



What's Happening?

at the Kingston Historical Museum

June 2023
Vol 2 Issue 6



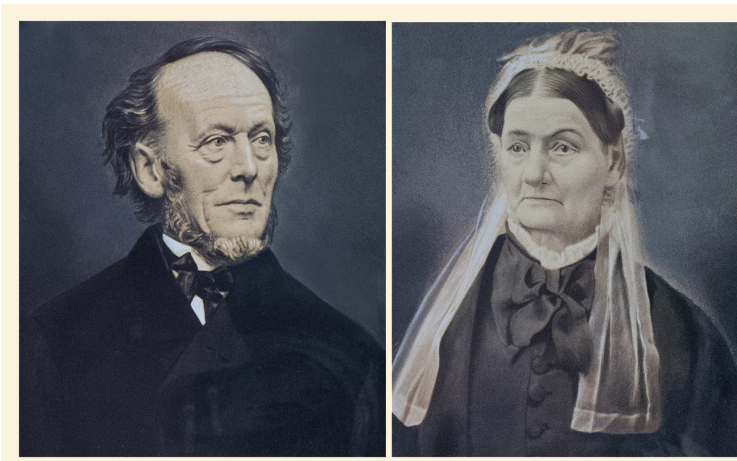
CELEBRATION!!

The Nichols Memorial Library building is celebrating its 125th year in Kingston! On Saturday June 10th, from 1:00PM until 4:00PM, the Kingston Historical Museum will be hosting a celebration to commemorate this special occasion. The celebration will feature the history of the building, especially the fully restored stain glass windows. The Heritage Commission will present each of the window sponsors with a commemorative gift to acknowledge their generous donation to the restoration project. The event will include the presentation of the National Register of Historic Places Plaque by the Heritage Commission to the museum.

Please join us as we celebrate a beloved addition to the town's history. Many of the townspeople have told us of the wonderful times and memories they have visiting the Nichols Library building over the years.

There will be light refreshments, a re-enactment of the Library's dedication ceremony, and the burying of a time capsule to be opened 75 years in the future. If you have an object, photo, or some other memento you might like to include in the time capsule, stop by the museum and share them with us!

J. Howard Nichols Gift to the Town



Photos of Nicholas Nichols and Mary Barstow Nichols

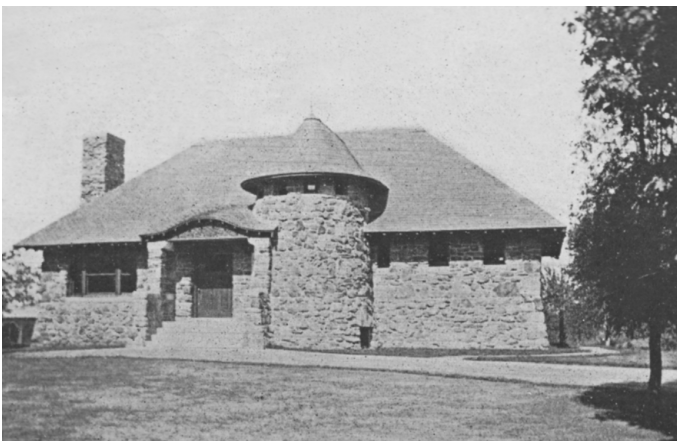
The Nichols family in Kingston dates back to 1786. J. Howard Nichols (his portrait can be seen hanging over the library's fireplace) became a prominent leader in the textile industry in the United States. Sometime early during the year of 1897, Nichols proposed to the town that he wished to construct a library for the town as a memorial to his parents, Nicholas Nichols and Mary Barstow Nichols. The town accepted his offer and according to the agreement between J. Howard Nichols and the town, he committed to...

*"...give to the citizens of the town of Kingston, my native town, a substantial library building as a memorial to my parents, whose early years were identified with said Town, and to proceed at once to arrange for its construction on the condition that the Town would accept the same, and agree to properly maintain it as a library and reading room for the free use of all the inhabitants of the Town, and also for the non-resident teachers and pupils that may be connected with Sanborn Seminary, and the said Town of Kingston did, at a legal meeting of the citizens of said Town held on July 23, 1897, unanimously vote that said Town does hereby agree to accept said library building when completed and read to be given to said Town...and whereas said library building has been completed, and is now ready to be given to said Town."*¹

The Design and Construction of the Library²

The land for the library was purchased on August 3, 1897 from Ellen J. Sweeney for \$500.00. The land provided the library with a central location for the use by the townspeople. It was just down Main Street from Sanborn Seminary and across Depot Road from the Bakie Bros store.

J. Howard Nichols contracted with the firm of Dwight and Chandler of Boston, MA to design the building. Dwight began his career working for the firm of Hartwell and Richardson before establishing his own firm in 1894. Dwight's design of the Nichols building was influenced very much in the tradition of Richardson's Romanesque style.



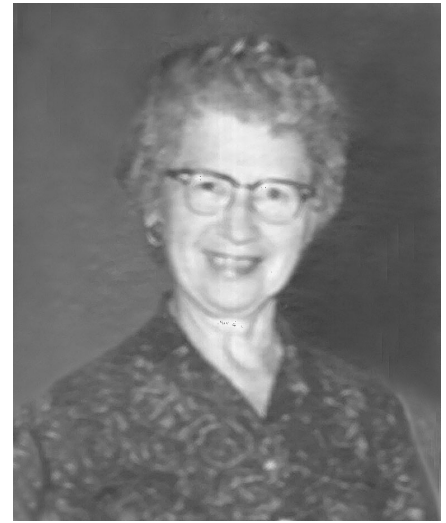
Earliest known image of the Nichols building - 1898

The exterior fieldstone work reportedly came from a farm at 6 Little River Road. The interior woodwork is of quartersawn oak along with oak waincoting. The interior is open to the ceiling showing king post trusses with purlins of Georgia pine. Around the reading room are a series of 11 stained glass windows. The design feature of the windows, shows printer's marks illustrating several historical printers. The total cost to construct the library in 1897 was \$10,000.00.

Librarians, Trustees, and Volunteers

The books in a library gives readers a world of information and stories about the world around them. However, it takes librarians to guide readers through the volumes and volumes that can be found in the library. Perhaps one librarian who stands out in the memories of the children who came to the library is Gladys Merrick Marche.

Mrs. Merrick (as she was known) served as librarian from 1933 to 1970! With such a long tenure, it is no wonder that many of the patrons would have been influenced by her in their childhood.



Gladys Merrick Marche



Staff at the 100th Anniversary of the Library

As you can expect, there have been a large number of people who have served and volunteered their time and talents to keep the Nichols Library relevant to the townspeople. The 100th anniversary in 1998 staff photo at left shows on the front row Karon Kamon, Julie Wojkowski, and Betsey Monahan Crespi. At the back row is Mary Penney, Diane Vaillant and Natasha Leonard.



1977 Nichols Library Trustees

The 1977 Library Trustees are shown in the photo to the right. Front row is Brenda Gould, Eunice Clark, and Carolyn Rent Christie. Back row is Carol Misenheimer, Ted Vogel and Adele Russman.³



Nichols Library and Kingston History Museum volunteers

When the library moved to the new Kingston Community Library in 2012, a group of volunteers began the task of keeping the history of the Nichols Memorial Library, along with the history of Kingston, alive. The Kingston Historical Museum is housed in the Nichols Memorial Library building. The photo at left are the volunteers.

Back row: Cindi Lewandowski, Steve Sousa, Walt Roy, Chuck Geary, Lesley Hume, Bob Bean, Dave Taylor, Betty Bakie Flanagan.

Middle row: Jef Flanders-McDougall, Gladys King, Halcyon Springer, Cynthia Swank, Jane Christie, Kathy Clark Chase.

Seated: Ruth Albert, Stacey Smoyer, and Christine Hume.



Last month's "**What is It?**" perhaps mystified a few of you. The device was sold by J. Hazelton who operated a dry goods store in Concord, New Hampshire. Given its amber glass barrel shape, you would not be faulted for thinking it contained some sort of beverage. But, it is in fact an early fire extinguisher called "Hazelton's High Pressure Chemical Fire Keg" to be thrown into a fire! Invented by Frank R. Hazelton, it has a height of 17 inches and a diameter of 6 inches. The keg would have been pressurized by machinery using carbonic acid and water and then tightly sealed. It was basically fizzy water! Before charging with the acid and water, "...powerful chemicals are placed in the keg and act as a reinforcement to the first volume of gas, caused by heat of

the fire. There can be no waste of gas in transit, as there is when hose and nozzle are used. They cannot freeze, evaporate, rust, or be tampered with although the contents are in view. ... It is splendidly adapted for use in buildings, railroad cars, steamships, and to attach to fire department or police patrol wagons."⁴ Look closely at the photo to the right and you can read its lettering.



Volunteer Hours Contributed

Spring seems to be just around the corner. The museum is working on planning for the new exhibit season and the 125th anniversary of the Nichols Library. For the month of May, the volunteers have contributed 117 hours and 367 hours for all of 2023. Thank you all so much.

**The Kingston Historical Museum is headquartered at
The Nichols Memorial Library
169 Main Street,
Kingston, NH 03848**

The Museum is open each Wednesday from 9:00 AM until 12:00 noon and on the second Saturday, June through October, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Appointment to conduct research or a tour can be arranged for another date.

For more information, please call Ruth Albert at 603-642-5508 or email us at museuminfo@kingstonnh.org.

Works cited for this newsletter:

1. Kingston, New Hampshire: Our History and Stories, 1694-2019. (2021). Kingston Historical Book Committee and the Kingston Historical Museum. Great Life Press, Rye, New Hampshire. p. 177
2. Kingston, New Hampshire: Our History and Stories, 1694-2019. (2021). Kingston Historical Book Committee and the Kingston Historical Museum. Great Life Press, Rye, New Hampshire.
3. Photo courtesy of Seacoast Media, *The Kingstonian*, June 1, 1977.
4. Bacon, George F. 1890. Leading Businessmen of Concord and Vicinity, Penacook, East and West Concord. Mercantile Publishing Company. Boston. Page 63.