



What's Happening?

at the Kingston Historical Museum

December 2022

Vol 1 Issue 3

This Month!

Though it may sound like a title to a story from Laura Ingalls Wilder, "Jenny on the Plains" is the story of the first time many of the people of Kingston would see an airplane up close. Kingston's "Triple Celebration" must have been a wondrous event for that summer of 1919.

So you don't miss an issue of the "What's Happening" newsletter, just go the town's website and select to receive it by email. See page two of the newsletter. You will find out how to sign up for it!

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Kingston Historical Museum. This month, in part 1 of the series *Volunteers at the Museum*, we describe some of the activities the volunteers perform for the museum.

Join us for a presentation of Christmas during the Civil War to be held at the Kingston Community Library on Dec. 14th. See page 3 for more information.

This month also answers the "What is It" question from the last newsletter.



As we approach the winter holidays and the beginning of a new year, the volunteers would like to wish everyone a Joyous Holiday and a Happy New Year!

The museum has begun its winter schedule. The 1895 Firehouse, the 1880s Cobbler Shop, the 1907 Tramp House and the 1833 Grace Daley barn will be closed during the cold weather. The Nichols Memorial Library will still be open for visiting. Check out our hours!

Kingston Stories ***Jenny on the Plains***

by Steve Sousa

Sometimes, it's small things that can tell the biggest stories.

Looking for a topic for this month's newsletter, I remembered that the museum had a small diorama showing people gathered around a biplane. The model was set on the top storage shelf, out of the way. I pulled it down and was amazed at the detail shown. The exhibit commemorated a time when a "Jenny" biplane landed on the Kingston Plains. But that was all I knew. What events brought that biplane to Kingston?



It was the summer of 1919 and time to celebrate the founding of Kingston 225 years earlier. World War I had ended the previous November, a time when Kingston had sent a number of its young men and women off to war. The town decided to combine the 225th celebration with a welcome home for those who served in "The Great War" and to include the first Old Home Day celebration that would become an annual event. This was the "Triple Celebration".

The homes along Kingston Plains were decked out with flags and banners. A parade through town was planned, floats were constructed, bands practiced their marching music, and speeches written. On the morning of the 6th of August, the celebrations began.

The paraders made their way around the Plains. Town industries joined in the procession. "Bakie Bros. Grocery; Walter S. Clark & Sons, Auto Accessories; Irving Nason, Log Cabin Grocery Store; Tom Tracy's Barber Shop on Wheels; Walter E. Webster's Casino; John Brown's Butcher Cart, loaded with live lambs; Parker & Webster, load of cement; and others innumerable" took part in the parade described in the Kingston's newest history book, published in 2021 and available from town hall.

(continued on next page)

Twice around the Plains went the floats and marchers. Cheering and songs greeted the long line of celebrants. At noon, everyone gathered for picnic lunches "...under the many shade trees and the shores of the pond."

At 2:00 PM, the festivities began again with a convocation, a number of speeches, and singing by the crowd. It was later that afternoon the Curtiss type JN4, affectionately called "the Jenny," made its appearance by overflying and then landing on the Kingston Plains. The photo below, by Harry Clark, captures the event.



Remember, in 1919 not many people had ever seen a biplane, let alone stood near one. Those pilots who fought in the first world war brought back with them a desire to continue flying and searched for ways to increase public awareness of the new technology. In 1917, the US military had ordered 3,500 Jennys for use as training planes for the war. By the war's end, there were 2,000 more than that number constructed and stored in government warehouses and later declared "surplus." The Jennys were sold off at relatively reasonable prices. Pilots bought them and found ways to carry limited cargo, provide sightseeing flights, engage in

demonstrations of skill and bravery. This was the era of the "barnstormers" and "wing walkers" and also the start of commercial aviation in the United States. So, it was one of these entrepreneurs who flew to Kingston and landed on the Plains. Check out the Curtiss "Jenny" page at <https://glennhcurtissmuseum.org/exhibits-on-display/the-jenny/>

Take a closer look at the photo above and the diorama on the first page. Walt Roy, from the Museum, constructed the diorama and used this photo as inspiration. The mother and daughter in the center of the photo and the crowd to the photo's right along with the pilot inspecting the propeller are faithfully rendered in the model.

Receive the "What's Happening" Newsletter in your email

- (1) Go to www.KingstonNH.org
- (2) At the Blue Box on the left side of the page - Click the "Subscribe to News" button
- (3) Provide your email address and then scroll down to "News and Announcement Updates"
- (4) Select - Historical Museum Committee
- (5) Make sure you select the "Subscribe Me" button at the bottom of the form after you check the "I'm not a robot" box!
- (6) The next "What's Happening" Newsletter will be emailed directly to you!

Christmas and the Civil War Program December 14, 2022

Bill and Liz Hallett will be presenting a talk at the Kingston Community Library at 7:00 PM. They are historic re-enactors and have performed several talks that relate to US history and the American Civil War.

This evening's performance is titled "The Civil War: Crucible of American Christmas." They will explore how the celebration of Christmas in the US evolved during the middle of the 19th century.

Mr. Hallett is the past president of the organization, Civil War Round Table of New Hampshire and is an author. Mrs. Hallett is the current vice-president of the CWRTNH.

A donation for the Kingston Historical Museum would be greatly appreciated to support future museum activities.

Volunteers at the Museum

What do the volunteers at the museum do? PART 1

Museum volunteers provide the essential services for the museum. Take for example, what happens when an object or a collection of objects are donated to the museum.

There are several documents generated that accompany the object before it is put on museum shelves. Donor forms that transfer ownership of the object from the donor to the museum must be filled out and checked for completeness. An accession number is given to the gift. Then a unique catalog number for each separate object is generated. This number needs to be either written on the object or if it is a fabric item like a dress or a shirt, a tag with the information must be sewn onto it.

To finish the paperwork, a complete description of the object is prepared. Measurements are taken, a descriptive narrative of the object is written, photographs are made to further identify the item.

Once all the needed documentation has been completed, the information on the forms is transferred to a computer program called "Past Perfect" to allow easy access of the information about the object for future exhibits or research. This computer program also maintains the museum catalog.

Given the tasks involved in bringing objects into the museum's collection, the old adage "many hands make light work" is so true. The tasks are not so difficult to do. They do give volunteers a look into the fascinating objects we receive and provide some experience in museum work. We also have fun together. It is also a time to make new friends.

There are many opportunities for volunteers to contribute to the town's museum. The qualities needed by our volunteers are a desire to learn, an appreciation for the objects and a sense of curiosity about the stories that can be told. **Please consider stopping by the museum to learn more about being a museum volunteer!**



What is it?



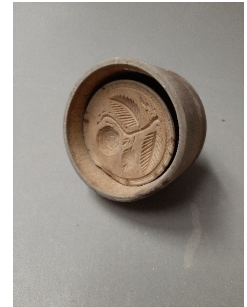
Last month's mystery object is shown at right and below. The object is a butter mold. Called "treenware", these small domestic wooden objects have become collectable.

Softened butter would be scooped into the bottom of

the mold and when full, the handle would be pushed down to eject the formed butter with the imprinted design. The designs would be used as dairy markers to signify what dairy produced the butter for sale.

Butter molds would also be used by homemakers to present butter in a pleasing way to guests.

(<https://www.allthedecor.com/art-and-antiques/antique-butter-mold-guide/>)



We Need Your Help!

We've received an answer to the question about the faucets found on Michael Cote's property from the last newsletter. Holly Ouellette told us that the faucets belonged to the **Hi-Lo Campground** that **Harvey J. Lafayette** once had at that location. Mr. Lafayette also operated a general store called **Harvey's**. Any other information would be appreciated to provide additional content for our collection.

Volunteer Hours Contributed

For the month of November, our hardworking volunteers have donated 98 hours helping the museum carry out its mission. So far, over 1,378 hours of volunteer time has been given for the 2022 year! Thank you all so much.

**The Kingston Historical Museum 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.