



## Story Corps

The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, the Great Barrington Fairgrounds and Berkshire Community College recorded stories. In an effort to collect the history of our area, using Story Corps. Elizabeth Kasevich and Peggy Whitbeck applied to do a recording. In August we had our 40 minute conversation recorded. We spoke of our friendship, the Mount Washington Historical Society and the Town of Mount Washington. All the stories recorded will become part of Story Corps and the Library of Congress Archives. When we were finished we each received a CD of our recorded story.

Peg Whitbeck

## Society News

Next meeting of the MWHS will be Dec.9 NOTE TIME CHANGE...6 pm at Elizabeth's

DAVID WHITBECK has been awarded the bid for the foundation work to be done at the Old North Schoolhouse.

A SPECIAL TOWN MEETING is scheduled for December to see if the town will vote to let the Historical Society purchase the Old North Schoolhouse from the Town of Mt Washington for \$1.00.

DID YOU KNOW that in the 18th and 19th centuries New England Apple trees were used to mark property lines?



# Mount Washington Historical Society, Inc.

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## Holiday Issue Nov/Dec 2015

Jolaine Allen, Mt. Washington Artist, Creator of Historical Society Logo.....

**Early this year the Mount Washington Historical Society (MWHS) declared they needed a logo and reached out for ideas and submissions . We received several sketches , renderings and suggested elements from interested Mt. Washington people. Then something incredible happened.**

**A gift to the Town of Mt. Washington arrived at the Town Hall. Jolaine Allen donated a wood burned etch of the Schoolhouse we were focusing on. She had received a specimen piece of wood from Harry Garrett late the previous Fall. She viewed this wood with her artistic eye and saw it as a perfect canvas to capture the essence of the old schoolhouse.**

**When the Historical Society saw it at the Town Hall they knew they had found their logo. However, we needed a clear picture for reproduction and Jolaine wowed us with an incredible pencil drawing (not one smudge!) that she gave us to use as the logo.**

**Jolaine was so gracious and happy to help and the MWHS is so appreciative of her generosity.**

**You may have seen the use of this logo on the posters for the September Heritage Walk or on your recent Membership Letter.**

**This is another example of the gems we have in our special community - THANK YOU JOLAINE!**

**By: Dianne Salamon**



# The President's Message...

It has been wonderful to see the Mount Washington Historical Society form as an outgrowth of the Mount Washington History Project. From the History Project, we inherited impressive ideas for the preservation of Mount Washington's unique history, such as genealogical studies, marking the old grave yards, studying the influence of the Native Americans and saving the Old North School House. In order to accomplish these plans, we decided to incorporate as a 501c3 organization. It took about a year of diligent work by Peggy Whitbeck for this to happen; a year of filling out numerous government forms. However, on July 14, 2014, The Mount Washington Historical Society, Inc. became official.

Since then, thanks to the creativity and generosity of several members and townspeople, we have produced a study of the charcoaling industry on the mountain. An oral presentation, by Cory Hines and MaryKing Austin was given in Copake Falls, at the annual meeting of the Roe Jan Historical Society. An exhibit took place in a nearby building. Paul McBride gave an interesting talk on the Mohicans. That too was held in conjunction with the Roe Jan Historical Society in Copake Falls. This spring, in association with Housatonic Heritage, the Mount Washington Historical Society sponsored a walk from the Scutt house on West Street to the schoolhouse. A lesson was taught by MaryKing, school books from the early 1900's were on display. These events were all well received and the Mount Washington Historical Society is becoming known in the region. Also, a raffle enthusiastically spearheaded by Dianne Salamon, earned funds for the treasury.

In the past year we have contacted an architect, Donald Pulfer, who has drawn up plans for renovating the school house. The building has been cleaned out; the floors preserved with Tung oil. However, the building is rapidly deteriorating. Our primary focus in the coming year is to begin the necessary restoration work. Currently, The Board is looking into the grant process and will soon begin a fund drive to raise money for the first phase which incorporates building a new foundation and site drainage. It is imperative that we begin this soon.

We will keep you all apprised of our plans and construction work. Your interest in the MWHS is very important. Please let us know if you can help in any way.

Many thanks are due to the hardworking, dedicated members of the Board, whose energy keeps the whole process moving.

Elizabeth Kasevich, President, MWHS



## John Verones joins Historical Society Board of Directors

Born in Great Barrington John grew up on a dairy farm just outside of town and has spent most of his life living in the Berkshires. After serving in the Navy he worked for a short time at Rising Paper in Housatonic then as equipment operator on construction sites locally. He then traveled to the North Slope of Prudhoe Bay Alaska to work on the gas line construction project in 1980 then to the pan handle of Texas working on oil and gas exploration drilling rigs. He also spent time working with a longtime friend who owned and operated a diving and fishing charter on the west coast of Florida. Most of the balance of his professional career has been in property management and development with specific focus over the past 25 years on construction project management representing owners in both private and public sectors. In 2000 John and his wife Patricia built a home on Mount Washington not far from Sage's Ravine where his great grandparents from Italy settled in the late 1800s, and where his grandfather and great aunts were born. His great uncle, Henry Verones, who was born in Italy, lived and worked most of his life on the mountain while the rest of the family moved to the valley, farming in Alford and Great Barrington. Currently John is a Managing Partner of JPV Consulting LLC.

# Thanksgiving & Christmas Memorabilia



Taken from (Mt.) Washington Post, November 1997...

First Thanksgiving”....This is the way the feast was described in a first-hand account presumably by a leader of the colony, Edward Winslow, as it appears in Mourt’s Relation:

“Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with little help beside, served the company almost a week. At which time amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, Many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest King Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the Plantation and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain and others. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are do far from want that we often wish you partakers of our plenty.”

An excerpt from the original “Vicky’s Kitchen”, early 1970’s, Christmas Eve Service....by the late Vicky Whitbeck

At three o’clock on Sunday, Dec. 24 over fifty people gathered to sing Christmas hymns and to hear Bob Austin read the Christmas Story from the Bible. During the reading and hymns there were others who took part in the service. Philip Pescosolido, Emby Bulkeley, Vickie Garrett, and Mary King Wyatt, (who also played the organ for us) each read a brief Christmas story.

The children sat together in the front pews very well behaved and tiny Monte Vaughan was quiet and comfortable perched in his carry-all on his father’s back.

The Church had been heated by space heaters the day before and also on Sunday, There is not heat in the Church , but all of us wore heavy coats and boots and for the brief time we were in the Church, it was comfortable. The hymns were familiar ones. Off the mountain neighbors and friends, as well as many of us up here, hope that in the future years this simple Christmas gathering will become a tradition.

The Church was decorated with glowing candles, real ones, each window with hemlock and a single candle and a beautiful stately evergreen tree from Blueberry Hill Farm was placed at the front of the room near the reading desk, decorated with real ornaments, apples, pears, and tiny oranges and walnuts and made completely with glowing candles with an unseen bucket of water nearby just “in case.”

The Service ended with all of us standing together in silent prayer for peace in Vietnam..

As I said, this was the day before Christmas and what better way to start the holiday season than to be with friends and neighbors, together, in our tiny Church with all of us reading or looking at he inscription that is stenciled on the front wall behind the reading desk, which says, “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills.”





## And much more entertainment!

ELECTION RETURNS - Nov 2, 1954

Mt Washington the first to report. The town is on the front page of every major newspaper in New England. Republicans held their traditional grip on Mt Washington, only 2 democrats.

There are two reasons why Mt Washington is the first to report on Massachusetts Politics.

The polls close at 11:30AM.

The town is the smallest in Massachusetts, with a population of 42 and 35 registered voters.

From an article in the Worcester Sunday Telegram, Sept.16,1956



## MWHS Membership 2015

Lewis Austin  
Mary King Austin  
Richard Barton  
Peggy Batista  
Bruce Bashford  
Beckwith Family  
Hans and Harriet Bergmann  
Robin Bruce  
Peter Cipkowski  
James and Dana Crowell  
Steve and Babs D'Alessio  
Garry Francis and Judy Durlach  
Ginny and Jim Filkas  
Bill and Jean Furcht  
Vanessa Noble Gang and Ralph Mullen  
Harry and Betsy Garrett  
Cope and Anne Garrett  
Erika Hanlon  
John C. Hicks  
Cory Hines  
Ray and Elizabeth Kasevich  
Lewis Ladocsi  
Mc Bride Family  
John Miller and Constance Barrow  
Joel and Christine Nachman  
Philip Newell and Madeleine Tramm  
Jane Peck  
Martha Piper  
Lou Randall and Sarah Johnston  
Dianne and Lenny Salamon  
Dennis Saul  
Dennis Sears and Rene Wood  
Brian Tobin and Bill Short  
Karen Smith  
Jane and Bill Vaughn  
Judy Whitbeck  
Peg Whitbeck  
Mibrey and Walton Zelly