

Events Calendar

Friends of the Library Book Sale

The Amherst Friends of the Library Book Sale will be held at the Amherst Congregational Church on Saturday, September 17 starting at 8:30 am and ending at 3:00 pm. Those wishing to look at the books before the crowds arrive should take advantage of the "Friends Only" preview from 8:00 to 8:30 am. Memberships are available at the library or at the door on the day of the sale. Nancy and Vick Bennison, official volunteer sorters, say there is a nice selection of books in good condition. Thanks to the many donations from local people and the careful sorting and culling by the Bennisons, the sale is considered by many to be one of the best in the area. Proceeds from the sale go to support special projects at the library.

Meeting Notice – Road Reconstruction

An informational meeting regarding road reconstruction in Amherst Village will be held in town hall on Thursday, September 22nd, at 7pm. The Road Commission and DPW will present the goals and objectives of the road work to be done over the next few years. Agenda: history, why rebuild roads, which village roads, engineering goals, aesthetic goals, what won't be done, future information, other road work in the village and discussion.

Amherst Junior Women's Club Seeks New Members

The Amherst Junior Women's Club is actively seeking new members. Any woman over the age of 21 who is a resident of the Amherst area is eligible to join. Members of the AJWC volunteer their time, energy and talent to enhance the community. The club's mission is to focus efforts on civic needs, educational advancement and the less fortunate. For more information, please contact membership chairwoman Kathy Wason at membership@amherstjuniors.org.

Community Resource Fair

Greater Milford Outreach (GMO) is hosting a Community Resource Fair on Thursday, September 15th, from 9 – 11 a.m., at the Milford Town Hall. All non-profits and agencies that serve the people of the Souhegan Valley are invited to participate. Booth space is free but must be reserved in advance. Please contact Susan Drew, Milford Welfare Director, sdrew@milford.nh.gov, in order to reserve a booth.

The budgets are tight this year and getting tighter. GMO is hosting this fair in order that the local towns, school districts, police and agencies serving those in need in this area can come together to learn more about the resources available.

Greater Milford Outreach (GMO) is an organization for anyone interested in exchanging ideas for better serving children and families in the greater Milford area. GMO seeks to create a network among area human services, schools, the court system, parents and community members.

Photographers Forum

Photographers Forum camera club will resume its meetings on Monday, Sept 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Bishop Guertin High School in Nashua. We are an informal club offering educational programs for all ability levels and the opportunity to meet people with similar interests. The Sept 19 meeting is a competition event. Categories for submission are Assigned: "Broken/Damaged" Challenge: "Dangerous" and Open. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month. Be our guest for your first meeting. Dues are \$30/year for individuals, \$50 for dual families; \$15 for full-time students thereafter. For more information go to www.photographersforum.org

Town News

The Tale of the Wandering Iguana

It had been one of those very hot and humid weeks in New Hampshire, the kind no human enjoys. In Amherst that week, you didn't even want to leave the house. But on Foundry Street, one fellow was very happy with the hot and humid. It was his kind of weather and he knew right from the start of the week he was going to escape for an adventure in the village. Being an herbivorous lizard and loving this kind of weather, he knew once he pushed the screen door hard enough he could escape in a flash. The backyard was lush and green.

Mr Biggs is his name; his owner for 8 years is Parker Hall. A family pet, he roams the house at will. Only five inches long when he came to live on Foundry Street, he now is over 2 feet. While it was no surprise to the family that he had escaped, they had searched for a week and realized eventually he would show up, if he survived. Everyone who has heard this story is thrilled that he did not show up in their backyard. Gone for a week, he was able to find plenty to eat. An avid climber, it is no wonder the wildlife on the block between

Foundry Street and Carriage Road must have been terrorized. Marti Warren, a resident of Carriage Road, on several occasions during the week had wandered outside to see what the commotion was with the birds and especially the Blue Jays in the back yards. But she could never find a cat or obvious predator. It wasn't until her neighbor's visitor found the lizard stretched out in the sun next to her car that Marti understood why the birds where having such a fit. A call to the police brought no help, there was no lizard reported missing! A call to neighbors went out and Marti volunteered to drive around the block to see if anyone had lost a pet lizard.

After a short trip around the block, the second stop at the Ramsey house on Foundry Street brought the report that a neighbor of theirs had lost one the week before! Sure enough the owner was located, but by the time they all arrived at the scene, the iguana had traveled 30 feet up a tree to nibble a few leaves and literally just hang out. All those who stood below peering up did not faze him. It was obvious he was too high up for anyone to reach him. Mr. Biggs seemed very pleased with himself, while several birds dive-bombed him and a squirrel, on the move, didn't miss a beat as it ran past him in the tree. A plan was needed to get him down and safely back home. No one wanted him roaming freely.

A little later in the evening, Amherst's fire department came to the rescue. While the group of three decided who was to go up and actually catch Mr. Biggs, a group gathered to cheer them on. A ladder was put up against the tree with great precision. Mr. Biggs did not seem phased. A decision to raise it a notch higher, however, was a bit too close for



Parker Hall holds his pet iguana, Mr. Biggs

comfort; in a split second Mr. Biggs was flying through the air and hit the ground running. He could run as fast as a Road Runner! A few of the onlookers quickly charged after him to block his exit and the owner's family swiftly and carefully caught him. He was placed in a pillowcase and returned to his home. Last report he was doing well. A small cut on his back might have been from those irritated birds, but overall he survived the vacation very well and from now on that screen door might need to be latched, so the neighborhood can rest easy.



Amherst firefighters set a ladder into the tree to retrieve the iguana.

Historic Amherst

Earliest Taverns in Amherst

BY KATRINA HOLMAN
Alright class, for today's history lesson your assignment is to read from the award-winning "Walking Tours of Amherst Village" book (2010): p. 53, p. 80, p. 50-51, p. 36, p. 20 (first paragraph), p. 68 – in that order, and focus on the origins of the buildings as inns/taverns.

Tavern Definition

In N. H. in the 18th century, a tavern was a "public house" that offered hearty meals of "victuals," drink, and lodging to patrons and their horses. The owner of a tavern was called an "innholder," but even though inn and tavern were thus essentially synonymous, such establishments were more frequently called taverns than inns. In the early 19th century the terminology changed a bit. Around 1800, early in the turnpike era, the terms "hotel" and "coffee-house," in place of "tavern," started to gain favor inland in N. H. and Vermont, lagging a bit behind seacoast usage as there was mention of a "Coffee-house-tavern in Portsmouth" in 1787 already (N.H. Mercury, 2-28) and the New Hampshire Hotel was incorporated in Portsmouth in 1795. A tavern- or

hotelkeeper may be called a "landlord" (as in Boylston's 1860 poem about Amherst's first 100 years). If a notice in the early part of the 19th century indicated an event at so-and-so's "hall," then usually it was a tavern (but sometimes it was a chamber over a store). In a newspaper of the same locality, events were usually simply advertized as being at so-and-so's "house."

First?

The Proprietors of Souhegan West township in 1735 offered Lot #21 to one Richard Mower on condition that he build "a convenient house of entertainment," fence in a pasture of six to eight acres and provide a ferry across the Souhegan river within eighteen months (John Farmer, Historical Sketch of Amherst, 1820). Nothing more is written about that, but the point is that the Proprietors, most of whom never settled here, tried to organize a tavern before they even appointed a committee to locate the sites for the meeting-house, burial ground and training field.

The earliest evidence I have found for a tavern in Amherst – drum roll, please – is for Robert Read. In the

Taverns of Amherst – Part One

11 May 1759 New Hampshire Gazette of Portsmouth, there is a notice about a sale of real estate lying near the river to be held "at the House of Robert Read, Innholder in Souhegan West." To sell "spirituous liquors" one had to be licensed and, sure enough, a tavern license for one Robert Reed is noted in the record of the Sept. 1759 Court of General Sessions of the Peace of the Province of N. H. (Vol. III, housed in Concord), which does not however indicate his place of residence. License records for the 1760s have not been found but a newspaper notice in 1767 mentions "Capt. Robert Read, innholder in Amherst;" and he was also granted a tavern license for Amherst in 1771 and 1774.

Robert Read

"Col. Robert Reed [sic] ... was one of the first settlers in this place [Amherst]," according to his death notice (*Farmer's Cabinet* of Amherst, N.H., 15 Sept. 1803, and Republican Spy of Northampton, Mass., 4 Oct. 1803). He first appeared in records of Souhegan West in 1753 when appointed by the Proprietors to the three-man committee supervising the construction of a bridge across

the Souhegan River, and a deed of the same year confirms his residency here and gives his occupation as yeoman. Robert Read (1720-1803) was the son of William of Litchfield; brother of Reed's Ferry proprietor William Jr. (1724-1768) of Litchfield (whose widow Lucy subsequently ran the ferry until granted to their son Wm III in 1789); and father of Amherst merchant William (1754-1834) who in 1808 opened a store in the Village (near where Soldiers' Monument stands now) with his son Robert (1785-1857), who would become a prominent businessman of Amherst, Nashua and Manchester. The elder Robert Read was a key player in early town affairs. He served five terms as Amherst selectman in the 1760s; was a member in 1770 of the committee to supervise the construction of the second meetinghouse; and in 1780 was on a committee to settle accounts with the minister, Rev. Barnard. Being an innholder was a respected occupation, plus he was an officer in the militia. Deeds of 1762 and 1763, when he is just in his early 40s, give his occupation as "gentle-

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Antiques on the Green

continued from page 1

The Amherst Fire Department will be displaying some of the historic equipment once used to fight fires in Amherst—including one of the town's prized antique hand pump fire engines.

Buyers and browsers alike should also be sure to bring their appetites to the common. Moulton's Market will be serving pizza slices and Jake's scooping their Old Fashioned Ice Cream. The Amherst Fire Department will have hot dogs to offer and the American Association of University Women will dish up chili. The popular apple turnovers from Preschool in the Village will

also return this year!

Our two museums are within walking distance of the Common and will be open the day of the show. There is no charge to enter the Wigwam or Chapel museums. Those attending can also enjoy dulcimer music by Sandy Lafleur, a bake sale sponsored by the Society and food from various local vendors. Visitors can also take advantage of the book sale sponsored by the Amherst Town Library at the Congregational Church adjacent to the Common. For more information about the event, please see check the Society website www.hsanh.org.

Clubs, Civic Organizations, Non-Profits please submit your publicity to *The Amherst Citizen*: news@amherstcitizen.com

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September Menu
Spicy Jalapeno Dip
Basil Minestrone with mini Ravioli
Marinated Three Bean Salad with Sherry Dressing
Multigrain Bread with Sunflower Seeds
Salmon Strudel Florentine
— or —
Mediterranean Black Pepper Fettuccine
Broccoli and Cauliflower Romano
Rolled Tiramisu with Kahlua
whipped creme and fresh fruit
Kim... will you marry me? K.G.

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