

Berlin Historical Society

August 28, 2007

The monthly meeting of the Berlin Historical Society opened at 7:03 PM on August 28 at the Berlin Town Office Building. Members in attendance were: Norbert Rhinerson, Lynn McManus, Mary Wells, Walter Wells, Elene Sartell, Lewis Neil, Maudean Neil, Edith Morse, Cheryl Poor, Anita Flannigan, Tom Williams, Vernon Turner, Kathy Brimblecomb and Richard Turner. Also two guests, Arlene Nelson and Joyce Pelletier.

The minutes of the July meeting were approved as written and previously distributed to the members. The Treasurer's Report showing our total assets to be \$45,576.03 was given by Mary Wells and approved as reported. It was also reported that the \$250 annual fee that we owe to the Town of Berlin for services that they provide is due.

1. Norb reported that the shelves that were authorized at the last meeting have been installed. We need bookends to hold books on most of the 12 shelves so Norb asked members for donations of any they might have that they are not using.

Martha Nye met with us this month and found information she was looking for on Bill Nye, a Berlin native who became an Adirondack guide. She bought one of our books and gave us a Nye pin that she had purchased in Plattsburg.

Diane Colgan stopped in a few days ago looking for information on William McIntosh who lived in West Berlin during the 1800's. She has salvaged a snare drum from the house that he occupied during the Civil War. We found his name in a list we have that is marked "Enrolled Militia – Town of Berlin" and dated 1863. From this we assumed that he was a veteran of the Civil War. However his name does not appear on official lists of veterans and on further investigation of our list, we found that it is actually a list of those eligible for service from Berlin. The drum appears to be of that vintage and is in quite remarkable condition except it doesn't have any skin left.

Joyce Pelletier acquired a diary some time ago that was written by Addie Turner Crandall in 1883. She has written a book entitled "A Vermont Woman's Life in 1883" that is based on the diary. Addie moved to Berlin in 1880 and spent the rest of her life here on a farm that was located on East Road a short way south of the present airport. She was a sister to Vern's and my great grandfather, Harrison Turner, and we were able to help her with the book by providing a lot of additional information about Addie and the family. Joyce gave a nice presentation telling us about her writing of the book and at the end of her presentation she gave the diary to our Society. Our thanks to Joyce for this very generous contribution.

Norb thanked Lynn McMannis for providing the program last month on the early Berlin settlers who came from the Glastonbury/Hebron area of Connecticut.

Norb explained that progress is being made on our cemetery project. The new corrected indexes for the East Road, Dewey-Wright and Colby Cemeteries have been typed by Lynn McManis and are now on the town web site. The entire project when finished will be to map each cemetery showing locations of all headstones and to coordinate these maps with the corrected information that each headstone contains. Greg Dubois has already mapped several of our old cemeteries.

We now have permission to take pictures of the old Cox Brook District #12 School from its owner, Mark Jenkinson. We will meet with Mark this coming weekend and we understand that he has several old pictures that he will share with us.

I purchased two diaries off the E-bay web site for \$42. The first one was written in 1899. It was started by a male and about the middle of the year was continued by Jennie Scott Stewart. I believe that the person who started the diary was Carroll who I presume was Jennie's brother. More research will be needed to prove these presumptions. The second diary was written in 1938 and definitely was Jennie who kept it. The Stewarts lived on the farm on Stewart Road that was located at the sharp turn to the right as you travel up Stewart Road from Paine Turnpike North. Jennie was 27 when she kept the first diary and she was married to Clarence at that time. She was 66 when she kept the latter one. The farm was previously owned by the Scotts (see Beers Atlas map) so again I presume that Jennie grew up on this farm and that she and Clarence inherited it from her parents. The diaries are full of names of people that were Jennies family and neighbors. Those of us who lived in Berlin during the early to mid 1900's knew most of them including Jennies son Luther and daughters May and Ethel.

Cathy Hartshorn will no longer be able to keep the clippings from local papers about Berlin. Lee Sartell volunteered to take over this task. Thanks Lee.

Two paintings that we had apparently lent to the Berlin Elementary School at some much earlier date have been returned to us. We had no recollection that they were ours but they were marked as property of the BHS and that they came from the Richard Nye estate.

I showed pictures of two broadsides that are for sale on E-bay. One is a meeting notice for Berlin Auditors in 1880 signed by the Selectmen of Berlin. The other is a notice of an auction near Berlin Pond in 1900. The general consensus was that we should try to acquire any articles like this that pertain to Berlin.

Lee Sartell brought up the fact that the old school bell and the teachers desk that both came from the old school at Berlin Corner had been at the Berlin Elementary School. She thought that we ought to make sure they weren't forgotten. She had been given the old school desk by Clarence Pike at the time the school was torn down in the 1960's. I stated that I had tried to locate the desk some time ago because it was no longer in plain sight at the elementary school. The people that I asked had no idea where it was. However, the bell is still in the lobby inside the entrance to the school.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Turner, Secretary