Sunday, April 23, 2017

*Rufus Porter & his Folk Art Murals*  By: Linda Carter Lefko

Congregational Church, 25 Great Road   2:00 pm - Refreshments, 2:30 pm - Guest Speaker

Rufus Porter (1792-1884), the “Johnny Appleseed” of landscape mural paintings, journeyed from town to town in New England for 20 years in the early 1800s, demonstrating his craft as he traveled. As a result, several of Porter's landscapes can be seen in some of Bedford's oldest homes, including the Job Lane House at 295 North Rd., now owned by the Town of Bedford and open to the public.

Porter's painting techniques will be the subject of the Bedford Historical Society's April program, when an expert associated with the Rufus Porter Museum in Bridgeton, Maine, will share her extensive knowledge and discoveries about Porter's work.

The program, set for Sunday afternoon, April 23 in the Upper Fellowship Hall of the First Church of Christ, Congregational, will begin at 2:30 pm. A refreshment period and brief business meeting from 2-2:30 pm will precede the guest speaker, Linda Carter Lefko.

Ms. Lefko is an artist, teacher and scholar of historical decorative arts. Her interest in historic murals led to a career in museum-quality restoration and conservation projects, writing books, lecturing and teaching.

Her talk to the Historical Society will feature information and photos from her latest book, *Folk Art Murals of the Rufus Porter School: New England Landscapes 1825-1845*. The book includes images of over 400 Porter paintings throughout New England, which Ms. Lefko personally examined and analyzed. According to the author, the book “provides inspiration for historians, researchers, designers and painters alike.” Copies of her book will be available after her talk.

Before Ms. Lefko's presentation, Society President Don Corey will introduce Society members Kaye and Rick Spofford. For many years, the Spofford's historic barn at 1 The Great Rd. housed a Rufus Porter mural that came from the Jonas Monroe House on North Rd., which was demolished in the mid-1960s. One mural from that house which the Society owns is hanging in the Town Hall Multipurpose Room. This second, larger mural that is being donated by the Spoffords to the Bedford Historical Society will also be displayed there.

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**Election of Society Officers & Directors**

**Nominating Committee Report**

2017 Annual Meeting, May 23rd

This year's Annual Meeting of the Bedford Historical Society, which will occur on Tuesday, May 23rd, will feature the re-election of all the 2016-17 Society officers, who have graciously agreed to serve for another year.

In addition, three Directors who are currently serving on the Society's Board of Directors have agreed to serve for another four-year term.

The Nominating Committee, whose duty is to prepare a slate of nominees for election at the Annual Meeting, reports that its candidates for 2017-18 Society Officers are as follows:

- President: Don Corey
- Vice President: Merri Lee Johnson
- Secretary: Brown Pulliam
- Treasurer: Pat Leiby

The candidates for Director for four years are:

- Bea Brown
- Frank Gicca
- Joan Gicca

This slate of nominees will be presented at the Annual Meeting by Nominating Committee members Carol Amick, Marion Bryan and Julie McCay Turner. Following these elections, President Don Corey will give a summary report to the membership about the year's activities which, pursuant to the Society's bylaws, “shall become a permanent record of the Society.”
Bedford in World War I

This is another in the Society’s series of articles on Bedford’s participation in the war effort. A number of families had multiple fathers, sons and brothers in the war. One of the largest contingents was from the Loomis family. Following are excerpts from the Boston Globe and Boston Post during that war.

“The only family in Bedford to offer four sons to Uncle Sam to fight the Kaiser is that of Judge Elihu G. Loomis. All enlisted and are overseas. Two of them are in the aero service and the other two are in the artillery. Three of the brothers are commissioned officers and the fourth has won a lieutenant’s commission and will probably soon be advanced to that position from his rank as private.

He is Priv. Hubert H. Loomis, A Battery, 101st Field Artillery. He studied at the Charlestown state armory and was awarded his diplomas. While waiting for his commission, the United States declared war, and he, fearing he could not get over to France before the war was over, promptly enlisted in A Battery and went overseas. After he left, his commission reached his father's office, and Gov. McCall personally requested Gen. Pershing to extend to Priv. Loomis the rank awarded for his efficiency and faithfulness. He went through the big drive with the "Yankee Division" and has written home that he feels amply repaid for any sacrifice he may have made.

The other sons of Judge Loomis ... are: Ensign Ralph L. Loomis, United States Naval Reserve Flying Corps; Lt. Samuel Loomis, HQ Co., 71st Artillery, C.A.C.; and Lt. William F. Loomis, 213th Aero Squadron, United States Army. Lt. Henry S. Loomis, a cousin of these boys of the Bedford fighting quartet, is also an army aviator, in the 213th Aero Squadron, flying second to Lt. "Bill" Loomis.

"Lieut. Bill" was credited with sending down his first Hun on Aug. 1st. While he doesn't make any claims Ensign Ralph Loomis is also credited with a Hun observer he got in a fight over the English Channel.... Ensign Ralph Loomis and Lt. William Loomis were trained in the French Foreign Legion and both gained valuable experience flying with the French.”

Don Corey

From the Bedford Enterprise, Sept. 25, 1918

"Are you saving your peach stones for the government? A request has been given to the people to save all peach stones, prune stones and nut shells to be used in the making of gas masks for the boys "over there."

After the Germans began using mustard gas against the Allies, gas masks became a necessity. The peach stones and others were ground up and were effective in absorbing poison gases from the air inhaled through gas masks. The staged photo of a soldier standing on the pile of peach pits was distributed to encourage people to save their peach stones.

Don Corey
**Amazon Smile**

The Bedford Historical Society is a participant in the Amazon Smile donation program. If you are planning to make a purchase on Amazon and would like to support the Society at the same time, just navigate to our web page and scroll down the right margin until you find the "Amazon Smile" link (pictured here). Clicking on that link will take you to Amazon Smile. Then, just log in and start shopping. 0.5% of all your purchases will be donated to the Bedford Historical Society! Once you have set up the Amazon Smile account, every time you visit https://smile.amazon.com/ and log into your Amazon account, you will see a banner reminding you that you are supporting the Society.

Kara Kerwin

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**Please mark you calendar!**

**Potluck Supper and Annual Meeting**

Bedford Town Historian and life-long “rock hound” Sharon McDonald will entertain Bedford Historical Society members at this year’s Potluck Supper and Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 23 in Upper Fellowship Hall of the First Church of Christ, Congregational.

**Please note that this year's event will take place on TUESDAY, May 23rd, not on Wednesday.** Appetizers and Marion Bryan's famous punch will be served beginning at 6 pm, followed by the buffet dinner around 6:30 pm.

Society members are requested to bring a salad, main dish, or dessert that can serve about eight people. Reminder phone calls will be made and emails sent to get a sumptuous array of foods for this final event of the Society's 2016-2017 season. Only those members who do not have email will be called about this event. Any Society member willing to help with phone calls should contact Carol Amick at 781-275-5278 or carol.amick@verizon.net or the Society's office at info@bedfordmahistory.org.

A sign-up sheet also will be passed around at the April 23 program meeting to get a sense of the dishes that members may bring on May 23rd and to get volunteers to help with the dinner set-up and clean-up.

The annual Meeting will begin at about 7:30 upon completion of the potluck supper.

Ms. McDonald's entertaining program will be the final talk in this season's “Speakers Series” and will undoubtedly be a most interesting presentation as she describes Bedford's geological history. Her lecture will follow the pot-luck dinner and the Society's Annual Meeting. For members and guests who cannot attend the pot-luck supper, but want to hear Ms. McDonald, they can arrive at the Congregational church around 7:45 pm.

Carol Amick

*The Societies programs are free and open to the public.*

If you have any items related to Bedford's history, like photos, ephemera, tools, etc., please consider donating them to our Society.

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**Thank You! Our supporters help keeping history alive!**

**Dues Renewals:**
Atty. Paul Dick

**Donations in Memory of Barbara Marshall:**
Heather & David Pullen

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**Member Application**

**Annual Membership Dues:**
- Individual: $25.00
- Couple/Family: $45.00
- Contributing: $100.00
- Patron: $175.00
- Benefactor: $300.00

Name: ______________________________
Address: ____________________________
City: __________________ Zip: _________
State: __________________ Phone: _______
Email: _____________________________

Return this with your check to:
Bedford Historical Society
2 Mudge Way
Bedford, MA 01730

Wish to pay by credit card?
Please visit our website at:
www.bedfordmahistory.org
Look for the PayPal “Donate” button on the bottom left of our page.

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**Officers**
Donald Corey, President
Merri Lee Johnson, Vice President
Brown Pulliam, Secretary
Patricia Leiby, Treasurer

**Board of Directors**
Frank Gicca ('17) Chair
Kara Kerwin
Bea Brown ('17)
Joan Gicca ('17)
Richard LeSchack ('18)
Sharon McDonald ('18)
Lea Ann Knight ('18)
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Atty. Paul Dick ('19)
Paul Purchia ('19)
Julie McCay Turner ('20)
Carol Amick ('20)
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Donald Corey, President
Patricia Leiby, Treasurer (non-voting)
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Making a Bog Garden

With the official arrival of Spring, and recent heavy rains, many properties around Bedford are probably candidates for bog gardens. The following article provides easy instructions for those of you who are so inclined. It was written by Dudley L. Pickman and published in the 1933 Mass. Horticultural Society Year Book. He had won a Silver Medal in 1932 for his bog garden near the Concord River and the Two Brothers Rocks.

The site for a bog garden is generally a restricted one. Where Shadbush, Azalea viscosa, Winterberry, Jack-in-the- Pulpit and Ferns are found, that is the spot to be chosen; it is a fairly safe indication that conditions there would prove quite as favorable for plants akin to those named. Besides proper condition of soil, some protection from cold winds is desirable as in any garden; and shady spots are indispensable to certain varieties, notably the closed Gentians and Cypripediums, although most bog garden plants cannot get too much sunlight.

Our garden in Bedford lies across a depression extending to the Concord river. The garden is practically limited to plants indigenous to eastern Massachusetts. Our first move in making it was the elimination of undesirables such as alder, maple and birch sprouts (leaving, of course, enough for renewals) — that is, getting rid of the goats to make room for more sheep. Grubbing is the recurrent bane of bog gardening, but as long as we must have maples and birches nearby, it cannot be avoided. Given this added space, we had room for more Azaleas, Viburnums, Blueberries, Irises and Rhodora moved from adjacent pastures.

Without any very definite plan for shape, or bounds, we began by deepening the wettest and boggiest places, making irregular ponds, or pools, and leaving special shrubs and clumps to become small islands. Different parts of these ponds vary in depth, some shallow with muddy bottom for Water Lilies, Pickerel Weed and the like; others deep to prevent under-water growth from spoiling surface reflections; and then some mere puddles for Calla palustris. Marshmarigolds flourish in the little brooks, and Pitcher Plants, clinging to the sides of the islets, add an interesting semi-tropical touch to the picture. The substance removed to make ponds was dumped at various points to form drier layers of soil where roots would not suffer from too much humidity. Here Aronia, Viburnum americanum, Kalmia, Magnolia glauca and Dogwood find conditions to suit them; but the masses of big Blueberry bushes and Swamp Azaleas backed by tall Amelanchier or Ilex are what give the garden particular distinction. Wild Roses, Irises and Ferns bordering pools with Meadow Lilies or Turk's Cap Lilies further back make charming reflections on their surfaces.

Remains of old stone walls give useful protection in many instances, although stone borders and stiff lines have been carefully avoided in order to violate Nature as little as possible. In Springtime the ground is carpeted with different kinds of violets, and when the time for wild flowers is past,- bright berries and glorious foliage of autumn make worthy successors.

Dudley L. Pickman.
Dudley Farms, Bedford, Mass.