

# Obituary

## Janice M. Shethar

AMHERST – Janice M. Shethar, a longtime resident of Amherst, died on April 3rd, 2014.

Mrs. Shethar was born July 31, 1916 in New Rochelle, New York. She was the daughter of Agnes Meighan and Alan Rutherford McMichael of Canada.

She was the wife of the late Prentice Shethar. They had been married for fifty-six years and had five children.

Mrs. Shethar graduated from the Traphagen School of Design in New York City, after which she worked as a textile designer for ten years.

She continued with her love of color and design for the rest of her life, organizing many fabric art hangings.

Mrs. Shethar was an assistant at the Amherst Town Library for eight years, after which she served as a trustee. She was an active volunteer at Mount Saint Hope School in Nashua, the Adult Tutorial Program, Friends in Service Here, and the Souhegan Nursing Association,

on which she later served as a board member.

She leaves five children. John Shethar of Colorado Springs, Colorado; Jane McMorrow of Thorndike, Maine; Alan Shethar of Littleton, Massachusetts; James Shethar of Cortez, Colorado; and Molly Shethar of Buena Vista, Colorado. She also leaves ten grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

There will be no service and the funeral will be private. The Shethar home will be open to friends and neighbors on Saturday, May 17th, 2-4 PM.

Memorial donations may be made to SHARE Outreach, Inc., 1 Columbus Avenue, Milford, NH 03055 or Home Health and Hospice Care, 7 Executive Park Drive, Merrimack, NH 03054. Arrangements are in the care of Smith & Heald Funeral Home, 63 Elm Street, Milford, NH 03055. To share a memory or leave a condolence, please go to [www.smith-heald.com](http://www.smith-heald.com)

### Amherst Town Library



Lisa Taylor conducts a writing workshop, April 26 at the Library

## Finding My Muse: ...A Writing Workshop With Author Lisa C. Taylor

AMHERST – Jump-start your writing life at the Amherst Town Library on Saturday, April 26, with a writing workshop with author Lisa C. Taylor. “Finding My Muse: Getting from the Ordinary to the Extraordinary in Writing” is scheduled for 2 to 4 p.m. in the Johnson Meeting Room and is for writers, want-to-be writers, and anyone who wants to spend an afternoon dwelling in the imagination!

Come join veteran teacher and writer, Lisa C. Taylor, as we spend a couple hours playing with words and learning how writers find original ideas. Lisa's skills as a teacher have helped her former students garner awards regionally and nationally. Share her enthusiasm for writing and learn how to laugh in the face of writer's block. Highlights will include using everyday objects and experimenting with unexpected settings to create compelling fiction or poetry. The workshop will also include a reading of Lisa's own poetry from Lisa's collections and there will be a time for questions.

Lisa says, “I think about imagination and creativity and its place in our fast-paced world. For me, writing is a way of slowing down. The cadence and layers of both poetry and fiction are something to savor, to pick up again and again, considering the words and the characters. My favorite writers (and they change regularly) will stay with

me long after the book is finished. These are poems and narratives that bring another level of meaning to my daily life.”

Author of four collections of poetry, most recently, Necessary Silence (Arlen House/Syracuse University Press, 2013), Lisa is currently working on a collection of short fiction and a novel that uses a hybrid form of writing. Her work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and she has been published in numerous national journals and anthologies. As Lisa shares on her website, “Writing matters because it is how we communicate. Literature matters because it is how humanity, with all its losses and triumphs, can become a work of art.” The Amherst Town Library invites you to enjoy a wonderful afternoon of creating with Lisa C. Taylor.

All programs in the April month long series for adults are free and open to the public. However, registration is REQUIRED for each program due to space limitations. The final program in the April series is “Longfellow: The Poet and His Songs,” a living history presentation, on Tuesday, April 29 at 7 p.m. You can register for these events by calling 673-2288, emailing [library@amherstlibrary.org](mailto:library@amherstlibrary.org) or by visiting our website at [www.amherstlibrary.org](http://www.amherstlibrary.org) and selecting the “Community Services” tab, then click on drop down “Sign-Up for Programs.”

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

ary (*Brooklyn New York Daily Eagle*, 12 Nov. 1877, 4 o'clock edition) for the older sister gave more tantalizing details: “Commencing when [Sarah Jane Hardy] was but twelve years of age, and her sister Josie ... was but ten, they sang, under their father's care, in all the principle cities of New England and New York, and from 1850 to 1860, few troupes of singers were more popular in those regions than the Hardy Family. [Wow!] They often sung with the Hutchinson Family, and later, with the now venerable Bernard Covert. At their former home, in Amherst, N.H., they were neighbors of the Hutchinsons, and the two families cultivated and indulged their musical tastes together.” Another obit of Sarah (from *N. Y. Tribune*, quoted in FC, 20 Nov. 1877) suggests a different timing: “[A]t the age of twelve years [Sarah] began singing with the remainder of the Hardy family in the larger places of New England and New York. Subsequently she sang with the Hutchinson family.” (The given starting ages don't gibe with the first concert as the Hardy Family. Perhaps the surviving loved one who wrote the obituary, likely her widower, didn't remember correctly; or perhaps the girls first sang at those younger ages in one of their father's singing school concerts.)

Alas, I could find no corroborating sources of Hardy concerts outside of Amherst and Mont Vernon nor of joint concerts with the Hutchinsons, neither in Patton's scrapbook at Milford's Wadleigh Library nor in America's Historical Newspapers database. Maybe the Hardy Family shared the stage with the Hutchinson trio of brothers, whose former quartette had lost sister Abby to married life in 1850, or another likely scenario for our Amherst girls is that they, singly or together, performed as virtual members of the “Hutchinson Family” to provide the female harmony (before Judson died in 1859 and the other

two started performing with their own children).

### Pa Was Innkeeper and Choir-master

Besides owning and running the tavern-inn on the south side of Amherst Common from 1831-1862, which he converted in Feb. 1845 to a “temperance house,” Elbridge Hardy (1804-1874) was selectman (1837), officer in the Lafayette rifle company (1838-1841), justice of the peace (appointed 1850), and “chorister” (choir director) of the Congregational Church (by 1836 until he left town). In connection with music at the church, Hardy was part of a group that formed the Amherst Sacred Music Society in Feb. 1848, he being its president (but perhaps it didn't last long because no further meetings were noticed in the newspaper); and he held singing schools. His winter 1848/9 class closed with a concert which the local newspaper editor (*Farmers' Cabinet*, 1 Feb. 1849) judged to be “highly creditable to their teacher, and gave evidence of the good success of the school.” The editor further opined, “There is a manifest advantage in Churches employing their own choristers in teaching when qualified so to do.” Only a few months later, when a Mr. I. S. Whitney of Milford offered a “juvenile class for instruction in the art of singing” at the brick school house, at 25 cents for 18 lessons, the same editor (FC, 3 May 1849) urged parents, “We feel anxious that all children of our village should attend this school.” That teacher continued with a follow-on summer session. The next year, Mrs. D. D. McKean offered a juvenile singing school at the “Means building” (presumably the old store at 1 Pierce Lane) of 24 lessons for 50 cents. In the spring of 1853, a Mr. J. M. Emery offered his first session on the same terms, held at Town Hall, followed by a summer session of 16 lessons for 25 cents.

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In Feb. 1854, Mr. Hardy's singing school gave a concert at the Congregational Church. These were just the opportunities for vocal instruction during the years that the Hardy Family began performing, but singing schools were regularly offered in Amherst, every few years starting in 1824, then nearly annually through the 1850s and 1860s, with ever-changing instructors, mostly men but a few women too.

### Moved Out of Town

Sarah J. Hardy was married c. 1860 to Elbridge Hollis Amsden, born 1821 in Mason N.H. as 8th of 9 kids of Hollis Amsden (1778-1832). No marriage notice for the innkeeper-choirmaster's eldest daughter appeared in the local paper – likely because the groom was divorced from his first wife (1826-1888, m1. 1848) in 1859. E.H. Amsden was a daguerrean artist, as early as 1850 when he resided with his wife's family in New Ipswich. From 1852-'58 (at least), he lived in Fitchburg, Mass. (listed there in 1852 Massachusetts Register under Daguerreotypes). In May-June 1856, Amsden brought his “daguerreotype saloon” to Amherst, advertising “pictures taken on glass” and copies of daguerreotypes, portraits and engravings; particularly encouraging family groups and schools and likenesses of sick or diseased persons. (Surely he photographed his bride! Does anyone know of such a picture?) Next he took his saloon to Milford (where his brother Timothy was a shoemaker).

Mr. Hardy ran into financial difficulties in Amherst and lost the hotel. One of the court executions against him was in favor of Aaron Lawrence, local merchant and philanthropist who had been church organist when Hardy directed the choir. The sheriff confiscated Hardy's property and in Nov. 1861 all the personal property was put up for auction – including the ho-

tel beds and stoves, 1 bass viol and 1 fiddle (how sad!), wagon and sleigh, a 10-year-old mare and 4-month-old colt, a heifer, two last-spring calves, and two shoats. So the family left town, and moved to New York. (The oldest son stayed behind; he had married an Amherst girl in 1853, but was divorced in 1865 as a wife abuser with a drinking problem.) Josie was married to C. M. Mills (no record with place or date found), probably Charles Mills who in 1867 shared the Brooklyn home – in which she died the following year at age 28 – with two other men of same surname, who were also carpenters. The 1870 census of Brooklyn, Kings, N.Y., shows Eldridge [sic] Hardy, 63, as a dealer in kindling wood with a decent amount of real and personal estate, living with his wife, and three children, son George, 26, working as a store clerk, 22-year-old daughter Percis working in a shoe factory, and the youngest, Nelly, 16, as a shoe fitter. The 1871 city directory shows Elbert [sic] Amsden, a painter, at the same location as Hardy, and that is where Sarah died of internal cancer at age 42, three-and-a-half years after her father. In the 1860s-70s in Brooklyn, N.Y., Mrs. Amsden was a teacher of vocal and instrumental music of some reputation and a choir member first of St. Paul's church in NYC and, at the time of her death, of the Pacific street M. E. church in Brooklyn; she sang on various complimentary public benefits from the citizens of Brooklyn and elsewhere. “She had a fine natural taste for music... Her rare personal attractions, social culture and musical gifts won her a large circle of devoted friends.” (Widower Amsden, 71, was living in Flatbush, N.Y., in 1892, still a painter.) The matriarch of the family, Sarah (Wadleigh) Hardy outlived all the singers and died in Brooklyn in 1882 at age 72.

# Friends of The Amherst Town Library 2nd Annual Trivia Night “Fun Raiser”

AMHERST – A big thank you to all the Amherst community members that were able to participate in the 2nd Annual Friends of the Amherst Town Library Trivia Night fundraiser. It was another evening full of mind bending questions, laughs, cheers and let us not forget the GROANS as teams battled it out to win this years bragging rights. Winners of this years bragging rights went to The “U” Usual Suspects”.

A heart felt thank you to all for supporting this fundraising event so that the Friends of the Amherst Town Library can keep providing enrichment programs and make contributions to the Amherst Town Library to better serve our community.

A special thank you goes out to our MC Tom Knapp, the Amherst Country Club, the Friends of the Amherst Town Library Volunteers and the following local businesses that generously donated raffle prizes:

Allen Remodeling  
Amherst Country Club  
Elliot Family Practice in Amherst  
Enchanted Lace  
Great New Hampshire Restaurants  
Gymnastic Village  
Innovations Spa & Salon  
LaBelle Winery  
Longhorn Steak House  
Moulton's Market  
Orange Leaf Frozen Yogurt  
Roxie's  
The Gift Shoppe at Salzburg Square  
The Meat House  
The Mile Away Restaurant  
The Toadstool Bookshops  
Walt's Service



Trivia Night Volunteers starting from the left back row: Liz Larson, Stephanie Tannariello, Amy Littlefield, Kim Ayers, Chris Shaver, Elaine Bennett, James Bennett, Nancy Head. Front row: Trivia Night Coordinator Christine Farris and Trivia Night MC Tom Knapp.

## Girl Scouts Conduct Energy-Efficiency Audit of The Brick School

AMHERST – If you were near Amherst Village on February 17 and heard a flurry of energetic bell-ringing, you were probably hearing the sound of Girl Scouts conducting an energy-efficiency audit.

Girl Scout Troop 22515, composed of fourth-graders from Amherst and Milford, investigated energy usage at the Brick School, with help from director of buildings and grounds Jim Miner, who gave them a tour and answered their many questions.

The Scouts interviewed Miner about the building's energy bills, energy sources, heating and cooling systems, insulation and lighting. They also checked for drafts, examined the basement, and, just for fun, rang the bell in the belfry.

Finally, they met Superintendent Peter Warburton, whose office is in the building. They thanked Mr. Miner, Mr. Warburton, and the staff for welcoming them into the office and supporting their work on energy-efficiency.

They are currently putting together a report on their findings.



(L to R) front row: Joely Brammer-DePuy, Chyanne Szot, Sarah Levesque, Brianna Elliott, Ana Nikolenko and Hannah Noble. Second row: Catherine Hinse, Amanda Fulton and Sophia Dube. Back row: Troop leader Wendy DePuy, Superintendent of Schools Peter Warburton, troop leader Michelle Levesque, Director of Building and Grounds Jim Miner.

## Cub Scout Pack 613 - Den 6 Activities

AMHERST – The Wolf Den of Pack 613, right here in Amherst has had a busy year completing all their activities to earn their Wolf rank. On a chilly Saturday Morning in the beginning of February the boys met to complete an outdoor Flag Ceremony at the Amherst Police station, the boys also learnt how to correctly fold the flag, honored the flag and properly lowered and raised the flag.

Recently the boys met at NE Sportscards to complete their activity on Collections. Bruce Parker and his wife, Owners of NE Sportscards in Amherst hosted the boys to teach them all about Collecting Baseball and Football cards, how to protect them and share in their excitement for the hobby. Major League Baseball offers a program for cub scouts to learn all about collecting and provides a starter kit for the boys to take home. Everyone had a great time and left with big smiles. If you have a son interested in joining our Pack do not hesitate to contact Gary Sainsbury at 721-1054 or e-mail [gary.sainsbury@e-hps.com](mailto:gary.sainsbury@e-hps.com) or go to <http://www.pack613nh.org/> for more information

