



SAWMILLS OF CHATHAM, NH



Skidway at a North Chatham sawmill. Mr. Bell on the left and Walt Charles on the right.

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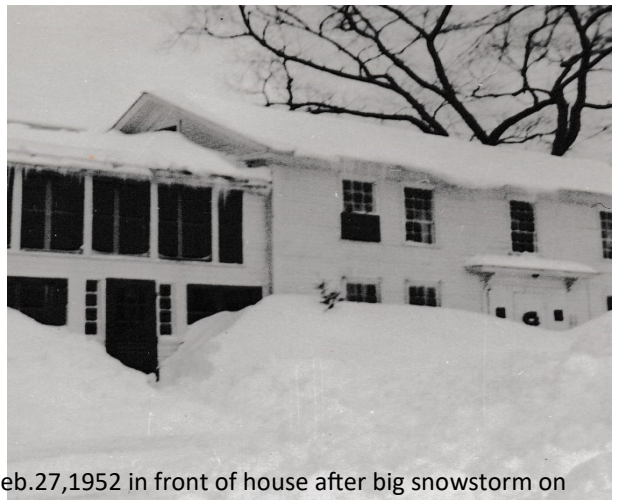
President—Jeanne Eastman
Vice President—Beverly Aimon
Secretary—Sue Crowley
Treasurer—Doug MacPherson
Directors—Steve Eastman
Judy Baily
Emily Fernald
Sheryl Emery

Chatham Veterans Memorial

Thanks to our hard-working volunteers and generous donors, 2017 saw the first phase of our Veterans Memorial Project. Twenty eight of our one hundred fifty two veterans have been remembered on sponsored stone pavers, and a flag flies proudly over them. Landscaping continues to be a work in progress, but I can picture a day when this corner of "downtown" is a beautiful memorial garden!

2019 will see the next step in the project. We have some pieces of granite from the old Townhouse foundation which we plan to use to make a bench at the memorial site. We would also like to add a second flagpole so that we can fly the POW / MIA flag as well as our nation's flag.

Of course, we will once again invite people to sponsor a stone paver for a veteran important to them, and in addition would like to invite people to help adopt a forgotten veteran from our earlier wars. Watch your mail for more information! Doug MacPherson



"Feb.27,1952 in front of house after big snowstorm on previous Monday. Feb 25th snowed 24 inches and wind blew—a real blizzard. The snow had settled a **little** before picture was taken-it had been up to last pane of glass ...Roads snowed in for two days—took milk by tractor on top of snow to families with children..." Andrews Farm North Chatham

In Memory

Bonnie-Anne Kennett Arbogast, 80, died Sept. 17, 2018. She is survived by her husband, Fred, and their 4 children. Bonnie was a synchronized swimmer and competitive shooter, and loved travel, cooking, and animals. She worked as manager at Log House Designs in Chatham, and as a nurse at Fryeburg Health Care Center.

Frederick Arbogast, 84, died Jan. 13, 2019. He was predeceased by his wife, Bonnie, and survived by their 4 children. Fred was an Army National Guard Veteran, and worked 30 years for the US Forest Service.

Lydia Thorne Lucy, 90, died Feb 13, 2019. She is predeceased by her husband, Chet, and survived by their 8 children. Lydia loved nature and sports, skiing, hiking, horseback riding, travel, and the arts. She was always helping others.

Paul Lewey, Jr., 79, died Feb. 12, 2019. He is survived by his wife, Diane, and their six children, and his siblings, Sharon Fisher, Jane Lounsbury, and Chris Lewey.

Wish List

An outbuilding with some local history. Our collection will soon outgrow our schoolhouse!

Upcoming Events

March 23, 10am-4pm.

Join us at Nate Hutchins' Sugar House
2102 Green Hill Road, South Chatham

to celebrate the Maple Season. Nate has generously offered to give the Society a percent of the day's maple sales. We will be serving a hot lunch.

April 13, 6 PM

Celebrate Patriots' Day and Paul Revere
Potluck supper and American Revolution Trivia Competition

Sure to be yummy and loads of fun!
1061 Main Road, Chatham Center

May 21, 6 PM

Annual Meeting for Society Members

June 7, 6 PM

1850's School Lesson
taught by Miss Corrilla Rose (born 1834)
from Washburn Norlands Living History Center
at our Chatham Center Schoolhouse
You don't want to miss this!

Notes from the President

There's a little warmth in the sunshine and we are rapidly gaining day length – spring is just around the corner!

Old diaries always report the weather each day – it was such an important part of life. According to those who remember the 1968-69 winter, 2018-19 is just average. I learn so much from the conversations that happen in our milk room. This week, in talking about a winter that was colder than average, George Perry said, “It was so cold the calf's feet froze to the barn floor!”

It was 30 years ago this February that the charter members of our Society walked up the hill, because their cars couldn't make it in the snow storm, to Doris Kennett's house to write up the by-laws. Happy 30th to the Chatham Historical Society!

We had a wonderful turnout for our February bonfire. A special thanks to everyone who contributed to making the event a success. Even members who were away for the weekend (or for the winter!) found ways to help! The snowbanks were high around our warm fire, and the schoolhouse was full of folks enjoying chili, cornbread, and each other's company. It was so nice to have the community gathered in our schoolhouse. Steve Eastman presented a slide show of events at the Chester Eastman Homestead between 1998 and 2008, including Ice Harvests, Logging Days, Spring Plowing, Maple Sunday, Fall on the Farm, and Chore Time.

Also, a huge thank you to the crew of volunteers who have been working on our building. John Stryker, Dan Markey, and Ed Eastman have spent many weekends in the basement “sistering” the joists so that we have a good solid building. An electrician has been upgrading all the wiring and has installed six old “schoolhouse lights” like the ones that were in the classroom when it sat on the hill by the Town House. This lighting project was funded by a Goldberg Grant that we received last summer. The chimney has been repaired and secured to the building. The building looks and feels great – it's a nice place to be! We'll plan to work on the exterior painting this spring.

Reading through this newsletter, it's hard to imagine how hardy those folks were. We have included excerpts from diaries and interviews that give a peek into the busy life in the winter woods of Chatham's yester-years. We'll leave you to imagine for now everything else that was going on – fires to feed, animals to tend, roads to roll....

At our February membership meeting we came up with a great schedule of events for the year. I love the enthusiasm and ideas of each member of our group! I hope you each will be able to attend at least one event, if not all of them. I'd like to especially encourage you to make the June 7 School Lessons with Miss Corrilla Rose from the Norlands Living History Museum. I worked at this museum in Livermore, ME, and can promise an excellent evening. History comes to life by taking on the role of a member of the neighborhood in the mid-1800's. Miss Corrilla is bringing with her another teacher from the district, so not only will we learn the school lessons, but we'll hear conversation between them about the life of a school teacher and what the neighbors were up to.

Here's a reminder that May is the month to renew your membership, if you are not a life member. If you know of someone who loves Chatham but is not a member, how about a gift membership to introduce them to our Society and newsletter! Also, in response to requests, you have the option of receiving your newsletter by email. If you choose email, please clearly print your address for us. Or send us an email! All future editions will be archived on our website, so you can see them at any time.

Jeanne Eastman

Portable Mills, Logging and Fire Wood

By Barbara Eastman

From the late 1800's to about 1950 this area had several portable mills. In many areas old remains of sawdust piles can still be found. Families moved in and out of town as the mill work lasted. Small camps often were moved close to the mill site and workers lived in them. Often school enrollment could vary as much as 10-20 students in a matter of weeks. I went to grade school in Stow and I remember one year when school opened in September there were eight students whose fathers were working in the woods and mills and by Christmas they had all moved on.

My family members were permanent residents of Stow. My father, Kenneth McAllister, was woods foreman for the NT Fox Company that bought lots of growing timber. The mill owner was Ira Merrill. They had several lots in Stow and Chatham where mills were set up. Dad had charge of the choppers' crew. He was time keeper as well as having to keep all the crews' cross cut saws filed and ready for use. He also "cruised" lots that the Fox Company might buy. He had the talent of being able to walk through a forest and estimate, within a few feet, how much timber could be harvested. Each crew consisted of two men and there were many crews. The trees were cut, hauled to the mill on site, sawed into boards or timbers then stacked in piles on site or near by to dry. Boards were then trucked to the planer mills. It was in the late 1940's when power saws first came around here.

In Stow there were mills on Stone House Road, Harndon Hill, Barbour Road and Quint Orchard. Owner/operators included Farnsworth, Arthur Hall, NT Fox Company, Robert Potvin and Earl Harrison. There were multiple sites for some of the operators.

In addition to the portable mills that functioned year-round, winter was the time when many land owners did their own logging. Pulp and birch were cut and sold to mills. Timber (pine, spruce and hemlock) was cut and sawed out for their own use as well as sold. Winter was also the time when wood was cut for the following year's fuel for heating the house and farm.

Most homes were heated with wood. A few used coal. Big houses like the Royce House and Chandler Farm had guests and used many cords of wood to heat for the winter. Norris Hill's diaries mention "cutting 15 ½ cords of furnace and stove wood." That alone took several days to cut and haul, to say nothing of the time to saw, split and put under cover. All this was done in early times with horses and oxen. Quite different than today's logging and mills.

In the Guy Crouse journals for 1916-1921 (extracted by grandson David Crouse) are many entries mentioning logging and mills.

Jan. 22-1916 "went on the mountain logging for Seavey"

Feb. 1916- "went up to Harriman's mill"

May 3 1916-"hauled pine logs to the mill"

June 1917-"hauled pine logs to the mill," "worked for Arthur Hall."

Fall of 1917-Mentioned are the Bosse and Arthur Hall mills. Also mentioned are camps connected with lumbering and noted is "finished yarding wood to the camps"

Dec. 1918-"helped Louville Heald build a camp up to the mill"

July 12, 1919-"Mr. Bosse's mill burned last night"

Apr. 1920-"we moved up into Hall's camp"

May 4, 1921-"moved a camp from Chatham Center to farm for use as a garage", which his daughter is still using!

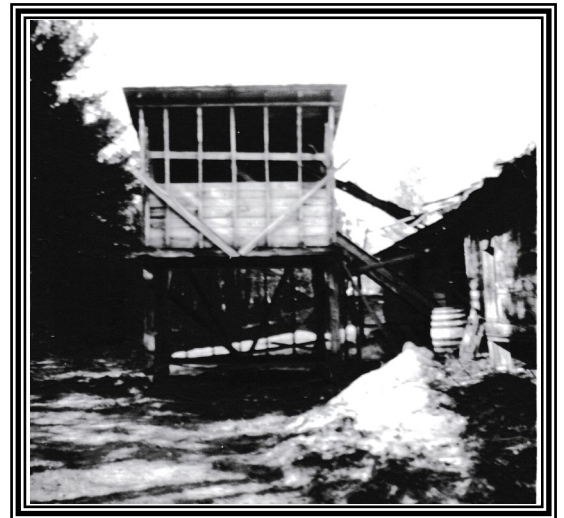
Some of the mills in Chatham

Dates	Location	Owner/operator	Kind of Mill
Before 1920	Toad Hill Rd	Paul Bosse	Saw Mill
1920's	Toad Hill Rd	Arthur Hall	Birch Mill
1920's	Mt. Pond Rd	Arthur Hall	Saw Mill
1920's	Mill Brook, N. Chatham	Sampson Harriman	Birch Mill
1920's	S. Chatham, back of Heads	NT Fox Co..	Saw Mill
1930's	Across from Frank Eastman's	NT Fox Co.	Saw Mill
1943	Chatham Church Lot	New England Bay -operator Earl Sanborn	Saw Mill
1944	Robbins Hill	New England Bay -operator Earl Sanborn	Sawmill
1948	Mt. Pond Trail	Rob Potwin	Sawmill
1940	Mill Brook, N. Chatham	Saunders Brothers	Sawmill
1950's	S. Chatham by Woody Munroe	Harry Farrin	Sawmill
1950	Back of Voter's, S. Chatham	?	Sawmill
1950's	In the Basin	Robert Potwin	Sawmill
1950's	Harold Andrews' Field	Robert Potwin	Sawmill
1940's	Maloney's Field	?	Sawmill
1959-1990's	North Chatham	Harold Andrews	Sawmill
1970's- 1990's	South Chatham	Bill Pitman	Sawmill
1998-present	North Chatham	Stephen Eastman	Sawmill

For more saw mill sites and information donated by David Crouse, see the files at the Historical Society.



Birch Mill in North Chatham on Mill Brook. George Drew on the right. Donated by George and Linda Drew.

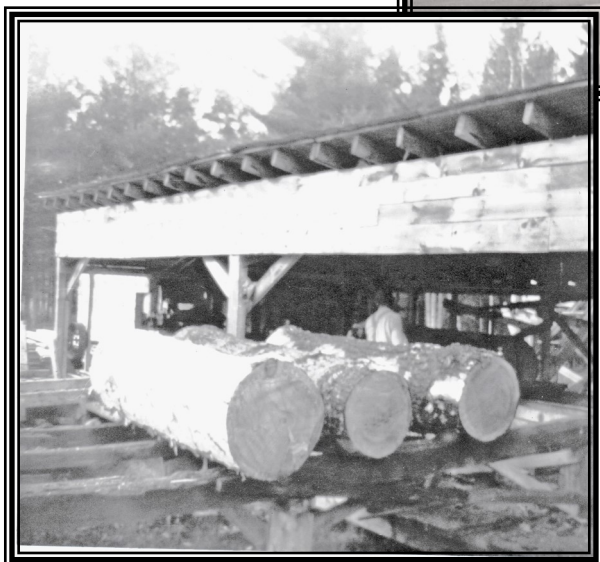


Sawdust house at Harold Andrews' sawmill with a rain barrel for fire protection.



Above—Steam mill located somewhere in North Chatham. Barrel staves were made there.

Right—Herbert Andrews hauling Mr. Williams' birch logs by Millard Chandler's in North Chatham.. Millard sold Gulf gas to passing motorists



Above—Harold Andrews sawing logs on his Belsaw one-man portable sawmill



April 1968—logs on the skidway at Harold Andrews' sawmill

Logging From Interviews by Jeanne Eastman

According to Howard Bryant (1914-2015) in a 2005 Interview:

My father used to work for the sawmills in Chatham. Used to be a big sawmill on the Binford Road. He also worked in the woods chopping for different men. He would tend a team way back in by old Sloop, the mountain. Had to walk in in the morning and be in there at daylight. He was chopping for the other teamsters. He had to have a load ready. They was hauling from there to Stow Corner Cold River. He had to help load the logs and they would leave and he would chop another load for the next morning and they would go back and forth. They were chopped with an axe, because there was just one man, into 12, 14, or 16 foot logs. He could chop those trees down so it would be just as square on the bottom, and the logs up in the middle, they had to be cut square on the top end to scale. Then the other end had to be cut square, but the butt end might have a flange in it. It was mostly spruce. They would be what would float on the river. They cut a lot of pine later, but there wasn't pine back on the mountains. He was working for the men that took the contract to cut the timber. They might have a four oxen team with a horse on front or they might have six oxen with a horse on front. They had to take a good load because they were I don't know how many miles to the river. Probably five miles anyway.

Up to the Millard Chandler farm, there used to be a birch mill up there. I guess 'twas Saunders' Brothers at that time. They were cutting dowel stock, each would be square. Then they stick them up out in the yard to dry. They they'd haul them to the finishing mill, like the one here in Fryeburg. They'd put them on a lathe and turn them to make spools, or dowels, or chair legs. That was back in the '20's. I even worked up there for Saunders Brothers in 1928, I think it was. I worked up there and helped haul in birch to the mill to saw, from the yard. The birch had all been hauled into the yard and then you had to haul it into the mill. We'd have a team of horses and load them on a scoot. Haul them in and unload them in the mill and go back and get another load. At that time I boarded up to Herbert Andrews and I got my meals at the cook house. Down where the mill was, they had a cookhouse, where Orman McAllister used to live. The boss that owned the mill lived there, and the men got their meals there.

According to Clyde (1919-2003) and Shirley (1921-2005) Garland, in a 2002 interview:

Clyde: I probably was about (8 or 9) when I watched them roll the logs into the river one spring and that was the last time they ever run logs down Cold River. That was from down on Herbert Emerson's or along in there somewhere. A lot of that timber come from in back of Sloop. They brought it down in Everett Eastman's there and come right down across my father's, Steve Merrill's, the Goodlin place, from there over across and come out Herbert Emerson's and down into the river bank.

Jeanne: Did they ever put logs in up higher on the river?) I think probably they did some. They probably did some pulp. I know Herbert Andrews told about damming up Shell Pond Brook to get a good head of water to wash some of the pulp down into the Cold River.

Shirley: My father used to go back in behind Sloop, took his horses and haul out timber. He used to go before daylight in the morning and it would be dark before he got home. He'd make one trip. He had to go down there where Maloney lives, in the road that went right across there. And that went right around the south end of Sloop. They had a crew in there cutting. All the time, they stayed right in there.

Most of them worked in there all winter with their horses. Bought their grain off of Charles Klory. They'd come out in the spring and still didn't—they didn't make no money.

Gracies' Meadow, that was one place they camped. They go in in the summertime and cut that hay and leave it right there to feed the horses. I suppose the Graces were the ones logging in there. They didn't own it. That was just common ground, nobody owned it.

Jeanne: Did you hear of any sleighs having trouble coming down the hills with a full load?) Clyde: I've heard them tell about Sheldon Hanscom. They said he worked up in there and he had a front sled that they weren't using. They said they turned the pole right back over one of the bunks, you know. One got on each side. Course they'd been hauling stuff down there all winter and the snow was deep, you know, and it was pushed up so they had a trough to come in. And one of them sat on the pole and one on either side and they started down over with that sled. The two outside ones just sat and rolled off. Sheldon they said was in the middle, and Sheldon said he got there quite a bit before the rest did.

That's about all they did in the winter, is log, cut wood. That's all there was for them to do.

Last Month's Photo was unidentified. Here is another great logging interview instead of an unidentified photo.

According to Chester Harry Eastman (1923-2015) in a 2005 interview:

We logged in the winter (at Chandler Farm). Uncle Charles, way back when I first started going up, they had their own big oxen. Then they sold them off and then they used horses. And then, 'course while Uncle Nod was there, they eventually graduated to tractors and mechanized equipment.

In the winter we cut pulp, which was the wood in 4-foot lengths and pile it up on the east part of our property on the bank of Cold River. In the early spring when the water was high, we'd go down and push that pulp into the river and then it would float down, I believe to Charles Pond and then on down further to sawmills.

They would have men, I don't remember of ours, but they would sort of guide them down if they got hung up on the bank or something. Push them away. All I recall is hauling them down there, piling them up, then pushing them in in the spring. Must have been in the '30's, early '30's.

Since Uncle Nod went, we would have a professional forester come in. The last time I had some cut I had 15-16 million board feet of pine and hemlock, and back in 1980 we had a very high wind that took the roof of the cow barn at Chandler Farm and also wiped out the whole top of what we call Hedgehog Hill across the road. All of

the timber was laid flat which resulted in a big logging operation.



Harold Andrews' John Deere Tractor Crawler with a load of Loren Andrews' logs at the skidway in the pasture north of the house.

Membership Form

\$10.00 /person/year

Due by May 1

\$100.00 life member

Name	
Address	
Winter	
Dues	
Donation	
Building Fund	
Total	

