

Canaan Historical Society and Museum Annual Report for 2005

The 2005 season brought 381 Visitors from the area, across the country and abroad to the Museum. We opened Saturday, July 2, and closed October 23 with several special openings.

On Friday, June 3, we had seventy-six fourth graders from the Canaan Elementary School along with their teachers and volunteers. They spent the day at the Museum and old Meeting House in observance of New Hampshire History Day. This is a re-enactment of the Colonial Days and the Students dress for the occasion. They are very interested in the articles in the Museum used by our early settlers. Several of these young people are descendants of Canaan's First families and are eager to learn about our towns' history. The Museum was open for the day on August 27, for a group of homes-schooled kids from Franklin, Concord, Boscowen, Penacook and Loudon. These students ranged in age from 5-17. They along with their teachers, parents and volunteers numbered 56. The group was seeking information on Noyes Academy. They spent the day with our historian, Donna Dunkerton. After a tour of the Museum, they visited the Meeting House, the Currier House, Old North Church, Wells Cemetery, Canaan Street Cemetery and the Howe House where some of the black students boarded when they attended Noyes Academy in 1835. This group used this information to create a production of True Freedom, which our historian attended on Friday evening, November 18, at the Grace Evangelical Church in Penacook.

On September 7, the Mills and Clause families from Snowflake and Mesa, Arizona, visited the Museum, Meeting House, Pinnacle House and cemeteries. They were interested in information on the Robert Barber family who came to Canaan from New Market, N.H., in 1774. It was Captain Barber who sawed the lumber for the Meeting House and built the Pinnacle House in 1786.

The Shanley family from Northborough, Mass., visited Canaan on October 7. They were looking for the grave site of Alton Webster. Irving Shanley was with Alton when he lost his life in the Normandy Invasion. Our historian accompanied the Shanley's to the Museum, Wells Cemetery, the Legion Hall and former Webster Home.

We had other special openings for Linda Belding Williams from Newport News, Virginia on October 8. The Turner family from Anacortes, Washington, October 16, and the Whittier family from Los Angeles, California, November 3rd.

Again this year we had several items presented to the Society. The Kulig family donated a Quilt and Afghan from the Pearl (Colburn) Neily collection. Our now retired town clerk, Ed Morse, brought us a Canaan Fair Poster dated 1959 and a typewriter. Ed purchased the typewriter at a firemen's auction in the 1970s at the old firehouse. It was used by our former town clerks. The top of a union suit and two pairs of shoes were given by Robert Wotton. These items came from Webster's Store in West Canaan. We received a corn chopper that predates the Civil War. This has the name Edwin Cobb, Canaan Street, on the side of it. Mr. Cobb operated a store on Canaan Street and was the great grandfather of Daniel W. Fleetham our Society Chairman. This came from the home of the late Ruth (Howe) Talbert and was donated by her son, Bill and family from Potomac, Montana. He also gave some old newspapers, town reports, numerous pictures and other tidbits of interest. Larry Lord brought us a box of town reports and numerous photographs were donated by Shawn Eastman.

Our Museum historian, Donna Dunkerton, has compiled several laser prints of Canaan pictures and other points of interest, which have been added to our books. On Saturday, August 6th, the Ori Calliope was at the Museum. Our visitors were entertained for the afternoon with circus music by Jack Snyder. We look forward to his return in August 2006.

The art work presented to the society on Old Home Day 2004, by Gary Hamel and other local artists have been framed by Gary. These pieces are a great addition to our collection and are displayed at the Town Library for the winter. The Snow Roller is finely home. Last September our road agent Earl "Buster" Charbono and members of the town crew returned the roller to the Museum grounds. In the spring a shelter will be constructed to house the last of the old snow rollers.

Respectfully submitted:

Daniel W. Fleetham, Chairman

John Q. Ricard, Vice Chairman

Carol Bergeron, Secretary

Reggie Barney, Treasurer

Donna Zani-Dunkerton, Historian and Corresponding Secretary