



# Hartford Historical Society

The Garipay House • 1461 Maple Street  
Hartford Village, Vermont 05047

HARTFORD • QUECHEE • WEST HARTFORD • WHITE RIVER JUNCTION • WILDER

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SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

May-June 2011

## ABENAKIS IN HARTFORD

By Martha Knapp

Archeologists agree that indigenous people have been in Vermont and the Americas for at least the last 11,000 years. They have given us three separate periods based on spear points, arrowheads and later pottery. If you ask the Abenaki, “the People of the Dawn”, of which there were at least 13 nations, or many of their Algonquin relatives in the Northeast, they will tell you they were created here. Their creation stories involve the Green Mountains, *Askaskadenak*, the White Mountains *Wobiadonac* and Lake Champlain, *Patawbakw*.

### UNTIL THE WHITE MAN CAME

When you think about how long the earth has been here, 250 years is not a very long time. However, as hindsight is 20-20, it is enough time to indicate what actually happened. The first settlers of the town of Hartford, literally happened upon an inhabited truly sustainable Garden of Eden 250 years ago. Every description of Hartford Village, Quechee, Wilder, White River or West Hartford written by the first historians speaks about the beautiful and bountiful land, the fish filled, clean, clear, healthy waters, and the old growth forests teeming with wildlife. I couldn't find out much about the people who lived here previously from the historians except for the wars. I did find this description of our Hartford Village's beginnings from The Old and the New no.2 1893-1901, published by the

### ANCIENT INDIANS OF NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND

- ⇒ **Paleo-Indian Period:** 8000-11,000 years ago, hunted big game with spears.
- ⇒ **Archaic Period:** 3000-8000 years ago, hunted small game, fished and gathered nuts, berries, and roots.
- ⇒ **Woodland Period:** the last 2000 or 3000 years, until the white man came, developed bows and arrows, made pottery, cultivated crops, and settled in villages.

Ladies Reading Club of the Hartford Library. . . . .  
*the first picture of the plateau above the White River on which our village now stands is called up by what the wife of one of the first inhabitants, herself a bride in 1800, and for many years a village grandmother and blind, used to tell, that she could remember when there was only a footpath where our main street now runs.*

*To this we can add, from other sources, that old-growth pine trees covered the back and perhaps the whole of the plateau, as well as the hill behind, while a broad meadow edged with elms bordered the river below. (now Watson Field) It went on to describe that other parts of the town had for some years had set-*

*(Continued on page 3)*

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

All Hartford Historical Society programs are held at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, in Hartford. They are free, open to the public and handicap accessible. Refreshments will follow.

**May 18:** Donna Roberts Moody, an Abenaki Elder and Director of the Winter Center for Indigenous Traditions, and John Moody, Ethno historian and Projects Coordinator for the WCIT, will speak on Abenaki History

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## From the Chair . . .

Yes, I truly enjoyed that liquid gold as it caramelized on contact with the precious cold white frozen crystals which were still quite plentiful when the Millers hosted the public at their sugar house in March. Thanks to all who participated in the exhibit at the Jericho community building, and in the many subsequent exhibits. A big vote of thanks to President, Susanne Abetti who is preparing a 250th insert to keep us informed.

Members and friends enjoyed the April program presented by Frank Jay Barrett Jr.. If you

missed it, he announced that he will be speaking throughout the Upper Valley as part of the 250th celebration. Thanks for your contribution to historical research, Jay. And finally, thanks to you, our members.

I get excited every time I register a new member. Welcome to each of you and I'm equally happy to continue to receive renewals..... We need your support more than ever as we venture forth with a variety of events during this 250th celebration. The more the merrier!

*Dorothy*

*(Continued from page 1)*

in Hartford and the White River Valley with a focus on 1761. Sponsored by the HHS and the Winter Center for Indigenous Traditions

**June 8:** Annual Meeting followed by a program by Michael Tougias, noted historian and author of six-

teen books. Mr. Tougias will offer a slide lecture on the conflicts between New England's Native Americans and the colonists, with an emphasis on French and Indian War events that took place in Vermont

## Welcome to Tammy Ladd:

With the extra activities generated by all the 250th celebrations, we are extremely fortunate to welcome a new member to the Historical Society, especially one who is willing to serve on the Board of Directors.

Tammy was born and raised in Barre, Vermont. She attended college in Idaho, served a church mission in France for 1.5 years, and, after she returned, she met her husband, Bill. In 1987, they moved to the Upper Valley. Having home-schooled all five daughters at one time or another, she has done a bit of study in the field of history, which led to a fairly recent interest in genealogy. Researching the lives of her Italian ancestors, who came to work in the granite quarries and settled in Websterville, VT, opened new doors; the clincher in her decision to join us might have been an interview with a family friend who is 106 years old and remembers her great-great-grandfather's family! She looks forward to interviewing more Hartford residents and assisting with the 250th celebrations.

Her greeting to us—"Let's make history and celebrate!"



## Hartford Historical Society

Post Office Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047-0547

<http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

### Officers

Susanne Walker-Abetti, President	802-295-9687
Bill Wittik, Vice President	802-295-9683
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blers, and below the plateau toward the east stood the house known as the Bailey house, which was built in 1775 by Benjamin Wright.



The Bailey House—1775

It told of a first road that went from: . . . behind the Bailey house from the Connecticut River, which turned to the left from the foot of the plateau and crossed the river by a ford and climbed the south bank near the woolen mill and continued on up past the Tilden house towards the Center of Town road.



The Tilden House—1800

After the bridge was built, many people used this same road over the river to avoid the toll. It continues: *On this south side of the river we must imagine Hurricane (Hill) covered with forest and unbroken by railroad embankments sloping to the river's edge, while in place of the dam and millpond was a line of rocks and rapids. Deer came down to the river to drink and crossed to the island--now only a sand pile but on which the first settlers raised corn-- which lies in White River, halfway to the point; and from the farm near Caesar Brook--the brook from the fair-ground--deer could be seen grazing in what is now*

the cemetery.

With the building of the dam in 1797 and the sawmill, gristmill, and oil mill on the north side of the river immediately after, the settlement of Hartford Village began. (then called White River Village)

The signs of the Abenaki in the Hartford village area were the White River, “a footpath where the main street now runs”, the island in the White River where the first settlers grew corn, and the deer yards where the deer could be seen grazing and drinking. This is what the village looked like as the Ladies wrote their history.

**So what is the Abenaki story?** (To be continued in next newsletter.

Katherine Blaisdell, Over the River and Through the Years Book Two, (Courier Printing Company, 1980), p 9.

Hartford Historical Society File, Hand out from Donna Roberts Moody and John Moody lecture.



Hurricane Hill



Hartford Village in 1880s

## 250<sup>th</sup> REPORT

The year is rapidly advancing and many events are in the planning stages. Our last event – the Maple Festival at the Jericho Community Building – was a great success – thanks mostly to the Runnal Boys loan of the many old – and not-so-old sugaring paraphernalia, their assistance in setting up and taking down, and the time they spent being there. The Millers and the Hazens also contributed with displays. Most popular were [1] the old stove in the school-house! [2] talking with the Runnals about sugaring and [3] tasting the sap & syrup. A sign of the success was not only the many young families who came and commented on how nice it was to have something they could bring their children to, but that the Sugarmakers have decided to do it again next year! Thanks Jim, Ken & Ed!



## Memorium

We are saddened at the loss of Mike Bettis, former Director and member

## Mystery Photo

Do you know where this is? Please contact Pat Stark if you do.



# The WRIGHTS

*[A continuation of our series on our founding families]*

Major David Wright was born March 14, 1749. He married Hannah Bailey on Sept. 26, 1771 in Lebanon, CT and brought his bride to Hartford [Vermont] by boat up the Connecticut River on their wedding journey, also accompanied by a sister. Stopping at a house for the night, he told the people in the house the ladies were both deaf; then he told his wife and sister the folks in the house were deaf, and so he had them screaming away at each other at a great rate. At last the truth came out.

Major David and Hannah first lived in a little log house on their 600 acres of land. While living here she found it hard to make her husband hear when she wished to call him to dinner, having no dinner horn and he being sometimes a long way from the house at work in the fields. He cut a long pole for her to use to strike against the gable end of the house, making a noise that could be heard for a long distance.

While living there, a Mrs. Ryder, whose daughter later married Major Wright's youngest brother Jonathan, and she was at this time living in the old house on the farm of Seth Wright, came to visit Hannah. It was getting dark when she started for home, and, as it was a lonely walk through the woods, Major David offered to go with her. She declined his offer and he asked her what she would do if she saw a bear, at which she replied she would call him to come and shoot it. He promised to listen for her call, and sat in the doorway with his gun, ready to go if she called. Sure enough, he soon heard her calling loudly, and hastening after her, he found her standing in the road, snapping her apron at an old mother bear with one cub beside her and one up a tree behind Mrs. Ryder. The mother bear stood snarling while she snapped her apron. She told him she wanted that cub for her supper, so he shot it, and the remaining bears ran off at sight of the gun (photo r).

Major David served in the Continental Army, and while he was away at the war, word came that the Indians were coming down the White River. This was in the winter of 1781 and the women and children of the region were to be sent to the fort at West Lebanon for safety. Hannah got the word in the night, instructed the hired man to hitch the steers to the sled and take such household goods as they could get together quickly. She rode on the sled with her one-year-old baby while the other children walked. Dan Wright [later Dr. Dan] was four and remembered the journey as he had to carry a pillow all the way.

In the Wright neighborhood, there was a sawmill

on the brook in the back of the Ballard meadow and a dam in the brook created a pond on which folks would go fishing. This pond also had pond lilies in it. A school was kept in a small house in the neighborhood. Squire Pinneo lived in a small house nearby and pastured some donkeys in exchange for the doctor's services. Sometimes the donkeys would put their heads into the open windows of the schoolroom and bray while school was in session. Major Wright wanted his grandson to be called Major David after himself, and asked the child's mother to feed him with pumpkin and milk so he might be able to "lick the Pinneos".

Major David died in 1822. He had a great fear of being buried alive, which sometimes happened with certain diseases of the time. He built the tomb near the house and before his death gave orders that his coffin should not be screwed down or the door of the tomb locked. He had stone shelves put around the sides of the tomb, one above the other except at the left of the entrance, where he wished his own coffin to stand. A mallet was buried with him, and a watch was kept for a few nights at the tomb door. It is also said that he wanted to be buried in a sitting position with his hat and boots on. He and his wife, his son David and his wife, and his son Bela and his wife are buried in the tomb also.



This quilt piece colored by Mrs. Gloria Hammond's 5<sup>th</sup> grade class [Wilder] for their Bicentennial Quilt – a recent donation to the society

## Wright's Tomb

At intersection of Route 5 and  
the VA Cutoff



## HONOR ROLL

Who will be selected for the Hartford Historical Society Honor Roll during this Semiquincentennial year? We all know someone who is worthy of recognition; how about taking a few minutes of your time to name that person? Deceased or living are eligible to be nominated. Nominations received before May 5th will be considered for immediate selection and announced at the annual meeting in June.

Submit the name of the person you wish to honor, his or her contribution to the community, and a brief bio, along with your name and contact information. There is a link to the form on our web site ([hartfordhistory.org](http://hartfordhistory.org)) or contact Pat.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement of the Hartford Historical Society: To acquire, identify and preserve information and artifacts related to Hartford's past and communicate knowledge of local history through programs, publications, and other interaction with the community.

### **Commercial/Institutional Members:**

CEMMS Family Painting	Geo Barns
Hartford Memorial Middle School	Hartford High School
Kibby Equipment	Main Street Museum
Meeting House Furniture Restoration	New England Transportation Institute and Museum

### **Membership rates:**

Individual: \$15  
Family [same address]: \$20  
Senior: \$10  
Senior family: \$15  
Commercial/Institutional: \$25  
Junior membership – No fee but needs a sponsor [contact Dorothy Yamashita]

# SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

Check the web, or contact Pat for details:

[www.vnews.com/250](http://www.vnews.com/250)

Vital Communities/Valley Quest calendar: <http://www.vitalcommunities.org/Valleyquest/uv250.htm>

- **May 14** 12-5pm AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE & Barn Census Wrap-up , tours, displays of old tools—and food—at the Theron Boyd House sponsored by the HHPC, H Historical Society & Vermont Historic Preservations
- **May 18** 7pm Donna Roberts Moody and John Moody will speak on Abenaki history in Hartford and the White River Valley with a focus on 1761 at the Greater Hartford UCC.
- **May 22** 8am- American Legion Youth FISHING DERBY in Honor of William Remick at the Hartford Rod & Gun Club pond
- **May 28 + 29** – MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND CEREMONIES & ENCAMPMENT on the Town Green [Meetinghouse Green] Center or Town With Chicken BBQ and other food available. Sponsored by the Hartford Veterans Council
- **Spring – Winter** – daylight – COLONIAL QUEST
- **June 5** 8am- Annual Elks Club Kids FISHING DERBY in Honor of Normande & Bunny Catier at the Hartford Rod & Gun Club pond
- **June 12** 8am Hartford Rod & Gun Club Annual Youth FISHING DERBY in Honor of Norris & Evelyn Putney at the Club pond
- **June 17+18** – QUECHEE BALLOON FESTI-

VAL with Reenactments at the Quechee Green sponsored by the Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce.

- **June 25** 11 am – ALUMNI DAY PARADE & Festivities Downtown White River Junction
- **July 4** – 10am – end BIRTHDAY BASH & ANNUAL FIREWORKS at Kilowatt Park & Wilder Club & Library Sponsored by the Hartford Parks & Rec. Dept & H Hist. Soc.
- **August 6** – OLD HOME DAY FIELD DAY & FUN RUN at Watson Park & Hartford village sites sponsored by the HHSoc and Htfd Parks & Rec Dept
- **August 13** – Abenaki Welcome Day at Lyman point Park , featuring Jeanne Brink, from the Speakers Bureau of the Vermont Humanities Council. Jeanne is an educator and Abenaki basket maker. Sponsored by the HHS & WCIT & Vt Humanities Council
- **Sept 10** – GLORY DAYS OF THE RAILROAD with expansion of a STREET DANCE after
- **Sept 10** 5-7 – SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL TURKEY DINNER at the Methodist Church, sponsored by the church
- **Oct 1** – QUECHEE GORGE BRIDGE CENTENNIAL at the Visitor Center
- **Oct 31** – GORY DAZE HALLOWEEN PARADE AND BALL sponsored by the MSM
- Nov 9** 7pm – Jere Daniels speaks on the INTERNATIONAL POLITICS & CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE CHARTERING OF HARTFORD and CLOSING CEREMONY at the Greater Hartford UCC sponsored by the Historical Society

## Historic Recipe:

Please think about your grandmothers best recipes and send them in to us for future issues! Thanks.

**Mrs. Dunbar's Gingerbread**, from the 1896 *Loyal Club Cookbook*, White River Junction.

1 egg, beaten well	1 tsp. ginger
1 cup sour cream	1 tsp. salt
1 cup molasses	1 tsp. soda
2 cups flour	

7 ½" x 11 ¾" pan      350 degrees 35-40 minutes.

# HHS Calendar

*Upcoming Programs, Meetings and Events*

## Summer OPEN HOUSE at the Garipay House – May - September:

The 1st Tuesday of the month 6-8pm  
The 2nd Sunday of the month 2-4pm  
Or by Appointment [call pat at 295-3077 M-F 9-4]  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday – Hartford Historic Preservation Com-  
mission meeting at the Municipal Building, 171  
Bridge street, White River Junction, Vermont at 4:30  
Board Chairman.  
For more information contact Dorothy Yamashita,  
Nov – Apr. at 7pm  
Garipay House May – Oct and the Hartford Library  
4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday – HHS Board of Directors Meeting –

**Wednesday – May 18** – Donna Roberts Moody, an Abenaki Elder and Director of the Winter Center for Indigenous Traditions and John Moody, Ethno historian and projects coordinator for the WCIT, will speak on Abenaki History in Hartford and the White River Valley with a focus on 1761. Sponsored by the HHS and the WCIT, the talk will be followed with refreshments. 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village

**Wednesday – June 8** – Annual Meeting and program by Michael Tougas on the Indian Wars in New England – focusing on Vermont, followed by refreshments. 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village

**Wednesday, Sept. 14** – A History of the Hartford Fire Dept. by Captain Bushey followed by refreshments. 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village

**Wednesday, Nov. 9** – Jere Daniel will let us know the FULL story of our Charter! Refreshments will follow. 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, 1721 Maple Street, Hartford Village

Don't forget the **Genealogy Center**, upstairs in the Hartford Library is open Monday afternoons Please see the schedule for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations elsewhere in this Newsletter. Hope to see you there!

## Hartford Historical Society

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