

Meeting Notice for February 15, 2012

The February meeting of the Berlin Historical Society will be held at the Berlin Town Office on Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at 7:00 PM.

At this meeting we will discuss the following:

- **The airport book - AT LONG LAST IT HAS BEEN PRINTED AND WE HAVE COPIES AT THE OFFICE. We will discuss where we stand but in the meantime it is available at several locations around Berlin and Montpelier. The price is \$19.95 and remember that after the cost of printing has been reached, all profits made will go to our Society.**
- **Abel Andrew's account book from the early 1800's.**
- **Dulcina Perry's name was googled and the searching party found us.**
- **Berlin's old Town Halls those are no longer in existence.**
- **Davis Bros. Granite Co. that was located in West Berlin.**
- **Cemetery index retyping project.**
- **Interesting excerpts from old Berlin Town Reports will be mentioned by Norb. We need to enhance our collection of these old reports by copying a few of the early ones that we missing from the town's records.**

Richard Turner

Secretary

Berlin Historical Society Meeting Minutes for January 18, 2012

Present were Norbert Rhinerson, Cheryl Poor, Anita Flanagan, Maudean and Lewis Neill, Manny and Mary Garcia, Mary Wells and Alan Blakeman from the Montpelier Historical Society.

The meeting was called to order about 7 PM.

The Minutes of December 13, 2011 together with the annual report for 2011 had been distributed along with the meeting notice so it was not read.

The Treasurers Report was read by Mary Wells. The Balance on December 31 was \$49,834.11. Mary also prepared a financial report for 2011 to be included in the upcoming Town Report.

Receipts for the year were \$2660.39 and expenses were \$871.14 leaving a balance of \$49,834.11 at the end of the year. Motion by Anita Flanagan and seconded by Cheryl Poor that the report be approved, all voted in the affirmative. Motion carried.

Richard says he still doesn't have a date when he will be able to pick up the first batch of airport books. When he finds out he will schedule a trip north and attend a meeting if it works out and if it doesn't meet our regular schedule we may have a special one while he is here. How many times do we publish a new book. He picked up another piece of airport info that he was able to get into the book. He located it through Jane Rice who is writing a book about Lt. Robert Fogg. She found info about Fogg at the Dartmouth College Library which included a write-up by Charles McKenna, the Montpelier postmaster at the time of the 1927 flood. It looks like McKenna wrote up a more comprehensive piece entitled "Our Local Airport" and this was just an excerpt from it. Richard will see if the whole article is around somewhere. If it is, it would add more info surrounding the early formation of the airport.

The excerpt he found relates specifically to the first use of the land where our airport is now located, as a landing field after the flood of 1927. A red tablecloth was used to mark the area to land an airplane on skis as there was 10-12 inches of snow on the ground. Richards book includes a picture of Lt. Robert Fogg, who made the first landing, in his Waco.

Vermont History Expo 2012 will be on June 15 and 16. Maudean is continuing her work on an exhibit related to the Civil War. Alan Blakeman of the Montpelier Historical Society was present to explain the model of the Sloan Hospital that they are building and will display at Tunbridge. Maudean is going to look at the bed cards that have been preserved in the Waterbury Historical Society to see if she can find those for patients from Berlin as a part of our exhibit. Montpelier and Berlin will complement each others exhibits but not duplicate anything.

There is a lot of research still to be done on the West Berlin/Riverton Post Offices. We need to find the post office locations for a number of the postmasters because as they changed the post office location changed. We would like to find out where the Ayers store that burned in 1899 was located among others. We plan to check what they may have at the Vermont History Center in Barre. Norb is planning to present what he has to date on both the Corners and West Berlin/Riverton Post Offices at the next Washington County Stamp Club meeting in February.

We have determined that the post office could not have been in the Riverton General Store as the building was built in 1950. Elinore Coonrod was postmistress from 1937 to 1954 when Mrs Croteau became postmistress at her home.

Mary Garcia and Cheryl Poor will begin retyping the Berlin Cemetery indexes so they can be edited and additions can be made. They picked up copies of the 1985 Directories produced by Jennie Woodbury, which we have been unable to convert to text, to work on. Cheryl will do the Corners and Mary will do the 9 historical cemeteries.

We will keep the 250th Anniversary of Berlins Wentworth Charter on June 13, 2013 on our list of things to do when the time comes closer. Communities are holding their observances and we have some ideas about ours.

Our May 2012 Potluck/Meeting will have a Civil War theme and will be on May 23. Maudean has made arrangements for a group to sing Civil War Era songs for us that night. Mary has made the reservations for us at the Congregational Church for that evening. As compensation for the singers had not been discussed, Norb will work on it.

Jane Sheridan inquired about the 1948 Christmas Eve fire in Berlin in which three LaCourse children perished. We understand that the oldest LaCourse daughter, Joyce was at her grandmother's, (Bessie LaCourse) house that night, the farm now owned by Anne and Ray Burke. The house that burned was located just up the road, across from the old Paul Davis homestead. We found information on this in the 1959 Town Report and got other information from Richard Turner.

A donation of \$250 was made by Paul Gillies with the condition that we send a copy of a "Place to Pass Through" to Evelyn Berglund. The book has been mailed.

A donation of two Berlin Town Reports, 1886 and 1935 was made by Joyce Pelletier who wrote the book about Adeline Turner Crandall. There is a wealth of history in those old reports. I made a few notes on what was in them.

1886 - Expenses for that year ending Feb 24, 1886 included building a bridge on Cox Brook.

Road, repairing a road and turning a brook, for \$23.00. Arthur L. Hewitt, Arthur W. Hewitt's father, for his work as superintendent of schools including teaching at District 4, guarding gypsies, water Rent and repairs to the Town Hall tenements (when the Town Hall was on Berlin Street, that is now in Montpelier), two bills for the use of water tubs and a circus license. (the circus was probably at the site of the present Montpelier High School).

1935- Electricity was available in all of the Town Schools, poll taxes were \$1.50 but there were two exceptions, one for 50c and the other for 95c (probably for portions of the year) , purchased 50 pounds of dynamite, ballot clerk was paid \$2.80, Cemetery Expenses totaled \$91.67, paid out \$10 for dog damage to bull and received \$50 payment for the old valley school and two copies of the town meeting ballots were included in the report.

Our Next Meeting will be on February 15, a Wednesday when we believe the Selectboard room will be available for our use. For this meeting we were not able to use it as the Selectboard was having an unscheduled executive meeting. It worked out fine as we had extra chairs for those present.

Manny Garcia volunteered to help Norb work on completing our 2011 scrapbook. Norb is continuing to do the clipping.

We had voted last year to purchase new fencing at the Veterans Memorial and were going to ask the Town to see if they would have someone install it. We did not ask them last year as they were overwhelmed by the work on the flood damaged roads and that was more important to the Town. We will try again in the Spring.

Adjournment at around 8:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by Norbert Rhinerson, interim Secretary