



**Diane Rousseau restoring stained glass window**

## **Stained Glass Window Being Restored!**

The stained glass window that was originally installed in 1895 in the Second Baptist Church of Townshend, honoring Aurelius Chapin Howard and Hannah Cobb Howard, was moved in 1979 to Gove Hill Baptist Conference Center in Thetford (to accommodate the building of Leland and Gray school) and then donated to the Townshend Historical Society when Gove Hill closed in 2014. It has since been lodged at Robert DuGrenier's Glass Art Gallery and fortuitously seen there by Diane Rousseau, conservator of glass and ceramics, specializing in stained glass, and also a fabricator of fused glass artwork.

Diane's studio is situated on the Mass MoCA campus in North Adams, MA. Most of her projects come from museums and private collections, with the occasional church or historic home for variation. Diane began the restoration work in March; she is in the process of

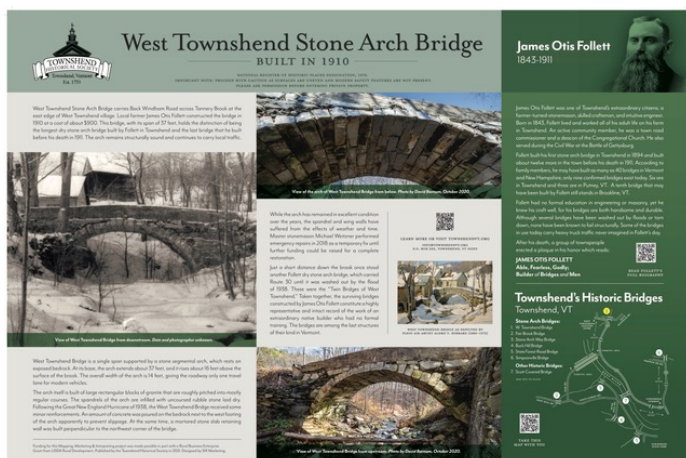
matching and then recreating the glass of the missing pieces at her studio. Then, the repair work will continue in the Glass Art Gallery and we will post progress updates on our website the public is welcome to visit. We're very grateful to Diane for donating her time and materials for this restoration. See other projects by Diane visit [www.dianerousseau.net](http://www.dianerousseau.net).



**West Townshend stone arch bridge parapets**

## **West Townshend Bridge Update**

Townshend voters have approved an additional \$50,000 on March Town Meeting Day. This most recent appropriation brings the total raised for the project to \$220,343 (\$188,000 committed by Town voters and \$32,343 in gifts raised by THS.) How much the original project estimate of \$283,000 will change after an update and review by Certified Stonemason Michael Weizner, remains unknown at this time. It is likely that project expenses going forward will be divided into three areas: 1) restoration of the bridge itself; 2) grading, draining, and repaving the surface and; 3) purchasing and installing parapets/guardrails. The filing of a VTRANS Small Structures Grant application by the Town for the West Townshend Stone Arch Bridge has been tabled at present due to the need for other emergency road projects in Townshend.



Interpretive sign ready for installation

## Grant Awarded to Map, Market, and Interpret Townshend's Historic Bridges

In 2020, the Historical Society was awarded a \$16,640 USDA Rural Business Development Enterprise Grant in support of its "Mapping, Marketing, & Interpreting of Townshend's Historic Bridges" project. The goal is to stimulate local business and create jobs through interpretative signage, digital advertising, and an enhanced THS website. It is hoped the project will instill pride in Townshend's history, build community spirit, and improve the quality of Townshend's rural life and economy. Toward these ends, THS has retained a professional marketing firm, SIX, Inc., based in Saratoga, NY.

In February, SIX Inc., working with THS, completed the interpretive signage designs for all seven bridges. The VT Division for Historic Preservation agreed to purchase an additional Scott Bridge sign, so that one can be placed at each end of the bridge. Charles Marchant and Robert DuGrenier of the THS Board and Steven Frisk, Townshend Selectman and Road Commissioner, have visited the bridges and chosen the location for each sign. THS and the Townshend Highway Department will be installing them soon.

On-going work by SIX during the winter and early spring also focused on expanding the THS website to accommodate information on the bridges. Some of this will be instantly accessible to bridge visitors via QR Codes on the signage. For example, scanning one QR Code with a smart phone will link to a printable map of all the bridges or, scanning another, to a full biography of stone-arch-bridge-builder, James Otis Follett.

Digital advertising campaigns that began last fall with ads supported by a Google Grant secured for THS by SIX, will expand and continue through July 31, 2021, the end of the grant period. The campaign will target cultural tourists, encouraging them to visit Townshend and its historic bridges.



George Sanderson's 1888 Diary

***Thurs., Jan 10, 1888. Clear. Go down to East Townshend in the evening. Go to lecture – Buy one claw hammer 50¢; one by one broom corn brush 25¢; candy 5¢; pencil 5¢. Start between 6 and 7 o'clock get back near 11 o'clock. 4 degrees below zero. Pay my taxes \$2.80¢.***

George Edward Sanderson (1862-1940) is an important figure in the history of West Townshend chiefly because of a diary he kept in the year 1888 during the time he owned the farm on Windham Hill Road at the corner of Lawrence Lane. He had previously lived a mile down the road with Grandfather John Sanderson at 505 Windham Hill Rd where he had worked on the family farm.

The pocket-size diary, inexpensively bound in leather, comprises some 90 handwritten pages of clear, tiny, casually ornate handwriting. It records the everyday life of a small farming community in Vermont with a clarity, accuracy, and detail that could hardly be matched by a library of scholarly volumes.

Today, the reader of the diary is immediately struck by one point about George and his neighbors and family relations: these people knew how to work. They were in the highest degree versatile, industrious, capable, and thrifty.

At the time of his diary, George at age 25, and is already a man of affairs and responsibilities. He sharpens axes, makes ax and other tool handles, cuts and splits prodigious amounts of firewood. He plants corn and potatoes, threshes oats and wheat, has a hay lot, a sugar bush, an apple orchard. Using his workhorse, "Prince," he helps out at other farms: mowing, picking apples and pears. He also breaks out their roads and driveways in the winter --especially during the famous Blizzard of 1888 when more than 40" of snow arrives within 2 days and snowdrifts become enormous. He gets help from neighbors in exchange for a day of his own work, borrows an evaporator in exchange for some of that year's sugar. He goes to dances, public lectures, and the famous Valley Fair in Brattleboro. He pays his taxes and votes staunchly Republican. Although he lived most of his life in West Townshend, he also worked for a time in Rutland, Vermont as a mechanic, and also at the Tap & Die Company in Greenfield, Massachusetts, and learned to how to build bicycles as a business enterprise.

When George Sanderson died at the age of 77, his occupation was given as "retired farmer." George never married and left no offspring. What he did leave is an engaging, authentic, and affectionate account of our community as it was a hundred and more years ago.

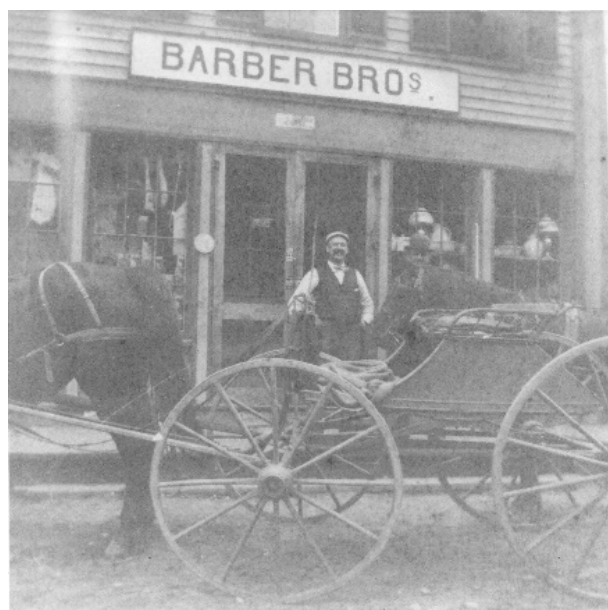
*by Castle Freeman*

Note: This unsigned diary was donated by Julie Lavorgna who spent many years sleuthing out clues before she discovered the true author.

## Barber Brothers' Store in W. Townshend

There were two general stores in West Townshend in 1888 that George Sanderson mentioned in his diary [See article above.]. Items that he purchased from the Barber Brothers' Store included grocery items such as sugar, raw oil, sweet oil, chocolate, horseradish in a bottle, 2 lbs pork, and dates. He also bought writing paper and envelopes as well as hardware items: hinges and nails; and 2 pairs stockings and leather boots.

The Barber Brothers had a store on Main Street by at least 1884 until 1902 when they sold to Charles Grout. The second general store, north of Barber Brothers on Main Street, was owned by Samuel Williams; this building is no longer extant.



**L to R: Frank Barber, Theodore Barber-- proprietors of the general store 1884-1902. The store was built in 1848. (Note the absence of a porch.)**

Photos courtesy of Dana Barber, Frank Barber's grandson.

The Barber Brothers advertised as: "Dealers in dry goods, groceries, hardware, hats and caps, boots and shoes, fine teas a specialty." George provided both stores with eggs from his Brahma hens --an important source of income for him.



**Left, Frank Fullerton Barber (1857-1926);  
Right, Theodore Philip Barber (1861-1934)**

The Barber brothers were sons of Augustus Anson Barber who was a harness maker and also ran a tanning business in West Townshend called Pomroy & Barber on Tannery Brook. Anson owned a building on his property next to the Caleb Garfield hat shop and it's possible that the first Barber Brothers Store was located there. Frank Barber eventually came to live in the brick house next to the present-day general store.



## Oakwood Cemetery

This historic cemetery is actually three cemeteries combined. 1) The oldest part is in the trees in the southeast corner of the cemetery and was there well before Oakwood was established. There is no deed for that other than boundary references in the newer part of the cemetery. 2) The original purchase includes what is now Divisions 1 - 11. The earliest deed reference is June 10, 1864 at which point O. S. Howard was paid \$419.53 for the land and \$168.04 for "improvements" for which there is no description. The part that is being used now (Division 12-19) was completed Nov. 23, 1913. The people involved in the sale of that property to the town were A. A. Mason, and Herbert T., Charles H., and Orinda Evans.

The present-day gate had been placed further back in the cemetery, where Division 3 and 5 are. Oral tradition says it was moved to its current location by Joe Daigneault II, father of the Joe Daigneault III who now lives in Brookline. The group that used to run the cemetery was called a "Committee". By the Town Report of 1883 they became "Commissioners" elected on a rotating basis for a 5-year term which still exists today, and the Commission has an Agent who sells the lots. In the 1880's the sales were recorded in the Town Land Records. It appears lots were sold for \$10. Today the cemetery has its own deed book and the sales are no longer by lots but by individual graves.

3) The most recent addition to the cemetery property was purchased from Ira S. Sawyer for \$250. This part is outside the fence and includes the grassy area next to the storage shed and the vacant part to the west side of the entrance road. That portion goes all the way to the West River.

(cont'd at right)



P.O. Box 202, Townshend, VT 05353



## Celebrating our Volunteers:

A special thanks to:

- Dave Barnum for photographing Townshend's historic bridges
- Rita Ivenitski for working on the THS website
- Patricia Jerez for keeping the THS mailing list up to date

## Please Join

Membership year runs January to December.

Dues are \$10 Single; \$15 family  
(Additional donations gratefully accepted.)

Please mail your dues to  
THS, PO Box 202, Townshend, VT  
or on-line at [www.townshendvt.org](http://www.townshendvt.org)

At one time the cemetery also owned what is called "Taft Meadow" where the Little League field is now. The deed had been made out to the town, not the cemetery, and the town arranged to have the community septic field there; as a result the area can no longer be used for "cemetery purposes" as the deed originally stated. Instead the cemetery gets an annual fee for the loss of the property and that money goes to the maintenance of the cemetery.

*Charlie Marchant*