



# Merrimack Historical Society

Autumn-Winter 2011-2012

News From the Schoolhouse

## Merrimack in World War II: On The Home Front Exhibit

Be sure to visit the new display case at the top of the stairs in the "Old" Town Hall. The case itself was built by the inmates of the NH State Prison in Concord, and the contents have been furnished by Janice Brown, Anita Creager and the Merrimack Historical Society. The first and current display is titled "Merrimack in World War II: On The Home Front", and features posters, Letters, photographs, certificates, souvenirs (silk pillows, handkerchiefs), memorabilia, ration coupons etc. Included in the display are several small posters that explain the display's contents and teach viewers about the "folks who stayed home" and supported the troops during World War II. Thanks to Janice Webster Brown for designing this display.

Our goal is to update this exhibit every 6 months. If you have ideas or would like to volunteer to create the next one, contact Anita Creager.

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Merrimack Historical Society

520 Boston Post Road,  
PO Box 1525

Merrimack, NH 03054  
603-880-4343

*[www.merrimackhistory.org](http://www.merrimackhistory.org)*

### Officers & Assignments for 2011-2012:

President – Anita Creager  
Vice President – Debra Bult  
Treasurer – Nancy Pease  
Corresponding Secretaries – Ruth Liberty & Barbara Watson  
Recording Secretary – Cynthia Memmen  
Membership – Lynda Tomasian  
Facilities – Phyllis Heaney  
Research – Janice Webster Brown  
Consultant – Lexi Keef

### Meetings:

The Merrimack Historical Society meets on the third Tuesday of each month at the society building at 420 Boston Post Road. During the winter, meetings are at the Merrimack Library (see schedule page 3).

### Membership:

Membership is on a yearly basis. Dues are collected in October for the coming year.  
Individual - \$15  
Family (two persons from same household) - \$25  
Seniors (age 60+) or Youth (under 16) – \$10  
Life Membership - \$100 (for Seniors), or \$150 (for those less than 60 yrs old).  
Business/Professional Membership - \$50.00 (includes an advertisement in each of the quarterly newsletters and recognition in our membership lists).

## EXCITING PAST WORKSHOPS

Our programs for the fall season are gone but not forgotten. All were well attended



Sept. 20 brought Dwight Damon, the “Magician of Merrimack,” relating memories of the Merrimack he knew in the 1950’s and 60’s. His chiropractic clinic in Lane Manor was also the headquarters for National Guild of Hypnotists and his entertainment business (as a clown and magician). For many years he organized our town’s Fourth of July celebration. His home, Lane Manor, was initially the old Thornton Inn, well known for its stone signposts. The Lane Drive-In was where Axel’s Food & Ice Cream stand is now. He shared interesting photographs with us, and his daughter, Melodie organized an index for our obituaries.



Pictured L to R: Caroline Stillman and Anita Creager. Photograph courtesy of Loretta Jackson, Merrimack Journal.

October 18 featured Caroline Stillman, editor of the Old Farmer’s Almanac. She made this ancient almanac come to life for us, as she told of the founding and sources that followed in Ben Franklin’s steps. Did you know the make a children’s version every two years?

November 15’s plans changed, since Madeline Bennett wasn’t able to be with us. Nancy Pease’s son, Richard, is an authority on the Revolutionary War, and demonstrated charts and photos of the battle areas involving Merrimack residents, especially Bunker Hill. He left a copy of the presentation with us, which can be viewed at the schoolhouse.

December 20, of course, was our annual Christmas dinner at The Common Man Restaurant, with twenty of our members sharing the joy of the season. It was great to see Marguerite Ryan and her granddaughter again, and to see Diane Papineau, one of long-distance members, who was visiting from Montana.

## MERRIMACK TIDBITS: First Town Meeting

The copy of Merrimack’s first town meeting on March 4, 1746 includes the names of Capt. Jonathan Cumings (moderator); Phinehas Underwood (Town Clerk); Phinehas Underwood, Mr. John Usher, Mr. Zechariah Stearns (Selectmen), William Datton (Constable), Ephraim Powers (“Tithinman”), Jonas Barrat (“Savaier” of Highways [sic Surveyor]), William Lund and Jonathan Powers (Field Drivers), James Karr and Timothy Underwood (Fence “Veears”) [sic Viewers]. It was signed by Joseph Blanchard, Justice of the Peace.

## WINTER-SPRING PROGRAM SCHEDULE

*Our winter meetings will be held at the Merrimack Public Library.*

Jan. 17 will feature "Aha Moments in Genealogy- Free and High Tech Solutions" with genealogist Janice Webster Brown.

Feb. 21 brings "A Talk with Abe Lincoln", a living history presentation by Steve Wood, hosted by the NH Humanities Council.

March 20 brings another Humanities Council program, "Brewing in New Hampshire" with Glenn Knoblick. Sad to say there won't be any beer samples, but there will be plenty of information about the actual breweries of the past and the present.

April 17 will be held at our Society headquarters, in the Schoolhouse. George May will talk about the Souhegan River Watershed. George is the head of the Watershed Commission and a fan of our local waterway.

May 15 will feature Chuck Mower talking about the Merrimack River Canals and Locks. He has discovered some new/old locks in his travels around this river, whose name we share.

## HAPPENINGS AT THE SCHOOLHOUSE

Our 1847 Schoolhouse got a new coat of paint this year, thanks to Tom Creager.

Tim Goodridge did some repairs at the back of the building.

Our resident foxes have left for the year.

The sign out front has been replaced with new landscaping and also for the flagpole thanks to an Eagle Scout.

Last year another Eagle Scout built our storage she/outhouse and a faux well.

Another Eagle project for the coming year is repairing the tipped gravestones in the Turkey Hill Graveyard.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER (Society Work)

There is always something interesting going on at the Society.

Sandy Russell is still hard at work on Volume II of our Merrimack History. Tom Mahon is working on the chapter on railroads. There are two more chapters to be written, before we can move into the "proofreading stage."

Our 'Old Homes' record books are still (permanently) in the process of being updated, and are available for you to see when you stop by. We have owner and deed records as well as photos of most buildings before 1950.

Ruth Liberty has been working on lists of past selectmen, police (and constables), town clerks etc. We already have teachers, physicians, monuments and other such records.

Janice Brown is working with research requests, and reviewing the ordering system of our subject and genealogy files.

Check out our website at [merrimackhistory.org](http://merrimackhistory.org). Almost daily Janice makes changes and additions. Our Country Store Gift Shop is also on the site, so you can see what we have for sale.



## WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

We need someone who will perform deed research at the Hillsborough County Courthouse.

We need someone to do our publicity (write articles and submit to news sources).



## SOCIETY WISH LIST

Santa didn't bring us everything we wanted, so our list is still here:

- Milford, Amherst, Hudson and Londonderry history books
- Merrimack High School yearbooks
- A projector suitable for use with a laptop computer to show Power Point presentations and slide shows.
- A study table to hold some of our artifacts. Should be suitable for display in our schoolroom.
- Donation of internet services
- Photos: Ayers Hall – inside
- Odd Fellows Hall – inside
- Merrimack Drive In Theater
- Merrimack Airways Airport
- China Village Restaurant
- Zylas' AUCTION House
- Pilgrim Furniture/Yield House – inside and the showroom
- Sports Teams with labels
- Sports uniforms

## DID YOU KNOW?

We have a vast collection of old duplicate town reports beginning in 1847, which are available for sale at \$1.00 each. It's amazing the information and trivia found in them. Did you know the siren signals for an air raid during World War II? Did you know which well known resident had perfect attendance in school in 1960? Did you know who was "warned" out of town in 1850? Contact Nancy Mitchell at 429-8823 to arrange your purchase.

## SENIOR CENTER DISPLAYS "WHERE IS THIS?" NOTEBOOK

There is a notebook at the Senior's Center with photos of many locations in Merrimack, for which we are seeking information. Bring back your memories and help us out. Thanks to Nancy Mitchell for putting this together.

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YOUR AD COULD HAVE BEEN  
HERE! BECOME A BUSINESS  
MEMBER OF THE MERRIMACK  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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## HERITAGE COMMISSION AT WORK

The Heritage Commission's mission is to record, recognize and preserve the infrastructure of our town. This commission will be soon be presenting plaques to the owners of more of our historical buildings. Other news is their purchase of the display case in the Town Hall, and their making arrangements for framed portraits of some of our noteworthy past residents in the Conference Room at Town Hall. This same group arranged for the informational sign currently at Watson Park showing the past industrial background of the area.

Another sign will soon be placed near the Fire Station to honor the Village Dam, which was removed in 2008. Soon, the Seaverns Bridge and Chamberlain Bridges will be identified with plaques as well. Next year the Commission plans to have new Merrimack Christmas Cards available. Volunteers are greatly needed for the Commission. Interested Merrimack residents should contact the Town Hall.