



WESTMINSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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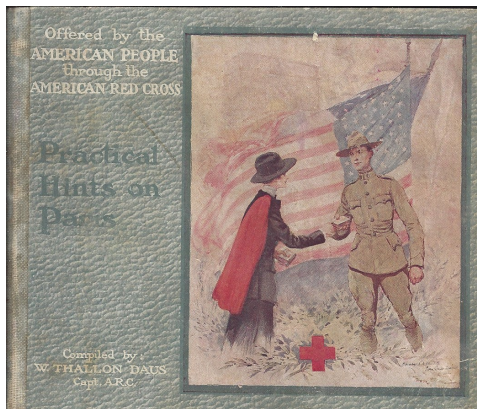
Fall 2018
Facebook: Westminster Historical Society

This article completes our series on World War I.

World War I—the war which was supposed to end all wars—ended with an armistice, signed in Compiègne, France on November 11, 1918. Every town and city in the United States found a way to celebrate.

The challenges our American boys and men found across the ocean were unimaginable. Fierce battles, fighting alongside men from other countries, they learned the horrors of war. When

they came back, many wanted to forget what they had seen or done. We are fortunate to have items that Ivar Tiainen saved from his service in WWI: his entire uniform, canteen, sewing kit, Bible,



songbook, photos and postcards he purchased about his time in France.

On the home front, Westminster residents contributed to the war effort by purchasing Liberty Loans and War Savings Stamps. This poster once hung in the Westminster Library.



Agencies were begun during the war to aid soldiers in battle. The Westminster Special Aid Society was organized by the women in town. The officers were President Reverend Lucy Milton Giles, Vice President Mrs. Edith M. Griffin, Secretary Mrs. Laura M. Miller, and Treasurer Miss Ada Mossman.



Ivar Tiainen's postcard of parade celebrating America's 4th of July in 1918 in France



World War I nurses.

**2018-2019
OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS**

<i>President</i>	Barry E. Roy
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<i>Clerk</i>	Betsy Hannula
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<i>At Large</i>	Pam Marengo
<i>At Large</i>	Tom Marien
<i>At Large</i>	Phil Marysz
<i>At Large</i>	Michaelene Morris
<i>At Large</i>	Bette Roy

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<i>Assistant Treasurer</i>	Lisa Burns
<i>Building & Grounds Manager</i> .	Luther Bradley
<i>Curator</i>	Betsy Hannula
<i>Genealogy Researcher</i>	Darlene Wildes
<i>Registrar</i>	Pam Marengo

MEETINGS

Meetings are held January through June on the 2nd Tuesday at 7 pm and are free and open to the public.

HOUSE & GIFT SHOP HOURS

The Historical Society House is open Mondays 7-9 pm, Tuesdays 9:15-11:15am 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

September 2018

Dear Friends,

We thank you for your interest in the Historical Society and our town of Westminster. Memories sustain us and bring us joy. Here are some of mine; maybe they'll remind you of yours!

When I was eight years old in 1960, my family moved from an isolated house in the woods of North Leominster to Church Street in Westminster. I couldn't believe we had neighbors! I could walk to school, the post office, the drug store and Johnny's Market. But most of all, I had many new friends.

On the day we moved in, I met Barry Keurulainen. Another Barry! He was also entering third grade. Soon after, Rick Ahlin's family joined the neighborhood. Barry lived two houses down and Rick was next door to him. In no time, my two brothers and I were riding our bikes up and down our dead-end street with our newly made friends. The move to Church Street brought new and exciting things. We walked to school. We played kick-the-can until it was too dark to see and our mothers were calling us to come in for the third time before we begrudgingly went in. Whenever we had 5 cents, we would excitedly run up to the drug store for penny candy or to Johnny's Market for a banana popsicle!

Our first winter on Church Street was full of excitement. As soon as the road was covered from a snowstorm, all the kids came out with our Flexible Flyer sleds and metal flying saucers. But, I think that every neighborhood has a resident grouch. We had one who would call the police to report that we were sliding in the street. The Police Chief, Toivo Tuominen, would come and tell us to be careful. But as soon as he left, this same grouch would call the highway department, demanding that the street be sanded as it was dangerously slippery. As quickly as the sander left, we went out with brooms and swept off the side of the road so we could continue sliding. Guess what? Another call was made to the police complaining that we were removing the sand! At that point, our parents would tell us to find something else to do.

So, we went to the Catholic Church parking lot where there were huge snow banks. We spent hours digging tunnels, making forts and having snow-ball fights and only went home when our wet clothing became intolerable. If we could not sled on Church Street, there was Academy Hill. Hard to believe today, but the road was blocked to traffic at the elementary school. We would run as fast as we could with our sleds and toboggans, starting at the very top near Bambi Azarian's house.

CURATOR'S CORNER

We are grateful for items that people have donated to our collections. The past becomes real when we are able to touch items used by people who came before us. Many thanks to the following people who have helped us achieve this:

Denise MacAloney: collection of tole painted items from Priscilla Merriam, photo of funeral home, map of Worcester County, painting of Miller boy who used to live in the Funeral home.

Steve Jarvenpaa: program of dedication of the Soldier's Monument.

Bette Roy: Elaine Nikki's report card & collection of photos of Westminster Art Association art exhibit at the Historical Society in 1987

Jeanne Keena: collection of letters related to the use of Holmes Park by the Finnish Workers Federation Realty Trust, Ashburnham-Westminster tel. directory 1999-2000. Westminster Tel. Directory 1989

Michael Porter Whitney: collection of deeds related to Jonas Whitney Family (brother to Nathan Whitney in south Westminster), dated 1757-1824

Carla Charter: notebook of her research on the abolitionist movement and Westminster participants

Karen Irving: photo of Einar & Helmi Muhonen, photo of Helmi Muhonen, and War Ration Books belonging to Carl Lindquist and Sylvi Lindquist.

William Miller: "Celebration of One Hundredth Anniversary of Incorporation of Westminster"

We are always delighted to meet visitors who bring us family items that they've been keeping for years and want to share them with us. Michael and Linda Whitney came from Kansas this summer to donate copies of deeds from Jonas Whitney. It was exciting to see the original signatures of families from the 1700s and 1800s!



(Continued from page 2)

What a ride! So fast, I was sure we were reaching speeds unheard of. Round Meadow Pond was another destination. My father and others would clear the ice and build a bonfire. We would skate to the small island, wondering what the house looked like where there was only a stone chimney left.

The following springs and summers brought more adventures. We rode our bikes to the base of Mt. Wachusett all the way up Mile Hill Road. I remember the super-sonic and very bumpy ride back down, trying to pass my friends in our race to the bottom. Unbelievably, no one ever fell. Speaking of bicycles, we



Ken, Barry & Steve Roy in 1960

would often race up and down Church Street with total abandon, never thinking that any of us would crash. That changed one day when my younger brother, Kenny, was swerving back and forth much too fast when he fell face first. I was right behind him. I remember his screaming and before I could reach him, Ronnie Albert, who was a teenager, ran from his house, scooped my brother up in his arms, and carried him to our house. I trailed behind with my brother's bike. But this was another first. My mother called Dr. Perkins, a wonderful doctor who lived on Bacon St. She came quickly in her old car with her black doctor bag. She cleaned up my brother and stitched his forehead. After she left, we were all happy because my mother opened a box of popsicles; Kenny got his favorite flavor, orange, and I had banana. The tragedy was soon forgotten.

When I was ten, we had another great first. We were allowed to take the bus to Fitchburg without an adult! We waited for it at the post office that was on Main Street next to the Baptist Church. The fare was 35 cents. I had saved another \$1.50, eagerly anticipating buying a Matchbox car or truck from Fitz Photo and then having a treat at the soda fountain in Woolworths. What a great adventure. It was repeated whenever we were able to save enough.

I lived on Church Street until I left for college in 1970. My parents sold the house in 1974 and moved to Cape Cod. After college, my first job was in Fitchburg so it seemed natural that my wife and I would live in Westminster. We had our house built 39 years ago and love it here. Today, I fondly think back on my friendships and growing up in the sixties on Church Street without a care in the world. Westminster was, and still is, a very special place to be.

Barry E. Roy

Continued from p. 1

World War I SOLDIERS FROM WESTMINSTER

The 1961 *History of Westminster* lists the men from Westminster who served; the complete list, as we know it, is here. If you know the family of any of these men, we would like to have information about their lives and service to our country. Please contact us if you have photos or materials we could copy.

Roger W. Battles
 Ernest T. Barrett
 Frank E. Ballou
 Hervey W. Bell
 Robert C. Bell
 Aldron A. Cannon
 George F. Cannon
 Robert Cannon
 Rollin M. Cannon
 Ralph W. Clark
 Henry L. Curtis
 Paule E. Derby
 Ray K. Durling
 Arthur G. Eaton
 Emile Fugere
 Richard T. Hanks
 Leslie E. Harris
 Alfred A. Haskell
 Daniel W. Havener
 J. Henry Hetu
 Charles A. Hicks
 Ernest C. Hicks
 Charles Hodge
 Thomas H. Holmes
 Roland C. Houghton
 Harry N. Howard
 Arno E. Jr. Hurd
 Arthur LaFortune
 Edward LaFortune
 Ernest LaFortune

Carl W. Matson
 William McKay
 Charles S. Merriam
 Spenser H. Merriam
 Winfred E. Merriam
 Guy L. Miller
 Henry H. Miller
 John J. Miller
 Walter A. Miller
 William S. Miller
 George Mossman, M.D.
 Benjamin H. Page
 Emil Parilla
 Thomas J. Perkins
 Emory J. Raymond
 Arthur K. Rice
 Wayland Robbins
 Carl A. Sargent
 Chester E. Sargent
 John A. Sargent
 Streeter G. Sprague
 Raymond I. Stockwell
 Roy W. Stockwell
 Leroy H. Sylvester
 Charles D. Towle
 Harold A. Towle
 Laurence C. Towle
 Prescott Townsend
 Joseph F. Whitney
 Richard A. Whitney
 Arthur E. Withington

The Historical Society has the original secretary's meeting minutes documenting their activities from 1917 through 1918. In them are documented all the donations they received and the items sent to their "boys" overseas. They met weekly and produced over a thousand articles for the men overseas, until they disbanded on November 11, 1918.

They organized drives and benefits. In addition the Town appropriated \$1000 for war purposes. They sent Christmas boxes to all Westminster men in service and gave all the surplus to the Red Cross.

These pages from the songbook in Ivar Tiainen's possession illustrate the sentiments and passions felt by the soldiers fighting abroad and those who supported them from home.

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The Home Road
 Words and Music by JOHN A. CARPENTER

Moderato

1. Sing a Hymn of Free-dom, Fling the ban-ner high!
 2d time p. 2. In the qui-et hours Of the star-ry night

Sing the Songs of Li-ber-ty, Songs that shall not die. } For the
 Dream the dreams of far a-way Home-fires burn-ing bright. }

long, long road to Tip-pe-ra-ry Is the road that leads me

home— O'er hills and plains, By lakes and lanes, My

rall.
 Wood-lands! My Corn-fields! My Coun-try! My Home!

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When Johnny Comes Marching Home
 Words & Music by LOUIS LAMBERT

With spirit

Solo *All* *Solo*

1. When John-ny comes march-ing home a-gain, Hur-rah!— hur-rah!— We'll
 2. The old church bell will peal with joy, Hur-rah!— hur-rah!— To
 3. Get read-y for the Ju-bi-lee, Hur-rah!— hur-rah!— We'll
 4. Let love and friend-ship on that day, Hur-rah!— hur-rah!— Their

give him a heart-y wel-come then, Hur-rah!— hur-rah!— The
 wel-come home our dar-ling boy, Hur-rah!— hur-rah!— The
 give the he-ro three times three, Hur-rah!— hur-rah!— The
 choic-est treas-ures then dis-play, Hur-rah!— hur-rah!— And

A Welcome Home Day was held on Sept. 19 for the whole town to honor the 62 servicemen who had returned from World War I. A parade, band concert, banquet, speeches and exercises, followed by a dance. Main speaker of the day was General Nelson Miles.



Parade on Main Street in Westminster to celebrate the end of World War I.

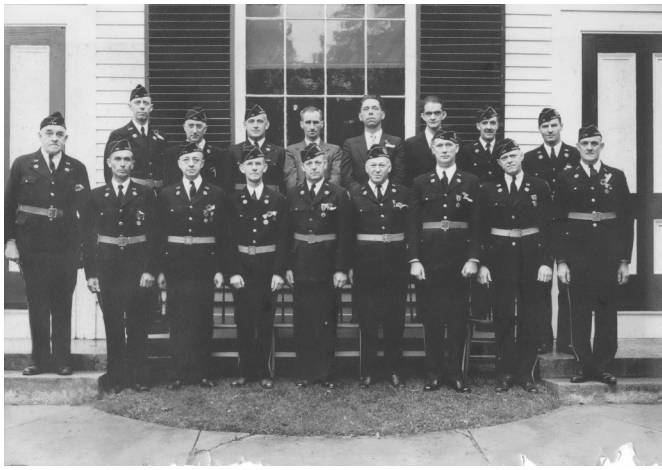
JUHANNUS PROGRAM

George Bergroth was featured at this year's Juhannus program at the Westminster Farmers Cooperative Camp on Leominster Street. Bergroth was a famous photographer who lived in Fitchburg, but had a camp where he spent many summers in "Finn Town" in Lakewood Park on

Wymans Pond. Bob Walker displayed a painting he had done years ago of this section of Lakewood Park, which included Bergroth's home.



Judith Lindsted, owner of ZZ Creative Video Productions, had collected photos and films made by Bergroth and incorporated them into a program, which we viewed that evening.



Memorial Day, May 29, 1938. Bottom row from left to right is Louis Gilson, Ernest T. Barrett, Arthur K. Rice, Dan W. Havener, James F. Murray, Emory J. Raymond, Charles Bullock, Matthew E. Handlin, Raymond I. Stockwell. Top row from left to right is A. Charles Hicks, Arthur E. Withington, William B. MacAloney Sr., James H. Totman, Jack Jamsa, Paul N. Woodward, Harry E. Withington and Charles D. Towle.



Top: Howard Smith, ?, Commander Walker Brown, Harry Howard and William Shay. Lower: Raymond Stockwell, Harold Towle, Emory Raymond, Arthur Rice accepting deed from Rev. Lucy Milton and Giles and Laura Miller, representing the Universalist Church.



In 1933 the Post was named the William S. Miller Post in honor of William Miller who died of pneumonia during the war. The Post's building, the former Universalist Church, was given to the Legionnaires in 1945.

Not all photos were stiff and formal. This photo of the Jamsa farm was taken by Bergroth Studios.

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 Nadine 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 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____
 Address _____
 Phone _____ Fax _____
 e-mail _____

Individual	\$30
Family	45
Senior (over 65)	20
Contributing	60
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.

Westminster Reflections CONTEST

**Sponsored by
 Wachusett Writers and Poets Club
 & Westminster Historical Society**

- ◇ **Create a poem, essay, fiction or non-fiction, or, create a black & white work of art which references Westminster.**
- ◇ **Contest is open to all ages and residences.**
- ◇ **Entry with application form due by Aug.31, 2019.**
- ◇ **Go to www.WestminsterHistoricalSociety.org for guidelines and application forms.**
- ◇ **Winning entries will be published in a book!**

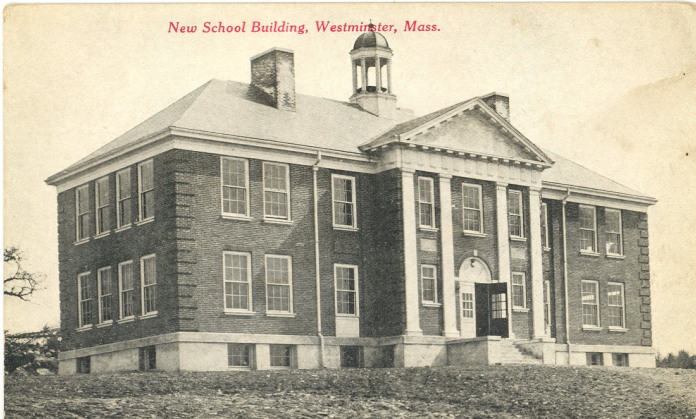
The Historical Society is very pleased to be sponsoring the Westminster Reflections contest along with the Wachusett Writers and Poets Club. President Barry Roy and Clerk Betsy Hannula have been meeting this summer with the WWPC group to discuss plans. It will be a good project to get people thinking about what inspires them in Westminster. So, put on your thinking caps and sharpen your pencils or get onto your computer.

A Jury Committee made up of two members of the Historical Society and two members of the Wachusett Writes and Poets Club will choose the winners from all the entries. The winning entries will be published in a book, which we plan to have printed for the Cracker Festival in October 2019.



UPTON UPDATE

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE UPTON CENTER



Renovating the cupola is the next project for the renovation of the Upton School to become our new headquarters—the Upton Center. The estimated cost is \$25,000 and we are well underway with raising those funds. Thank you to all those who have donated funds to date for this project.

If you would like to honor your family’s lives in Westminster, please think about giving a gift to this Capital Campaign as a legacy to your family. All donors will be recognized with plaques inside the building. If you choose, gifts can also be given to the Endowment Fund which will fortify the Society’s financial strength into the future.

When the Upton school first opened the cupola on top of the Upton building had openings all around. Apparently it was not stable and metal shutters were soon installed in an effort to stabilize it.



Our plans are to remove the metal shutters and recreate the cupola with modern materials which will be strong and safe.



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 7-9 pm, Wednesdays 9-11 am and Fridays 9—noon and other times by appointment. Members receive a 10% discount on all purchases.

Books

<u>Cemetery Inscriptions</u>	25.00
<u>History of Westminster, 1832</u> by Hudson	5.00
<u>History of Westminster, 1893</u> by Heywood.	96.00
<u>History of Westminster 2008</u> by WHS	95.00
<u>History of Westminster, 1961</u> , by Tolman	20.00
<u>Homestead Heritage of Westminster</u> , by WHS	50.00
<u>Images of America</u> , by WHS	20.00
<u>Olin Warner, Sculptor</u> , by Hyson	4.50
<u>200th Anniversary of Westminster</u> ,	5.00
<u>Vintage Views of a New England Village—A</u>	
<u>Postcard Tour of Westminster, Massachusetts</u>	25.00
<u>Wajusett Gatherings</u> , by Sinclair (hardcover).	30.00

Other

<i>Wachusett Mountain</i> charcoal print	60.00
Calligraphy sampler	12.00
<i>Cracker Factory</i> print by Dana Vickery, signed	45.00
Map of Westminster 1855.	6.00
<i>Downtown Westminster 1831</i> by Peckham	30.00
Postcards	50
Children’s books	4.95
Paper dolls, Assorted	5.00
Westminster Tapestry wall hanging	35.00
Tobacco Shed pottery (last of the line!) . priced as marked	
NEW! Soup mug with spoon	10.00

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

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DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat. Sept. 22, 9-3: Attic Treasures Sale
Sat. Oct. 20, 10-5: Westminster Cracker Festival
Sat. Nov. 10, 6-9 pm: Benefit Auction FUNdraiser
Fri. Nov. 2, 5:30 pm: WHS Annual Meeting
Fri. Nov. 30, 6-8, Members Christmas Party
Dec. 1, 9-2: Christmas Open House & Flea Market

FUNdraiser

to benefit



Sat. Nov. 10, 2018

6-9 pm

McNally's, 88 Sargent Rd,
Westminster, MA

- ⊘ *Live Antiques Auction*
Nichole Firro auctioneer
License #44196
- ⊘ *Silent Auction*
- ⊘ *Baskets Raffle*

TICKETS \$15

Includes free appetizers with cash bar.

Contact WestminsterHistoricalSociety.org or 978-874-5569.

WESTMINSTER CRACKER FESTIVAL

The Cracker Festival is going strong and the Historical Society is in the middle of it all! Be sure to visit us on October 20 and see what's cooking over the fireplace and in the bake oven. We'll have cooking implements and tools on display and you could even try your hand at making something to eat!

Taste some soup made over the open fire, and take a look at our new soup bowls and spoons, in the Gift Shop—filled with Westminster Crackers to take home for \$10 a bowl.

