



NOW & THEN
 at the
LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
 (Downstairs at the STOCKBRIDGE LIBRARY)
ISSUE #43
MARCH 2016

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BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: AT HOME IN STOCKBRIDGE

March 2, 2016 (Wednesday) at 6:30

Jonathan Edwards Room, Stockbridge Congregational Church

This popular program is about the interesting people who have made their homes in Stockbridge over the years. It features the current home owner talking about the families who lived in their houses before them.

Each program includes two existing homes and one other that has been lost over the years.

The March program, *A Study in Contrast*, will feature the following houses in Stockbridge:

- Jim & Cathy Daily will talk about their home at 8 Prospect Hill Road
- Jack Spencer will tell us about his home at 14 Church Street and the Church Street neighborhood that has come and gone

Suggested donation \$5

OPEN HOUSE AT THE MERWIN HOUSE

March 5, 2016 (Saturday) from 10 am to 2 pm

With the Library building nearing completion, this will be your last chance to see the Merwin House with the furnishings as it was when Mrs. Merwin lived there (*pictured right and pictured below in the front parlor at the Merwin House*). It will also be your last chance to view the Stockbridge History Room of selected artifacts from the Museum & Archives collection.

Representatives from Historic New England Inc. will be there to talk about the building and its history as well as answer questions.

Barbara Allen and Joshua Hall from the Museum & Archives will also be there to explain how the house fits into Stockbridge history.



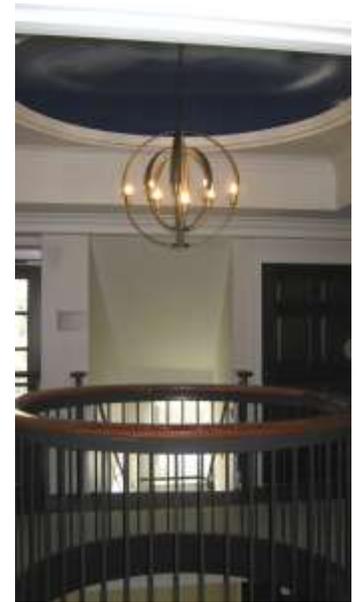
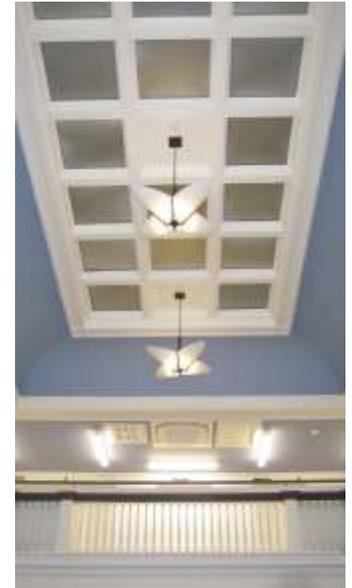
LIBRARY REOPENING

Before the Library's grand reopening on April 30th, there's a lot of "moving back in" that is needed. This includes everything from moving items, unpacking, organizing and cleaning. Your help would be greatly appreciated. There's a job for everyone.

Please help the transition go smoothly and volunteer to help out. Call Barbara Allen at 298-4703 and see where you can assist.

LIBRARY RENOVATION

The renovations have neared completion at the Library and the Museum & Archives. Pictured clockwise from top left are – the new reading area where the attic once was, the entrance to the M&A and elevator, looking up from the first floor of the Jackson wing to the balcony area and skylight, the new entrance otherwise known as the Fitzpatrick Atrium, the Jackson wing with original fireplace and door to the Director’s Office, the Bement room, the new bird light fixture in the Jackson wing, and in the center (*top*), the downstairs Museum Gallery with the Procter tile medallion designed by Terry Wise and made by Ben Evans, in the center (*bottom*) the staircase in the Jackson wing.



OCRAN CURTIS

The following advertisement appeared in the *Pittsfield Sun*:

"NOTICE
Wool Carding and Cloth Dressing
IN THE SEASON OF IT

The above business will be carried on by the subscriber, the ensuing season, on liberal terms. His Machines are in the first rate order, and he has taken pains to select one of the most experienced workmen that is to be found, and has the greatest confidence that he will give perfect satisfaction to all who favor him with their custom. All kinds of produce taken in payment, if delivered by the 1st of February next. Cider will be received in payment at any time, delivered at the Distillery lately occupied by myself. Also, Wool will be received in payment. Those who pay *cash* at the time they take away their wool, shall have a deduction of *eighteen per cent*. OCRAN CURTIS

Stockbridge, April, 1827."

Ocran was the grandson of Elnathan Curtis. Elnathan and his sons were the early settlers of northern section of Stockbridge which was originally called Curtis Mills and then later Curtisville (currently Interlaken). The Ocran Curtis Distillery was located at the corner of Interlaken Road (*Route 183*) and Willard Hill Road. The Distillery building burned and the existing brick building was built on the same site and was used as a store and post office.

A document in the M&A collection by Carl Wurtzbach states that all surplus cider and grain in the area was converted into whiskey and cider brandy. These were not days of temperance. Surplus apples and grain had to be disposed of and were sold in order to pay the merchant, shoemaker, blacksmith, minister and taxes. Men carried away 50-100 barrels of cider yearly. There were no populous villages nearby where grain and apples could be sold.

COAL MINE IN STOCKBRIDGE

The following excerpts are from an old document in the Museum & Archives files.

"Minutes of the Meeting held at the Stockbridge Library for Larrawaug [sp], Glendale and Furnace District Historical Exhibit, Tuesday October 21, 1952. About 50 people attended.

Mrs. Edith Cooper of Glendale told of an old deed she has which mentioned a coal mine on her side of Monument Mountain. Story goes that the Indians use[d] to get coal from there and take it to a Blacksmith Shop at Larrawaug [sp].

Mrs. Graham Wilcox told the story about a piece of coal supposedly from this mine that had been sent to Mark Hopkins in New York to be tested and that he wrote back to the effect that he had thrown it in the fire and it had burned and they might have done the same and saved themselves the bother of sending it to him."

STOCKBRIDGE FIRE DEPARTMENT

(Information from a document compiled by Polly Pierce, former Curator of the Historical Room at the Library)
The Stockbridge Hose Company No. 1 was organized October 5, 1894

1898 – Hose House #1 was built on Elm Street – Cost \$2,500

1899 – Hose House #2 was built on Church Street. (Later became the Legion Hall, currently a private residence at 12 Church Street)

1904 – \$1,000 was appropriated for a firehouse in Glendale.
Built in 1905 for \$1,500.

1913 – \$3,000 was appropriated for a firehouse in Interlaken.
\$50 was paid for the land and house.
Built in 1915. Cost \$2,948.53.

MUSEUM & ARCHIVES TEMPORARY HOURS DURING RENOVATION PROJECT

The M&A office is currently at a temporary location at 14 Main Street in the Merwin House. During the moving phase over the next few months there may not be anyone available to answer the phones; please leave a message and someone will get back to you. To contact Curator Barbara Allen, call 298-4703. If you need to contact the Library, call 298-5501.