

Under the Hump

SOCIETY BUSINESS

NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- The next meeting will be held on May 20th, 7 pm, at the Meeting House in South Duxbury. Watch for special events before then by visiting our website.

GUESS WHO?



Become a member of the Duxbury Historical Society!

Dues are \$10 (ten) per calendar year, per person. To become a member, mail your dues to Mark Morse, Treasurer (see back of newsletter), or attend a meeting and submit your dues in person. Dues expire on the last day of each year.

Reminder: Dues expired December 31, 2024. Please mail your 2025 dues to Mark Morse, Treasurer (see back of newsletter), which will help defray postage costs of reminders. Dues are \$10 (ten) per calendar year, per person. If you have already submitted your dues please disregard this notice.

End of 2024 Sale Updates

November Food Sale

The food sale set a new sales record! We netted \$402! Thank you to everyone who donated food and helped in any way. Let's break the record again this November!

Wreath Sale

The wreath sale was also a success...we made \$780 for sales plus some extra donations. Great work, everyone!

"Pie for Breakfast" Fundraiser

"Citizens Have Your Say Day" was held on January 11 in the cafeteria at Crossett Brook Middle School. Folks were asked to bring a pie to share at the "Pie for Breakfast" tables. The Duxbury Historical Society served the pies and refreshments. The DHS thanks the Cold Hollow Cider Mill for their donation of cider and the Cabot Creamery for their donation of cheese slices and whipped cream. We also want to thank all of the individuals who donated food, helped serve, and helped clean up. Proceeds from the pie and refreshments tables netted \$251 for the DHS.



Shawn Perry photo.

SOCIETY BUSINESS

Archival/Preservation Committee Report

Members: Lori Morse, Bonnie Morse, Mark Morse

- Updated family files with new information regarding births, deaths, marriages, etc.

Donated Artifacts/Documents/Ephemera

- Duxbury Corner School Student Photos – Becky Green

Monetary Donations (as of 01/11/2025)

Multiple Unnamed Donors – Open House, Food Sale, Holiday Sing-Along, Pie for Breakfast

Phyllis Arsenault-Berry

Jeanne Atchinson

JW Auto

Lisa Beliveau & Stephen Lindsay

Maureen & Andrew Bothfeld

Dale Christie

Carol & Fred Collins

Arthur Cubit

Christopher Curtis & Tari Swenson

Elizabeth & Dwight Day

Cathy & Shane Fisk

Marge & Ed Gormel

Breta & Steve Grace – Memory of Bob Grace

Breta & Steve Grace

Kim Greenwood & Ian Orman - X2

Harold Grout

James Hanley

Anne Hutchinson - X2

Lori Jackson

Martha Jillson

John Kerrigan

Linda & Richard King

Stephanie Koonz & James Dryden

Barb & Mo Lavanway

M & B Properties, LLC

Joyce Manchester

Marshall-Carney Family – Memory of Katherine & Howard Sherman

Mame McKee

Sarah Page & Robert Westcott

Charlene Peirce

Christine & Jake Rivers

Bonnie & Joe Rutledge

Ames Robb & Todd Hill

Cindy & John Senning

Susan & George Seymour – Memory of Bill Morse

Connie Smith

Mary & Ken Spencer

Scott Stockwell

Shannon & Mike Thompson

John Tobin, Jr.

Wendy & Jim Welch

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Ken Spencer

The joyful singing that filled the air in the Meeting House on December 15, 2024, marked the first public exposure for a few changes to the building:

- Obvious right away as you walked in was the new Duxbury Historical Society sign hanging in the same spot as the historical church sign. Even though we don't want much to look new, that modern addition, a custom purchase from Wood and Wood in Waitsfield, looks good. Our home is now identified.
- Coming after one of the coldest nights of the year, the event was a test of the ability of the room to hold heat. It was 8 degrees outside and 30 degrees inside when the heaters were turned on at dawn. We were singing in a 55 degree room at the end of the afternoon, but I don't think too many minded. Even though we now have storm windows, there is no insulation behind those plaster walls. It would have to be added in the future if we would like to have a four season event space. However, our December event was probably put to one of its toughest heating tests in 2024.
- The Meeting House was wonderfully bright with the freshly cleaned and protected windows and with the temporary removal of the upper outdoor shutters.
- The electric project was concluded with the electric panel cover at the front of the hall. Photocopy renderings of the distinctive wall paper were a pretty good match for the original and provided an example of how future touchups might be done.

We look forward to having future events with presentations projected on a screen in the Meeting House. The low hanging chandelier currently creates a visibility problem from some of the seats. Fortunately that problem should be remedied in 2025 without much difficulty. The present light fixtures are probably the original oil lamps that were wired for bulbs when the building got electricity in 1948. Before that the chandelier had to be raised and lowered in order to fill the oil lamps. A pulley and bucket counterweight mechanism allowed this to happen. You can see in the picture that the apparatus is still in the attic today. That pulley looks a little rusty, but we'll see how it works...

At our November meeting the Building Committee committed to applying for a matching grant to paint the Sunshine Hall. Grants from the 1772 Foundation are administered by the Preservation Trust of Vermont. This is one of only a few grant opportunities that cover painting projects. As we have mentioned before, this is an expensive endeavor due to the presence of lead paint. The application process for this grant in 2025 is under way. The upcoming committee looks forward to looking for other grant opportunities and for prioritizing projects for the warm months of the year.



Ken Spencer photo.

Pulley and bucket counterweight mechanism in the Meeting House.



Christian Magnani photo.

Our new sign outside the Meeting House.



Shawn Perry photo.

Holiday Sing-Along on December 15, 2024.

BASEBALL IN DUXBURY

Duxbury's Diamonds in the Rough

By Steve Grace

In these modern times there are many sports that we can view around the clock on our television sets or smart phones. Baseball, basketball, soccer, hockey, tennis, golf, and other sports - men's and women's teams - professional and amateur - we are virtually inundated with choices of what to follow as our favorite sport.

Things were decidedly different in the 1940's and 50's when I was a kid up on our Crossett Hill farm. The only exposure I got to sports as a young child was via an antique radio or one of the local newspapers. My dad and mom received the Burlington Free Press (BFP) in the mail every day and we had an old Philco radio that got one station - WDEV in Waterbury. The BFP had a modest sports section, often sharing space on one page of the paper. I became addicted to the sports page as soon as I could read. Baseball coverage ruled both the radio and newspaper sports world in those days. WDEV broadcast the Boston Braves' games in the 1940's, and then switched to the Boston Red Sox in 1950. I started out a Braves fan, then became a diehard 'Sawx' fan when WDEV started broadcasting the Sox games, the transfer of alliances made easier by the Braves' move to Milwaukee in 1953. Some of the local kids who must have had better radios with more station choices followed other teams. The Yankees had a significant following - the Yankees' attraction was pretty obvious - they had by far the best team in the major leagues for most of the years of my youth. My neighbors and good friends, the Welch boys, David and Donnie, were Cardinal fans for some reason or other. I thought they were crazy. Hell, anyone who didn't love the Sawx had to be crazy.

Baseball ruled the roost in the sports world for a great majority of the adults and children of my generation. We kids wanted to play our beloved game and found ways to do it, and a significant number of our parents and other adults also loved the game enough to want to play baseball in the fleeting moments that they weren't working. My dad wasn't one of them, though. By the time he came out of the woods from logging all day he wanted nothing to do with playing baseball.

At our one-room school up on Crossett Hill and, I suspect, other similar schools scattered around the Duxbury hills, the teachers and kids found an area at or very close to the school where kids could 'divvy up sides' and play games on makeshift diamonds. At our Crossett Hill one-room school and later at the Duxbury Corner School, we were equal-opportunity champions for our times. Any girls interested in playing were welcome - some of them were recruited. When you have so few students in your school that you can't field two all-male teams, necessity breeds inclusion. I remember a few of those girls - Rachel Sherman, Callie Welch and Freda Morse come quickly to mind - that were a lot better players than many boys of their age. The best player by far on the 'diamond' just in front of the two-holer up at our Crossett Hill one room school was our teacher, Marianna (Beaton) Towne. She was barely twenty years old, just graduated from Johnson Normal School, a tall, rangy, athletic lady who stayed in good shape from walking/running from Duxbury Corner to our schoolhouse up on top of the hill most mornings - I would guess about four miles. She bounced more than a few line drives off that two-holer, even bounced one off my forehead one day which frightened her mightily and caused great merriment among my fellow players as I lay prone on the ground.

The kids weren't the only ones who loved the



One of the iterations of North Duxbury's Town Team in the early 20th century. Note the fellows proudly displaying their "ND" logo on their uniforms. A fine looking crew! The two bats look like they may have been reclaimed peavey handles. The picture was most likely taken on Pete's Field in North Duxbury. (Photo courtesy of Joan (Lewis) Haskins.)

Front row, left to right: Roy Davis, Willie Durkee, Lew Morse, "Old" Hale Conley. Back row, left to right: John Hoy, Lewis Caderec, Willie Caderec, Harold Lewis, Nelson Caderec, Alba Durkee, Wilmore Baldwin.

BASEBALL IN DUXBURY

game and were determined to compete in organized games. There were adult teams formed in North Duxbury, South Duxbury, Duxbury Corner, and Rock Bridge/Palisades (the talc mine area just southeast of Duxbury Corner) through several decades in those times (1850 - 1960). When one of these teams was short of players for a game, area youngsters served as fill-ins. Diamonds sprung up in backyards, corn fields, and cow pastures. It was as true in Duxbury as it was in a famous sports movie - 'if you build it, they will come.'

In North Duxbury, old timers still talk about Pete's Field, a diamond on a flat piece of land above the North Duxbury one-room school located at that time near the intersection of River Road and Camel's Hump Road. There are multiple articles I've read in newspaper archives about the North Duxbury teams of that era playing against neighboring town teams on Pete's Field. It's obvious from this research that North Duxbury had some excellent teams. The two Lewis brothers, Paul and Lynn, Jr., both of whom passed away in the last ten years or so, were prominent members of those teams for many years. Paul was a fine player, but Lynn really stood out as an outstanding player and team leader. Both of them became varsity baseball players at Waterbury High School - Lynn was both an excellent pitcher and hitter and team captain. The Lewis brothers' father, Lynn Lewis, Sr, appears in many articles in the Waterbury Record in an earlier era - he was an outstanding player as well. The baseball genes had to have been dominant in the Lewis family. Nelson Lewis and Clair (Lefty) Lewis's names and pictures appear in articles in the local newspapers of the early 1900's. And in my own generation of local ballplayers, another member of the Lewis family was a blossoming star at Waterbury High School in the 1950's - a red-headed, flame throwing pitcher, Merl (Red) Lewis, pitching on the varsity baseball team at WHS as a freshman and sophomore. In one of the saddest chapters in WHS sports history, Red Lewis accidentally shot himself in 1956 while handling a revolver which was assumed to be unloaded while hanging out with two brothers and a close friend, bleeding to death before medical help could arrive at the scene.

(An aside: Red Lewis was one of the multiple members of the WHS Class of 1957 who died in tragic accidents in



From left: Roger Brier, Clair (Lefty) Lewis, Sid Brier. Undated photo—likely early 20th century. (Photo courtesy of Joan (Lewis) Haskins.)



Lynn Lewis, Sr. (father of Lynn, Jr. and Paul Lewis) - likely taken in early 20th century. (Photo courtesy of Joan (Lewis) Haskins.)



From left, Lynn, Jr. and Paul Lewis. Picture taken in 1947. (Photo courtesy of Joan (Lewis) Haskins.)



Lynn Lewis, Jr. (Photo courtesy of Joan (Lewis) Haskins.)

BASEBALL IN DUXBURY

the course of one year of school at WHS. Our school and the whole community was in shock for a long, long time after those sad months. But that's another story...)

The Cadoret/Cadoract/Caderec - never have figured out the correct spelling - brothers came up in my conversations with Marianna Towne and Lynn Lewis about those North Duxbury town teams. The word used frequently to describe the 'C' brothers was that they were 'tough.' I got a chuckle out of one of my conversations with Marianna when she was talking about the 'C' boys - she smiled ever so faintly and with a bit of a twinkle in her eye told me, "Folks didn't mess with the 'C' boys." In one picture of that era there are Hoy, Morse, Durkee, and Davis fellows in uniform, all names from multi-generation North Duxbury families in earlier and current eras.

Another area 'diamond in the rough' was located in the cow pasture in back of Howard and Kathryn Sherman's farm on Route 100 in Duxbury - the property now owned by the Sherman's daughter, Kathi, and her husband Robert Grace. I'm not sure of the genesis of that field, but I do know that Howard and Kathryn were generous, community-minded people and loving parents - combining those traits with a love of baseball led to the creation of that field, I believe. It became a gathering place for both kids and adults who loved the game of baseball and would come from miles around to play in both pick-up and organized games at the field. The field was located on excellent pasture land, so the Sherman family's milk cows, young stock, or horses were often grazing in the field when it wasn't in play as a ball diamond. Consequently, there were often fresh mounds of cow or horse manure to negotiate while fielding a batted ball. Stepping in a fresh pile of cow flop while running the bases could result in a nasty fall - in both literal and figurative senses. And fielding a line drive in the outfield after it had passed through - or worse yet, lodged in - a fresh pile of cow flop was a recurring nightmare for outfielders. One of the Sherman kids, Stub, an avid baseball fan and player, was one of my best friends of that era, so I spent a lot of time on that ball diamond. My brothers Dick, John and I played games at that field with the Shermans, Morses, Atwoods, Demas, Grouts, McGraths, Welchs, Greens, Kidders, Lewis, ... I recall John and I heading down off Crossett Hill in the late afternoon/early evening hours in the summer months when the days were long, cutting through the woods to shorten the distance to the field, playing until it was too dark to see the ball, then heading home through the woods in the dark.

In my earlier years on Crossett Hill, in the 1940's, while I was attending the one room school on Crossett Hill, and the above Sherman family members were strangers (anyone not living within a mile from our farm was a stranger in those days), the local Crossett Hill men and women would play pick-up games on what we called Murphy's field, a nice level meadow on the property of Danny and Alice Murphy, just below our farm - now the Spencer's home - on the hill. The Ferd Morse family, the Waterhouse family, the Murphy boys, the Farnham boys, the Clarks, the Pelkeys, the Graces, the Bobars, and others would gather at the field, choose up sides, and play ball. I recall a time or two when we were having an especially good time or enjoying a highly competitive game and it grew too dark to see the ball, Hayden Waterhouse would drive his stake-bed farm truck into a position where he could turn on the lights, allowing the game to continue for a few more precious minutes. Hayden was one of my heroes at the time. He was fun-loving guy, an impressive hitter and talented at chasing a fly ball. Rumor had it that he was also pretty adept at chasing the ladies, too, but that only made him more heroic in my eyes.

Many youngsters who played on these crude fields went on to attend Waterbury High School and played on its baseball team. My brother John, Donnie Welch, Stub Sherman, Charlie O'Brien and I, for instance, played together on WHS varsity teams in the late 1950's. The Rock Bridge area produced many excellent WHS players - Bud Eastman, Dick Russel, Bill, Harry, and Charlie O'Brien, Dick and Roger Lemery come quickly to mind. We were all graduates of Duxbury's diamonds in the rough. I did not do enough in-depth research to compile a list of the Duxbury kids



One of the multitude of teams that the Sherman Field diamond produced through the years. This picture was taken in the late 1940s, I believe. Since there are no uniforms involved, this is most likely an 'informal' team, possibly ready for a contest with one of the neighboring towns. This motley crew is identified as follows: Back row, from left: Richard Grace, Lawrence Kidder, Richard McGrath, Ben Kidder. Front row, left to right: Donnie Welch, Earl Demas, Donald Demas, David Welch, Roger Merchant. (Photo courtesy of Don Welch and Connie Sherman.)

BASEBALL IN DUXBURY



Carl Welch as a young man - probably taken in the 1940s. Carl was not only an outstanding baseball player but, along with two brothers, Howard and Gerald, a decorated WW2 veteran. (Photo courtesy of Don Welch.)

who went on to play high school baseball, but I'm positive there were many more that I have overlooked.

Of the many youngsters that graduated from the local crude diamonds in Duxbury to roles on Waterbury High School and local town teams, two names, Carl Welch and Lynn Lewis, come up often when I talk to old-timers about past standout players. Carl was an outstanding player in the era from the 1930's to the 1950's. He starred on the local fields in Duxbury, then at WHS, where he was not only a standout player but team captain. After graduating from WHS in 1940, Carl worked in the Waterbury/Duxbury area and in Claremont, NH, staying active on the ball field playing for local 'town teams,' adding to his reputation as an excellent player. In 1942 Carl enlisted in the US Marines and shipped out to the South Pacific where he served with distinction until the end of the war. Carl's brother, Gerald, a fine baseball player himself at WHS, also enlisted in the armed forces as did another Welch brother, Howard. When Carl returned from the war, he was 'recruited' for a job in a sawmill in Newbury, Vermont. The owner of the mill managed a local town team in that area. He had obviously seen Carl in action on a baseball

diamond. He needed a man for sawmill duties, but Carl's baseball skills were a far greater attraction for the owner than his expertise as a mill employee. Carl lived up to the guy's expectations.

Some of my older traveling companions, now deceased guys like Dac Rowe, Sam Parks, and Ken Sabin - guys who loved the game and were fine athletes themselves - raved about the skills and the character of Carl Welch. I wish I'd seen the guy play, but I was too young and too grounded to our farm on Crossett Hill.

Lynn Lewis played in that same era, a bit later than Carl Welch. He was a crafty southpaw pitcher and an above-average hitter, a mainstay and team captain on his WHS teams of the 1940's, graduating in 1947. Lynn also played for many years on town teams in Duxbury and Waterbury after he graduated from WHS. He was a great guy, a lover of Duxbury and Lewis family history. He loved to tell a story and took his time telling it - no stones were left unturned. He was not only an excellent baseball player but an accomplished deer, bear, and rabbit hunter. I saw him pitch a couple times at different locations. One of them was at the diamond out in Sherman's field in the 1950's. Lynn was getting a bit long in the tooth by that time, but he still was adept at throwing a slow, tantalizing curveball that the big boys had a terrible time squaring up for decent contact.

I often drive by the fields and farms where these ball diamonds were in use when I was a young boy. The diamonds have long ago disappeared. Only an old timer who had played on those fields would now recognize them as past ball fields. Trees, lawns, beaver ponds, and homes now occupy the places I fielded a grounder or caught a fly ball or stepped in a pile of fresh cow manure in those bygone days. But the vision of those earlier times still lingers in my mind - I still remember with great fondness the games I and others played on those 'diamonds in the rough.'



Carl Welch, outstanding Duxbury baseball player in the 1935-1955 era. He starred for and was captain of his Waterbury High School (WHS) Longhorns on the baseball diamond. Carl played on multiple town teams in Vermont and New Hampshire. This photo was taken, I believe, after he graduated from WHS and was playing on a town team. His baseball exploits were interrupted by honorable, decorated service in WW2 in the Pacific Islands. (Photo courtesy of Don Welch.)

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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DON'T FORGET THE NEXT MEETING - MAY 20,
7 PM, MEETING HOUSE, SOUTH DUXBURY

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