

Berlin Historical Society Annual Report – 2011

Our Societies activities this year mostly centered around our monthly meetings. Our featured speaker for our annual dinner meeting in May was Sylvia Parker who told us the history of the “Cottage on Erhardt Hill” with help from Jim Sumner. The cottage was built by Justus and Fannie Doane Erhardt in about 1904 at the top of the steep portion of Erhardt Hill on the south side of what is now Crosstown Road. Sylvia’s presentation included many pictures of the house and guests including Bela Bartok the famous Hungarian composer who summered there in 1941.



The Cottage on Erhardt Hill

The cottage fell into complete disrepair during mid-century and the remains were finally burned by the Berlin Fire Dept. in the mid 1960’s. Erhardt Hill got its name from the Erhardts who owned and summered at the cottage. There is no connection to Amelia Earhart (note spelling) although the rumor persists.

We participated in the Washington County History Fair held at the Pavilion Building in Montpelier on July 16. Maudean Neal exhibited an updated version of her 1860 Agricultural Census display that she put together for last years Vermont History Expo in Tunbridge, Norb Rhinerson showed his Berlin Corner Post Office exhibit as well as a slide show of historical Berlin photos and Manny Garcia put on a slide show of photos of the area of Berlin that was annexed by Montpelier in 1899.

At our September meeting we learned about the Perrin family, one of Berlin’s earliest settled families, from David Perrin, a descendant. In October, Manny Garcia brought us through the evolution of transportation in central Vermont from the earliest canoe and foot travel to the various modern modes we all now enjoy.

Norb has been working on a West Berlin post office display similar to the one he created on the Berlin Corner post office. It will consist of the names of the various “Officers in Charge”, dates of office, and location of each office which used to be in their respective homes. We are also updating our old cemetery information with pictures of each monument and its location within the cemetery.

To learn more about the above mentioned subjects or any other Berlin related history you are invited to visit our office in the Berlin Municipal Building. We do not have regular hours when we are open but will accommodate anyone who wishes an appointment. Call Norb Rhinerson at 802-223-1203 or e-mail him at norbert925@myfairpoint.net. Contact Norb also if you are interested in joining our society or want to be included in our e-mail notification of meetings. The public is welcome to attend any and all meetings.