

Amherst's July 4th Celebration: "Our New Hampshire Heritage"

The Forecast Was Rain On the 4th, But It Didn't Rain

By NANCY HEAD

It didn't rain! That was the wonder of this year's Fourth of July Celebration! We had had nothing but rain for weeks before the Fourth, and a forecast of more rain on both Friday and Saturday—but it didn't happen!

It was a great time for all, thanks to the many individuals, organizations, and businesses that contributed to making it so. On Friday night, thousands of people gathered at Souhegan High School to watch the spectacular fireworks put on by Jack Reed and his volunteers and made possible by the major sponsor, Granite State Credit Union. Tethered hot air balloon rides were provided by REMAX and resulted in donations to SHARE, PMEC Scholarships, and the Fourth of July events. Offsuit, a band made up of SHS students, and the Amherst Town Band, led by Pat McMullen, made the evening a musical event. Volunteers offered drinks and food. Business contributors to the evening included Atlas PyroVision, Bot-L-Gas, Jake's Ice Cream, and Sal's Pizza.



Beautifully decorated floats carried out this year's theme.

The success of the parade on the Fourth was due to the bands and parade events but also, in great part, to the efforts of the people who volunteered to march or decorate a float. Among those responsible for the floats this year—and they were exceptional—were the Janson Family, the Amherst Garden Club, Friends of Peabody Mill,

the Grella Family, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and the Amherst Republican Club. There was also a wonderful mystery float with live chickens! Thanks to them all. Thanks, too, to Anne Hoag and the Lions Club for once again sponsoring the Children's Bicycle Parade. As the pictures of the parade made evident, this is one of the

highlights of the day for the young people in town.

The Democrats brought a special guest, 100-year old Iris Thompson, and the governor, although not able to attend, sent his horse guard which made an impressive showing. Thanks to volunteers Chris Conard and daughters Abigail and Bailey, the horses were well-picked up after and hopefully caused no problem to marchers following them. The antique cars were exceptional this year—our thanks to the owners who entered them in the parade. Lori and Bruce Henry arranged for a hybrid car of the future to be in the parade also—a nice contrast with the antiques. Thanks, too, to our very own enthusiastic Kazoo Band members who always spark things up, the Amherst Library's Reading Wizard and her followers, WMD and friends, and Pack 13 Cub Scouts who turn out in large numbers each year.

Very necessary to the smooth running of the parade are the people who volunteer each year to drive people in their convertibles, the students who carry the signs identifying the groups, and the people who help organize the parade at Wilkins School. We are grateful for their help.

Thanks also to all the volunteers and nonprofit organizations who made the village green bristle with energy. Present this year to entertain the children were some of our own clown workshop graduates as well as Amherst's Uncle Sam on stilts. Another favorite among the children is Pastor Mike of the Amherst Baptist Church who is a whiz at making balloon animals. And, of course, the live animals that the children can see and pet were once again the big draw for the very young and not so young! We are indebted to the owners who were willing to give their time and energy to make this happen; many have been coming for several years. For the adults, there were the Art Show and booths, all manned by volunteers. Among the other volunteers were Doug Kirkwood who played the bagpipes for the reviewing stand ceremony, and the Amherst



Uncle Sam was a stand out in the crowd on the Amherst Common.

service to the community in the form of providing publicity for the Fourth of July celebrations.

Financial contributors to the day were the Newcomers' Club and the Pasta Loft, both much appreciated for their donations. Along with the fundraisers run by volunteers for the Fourth of July Committee, the town, and the business contributors of the night before the Fourth, these donors provide the financial foundation that makes the celebration possible.

In the background making sure that things went well were the Department of Public Works under the direction of Lead Foreman David Herlihy, the Police Department and Chief Peter Lyon, the Fire Department and Chief Rick Todd, and the Emergency Medical Service and Chief Brian Gleason. There is good reason to be proud of our town and the professionals that make it work—they help us, protect us, and make us look good.

It is the Fourth of July Committee members who chair the committees and are responsible for the success of the celebration. It is a great committee! Members this year included Mary Beyers, Charlene Carper, Diane DeSimone,



Always a favorite, Revolutionary soldiers firing their muskets.

PHOTOS BY THE AMHERST CITIZEN



Amherst artist, Joyce Kingman displayed her artwork...



Katrina Holman sold suncatchers...




Amherst's Concord Coach at the Wigwag...



Bill and Tracy Veillette sold Historical Society hats and t-shirts.

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**New England Peach Festival  
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at Lull Farm Stand, Rt. 13, Milford  
  
The 6th Annual Peach Festival sponsored by Milford's Church of Our Saviour will be held rain or shine featuring everything peachy to benefit local charities.  
  
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