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Hebron, NH

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Exec. Editor: Ron Collins

Editors: Barbara Brooks,
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Ron Collins
PO Box 152
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The following story was contributed by Louise Traunstein. It is based on fact. I discussed this story with Flora Braley who attended the Saturday night dances in the 1930's. It gives an interesting flavor to life in Hebron in 1939. The Clover Farm Store mentioned in the story is today's Hebron Village Store. Flora says the dance hall was underneath the church as it was before it burnt in 1945.—Ron Collins

HEBRON COUNTRY DANCE 1939

The cars were parked three deep in the long dry grass around the Hebron Town Hall - Model A's, jalopies, pickups, the beat-up old trucks of farmers and loggers who journeyed many a mile every Saturday night to share in the festivities (Lonnie Bowles still driving his buckboard hauled by that ancient, scrawny horse.) The few new cars, especially the Buicks and the convertibles were owned by some of the more venturesome city folk who wandered up from Newfound Lake mostly to get drunk and observe the 'country folk'. Arthur Brown on his '28 Indian, now back in the cemetery drinking beer and arm-wrestling with Bob Kinne, both acting very foolish. Most of the locals, white shirt sleeves rolled up their deep brown arms, passed around warm quarts of beer, gabbed about lumber and hay and the roads and last winter's weather. Kids wrestled, played tag between the cars, peeked in the Hall windows. City folks, many with bad sunburns, sat in their cars listening to the radios and occasionally nipping hard stuff from a bottle or flask, gathering up courage to go in, while a single electric bulb on the porch began to throw wavering shadows across the field. Headlights flashed across the scene as cars turned off the main road at the bright green Clover Farm Store with the orange gas pumps, then bumped over the dusty path to the Hall.

Inside Jake Matthews was tuning up his fiddle. Someone pulled the shades down. A sign over the door said: NO UNGENTMANLY CONDUCT SHALL BE TOLERATED SUCH AS DRUNKNESS CLIMBING IN AND OUT OF WINDOWS ETC. SIGNED SID HUCKINS, SELECT-MAN. Sid was in charge of everything - (tickets 35 cents apiece for adults, fifteen for kids), the music, soft drinks and the decorum since he was Town Policeman as well. His lean pimply-faced son shuffled around peeling wax

(Continued on page 2)

from a candle and scuffing it into the dance floor. Then the music began, the Missouri Waltz, but people just sat back, hands and arms folded, on those long wooden benches staring, until Dot and Lucy Hobart arose, waltzed up to the platform and said 'hello' to Jake and Mrs. Robey who was playing the piano, then sashayed back the length of the floor snickering in each other's ear, and then waltzed back again. The men and the boys applauded, the older women glared and the kids stopped horsing around and watched in amazement. Everybody began getting up.

"Waaal that's more like it! Sid bellowed, rising up on his own huge frame above the welter of tickets, change, and soft drinks, then grabbed that big green pine tree stamp that he unceremoniously pasted on the wrists of all paying customers, lumbered out onto the porch with his big five cell flashlight, and spotting several more amorous couples still sitting in their cars, hollered , "Two more couples for a Portland Fancy!" Business picked up fast!

The Author of this story is Russell M. Traunstein (summer resident of N. Groton from his birth in 1925 until his death in 1997; retired to Plymouth, NH in 1990 from the Veteran's Administration, Boston, Ma. as a Clinical Social Worker for the CPD (Center for Problem Drinkers). Copies of his book can be found in Special Collections at Plymouth State University's Lamson Library or in the files at the Groton Historical Society located in Schoolhouse #4 on Halls Brook Rd., N. Groton. This story of the Hebron Country Dance appears in his book of poetry, Harvest of Seasons: A Collection of Poems and was published by Colophon Press, Plymouth, NH, 1997. Russ was awarded the First Discovery Award of the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts in 1993. He was nominated by the late Jane Kenyon for his award. This first collection of his work displays his sensitivity and talent as a poet. Several of his poems were inspired by his life in Groton and appear in this collection.

Cryptogram Challenge by Kathy Begor

Each letter in this code stands for another.

Clue: O equals V

C MSQCB TACDQ BX OFEFB CZP

C GXZPQSRNA TACDQ BX AFOQ,

JQWSXZ FE C INFZBQEEQZBFCA

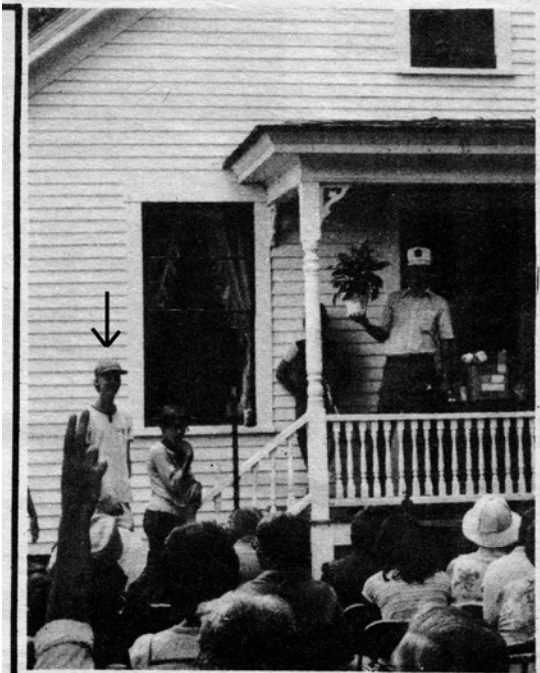
ZQG QZMACZP BXGZ!

(answer on page 5)

Do You Recognize These Long Time Hebron Residents ???



UPBEAT BY THE BRISTOL ENTERPRISE JULY 24, 1980



Rev. John Fischer served as auctioneer at the auction which was a popular attraction at the 25th annual Hebron Fair on Saturday July 26.

(answers on page 5)

Besmirched in Death – A longtime insult now corrected

by Ron Collins

Rueben Hobart is buried behind the church in the Hebron Village Cemetery. He was one of the founders of Hebron and built the house and farm now owned by David and Mavis Brittelli. Reuben's reputation has been questioned over the years because of his unusual epitaph. Reuben Hobart's epitaph reads in part "His death was much lamented as a member of civil society, and as a pillow in the church." There has been confusion and plain mischief made over the term "Pillow in the Church".

A lady named Mimi Lisbon sent an e-mail to a website called "Travels with Becky" in 2009 in which she recalls a sightseeing visit to a cemetery in Hebron that yielded more humor than you'd expect in a cemetery. Here 'tis.

"For many years I worked for AARP and served the Rumney/Hebron/Groton area of New Hampshire among others. One of my favorite things to do in between business appointments at those rural sites, was to "kill time" and visit the local church cemeteries and read the inscriptions. So much history, so many questions? New Hampshire cemeteries yield some unexpected surprises!

So, I was wandering the rows of stones behind the church in Hebron one sunny afternoon when I was joined by a local member of the historic society. We chatted, and learning of my curiosity about local history, he guided me to a commemorative stone which read "Here lies ... the Pillow of the Community.

I wish the heck I could remember the name, but this is what my young companion told me. Seems this fella, this 'pillow of the community,' had a way with the women. In particular he became enamored of the local stonemason's wife! This did not sit well with the stonemason, but being a patient man, he bade his time to get his revenge!

So, as it turned out, the "pillow" of the community is not a misspelled word after all!

AND, if you take a closer look, as my guide suggested I do, it's amazing how many ladies are buried close by, all sort of cozied up to the pillow, if you get the picture? Dontcha have to wonder who got the last laugh?"

In actuality the line is in reference to a Biblical scene. Jacob, after his dream of a ladder reaching into heaven, declared (Genesis 29:11-22): "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not." He then erected the stone that had been his pillow saying, "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house." The term "Pillow of the Community" was used in the 18th and 19th centuries as an indicator of someone who was the solid foundation of a community or church. So Ms. Lisbon was really off the mark and shouldn't have besmirched the good name of Reuben Hobart.

History of the Hebron Academy

by Ron Collins

The Hebron Academy was built as a privately owned "college" during the period from Autumn of 1838 until the late Spring of 1839. The largest investors were Leonard Tenney from Groton, and Hiram Orcutt of Acworth. This was at age 24, Hiram Orcutt's first try at running a school of higher learning. Later he would go on and become one of the leading educators in the United States (See notes below). The first term of Hebron Academy commenced in the fall of 1839. At that time the trustees did not expect to establish a year round school; they hoped to be able to sustain it two ten week terms in the year, but the patronage received was so good that they kept it open for three terms per year in-stead of two. Instruction was given in Latin, Greek and French languages and in all English branches studied in similar institutions.

The original instructors were the investors Leonard Tenney, A.B., principal and Hiram Orcutt, associate principal; the executive committee was Jonathan K. Pike, David Hazelton, John C. Hammond, who were all from Hebron and may also have been investors. The tuition was \$3.00 per term for English branches and an additional \$1.00 was charged for Latin, Greek and French. There were 89 pupils enrolled for the year 1840 giving the Academy a yearly revenue of \$935. The Academy had no dormitories, so all students were either locals or they had to find local boarding. Boarding with families near the academy ranged from \$1.17 to \$1.42 per week, and included room, board, wood, lights, and washing. There were some furnished rooms available for those wishing to board themselves at a moderate charge. The students who availed themselves of the opportunity the Academy offered for the few years it was in open came from the nearby towns of Dorchester, Groton, Rumney, Plymouth, Bridgewater, Bristol, and Alexandria.

A quote from the 1840 catalogue reads: "It is considered that all those designing to connect themselves with the school, should enter at the commencement of the term, both on their own account, and on account of the classes which they may wish to enter. The course of instruction is designed, effectually, to lead the pupils by self application, to correct habits of thought and reasoning, and to secure to them the development and cultivation of the moral as well as the intellectual powers."

Hebron Academy was very successful for a few years and received generous patronage. As stated earlier there was no boarding house connected with the school; the students were obliged to board with private families or secure rooms and board themselves, which proved too much for a small farming community. The resident's houses were not adequate to accommodate so great a number, as the families were so much larger then than they are today. As a result the Academy closed after just eight years. The Academy's door was closed in 1847. The Academy bell was removed from its scholastic belfry and placed in the church belfry, where it has hung until the church burned in 1945.

The Academy building stood un-occupied for a number of years and was then purchased by the Town of Hebron as school district No. 5.

NOTES ON HIRAM ORCUTT

Hiram Orcutt (February 3, 1815-April 17, 1899) born in Acworth, NH, was a noted American Educator. He wrote The parents' manual: or, Home and school training. Published by Thompson, Brown, & co, Boston, c1874. After the Hebron Academy closed Orcutt moved to Thetford, Vermont where he was principle of the Thetford Academy from 1842 until 1855. In 1850, Hiram Orcutt, writing in the Vermont Chronicle, called for the formation of a State Teachers' Association. On October 16, 1850, teachers and friends of education met in Montpelier to organize a State Association of Teachers and "to discuss and adopt such Resolutions as express their views upon the subject of Education in Vermont."

Answer to Cryptogram: A great place to visit and a wonderful place to live, Hebron is a quintessential New England town.

Answers to Picture Identification: Top Row Left to Right - Ed Gempka, Donna Esty, Dick Merrill and Norton Braley.

Middle Row Left to Right - Mark Braley, Bruce Barnard

Bottom Newspaper article under arrow - Bob Brooks



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September 9

Annual Meeting & Election of
Officers upstairs at the
Academy at 4PM.

**MEMBERS ARE WELCOME
TO ATTEND.**

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Hebron Historical Society Program Events Calendar

September 9—Annual Meeting & Election of Officers upstairs at the Academy at 4PM.

MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.

September 14—Pot Luck Dinner in the Community Center at 5:30—Program to Follow—**“Hebron Since 1940” by Bruce Barnard**

November 11—*Veterans Day Program*

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Arthur and Sandra Cummings

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Doug and “Ralph” McQuilkin

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The Hillier Family

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Willa and Bill Lucarelli

Membership Update

DUES DUE EACH JANUARY

A membership gift to a family member or friend is a wonderful way to help preserve our history and archives.

Membership forms are included on the back page of this newsletter for your use.

**Thank you for your support,
“Ralph” McQuilkin, Membership Chair.**

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for a 2 inch by 2 inch ad.**

Contact Ron Collins at 744-1048 to place an ad in the Gazette.

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are gladly accepted.**

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Two videos on one DVD: **The Beauty of Hebron 2** and **Birds of Newfound**. \$10.

Sergeant John Ordway, A History with his Genealogy. The story of Hebron resident John Ordway who became the third in command of the Lewis & Clark Expedition. Price \$10.00 for members, and \$12.00 for non-members.

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A new 347 page book, completely indexed, of genealogies of the families living in Hebron for the first two hundred years of the Town.. Price \$25.00 for non-members, \$22.00 for members.

The History of Hebron, NH The First Two Hundred Years

A new 247 page book with 75 color and Black & White photos, and 11 maps.. This new history of Hebron gives the story of the founding of the town, its growth and major citizens set in the historical context of what was happening in the world around them. Price \$29.00 for non-members, \$25.00 for members.

Hebron Tiles—designed by Derry Riddle and Produced by Betsy Twombly. \$10.00

These items may be purchased directly from the Hebron Historical Society

**PO Box 89
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**The books are also available on
www.Amazon.com**

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Lapsed Memberships will not receive future Gazettes.

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Ideas for future Programs: _____