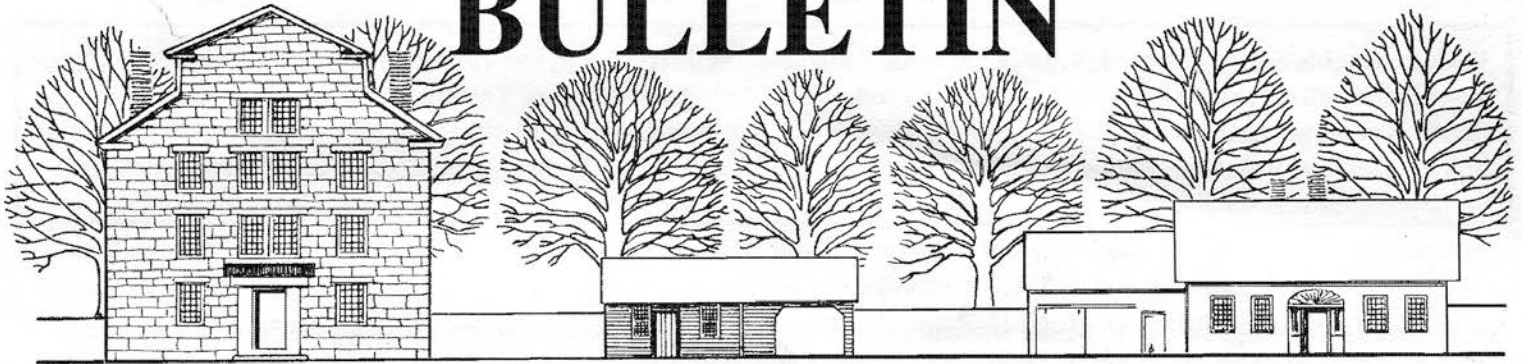


# BULLETIN



Number 129

Orleans County Historical Society, Inc. • Brownington, Vermont 05860

Spring 2016

## We will bring the Grammar School home on August 8

The final piece of our historic neighborhood is returning to its original site this summer. We will move the two story 30' X 40' building, most recently known as the Brownington Grange Hall, 1/3 mile up the Hinman Settler Rd. to a new basement at the foot of Prospect Hill, on Monday, August 8. We are enlisting teams of oxen to lead the building home, to honor the history of the many buildings that were moved in early New England by these strong, steady animals that provided the power for the early settlers.

Messier Movers of East Montpelier will be managing the



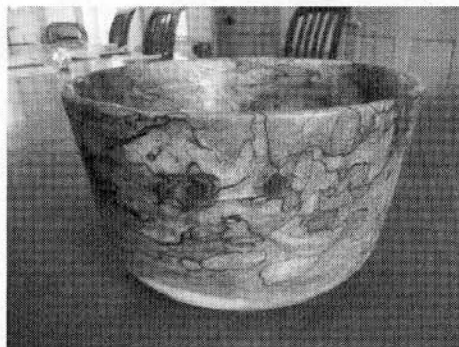
move, and will have the building mounted on a wheeled carriage with hydraulic lifts to keep it level. A tractor will be pushing it from the back, since the road is paved and the oxen cannot dig in to get traction, and the route is slightly up hill. But still, it will be a memorable sight, and we welcome spectators to celebrate the move with us and bring attention to our authentic historic neighborhood, as well as the many oxen still working in Vermont, and the 4-H kids who

continue the tradition.

The Orleans County Grammar School was built in 1823 at  
*(continued on page 7)*

### Please donate to help "bring the Grammar School home"

Richard and Vera Long of Long Branch Woodturning in Holland, made this spalted bowl from an ancient maple cut the summer before last near the Hall House. The enclosed raffle tickets cost \$5 each, and if you are very lucky, you



can be the owner of this heirloom quality bowl. We will draw a winner at the end of October.

If you are very generous, however, and donate \$5,000 or more for the

Grammar School Project, you can be assured of getting a bowl or platter made from a maple cut this winter that grew across the road from the Grammar School. Enclosed is a

remittance envelope in which you can put your donation of any size for the Grammar School Project, or enclose raffle tickets and payment.

We still need \$100,000 to complete Phase One, which includes digging and pouring the basement and moving the building onto it, and also install running water and a septic system. Phase two will require \$125,000 to build a replica of the old bell tower, with interior stairs, build a new chimney and build the porch with handicapped ramp.

So far we have \$110,000 committed to the project, and grants pending, with the total project cost of \$335,000.

The Orleans County Historical Society a 501 C-3 non-profit corporation, and gifts are tax deductible. We welcome gifts of appreciated stock, which give the donor a nice tax deduction, and we pay no capital gains tax on the appreciation.

# Events & Programs

**Antique Engine Show – Saturday, June 18, from 8 am to 4 pm** Members of the Vermont Antique Gas & Steam Engine Association will exhibit their working engines and collections. Members of Cars of Yesteryear will display antique and classic cars. Roger L. Emerson will be signing his new book “My Vermonters: The Northeast Kingdom 1800-1940.” Small engine exhibitors welcome. Phone 754-2022 for information. Lunch by the Brownington Ladies Aid. Free admission to the Engine Show and the first floor of the museum.

**Braided Seagrass Carrier - Saturday July 9, 10 am – 2pm** Make a seagrass carrier in Carolyn Starr’s basket workshop. Cost \$25 or \$20 for members, plus a \$26 material fee.

**Back Roads Readings at 3 p.m. in the Brownington Congregational Church, reception after in the Hall House.**

*Sunday, July 10th – Major Jackson & Ellen McCulloch-Lovell. Sunday, July 24th – Edward Hirsch.*

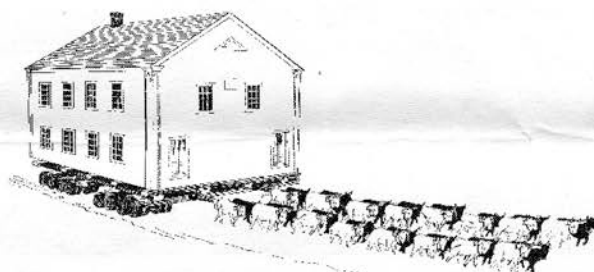
*Sunday, August 7th – Rachel Hadas & Vijay Seshadri*

**Heritage Craft Week July 11-17** See details on page 3.

**Gala Benefit Auction – Thursday, July 21, 6 – 9 pm at the Eastside in Newport** Major fund raiser for the Museum at the Eastside Restaurant in Newport. Tickets \$30 Advance, \$35 at the door. Limited Seating. Delicious hors d’oeuvres, live music, live and silent auctions featuring unique gifts, services and experiences. A good time for a good cause!

**Time Travelers Camp – July 25-29** See article on page 3.

**A Gathering of Oxen – Sunday, August 7** We invite teamsters to bring their oxen for a celebration of the strong, steady beasts that provided the power to settle this country. Demonstrations of working oxen, yoke making, exhibits, and practice for the hitch the next day when we...



**...BRING THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL HOME – MONDAY, AUGUST 8!** Spectators welcome to watch the Brownington Grange Hall be moved up the road 1/3 of a mile to the site on Prospect Hill where it was built in 1823. Teams of oxen will lead the building home, in honor of the way that buildings were often moved in every town in New England. Since the road is paved, and the oxen can’t dig in for traction, a tractor will also be pushing from behind. Parking is on the perimeter of the work area, follow the signs and check our website for routes in.

**Preserving the Harvest, Pam Kennedy - Wednesday, August 13, 6pm** Free

**Old Stone House Day – August 14, 10 am to 4 pm.** Museum Open House, Demonstrations of Traditional Skills, Crafts, Farmers Market, Food, Music, Pie Auction. \$5 a carload. Parking on Prospect Hill and beside Twilight House. This year’s theme is the Grange Hall. Learn about all the community events that took place there between 1869 and 2016 when the building was in Brownington Village, and imagine what can happen now that it has been moved back to its original site on Prospect Hill.

**Bountiful Bread Basket w/ Leather Handle – Saturday, August 20, 10 am – 2 p.m.** Join Carolyn Starr for her final class of the season. Cost is \$25, or \$20 for members, plus \$26 material fee.

**Craft Circles:** *Bring your lunch!*

*Spinner’s Circle:* 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday, 12 – 3 pm

*Quilter’s Circle:* 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 12–3 pm

**Blacksmithing:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 8:30 – 12:30 Fundamentals of blacksmithing - \$50, members \$40

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 1:00 – 5:00 Open Forge \$10 material fee

**Basket Weaving Workshop with Carolyn Starr** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday each month 10 am-2pm

# Time Travelers' Camp explores the rise of the Brownington Grange 1875-1900

"The Rise of The Brownington Grange" is the 2016 theme for Time Travelers Camp. Campers will explore the reasons for the rise of the Brownington Grange and its impact on farm and village life in Brownington from 1875 to the turn of the twentieth century. We will be researching the people in Brownington who started the Grange here, and learn about the social and political issues of the day including the presidential election of 1896, from which a campaign parade or street banner was recently found in the attic of the Brownington Grange Hall.

Children aged 8-12 will work with experienced instructors and craftsmen and women during the week, and will choose four out of six possible workshops including Blacksmith, Wood Working, Early American Decorative Arts, Hearth and Home, Treadles and Spools and Entertainment. Campers may also learn to make their own root beer and ice-cream as well as participate in a variety of period games and amusements as well as listening to outside speakers. There will be a chance to exhibit their skills and projects to the

public on Friday evening at the traditional Potluck Picnic.

Campers who have reached 13 years of age may apply to be Junior Counselors. Junior counselors are unpaid but get to work closely with instructors, hone their own skills and help younger campers.

Counselors should be 15 years of age, have prior camp experience and enjoy working with younger children. Should you know of a young person who would be interested in being a Counselor or Junior Counselor please have them contact Bob, education @oldstonehousemuseum.org or phone the museum at 754-2022.

Registration for Time Travelers' Camp has already begun and our brochure will be available shortly. Camp is limited to 50 children on a first come, first serve basis.

Call or e-mail the Museum to request a brochure with registration form at [education@oldstonehousemuseum.org](mailto:education@oldstonehousemuseum.org). Registration forms may also be downloaded on the Museum's website.

## Heritage Craft Week

"Heritage Craft Week" is back! From Monday July 11<sup>th</sup>- Sunday, July 17<sup>th</sup>, the Old Stone House Museum will be teeming with workshops and classes being offered in various Heritage Crafts. This is a wonderful opportunity with many crafts to choose from. Plan your summer vacation and learn a new skill from talented and experienced traditional craft instructors. Check our website or call for more details and to register. [www.oldstonehousemuseum.com](http://www.oldstonehousemuseum.com) (802) 754-2022

### Heritage Craft Week Schedule: July 11-17

**Rug Braiding**, *Mary Ragno*, Monday & Tuesday, July 11 & 12, 1-5pm and Sunday, July 17, 10am – 2pm Cost \$75 for 3 session course, plus a \$17 material fee.

**"Paper Cut Art 101"**, *Carolyn Guest*, Tuesday, July 12, 1-3pm. Cost \$25 or \$20 for members, plus \$45 material fee.

**Introduction to Needle Felting**, *Laura LaCroix*, Tuesday, July 13, 10 am -3 pm Cost \$35 or \$30 for members, plus \$20 material fee.

**Prospect Hill Rug Camp** *Carolyn Buttolph*, Thursday, July 14, 10 am – 2 pm

**Rug Hooking for Beginners** Cost is \$45 or \$40 for members. Friday, July 15, 9 am – 4 pm

**Primitive Rug Hooking, Part I How Color Works** Previous rug hooking experience required. Cost is \$65 or \$55 for members. Saturday, July 16, 9 am – 4 pm

**Primitive Rug Hooking, Part II Hooked Rug Design** You may continue your Friday project, or join the class. Previous rug hooking experience required. Cost is \$65 or \$55 for members.

**Stonewall Building Workshop**, *Charles MacMartin*, Saturday, July 16, 9 am – 4 pm. Cost \$100 or \$80 for members

**Complete Blacksmith Course for Beginners**, *Courtney Mead, Wyatt Mosely, Lynn Lang* Saturday & Sunday, July 16 & 17, 9am – 5pm. Cost \$150 or \$125 for members plus a \$25 material fee

**Wooden Handle Making**, *Sam Perron* Saturday, July 16, 1 – 5pm Cost \$35 or \$30 for members, plus a material fee of \$10

**Knit a Mobius Infinity Cowl**, *Diana Foster* Saturday, July 16, 1 – 4pm Cost is \$10 or \$5 for members

# Donations to the Museum April 15, 2015 to May 1, 2016

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 Ruth Gjessing  
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 Michelle Hubert  
 John Finley  
 Alyssa Hamel

## In Memoriam

As a member of the Vermont Antique Gas & Steam Engine Association, **Bob Williams** has been organizing the Antique Engine Show and the Collectors Fair as long



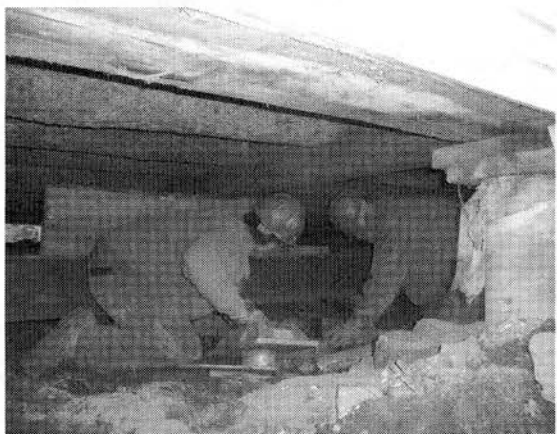
as anyone can remember. Bob died on March 11 at the age of 82. In recent years he powered on through the annoyance of emphysema as he rallied his fellow collectors to always put on “a really great show.” Those events won’t be the same without him. His enthusiasm for antiques, including engines, furniture, books and papers kept his life interesting. We will miss our visits, when he would arrive at the museum to bring us some of his treasures to donate to our collection. Bob owned and operated the Black River Lumber Company in Irasburg, a labor of love, and even after he retired ran his own small sawmill at his home in Burke Hollow. This photo was taken at the Collectors’ Fair in the gym of the Orleans Elementary School on February 21 this year, as Bob talked with Gary Olney, admiring his collection of automobile memorabilia.



**Florence Kelley Thompson** died on March 18, 2016, at the age of 105 ½. She died in the same room she was born in, at her home near the Old Stone House, which used to be the Rice & Going Hotel, a stop along the stage coach route. Florence was active in the Orleans County Historical Society for more years than most people are alive. She was a regular at our envelope stuffing parties until just a few years ago, and hers was always the first membership returned. She was a wealth of historical information, always glad to have visitors, and sharp until the end, with lovely old school handwriting. She was an active member of the Brownington Grange and the Ladies Aid, and she attended the Brownington Congregational Church, where she sang in the choir. In 2006 Florence was a surprise visitor to Time Travelers Day Camp, where everybody wanted to get her autograph as Florence Kelley, one of the students enrolled in the old Brownington one-room schools. Florence was a huge hit.

(continued from page 1)

the base of Prospect Hill to serve as the first secondary school in Orleans County. Alexander Twilight was hired in 1829 to become the headmaster of the school, as well as the preacher for the church, which held its services on the second floor of the Grammar School. In 1836 he built a massive stone dormitory to house the growing number of out of town students and to provide additional classroom space.



On the right is Norm Messier of Messier House Moving and Construction, Inc. and Calvin Lamphere (left) under the building positioning the jacks.

Many people now think that the Old Stone House was the school. But the two story white clapboard building that was moved down the road to

Brownington Village in 1869 was actually the school, and it is coming back on August 8 to the exact spot where it was during the time of Alexander Twilight. When it is moved back, the gable end that is now facing the road will once again be facing away from the road, and the gable end that is facing away from the road will face the road.

The Orleans County Grammar School began to lose students and tax money as other towns in the county established their own secondary schools, including, Craftsbury Academy, Derby Academy, Barton Academy, and the Orleans County Institute in Glover. After Alexander Twilight died in 1857 the dormitory closed down, but the Orleans County Grammar School continued on with fewer students.

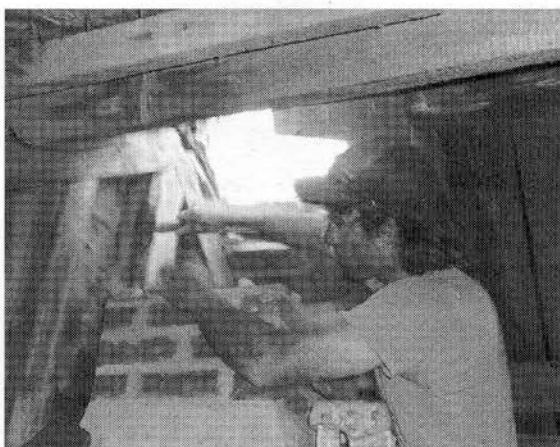
The old school account book stops in 1865, and starts again in 1870, after the building was moved to Brownington Village. Town Meeting minutes leading up to that time reveal that the building was in need of much repair. An article in the December 28, 1869 Orleans Independent Standard, published in Irasburg, reported that "with generous contributions of money, time and labor, amid many discouragements and in spite of many obstacles, they have succeeded in moving the building to a very eligible site near Wheelers store, and in finishing the upper story into a good and commodious hall. This hall is designed for the use of the Good Templars, and for all suitable village purposes."

The Good Templars, who promoted temperance, didn't occupy the building long. The Grange, which also promoted temperance, as well as cooperation of farmers, women's suffrage, and rural free delivery, was rising in the 1870's, and the Brownington Grange took over the second floor of the Grammar School. The school continued to be held in on the first floor until 1912, when the trustees of the Orleans County

Grammar School transferred the ownership of the building to the town. The building has been the site of many community events over the years – eighth grade graduations, home dem meetings, family celebrations, dinners after funerals, and the annual Easter breakfast.

Brownington voters agreed unanimously at their 2015 Town Meeting to give the building to the museum, because it needed a lot of work, which the town could not afford to do. Also, their insurance company had refused to cover it except for clean-up if it burned. The building does not meet modern fire and safety codes, and is not handicapped accessible.

Last fall, with help from the Brownington Ladies Aid and the Vermont Community Foundation, we put a new roof on the



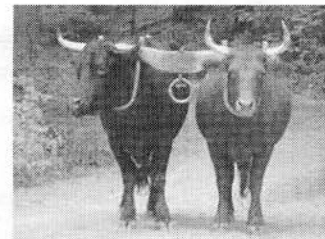
Lee Cooper worked with Jane Greenwood, Building and Grounds Committee chairman, to take the chimney down before the move.

building. This spring we pulled the two hole privy off the back, and the front porch off the front, and gave the building a coat of fresh

paint for the move. Where the privy was, there originally was a bell tower, which was torn down before the 1869 move from Prospect Hill to Brownington Village. When the building returns to its original site we will build a replica of the bell tower, with stairs inside which will satisfy the state fire code requiring a second exit from both the first and second floors, and also the new basement. The porch, which will be away from the road, will be replaced a tad wider, to accommodate a handicapped ramp. A handicapped accessible bathroom will be tucked into the entry corner of the first floor hall, with the plumbing back to back with the kitchen sink, so the simple system can be easily drained down into a heated room below in the basement after the occasional winter event.

The building will get a new life, with modern amenities, but still look about the same. We hope that many of the same community events will continue. The museum will also use the Grammar School for exhibits, events, and education.

Come celebrate the move with us on Monday, August 8, and see something you are not likely to see again. On Sunday, August 7, the teams of oxen will gather, and we welcome the public to come see them and an exhibit on the history of oxen in New England.



# Rufus Porter murals given to Museum

The Collections Committee is very excited to announce a new acquisition. Thanks to the generosity of collector Richard Thorner, the Old Stone House Museum will soon receive a gift of 13 murals painted directly on plaster by the renowned early American artist Rufus Porter. Porter was one of America's most important limners or itinerant painters, who traveled widely throughout New England from 1820 until 1848. While we don't have direct evidence that Rufus Porter worked around Brownington, it is possible given his strong family ties to Orleans County.



The Rufus Porter murals were delivered to the Museum in two trucks on May 26, and the staff helped the two drivers, David Ottinger and Chris Harvey, unload them. Katherine French, museum curator, inspected them closely as they were arranged in the gallery.

These works are rare examples of a decorative style of stencil painting once common in historic buildings like the Twilight and Hall Houses. Sadly, many were destroyed when buildings either burned or were torn down—or were covered over with wallpaper during the Victorian era. These particular murals were hidden behind a wall for much of their history in Derry, NH and were only discovered when the former academy building was being renovated for private use. Consequently, they have not faded or suffered damage like so many of Porter's other works. Their fresh, original color will likely attract many visitors to the museum this summer.

Those interested in the history of education will find that this work has much to offer. Young ladies at the Adams Female Academy followed a similar curriculum and sometimes demonstrated the same kind of unruly behavior as students under the tutelage of Alexander Twilight's. Names, dates and other graffiti are inscribed on the surface of the paintings, much as they are on the walls and desks inside the Old Stone House. Porter created his stencil murals for an educational institution very much like the Orleans County Grammar School, and this new acquisition

Brownington eighth graders learned about historical Brownington residents and talked about them in the Brownington Village Cemetery on the evening of May 26, as their parents and members of the community took a cemetery walk. Museum Education Coordinator Bob Hunt and their teacher Kyle Chadburn helped them with the project, and the reception that followed, where blueberry buckle, which the students made, and Joan Huguenin's famous rhubarb punch were served. Here, Richard Davignon, standing in front of the Twilight grave-stones, represents Alexander Twilight.



will provide a valuable way for us to understand the physical environment of schools in the early 1800s, as well as the culture of the young men and women who attended.

## Wish List

- Stories and photos of Oxen
- Teamsters and Oxen to help Bring the Grammar School Home on August 8
- Volunteers for Old Stone House Day August 14
- Museum Tour Guides
- Laptop computers
- Donations for the Grammar School Project

## THE OLD STONE HOUSE MUSEUM BULLETIN

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