



Members Quarterly Newsletter

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Pittsfield Historical Society
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Pittsfield, New Hampshire – The Gem of the Suncook Valley
Liz Dimmick & Bill Provencal, co-editors

Accessions

John Walker's Prize Cow

Many thanks to the Pittsfield Police department for donating a picture that had been languishing at the station for numerous years. It is a picture taken in 1910 of John A. Walker with a prize cow when he lived at 14 Manchester Street. The cow weighing 1,870 pounds looks very content grazing on the side lawn.

Mr. Walker, born in Barnstead on June 22, 1841, led an adventurous life. As a teenager, he joined a wagon train following the Santa Fe trail. After his trip, he returned to Pittsfield and married Emma A. Eaton around 1862. After her death, he married Lucretia Eaton, in 1887. He served in the NH legislature during 1873 and perhaps at other times and was a selectman in 1876. He passed while living with his son in Medford, MA, on May 20, 1916. His body was returned to Pittsfield for a funeral held in the Advent Bethel Church.



Mr. Walker's Prize Cow

F. F. Prescott Grocer Sign

An F. F. Prescott Grocer sign was donated by Stephen T. Tallman. This store was located in the Opera House block, 42-44 Main Street.



Glass Negatives of Pittsfield

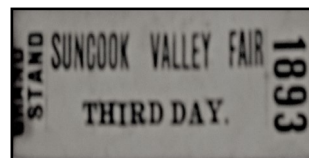
Special thanks go to Marty Cornelissen of Alton for sharing numerous digital photos of Pittsfield. Marty is currently working with the NH State Archives to digitally record their glass negatives. As he came across scenes that pertained to Pittsfield, he collected them for us. And when he brought them by to deliver, Larry Berkson managed to convince Marty to process a stack of our own glass negatives. So, thank you, Marty, for your generosity and dedication to preserving local history.

Pittsfield's Fair

Thanks to Milton Locke Jr. for donating some items from the Pittsfield Fair Grounds. One item is a Grand Stand admission ticket dating from 1893. The other item is a fragment of the roof.

The ticket office of the Pittsfield Fair Grounds was in the path of Route 28 bypass when it was built in 1962. Milton Locke Sr. purchased the building for \$10 and dragged it across the road to his home on Concord Hill Road. It was approximately 15' by 30' and was used as a shed and a playhouse for his children. When he replaced the roof, he saved a short piece of board. He had an affinity for American Indians and their plight and mounted two pictures on the board.

Mr. Locke died in 1982, and his wife Grace (Joy) decided to have the building torn down.



The Search for a New Museum

Many of you are aware of the recent search for a new museum for the Historical Society. Why, you may ask? When the Society purchased the current building, it was considered too small, but it was the only building available and within cost at that time. It was to be a temporary building, but it has graciously housed the museum for over twenty years—like the family who has visiting relatives but who then move in more and more of their possessions and become permanent. The Society now has too many possessions and the newer and larger items have been stored at various locations. It is time to put them all in one place.

Over two years ago, a search committee, chaired by Larry Berkson, was established to look for a prospective new “home.” It was a herculean task, but the small group was diligent. They looked at over twenty locations; measured square footage of existing buildings; considered costs to renovate existing buildings or to raze a site and erect a building; and considered convenience and accessibility for visitors.

There was one property, the location of the old Washington House, that was considered early in the process but put aside since the town’s beautification committee had established a perennial garden, adorned with stone walls. However, as it sometimes happens in small towns, members of the beautification committee heard of our hopes. They agreed that if the town and Selectmen agreed to sell the land to the Society, they would not object. In fact, they offered to provide gardens for the new building.

It is a wonderful location for the Society, a large lot that will accommodate a substantially bigger museum, room for parking, easy access for people and large objects, and room for beautiful landscaping.

After going through the Town’s established process, the Selectmen voted to sell the Washington House property to the Society! Currently the proposal to sell the property is being reviewed by the Town’s legal team. Hopefully, by the time of the next newsletter (December), the Historical Society will have a signed agreement. Watch for more articles in the *Suncook Sun* for future updates.

Historical Society Programs

Future Programs:

Videos of Pittsfield: 1930s and 1940s

On October 10, Larry Berkson will narrate some home movies from the Freese family which were taken during the 1930s and 1940s. These images highlight everyday life in Pittsfield including some now historic buildings and events. Please join us at the museum on Wednesday, October 10, at 7:00

Concord Coaches



Peter James
Abbot-Downing Historical
Society

Many thanks to Peter James, from the Abbot-Downing Historical Society, for sharing his expertise on the world-famous Concord Coaches. Did you know there was an “Eastern” coach and a “Western” coach which was created to handle the more extreme road conditions?

There were three sizes of coaches: a 6-passenger; a 9-passenger; and a 12-passenger. This designation refers only to the interior seating. More people sat on top. These coaches were sturdy! There was also a stage coach ladder that was used to climb to the top. Usually there was a ladder at both ends of the journey. If the coach was used for a specific destination, the ladder was stowed underneath.

Thank you , Lyman Park Mowers

Despite the lack of rain in early summer and then plenty of rain, all of you did a great job of mowing at Lyman Park, and the results showed. Volunteers this summer were Fuzz Freese, Clayton Wood, Linda and Bill Provencal, Ray and Judy Webber, David Harper, Cedric Dustin, Martha and Richard Moley, Jim Allard and Liz Dimmick. Again, thank you for your efforts.