

Berlin Historical Society

October 15, 2014

The meeting commenced at 7:07 with the following members present: Norb Rhinerson, Manny and Mary Garcia, Corinne Stridsberg, Vern Turner and Richard Turner.

The Treasurers report showing our total net assets as \$50,676.48 as of September 20 was given by Manny Garcia and approved by members present.

Minutes of our September meeting were previously sent to members and friends of the BHS.

The main topic for this meeting was a rehash of Chapter 12 of "A Place to Pass Through - The Montpelierization of Berlin Pond". It was noted in Abby Henenway's Vermont Historical Gazeteer that Berlin Pond might well be called Mirror Lakes. This is the first known reference to the name which has been used occasionally since. The one-room school at the south end of the upper pond was known as the Mirror Lake School and the grange organization that was located on the second floor of the old Berlin Corner School House was named the Mirror Lake Grange. Montpelier first started using Berlin Pond water on October 7, 1884 after completing a pipeline up to the reservoir where the present filtration plant is located. In 1894 Montpelier asked the State Board of Health to examine the condition of the pond as to its use as their water supply. The Board recommended the pond and all its tributaries be protected from pollution or that a method of water purification be employed. Montpelier hesitated in following up on their recommendations so in 1903 the Board adopted rules that forbade bathing or swimming in the pond as well as other restrictions. In 1909 the first arrest and conviction was made for non-conformance to the rules. Montpelier had started purchasing land around the pond as early as 1901 and had mostly completed this by 1924. There were some holdouts and the issue arose again in the 1950's when cows were still allowed in the lower pond and Pond Brook by their owners. A pipeline was completed from the old intake at the reservoir up to and into the upper pond about 1957. This pretty much solved the problem of domestic animals polluting the water. The latest problems of boating and fishing in the pond have happened subsequent to the publishing of "A Place to Pass Through". The advent of Montpelier's building of a filtration plant has allowed boaters to disregard the long time regulations that restricted boating and fishing on the pond. The Vermont Supreme Court upheld their rights and at this time it seems that a boating access will be built on a piece of property that reverted back to Berlin when Interstate 89 was built and the old town road that started around the west side of the pond was rerouted. I projected a lot of Berlin Pond photos from our files on our computer onto our large monitor in our office. There was still time left so I displayed a lot of other photos of various Berlin locations. Norb suggested that a "Tour of Berlin by Pictures" might be a good topic for our May potluck dinner meeting.

Norb is no longer the town's web master and a new format is being established for the Website. He is working on reestablishing a lot of the Berlin Historical Society data that he had posted on the old site.

Corinne Stridsberg brought in a photo of the old Davis Brothers granite buildings in West Berlin with which her ancestors were associated.

Our computer is several years old now and we felt that we should purchase a new one and transfer data onto it before it gives out. A motion was made by Corinne to: Purchase a new

laptop computer including all necessary programs up to a cost of \$800. The motion which was seconded by me was carried. We will probably not be looking for one until sometime next spring.

Corinne has volunteered to maintain an occasional presence in our office this winter. I will be away for the winter again and with Norbert now living in Williamstown, it is doubtful if we will have any meetings. I will keep you posted if we plan a meeting but in the absence of a notice, there will be none.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Turner, Secretary