

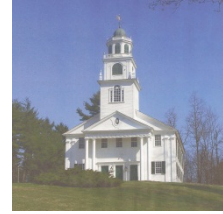
Westmoreland Park Hill Meeting House & Historical Society



NEWSLETTER

Westmoreland, NH 03467

www.westmorelandhistoricalsociety.org



August

2015

Officers: Hugh Shelly, Co-Director, Richard High, Co-Director, Janet Hurley, Treasurer; Patti Seymour, Clerk/Secretary;
Walter Carroll and John Harris, Property Managers; Jan Carpenter, Archivist.

Message from the Directors

We have a great line up for our Fall programs – hope you'll be able to attend some of them.

Please remember to pay your annual membership dues or consider renewing as a Life Time member so you don't have to remember every year. Your annual membership dues run from July 1 through June 30. We're always interested in hearing from members who want to get more involved, and if you have an idea for future program topics, please let us know.

We are an active organization.

Please mark your calendar and join your neighbors at a few of these events.

DATE	EVENT	TIME	LOCATION
Saturday – September 5	Annual Tag Sale	9 - 2PM	Park Hill Meeting House
Tuesday – September 1	Marriage Ways – the epidemic of 'bridal pregnancy' in Westmoreland, 1770-1820	7PM	Corner School
Monday – October 5	Westmoreland's Ancient History	7PM	Town Hall
Monday – November 2	Old Home Days of the Past	7PM	Town Hall

Fall Program Schedule – 2015

Tuesday - September 1 – Corner School, River & Poocham Roads, Westmoreland

Marriage Ways – the epidemic of 'bridal pregnancy' in Westmoreland, 1770-1820 – Richard High

While it is easy to think of marriage as one of the stable and unchanging elements of a society, the reality is that every era puts its own stamp on the process of courting and saying "I do". This was certainly true for Puritans, whose unique conception of marriage set the stage – 'for better or for worse' – for New Englanders in the 18th century. Using information from the Ella Patten Abbott genealogies, Mr. High will describe aspects of getting married between 1770-1820. You'll learn about local courtship practices and the typical age males and females got married in town. You'll also learn things like which months were the most popular to get married in town and which months were the most popular for a couple's first child to be conceived. Can you guess them? You'll also learn about the frequency of what can euphemistically be called "bridal pregnancy" and be able to answer the question of whether the first American sexual revolution took pace in the 18th century. These and other aspects of marriage will be presented in the context of 18th New England culture.

Monday – October 5 @ 7PM – Town Hall, Rt. 63, South Village
Westmoreland's Ancient History – Pat Baker

New England's Mystic Ceremonial Landscape, part of New England's charm, lies in the thousands of miles of stone walls and stone structures one finds when wandering in the woods. Popular belief is that these are the work of Colonial settlers. An argument exists that these structures were built thousands of years ago, long before Colonial settlers arrived. It is believed that the purpose of many of these structures was ceremonial, and that worship of the great Spirit inspired their construction. Earth energy is frequently a prominent characteristic of these sites. Pat Baker will make this argument and describe a number of sites he has visited.

Monday – November 2 @ 7 p.m. Town Hall, Rt. 63, South Village
Old Home Days of the Past – Carlson Barrett

“It was Governor Frank W. Rollins who first proposed that the wandering sons of New Hampshire be lured back, if only briefly, in an annual celebration to be known as Old Home Week. Thousands answered the invitations of no less than 65 local committees and on Saturday evening, August 26, 1899, welcoming fires blazed on mountain and hill from the Connecticut to the sea. Old Glory flew above every second doorway, and the grass of village greens was flattened under an army of lunch baskets. There were pie-eating contests and balloon ascensions. “Pyrotechnic programs” followed the speeches of the local boys who had made good, while the brass and woodwinds blew themselves out behind the Japanese lanterns on octagonal bandstands.” (from Yankee Kingdom by Ralph Nading Hill). Carlson was a member of the OHD committees for many years and took part in a number of plays. The Historical Society's Old Home Day collection, donated by Bill Howland, will be displayed and the audience's memories and further discussion will be encouraged.

Harry S. and Rae J. Publicover
By Jim Ranson

The Publicovers, especially Rae, will always be remembered in our town history as being involved in the “1949 East Westmoreland Post Office incident”. It was even featured in Life Magazine! Harry Steward Publicover was born in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, on Sept. 22, 1897. His family emigrated to Boston, MA sometime between 1898 and 1900. He was working as a teller at the National Shawmut Bank in 1918, living in Boston, MA. Mrs. Rae J. Publicover was born somewhere in Canada on Nov. 5, 1898, but her maiden name is unknown. She emigrated in 1917, presumably to the Boston area.

Harry and Rae married in 1922. They had no children. Harry became a naturalized U.S. Citizen on June 10, 1940, in Massachusetts. By 1940, Rae was also a U.S. Citizen. He was managing a Cities Service gas station in Braintree, MA in the 1930s. On June 27, 1939, Harry and Rae, while now living in Quincy, MA, bought a 6.6 acre piece of land with buildings thereon in East Westmoreland from John F. Donlay and his wife, also from Quincy, MA. At the time, this property would include the former Mike Henchey property (tax map U1-8) on the old Rt. 12 (the new Rt. 12 section hadn't been built yet), and the present day Treehugger property (U1-9).

During the 1930s, one of the buildings on the 6.6 acre tract was a one-story house near, or on the location of Henchey's Garage. It was apparently being rented by a Bill Allen, who operated a store there. I assume that Harry and Rae moved into this building (facing old Rt. 12) when they bought the property in 1939. They operated a store in the house along with a gas station. The gas pumps may have come with the property. On June 20, 1940, Harry gave his half-interest of the property to his wife, Rae.

The following year on March 31, 1941, Rae Publicover sold a strip of land 85 feet wide (1.10 acres) through their land to the state of NH for the purpose of redirecting Rt. 12 in that area. The State also bought rights of way that year from eight other nearby landowners. Thus, the future Mike Henchey property (U1-8) and the Treehugger property (U1-9) were now separated by the new highway. After the new section of Rt. 12 was

opened (year?) and the old one terminated as a state road, The Publicovers had their house moved across the new highway to where the present-day Treehugger fire-wood office is located.

During World War II, Harry was appointed Westmoreland's Air-Raid Warden and Chief Airplane Spotter. I was told that Harry may have received the position because he had served in the Royal Air Force (inscribed on his tombstone). The town had put an airplane spotting cabin (with a telephone) upon a knoll, across the brook behind the present Pit Stop Smokehouse Restaurant. Various men and women in town volunteered their services at the cabin during the war.

In 1948, Harry and Rae were operating a small store in their home, as well as an ESSO gas station. Almost everyone, except for the Publicovers, was a longtime resident of East Westmoreland. Many of the families were related by marriage and most were Republican—at a time when Harry S. Truman was the President. Westmoreland then had three post office locations—the Depot Station (closed in 1954), South Village and East Westmoreland.

Hiram Woodward had been the Postmaster of the East Westmoreland Post Office since 1920. It was located in his house (U2-10) on Mt. Gilboa Rd., which was next to the school house. Hiram died on November 10, 1948. His wife, Verna (a republican), “assumed” the postal position upon her husband's death. However, the democrat-controlled postal administration in Washington D.C. decided that the Westmoreland position should go to a democrat. Thus, Rae Publicover became the new postmistress on May 1, 1949, and the post office was transferred to the Publicover's house/store.

There was a local uproar of dissatisfaction regarding this change. It made the national news. Life Magazine published an article about it in their May 23, 1949 issue with the heading “Stamp Of Disapproval for The Postmistress”. As stated in the article, the East Westmorelanders, led by the staunch republican and longtime town moderator, Paul King, held protest meetings and boycotted Mrs. Publicover by buying stamps in Keene. They also hoped the government would put them on a rural route from a nearby town, thereby eliminating the East Westmoreland Post Office entirely. Much to their dismay, Rae Publicover served as the postmistress there until the East Westmoreland Post Office was permanently closed on April 30, 1955. Since that time, the Westmoreland Post Office in South Village has been the only one in town.

On March 11, 1966, Rae sold the property (tax map U1-8) on the south side of the new highway to the Fairlane Mobil Home Park and Sales, Inc. of Lunenburg, MA. This triangular piece of land, bordered on the south by the old Rt. 12, would later be owned by Mike Henchey. I am not sure when the Publicover's in-home store, and gas station were discontinued—probably before 1970.

Rae Publicover died in March, 1975. She was buried in the East Westmoreland Cemetery. On April 16, 1976, Harry sold the remaining home site property (future Treehugger business) to Charlotte and William C. Frazier, who lived on old Rt.12 (U1-5). Harry Publicover died the following year in August, 1977. He was buried alongside his wife. Frazier's son, Curt, moved into the former Publicover house. Apparently, it burned down (year?) while he was living there. The property was sold by the Fraziers to Richard Wrobel in 1988, who sold it to Gregory ‘Greg’ Clark in 1994. Jonathan Clark, owner of the present Treehugger Farms firewood business, bought it from his father, Gregory, in November, 1998.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND IN YOUR 2015 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES
(July 1, 2015- June 30, 2016) IF YOU HAVE NOT DONE SO ALREADY.**

MEMBERSHIP AND DONATION FORM
THE WESTMORELAND PARK HILL MEETING HOUSE AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
JULY 1, 2015 TO JUNE 30, 2016

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

Individual Membership	\$ 10.00	Individual Lifetime Membership	\$100.00
Household	\$ 15.00	Household Lifetime Membership	\$150.00
Organization or Business	\$ 25.00		

Please accept my additional tax exempt (501(c)(3)) donation of \$ _____.

Make your check payable to The Westmoreland Park Hill Meeting House and Historical Society.

Mail check to: Westmoreland Park Hill Meeting House and Historical Society P.O. Box 105
Westmoreland, NH 03467

Time and Talent

Please check any and all ways you are willing to help out with the public events and tasks of the Corner School and the Meeting House. Most activities are for a few hours once a year.

cleaning/painting baking planning events phoning publicity
 annual tag sale open house guide general maintenance serving on a committee

Other talents and expertise you have that you are willing to share to help the Society: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Westmoreland Park Hill Meeting
House & Historical Society
P.O. Box 105
Westmoreland, NH 03467