

Canaan Historical Society and Museum Report 2007

The 2007 season brought 357 visitors from the area, across the country and abroad to the museum. We opened Saturday July 7th and closed on Saturday, November 3, 2007, (including several special openings). On Friday, June 8, 2007 we had 90 fourth graders from Canaan Elementary School along with their teachers and volunteers. They spent the day at the museum and the 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 were very interested in the articles in the museum used by our first settlers. Several of these young people are descendants of Canaan's first families and were eager to learn about our town's history.

On Saturday, June 2, 2007 Edward Lary and the late John Ricard put on an outstanding program on the Canaan Fire. Over 70 people crowded into the Senior Center to hear details and stories of the Canaan Fire on its 84th Anniversary as well as view our Museum's extensive collection of photos and newspaper clippings. Following the program John led a very interesting walking tour of the fire.

On July 7th, a group of 31 having a family reunion spent the afternoon with our historian seeking information on several families that once lived at Canaan Center when it was known as "Factory Village." On Saturday, September 15th, numerous families and individuals from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maine and Canada visited the Museum. These people along with our Historian visited the site in West Canaan of the "Great Train Wreck of September 15, 1907" This was the worst wreck in N.H. history where 26 people lost their lives.

In August and October we had special openings for families from Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Utah, Oregon, California and Texas along with a group of "home-schooled" children on November 1st. Again this year we had several items presented to the Canaan Historical Society: Ganeta Calley of Hill, NH brought us two small hooked rugs. These were made by her Grandfather, Ralph Hill, who lived for many years on Parker Street; Ruth Carlson-Cornwell donated a small chair used by her when she attended Woody's Nursery School; Leonard LaFlam of Etna brought us several postcards of the Great Train Wreck of 1907 and other tid-bits relating to Canaan History; Elsie Smith Wilson gave us a small album of very old photos and a book of family history, (Elsie is a Mayflower Descendant); Ruth Tucker brought us a booklet from 1948 when the Mt. Cardigan Fish and Game Club sponsored Canaan's Fourth of July program — Ruth also gave us a book of plays used by her when she taught at the Canaan High School; A century old sewing machine belonging to Jeannie Lawn was given to the Museum by her daughter, Mildred Nixon; Adeloid Benware, formerly of Orange and now living in West Lebanon brought us a cream separator; Dan Fleetham Jr. gave us a small cup from the early 1900's with a print of Canaan Village on it and encouraged his friend Dick Vogel of South Carolina to donate a matching plate with the same Canaan scene; An old hand push roller was brought to the Museum by Doug Nordsy and his son, (the roller was used to smooth down the grass for some of the famous croquet tournaments held on Canaan Street.

Our Museum Historian, Donna Zani-Dunkerton has compiled several laser prints of Canaan pictures and other points of interest, which she has added to our books. Our collection of art work is on display at the Canaan Town Library during the winter months.

Our Canaan Museum has a bench from the old Canaan train station, the bell from the Canaan High School, projectors from the old Canaan movie theater, school desks that pre-date the Civil War and lots more... Come visit us next summer...

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel W. Fleetham Sr., Chairman, Edward Lary, Vice-Chairman, Carol Bergeron, Secretary
Reggie Barney, Treasurer, Donna Zani-Dunkerton, Historian and Corresponding Secretary