

Rev. Bolduc Discusses Early Settlers Of Lakes Region

By WINNIFRED N.A. HACKETT

LACONIA — A standing ovation followed Hector Bolduc's talk to the Laconia Historical Society on "Early Settlers" in the area.

The noted historian started his presentation by saying that Laconia was once a part of Gilford and referred to Capt. John Smith, explorer of the Virginia Colony, who gave a very pessimistic view when penetrating the New England coastal area in the late 1500s. He felt that the land was bleak and wild and discouraged settlement. Gilford and Laconia were then part of the lands claimed by Northern Virginia.

In 1620, the Plymouth Colony was established and the Massachusetts Bay Colony; and, then in 1621, the Masonian Grants. The Masonian Grants went as far north as the headwaters of the Merrimac River. The proprietors had great trouble with the grants because the boundaries were undefined, as early explorers failed to bring surveyors with them.

In 1652, Governor Endicott engaged a group of surveyors who pushed on until they reached the Weirs, where they carved their initials in the rock. The surveyors sent reports to England and told of vast forests, rivers, trees for masts and fish for food.

The state seal reflects the reports they sent back. Notetakers were impressed with the large number of fish in the inland streams and lakes. The Indian guides fed the explorers fish caught in these rivers and lakes as a staple. The pine tree on the seal indicates that the Lakes Region was heavily forested with pines and fir trees. England's forests had been denuded and the King



Discuss Area History

Guest speaker at a meeting of the Laconia Historical Society was Father Hector Bolduc, right. On the left are Reginald Bisson and Melba Hodgkins.

find them a few years later. Gilmanton settlers resisted taxes for road building to the north, and it took 55 years to get a road between Dover and Gilford, only 40 miles apart. The road to Gilford finally built at Gilmanton's expense, was finished in 1787.

Settlers had to clear three acres of tillable land within three years' residence, and the proprietors were obliged to build a saw mill, a gristmill, and provide a school lot and lots for the church and parsonage. Captain Gilman was the first settler to arrive in Gilford around 1777 in the Lily Pond area, and he built a log cabin there. Samuel Jewett was the first Laconia settler, and his home still stands on Gilford Avenue, between Dewey and Isabella streets.

James Ames settled in the Intervale, and Weeks, Sawyers, Hoyts, Goves, Colbys, Sanborns, Davises, and Blaisdells

India wharf in Portsmouth who had sampled a bit of the rum he was carrying. He had gone past the cemetery to Brake Hill and was proceeding down when his brakes failed.

When an object hits a solitary wall, it stops; and so did he, spilling the barrels into the road. Men immediately rescued the rum before they rescued the driver, who was pinned underneath. The local minister chose for his sermon that Sunday, "The Evils of Spirituous Beverages Threatening the Brotherhood of Man."

Haying was done quickly when a keg of cider was available.

The weather was horrendous and set records in the early days. Winters were cruel and hard. Food was scarce at times. They had record snow falls. They had to go out in that snow; and, if the cattle were starving, they had to be slaughtered.

and smelted down. After an explosion in the mine went off prematurely, killing one of the men, the community lost interest in the mine venture.

The Frohocks at the foot of Rowe Mountain planted mulberry trees for raising silk worms and glass was also manufactured in Gilford. Ink bottles, medicine bottles and slag have been found while renovations were being made to a Gilford home.

Bolduc concluded his talk by saying that he felt that the Laconia Historical Society was playing an important role in preserving our heritage and recording the achievements and feats of those who carved out a niche in that wilderness. A question and answer period followed the presentation.

During the business meeting, Warren Huse, president, named new acquisitions: Odell Memorial plaque from Indian Head Park in Lakes Region.

looked to America for wood for masts. All pine trees over 24 inches in diameter would be reserved for masts for the Royal Navy and special roads were built to get them out to the coast. The frigate Robin on the seal denotes that it was built and outfitted with New Hampshire wood and by New Hampshire men.

In the late 1500s and early 1600s on the coast, Portsmouth, Dover and Hampton were established; but it was more than 50 years before people came to the Gilford area from Dover. England was embroiled in political strife and many wars; and the Indians got along fine with the settlers until England and France, vying for power, used them for their own purposes by offering bounties for the scalps of their opponents.

As many as 12 peaceful tribes came to the Winnepesaukee each year to fish at its weirs and fast flowing river, but life for the Indians was harsh. The mighty Iriquois would come down and raid the camps, starvation was the rule of the day, and smallpox devastated the Indian villages.

The explorers told of Indians in the Gilford area and with the scalplings, the settlers were not inclined to penetrate the wilderness during these times of war and discord.

Holders of the Masonian Grants sought to make settlement easy and attractive, but the furthest settlement in this area for a long time was Gilmanton. Twenty-four Gilmans signed the petition and settled there in the early 1700s. It was a large and prosperous town and it was thought to be the future capitol of New Hampshire, but Concord won by only one vote because of its fast running stream, the Merrimac.

In 1722, heirs of John Mason built two log forts, 50 feet square at Alton Bay and in the Weirs area. The forts proved totally ineffective, however, and fell to ruins. In fact the paths grew up around them so that even the builder could not

came to settle farms in the Gilford area.

From records found in the attic of the 1779 Jewett homestead where Hector was born, he pointed out the hardships of traveling by oxcart over no more than cowpaths. The roads were poor from the spring freshets, and it wasn't uncommon to see the settlers stop for several days while a blacksmith unpacked his equipment and set up his forge to repair a wagon wheel or axle.

There were no doctors in the new settlement, and Mrs. Ames had to ride all the way to Londonderry, following spotted trees through the forests, to bring back a doctor to amputate her husband's leg which had been caught in a bear trap.

Further records of 1778 reveal felling trees which were six feet thick at the base and three feet in diameter where topped at 100 feet high. Possibly the 48 to 52 inch boards in the Jewett-Bolduc home come from them.

Everyone knew where other settlers were, with the stump fires burning for days and days and days. Later, a magnificent wheel, 15 feet in diameter, was used to hook onto the big roots and pull them out. The farmers used the stumps for fences, as well as the rocks that they cleared from their land.

In 1813, one year after Gilford was incorporated, 294 names were on the tax record. The entire tax assessment for that year was \$1,270.08.

They had to be self sufficient in those days and barter for their goods. For example, Benjamin Jewett traded four pounds of maple sugar to Blacksmith Gove for two pounds of nails. The Jewett sugar orchard has been in operation every year since 1778.

A cooperage was set up in the area to make wooden casks to be taken down to the coast for rum, salted fish, or cider. For over 75 years, the cooperages in Gilford and Laconia were lucrative.

One story that has been handed down is about a man coming back from the East

The year 1816 found a "year of no summer." It snowed in May, June, and July; and there was a frost in August. The situation was desperate throughout New England, as indicated by the action of the Sandwich (Mass.) Glass Company which actually sent a ship around Cape Horn to get food from South America and even California.

But, despite the hardships, Gilford persisted as a farming community.

The stone walls were built out of necessity so they could get a toehold on the land and have enough space to farm. If the foundations were built of stone, it was because they had to get rid of the rocks. They used a tube to put corn under the big rocks so pigs could root it out and loosen the boulders. "I think they missed out when they didn't put a stone or a rock on the state seal," Bolduc said.

There was an iron mine on Belknap Mountain where ore was hauled by cart from the Arthur Weeks farm to Lakeport

Bank in Lakeport, also with pictures of Henry J. Odell, president 1892-1905; Herman J. Odell, Joseph L. Odell, and Charles L. Pulsifer, president 1905-1931 and an early mayor of Laconia; register of Darius Drake G.A.R. post; photograph of Union Avenue, Lakeport, in the 1920s, with trolley car; numerous other photographs; and two storage cabinets.

Also received was the genealogy of the Hogdon family, donated by Kay McGowan; "Laconia, City on the Lakes," donated by the booklet's compiler, Peter Tibbetts; autographed photograph of Dr. J. Alonzo Green and New Weirs Hotel menu for July 4, 1901, gift of Ed Shaw.

Other photographs acquired were from 1970 files of the Evening Citizen. The Chamber of Commerce donated a number of special and souvenir editions from the 1930s.

Charlotte Hamilton and her refreshment committee served a delicious punch and cookies at the conclusion of the meeting.

Historical Society To Build New Home

WARREN — The Warren Historical Society recently voted to construct a new building to house its records, photographs and other artifacts for permanent display.

Secretary-treasurer Sarah Lester reported that this new structure, to be located near the town offices, will be in keeping with the architectural style of other buildings along Main Street.

In fact, that very architecture will be the subject of a discussion at the society's next meeting on Aug. 10 at 7 p.m. in the Mooselauke Health Center. Karen Taylor, who has been studying what she calls Baker River Valley style, will discuss why this architecture is unique and worthy of preservation.

Mrs. Lester added that the group hopes to have the foun-

dation set and capped by the end of this summer. The long-term target date for completion is 1988, to coincide with the town's 225th anniversary celebration.

She also indicated that the society's on-going membership drive has been very successful over the past two months with the number of members increasing to about 60.

This Sunday the group is planning a field trip to Charleston off Rte 25C. Everyone who wishes to participate can meet at the health center at 1:30 Sunday afternoon.

In the meantime, Mrs. Lester, noted that the community is anxiously awaiting the first copies of the 'History of Warren', written by summer resident Roland Bixby. The book is scheduled to come off the press on Aug. 1 and will be on the market here soon.

576 North Ave.
Weston, MA. 02193
June 29, 1987

Dear Mr. Armstrong;

I think it is exciting when history comes back to life. I wish I had complete records on file but I don't.

However, I can tell you of some recollections.

My brother Clifford and I believe that the William M. Potter family lived on property owned by the Veaseys. I don't know where they lived after the fire. Grandpa Potter (Fred) told Cliff that the cellar hole of the Veasey house was across the street from Aunt Cora's house and toward the village store. The house that Kathy Hoyt lives in was known to us as Aunt Cora's. She lived there in the early 1920's. After she died in 1948 and the Potter farm was sold, Grandpa Potter (Fred) lived there with his 2nd wife, Abbie V. Smart Potter, until her death. Soon after, Grandpa sold the house and land to Dr. Hoyt.

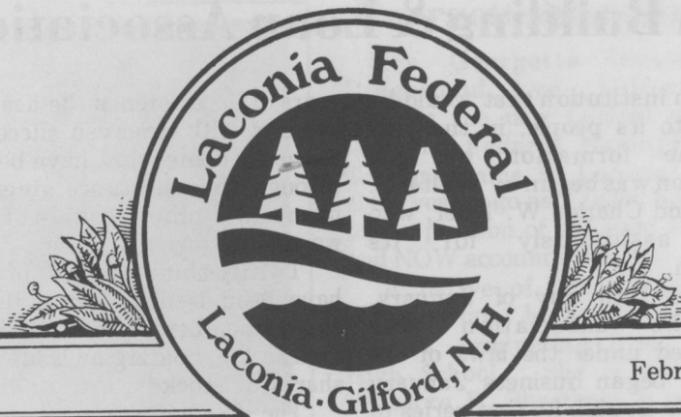
The house on Potter's hill didn't burn down, but my mother told us about a huge sweeping forest fire on Rowe Mountain and Potter's hill above the house. There was dense smoke and they could hear the bright

red fire crackling in the night. Many men from all around the mountain fought the fire.

Grandpa used to tell us about winters when the snow reached the 2nd story of the farmhouse on the hill. Then, they would dig a tunnel from the house to the barn, to care for the animals. The cellar of the house was filled with barrels of sand in which were buried the fruits and vegetables which they ate.

My brother and I enjoy recalling our childhood days of summer in Gilford. I'm not sure where you live, but around the late 1920's on land about 300 feet up the hill on the right from Haskell's, a dance hall ^(Potter) was built on land owned and cleared by the Morins of Laconia. Electricity was put in, but, later we heard that the G Men had raided the area and destroyed a distillery for moonshine! Cliff remembers walking in that area 30 years ago and finding the foundation of the dance hall and metal remnants of the "still".

M. Joan Potter and her mother had a very enjoyable time at the rededication. Thank you for your interesting letters and helping us to recall and appreciate again our very special Gilford heritage. Sincerely,



Gilford Grand Opening Celebration



Gilford Office

Free Gifts and Prizes During Grand Opening Celebration

A grand opening celebration will be held at Laconia Federal Savings' new Gilford Office on Friday, February 9th from 9am to 7:30pm and on Saturday, February 10th from 9am to 3:00pm.

Everyone is invited to stop in to tour our new facilities and to enjoy refreshments. There'll be free gifts (while the supply lasts) and the opportunity to register for several free prize drawings: 1st prize: 17" Zenith chromocolor TV; 2nd prize: Amana microwave oven; 3rd prize: timed shopping spree gift certificate at Dan's Star Market; 4th prize: 26" ten-speed Schwinn bicycle. Children six years old and under may register for drawing of a Flexible Flyer tricycle.

Route 11, right next to the Lakes Region Shopping Plaza. The Gilford



Don't miss this gala opening of the new Gilford Office located on

Office will be open for business on Monday, February 12th.

The Early Days of Gilford

While the exact date that the first permanent settlers arrived in what is now Gilford is unknown, the date most historians agree upon is 1777, the year James Ames and Captain Samuel F. Gilman took up land in the "Upper Parish" of Gilmanton. Shortly before this Samuel Jewett built a house in the vicinity of Province Road in present-day Laconia. Among Samuel's descendants are the late Stephen S. Jewett, the well-known lawyer and his son, Judge Theo S. Jewett, the historian.*

The Gilford Story

The honor of naming the town was given to Lieutenant Lemuel B. Mason, who was among the early settlers of Gilford, coming from Durham. Lieutenant Mason was a revolutionary soldier, having joined the Continental Army at Portsmouth when only sixteen years of age, and remained in constant service til the close of the war. He also took part in the war of 1812. When the division of Gilmanton took place,

according to family tradition, corroborated by the testimony of the old inhabitants, he was invited to name the new town, which he called Guilford, from the battle of Guilford Court House, S.C. in which he was an active participant. But in the petition to form a new town the spelling (for some reason, whether purposely or otherwise the records do not show) was changed to Gilford. Lieutenant Mason settled on the Matt Kimball farm now known as the King's Grant Inn. (One Hundredth Anniversary of the Incorporation of Gilford, N.H., June 17, 1912) After its incorporation in 1812, the town of Gilford enjoyed steady growth. Winnepesaukee River power was utilized by manufacturing industries. Churches were originated and maintained. The Gilford Academy** incorporated in 1820 "stood high in the educational world and sent out from its doors many men and women who achieved distinction in various lines of human endeavor." Terms of court for
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Ken Blackey Extends Welcome



Kenneth E. Blackey,
President

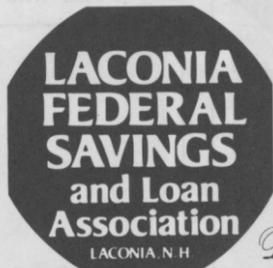
to meet the housing and financial needs of the Lakes Region, combined with our rapid growth and the wish to offer the many new services that our industry has introduced during the past several years has necessitated the increasing of our present staff, causing severe overcrowding in our Main Office. This has produced inconvenient working conditions, which directly affect our customer services. The addition of this Gilford Office should relieve this situation somewhat until we are able to expand and renovate our Main Office. The Gilford Office will also allow us to offer the convenience of drive-up service which is physically impossible at our Main Office. This service is extremely important in an age of an increasingly mobile society and will allow the Laconia Federal Savings & Loan Assn. - the smallest thrift institution in the immediate area - to maintain a competitive stance within the communities we serve. I am proud of the Staff of our Gilford Office and I am sure they will maintain the same high standard of service which we strive to provide to all our customers in the Lakes Region. I find it very appropriate that we are dedicating our Board Room to Dr. A. Philip LaFrance, on the occasion of our grand opening and his retirement as an active director. Dr. LaFrance has always been a personal source of encouragement to me. His optimism for the construction and future of the Gilford Office was especially helpful to me. I personally hope that he will continue to be an active member of our Board as Director Emeritus. I would certainly miss his presence and guidance at the Board Meetings.

I welcome you all to our Grand Opening and will be looking forward to meeting you there.

At the end of this year I will be celebrating my 25th year with Laconia Federal Savings & Loan Association. I am glad to have the challenge of a new venture in this quarter-century mark in my career - the launching of our first branch facility. I shouldn't use the word "branch" because it is actually an individual "office." At the present time the only service that will not be provided at the Gilford Office - that is available at the Main Office - is safe deposit boxes. As a Gilford resident, I'm delighted that this new facility is located in Gilford. This Office will serve not only the residents of Gilford, but all the townspeople in the surrounding area.

Total deposits and mortgages of Laconia Federal Savings have more than doubled during the past five years. Of worthy note is the fact that over 30% of our Association's total deposits and over 50% of our total mortgages outstanding are within the boundaries of the Gilford Office. The desire of our Association

FROM BEES TO TREES!



Bee Thrifty!

OLDEST FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION IN NEW ENGLAND Member FSLIC



Laconia Federal Savings & Loan Association
Laconia, Gilford, N.H. Member F.S.L.I.C.

Laconia Federal Savings, recognized for years by their honey bee logo, took on a new look this past year.

Their new logo is in keeping with their continuing dedication to serving the Lakes Region.

Formation of Laconia Building & Loan Association*

When men of small means found out that a business enterprise, which no one of them could conduct alone, was possible for them by uniting their labor and their capital they discovered the secret of cooperation. When they found out that by uniting their surplus earnings they could provide themselves with homes of their own instead of remaining subject to the demands of landlords, they put cooperation to one of its most beneficent uses.

The concentration of capital is daily going on, for capitalists have learned that by this means (cooperation) they can conduct great enterprises with more certainty of success than by any other.

Now what is good for the man of large means is equally good for the man of small means; but the latter class seem to have been much longer in finding it out, and have always plodded along because they believed themselves too poor to accomplish anything. Single-handed a man is, but when he is afforded an opportunity to pool his savings, though small they may be, he should not hesitate to do so, for by such methods he receives valuable assistance and is enabled to raise himself much more easily from the financial "slough of despond" in which he with the ninety and nine are wallowing. With the object of cooperation in view, and to give to

Laconia an institution that would be a benefit to its people, in the year 1887, the formation of this organization was begun by Walter S. Baldwin and Charles W. Tyler, who worked assiduously for its completion.

On the 14th day of January, 1888, the association was incorporated under the laws of the state, and began business January 31, 1888, by issuing its first series of shares, five hundred in number, which were promptly taken.

The Laconia Building and Loan Association is now an established fact. It has a large membership, and offers both depositors and borrowers advantages unequaled by any other system of banking known in the world. It combines the principles of a savings bank and a stock company.

It is authorized to issue shares to the amount of \$1,000,000, which are nominally worth \$200 each, but are paid for in installments of \$1.00 per month, or better, these monthly payments, together with the dividends which they have earned, will at some future date (usually about eleven years), equal \$200.

If the shares have been used in securing a home, it is then the borrower's, free from all incumbrances. On the other hand, if they have been held for investment only, they will then be paid in cash. During the little more than eleven

years of its existence the association has met with deserved success, and the many homes that have been built through the assistance given to its members is proof positive of its true worth and merit.

Twenty-three series of shares have been issued during the time, and its membership has numbered as high as 425, holding an issue of 2,400 shares of stock.

The following named, many of whom have been connected with the association since its formation, comprise its management: Edmund Tetley, president; Alburdis S. Gordon, vice-president; Albert C. Moore, secretary; Charles W. Tyler, treasurer; Stephen S. Jewett, attorney. Directors, Walter S. Baldwin, William F. Knight, Charles W. Vaughan, Charles F. Richards, Charles J. Austin, William A. Plummer, Frank P. Webster, Louis J. Truland, Stephen S. Jewett, Alburdis S. Gordon, Charles W. Tyler, and Albert C. Moore.

The assets of the association amount to nearly \$160,000, nearly all of which are investments within the city limits.

The office of the association is located in the Masonic Temple, where it occupies a handsome apartment.

* Reprint from the Illustrated Laconian 1899



The first mortgage loan granted by the Laconia Building and Loan Association was for \$800, on the house pictured above. It was voted February 29, 1888 and the borrower was Mrs. Mary A. Leavitt of 368 Pleasant Street, Laconia, N. H.



Today's owners of this well-maintained home are Mr. and Mrs. John Colby. The latest addition is a two car garage.

Formation of Laconia Federal Savings

The original Building and Loan Association was chartered in New Hampshire in 1888. On February 13, 1934, the Officers and Directors of that Association - through the efforts and leadership of E. Harrison Merrill - formed the Laconia Federal Savings and Loan Association - the first federal savings and loan association in New England. Harry Merrill was the Executive Officer of the Association until his death in 1956. The new organization opened for business in the Masonic Temple Building one month later to the day, March 13, 1934, with assets of \$5,600. In 1936, noting the

inactivity of the real estate field, the Laconia Evening Citizen and the Laconia Federal Savings and Loan Association cooperated in a building program. Ten new homes were built in various parts of the city by different contractors. Many tradesmen were employed in this venture and home building was stimulated.

In 1950, the older Building and Loan Association merged with the Laconia Federal Savings and Loan with combined assets of \$2,937,000.

Specialists in home financing, the Association was the first to introduce home purchasing through

direct reduction loans, which meant that potential owners could invest small down-payments and pay for their homes in reasonable monthly payments arranged according to their income; the Association also enjoys the distinction of making the first GI loan in the Lakes Region.

The Association was also the first banking institution in New England to insure savings accounts through the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation. This insurance was something of an innovation when it was established in 1935.

Dedication of Board Room to A. Philip LaFrance



W. Robert King (left), chairman of the board of Laconia Federal Savings and Loan, presents Dr. A. Philip LaFrance, vice president, with a plaque commemorating the dedication of the Board of Directors' room to Dr. LaFrance.

Many people often ask what does it take to be a good bank director. I think the best answer would be someone like Dr. LaFrance. He has held public office, serving for many years as a member of the Laconia School Board. He has also been elected to the presidency of the N. H. Medical Association. In spite of this very busy personal and professional

life, he has devoted himself generously and enthusiastically to his duties as a Director of our Association. Phil has served as a Director since our charter was issued to us as New England's First Federal Savings & Loan Association. It is only fitting that we dedicate our new Board of Directors room in his honor. Bob King

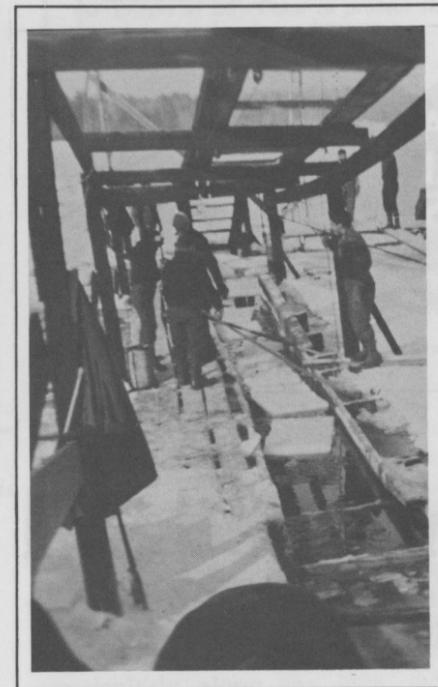
Ice Harvesting at Lily Pond

The Lily Pond neighborhood was a part of the Boston milkshed. Malcolm Barney, one-time mayor of Laconia, was a leading figure in this locality's relationship with the Boston market. His Laconia Creamery was the first in Central New Hampshire to make farm pickups of milk under the strict Board of Health regulation and inspection system. He furnished a tanker of milk daily to the Herlihy Bros., Boston milk distributors.

Mr. Barney also superintended the ice cutting operation at Lily

Pond - the only natural ice harvesting done in this area for shipment to Boston. The ice storage house was built in 1929 between the shore of the pond and the railroad. It was this facility that insured the retaining of the portion of the old Lake Shore Railroad track between Lily Pond and the main line of the Boston & Maine at Lakeport at the time that the service to Alton Bay and Dover was discontinued.

During two weeks every February about 40 men were involved in harvesting a quarter of a million tons of ice and storing it in the icehouse. The last ice harvest at Lily Pond was in 1943.



Ice rafts were then moved toward the base of the hoist where they were separated into blocks and conveyed to the entrance of the icehouse for storage in sawdust or straw.



After the surface was cleared of snow and planed to remove rough and wavy ice, the ice was cut by first running two lines at right angles. Grooves, usually 22 inches apart, were then cut. These grooves were cut and separated into rafts. Shown above are two gasoline powered saws, owned by Maurice Watson, on the Lily Pond ice field.

Photo courtesy James McCracken, Sr.

Karl Reitz, Appraiser, Relocates to Gilford Office

We are happy to announce that Karl Reitz will emerge from the depths of the lower regions of the Main Office of Laconia Federal to transfer the Appraisal Department to the new Gilford Office.

Yes, the long-lost, and much-missed, Karl Reitz who has been buried in the lower levels of the Main Office will be in full view once again in the upper level of the new Gilford Office.

Those who have sought Karl in the recent past know all too well the long and arduous journey to be undertaken to reach his desk. Until now only a trail marked by maple leaves has served to guide Karl



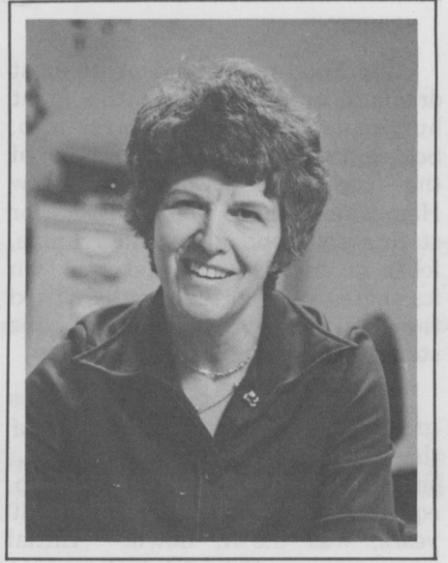
Reitz' seekers to his hidden office. But no more. Effective February 12th, if you wish to see - or speak - with Karl, you'll be able to do so easily and conveniently.

Watch for him . . . emerging soon in Gilford.

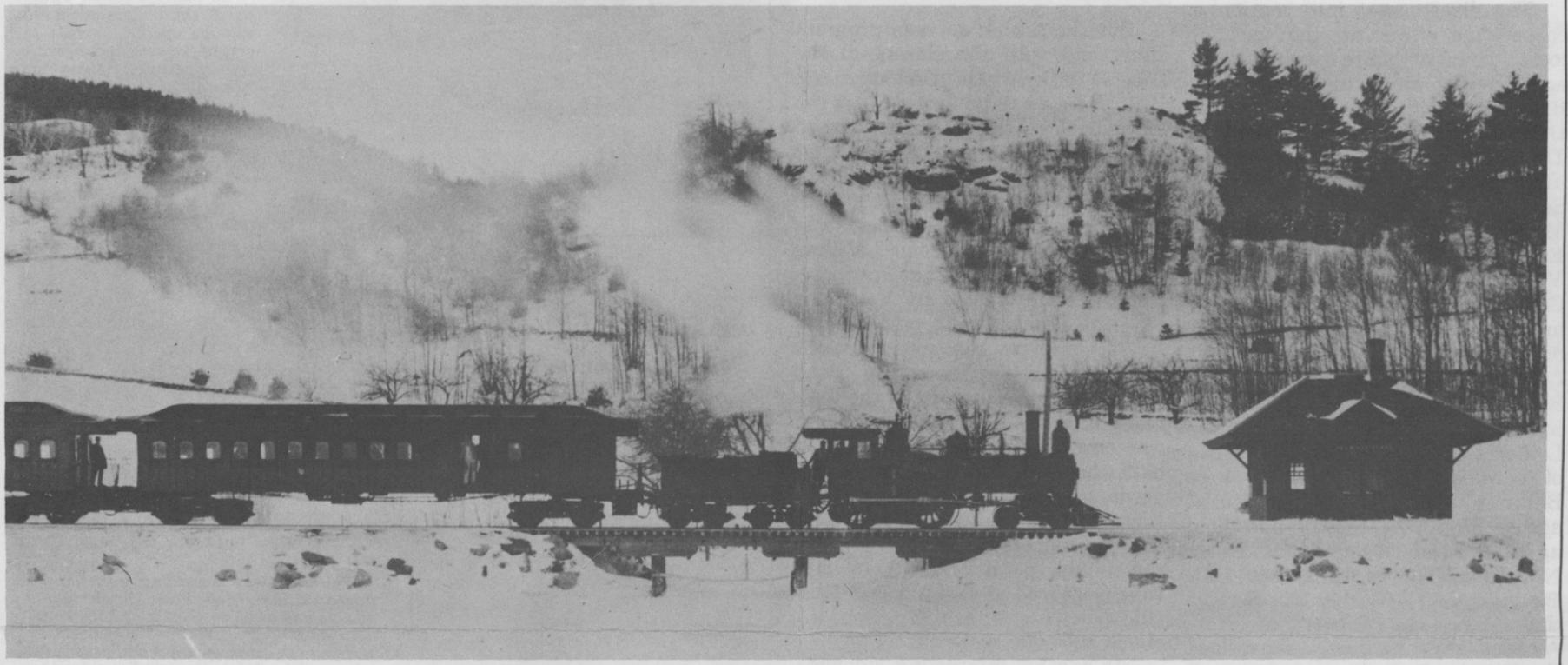
Georgette Shastany Manager of Gilford Office

Mrs. Georgette Shastany of Ridgewood Ave., Gilford, will manage the new Gilford office of Laconia Federal Savings. Mrs. Shastany came to Laconia Federal eight years ago as a teller, advancing to the position of assistant treasurer and NOW account manager.

A native of Manchester, Mrs. Shastany later became a resident of Laconia, graduating from Laconia High School. She is married to Theodore E. Shastany, a native of Laconia. They have four children and one granddaughter. Mrs. Shastany has been a member of the Winnepesaukee Chapter of Sweet Adelines, Inc. for twenty years and is a member of the Out of Town Four Quartet. She is an enthusiastic tennis player and skier.



The Lake Shore Railroad



*In conclusion, we commit to your hands,
Our case which asks for iron bands,
To connect us more closely with our
Eastern friends;
And, to be or not to be, on your vote
depends.*

*The God of Nature made a splendid
way,
Over which to lay the Road from
Alton Bay;
To ask for it is just, to grant it will be
right,
And against it, no one ought to make
a fight.*

*The most charming ride you can pos-
sibly take,
Will be on this Road by our beautiful
Lake;
From Laconia and Lake Vill. to Alton
Bay,
The Road for which we now ask the
right of way.*

*Long will the memory of the Legis-
lature live,
Which shall a Charter, for the Lake
Shore give;
Its praise shall be echoed from hill to
hill,
From every Locomotive's whistle,
loud and shrill.*

*We pray you to grant it, we feel that
you will
Give us our Rights by passing this
Bill,
And to us bring thrift and business
prosperity,
To you the blessing of all our pos-
terity.*

S. S. WIGGIN
Charter member of Lake Shore
Railroad

(Collection preserved by
New Hampshire Historical Society)

It was June 17, 1890. The sound of cannon fire rumbled across the New England landscape. By a long standing tradition the anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill was still being observed, even in New Hampshire. After all, of the 1600 Americans that faced the British on the Charlestown peninsula 115 years earlier, 900 were from the Granite State.

In 1890, however, there was additional cause for celebration in Alton and Laconia. The almost-40-year campaign to fill the 17 mile gap between the terminus of the Dover and Winnepesaukee Railroad at Alton Bay and the line of the Boston, Concord & Montreal Railroad at Lake Village (now Lakeport) had been won.

The struggle began in 1851. In that year the line, then called the Cocheco, reached Alton Bay. Chartered in 1847, that railroad was intended to connect Dover on the Boston & Maine line with Meredith Bridge (now Laconia) on the B.C.&M. Complications, though, combined with lack of funds, prevented extension of the line beyond Alton Bay.

The original charter expired. Attempts to renew it were made during the legislative sessions of 1868, 1869 and 1871. Such vigorous opposition was encountered from the B.C.&M.R.R., then marshalling its resources to extend its line into the mountain region, that the effort was not renewed until 1881. Finally, in 1883, the charter was renewed.

The beginning of construction, however, was delayed by a secret agreement by which neither of the competing railroad lines would build the road without the consent of the

other. This complication was not overcome until 1887 when both parties offered to build the Lake Shore Railroad.

The most persistent figure in the struggle to obtain the link was Charles A. Busiel, a partner with his brothers in the hosiery manufactory established by their father. He was to become the first Mayor of Laconia after its incorporation as a city in 1893 and the Governor of New Hampshire from 1895 to 1897. The grantees named in the charter of the Lake Shore Railroad, in addition to Busiel, were local luminaries prominent in the affairs of the area.

Tuesday, the 17th, was described in the local press as "a red-letter day in the history of Laconia and Lake Village." The celebration of the opening of the \$300,000 line was held under the auspices of the Board of Trade.

There was cannonading, bell ringing, bunting, music, banqueting and speech making. Invited dignitaries and special guests arrived from Nashua via Manchester, Concord and Tilton. Four trains made up of twenty cars proceeded from Lake Village to Alton. In the first section went Rublee's Band in an observation car and a detachment of Grand Army men under C. F. Buzzell on a platform car on which was mounted a brass field piece from The Weirs.

The assemblage was entertained at Alton Bay by a noisy demonstration of Buzzell's gun and a concert by the Belknap Cornet Band of Barnstead until the Dover Board of Trade and delegations from Rochester and Farmington arrived. The procession returned to Lake Village and Laconia for impromptu

jubilation and formal speech making in Railroad Square at Lake Village and the Moulton Opera House in Laconia. "The most attractive and appetizing layout that has ever been attempted in northern New Hampshire on anything like so large a scale" was served the crowd under a "monster tent" pitched behind the Hotel Wonolancet (ultimately renovated by Max Chertok into a store to house his furniture business.

This building has since been destroyed by fire).

To meet the expenses of the celebration \$950 had been raised. As the local press observed, "When you dance you have to pay the fiddler."

The importance of the Lake Shore Railroad transcends its short life. It brought cheaper passenger and freight costs by putting Laconia 95 miles nearer Alton Bay, 38 miles nearer Rochester and 28 miles nearer Dover and Portland. To the traveller it opened up a route virtually unsurpassed for its beauty along a major lake. To the people of all walks of life it provided easy access to refreshment and relaxation whether at summer cottages or "castles" or at Lake Shore Park, all of which flowered after service was opened on the line. Whether a summer visitor, a mill owner or merchant, an operative or clerk, the series of station stops - Lily Pond, Gilford, Belknap Point, Carr's Point, Springhaven, West Alton, Wheeler's, Saints' Rest, Loon Cove -- made it possible to arrive for a season, overnight between work days, or a company or fraternal outing. The pattern has continued although the Lake Shore Line was abandoned in 1935.

Timber Salvage At Lily Pond

Lily Pond played one of its most dramatic roles following the great hurricane of forty years ago, September 21-22, 1938. It was one of the bodies of water in New Hampshire that were used for storing softwood logs, chiefly pine, felled in that disastrous storm. On its shores two portable mills sawed the hardwoods that could not be stored in the pond.

The state's forests suffered losses greater than those in all of the rest of the New England states combined. In a few hours, a \$50,000,000 crop, equal to a normal harvest for 30 years, was blown down. Initial estimates put the state's losses at two billion feet of marketable timber as compared with one and one-half billion feet in the rest of the region.

The disaster set into motion a cooperative effort on the part of local, county, state and federal agencies that was termed by H. Phil Brandner, assigned as State Project Director, U. S. Forest Service Timber Salvage, as "absolutely unparralleled." As early as September 27, Governor Francis P. Murphy appointed a Disaster Emergency Committee. William D. Veazey of the Boulia-Gorrell Lumber Company and one of the best known lumbermen in the state was assigned to the Committee on Forests and Lumbering and made chairman for Belknap County. Town salvage committee chairmen included Arthur Lord of Gilford and Albert W. Head of Laconia. Equally active were Belknap County's agricultural agent, Royal W. Smith, and field agent, Fred Friend. From November, 1938, to April, 1940, L.D. Blodgett, U. S. Forest Service timber salvage expert of Port Angelos, Washington, supervised the District 7 (Belknap and Carroll counties) office in Laconia, where Mrs. Rena Burleigh was stenographer. Among the U.S.F.S. personnel assigned to the District 7 office and who became permanent residents were James McCracken and John Hobbs.

By July, barely ten months after the hurricane, deliveries at Lily Pond peaked with 2,380,000 feet of logs stored there, ranking it third after Tilton Station (3,079,000) and Spectacle Pond, Meredith (2,590,900). The "hot logging" system was used, making deliveries within 3 days after cutting so as to avoid insect and stain damage. At the same time, District 7 led the state in amounts delivered at storage sites. The owners were paid \$400,000.

During the 18 months that operations were directed from the Laconia office, 49,000,000 board feet of timber was deposited in the storage ponds of Belknap and Carroll counties. Woodlot owners of the area were virtually saved from financial ruin.

But the timber salvage program didn't end with the closing of the Laconia office. On December 24, 1940, there was announced what the Laconia Evening Citizen termed "the biggest Christmas present that the city could hope for." A contract to trim, sort and dress 50,000,000 feet of hurricane lumber was awarded to the Laconia Milling Corporation. For that purpose, facilities were erected by February, 1941, at Black Brook off Blaisdell Avenue and on the spur of track between Lakeport and Lily Pond that had once been a part of the Lake Shore Railroad line. Wilfred Gilbert was awarded a related contract to haul the lumber from the storage yards of the United States North East Timber Salvage Corporation that were located within 40 miles of the milling plant. About 62 men were employed at the mill and 10 in the trucking operation, leaving about \$300,000 in town.

As another interesting sidelight, the Recreation Building at the Belknap (now Gunstock) Recreation Area was constructed of hurricane timber, 125,000 board feet for the project having been sawed at Colby's mill in Alton.



Lean P. Tilton with his ox team arriving at Lily Pond log storage site. Mr. Tilton was assisted by his sons, Arthur A. and Lester A.



So many woodlot owners used their horses in the salvage operations that the city of Laconia had difficulty in obtaining them for sidewalk plowing.



Log deck on east shore of Lily Pond as viewed from the ice-covered surface of the water. The area is near the present site of the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association training center.



As soon as storage ponds became ice-free, log decks were broken down. Here Robert Barnard, employed by the Timber Salvage Administration, directs logs into the waters of Lily Pond to protect them from insect and staining damage.

Walter Brooks unloading logs on the frozen surface of Lily Pond. Single course of logs unloaded on the ice at Lily Pond. Timber salvage operations could not interfere with water supplies and other uses of ponds and lakes, including the harvesting of ice.



Photos courtesy of James McCracken, Sr.



Gilford Office staff (left to right) Bruce Harrison, Eileen Fluett, Debbie Gleeson and Georgette Shastany.

Our Thanks To Gilbert S. Center

We wish to thank Gilbert S. Center of Laconia for his long hours of tireless research in compiling historical data about the town of Gilford and its surrounding areas for use in this publication.

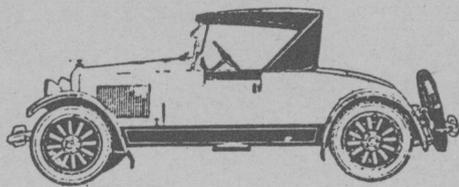
We also appreciate the efforts of Agraftotis Associates, Inc. of Manchester and Miss Connie Hickey, administrative assistant of the Laconia Federal Savings for their efforts in coordinating this work.

Continued from page 1

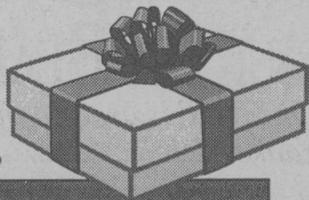
Stafford County were held on the Gilford side of the Meredith Bridge for some years prior to establishment of Belknap County in 1840; then Gilford became its shire town and so continued until 1824 when that portion of town in which the court house was located was annexed to Laconia - and it became the shire town of Belknap County town house at Gilford Village. "Within recent years a railroad has been constructed along the entire northern border of the town, and by reason of easy access by railroad, scores of people have established summer homes within the limits of the town, particularly along the lake shore, which have added much to its valuation and materially increased its population during the summer season of the year. No town has greater attractions for the summer resident and tourists than Gilford . . ."

*The Firm of Jewett & Jewett has been intimately related with the Laconia Federal Savings & Loan Association. On January 17, 1888 the first meeting of the Laconia Building & Loan Association was held in the law offices of Attorney Stephen S. Jewett who was one of original Directors. On January 20, 1925, his son Theo S. Jewett was elected director of the Association and served until his death in September 1965. On November 2, 1965, his son, Stephen S. Jewett, was elected as Director of the Laconia Federal Savings & Loan Association until his death on June 17, 1976.

**The Gilford Academy later became the Laconia Academy, then evolved into an elementary school and is now the new district courthouse.



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OUTING CLUB LAND DONATED TO TOWN



by Roger Amsden
News Correspondent

GILFORD - Three generations of skiers, including Olympic Silver medalist Penny Pitou, made their first downhill runs on the slopes of the Gilford Outing Club ski area and it is the hope of Gary and Lucile Allen, who have donated the 19-acre site to the town, that future generations will now have that same opportunity.

Allen, a member of the Ski Hall of Fame moved here 50 years ago and helped start the GOC along with Gus Pitou, Penny's dad, and Marty Hall, recalls that the club's first ski slope was on Corcoran Hill and that a Model T was used to power the rope tow and that the warming hut was a three-hole privy hauled to the bottom of that hill by Pitou.

That was in 1946. Two years later the GOC moved to the location it has occupied ever since, a gently-sloping area between Potter Hill Road and Rte. 11A where the club ran a ski program until two years ago when high liability insurance premiums forced it to close down.

"We never had a claim in over 40 years, but the pre-

mium climbed to \$6,000 and that was just too much for a small organization like the GOC to pay," says Allen, who hopes that skiing for beginners will again be available at the area in the future.

He said the area had cross-country trails which ran through woods next to the ski slope and that a conservation easement arrangement with the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests provides for permanent custodial care of the property, ensuring that the trails will be maintained.

The property borders town-owned land and the Gilford Village Historic District and is located on the highway which leads to Gunstock Ski Area, which would have made it a prime candidate for development.

"We want to see the woods and green space preserved for future generations," said Allen, who says that the farm where he and his wife lived for nearly 50 years and the remaining 19 acres of the property were sold to a Vermont businessman who is interested in seeing some sort of non-commercial skiing activity at the former GOC property.

"This has always been a

place for families and for young people just starting to ski," said Allen. "As soon as they got good enough they'd head off to Gunstock and start racing on the Fletcher Hale trail," he recalls, noting that Pitou worked with the beginners and that he worked with the junior skiers who wanted to race in competition.

"Skiing was a lot different then. You had to work a lot harder to get in those runs. We'd have whole families here with fathers running the rope tow, mothers helping out with the food and everyone pitching in to make things work," says Allen.

He said that it is relatively easy to sell and develop land like that donated to the town but when green space is lost "it's gone forever. We'd like to see the same kind of opportunities for recreation that we've enjoyed remain available to future generations."



FACTS of LAW

by Chuck Douglas



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8142 Laconia Tavern—Main St., Laconia, N. H.
8143 Laconia Tavern—Main St., Laconia, N. H.
8159 Geo. A. Collins Drug Store, 59 Elm St., Lakeport, N. H.
8164 Eagle Hotel—598 Main St., Laconia, N. H.
8165 C. W. Plummer Co.—787 Union Ave., Lakeport, N. H.
8167 Boston & Maine Passenger Station—Laconia, N. H.
8170 Masonic Temple—653 Main St., Laconia, N. H.
8171 Boston & Maine Passenger Station—Lakeport, N. H.
8175 A. W. Simoneau—153 Church St., Laconia, N. H.
8176 Story's Drug Store—528 Main St., Laconia, N. H.
8177 Mt. Belknap Hotel—763 Union Ave., Lakeport, N. H.
8302 Colonial Theatre—615 Main St., Laconia, N. H.
8479-2 Laconia Armory—Court St., Laconia, N. H.
8544 W. H. L. Page's Garage—California Ct., Laconia, N. H.
8615 Hudson-Essex-Dodge Sales Service Station—72 Church St., Laconia, N. H.
8661 Satta & Co.—676 Main St., Laconia, N. H.
8686 McCrillis' Drug Store—541 Main St., Laconia, N. H.

WEIRS

9706-2 G. W. Tarlson—Weirs, N. H.
9706-3 Boston & Maine Passenger Station—Weirs, N. H.
9706-11 Pleasant View House—Weirs, N. H.
9708-2 Hotel Weirs—Weirs, N. H.
9708-3 Boston & Maine Passenger Station—Weirs, N. H.
9708-11 Cawley's Tavern—Weirs, N. H.
9708-12 Lakeside House—Weirs, N. H.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROJECT ...HITS THE ROOF

A comprehensive community project in the Historic District of Gilford Village "is well underway," says Greg Dickinson, President of the Village Bank and Trust Company in Gilford and Chair of the Thompson-Ames Historical Society's "Preservation and Restoration Fund". According to Dickinson, the roof of the Society's early 19th century Universalist Church Meeting House "that sits on the grassy knoll just opposite the Village Field was in danger of collapsing without some additional structural supports

"This could not happen to such a charming building that adds so much to the beauty of our Village," says Dickinson. He explains that more than seventy individuals, businesses, trusts and foundations, including the Village Bank, the Laconia Savings Bank, Stafford Oil, Munsey & Brazil, Inc., and the Penny Pitou and Milo Pike Fund with the Lakes Region Charitable Trust have contributed to this project.

Dickinson explains that in early September The Meeting House was emptied of its contents so that Henry Page House Restoration Consultants of Gilmanton could install steel reinforcements along the Church's twenty rafters. "We're happy to have this first phase finished as the building would not have tolerated another winter," he says

Adds Judith Buswell, Society President, "While the building was empty, we used the time to give the place a good cleaning and to update wiring and outlets that hadn't been changed for many decades." According to Buswell, Diana Hunt Duckoff and Joan Nelson, Curator and Coordinator of Museum Education, are creating a displays and educational exhibits in the Meet-



Public Library



Grange Hall



Town Hall and Church

ABOVE PHOTOS FROM "GILFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE" PUBLISHED FOR OLD HOME DAY, AUGUST 24, 1936. COURTESY OF ELMON PHELPS, GILFORD

ing House as well as in the nearby Belknap Grange, also owned and maintained by the Thompson Ames Society

"We expect these exhibits will be open to schools and visitors sometime in the Spring of 1998," she says

The Universalist Meeting House built in 1834 by the Universalist Society was occupied briefly by the Universalists until it was turned over to the Methodists who used the building until the 1930's. Mr. George Ames became the building's next owner. In 1943 Ames do-

nated The Meeting House to the Thompson-Ames Historical Society of Gilford.

The Mt. Belknap Grange, also located in Gilford Village was built in 1857 and is one of only two structures in Gilford listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Built by John J. Morrill in the Greek Revival style it first opened as a dry goods store but had to close as it was unable to compete with the Village Store across the road. In 1909, this building became the permanent home of the local Grange
See **HISTORICAL SOC.** on 28

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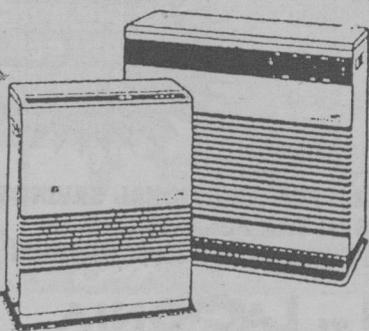
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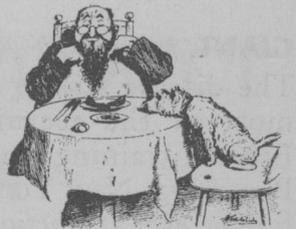
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GEORGE DAVY, from page 3 boardwalk complete George is now volunteering his skills to other Conservation District trails and projects at Gunstock.

To help show our appreciation to George, the Conservation District will display a plaque with his name on it on a board of the Wetlands Walk. Mr. Davy's plaque is part of the larger fund raising effort titled "Buy a Board", connected with the Wetlands Walk. For a donation of \$25 you can give a tax deductible holiday gift that will be evident for years to come. The funds gained from the sale of these name plaques will be used toward maintenance and care of the boardwalk, and related items. If you would like to become a New Hampshire Natural Resources Conservation Service Earth Team Volunteer, or purchase a board and name plaque on the Wetlands Walk, please call the Belknap County Conservation District at (603) 528-8713.

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HISTORICAL SOC., from 16 organization, and thus the center of social activities in Gilford for much of the 20th century. In 1990, the Grange building was given to the Thompson-Ames Historical Society.

"These buildings are absolute treasures and the Society has excellent plans for sharing them with the Lakes Region," continues Dickinson, "For these reasons we thank all those who have already contributed to our Restoration Fund." Dickinson explains that the Village Bank and Trust Company will continue to accept donations on behalf of the Thompson Ames Historical Society "until both buildings are brought up to code and are in healthy repair."

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New Hampshire Neighbors

Arthur Tilton

At nearly 81 years old, he describes himself as "a very old bachelor," is an old-fashioned Yankee to the core and has developed a reputation as an outspoken gadfly always ready to speak his mind and offer his own unique perspective on town affairs. Town moderator for 20 years, a member of the recreation commission for 16 years, Tilton raises Scots Highland cattle at the family farm on Old Lakeshore Road and is a sought-after guest speaker at historical society meetings. The town's covered ice skating rink is named in his honor.

HOMETOWN: Gilford; later this month he will mark his 81st year there.

OCCUPATION: Retired carpenter, but still active in town affairs.

HOBBIES: Woodworking.

QUOTE: "The native people of New Hampshire are golden nuggets. For the most part they are independent all the way around and very tolerant of strangers. If you live here 20 years or so, they generally become very accessible and treat you almost like you were born here."

Editor's note: New Hampshire Neighbors will be a weekly feature. Watch the Sunday News in coming months for more additions and improvements.



Roger Ansdan Photo

Our Yesterdays

By GILBERT S. CENTER

125 YEARS AGO (1865) from The Laconia Democrat

J.B. Batchelder, owner and editor of the paper, was pleased to report that the "new hotel enterprise is progressing finely. An act of incorporation has been drawn, and notice of bill given in the Legislature by Mr. Hibbard, our Representative, and other preliminary matters are being attended to."

100 YEARS AGO (1890) from The Laconia Democrat

After nearly 50 years of agitation for a railroad to connect Dover on the Boston & Maine with Meredith Bridge, later Laconia, on the Boston, Concord & Montreal, the Lake Shore Railroad was ceremonially opened on June 17. "The start from Lake Village was made to the accompaniment of concerted music from bells and whistles, backed by a chorus of lusty cheers. Four trains made up of twenty cars were necessary to supply the necessary transportation. In the first section went Rublee's band in an observation car, and a platform car on which was mounted one of the brass field pieces from the Weirs with a detachment of Grand Army men, under C.E. Buzzell, to man it and wake the echoes along the route. These latter were not slow in living up to their privileges. The Concord directors have not been so waked up for years as when they pulled in at Alton Bay and suddenly realized that their big car windows had succumbed to one of Buzzell's guns.

After the arrival of delegations from Dover, Rochester and Farmington, the return trip

began. There were speeches in Lake Village by Col. H.B. Quinby, Hon. B.J. Cole, Acting Gov. Taggart and Hon. Charles H. Bartlett. Their arrival in Laconia was greeted by the ringing of bells, tooting of steam whistles, roaring of cannon and "a miscellaneous hubbub." From the station the party proceeded to Rowe Court to the rear of Hotel Wonolancet where a monster tent had been pitched and caterer J. Tyler Hicks served "the most attractive and appetizing layout that has ever been attempted in northern New Hampshire on anything like so large a scale."

It was 4 o'clock before speaking began in Moulton Opera House, W.F. Knight, W.L. Melcher Esq., railroad president Charles A. Busiel, Charles F. Stone Esq., Hon. B.A. Kimball, Ex-Gov. Smyth, Hon. Ellery A. Hibbard and other dignitaries all having their turns. President Busiel, who all conceded was the one to thank for the Lake Shore road, was presented a heavy gold headed cane, the gift of the residents of Laconia.

75 YEARS AGO (1915) from The Laconia Democrat

Forty-seven Canadian Pacific stock cars loaded with horses and drawn by two huge 10-wheeled locomotives passed through the city on Tuesday. They were destined for Boston where the horses were transferred to a steamer for shipment to the Allies. The previous week the Up In Town correspondent observed, "It seems a sin to sacrifice such an army of horses from this country to the European war, as has already been



Gone But Not Forgotten

Gilford Station on the Lake Shore Railroad was located where B. Mae Denny's Resort and Conference Center now stands. Barn at left was used for many years as the Lakes Region, later Gilford,

shipped there, and there still comes a call for more."

The annual rivalry between home gardeners was again being recorded. Lucian A. Ladd of 68 Pleasant St. informed the editor, "Let me answer the question that is asked of me every day I meet my friends: 'How is your garden?' Will say my corn stands 10 inches high, planted the last of April; my rhubarb stands 2 feet 7 inches; my peas are in pod. How is that?" The Lakeport correspondent anticipated the challenge: "It may be that rhubarb 30 inches long is 'some' rhubarb, at the south end of the city, but people of this ward are so accustomed to Farmer Haserick's, which is 41 inches in length, nearly as large around as one's wrist, and so tender it almost breaks of its own weight, that rhubarb of the south end

for the outstanding senior athlete, and the Dr. Rowe Award for the outstanding athlete selected by the other athletes. Other recipients of awards included Jim Aldrich, Walter Harkins Golf; Terry Adams, Elks Award; Steve Davis, Hudson Memorial; Richard Fournier, Ponzi Clark Tennis; Mike Phelps, Irwin Track; Bob Tibbetts, O'Mara Trophy; Paige Callahan and Sue Kelley, Norma Wilkinson Award; and Sue Dunlap, GAA sportsmanship, leadership and scholarship award.

The Rev. Dr. Miller C. Lovett was welcomed as the new minister of the Laconia Congregational Church.

Winners of the prize speaking contest at St. John School were Helen Emery, Ruth Gilbert, and Richard Robinson.

Playhouse. Photograph is from the collection of the Gale Memorial Library, Laconia.

The Laconia DeMolay was recognized as the top chapter in New England, memberwise. It tripled a quota of 12 for 1963-64 by inducting 36 boys, eclipsing efforts of about 300 other chapters.

10 YEARS AGO (1980) from the Evening Citizen

Highlighting an LHS sports cookout and awards program was the presentation of the first Soc Bobotas Memorial Award to Greg Cadrette. Doug Filaroski was recipient of the Jay O'Connor MVP Trophy; John Baer, the Irwin Track Trophy; and Scott Davis and Rick Irving, the top freshman award in track.

It was graduation time for 199 seniors at Laconia High School. At awards night the first recipient of a perpetual Eleanor C. Parker Literature Award was

Gregory Cadrette. Former Mayor and New Frontiersman Bernard L. Boutin gave the commencement address. Glenn Cayes was valedictorian and Steven Achber, salutatorian.

The Raymond Seabeck family of Gilford was preparing for two weeks in Haiti serving a mission operated by Nobel Prize winner Mother Teresa. They would carry five trunks of donated medicines and toys to help in their work among starving and dying people on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony highlighted open house at the Easter Seal Society Rehabilitation Center of the Lakes Region in O'Shea Industrial Park. The new facility was serving clients residing in communities of Belknap and southeastern Grafton counties.