



HENNIKER HISTORIAN

JANUARY 2022 NUMBER 86

NEWSLETTER OF THE HENNIKER HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

Henniker Historical Society Board 2020-21

President: Marc McMurphy

Vice President/Newsletter Editor: Ellen Reed

Treasurer: Sue Fetzer

Secretary: Kristen MacLean

Members: Diane Carpenter, Deb Dow, Yolande Nicknair, Martha Taylor

connected to our town for many different reasons. We are more than happy to help anyone, either you, as the reader, or someone you know who could benefit, and discover this town’s amazing past.

Finally, for those of you who choose to go beyond and financially support our work, we are sincerely grateful. It brings great joy to us to share Henniker’s history with our friends, neighbors, and fellow citizens.

Sincerely,

Marc McMurphy
President

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Everyone,

If you are reading this, you already have an interest in the history of Henniker. You have asked to receive this newsletter and keep current on what is happening with our Historical Society. You have some connection that you want to maintain.

How do we get others connected? There are two groups of people who may not even realize that they have strong connections to Henniker. For many folks, where they grew up is what defines their hometown. However, there are many people in Henniker who have lived here longer than anywhere else. This is their chosen hometown. The history of this town is important to them, to strengthen the bond they already have with Henniker.

Other folks may have moved to Henniker for any number of reasons and while here, started a family. While Henniker may not be their hometown, or they have not lived here longer than anywhere else in their lives, for their children, Henniker is their hometown now. It would be important to these folks to have a connection to Henniker’s history for their children’s sake.

The point of all this is that Henniker Historical Society isn’t just here for sake of those who find history interesting. There is a need for many to be

Members Remembered

We were sad to learn of the deaths of two of our past Board members.

Joyce Meyer died last March in Portland, OR. She served as our secretary from 1994-96 and as President from 1998-2000. She created our archival and artifact numbering system and wrote many of our policies.

Patricia Proctor died this month. She was our secretary from 1992-94 and Co-President from 1994-95. She and her Co-President, Jan Seavey, were responsible for working with the Selectmen in order to secure Academy Hall to be used as the Historical Society’s home. She also oversaw the renovation of the building into a museum and working research facility.



TOURS

In 2021, HHS conducted three separate tours: The Henniker First Murder Tour in August, the Center Cemetery Tour and the Old Burial Yard Tour both in October. All the tours were well attended so in 2022, we currently have two tours scheduled: The Henniker First Murder tour will be held on August 14th (the 128th anniversary of the murder) and a tour of the Plummer Cemetery on September 24th. Check our website for further details.



Center Cemetery reenactors



Old Burial Yard tour

VISIT US ON THE WEB:

www.hennikerhistory.org

email: hennikerhistoricalsociety@tds.net

Facebook

VISIT US AT ACADEMY HALL

51 Maple St

Henniker, NH 03242

603-428-6267

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Monthly board meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of each month at 9:00 am in Academy Hall. Members and prospective members are invited to attend

MEMBERSHIP

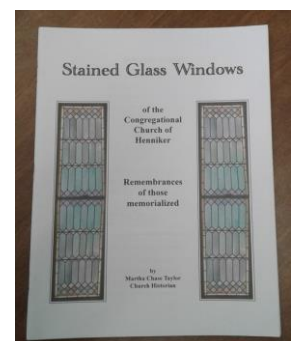
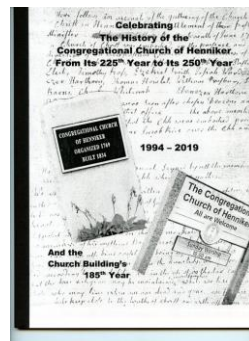
To renew, send \$25.00 per household, \$15 per individual or \$7.50 for seniors 65+ (checks can be made out to Henniker Historical Society) along with your name and address to:

Henniker Historical Society
PO Box 674
Henniker, NH 03242

Household: \$25
Individual: \$15
Senior (65+): \$7.50

Two New Booklets Available!

Two new booklets are available on our website or at Academy Hall: History of the Congregational Church and The Stained Glass Windows of the Congregational Church. Both were written by our esteemed Town Historian and HHS board member, Martha Taylor. Be sure and check them out!



Do You know this historic house?

This is the most recent historic house to display a Henniker Historical Society historic plaque. The historical plaque program, initiated in 2021 has researched over 15 historic properties in Henniker to determine the approximate or actual date of construction. Any house is eligible! Check out the HHS website hennikerhistory.org for the application.

What is the date of this house?

- a. 1800
- b. 1835
- c. 1870



In the Cloud

For the past year, we have been busy cleaning up all our data in preparation for moving to the Cloud with Past Perfect. Past Perfect is a program designed especially for small museums and historical societies and allows us to organize all of our data in a consistent and easily accessible manner.

At long last, we finally reached the point where we could transfer our data to the cloud-based platform and in December, we did so. There are some definite benefits to this. Now, volunteers can work on data entry, research projects, etc. from anywhere they can access the internet. Eventually, as we get more and more of our information entered and scanned, we will be able to make it available to others to search as well. It will also allow us to keep track of members and fundraising campaigns as well as create online exhibits of our artifacts. This is a big step for the Henniker Historical Society and we are excited to see where it takes us!



Members Only Virtual Tours section is now available on our website.

Check it out!

The password is **HHS2021**

What Happens to Your Donated Items?

Frequently, people bring items to HHS and donate them to us in hopes they will be of interest. We absolutely love getting new items pertinent to the history of Henniker. That said, we unfortunately cannot keep every item donated. Sometimes we already have one or more of the items or perhaps the item doesn't really pertain specifically to Henniker history. Since our storage is very limited, we have to be somewhat selective. However, we'd rather people bring in too much than not enough. Items not accepted into the collection may ultimately be sold at a tag sale to help raise funds for the Society.

When we accept an item into our collection, it is recorded on an intake sheet, along with a detailed description, history, donor etc. It is very important that a donor supplies as much history about a donation as possible. It is then assigned an acquisition number and an individual ID number. Now that we have software designed for small museums, we enter all this information into our database. We will be taking photos of each item and attaching the image to the item's computer record. Photos are automatically scanned when received. This allows us to easily search for items and photos related to a specific person, event, etc.

Each item is then assigned a location. Photos go into specific folders for people, events, business, etc. Physical items are placed in acid free boxes dedicated to specific topics or are placed on shelves in our storage areas. Especially old or fragile items are stored in the temperature-controlled area. The location of each item is recorded both in a notebook and in the computer, again allowing for quick retrieval when needed.

We do display some of our items either in the museum in Academy Hall or in the display case at the Town Hall. We periodically rotate items from the Town Hall to the museum to create new displays in both areas.

We truly appreciate the generosity of our donors and if you have some items of possible interest, we urge you to bring them over to Academy Hall!

Bruce Wing



A Henniker Kid in 1952-56

by Penny Wing

In 1952, Bruce Wing was 11 years old living in Henniker with his mother, Nellie, and sisters Shirley, Joyce, and Penny in a duplex owned by Bessie and Howard Gamble on Depot Street. One day Norm Parmenter (owner of the Henniker Rexall Pharmacy) asked Bruce if he would be interested in taking on a paper route. Bruce thought this was a great idea! His mother wasn't so sure. She was very hesitant to give him permission, but Bruce convinced her he could handle it and assured her he would be careful and responsible. She gave in and said okay. Norm helped Bruce get his social security card, and Bruce was in business as a "paper boy"!

Every morning Bruce got up around 4:30 a.m., had a cup of cocoa, a slice of toast or a bowl of Cheerios for breakfast and then headed out on his bicycle to pick up his stack of Manchester Union Leader newspapers at Norm's Pharmacy. His Elgin bike, which Priscilla and Guy Brill gave him, was maroon and cream in color with fat balloon tires. He loaded the newspapers into a canvas carrying bag and draped the bag over handlebars leaning over front fender.

For three hours every morning before school and on Saturday and Sunday, Bruce delivered newspapers from Main St. to Rush Road to Western Ave. and streets in between. Bad weather slowed him down but didn't stop him. He rode his bike through the rain and snow to deliver 55 newspapers every day. When the snow was really deep, the balloon tires on his bike made it very hard to peddle, but he persevered and delivered those newspapers!

Bruce's first delivery stop of the day was to the Henniker Inn where the Innkeepers, Mr. & Mrs. J. R. Berry, would have hot chocolate and a donut waiting for him. He then delivered newspapers to Roby Wood on River Road, George Arnos on Crescent St., and Mrs. Searles on Rush Rd. where he took her newspaper inside to her and she would give him a fresh donut. Mrs. Searles made donuts and pies every day for the Nook Restaurant on Main Street. He then continued on to Marshall Rowe's and the Kjellman's on Rush Rd., Al Norton's Sunoco Station on Maple St., Albert Jones Flower Shop on Gould St., Ernie Greenwood's house on Western Ave., and Razor (Ray) Carlson's Autobody Shop next to the Mary Proctor Bridge, and beyond. The total route was 7 miles.

One bad winter morning, the roads were very slippery and covered in snow. Bruce came upon an accident scene at the base of Old Hillsboro Rd. in front of Ernie Greenwood's house in West Henniker. Ernie, who was Chief of Police at the time, stopped Bruce and wasn't going to allow him to go past the accident but Bruce assured him he wouldn't stop to look at the accident scene and would just go up ahead to the steel bridges to deliver the paper to Mrs. Rice on Patterson Hill. John Martin, owner of the dairy on Butler Street in Hillsboro, was delivering milk that morning when his milk truck slid right into a large maple tree in front of Ernie's house. Sadly, Mr. Martin perished at the scene.

Bruce made 1.5 cents on each newspaper he delivered and he received tips ranging from 25 to 50 cents a week. At Christmastime his customers gave him gifts of socks, belts, gloves, and cash. His route took him about 3 hours to complete and he did this faithfully every day for about 2 years while still making it to school for 8:30 a.m.!

When Bruce was 15, he worked at the Henniker Bowling Alley after school setting up pins until 8 p.m. This job required him to sit on a perch above the pins and jump down to reset them after each game. Sometimes while waiting on the perch, pins would fly up in the air after being struck by a ball in play and Bruce would have to dodge the flying pins!

Dots on the floor indicated where each pin should be set down. The head pin was set down first, followed by two pins, three pins, and the final four pins. Bruce set up pins at the Bowling Alley for about six months until an automated pin setup system was installed.

It's incomprehensible today, that young kids would be allowed to work at such hazardous jobs. But back then life was very different and the dangers were not recognized or openly publicized as they are today. Bruce probably didn't realize his jobs were extremely dangerous; he was just an ambitious, conscientious, and hard-working kid who took his jobs seriously trying to make some money to buy a new bike. Luckily, he had wonderful newspaper customers, employers, and family who thought the world of him and took good care of him. We are fortunate and grateful that he was not maimed or killed while performing those dangerous jobs.

In his adult life, Bruce became an electrician and worked at Monadnock Paper Mills in Bennington, NH until his retirement. He has four children, sons Rob & Ron (twins), son Ryan, and daughter, Brittnee, and he has 8 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. He lived in Hillsboro, Henniker, Nashua, and Sidney, Maine until the death of his wife, Debbie. He now lives in Goffstown, NH.

Boxes and Boxes!

One of the many activities of Henniker Historical Society volunteers is the organization and recording of three types of items: photos, objects, such as clothing, books or everyday objects, and ephemera. Ephemera ranges from original letters, newspaper articles, pamphlets, to theatre tickets or musical scores. After each piece of ephemera is accessioned, a decision is made as to which box it should be stored. For example, a magazine article about Henniker poetess Edna Dean Proctor would be placed in a PEOPLE box under her name. Once the box is determined, the item is noted in an indexed binder under the box number. The information is then stored digitally. There are two Proctor boxes, 85-1 holds her poetry, while 85-2 holds biographical ephemera.

Each box is composed of acid free material which prolongs the life of the item. In addition, within the box fragile items are placed in an acid-free plastic sleeve for protection. At the present time, the Society counts over 250 specifically designated boxes. Each box is labelled on the outside with boxes stored in numerical order. The shelved 'Box Room' at Academy Hall is darkened room to protect the item from light or heat damage.



Ephemera stored in one of our acid free boxes

Gotta Rug?

The Society volunteers are busy sprucing up the second floor Board Room at Academy Hall. They have pulled up 60+ year old, wall to wall, carpeting, and are busy staining the wood floors. New or gently used area rugs are needed. Please email us at www.Hennikerhistoricalsociety if you have a donation.

(Answer to Historic House from Page 3: 1835).

Henniker Historian

**Henniker Historical Society
PO Box 674
Henniker, NH 03242**

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
HENNIKER, NH
PERMIT NO. 35

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**October 2021 Newsletter
Issue No.85**



Arbor Day: April 29, 2022

The 100+ year old rock maple tree that stood in the front yard of the Henniker Historical Society was removed in the fall of 2021. It had lost many diseased limbs and was posing a danger to passersby. We at HHS want to replace the tree. If you would like to donate a tree and help plant it on April 29, 2022, please contact HHS at Hennikerhistorical@tds.net

