

Berlin Historical Society Minutes of the January 22, 2008 Meeting

The monthly meeting of the Berlin Historical Society opened at 7:05 PM at the Berlin Town Office Building. Members in attendance were: Norbert Rhinerson, Lynn McManus, Mary Wells, Cheryl Poor, Vernon Turner, Tom Williams and Richard Turner.

The minutes of the December meeting were approved as written and previously distributed to the members. The Treasurer's Report showing our total assets as of December 20 to be \$45,895.37, was given by Mary Wells and approved as reported.

Norb reported that we have notified the Vermont Historical Society that we will participate in the Vermont History Expo on June 21 & 22, 2008 and that our subject will be Mary Greene Nye. We will have an 8'x 8' space in which to set up our display. Vern and I have started pulling things out of our files that will be of use in our display. Norb searched for Mary's name on "Google" on line and discovered that she had found that the federal government had borrowed money from Vermont to help fund the War of 1812 and had never repaid it. They returned some \$89,000 to Vermont which included interest on the loan.

Norb delivered a letter, written by Elene Sartell, to the Berlin Elementary School. The letter explains how Elene obtained the old teacher's desk and that she is giving the desk to our Society. We now need to have a plaque made to be attached to the desk explaining where it came from and the fact that it belongs to us. We also need to put a similar plaque on the frame of the bell that is in the school lobby. That artifact does not belong to us but needs to be identified by means of a plaque so future generations will know that it once resided in the belfry of the old Berlin Comer School that stood where the Veteran's Memorial now stands. The bell was manufactured by Meneely from W. Troy, New York and was installed in the belfry of the school in the 1850's. The school building was built in 1845.

Robert Vose, who reputedly was a Methodist minister, died in 1819 and is buried in the East Road Cemetery. Norb found more information about him which will be added to our Vose file. Lynn also found information about Abigale and Asariah Grant.

Jim Sumner has been in touch with Abby Smith, daughter of the former owner of "Lotus Lodge".

The lodge was operated during the 1930's and was located at the top of Erhardt Hill on Crosstown Road. Abby was acquainted with Agatha Isles who was the owner of the "Cottage" at this same time. Abby plans to be in our area this summer and we look forward to talking to her.

Tom Willard and I visited an old cellar hole that is located off the Darling Road on the Sherman property. To get to it we traveled up the Darling Road, crossed the brook and took an immediate left up a logging road. The logging road peters out but the cellar hole is about a quarter mile up from the Darling Road. The cellar hole is interesting in that it has a stone structure in the middle that apparently was a foundation for a central chimney. We assumed that there probably were multiple fireplaces around the central chimney similar to the way the Simpson Stewart house was built. The structure was certainly built very early in Berlin's history and probably not occupied for a long time. It would be interesting to trace the ownership back to see who the original owner/builder of the house was.

Maudeen Neil and I have been working separately on indexing our scrapbooks and have finished three so far. The object is to refurbish the ones that are falling apart, number each book and the pages within them, and then list the information that is in each one so a computer search can be performed to locate various subjects.

Our annual report and financial report have been completed and have been submitted to the town to be included in the Berlin Town Report.

Janis Helgesen of Bay Village, Ohio has inquired about Steven Benjamin Colby but we have no information on that name. We referred her to our information on the Colby Cemetery on our web page and she commended our work on putting together the indexes and map.

We are bidding on a postcard on e-bay that is purported to be the covered bridge on Browns Mills Road. We hope that the card proves the location.

Andrea Chandler is trying to find more information on the ownership and operation of the granite quarry that is located off Crosstown Road. There is a notation in the Hemenway Gazetteer that states that both Barre and Berlin granite were used in the construction of the Episcopal Church on State Street in Montpelier .

We brought in the two recently purchased post cards. The first was a group of boats on Berlin Pond, with a sail on one of them. The second was one of George Bosworths cards of a winter scene by the Clarke residence next to Berlin Pond. George mailed this card to a friend and dated the picture he took as January 13, 1908. This was exactly 100 years (plus nine days) ago.

The meeting was adjourned about 8:30.

Respectfully submitted, Richard Turner, Secretary

