

# MHS Newsletter

Marlow Historical Society, Marlow NH, 03456



Winter 2012

*It's a new year, and we are excited about resurrecting our newsletter. We hope to bring you up to date on new items in our collection, our upcoming programs, and events both in Marlow and beyond that you might like to attend. We'd like to think of our Society as always making connections between Marlow's past, present, and future, building up the "ties that bind" us all together. Thank you for joining us in our 2012 adventure. Together we can assure that Marlow's history is preserved, and cherished*



## Tinshop Pond Fence

In January 2011 the Marlow Historical Society began our efforts to raise over \$11,000 to reconstruct the Tinshop Pond Fence in the style and materials used in the past. Built in 16 ft. sections and spanning 224 ft, it was the only segment still standing from the graceful fences that wended their way up and down the streets of the village. Almost immediately donations poured in from individuals, families, businesses, corporations, local organizations and students. Many of the donors sponsored a 4 ft section of fence for \$175.00

By late October 2011 we had raised over \$11,500 and The Monadnock Fence Company was putting on the finishing touches to the "new" fence. Through the efforts of Genevieve Ellis the Society recently received our second grant from Exxon Mobil; this grant will help fund the construction and installation of a donors plaque and maintenance of the fence in the near future.

## Every Bequest Tells a Story.....

One current M.H.S. project is reviewing our collection to identify, organize, and better conserve what we have. We plan to relate each artifact to Marlow. Each item tells a story. What does it tell about the family from which it came and about Marlow's past? Among other gifts to the M.H.S. museum is one made in 2004 by Charlotte Graves of Washington, NH and Ware, MA. The gift consisted of objects and ephemera.

Among the ephemera are a New Year's Ball dance card. The ball was held at Marlow's Forest House Tuesday evening, Jan. 1, 1884. The delicate rose on the cover and the tasseled silken cord speak of the elegance of the occasion. The inside tells us that the affair featured a grand march and an intermission with supper, and that the evening was lively with contras and quadrilles. There were waltzes, polkas, a schottische, a reel, and hornpipes. Also among the ephemera are photographs of Alonzo Oliver Brown and Ellen Jane Spaulding Brown (Ms. Graves' great grandparents), a program of Marlow Academy fall term closing exercises of 1872, and affidavits signed by Marlow Selectmen declaring Ellen Brown's fitness to teach primary school and attesting that she is "a person of sober life and conversation and good moral character." A letter from Dudley H. Lewis, born in Marlow in 1818 and killed when thrown from a stage in 1879, is included. Mr. Lewis, a wool merchant, moved with his wife Charlotte from Marlow to Boston in 1839 where he remained ten years before returning to Marlow. The letter, dated Jan. 24, 1847, shows the formality of the period. Although it is addressed to his son in Unity, N.H., it begins, "I with pleasure sit down this evening to address a few lines to you through the medium of the post." He tells of a great fire which came near his Boston house and place of business. Each item illuminates the past like a candle in the dark.

Each object Ms. Graves gave also tells its story and leaves us with questions. We have Bertram Brown's fancy silk handkerchief from when he was a Marlow band boy playing at the Alstead Fair. We have a large square cloth muffer which had belonged to Dudley Harvey Lewis. With its exotic orange, blue, and lavender paisley design, it is clearly an Indian import, symbolic of wealth and Victorian elegance. He must have done well in the wool business. We have a fine linen towel, spun and woven by Mehitable Way Lewis, another of Ms. Graves' great grandmothers. This reinforces Elgin Jones statement that Marlow people grew and spun flax. Mehitable's ancestor, Christopher Way and her husband's ancestor, Eber Lewis settled in Marlow in 1767.

Most interestingly, we have a pair of slippers which had belonged to Dudley Harvey Lewis' son, Dudley Harris Lewis, born in Marlow in 1787 who had married Eirley (or Early) Gee, daughter of Solomon Gee, a cloth merchant who built a saw mill here. These slippers are remarkable. First, they are like a woman's size five or six, tiny for a man. Second, each is shaped from a single piece of leather. Third, they are moccasins made of soft deerskin and decorated with ribbon, tiny stitches, and bead work. Each bead is smaller than a pin head. The "slippers" raise questions. Could there have been a Native American in the Lewis family? That seems unlikely as the the Lewis genealogy is clear back to Massachusetts in 1655 and to Wales. What tribe made these? Were they made by Algonquins and traded for locally? Were they from the Western fur trade which was already brisk in Ohio and the Great Lakes area before Dudley Harris Lewis died in 1859? Some of Marlow's own, such as Stephen Mack, were involved. If the slippers came down from Canada, that tells another story. This bears investigation.

*Loisanne Foster*



## Notes from the Archive

I spent much of the month of November and some of the warmer days in December reorganizing our little Archives Room on the second floor of the Methodist Chapel, in order for us to make use of the space more efficiently..

Among our treasures are a number of issues of the *Cold River Journal* - a weekly newspaper published in Alstead - from the 1890s and from 1902 - 1904. Marlow regularly submitted news, which give us a glimpse at what life was like in those days. Here are some items from the Journal:

Dec. 8, 1892

"Dexter Washburn of Marlow has trapped 50 foxes, 50 skunks, 100 muskrats, 20 minks and 20 coons."

March 2, 1893

Because of back-to-back snowstorms "the Forest Stage was not able to get over Stoddard Hills until Friday."

March 7, 1893

Traveling was very bad - snow continually filling the road. "Mr. Beard, the mail carrier from Marlow to Alstead, brought in the mail on his back. He was unable to get over this side of W. Whittemore with his team."

Feb. 1, 1902

"Many of our townspeople have been busy cutting and storing ice for the coming season. The ice is said to be of fine quality."

March 12, 1904

At the School Meeting "it was voted to raise \$2.00 more than the amount required by law for school purposes, and the sum of \$30.00 for repair of schoolhouses."

These are just a few examples of the fascinating material I found. It was with regret that I had to stop when it got too cold, since we don't have heat upstairs. In future newsletters we will offer you more snippets from our collection.

*Maria M. Baril*

## Membership

*To the members of the Marlow Historical Society:*

Please be assured that we don't ever take you for granted. Dues and generous donations are the lifeblood of the society. They make it possible for us to restore and preserve local structures of historical and architectural significance, and to enrich and maintain our museum and archives.

Certainly we can only concentrate on one major project each year. In 2011, Marlow's 250th anniversary, we rebuilt the Tinshop Pond Fence, which is an integral part of the Marlow Village landscape. In the spring we will install a plaque with the names of the donors - nearly a hundred of them, including the three students from the Perkins School Class of 2011!

We have now formed a committee to explore the continued restoration of Murray Hall. During the past few years a lot has been achieved: new roof, removal of a collapsed addition, stabilizing the foundation, re-glazing and repair of all the windows, painting of the whole building, etc.

The committee will decide what work needs to be done next. If you are interested in joining the group you may contact one of our board members.

We wish you all a happy and healthy New Year.



**Contact us if you wish to purchase a 250th Anniversary Puzzle done by our own Stephanie Tickner. All profits go to the Society, and the cost is only \$20.00.**

## Mark Your Calendar!

**Sunday,  
April 29  
2:30 p. m.  
Jones Hall**

**Lecture:  
"Runaway Wives"**

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## Runaway Wives Come Back

Yes, this program sponsored by the NH Humanities Council will return to Jones Hall on April 29th, at 2:00 p.m. Historian Marcia Schmidt-Blaine will lecture on the reasons why colonial women "ran away" from marriages, and what happened to them after they did. Come and enjoy a marvelous afternoon with us. The Marlow Women's Society will be co-hosting this event with us, and will be helping to provide a beautiful and delicious Afternoon Tea for all who attend. This event is free, and please bring your friends!

### 2012 Officers

*President: Joanne Thomas*

*Vice President: Maria Baril*

*Secretary: Loisanne Foster*

*Treasurer: Mary Blank*

*Directors: Gen Ells ; Johanna Kent*



[www.marlowhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.marlowhistoricalsociety.org)