

---

# NEWBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Newsletter Volume 16, No. 1 Spring, 2019

---

### The Gas Station of the 1880s by John Lyons

Our modern means of transport (i.e., cars and trucks) find "refreshment" at the gas station. We pull up to the pump and add a few gallons. Now our steeds have had a drink and are on the way.

In the 1800s in Newbury, and the rest of New England, horses and other animals traveling the roads needed "refueling" just as today's trusty steeds do. Clean water was important for the health of horses, particularly on longer travels or in difficult weather conditions. Imagine horse and rider going up Newbury's Ledge Hill in August. This gave rise to the watering trough.

A state statute of 1858 authorized towns to pay private citizens who provided and maintained watering troughs for the use of travelers' horses. Section 12 of the statute read:

*The selectmen of every town shall abate a sum not exceeding three dollars, from the tax of any inhabitant who shall construct, and during the year keep in repair, a watering-trough, well supplied with water, sufficiently elevated and easily accessible for horses and carriages, if said selectmen shall deem the same necessary for the convenience of travelers.*

These local troughs were most likely made of wood and maintained by a local townsman. An ideal location would use a nearby spring and gravity to provide passing oxen and horses with clean fresh water. In larger towns and cities, the troughs were often made of granite; they sometimes served both man and beast.

In the 1881 Town Report of Newbury, the town paid \$1.50 for the use of watering troughs to Vinal Stevens, Virgil C. Brockway, Nathaniel C. Lear and Thomas J. Leach. In the 1885 Town Report, the troughs were referred to as watering tubs. In 1899, payments for watering tubs were made to: M.H. Ring \$6, V.C. Brockway \$3, and T. J. Farmer \$2.

According to Jim Garvin, a former state architectural historian, as reported in the *Concord Monitor* in 2014: "Facilities for horses were highly important and they were looked upon as sort of a public service that communities were expected to provide for

the benefit of travelers passing through.

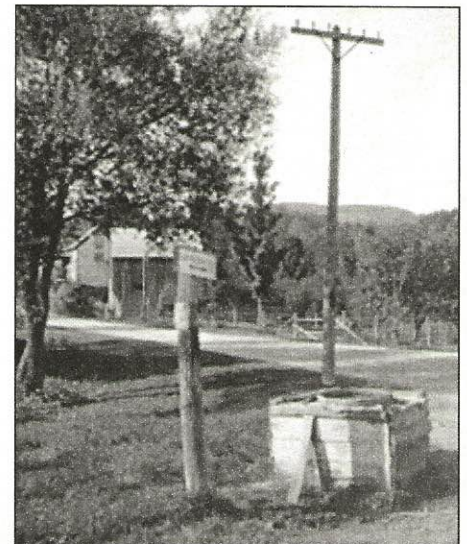
Cities were proud of their fountains and boasted of how many they had. Many were made of granite and donated as memorials to animal lovers or leading citizens. Some had a bubbler on the side for people as well as a trough for horses. The Henry W. Clapp Company and the Concord Foundry Company produced "Horse Troughs & Drinking Fountains," mostly in metal.

Around the start of the 1900s, an epidemic of glanders occurred in some cities. Glanders is an infectious disease that is caused by bacteria. While people can get the disease, it primarily affects horses. Public health officials ordered the horse troughs to remain empty. By 1914, removing horse troughs was a national movement. Some cities, like Boston, ripped the beautiful fountains out and replaced them with hydrants. Teamsters were told to siphon off water into pails and offer it to horses instead of allowing horses to drink at their leisure.

The era of horse travel, and troughs, declined rapidly with the introduction of the Ford Model T. It sold for \$490 in 1914, about one quarter the cost of the previous decade. The 1920s saw tremendous growth in automobile ownership, with the number of registered drivers almost tripling to 23 million by the end of the decade.

*Shown at right is the horse trough in South Newbury at the entrance to the Shultis Farm driveway, now Hopewell Farm, near the junction of Village and South Roads.*

*c 1902*



## Development of the Newbury Town History Project

Newbury's 2017 strategic plan, called Envision Newbury 2027, put forward the goal of creating a town history. In contrast to surrounding towns, Newbury does not have a comprehensive town history publication.

In the fall of 2018, the Newbury Historical Society proposed a plan to the Selectboard that would help with the goal of creating a town history. The Selectboard created a Town History Committee and appointed three members of the NHS (Paula Falkowski, John Lyons and Bill Weiler) and charged them with determining the feasibility of this project. The Selectboard expressed support in principle of the goal of creating a history of the Town of Newbury.

There will be many opportunities for the community to participate in the project. Starting in the summer of 2019, we're hoping to form an Oral History Committee to interview a number of long time Newbury residents. Other committees could include research, publicity, and fundraising.

It is an exciting time as we look back at over 250 years of our town's growth to find our roots. You can help make history with a gift to support this project. Donations payable to the Newbury Historical Society, marked book support, may be sent to P.O. 176, Newbury, NH 03255. You may also wish to contact John Lyons at 938-5398 or johnlyons@tds.net to talk about your support options.



### Newbury Historical Society Contacts

**Archives:** Bill Weiler (603-938-2892)

**History Committee:** Deane Geddes

**House Markers:** Gay and Marty Sheary

**Membership & Website:** Margie Weiler

**Newsletter:** Ashley Geddes, Deane Geddes, Paula Falkowski, John Lyons and Barbara Steward

**Programs:** John Lyons

**Town History Committee:** Paula Falkowski, John Lyons and Bill Weiler

**Email:** [info@newburyhistorical.org](mailto:info@newburyhistorical.org)

**Website:** [www.newburyhistorical.org](http://www.newburyhistorical.org)

## Annual Meeting and Program

Sunday, September 15, 2019, 3:00 p.m.

### Newbury Veterans Hall

Jo Radner presents:

### FAMILY STORIES: HOW AND WHY TO REMEMBER AND TELL THEM

Telling personal and family stories is fun - and much more. Storytelling connects strangers, strengthens links between generations, and gives children the self-knowledge to carry them through hard times. Knowledge of family history has even been linked to better teen behavior and mental health. In this active and interactive program, storyteller Jo Radner shares foolproof ways to mine memories and interview relatives for meaningful stories. Participants practice finding, developing, and telling their own tales.

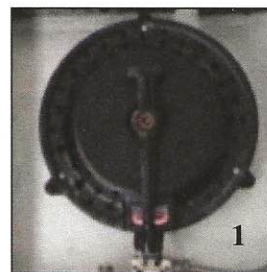
Jo Radner received her Ph.D. from Harvard University. Before returning to her family home in western Maine as a freelance storyteller and oral historian, she spent 31 years as professor at American University in Washington, D.C., teaching literature, folklore, American studies, Celtic studies, and storytelling. She has published books and articles in all those fields, and is now writing a book titled *Performing the Paper: Rural Self-Improvement in Northern New England*, about a 19<sup>th</sup>-century village tradition of creating and performing hand-written literary newspapers. She is past president of the American Folklore Society and the National Storytelling Network.

This program is made possible by a grant from the N H Humanities Program.



### What is it?

Clue: objects were found in the Old Town Hall during the work on the painted curtains conservation project.



1. Black heavy metal, approximately 12" in diameter.



2. There were 7 or 8 sections of carefully constructed and finished wooden fencing with two gates. They were made to stand alone.

Answers on page 3.

**South Newbury Buildings Added to NH State Register of Historic Places**

The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources announced in February that the State Historical Resources Council has added the three community buildings in South Newbury to the New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places. The three buildings sit side-by-side in the village center and represent a variety of civic uses over the past 150 years.

**Old Town Hall:** Built in 1876, the front-gabled Greek Revival building with a bracketed entry hood served as a gathering place for public affairs for more than a century. Town and school meetings were conducted here as well as various receptions, dances, plays and entertainments. Prior to relocating to their present offices, the Town Clerk/Tax Collector and Police Department occupied the two front rooms of the building.

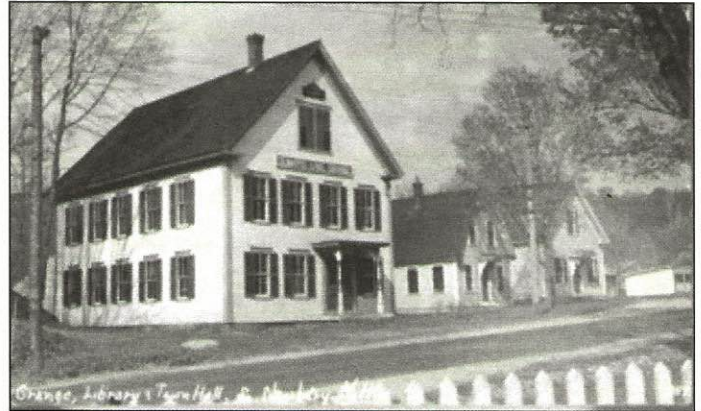
**Sherman Hall:** When space became inadequate in the Old Town Hall, Newbury voted to build a selectman's office in 1916. Notable for its gambrel roof, the structure is an example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century Colonial Revival town office building. In addition to office space and a fireproof archival vault on the first floor, the South Newbury branch of the town library once occupied the second floor. Named after former selectman and town historian Ernest Sherman, the building is currently home to the Newbury Historical Society.

**Sunapee Lake Grange #112:** On the former site of a blacksmith shop, the Grange was erected in 1902. The Grange sold the building to the town in 2004 but retains the right to use the first floor.

The State Register has helped to promote the significance of many historic properties across New

South Newbury Buildings (continued)

Hampshire. Benefits of being listed on the State Register include: acknowledgment of a property's historical significance in the community; special consideration and relief from some building codes and regulations; and designation of a property as historical, which is a pre-qualification for many grant programs.



South Newbury Village, c 1945  
Grange Hall, Selectmen's Office and Town Hall

**Answers to Quiz on Page 2**

1. This round black metal device was found in the on-stage electrical box and proved to be a fully operational dimmer control for the stage lights. Marty Sheary was the one who identified this.
2. We questioned if the quality fencing was part of a stage set but Hank Thomas remembered them as the line corrals used on voting day.



**Newbury Historical Society Membership Renewal, 2019 - 2020**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **e-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please check type of membership:

Individual \$ 10.00    Family \$ 20.00    Business \$ 50.00    Life \$ 200.00    Family Life \$ 300.00

I am enclosing an additional contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (greatly appreciated).



Please return the bottom of this form and your check to:  
**The Newbury Historical Society, PO Box 176, Newbury, NH 03255**

## Report of the Board of Directors

The Newbury Historical Society continues in its mission to stimulate interest in and educate others about the history of Newbury.

In September of 2017, the N. H. State Council on the Arts awarded a Cultural Conservation ("Moose Plate") Grant to the Newbury Historical Society. The funds were used in May to conserve two of Newbury's historic painted curtains, one depicting Lake Sunapee at the Old Town Hall, and a grand drape featuring a New England coastal scene at the Veterans' Hall.

Christine Hadsel, director of Curtains without Borders, along with Mary Jo Davis and Mary Richardson, paper conservators, oversaw the project. Following completion, Christine presented *Suspended Worlds: Historic Theater Scenery in Northern New England* on June 4 at the Veterans Hall, followed by a visit to the Old Town Hall. Thanks to the many volunteers and workers who helped with the project, including: Bruce Barton, Cheron Barton, Don Falkowski, Paula Falkowski, Cathy Fayton, Bruce Healey, Judy Healey, Mike Menino, Marty Newell, Joy Nowell, Tom Nowell, Josh Perkins, Gay Sheary, Marty Sheary, Margo Steeves, Barbara Steward and Ed Wollensak.

The History Committee continues to meet the second Tuesday of each month at 9:30 in the community room of the Town Office. Topics in 2018 included Sarah Jane Cilley Clement, the Lane/Lain and Gillingham family, the Digilio farm, old homes, cemeteries, railroads and steamships on Lake Sunapee. The August meeting was held in the Old Town Hall in South Newbury, followed by a tour of the three historic buildings. In October, John Greenwood presented a history of Lake Sunapee's Great Island. His extensive collection of photos showed the evolution of life on Great Island from its development to today. At the November meeting, Deane Geddes continued the Great Island theme with a profile of an early developer of property there, Norman C. Brockway. Everyone is welcome to these gatherings; you don't have to be a member.

The Annual Meeting was held on September 16, 2018 at the Vets Hall. Guest speaker Steve Taylor, former NH Commissioner of Agriculture, presented *New Hampshire's One-Room Rural Schools: The Romance and the Reality*. The presentation was made possible with a grant from the N.H. Humanities Council.

In October, the three South Newbury historic buildings were nominated to be on the State Register of Historic Places. To accomplish this, the NHS funded a historic preservation study in preparation for the application to the State Register.

Bill Weiler has been instrumental in the conservation of early town record books. They are being digitized by the New England Document Conservation Center in Andover, Mass. Once the record books are digitized, they will be available in electronic format to researchers and will be especially helpful in the creation of the town's first history book. The NHS is funding this project and the registration of the historic buildings.

A Town History Committee was appointed by the Newbury Selectboard to explore the feasibility of writing the town's first comprehensive history from the 1700's to the present. We are in the very beginning stages of what we expect to be a three to four year project and welcome input from the Newbury community. In addition to the narrative, it will contain photos from the past and present. We would very much appreciate volunteers from the community to help out. Please contact Paula Falkowski, John Lyons or Bill Weiler. As the project moves forward, we will continue to update the community.

Board meetings are currently held the second Thursday of January, March, May, September and November at the town office at 2:30 p.m.

Board of Directors: Paula Falkowski, Ashley Geddes, Dean Geddes, John Lyons, Gay Sheary, Bill Weiler and Margie Weiler.





Newbury Historical Society  
P. O. Box 176  
Newbury, NH 03255

**Painted Curtain Volunteers at Work, Spring, 2018**

