

Under the Hump

SOCIETY BUSINESS

NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- Wreath sale is under-way! Supply is limited so place your order soon.
- Annual bake sale is Nov. 14.
- Next DHS meeting is May 19, 2026. Time and location TBD.

DO YOU HAVE A PHOTO OF A PERSON OR PLACE WE CAN USE FOR A MYSTERY PHOTO? IF SO, PLEASE SUBMIT TO A NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE MEMBER TODAY! THANK YOU!

Last issue's mystery photo:
James Hanley



Reminder: Dues expire December 31, 2025. Dues for 2026 are being accepted. Please mail your dues to Mark Morse, Treasurer (see back of newsletter), which will help defray postage costs of reminders. If you have already submitted your dues please disregard this notice. A reminder will be sent nearer the December 31st deadline.

Fundraiser Updates

The DHS held two successful lawn and food sale fundraisers in September and October. The total profits for both sales were approximately \$1,800! A huge thank you to everyone who organized the sales, volunteered their time in various capacities, donated items, baked delicious treats, and bought items to support our society. We are grateful for your generosity!

Wreath Sale

Our annual wreath sale is on again for this year! Call Mark Morse at 244-7080 or Shawn Perry at 244-6496 to reserve your order. The supply is limited! Wreaths this year will cost \$25.00 each. We will also have mailing boxes available for your convenience at \$4.00 each. Everything else will remain the same as last year.



Annual November Bake Sale



Our annual fall bake sale is scheduled for Friday, November 14th, 9 am–11 am, in front of Kinney Drugs in Waterbury. Please bake your favorite cookies, muffins, brownies, donuts, pies, bread, baked beans, etc., and donate them to our sale so we can make it another successful fundraiser for the society. Thank you to all of our society members and friends that surprise us each year with their bake sale donations.

For anyone who owns a copy of the cookbook,
My Joy of Baking, by Helen B. Davis:
corrections to the cookbook have been posted on the
DHS website for your convenience.
<https://duxburyvt.com>

Archival/Preservation Committee Report

- Updated family files with new information regarding births, deaths, marriages, etc.
- Provided research support to Tammy Tevault of Winchester, Virginia on the Ward, Munson, and Turner families.
- Provided research support to Sean Tucker of Fairbanks, Alaska regarding his ancestral lineage to the Smalley family.

- Chair manufactured by the Demeritt Co. – Willis Morse Estate.
- Roll Top desk – Willis Morse Estate.
- Sheet Music composed by Dorothy Deane [AKA Dorothy Catchpaw] – Martha (Cameron) Ewell
- 1826 Justice of Peace certificate for David Crawford signed by Governor Ezra Butler – Larry Frasier.

Mame McKee * Alex Trinca * Martha Jillson * Moose Meadow Lodge
Tammy Tevault * Paige & Kevin Lavanway * Marge Gormel
Steve & Breta Grace * Cheri & Phil Lundblad
Multiple Donations collected at Society Meetings and Meeting House Canisters

FIRES IN DUXBURY

September 30, 1947

Ravelin Lumber Mill Destroyed By \$12,000 Fire

Duxbury Sawmill
Built in 1942; Office
Building Is Saved

Special to the Free Press

DUXBURY, Sept. 29.—The Ravelin lumber mill was destroyed by fire this morning, with loss estimated at \$12,000 by Fred Ravelin, owner. The modern mill with machinery and equipment was partially covered by insurance.

According to Ravelin, a semi-Diesel engine in a cement pit backfired and a spark ignited oil on the floor. The fire spread so rapidly that the Waterbury department was unable to save any of the building. However, the home and office building were not burned.

The mill was built and equipped in 1942, although Ravelin has been in the sawmill business for many years. Dressed dry lumber, unfinished lumber and much equipment, some of which was being stored there by Crossett Shonyo of South Burlington, was lost.

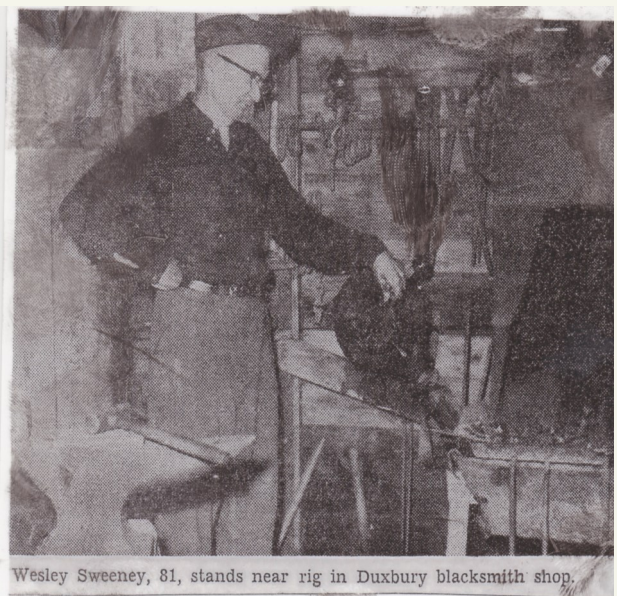
June 9, 1967

Mrs. Sweeney's Home In Duxbury Corner Levelled by Fire

DUXBURY — Another fire at Duxbury Corner took place Sunday in the early evening when the home of Mrs. Wesley Sweeney was leveled. The house sat close to the road and only a few feet from the home of Mrs. Madeline Kaiser, whose health is not too good, and who was removed from her home. Her home was saved, as were the rest of the buildings in the immediate vicinity.

With Mrs. Sweeney at the time the fire started was Beulah Bennett. Neither was hurt.

Not too long ago the property of Herbert Sheldon burned, just across the road from the Sweeney property.



Wesley Sweeney, 81, stands near rig in Duxbury blacksmith shop.

Undated photo but through researching, it is logical that the photo was taken between 1963-1964.

THE OLD PUMP LOG

The Old Pump Log

By Donnie Welch

Long ago, water was transported through a pump log system. This was accomplished by joining pump logs in tandem from the spring or water source to the home.

Cedar logs about eight feet long with a butt end diameter of six or eight inches were preferred. This species was very resistant to rotting and the heart or center was also soft, making it easy to bore out the heart, leaving a natural corridor for the water to flow through the log. The logs were then connected in a tangent line by molding the end of one log to the next repeatedly to complete the pump log system. An elevated spring was necessary to accomplish a gravity feed to the home.

Our Duxbury Historical Society has a pump log in its possession that was in use many, many years ago serving a home on what is now known as "Atwood Road." Which house this served will never be known, but I can remember when my dad replaced the system to our house in approximately the mid-1940s, by removing the pump logs and replacing them with a plastic water system. Being about six years old, I did not know what was happening, I just remember all those logs beside the ditch.

I was told that this particular pump log came from near the end of Atwood Road which makes me wonder if it originated from our property. We do know that it served a home along this road, and I know this spring was the only spring along this road, so this pump log is a gem to our society and the history of our town.

We are so thankful to have this primitive specimen, and are very grateful to the people that made this possible. Our society will be honored to harbor, protect, and display this and all of our town's artifacts.



Kelly Welch photos.

BOMBER CRASH ON CAMEL'S HUMP

By Brian Lindner

Myths of the Camel's Hump Bomber Crash

The following is a list of myths that have grown up in the local area about the bomber crash that took nine lives and left the 18-year-old sole survivor, PFC James W. Wilson of Jacksonville, FL with life-threatening injuries.

Wilson lost both hands and both feet due to frostbite and was the first of only two American soldiers to suffer that fate during World War Two. The myth is that he married one of his nurses. Not true. He did date one following the amputations and during his recovery, but he actually married a fellow student in college well after he was discharged from the hospital and the Army.

The weather on the night of the crash was nearly perfect. Although there were some blustery winds around 4,000 feet, there was not a cloud in the sky, and it was not snowing. The crash took place near 2 am but in the hours before daybreak the clouds did move in, and snow began to fall.

Famous National Geographic explorer, Norman Vaughn in his book My Life of Adventure, wrote an entire chapter on how it was he who discovered where the bomber was down, organized the first search party, found the survivor, saved his life, and became a life-long friend. The entire chapter is *total* fiction. Vaughn's claims were all *utterly false*.

Members of the rescue crew were alleged to have removed flight jackets and helmets from the deceased crewmen and were seen to wear them around town in the weeks and months after the crash. Not true. Eight of the nine deceased crewmen were so horribly dismembered that no piece of uniform clothing was recoverable. It is far more likely that members of the Vermont State Guard helped themselves to items of military clothing left on the side of the trail by members of the Army while they recovered the remains.

The crew was lost when they hit Camel's Hump and had been signaling their navigation lights to request help. Not true. The bomber was on course but too low.

Multiple "ear witnesses" later claimed to have heard the crash and reported such to authorities only to be ignored. Not true. The bomber crashed at 1:58 am on the coldest night of the year. Nobody was outdoors and listening to hear a crash miles away on the summit of a mountain.

As late as September of this year yet one more person has come forward to claim they were on the rescue crew that brought PFC Wilson off the mountain and have maintained contact with him by letter and Christmas cards down through the decades. Not true. Wilson was rescued by members of the Army, two civilian guides, Cadets from the Civil Air Patrol, and Waterbury

dentist Edwin Steele. Wilson did maintain occasional contact with Steele and some of the Cadets but nobody else.

The crew was on a secret mission. Not true. They were on a routine training flight specifically for the copilot to perfect his night flying and navigation skills.

The bomber had Top Secret gear on board. This one is true! At this late date in the war even training flights occasionally had a classified Norden bombsight on board. The Germans were supposed to have multiple examples from shot down American bombers therefore Nordens were no longer guarded as closely. (Small pieces of the Norden were recovered from the crash site in the years after the crash.)

The crew has been rumored to have been playing cards and not paying attention. Although it is possible some of the crew were playing cards to kill time, it is extremely unlikely the pilot or copilot were involved. The pilot, Lt. David Potter, was highly respected and known as a very safe pilot.

This has been the only airplane to crash on Camel's Hump. Again, not true. This was the first of four to crash on the mountain. The others were in 1946, 1961, and 1986.

The Army mistakenly left the body of one crewman on the mountain. This one is sadly true. The intact remains of Tail Gunner, PFC Richard C. Wynne (18) of Henryetta, OK was discovered by hikers in April of the next year. The body had been frozen since the time of the crash and was in plain sight. It remains a huge mystery of how Wynne's body was not found during recovery operations. (The Army doctor and dentist assigned to identify the remains of the crew have readily admitted they did their best in 1944 but recognized the dismembered remains were in such condition that missing one body was entirely possible.) What was in the first coffin sent to Wynne's family?

Running down these myths was sometimes very difficult and often took years to resolve. However, by far, the most difficult aspect of researching the Camel's Hump bomber crash has been the near-total lack of photographs taken of the wreckage during the 1940s and 50s. Thousands of hikers visited the site and probably hundreds left with photographs in their cameras - but where are they?

Interesting Facts

October 16, 2025 marked the 81st anniversary of the bomber crash on Camel's Hump.

Days ago, I received notice that a great-grandson was born to the sole survivor on the 81st anniversary of the crash. The child has been named after PFC James W. Wilson who died December 30, 2000.

THANKSGIVING DAY MEMORIES

Thanksgiving Day at the Willis & Barbara (Callahan) Morse Farm
1955 – 1965 and Beyond

As Remembered by Joyce (Morse) Gingras, Martha (Morse) Jillson, Mark Morse, and Laura (Morse) Titus
09/11/2025

Having a large family with seven children, Thanksgiving was a memorable occasion at our dairy farm on Crossett Hill. Though not unique from most other families at the time, it was a day we all looked forward to being together with family and having a feast to satisfy our appetites. I'm not sure my mother looked forward to all the effort that was required to feed us all, but she enjoyed seeing us all celebrate the day and the older sisters would pitch in with assistance getting the meal prepared.

Like most farm families at the time, we certainly were not flush with an abundance of cash to afford many luxury items, but we were never short of meat, garden produce and dairy products to provide most of the needs for a delicious Thanksgiving meal.

We usually ate our Thanksgiving dinner at the evening meal after the afternoon milking was completed. Of course, we had the traditional turkey dinner with all the fixings, including stuffing, gravy, green beans, winter squash, potatoes, salads, cranberry sauce and, if the stars aligned, we might even have a little venison to add to the fare. Of course, we had to have a plethora of desserts which included mincemeat, pumpkin and apple pies, fruit cake, and perhaps a combination of homemade cookies.

The day would begin with our mother getting the turkey and stuffing properly assembled in the large roaster. Sisters Margie and Judy would help with preparing all the other food items. Our father along with brother Bill, sisters Joyce and Martha would head to the barn to take on the morning chores of milking and feeding all the livestock which included cows, calves, work horses, pigs, chickens and of course the pet dogs and cats. Once all the animals were taken care of, the task of mucking out the stalls was undertaken. In later years, Mark and Laura were also added to the work crew in the barn. They also were in charge of replenishing the firewood for the kitchen stove (no electric or gas appliance then!).

After the morning milking and chores were completed Dad and Bill would take to the woods in hopes of getting a deer to add to the protein reserve if they hadn't already been fortunate to have bagged the "Big One." This was their chance to have a little respite from the daily farm chores.

Joyce and Martha were not as fortunate, as they were added to the kitchen crew for much of the rest of the day. Mark and Laura would have to be sure the wood box was fully stocked for the woodstoves prior to the evening meal.

By late afternoon, it was time to return to the barn for

the afternoon milking and feeding. This was started a little earlier than normal so our turkey dinner would not be served too late. Once that was completed it was finally time to eat our feast. The smells emanating from the kitchen had been enticing us all day, we were now ready to reap the rewards.

Like most families, we all took our assigned places at the table (which occasionally included paternal grandparents Clyde and Mary and our Aunt Lonie) and began the process of devouring the sacrificial bird and all that nature had graced us for our efforts.

Of course, everyone ate more than they should. Bill would make sure he had a small slice of every pie that was available for consumption. After the meal some of us retired to the living room to settle our meal and relax. Unfortunately, our mother and sisters were tasked with the clean-up before they could join the rest of us. After all the clean-up was completed, we all sat around telling of life's struggles and hopes for the future before retiring to begin a new day which we knew would bring turkey sandwiches (which Bill loved to take hunting) and another meal at night to finish up the leftovers.

In later years, after our father had passed and the family grew through marriages and children and we had moved off the farm, our mother wanted to continue the tradition of having us all together for Thanksgiving dinner. Judy stepped up to organize the day and Bill made arrangements with the Congregational Church to use their facilities for our gathering. We would cook the turkeys, biscuits, and many of the vegetables in the church kitchen. Each family would add their contributions to the day's meal as they arrived. Mark would carve the two turkeys and Bill would procure the wishbones from each to be distributed to the contestants of his choice, usually the youngest in attendance. After the clean-up, we all sat around chatting, playing cards and/or board games until evening beckoned us back to our own homes.

One year we were honored when Anson Tebbetts filmed a segment to appear on the WCAX evening newscast describing our Thanksgiving tradition. Some of the family members were a little camera shy, but it was well received by the television viewers.

As the family continued to grow to over 50 individuals of which many had moved farther away from the local area, and our mother had also passed, we reluctantly had to cease the tradition of assembling the entire family. We all now have our own Thanksgiving traditions, but we continue to cherish the times we spent together those many years.

P O T P O U R R I

On Halloween Night

When witches fly, children cry,
Also with the devil.
But, when witches fly, I do not cry,
The one who cries, is the devil.

When the devil goes by,
Black cats yawl,
They yawl and yawl and yawl,
But, little white kittens only bawl.

So, on Halloween night,
Witches fly,
The devil goes by, too.
Black cats yawl,
And kittens bawl,
All on Halloween night.

At the end of Halloween night,
You have a bag full of candy.
Tootsie rolls, chocolate bars, lollipop sticks.
The kind of time I had, was dandy.

In the morning, after Halloween,
I eat up all the candy.
And do you know what, today?
That candy wasn't dandy.

I'll tell you why it wasn't dandy,
I ended up with a stomach ache,
After eating so much candy!
That's why it wasn't dandy!

~Kevin Crossett, age 9
Brook Street School, Grade 4
November 3, 1964

Vermont Homespun ~ As broadcast by "Old Squier" WDEV ~ Copyright Lloyd Squier

Harvest Supper Crowd

When comes the Harvest time of year
The thing I like the best—
The days that linger in the mind
Much longer than the rest,
Are pleasant afternoons with friends
On back roads, all ablaze,
To just enjoy the country roads
In Harvest Supper days.

You travel all the hilltop roads,
Nor seek the shortest way,
Discovering new beauty spots
On every pleasant day;
And all this satisfaction comes,
It's always been allowed,
Because you took the time to join
The Harvest Supper crowd.

For every church in every town,
In every country place,
Will plan a whopping Harvest meal—
A sort of thanks for Grace,
Which through the year has come their way
Where they will meet their kin,
Partake of fulsomeness achieved,
And ask their neighbor in.

And all are welcome, every one,
And folks will come for miles,
Abandoning their daily cares.
They bring their brightest smiles,
And often fill the car with folks
Who, too, enjoy the ride,
But most of all well fed content
From Harvest fare, inside.

Some Harvest Suppers feature things
That grow upon the land,
Like cabbage, turnip, carrots, squash,
Heaped up, you understand—
With boiled potatoes, home made breads,
And hunks of good corned beef;
And everyone must help himself
'Till hunger gets relief.

Some others draw the city folks
From places they abide
Because the old time chicken pie
Is thick, and deep, and wide,
The "fixin's" constitute a meal—
And "seconds" make you laugh—
You're urged to eat three dollars worth
And pay for only half.

Then home made pies and frosted cakes
Come down from off the shelf,
And you must sample more than one—
"And please to serve yourself."
Agreeably, you eat dessert,
Which you are not allowed—
No wonder people like to join
The Harvest Supper crowd!

You meet some friends, and make some more,
And when it's time to leave
You rise, somewhat reluctantly,
To end this short reprieve.
And at the door they always say,
"You'll come again next year?"
We wonder if it's 'cause we might,
Or might not, which they fear.

We do a little purchasing,
Then take the homeward trail,
While hoping they had recognized
We patronized the Sale,
And every single one who went,
Right then and there avowed
He'd never miss a chance to join
A Harvest Supper crowd!

**D U X B U R Y H I S T O R I C A L S O C I E T Y , I N C .
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DONATE TODAY / SUPPORT THE RESTORATION PROJECT

www.DuxburyVT.com

**DON'T FORGET THE NEXT MEETING -
MAY 19, 2026. TIME & LOCATION TBD.**

**D U X B U R Y H I S T O R I C A L
S O C I E T Y , I N C .
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