

# THETFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## *Calendar of Summer Events - 2009*

Saturday	18 July	Post Mills Saturday! Sheepdog demonstrations, historical tours, pot luck supper. See inside for locations and additional info.
Saturday	1 August	Exhibit at Thetford Hill Fair, 1:30 to 4:30 PM.
Sundays	9, 16, 23, 30 August, 6 September	Openings of Hughes Barn Museum, 2274 Route 113, 2-5 PM.
Thursday	24 September	Pot luck supper and Annual Meeting with VT Historical Society Director Mark Hudson
Sunday	25 October	"Dean Worcester in The Phillipines", 4 p.m.
Historical Library Open Hours: Mondays and Thursdays, 2 to 4 pm, Tuesdays, 10 am to noon.		
Visit us on the web: <a href="http://www.thetfordhistoricalsociety.org">www.thetfordhistoricalsociety.org</a>		

## 2009 Schedule

Our program this summer is a little more elaborate than usual. We did not prepare an exhibit for the Vermont History Expo in Tunbridge this year, as there was no Expo. The quadricentennial celebration of Lake Champlain and budget constraints within the Vermont Historical Society led to the decision not to hold Expo in 2009. The event may return in 2010.

## Post Mills Events

Last summer during our barn openings, one of our programs focused on sheep and wool. Post Mills residents Jim and Susan Allen were interested in the program, but pointed out our shortcoming. "Where are the sheepdogs?" They were right, of course; unfortunately, space constraints at the Barn Museum make a herding demonstration impossible. We are pleased to say, though, that we're back in the good graces of Border Collie fans (with more than a little help from the Allens), and that there will be a sheepdog event this summer. It's scheduled for Saturday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, in Post Mills, and will be presented by Jim and Susan, and Steve Wetmore, of Strafford.



This isn't a full-blown trial, but a small event with two or three handlers; plenty of action, and time for questions and answers. The demonstration will begin at 3:00 p.m. and will be held in Tim and Janet Taylor's field, a short walk behind the Congregational Church. Following the demo at 4:00 p.m., two of our Post Mills board members, Jennifer Boeri-Boyce and Aimee Toth, will lead interested persons in a walking tour of Post Mills, covering houses and sites along Route 244 from Route 113 to Lake Fairlee. Tour departs from the congregational Church. At 5:30 p.m., meet back at the church for a pot luck supper.

## Thetford Hill Fair

The 104<sup>th</sup> annual Thetford Hill Fair happens on Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup>. As we have done in the past, the Historical Society will be open from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., and will feature an exhibit on Camp Hanoum, Thetford's first summer camp, which began 100 years ago in 1909, on Houghton Hill Road.

Camp Hanoum was the inspiration of Charles and Charlotte Farnsworth, and in its first year, the camp was simply an outing of a dozen or so students from Horace Mann School at Columbia Teacher's College, who summered with the Farnsworths in Thetford. In subsequent years, the Camp expanded to a second location and formalized its offerings to an eight-week program that included nature study, swimming, canoeing and water safety, crafts, and hiking.

Hanoum was an important part of summer life in Thetford. In the early years the girls arrived in town by train, and were transported to camp by local hired cars, including those from Charles Vaughan's taxi service. The campers frequented Vaughan's Store on the corner of Academy Road and Route 113, and participated in the Fair held each summer on the Thetford Hill Common. Campers were a familiar sight to local residents, either hiking through the area, or canoe camping along the Connecticut River, where it was common for campers to spend the night in local barns or fields. The Hanoum Inn, located in a Thetford Academy dormitory building south of the Common on Academy Road, was also operated by the Camp as local summer lodging for camp visitors. The building burned with other Academy buildings in 1942.

Hanoum continued through the first half of the 20th century under the leadership of the Farnsworths, expanding both their offerings and their camping sites. In 1916, the older and younger campers were separated, with the younger girls remaining on Houghton Hill, and the older girls 1 mile to the west, on the water, at the newly established Lake Camp. A trail was cut from the Lake Camp to the Hill Camp in 1919, uniting the two sites. The Farnsworths eased out of an active management role in the late 30's, but were still an important part of camp life. Following the death of Charlotte Farnsworth in 1946, the camp was under new ownership and management of sisters and former campers Helen Joiner and Martha Hightower. They continued as joint managers until 1959, when the camp was transferred to the Girl Scouts, and renamed Camp Farnsworth.

## Barn Museum Open Sundays

The Hughes Barn Museum, located at 2274 Route 113 (just up the hill from Garey Road) will be open Sundays in August beginning on the 9<sup>th</sup>, and on Sunday September 6<sup>th</sup> (Labor Day weekend, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. The following is an outline of events at the barn, by week:

**August 9**    **One Room Schoolhouses**

Visit our schoolroom display, learn about early education in Thetford, check out books and other classroom items, view photos of district schoolhouses.

**August 16**    **Old Tools Day**

Everything you ever wanted to know about use, construction and care of old tools.

**August 23**    **Antiques ID**

Chuck Eaton will identify and appraise Americana and handcrafted items. No china or glassware, please!

**August 30**    **Strike up the Band**

Join the NH Serenade Band at the Museum for a concert and ice cream. View our exhibit of Thetford area band items, including instruments, uniforms, and sheet music. Photos too!

**September 6**    **The General Store**

Visit the General Store exhibit and explore Thetford's stores, past and present.

## Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held on Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, beginning with a pot luck supper in the Newcomb Room of the Thetford Hill Church at 6:00 p.m. and then moving across the street to the Gallery of the Bicentennial Building at 7:30.

Our speaker, after a brief business meeting, will be Mark Hudson, the new Executive Director of the Vermont Historical Society. We thought it would be a good opportunity for Mr. Hudson to get a look at this side of the state (and our Society) - and for us to get acquainted with him. Mr. Hudson comes to Vermont from Maryland, where he directed the historical society of Frederick County for eleven years, bringing that museum up to national standards. He has earned degrees in history and museum studies in Kansas, and in library science in Missouri. Since arriving in Vermont, he has been busy studying the state's history. He will talk to us about "American Presidents and Vermont". This will lead us not only to Chester A. Arthur and Calvin Coolidge, but to horseback trips by John Adams and Thomas Jefferson and whistle stop tours by others.

## The Worcesters of Thetford

If you lived in Thetford two or three decades ago, you were very conscious of William Worcester. A native of Thetford, he had a career as an engineer elsewhere and then retired to Thetford, where he headed the board of trustees at Thetford Academy, sat in the front row of the Congregational Church, collected delinquent taxes for the Town, and claimed he had started the ringing of church bells on the Fourth of July and made the first pair of skis in the state of Vermont.

William Worcester's four children moved elsewhere, but a couple of years ago, we got word that his older son, William, Jr., who had retired to Florida, had left us an oil portrait of the Rev. Leonard Worcester, (1769 - 1846), the first minister in Peacham, VT, one of whose sons moved to Thetford in 1846. The portrait now hangs in the exhibit room in the Bicentennial Building.

This gift reminded us that one of our most important manuscript collections is that of Dean Conant Worcester (1866 - 1924). Born in Thetford, he studied biology at the University of Michigan, and went on two biological expeditions to the Phillippines in the 1880s and 1890s. After the war with Spain in 1898, he served on two commissions to decide what to do with the Phillippines, and then served from 1901 to 1913 as Minister of the Interior in the islands. This position gave him control over the natives of northern Luzon, the largest island in the archipelago, an area practically untouched by the Spanish during their 400 years of rule.

In hundreds of communities separated by mountains and tropical forests, the natives maintained separate cultures and pursuits, of which head-hunting was a favorite. A hard worker and a prolific writer and photographer, Worcester wrote detailed reports of his travels in Luzon and the islands. He continued to live in the Phillippines until his death in 1924, working on how the islands could produce goods that could be valuable in world trade.

Worcester's daughter lived in Orford, and after her death about 1980, the family gave his papers to us. The University of Michigan has another large collection. Scholars have used the collections; one professor from Australia wrote a biography showing Worcester as a "typical" American imperialist, but it has been some time since we reminded people in Thetford about this resource.

To remedy this we are preparing a multi-media presentation of some aspects of Worcester's work, including photographs, glass plate slides, and readings from some of his journals, as well as some thoughts about his ideas of colonial government. This will be given in the Gallery of the Bicentennial Building on Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 p.m.

### Memberships

It is time to pay dues to the Society for the year 2009. Please renew your membership, or become a new member, by using the enclosed envelope.