

Hebron Historical Society Gazette

Hebron, NH

Volume 4, No. 1, January 2006

www.HebronHistSoc.org

50 cents



The Membership Year Has Changed

The membership year in the Hebron Historical Society has changed to coincide with the calendar year. So everyone who paid their Membership this past September is now registered for the new membership year of January 1, 2006 until December 31, 2006. If you haven't paid this year's membership please do so soon so that you do not miss out on receiving the Gazette and other Society benefits. Our new membership chairperson is Barbara Brooks.

Society News

President, Ron Collins and Vice president, Alan Barnard, have located the home sites of the Ordway and Ball families on Tenney Hill. The Ordway family site is important because John Ordway was a leading member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The Ball family site is important because they were relatives of George Washington, and because John and his sister, Deborah Ball, were important historical figures in their own right. The Society will be presenting a program on Deborah Ball in February 2006. A biography of John Ball is in the library. Both home sites are now owned by Greenacres Woodlands, but Greenacres has indicated that they may give easement rights to these two sites to the Town of Hebron. This has come about due to the work of Ron and Alan. The Society will play a major role in preserving and studying these sites.

**Be sure to visit our Society website at:
www.HebronHistSoc.org**

The Society is placing a lot of historical information on this website.

Boy Meets Planes

Designs Satellites by Barbara Brooks

Many years ago a six year old boy decided he wanted to whittle an airplane and with that project began a lifelong interest in airplanes. Malcolm Brawn is as fascinated with aircraft building today as he was when just a young boy. His first planes were models patiently glued together and proudly displayed in his family home in Maine

Work for his dad as an optician necessitated a move to Cambridge, Massachusetts and it was there that Malcolm attended Rindge Technical High School in the Aviation Course, graduating second in his class.

Entering the U. S. Naval Air Corps in 1943, Malcolm was sent for preflight training as a Naval Aviation Cadet in Pennsylvania, New York and Georgia, getting geography experience at an early age.

In 1946, Malcolm went to work at MIT as a laboratory technician in the chemical engineering and gas turbine labs in Cambridge. This work was in the early days of building turbine engines and the development of the blades for them. At this time he decided to attend Northeastern University where he studied mechanical engineering. After graduating, Malcolm returned to MIT to work at the Lincoln Laboratory as a research staff engineer where he stayed for 29 years. Much of his work there was ground breaking development of satellite, radar and communications systems which are in use today. It was during this time that he obtained his private pilot license.

During his tenure at the Lincoln Labora-

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tory, he was assigned to a radar site at White Sands Missile Range, where he met and married Ann. His job there was as site mechanical engineer. While in El Paso, he bought an old 1946 Stinson four passenger plane. Not to be left behind, Ann went to flight training school and she too received her private pilots license.

Time came for them to return East and this adventuresome couple flew the old Stinson from El Paso, Texas to Hanscom Air Base in Massachusetts. While possessions were trucked east and a friend drove their car, Malcolm and Ann set off on a memorable two week flying excursion. Frequent stops and layovers in November for weather fronts to pass plus having to find overnight accommodations was not easy at that time. During subsequent years at the Laboratory, they spent seven years working at the Vandenburg Missile Range in Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands of the South Pacific.

After retirement, many planes and plans have come and gone as this couple worked together to revive the old and build the new. Names such as Stinson, Aeronca Defender, Fisher, Nieuport 11, Hummel Bird and RV9 are some of the planes they have built and worked on, some of which can be seen at Plymouth Airport today. Working as a team, Malcolm and Ann are very serious about their work and a very brief tour of their basement reveals much about their enthusiasm for this sport and hobby of building and flying full size and radio controlled model planes. Airplane parts, varying from rivet machines, motors, wings large and small are seen everywhere as works in progress or those put to rest for the time being.

Other radio control flying enthusiasts here in the area are still pursuing this hobby or just enjoying their memories are Harvey Fogg, Alan Estes, Bob Allenson, Ron Jons and Joe Libby (deceased). For several years this group met at Dick Merrill's field and with much laughter and enjoyment, they created a very busy and active radio control model airport.

We also have several other local pilots: Dick Cowern, Ron Collins, Mark Conner, Henry Lynch, Bill White, Mike Madden and others.

We salute Malcolm and Ann for their expertise as well as their pioneering spirits.

**Cecil O. Davis, 1873-1963, "Good Neighbor" by
Howard T. Oedel**

I first met "Cece" Davis, or "Mr. D," as I came to call him, on a snow-train trip to Plymouth in the early 1930s. My dad and I had climbed aboard an open truck and, half an hour later, jostled into the Davis barnyard in East Hebron ready for a few hours skiing on Tenney Hill. There was Mr. D to greet us, with his wife Lura (Butterfield) Davis there as well, to warm us up with a cup of coffee and a donut, all for the handsome sum of 10¢.

Mr. D, in his early sixties, was a tall, handsome man, weighing perhaps 225 pounds. He was a New Hampshire native all right, with a country "twang" and a high-pitched, distinctive laugh and a "no-nonsense" manner. There were lots of young people about, his children no doubt, peering around corners to catch a glimpse of "city folks" with their modern ski equipment -- today considered antique.

Fifteen years later, in 1945, my father, to his obvious surprise, purchased a piece of property on George Road, the Uriah Pike Place, which included the Tenney Hill ski slope which we'd enjoyed when I was ten years old. When I returned from the Pacific War in 1946, I too was surprised to learn that our nearest neighbor was Cecil O. Davis.

I have no idea who Cece's parents were, but he was brought up by his grandparents, who lived at the old Hollister farm on Newfound Lake, now a part of Camp Onaway.

Cece rarely spoke about school days or what life was like "back then," but he liked to tell stories about early experiences. He remembered going to Bristol with his grandfather with things to sell. They often exchanged maple sugar for white cane sugar, pound for pound. Maple sugar was the only really "cash crop" that subsistence farmers like Mr. D could count on.

Another time, on a trip to Bristol with his grandfather, the plan was to sell some apples of good quality they'd picked on Tenney Hill (there were no apple worms back in 1880!). The only problem was they could find no buyers in Bristol.

So Cece and his granddad dumped their load of apples into Newfound River and made their way home.

Cece could recall many childhood experiences. One of his chores was to hike up to Squire McClure's Inn (Six Chimneys today) to get the mail. As a boy, he greatly feared the Squire, who was tall, strong, and forbidding. Upon arrival at the inn, if Cece caught a glimpse of the Squire, he quickly turned around and headed for home. The mail could wait another day.

One of the most frightening events of Mr. D's young life was being obliged to sit up with dying neighbors. It was the custom 125 years ago for the community to attend to sick people until they either got better or passed away. One time, Cece, as a ten-year-old, was called upon to spend the night -- until dawn - with an old Mexican War vet, Levi Ball, who lived in the Uriah Pike Place, now our home. Mr. Ball was in considerable pain, and he offered Cece two dollars (two weeks pay) to get his rifle off the wall and shoot him, "to put him out of his misery." Cece cowered in the corner of the room until the first thin streaks of dawn lit the sky, and then he took off for home as fast as his legs would carry him.

The Davis farm (now owned by Mike Ethier) was what we would call today a "subsistence farm." The family grew what was necessary to keep body and soul together. Potatoes were essential, and beans, some corn and cabbage. A few hens were about, a milking cow or two, a few beef cattle, and an ample number of piglets. Wild berries were harvested each summer as well, and butternuts were important, despite the fact that they were plentiful only every seven years. Some of Mr. D's farming methods struck me as unusual. His bean patch was always planted on the steep hill where Henry Lynch's house is today. Once planted, no special care was taken until the beans were ripe and were harvested. Wild apples of good quality were harvested from ancient trees planted by settlers long gone.

Maple syrup was the essential crop on the farms because any surplus sugar could be sold for cash -- a rare commodity. When we arrived in the area, instead of sugar, syrup was available, thanks

to tin cans. The syrup was always finished off carefully on the kitchen stove by the lady of the house. It sold for \$1.00 a gallon.

I recall hiking down to the Davis house through his maple grove. Nothing but sugar maples were permitted to grow among the big trees. Especially undesirable were white pines and all other evergreens. Small wood, both pine and hardwood, were essential to sugar production, which required many cords. Any marketable oak or ash had long since been cut and sold. I recall there was hardly any tree over 6" in diameter on the entire 100 acres of the Davis farm.

Davis also had a thriving butcher business. He and Fred Barnard ran a meat cart around town, but that was long before I knew him.

When we came to summer in Hebron, we discovered that Cece had for years rented out our hillside to Franklin farmers seeking pastures for their young stock. It meant a few dollars for Cece, and Dad did not object, so a firm bond between the two was formed. When Dad asked Cece to plow some land for a garden, he did so willingly but with misgivings. Could a flatlander get a hillside garden in Hebron to produce? Dad showed that it could be done. Dad's secret to success? Hard work. Cece was impressed.

Cece loved to tell stories, and I made a tape of many of them back about 1950. There are too many to do justice to them here, but here are a couple more:

A fellow by the name of Lufkin lived in our house about 1900, when Cece had his own house on the Davis property. Lufkin had a team of horses he often drove down the back road as a shortcut to East Hebron. He had to stop to open a gate at the Davis house. Lufkin was almost deaf, and when the gate was open, Cece would "cluck" the horses and they would start down the road before Lufkin could close the gate. Lufkin railed at the horses, but he never caught on to Cece's prank. It gave Cece a chuckle for years afterwards.

Before we acquired the Uriah Pike Place, there was a minister from Lancaster, New Hampshire, who owned the property and spent summers

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there with his family. His name was Wolverton. Every morning, without fail, Wolverton would go down the hill to the Davises for a quart of milk. He invariably arrived at 5 AM, the precise hour when Cece was struggling to get his boots on. Every day Wolverton would ask, in a cheery voice, "What are you going to do today, Mr. Davis?" This question infuriated Cece, as he had no idea so early in the morning what he was going to do. One day he responded, "WORK! What in God's name are you going to do?" And he felt much better. "The question" was never asked again.

The classic story I liked best was Davis's run-in with Wolverton over who owned the cider mill site, across the road from what is now our house. Wolverton said obviously it belonged to him, as it went with his home. Davis said, "Everything on that side of the road belongs to me!" So the two of them argued about it for twenty-five years. When we bought the place, Wolverton told Dad about the disagreement. Dad asked Davis about the situation. "There's no argument," said Davis, "I own it." "Well, would you sell it?" "In a minute." What do you want for it?" Davis's quick reply was, "Ten dollars." So twenty-five years of dissension was settled with a handshake and a ten-dollar bill in less than two minutes.

Davis had eight children: six boys and two girls. The girls drifted off to get married, but the boys, for the most part, stayed around and helped work the farm. Mr. D kept a close watch over things; no one ever got out of line. He was especially careful about money, as it was hard to come by. I recall his bank-roll, which he kept -- bound with a thick rubber band -- on his person at all times. It was big enough "to choke a horse."

In his later years, Cece retired from hard labor and spent most of his remaining days in a big old chair in the only living room in the house. That room, complete with a wood stove and a light bulb, was all Cece needed to make him content. He always ate the same thing. Dinner consisted of meat and potatoes . . . beans on Saturday. Wonderful homemade bread and pies. Never

a salad.

Mr. D always enjoyed sitting back and smoking a huge pipe. I can see him now, wreathed in great clouds of smoke and chuckling or laughing in his high-pitched, infectious way, if the conversation was spirited. He lived to be ninety. He was a character.

P.S.: The "O" in Cecil O. Davis stood for Oliver. (Not many people knew that.).

A TRIBUTE by Barbara Brooks

On Friday, December 16, 2005, Sara Smith Chisholm passed away. The daughter of Manson and Evelyn (Scott) Smith, Sara lived in East Hebron for most of her life.

Stricken with polio at an early age, Sara never let her lifelong need of crutches keep her down. With a warm smile and great determination she attended Plymouth High School graduating in 1944 and then on to Wellesley College graduating in 1948.

Hebron was fortunate to have Sara as a dedicated Town Clerk for sixteen years as well as serving terms as Trustee of the Trust Funds. Her other civic commitments included being an active and long term member of the Board of Directors at Speare Memorial Hospital and the Pemigewasset Bank. Sara was a lifelong member of the Hebron Union Congregational Church and a Life member of the Hebron Historical Society.

Sara was predeceased by her brother M. Parker Smith, long time Hebron Town Moderator. She is survived by two sons, two daughters, three grandchildren, one great grandchild and a sister.

Sara gave much to many and we shall remember her kind and giving spirit.

Future Society Programs

Your Historical Society is planning programs on "**Mining in the Hebron Area**," "**Hebron Explorers**," "**19th Century Hebron Businesses**" and "**Hebron Vets - 18th & 19th Century**."

If you have a suggestion for a program contact Ron Collins at 744-1048, or at PO Box 152 in Hebron, or at roncollins@metrocast.net.

Some Ancient History by Ron Collins

Imagine a thick sheet of ice covering all of the upper United States. Here, at Newfound Lake the ice was about a mile thick. It covered all of New England, including Mt. Washington. The Ice Age Glaciers came down from the Arctic region and slowly, but relentlessly, grew deeper and thicker, and covered the White Mountains. The leading edge of the glaciers melted in the spring but refroze in the winter, and slowly they pushed further south into New Hampshire.

Glaciers scratched and scraped the notches of the White Mountains. They also formed lakes and ponds that are now found throughout New Hampshire. Glaciers left sand, clay and gravel in their path from the debris they picked up. Every hill, swamp, mountain, pond, lake, and bog in New Hampshire is the result of the glacier movements.

Finally about 21,000 years ago, for reasons not completely understood, the glaciers began to melt and retreat back into the North. The ice cap covering New Hampshire began to melt and stopped moving. When this happened, huge chunks of the ice broke off the leading edge of the main glacier. A process called calving which is the same process that creates ice bergs today. Then for a short period of time the weather became cold again and the ice sheet began to move south again, running over the huge ice pieces that had fallen off. The pressure, from the glacier, pushed down on top of the ice chunks and ground them into the earth's surface.

The huge chunks of ice were forced deep into the ground under the glacier. When the glacier finally melted away, not much more than 15,000 years ago, the hidden ice chunks melted, too and formed the basin for what is called a "kettlehole" lake. Newfound Lake is one such kettlehole lake. This is why Newfound is so deep and mostly spring fed, the ice chunk was forced down and through many layers of aquifers.

Studies now suggest that between 10,000 and 7,000 years ago many major New England rivers followed widely meandering courses and did not reach their present channels until about 7,000 years ago. As a result for 5000 to 8000

years rivers such as the Cockermouth flowed much heavier than they do today. Sculptured Rocks Gorge is the result of a much more violent Cockermouth than the one we know.

Other specific features and deposits are directly attributed to this early post-glacial period. Before vegetation could be established, the exposed finer outwash sediments were redistributed to form dunes and thin layers of windblown sand. The drained basins of certain glacial lakes became the sites of significant wetlands which were connected by small streams and ponds and interspersed by low rises of outwash. Such an area is the short vale of the Newfound River between the lake and present day Bristol. At the end of the ice age period, when the block of ice that formed Newfound Lake was in the process of melting, the Newfound River, according to state geologists, and the falls at Bristol would have been spectacular. The falls was probably a cataract over 75 feet high and probably over a hundred feet wide.

Although the ice had disappeared from the Newfound Lake Region, the presence of remaining glacial ice to the north continued to influence regional climate for several thousand years. Between 13,000 and 10,000 years ago, the climate was still wetter and cooler than today, comparable to modern interior Labrador. New Hampshire's earliest inhabitants, the ancestors of our local Abenaki Indians, likely experienced these conditions when they arrived here. In New England, this was followed by a rapid transition to warmer and drier conditions that lasted from about 8,500 to about 4,500 years ago, corresponding to the Middle and Late Archaic periods of prehistory. The temperatures at Newfound during this climatic optimum were comparable to what Maryland and Virginia are today. About 4,000 years ago, a fluctuating cooler and wetter weather pattern began to develop; this pattern has been evident during the last five centuries. Weather observations gleaned from historic records indicate a relatively wet and cooler period interrupted by "occasional decades of drought" such as that between 1620-1890. During the latter half of the 19th century, a general more stable warming trend began which continues today.

Hebron Historical Society Program Events Calendar for 2006.

This calendar will be filled out as the year progresses and will be updated in each issue of the Gazette.

February 18 - Pot Luck Supper with Program: "Hebron's Deborah Ball Powers, America's first self made millionairess." by Howard Oedel

If you have a suggestion for a program please do not hesitate to tell us. Just call Ron Collins at 603-744-1048 and he'll be happy to hear your idea.

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written by Ronald Collins, archivist of the Hebron Historical Society. The book of 185 pages covers the lives of nearly 1500 people and is completely indexed. Price \$25.00 for non-members, \$22.50 for members.

The "Genealogies of The 19th Century Residents of Hebron, NH
written by Ronald Collins, archivist of the Hebron Historical Society. The book of 178 pages covers the lives of nearly 1600 people and is completely indexed. Price \$25.00 for non-members, \$22.50 for members.

The family names contained in these two volumes are: Adams, Ball, Barnard, Bartlett, Beede, Berry, Blood, Bowers, Braley, Browne, Butterfield, Case, Cheney, Cilley, Clement, Colburn, Colby, Crawford, Crosby, Cummings, Davis, Dustin, Estye, Farley, Farren, Fowler, Fox, George, Gilman, Goodhue, Gould, Greenleaf, Hardy, Hazelton, Heath, Hobart, Hoyt, Huckins, Jesseman, Jewell, Jewett, Johnson, Kelley, Kendall, Keyes, Kidder, Lovejoy, McClure, Melvin, Merrill, Moore, Morgan, Morse, Moses, Murch, Muzzey, Nelson, Nevens, Nevens, Norris, Noyes, Nutting, Ordway, Page, Parker, Perkins, Phelps, Pierce, Pike, Powers, Putney, Rawlins (Rollins), Remick, Roby, Rogers, Sanborn, Sealy (Cilley), Shuttuck, Smith, Vickery, Walker, Ward, Whipple, Whitmore, Wise, and Wright.

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