

Bulletin Board

Amherst Lions Club 42nd Annual Pancake Breakfast

The Amherst Lions Club will be having their Pancake Breakfast on April 13 from 8-12 at the Wilkins School. Treat yourself to all you can eat pancakes for just \$5 (\$3 for children 12 and under) and let us do the dishes.

Historical Society April Meeting: Restoration of Historic Documents

Please join the Historical Society of Amherst as we welcome Amherst resident and Executive Director of the Northeast Document Conservation Center, Bill Veillette. He will be presenting three fascinating restoration projects recently completed by the NEDCC. This exciting program will take place on April 14th in the Vestry of the Congregational Church of Amherst at 7:30pm. It is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

DAR Monthly Meeting, April 14

Captain Josiah Crosby Chapter, DAR will hold their next meeting Monday April 14, at noon in the Amherst Fire Station Hall. A light lunch will be served then Bruce Berry, Director of Public Works in Amherst will be speaking on local and regional recycling. The public is welcome. A business meeting for members will follow. For more information or to let us know if you are joining us for lunch please contact us. (j15m@yahoo.com or 763-8029)

Nashaway Chapter of the New Hampshire Audubon Society

On Saturday, April 19 the Nashaway Chapter of NH Audubon will be visiting the Massabesic Audubon Center in Auburn from 7am – noon. The group will explore the walking trails that cross fields and woods beside Lake Massabesic. The public is welcome to join this free trip. Meet at the Massabesic Center parking lot. For directions and more information, go to: www.nhaudubon.org/locations/centers/massabesic

To register for the trip contact Richard Bielawski at 603- 429-2537 or rbielawski@mac.com

On Wed, April 16 at 7pm, the Nashaway Audubon Chapter will host Judy Burger of Wild Birds Unlimited for a presentation on Hummingbirds. The public is welcome to come and hear about the amazing habits of hummingbirds, their migration, and how to attract them to your yard through feeders and plants. This free talk takes place in the Downstairs Theater Room of the Nashua Public Library. Registration is not necessary. For more information, contact Program Coordinator: Richard Maloon 424-5621 or richard.maloon@att.net

Discussion Group At Toadstool Bookshop

On the first Thursday of each month, the discussion group meets from 7PM to 8:30PM. We share ideas on philosophy, current affairs and familiar truths. For more information contact: Norah at 673 – 6948.

Open to All Southern New Hampshire Women

The Amherst Area Newcomers Club monthly holds social gatherings both informational and entertaining. The club also has subgroups, which include Book Group, Bunco, Crafts, Golf, Knitting, Out-to-Lunch and Walking groups. Early December the club hosts an annual "Breakfast with Santa", for the community, which is optional for members to participate in. If interested in joining the membership annual fee is \$20 (only \$1.67 a month). For information and calendar of events visit www.nhnewcomers.com or contact Lorelei at 488-0781. RSVP's are appreciated, but not necessary.

Amherst Juniors Open for New Members!

Our mission is civic needs, educational advancement and those less fortunate. Our goals are achieved with the assistance and generosity of businesses, organizations and individuals.

We are in need of women with motivation and dedication to join us in growing our mission even further within our surrounding communities.

Please email us at memberships@amherstjuniors.org. Our website is www.amherstjuniors.org. Call Barb @ 508-783-3686 or Karen @305-3046 for more information. Join Us!

Speaker at Villagers Meeting To Focus on Early Electric Lighting

AMHERST – On Wednesday, April 16 Christopher Allen from Harvard MA will be the guest speaker for the Villagers' chapter of Questers International. Quester members enjoy learning about antiques and helping with their restoration and preservation. The meeting will take place downstairs at the Amherst Town Library on Main St. at 10 AM.

Chris and his wife Cindy have owned Antiques Lights since 1979 and have become experts in 19th and early 20th century lighting. Their specialty is the restoration of ornate gas lights, from artistic gasoliers to sculptural table lamps and

wall sconces. Recently some of their lighting has appeared in the Steven Spielberg movie "Lincoln" and in the Quentin Tarantino movie "Django Unchained." Chris will be speaking about Early Electric Lighting, including Art Glass Lighting, and will bring examples of these lights to focus the discussion. You can see their lighting at www.antiquelight.com.

Villagers would like to welcome the public to this meeting. Since space is limited, it is imperative for you to reserve your seat. Please make your reservation by contacting Jeannie at jeannieweller@gmail.com.

Let's Go Shopping!

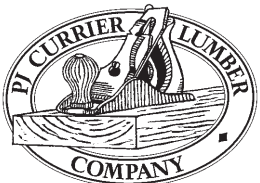


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Town News

Historic Amherst

The Hardy Family – Singers with Melodian, Violin and Base Viol:

19th-Century Child Stars from Amherst, N.H.

BY KATRINA HOLMAN

In a favorable review of the "musical entertainment" given by the latest singing class of the long-time choirmaster of the Congregational Church to a "very crowded assembly" in Feb. 1855, the Amherst, N.H., newspaper editor said: "We cannot but remark the growing interest and talent for music in this place, much of the credit of which is due to Mr. Hardy and his family. A few years since there were but three or four parlor instruments in the place – and fewer who were able to finger them at all skillfully. Now we have some fifteen pianos, four or five organs, and a score or more of saraphines, with as many players as instruments – two teachers of music – an efficient band – and a 'rising generation' that are essentially 'posted' in tune and time. To us this is one of the most pleasing and promising features of the place."

And yet, I'll bet you've never heard of the singing Hardy Family!

Debut of Amherst Singing Family

It was in the summer of 1851. "On [a] Tuesday evening [Amherst] citizens were favored with the maiden Concert of [the Hardy Family of] singers, consisting of a son and two daughters of Mr. Elbridge Hardy, the well-known inn-keeper of this village." Their first review read: "It is but justice to them to say that their performances were such as to give much pleasure and entire satisfaction to the large audience present. Their programme was select and chaste, and their singing unaffected and in good harmony and taste. Considering their ages, and advantages (having enjoyed none but home instruction) their singing, as well as their performances upon the melodian, violin and base viol, whether separate or in concert,



Congregational Church of Amherst, N.H. For a quarter of a century, from 1835 to 1860, innkeeper Elbridge Hardy (1804-1874) was the church's choirmaster. (Stereoscope card published by E. Lovejoy of Milford, N.H.; photographed by S. R. Hanaford, 1869. Collection of Historical Society of Amherst, N.H.)

were highly creditable, and evinced much musical talent, already under a good measure of discipline. As they are designing soon to sing in some of the neighboring towns, we take pleasure in commending them to the favorable notice and patronage of the community, feeling assured that their entertainments will compare advantageously to them with those of others who have been favorably received." (*Farmers' Cabinet*, Amherst, N.H., 6 August 1851)

Who were these children? The Hardy sisters were Sarah Jane (1836-1877), who was 15 at this time, and Joanna Maria "Josie" (1839-1868), who was 11! The brother was probably the oldest, Elbridge Gerry (1832-1877), aged 18, because the next oldest boy was only 6. There were 9 siblings altogether, all born in Amherst.

The Amherst newspaper carried only these few notices of their local concerts: The Hardy Family sang at the celebratory supper for 130 guests in Feb. 1853 when the second local tavern-inn discontinued serving alcoholic drinks and became a "temperance house," namely the U.S. Hotel at 101 Boston Post Road run by Mr. and Mrs. Shepard. The following month, the Hardys gave a concert at Amherst Town Hall, followed the next week by a vocal and instrumental entertainment at Mont Vernon. In Feb. 1854, the Hardy Family again entertained their hometown. "The Female Auctioneer, by Miss Joanna, was admirably performed, as also the Gipsy King, by her brother. One of the gems of the evening, performed by the sisters, with melodeon accompaniment by its author, Mr. Alfred Little, was the Sunbeam Song, a very sweet composition in style and sentiment." Alfred Little (1823-1880), a native of Boscawen who was crippled by childhood diseases, had worked in a shop in Concord, N.H., making reed instruments called seraphines and melodeons; in 1852 he invented and built himself an improved "orchestral melodeon" with which he traveled in New England and out West on concert tours. Little teamed up with Joshua Hutchinson of Milford for a swing through five neighboring towns before sharing the stage with the Hardy Family in 1854; he performed in Amherst again in 1856 and 1866. The Hardy Family gave another (maybe final) vocal and instrumental entertainment in Amherst Town Hall in Oct. 1856.

Sang with Famous Hutchinsons

When the younger sister died, the obituary in Amherst's newspaper (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 28 May 1868) said: "Josie M. Mills, daughter of Elbridge Hardy, formerly of Amherst, ... will be remembered by a large number in this State [N.H.] and New York, as the star of the once popular Hardy Family of singers." An obitu-

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AMHERST RECREATION

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With Spring Break in just a few weeks, summer is not far behind!

Summer Camps

Outdoor Discovery (formerly Hartshorn) is an educational weekly summer program held at PMEC from 9-noon. There are 6 weeks of programs for k-8th graders with a wide variety of themes. Registration is open!

Baboosic Lake Summer Camp Summer Camp at the lake is running for 8 weeks. Camp hours are from 9-3, with before-care from 7:30-9:00 and after-care from 3:00-5:30 available. Popular themes including "Minute to Win It" and "Baboosic Lake's Got Talent" have returned along with some new ones. Registration is now open.

Swim Lessons and Swim Team Registration for all activities at the lake, including swim lessons, swim team and a Season's Pass are now available.

Youth Programming

Yoga for Middle Schoolers will begin its last session for the school year. The start date has been

changed to Wednesday April 16 at 2:35. If the weather cooperates, sessions will be held outside!

Kids CAN Cook! Amherst resident Paula Garvey is an experienced Home Economics teacher and she is offering a variety of classes. In response to a survey of Middle School parents and requests for programs that begin and end at a later time, her Make a Meal: Pasta Bolognese will begin at 3:30 and end at 5:30 on Tuesday May 20th.

Start Smart Baseball for Boys and Girls 3-4 Years Old As the first two sessions are now full, a third session starting at 11:00am has been opened with a limit of 12 seats. The materials have arrived-this will be a great program!

Track and Field will kick of their season with a Wet and Wild Fun Run on Sunday April 28th for ages 6-18. Parents are welcome to accompany their children. Anyone registered for Track and Field can participate with no cost. This long standing program has had a hand in developing several college T & F athletes and has a flexible practice schedule.

Tot Soccer is an ever-popular program run by our terrific instructor Chris Woodbury. We offer a

Wednesday morning and Thursday afternoon option, starting the week of May 5th. Space is limited- register early!

Spring into Art Brandie Pettus will take 1st-4th graders outside for art materials, fresh air and inspiration starting May 1st for 4 weeks. The price for this program has been dropped to \$60.00 for residents and \$70.00 for non-residents in response to parent feedback.

Walnut Hollow Farm offers a discounted introductory rate through us. Call in for more information about riding lessons for both children and adults.

Instructional Soccer for 5 and 6 year olds is now opening for registration. We are happy to make sure your child's T Ball practice is not scheduled at the same time as soccer if you give us a call.

Flag Football, Pick-Up Style This is program is for boys and girls with no experience with flag or tackle football and for kids who just want to get together and play once a week. Teams will be divided each Wednesday and parents are needed to assist with setting up the field and officiating. Kids had a great time with this program last summer! Registration is now open.

Archery will be opening soon.

Adult Programming

Wholesome Cooking with Paula Garvey Paula's first demonstration was a night of fun and laughter, and many participants asked for another program. A Proper Irish Tea, with special guest A&E Roastery will be held at Amherst Middle School on Thursday May 8th from 7-8:30. While scones, Carrot and Apple Squares and Irish Tea Brack is baking, sit with a cuppa and learn about art of making a perfect cup of tea with Emeran from A&E Roastery. Space is limited.

Learn to Knit for Adults is going strong! Each session we have new knitters register and we have participants in Class 1, 2 and 3, so don't think it is too late to begin. Our next project is Fair Isle Colorwork: Flora by Margaux Hufnagel, which will begin on Join us on Wednesdays from 4:30-6:00!

If there is something you are looking for and don't see, send us an email at jstover@amherstnh.gov ...and make time in your life for Recreation!

Rights of Spring!

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