



ANNUAL MEETING

Officers and Trustees will be elected
at 1:30pm

Townshend's Stone Arch Bridges



West Townshend Bridge courtesy of John Herrick

**Sunday, November 4
2:00pm Town Hall**

Light Refreshments Served

All are invited to attend our Annual Meeting in the Townshend Town Hall. The brief business meeting will include a vote for Board Members and Officers.

The meeting will be followed by a presentation about the Townshend Stone Arch Bridges by **Master Stone Mason Michael Weitzner**, of Thistle Stone Works in Brattleboro. Weitzner has completed an extensive Conditions Assessment of the six surviving stone arch bridges in our area; a selection of truly awesome photos from that report will be the basis of the presentation.

Emergency Repairs at W. Townshend Stone Arch Bridge

The Northeast spandrel wall of the W. Townshend Follett Bridge is badly eroding and will have temporary mortar applied to keep the stones from ending up in the brook. (See photo below.) Michael Weitzner, one of the best dry stone masons in our area will do the work. Hopefully this can be done before the weather closes in.

The Speed Limit on this one-way bridge will be 5 MPH and weight limit signs will also be posted to the north and to the south of the bridge. The Town has been urged to use a snow auger or snow blower in order to keep the parapet walls from being pushed any further outwards.

Meanwhile the historical society is looking into matching grants to raise a needed \$397,000 to cover all four of the bridges that need repair. It is expected that the Town will apply for a VTRans Structures Grant and also supply some money for the WT bridge that is being actively used for traffic.



Collapsing section in northeast spandrel wall

The Peaked Mountain Schoolhouse

Part I: Interview with Winnifred Lawrence

I was born in the brick schoolhouse on the back of Peaked Mountain on March 5, 1915, about 5:30 in the morning. My mother said that the winter was extremely cold and there was so much snow around here that you wouldn't know there were any walls to the house at all –just the roof. My mom and dad, [Fred and Pauline Lawrence] lived here and worked on the neighboring farm for Orison Follett [the father of Rob Follett] who had a big farm with a big field and some woods.



Orison Follett Farm

Orison Follett's youngest son used to come up from the farm to visit with mother before I was born. She would be sewing and he would say, "Throw down your old sewing and hold me." She would hold and rock him until he would go to sleep and have a nap. Well, after I had come, he was hurt like a lot of little ones are after the second one comes. She treated him just the same as she would have treated her own. She let him know that she still liked him so that was all right.

Then in 1918 my sister [Clara Lawrence Perry] arrived. Then, the night my brother was born, July 10, 1921, I'll never forget that. There was a terrible thundershower. Grandma Lawrence had come over from Grafton to take care of mother and the rest of the family. I remember Grandma got us two girls to lie on the couch while it was thundering and raining. Mother was in the bedroom and the doctor had been called. Well, in those days we were told that doctors brought the babies in their little black bags. So Dr. Osgood arrives and has his little black bag and says, "Hi, girls; how are you?" and walks straight into the bedroom. We said, "Oh, ho' has he got a baby in that bag?" Just at 6 o'clock there was a big crack of thunder and at the same time, the baby cried.

We said to each other, "He did have a baby in that bag." It wasn't long and everything got straightened out. Grandma came out and asked us if we wanted to see our baby brother. We couldn't understand why mother had to stay in bed just because the doctor brought a little baby. Grandma said, "She has to gain a lot of strength to take care of that baby, you girls, and Daddy, and do the housework." That satisfied us all right.



Dr. Fred Osgood

Grandma Lawrence's family never swore. I heard Dad swear only once in all my life and that was because he was really angry. While grandma was here I did something, and I said, "Dammit." I evidently had heard it from the other men around because Dad didn't swear. Grandma said, "What did you say? I'll get some soap ready and I'm going to wash your mouth out." Out the door I shot. I was singing to the top of my voice, "Grandma can't do it; Grandma can't do it." I had come out this door and went around the schoolhouse, came around the sink window which was on the other side. I set on some boards right under the window and, of course, the window was up some. I sat there, "Grandma can't do it; Grandma can't do it." Well, she took it as long as she could and she hollered out, "Grandma can do it, and wait until you come in and you'll find out Grandma can do it."

Well I stayed out there quite a long time and I thought, well, she's forgotten about that now; but, oh no; the minute I came through the door she grabbed me. My mouth was washed out with soap and water. It didn't taste very good. She never forgot it any more than I did. Even after I was grown up, she would remind me how she washed my mouth out or I'd remind her how she did it.

Recorded by Rose-Marie Steiner Tarbell Lyman



PTV Fundraising Conference

Charlie Attends Fundraising Conference

The conference was sponsored by VT Preservation Trust in Grand Isle. Our President Charlie Marchant reports, "Many great ideas about funding sources were discussed. Our stone arch bridge project got rave reviews because it is so different from other projects around the state." The Department of Agriculture expressed special interest, and we have recently met with local representative Max Muise regarding specific grants that pertain to our project.



History in Plain Sight

How many times have you walked up the steps of the town hall without noticing a little bit of history to the left of the steps? Looking closely you will see a small metal disk that is a 1928 marker, placed there to mark a survey point on the earth's surface. Our marker is a "benchmark" that indicates elevation and indicates that this point is 574 feet above sea level. On the disk you will see that it was part of the U.S. Geological Survey in coordination with the State of Vermont. This type was used when cooperative surveys were conducted by state agencies and the federal work programs during the Great Depression of the 30's. There is a warning that disturbing the marker will result in a \$250 fine; however the Townshend one had to be moved a few inches to accommodate the Town Hall steps.

Stone Arch Puzzle Forms a Bridge to the Past

We invite you to join us in our efforts by purchasing our fundraiser puzzle for \$27 (plus shipping). Order at townshendvt.org. It's a nice holiday gift idea.



West Townshend Stone Arch Bridge Puzzle
250-piece fundraiser puzzle (11 X 14")

Tin Pot versus Flyburg

Most Townshend residents know the Harmonyville area of town well, but how did it get that name and why was it called Tin Pot for a while? According to *Child's Gazetteer* published in 1884, the little village had a general air of economic success. There was a general store, a custom saw, grist and flour mill, a chair stock mill, about fifteen dwellings and it "had an air of sprightliness and progress". Townshend village, a half mile away, was somewhat jealous and called the little village, "Tin Pot". The little village responded by calling Townshend, "Flyburg," and called a council of war to give the village an appropriate name. After much debate it was decided to name it "Harmonyville." Emery Cathan (who lived next to the bridge) painted two signs bearing the new name and nailed one to each end of the bridge that crossed the brook. They were soon pulled down by youths from the rival village, though not until the name had become established.



Harmonyville Bridge

Time to Join and Renew THS Membership for 2019!

(Membership year runs January to December.)



Please mail your dues and updated info
in the enclosed envelope or join on-line
at www.townshendvt.org or use our
Townshend Historical Society
Facebook page, using PayPal.

We need and appreciate your support.



P.O. Box 202, Townshend, VT 05353

Townshend Historical Society Board

President: Charles Marchant

Vice President: Robert DuGrenier

Secretary: Marge Holt

Treasurer: Lee Petty

Trustees: Heidi Clawson, Eileen Fahey



Trustees at work in the community



Fundraising and educating

info@townshendvt.org

www.townshendvt.org