

Wilmot Historical Society Annual Report for 2012

The Wilmot Historical Society (WHS) enjoyed a positive year on several fronts.

The Curiosity Shop remains the foremost outreach program for the WHS. During the summer, Lindy Heim led her team at the Wilmot Farmers Market. They enjoyed engaging the public while selling donated articles and promoting the historical society. Funds earned from sales are used to preserve and sustain the historical society's collection of documents and artifacts important to the town's history.

We worked together with the town of Wilmot on two projects. The town and the WHS collaborated with The New Hampshire State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts to secure a Moose Grant. With the grant funds, we hired *Curtains Without Borders*, a company that specializes in this type of work, to repair and refurbish both curtains. The work included repair of the curtains and maintenance to the stage. One of the now-restored curtains has not been displayed in several years. It will be on display during Town Meeting in March 2013. Later in 2013, the WHS will present a program on the history of the curtains and the repair process.

The other joint Wilmot/WHS project, which was led by Liz Kirby, formalized the Boston Post Cane policy. Nearly 100 years ago, the Boston Post newspaper (now defunct) promoted itself by sending out a walking cane to every town in New England. The cane was distributed to the oldest person in town as tribute to his/her longevity. Wilmot's cane remained with the recipient until he/she died; then the town passed the cane to the oldest person.



Several years ago Wilmot and WHS jointly decided that the WHS would take over the town's role as the entity responsible for the cane. Wilmot's Boston Post Cane policy recognizes the oldest person in town but the cane remains in the possession of the WHS. To ensure that everyone in town knows who holds the honor of the oldest resident, a picture hangs in the Town Offices. Liz Kirby coordinated with Tony Caruso, the town's oldest person, to take his picture and present him with a certificate. (*Sadly, Tony passed away 1/7/2012*)

Throughout the winter and spring of 2012, we continued to catalog and digitize our collection. Mary Fanelli and Judy Hauck spent most Thursdays in the History Room where they scanned pictures, post cards, and recorded digital images of bigger objects. You are welcome to join them and see firsthand how the WHS is working to make the collection accessible to the public.

Mary's creative talents also surfaced at the WHS web site: www.wilmothistoricalociety.org/. The web page contains our board meeting notes, financial information, and other items including upcoming events and pictures of our collection. Our 2012 revised by laws also are posted on the website. Please visit the site and let us how we might improve it.

The historical society sponsored three programs in 2012:

February – The Good Old Plow singing trio presented a rousing musical program depicting the rise and fall of the New Hampshire hill farm culture of the 1800s. The group included Wilmot’s own Fred Ogmundson along with Tom Curan and Don Towle.

May – The Vaudeville Show production made your sides ache with laughter. Wally Borgen of New London and her fabulous troupe of vaudeville performers delighted young and old in the old time tradition of Vaudeville performed on the historic stage of Wilmot Town Hall. Wilmot residents Jay and Linda Lambert, Margaret Doody, Bonnie Lewis, and Charlie Freiberg were among the performers.

November – Using the Cracker Barrel format again this year, the historical society’s Foto Fest interacted with the audience to discuss and present photos from the community and Society’s collection. Digitized and projected onto a large screen the pictures generated a vigorous and fun exchange amongst us all.

The Wilmot Historical Society’s History Book Club met quarterly. Participants choose the books. Thus far, the choices have ranged from history, biography, memoir, or historical fiction. Selections also may include plays or subjects not normally considered historical such as natural science or environmental topics. This year the group read:

March	<i>The Sea Captain's Wife</i> by Martha Hodes
June	<i>Samuel Pepys: The Unequalled Self</i> by Claire Tomalin.
September	<i>American Nations: A History of the Eleven Rival Cultures of North America</i> by Colin Woodward.
December	<i>Landscape Turned Red: The Battle at Antietam</i> by Stephen Sears

Respectfully submitted,

Wilmot Historical Society
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