

WHHS Newsletter

The Marlow Historical Society's Mission is to preserve and illuminate Marlow's History

Summer 2016

Sand Pond....A Precious Summer Legacy

This issue of the Marlow Historical Society Newsletter focuses on the history and the people of Marlow's special Sand Pond community. We hope that you enjoy the articles and are inspired to revisit or visit for the first time, this wonderful, unspoiled place that has delighted generations from all over New England, and the world!!

A Brief History of Sand Pond

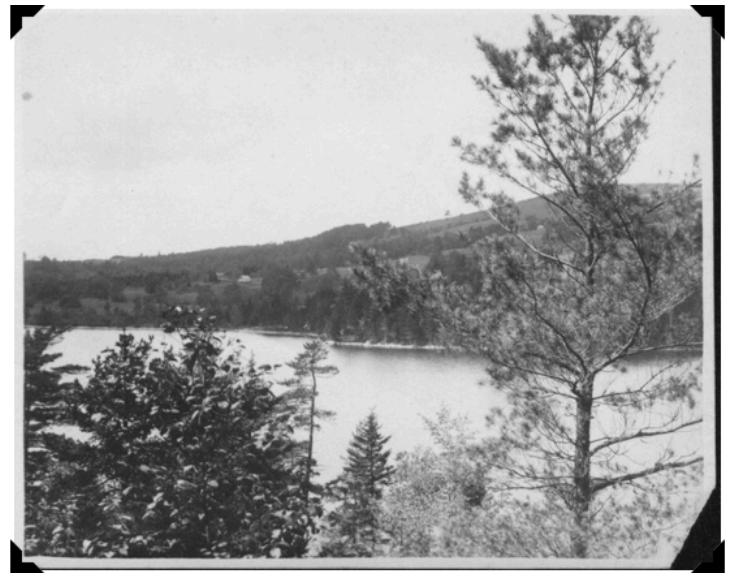
Sand Pond, located partly in Cheshire County and partly in Sullivan County, is one of the lakes which form the headwaters of the Ashuelot River. The western side is noted for its sandy beaches; the eastern side is rocky with ledges along the shore. It is spring fed, and its waters are remarkably clear and clean.

As a recreational lake, Sand Pond was first settled by Dr. Carl Addison Allen of Lempster, who built a cabin on the Silver Mountain side of the lake. It was accessible by a road that crossed over the mountain from the main Lempster/Washington road. Dr. Allen was born on the Wright Estate in Lempster, and served as a physician in Acworth. He was a great-grandson of Col. Elijah Huntley, one of Marlow's early citizens.

It is interesting to know that Dr. Allen was a student at the Marlow Academy in 1865; and in the early 70s he was Principal, and teacher of Latin, French, and Mathematics at the Academy. He also began his study of medicine under Dr. Marshall Perkins of Marlow.

In 1884 he developed his property into a summer camp (Camp Echo) where he brought some patients, and invited neighbors and friends from Lempster and other surrounding towns. There was no access to the camp except by driving through farm fields, opening and closing gates to keep cattle in.

On the road to Marlow, at the top of the hill beyond "Huntley Corner" was the home of Orison C. Huntley. In her "Recollections", Frances Briggs writes: "As for native population about the camp, there was none except for Orison Huntley Orison was general factotum for Dr. Allen's camp, and closed it after Labor Day. He also furnished ice" (which he cut from the lake during the winter),



Upcoming Events This Summer and Beyond.....

Saturday, August 13

Look for our table at the Odd Fellow's "Family Fun Day" There will be Marlow items and our Town History for sale!

Saturday, August 27

**We host The Gathering Place at the Methodist Chapel, 9 - 11:30
Stop by for a treat, and support your society**

This Fall.....

Plans are underway for a musical program celebrating Marlow's once world-renowned opera singer Maria Callista Huntley at our own Jones Hall

Cheshire County Historical Society's own Alan Rumrill will present one of his fascinating talks for all members and friends of local history to enjoy time and place TBA.



How the Pond, Its Mountains, and Ducky Brown Road Got Their Names

The lake was known as Sand Pond, because of its natural sandy beaches along the west shore. According to Mr. Elton Beard, who was interviewed by then Marlow Historical Society President Betty Batchelder in July 16, 1998, Dr. Carl Addison Allen named it Echo Lake because of the reverberating sound from the three mountains that surround it: Huntley Mt. to the south, Blueberry Mt. to the east, and Silver Mt. to the northwest.

We have in our files a memoir written by a young lady from Massachusetts who spent an unforgettable vacation at Echo Lake in 1929, during which she and a group of friends decided to test the name of the lake. She writes; "We stood on a high rock that was on a hill near the edge of the island. The moon was out and everything was still. We cupped our hands over our mouths and shouted "HELLO" across the lake. Sure enough! A second of silence, and then six or seven answering "HELLOS" from different parts of the wooded hills responded. The echoes were perfectly clear. I knew then that this lake of ours had every right in the world to be called Echo Lake."

We also have copies of articles of the Cold River Journal dated 1880- 1904 regarding Echo Lake. One of them reads: "On almost any day or eve, when the air is still and the surface of the lake is smooth, a wonderfully clear and distinct echo is heard; the voice being thrown back one mountain to another until the sound is repeated, made fainter and sweeter than the time before."

Huntley Mountain is named after Col. Elijah Huntley, one of Marlow's earliest citizens, who built his home on the southwest side of the mountain. The house was still standing in the early 1900s.

As to the origin of the name Silver Mountain... according to an 1880 article in the Cold River Journal: "More than fifty years ago a man by the name of John Silver lived upon a farm, high on the slope of a mountain in the extreme southern portion of Sullivan County, NH. He kept a large herd of cattle which roamed at pleasure over the mountain side...Years have come and gone since then, and only a few stones and scraggly apple trees remain to tell us where the Silver homestead was; but the name will last forever, and Silver Mountain will remain."

George ("Ducky") Brown lived on the road that now bears his name, quite a distance away from Sand Pond Road. He was born in England in 1876, arrived in the U.S. in 1904, and came to Marlow in 1927. He rented what was the L.B. Huntley house. Mr. Brown was short, stocky and partially crippled, and got his nickname because of the way he walked. He was a recluse; Nichols & Newton supplied him with groceries, and kids in town helped deliver them.

His half-sister, Anna Landfried came to live with him in 1930, and was his housekeeper. When she died, in January 1939, he was unable to get out because of the amount of snow, so he placed her outside on a snow bank and covered her with newspapers. She was found days later by Bill McPhail, Fred Corey and Dutch Mosher.

Mr. Brown himself died 4 months later. A headline in the Keene Evening Sentinel of Monday May 15, 1939 reads: 65-YEAR OLD MAN FOUND DEAD IN HIS HOME IN MARLOW. GEORGE BROWN, RECLUSE, HAD BEEN DEAD DAYS WHEN BODY DISCOVERED IN HOME.

Emily Bomely remembers that the house, surrounded by apple trees, was still standing when she was a teenager. Only the cellar hole remains today. Both George Brown and Anna Landfried are buried in the Village Cemetery.

Historical Society News

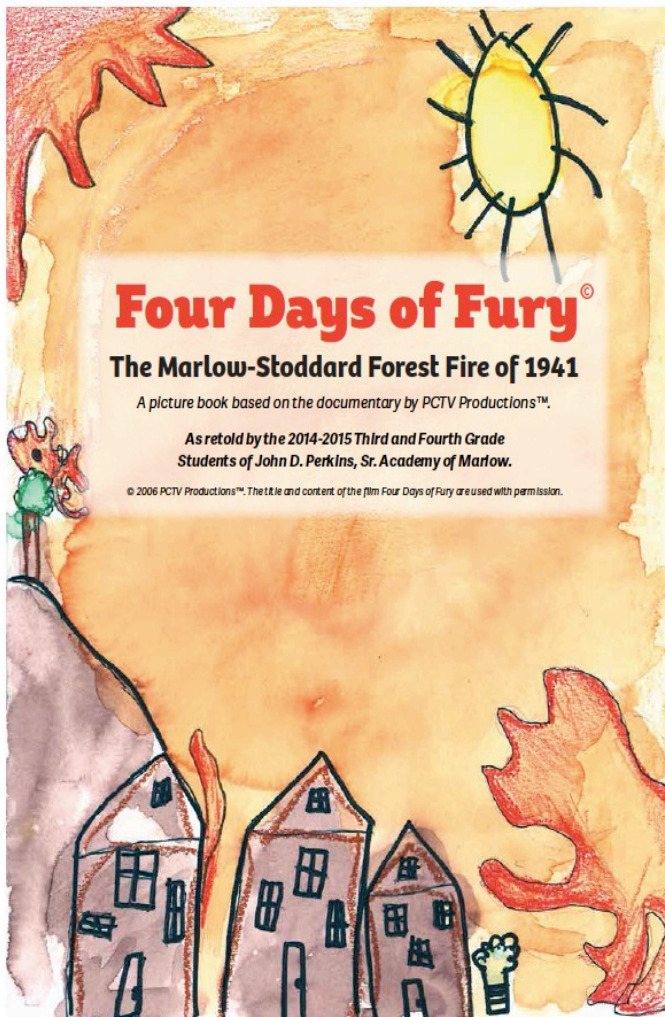
We will continue to work on the renovation of Murray Hall this summer. All we have left to do is to sheetrock the upper walls, and the ceiling, then a coat of paint, and we will be complete, for now! This is a costly undertaking, and we continue to raise funds for it. Once this work has been completed, we will be able to open our museum to the public, hopefully in the fall.

We had a surprise visit from a descendant of the Gee family. Melanie Mercier, granddaughter of Ruth Gee (1895-1980), brought us a copy of Ruth's "memories" which were taped and transcribed by Melanie and her sister Deana. Ruth's father, George, was the last in the family to own the Gee Mill at the intersection of Route 10 and Sand Pond Rd. Melanie also sent us a copy of a letter to Iva Gee (Ruth Gee's half sister) dated 1901.

There is a wealth of historical data in just this one letter. What is more, Ruth Gee's son Dean Safford, 94 years old, sent a generous donation for the Murray Hall project. More about the Gees in a future newsletter.

We will be holding annual elections in September. There will be positions on the Board vacant. We absolutely need more people to help! There are so many programs we would like to sponsor, and there is so much interesting research to be done, but, alas, we have only 10 regularly active members out of a total of 75.

Without more help, we will be "treading water", and that's about all. Members are so generous financially, and this is fantastic. We could not exist without this support. However, if you ever thought you'd like to do a little bit more, this is the year for it!



Four Days of Fury[®]

The Marlow-Stoddard Forest Fire of 1941

A picture book based on the documentary by PCTV Productions™.

As retold by the 2014-2015 Third and Fourth Grade Students of John D. Perkins, Sr. Academy of Marlow.

© 2006 PCTV Productions™. The title and content of the film Four Days of Fury are used with permission.

"Sand Pond" continued from Page One

In the 1920s a handful of camps existed, and only a dirt road from Route 10 to the pond. Ellis Spaulding, in his "Recollections of Bygone Years" writes, "It was prudent to wait until about the first of June before attempting a trip with an automobile. I can remember at least two occasions when the car sank to the hubcap on at least one wheel and this was in the days of the 36-inch wheel." There was no electricity or telephones. The pond provided water, and kerosene was purchased for use in lanterns, lamps and a two- burner stove.

Orison Huntley owned considerable lakefront property. The rapid development of Sand Pond began when he started selling lots for summer homes. In her reminiscences about the lake, Mildred Beard writes: "We bought our lot from O.C. Huntley by moonlight. It was very swampy but had a lovely beach. We started building on July 4, 1934. In August 7, 1940 we had our camp wired for electricity. We were the first to sign up when the REA wanted to start wiring around the lake."

The West Shore Road was put in by Marlow around 1950. Before then there was no access to that area of the pond. Bill Bomely recalls that when his father built their camp he brought everything in by boat from the North Shore. The first camp on the back side of the lake was built by the Rhodes family in 1956. The area is still not accessible by road.

As more and more camps were built, a real community emerged, with enduring friendships, and properties remaining in the same family for generations.

The Bomelys remember Harold and Millie Kinson, calling them "mainstays of Sand Pond." They bought Silversight (now the Istel camp) from Lucian Webster, and they would come in over the Ducky Brown Road to their cottage. When Bill's parents started building, Harold ran an electrical line to their cottage so they could have lights. "They were a wonderful couple", Emily says, "their door always open. Harold had a cannon he always shot off on the 4th of July. His grandkids have carried on the tradition."

Chuck Mosher reminisces: "My grandfather, Walt Nichols, built his camp on the west shore, before there was a road or much else on that side of the pond. He rowed all the materials across from the Beard camps in Lempster, and he loved going there to fish and canoe. At that time he ran the grocery store next to the river in Marlow, and Sand Pond was 'just far enough away' to suit him."

"My father, Dutch Mosher, left Marlow for WWII in 1942, and was part of the forces that took New Guinea back from the Japanese. By the end of the campaign his tour should have been up, but the entire division was ordered north to the Philippines, instead of returning to my mother Ethel and the cold, clear beauty of the Pond. He described the time fighting in the Philippine jungles as the worst in his life, and said the only thing that saved him was a letter from Walt, promising him the lot right next to his, and that they would build him a camp together when he got home. He carried that letter with him for years, until it crumbled from age."

"They started construction on his camp in the spring of 1946, and I was born that December. I have pictures of Ethel that fall, very pregnant, but helping put the finishing touches on before winter; and a picture of me at 18 months, wading in the shallows."

(Continued Page 4)

Congratulations to the third and fourth grade students of the John D Perkins, Sr. Academy of Marlow and their teacher, Mrs. Leah Giles, on the publication of their new picture book, Four Days of Fury, based upon the documentary by PCTV Productions, © 2006. In anticipation of the 75th anniversary of the 1941 forest fire that burned 24,000 acres in Marlow and neighboring towns, Marlow firefighter Charlie Strickland and local historian and filmmaker Tracy Messer challenged the students to retell the story using their own words and original illustrations. The picture book was printed by Gem Graphics with support from private contributions. Copies may be purchased through Perkins Academy for \$12. All proceeds from the sale of this book will go directly to the Perkins Academy to fund future student projects

A Sand Pond Scrapbook



Left: A Day at the Beach, circa 1900

Bottom left: the stage from Hancock to Marlow that passed near the camp, circa 1900

Below: a winter view of the Littles' cabin on Sand Pond



Sand Pond Personalities!

There is something about our peaceful, pastoral village and its surroundings that draws people from all over, and from all walks of life. Sand Pond, although Marlow can claim only half of it, is one of those special places that cast a spell upon those who lay their eyes on it for the first time. Some very distinguished individuals have become avid "Sand Ponders".

One such person was Norman Carl Rasmussen. He purchased land at the base of Huntley Mountain on Sand Pond around 1960, cleared it, built his own cottage, and made it his sanctuary for almost 30 years. Mr. Rasmussen was a brilliant scientist, engineer, educator and researcher. He was professor of nuclear engineering at MIT, consultant to industry, and advisor to the US government. He was appointed by Pres. Reagan to the National Science Board, and won the Enrico Fermi award, one of the oldest and most prestigious science and technology awards given by our government. He made history with his remarkable achievements in the area of nuclear power plant safety, a topic on which he consulted with countries all over the world.

And yet, as his daughter Arlene reminisces, "on weekends he took off his suit and went to Sand Pond in old overalls.... sort of like two different people. He loved, loved, loved, Sand Pond. His heart was definitely there."

He visited barn sales to find old beams and boards to build his cabin; purchased and restored an abandoned bulldozer to clear the land and improve the road into his property; and built a sauna.

Mr. Rasmussen was a skilled craftsman, avid bird-watcher, accomplished skier...and a Red Sox fan! He loved to pick blueberries up in Silver Mountain, where one year, his daughter says, he picked over 30 quarts. He and his wife Thalia served on the Sand Pond Association for many years.

To Sandy and Bill Williams, whose cottage he also built, he was a wonderful neighbor, helpful, down-to-earth, and very funny.

After Mr. Rasmussen died in 2003 the land the family owned, 572 acres, was donated to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. It is called the Rasmussen Forest.

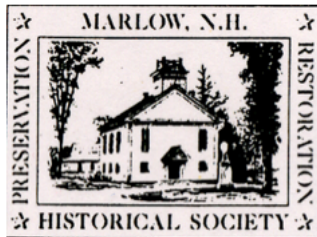
Another person smitten by Sand Pond is Jacques-Andre Istel. In 1996 he was visiting his daughter who lives in Acworth, and was looking for a property on the water. There was one for sale on Sand Pond, and the instant he saw it he made an offer.

Mr. Istel was born in France, and although you need to go to Wikipedia to read about all of his accomplishments, we will mention here that he was a parachutist, investment banker, diplomat and historian; he was a Lt. Col. in the US Marines; he was responsible for popularizing parachuting in the U.S., and is considered "the father of American skydiving".

In 1986 he founded the town of Felicity, California, where he lives. The crowning achievement of his life is the founding of The Museum of History in Granite, which is now a candidate as a World Heritage Site.

Last I saw him, he and his wife Felicia were taking in the sights during the last night of Marlow's 250th Anniversary celebrations. His cottage has now passed on to his daughter, but he will come to visit his beloved Sand Pond in the summers.





**Marlow Historical Society
2014-2015
Officers:**

President: Joanne Thomas
Vice President: Maria Baril
Treasurer: Liz Thayer
Secretary: Linda McCracken

Directors:
Joe Baril
Barry Corriveau
Carol Reardon

Our web email: mhsnewhampshire@gmail.com

Our current website: www.mhsnewhampshire.org

DID YOU EVER WONDER.....

..... about the little white cabin in the woods, across from the Post Office?

Although it's uninhabited and quite run-down, it has an official number now:
829 NH Route 10.

In our Fall Newsletter, you will discover **who** lived there, and **why!!**



"Sand Pond" Continued from Page 3

"They loved the time there, and in the summer of 1960 I brought my now wife Sally to Sand Pond for the first time. It's now a "special place" for our daughter, son-in-law and two granddaughters."

Another WWII veteran, Bob Clough, worked with Dutch Mosher to build the first section of the West Shore Road down to the spot where Carol and Ed Reardon live today. Chuck Mosher says that he was "a hard worker, with a great laugh, who could get a lot done in a day with just a bulldozer."

The Sand Pond community came together 51 years ago with the formation of the Sand Pond Association. Since that time they have endeavored to protect the surrounding watershed, preserve and rebuild the dam originally built in the late 1800s, monitor water quality, attempt to stop erosion and pollution, participate in State led initiatives to control the spread of foreign invasive plant and animal species, and encourage the native loon population.

As Mr. Mosher states: "All of this has been made possible by generous annual appropriations from the towns of Lempster and Marlow. We are proud to be your neighbors."