

WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

Volume I ... Issue IV

January/February 2004

Normal Life — *and* Fast Cars — Return to Route 121

Route 121 is done for the winter. What a long project. How often did I hear, "What is going on with Route 121? Do I have to go around?"

I felt it important to express my thoughts on the weeks of work that went into fixing the road after the August 3rd flood. I don't know much about road construction, so I had no idea of the time involved to fix it properly. I am grateful to Rodney and the road crew for choosing Mr. Gurney and his crew to put the road back together. The Gurney folks are nice, hardworking people, and I'm glad to have had the good fortune to be right in the middle of their job site!

On the one hand, it was kind of a drag to get my son to the bus stop

at the Four Corners when you couldn't get up the road, but there are worse things, so really, it was hardly an inconvenience. Rodney and Bill made an effort to inform me where the workers would be so I could plan my trips accordingly. And the Gurney group were always polite and helpful. I had help carrying groceries, my dogs received treats, and my boys got big waves and honks from dump truck drivers. Mr. Gurney himself helped me stack wood!

Three months is a long time to have strangers in your yard, and it could have been much different. Instead, I met really nice people and my boys had bucket loaders, dump trucks and excavators to drool over.

A big plus in all the disruption was

the slow traffic. Signs have been ordered to remind drivers to take it easy and watch for children. Speeding on 121 has always been a problem, but I won't harp on that now. Instead, the whole 121 experience has been a good reminder to keep my own actions in check — follow the speed limit, be respectful of my neighbors and take things slow.

It was a long time getting the road finished, but it seems far better to take your time and get it right. This seems like a good thought for everything we do ...

Kindly,

Beth McDonald

VT Rt. 121

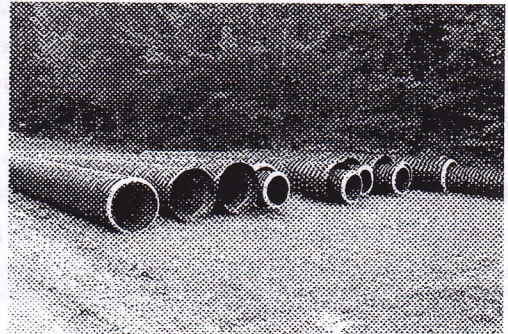
Thanks to Rodney, Bill and the Gurney Folks

Driving along Route 121, much of the work that took place after the August floods is apparent. New culverts are in place in many spots, and large stones line ditches to hold soil in place.

After the August storms, the Gurney company came to our rescue. One call from Rodney, and their only question was "How many trucks do you need?". The extent of the damage and repairs involved had to be assessed by various government agencies. As awful as the storm and its aftermath were, Windham is fortunate that money from the State of Vermont and the Federal government will help defray the costs of the massive repair effort.

At this point, the entire road has been paved with a base

coat of blacktop. This was critical to maintaining the highly traveled road through the winter months. Many guardrails have been put in place. The final stages of this work will be completed after the weather improves in the spring. We're all thankful to those who worked so tirelessly to get things back to fairly normal for those who live and travel along the road.



Windham News & Notes is Thriving

We've told you before about how well the newsletter has been received. To our delight, we continue to hear from new subscribers. The latest count is 180. We took an idea that had been talked about and considered for some time, and with help from all of you, our loyal subscribers, turned it into a reality. The feedback has been wonderful. The turnout at some recent events was higher than usual, so we are happy for any small part that we may have played in getting the word out.

Like all things, Windham News & Notes is changing, and you will see other names appear in future issues as part of the staff. Having helped to make the newsletter a reality, I am now going to be focusing my energies on other community projects that I have been asked to get involved with. You will hear more about them in future issues. One project is "Windham Wisdom – Gardening at 2000 Feet", the gardening book fundraiser that we are putting together for

the WCO. The other, which will appear first, is a "Who, What, Where and When of Windham", a guide for newcomers and old timers alike, with lots of details and information about our town and the surrounding area, local services, and more.

It's been great to help get this newsletter off and running, and as part of the original team, I will always have a keen interest in it. I look forward to seeing more from all of you in future issues. Remember, this is your newsletter Windham, so please see it as the place to share news and thoughts that you may have.

Thanks for all of your support and compliments as we make WN&N a part of so many lives around here.

All the best,

Lydia Pope France

Windham Elementary School

The soccer seasons at WES has wrapped up, but students will be participating in ski programs from January through early March. The school now has a basketball team, coached by Kathy Campbell. There will be a public meeting about the upcoming school budget in early February, in preparation for March town meeting. Date for the public meeting has not yet been set, please check with the Town Office if you'd like to attend.

Working for a Good Cause

Kathy Campbell and Beth Ires manned the booth at the Townshend Pumpkin Fair, where they raised nearly \$245 to pay for soccer and other sporting equipment for the school after it was vandalized. All sorts of wonderful baked goods, jams, cookie-in-a-jar mixes and more were donated by community members. The weather cooperated and it was a wonderful fall day with a good crowd on the Green in Townshend, and by day's end, the booth had pretty much sold out of all its wares. Thanks to all who helped make this fundraiser a success.

State Government News

The January 2004 session of the VT General Assembly convenes at 10AM on Tuesday, January 6, 2004. Decisions made under the golden dome impact all our lives. Communication is essential to good policy decisions.

Please contact me anytime with your questions, concerns, ideas or problems regarding our VT state government.

During the session, you can contact me Tuesday through Friday at the State House by phone at 1.800.322.5616, and leave a message; by mail at House of Representatives, 115 State Street, Drawer 33, Montpelier VT 05633-5201. My e-mail address is obie@leg.state.vt.us. Otherwise you can reach me at 802.463.3094 or 72 Atkinson Street, Bellows Falls, VT 05101-1321. Please do not hesitate to contact me. Together we govern.

Regards,

Michael J. Obuchowski



Kathy and Beth at the Pumpkin Fair

Glebe Mountain Collaborative Meetings

To the Editors:

Wind-generated energy is a "hot" and important issue for Vermont, as it is needed to increasingly supplement other electric energy sources in the future. The Searsburg wind farm is planning to expand.

Several others are being studied, including the Glebe Mountain ridge proposal.

Attendance at monthly Glebe Mountain Collaborative meetings in Londonderry since July lacks Windham representation, even though Glebe *is* Windham's back (or front) yard, with the proposed access road in Windham.

I am surprised and alarmed that the Town of Windham has not sent a representative. And where are Windham voters and vacation homeowners? This project badly needs citizen involvement and representation from Windham, the only town which occupies Glebe beside Londonderry.

The next meeting is Tuesday, January 20, 2004, 5 PM, location to be determined. These meetings are very informative. Let them also reflect the interests of the Windham community. For the location of the January 20, 2004 meeting, you may call me several days ahead, (802) 254-3484.

-Maggie Newton

The Windham Volunteer Fire Company's Annual Appeal

The good news is the Windham Fire Company has purchased a much-needed tanker truck. This was made possible by many generous donations and support, including the tireless work of the Fire Company volunteers at their annual auction and BBQ. They have received a grant from the Stratton Foundation, which paid for a new hose. The Thrifty Attic donated a portable water pump.

Now they are asking residents, homeowners and friends of Windham to send cash donations so that they can continue to cover working expenses, and so that they can get the new truck painted "Windham" (it currently reads Granby CT!). Please give generously. Checks may be sent to The Windham Volunteer Fire & Rescue Co., Inc., 290 White Road, North Windham VT 05143. Their work is so important to us all. Let's try to make it a little easier for them by getting them the things they need to do a great job.



Windham Library

The library reading club — the Windham Chatter Bookies — is in its third month. This month's book is "Chocolat", by Joanne Harris. Many of you will remember the movie that was based on this book. We chose it because it would be fun and festive to read around the holidays. If you have read the book and would like to join in the discussion, please come to our group on Wednesday January 7th, from 3:30 to 4:30. We have a lively discussion, complete with refreshments. New members are always welcome.

If you would like more information about the library, or if you are interested in joining the book circle, call Bev Carmichael at 802.875.4874

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Alice Maria Stowell Bliss

I try to be sure to turn on my radio at W T S A Brattleboro, at about 10 minutes to 7 on weekday mornings. At this time you will hear the rooster crow followed by Alice's voice announcing, "time for the morning almanac with Arlo Mudgett."

Alice is the lucky thirteenth child born to "The Champion family of Windham County", so named in 1911 by the "Bellows Falls Times." Elias Stowell and Minnie Robinson Stowell went on to produce sixteen children in all. This whole family made quite a splash in the small town of Windham, Vermont.



believe most of the Windham news and notes readers would not recognize that these "dinner pails" were covered tin pails that you purchased full of lard in the good old days. Mrs. Stowell also made all the children's clothes and also made mittens from the good parts of worn out

woolen clothing. I myself remember doing that as a young girl so that there would always be dry mittens when we had to go out. They were not of the best fit and it was quite clumsy to pick up some things. My mother could not knit but she could crochet beautifully. Most of the Windham news and notes

readers don't remember the lack of cash during the depression to buy some of these needed items so it was rather ingenious to see how you could manage.

There is so much more that we learned visiting with Alice that day, but we are going to save some of it for a later newsletter and then perhaps talk about the rising cost of real estate as the years went by. The country here in Windham in depression times would also be a good topic. So many of our readers do not remember those days. So good-bye for now.

-Margaret Woodruff

Lydia Pope .France and I went over to visit Alice this last fall before she left for Florida. We really had a great time. Alice is a remarkable walking history book of growing up in the old days and in such a large family. The theme throughout the talk was the way the whole family worked smoothly together to provide daily comfortable living for such a large family.

Alice remembers her mother baking 10 loaves of bread every night to be sure there was enough for the multitude of dinner pails that had to be prepared for the next day. I

A Note from Alice Stowell Bliss

After our meeting with Alice, we received the following note – another fond recollection of her family and Windham. Enjoy it ...

Gary Chandler Earle and Evelyn M. Stowell were married in the Windham Congregational Church in October of 1940, at 2:00 PM by Reverend Fowler of Chester. This was the first wedding held there in 75 years.

Guy was the son of Gary and Annie Earle of Chester, and Evelyn M. Stowell the daughter of Elias and Minnie Stowell of Windham.

Guy served over twenty years in the Air Force, and also was on the staff as an Instructor in civil engineering at Norwich University

- Alice Stowell Bliss

Strong Living Exercise Program Completes Fall Session

The 12-week Strong Living weight-training exercise program for persons over 50 completed a twelve-week session in December. It took place at the Windham Meeting House. It was co-sponsored by the Vermont Department of Health and Tufts University. Tufts developed the program to enhance strength, bone and balance in older people. No winter class is scheduled, but some members

plan to meet in their homes for maintenance exercises. A spring 2004 class is possible if there is enough interest. Class size is 14 persons maximum. Those wishing to be called about a spring session, whether a newcomer or previous participant, can contact Maggie Newton, leader, at (802) 254-3484.

05359

Did you know that you can use either Windham or West Townshend in your mailing address? We say, use Windham, let everyone know where we live, even if the post office isn't right here in town !!!

The Fire Company reminds everyone to check their fire extinguishers and the batteries in their smoke detectors and carbon monoxide sensors.

And if you don't have these items, the Chief says "Please Get Them".

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Reflections on Windham Meeting House

The big white church-like building on top of the hill in Windham Center houses several organizations including the Congregational Church. But in spite of its looks, it's not only the church; it's the Windham Meetinghouse, and it belongs - upstairs and downstairs - to all people of Windham, whether they attend church or not.

It's likely that the building was built with a steeple because virtually everyone in town went to church in the early 1800s.. Times have changed, and although the members of the church administer the building, its uses include secular as well as church activities. Among them:

Bev Carmichael leads discussions every month for the Book Club, part of the Windham Library's programs; Pete Newton chairs the Friends of the Meetinghouse, which raises money for the preservation and improvement of the building; Kathy Campbell directs the Windham Summer Day Camp with the help of Beth McDonald and many others; Dr. Maggie Newton leads a strength training class; the Windham Community Organization (Carolyn Chase, President) organizes harvest suppers, BBQs, and square dances; Pastors Fran Hackenson and Margaret Woodruff conduct weddings and funerals and well as weekly services; Donna Koutrakos moderates Town Meeting every March. All this happens at the Windham Meetinghouse.

There are concerts, lectures, political discussions, holiday programs, slide shows. Both floors of the building - perhaps the two biggest rooms in town, and a great kitchen - are available for use by people who live in Windham. Margaret Woodruff (874-4302) does the scheduling.

- David Crittenden

Letters to the Editors

We received this nice letter from Cate Kelley, and were going to save it for spring time. But as we go to press in the midst of winter storms, we thought it might be nice to include it now, to remind us all of the blooms that are sleeping under the snow ...

Celebrating Mother's and Father's Day is a familiar custom, but about 40 years ago at the Windham Meeting House, a very unusual celebration to honor *children* took place for many years.

Every Spring, as part of the regular Church service, we were surprised to find beautiful rows of petunias lined neatly beneath the pulpit in celebration of Children's Day. After the Children's Chorus had sung (with the assistance of Jane Newton), we quietly, almost solemnly,

filed forward to find our favorite flower. It was almost a hard lesson. We had to choose quickly and learn not to envy the choice of those neighbors who were first in line by the understanding that there was plenty for all of us, and the reassurance that if we looked carefully we would find just the right one.

I will always remember Edna Winship and Angelette Stowell for this wonderful and ingenious occasion. They were the ones who somehow found the time each Spring to start these flowers for us. Each tiny seed provided a miraculous zap of color and gave each child the importance and pleasure of a hard choice!

- Cate Kelley

WCO Ham Supper and Square Dance

The Windham Meeting House was put to good use back on November 15th, when the Windham Community Organization hosted a Ham Supper and Square Dance. The night was a big success, raising \$590 after expenses. The group gave \$50 to the Meeting House/Church to defray the cost of heating and other utilities, and the remaining money was split between the WCO coffers and the Windham Elementary School Extracurricular Fund.

The WCO once again increased the amount of their holiday donation to the Food Pantry in Londonderry, so the



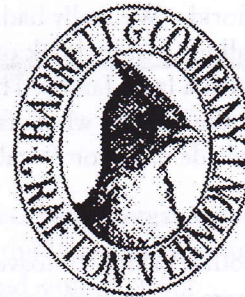
money raised that evening was quickly put to good use.

Thanks to the many volunteers who made the night possible, especially all those pot scrubber and dish washers!

Everyone had a wonderful time, and enjoyed the chance to get together with so many others from the community. We hope to see even more of our friends and neighbors when we have our next get together ...

Important Notice – Windham Congregational Church

Starting January 4th, and until further notice, Sunday services at the Windham Congregational Church will begin at 10:00. All are welcome to attend.



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Reminder ... Windham Elementary School Budget Meeting – Early February. Date TBD. Check with Town Office. All are welcome to attend.

State House web site:
www.leg.state.vt.us
Legislative schedules, members' directory, bill tracking and more

WN&N Receives Council on Aging Grant

Windham News & Notes has received a Successful Aging Initiative (SAI) grant for 2004 from the Council on Aging for Southeastern Vermont (COASEV). The award provides funds to enable the newsletter to apply for Vermont non-profit status and to fulfill its original goal of developing a true community-wide newsletter.

Income from donations, advertisements, and subscriptions from a third of the year-round residents and half of vacation home owners has not enabled us to provide copies for all residents. This grant enables us to do just that. Residents who have not previously subscribed will receive the next four issues. We are attempting to identify all older age, disabled, or otherwise potentially needy residents in the community. In future issues, we'll be reporting more items relevant to these families as well as for the entire the community. (Readers who have ideas of how we can enhance our information services are encouraged to contact us by telephone, e-mail or letter.)

The staff of *Windham News & Notes* expresses our sincere thanks and gratitude to the COASEV for this generous grant. Maggie Newton will administer the grant.

- Maggie Newton

The WN&N Team

This issue brought to you by

Alice Stowell Bliss

Bev Carmichael

Peter Chamberlain

David Crittenden

Donna Koutrakos

Beth McDonald

Maggie Newton

Lydia Pope France

Margaret Woodruff

If you'd like to help on a future issue, get in touch.

We 'd Love to Hear from You

Please send us comments, letters, suggestions, ideas, whatever. You can use the post office box or phone number below, and our e-mail address is now up and running, too.

Write to us: PO Box 1068, Windham VT 05359

E-Mail: windhamvtnews@adelphia.net

Call: 802.254.3484

This issue funded in part by a Successful Aging Grant from the Council on Aging

Did you know that 176 inches of fallen snow was measured in Windham in the winter of 2002-2003? It came between October 23 and April 23 ... Do you keep track of the snow that falls at your house? We'd like to hear

To Subscribe to Windham News & Notes

To receive the remainder of WN&N first year issues, please send you name, mailing address, e-mail address if available, and your street address in Windham (if different from your mailing address), along with your check or money order for \$5.00 to the address above

HAPPY NEW YEAR

FROM WN&N



Emily de Coninck
Real Estate

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Windham News & Notes
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Windham VT 05359

Windham News & Notes welcomes submissions
... Send articles of 75 to 225 words and
Signed Letters to the Editor at the
above address

GET INVOLVED IN WINDHAM!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR – Winter 2003

It's a quiet time of the year here in Windham, but below are a few
ongoing activities that you might find of interest

Wednesday Evenings

3-5 PM

Windham Library open first Wednesday of every month



Council on the Aging Monthly Dinners

Chester Congregational Church

Second Tuesday of the month/11:30AM

Call 802.875.2524 to reserve a place by the first Thursday of the month

Londonderry Congregational Church

Second Thursday of the month/11:30AM Call 802.824.6521 to reserve a place
by the second Monday

Grafton Cares

Every Wednesday, noon at the chapel, call Marjorie Heindel (802.843.2461) for
information

Donation:

Age 60 and over – \$2.50

Under 60 – \$4.00

All Are Welcome!

