

Berlin Historical Society Minutes of the October 23, 2007 Meeting

The monthly meeting of the Berlin Historical Society opened at 7:06 PM on October 23 at the Berlin Town Office Building. Members in attendance were: Norbert Rhinerson, Lynn McManus, Mary Wells, Elene Sartell, Cheryl Poor, Maudean Neil, Lewis Neil, Vernon Turner, Cathy Brimblecombe and Richard Turner.

1. The minutes of the September meeting were approved with one correction. Terry Stockton is now a member of our society and was listed as a guest. The Treasurer's Report showing our total assets as of October 20 to be \$45,519.81, was given by Mary Wells and approved as reported.

All of our things that we had stored in Joe Howard's barn were removed by the end of the first week in October. Mary reported that she has paid rent to Joe through the end of the year so an adjustment from Joe is in order.

Norb has taken pictures of the bell and school teacher's desk that are at the Berlin Elementary School and has suggested that we put plaques on them to signify what they are and where they came from. We have permission from Mrs. Noyes at the school office to put a plaque on the bell structure but she says the desk is owned privately so she can't give us permission to put one on it. Elene Sartell said that the desk was given to her by Clarence Pike after the old Berlin Corner School was torn down. She will contact the appropriate people about ownership and permission for the plaque.

While at the school, Norb talked to Mrs. Noyes about making students aware of our collection and encouraging them to make use of it. She suggested that we formulate a notice to go in the school newsletter so Norb did just that. His notice was as follows;

“The Berlin Historical Society would encourage students, teachers and parents to visit the Nye-Woodbury Room at the Berlin Town Hall to view our collections of Berlin history. Berlin has had an interesting 244 year history and we would like to share it with you as well as to allow us to participate in projects that concern our Town's history. Call President Norbert Rhinerson at 223-1203 for an appointment. There are no regular hours but your visit could be during the day or evening. We will try to accommodate your schedule if possible. Lots of information about Berlin is available on the town web page under Historical Society at < www.berlinvt.org>.”

We had an inquiry from Bob Morton of Texas about Elisha Andrews who is buried in the Black Cemetery. Now that we have pictures of all the markers in that cemetery, we were able to provide a picture along with information on Andrews, Buck and Darling families.

Thanks go out to Nancy Tripp for her good work on keeping up the flowers in the planter at the Veteran's Memorial.

Norb and I took a trip up the Jones Brook road where we located and photographed the schoolhouse that is located on it. However, a portion of the Jones Brook road is in Moretown and that schoolhouse is in Moretown and is not one of ours. Lewis Neil, who is at this meeting, mentioned that he lived in Moretown while in early grammar school and attended this very school. When Berlin was divided into 12 school districts, Berlin's school in the Jones Brook area was located on the road between Montpelier Junction and Middlesex just west of it's intersection with Jones Brook Road. It is no longer in existence.

Norb plans to take a picture of the East Road School which is a private residence located on Scott Hill Road. This just about completes pictures of all of Berlin's old schools that are still standing. One exception is the two story building that is located on Vine Street near its intersection with the Barre-Montpelier Road. Pat McDonald is trying to locate pictures of this one.

Norb brought in pictures of the old Chenette home on East Road that were donated by Beth Chenette. That residence is now owned by Lori Holm. Beth plans to provide names of the people that are in these pictures.

I reported on a couple of projects I have been involved with. One is a story that Vern and I have almost completed entitled "Growing up in Berlin in the 1940's". We have added pictures to the text to make the story more interesting. The other project is the writing up of explanations for places that are referred to in several of the stories we have about Berlin. It is common practice when writing a story to refer to a location by giving the name of a current homeowner. At the time it is written everyone knows where this is. But 50 to 100 years later it becomes a task to figure out the location that they made reference to. A notable example of this is Mary Nye's book "The Early History of Berlin". Another is the taped interview that Norb and Harold Woodbury had with Hazel Somers when she was 95 years old. I have typed up an explanation, with pictures, of all places she talks about and added information about Hazel from my own personal knowledge. This explanation is meant to be used when and if anyone listens to the taped interview. We need to do the same thing for Berlin's earliest settlers. It would be very useful to know where each one of them lived when reading about them in the historical stories that we have in our archives.

We have picked up another post card of Berlin Pond to add to our already large collection of post cards.

Looking ahead, we have to check out the theme for next years History Expo and decide if we are going to participate. Also, Howard Coffin an author of several Civil War books, has agreed to be our speaker for our annual dinner meeting next May.

The next meeting, the November/December meeting, will be on December 11. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 and refreshments were served thanks to Cheryl Poor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Turner, Secretary