



# Middletown Springs Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Vol. 48, No. 2

September 2017

## The Search for “Lost Buxton”

The Historical Society was pleased to host a presentation on August 5 by author Rachelle Chase introducing her new book, *Lost Buxton*, about the town of Buxton, Iowa, which was founded by Middletown Springs native, Benjamin Buxton. The multi-media program was held in connection with the Buxton Family Reunion arranged by Sally Buxton Jones.

When Rachelle Chase first visited the ghost town of Buxton on a visit to Iowa from her home in California, she was determined to find out more for herself about this once thriving coal mining town, established in 1900 by the Consolidation Coal Company, where 5,000 residents, 55% of whom were African-Americans, lived and worked together in racial harmony at a time when Jim Crow laws and segregation kept blacks and whites separated throughout the nation. African American and Caucasian residents lived, worked, and went to school side by side. The company provided miners with equal housing and equal pay, regardless of race, and offered opportunities for African Americans beyond mining. Professional African-Americans included a bank cashier, the justice of the peace, constables, doctors, attorneys, store clerks, and teachers. Businesses, such as a meat market, a drugstore, a bakery, a music store, hotels, millinery shops, a saloon, and restaurants, were owned by African-Americans. The town was gradually abandoned after the coal deposits played out in the 1920s and the miners and their families relocated to pursue work in other areas. The buildings were later demolished, leaving only foundations, a cemetery, and other abandoned relics.

She later returned to Iowa to find out more. Her research at the State Historical Society of Iowa uncovered a trove of photographs, newspaper accounts and hours of audio interviews with former residents, recorded in the 1980s.

Her book, *Lost Buxton*, was published earlier this year, but she decided she was not done. Among the



*The business section of Buxton, Iowa. From the collection of the State Historical Society of Iowa.*

factors behind the racial harmony in Buxton was the leadership of Vermonter Ben Buxton. What was there in his family character, his upbringing and in his earlier adulthood that determined his leadership qualities? She decided to search for answers in Middletown Springs beginning with the Historical Society website. She contacted Jon Mathewson and David Wright by email, who put her in touch

with Sally Jones.

An invitation soon followed to attend the Buxton Reunion and to do research in the Historical Society and Town archives. During the week that Rachelle was here she visited the site of the Buxton's Justamere Farm on Buxton Avenue, where Andrew & Susan Shayne welcomed her and several Buxton descendants for a tour of the Buxton Bungalow.

Rachelle's search continues in other states from Florida to California where the Buxtons owned property. We look forward to her next book, a biography of Ben Buxton, and to her conclusions about his influence on the racial harmony of the lost city of Buxton, Iowa.

*Lost Buxton*, published by Arcadia Publishing, is available for sale at the Historical Society and for loan at the Middletown Springs Library.

### Welcome! New Members

Bruce R. Saxton, *West Suffield, Conn.*  
Janna Tornabene, *Middletown Springs*  
Linda Van Guilder, *Minnetonka, Minn.*

## ***Preserving Daguerreotypes and Glass Plate Negatives***

A while back I was taking a picture of a red ibis in the Montreal Biodome when my iPhone fell out of my hand and hit the concrete floor, shattering the unprotected cover. This serves as a reminder of how even in the digital age glass plays an important role in photography, although not as important as it did in earlier phases of photographic history.

The earliest photographs were called daguerreotypes, named for their inventor, Louis Daguerre. These had a polished copper plate base, with a silver-plated surface, and an image created by an amalgam of silver mercury and gold particles. This is all covered with a plate of glass. While importantly showing us the earliest images of people and things, daguerreotypes are also notorious for not lasting: the copper corrodes, light easily fades the image, the glass breaks, the enclosures fall apart.

The Middletown Springs Historical Society is fortunate enough to have about 20 daguerreotypes in the collection. Researcher Alice Marsh recently came across two images of her great-great-great grandparents, Hiram and Sarah (Smith) Horr which were not in great shape: they were faded, some corrosion had begun, and the cases were showing their age. These were the only images of the Horrs, which Alice had ever come across, and so she decided something had to be done to preserve the images .

After searching for a restorer and receiving estimates ranging from \$75-\$750 per image and from a week to a year for the work, she settled on

Dennis Waters of Exeter, New Hampshire. They completed the work in a matter of days, and the Horr daguerreotypes were soon back at the Historical Society.

The restoration revealed that the images had been hand-colored. While not as brilliantly red as the ibis I had tried to photograph, the pink and blue hues add an unexpected depth to the images.

There are other artifacts made from glass in our photographic collection: glass-plate negatives. We have hundreds of them, some portraits, some landscapes, and many scenes around local houses. Most were taken by Dana Carpenter and Kirby Kelly. These were, specifically, silver gelatin dry plate negatives, which were used primarily from 1880-1930. Recently, we have been re-housing these plates of glass, which are, of course, fragile. Like daguerreotypes, they are prone to fading and cracking. So, we place each plate in a sturdy acid-free paper enclosure, and put about a dozen enclosures into a sturdy acid-free box custom made to fit standard glass-plate negatives. This will keep them from fading over time, and give them some protection from shattering, protection like I should have had for my iPhone that day !



## ***Storm Floods Minerals Springs Park***

A sudden storm on July 1 raised the Poultney River to flood stage in Middletown Springs, inundating adjacent areas of the Mineral Springs Park. The flood left silt and debris on the spring house floor and outflow boxes and eroded the ground exposing the drainage pipes from the spring to the river. Trees brought down by the flood were piled in a tangled mass on the opposite bank of the river.

Bud and Anne Krouse quickly cleaned the spring house and restored access to the park. The next day Bud with his backhoe and volunteers David Wright and Chris Dufresne with shovels and rakes filled in eroded areas and cleaned up extensive debris.

Damage was less severe than from the Tropical Storm Irene flood of 2011, which caused almost \$5000 damage to the Spring House and grounds of the Mineral Springs Park.

*(cont. from page 1)*



*Rachelle Chase presents Lost Buxton at the the Historical Society in conjunction with the Buxton Family Reunion*

## In Memoriam

**ELLEN SECORD**, 70, died May 27 in Middletown Springs. She was born in Boston, Mass. in 1946. She grew up in Wenham, Mass, and attended local schools. She was graduated from Keuka College in the Finger Lakes region of N.Y. state and received her Master's in Education degree from UVM. Finding teaching young children was not her calling she became a manager with Rutland County's first food co-op in 1974 and served in that capacity for several years. After time out when her daughters were young she worked for the Crossroads Arts Council and later joined Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging as an advocate and later a Resource and Information Expert, a position she held for 19 years, retiring in 2011.



She met her future husband, Dan McKeen at a Co-op dance in 1974. They married in 1976 in the Mineral Springs Park. Their twin daughters, Rachel and Amanda were born in 1978. Dan and Ellen were founding members of the land cooperative, Rocks & Trees where they bought land and built their house and started an extensive vegetable garden. As a stay-at-home-mom, her focus was raising and home-schooling her daughters through the second grade. Her gardening success led to a business, selling weekly at a store parking lot in town.

In retirement her advocacy skill were instrumental in caring for her aging parents who moved to the area to be near the family. Their care merged with other nurturing opportunities at the arrival of grandchildren.

Ellen was a devout Christian, baptized at age 43 along with Amanda and Rachel at a pond on Coy Hill Road. She and Dan joined the Community Church where Ellen served as Deaconess, Helping Hands coordinator, bulletin editor, among other necessary tasks to make a church community function. Her community interests included service on the School Board for ten years, library volunteer, Town Elderly Officer, treasurer for the local food co-op, and a team player in Meal Train, assisting families in hospice. For decades she was the bookkeeper for Rocks & Trees and Green Mountain Timber Frames, her husband's business. For 30 years she walked four times a week with Natalie Casco, Winsome Moran, Pat Pellicci, Anissa Lamberton, and many other women. Ten degrees was their limit for stepping out the door in the winter months!

Dan and Ellen became members of the Historical Society around 1980.

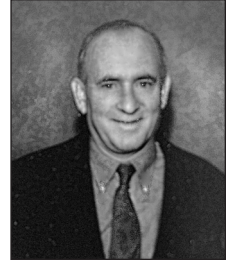
Ellen is survived by her husband Dan; her mother, Dorothy Secord of Manchester; sisters Susan and her husband, Chris Hoffman, of Boulder, Colo.; and Martha and her husband, Wes Weisman, of Atlanta, Ga.; daughters Rachel and husband, Ryan Yoder, of Danby; and Amanda and her husband, Ken Carter, of

Middletown Springs; and grandchildren Asa Daniel and Taurin of Danby.

Her father, Robert Secord, died in 2011; her brother, Rick Secord, died in 2011.

Ellen will be remembered for 43 years assisting where she could make a difference for the well-being of all our residents.

**JOHN VINCENT "JACK" WINKOPP**, 76, died Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2017, at his home of over 26 years in Greenville, S. C. He was a son of the late Vincent John and Aileen Pelletier Winkopp, longtime residents of Middletown Springs. Jack studied at Blackrock College in Dublin, Ireland, and graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1963. He attended the New York University School of Business. Jack retired from the securities business in Rutland in 1990.



He was active in Middletown Springs as selectman, town and school moderator, volunteer fireman, library trustee during the relocation of the town library to its present location, chairman of the rebuilding committee after the fire at the Church of St. Anne, co-founder of the town's Memorial Day parade, and several other local projects.

After retirement and moving to Greenville, he partnered with son Tom, and Wallace Martell for several years developing real estate projects.

Jack was married for almost 52 years to Catherine Boule Winkopp. They owned the Buxton Bungalow on Buxton Avenue for many years and kept part of the property where they built a vacation cabin. Some of his fondest memories were of times at the family cabin, felling trees, riding four-wheeler and driving his John Deere tractor. Jack was a great lover of books, gourmet cooking and antiques. He enjoyed sports throughout his lifetime, including basketball, rugby, tennis and most recently, pickleball. He was more than passionate about all things Notre Dame.

In addition to his loving wife, Jack is survived by a son, Thomas Pelletier Winkopp (Shannon Hait), of Anderson, S.C.; two daughters, Elizabeth Frances Darnell (Thomas), of Clarksville, Tenn., and Jennifer Boule Alfieri (Peter), of Pittsburgh, Pa.; seven grandchildren, Pelletier Carson and Sheppard Jack Winkopp, Jack Thomas and Sarah Catherine Darnell, and Elijah James, Elizabeth Anne and Leo Jack Alfieri; two sisters, Mary Kate Morgan, of Saddle River, N.J., and Aileen Hermine Stevenson (Peter), of Middletown Springs; sister-in-law, Linda Bemis (Art); and twelve nieces and nephews, In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his Irish twin, best friend and big brother, Thomas Pelletier Winkopp, in 1961; a brother-in-law, William Morgan; and a nephew, Jordan Bemis.

A memorial service will be held at a later date at the Church of St. Anne in Middletown Springs. Burial will be in the family plot in Church of St. Anne Cemetery.

## Another Beautiful Strawberry Festival

It was a fair, warm June Sunday for the 42nd Annual Strawberry Festival. Dutton's strawberries were perfect. Dellveneri's biscuits were outstanding. The music by Paul Morgan and friends was lively. The flower arrangements by Mary Lou Willits and Maureen McCormack were appropriately beautiful.



We send thanks to Stewarts for the ice cream, to Thomas Dairy for the whipping cream, to Dietra Davis for the doll raffle prizes and for the loan of both the lawn furniture and the servers aprons, and to Claudia Gonda and Rosemary Moser for organizing the children's activities.

Thanks to all the crafts and art vendors: Mahar Family – maple products; Peter Huntoon – painting demonstration; Maureen LaBate – honey & beeswax products; Bud and Ann Krouse – *Gem in the Hills* book; Grace Carpenter – animal/landscape art & quilted baby blankets; Caite Raishart – jewelry and flower arrangements.

Thanks to the approximately 375 attendees who purchased our signature strawberry shortcake dessert! And a big thank you to the many volunteers who helped us net almost \$1,500 for the Strawberry Festival. We are grateful for each and everyone who helped make it a sweet success!



Photo by Pat Hemenway

*Volunteers stand ready to serve at the 42nd Annual Strawberry Festival.*

## Early Issues Added to Archive

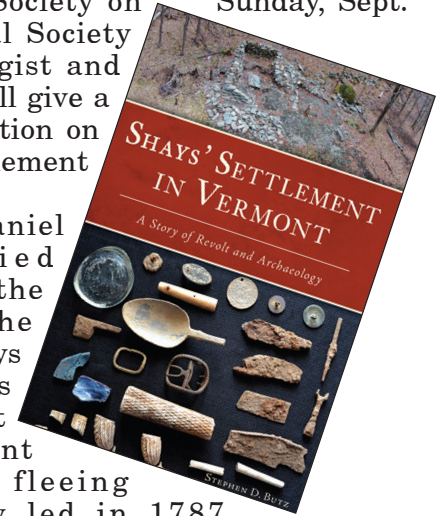
More back issues of the Newsletter will soon be posted on the website. Volunteer Pam Johnson, a new member and descendant of the Hilliker family, has scanned issues from 1990 to 1999 and they will join issues from 2000 to the present at [www.MiddletownSpringsHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.MiddletownSpringsHistoricalSociety.org)

Thank you Pam!

## Notice of Annual Meeting

At the 48th Annual Meeting of the Middletown Springs Historical Society on Sunday, Sept. 17, at the Historical Society Building, archaeologist and author Steve Butz will give a PowerPoint presentation on "The Forgotten Settlement of Daniel Shays."

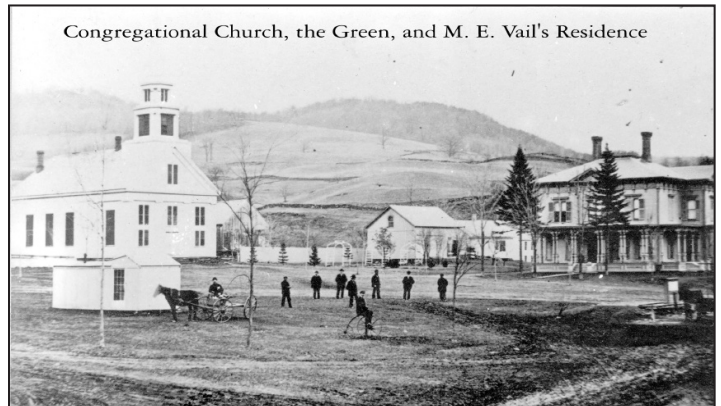
The ruins of Daniel Shays's fortified settlement reveal the hidden story of the famous rebellion. Shays and the Regulators founded the settlement deep in the Vermont wilderness after fleeing the uprising they led in 1787 in Massachusetts. Rediscovered in 1997 and under study since 2013, these remnants divulge secrets of Shays's life that previously remained unknown, including his connection to Millard Filmore and the Anti-Federalist lawyer John Bay. As the leader of the site's first formal study, Stephen D. Butz weaves together the tale of the archaeological investigation, along with Shays's heroic life in the Continental Army, his role in the infamous rebellion that bears his name and his influence on American law.



Stephen Butz is an educator, writer, archaeologist and environmental scientist who has taught at the secondary and college level for over twenty years. Steve gained his undergraduate and graduate degrees at Cornell University and has published numerous books on the subjects of science, history and technology. Steve is a co-director of the Shays' Settlement Research Foundation, a nonprofit organization supporting historic research, scientific inquiry and educational outreach. He lives along the Vermont–New York border, where he continues to teach, run the Shays' Settlement archaeology field school, and work on his various research projects

The meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m. with a dessert buffet and a brief business meeting and election of Trustees.

Congregational Church, the Green, and M. E. Vail's Residence



## ***Spaulding Descendants Visit Middletown Springs***

A group from the Spaulding family, hailing from as far away as Michigan, visited the Historical Society on September 3, where they viewed Spaulding objects from the collection and viewed Spaulding references in the Timeline Exhibit with the assistance of Jon Mathewson. They donated a copy of a Spaulding Family photo from 1907, including in-laws from the Cairns and Scribner families, and a copy of the record of service in the civil war for Reuben R. Spaulding who was mustered out as a corporal after a years service, including a skirmish at the Fairfax, Va. Court House and at the Battle of Gettysburg.

The Spauldings then proceeded up Spruce Knob road to the Fenton farm, an early home of Captain Joseph Spaulding, who surveyed the boundaries of the new town of Middletown in 1784 and was given the privilege of naming it, and of Deacon Asahel Spaulding. The farm has been owned by Spaulding descendants for over 200 years.

The Fentons escorted the reunion group up Spruce Knob Road in a tractor-drawn hay wagon to see the home, now owned by the Kenney family, of ancestor Reuben Spaulding.

Bill Spaulding writes: "My family just had a marvelous reunion in Middletown Springs. We had the pleasure of touring your museum, with the amusing, and interesting insight of your curator, Jon (Mathewson). I must say, the museum, the people, the scenery, simply blew us (Flatlanders from Michigan) away. It was a joy meeting with people that understand and appreciate the history of our country, and the contributions made to it by our ancestors, normal people complete with flaws and courage. We will be back . . . like returning home!!

Bill is a fourth great grandson of Joseph Spaulding.



*Left to right, rear: Chris Fenton, Marcy Fenton, Peter Van Oast, , Paul and Linda Button, Dave Fenton, and Bill Spaulding. Front row: Adam Spaulding, Stacy Van Oast, and Audrey Putnam. Not pictured are John Schaupner from Maryland and Diane Garrett from Vermont.*

## ***Historical Society Publishes Historic District Book***

The Historical Society announces the publication of the book, *Middletown Springs Historic District*, cataloging original photographs and edited descriptions of historic structures in the village area of the town.

In 1984 town voters approved money to match a Federal "Revenue Sharing" grant to apply to the National Park Service. UVM historic preservation graduate Matthew Cohen was hired to research, photograph and write the application, which was accepted in 1985.

Copies of the individual photographs and descriptions were given to property owners, and a complete copy of the report was displayed in an album at the Historical Society for many years. When the album binding deteriorated it was decided to take a different approach. The photographs were digitally scanned and the original prints archivally stored. The text was scanned as well.

Book designer, Dennis Grady, from the Dartmouth College Library was contracted to create a book with photographs and descriptions on facing pages, along with maps and tables of current ownership.

David Wright led a long process of editing the text with assistance from Trustee Pat Hemenway and professional proof-reader, Alice Gilborn. Dummy manuscripts passed back and forth by surface mail as many mistakes and typos were found and corrected.

Copies of the book will be produced by print-on-demand publisher. The first copy will be on display at the Historical Society very soon and we hope to send an announcement and order form to the membership in the next few weeks.



*Ginny and Tom Sheldon visited the Historical Society in early June. Ginny is the great great granddaughter of Barnes Frisbie and in 1993 donated the original manuscripts of his 1867 History of Middletown to the Society.*

## Items for Sale

- Copies of Historical Society Newsletters, \$1 post paid.
- *History of Middletown*, by Barnes Frisbie, CD-ROM or photocopy, \$20, post paid.
- Historic photo notecards of Middletown Springs, box of 8, \$12 post paid.
- *Searching for Ichabod*, by Julie Van Camp, \$18, post pd
- *A Gem in the Hills*, by Frances Krouse, \$25, post paid.
- Antique Mineral Springs Water bottles, starting at \$60.

## Membership Information

Membership dues for 2018 are due in January.  
Check your mailing label for current status.

Dues (Check one):

Individual	\$10.00	Business	\$50.00
Family	\$15.00	Sustaining	\$100.00
Contributing	\$25.00		

Send to: Pat Hemenway, *Treasurer*  
Middletown Springs Historical Society  
P.O. Box 1121  
Middletown Springs, VT 05757

Donations to MSHS, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, are tax deductible.

[www.MiddletownSpringsHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.MiddletownSpringsHistoricalSociety.org)

## Business Members

*Blue Cat Bistro, John Rehlen*  
*Dellveneri Bakery*  
*Gabe Friedman, Web Designer*  
*Green Mountain Timber Frames, Dan McKeen*  
*Hermit Hill Books, Patricia McWilliams*  
*Johnson Energy, Tom & Eileen Johnson*  
*LaValley Building Supply*  
*Mahar Family Maple, Ryan & Ann Marie Mahar*  
*Morgan Mountain Organic Gardeners*  
*New England Slate Co., Chris Smid*  
*Stewarts Shops*  
*Thomas Dairy Farm, Rutland*  
*Williams Hardware, Poultney, Bob Williams*

The MSHS Newsletter is published twice a year for members and friends of the Society. Comments and manuscripts on subjects of interest are encouraged and should be sent c/o David Wright, editor, or e-mailed to [montvert@vermontel.net](mailto:montvert@vermontel.net).

Middletown Springs Historical Society  
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Middletown Springs, VT 05757

Address Service Requested

## Recent Acquisitions & Collections Care

• This wooden foundry mold, purchased on eBay, was used to cast storm water grates at the Gray Foundry in Poultney. The name on the mold was obviously changed from "Ruggles" to "Gray" indicating that the mold was made for the previous owners of the foundry.



Photo by David Wright

• A Middletown Mineral Springs advertising in vintage newspapers were donated by John Antonez.



Photo by David Wright

• This four-gallon stone-ware jug, maker unknown, is marked "J. Jay Joslin, Middletown." Joslin, a Poultney merchant, was Treasurer of the Middletown Mineral Spring Co. in 1869 and may have been a partner in a Middletown store when this "store jug" was produced.

Some of the above items were purchased through the Museum Fund, supported by gifts from donors like you!

## 2017 COMING EVENTS

Sunday, Sept. 17  
2 pm

**Annual Meeting —**  
Presentation "The Forgotten Settlement of Daniel Shays"  
by archaeologist Steve Butz

Sunday, Oct. 8,  
2-4 pm

**Museum Open House**

**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**SUNDAY, SEPT. 17<sup>TH</sup>!**