

## **CHAPTER V - HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Newbury has a long and rich history parts of which are still evident today in the historic buildings and sites still existing within the town. There are not many of these historic buildings and sites still remaining in the town so it is important to retain as much as possible of what remains. These historic features reflect the persons and events which help to define Newbury as a community. They provide a valuable link to the past and, as such, should be preserved for the benefit of future generations.

As a community grows and develops, a gradual erosion of its historical character can happen as incremental changes to or elimination of historical buildings and sites accumulate. It is evident from the results of the community survey that historical preservation is a very important issue for the residents of Newbury. Identifying the important historical resources to preserve in Newbury and planning how to accomplish preservation of these resources is critical to retaining these resources for the enjoyment of current and future residents.

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight some of the important historic buildings and sites to preserve in Newbury, to provide a brief description of their historical significance, to describe tools and techniques to preserve these historic resources and to provide recommendations for the preservation of these resources.

### **BRIEF HISTORY OF NEWBURY**

Newbury went through several name changes in its early years. The first grant in 1753 was named “Dantzic,” after a Baltic seaport, but this grant failed since it was never settled. The first provincial grant in 1754 was named “Hereford,” in honor of Edward Devereaux, Viscount Hereford. This grant also failed again because it was not settled. Colonial Governor John Wentworth granted the same area again in 1772 to his brother-in-law, John Fisher who named the town “Fishersfield” and it was finally settled. The town was finally incorporated as “Newbury” in 1837, as suggested by settlers from Newbury, Massachusetts.

Two hundred years ago, the only road through this area, now known as Province Road, came from Boscawen along the southern shore of Lake Sunapee, then wound its way westward to the Connecticut River and the garrison at Fort No. 4 in Charlestown.

In 1872, the Concord & Claremont Railroad brought commercial development and the first wave of summer tourists to Lake Sunapee. Black powder was used to blast through a ridge of bedrock just south of the village to make the legendary “Newbury Cut” which is the watershed divide between the Merrimack and Connecticut River basins. The early settlers to locate in Blodgett were religious revivalists who stayed in tents and later build camps at Blodgett Landing.

At its peak the railroad deposited up to ten trainloads of tourists from the cities per day at Lake Station in Newbury Harbor. Here the vacationers would transfer to a fleet of steamboats with romantic Indian names such as Weetamoo and Kearsarge. These steamships carried the visitors to the various “landings” around the lake to guest houses, grand resort hotels or to privately owned summer cottages where many stayed for several months to enjoy the pleasant summer weather.

John Hay, private secretary to Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of State to presidents McKinley and Roosevelt, purchased several old farms along Route 103A for his summer home now known as “The Fells.” Teddy Roosevelt visited “The Fells” in 1902.

Mount Sunapee at 2,743 feet in elevation is the highest point in Newbury. Clear-cutting by the timber companies on Mount Sunapee spurred local and summer residents to enlist the help of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests to create a forest park in 1948. In the 1930’s, the mountain came under state ownership. The Mount Sunapee State Park included land encompassing the mountain and shore land on Lake Sunapee. A ski area was developed on the mountain and operated by the state until a few years ago when it was leased out to be privately operated by the owners of Okemo Mountain Ski Resort. The shore land on Lake Sunapee included a beautiful sandy beach which was developed into a summer swimming and boating area.

## **HISTORIC RESOURCES – BUILDINGS & SITES**

The following section highlights some of the important historic buildings and sites to preserve in Newbury and provides a brief description of their historical significance.

### **The Center Meeting House - A History**



The Center Meeting House is the icon of Newbury. This architectural gem has been standing at the crossroads of the town for 175 years serving the spiritual needs of both the lakeside area residents and the summer visitors.

In the language of today, a building of this type is often referred to as a church. But in this area two hundred years ago there was a distinction between a church and a meeting house. A church was a group of people who came together to worship in a common belief. The meeting house, on the other hand, was the place where all churches could meet. Methodists, Free Will Baptists, and Universalists have all met in the Center Meeting House.

The first meeting house in town was built on Bly Hill in 1791. The decision to build was made in Town Meeting and the management of the project was in the hands of the selectmen. However it

was financed by the sale of pews rather than by taxes. Forty years later when Town Meeting voted to raze the building, the town seemed to think it had some financial interest.

In 1790 when the civil and religious focus was on Bly Hill, the population was 331. By 1820 the population had grown to a peak of 874, and by 1830 had slipped to 797. Apparently during this time there had been a shift in interest to the southern end of the lake. In addition to the desire to abandon the old meeting house on Bly Hill, there was a desire to build a new meeting house by the pond. Also this was an era of economic prosperity owing to the sheep raising boom which occurred between 1800 and 1840. The rugged, rocky country was well suited to raising sheep at a time when top prices were being paid for wool.

The second meeting house in town was built in South Newbury village in 1831. A group of men came together with the purpose of “erecting a house of worship”. They bought pews to raise the money and by that act became proprietors of the South Meeting House.

The third meeting house in town, the Center Meeting House, was built at its present location in 1832. The record books have been lost, but we have a few scraps of evidence that can be used. It is likely that the financing followed the model of the South Meeting House. We do know that the proprietors group called themselves the First Toleration Society. One of their first acts was to ask Town Meeting for some land. The following is recorded in the minutes of the Town Meeting of 22 October 1831: “Voted that the Selectmen lease a part of the common land lying at the South End of Sunapee Lake in Fishersfield to the Religious Toleration Society so called.” It is likely that their constitution was similar to the South Meeting House in that the meeting house would be “free for the use of all denominations of Christians.”

It is apparent that the men of the First Toleration Society were prosperous. They chose a design for the meeting house by the well known architect Asher Benjamin who published several books for country builders. Instead of being a simple box with a steeple, this house has a projecting pavilion on the entrance side with the bell tower rising out of it and the main roof. In addition they hired experienced craftsmen to erect the structure and craft the finish details. James L. Garvin, State Architectural Historian, studied the Center meeting House in May 2006. In his report he had this to say:

“Despite its architectural conservatism, the Newbury building displays excellent workmanship. [The interior architectural features] all display virtuosity in design and execution. The pulpit exhibits especially fine craftsmanship and detailing. ...the Newbury Center Meeting House is a skillfully designed and built but conservative example of a rural church building.”

The Center Meeting House was one of the last country meeting houses built in the pure federal style and one of the few to survive intact to this day. Another aspect of this meeting house which makes it a rare example is the reversed pulpit. The usual plan of a meeting house has the congregation facing away from the entrance doors and toward the pulpit in the rear of the building. In the Center Meeting House, the congregation faces the entrance doors and the pulpit. Garvin quoted extensively from the Ph.D. thesis of Philip D. Zimmerman who apparently was the only one to study this phenomenon. Zimmerman makes the following points:

“The importance of reverse church plans to meeting house architectural history is threefold. First, the plan was widespread and significant in terms of the numbers of these buildings [that were] erected. Second, the plan did not appear in urban areas and has no known European precedent. For this reason, reverse church plans represent a rural innovation. Third, the plan directly

influenced rural ecclesiastical (and schoolhouse) designs for years after it fell from favor.”

Garvin went to say:

“In explaining the possible origins of the “reversed” plan, Zimmerman refutes popular interpretations (to “discourage latecomers” to service, or to permit the minister to “note the comings and goings of the congregation”), and substitutes the thesis that this plan furthered the Protestant insistence that no part of the meeting house should be regarded as sanctified.”

And then he quoted Zimmerman:

“Thus, they rotated the inside arrangement, assuring themselves that their auditoriums would express no artificial sanctity. They ensured that the mere act of entering the room would undermine any sense of progressively more sacred space, since all people had to walk past the pulpit and essentially ignore it as they went to their seats.”

Zimmerman searched throughout New England for examples of the reversed plan and found that Newbury had the only example in a federal style meeting house.

The Center Meeting House is thought to be one of three identical meeting houses built in a three year period. Although the South Sunapee Meeting House (1833) was demolished, a photograph of it survives which shows an identical structure. Also there is another picture of the interior which has an identical reverse pulpit. The other is the one in Unity (1831) which has been extensively modified for a Town hall. A picture from 1892 shows it to be much the same except there are two windows on the side instead of three.

The downfall and salvation of the building was declining population. As the building aged fifty years, the population declined by 200 people. With fewer resources, the building was not maintained and decay set in. From The Granite Monthly of July 1880 we read this description of the town:

“The steamer lands you at old Newbury, a sleepy, decayed hamlet at the foot of Sunapee Lake. In some way it reminds you of Sleepy Hollow, which the pen of an Irving has celebrated in his matchless prose. Life is stagnant here. Enterprise has long since taken its flight elsewhere. There is an old tumble down church, where there has been no preaching for many a day, I will be sworn. Back of it is the village graveyard, an aerie [sic], ghostly place enough in a dark night. You notice no children in the street, and even the inevitable boy and girl of young and tender years do not stand at the depot or in the post-office chewing gum, eating candy, and looking dove’s eyes at each other. Newbury must have lived before the deluge, for there is no life there now. It cannot always sleep, however, and before many a year we shall see the place Rip Van Winkled into life again. The tide of fashion upon Sunapee’s shores will ere long stimulate enterprise. Hotels and boarding houses and rural cottages will rise as if by an enchanter’s wand, and old Newbury will become new, not only in her garb but in her spirit. Years of prosperity are before her.”

Because of this neglect, there had been no effort to remodel or modernize to the latest fashion. In 1892 John Hay, an entrepreneur and secretary to statesmen who had built an estate on the lake, came to the rescue. He bought a bell in Grantham and had it installed while paying for other repairs and improvements. It was his wish, fortunately, that nothing should be changed. The motivation for this restoration was the need for a place of worship for the expanding summer population. Indeed as time went on, there were special steamer runs on Sunday to the “Pond” Meeting House.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the decline began again. The financial responsibility was

still in the hands of the proprietors who were dwindling in number owing to age and leaving town. They had little money for upkeep. Meanwhile the nature of the summer people was changing as they became more interested in play than religion. In 1932, just one hundred years after the Meeting House was built, the remaining proprietors transferred their title to a board of trustees. The trustees had even fewer resources. From time to time they tried to raise money for paint or a roof and tried in small ways to prevent the collapse of the building. Again there was no pressure to remodel or modernize.

On March 20, 2005, a group of about twenty concerned citizens led by Dan Wolf met to discuss the current condition and the future of the Meeting House. Five members of the Board of Trustees were present as well. The group agreed that the deterioration had gone on long enough and that action needed to be taken immediately. The first decision was to restore the building as an historical artifact with no modern improvements. Each person was assigned to one of four committees and work began. The Board of Trustees was reformed into a Board of Directors of a general membership organization that anyone could join and support. Also the board filed for and received tax exempt status from the IRS. The first major project, carried out in 2006, was to square up and level the building by placing a new foundation under it. As of this writing, the remainder of the restoration is in the planning stage.

Author: William Weiler

## Newbury Veteran's Hall: Sons and Daughters of the Past



Like many who drive by the hipped-roof building most Newbury residents call the “Veteran’s Hall,” I knew little about its age or role in the community. Consequently, no one was more surprised than I to discover that the answers were in my own family’s attic all along! The story begins just over a century ago.

### Matson’s Hotel

On December 6, 1892, a group of Newbury women organized the Golden Rule Circle of the King’s Daughters, a national nonsectarian religious and charitable association. Meetings were held at homes of different members. At that same time, Sarah (Cilley) Clement conducted a boarding house located directly across the street from the Center Meeting House. She was getting along in years and in 1903 decided to sell her place to Samuel J. Matson, an ambitious young hotel clerk from Concord. Having made several improvements over the years, the Matson family was devastated when their hotel burned to the ground on February 20, 1909, due to a chimney fire. The Matsons moved to Andover, NH and, two years later, agreed to sell the land to the Golden Rule Circle. The women wanted a hall of their own to accommodate their growing organization. In February, 1912, they engaged an established local carpenter to construct a 60’ x 36’ hall for under \$1,500. He did so for \$1,498.14 and, on July 12 of that year, the new building was dedicated.

### **The King's Daughters Hall**

The hall was designed with six windows on the sides and two large ones on each upper end. A covered porch ran across the front, overlooking the harbor. Off either side of the front hall were two small rooms: one served as a kitchen, the other for the use of the Newbury library. To the rear was a large room featuring a stage with a scenic backdrop, two dressing rooms, and seating for 200 people. Through the diligence of its members, the organization raised enough money from regularly held suppers and craft fairs that it soon became debt free. Voters recognized the King's Daughters Hall as an asset to the community and successfully petitioned the town to exempt the building from taxes as of 1913. In 1932, the King's Daughters coordinated the Center Meeting House centennial celebration and were instrumental in establishing a Board of Trustees to care for the church. The following year, the Golden Rule Circle hosted more than 200 people for the annual statewide convention. The Junior King's Daughters and Sunbeams groups were organized for young women and girls in town.

### **Brook-Keefe Memorial Hall**

While the King's Daughters are still active elsewhere, membership in Newbury dwindled as times changed. On April 12, 1947, the Golden Rule Circle deeded their building to the town for use as a veteran's hall, retaining space for the library. Although the sign wasn't made until 1951, the building was officially named the "Brook-Keefe Memorial Hall" in honor of two sons of Newbury. Herbert E. Brook, Jr. was killed during the invasion of Guam; Daniel Keefe died in July, 1944 at the battle of St. Lo. The town assumed maintenance costs and repainted the building in 1948, 1963 and 1974, and repaired the roof in 1967. A glassed case World War I/World War II memorial was made in 1945 through the generosity of the "Women's Club" and matching town funds. In 1963, voters raised \$200 towards the erection of a bronze veteran's marker to be installed inside the new library building. In 1964, the town paid \$100 to acquire the B&M lot in between the Veteran's Hall and the firehouse, and paved it for parking two years later. Toilet facilities were installed in 1967 by sectioning off a portion of the front porch, but have since been disconnected. In more recent years the building has been used by school children for parties, The Trinity Gospel Church for worship, and the volunteer fire department for storage and the "Haunted House". Despite the lack of heat and running water, the Newbury Historical Society hosted a special ceremony at the hall on October 11, 1987 to dedicate a new veteran's memorial display case built by Frank Mikutajcis and fashioned after the original. The project was made possible through the efforts of resident veterans Roland Hall, Ernest Sherman, and Paul Diekmann.

Author: Tracy W. Messer

## Newbury's Cilley Tavern



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Old Tavern, Oldest House in Newbury, N. H.

### **If These Walls Could Talk . . .**

By Shelly Candidus

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In the heart of Newbury center, at the intersection of Routes 103 and 103A, stands a building whose façade identifies it as “OutSpokin’,” a store catering to the outdoor sports enthusiast looking to explore the area attractions by bicycle, skis, skateboard, or water craft. How foreign these recreational niceties would have seemed to the residents almost 250 years ago, when the area’s beauty and natural resources beckoned pioneers to the wilderness to eke out an existence using primitive tools, backbreaking labor, and Yankee ingenuity. The early settlers faced daily challenges from the environment, including unwelcome raids by wild animals and hostile Indians. Nevertheless, they persevered and in 1775, a small community had settled, incorporated under the name Fishersfield.

*The History of Newbury, Part I* indicates that on September 9, 1775, eleven families were given one hundred acres each “for settlement.” Of these first families, Charles Emerson, Jr. received land which included parcel number 11, future site of the Cilley Tavern, “lying north of the Province Road and just east of the lake.” His 100 acres were bounded on the southwest by a lot called the “Parade,” a training field later called the “Common Land.” Most of Charles Emerson’s land was on both sides of present day Route 103A, including the Birch Bluff area. Records show that the first Town Meeting was held at his house on Birch Bluff on January 17, 1779. Emerson was also Town Moderator and constable. He sold his property to J. Cutler in 1793.

Lt. Josiah Cutler, who is shown as owner of the tavern property on the 1809 town map, may have built the tavern shortly after acquiring the parcel from Emerson although the property may have

changed hands again, since the *History of Newbury* notes that Simon Ayer, “innkeeper,” sold to Moses and Ezra Cilley. In any event, the building appears to have been erected in the late 1780s or early 1790s. It was constructed with hand-hewn beams in the pegged post and beam style. A large building by the standards of the day, it was ideally situated to serve both the residents of the town and the passing traveler. Randy Messer, who with his brother Tracy has researched many old Newbury buildings, points to the placement of the two end chimneys, the 12 over 12 windows and front door detailing as representative of the Georgian style of architecture, with neo-classical features. Many of the oldest homes in Newbury exhibit these simple symmetrical lines with balanced windows and fine detailing around the front door. The buildings were utilitarian, but greatly refined from the simple log structures and rough one or two room cottages with lofts that were put up in haste by the earliest settlers.

Town records show that in 1811, Josiah Cutler “posted an advertisement in his bar room.” In 1817, and again in 1828, a license to sell liquor was issued to Ebenezer (Ezra) and Moses Cilley, documenting their long association with the building. They were the sons of Benjamin Cilley, born in 1775 in Weare, NH, who moved with his first wife to property on Baker Hill in 1806. Of his six children from this marriage, Ezra and Moses appear to have been like-minded and remained closely allied throughout their lives. (There is no record of a marriage for Ezra, but Moses married Lucinda Bachelder, younger sister of his father’s second wife, Betsey.) While records show a license issued to Ebenezer and Moses, genealogical records show no Ebenezer, and it is likely that this is Ezra, despite the fact that he was only 18 years of age in 1817. (His younger brother Moses, if records are correct, was but 15 years of age!)

The Cilley brothers were active in the town: In addition to their association with the tavern, Ezra was elected Town Clerk in 1837. Moses held considerable land, having bought 250 acres as high bidder in the public sale of land held by his half-brother’s wife, Serena Cilley. It appears that the brothers maintained ownership of the tavern for many years, although they must have rented it out to other proprietors. Census data shows both Ezra and Moses residing in Manchester in 1850, but they were back in Newbury by 1860 and lived out their long lives in town. Both died in the mid 1880s -- Ezra at 86 years, and Moses at 85. The Cilley property on Baker Hill was purchased by the Messer family sometime after 1890.

Despite their tender ages, the Cilley brothers must have been industrious and enterprising. The title “landlord” was an important one at the time, and kept them in the public eye. Taverns were commonplace in the early settlements, and ranked with meetinghouses and country stores as centers for communication and entertainment for the townspeople. (It was at a Town Meeting at the Cilley Tavern in March, 1831 that the town voted to tear down the 1790s meeting house on Bly Hill and erect a new meeting house near the tavern in Newbury center.) Taverns provided havens for socializing, conducting town business, and offering the solace of various “spirits” to the hard-working citizen. Licenses for selling “spirituous liquors” were issued to proprietors of taverns and general stores and to several early Fishersfield settlers, including John Witherspoon “to sell spirituous liquors at his store near the Meeting House” in 1795. There was a Richard Cressey Tavern, and Deacon Joseph Chandler had his “House of Entertainment” near Mount Sunapee in 1807. Ezra and Moses had an ideal location for their establishment and it appears to have prospered from the stagecoach to the railroad eras.

The lifelines of the early settlements were the roads that connected them with neighboring towns and larger outlying world. Province Road linked the Merrimack River and Fort No. 4 in Charlestown. At the time the Cilley Tavern was built, Province Road had been laid out coming

south from New London to the Baker Hill School, turning west to where Chalk Pond Road is now located, and then south again to present day Rollins Road and the old Town Center on Bly Hill. From Bly Hill, the road went east to Sutton and west around the southern end of Lake Sunapee, then north to Mount Sunapee, where again it turned west toward Goshen. Constructed on the imprint of old Indian paths, it was instrumental in the transport of Revolutionary War soldiers and supplies as well as people, goods, and mail during the late 1700s. The handsome Cilley Tavern, standing at the southern tip of Lake Sunapee, must have been an inviting sight for the weary wayfarer.

As at other public houses, inns and taverns of the time, travelers were made welcome at the Cilley Tavern. They brought news from afar as they enjoyed food and drink and a respite from their arduous journey over primitive roads. The tavern keeper, or landlord, usually lived with his family in part of the building, and housekeeping chores and food preparation were family affairs. Sleeping accommodations were spare and usually consisted of only a couple of rooms – one roughly finished for men, and another more nicely finished for ladies, perhaps holding a small table and basin with ewer for washing. Many taverns had an area for dancing, or a barroom or parlor which could be cleared for this activity. By today's standards, the stopover for the traveler would be distinctly uncomfortable, with cramped quarters, rustic furnishings, plain cooking, smoky fireplaces and dim candlelight. At the time, however, the tavern provided welcome relief from a bone-rattling stagecoach ride or hours in the saddle riding over rutted or muddy roads. Unfortunately, there are no records to tell us the number of guests that stopped at the Cilley Tavern over the years, who they were and what their stories might have been.

In time, Ezra and Moses turned the role of landlord over to others. In 1823, George Gunnison was granted a license to sell liquors at the tavern, and in 1826 John Kelly was provided a license "at the store of Ezra and Moses Cilley." In 1847 an advertisement was posted "at the Tavern House of Ezra and Moses Cilley then occupied by George Kennerson, Jr. in Newbury." Sewell Clark was licensed in 1849 "in the Moses and Ezra Cilley Tavern." Finally, in 1856 John Cutler ran it as a store called the Cilley Tavern Stand, described as a general store.

In the midst of this changing management comes a foretaste of the future for the Fishersfield harbor area. In June of 1835, Alva T. Wilkins, describing himself as "for many years a son of old Neptune," advertised in Concord's *New Hampshire Patriot & State Gazette* that "Wilkins & Cilley" were providing sailboat rides to the public from "the head of the Lake, Fishersfield," or by arrangement, any part of the lake. Two boats were available: the 30-foot "Lady of the Lake" holding "pleasure parties" for up to 50 people, and a smaller sailboat for fishing excursions. Here is early evidence that the natural attractions of the area could be profitable, and that the hard working citizen might take a few hours to relax and enjoy his surroundings.

There are other indications that life had become a bit easier, or at least more orderly, by the 1830s. The town had gone through a period of rapid growth at the beginning of the century. A new meeting house, more centrally located for the area residents, had been built. Schools were being established. Improved roads made travel less arduous. town government became more solidified and more services were provided. In 1837, poised for future growth and new directions, Fishersfield was renamed Newbury.

Perhaps the most significant of the changes was the coming of the railroad, profoundly affecting the future of the town and with it, the Cilley Tavern. By 1850, the Merrimack & Connecticut River Railroad running between Concord and Warner was extended to neighboring Bradford. It

would take another 20 years and innovative blasting along Ledge Hill to create the Newbury Cut and bring the train to Newbury and on to Sunapee and Claremont, creating the Concord & Claremont Railroad. Goods, mail and people could travel at unimagined speed and ease between area towns and into the world beyond. The function of the tavern as a hostel became largely obsolete, and the Cilley Tavern, like many others, adapted by becoming a store.

Train travelers, alighting for refreshment, were charmed by the beauty of the small town, the surrounding mountains and the beautiful clear water of Lake Sunapee. Many from as far away as New York and Boston were prompted to return to spend days or weeks along the shores of the lake, and the coming of the steamboats made this trip to a favorite lake retreat easy and enjoyable. Newbury Harbor reflected the impact of this new influx of tourists and summer residents. A train station had been erected by the railroad company, and a small group of cottages called “Frost Top” was built adjacent to the tavern. Taking advantage of the new tourist trade, by 1892 Mrs. O.J. Lear’s “Why Not” ice cream store was in operation.

The era of the railroad and steamships brought a new dimension to life in Newbury. Recognition that the town itself was blessed with natural resources brought new job opportunities and prosperity as the twentieth century came in. With it came still more changes. The railroad, bearing increasing financial burdens, was losing ground to the increasingly popular automobile. Ezra and Moses Cilley were long gone, but their building stood as strong as ever waiting for its next reincarnation. In the early 1900s the building was moved back from the road and rotated 90 degrees so the façade faced Route 103A, presumably for better access to traffic and to provide parking for cars stopping at the store. By 1926 Charles Dicey had put it to use as a garage. Newbury’s first fire engine was housed there in 1928.

In the 1940s, the O. H. Lewis Company in Claremont bought the property from Hawes Hallett to establish a local outlet for their gasoline business, and they maintained ownership of the site until 1982. After World War II, Reginald LaPorte brought his family to Newbury to live in the large second floor, which was then accessed by an outdoor stairway. His sons Richard and Wayne LaPorte remember that there were two open garage bays on the former first floor of the tavern, and Texaco gas was dispensed. Some sporting goods were also sold there (a glimpse of the building’s future). Richard remembers thieves breaking into the shop for sports equipment. They were pursued through the adjoining Lakeside Cemetery and apprehended. After Reginald died in 1966, Richard moved across the intersection and managed a Sunoco station, now operating as Newbury Quick Stop. During the tenure of the LaPortes, a façade was added to the building to create more work space for the busy shop.

Upon departure of the LaPortes, Red LaClaire moved his family into the apartment and ran what was then called the Center Garage. He was followed by Richard Smith, who took over in 1977 and lived in a house at the site of the present day gazebo at the harbor. Richie hired a local 12-year old from South Newbury, Will Hurley, to pump gas and do chores in the garage. When O. H. Lewis sold to Mark Hokanson in 1982, the building went under yet another transformation and Will Hurley was on the brink of finding a career dealing in sports equipment.

Under Hokanson’s ownership, the old tavern was put to new uses. Corey Beaudry, manager of Outspokin’, recalls, “Mark Hokanson and his family lived upstairs. He added a new section onto the front and made the downstairs into a food and snack store on one side and a sports shop – later an antique shop with rented dealer booths – on the other. Video rentals were added to the snack shop in the 1990s.” Corey points out that the old garage lifts are still under the present

wood floor and hooks in the ceiling beams recall the use of the area as a garage. The beams are solid and the structure is still sound.

Will Hurley, co-owner and General Manager of Outspokin', worked for Hokanson during his college years when sporting goods were sold. He then went to Bob Skinner's where he was able to pursue his interest in working with bicycles. When Skinner's downsized the bicycle business, Hurley bided his time. Soon he was able to work a deal with Hokanson, who also owned the present-day Marzelli's Deli, to open a bike shop there. Business took off and Hurley had soon outgrown that location. Again, in cooperation with Hokanson, he moved into his present location, and the old Cilley Tavern found yet another function.

Hurley's business continues to thrive. His association with the town is life-long, and his establishment at the Cilley Tavern site seems pre-ordained from his boyhood job there. "I learned a lot from Richie Smith," he says. "He was kind of a father figure who had expectations that had to be met, but working there was also a lot of fun. And Mark Hokanson was very generous. He taught me that good service will lead to sales. From them, I've come to realize that small business is part of the community, and I'm lucky to have such a cool work environment."

Those words certainly apply to the old Cilley Tavern, which has been a business center of the town since its beginning. What does the future hold for this enduring structure? Erika Hokanson and her brother Curtis inherited the building upon their father's death in 2002. Erika is presently at work renovating the second floor apartment to make it ready for yet another tenant. "I grew up here with my family," she says. "It's a wonderful old building that maintains its character despite changes and upgrades to modernize it. There's some really old wallpaper in the entry utility area. I think I'll leave it just as it is."

Sources: Ernest Sherman's *History of Newbury, Part I*, Bicentennial Edition, Barrett Press 1997  
*Newbury Past & Present*, Lake Sunapee Grange No. 112

"Descendants of Benjamin Cilley," genealogy provided by Roscoe Hastings,  
Rochester, NY

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## Railroads



The railroad was an integral part of Newbury's history since the Newbury Cut was opened in early 1872 and connected Newport and Claremont to Concord in a shorter route. Lake Sunapee became a resort destination after the Woodsum Brothers came to Lake Sunapee in 1876 and recognized the need for steamships to meet the railroad and transport them to their accommodations on the lakes. The lake became very popular with summer folk from "New York, Philadelphia, and Boston- and there is usually a delegation from far-off San Francisco (or so says the 1897 Boston & Maine Railroad Lake Sunapee Publication)".

During the era of the railroad, three stations operated in Newbury: Edgemont, Newbury Station and Lake Station. Lake Station was the major hub for passengers disembarking to Lake Sunapee so much so that extra passenger cars would be parked on the siding for the return trips. It was not unheard of to have over 5,000 passengers on busy summer weekends. For almost a score of years, the railroad was king, but slowly the automobile took over as the transportation of choice. The railroad as we knew it slowly evaporated from sight as freight transports and train passenger cars slowed to a trickle.



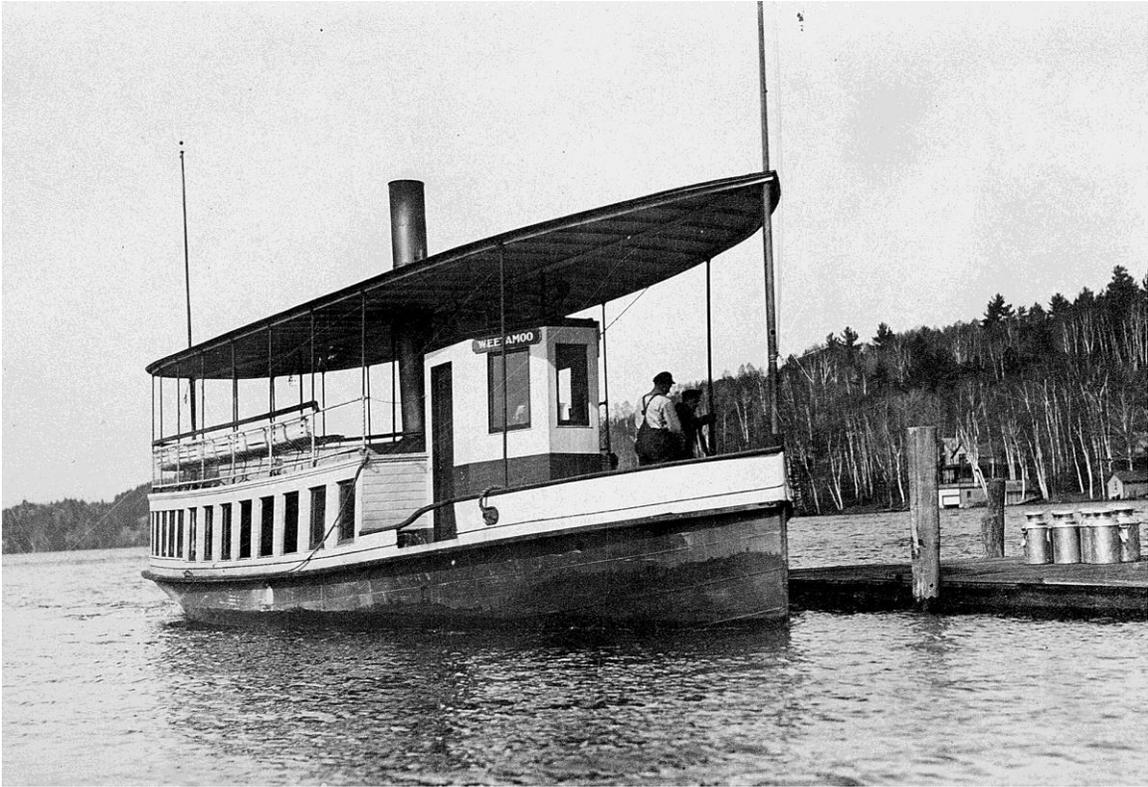
In the 1960's, the tracks were removed and the lone whistle slowly was silenced and now we have just memories of a bygone era. Newbury has chosen to remember the historical and cultural impact the railroad played in Newbury's past by converting an old caboose into a historic museum that highlights the railroad era.

Author: Dennis J. Pavlicek

## **Weetamoo**

A fascinating piece of Sunapee history is available to certified divers who visit the Sunapee area! The Weetamoo, one of Sunapee's fleet of steam ships, was deliberately sunk when steamships had outlived their usefulness. Several people saw the Weetamoo sink "off Pinecliff" on the East side of Sunapee in Newbury, but in 70 feet of water, it is hard to locate a specific item, so the ship lay in its watery grave undetected for many, many years.

It has now been found and marked with a buoy about 8' underwater. The buoy has been tied off underwater to keep from making a boating hazard. If the State passes legislation protecting underwater antiquities, they will maintain a buoy on the surface of the lake, but for now, the markers must be located under the water. The divers who found the Weetamoo have removed the name plates and given one to the Sunapee Historical Society, knowing that they would be the first things to disappear from the ship.



Diving on the Weetamoo is a great experience! You moor your boat to the buoy (which is tied off with stout rope to the wheelhouse on the ship) and after suiting up with full cold water gear (the water at the bottom is about 45 degrees summer or winter), go down the line tethered to the pilot house, from warm summer water, through the thermocline into the cold bottom water. The thermocline is very noticeable and is the layer of water between the upper warm and the lower cold water, and is always marked by "fog". It is an eerie feeling to be descending in clear water and suddenly be in fog. At the same time you can't control a shiver because the change in temperature is so abrupt. Sometimes you can extend your arm its full length down and feel the instant change in temperature. Once you sink through the foggy layer of water, a ghostly outline of a ship gradually appears below you. It's easy to imagine the lovely ladies in their long elaborate dresses moving from top deck down into the interior where there are built-in wooden benches that fit around the curved back of the ship. Or to picture gentlemen perhaps smoking cigars beside the railing on the top deck visiting with other passengers. Today, the only permanent resident is a large cusk, who makes his home in the *Weetamoo*. When divers disturb his tranquility, he placidly swims out one of the windows into the murky depths; but as soon as we divers must return to the air above, he obviously reestablishes his claim to his watery domain.

But if diving to the Weetamoo is a little too strenuous or adventuresome for you, you can see the original name plate and photographs of it at the Sunapee Historical Society, which also has a nice variety of other steamship memorabilia and other historic items.

It's always with a bit of reluctance that we start up the tether line to the surface and the boat and the rest of the world.

Author: Judy LaPorte

## South Newbury Village - Surviving the Centuries



*Main Street So. Newbury A.M.*

Many of today's visitors to Newbury exit Interstate 89 at Warner and hurry up Route 103 through Bradford to Newbury Center to enjoy activities at the foot of Lake Sunapee. Residents, in a rush to attend to business in cities to the south, zip along Route 103 to access the Interstate. Few of these people slow down enough on Route 103 to note the intersections of Sutton Road marked by a caution light. These travelers, focused on the business at hand, have overlooked the heart of Newbury as it existed almost 200 years ago and as it maintains its identity to this day.

Village Road, just a few hundred feet from Route 103, is the entrance to an oasis of peacefulness. The years have settled securely over this neighborhood, preserving the atmosphere of a once bustling community when Village Road was old Route 103 and a direct link to Bradford in the south and Sunapee to the north. The present Route 103 bypassed the village and thus preserved it from further commerce and expansion. Lorenzo Heath, who lived here since 1947, says, "The new Route 103 isolated the village and saved its character."



South Road near Village Road

Today the heart of the village consists of Village Road, South Road at its intersection with Village Road, and Sleepy Street, home to many residents bearing names or links to the early settlers. Andrew Brook, cascading down from Ledge Hill, runs between Village Road and Route 103, and provides an additional barrier to the outside world.

Still evident are many of the elements that made this a viable community. At the southern end of Village Road stands South Newbury Union Church and its attendant Friendship House, which was Old School House # 5 for nearly a century before becoming Church property. Standing side by side down the road are the Grange Hall, Sherman Hall which has housed offices for the selectmen and a small library on the second floor, and the old Town Hall, built in 1876 to house the town clerk, treasurer, and police.



School House #5 - South Newbury Union Church

Other structures that were important to the community in its early days have disappeared, victims of changing times and natural attrition. A tavern just beyond the Town Hall, once owned by King Gillingham, and a blacksmith shop were destroyed by fire in 1868. The town weigh station, now gone, was located across from Town Hall and was used by local farmers to weigh hay, grain and other produce prior to selling it. And Mrs. Jim's Lunch, a local landmark on Village Road, was razed in 1960 by South Newbury resident Will Willis, who used the hand-hewn beams and timber to construct the core of his present home on nearby Old Post Road.



E. A. Blodgett's Store c. 1905

Much of the reason South Newbury village has retained its sense of timelessness is due to the preservation of family names and houses that have distinguished the area for two centuries. Among the South Newbury settlers of Fishersfield, as Newbury was called on its incorporation in 1778, was the Rev. Timothy Morse, who bought his tract of land northwest of Lake Todd in 1795. Ernest Sherman's *History of Newbury, Part I*, written for the Town's Bicentennial Celebration, reports that Morse "was the first of the family that would multiply until it would tie into most of the old families." In 1800 there were nine children, who married into the Cheney, Perkins, Gillingham, Adams, Sargent, Bly and Peaslee families. Other names associated with South Newbury in the 1830s included Presby, Eaton, Twiss, Simons, Andrews, Chandler, and Muzzey. These names live on today, in descendants in the area, in roads and properties that carry their names, and in the South Newbury Cemetery, where gravestones faithfully record family statistics.

As the early settlers' names survive, so do many of their houses. South Newbury village is the site of some of Newbury's oldest houses, dating back to the first two decades of the 1800s. Descendants of their builders still inhabit some of these houses, or live in neighboring homes in the village. One of these is Richard Perkins, who was born on the present Schroeder farm in the Birchfield area of South Newbury. His father, Merton, was Road Agent and his mother, Florence Bly Perkins, was a talented observer and recorder of people and events in her and her parent's time. In her 1991 booklet, "Grammie's Memories," she explains, "Living in the same houses from generation to generation, we inherited many boxes of old deeds, wills, letters, etc. Some date back to 1797... These old papers helped [relatives] to know what part their families had in making ... Newbury, NH as it is today."

Florence Bly Perkin's recollections of life in South Newbury in the early 1900s are a lively account of the daily activities and events that filled her childhood. She tells of spending a vacation week with her family and friends camping nearby on her grandfather Bly's land. "The men were to fish and the women and children to camp . . . and pick blueberries." The men set up the tent and filled lanterns with oil. A kerosene stove, "about the size of a two-slice toaster," was used for cooking. The children picked berries, played, "and the night was filled with word games." The excursion was rained out, the blueberry sauce ruined by an unruly game of tag, and the horse escaped, but the outing remained a highlight in Florence's memory.

Another activity she recounted with amusement was her father's story about pickle making at his farm. At the time when Florence was born, in 1903, her mother's friend Lottie Morse was in residence helping out. Temperance was in full swing, and Lottie was shocked to find Nathan Bly adding a spoonful or two of alcohol to the crocks of vinegar. Lottie lectured Nathan on the evils of alcohol and complained to Mrs. Bly, who smoothed things over by saying "it must be all right as the recipe was in the government bulletin for preserving farm crops." Lottie was later found to be snacking on the pickles and found them delicious. "You know, Nathan, I can hardly leave them alone!"

Florence, pointing out that corn was a top crop for Newbury farmers, described how the husks were dried to make fill tucking for mattresses, changed yearly, and the burned cobs made smoke to cure ham, bacon and other meats. She describes an old time husking bee in a clean-swept barn with long boards placed on wooden blocks to make seats. Between the long seats, bushels of corn were spread down the middle and empty baskets were provided for the husked corn. The husker who found a red ear of corn was obliged to chase after one of the opposite sex "until he caught her and got a kiss. This caused much movement and squalling and red faces." After

husking, a ten p.m. supper was ready in the house, and “There always was a lot of singing, and if there was a musical instrument around, square dancing and was enjoyed by all.”

The Civil War was fresh in the memory of Newbury citizens, and in 1914 Florence watched one veteran, Ralph Gilbreath, build a wooden monument honoring those local men lost in war. Passing by his house on the corner of Sutton and Village Roads, she watched through the double barn doors as the monument took shape. Gilbreath had lost an arm in the war, but he skillfully sawed, planed and nailed the wooden base, provided holes in each of the four corners for holding flags, and added a tapering column with a wooden star fixed to the top with a metal rod. He painted the structure white and on the final coat added white pond sand to the wet surface. When dry, the surface looked like marble. The monument has since been restored by Richard and Dorothy Perkins.

Memorial Day did not mean a day off from school. Florence recalls that the school children played a major part in the commemoration. “The boys went out and got lots of trailing evergreens, and the girls and little children (it was a one room school...) made wreaths for the Civil War graves and all helped decorate the school room with lilac, wild flowers and flags.” The school board, parents and residents came in the afternoon to hear the children sing Civil War songs and recite poems. They then marched, two by two, “the girls with the wreaths, and the boys with flags, followed by the guests to the cemetery.” In 1914, this procession stopped at the house of Mr. Gilbreath, recently deceased, and placed a wreath on his door. “All very solemn ... [then] marching to Andrew Brook Bridge on Old Post Road .. we dropped a wreath in the water to honor those lost at sea.”

School, Church, Town Hall, Post Office, store and the Grange were the hubs around which village life revolved. Over the years, the activities associated with these institutions have declined or ceased. Only the South Newbury Union Church remains strong in membership and, in conjunction with the Friendship House next door, hosts several local events, including an annual barbeque, market and auction. Framed by Jeremiah Morse in 1831, using timbers from the old meeting house on Bly Hill, the church when built resembled closely the present Meeting House in Newbury Center, built about the same time and also featuring timbers from the original Bly Hill structure. For many years the South Newbury Union Church was distinguished by a mural painted by an itinerant artist, whose name, unfortunately, was never recorded. Florence Perkins reports that when her father was a schoolboy in 1884, the students were allowed to sit in the back of the church and watch the artist at work. Age and environment worked to erode the painting over the years, and it was removed in the 1990s.

Much of the vitality of a village came from its young population, and schools are required for their education. The original South Newbury Schoolhouse, in need of repairs, was moved from its site next to the church in the 1850s to Sleepy Street, where it was renovated and where Lorenzo Heath lived. A new school house (the present Friendship House) was built in 1853. When Newbury became part of a seven-town centralized school district, elementary school children were sent to Bradford, and the many small one-room schools were abandoned or put to other use.

By the 1900s, South Newbury abounded with children. Richard Perkins reports that in the late 1930s and early 1940s, there were up to 35 students in the one-room school house. Some of the seventh graders were sent to the Center School in Newbury to alleviate overcrowding. After eighth grade, students went by train to Warner for high school, and some to Newport. School

was an opportunity for socializing as well as learning. Several residents who grew up in the area in the 1930s remember winter toboggan and double-runner bobsled rides that started up on Old Post Road. Perkins says, "Ten kids would climb aboard and take a run down Old Post Road, ending up in the parking lot of the Church on a really good ride." This was before the new Route 103 brought traffic and barriers that put an end to the toboggan runs. "Often in winter," says Perkins, "we would skip lunch at school to go skating on the ponds. There was a ski jump built for the Grange Winter Carnival across from the church. The hill there was much higher before the state took much of it for road fill for Route 103."

While South Newbury School found a new life as Friendship House, the Town Hall remains unused, still furnished with a hand-painted scenic view of Lake Sunapee on a stage curtain where local plays and talent shows were once held. The building contains rows of long benches, or "settees," which were built at nearby Fowler Mill on Andrew Brook in 1887. More of these settees are also at the present Town Office in Newbury Center, where town business is now conducted. Sherman Hall, too, is no longer home to the selectmen, but is used as headquarters for the Historical Society and storage of valuable old town documents.

Of the three buildings lined up in a row on Village Road, the Grange is still active, although its membership and activities are in sharp decline. Sunapee Lake Grange # 112 is one of the oldest active granges in the state, incorporated in 1886 and moving into its present quarters in 1902 on land donated by Mark Shultis. During the 1900s, the Grange sponsored an annual Winter Carnival and held annual agricultural fairs which originally lasted for two days and featured livestock and poultry, garden and field produce and food, flowers, and needlework. Richard Perkins remembers that the fair also provided a big supper and James Farmer led square dancing in the Town Hall. The Grange has fallen victim to changing times and interests in a world where family diversion is no longer found within community activities. The building, in need of upkeep, was recently purchased by the town with continuing rights to the Grange to meet there.



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MRS. JIM'S LUNCH, STORE AND POST OFFICE, SO. NEWBURY, N. H.

The Post Office in South Newbury was established in 1850. Its location changed many times over the next 100 years, being situated in Richard Cressy's store, in Deacon Jeremiah Morse's house, and in Mrs. Jim's Lunch until that building, owned by Mrs. Wesley Cilly, was razed in 1960. At that time, Richard Perkin's wife, Dorothy, began to run the Post Office from her home and did so until 1987, when the postal service in South Newbury ceased.

And so a time of quiet has settled over South Newbury, which was interrupted only by the annual Fourth of July children's parade sponsored by Newbury's Friends of the Library. The historic old houses still stand, many carefully cared for, and the residents continue to keep the memories of times gone by alive in their surroundings and the ties that bind family and friends. The spirit of community remains strong in this small village.

Source materials include:

Ernest L. Sherman, *History of Newbury, Part One, "The Beginnings 1740-1800"*, Bicentennial Edition published by Barrett Press, Newport, NH, 1978.

*Newbury Past and Present*, published by Sunapee Lake Grange No. 112, for its Jubilee Pageant, August, 1955.

Florence Bly Perkins, "Grammie's Memories," 1991.

And special thanks to Richard Perkins, Lorenzo Heath, Doris Newell, and other South Newbury residents for sharing memories.

Author: Shelly Candidus

## South Newbury Union Church



The South Newbury Union Church sits quietly on Village Road in South Newbury. Constructed in 1831 it was built on the rise of land east of the highway between lands owned by Stephen Emerson and Levi Jones. According to the articles of the constitution, which were approved on March 19, 1831, it was to be a meeting house for the free use of all denominations of Christians. The Building committee consisted of Jonathan Emerson, Daniel Morse, and Jeremiah Morse. Supporters purchased pews as real property to fund the construction and operating budget. In the early 1900s, the Sunday school proposed the idea that a bell be added to the bell tower. The bell was installed and dedicated in July of 1908.

Author: Elizabeth Ashworth

## Selectman's Office/Sherman Hall



### Prehistory

For nearly forty years, the Selectmen and School Board conducted their affairs in the front rooms of the old Town Hall in South Newbury. By 1914, the space became inadequate and voters considered whether or not to finish off the second story of the Town Hall for use of the School Board. Instead, \$1,500 was appropriated in March, 1916 for the construction of a new "Town Office and Vault." In May, the town paid Mark W. Muzzey \$22.50 for 1/4 acre. This vacant lot was the remainder of the former Perkins Blacksmith Shop land which hadn't already been sold off for the construction of the Town Hall (1876) and Sunapee Lake Grange Hall (1901).

### Construction

The appropriation was sufficient to construct a twenty five by fifty foot story and a half structure with front and side entrances. The front office was small but adequate. There were two interior doors, one leading into the ten by ten foot walk-in concrete vault equipped with a sturdy iron "Morris-Ireland" safe door. The other door opened into a narrow hallway with access to the side entrance and a stairway leading to an unfinished second floor. According to the Town Treasurer's Account Book, construction began in May and continued through the Fall of 1916. Over a dozen laborers were involved. Initially, there were three principal builders: B.F. Butler, of whom little is known, and two Newbury Selectmen -- Mark W. Muzzey and Albert W. Cheney. By the week of August 18, the Kearsarge Independent & Times reported that 'Frank B. Fellows had charge of the Vault Building at South Newbury The actual cost was surprisingly close to the amount of the appropriation: \$1,538.03!

## **Expansion**

On March 3, 1917, the town sold a strip of land to their neighbors, Sunapee Lake Grange. Newbury residents at the March 1917 Town Meeting were asked "to see if the town will vote to finish library room and a room for the school board in the new building." Frank Belden Fellows was hired to do the work at a cost of \$74.08 and \$8 for supplying a stove. The Newbury Free Library was established in 1892 and was originally housed at the home of Edwin A. Blodgett across from the town buildings in a long-gone extension of what is now the Syvertsen home. The South Newbury branch of the town library evidently occupied the upper room of the Selectmen's Office building until they moved into the present library building which was dedicated November 17, 1963. Over the years, wood for fuel, insurance, and custodial services were the routine expenses.

## **Maintenance and Improvements**

It appears that the Selectmen's Office was originally painted white with green trim. Voters were first approached about painting the exterior of the town office in 1927. In 1948 the town appropriated \$350 to paint the office building inside and out and appropriated another \$200 in 1949 to finish the job. The Selectmen's Office required reshingling in 1940; Jim Jepson was paid \$150. In 1955, voters were asked to purchase an oil heater for the library using funds from the Jennie Folsom Library Trust. In 1965, the town spent \$375 for a warm air heating system and \$203.19 for storm windows (for the Selectman's Office). According to the 1967 town report, that year "the Selectmen's Office has been painted (gray) to match the Town Hall and has been redecorated with new paint and drapes. Tiled ceiling has been installed around flush mount lights, overloaded electric circuits were replaced to give safe wiring. The conference table was replaced with metal desks. The former library over the town office has been assigned to the planning board. Lights have been installed over the conference table formerly used by the Selectmen. This room will provide ample wall and work space for maps and records used by the board." In 1974, the town voted to raise and appropriate \$1,000 to repair and reshingle the Selectmen's Office and \$1,000 to repair or replace the heating plant.

## **Relocation of Selectmen/Sherman Hall**

In early 1989, the town offices were relocated from South Newbury to the newly renovated Center School building, at which time the Selectmen agreed to let the Newbury Historical Society occupy their former headquarters. At the March Town Meeting, voters approved renaming the building "Sherman Hall" in memory of Ernest Lincoln Sherman, Newbury's foremost historian, who died August 189, 1988. Sherman Hall was dedicated on Sunday June 25, 1989. Since then, Society members have worked to organize the old town records and documents and the Sherman collection in addition to compiling original research. Most notably, in 1989 an original copy of the United States Constitution was discovered while sorting through the vault. Voters authorized to place the document on loan to the New Hampshire State Archives for safe keeping.

Author: Tracy Messer

## Sunapee Lake Grange Hall #112 South Newbury



The Grange came to Newbury more than a decade after the founding of the Order in New Hampshire in 1873. Serious losses in membership and the collapse of numerous subordinate units had dealt the New Hampshire Grange a near fatal blow by 1881, but then under courageous and highly capable leaders, its fortunes began to revive. A vigorous campaign was launched with the purpose of revitalizing the Order and spreading its influence throughout the Granite State. Dormant granges were awakened and new subordinate and pomona Granges were organized. It was amid this general revival that attention turned to Newbury.

On January 9, 1886, a public meeting was convened at the Town Hall in South Newbury to determine what sentiment existed in favor of starting a Grange. Among those attending were State Grange Master William H. Stinson, State Secretary Nahum J. Bachelder, and several for Newbury who already belonged to Bradford Grange. A petition was circulated around the hall and signed by seventeen of those present, after which the public session was closed, and the state officers, assisted by the patrons from Bradford Grange, proceeded to obligate the new Grangers and to install their officers. Before the meeting adjourned, it was voted that the new subordinate Grange should be named Sunapee Lake Grange No. 112, Patrons of Husbandry.

These early Newbury Grangers were mostly farmers by profession, though Wesley Cilley and his wife Mary owned the general store in South Newbury, and brothers Brockway, father and son, were respectively the station agent and telegrapher at the Concord & Claremont Railroad Depot

at Newbury. Several were active in town government, especially Brother Sprague Morse, who, besides his farming, had served as Town Clerk for almost thirty years. Master Fred S. Muzzey, whose wife Hannah was first Chaplain of Sunapee Lake Grange, lived on the farm now owned by Barbara Yates; his son Willis, elected Steward at the same time, occupied the cottage half way down the lane and now the property of Walter Wurth. The Overseer, Brother Daniel M. Perkins, who operated a large farm on Morse Hill, belonged to the Masonic Lodge in Bradford. Among the sisters were several who were teaching or who had taught in the town's district schools. Of those who farmed, most seemed reasonably successful; indeed, one of the largest farms in the area, over 400 acres in extent, was that belonging to Brother Richard T. Muzzey up between the mountains. In general, it was a young Grange; the median age of those who joined in 1886 was thirty-three and more than a third was under the age thirty.

For several months, Grange continued to meet in the Town Hall, but in April, when Brother Cilley offered to rent the hall up over his store, directly across the street from the Town Hall, and to furnish lights and fire wood, all for \$20. a year, the Grange decided to change quarters. The new hall was dedicated on April 23<sup>rd</sup> with a special program and a farmer's dinner. Over the next several months, various members donated tables, chairs, lamps, crockery and other furnishings. The Grange remained at Cilley Hall until October 1902.

Sunapee Lake Grange quickly made a good impression around town, and before the year was out, twenty-eight more had been entered on the rolls, including several who took demits from Bradford Grange. In the years ahead, the trend was steadily upward. By 1901, there were eighty-one members. Familiar names and others less familiar appear on the early rolls—Brockway, Gillingham, Bly, Perkins, Messer, Shaw, Folsom, Muzzey, Rowe, Morse, and Twiss. They met almost every week except during haying and the harvest.

Newbury in the late 1880's was essentially a small rural town, with a majority of the resident families living on farms, many where fields and pastures and even dwellings and barns have long since been swallowed up by the forest. Though agriculture had been on the wane since the Civil War, it was still the mainstay of the local economy. Other than saw mills and a few tiny workshops and general stores, there was no industry. Even village households kept gardens, chickens, and a cow or two. Farming was the way of life.

The farms were not large, averaging perhaps 160 acres, much in hill pasture and timber. Mixed agriculture predominated. Hay was the leading crop. To earn the cash they needed to pay their taxes and meet other expenses, Newbury farmers raised and sold potatoes, butter, eggs, apples, maple sugar, and vegetables. Milk was shipped by rail from the Bradford and Newbury depots, mostly for delivery to D. Whiting and sons in Boston. Through the summer and into the late fall, cattle and sheep were fattened on mountain pastures high above the village. Livestock trading was a big business, too. During the winter and early spring, local farmers cut and sold firewood and lumber, much of being taken by the large mill owned by the Fowler Brothers at the head of Todd Pond. Ice drawn from lakes and ponds was packed in sawdust and peddled when the weather turned hot. Many farmers also took in summer boarders and supplied fresh produce to the fancy hotels and cottagers around Lake Sunapee.

Going to Grange soon became a weekly habit for farm families around town. Thus, Brother Daniel Perkins makes the notation in his diary for February 17, 1888, "All hands went up to Grange at Night". The diaries indicate that Brother Perkins seldom missed a meeting.

As membership expanded, Cilley Hall became cramped for space, and finally in 1901, it was decided that the Grange should look for new quarters. A site of land adjacent to the Town Hall, then occupied blacksmith shop owned by Jason Perkins, was purchased for \$75 and, assisted by a loan from Brother Mark Shultis, construction began on the hall. The building was finished in the fall of 1902 at a total cost of \$1,776.06. The first meeting was held there on October 24<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently, the Grange acquired the barn on Sleepy Street now owned by Harold Eaton to be used for stabling the teams of visiting patrons, and somewhat later added the shed to the back of the hall. In 1917, Brother Mark W. Muzzey presented the Grange with a deed to the land just west of the hall so as to clear eight feet from the building.

The new hall was finished just in time, for the Grange was soon deluged by applicants. By 1910, membership had risen to one hundred and forty. The New Hampshire Grange was in its hey-day. With thirty thousand members and subordinate Granges located in virtually every town and voting ward in the state, the Grange had become a power to be reckoned with. From 1903 to 1905, State Master Nahum J. Bachelder served as governor; influential grangers sat in the legislature and occupied other positions of prominence in state and local government. Grange-sponsored legislation made radical changes in the state's public school system on major improvements in the quality of rural life in New Hampshire. In few states were farms more thoroughly organized, and in New Hampshire, the Grange was recognized as the "farmer's spokesman".

Newbury reflected this development. Not another organization in town could match the influence or the popularity of the Grange. Virtually everyone of consequence in town affairs belonged. Though farmers and their families still made up a majority of the members, other professions were well represented – merchants, laborers, teachers, students, the butcher, and a locomotive engineer, a poultry dealer, wealthy and poor alike. Many of the town officers were Grange members – Town Clerk Clarence Perkins, representative Thomas Leach, road agent Orrin Muzzey, school treasurer John Gillingham, selectmen, auditors, supervisors, and school committee members. The Grange brought people together and helped create community spirit. The Grange was a lively place in those days.

Times were changing. The telephone reached South Newbury in 1898; electric power lines arrived in 1927; automobiles and motor trucks were appearing in growing number; the main street through South Newbury was paved during the mid 1920's. The subsistence farm had all but disappeared. Most farmers bought whatever they needed at the village stores. Whereas in 1886, there had been at least fifty working farms in the town, by 1920 there were fewer than two dozen, including the massive estates owned by Newton Shultis and Clarence Hay. Pressured by rising costs and falling commodity prices, agriculture continued its decline. By 1940, all that remained were a handful of farms.

The Grange faced an uncertain future. Membership fell to ninety-eight in 1919, and the decline continued on into the next decade. The Great Depression caused great hardship locally. From a peak of 33,000 in 1921, the New Hampshire Grange suffered a steady eroding of membership which continued virtually unchecked until 1940.

Whereas the State Grange has experienced staggering losses over the past, and today exercises only marginal influence in the public life of New Hampshire, Sunapee Lake Grange has suffered very little. The closing of the Granges in Warner and Bradford has brought an infusion of

willing workers into Sunapee Lake. In the years since World War II, there has been a succession of dedicated masters – Merle Rich, Julia Thompson,

Edith Eaton, Charlotte and George Allen, Helen Rollins, Vera Newell, Merton Perkins, Blanche Clarke, Martha Blake, Reuben and John Moore, Frank Brown, Doris Newell, Bob and Sandy Cyr.

Whether it is working on suppers, rehearsing a play, preparing programs, working on the fair – the evidence is clear, the Grange Spirit is alive and well in Newbury, New Hampshire.

Taken from: HISTORY OF SUNAPEE LAKE GRANGE #112

By Rexford Sherman

Author: Marilyn Geddes

## **Schools in Newbury – An Incomplete History**



BAKER HILL SCHOOL  
Owners: Mr. & Mrs. John E. Mattis – Newbury, N.H.

Tracing the history of education in the town of Newbury is both rewarding and frustrating. Doubtlessly the early settlers valued education for their children. Indeed, they were required by the incorporators to take immediate steps to offer education to the families who settled here. As communities struggled to establish themselves amid the wilderness, classes were held in whatever structures were available: meeting houses, private homes, and even probably under temporary shelters and in sheds.

Later, as funds became available for more formal quarters, Newbury's forefathers began discussing where to erect school structures. Much of that early discussion remains a mystery for the most part. What's known is that -- after much debate -- Newbury's first unique school structure was built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century on Baker Hill Road. The structure still stands, somewhat modified for residential use. What's not known for sure is when and where many of Newbury's other schools were built and what became of them.

Over time any detailed records of the school houses have either been lost, or buried amid unprocessed documents, or become inaccessible. There are several personal recollections, however, whose information has the feel of authenticity, and some photographs. Those will be used here to review what can be determined in 2007 about Newbury's school history.

From several sources we know that Newbury at one time counted up to 13 school districts. Local historians agree that not all were used simultaneously, but were created as the need for education arose. In fact, at least two of the "districts" we know about referred to schools that were just outside of Newbury's boundaries, but were attended by children from Newbury.

One local historian was the late Clifford B. Ayer. Mr. Ayer, who died in 2005 at age 93, was "deeply involved" in Newbury's history, according to the 2005 Town Report. Among historical documents he collected was a list of school districts in the year 1850, based on deed records:

1. Baker Hill: 1791
2. Corner of Rollins Road
3. Cheney Road
4. Gillingham Drive
5. South Newbury
6. Box Corner. (Notation beside entry: "District No. 1 in Bradford. Annexed to Newbury April 27, 1850.")
7. Post Road
8. Mt. Sunapee
9. Mountain Road
10. South Road. ("Past home of John Gillingham, right side of road.")
11. South of Baker Hill Road. (Old road to Chalk Pond.)



**Mt. Sunapee School**

Another list of districts was published in 1991. In "Grannies Memories," Florence Bly Perkins recorded the recollections of her father, born in 1849, and her mother, born in 1863. Her list of school districts, as she acknowledged, was somewhat incomplete:

1. Baker Hill

2. Corner of Rollins Road near Hay Estate
3. Gillingham, near Elms Farm
4. E.D. Perkins on Gillingham Drive
5. South Newbury
6. Ledge Hill. "Blasting at the top of Ledge Hill for Route 103 destroyed the old foundation of the Bly Hill (sic) School House."
7. Shaw or Cheney; burned about 1981.
8. Chandler, Mt. Sunapee
9. Between the Mountains. Burned down in the 1950s by Ray Shulkey.
10. (sic)
11. (sic)
12. (sic)
13. Sutton and Newbury ("This may not be right. F.B.P.")

District 12, at Box Corner (Hoyt's Corner), was run as part of the Union School District cooperatively with Bradford. District 13 housed a combination of Sutton and Newbury students, although the building was just over the town line in Sutton.

(Not included in the "historical" lists of school sites is the Center School, built on Route 103 in 1927. Many of today's longtime Newbury residents recall the building in use as a school, before it became the Town Office Building in 1989. Alice Lynn, 89, attended school there and remembers 28 or 30 students in the first through the eighth grades. "Florence Symonds was the first teacher. Then Edith Watson for the next 30 years. Edith came out of normal school. She was so smart, she utilized every minute of your time," Alice remembered in the spring of 2007.)



Center School - now Town Office Building

The only school with detailed historical documentation to date is the Baker Hill School. The current owners are Diane and Michael Hornblas of Portsmouth. They were left a package of

notes taken by previous owners, and photocopied documents obtained from the state archives in Concord. Much of the material concerned the Baker family, which lived in the area along with the Messers and others. An example were the notes taken in September 1972 by the owners when Mrs. Clara Wright of Newport (nee “Cressey of Bradford”) came to visit. She told the owners then she had taught “the three Rs” at Baker Hill from 1916 to 1917 for three terms and was not a trained teacher. She left teaching for business. Julia Wood taught before Mrs. Wright, and Mary Farmer from Keene followed her. Mrs. Wright earned \$8 a week and had 12 to 18 pupils. She roomed and boarded with the Messers for \$3. She loved living with them and had good times with the neighbors’ families – Messers, Woods and Prews.

From another document at the Baker Hill School: In 1791 New Hampshire school law required 50 households to provide a school master for reading and writing. There were 100 households, which provided a grammar school. The fine for “miscompliance” was 20 pounds. In 1805 the town were empowered to divide into districts and appropriate money for schools.

From notes taken in February 1971 from microfilm and found in the Baker Hill School: March 17, 1790 – first discussion of a school and voted 12 pounds to divide school into classes according to taxes. Selectmen to look at and agree on school lot given by John Pierce. 1793 – 25 pounds to be raised for hiring schools for the present year. 1799 – Divided town into school districts. 1800 voted not to build school houses. 1804 first school house (presumably Baker Hill). 1805 – money shall be provided for each district to build its own school house. 1813 – Baker School lot.

From these references a pattern of change can be assumed, the district going from “hiring schools,” or renting space in a house or other building, to actually getting down to the business of appropriating cash to buy materials to build a school structure.

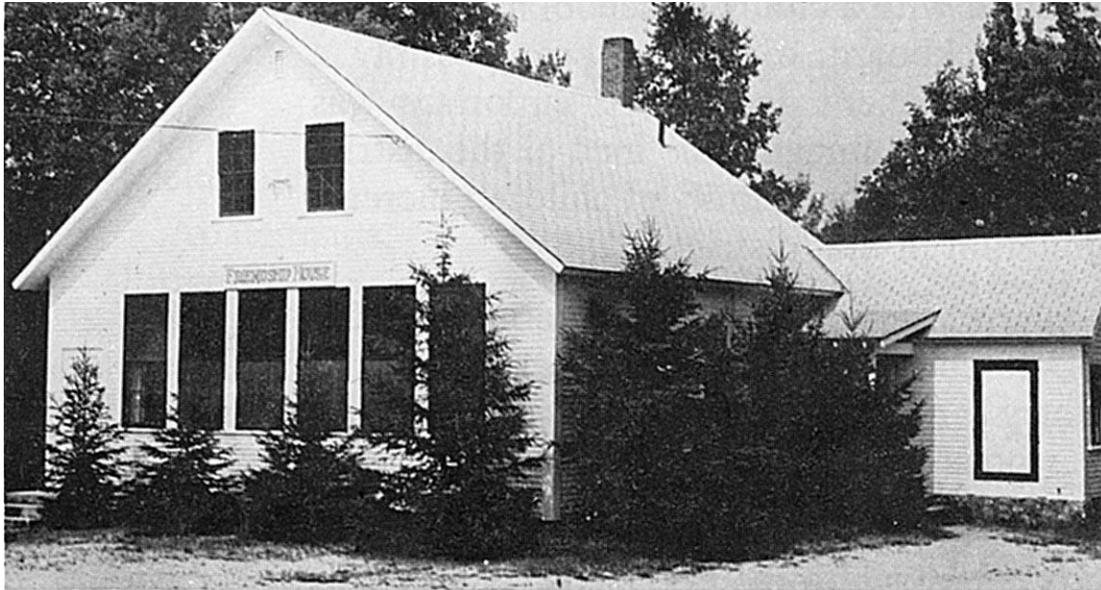
A graduation memento of the Baker School, owned by William Weiler, chairman of the Newbury Historical Society in 2007, sheds light on the composition of the school in 1907. The souvenir folder was presented by Edith S. Messer, teacher, and school officers John D. Peasley, Emma Cheney and Anna hinds. Pictured in the folder are pupils Clarence S. Austin, Blanche D. Austin, Alice L. Gillingham, Chester J. Gillingham, Roy J. Gillingham, Harry V. Hoag, Harry J. Mason, Willie E. Mason, Harold M. Messer, Eva B Watso, Jessie Watso, Mabel D. Watso, Doris M. Whipple and Leslie H. Whipple.

Once cannot delve very far into Newbury’s past without encountering the efforts of the late Ernest L. Sherman, author of “History of Newbury, New Hampshire, The Beginnings, 1740-1800”; Bicentennial Edition, 1978. While detailed as to the formation and early settlement events of Newbury, the history contains only this about schools: “ Lot #4 was originally owned in 1778 by Jesse Baker; by 1806 it was owned by the Cilleys. After 1890, the property was owned by the Messers.”

Another historical document is “Newbury Past and Present,” published in 1955 by Sunapee Lake Grange, No. 112. It suggests that Newbury’s first school was created in 1791 on Baker Hill in School District No. 1. It goes on to report: Through the years there have been at least thirteen school districts in the town of Newbury, though not all were in session every year. A superintending school committee was elected from the town at large. Each district elected a Prudential Committee which supervised their own districts. A summer term was usually taught by a woman; students included the youngest children. During the winter a male teacher taught

the older boys, who had less work on the farms during that season. Students throughout the year ranged from tots of 4-5 to girls in their late teens to young men in their 20s.

Further school-related tidbits can be gleaned from the various notes, remembrances and publications already mentioned. For instance, the school in South Newbury, now known as Friendship House, was built about 1853. In 1855 Martha S. Shepard was paid \$18 for teaching nine weeks of summer school. George W. Skinner received \$43.64 for teaching nine weeks in the winter. A broom and chalk purchased for the school cost 37 cents; a water dipper cost 15 cents.



**SOUTH NEWBURY SCHOOL**  
Owners: South Newbury Union Church — Newbury, N.H.

In a grim recollection, it was noted that teacher Frances Stevens was found dead in the Baker Hill School in 1938. (The current owners do not attest to the presence of any otherworldly spirits in the structure.)

The annual town report of 1971 included an article, “The Old Schools of Newbury,” author unknown. It notes that an 1858 map of Newbury shows 11 school districts. The article charmingly relates:

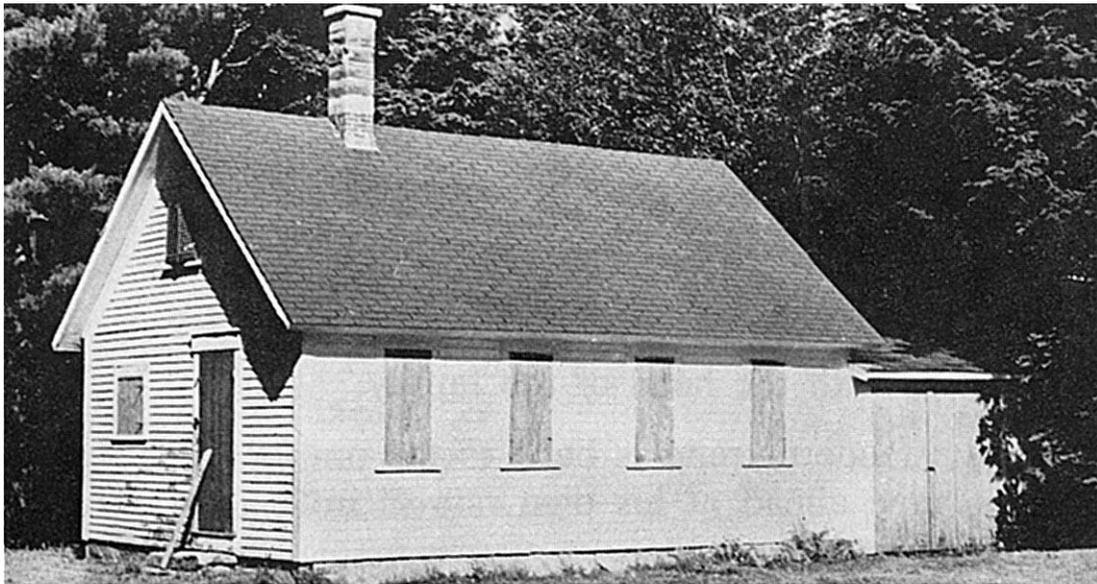
“Such a school house would be a one-room affair with a chunk or school house stove, a long pipe to radiate heat, crude shelf desks, a blackboard, a wooden box, possibly a map, and sometimes a raised platform to hold the teacher’s desk. Most important was the fact that these buildings were portable and one can imagine the men of the district with their teams sledging the school to a new location, as one family of children increasing could change the center of the school population in that district.”

The article goes on to describe the long walk many children had to the school house, made pleasant in the fall with the “leaves ablaze..., the partridge drumming in the spruce woods and the puffs of chalklike dust spurting up between ones (sic) toes.”

Teachers' lives were severe, it continued: "The pay was small, but by "boarding around," the teacher could make a living. Moreover, she got to know her pupils well, eating with them, helping with simple chores, and sometimes coming to intellectual grips with the head of the family."

Accompanying the 1971 report's article were photos of six existing schools from the early period, and the Newbury Center School. The captions do not specify the location of the six older buildings, but list them by the names they were known by at that time. The names hint at their approximate location: "Baker Hill School, owners, Mr. and Mrs. John E. Mattis; Craig Hill School, owners, Mr. and Mrs. Raapzaad Hassel, South Newbury; South Newbury School, owners, South Newbury Union Church; Chandler Brook School, owner, State of New Hampshire; Cheney Road School, owner, Mr. Abram C. Flint, Billerica, Mass.; Between-the-Mountains School, owners, Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Bucher, Ridgewood, N.J.

So, awaiting further historical research, this is what exists of Newbury's school history in 2007. The Newbury Historical Society would be pleased to hear from anyone who has documented evidence of schools in Newbury.



**CHENEY ROAD SCHOOL**  
Owners: Mr. Abram C. Flint — Billerica, Mass.

Author: Frank Perrotta

### **Oral History by Alice (Croteau) Lynn**

A lifetime of memories, family, friends and changes in Newbury NH over the last eighty nine years.

Based on an Interview by Donna Matte on June 11, 2007

Alice begins:

I was born in 1917 on Baker Hill in a farm house that is across the road from where Stony Brook Road intersects Baker Hill going toward Sutton. My father (Joseph Croteau) bought the existing farm house and, over time, purchased additional land which made for a forty acre farm there. He had to fix up the farm house before my mother and oldest brother could move into it. My mother often said you could see daylight coming through the house. My father worked hard during the day and by lantern at night getting the farm house ready for our family to live in it. In the mean time my mother lived in New London with her mother in-law. My second brother was born in the farmhouse. I was number six in a family of ten children; six boys and four girls. Our farmhouse was in a beautiful spot and as kids we had plenty we could explore. So that's the story of my birth.

My 3 oldest brothers and one sister went to the Baker Hill School. The only time I went to the Baker Hill School was when I was 2 or 3 years old. The teacher used to ask my mother if she would send me to the school so I could recite the little poems and sing songs I knew. The only thing I remember about the school house was that it was up hill all the way to the Digillio farm house and my little legs got so tired my brothers used to take turns piggy backing me up the hill.



Center School 1927 / Alice Croteau second from left

Eventually they closed the Baker Hill school. So then I went to school at the school house that was at the corner of Rollins Road, until the Center School opened in 1927. This is the building that is now the "New Town Hall" located next to the Newbury Library on Route 103. The teacher was Mrs. Simons. She lived in the house just up the street at the corner of Birch Bluff and what

is now Route 103A. When Mrs. Simons would go to Florida for a couple of weeks Mrs. Cove from Mount Sunapee would be our substitute teacher. Also once in awhile Helen Coburn from South Newbury would substitute, but she was the teacher at the South Newbury School.

Later on we had Edith Watson, just nineteen years old, who came from a little town east of Hanover. She was a crackerjack teacher. She had eight grades to teach. Every morning she had every grades regimen on the black board. She always made sure we got outside everyday. If it was raining we all crowded on the little porch that is there now. She always played baseball with us that was our favorite sport. She used to board at the farm at the bottom of ledge hill, where the auction barn is now. Miss Watson stayed for thirty two years. She knew every subject perfectly. She graduated from the Donald School in Keene. I was the only one in my grade so I never had a classmate. So I would go with the class ahead of me. I learned nine years of school in eight years. Most everyone loved her!

Miss Watson would take us on the steamboat that went around the lake after the 10:30 train left. We would take our lunches and go around the lake. They would stop around the lake to discharge or pick up mail. We had a great time. Sometimes she would take us on a hike up to Lake Solitude.

We would raise money having card parties for our parents at the Kings Daughters Hall, (now the Vets Hall). Then Miss Watson would rent a cottage at lake Massasecum. The older kids would go to the cottage for a week or two depending on how much money we raised. Miss Watson came from Lyme, NH. I guess she returned there after teaching and became the librarian, for many years. She died at age 83 or 84. I felt so bad I never stayed in contact with her. I had thought she had died in Texas many years earlier.

I didn't go to high school. Instead I went to live with my aunt in Waltham Mass. I always tell people I came from the school of hard knocks. My mother came from Waltham; she met my father in Waltham. He worked at a factory were they made automobiles; I think it was a car called the Metz. They married when my mother was twenty two (?) and my father was younger (he was born in 1886). When we got my mothers Baptism papers for social security we found out she was born in 1884 not 1885. Well we don't know if that was a mistake by the Catholic Church or whatever. My oldest brother George and my sister Louisa where born in Massachusetts. Louisa died of meningitis at 5 months of age. Later they moved to Lowell Mass. I don't know what type of work my father did there; but his father was an accomplished "plush" weaver in the mills of Lowell.

My father's mother had moved to New London so that's how we came here in 1910. My Grandmother lived in the 1792 House just beyond the little Stone Episcopal Church on King Hill road. My family stayed with my grandmother at this time. When the farm house was ready they moved to Baker Hill. There we had cows, chickens, pigs, and horses. So we had our own milk, eggs, meat and huge gardens for vegetables. There weren't many neighbors; the Messers, the Digillios, and Robbie Hill. When we ran out of milk we would buy some from Robbie. There was a man named Bill Connor who lived on Baker Hill Road just over the Sutton line; my father always hired him to slaughter the pigs. There weren't many neighbors.

We were Catholic and the nearest Catholic church then was in Sunapee so we didn't attend. My mother taught us our prayers. My mother's sister used to come to visit and they would have

little spats about us not going to church; when you have a horse and buggy you don't go too far. I found my own religion when I moved to Massachusetts. I

got a job. I used to go to the different churches. I ended up becoming a Methodist. When I married my husband we lived in Reading Mass. We taught Sunday School for 12 years. There were a hundred or so kids. I became the leader of 14 teachers. Getting volunteers was very hard to do. I would call parents to ask them to participate and they would say that couldn't because they were playing bridge on Sunday afternoon.

I have a theory about that; I think every parent should give up a year of their life to their child's Christian upbringing. I couldn't talk people into it. I also taught Sunday school in the Sunapee Methodist church for 6 years. I don't go to church anymore; I can't hear the sermons.

My husband died in April of 1961, my mother died in August of 1961. My father would come to visit and say "Alice you need to come to NH with those two girls to live. I will give you a piece of land and you can build a house on it" So this is it. This is the main house built in 1962. In 1968 I added 24 feet for a beauty shop. I got my GED and went to beauty school when I was 50. I retired in 1983. Until two years ago I did everything around here myself, now the house is getting too big for me. But God has been good to me; I am going to be 90 in August. I can still do things and I can still think.

Years ago, in 1926 these roads were all dirt. For awhile my father worked as a state patrolman. He was responsible for the upkeep of Route 103A from the New London line to the center of town in Newbury at the end of the lake. There weren't many houses on the road at that time. The Morison's lived in the house which is across the street from the field area of my brother Walter Croteau's house (my family's 2<sup>nd</sup> homestead in Newbury-Walter was the Newbury Town Treasurer for 28 years). There was also the house at the corner of Birch Bluff and a few cottages down by the lake.

There was a Mrs. Hayward who was the head of the Girl Scouts of America. She would come to Newbury to spend the summer. She had purchased land from the Stevens where Chalet Hill used to be. Next were George and Marie Thomas on the lakeside. Next was the Knollwood Inn, which has been torn down. Beyond that was a Dr. MacMillan, an eye doctor in Concord. I got my glasses when I was 13 from him.

I once got a letter from his grand daughter; she knew I was connected to the Center Meeting House. She said she had the first organ that was in that Center Meeting House and would I like it? I said yes. But there was a little problem. I couldn't go to get it. I didn't think I knew anybody who would get it. I was talking to Chuck Kennedy and he went down just a year or so ago and got it. It was quite a find I guess. The organ in the Center Meeting House now goes back to 1892 or maybe before that. Doris Newell had played the organ there for 30 some years. Now she plays the organ at the South Newbury Church.

Helen Nye and I used to get the Ministers for the Center Meeting House. When she could no longer do it I took it over for ten or twelve years. Helen was a school teacher in Warner for many

years. Helen married Harley Nye in the forties and became a substitute Librarian here in Newbury for 42 years. The Library for this part of town was in the Kings Daughters Hall. Mrs. Spaulding was the Librarian for a time. In the winter she would take the books to her house, which is the Bald Sunapee building now. Clifford Ayers grandfather built that house; I think he was a Coburn. At that time if we had an overdue book we had to pay a penny, now we are free. I am in my 20<sup>th</sup> year working at the Library. Of course I only work one day a week.

In 1965 we built the Library where it is now. It was where the Children's room is now. That's where I started working. That's the story of the Library and the Center Meeting House. I am a trustee of the Center Meeting House. The Library for South Newbury was in Sherman Hall upstairs. Helen Rich used to man that Library.

I have been on various boards for the town of Newbury over the years. When I was on the committee for the Caboose, Dennis and I and Dickie Wright went to Laconia to look at the Blue Caboose. I never in my life saw a Blue Caboose!

As a kid my sister Irene and I used to go down when the train came in to watch Mr. Brockway, Charlie Brockway. We would watch him hold up the stop sign. Its funny the things you remember from when you were a kid.

The Brockways built the house that the town just bought next to Bald Sunapee. That belonged to a Virgil Brockway. Charlie Brockway lived across the street and he was the Station Agent. The town has acquired a nice piece of land in the center of town.

We are trying to work on the Center Meeting House right now. We raised the money to fix the foundation, which has been done now and I think the steeple is next. We have to thank John Hay Sr. for his help in preserving the color of the inside of the Meeting House. I guess some one wanted to change the color and he said no way! It is apple green and he would not let anyone alter the original color. I hope whoever we get to do the inside and the outside of the building knows what they are doing. We have to be very grateful to the Hay Family for saving the original apple green, and for preserving the building in its original state since it was built in 1832. It is one of only three such buildings in New England; possibly Bullfinch architecture. I am in the process of trying to put together the names of all the ministers we have had speak there. When I was a kid a minister Knotts lived up Baker Hill and preached down here for a number of years. I don't know where we are going from here but we are fighting to keep the building.

The first Center Meeting House was at the corner of Province road and the old County road on Bly Hill. One day a girl came to the Library and said she just bought some land in Newbury. I asked her where and she said next to the cemetery on Bly Hill. I got out the old map and lo and behold it was right where the old. Center Meeting House was. Some of the beams from the old Meeting House were used in the present Center Meeting House; the rest of the lumber went to someone on Mountain road, I have forgotten the name.

There was another Center Meeting House in Sunapee like our present Center Meeting House but it burned in the 20's. There are 2 other "Churches" like the Center Meeting House, one in Wolfboro and one in Sturbridge Massachusetts. There was a man who built the beam structure for several churches in the area, one of them being the South Newbury Church. It was built the year before the present Center Meeting House. The original church in South Newbury

burnt and was replaced but I don't remember who rebuilt it. I am so glad the Meeting House will be restored, probably not in my lifetime, but I know there are younger people who will carry on.

I'm so glad that I moved back to Newbury; my old birthplace. When I had my shop people would call and complain about this and that, I would tell them to talk to there selectman, I can't help you.

I have been on the planning committee, scenic byways committee, upper valley planning for the Historical Society, the caboose committee, let's face it; I didn't know how to say no!

## **TOOLS FOR THE PRESERVATION & ENHANCEMENT OF HISTORIC SITES AND AREAS**

To date, the continued protection of Newbury's historic resources has been accomplished largely by the actions of individual owners and an overriding community-wide respect for the town's historic assets. Decaying buildings and neglect are rare, outweighed by a sense of pride and understanding identifiable by visitors and residents alike. Currently, Newbury manages development through zoning, subdivision regulations and site plan review regulations. Yet, these ordinances and regulations may not be enough to protect the town's historic resources in the future. It should not be assumed that land use controls and federal incentives alone will be sufficient to preserve Newbury's important assets. It is the private sector which provides the fuel and support necessary to ensure that the town's cultural resources remain an integral part of everyday life. It is a broad-based partnership between different levels of support which must be sought.

To ensure that Newbury is able to retain its historic assets in the future, the various vehicles for preservation available from the town, as well as from the private, local and federal levels, are discussed below and should be considered.

### **Private Citizens and Organizations**

Much of the responsibility for historic preservation is undertaken by private individuals or groups. According to 2000 U.S. Census figures, 17% of Newbury's housing units were built prior to 1940 (as compared to 24% in Merrimack County and 20% statewide). Pride in ownership and regular maintenance alone can be responsible for remarkable preservation results. Cases of neglect and decay are rare in Newbury; general maintenance is rewarded by a very favorable real estate market. Unfortunately, improvement work undertaken with good intentions can result in techniques or materials inconsistent or insensitive to an older building. As a result, the integrity of the building is compromised and work done may actually damage the building it was intended to preserve, often proving more expensive than the proper treatment. Information covering topics sensitive to the needs of older buildings, ranging from the pros and cons of vinyl and aluminum siding, stripping paints, window replacement and repainting brick, is available from the New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources.

The Newbury Historical Society has been instrumental in enhancing the public's awareness of the importance of preserving the town's historic quality.

## **Historic Resources Survey**

Preservation through documentation is, perhaps, the most basic, essential and non-controversial of preservation strategies. There are several advantages in undertaking an historic resources survey. In addition to providing a permanent written and photographic record of a town's architecture, a good inventory is the foundation for other preservation tools and can be used to establish local historic districts or to prepare nominations for listing of historic structures in the National Register of Historic Places. Data gathered in a survey may encourage a greater appreciation of the built environment by local citizens and identify historical resources worthy of protection from adverse impacts associated with the development of neighboring properties. Historic resource assessments are also necessary for accomplishing environmental reviews required in projects receiving Federal funding. As the beginning of a comprehensive historic preservation strategy, information gathered should act as a firm base for future decision making, by identifying buildings suitable for and worthy of rehabilitation and preservation.

As part of a statewide effort to identify and help preserve significant resources, matching grants are available from the New Hampshire Office of Historic Preservation for historic resource surveys. Such surveys, documenting resources significant for their historical or architectural character, quality and importance, are mandated by State and Federal law for the State Office to complete.

The matching grants for historic resource surveys available from the New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources are available only to communities that have become Certified Local Governments. To become certified, a town must:

1. enforce appropriate state or local legislation for designation and protection of historic properties;
2. establish an adequate and qualified historic preservation review commission under state law or local ordinances;
3. maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties;
4. provide for adequate public participation in the local historic preservation program, including the process of recommending properties for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places; and
5. satisfactorily perform the responsibilities delegated to it by the State Historic Preservation Officer under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

## **National Register of Historic Places**

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation. Established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and administered by the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior, the Register lists properties of local, state and/or national significance in the areas of American History, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture. Resources may be nominated individually or in groups, as districts or multiple resource areas, and must generally be older than 50 years.

In New Hampshire, any individual may prepare a nomination application. National Register forms, maps and photographs are submitted to the N.H. State Historic Preservation Office for review by the State Review Board. Following approval at the State level, it is sent to Washington, D.C. for final review, approval and listing. Assistance in the preparation of any National Register nomination is available from the Regional Planning Commission.

### Benefits of National Register Listing

1. Recognition of local, state or national significance often stimulating appreciation of local resources and encouraging pride in ownership.
2. Provides for review and amelioration of effects which any Federally-funded, licensed or assisted project might have on the property.
3. Eligibility for certain federal tax benefits, including the 25% investment tax credits for the rehabilitation of income-producing buildings and the charitable deduction for donations of easements.
4. Qualification for federal preservation grants when funding is available.

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, properties or districts must generally be older than fifty years and meet the evaluation criteria in the Federal Regulations summarized below:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture in districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association; and

- a. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Each individual building within a National Register District may not be an outstanding landmark on its own, but the group of structures taken as a whole must convey a strong sense of history and integrity. Structures which have been greatly altered or which do not contribute to the character of the district are noted “non-contributing”. Once nominated, a National Register District must have the approval of a majority of property owners, with each owner having a single vote regardless of the number of eligible properties he may own and regardless of whether the property contributes to the District’s significance. For a single privately-owned property with one owner, the property will not be listed if the owner objects. Listing in the Register does not interfere with a property owner’s right to alter, manage, dispose of or even demolish his

property unless, for some reason, Federal funds are involved. Nor does National Register listing require that an owner open his property to the public.

The Meetinghouse and the Fells are the only structures in Newbury listed on the National Register. Nearby National Register properties include the Dr. Solomon M. Whipple House in New London, the Salisbury Academy and covered bridges in Warner, the meetinghouse in Webster, and the Springfield Town Hall. The Downtown Newport Historic District is the closest established historic district. Over fifty individual buildings on sites and eleven districts in the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region are listed in the National Register.

National Register listing can be an important tool for identifying and planning the future of significant resources. Listing can act as a catalyst to change public perception and improve an area's image, but cannot in itself prevent major detrimental alterations or even demolition. It remains an important psychological first step towards historic awareness, respect and protection.

### **Local Historic Districts**

The term "historic district" can refer either to a locally designated historic district or, as has previously been discussed, to a National Register Historic District. Both are useful preservation tools but differ in the way in which they are established and the protection they afford. An historic area may be both a locally designated historic district and a National Register District. In this area, both Claremont and Newport have designated local historic districts.

The concept of historic district exemplifies the growing recognition that buildings cannot live in a vacuum but protection must be provided to structures as part of the total environment. The purpose of an historic district is to protect and preserve areas of outstanding architectural and historic value from inappropriate alterations and additions which might detract from an otherwise distinctive character. The controls on property development serve to assure property owners that investment in rehabilitating significant structures will not be negated by incongruous development on neighboring properties. The New Hampshire legislation (RSA 674:45) identifies the following purposes of historic districts:

- preserves an area which reflects cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history;
- conserving property values;
- fostering civic beauty, strengthening the local economy; and
- promoting the use of the district for the education, pleasure and welfare of community citizens.

The most comprehensive preservation tool available to local governments under state law is the creation and administration of a local historic district. As authorized by RSA 674:45, an historic district commission may be designated by local town meeting to prepare a suitable ordinance which establishes a framework for the commission's decisions and administration. In order for a town to adopt an historic district ordinance, public hearings are required and a majority of the voters at Town Meeting must approve the historic district ordinance before it can go into effect.

An historic district is characterized by a grouping of structures and/or sites which physically and spatially comprise a specific environment. Buildings may represent a cross section of ages and

styles but should be unified by past events or by plan or physical development. Delineating the boundaries of the district can be one of the most difficult aspects of creating an historic district.

After preparation and approval of an appropriate ordinance, the commission is given authority to consider the appropriateness of any proposed construction, exterior changes or demolition of any structure within the district. In addition to the buildings, streetscape features, above ground utility structures and signs are often also regulated. Each individual ordinance must outline precisely permitted and prohibited actions and regulated activities. Expectedly, ordinances take on varying degrees of strictness. Permitted activities might include routine maintenance, painting, replacement of exterior features with similar features, rehabilitation and routine landscaping. Prohibited uses might include artificial siding, lighted signs, mercury vapor lighting, etc. An historic district ordinance can specify the use of land, as well as its appearance or aspect, though a town can limit the commission's powers so as not to include land use regulation.

It is important to emphasize that historic district commissions control noncontributing structures, as well as new construction, within a district. Alterations and additions within a district are individually reviewed in respect to their mass, scale and detailing in relation to surrounding structures. In communities with a zoning ordinance, the historic district is usually, but not always, an overlaying district to an underlying zoning district.

For additional information on local historic districts, refer to: [Historic Districts in New Hampshire: A Handbook for the Establishment and Administration of Historic Districts](#), and [A Guide to Delineating Edges of Historic Districts](#). These and other pertinent publications are available at the Regional Planning Commission.

### **Heritage Commission**

New Hampshire now allows communities to establish heritage commissions. Heritage commissions give local governments in New Hampshire new abilities to recognize and protect historical and cultural resources. Unlike historic district commissions, whose responsibilities are limited to specific parts of a community, heritage commissions are intended to have a town-wide scope, and a range of activities that is determined by each individual community. Heritage commissions do for cultural resources what conservation commissions do for natural resources. Functionally, heritage commissions are somewhere between historical societies and historic district commissions, with their precise role determined locally. And while their primary duties are to advise and assist local boards and commissions, including the planning board, heritage commissions are also empowered to accept and expend funds for a non-lapsing heritage fund, and to acquire and manage property rights. Some communities may have heritage commissions that are only advisory, but others will want their commissions to take a much more active role and to assume responsibilities of an historic district commission. All of these are local decisions, authorized by the state enabling legislation; it gives communities a menu, not a mandate.

### **Historic Building Rehabilitation Tax Credits**

The rehabilitation of older buildings, frequently less expensive than new construction, is a cost-effective solution benefiting the tax base, while filling older structures with new life. The Economic Recovery Act of 1981 (as amended in the 1986 Tax Reform Act) provides attractive incentives in the form of federal investment tax credits for the substantial rehabilitation of

income-producing older buildings. The Act was enacted to support preservation by eliminating certain favorable tax incentives, which encouraged the demolition of historic structures. Credits are deducted from taxes owed, not income earned. Currently, the investment tax credits (ITC) incentives take two forms:

<u>ITC</u>	<u>Building Use</u>	<u>Eligible Properties</u>
10%	Commercial & Industrial	Built before 1936; not listed on National Register
20%	Commercial, industrial & rental residential	Certified historic structures 50 years or older undergo a certified rehabilitation approved by the National Parks Service

To be eligible for the 20% credit, a building must be a certified historic structure, either listed individually on the National Register or contributing to a Register Historic District or certified Local District. Certified rehabilitation work must adhere to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, a list of ten standards developed to ensure that significant features of a building will not be compromised. The 20% category carries guidelines for how work is to be done. Owners of properties within National Register Historic Districts must use the 20% or obtain certification that their structure is not historic to elect the lesser credit. In order to qualify for any of the tax credits, rehabilitation expenditures over a 24 month period must exceed \$5,000 or the adjusted basis of the property (purchase price of building less depreciation), whichever is greater. Municipally-owned structures are not typically eligible for these credits.

For additional information about the National Register or rehabilitation tax credits, contact the New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources in Concord.

### **Other Preservation Tools**

#### Revolving Funds

Revolving funds are self-replenishing loan pools. The money in the pools is mostly composed of donations and is used to restore buildings. The fund revolves when the restored building is sold. With a revolving fund, a nonprofit organization can acquire a deteriorating building, restore it and then sell it, or make low interest loans available to those who need to restore their historic buildings.

The first building restored by a revolving fund should be a highly visible one, so that donors can see their money at work. A building should be endangered, well worth saving, and have a high resale potential before it should be considered eligible for a revolving fund. Besides donations, an organization administering a revolving fund can solicit sources of revenue from private foundations and government subsidies such as Community Development Block Grants.

#### Easements

New Hampshire Law RSA 447:45-47 covers Conservation Preservation and Agricultural Conservation Restrictions, commonly known as easements. An easement is a partial interest in a

property, a property right that can be bought or sold. It may give a person or a right to do something with or on another person's property or, as is more common in terms of historic preservation, it can prevent an owner from doing something on his or her property (called a negative easement).

The major advantage of easements is that the costs of such a program may be significantly lower than buying properties outright to protect valuable resources, particularly when easements can be acquired by donation.

A preservation easement is an agreement between an owner of historic property and a government agency or preservation organization which gives the latter the right to review any proposed changes to the structure. In return for giving an easement, a property owner is eligible under the Tax Treatment and Extension Act of 1980 to make a deduction from his/her income tax. If the easement is considered a lifetime gift, then the property owner could receive a deduction for up to 50% of his adjusted gross income. Once recorded, an easement usually runs with the property in perpetuity, thus binding not only on the present owner who conveys it, but all future owners as well.

Preservation easements generally take one of two forms. The first and more common type is the exterior or facade easement which protects the outside appearance of a building by controlling alterations and requiring maintenance. The second type, an interior easement, protects all or part of a building's interior. This type of easement is seldom used, for it is often difficult to enforce and also to acquire.

In rural areas, conservation easements can play a vital role in preserving the lands around historic sites. Typically, a conservation easement can be donated to protect open spaces, scenic areas, waterways, wildlife and farmland.

In those instances where it may be appropriate, historic preservation easements can be implemented and enforced by the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust (ASLPT). The ASLPT has considered one historic facade easement proposal to date, but did not accept the easement since they did not consider the structure involved to be historically significant. The ASLPT is concerned with the cost of enforcing historic preservation easements, as well as the issue of determining what changes may be permitted after acceptance of a facade easement. Given these reservations, the ASLPT may still possibly accept an historic preservation easement if the right situation arises.

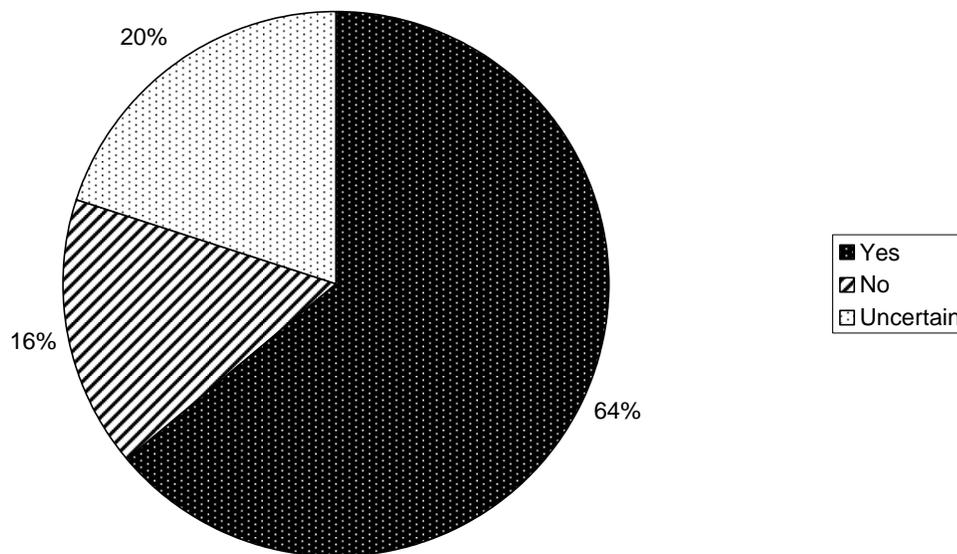
### Site and Building Design Guidelines

Protection of historic resources can also be accomplished through development and implementation of building and site design guidelines. One option to consider is to incorporate site and building design guidelines into the Site Plan Review Regulations. This would provide the opportunity to review all types of development for consistency with site and building design guidelines, with the exception of single and two family residences.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS: HISTORIC PRESERVATION

When asked if they would support the use of tax dollars to purchase property or easements for historic preservation, sixty-four percent (64%) of those responding to the community survey supported the idea. Only sixteen percent (16%) opposed the idea and twenty percent (20%) were uncertain. The use of tax dollars to purchase property or easements for historic preservation was second only to using that money for conservation.

**FIGURE V-1:  
Historic Preservation**



### **Issues: Historic Preservation**

1. Ernest Sherman has documented the history of Newbury up to 1800, but a written history of the town does not exist beyond that date.
2. The town lacks an inventory of its historic resources including historic structures and sites such as old mill sites, cellar holes and other valuable historic sites.
3. The Meetinghouse is the only structure in Newbury listed on the National Register of Historic Places and there is no area listed as an historic district.

4. There is a lack of information available to the public regarding suitable rehabilitation techniques and grant opportunities for the appropriate renovation of historic structures.
5. Newbury's historic documents need to be protected.
6. Many of the gravestones in the town 's cemeteries need repair and maintenance. There is not a photographic record of gravestones in the town 's cemeteries.
7. Newbury currently has designated Cheney Road, Province Road and Gillingham Drive as scenic roads. Scenic road designation can protect the scenic visual qualities along the road, such as stone walls and shade trees, which contribute greatly to the rural character of the area.
8. Stone walls along roads and property lines are significant historic resources worthy of protection and restoration if disturbed during the development of property.
9. Known archaeological sites on or in the vicinity of development sites can be adversely impacted by the development.
10. Historic resources can be irretrievably lost through the site development process.
11. The Historical Society collection needs to be cataloged.

#### **Goals: Historic Preservation**

1. To guide future development of the town so as to preserve historic buildings and sites which are integral to the rural, community character in Newbury.
2. To develop measures for retaining the visual quality and character provided by historical buildings and sites in Newbury.
3. Through education the town should raise awareness of the important historic resources in the community and encourage property owners and developers to consider preserving historic and cultural resources found on their properties.
4. The town should encourage the protection, enhancement and renovation of significant historic structures and sites using the various mechanisms described in this chapter.

#### **Recommendations: Historic Preservation**

1. The Historical Society should spearhead an effort to prepare a written history of Newbury with the assistance of a committee of volunteers.
2. A volunteer committee under the guidance of the Historical Society should undertake a complete historic resource survey of Newbury including historic buildings and sites remaining in town . A survey of historic sites should include an inventory and mapping of old mill sites, cellar holes and other valuable historic sites.

3. Eligible historic structures and areas should be considered for individual or district listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
4. Copies of literature from the New Hampshire Office of Historic Preservation regarding appropriate rehabilitation techniques and grant opportunities should be placed in the Town Library and the Town Offices to encourage access to information for the appropriate renovation of historic structures.
5. Historic documents should be kept in a concrete vault (18” thick walls) with temperature and humidity controls.
6. The town should continue to support the repair and maintenance of gravestones in the town’s cemeteries. Gravestones should be photographed and the photographs stored in a secure and fireproof place.
7. The town should identify and designate additional scenic roads within the community to protect stonewalls, shade trees and other cultural features.
8. Stonewalls should be preserved and protected along roads and property lines, and landowners should be encouraged to consider retaining or rebuilding stonewalls if altered during development.
9. The Planning Board should ensure that developers contact the New Hampshire Office of Historic Preservation to ascertain if any known archaeological sites are on or within the vicinity of new development proposals and to provide recommendations on the best techniques to use to preserve those sites.
10. The Planning Board, through the Site Plan Review Regulations, should require developers to identify any historic and cultural resources found on their property, to locate them on the site plan, and to preserve those resources similar to the requirements included in the Subdivision Regulations under Section 10.2.6 Protection of Historic & Cultural Resources.
11. The Historical Society should oversee the cataloging of the Historical Society collection.