



POWNAI GATEWAY

Pownal Historical Society, Inc.

September 2006

Vol. 4, No. 2

Meeting Schedule

Sept. 10. Enlisting in 1861.
Joe Parks. Pownal Library.
2 p.m..

Sept. 28. Archaeology in
Pownal. Ellen Cowie.
Pownal Library. 7 p.m.

Oct. 22. Collectina



Maple Wind Farm Event Delights

On September 20, Society members and friends enjoyed the hospitality of Eve Pearce at her Maple Wind Farm.

Eve discussed the history of the farm and her application for a Vermont historic designation. As part of the talk, a number of our Pownal friends discussed their memories of life on the farm. They remembered the previous owner, Myrtle Wilcox, planting dandelions while the rest of us tried to eradicate them. Lauriston Wilcox refused to accept Daylight Savings Time. Whenever someone wanted to set a time for an activity, the first question was “Whose time?” Eve planned to harvest the trees along the Dark Woods Road – until she learned that Lauriston had proposed to Myrtle there. Her grandson remembered cutting Christmas trees – once he quietly watched her climb a fence to get him when he was late and saw her fall, casually shake off the snow, and walk home.

Maple Wind Farm – a mid-19th Century hill farm – has fifteen buildings, including 3 large barns and a number of smaller buildings that served such purposes as smoke house and ice house. Eve described the farm as the “Gardner/Wilcox Farm,” not hers, describing herself as the “caretaker with the great good fortune to live here . . . Myrtle Wilcox not only passed her home on to me. She has also been a kind of absentee mentor. We still harvest her asparagus in May . . . and her dandelions as well. We enjoy the wonder of her mother’s rosebush.” Before installing a furnace, Eve and her family burned 8 cords of wood a winter and sometimes had 3 stoves going to keep them and the pipes from freezing.

Finally, refreshments provided by our Board members and other friends led to many conversations about life in Pownal years ago.

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Selected Pownal Websites:

Historical Society:

www.pownal.org

Wikipedia:

[En.wikipedia.org/wiki/pownal%2C Vermont](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pownal%2C_Vermont)

Pownal Library:

<http://solomonwrightlibrary.org/>

Pownal Planning

Pownal.pbwiki.com

Murder Most Foul

On August 17, 1829, the *New-Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette* reported: "A man by the name of Lyman Booth was found dead in a field, at Pownal, Vt. his hands being tied behind him, and his skull fractured. He had been in the employment of a person named Wright, between whom and the deceased some dispute occurred, which caused the former, with the assistance of two or three others, to seize hold of Booth and drag him towards the house. The latter making some resistance, 'the ruffians knocked him down, dragged him into the house, tied his hands behind him, and watched him, as Wright states, through most of the night. The next morning he was missing; and Wright tells his neighbors that he got an axe, cut the cords from his hands and got away.'"

Our newsletter looks forward to an update of this news.

Upcoming Meetings

September 10 -- Civil War Talk

On Sunday, September 10, at 2 p.m. in the Pownal Public Library, Joe Parks will talk about Bennington County men who enlisted in the Civil War. Why did they enlist? What has he learned about them? The talk is open to the public.

September 28 -- Archaeology in Pownal

On Thursday, September 28, at 7 p.m. in the Pownal Public Library, Dr. Ellen Cowie, Director of the Archaeological Research Center of the University of Maine Farmington, will talk about "Native Americans in the Pownal and Bennington Area." She will discuss what archaeologists have learned from their excavations in our area and help us learn what the artifacts on display in our Library reveal about the American Indians in our area. The talk is open to the public.

October 22 -- Historical Documents

On Sunday, October 22, at 2 p.m. in the Pownal Public Library, Kevin Graffagnino, Director of the Vermont Historical Society, will talk about what paper documents reveal about the history of Vermont and answer questions about such documents as maps, letters, and newsletters. The talk is open to the public.

Volunteers Welcome

Our Historical Society welcomes anyone who wants to help with our projects. Typical projects include: Preparing the exhibit for the Tunbridge Vermont History Fair, contributing to the newsletter, finding speakers for public events, presenting a program yourself, contributing to our website, and helping with social events. If you are interested, we would welcome you with open arms. Either call: 802-823-5536 or e-mail:

Special thanks to our previous editor, T. J. Norris, for all her work. Send newsletter material to: raymond_rodrigues@msn.com

Pownal News from 1888

On April 10, 1888, J. Wright wrote to Rev. J. M. Bacheldor, former Baptist minister in Pownal, then living in York, PA. We have copied this original document as part of our efforts to preserve the history of Pownal:

Brother Bacheldor

I received your letter and it gave me much pleasure in perusing the same as they carry me back to the times that tried mens sowlz, although there is a statute law that empowers the town by vote to have its history written. Still the citizens are not anxious to see its doings on rechord. If it should ever be called for in my day and generation. I want you to compile fourteen years of it and I will attest the same if desired and that Jack Scott was grand master of the good Templers and that wounderfull declamty or recitation in Parkers Hall of the death of the man on Chesnut Street and as Town Agent and the death of the woman at the Betsy Noble house and the inquest and the keeping the Exchange Hotel and trial for the sale of intockicants and his brother in law Bowin testamy who delt out the vile stuff and H. E. M. Banister testimony of its being of the strength of week tea etc etc yet although it did not appear to amount to much at the time but I can assure you it broak the backbone of intemperance. (word unclear) (Prest) The change in the subject is desirabl). The time has come that I can give you a brief summing up of the revival. It commensed at Pownal Center under the labors of Mrs Ellen E. Towsley and Mrs E. A. Warren of Dalton Mass of the Advent faith and the Breathern called in help and continued the meetings and it spread to our village and North Pownal. We will say eight or ten conversions at the Center mostly young people none I think of your acquaintance. Mr. Wilson the Democratic Post Master is one at Pownal two youngest sons of Charles H Barber D. J. Bates and all his family Mr Norwood & wife Daniel Thompson Artemus Ladd and say twenty others in the Methodist Church Marietta Lincoln Levi A Lincolns wife & son Miss Houghtoting (sp?) and Mrs. D. F. Bates of the Baptist Church. The Methodists had an Evangilest Bradick by name as a helper from South Shafsbury and the Baptist Mr Barss from Hosach. As you observed in your letter some was fellows of good works and some was jealous of the same but on the whole there has been of good work done by the Lord of Hosts and the Holy Spirit. Doct C. W. Wright is now a practicing Phasition at North Adams as partner of Doct Stafford and we here very flattering reports of his success and reception by some of the cultured and best families of the Town. I hope it is true. Yours in faith and comeing of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
Remember me to your family in much love

J. Wright

Welcome New
Members:

Rev. and Mrs. Gary Dickson
Pownal, VT 05260

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Gilbert
North Pownal, VT 05261

Felix and Elizabeth Mrozek
Latham, NY 12110



Historic Preservation Grants

At our Summer social event (see page 1), Eve Pearce discussed her application to have her farm designated a Vermont historic site and encouraged others to do the same, for very few Pownal homes, barns, and farms are registered. She shared her application and supporting documents for others to see. This year's deadline is October 2, but a new deadline will be one year from now. For instructions and forms, go to the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation:

<http://www.historicvermont.org/programs/registers.html>. The site tells us about grants, as well. "Vermont's historic buildings are important to communities and organizations across the state. Since 1987 the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation has had a 50/50 matching grants program to assist municipalities and non-profit organizations in restoring important historic buildings across the state. Each year grants of up to \$15,000 are awarded to help preserve and repair buildings that will promote the public's awareness and appreciation of Vermont's cultural heritage. Town halls, municipal buildings, churches, historical societies, granges and many other kinds of buildings have been funded. Eligible work includes restoration and repair of roofs, structural elements, windows, foundations and other important components of historic buildings."

An Aborted Visit from Alabama By Ted Atkinson

The gravestone of Joshua Carpenter, 1754-1794, is in the Homestead Cemetery (also called the Carpenter Lot) above the Apple Barn in the Apple Orchard off Carpenter Hill Road. Two summers ago, his five great grandson, Joshua Atkinson, of Andalusia, Alabama, was scheduled for a visit. He could help me, I thought, slant the stone a little toward the west to ward off acid rain. So I dug a modest hole in front of the stone in anticipation. The orchard manager alertly spotted the digging, speculated that thieves were at work, and called the Bennington police. They came and took photos. The manager, Lee Herring, then filled in the hole. Later I apologized to orchard owner, Lea Diamond, and the police. Joshua, 11, simply had his picture taken at the stone and cut a little grass.

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Officers:

President: Ken Held
Vice President: Fran Lampman
Treasurer: Charlotte Comar

Board Members:

Ted Atkinson
Dorothy Bates
Joyce Held
Wendy Hopkins
Margaret Lilley
T. J. Norris
Jeanne Overstreet
Raymond Rodrigues



Thomas Pownall

Our Goals:

- Raise public awareness of Pownal's history: its founding fathers and its early inhabitants;
- Stimulate our children's interest in the history of Pownal;
- Gather and preserve historical data and artifacts;
- Share with other communities data relevant to their history.