



Johnson Historical Society Newsletter

September 2019

A Message From the Board President

Have you visited the Holcomb House yet? You should put it on your to do list. Our collection continues to grow and there is something for everyone. Donations range from the old kitchen wood stove to many photographs of bygone years, old farm and woodworking tools to paintings by local artists, Johnson High School memorabilia to items from businesses long since gone. Come take a look.

Our pie is complete! Thanks to all the fundraisers for your efforts and thanks to all who contributed. That goal is complete but our need for funds goes on. Remember us for your charitable giving.

Keep us in mind as you go through your attics, barns and sheds. Those old items that relate to early life in Johnson are wonderful especially shared with others. We are always grateful to have them.

Richard "Dick" Simays

Celebrating the Completion of Our Pie



After the 2014 Town Meeting when the voters approved the purchase of the Holcomb House for the Johnson Historical Society and we agreed to reimburse the town, some of us thought: *How are we going to raise \$300,000? We can't do it with pies? Can we do it?*

Early on Bill Jaspersohn met with members of the Johnson Historical Society and shared information about fundraising. Then the Building Fund Committee was formed. We wanted to include some members of the community as well as JHS Board members. Sometimes it has been referred as the "fun" committee, but I assure you that it has been a work Committee. Its members are Lois Frey, Linda Jones, Jane Marshall, David Marvin, George Pearlman, Margo Warden, Aggie West, Alice Whiting and Peggy Williams. These are the people who have written letters, talked with potential donors, coordinated four raffles and sold raffle tickets, as well as organized and managed a yard sale, a silent auction, and a flea market. They are the workers!

The raffles included a quilt made by Andrea Blaisdell and quilted by Marion Philipsen Seasholtz, a painting by Eric Tobin, two ski chairs made by Barney McLean, and a Georgia Balch painting donated by Chuck Conger. Speaking of talented donors, Kate Westcott created and painted the capital campaign's pie chart. Each piece of pie valued at \$30,000 is different to reflect the variety of pies that we sell at Tuesday Night Live.

We would like to send a heartfelt thank you to all that helped us build this pie!

New (or not so new) Items

We are excited to share a few “new” items added to our collection.

In 1906, the American Mineral Company (AMC) opened a small talc deposit on French Hill, and in 1923 it became Eastern Magnesia Talc Co.

The desk and chair, donated by Bill Perkins, came from the Talc Mill office, located at the end of Railroad Street, where the food shelf is today. They possibly date back from the American Mineral Company times.

Also donated by Bill Perkins, this baggage freight cart came from the St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County Railroad. From the type of wheel, this cart is probably from circa 1919 when the railroad station was constructed. The trains started running through Johnson on December 1876, and this cart stopped being used when mail and passenger service was no longer running by train.



Robert and Gloria Mobbs (below) donated this 101 year old crib to our Johnson Historical Society. The Mobbs bought Sybil Sweet's house in 1991 and still live there. The crib was originally built by Sybil's husband for their daughter Phyllis Sweet Jewett. Phyllis was a cherished Johnson historian. Jim Jewett, Sybil's grandson, remembers the crib next to the wood stove and is sure he was in it at some point since the

Jewetts lived with Sybil until Jim was 6 years old. The crib has boards on its bottom with a Parker and Stearns stamp as you can see on the picture detail.



Similar to the signs we have today, this Johnson Sign used to be either by the top of Gulf Hill, or past the Co-op building. As you can see it is a bit outdated, since we no longer have the Johnson Teacher's college, now Northern Vermont University, and Eastern Magnesia and Parker & Stearns while both Woolen Mills and Vermont Electric Coop are still here.

We Want Your Feedback

We would like to ask our members for suggestions and/or recommendations of presentation topics, either new or repeat, for future months . Please call or email us with your feedback!

Pictures

We've received a donation from Bill Hooper of 23 boxes of slide carousels that belonged to his father Red Hooper, finding between 300-350 slides relating to Johnson. Once we get them organized we plan to do a presentation to the community.

Tuesday Night Live

Tuesday Night Live wrapped up for another season on August 27th. In spite of some rain on two of the evenings, we ended with a banner year. We would like to thank all of our 2019 pie and cake bakers, from Johnson, Eden, Hyde Park and Waterville. They include the following: Pam Locke, Judy Beard, Mary Beard, Linda Audibert, Lynn Sibley, Lillian White, Kelly Daige, Lynda Hill, Christine "Ducky" Cooney, Marie Boisineault, Martha Corey, Kyle Nuse, Jean Locke, Margo Tillitson, Rita Lehouillier, Barbara Backus, Peg Rowe, Andrea Blaisdell, Jess and Alyx West, Polly Lehouillier, Jan Gearhart, Phil Wilson, Aggie West, Alice Whiting, Mary Jean Smith, Kelly Vandorn, Duncan Hastings and Linda Jones. Additional thanks go out to McKenzie for their donation of hot dogs, Waterman Orchards for their donation of blueberries, Dick Simays, Jane Marshall and Sterling Market for hot dog rolls and Lois Frey for the potato salad.

Unknown items

Have you seen these two items at the Holcomb House?

Do you know what they are?



Raffle Winner

The Georgia Balch painting that was recently raffled off by the historical society was won by Barry Simays (pictured here with Alice Whiting). He grew up in Johnson and presently is Battalion Chief and Fire Marshall for the city of Burlington Fire Department.

In Memoriam

Johnson Historical Society has lost a long time friend and historical resource person, Amy Thompson. Amy was a near lifetime resident of Johnson and always answered questions that the historical society may have had trouble answering themselves. She will certainly be missed as a resource and friend to our organization.



The mission of the Johnson Historical Society is to preserve our history by weaving stories of the past with the present, using our collections of artifacts and displays, creating a legacy for future generations.

Hours

Dr. Holcomb House, home of the Johnson Historical Society is open every Sunday from 1 to 4 PM and every Thursday from 9 AM to noon. Also, opened by appointment, please call Linda Jones at 635-7401, Lois Frey at 635-7826, Dick Simays 635-7080 or Dean West 635-7431.

Board Meetings

We meet on the second Wednesday of every month at 9:00 am at Dr. Holcomb House on 188 Main Street. Open to public.

Check out our webpage <http://johnsonhistoricalsociety.org> and our Facebook page

To access our meeting minutes, please visit: <http://townofjohnson.com/boards/historical-society/>

Board Officers

Dick Simays, President

Tom Carney, Vice President

Kelly Vandorn, Treasurer

Lois Frey, Secretary

Alice Whiting, Membership Chair
