



Bethel Historical Society  
& Museum at the Brick Church  
PO Box 25  
Bethel, Vermont 05032

11 June 2007 Meeting of the Bethel Historical Society

President Nick Nikolaidis called the meeting to order at 7PM.

Attending were the following: Nick Nikolaidis, Kent Batcheller, Bill and Fran Johannson, Don Hyde, Don Brown, Dave Aiken, Helen Miller, Louise Putnam, George and Janet Burnham.

Note: Today was Bill Johannson's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The secretary's report was approved.

The treasurer's report was approved. As of the end of May, the checking account balance was:

\$5,123.24. The amount raised from the Post Card show: \$2,194.25. Expenses were: \$417.49. Leaving a balance of \$1,776.76 from the show. This amount also includes the sale of old postcards that were in our files that were NOT of Bethel. Most were '27 flood scenes from other VT towns.

OLD BUSINESS:

POST CARD SHOW

The Post Card show was very successful. The connection between old postcards and history is just beginning to be noticed on a wider scale. As a result of the good turnout and interest, a date has been set for a second annual Post Card show next year. Mark your calendars: It's a Saturday, May 24th, 2008.

It was voted to give John Hubbell a \$50 gift certificate for The Peavine Restaurant as a thank you for all his donated time the day of the show.

Nick mentioned having John Lutz, who was a grand help in putting the show together, as a speaker some time next fall. His subject would be the world of Post Cards and how they tell us so much about US history at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It was also voted to set aside \$500 for expenses for next year's show.

## OLD TIMER'S ROUNDTABLE

Another very successful program featuring Ted Nelson, former Bethel Town Manager and cohorts talking about the 1950's. It cost us \$35 for refreshments. Jennifer Ankner took a video of the program which will be available on disc for anyone interested. There will also be a copy in the Historical Society's files.

## APPRAISAL NIGHT with Jim Marquis

A very well attended evening of our own Antiques Roadshow. We shared the evening and the proceeds with the Stockbridge Historical Society. Profit: \$110 for each society

An interesting bit of information: The fife, which the Society has been paying an extra \$100 of insurance on each year, isn't worth anywhere near the amount that was previously thought. Marquis who used to collect fifes from the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, said it was worth somewhere between \$150 to \$200. A motion was made and passed to not continue to pay the extra insurance.

## FLATS WALK

This will take place tentatively on Columbus Day weekend in early October. Saturday will be the date, with Sunday, the rain date. It will begin at 2PM and leave from the River Street Bridge to walk approximately one mile to the Blue Hill Dam, covering the sites of the eight Flats houses and on to the stone sheds. There will be some advertising out on this, so that anyone interested can attend.

Bill has done extensive research on the Italian families who lived on the Flats in the early years of the 20th century. The society hopes to put together a book on the Flats sometime in the near future.

Don Hyde and Don Brown brought up an interesting fact that they learned while researching the Peavine Railroad. Back in the early 20th century, there used to be horse races on the frozen river from the Blue Hill Dam to the River Street Bridge. One newspaper story covering the event reported 700 people in attendance. It also called that portion of the frozen White River, Dago Lake...a nod (maybe not entirely a positive nod, since Dago was often used derogatorily) at the Italian stonecutter's who lived beside that portion of the river.

## THE HISTORY EXPO 2007

Don Brown and Don Hyde reported that "the elves" have been busy on the PEAVINE exhibit for the upcoming Expo. They're doing a replica of the Hummingbird, the little self-propelled one car train that ran from Bethel to Rochester. They've visited Macy in Woodstock, who runs a photographic workshop, to get the backdrop photo. The Hummingbird model will be seated on a table 82" long by 3' wide.

They will sell the PEAVINE railway book, *A Whistle Up The Valley*, at the exhibit. The book is \$30...or if you wish to join the Bethel His Soc, the book is \$25...with \$5 for membership. A good deal, as members get our prize winning newsletters.

#### NEW BUSINESS

We have been given a box full of newspaper clippings by Caroline Sargent of Granville. Her mother used to live in Lilliesville and clipped hundreds of pieces from the paper over the years about Bethel and Lilliesville. They will be put in yearly order in a binder. A thank you was send to Ms. Sargent.

Don and Don report that they spent most of a day going through the papers in the attic of the Town Offices. The majority of the papers pertain to school business.

#### WWII HONOR ROLL

Does anyone know where it is? It's wood and evidently deteriorated.

#### MUSEUM

It would be wonderful to have our museum be ground level accessible. To that end Nick even mentioned the possibility of using the United church's parsonage. Never hurts to put feelers out there.

#### THANK YOU

From Janet Whittaker, the librarian at school for the copy of *A Whistle Up The Valley* that the society donated to the school.

#### HISTORY QUEST

Bethel's Peavine exhibit will be one of the locations for the History Quest at the Expo.

#### DONATION

Nick proposed that the Society give \$100 to the Steeple Fund for the United Church. The steeple needs repair. The building is one of Bethel's historic sites...as well as housing the Society's museum at present. The idea was tabled until next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10PM.

Respectfully submitted  
Janet Burnham for Rosella Leonard.