



NOW & THEN

at the
LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
(Downstairs at the STOCKBRIDGE LIBRARY)
ISSUE #6
JANUARY 2010

Anyone wishing to subscribe to the “Now & Then” newsletter -- contact luciamlc@peoplepc.com. As we finish the first year of our newsletter and move into our second year, please let us know any suggestions of things that you would like to see in the newsletter.



Dollhouse made by Elsie (Mrs. Einer) Handberg



Menorah



Christmas Musicians



White Fur Coat & Hat ca. 1915



Case of toys in downstairs lobby



Dolls in the Bement Room

Stop by and see the minute furnishings in the doll house with Santa in the front yard and the sleigh and reindeer on the roof. There are other displays in the room itself as well as a case which holds vintage clothing. The downstairs lobby has a display of Christmas photos along with a letter from Santa, a case of early toys and games and much more, while the Bement Room has display cases full of dolls and toys.

FUTURE EXHIBITS

Look for **new exhibits** in the downstairs lobby. Our Saturday Archivist, Josh Hall, will mount an exhibit for the month of February on the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America. The next exhibit running from March through July will focus on the 100th Anniversary of Stockbridge Grange #295. Upstairs in the Bement Room display case there will be a Valentine “Pretties” exhibit during the month of February.

LAUREL HILL ASSOCIATION

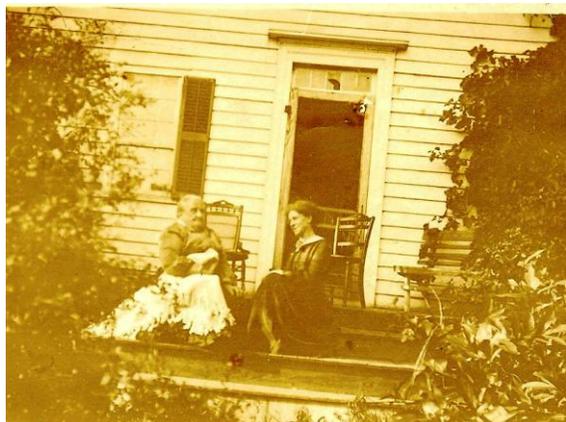
The **annual meeting and program** of the Laurel Hill Association will be held in the Bement Room at the Library on January 20th at 7:30 pm. Barbara Allen, a former officer and trustee of the Laurel Hill Association, will be speaking on the History of the Laurel Hill Association. (*All the records of the Laurel Hill Association from 1853 to present are in the archives*) The meeting is open to the public, so please stop by. Refreshments will be served following the program.

OUR ARCHIVE'S RESOURCES -- VASSEL WHITE FAMILY

Amongst the archival collection are four books (**ledgers and day books – 1838 to 1856**) which belonged to Vassel White M. D. (1792-1856), physician and member of the school board. He had moved from Becket to Willard Hill Road in Stockbridge. A review of the ledgers show that he charged 50 cents for most visits and \$1.00 on Sundays. Many visits were \$1 - \$2 (could be that it included medicine).

The **White grave** (pictured above right) in the Stockbridge Cemetery contains much information on the family. Newton T. White is listed as entering Williams College in 1855 and being admitted to the bar in 1860. Whitman Vassal White, M.D. is listed as a direct descendant from the Mayflower and was a surgeon in the Civil War. The whole right side of the stone contains a listing of dates and places where he served. Lucy (Brown) White, Vassel's wife, and his daughters, Lucy Brown White and Eliza B. Durand are also listed on the stone. The Whites had 12 sons and 2 daughters.

An interesting item displayed in the museum is a **"rod" (or pointer)** with the inscription "L. B. White 1879" (pictured far right). According to a **history done in 1978 by Dr. Howard** which is in the collection, Lucy, Vassel's daughter, **ran a school** in her home for a number of years. Could this be the infamous "rod" that naughty children were not spared?



The **house** that the White family lived in on Willard Hill Road was deeded from the mother to the daughter in 1885 where the daughter lived until her death in 1930. A number of years after her death the house was demolished leaving only a few stones to mark where the foundation was. The picture (left) shows Lucy B., the daughter, seated (on the left) on the porch of her home.



MUSIC MEMORIES GAB FEST SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY

A Gab Fest on **"Music"** will be held in January. Whether it be local choral groups, square dancing, impromptu get-togethers, music lessons, the Music Inn or anything else musical please come and tell us about what you remember or just come and listen. It is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27th at 4 pm at the library.

GAB FEST IN NOVEMBER

A small group met and reminisced on some of the things that they did to earn money when younger. John Miller remembers caddying for 18 holes as a boy for 75 cents (plus a tip if he was lucky). Some of the boys went into the Conservation Corp during the depression. Someone remembered babysitting for 4 children and being required to watch the 4 children, feed them, clean the house, do the dishes and even mow the lawn for 75 cents an hour. There was also discussion on the cider mill in Glendale and the ice harvesting business. Parker Oppermann's first job as a boy was to work for a woman in the neighborhood polishing floors, making beds, shining the brass etc as well as mowing the lawn and working in the flower beds for 25 cents an hour.

We plan to explore the history of the founding church in Stockbridge in our next couple of issues. We introduce the topic in this issue with a bit on John Sergeant. Although the Mission House was never actually used as a church, it served as an important part of the history as it was Sergeant's home

THE CHURCH IN STOCKBRIDGE – PART 1

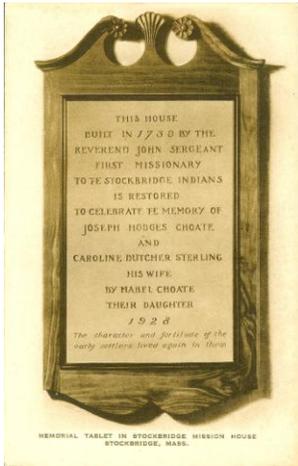
The Congregational Church just celebrated its **275th birthday** this past November. The church was founded when John Sergeant, a student from Yale, traveled to what eventually became known as “Indian Town” to become the first missionary to the Stockbridge Indians. The church was formally organized in 1734. Sergeant built his home (c. 1741), now referred to as the “Mission House”, on Prospect Hill for his wife Abigail Williams (1912 postcard at right).



A marker stands along the Marian Father's driveway designating the spot where it originally stood. In 1927 Mabel Choate rescued the house, having it dismantled and moved to its current location on Main Street where she and Fletcher Steele oversaw the restoration which took 3 years (see 1954 post card at the right).



The post card to the left shows the memorial tablet stating that Mabel Choate had the work done in memory of her parents, Joseph and Caroline (Sterling) Choate. The tablet can be found in the front hallway of the Mission House.



The 2 early postcards to the left show the parlor in the Mission House. (A full set of interior post cards are in the post card collection at the archives)

The 3 postcards to the right show some of the exterior of the Mission House – front walk looking at Main Street (1943 post card), front doorway (1935 post card) and brick path in the garden with the cobbler shop (undated postcard).



Our next issue will take a look at the first church building built in the town.

DID YOU KNOW?

On September 9, 1918 the Stockbridge Hose Company voted to take \$25 from their treasury to buy tobacco and cigarettes “for the boys from Stockbridge over in France”.

MUSEUM & ARCHIVES HOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9-5, Thursdays 9-1 and Saturdays 9-2 (note the change in schedule) If you plan to spend time researching, it is always a good idea to call (298-5501) to check for availability.