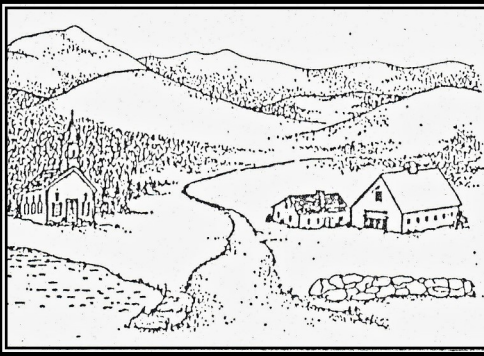




Chatham Times

Past and Present

History on Butter Hill by Jeanne Eastman

A group of twenty braved the weather forecast and mosquitoes to explore the history of Butter Hill on the morning of May 28th.

This land was originally part of the land grant given to Thomas McDonough in 1767. McDonough had cleared twelve acres by 1773. When the American Revolution broke out, McDonough, being loyal to the British Crown, fled to England. His land was being settled by other pioneers when he returned to Boston as British Consul to New England after the war. His land was restored to him, provided



Butter Hill Camp prior to 1913

that he give clear title to those who had settled in his absence. It appears that McDonough never lived in Chatham again; his land was managed by a nephew named Hogan. The last time McDonough visited Chatham, it is said that he was in a two-wheeled carriage, with an Irishman at each wheel to steady it over the logs and rocks.

Amos Harriman (c. 1754 - 1824) was one of those early settlers. He was a veteran of the American Revolution, having been with the Methuen Minutemen who responded to the alarm given by Paul Revere of the British attack at Concord. He was also at the Battle of Bunker Hill. He moved to the Fryeburg area between 1776 and 1780, married Nancy (whose maiden name is unknown), and their first five children were born there. By 1789 they had settled on Butter Hill, where their six other children were born. All eleven children reached adulthood.

On an 1861 map, three Harriman families are shown on Butter Hill, grandsons of Amos and Nancy: Amos (1825-1864) who enlisted in the Civil War in 1863 and was wounded September 19, 1864, and died five days later, leaving his wife and six children; Lorenzo D. (1828-1898) who appears to have moved down to what is now 113B and served as a Selectman in 1871; and Benjamin Franklin (1829-1898) who may have built the "Butter Hill Camp" that still stands.

It was Benjamin Franklin Harriman's son, Erastus, who sold the homestead to Martin Strelneck in 1900. Since then it has passed through several owners, and is now owned by Butter Hill Hideaway, LLC with tents set up for "glamping" behind the main house.

We explored two remaining cellar holes. One was down the hill a ways, the other just above the standing

Notes from the President

It is always a pleasure to write these notes because there are so many people to thank for their contributions to the workings of our Society!

Many thanks to Nate and Kate Hutchins for having us take part in their Maple Weekend. Great cooks – Ann Fargo, Ann Loscocco, Judy Bailey, Jane Nesbitt, Diane Scott, Alina Gagne, Beverly and Scott Aiman, and Sue Crowley - made chili and baked goods which sold “like hot cakes!” Also thanks to those who volunteered to help set up and staff our sales table – Sheryl Emery, Beverly and Scott Aiman, Alan Eastman, Seth Pitman, and Paul and Ann Loscocco.

I also need to thank Becky Knowles who has been doing a “magical” job of putting our newsletter together each quarter. I give her the copy, and she makes it into a wonderful collage of information. Becky also donates the printing of the newsletters, which is huge!! Thank you so much, Becky!

David Crouse has been researching deeds of our older houses, a slow, time-consuming, but interesting job. Thank you, David! This information will go into a History of Houses exhibit with our large 1892 map of Chatham.

Susie Eastman has stepped in as our new curator. She and I have been busy in our museum Tuesday mornings, creating exhibits, making discoveries, and marveling at all the work that Barbara Eastman has done over the years collecting and cataloging Chatham history. The current exhibits are: Kitchen Tools, “Made in Chatham,” Business of Chatham, Toys, and “Stow Corner.” We invite you to lend us artifacts or documents to be a part of these exhibits, which will be set up through the fall. And we invite everyone to stop in to see the exhibits, to explore our history, to help with the work, or to share your memories of Chatham.

We also have several “school lessons” on our chalk boards in the classroom. There are geography, history, arithmetic, hygiene, and reading lessons, as well as a kinship lesson featuring the local Eastmans and how they are all related. Would you believe that Alan and Steve, next-door neighbors today, are ninth-cousins once-removed?! Their first common ancestor is Roger Eastman who came to this country in 1638!

This summer we will have our roof painted by Larry Butters. Any contributions to the painting fund will be greatly appreciated.

Please notice the raffle tickets included in the newsletter and help us sell them to your family, neighbors, and friends. If you'd like a ticket for the limited raffle, please send an email to reserve tickets, send a check, and we'll make out the tickets.

We are pleased to have presented monetary awards and one-year memberships to our Society to two graduating seniors who completed our application. Congratulations and best wishes to Emily Sakash and Eden Voter.

Also, welcome to our new members, Justin and Amanda Wood, Karen and Terri Leach, and Helen and Barry Hollis.

Annual membership dues are due at this time. Please check the address label on your newsletter to see if you need to renew. We hope you have enjoyed our newsletters, our programs and events, and knowing that you are supporting a good cause!

Be well! We hope to see you at some of our events this summer!

Jeanne Eastman



Left-Jeanne Eastman shows her grandson, Everett, a large boulder beside Robbins Ridge Road. Orman McAllister, while out hunting one year, discovered the line of drilled holes the entire length of the boulder. The project of splitting the granite was abandoned for unknown reasons many years ago.

Chatham Trails Association Celebrates 100 Years!

When the AMC Cold River Camp was established in North Chatham in 1919, the valley road, now Route 113, was only a dirt road which ended at the Brickett Place – there was no road up through Evans Notch. Many of today's trails did not exist.

In 1922, Frank Mason established the Chatham Trails Association (CTA) to improve hiking in the Evans Notch region of NH and ME. The White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) had just been created in 1918, and while some trails existed, a trail system had yet to be built. In early 1922, the CTA members voted to ask for the WMNF approval to assume care of the trails within the National Reserve. Shortly thereafter, the WMNF Supervisor responded positively and enthusiastically, and thus began the official association between the CTA and the USFS which continues to the present.

In 1922, Mr. Fritz, WMNF Supervisor, noted, “We trust that the Chatham Trails Association will not only aid in the preservation and protection of natural beauty spots of the region, but that they will also use its influence for the improvement of the region so that it may be made useful and enjoyable to the greater number that will inevitably go there in the future.”

Over the next 10 years, over 35 miles of hiking trails in the area were constructed or brought to good condition. The "trail-builders" set out to create new routes and build new trails so hikers could enjoy scenic and interesting areas. This work culminated in the building of the Bicknell Ridge Trail in 1941.

The CTA then turned to protecting and preserving the trails, spots of scenic beauty and places of historic interest. At that time, most trail maintenance was done by valley residents under the supervision of Millard Chandler. Water bars, switch backs, stone stairs, and wooden walkways through wet areas were created to minimize erosion. Blow downs and brush growth were cut and trail signs posted to maintain clear trails.

Dwight Wilder, CTA President 2001-2004, remembered a project of hardening, stabilization and improvement at the start of the Baldface Circle Trail. A week after the work was done, he received “the best compliment.” He was putting in some grass seed by the new stone steps when a party of hikers stopped at the foot of the steps. He asked if they needed anything, to which the reply was, “No, thanks. We’ve been hiking the Baldfaces since the 60’s, but none of us can remember these steps being here – though clearly they’ve been in place for a while!”

100 years after its inception, in 2022, the volunteers of CTA continue the tradition with stewardship of nearly 40 miles of trails on National Forest and private land in the Evans Notch and Cold River Valley area, including regular maintenance of the hiking trails and larger projects to improve trail features.

Steve Fink, CTA treasurer, says, “The CTA typically hosts three volunteer Trail Work Weekends a year, based out of AMC Cold River Camp. These weekends are a great way to connect with other like-minded trail-lovers and to join in caring for the trails we are so passionate about. This year, the first work weekend was May 27-30, and the next two are scheduled for June 17-19, and September 9-11. All meals are provided at no charge to the volunteers, and comfortable overnight accommodations are available at the AMC Cold River Camp, also at no charge, for those coming from a distance. Families with children over 12 years of age are welcome. Advance registration is required. Visit chathamtrails.org to learn more about CTA and its history, the area hiking trails CTA maintains, CTA membership, and to sign up for a trail work weekend.”

Sources: Reflections, 100 Years of Friendship and Hiking at the AMC Cold River Camp, by Robert and Emma Crane; CTA records kept at Chatham Historical Society; and www.chathamtrails.org.



Left –Mike Zlogar, a member of CHS and CTA, with the help from other volunteers, made a better trail through a wet area a few years ago.

Right-Ted Barrett and Frank Eastman, in the early 2000s , volunteered to keep the trails in good shape





History Hike participants check out the upper cellar hole, once the home of Benjamin Franklin Harriman

Our hike then followed an old road north. This road is not shown on any old road map of Chatham, but it is shown as a trail on the 1936 CTA trail map. It went between some beautiful stone walls for a ways, and then through an area that looked flatter, less rocky, and like better farmland than where the cellar holes are. Just before meeting up with the current snowmobile trail (which was probably an old, old road to Jackson before becoming a hiking trail) on what is now US Forest Service land, another cellar hole is marked with a USFS sign. Lusky noted this was a smaller house, and that many early houses burned when sparks from the cooking fires landed on the wooden shingles of the roof. They may have been abandoned when families began moving west after the Civil War



Butter Hill Camp , painted by Inez Applegarth Eastman who owned it with her brother, Frank Packer, from 1936 to 1949

house. They were built with field stones and are holding up well. A barn foundation was discovered near one, and a low area that was likely dug out for a water source. Paul Lusky, who grew up in Chatham and has spent many years in the woods, noted a large white ash tree there, and “white ash likes wet areas.” The other cellar hole was on a high spot and had a large rock foundation on which the hearth and chimney would have been built. Lusky suggested that probably the earth from inside the cellar was placed around the outside of the rock wall as the wall was built up. Soon there were excited shouts as Russell Record found the old rock-walled well right nearby! A large rock had been placed partially over the opening to keep large animals from falling completely in.



Another view of the upper cellar hole.

and Chatham's population began to decline. Lusky speculated that early settlers in Chatham chose the hillsides for their farms because the valley was subject to flooding and roads were so wet much of the year, as is noted in the fact that North Fryeburg was also known as “Mud City.” Butter Hill Road was a main road into the early 1900s.

The 1861 map shows a schoolhouse midway along the road. Lusky says that schools were located so that no children had to walk more than a mile or so to school, and not according to the number of children attending. In the 1860 census, there were about 20 school-aged children on Butter Hill Road, with Eastman School (built in 1837) at the north end of the road, and the original Chatham

Center School (used for Town Meeting in 1811, before the Town House was built) at the very south end.

Frank Eastman told some of the more recent history of Butter Hill. His grandmother, Eliza, was born in Rollins Pasture. One of her sisters, Lydia, married a Harriman and lived on Butter Hill. Another sister, Susan Emma, married Russel Bricket who briefly owned the Butter Hill Camp in 1912-1913. Frank's uncle, Ashley Eastman, owned land around the Camp. Ashley and his brother, Merton (a.k.a Hickory), would drive their cattle from Corn Shop Road and North Fryeburg up to Butter Hill to graze for the summers. The cattle kept any saplings grazed so that the surrounding area remained open with views of the mountains to the north and east.

The very steep, half-mile hill on the east has not been maintained by the Town since the 1930s. Sandra and Suzanne Layne remember sliding down the hill in winters, when children could play unsupervised by adults. In 1973 the Town voted to "close subject to gates and bars" the road on the southern side of Butter Hill.

Sean Garland and Paul Lusky mentioned several cellar holes and artifacts of interest on the southern end of Butter Hill Road. We'll look forward to a History Hike in that neighborhood next spring!

Sources: History of Chatham, New Hampshire, by David Crouse; Early Families of the Cold River Valley, by David Crouse;

Mystery Photo Solved

Frank and Barbara Eastman have a copy of the mystery photo posted in our March newsletter. It was given to them by the family of Henry Wardwell II, whose father-in-law, Oscar T. Williams had bought "Bald Face Farm" in 1920. On the back is written "Walt and Henry with rake" and "Omer with oxen." That would be Walton Charles and Henry Wardwell II, standing to the side with a bull rake, and Omer Charles driving the oxen. The man on the dump rake and the man building the load of hay are still unidentified. Omer Charles died in 1939.

The view is looking eastward toward the Deer Hill, with the photographer standing along the south edge of the Williams' field about half way between the road and the house. The pines along the road today have grown up, obscuring the hills. In the photo there is a clearing on the side of Little Deer Hill east of the AMC camp, as of a rocky pasture with a large barn-like structure. Frank has pointed out that the Chandler Cemetery is visible in the photo, and that a pole along where the road runs would be a utility pole. Telephone poles and wires reached North Chatham around 1907, but according to Frank those poles were shorter. Ernest "Red" Munroe told Frank that he worked with the crew bringing electricity to Chatham in 1938. The pole appears to be unfinished as it has no cross piece at the top. Millard Chandler noted in his 1938 diary that power was turned on July 26, 1938.

All of this information points to the photo having been taken in the "Bald Face Farm" field during the summer haying season, probably July, of 1938.



Limited Raffle

A two-night stay at “A Hiker's Haven” Vacation Rental Cottage, formerly the North Chatham Schoolhouse (around 1810-1929) and the Eagle Grange Hall (1929-1970), next to the Baldface Circle Trail in North Chatham. Value: \$400. The winner will have a choice of days, around other reservations that have already been booked. Good through August 2023.

<https://airbnb.com/h/hikers-haven-nh>

Only 100 tickets will be sold. \$10 per ticket. The drawing will take place as soon as all the tickets are sold and payment received. We will write out your ticket as soon as we receive your payment, but call or email to reserve your tickets! They will likely go fast!

Thank you, Barry and Helen Hollis for this donation!



North Chatham School House

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603-307-0783

Open Hours: Tuesdays 9-Noon
We look forward to seeing you!

Donations.

Frank and Barbara Eastman – permission to copy a Hygiene textbook used by Frank's Aunt Clara at a Chatham school in 1902.

George Fernald – photographs and information about Belle Latham and Helen Latham Comstock.

David Crouse – digital transcriptions of his grandmother, Mattie Crouse's, 1916 – 1921 diaries.

Bill and Sue Perry – a barbeque grill.

Steve Eastman – a large, wooden lunch box with Hazen Chandler's name.

Lori Steere – permission to copy photos and guest books from Butter Hill Camp.

Upcoming Events

June 8 – Paint Night. 6-9 PM. A fund raiser, at our schoolhouse. \$40 per person, limited to 10 people. You will receive instruction and have a finished painting to take home.

July 9 – Revolutionary War re-enactor, Dan Kinley, will present a demonstration and talk, with time for questions & answers. 10 AM at our schoolhouse.

August 19 - Ice Cream Social with a pop concert by the MWV Ukelele Posse. 6:30 PM

September 10 - Town Picnic, Noon, please bring a dish to share. Raffle winners will be drawn.

October 15 – Tour of Chatham Woods Camp and Mill Sites, Little Chatham Road 9 AM

Chatham Historical Society
1061 Main Road
Chatham, NH 03813

Dues and Donations

Chatham Historical Society is a non-profit 501(C)3 Charitable Organization

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