

ESTMINSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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

Winter 2014

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

WESTMINSTER CIVIL WAR MONUMENT

In 2015 the country will commemorate 150 years since the end of the Civil War. The Massachusetts Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee has been encouraging communities to observe the event by

ensuring that Civil War monuments are properly taken care of so they will last into future generations.

In our town, the Westminster Historical Commission, with member Bill Waight as project leader, has taken on the task of planning the restoration of the Civil War monument in front of the First Congregational Church. Conservators who specialize in this kind of work have ex-

amined the monument and the work of cleaning the surfaces is estimated to cost \$10,000.

Here's a little background on the monument. Heywood's 1893 <u>History of Westminster</u> gives the following history of the monument: "In the warrant calling the annual town meeting, March 6, 1865, appeared an article 'To see what action the Town will take in relation to erecting a monument in memory of its soldiers who have died or may die in the service of our country in the present war.' As a result, Joseph Hager, James Puffer, and Jonas Miller were appointed a committee 'To gather all the necessary facts and information and at the proper time erect or cause to be erected a suitable monument in memory of all soldiers belonging to

this Town, or whose parents belong here, who have died or may die in the service of our country in the present war. Subsequently, on Nov. 7th it was voted, 'To procure a suitable granite monument' and 'To locate said monument in the centre village.' The committee determined the monument be put up in the open area in front of the Church of the First Par-

ish. It was dedicated on July 4, 1868.

'The monument is a substantial, unpretending, but appropriate structure, made of Fitchburg granite and consisting of a solid, square base and pedestal with relieving fillets, surmounted by a pyramidal shaft sloping gently upward to the height of 22 1-2 feet from the ground. On the four sides of the pedestal are marble slabs bearing an

inscription and the names, rank, place and date of death of the thirty-four patriot sons of the town, who, at the time of its erection were known to have perished in their country's service--the whole being surrounded by an octagonal stone curbing.

Mark Landry, Westminster's Veterans Graves officer, and member of the Historical Society Veterans Committee, has done extensive research on all veterans in Westminster. He has contributed the following information on the soldiers whose names are listed on the plaques on the four sides of the Civil War monument. Future articles in this newsletter will have information on all the Westminster soldiers who died.



2013-2014 OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS COMMITTEE CHAIRS & STAFF

President	Beth Bowen
Vice President	
Clerk	John Bowen
Treasurer	
At Large	Roni Beal
At Large	Melody Gallant
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<i>At Large</i>	Wayne Klemetti
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At Large	Julie Scapparone

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Administrative Assistant	Liz Maillet
Assistant Treasurer	Michelle Valentino
<i>Curator</i>	Betsy Hannula
Genealogy Researcher	Darlene Wildes
Historian	Patricia Lasky
House Director	Rob Johnson
Newsletter Editor	Patricia Gendron
Registrar	Stephanie Boucher

If you've ever had an interest in being on a committee or the Board, we're looking for additional members. Call Liz to talk about it.

MEETINGS

Meetings are held October 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 7-9 pm and 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, Neighbors, Friends and Everyone who cares about Westminster Past and Present,

As I begin my third go round as President of this wonderful society, I want to thank Jim Biglow, Janice Swenor and Roni Beal, the three presidents who immediately preceded me. I also wish to thank the fabulous members and their families who make so many things happen in Westminster.

The WHS is a wonderful, active group of people who work hard to collect and protect what is Westminster's past and present, and have fun doing it. Remember, today is tomorrow's history.

One of the goals of my term is to attract more people to the society who want to work on our primary project – the preservation and restoration of the Upton School. Whether it takes 10 years or 30 years, it is a project worth doing. The next phase is to secure the roof rafters and replace all the old roof slates. Thanks to all the generous donors and Betsy Hannula's grant writing skills, we begin the roof work in March.

The Society has also launched "Friends of the Upton School" to provide additional support for the project. Call the Society if you wish to join the 16 persons who have already become members of "The Friends of the Upton School."

Another goal is to continue to make working at the WHS and on the Society's events fun for the town and fun for the volunteers. I appreciate the time so many people give to the WHS, whether it be an hour now and then, or a weekly commitment. I encourage more people who care about Westminster to join the Society. We want you; and we need you.

With your help, I pledge to work hard to organize, lead and stimulate this Society. The Westminster Historical Society is a great group and I am proud to be your new president.

Best regards,

Beth Bowen

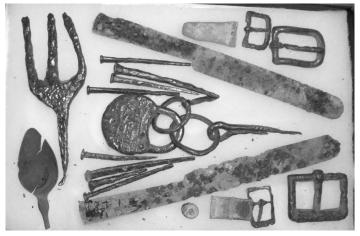
IN MEMORIAM

We are saddened by the passing of these former members of the Historical Society. Shirley Desjardin and Bruce Vincent

CURATOR'S CORNER

Thank you to everyone who has donated items to the Historical Society for preservation in the collections. Objects are truly the most reliable connection to the past.

Sometimes we receive interesting items that do not have a direct connection to Westminster's history but we are able to make use of them in our Education Department collections. Such is the case with three items that were donated by a fellow collector, Tom Torrans. His interest in the Civil War has led him to collect a number of Civil War items available in different parts of the country, and he was interested in parting with some of them. He donated to the Society



Civil War relics found by a Robbie Robertson in Kentucky

a box of Civil War relics dug from Camp Nelson, Kentucky and a small box of Civil War bullets found at the battle of Nashville, Tennessee. Since they will be in our Education Department, people will be able to have closer contact with them, compared to the

Westminster-related items in our collections which require more careful handling.
The third item Mr.
Torrans gave to us was a soldier's helmet from the Vietnam era.



Civil War bullets found in Tennessee

Since it did not belong to anyone from Westminster, it will also go into our Education Department and can be used by anyone who has an interest in it.

A CALL TO ARMS!

Did you know that 7 months *before* the shot heard 'round the world on Lexington green started the Revolutionary war, Westminster men were part of a similar revolt? In September of 1774, 120 men and boys from Westminster rode down to Worcester to join 4,500 others from 37 towns in Worcester County to oust 25 Royal Crown appointees sent to control the courthouse there.

In the spring of 1774 the British Parliament had removed many of the colonists' civil rights—this was the last straw for many Patriots in Worcester County. On September 6 organized militia men were coordinated to seize the courthouse. Armed men lined the sides of Main Street and the British officials were marched down the middle of the Street and made to recant their loyalties to the Crown and the new mandates over and over again to all the citizens that gathered.

The Antiquarian Society on Salisbury Street in Worcester is planning a series of events leading up to a reenactment on September 7, 2014. Details of the project can be found online at http://www.revolution1774.org. They would like to include representation from the town of Westminster so anyone who is interested in planning or participating in the project can contact Tom Connell at 978-833-7453 or at wuzfuzipa@yahoo.com.

NEW TENT PLATFORM AT HOUSE

The work never ends at the Historical Society house on Main Street. Finding enough storage space for the items in our collections is always a struggle. In



Eddie Hannula, Tom Marien, Rollie Boucher, and Phil Young finishing up the platform.

finding storage space for the items that are given to us for sale in the annual Flea Market is anoth-

addition,

er struggle. A nice large tent was donated to us by Aubuchons, and we needed a platform for it to stand on since the back lawn gets quite wet when it's rainy. A team of volunteers came to the rescue – Roni Beal, Rollie Boucher, Stephanie Boucher, Tom Marien, Eddie Hannula, and Phil Young, who was in charge of the project. It was a great effort and we now have a tent to hold big items that are donated throughout the year. Thank you all!

(Continued from page 1)

Inscriptions on the marble sides of the Civil War Monument

Front Side.

In memory of the patriotic volunteers of Westminster whose lives were sacrificed in defense of Liberty and Union during the great Rebellion."

LIEUT. COL. JOSEPH P. RICE 21. Mass. Vol. killed at Chantilly, Va. Sept.1,1862. Aged 41 yrs.

LIEUT. COL. CHARLES CUMMINGS, 17. Vt. Vol. killed in front of Petersburg, Va. Sept. 30, 1864. Aged 43 yrs.

LIEUT. CYRUS K. MILLER Co. B, 28. Ill. Vol. died in Hospital near Vicksburg, Miss. July 8, 1863. Aged 25 yrs.

ORDERLY SERGT. MARCUS J. HAGER Co. I, 53. Mass. Vol. died at sea on the passage from N. N. Va. to N. O. Jan. 22, 1863. Aged 22 yrs.

SERGT. ISRAEL CUMMINGS Co. D, 21. Mass. Vol. died of wound in Hospital at Knoxville, Tenn. Dec. 3, 1863. Aged 31 yrs.

SERGT. GEO. H. PAGE Co. F, 25. Mass. Vol. died of wounds in Hospital at Baltimore, Md. June 26, 1861. Aged 23 yrs.

CORP^L PATRICK KELLY Co. H, 28. Mass. Vol. Killed in Battle at Gettysburg. July 2, 1863. Aged 22 yrs.

Northeast Side.

SERGT. WALTER H. SAWTELLE Co. F, 25. Mass. Vol. wounded May 16. 1864. Died July 20, 1864, at Portsmouth, R.I. Aged 35 yrs.

CORPORAL FARWELL SAWIN
Co. H, 36. Mass. Vol. died in Hospital at Vicksburg, Miss.
Aug. 9, 1863. Aged 21 yrs.

CORPORAL CHARLES A. MILLER Co. F, 25. Mass. Vol. died of wound at Hampton Hospital Va. July 9, 1864. Aged 28 yrs.

CORPORAL SAMUEL H. PECKHAM Co. E, 59. Mass. Vol. died in Prison at Andersonville, Ga. Sept. 20, 1864. Aged 31 yrs.

FRANCIS BLAKE Co. I, 10. U.S. Infantry killed at North Anna River, Va. May 17, 1864. Aged 31 yrs.

HARRISON P. SAWIN Co. H, 36. Mass. Vol. died in Weaverton Hospital Va. Nov. 21, 1862 Aged 21 yrs.

GEORGE W. MILLER Co. H, 36. Mass. Vol. died in Hospital at Baltimore, Md. April 17, 1863. Aged 28 yrs.

GEORGE NICHOLS Co. F, 25. Regt. Mass. Vols. Died of disease, Contracted in Andersonville, Ga. May 5, 1867. Aged 25 yrs. 8 ms.

FRANCES ESTEY Co. F, 25. Mass. Vols. Died of disease, Contracted in the Army. Jan. 19, 1863. Aged 30 yrs.

Southeast Side.

HORACE S. WOODWARD Co. H, 36. Mass. Vol. died of wound Oct. 19, 1863. Aged 43 yrs.

HENRY CUTTING

Co. H, 36. Mass. Vol. died in Hospital at Knoxville, Tenn. Dec. 9, 1863. Aged 28 yrs.

EDWARD O. YOUNG

Co. H, 36. Mass. Vol. died of wound at Fredericksburg, Va. May 25, 1864. Aged 20 yrs.

JOSIAH FOSTER Co. H, 36. Mass. Vol. Killed near Petersburg, Va. Oct. 2, 1864. Aged 41 yrs.

CHARLES W. HARTWELL Co. F, 25. Mass. Vol. died at Fortress Monroe, Va. Feb, 8. 1862. Aged 18 yrs.

WALLACE W. BUTTERFIELD Co. F, 25. Mass. Vol. died of wound at Campbell Hospital, Washington D.C. June 17, 1864. Aged 19 yrs.

GEORGE F. BENJAMIN Co. B, 15. Mass. Vol. Killed at Balls Bluff, Va. Oct. 21, 1861. Aged 21 yrs.

OREN T. RAYMOND Co. F, 25. Mass. Vol. Killed at the Wilderness, Va. May 6, 1864. Aged 19 yrs.

THOMAS SCOLLAY Jr. Co. B, 15. Mass. Vol. died of disease Mar. 18, 1864. Aged 19 yrs.

Southwest Side.

NELSON Z. BATHRICK

Co. B, 15. Mass. Vol. died of wound at Auburn Hospital, Washington D.C. June 30, 1864. Aged 32 yrs.

JAMES E. PUFFER Co. A, 32. Mass. Vol. killed at Gettysburg, Pa. July 2, 1863. Aged 22 yrs.

GEO. W. FINDALL Co. F, 32. Mass. Vol. killed at Laurel Hill, Va. May 13, 1864. Aged 33 yrs.

ALBERT E. BROOKS

Co. D, 2. Mass. Vol. drowned in Charles River, at Camp Andrew, W. Roxbury, Mass. June 1, 1861. Aged 14 yrs.

(Continued from page 4)

BENJ. F. WILCOX

Co. D, 2. Mass. Vol. killed at Cedar Mountain, Va. Aug. 9, 1862. Aged 22 yrs.

AMOS H. PARTRIDGE

Co. D, 20. Mass. Vol. died in Prison, in Virginia. Jan. 10, 1862. Aged 18 yrs.

JOHN W. HOWE

Co. B, 27. Mass. Vol. died of starvation in Andersonville Prison, Ga. July 22, 1864. Aged 25 yrs.

MARCUS M. COOLEDGE

Co. H, 1. Mo. Vol. died of wound at Boonesville, Mo. June 17, 1861. Aged 21 yrs.

AUGUST PETTS

Co. A, 36. Mass. Vol. died at Andersonville Prison, Ga. Aug. 12, 1864. Aged 23 yrs.

MAKING LINEN IN WESTMINTSER

Jody Jess and Jacqui Marsh were our guest speakers for the November meeting at the WHS house. What an interesting program! Jody and Jacqui have been growing flax at their homes and cutting it in the fall to make linen, quite an involved process. It requires heavy equipment to "brake" the fibers of the plant and demands hard work throwing it against a hetchel so the fibers become fine enough to weave into cloth. Several pieces of linen made centuries ago in Westminster are in the Society collections and were brought out for examination.



Jody Jess and Jacqui Marsh demonstrated making linen to WHS members.

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

This is the second year that we have held an evening for Historical Society members and their guests the night before our Christmas Open House for the public.



Phil and Linda Manseau and Rollie Boucher

This year we added the extra attraction of chestnuts cooked over the fire in the fireplace. What a



The connector held our second annual Christmas Flea Market!

treat! Heather Bowen was in charge of the cooking the chestnuts, along with popcorn popped in the fireplace. Wine and apple cider were also served— a great addition to the festivities that evening Everyone had the opportunity to purchase their items in the Gift Shop and the Christmas Flea Market before the crowds on Saturday.

UPTON BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

We had a lovely surprise at the Upton Birthday celebration. Catie Henry presented the Society with a model of the Upton School that she had made for a school project when she was in the fifth grade. We are very pleased to have it in our collection! Thank you Catie!



ICE FISHING DERBY A SUCCESS!

Under sunny skies and warmer than usual temperatures, the Westminster Historical Society's 2nd Annual Ice Fishing Derby got underway promptly at 6 am on Saturday, February 2, 2014. Seventy seven fishermen, including 17 children participated in the derby which ended when the last fish was weighed in and measured at 4 o'clock. Participants fished local ponds, "secret spots" and some went as far away as Cape Cod to set their tackles and try their luck. Entrants included fishermen from 11 area towns as well as two who came from New Hampshire.

New this year was the addition of a children's category, which was a big hit with the under fifteen year olds who entered and won prizes and ribbons, in this new category.

Prizes were awarded for the first fish brought into derby headquarters in each category as well as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd largest perch, pickerel, bass and crappie. Fish arrived throughout the morning and were displayed on the official derby boards in both the adult and children's categories.



Leah Peters won the prize for the largest bass caught by a o child under the age of 14.

A very proud Leah Ann Peters, of Ashburnham, came in first place in the children's division, landing the largest bass which weighed 4 pounds, 5 ounces. According to Leah's father, John Peters, the fish has been sent out to be mounted as a lifelong reminder of Leah's good luck. Jonathan Clark of Hubbardston, was the luckiest fisherman however, as he won in several categories. Jonathan not only won the top prize for the largest pickerel, he also won the top three prizes in the crappie category, and top two for the largest perch.

Derby organizers included Linda Landry, Melody Gallant and David Cormier. They were assisted the day of the derby by Steven Jarvenpaa, Ron Chevarie, Madison Chevarie, Rich Daniels and Heather Bowen.



Bob Chevarie and David Cormier measured fish as

PLAN ON A TEA PARTY TO CELEBRATE SPRING IN APRIL!

The Historical Society is hosting its second annual Tea Party on Saturday April 19 from 2-4 at the Historical Society house. Sign up now with a friend or a group of friends for a fun and fancy time with a delightful selection of sweet and savory goodies and special teas to entice your palate. An exhibit of vintage clothing will also be on display from our collections.



This event is one of several planned in a series of Food and Fun Fundraisers to pay for operating expenses at the Upton School while we are undergoing renovations there.

Please join us!

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR ELECTRIC BILL IN MASSACHUSETTS & HELP THE HISTORICAL SOCIE-TY

The Historical Society has signed on to a unique opportunity to save money on its electric bill, and we're offering families and companies the same opportunity. It's through a company called Viridian.

Anyone in Massachusetts can participate in this program through the Westminster Historical Society except for those persons whose electricity is provided by a town municipal electric company (like Ashburnham or Holden).

How does this work? Viridian is an energy supplier. In markets where energy is deregulated—and that is Massachusetts—energy service is broken down into supply and delivery. This means that customers can stay with their local utility for service and delivery but select an alternate company as their electricity supplier.

With Viridian, the customer will still receive the same bill and the same maintenance, service and delivery of power from the utility, but will receive Viridian's rate on the supply portion of their bill., which is typically about 2/3 of the total bill. Furthermore, you can choose whether you want a fixed or variable rate. Right now Viridian's fixed rate is 9.490 cents per kilowatt, whereas National Grid's fixed rate is 10.025 cents per kilowatt. Viridian's fixed rate will last for six months, and historically the fixed rate of Viridian has stayed below the fixed rate of National Grid. At the end of the six months you can choose to stay with Viridian or choose another supplier.

In a typical household using 500 kilowatts a month, the savings would be around \$3 a month for the homeowner. In addition, however, Viridian's fundraising program will give the Westminster Historical Society \$2 for every customer. This is a win-win for everyone.

The Historical Society Board of Directors was impressed by the Viridian professionals and we are already using Viridian as our electricity supplier. One of the most important reasons that the Historical Society is committed to Viridian is that Viridian purchases a minimum of 50% of its energy sources from renewable sources like solar, wind, and hydro, whereas other suppliers get the bulk of their energy from fossil fuels.



For more information about the Viridian's energy service, visit the Historical Society website at www.WestminsterHistory.org and click on Viridian Green Energy program which will then link you to the Viridian web site where you can sign up for this program and become a customer. Follow the directions and in the chart of rate options, you scroll down until you see the 50% fixed rate for 6 months @ 9.49/kilowatt.

You can also contact Viridian's independent associate, Deb Healey, who is the contact person for this program. Call her at 508-776-5668 or email her at debhealy63@gmail.com for more information and details.

WESTMINSTER BENEFIT FUND TOPIC OF MARCH PROGRAM

Jen Shenk will present a program about the Neighbors Helping Neighbors that does such wonderful work in Westminster. Plan to be there on Tues., March 18 at 7pm at the Historical Society.



Bruce and Cindy Vincent were long time supporters of the Westminster Benefit. We are saddened by the loss of Bruce in our community.

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 if you have already 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	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

With the planned work in the attic and on the roof this winter and spring at the Upton School, we needed a safe place to park construction vehicles and the cars of the workers. We mapped out an area a bit larger than the future parking lot next to the Upton building and drew plans for digging out 6 inches of loam and filling in with road grindings. Streeter Construction did the work for us and we are ready to go!



The Request for Proposals (RFP) has gone out for potential companies to bid on the roof project at the Upton School. We expect to have a contractor signed up by March.

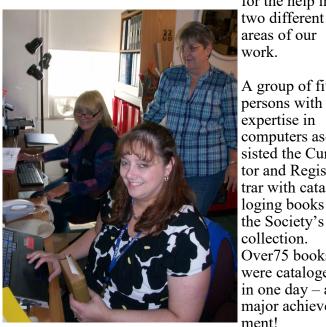
CUB SCOUTS VISITS SOCIETY



Mark Landry's Cub Scout Den of first graders came to the Historical Society early in December to learn about the historic buildings on Main Street from the old Westminster Hotel all the way down the street and up to Academy Hill. Curator Betsy Hannula showed photos of these buildings and talked about how the area has changed since then. The Scouts had many questions and we tried our best to answer them. It was a great evening!

UNITED WAY DAY OF CARING

The Historical Society was pleased to be able to participate in the United Way of Central Massachusetts Day of Caring in September. We were very grateful for the help in



Stephanie Boucher oversaw United Way volunteers in the book cataloging project.

A group of five persons with expertise in computers assisted the Curator and Registrar with cata-

loging books in the Society's collection. Over75 books were cataloged in one day - amajor achieve-

In addition, several other volunteers primed and painted the front and rear steps to the house as well as the railing on the side of the house. Thank you to our wonderful volunteers!

To the right: United Way volunteers arrived at the Historical Society ready to work!

Below: Six volunteers painted three sets of stairs at the Society.





WESTMINSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY GIFT SHOP

When looking for a unique gift for birthdays, anniversaries, and other holidays or 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.

Books Other

Cemetery Inscriptions	25.00
History of Westminster, 1832 by Hudson	
History of Westminster, 1893 by Heywood	96.00
History of Westminster 2008 by WHS	95.00
History of Westminster, by Tolman	
Homestead Heritage of Westminster, by WHS	
Images of America, by WHS	
Olin Warner, Sculptor, by Hyson	4.50
200 th Anniversary of Westminster,	5.00
Wajusett Gatherings, by Sinclair (hardcover)	30.00
Tapestries	
Tapestry wall hanging	35.00

New Wachusett Mountain charcoal drawing 60.00 Map of Westminster 1855..... 6.00 Downtown Westminster 1831 by Peckham 30.00

Tobacco Shed pottery priced as marked Tote Bags priced as marked

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DATES TO REMEMBER

- March 18, History of Neighbors
 Helping Neighbors with Jen Shenk
 - April 15, History of first railroad in Westminster with Nick Langhart
 - April 19, Tea Party fundraiser

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN SKI TICKET SAVINGS PROGRAM SPREAD THE NEWS!

Do you, or someone you know, ski? If so, we're very excited to tell you about the program Wachusett Mountain has established with the Historical Society that will benefit both of us. Here's how it works:

Any time you purchase a ski ticket ON LINE before you go skiing at Wachusett Mountain you can receive \$5 off your ticket price by clicking on the word "coupon" and then inserting this code: HISTSOC. This offer is effective until April 6, 2014.

The terrific part of this offer for the Historical Society is that when the season is over, Wachusett Mountain Associates will give the Historical Society \$10 for each ski ticket sold through this offer. What a fabulous benefit to support the Society!

So, please tell everyone in your family and all your friends about this program. Anyone can save the \$5 off each ski ticket and support the Society at the same time!

