

Gorham Times

HOW GORHAM GOT ITS NAME

Edited and reprinted from 4/15/97 Gorham Times article by Clark Neily



When entering Gorham from Route 22, this sign greets passersby.

The town of Gorham was one of seven townships established in 1733 by the Massachusetts General Court. These seven townships were known as the Narragansett towns. The land in these towns was awarded to veterans, or their heirs and survivors, of the Narragansett war, also known as King Philip's War, which took place between 1675 and 1676.

The war was fought between colonial forces and a combined tribe of Indians, including the Narragansett tribe, led by King Philip. One of the Plymouth companies of the colonial forces was commander Captain John Gorham, whose son was Shubael Gorham. Shubael was authorized, in an order from the Massachusetts General Court dated July 5, 1736, to assemble and convene a meeting of all the grantors and lots in Narragansett Number Seven to establish conditions for the "settlement of the Township." The town derived its name from John and Shubael Gorham. The first home built in the town of Gorham was built by John Phinney in 1736.

It is interesting to note that the direct descendants of three of the original and most active proprietors of the Gorham Township, namely the Phinneys, Aldens and Hamblens, are serving or have recently served as elected officials of the Town of Gorham—a lasting influence.



AERIAL VIEW OF GORHAM VILLAGE IN THE 1800'S.

Photo courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society

SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE GORHAM TIMES

Gorham Times Staff

The editorial staff is dedicating this entire 24-page issue to Gorham's 275th anniversary and the Gorham Founders' Festival. You will find historical articles and pictures on the town as well as a complete rundown of all the activities from May 27-30 planned by festival organizers.

The Gorham Times is proud to dedicate this issue to the town's anniversary because of just how important history has been in shaping the personality of Gorham. Gorham is a close-knit community that values everything the town has to offer from The Village to North Gorham.

This issue is the result of a lot of hard work by many people in the past as well as our current editorial staff who have presented pictures and stories of Gorham's history. Thanks to all of the townspeople who have contributed and to the advertisers who made the publication of this issue possible.

The town has forged a wonderful 275 years, and we look forward to the years to come as we continue to make Gorham one of the best places to live in Maine.

JOHN PHINNEY: BLAZING THE TRAIL (1693-1784)

Edited and reprinted from 8/25/1995 article by Edna Dickey, based heavily on McLellan's "History of Gorham"

John Phinney was born in Barnstable, MA in 1693, and moved to Falmouth, ME in 1732. He was married to Martha Coleman and had a total of ten children.

Once in Maine, John's goal was to go to Narragansett # 7 because his grandfather had fought in King Philip's War and was therefore eligible for one of 30-acre lots in the township of Gorham. On May 1736, John and his son, Edmund, paddled up the Presumpscot River in a boat and turned into the mouth of the Little River, which was considerably deeper and wider than the brook we know today. They eventually secured their boat to a ledge on the south side of the river, and used an ax to struggle through bush and woods to the top of the hill, known now as Fort Hill. They continued along toward the south, very near to our own road, and were well pleased with what they found on the southerly slope. They built their camp near a large basswood tree, worn down with age, and Edmund felled that tree, the first tree in town felled for the purpose of settlement. They continued clearing and in June planted crops of corn, peas and watermelon. They also erected a log cabin and made preparations for their family to move to Gorhamtown. On August 13, 1736 the eighth Phinney child, Mary, was born.



Photo courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society

Mary Gorham Phinney, the eldest daughter of John Phinney, was the first white child born in Gorham. Born August 1739. Married Mr. James Irish.

She was the first white child to be born in this wilderness. The family passed lonely days during the two years before other settlers arrived in short succession – the Moshers and the McLellans.

There were also Indians scattered in the area; their villages bearing names of the headwaters in the area – the Ossipees, the Androscoggins and the Pequokets. The children played together, and for the first seven to eight years, as new families moved into the settlement, all was peaceful.

Today, if you stand on the bridge over the Little River on Route 114, and look downstream, you will see ledges on both sides

that form a miniature canyon. Some distance beyond this, and not within sight, is more ledge. About 20 feet above the current water level, on private property, is Phinney Rock, marked "John Phinney, May 26, 1736." A small part of this ledge was placed in Phinney Park, and dedicated at the bicentennial observance in 1936. Today, if you look past Phinney Rock near the cemetery wall you will see the graves of John Phinney, his wife and some of their 10 children.

PHINNEY ROCK



Photo credit: Martha T. Harris

Greg Cuffey stands before Phinney Rock while thumbing through "Bi-Centennial History of Gorham, Maine 1736-1936," compiled and edited by Walter H. Johnson, which Cuffey used to accurately identify this first historic spot in the Township of Gorham.

Be sure not to miss the four-page insert – found in the middle of this issue – entirely dedicated to the Gorham Founders' Festival being held on Friday, May 27 through Monday, May 30. The insert contains a schedule of events for each of the three days, a map showing where each event is being held, information on the Founders' Festival committee, and photographs from other town anniversaries. The insert can easily be separated from the rest of the issue, making it portable to bring to the festival as an informative guide.

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HISTORICAL EVENTS

IN THE TOWN OF GORHAM (1736-2011)



This statue of an American Indian used to be in the town square until it was stolen and never recovered.



Early 1900's, Gorham Village



Photos this page courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society

People from Gorham enjoy a picnic in the 1900's.

- 1733 Narragansett #7, one of the seven townships granted by the General Court of Massachusetts to those who fought in the Narragansett War.
- 1736 First settlers, Captain John Phinney and son Edmund landed on southerly side of the Little River.
First child born in Gorham: Mary Gorham Phinney.
- 1738 Hugh McLellan and Daniel Mosher came to town.
- 1741 November 24-26 Proprietor's meeting voted to build a meeting house for the worship of God. Committee appointed to lay out a road to Scarappa (Westbrook), and General Court granted money to erect a fort.
- 1742 First oxen, first sawmill (John Gorham) at Little River, and first preacher hired for six months.
- 1744 Fort built on Fort Hill.
- 1745 Eighteen families in town.
Meeting house on Fort Hill and grist mill burned by Indians.
- 1746 Ten families in town. Some moved away because of threatened by first Indian attacks. Five children born to families in the fort.
- 1750 Black tongue disease broke out in fort, 25 persons afflicted, four died.
Women called upon to defend the fort. Eleven soldiers provided by General Court to assist in defense.
- 1754 Bridge over Little River erected. Road cleared for wheels to Standish.
- 1757 Jacob Hamblen was first tavern keeper.
- 1761 Edmund Phinney instructed children in his kitchen. Austin Alden also a teacher while in fort children were taught by older boys paid by mink and muskrat skins.
- 1762 Approved incorporation of town. October 24, 1762.
- 1763 Population 340 (60-70 families). 20th town in Maine.
Gorham had no glass windows. William McLellan erected the first two story house.
- 1765 First Town Meeting, February 18. Forty pounds voted for schools.
- 1770 First physician, Dr. Stephen Swett.
Steven Longfellow, great grandfather of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, moved from Portland to Gorham when Portland was burned by the British fleet.
- 1771 100 families in town. 30 pounds raised for schools.
- 1772 Population 600, plus 4 slaves, 77 horses, 281 cows, 204 oxen, 506 sheep, and 125 swine.
- 1773 First high school in White Rock. 40 pounds raised for schools.
- 1777 First meeting of Quakers.
- 1781 First Free Will Baptist church.
- 1787 Public school system changed from term to full year.
- 1797 First Parish Meeting House erected.
- 1790 First district school on Brick Parish lot corner of Church Street and School Street.
- 1791 Two tanneries in town.
- 1792 Population over 2000. 200 pounds raised for schools.
- 1797 Post office established with mail twice a week. Until this time, mail came once a week.
- 1801 First lawyer, John Park Little.
- 1802 Gorham Academy incorporated. It opened September 9, 1806 with 33 scholars.
- 1804 The Methodist Society of Gorham, Buxton and Standish incorporated.
- 1811 Elihu Baxter began the practice of medicine.
- 1812 Money raised for purchase of fire engine.
- 1814 The first public library in Gorham located in Nathaniel Gould's house on Main St.
- 1819 Gorham voted in favor of separation from Massachusetts. Gorham had four senators and 15 representatives in the Massachusetts Legislature.
- 1821 Free Meeting House built on College Avenue, now USM Art Gallery.
- 1822 Paul Revere Bell installed in First Parish Meeting House tower. Cast in Canton, MA by Joseph Revere, son of Paul Revere. Inscription on bell reads Revere-Boston.
- 1827 Ellen Gould Harmon, a co-founder of the Seventh Day Adventist Society, born on Fort Hill Road, November 26.
- 1835 William J. Woodbury purchased from Benjamin Phinney a piece of land upon erected a palatial mansion so distinctive and elaborate that it came to be known as Woodbury's Folly
- 1837 Gorham Female Seminary dedicated September 13. The following year, this Seminary was separated from the Gorham Academy.
- 1841 Free Baptist Meeting House erected at Little Falls.
- 1843 First North Gorham School House (little red schoolhouse) is erected.
- 1846 Work begun on York Cumberland Railroad, Portland to Rochester. First train 1851.
- 1866 Monument in memory of those who perished in the Civil War is dedicated and located in front of the old Town House on College Avenue (presented to the Town by the Honorable Toppan Robie) 386 served and 57 died.
- 1866 Fort Hill School.
- 1867 Portland Water District laid first pipes. Toppan Robie donated clock in First Parish Church steeple.
- 1868 Gorham Savings Bank opened for business.
High School built on South Street cost \$10,000.
- 1869 Tannery buildings on Main Street burned and was Gorham's largest fire.
- 1870 First train on Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad from Portland to Sebago Lake ran on September 12.
- 1877 Little red schoolhouse at North Gorham burned. It was rumored to be arson due to Prohibition feud.
- 1878 Gorham Normal School dedicated. First principal William Corthell.
- 1882 Honorable Frederick Robie elected Governor of the State of Maine. Re-elected in 1884
- 1888 Frederick Robie School built at Little Falls.
- 1889 Town required to furnish free text books.
- 1892 Town accepted the offer of library building and Baxter House.
- 1893 1894 Gorham Female Seminary building destroyed by fire.
- 1894 School districts abolished and Superintendent of Schools established. School Board to be elected not appointed.
- 1897 First electric cable cars ran from Westbrook to Gorham Village. Extended to Little Falls in 1899.
- 1902 Volunteer Fire Company organized with William T. Libby as first Fire Chief. First paid fire fighting in 1906.
- 1903 Hugh McLellan's The History of Gorham, Maine was published.
Vote to buy snow rollers. Rollers first used in 1914.
Electricity came to Gorham.

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HISTORICAL EVENTS

IN THE TOWN OF GORHAM (1736-2011)

- 1907 Baxter Memorial Library presented to Town by Honorable James Phinney Baxter.
- 1916 Fire destroys Narragansett Block in Gorham Village, Three days later fire destroyed much of White Rock (Post Office and store, Martin residence, Railroad Depot, Farmers Union store, and a grist mill).
- 1920 First boys' basketball team at Gorham High School. Girls' team in 1922.
- 1922 First motorized snow plows.
- 1923 1923 New chemical fire engine cost \$2,000.
- 1924 First Junior High erected on School Street, later Charlotte Millett School.
- 1925 Gorham High School damaged by fire. Rebuilt with 6 classrooms and modern toilets.
- 1929 State Inspector of Schools says Gorham Schools above average.
- 1930 New firehouse erected on South Street.
- 1932 Robie Gym built.
- 1939 Dedication of the new high school, Charles C. Shaw School.
- 1940 Gorham dial telephone system began.
- 1943 Town meeting approved Sunday movies in Gorham.
- 1945 Gorham Normal School renamed Gorham State Teachers College.
- 1946 Sidney Branson, M.D. began his practice in Gorham. He retired in 1982.
- 1952 February, the Great Snow Storm. Turnpike closed; communities isolated for several days.
- 1955 Newly organized Congregational Church begun in North Gorham.
- 1958 Eldon Shute appointed first Town Manager.
- 1959 New High School on Morrill Avenue opened.
- 1960 Last freight trains through Gorham Village. Rails removed in 1961.
- 1962 New White Rock School opened.
- 1963 New Village Elementary School opened.
- 1964 New post office opened on Main Street.
First marked Police Cruiser came into service and Stephen Wentworth was named first Police Chief.
- 1965 Retirement of Earle B. Files after 30 years as Postmaster. Charles Turner and Donald Collelo first full time police officers.
Gorham State Teachers College renamed Gorham State College.
- 1968 Formation of Gorham Rescue Squad.
Beginning of Town Council-Manager form of government after more than 200 years of Town meetings and Selectmen.
Death of Edgar Carswell, pharmacist; town meeting moderator for many years.
Gorham State College renamed Gorham State College of the University of Maine.
- 1969 June 15, death of Percival P. Baxter; ex-governor and Town benefactor.
- 1970 Gorham State College of the University of Maine renamed University of Maine at Portland and-Gorham.
- 1971 St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church on lower Main Street started construction
- 1972 Death of Charlotte Millett; founder and leader of Gorham Camp Fire Girls.
- 1973 North Gorham Library burned and Babbæ's Bridge burned by arsonists.
- 1975 The Rust Farm burned and town participated in a barn raising for the family.
- 1977 Brenda Caldwell sworn in as Town Clerk and was first woman to hold this office.
- 1978 USM Centennial Convocation; keynote speaker Sr. Harold Wilson, former Prime Minister of Great Britain.
University of Maine at Portland-Gorham renamed University of Southern Maine.
- 1979 Rodney S. Quinn installed as Secretary of State. He served 27 years in Air Force and d on Joint Chiefs of Staff, returned to Gorham in 1969; served on Gorham Town Council and as State Representative from Gorham.
- 1981 Narragansett School opened
- 1982 Jody Thomas named Gorham's first policewoman
Constance Goldman named Superintendent of Schools, first woman to hold this position in Gorham.
- 1984 Mobil Station, at junction of Main Street and New Portland Road, replaced by Cumberland Farms.
- 1985 Burger King opened in part of former IGA building on Main St.
David Kurz appointed Chief of Police.
- 1986 Gorham's South Street Historic District was created by the Federal Government. (18 homes)
Edna DickeyÆs book Fifty Years of Gorham 1936-1986 was published.
Maurice Whitten's book, "The Gunpowder Mills of Gorham, Maine," was published.
Bertha Willis wrote "The Way It Was in Gorham" for the 250th anniversary of the town.
- 1987 Robert Lefebvre appointed as first full-time fire chief.
- 1988 The first paid full-time rescue personnel (Steve Rines, Kandy Lefebvre, Paul Conley and Robertâ Bernard) were added to Gorham Rescue.
- 1989 Gorham House was completed and opened.
- 1992 Wayne "Pooch" Drown became the first DARE Officer assigned to the High School.
1995 First issue of the bi-weekly volunteer run Gorham Times published.
Completion of the high school renovation.
Ronald Shepard appointed Police Chief. He was the first Chief to work up through the ranks of the GPD.
- 1998 The Great Ice Storm started with freezing rain falling for 50 hours. Families were without power for up to two weeks.
200th anniversary of the founding of the First Parish Congregational Church.
New Post Office built on Mechanic Street.
- 2004 The historic Mosher Farm barn at Mosher's Corner, burned to the ground. The house was saved. Fire was arson.
- 2005 Shaw Park: 12 acres on the Presumpscot River between Gambo Bridge and the train trestle were donated to the town by Shaw Brothers Inc.
- 2006 Shaw Junior High School renovated into the Gorham Municipal Center.
The old Municipal Center on Main Street became the Gorham Public Safety building.
Gorham Middle School on Weeks Road opened.
- 2007 Groundbreaking for the bypass between Route 114 and Route 25.
- 2008 100th Anniversary of Baxter Memorial Library celebrated.
- 2009 Bernard P. Rines Bypass officially opened and named.
- 2011 Gorham celebrates 275th Anniversary.



James Phinney Baxter

James Phinney Baxter (March 23, 1831 – May 8, 1921) was born in the Baxter House on South Street in 1831. The home was originally built on the current site where stands the Baxter Memorial Library. In 1907 Baxter approached Governor Robie with a proposal to fund the building of a public library in Gorham, with the condition that his childhood home be made into a museum. The proposal was accepted, and in September 1908 the Baxter Memorial Library and Baxter House Museum opened their doors. (Adapted from www.baxter-memorial.lib.me.us/museum/)



Built as a dormitory in 1837, the Seminary was destroyed by fire in 1894.

Image courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society

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— Around Town —

**THE VILLAGE OF GORHAM GROWS INTO A TOWN
 AROUND THE RAILROAD**

Excerpted from Gorham Times insert "Gorham Station Historical Menu," Winter 1995/96

THE BOSTON & MAINE

The railroad from Portland to Gorham was known first as the York & Cumberland. In 1865 the line extended to Rochester, NH and the name was changed to Portland & Rochester. In 1881 Boston & Maine took over the stock and in 1900 this line was completely owned by the Boston & Maine Railroad Company, which carried on its business through Gorham until 1946.

GORHAM NORMAL SCHOOL

Passenger trains brought students to the Gorham Normal School, a predecessor institution to University of Southern Maine. One of the stipulations for the site for such a school was access by "water or rail." Dignitaries came by rail to observe and participate in special celebrations.

A SPECIAL TREAT

After the regular passenger service ceased, there was at least one time when a fleet of passenger trains brought people from the Sanford-Goodall factory through Gorham on an excursion to Old Orchard Beach. Seven trains, each with 10 coaches, were filled with employees and their families.

Wednesday Feb 5, 1851 was a "great day for Gorham. This day passenger cars ran from Gorham to Portland. Hundreds and hundreds crowded the cars to capacity...most of the village children took a ride to Portland and back. Flags waved, cannons were fired and it was a general holiday."

JOSEAH PIERCE'S DIARY

A SAD DEMISE

By 1961 not even freight trains passed through the village anymore. It was reported that the rails were shipped to Liberia and used to connect Monrovia with the bush country.

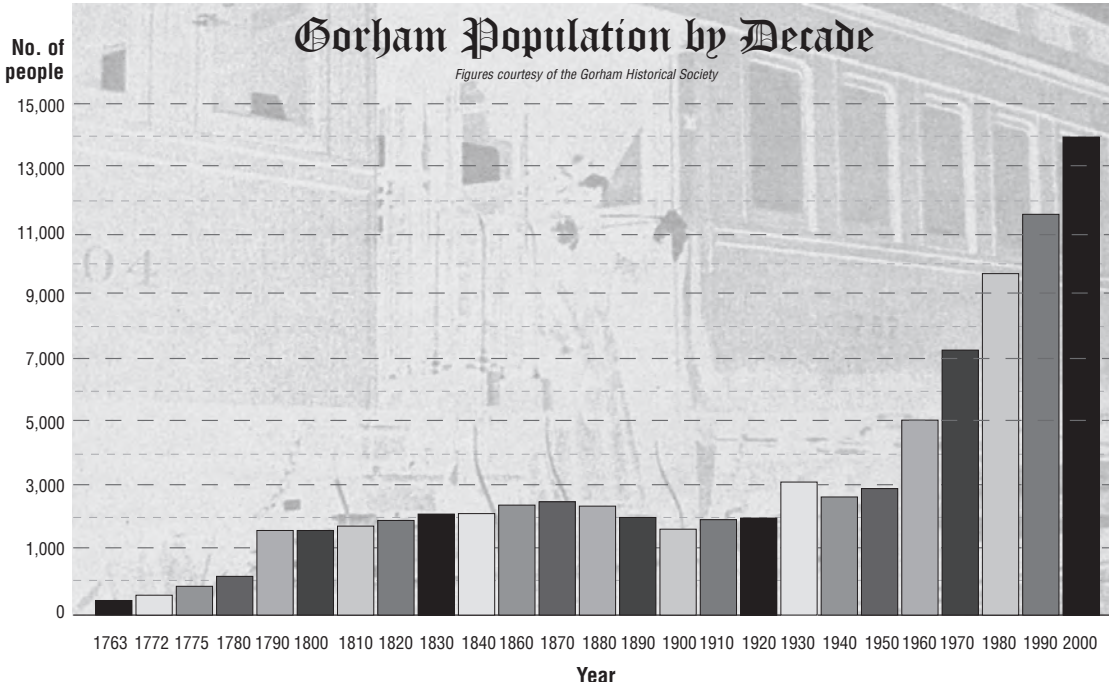
THE BRIDGE DISAPPEARS

In 1964 the South Street (Route 114) bridge was removed, the road was repaired and the fact that there ever had been a railroad under that section was concealed. After more than one hundred years, the romance of the railroad in Gorham Village was no more. ❀



Original Depot, 1850

Photo courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society



HOW WHITE ROCK GOT ITS NAME

Except taken from "History of Gorham, Maine" by Hugh D. McLellan

The locality known as White Rock owes its name to a large boulder, which used to stand on the hill, in the field nearly in front of the White Rock Church. It was a large, white rock, some ten to twelve feet in height, with a sloping top, and formed a conspicuous object for miles around. Against this rock the Indians, stopping here to rest on their way from Sebago Pond to the salt water, used to build their fires to cook their meat. Later, when the white men had penetrated the forest, and begun to cull out the larger trees for masts, there was a "mast camp" built around the rock. Still later, when lumbering had become more of a business, it was the custom to rest and bait the cattle on the flat top of the hill, near the white rock, while their owners prepared their own food over a fire kindled in the same old place against the rock. Captain John Sturgis, on whose farm the rock lay, finally decided to destroy it; but said afterwards that he never in his life was so sorry for any act of his, and that the moment the powder exploded and the stone flew into pieces he would have given anything to have been able to put it back as it was before. But it was too late, the landmark was gone forever. ❀

DEVASTATING WHITE ROCK FIRE IN 1916

Except taken from Gorham Historical Society newsletter, January 2006

On October 1916 at approximately 11:30 a.m., a suspicious fire broke out in Marshall Shackford's White Rock general store, which contained the post office, and then spread to the John Martin House, the barn, store and grain mill. High winds cause the flames to leap the road to the storehouse of Farmers' Union Inc. and the Maine Central Railroad Station. Luckily a passing train blew a long blast to rouse the neighbors but with the firefighting equipment so distant and intense winds, all seven buildings were completely destroyed in a little over an hour.

The central portion of the White Rock community virtually disappeared in this fire. Only the rail depot rebuilt sometime later. The total loss was estimated at \$35,000. As a business community, White Rock never recovered. ❀



White Rock Depot

Photos courtesy of John Phinney



MILK MEN'S HOUR, WHITE ROCK, ME.

Milk Men's Hour, White Rock, 1909

Photos courtesy of John Phinney

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— Community Profiles —



Photo courtesy of Gorham Times archives

Gorham High School Girls' Basketball Team, 1919.
Ella Hannaford (Bachelder) back row, second from left.

**ELLA
HANNAFORD
BACHELDER**

Edited excerpt from Gorham Times, March 22, 1996, written by Peter Bennett

“I was born in Gorham. The house opposite Barrows Greenhouse was the Hannaford home, and the Barrows house there by the greenhouse was where my grandparents lived. My uncle started the first greenhouse there way back then. It’s wonderful to reflect and see the difference just in that main street, the different ones that have moved away, the new ones that have come. Still a nice town.”

**GORHAM HIGH GIRLS
BASKETBALL, 1919**

“In those days Westbrook and Portland had girls’ basketball teams; however Pennell Institute (in Gray) was the only small school that had one. So two or three of us got together, and we began to talk, we wanted to have a girls’ basketball team in Gorham. It took quite a lot of persuading people that we should do it, but we finally won out. We used to play in what was originally the town hall, which is today connected with the college, and we used to have to go up there, build our fire, get the place warmed up. We wore middy blouses and navy blue bloomers, all dressed alike. It really and truly was quite an ordeal.”

**MARRIAGE TO HENRY
BACHELDER**

Ella graduated in June 1921, and married Henry Bachelder in July, moving to North Street. They were married 65 years. “I met Henry at a dance. They used to have the country-dances out in West Gorham years ago. The hall has burned since then. We could only go with my brother Joe and my sister Carrie. Mom would let us go up there because it was nice, clean, a Grange sort of thing, we would go there when we were in high school. Henry and I would go to a place for dancing and come to find out they’d have a prize waltz and we’d go on and we’d win and get the prize, a big cake or something like that, so we’d all get together for that. We used to do that a lot. I used to say I would never marry a man that didn’t dance, because I knew very well I’d cheat on him. I couldn’t give up dancing. But I married Henry so it worked out fine.”

**GREEN STREET
BUSINESS**

From 1950 to 1970, Ella operated a beauty parlor out of their home. “That house on Green Street now is one of the historical places of Gorham, but you’d be surprised at the things I did to that, putting on the beauty parlor. I had a fireplace in the beauty parlor; it was very lovely. We made over every room. Poor Henry! He’d come home and I’d have a partition wall down to make an archway or something.”

**MAURICE
WHITTEN,
CELEBRATED
MAINE AUTHOR
AND TEACHER**

Abigail Cuffey, Reprinted from Gorham Times, 08/14/1998



Photo credit: Martha T. Harris

Maurice Whitten

A lover of all things scientific in nature, Maurice Whitten is a true Mainer. His interest in saving and glorifying a small town’s historic features are well known not only in Maine, but all over the country. His book, “The Gunpowder Mills of Maine,” is currently in its second printing and is available in libraries and chains, such as Target, statewide. In an age when people look to build new facilities, Whitten’s passion is to help preserve the old. He believes that they tell a story a story of how we got to be where we are today.

This celebrated author was born in Providence, RI but spent the majority of his childhood in Maine. He moved to Gorham in 1955.

He received a chemistry degree from Colby College and a master’s degree in teaching science from Columbia University. After acquiring his Ph.D. in chemistry at Ohio State, he began his teaching career where he taught science at Lewiston High School for seven years.

Whitten’s contributions to Gorham begin with his legacy at the Gorham State Teacher’s College (now USM) where he began teaching in 1955, and retired from there in 1983. While teaching chemistry, Whitten discovered that he was

also intrigued by the history of science. His passion became not just to teach science, but to learn how it was created. He found his answer through the gunpowder mills.

Whitten’s interest in Gorham’s history was first sparked when he took a tour of Gorham and the tour guide briefly stopped down Gambo Road and pointed out the mill. In the foreword of his book “The Gunpowder Mills of Gorham, Maine,” the tour guide is quoted as saying “There was an old gunpowder mill somewhere in this area, but I don’t know much about it.” Whitten decided to find out more.

Take a walk down Gambo Road and you’ll be sent back in time to a place where history was made. Behind modern developments and a dusty gravel pit, you will find rushing streams of water, pathways and foundations of mills that have remained there since 1872 when the first mill was built.

Whitten’s interest was stimulated by how the mills moved and what went into the gunpowder (sulfur, potassium nitrate and charcoal). His curiosity included: the civil war; raw materials and where they come from; the composition of gunpowder; explosions that occurred while producing; financial problems; sales; as well as other companies in comparison.

In Maurice’s book, you can find the answer to the question: What mill supplied about 25 percent of the gunpowder used by the Union during the civil war. The answer is Gorham’s Gambo Mill.

While flipping through his book you can see why Gorham was such a good place for a mill. The town had all the charcoal and water power needed to employ 45 people—a lot in the 1860s. The gunpowder mill eventually closed down in 1905 when it was sold to Laffin and Rand Company. This was a result of mills shutting down statewide due to the decreased need for gunpowder for military purposes (the war was long over) and an increased need for blasting powder for the production of new railroads, etc.

Today, Whitten is still an active member of the Gorham Historical Society and continues to focus on another hot topic

**LILLIAN
HAMBLÉN
GRANT**

*Phil Bartlett
(Excerpt reprinted from Gorham Times, 12/14/2001)*

Lillian Hamblen Grant was born in 1914, and first lived in a house on the corner of South Street and the “Dump Road.” Her family moved to the old Hamblen farm, which came into the family in 1787. She recalls as a child going down to the cellar to retrieve cream and butter, where it was kept at night because it was cool. Electricity did not make it to that part of Gorham until 1929. Grant’s mother used to make butter and then “take it around to make pin money. “When she was old enough to drive, Grant took her mother around in the truck to deliver the butter. Her mother never drove, though she was good at harnessing horses.

Grant did not start school until she was seven. She was held back until her younger brother, Almerly, was ready to start school too. Almerly bragged, “Lin can lick any boy up there!” Grant sat in the back row of her first-grade class at Frederick Robie School with two other Lillians – Lillian King and Lillian Irish. She recalls

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

these days—the environment. He has been a supporter of all things historic in Gorham, especially preserving the Shaw Middle School and any other remnant of what Gorham used to be.

His hobbies include traveling to places such as the British Isles and Italy. When asked what advice he has for the younger generation who want to get involved with the history of science, he said: “Our greatest learning tool is just to ask. Ask your elders questions, and if you listen, you just might learn about what has been there all along.”

Thanks to an interest few hold today, Whitten continues to defy a concern for the new and instead relishes in the old.



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School



Photo credit: Martha T. Harris

The White Rock School, serving students from kindergarten through second grade, opened in November 1962 and is scheduled to close in June 2011.

A closing ceremony will be held on June 2 from 5-7 p.m. with a BBQ, nature walk, obstacle course, hula-hoop, and many more fun activities.

Rain date is June 3. Please call 222-1050 to RSVP.



Photo credit: Martha T. Harris

Frederick Robie School, located near the intersection of Routes 202 and 237, held classes through ninth grade. The school is currently available through the Gorham Recreational Department on weekends and evenings for community events, wedding receptions and birthday parties. The school, which was completely rehabilitated by PTA volunteers, is currently available through the Gorham Recreational Department on weekends and evenings for community events, wedding receptions and birthday parties.

The Village Elementary School was built in 1963, replacing the Charlotte Millett School built in 1924 and The Frederick Robie School built in 1888.

The Shaw School was opened in September 1939 as a three-year high school, which started with about 135 students.

The old high school, used between 1868 and 1939, was located beside the current Robie Gym. The school was built for about \$10,000. It was later used to house fire trucks. Robie Gym served for many years as the high school gymnasium.

Gorham's newest elementary school, Great Falls, is currently under construction and is scheduled to be complete in July 2011.

Starting in September 2011, Gorham's three elementary schools will each serve students from kindergarten through fifth grade.



Class of 1898

Photo courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society



Class of 1909

Photo courtesy of Gorham High School Library



Gorham High School, 1913 school play

Photo courtesy of Gorham High School Library



Photo courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society

The new "Old Robie School of Little Falls," is a colonial revival classic that sits on top of the hill on Rt. 202, just south of the roundabout and Sweets N Eats. It was first built in 1888, and existed as The Frederick Robie School, after the Honorable Frederick Robie, the twice-elected Governor of Maine.



Children sit at desks at the Gorham High School assembly room in 1938.

Photo courtesy of Gorham High School Library

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Sports



Clockwise from top, left:

Gorham High School Football team, 1911

Gorham High School Boys' Basketball team, 1927

Gorham High School Girls' Basketball team, 1929

Gorham High Undeclared Baseball Team won 38 consecutive games in 1938

Gorham High School Basketball team, 1920

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Historic Sites

GAMBO POWDER MILLS

Glenn Parkinson (Excerpt reprinted from Gorham Times, 11/03/1995)

Did you know that one quarter of the gunpowder used during the Civil War was made at the Gambo Gunpowder Mills site in Gorham?

In 1992, Shaw Brothers donated the site to the Gorham Land Trust. "The Gambo area is one of Gorham's most important historical areas," said Betsy Shevenell, then president of the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust (formerly named Gorham Land Trust). "Not only is it the site of the gunpowder mills but it also includes part of the old Cumberland Oxford Canal," continued Shevenell.

After the Land Trust was given the land, work crews were



organized to clear brush from the paths. Shevenell added, "The paths are now open to the public and are a wonderful place to walk."

The bridge spanning the Presumpscot River is no longer open and the river above the dam is one of Gorham's favorite swimming holes. On a hot summer day kids, adults and dogs can be found enjoying the cool waters or just hanging out.

Upriver from the bridge is a small island where charcoal, used in the making of gunpowder, was made. Wood

was packed into metal barrels, sealed and then baked. The island site reduced the chances of a dangerous explosion being ignited by the charcoal making. The submerged old wood dam is sometimes visible coming off the north side of the island and continuing under the current bridge. Granite abutments for the old bridge to the island are also still visible.

A path from the parking area leads down to the granite foundations of the mills. The first foundation is circular, the others are all square. The water wheel in this first mill, used to power the grinding wheels, was laid flat in the foundation. A raised earth trail leading past the mills is the actual path the workers used, although then it was a wooden boardwalk. Workers wore felt slippers and pushed wooden wheelbarrows made with copper nails. The barrows had felt covered wheels. Iron nails in a pair of boots or on a wheelbarrow

could cause a spark that could ignite a deadly explosion.

The individual mills were spaced 500 feet apart to prevent one explosion from damaging too much of the production. On the right side of the path is the raceway that carried water to power the mills. The Land Trust property ends just past the fourth mill.

The canal was first proposed in 1791, but due to difficulty in raising money, was not opened until 1830. The building of the canal was a major engineering feat and included a 100-foot aqueduct, a bridge for boats, over the Little River near the Land Trust St. Pierre property.

The canal opened up the interior of Cumberland and Oxford counties to shipments of produce. Lumber, cord wood, farm products and of course gunpowder, were shipped out. Furniture, manufactured goods and liquor were shipped in. At its peak, 150 canal boats used the waterway.

As you walk along the tow-

path, the canal is to your left. Horses walked the same path towing boats. Two of the 27 locks needed to raise boats as they traveled inland from the ocean to Long Lake were located on this section of the canal. On occasion, explosions at the gunpowder mills damaged the towpath. When the boats reached open water in Sebago, they raised sails to traverse the lake.

Horses towing barges loaded with lumber and workers in felt slippers pushing wheelbarrows on wooden boardwalks are part of Gorham's history. Today, the trails are quiet. Granite foundations sit in mute acknowledgment of the tension of the Civil War. Quiet beauty and the sense of stories untold have replaced the bustle of years past. More information can be found in Maurice Whitten's book "The Gunpowder Mills of Gorham" or by contacting the Land Trust at www.prlt.org or prlandtrust@yahoo.com. ❀

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NAME THAT HILL

Lennie Cross (Excerpt reprinted from Gorham Times, 08/01/1997)

Can you name the Gorham hill that was named for a well-placed bribe?

Fort Hill Road, first known as King Street, was once the main highway for all traffic traveling east through Standish from New Hampshire—particularly Coos County. The route followed an old Indian trail to the seashore, where Native Americans wisely spent summers on the coast. The rolling hills from Sebago Lake were difficult for oxen and horse teams when the roads were dry and hard packed; they were nearly impossible in the mud and snow.

Around 1820 serious discussion began about a new route from Standish to Gorham. The Court of Massachusetts granted a road, and then appointed a

committee to examine the possibilities and choose the best route. Fort Hill, as the existing route, was to be examined first. While the road committee was engaged in surveying what was, a group of people from Gorham Village and West Gorham began preparing what they hoped would be. "With oxen, ploughs, shovels, and crowbars" they began to alter the slope of a hill to better their chances of a new route. The industrious citizens accomplished a great deal in the time allowed to survey King Street.

On the day the road committee was to inspect the most direct route from West Gorham to Gorham Village. A crowd gathered with the intention of joining the committee in their survey. One member of the group suggested they fill a flask with the best spirits of a certain type acquired from the village store. Armed with a quart of liquid refreshment, the villagers set forth. Reaching the brook at the base of their newly sculpted hill, they paused and placed the flask in the cooling

waters then continued on to West Gorham.

The day was warm for the stout chairman and soon he was perspiring greatly. Following his compass and noting his progress, he reached the brook where it was decided a rest was in order. One of the villagers jokingly suggested a nip would be a welcome addition to the cool stream water, and the chairman heartily agreed, but lamented the lack of opportunity to procure such spirits. A lad then produced the hidden flask amid much rejoicing. The flask was shared and enjoyed so much by the chairman that he announced: "I want to name this brook and Providence has provided it. I will call it 'Brandybrook.'"

Thus, the hill so carefully sculpted by the forward thinking group became Brandybrook Hill, and the road path laid out by the surveyor passed over the spot where the brandy had cooled. Next time you drive on Route 25, check the brook. Who knows what may be beneath the waters. ❀

FORT HILL

Lennie Cross, adapted from "History of Gorham, Maine" by Hugh D. McLellan

Fort Hill gets its name from a fortification that was erected in 1744 on the highest land in the town on thirty-acre lot No. 2 on the original map of Gorhamtown. At a meeting held on the 28th of August in 1744, the old proprietors of Gorhamtown or Narragansett No. 7 decided to build a fort of hewn timber in an oblong square about 50 feet long. This fort was to be surrounded by a palisade of heavy timber set in the ground. The timbers were 15 feet long with three feet set into the ground and 12 feet standing. There were watchtowers built at two diagonal corners with mounted cannons to be used as defense against hostile Indians, and to warn neighboring towns of attack. Inhabitants used the southeast tower as a place of worship. The Indians burned the meetinghouse in 1747.



The Fort Hill dedication plaque

The last record of any repairs made to the fort was in 1757. March 25, 1747 at the house of Joshua Freeman of Falmouth it was voted to pay Hugh McLellan one shilling and four pence, per foot for stockading to repair where walls had weakened. The timber of choice was stripped spruce, pine, or hemlock. The work was to be completed by April 15, 1757.

The fort was never tested by a large force of Indians. Small bands of Indians forced settlers to live at the fort for long periods of time (In 1746 there were six families living at the fort) but no large scale attacks threatened the bullet-proof design. ❀

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Historical Articles

GORHAM'S TANNERIES

Lennie Cross (Except reprinted from Gorham Times 11/17/1994)

It is believed that the first tanners in Gorham were William and John Cotton. William's 30 acres were on the road above Fort Hill. He tanned cowhides and calfskins for his neighbors. Other tanners listed in the tax roles were captain Oliver Hunt (1794) and Joseph Cressey (1805). Later there was a tannery, run by John Wilson and William Hasty, on the east side of School Street, next to First Parish Church (Ayers property), and another run by Humphrey Pike (1828).

Around 1800, agriculture began to replace lumbering as the primary local industry. Farmers were no longer merely subsisting, but were produc-



THERE WERE AT LEAST SIX TANNERIES IN GORHAM FROM 1794 TO 1828.

ing more than their family's needs. This change in lifestyle fueled a growth in specialized industries. Although there was no local slaughterhouse, hides could be acquired locally.

Moses Clark and his son, John, operated a tannery from 1792 to 1824 on Main Street (currently Village Mall.) In 1828 Captain James Irish built a larger tannery on Mechanic Street, which later converted to a corn-packing factory. It burned in 1871. In 1832, Stephen Hinckley purchased

the yards and buildings of Moses and John Clark and operated it until fire engulfed the building in 1869 – the largest fire in Gorham's history. The entire operation (except the office, Hinckley House and stable) was leveled in several fires during November. Rebuilt by the Hinckley's, the tannery's peak employment was 50 to 60 workers. In the 1920s, this tannery was the Ireson Tanning Company, a Massachusetts firm, employing about 20 workers. Its whistle signaled the

start of work, lunch, break, and quitting time, along with fire calls and no school.

The tannery had an underground duct of cut rock that channeled water to the tannery from the railroad brook pond (currently where Sebago Brewing Company is) and from a pond east of South Street (one block south of Green Street). A manhole located at the corner of the tannery property allowed the curious to look at the underground stream. The tannery was powered by coal-

generated steam. The earlier machine shop had been powered by a large undershot water wheel with water from a pond at Fairy Glen (behind the current Burger King).

In the main building, equipment was suspended from two 40-foot-long, one-foot-thick beams supported on eight huge ash ship's knees. Pooling tannic acid on the floor would have been highly corrosive to metal machine parts, so nothing sat directly on the floor.

When the railroad connected Gorham to Portsmouth and Boston in 1875, hides were no longer simply regionally acquired, but came from South America via the railroad. These much thicker hides were used for belts. Hides were tanned and finished and shipped to Bass Shoe and points south. The Ireson Tannery closed in 1932 when the closing of the railroad made receiving supplies and shipping finished products too costly. ❀

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FORT HILL-HALLOWED GROUND

Edna Dickey (Excerpt reprinted from Gorham Times, 03/08/1996)

Beginning with the first settlers and reaching into the twentieth century, the commanding elevation of Fort Hill has served well the needs of our residents. Today, the panoramic view draws people like a magnet, but very early in Gorham's history and even in our own century, it was a strategic spot for observing the enemy.

In the first years after settlement, the colonists in Gorham found the Indians to be friendly and helpful. When hostilities between the French and British arose, the native population's earlier friendliness changed to enmity. The General Court at Massachusetts took measures for the defense of its Maine settlements by selecting six sites for forts, including one in Gorham.

The Fort was inhabited for four years. According to McLellan's records, by 1744 there were 10 families in the colony and only four had not entered the Fort by 1746. Life in the Fort was one of privation, tension, and courage. There were at least two

periods of severe, contagious illness and food was often scarce or nonexistent. In the summer, the men struggled to raise as much food as possible. In the winter, when snows were deep, some families went home until the following spring. At harvest time, the men often worked together harvesting each property while a child stood guard on a stump watching for Indians.

Fort Hill played a strategic defense role again 200 years later, during World War II. A two-story tower was erected on the hill in order to spot the approach of enemy planes. Windows on all four sides made it possible to watch all airways and determine whether friend or foe was approaching. Field glasses aided the observers and



a telephone connected the tower with headquarters, where messages of enemy approach could be relayed to Fort Williams. This look-out was manned 24 hours a day, by men and women working in shifts. High school students took turns too. Because of the inaccessibility of Fort Hill to the volunteers due to gas rationing, the tower was moved to a little rise of land near the current Village School at some point during the war. Later it was purchased by members of the Robie family and moved a few hundred feet to its present location beside the garage of the Robie home on Robie Street, where it served as a shed and storage area.

Today, the plot of land we know as Fort Hill has become a public park with markers telling of our rich heritage. ❀

NEW PORTLAND ROAD

Tony Rimkunas (Excerpt reprinted from Gorham Times, 10/18/2002)

New Portland Road has perhaps the oddest name of any road in Gorham. First, it was built over 200 years ago. Second, while the road does go in the general direction of Portland, it only goes as far as Westbrook. In Westbrook, of course, the road is known as New Gorham Road.

Construction of New Portland Road began in 1818 or 1819. By August of 1818 the road was laid out from the corner where the Cumberland Farms and Mr. Bagel now stand, to Main Street in Westbrook. Gorham paid fourteen landowners a total of \$765 for the right to build the road over their land. Westbrook paid six landowners \$151.

How New Portland Road got its name remains a mystery. In the 1871 Atlas of Cumberland County, the road is marked as

Portland Street in Gorham and Gorham Road in Westbrook. At some point between 1904 and 1908 Gorham Road became New Portland Road. Portland Street in Gorham likely changed its name about the same time. What caused a road that was at least 80 years old to suddenly become new? The answer may be lost in history. It could be that something happened to the road that significantly changed it. Paving wasn't very common back then, but maybe it could have been widened or improved somehow.

The best clue is a hand drawn map at the Gorham Historical Society, probably from 1892. This map marks the road as "New Road." This might show that people in Gorham were calling the road New Road even though the official name was Portland Street. This nickname could have been more common than the official name. If something similar was true for New Portland Road, then it must be that at some point somebody decided it was silly to have a road called one name on all the maps but that everybody called something else, so the two names were merged into New Portland Road. ❀



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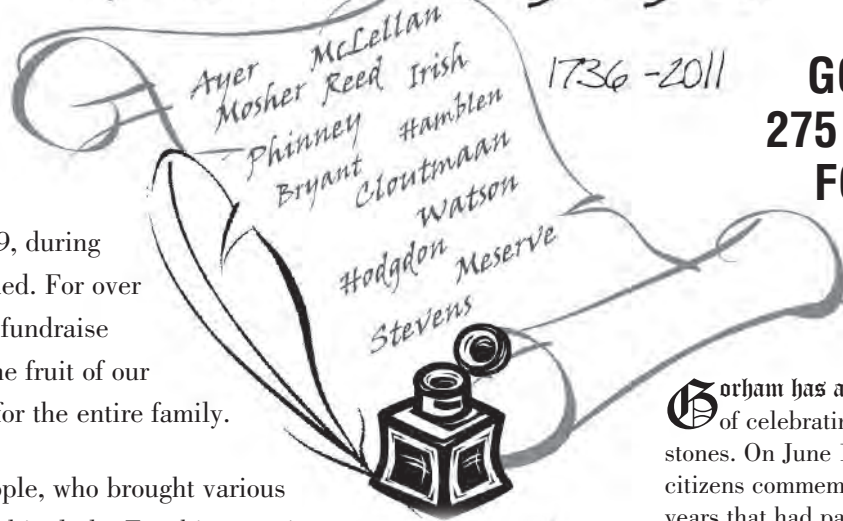
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Gorham Founders Festival



**GORHAM CELEBRATES
275 YEARS WITH GORHAM
FOUNDERS' FESTIVAL**

Dede Perkins

The Gorham Town Fair Committee was approved at the January 4, 2011 Gorham Town Council Meeting in order for the town to mark the 275th anniversary of its founding. The Committee's first meeting was held on January 19, during which the name and date of the event were decided. For over four months, the Committee worked diligently to fundraise in order to plan the events and entertainment. The fruit of our labor resulted in a weekend packed with events for the entire family.

The committee consisted of a variety of townspeople, who brought various perspectives and ideas on what the festival should include. For this year, it was our goal to make this a memorable event for the town by acknowledging Gorham's 275th. We also wanted to provide a singular venue that promotes fundraising for Gorham's school boosters and local non profits.

On behalf of the Gorham Town Fair Committee, the Gorham Times, our sponsors, and all those responsible in putting this together, enjoy the fair and help us celebrate a truly remarkable milestone – 275 years of Gorham history.

With sincerest thanks
and appreciation,
Philip T. Gagnon Jr.
Committee Chair

250th Parade



Photos courtesy of the Phillips Family



Photos courtesy of the Neal Family



Photo credit: Steve Neal

Paul and
Barbara Neal



Hot air balloons flew high
above the 250th celebration of
Gorham's founding.



Gorham has a proud history of celebrating town milestones. On June 10, 1836, town citizens commemorated the 100 years that had passed since John and Edmund Phinney first stepped onto the southerly bank of the Little River to become the first white men to settle in Gorham. Since then, commemorative celebrations have been held in 1936, 1964, 1976, and 1986. This year's Gorham Founders' Festival, which will take place over Memorial Day Weekend, May 27 – 30, 2011, marks and celebrates 275 years of Gorham history.

The Gorham Founders' Festival kicks off at 4 p.m. on Friday May 27th with amusement rides at Narragansett School. Fiddle Jam will play at 5 p.m. followed by the Don Roy Trio at 6:30 p.m. Saturday's opening ceremonies begin at 9 a.m. followed by a concert by the Gorham Chamber Singers at 10 a.m. Amusement rides will be open all day on Saturday, from 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Besides entertainment scheduled throughout the weekend, there will be a live benefit auction sponsored by the Gorham Historical Society at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday as well as a silent auction by the class of 2012. Both auctions will take place behind the Gorham Founders' Festival Information Booth at Narragansett. Historical bus tours will depart at 2 p.m. from St. Anne's Church on both Saturday and Sunday. The Gorham Fire Fighters' Chicken

Dinner will take place at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday followed by Pete Kilpatrick at 5 p.m. and Motor Booty Affair from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday's celebration culminates with fireworks at Narragansett at 9 p.m.

On Sunday, the Gorham Taste Walk will run from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. On the day of the festival, Taste Walk maps will be available at participating locations, including Hannaford, and in front of the Baxter Memorial Library. The Granite State Zoo will be at Narragansett from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. A historical walking tour will depart from the Hannaford flagpole at 2 p.m. Amusement rides reopen on Sunday at noon.

To honor and thank our local veterans, the Gorham Founders' Festival will conclude with the annual Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 30. Community organizations, churches, clubs, neighborhood groups, businesses, school groups, sports clubs and anyone else who wants to take part will meet at Village School to line up at 10 a.m. The parade will step off at 11 a.m. onto Lincoln Street then right onto South Street. The parade will pause for a brief wreath laying and salute at the memorials at Phinney Park then will proceed down Main Street. The Memorial Day Parade will end with a ceremony at the Eastern Cemetery.

For more information, please visit www.gorhamfoundersfestival.com. ❁

**Bring your canned food items to the Gorham Founders' Festival.
Collected items will be donated to the Gorham Food Pantry.**



Congratulations Gorham

Check out the Gorham Founders' Festival Booth at the Festival!



Photo courtesy of the Gorham Founders' Festival Committee

We will have items for sale including commemorative postcards with historical town photos, and available through pre-ordering will be Gorham Longaberger baskets and "Gorham 1986-2011," a book compiled by Abbot Mosher and Suzie Phillips.



Photos courtesy of the Neal Family

250th anniversary photo – Back row: Wright Faatz, Linda Treworgy Faatz, John Treworgy, Martha Treworgy Harris, Phyllis and Stubby Treworgy
Front row: Sarah Treworgy, Hannah Treworgy, Robyn Pettengill, Jennifer Pettengill and Nathan Faatz



Gorham Taste Walk Returns Sunday 5/29 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Take a walk through the village of Gorham and sample special items from restaurants, coffee shops and the like. Pick up your map at any location including Gorham House of Pizza, University of Southern Maine, St. Joe's Coffee, Thatchers, Amatos, Gorham Grind, Mr. Bagel, Hannaford, Lucky Thai, Sebago Brewing Company or Salty Dog Cafe. Maps are \$5 with a maximum of only \$15 per family. Vote for your favorite! Sponsored by Casco Federal Credit Union.



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On Your 275th Anniversary



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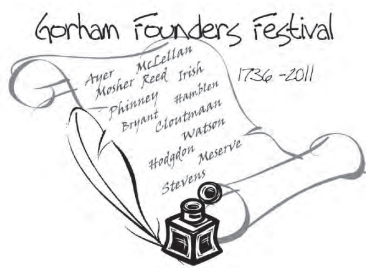
Photo courtesy of the Neal Family

250th anniversary photo – Above: Willis Farm Fire Department: In the front seat are Roberta and Steve Willis with their daughter Lydia. From left to right in the back of the fire truck are Dave Nichols, Jan Willis, Andy Wescott, and Troy Willis. Sitting directly behind Troy is Paul Willis with son David Willis.



Photo courtesy of the Willis Family

250th anniversary photo – Right: At the 250th celebration are longtime Gorham residents: Arnold Calderwood, Jack Perkins, Edna Dickey, and Paul and David Willis.



Map Key

1. Parking Lot (Spn. by Gorham Football Boosters)
2. Fireworks (Spn. by Moody's Collision)
3. Amusement Rides
4. Performance/Opening Ceremonies Stage (Spn. by Gorham Savings Bank)
5. Gorham Fire Fighters Chicken Dinner
6. Live Banniff Auction (Spn. by Gorham Historical Society)
7. Vendors
8. Festival Information Booth
9. Historical Tours (Spn. by Gorham Historical Society)
10. Handicap Parking at Narrigansett
11. Handicap Parking at St. Anne's Church
12. Parking Lot (Spn. by Knights of Columbus)
13. Bathrooms



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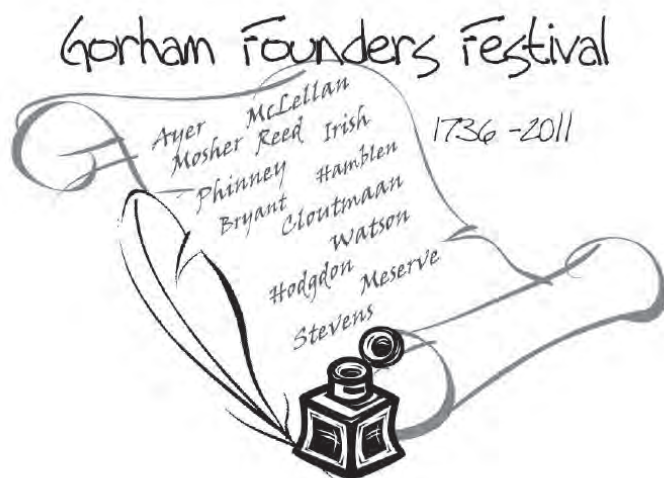
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Event Schedule

Friday, May 27 (Evening)

Amusement Rides	4-9 p.m.
Fiddle Jam	5-6:30p.m.
Don Roy Trio	6:30-8 p.m.

Saturday, May 28

Opening Ceremonies	9 a.m.
Gorham Chamber Singers	10 a.m.
Amusement Rides	10 a.m.-9 p.m.
Phil Smith Magician	11-11:30 a.m.
Phil Smith Magician	3-3:30 p.m.
Live Benefit Auction	11:30 a.m.
<i>Sponsored by Gorham Historical Society</i>	
Wayne From Maine	12 p.m.
Party Palooga Show	1:45-2:30 p.m.
Party Palooga Balloon Animals	2:30-3:30 p.m.
Historical Tours*	2 p.m.
Gorham Fire fighters Chicken Dinner	4:30 p.m.
Pete Kilpatrick- <i>Spon. by Grondin</i>	5 p.m.
Motor Booty Affair- <i>Spon. by Shaw Bros.</i>	7-9 p.m.
Fireworks- <i>Spon. by Moody's Collision Cntr</i>	9 p.m.

Sunday, May 29

Gorham Taste Walk	11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Granite State Zoo	10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Amusement Rides	12 p.m.
Fourniers Karate	12-1 p.m.
Jerks of Grass	1 p.m.
Historical Tours*	2 p.m.

* Provided by Gorham Historical Society

Monday, May 30 (Memorial Day)

Memorial Day Parade	11 a.m.
Amusement Rides	12 p.m.



250th anniversary photo -
The float for Cook's Country Store

Gorham Founders' Festival Tours

Reservations are suggested. Call the Gorham Recreational Department, 222-1630.

Gorham Historical Long Bus Tour 2 pm Sat. & Sun. (approx. 3 hours)

Board bus behind St. Anne's on Main Street
Travel on Main Street. Turn right on Fort Hill Road. Left on College Ave. Reverse and head north on Fort Hill Road. Right on Wescott Road thru White Rock. Stop at Merrifield Farm for a brief talk on the Indurated Fibre Co. Proceed to North Gorham for a stop at the former Levi Hall School, now a church. View amazing photographs of early Great Falls industries. Leave North Gorham traveling south on route 237. South on route 202. Left on Queen Street Right on route 237 to Mosher Corner. Right on Main Street, back to St Anne's

Gorham Historical Short Bus Tour 2 pm Sat. & Sun. (approx. 1 hour) Tour to encompass Village area history 100 to 150 years ago

Board bus behind St. Anne's on Main Street. Travel on Main Street past Eastern Cemetery.
Left on Mechanic Street. Right on Railroad Ave. Left on Elm Street. Right on Lincoln Street. Right on South Street. Left on College Ave. Right at entrance to USM, Right at Fort Hill Road/McLellan House. Fort Hill taking a left on Main Street to St. Ann's parking lot.

Gorham Historical Walking Tour 2 pm Sunday only. (approx. 1 1/2 hrs)

Meet at the Hannaford Flag Pole, in parking lot
Railroad Ave to Elm Street. Left on South Street. Cross street to Baxter House. South Street to High Street. Tour IOOF building. Left on College Ave. Reverse and travel up Main Street back to Hannaford.

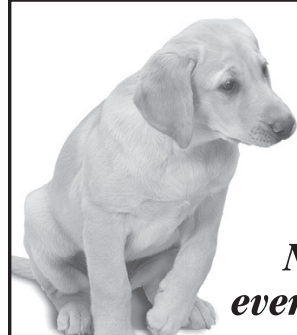
Gorham Historical Society Live Auction

The Historical Society will have a Live Auction at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 28 at the festival. Available will be certificates for heating oil, cord wood, screened loam, auto repair, horse riding lessons at area barns, loam, gourmet food, museum tickets, maple syrup, antiques and much more.

Rain Location Information

The rain location for Saturday's musical events - Motor Booty Affair and Pete Kilpatrick - will be at the YourSpace facility at 215 Narragansett Street.

The Wireless Society of Southern Maine, an amateur radio club that meets monthly at the Gorham Recreation Dept., will set up and operate a special event station during the Festival. The club will also set up an information display and members will be on hand to answer questions. For more information about the Wireless Society of Southern Maine, please visit the club's website at www.qsl.net/ws1sm.



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Of Interest

Ice Cutting



Photos courtesy of Alice Mains

Ice cutting, hauling and storing at Kimball Pond in early 1930s.

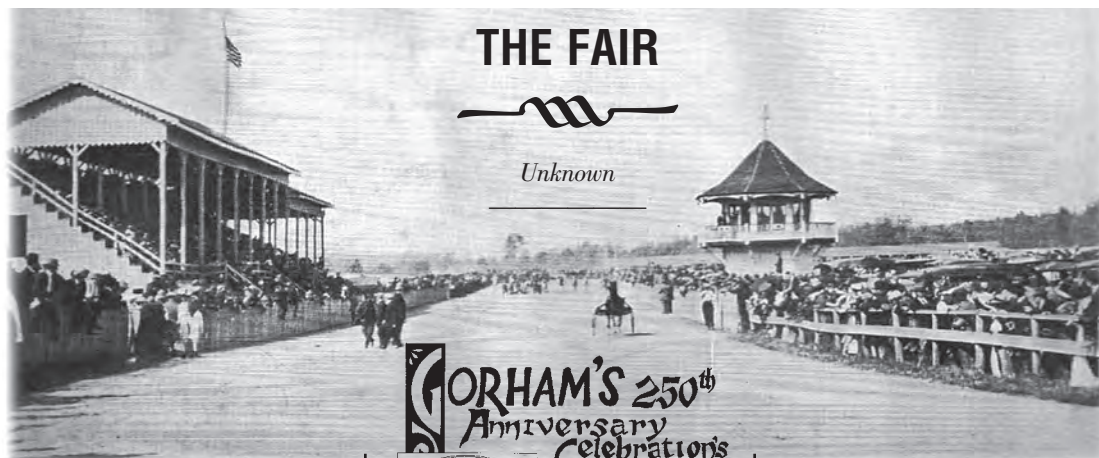


Photo courtesy of Gorham Historical Society

THE FAIR

Unknown

Like most Maine communities, Gorham's economy was originally based on farming. In order to support and encourage local farm families, an agricultural fair was organized. The result was The Cumberland County Agricultural and Horticultural Society Fair, held at the Narragansett Park (the old racetrack, now Moody field.)

The fairs began in 1839 and ran until 1941. At the fair farmers could see demonstrations of innovative ideas and new technologies for farming. There were family events too. For women there were displays of homemade pies, pickles, breads and handiworks. Men and children would watch the horse and ox-pulls and visit the animal exhibits. Prizes called premiums were



Photo courtesy of Suzie Phillips

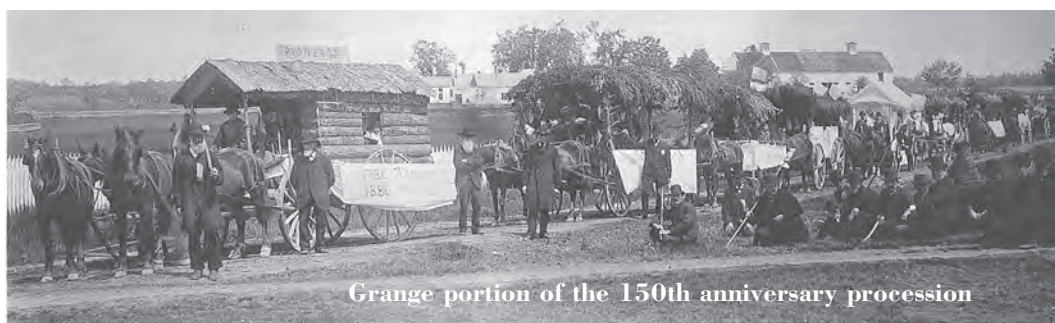
Poster for Gorham's 250th anniversary celebration held in 1986.

awarded for outstanding performance and goods. The 1895 fair program offered a special premium, "To the Handsomest

Girl in Cumberland County, \$10 in gold." Also at the fair was the traditional midway – games of chance and various shows.

The train and trolley that served Gorham provided much needed transportation. Rides to and from the fairground on the railroad were free upon showing a certificate from the Secretary of the Fair. The Maine Central Railroad gave free trips for livestock and articles exhibited. Carriages were used to shuffle fairgoers between the trolley depot in Gorham Square and Narragansett Park.

1941 marked the last of the fairs. Racing continued to prosper until the mid 1960s when a change in racing dates effectively closed the raceway.



Photos credit: John Phinney

Grange portion of the 150th anniversary procession



Photos credit: John Phinney

150th anniversary celebration in the Village



Photos credit: John Phinney

Parade procession in the 200th anniversary celebration

Gorham Times Archives

A story is told, by an elderly resident of town, of a murder that took place in Bickford's Stable, long ago. Several Gorham men gathered there for a party one evening. A "lady of the night" from Portland attended the party. In the morning, the body of a man was found in the stable. The men involved in this scandalous happening left town for several years. The whole shocking affair was hushed up.

Courtesy of "The Way It Was In Gorham" by Bertha Bridges Willis. Copyright 1986.

In 2006 Gorham made the Guinness Book of World Records for the most people wearing Groucho Marx glasses in the same place at the same time. In 2002, Gorham's Centre of Movement was noted for the longest distance tap dance when 13 dancers tapped from Portland to Gorham.

Electricity did not make it into some parts of Gorham until 1929.

Mail used to be delivered with horses. The delivery started at 7 a.m. with one horse, then that horse would be switched with another horse halfway through the delivery.

The Honorable Frederick Robie was elected governor in 1882 and reelected in 1884. He served until 1887. He was a member of the House of Representatives and presided as Speaker of the House in 1872 and 1876. The Gorham Normal School (now USM, Gorham campus) was established through his influence with the legislature.

The West Gorham Union Church was originally dedicated as the Union Christian Endeavor Chapel on March 16, 1899. The Ladies Circle of the area started raising money for the new building and is still an active part of the church today.





Maryanne Bear



Julie Chandler



Mike Griffin



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— Historical Buildings —



Photo courtesy of Gorham Historical Society

Gorham Academy ~ This is not only the oldest classroom building on the USM campus but is also one of the best examples of Federal school architecture in Maine. Gorham Academy was approved May 1805 and a Preceptor was selected. Students (at least 10 years of age) would receive instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar and composition, speaking, geography and the use of globes, mathematics and their various branches, and Latin and Greek. There would also be instruction in Precepts of the Christian Religion. 33 students were enrolled by the end of the year and girls were later allowed to enroll.

The co-educational arrangement continued for about 30 years before another building was added and the institution began its long evolution toward the USM we know today. In 1910 Academy Hall was given to the state under a 999-year lease under which the outside of the building was not to be altered and the building used for educational purposes only. Today it is used by the USM Art Department.



Photo courtesy of Gorham Historical Society

Paine House, Main Street and New Portland Road



Photo courtesy of John Plimney

Free Meetinghouse ~ Built in 1821 on land donated by Alexander McLellan, the original purpose was to provide a place for the displaced, church-based singing society, the Handels, who had many of the oldest and best singers in town. From 1850 for a hundred years was used as a Town Hall. Now used as the USM Art Gallery.



Photo credit Martha T. Harris

The Baxter House Museum is a little Federal style house over 200 years old, built in 1797 by Issac Gilkey. It is set back from the road and on the north side of the Baxter Memorial Library. This house was the home of the Baxter family for 20 years. In 1907, James P. Baxter donated the house to the Town of Gorham to be used as a museum.



Photo courtesy of Gorham Historical Society

Babb's Covered Bridge: Originally built in 1763. Present bridge erected in 1976 and is a replica of the one that burned in 1973. It is one of ten covered bridges remaining in Maine.

HUSTON FARM

Martha Sanborn (Reprinted from Gorham Times, 03/22/1996)

The old Huston Farm, located at the present day site of the Public Works garage and landfill, served as Gorham's Poor Farm for many years. Early in Gorham's history, the care of the poor fell to the selectmen. The town took care of the poor as economically as possible. Later, the poor were "let out" to the lowest bidder in exchange for their labor, an often profitable proposition for the bidder. In 1812, this practice was ended and the town began a search for a more permanent farm for the poor. Several farms were used, including John Hamblen Jr.'s farm on Gray Road, until 1837, when it was recommended that the Huston Farm be used. The 115-acre farm and buildings had been bequeathed to the town by Simon Huston upon the death of his wife, Elizabeth.

The town paid \$165 annually for the use of the farm until Gorham came into possession of the land after Mrs. Huston's death in 1865. Most of the labor was performed by the paupers who raised corn, grain, hay and potatoes. Later the farm had an overseer and he and his family lived there. In the early 1920s, Clifford Wescott and his family lived there, also Al York and his family.



Photo courtesy of Gorham Historical Society

Methodist Church Built in 1880, the educational building was adjoined in 1964. The building covers one of the earliest burying plots in the town. In 1803 Methodists had petitioned the General Court to be incorporated into a society separate from the existing church.

Located in the back field of the farm is the site of the Huston cemetery. The cemetery is enclosed by an old board fence and, until recently, was overgrown with bushes and trees. Richard Wing cut the trees and bushes in the burial plot, guaranteeing the Huston family, who gave so much to the town of Gorham, a decent burial site. ☸



Photo courtesy of Gorham Historical Society

This corn mill, owned by Elden Gamman, was behind what is now Burger King and Goodwill, on Main Street extending to Water Street. The wooden wheel, 100 feet in circumference, was entirely handmade. Mr. Gamman was credited with many inventions, including a machine for making buttonholes. His mill was later used as a carpet factory.

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Business Profiles

GORHAM SAVINGS BANK

Courtesy of the Gorham Savings Bank



Photos courtesy of Gorham Savings Bank

Top: The original Gorham Savings Bank.

Below: Toppan Robie, first president of Gorham Savings Bank

Gorham Savings Bank's charter was granted to the town of Gorham in 1868. Captain Toppan Robie was elected as the first president of Gorham Savings Bank, with Joseph Ridlon as vice president and John A. Waterman as secretary/treasurer. The Bank opened for business on Saturday afternoons from 1 to 4 p.m. in a brick building on School Street, which was built in 1845 for the Maine Mutual Fire Insurance Company. The following week, Gorham Savings Bank's first account was opened with a deposit of ten cents. By 1896, the bank was open from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

In 1904, it was voted to enter into a lease with the Gorham Real Estate Company for a part of their new building for a term of twenty years at the rental of

\$135 per year, plus a sum not to exceed \$40 per year for heat.

On October 16, 1916, a fire broke out that nearly destroyed the building. Despite damage from fire, the walls of the building remained standing. The vault escaped harm, and business was allowed to continue despite the extensive damage.

In 1959 Gorham Savings Bank moved to a new building at 64 Main Street and in 1988 opened an Operations Center on Wentworth Drive. In addition to supporting operations, a community room is available for free use by local non-profit organizations. This community room was dedicated and named after Clarence E. Carll, as he was president of the bank when the tree farm was purchased on which the Operations Center stands.

In 2001, Gorham Savings

PHINNEY LUMBER

Reprinted with permission from www.phinneylumber.com

Captain John Phinney arrived in Gorham with his family in 1736 and in doing so, became Gorham's first settlers. Captain John led a long and useful life in Gorham and was the first of many generations of Phinneys to deal in timber and timberlands.

Samuel W. Phinney married Eva Haynes in 1894 and had three children, including a

Bank acquired Turner Barker Insurance and began offering investment services through INVEST Financial, now known as Gorham Financial Group.

In 2010 they opened their tenth location in Falmouth.

son, Raymond. Sam loved dairy farming, but Raymond didn't. To accommodate his only son, Sam built a stationary sawmill at our present location in 1928 and soon turned this sawmill operation over to Raymond.

Raymond Phinney successfully ran the sawmill until his retirement in 1970, at which time his son, John Phinney, purchased the business and expanded the operation from selling just lumber to offering a complete line of building materials to retail customers.

John's son, Michael, as well as his brothers, Dana and Scot, currently manage Phinney Lumber (with a little help from dad) and, after building a new store in 2003, are pleased to continue the tradition of having the Phinney family provide Gorham and surrounding areas with building material and firewood needs. ❁

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C.E. CARLL AGENCY

Sherrie Fontaine (Excerpt reprinted from Gorham Times, 12/10/2010)

C.E. Carll Agency, now part of the Chalmers Insurance Group, has had a lengthy history of serving past generations of Gorham customers. Founded in 1866 by H.R. Millett, the company was later taken over by C.E. Carll in the 1900's. Jason Beever purchased the company in 1994 and is the fourth generation of his family to manage the business. Older customers may associate the insurance agency with the brick building at the intersection of Routes 114 and 25, also known as the Old Masonic Building. In fact, the telephone pole in front of the building bears a plaque and American flag donated through the Lion's Club in memory of Jane Beever, Jason's mother and longtime employee of C.E. Carll. The agency relocated a few years ago to 65A Main Street, a building shared with Norway Savings Bank. ❁

BARDEN'S DRUG STORE

Phil Bartlett (Excerpt reprinted from Gorham Times, 10/05/2001)

Richard Barden began working in his father's drug store, Braden Drug Company, "as soon as he was old enough to see over the counter." His father, Nelson Barden, came to Gorham in the winter of 1938 and bought a pharmacy on the corner of Main and South Streets, where the Gorham House of Pizza is now.

After graduating from Gorham High School in 1944, Barden went with friends to a military recruiting office with the intention of joining the Navy. The recruiter instructed Barden to walk towards an eye chart and stop once he could read it. When he stopped, Barden was so close he could nearly touch the chart. That was too close for the Navy.

Instead of going to war, Barden attended the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy, as his father had. When he graduated in 1948, he was awarded a two-year assistantship at Purdue. Back in Maine, his father had been working alone and was exhausted, so Barden postponed Purdue for a year to help at the drug store. During that year Barden met his wife-to-be, Rosalie, and never did make it to Purdue.

Barden worked for his father until 1963, when the business was turned over to him. In 1966 he joined forces with Bill Rickards, a competitor who owned a drug store across the street. The two men opened a new store, Gorham Pharmacy, on Main Street. They opened a second pharmacy in Standish in 1974. In 1977 Gorham Pharmacy was sold to LaVerdiere's. Barden worked at that store for another 13 years. After a year or two after he retired, Barden missed his customers and went back to working part time at the Community Pharmacy. ❁

O'DONAL'S NURSERY

Jeff O'Donal

Did you know there is over 100 years of horticultural history at O'Donal's Nursery in South Gorham?

Back in 1859, Thomas Jackson started a liner nursery called Forest City Nursery in the Stroudwater section of Portland. Jackson was internationally known as a propagating specialist and his rooted cuttings and seedlings were sold worldwide. The Jackson homestead, which still exists in the Stroudwater neighborhood, holds satchels of receipts from Germany, England, as well as the State of California and other distant locations. His 1800's catalogs promised delivery to Boston in eight hours, and to New York City in 24. A business card, pictured above, of Thomas Jackson shows a sales office on Vessey Street in New York City that was open from April 1 to June 1, 1872.

Documentation exists show-

ing that his son, Herbert Jackson, operated the company in Portland, as late as 1892. Historical investigation by Al Black (now deceased), former Maine State Horticulturist, showed that the Jackson family moved the nursery to its current location in South Gorham sometime around 1900. At that time, the nursery changed its name to The Jackson Nursery.

The Jackson family continued to operate the nursery until 1960, when Lena Jackson, the widow of Robert Jackson, sold it to Royce and Selma O'Donal. The O'Donal family has operated the nursery ever since.

Throughout years of change, one thing has always remained constant: an experienced and knowledgeable staff that grows their own local products.

The long and interesting history of O'Donal's Nursery continues. It recently bought the rights to a remarkable product line of historical horticultural significance. In 2010, O'Donal's Nursery acquired the Barth Hybrid line of daylilies, the longest continual, unbroken line of daylily hybrids known to exist in the world. ❁

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Municipal

BAXTER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

*Excerpt taken from
www.baxter-memorial.lib.me.us*

The Baxter Memorial Library, built in 1908, was the gift of James Phinney Baxter. It is constructed of pink granite and the interior is completed in red oak. The Library currently stands where the Baxter House Museum once stood.

With the opening of a new addition in February of 2003, and the re-opening of the original building in May of 2003, the library has added considerable space while blending the old with the new in a complimentary manner. The library continues to preserve the Baxter family legacy in its collections, including J.P. Baxter's journals and the Maine Collection, an accumulation of Gorham history, Maine history, and books written by local authors.

The Baxter Museum, boyhood home of James Phinney Baxter, will open for the season on June 2, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Summer hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. during June, July and August. The museum is located at 67 South Street. Admission is free but donations are welcome. For more information, please contact 839-3878. ❀

NORTH GORHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY

Compiled by Karen DiDonato

The North Gorham Public Library began in 1896 when the North Gorham Public Library Association received a gift of \$600 from the Estate of Joseph Walker of Portland, also a chief benefactor of the Walker Memorial Library in Westbrook. Walker was a former business partner of Peter Trickey, Sr., who, tradition says,

was North Gorham's first librarian. Contrary to this belief, the first librarian to pen records was 15-year-old Marion Lucretia Moses, later Mrs. Guy Wilson.

The small library room, housed in Forest Hall, served patrons until 1918 when the Library Association acquired the Smith's Brothers store, which had been built next door. Forest Hall seemed an unlikely location for a library as the adjoining room often served as a movie theater, and until 1910, the basketball court for Windham High School.

In 1975 the library room in the Smith's Bros. building was lost to arson, but through cooperation with the Town of Gorham, the library was relocated next to the fire station on Standish Neck Road. The re-establishment of a functioning library required hundreds of hours of volunteer work and was truly a community endeavor.

In 1997 the library celebrated its centennial when a congratulatory Special Sentiment from the 118th Legislature was presented by Hon. Janice E. Labrecque. A Centennial History of the Library was read, and the living past librarians were presented. ❀

SOUTH WINDHAM LIBRARY

Adapted from "Fifty Years of Gorham" by Edna Dickey

The South Windham Library was founded in the late 1920's with the formation of a Library Association. The Town of Windham donated a small hose-house that was no longer used once the new fire station was built. The community gave \$300 to buy books and cards. In 1935, the hose house was moved across the river to the Gorham side and an addition was built. It was situated on land owned by S.D. Warren Co. By the time it opened, it had nearly 2,000 books. Despite the name, the South Windham Library is a Gorham library. ❀

RECOLLECTIONS OF PUBLIC SAFETY

*Phil Bartlett (Excerpt
reprinted from Gorham Times,
11/07/2005)*

In 1895 fire wardens were elected for the first time, and a committee was established to determine how to stretch the water supply into the village. Two years later, the wardens were instructed by the Village Corporation to organize a fire department with firefighters to be paid 25 cents per hour.

It was not until 1948 that formal fire protection was provided in White Rock.

For many years the Neal Funeral Home (Now Dolby & Dorr Funeral Chapel) had a red phone that the Neal's could use to sound the alarm if a fire came in. ❀

EARLY ROADS

*Lennie Cross (Excerpt
reprinted from Gorham Times,
09/27/2003)*

Travel for the first arrivals in Gorham was most often by foot; however, for long distances over the rough trails, oxen, led by the man of the household, were used to pull carts or sleds. The density of the forest limited choices of passage, for much of the land had yet to see an axe.

When the town of Gorham was surveyed and lots organized, the original plan was to place roads around every four of the 30-acre lots on the original town plan. Main thoroughfares were to be four rods (66 feet) wide while secondary roads were to be two rods wide (33 feet). A second division called for roads around every 200 acres, which would have meant a road on three sides of each lot. This would have been an industrious undertaking given the heavily wooded forest. Many of these roads were never cleared or opened.



Gorham High School was converted into a fire station in the late 1950's.

Photo credit: John Phinney



Gorham's first police cruiser.

Photo courtesy of the Gorham Police Department



In the early 1900's cars started to appear on Gorham's roadways.

Photo courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society



Charlotte Millett and her father, Dr. Millett, ride in first Stanley Steamer.

Photo courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society

The principal road running northerly over Fort Hill was named King Street, now Fort Hill Road. This had once been an Indian trail and remained a primary route into New Hampshire. The principal road designated to run westerly was named Queen Street, but was never opened and should not be confused with the current Queen Street.

The main street in Gorham Village was called Gorham Street, which in 1743 ran as far as Mosher's Corner. It was decided in 1743 to lay a road from the end of Gorham Street to Saccarappa Mills in Westbrook.

In October 1749 it was voted to pay 30 pounds to the person or persons who would clear a passable road from Gorham Corner to the Scarborough line,

a distance of five miles.

In 1762 a bridge was proposed over the Presumpscot River at Horsebeef Falls.

In July of 1777 it was possible to travel from Massachusetts to Saco in a chaise, but it was ill advised to travel to Buxton by carriage. One of the first to attempt this trip was Rev. Paul Coffin of Charlestown, Mass. with his bride Mary Gorham. It took four hours to walk and steady the chaise to reach Buxton. The ride from Buxton to Gorham was accomplished with saddles for the gentlemen and pillions or cushions attached the back of the saddle for the ladies. At this time no carriage had traveled from Gorham to Buxton for there was no road able to accommodate such a vehicle. ❀

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Living

INTERVIEWS WITH LONGTIME GORHAM RESIDENTS

What major events really changed Gorham?

When I was a young girl there were trolleys. The way we travelled to Portland and back was by trolley. When they took out the trolleys it made quite a change. Of course at that time too, when I was a young girl and a young woman, groceries and meat and milk were all delivered to the house by the producer - the milkman came, the meat man came, the fish man came. Of course, all of those things you now have to go and buy. I suppose it made it easier for the housewife.

~
Frances Huse Boothbay, 95 years old, moved to Gorham when she was 10, now lives in Westbrook.

The Dutch Elm disease that took all of those beautiful trees out of Main Street and South Street in the early 1930s. The trees were gorgeous and the Dutch Elm killed off all of them.

~
Frances Huse Boothbay

~
By 1932-33, the worst years of the Great Depression, over 10,000 banks had failed and over 2 billion in deposits had been lost. Under the capable stewardship of Carrol H. Wentworth, Gorham Savings Bank closed its doors for only 48 hours. The bank provided economic stability for the Town. Not only did the bank not collapse, it survived and prospered, as did the town.

~
Rodney Quinn, 88 years old, born in Gorham, retired here in 1968, former Maine Secretary of State.

What are your favorite memories of Gorham?

I'm sure my favorite memories are of my childhood. I have very fond memories of the 200th anniversary celebration. There was a big parade.

~
John Alden, 88 years old. Born and still lives in Gorham.

~
My dad owned Barden's Rexall Drugstore where Gorham House of Pizza now stands. It was a hangout for high school kids and kids and I was a "soda jerk" by the time I could see above the counter. I made more banana splits than I'd like to remember.

~
Dick Barden, 85 years old. Has lived in Gorham for 73 years.

What are the biggest changes you've seen in Gorham?

People! When I moved to Gorham in 1938, the population was about 2,200 and I think that included the cows and the horses.

~
Dick Barden

~
Transportation. We have gone from 15-cent trolley rides to automobiles. Worth mentioning that the one constant transportation matter since the 1970's has been the issue of the bypass.

~
Rodney Quinn

What people influenced the direction of the town?

Carroll Wentworth. He was the treasurer of Gorham Savings Bank and a friend of my dad's. He was instrumental in starting the housing development in this town, namely the Bank Development.

~
Dick Barden

~
I guess some of the old families are the ones who have had the greatest impact, including the Robie family and the Phinney family.

~
John Alden

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BLOTTER, 1964

Courtesy of the Gorham Police Department

CANAL STREET CALLER reported a neighbor and her children were throwing stones and apples at her house, kids, dog, cat and car. Neighbor was warned that further problems would wind up in court and police did not want to deal with these nuisance complaints.

MAIN STREET WOMAN reported some men driving a vehicle with Mass. plates were selling linoleum under false pretenses.

GROUP OF MINORS were reported having a party at Alden Pond. Officers found 20-25 youths smoking, swearing and drinking. Officers approached the group and after some time of "ridge running" apprehended 13 youths who were taken to the police station. Their parents were called and they were given verbal reprimands.

CALLER WHO LIVED behind the Esso Station on Rt. 237

reported that three boys who live upstairs go out at all different times and start up an old car and race the engine to the annoyance of others.

CALLER FROM WATER STREET reported college boys were having parties at the red house on the corner of Glenwood and Water and were making a lot of noise, keeping his kids awake.

SOMETIME DURING the previous night between 25 and 30 barrels of gasoline was siphoned out of a shovel at the Maine State Highway Barn on Libby Avenue. Subjects came in on foot and used cans.

HARDING ROAD CALLER who was in the process of obtaining a divorce, reported that her husband took her mailbox and a dog and threatened to shoot her with a shotgun rather than let a boarder in the home "have her."

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Living

85 YEARS OF THE GORHAM WOMAN'S CLUB



Nancy Taber

Imagine that World War I is a recent trauma, that the Town of Gorham still has trolley tracks down the center of Main Street, and is still serviced regularly by passenger trains. Women, who just a few years before, were gathering mainly to roll bandages for "our boys," were beginning to seek out a new way to be useful.

That is when word began to spread that a national organization known as the General Federation of Women's Clubs (formerly Sorosis Clubs, which became GFWC in 1890) was making its muscle felt. Women from this group raised \$4,880,000 in Liberty Bonds, \$90,000 for the Red Cross, \$55,106 for camp libraries, and \$89,788 for the YMCA during the WWI years and Gorham women wanted to be part of the action. Thus, 85 years ago, the Gorham Woman's Club met for

the first time.

Supporting and promoting libraries has been a Woman's Club goal at national, state, and local levels for many years. By 1933, GFWC had founded 75% of America's public libraries, as well as pioneering the idea of bookmobiles. Gorham women were right in step with the national movement, doing their part over the years for Baxter Memorial Library and the branch libraries. For a number of years, the club has assisted a pre-school reading group by providing small, colorful book bags and books for each child in the groups. In a related effort, the club provides a school newspaper called "Kind News" to all classes whose teacher requests it. Another club project that inspires members is sponsorship of high school students to the Maine Youth Leadership Conference at University of

Southern Maine.

To support these and other projects, club members have held many fundraisers including a cookbook sold for several years through L.L. Bean, selling a woven lap robe which features places of historical significance in Gorham, and holding an Annual Spring Luncheon, which has become a popular rite of spring for many local people and their friends. Another project of Gorham Woman's Club was to plant pink tulips in many locations around town as a community beautification project and to honor breast cancer patients.

Membership is an ongoing challenge, as it is for most service organizations, but the giving of the scholarships is an inspiration that keeps the membership active. The club welcomes all who would like to participate in helping young people and the town.

RECIPES FROM THE MID 1800S



Town Meeting Cake

Esther E. Wood

No town meeting was considered complete without a town meeting cake.

- 2 cups brown sugar
- ½ cup shortening
- 2 cups flour
- 1 ½ tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 cup sour milk (or add 1 tsp vinegar to regular milk)

Mix sugar, shortening, flour and nutmeg well. Reserve ½ cup of mixture to be used for topping. Dissolve the baking soda in the milk. Add egg and milk to the flour/sugar mix. Pour into a 10 by 4 inch pan. Sprinkle on topping. Bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes



Feather Cake

A cup each of sugar and milk, the yolk of one egg beaten and stirred to a cream with 1 tsp of butter, a tsp of cream of tartar and 1/2 tsp of baking soda sifted with the flour, flavored with lemon. Beat the whites of the egg to a stiff froth, then slowly add 7 tps of powdered sugar. Frost it.



Snow-Fritter

If it snows during the night or morning hour, stir together, in the morning, 2 cups milk, 3 cups flour, and a pinch of salt to make a rather thick batter. Add 1 ½ gills (¾ cups) of newly fallen snow. Be sure to have the fat "ready hot" at the time you stir in the snow. Drop the batter in the fat with a spoon. These fritters are even preferred to those made with eggs. (The ammonia in the fresh snow acts as a rising agent).

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LILLIAN HAMBLÉN
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

one day in the third grade when the superintendent came by the school and asked what she was doing in the third grade. The teacher explained to the superintendent that she had started school late, but then later in the day the teacher told Grant that if she could master fractions she could go into the fourth grade. Grant quickly became a fourth-grader.

Grant remembers traveling to Portland on electric cars with her mother for flute lessons when she was young. They would walk across the field to Mosher Road to take a car, which traveled through Westbrook into Portland. In 1931, the electric cars were replaced with buses.

After spending ninth grade at Frederick Robie, Grant and five other classmates went to the high school in Gorham. The transition was difficult, she recalls, since they were joining "youngsters who had all been together their whole lives. I was petrified the first time I had to talk in front of the class."

She got a ride to the high school with her father in the

morning but then walked home after school. She remembers the day a police car stopped as she was walking home. Ever mindful of the lessons she had learned from her mother, she refused a ride because the officer was a stranger.

Grant graduated from Gorham High School with a class of thirty-five students in 1933. She went on to the Gorham Normal School, graduating after two years. Due to the Great Depression, there were not a lot of jobs available for new graduates. She substituted in Gorham before becoming a full-time teacher at the North Gorham Normal School. One year she had only eight students. While teaching, Grant took evening and weekend classes at the Gorham Normal School to achieve her master's degree in education.

From 1942 until 1957, Grant taught fourth and fifth grade at Frederick Robie School. She then moved to Little Falls School, where she taught third grade until she retired in 1972. Grant particularly enjoyed teaching third grade, finding that the children "were just beginning to be people."

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As a teacher, Grant always sought to help those students who "didn't have too many advantages." She refused to let any child not have a chance. Her mission was to convince every child that he or she was "as important as anyone in the world." She finds it very gratifying when students tell her that she's changed their lives.

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Photo courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society

Fannie McDaniel (1855-1949) uses her old spinning wheel at her home on Church Street. She was said to be an expert in the art of spinning, which she exhibited to the members of the Woman's Club of Gorham.



Photo courtesy of the Gorham Historical Society

Coney Kneeland, driver of W. I. Bickford's coal and wood cart.

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