

Westminster Historical Society NEWSLETTER

110 Main Street, P.O. Box 177, Westminster, MA 01473

September 2011

(978) 874-5569 E-mail: WestminsterHistory@Verizon.net; facebook: Westminster Historical Society; website: Westminsterhistory.org

PASSING DOWN TRADITIONS

By Patricia Gendron

Memorial Day and Veterans Day have always been very special to me. My father proudly served in WWII along with his older brothers, John and James. My husband and brother served during the Vietnam War. Our family celebrated the lives of those who died by marching in and attending parades and putting flowers on the graves of



Westminster Veterans marching in a Memorial Day Parade

loved ones. I like to pass traditions down to my children and grandchildren, so when the family moved to Westminster, our first Memorial Day was celebrated by attending the parade and visiting the cemetery. We brought our chairs and sat in front of the First Congregational Church. The firemen, police, veterans, politicians, marching band, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Little League, preschoolers, and antique cars were wonderful to behold. I must have taken seventy-five pictures. The children enjoy the candy, hot dogs and sodas offered by our generous merchants in the town. The family has been at every Memorial Day parade since 2005.

This year's Memorial Day was a little different for us for two reasons. A WWII pilot came back to the United

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DATE OF ANNUAL MEETING SET

The 91st annual meeting of the Westminster Historical Society will be held on Saturday October 22 at the Old Mill. Registration will begin at 6 pm followed by dinner at 6:30 pm. To attend, please cut the reservation form from this newsletter insert and send it along with your check (each meal is \$26) to the Historical Society.

The members of the Upton Building Committee and the architects from Chenot Associates, Keith Chenot and Phil Warbasse, will be the guest speakers. Members of the Upton Building Committee are Jim Biglow, Dino DiBattista, Don Blood, Mike Gallant, Betsy Hannula, Kevin Keena, Ken Marien, To Marien, Vol Salmi, Dave Turcotte, and Phil Young. We thank them for their service!

The program "The Upton Center: Plans and Progress" will be an opportunity for everyone to hear about the efforts to incorporate energy saving measures in the building and to make this a "green" building project, all with the hope of minimizing future operating expenses and our impact on the environment. We hope to see you Oct. 22!

FLEA MARKET

Don't forget the annual Flea Market on Sat. Sept. 24. It is our biggest fundraiser to help pay operating costs at the Historical Society. If you have items to donate please leave them in covered boxes in the barn (we stack them). If you have furniture it would be best for us if you brought it down the night before the Flea Market because storage of large items is difficult.

And if you have paintings or ephemera to donate, please think of the Art & Ephemera Auction & Sale on Oct. 15.

We can always provide you with a receipt for your donations so you can deduct their value as a donation on your income taxes. Thank you for your support!

2010-2011 BOARD MEMBERS OFFICERS & STAFF

D :1 .	D : D 1
President	Roni Beal
President-Elect	James Biglow
Vice President	Janice Swenor
Clerk	Denise MacAloney
Treasurer	Linda Landry
At Large	Melody Gallant
At Large	Betsy Hannula
At Large	Darlene Johnson
At Large	Joan Longcope
At Large	Sandra Ouellette
At Large	Ed Lafortune
At Large	Anne Honkonen
At Large	Carole Christensen
Administrative Assistant	Liz Maillet
Assistant Treasurer	Michelle Valentino
Curator	Betsy Hannula
Genealogy Researcher	Ellen Baker
Historian	Patricia Lasky
House Director	Ken Marien
Housekeeper	Christy Lombardo
Newsletter Editor	Patricia Gendron

MEETINGS

Meetings are held September through June on the 3rd Tuesday at 7 pm at the House, and are free and open to the public.

HOUSE & GIFT SHOP HOURS

The Historical Society House is open Mondays 9-11:30 am and 7-9 pm, Fridays 9-12 Noon and other times by appointment.

MISSION

The Westminster Historical Society's mission is to save and share Westminster's past.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

No matter what anyone says, we all know autumn is here after Labor Day. School and colleges are back in session, and the Westminster Historical Society is in full swing preparing for the annual Flea Market on September 24. Donations started coming in right after last year's flea market. This year we stored furniture donations in the Upton building because we simply ran out of room with only two tents and a barn full of other items.

The Board of Directors has been busy this year. Generally, the board will take a break and skip a meeting in either July or August, but this year we held meetings regardless of the steamy weather. We planned next year's program events for 2011-2012, which include a mix of inhouse evening lectures and weekend family activities. The board is open to suggestions, so if you have an idea for a program, please contact one of the board members.

This is my last letter in the newsletter as president. I started out the year interviewing tenants for our apartment rental and ended the year interviewing candidates to be our new House Director. Ken Marien accepted the position, and we are delighted to have him as House Director. Our Assistant Treasurer, Dawnmarie Ball, recently moved back to her home state, Pennsylvania; she did a great job helping Linda Landry process our monthly bills and other financial matters since 2009. We welcome Michelle Valentino as our new Assistant Treasurer.

On Mondays I meet with Liz Maillet, our office administrator. The hub of the historical society is the office, and Liz does an excellent job keeping us on schedule with monthly events, quarterly newsletters, and every day business.

It has been a privilege to be president of the Westminster Historical Society. I thank the Board of Directors and Administrative staff for their support and hard work. We had a good year!

Sincerely yours, Roni Beal

IN MEMORIAM

Lucille Fitzgerald 2011

CURATOR'S CORNER

Thank you to the following people for donating items to be preserved in our collections:

June Flinkstrom: information related to her aunt, Ellie Jansson

Betsy Hannula: photos of Memorial Day 2011 parade Ed Lafortune: telephone directory

Philip Manseau: set of Oakmonitors, school newsletters and the 1960 Oakmont Student Handbook

Tom Marien: set of Rocket newsletters from 1940s

Virginia VanHazinga: calendar, egg crate, etc. from her

mother Amy VanHazinga's estate Flea Market: Girl Scout handbook



Oakmont Mascot 1960-1964

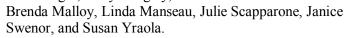
Some gifts to the collection REALLY take us back in time. The Student Handbook for the year that Oakmont opened its doors was one. Under "Regulations for Wearing Apparel" were "Boys are to wear shirts and ties, with shirts buttoned and tucked into trousers. All buttons including the top button on sport shirts are to be buttoned between Nov. 1st and April 1st... Pegged trousers, pants with bands or wide seams, and dungarees are not consid-

ered acceptable..., T-shirts as outside attire are for use in the athletic program only, and Slacks or shorts and hair in pin curls are not considered proper attire for girls." Wow! Has the world changed since 1960!

THANK YOU, WHS MEMBERS

Oten we do not recognize people who help the Historical Society run smoothly. With so many people uncomfortable in the kitchen it becomes hard to find volunteers to bake for some of our programs, and people LOVE home baked goodies! So, a huge THANK YOU goes out to the following people that we've depended upon these past

few years: Marie Auger, Linda Barrows, Roni Beal, Julie Bedard, Beth Bowen, Eleanor Brogan, Ceil Burgess, Melody Gallant, Eileen Goguen, Lisa Grenier, Betsy Hannula, Clara Hannula, Jeanne Keena, Marta Klemetti, Jeannine LaCoss, Linda Landry, Pat Lasky, Leola Leger, Betty Longley,



We are always looking for volunteers so that we don't have to call the same persons all the time. If you could help out in the future or if we missed you on this list please contact Liz Maillet at the Historical House at 978.874.5569 or email at westminsterhistory@verizon.net

GAZEBO FOR SALE

For anyone who attends our annual flea market, the gazebo or summer house is where all the arts and crafts items are sold. It is a wonderful old building with a wooden parquet ceiling, floor and unique folding windows with screens. The 20' x 12' gazebo sits on top of



cement blocks. The roof was shingled in August by a group of volunteers. Except for needing paint on the exterior, the gazebo is in excellent condition and a great place to enjoy the summer's breezes!

In earlier years hot weather events were held here—summer luncheons and meetings — where cool breezes made a delightful difference. The Board of Directors voted to sell the gazebo at this time in order to raise money to make some repairs on the house and to add to the Upton building renovation fund.

A property appraisal is next, and then we will advertise the sale of the gazebo. If you're interested in seeing the building or purchasing it, all Liz at 978-874-5569.

HISTORY DETECTIVES

Have you watched the new television series called "History Detectives?" Viewers are invited to submit a unique object with a question about it's authenticity or purpose, and the staff on the show travel all around the country trying to find the answers. It's always interesting to see how their research is done, and the answers are not always what one hoped for, but the story is always good!

We're going to try our own version of History Detectives in Westminster. You are invited to submit an object with a question or just a question about Westminster's past and we will do our best to find the answer—with facts and science—and a bit of luck along the way.

Email your inquiry to WestminsterHistory.org. Thanks!

(Continued from page 1)

States to be buried, and my six year old grandson wanted to do grave rubbings. Let me tell you about the war hero who came home first.

I was watching the news and cooking one weekend in April when I heard the newscaster talking about a World War II pilot being buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in Lowell to full military honors. I was dumbfounded because I heard the name Murray. Second Lieutenant Martin Patrick Murray and my Dad, who grew up in Lowell, joined the service in 1942; Dad, the Navy; Marty, the Army Air Corps. They were best friends. I have been waiting all the days of my life to learn the fate of Marty



Vanished: The B-24 Liberator plane - and its 12 crew - disappeared without trace during a reconnaissance mission over the South Pacific

Murray, lost at sea.

I ran to the computer to look at the obituaries in the Lowell Sun. From one article and others on the Internet about the mission and the men who were found, I gleaned this story. On a reconnaissance mission to photograph enemy ships in the Bismarck Sea October 1943, the plane "Shack Rat" a B-24D Liberator, which 2nd Lieutenant Murray was copiloting, went down in heavy weather somewhere in the Pacific. They had been ordered to abort the mission. The crew of twelve never made it to the alternate landing site at Dobodura, and the plane was reported missing, the men presumed dead. I can only imagine the grief Second Lieutenant Murray's family and my Dad felt. Dad talked about him any time he talked about the war, which was his favorite subject. The grandchildren were mesmerized by Dad's tattoo on his arm of a skull in an aviator cap, which he displayed while recounting the tales of the Black Cats, my father's Navy squad, and their part of the war effort on Guam. The stories always culminated with Martin Murray lost at sea.

Have you ever wondered whatever happened to someone who disappeared and was presumed dead?

Marty would have stood up for Dad at his wedding in 1944 had he still been alive. It is strange to look at that wedding photo and notice the best man is not Martin Murray. I was born in 1945. For at least 60 years, my brothers and I have wondered where he was, especially since I was named Patricia and my brother, Lawrence Martin McGee in honor of him. Marty's sister Claire Murray was Larry's Godmother. We often visited the Murray home at 30 Cosgrove Street in Lowell. Even baby Kathy born almost twenty



Lieutenant Martin Patrick Murray

years after me heard about 2nd Lieutenant Martin P. Murray and went to the Murray's. Marty's picture was displayed in the Murray home and at the McGee's. Whenever he was telling war stories, we always questioned Dad about how his best friend was lost at sea.

Marty Murray came home after being gone for 68 years. A villager in Papua New Guinea told a military joint POW/MIA Accounting Command team on the island that he had come across wreckage in the jungle in 2003. He had an ID tag belonging to one of the crew members. The crash site was so remote that it took the investigators four years to reach the plane. They began excavating and identifying the human remains in 2007. Dental records, circumstantial evidence, and mitochondrial DNA helped the team identify Lieutenant Murray and the others. In December 2010, Engineer Hollis Smith of Cove, Arkansas, tail gunner Claude A. Ray of Riverside, California, and photographer Claude Tyler of Arlington, Virginia, were returned to their respective homes for burial. More time passed before Marty was identified and returned to Lowell, Marty Murray who was lost at sea.

On April 16, 2011, to full military honors including a "fly by," Second Lieutenant Martin Patrick Murray was home at last.

I related this story to my son, daughter-in-law and my grandchildren, Tyler and Trevor. Six year old Trevor wanted to see the grave. I thought a minute and since I do not like driving distances, asked, "Wouldn't you like to do a grave rubbing instead of driving to Lowell? They

(Continued from page 4)

have some cool gravestones in the Woodside Cemetery where your great grandfather and great grandmother are buried." Trevor agreed.

On the first sunny day in May, we took archival tape, newsprint, compressed charcoal sticks, and two seats to the Woodside Cemetery. I taped the newsprint to the gravestones near our plot. They have delightful pictures of angels or trees or urns. Trevor carefully rubbed the charcoal over the



Trevor grave rubbing

newsprint revealing the pictures. He was thrilled. He was able to do three different ones before his attention waned.

We visited the stone of Captain Daniel Hoar whose ancestor's house is around the corner from us. Our friend's grandfather lived in that house, now owned by the Shenks. The stone along with his wife's and children's stands in the back right hand corner of the cemetery down Spruce Street. It reads (as well as I could make out):

In memory of Capt. Daniel Hoar who died Dec. 4, 1782 in the 70th year of his age. He was one the first settlers in this town where he underwent many hardships in settling there, then inhospitable wilderness. He sustained many of the principles offices in town and militia affairs which he discharged with faithfulness, he was kind and benevolent to the poor, the fatherless and widows, a friend to his country, a hater of the tyranny, a lover of unity and peace but alas death has called him out of this world into the other and has unstrung his nervous arm and his sinews are relaxed and his limbs not long ago the seat of vigor and activity lie down motionless and are crumbling into dust and has left his children and town to mourn his loss. Make the extended skies your tomb let stars record your worth. Yet know vain mortals all must die as na-

ture [sickly in] birth.

This was rather a long epitaph to which I figured Trevor would not respond, since he is only six. But, no, his response was: "Meme, when I am buried, can I have a sarcophagus?"

Trevor is prepared to

Trevor is prepared to become an ancient Egyptian



WESTMINSTER BOY SCOUTS COMPLETE PROJECTS AT HOUSE

SHAKER BASKET WORKSHOPS

Yet again, the Shaker Basket Workshops were a sell-out. There were 27 in each class, one on July 18th and the other on August 15th at the Westminster Senior Center. The classes filled quickly, necessitating the scheduling of a third class.

In July, we made a small, wood base basket with a decorative stripe and a wire and turned wood handle. In August, we made a 12" X 14" pie basket with a solid woven bottom, about 6" deep with a



Mrs. Ouellette helping participants

"D" handle. We could choose a navy, cranberry or hunter green stripe. This class filled quickly and we had to schedule another for September 12th.

The workshops are led by Terry Ouellette, a well-known local basket weaver. These classes are popular because anyone is welcome, novices or those with experience. Everything needed is supplied, and everyone goes home with their basket.

MEMBERSHIP

If you're not yet a member, please consider joining today. It's easy. Just fill out the form below and send it along with your check to the Historical Society. Your membership support is essential to us.

Thank you to all who have renewed their membership this past year. If you are unsure of your status, just call Liz at the office (978-874-5569). You will want to be a member in order to take advantage of the ten percent discount on all items in the Gift Shop! If you are 75 years of age, your membership is free!

WESTMINSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERHSIP FORM

Name		Individual	\$25
Address		Family	40
Phone	Fax	Senior (over 65)	15
e-mail		Contributing	50
		Friend	100
		Honorary (over 75	5) 0

All members receive a 10% discount in the Gift Shop.

Please contact me about volunteering. These are some of my interests:

- ☐ Sorting, cleaning, and cataloging items.
- ☐ Putting data about items into a computer database.
- ☐ Helping with newsletters and brochures.

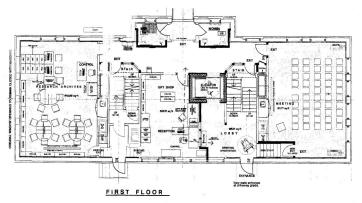
Please send form to Westminster Historical Society, Membership Committee, P.O. Box 177, Westminster, MA 01473.

UPTON UPDATE

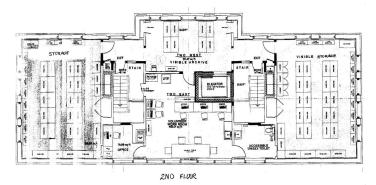
The architectural plans are nearly done. Extra time was needed to work with structural and mechanical engineers to make sure the Upton Center will be safe to hold all our collections and the people who work with them and the visitors who want to attend our programs.

In addition the Upton Building Committee has been working very hard with the architects, Keith Chenot and Phil Warbasse, and structural and mechanical engineers to make sure our building will be energy efficient so the operating costs will be as minimal as possible. Furthermore we aim for a "green" renovation — making as small an impact on the environment as possible. It's a tall order, but we're taking the time necessary to do it right the first time.

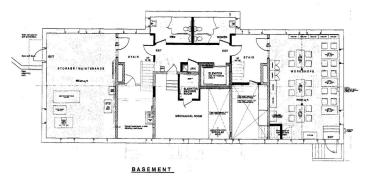
Plan of First Floor



Plan of 2nd Floor



Plan of Basement



UPTON OPEN HOUSES CONTINUE

Plan to stop in to see the school on Fridays in Sept. and Oct. from 3-6 pm and see the plans! Once winter sets in, we will not be able to host people inside the building.

MORE UPTON UPDATES

The Board of Directors hired a fundraising consultant who has begun to help us plan the Capital Campaign. Rick Blain has 40 years of experience working with nonprofits in fundraising efforts and we're happy to have him on board. The public phase of the campaign will most likely be announced in 2012 – the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Upton School in 1912. It seems appropriate!

Meanwhile we're developing the brochures that will be sent to all townspeople and anyone else who might be interested in this project. Ross Albert, who designed our logo and new stationery is also designing the graphics for the brochures. We've been glad to have him working with us! He has now begun an internship working for the Boston Bruins. Thank you and good luck, Ross!



Darlene Johnson, Eunice Arcangeli and Philo Maryscz at the Plant Swap in May.

COMING UP: NOV. 21: RESEARCHING A CIVIL WAR SOLDIER

Joy Contois, long time Education Coordinator at the Fitchburg Historical Society will talk about all the sources we can use to learn about a soldier in the Civil War. Using Westminster soldiers as examples, Joy will trace the steps anyone can take to gather information about a participation in this war that took place 150 years ago.

PAST PROGRAMS



Clay Swenor explained how he restored the Ever Ready, the hand pumper at our May meeting.

George Engman and Len Engman, his nephew provided program at the Juhan-

WESTMINSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY GIFT SHOP

When looking for a unique gift for birthdays, anniversaries, holidays or other special occasions, be sure to browse the WHS Gift Shop. Whether shopping for yourself or someone on your gift list, you are sure to find the perfect gift here. The Gift Shop is open on Mondays from 7-9 pm and Fridays from 9 until noon and other times by appointment. Members receive a 10% discount on all purchases. (Postage and shipping costs apply for items sent by mail.)

Books	Other
Cemetery Inscriptions	Calligraphy sampler
History of Westminster, 1832 by Hudson 5.00	Cross stitch sampler kit "Mosman"
History of Westminster, 1893 by Heywood 96.00	Framed pen & ink of WHS house by Santora
History of Westminster 2008 by WHS	Map of Westminster 1855
History of Westminster, by Tolman	Notepaper Westminster scenes, pkg.12 3.50
Homestead Heritage of Westminster, by WHS	Postcards
Images of America, by WHS	Children's books
Olin Warner, Sculptor, by Hyson	Paper dolls, Assorted
200 th Anniversary of Westminster, 5.00	Tobacco Shed pottery priced as marked
Wajusett Gatherings, by Sinclair (hardcover) 30.00	Tote Bags priced as marked
Tapestries	Westminster 1831 photo of painting by Peckham 30.00
Cotton afghan in green, navy, burgundy	Wachusett Mountain & Round Meadow Pond print. 56.00
Tapestry wall hanging	Westminster Cracker Factory print 45.00

Westminster Historical Society 110 Main St., P.O. Box 177 Westminster, MA 01473

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September 24 Flea Market

Saturday, October 8 Apple Pressing Demonstration 1-3pm at Hannula's home at 68 Harrington Road.

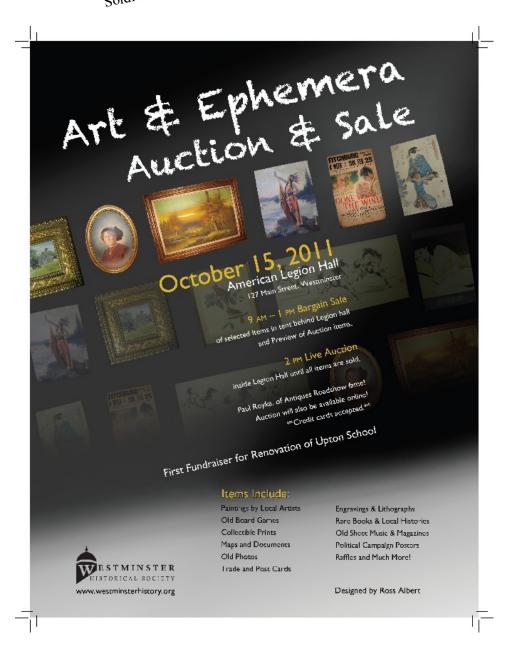
October 15 Art & Ephemera Auction & Sale

October 22 Annual Meeting and Dinner at

Old Mill

November 21 "How to Research a Civil War Soldier"

Postal Patron



APPLE PRESSING-MAKING CIDER THE OLD **FASHIONED WAY**

Want to have a workout and get a nice reward of sweet tasting apple cider? Try cranking the handles to grind the apples you've thrown into the hopper of the apple press, and then turn the bars of the press to

squeeze out the juice on **Saturday** October 8 from 1-3 at the Hannula's home at 68 Harrington

Road. Or, you could just watch the

Apple pressing equipment

whole operation and still enjoy the cider! All are invited.



The Upton School plans are almost complete.

ANNUAL MEETING INVITATION

You are cordially invited to attend
the 91st annual meeting of the
Westminster Historical Society
on Sat., Oct. 22 at the Old Mill
5:30 Registration and Social
6:00 Dinner
7:00 Business Meeting and
Installation of Board Members
7:15 Program—The Upton Center
Plans and Progress
Architects Keith Chenot & Phil Warbasse
And Upton Building Committee members

F 	HISTORICAL SOCI	ETY ANNUAL MEETING RESERVATION	- — —
Name		Email	
Address	City	State Tel.	
		rve place/s at the Historical Society Annual Meeting on Sat. Oct \$26 per person (includes tax & gratuities).	. 22

ART & EPHEMERA AUCTION & SALE









It's been a long time coming – and it's finally almost here! Our first major fundraiser for the renovation of the Upton School is Sat. October 15 at the Legion Hall at 127 Main Street. We are excited to tell you that Paul Royka, who first came to national attention with his participation on PBS's Antiques Roadshow, will be our auctioneer.

A big tent in the back of the Legion Hall will hold more than 400 art works – paintings, prints, vintage books, old board games, postcards, sheet music – something for everyone who collects or just wants something nice in his or her home. That sale will begin at 9 AM. At 2 PM the Auction will begin inside the Legion Hall. Any works leftover on Sat. will be sold at bargain prices on Sunday from 11 AM to 3 PM.

Many beautiful Oriental pieces have been collected, as well as works by well known artists such as Audubon, Maxfield Parrish, and Wallace Nutting. Posters include a "Gone With the Wind" poster from the Fitchburg Theater and political posters featuring Eisenhower, Nixon, and Goldwater. It is quite an eclectic group of items – some very modern and outlandish, others very traditional. We are also pleased to tell you that several local artists have donated works of art for this auction. If you have ever wanted to find something unique to decorate your home or add to your collection of original art work or ephemera—now will be the time! It will be fun to be a part of this event.

We are creating an auction and sale catalog and in addition to having it available on that day, it will be put on line on our website in September. Businesses have supported this venture with advertisements. If you are interested in being a sponsor, a minimum of a \$10 donation will get your name on the list of patrons. Call now. WE THANK YOU!

ART RAFFLE



Mount Wachusett and Round Meadow Pond by E.H. Rogers



Westminster Cracker Factory by David Vickery



Main Street, Westminster, 1831 by Robert Peckham



Maple Heights Farm original oil painting by John Gamache

An original oil painting of a Westminster scene and prints of three special works of art will be raffled in connection with the upcoming **Art and Ephemera Auction and Sale** on October 15. This is a great opportunity to support the Historical Society even if you are not able to attend the event by purchasing a raffle ticket through the mail. The raffle drawing will take place at the Historical Society's Annual Meeting on October 22.

The oil painting is of the *Maple Heights farm* on Howard Street painted by John Gamache, an Ashburnham native who is an accomplished artist; this painting is 10"x10" and is valued at \$600. The prints include a signed and numbered print of the *Westminster Cracker Factory*; the original is a watercolor by Dave Vickery, and is 23"x16". Another is a photographic copy of Deacon Robert Peckham's *Main Street Westminster in 1831*; it is the only landscape known to have been painted by this Westminster native who became a famous portrait painter in the early 1800s. It is 25"x17".

The third print is the largest, a copy of a new acquisition at the Historical Society, a charcoal drawing of *Mount Wachusett with Round Meadow Pond* in the foreground. It was created by the artist, E.H. Rogers circa 1910 and is the largest of them all, at 42"x24".

This is a unique opportunity to have a chance at owning one of these beautiful works of art. Any one of them would reflect a lovely picturesque scene in Westminster in your home. Raffle tickets may be purchased through the Historical Society. Five tickets are \$10; you may designate your tickets to any of the four items. Mail your check and form below, indicating where you would like your tickets allotted, and mail to the Westminster Historical Society, PO Box 177, Westminster, MA 01473 before October 15, 2011. Good luck to you!

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