

**MILFORD
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

PRESENTS
**ANOTHER 100 GLASS SLIDES
OF MILFORD**

Town Hall Banquet Hall

**Wednesday
March 20, 2002 7:30PM**

Presidents Message

With the Milford Methodist Church buying land and eventually moving to a new location, I thought it would be of interest to know a little history of the beginnings of some of the churches in Milford. This history comes from the Ramsdell or Granite Town History books. A special "Thank You" to Alexis Eaton for the information on the Methodist Church.

Congregational Church: Was originally organized in 1788 with 13 members. The first meetings were held at the William Crosby house. When the meetinghouse was ready (Eagle Hall) the church met there until 1833 when there was a need for them to have their own building. The first pastor to accept a call from the church was Rev. Humphrey Moore in 1802. He was born in 1778 in Princeton MA. He purchased and lived on a farm on Elm Street. He was over 6 feet tall, a hardworking farmer and wrote his sermons at night after working in the fields. The brick house on Elm Street built in 1820 was, at the time, one of the best residences in the county. Rev. Moore was paid \$600 per year and he stayed as pastor until 1836. He died in 1871 at the age of 93.

The current building on Union Street was dedicated October 1, 1834. The building was damaged by fire in 1837. On November 20, 1888 they celebrated their 100th anniversary as a church group.

In 1900 extensive repairs were undertaken. The building was shingled, painted outside, wired for electricity and fitted with electric lights. A steel ceiling was installed, a new furnace under the vestibule and other repairs were made. In 1914, Rev. Twichell initiated the first community Christmas tree on the Common for the children of Milford. In 1920, a new pipe organ replaced the one installed around 1867. In 1942 heavy timbers were placed in the steeple to support a set of chimes given to the church by Mrs. Minnie Eps in memory of her mother and father, Charles and Martha Smith.

In 1947 fire severely damaged the church. Its lovely Colonial features were restored under the leadership of Rev. Haskell. Lightning struck the church steeple in 1957 and required considerable repairs. In 1963 the church was redecorated in preparation for its 175th anniversary.

Baptist Church: They were few in number and lived in different parts of town. They were connected with the Baptist church in Mason. In 1806, there was a warrant to build a schoolhouse on the north side of town. It was proposed that the Baptists join in the building of the school and they would have use of the building on Sundays for worship. In 1809 they severed their relations with the Mason church and formed their own independent body. They worshipped in the schoolhouse until 1816. At that time they had 39 members. By act of the New Hampshire legislature, they were incorporated in June 7, 1813. Their first meetinghouse was built in 1816 and finished in 1817. It was built on the hill on the north side of the road leading to Mont Vernon (near the home of Terry & Judy Parker) and was 54 by 42 feet in size. The first pastor was George Evans.

The church was moved in 1836 to its present location (now the Methodist Church), and enlarged in 1846, 15 feet being added to the front, a spire added, pulpit reduced in height, galleries reduced, and old pews changed for a more modern design, all for a cost of \$1,700. In 1856 a bell weighing 1,451 pounds was placed in the spire.

In 1874 a lot of land was purchased from George Daniels on South Street and a new church was built being 85 by 55 feet. The first spire was 30 feet tall. It proved to be too small and eventually fell to the ground. A taller spire was built, the spire 150 plus feet tall, which contained the old bell. The second spire also proved unsafe and was replaced by a shorter one, which fell in 1954. The last spire was built in 1956. Nine horse sheds were in the rear of the building along Railroad Pond and burned in 1963. In 1969 it was decided to sell the building and build a new church on land given by Muriel and Everett Wheeler at the corner of Spaulding and West Streets. The building is 37 by 100 feet. The old bell was sold for scrap and the building sold to the Milford Cooperative Bank (now Bank of New Hampshire) and was demolished.

Methodist Church: Was organized in Milford in the fall of 1852 by Rev. Tupper and Rev. Moulton, members of the New England Conference. For 23 years the society met in private houses, public halls or wherever it seemed that people would congregate. During the pastorate of Rev. Harrison and while occupying the Burns Hall (in what later became known as the Jewett Block) the idea was presented to buy the old Baptist church. In 1877 the old Baptist church was purchased for \$1,500. Improvements were made and the church was dedicated as the Methodist Episcopal Church on August 12, 1877 with the sermon being preached by Rev. John Hamilton of Boston. This building has been their church home since then.

The building was remodeled in 1893. The building was again remodeled in 1923. New carpeting was laid, new rooms on the second floor were finished and a stairway leading to them was built. In 1946 the vestry adjoining the auditorium was completely renovated and made brighter. For many years the church was painted a shade of brown, but in 1951 it was painted white. The church auditorium has changed very little since it was remodeled in 1893. In 1946 a Hammond electric organ was purchased for the church. The parsonage at the rear of the church was built in 1907, just in time for the Rev. Walter Whitney and family to have Christmas Dinner.

The Methodist church celebrated its 100th Anniversary in October 1952 with their 150 year Anniversary coming up this year.

Catholic Church: Was started by Patrick O'Connor in 1848 who lived at the end of Souhegan mill pond. The first official visit from a priest to the town was November 1853 – The Rev. William McDonald of Manchester. The Rev. Patrick Houlihan was placed in charge of Missions. His territory included the larger towns between Milford and Harrisville.

St. Patrick's church was erected in 1859 on Souhegan Street gifted from John Finerty and Patrick O'Connor. It was enlarged in 1864 to twice its original capacity and dedicated in 1867. The increase in members made it necessary to erect a new building in 1890. It was

Situated on Amherst Street, 100 by 50 feet and seated 800 people. On June 27, 1902, fire destroyed the old Catholic Church on the "ACRE" on Souhegan Street.

As stated above, this is just a brief history of some of our local churches. Milford's churches have always had a great interest in Missions around the world; helping the needy locally; and encouraged their members to grow spiritually in God's word.

Enjoy the rest of the newsletter. Don't forget the Glass Slide Program on March 20 at 7:30 PM. It will be an interesting evening looking at another 100 views of Milford as it used to be.

Polly Cote, President.

One task of the Curator Committee is to accession and record new acquisitions. At times we spend a good deal of time and effort to establish a connection to Milford. This past year the Francestown Historical Society donated a small cast iron box stove. (In the past soapstone stoves were manufactured in Francestown and the Society didn't have room for other similar artifacts.) The top of the stove is 18" long and has one round lid. The inscription on the door is "J. Hartshorn, Milford N.H.". This is an attractive stove in good condition and rather pleasing to the eye.

To date no record of a Hartshorn foundry has been found. Harold Wilkins said that a Jotham Hartshorn at one time ran the sawmill where Wilkins Lumber Company now does business. The genealogies show Jotham Hartshorn to be a prominent citizen of Amherst. A look at Milford 1831 tax records show that Jotham Hartshorn also paid taxes on 11 acres of land and a sawmill on the east side of the highway to Mont Vernon. This is listed as part of his home farm.

Proof of the origin of this stove is still lacking although it is labeled Milford, N.H. It is tempting to assume that Jotham Hartshorn somehow had a foundry in the same area as the sawmill and for a time cast small iron stoves. We would appreciate any information or guesses as to a foundry or a J. Hartshorn who manufactured small stoves.

Louie Carey, Curator

SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2002
5TH NEW HAMPSHIRE VOLUNTEERS LIVING HISTORY
ALL DAY
ON THE COMMUNITY HOUSE GROUNDS
7:00 PM
MAIN AUDITORIUM, MILFORD TOWN HALL
ANNUAL MEETING
7:30PM
CIVIL WAR PROGRAM

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The Carey House is open:

**2nd Saturday & Sunday of every month 2PM – 4PM
2nd & 4th Tuesdays 9AM – 11AM**



***The Milford Historical Society
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