanging – "The Babcock" (fire truck) – in memory of Connie Holman
 - Collection of 1976 Tax Assessors Maps of Hampton; plan of lots leased in 1898 to HBIC; – Fred Schaaake
 - Research on Hampton property lines and boundaries – Tocky Bialobrzieski
 - Map of High Street Cemetery (copy) – Harold Fernald
 - Wooden sleigh – Susan Irwin
 - Leavitt family hooded wooden cradle - Laurence Leavitt
 - Oil painting – "Football Practice at Tuck Field" by Fran McHenry - www.RiverRunGallery.com
 - Salty Marsh Garden Club Scrapbooks (3) 1963-64 and 1965-68 – Velma Hansen
 - Hand-made maul for education programs – David DeGagne



Barn Survey Project

With the arrival of spring, the Hampton Historical Society's barn survey project is getting back into gear. Started in October 2009, this project was originally conceived by member Chet Riley in conjunction with the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources statewide survey of farm buildings.



While Chet was restoring his own Revolutionary era barn, he drove the streets of Hampton, marking the location of every barn on a map. This map and the names and addresses of the barns' owners provided the starting point for the first meeting of volunteers, whose job would be to collect the information to be sent to the state. With 113 barns listed, the volunteer team -Chet Riley, Ben Moore, Betty Moore, Dave DeGagne, Rich Hureau, Liz Premo, Blake Chichester, Russ Brady, Percy Annis, Tocky Bialobrzewski, and Cheryl Lassiter - has a lot of work to do.

A letter was sent to all barn owners requesting permission to include their barn in the survey. Meanwhile, the novice volunteers, accompanied by several experienced team members, attended Chet's "training camp" to learn how to safely conduct a survey, what the experts look for in determining a barn's age, and what owners can do to protect their barns from deterioration: clear vegetation from the exterior of the barn, remove junk from the interior, keep the roof in good repair, and shore up the foundation.

The team completed five surveys before winter set in. The barns were measured and photographed, their construction details noted, and their owner interviewed. The majority date from the late 1700s-early 1800s and are under preservation easements granted by the Town of Hampton. Sadly, one barn is facing demolition.

Pride of ownership is evident in the loving and costly care lavished on many of these old structures. We admire and appreciate the voluntary preservation of our town's stock of historic farm buildings, every one an amazing portal into our agrarian past. As survey volunteers, we've experienced the charm and personality of these barns firsthand, and we anticipate another season of discovering more stories of how it used to be in Hampton.



The Hampton Historical Society wishes to thank the barn owners who have returned their permission card marked YES. We look forward to making arrangements with you to visit your barn soon. If you are a barn owner who hasn't returned your permission card, please do so today and help us document Hampton's past. For further information, call Cheryl Lassiter at 929-3682.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 20 6 p.m. Lori Cotter's presentation of Edmund Willoughby Toppan's: *Toppan's History of Hampton - The Early Settlers 1630-1730* Lane Library
- May 16 2 p.m. Harold Inglis presentation on genealogy - "The Snags & Serendipity of Genealogy" - Tuck Museum
- September 4 Noon to 3 p.m. The 9th Annual Pig Roast - Tuck Museum grounds
- October 14 7 p.m. Brendan DuBois, mystery writer whose works are set in Hampton and greater Boston - Tuck Museum
- November 12 7 p.m. Steven Closs, civil war historian speaking on New Hampshire's involvement in the American Civil War - Tuck Museum

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