

CAMBRIDGE HARKENER

CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE OF CAMBRIDGE, VERMONT

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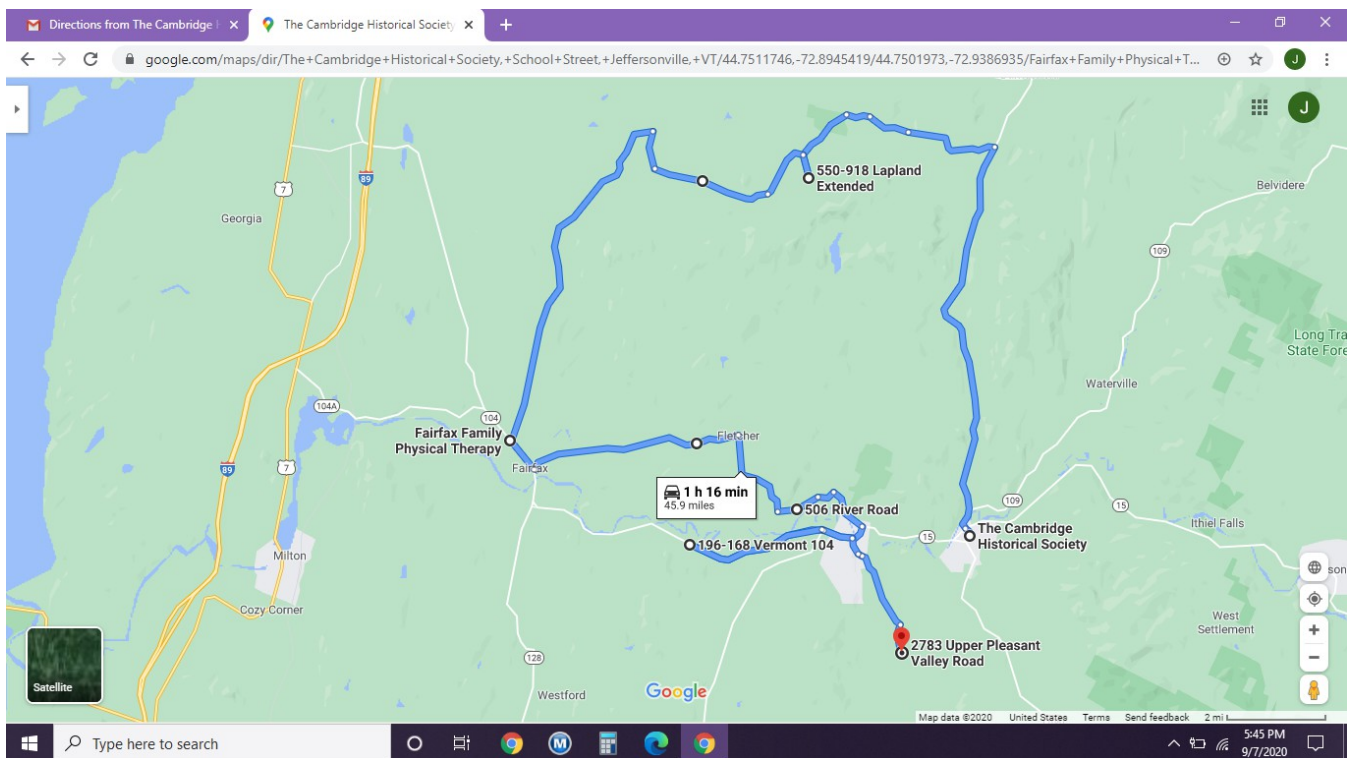
Honorary Board Members: June Dodge, Barb Juell

SECRETS of CAMBRIDGE'S CEMETERIES

Jennifer Bartlau

Stone House Sunday Drive Directions

As promised, a map and directions for finding the stone houses described in the previous issue.



All the signage seems to be good on this route. It is a mix of dirt and paved, with no real ruts or potholes. Takes about 2 to 2.5 hours – very curvy in places, so go slowly and enjoy! I would be interested to know how many of you tried this... Jen B (vtjen802@gmail.com)

- From Traffic Circle in Jeffersonville, travel 8.3 miles North on VT Route 108 and turn Left onto Whitney Rd.
- Stay straight where Lost Nation Rd comes in from left.
- At 3.5 miles, take a Left onto Lapland Rd.
- At 2.1 miles, take a Left onto Lapland Extended
- 1810 Stone House on Right 0.4 miles down road. Turn around just beyond house.

Early History of Cambridge

by Ida Morgan Anderson

Beginning in 1935, Ida Morgan Anderson began serializing a column on the History of Cambridge in the *Cambridge Town Crier*. Many of our readers may remember the series of 27 Installments. The Harkener continues publishing the installments for a new audience on the assumption that the copyright (if it ever existed) has long since expired. We hope you will enjoy these "blasts from the past."

Installment Seven

In those early days the food supply got woefully short sometimes. Great-grandmother Stetson told of a time when several of the neighboring women made her an afternoon visit, and according to custom, stayed to supper. There was nothing in the home to eat but potatoes and great-grandmother was too proud to make any excuses. So she pared and boiled them, mashed and salted them carefully. She could be very dignified and genteel when the occasion called for it, and now in her best manner, she announced "Ladies, my supper is ready and I haven't got anything but potato pone, and them that don't like it can let it alone," they all ate heartily.

The year of 1816, known as "eighteen hundred and froze to death," the year without a summer, was a hard one for the pioneers. Uncle Harry Montague of North Cambridge, who was a small boy at that time, used to tell of dropping corn with mittens on, for the men to plant. Snow and sleet fell in seventeen days of May and in June there was either snow or frost every night but three. July was cold, and ice as thick as window glass formed occasionally in everyone of the New England states. Old records say that "August was worse and ice formed nearly an

inch thick, killing every green thing in the United States and Europe. In the spring of 1817, seed corn saved from 1815 sold for from \$5 to \$10 a bushel." However, a little corn must have been raised in sheltered localities, for the frost bitten stuff was ground and eaten, and when a traveler took some Johnny cake made from unfrozen corn from his saddle bags, the children of the family where he had spent the night asked their mother if that was "pound cake," a real luxury they had heard her speak of.



In Addition to her history installments, Ida Anderson included brief vignettes about people from Cambridge's past.

Abner Brush and his wife, Laura Hubbard Brush, were descended from the first settlers of New England. "The first settlers of New England," says John Fiske, in "*The Beginnings of New England*" were drawn from the sturdiest part of the English stock." If you know little else about the ancestors of Abner and Laura Brush than that they came to New England in the Seventeenth Century, it is safe for you to infer that they were men and women with the courage of their convictions, and that they left England for America between the years 1620 and 1642. "The emigration," to quote again Fiske, "was pre-eminent for its respectability. It consisted largely of county squires and yeomen; thrifty, prosperous men, who, on account of their devotion to an idea, became voluntary exiles. The needy shiftless people who usually make trouble in new colonies were not tolerated in the early days of New England.

The Brushes and Conklings came from England to Salem together. From Salem they went to Long Island. John Brush of Southold, Long Island - when that place was a part of the republic of New Haven - was the first of the name in America. It is in the records of Fairfield County, Connecticut, that Thomas Brush, son of John Brush, born about 1610, settled in Southold, Long Island, previous to 1657. He moved to Huntington, Long Island, in 1648. He married Rebecca, daughter of John and Mary Conkling, and died in 1675. He had four children. - It is of interest to note that his youngest daughter, Rebecca, was married to the Reverend Jeremiah Hubbard in 1680. - Thomas Brush II, the son of Thomas, is in the direct line we are tracing. He married Sarah Wickes. - A boy named Francis Weeks went with Roger Williams to Providence. In 1657 he was on Long island, and was probably the ancestor of Sarah Wickes. - Thomas and Sarah Brush had nine children. Their second child, Thomas III, was born in 1683. He served as a private soldier in the Indian War of 1715. His name appears on page 68 of Vol 60 of *New York Colonial Manuscripts*, recorded as a private in Captain Thomas Higbe's Huntington, Long Island Company.

Continued from Page 1

- Return to Lapland Rd and take a Left.
- Stay to the Left at Y with Romar Rd. Lapland Rd becomes Howrigan Rd.
- At 2.6 miles, 1827 Stone House (Howrigan Farm) on Right.
- Continue straight to T with South Rd and take a Right.
- At 0.8 miles, take a Right onto Buck Hollow Rd and follow into Fairfax.
- 1795 Stone House (Fairfax Physical Therapy) is nearly straight ahead (take a Right and turn around at Nan's Mobil to get a different view).
- Follow VT Route 104 thru Fairfax village to blinking light, and take a Left onto River Rd, then immediate Left at brick church onto Fletcher Rd.
- At 3.5 miles, 1800 Stone House is on the Left.
- Continue to the 4-way stop in Binghamville, and take a Right onto School Rd.
- Continue on School Rd to the T with River/Sweet Rd, and take a Left.
- At 2.4 miles, 1825 Stone House (Sweet Farm) is on Left.
- Continue to T with Pumpkin Harbor Rd and turn Right, following to VT Route 15.
- Take a Right over Wrong Way Bridge thru Cambridge Village, and Right at Boyden Farm onto VT Route 104.
- At 0.8 miles, take a Right onto yet another River Rd. This is the original road, which was much closer to the Lamoille River. At the end, the road curves sharply to the Left to return to Rte 104. The original road followed the line of Rabideau St, along the base of the hill and into the fields beyond.
- Continue up the hill and take a Right onto VT Route 104.
- At 0.8 miles, take a Left onto Maple Hill Rd to turn around. The 1833 Stone House was where the blue house now stands right across the highway. The original road ran in back of the house. The Giddings Farm (now the VT Woodworking School) had a long driveway according to the 1878 Beers Atlas, and was not right on the road as it is today. George Majors built a log cabin on the hill in back of the farm.
- Return to Cambridge Village and take a Right onto Lower Valley Road just past the Cambridge Village Market.
- Follow Lower Valley Road to the junction with Upper Pleasant Valley Road, and take a Left at the stop sign.
- 1811 Stone House is 1.5 miles from the junction on the Right.
- Continue on Upper Pleasant Valley Road into Jeffersonville, or take Bryce Road on the Left to return to Cambridge Village.

River Road between Fairfax and School Road is closed Sept 15-25.

One of my favorite foliage drives is to take a Left onto South Rd after the Howrigan Farm and follow that road into Fletcher. The views are tremendous, and I especially love the license plate barn at the bottom of the hill with the pretty little mill pond across from it just before the 3-way stop in Fletcher.

Board of Director Changes at CHS

Barb Juell, long-time member of the CHS Board of Directors, has been struggling recently with health problems. Unfortunately, these problems have made it impossible for her to serve the CHS as she would like. Therefore, she has resigned her position as Board Member. Shirley Opstrup has been elected to fill her unexpired term. Shirley has been an active member for years, often helping her husband Peter (also a Board member) with CHS business. Shirley is a retired teacher, and brings an educator's perspective to the Board. The unexpired term ends in November, at which time there will be elections for two Board positions for a three year term. The Board of Directors welcomes Shirley and looks forward to working with her.

At the same time, we will greatly miss working with Barb, who has been an active supporter of CHS for many years. Barb and her husband Gaylord (past CHS president, now deceased), organized a CHS Christmas Gift Shoppe in 2009 to raise funds for the CHS. Barb also helped organize our annual dinners which took place for years at Three Mountain Lodge and Smugglers' Notch Resort. At Civil War Days, Barb could be found greeting visitors in her elaborate Civil War era attire, hoop skirt and all. We will greatly miss her assistance and bubbly personality on the Board, though she will continue as an honorary member. We wish Barb improved health!



SWEET HOUSE IMPROVEMENTS

As many of you know, the Historical Society owns the Sweet House on Main Street in Jeffersonville and rents the house to the Mary Elizabeth Preschool. The end of summer brought a flurry of work at the Sweet house, motivated in large part by the start of another school year for the Preschool. The right side of the front porch was completely rebuilt, with new hemlock floor joists, and new tongue-and-groove spruce decking. Vice President Rick Fletcher handled most of the carpentry work on the porch, with assistance from his father-in-law, as well as Board members Shirley and Peter Opstrup, and President Joel Page. The porch floor is now safe, solid, and freshly painted. Two sets of new pressure treated steps and handrails were also constructed.



In the back room (a former woodshed-turned-den in the '70s), a sliding glass door and sills had deteriorated to the point where the door was no longer functional. The Board hired John Gillespie and his crew to rebuild the sill, and install a new door and window. A deck approximately 6'x10' in size, with railings and stairs leading to the enclosed back yard play area were also constructed.



As a Covid-19 precaution, the school needed additional hand-washing stations. Two utility sinks were added in the back room. Plumbing repairs were also made in the back room to allow the washing machine to function again, and it is anticipated that a 240 watt outlet will be added for a dryer.



All of the above improvements were paid for by the Historical Society. Due to school closures in March and resulting cash flow challenges faced by the Preschool, the Historical Society waived the Preschool's rent for the five months of April through August.



Schools and preschools are facing many challenges and uncertainties in this pandemic, and cleanliness is a major concern. The Preschool undertook to have the downstairs hardwood floors refinished, as they were in rather rough shape, and difficult to keep clean. The floors came out great, and certainly add to the appearance and value of the property. Discussions are underway about how that expense will be handled.

The Cambridge Historical Society is trying to be a responsible steward of the Sweet property, and a responsible landlord for the Preschool, while operating on a very tight budget. The rent waiver and the improvements made to date were necessary, and were the appropriate thing to do, though they strain our finances. The Historical Society and the Preschool are exploring other funding options such as grants and "Go Fund Me" as possible ways of funding further improvements (a second bathroom is a priority). Stay tuned as we continue to deal with these challenges.

October 14th CHS Program in ON

The historical society has not held a public meeting since March, when we highlighted the 55+ Club. The pandemic made holding public meetings difficult, if not impossible. Although COVID-19 is still with us, the threat has receded enough that we have decided to hold our October meeting as "usual." Masks will be required and appropriate social distancing will be enforced. Because of constraints on our space, we will need to limit the number of attendees - so if you want to hear the program, come early. We will apologize in advance to anyone we have to turn away.

Now, the Program:

"Finding Jesse: A Fugitive from Slavery in Vermont"

traces Jesse's life from enslavement in North Carolina to freedom in Vermont. His story is told through letters in the collection at Rokeby Museum and documents at the North Carolina State Archives. The illustrated talk brings the narrative of one slave out of anonymity and explores his life and pursuit of freedom.

The program is presented by Jane Williamson, Director Emerita of the Rokeby Museum.



Cambridge Historical Society
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The Board of the Cambridge Historical Society has decided to hold the October meeting as scheduled on October 14th at 7:00 pm. Please see the announcement on page 4 for program information.

Jennifer Bartlau continues to provide interesting articles on the people of Cambridge. She is requesting folks to email or call her (vtjen802@gmail.com) (802-881-8608) with any info they have on the **Edwards/Hebb/Lamplough families of South Cambridge** in the 1840s, 50s, 60s? She is preparing an article about the families, and is curious as to any "tales of old."

This Newsletter is one of the perks of membership, so to continue receiving The Harkener renew your membership, and THANK YOU.