

May 2021

HALIFAX NEWS

HALIFAX CEMETERIES, PART 2

by Laurel Copeland, Halifax, Vermont

Photographs by David Erickson

On a high hill in Halifax, overlooking a beautiful view of distant mountains, an old cemetery awaits restoration. The Clark cemetery is a collection of fallen and broken stones, some needing to be pieced together, each needing to be cleaned and repositioned. The stones are heavy. In the photos below, you can see where they were lying down and how much work remains to be done to restore this cemetery. Andrea Rand is leading the effort to restore all the cemeteries in Halifax. I asked Andrea whether she needs more help.

She writes, “Yes, please! We need strong people to **help move larger stones** that are falling over or have already collapsed. This would also entail developing **ideas on how to build something to lift these stones**. Also, if anyone would like to **help clean stones** that would also be greatly appreciated. We are **also raking and trimming** back trees and bushes that are hanging over the gravestones. We are currently working on Niles Cemetery on Route 112. To help, **call me, Andrea, at 802-368-7157**. I am out there just about every day, but you should call to find out when I will be there.”



Below: From the air, the former locations of the fallen stones can be seen as impressions in the ground.

Restoration work will see these stones repositioned in their original upright aspect, in locations as near as possible to where they originally marked each person’s resting spot.

Stones were laid on pallets and wrapped for the winter.



TOWN NEWS

IN THE VIRTUAL HEADLINES: A video of a local chicken sledding with his best buddy, Luke Read (11) of Halifax, went viral on Twitter in February. Luke tamed a chicken his mom, Angelina, and dad, Clint, got for him. Angelina teaches kindergarten in Halifax. Clint works at Prospect Meadow Farm in Hatfield, where the family got Teddy Nugget and three other chickens. Luke figured out how to help the bird feel calm by placing her in a doggie playpen, and he trained her to perch on his arm or head. Luke named the bird Teddy Nugget, after rock musician Ted Nugent. She is a Barred Plymouth Rock hen and has been with the family since early May 2020. This winter when Luke wanted to go sledding and no friends were available, he took Teddy Nugget. His dad videotaped the chicken and Luke. Check out these still shots of Luke and Teddy Nugget the sledding chicken!



SENIOR MEAL

Friday May 21 is the next Senior Meal. It will be held at the Community Hall in West Halifax at 20 Brook Road. I said last month that we would eat inside this month, BUT the Governor isn't opening things like that up until JULY 4th, so I guess I better follow the Governor's guidelines. The meal will still be PICK-UP ONLY in MAY. The menu is: **sweet sausage stroganoff, carrot salad, a roll and dessert**. All seniors are welcome. A free will donation of \$3.00 for age 60 and over is suggested. Persons under age 60 it is \$4.00. Call Joan @ **802-368-7733** so she knows about how many to expect. – *Joan Courser*

COVID has worsened food insecurity. One option for assisting the Senior Meal program is to donate: <https://www.seniorsolutionsvt.org/get-involved/>

SPECIAL ELECTION FOR SELECT BOARD EXPANSION

Tuesday, May 25, 2021 voting for a Special Election of Two Selectboard positions will occur. Voting will be at the Halifax Community Hall from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm on Tuesday May 25 or by absentee ballot (**request online well in advance: <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>**). Masks are required for in-person voting. Candidates are:

Selectboard for 1-year term

Rhonda Ashcraft
Paul G. Blais
Cara Cheyette

Selectboard for 2-year term

Ric Owen
Tristan D. Roberts
Matt Stewart



HALIFAX HEADSTONE QUESTION Can anyone help me out? Linda Swanson and I found these two gravestones that have no names in Niles Cemetery on Rt. 112. Do you know to whom they belong? See photos at right (Pietà; whimsical collage). - *Andrea Rand, Halifax, VT, 802-368-7157*



FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLS

April 3: woman fainted; transported by Deerfield Valley Ambulance. The roads were quite muddy, so she was driven to the school for the ambulance to pick her up there.

April 7: two men to Hanson for a lift assist; a 90-year-old man had fallen.

April 7: three men to Green River Road for a lift assist; a man had fallen.

April 10: seven men to Route 112 for a man who had fainted; Deerfield Valley Ambulance transported to Brattleboro Hospital.

April 14: one man to Wheeler Road; person transported to Brattleboro Hospital by ambulance.

April 15: four men and one truck to Readsboro Inn on a mutual aid call for a kitchen fire.

April 19: two men and one truck to a mill fire in Charlemont: MA.

April 22: three men to Larabee Road for someone experiencing vertigo.

Our firemen have been busy. They recently sent out their annual fundraising letter; the response has been good so far. They are all volunteers. You can send a donation to:

Halifax Fire Co., Inc., P O Box 27, West Halifax VT 05358.

The firemen will hold their annual **Firemen's AUCTION** this year. The date is **Saturday, JULY 3rd at 10 AM** at the fire station in the village of West Halifax. Call Wayne @ **802-368-7733** to donate items.

TIME FOR COMPOSTING!



Join Windham Solid Waste Management District (WSWMD) on **Saturday, May 15, 2021 from 1:30-3:30** at WSWMD Transfer Station, **327 Old Ferry Road, Brattleboro** for the spring open house! The event will feature a variety of compost tumblers, bins, and tools. The WSWMD Composting Demonstration Site will be open for self-guided learning.

The Demo Site Open House will feature mini-compost workshops, "Ask a Compost Expert" sessions, kitchen caddies and compostable bag give-aways, compost bin sales, and a **free raffle for an Earth Machine Compost Bin**. Learn how to compost food scraps safely, how to keep wildlife away, the pros and cons of different bins, and how to tell when your compost is "done". The event is kid-friendly and COVID-safe!



WEST HALIFAX POST OFFICE CLOSING! APRIL 29, 2021

Our post office at 3438 Reed Hill Road is closing Thursday, April 29. Box-holders can get their mail at the Jacksonville PO starting Friday, April 30th. The J'ville lobby is NOT open 24 hours/day. Hours are Mon-Fri 8-12:30, 2-4:30, and Sat 8:30-11:30am, at 2939 Vermont Route 100, Jacksonville VT 05342.

➔USPS would be interested in another lease/rental space in Halifax if you have it. 1-802-368-7700

NO MORE 7-DIGIT DIALING

Remember when you could dial the 4-digit line number to call your neighbor? And then the 3-digit prefix was required, with names such as NOrmandy-2 (662-) and DAvis-8 (368-)? As of April 24, 2021, you now must dial the 802 area code to call your neighbor. If you are calling from a landline, you must dial 1-802- and then the 7-digit number. If on a cell phone, just start with 802.

HEALTH – GETTING A COVID-19 VACCINE IN VERMONT

Register for the vaccine to prevent COVID-19 at the Vermont Department of Health website:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/myvaccine> or

<https://vermont.force.com/events/s/selfregistration>.

For help making an account, call (802) 863-7240

Return to your registered account and book a time and location.

For help making an online appointment, call (855) 722-7878

All Veterans, their spouses and caregivers can now get COVID-19 vaccinations from the VA under the SAVE LIVES Act signed into law March 24, 2021. Sign up online: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/stay-informed>. Or call MyVA411 main information line at 800-698-2411 (TTY: 711).

ENVIRONMENT

Humanity has wiped out 60% of mammals, birds, fish, and reptiles since 1970. Human expansion and clear-cutting forests destroy habitat needed by wildlife, including insects. And insects feed the world. They pollinate crops, enrich soil, feed fish, and play many other roles that ultimately support our lives.

Amphibians suffer loss of habitat and poisoning from human activities (germs; pesticides; herbicides; dumping). A recent study ties amphibian collapse with increased malaria outbreaks. Joakim Weill and others described a link between amphibian die-off and human malarial infections in Central America. The sequence went like this. Mosquitos carry the microbe *Plasmodium*, which causes malaria in humans. Frogs and other amphibians are great mosquito-reducers. *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*, or *Bd*, is a highly contagious fungus that infects the skin of amphibians, impeding breathing and thus killing them. Ponds hit by *Bd* are quickly choked by belly-up frogs. When ponds in Central America experienced massive frog die-off from *Bd*, mosquito populations boomed, and human malaria cases rose. Global spread of *Bd* is from human trade in amphibians.

HOGBACK MOUNTAIN SONGBIRD BANDING PROJECT

Eric Slayton is back this spring to continue his multi-year bird banding project, which had session last fall on Hogback Mountain. Eric writes: The project's second spring season will begin early May and run through the month into early June. The station operates on fair weather days starting just around sunrise and runs until late morning if there is a good flight of migrating birds. If you are interested in learning more about the project, coming out to see what is going on, or lending a hand with netting, weighing, and banding the birds, send me an email and I will get back to you and add you to the growing list of project supporters. No experience is necessary—only a strong positive curiosity. See you in the spring! Eric: eric.slayton@me.com

MORE BIRDS

For a remarkable description of the millions of birds that fly unseen over our heads at night, listen to Scott Weidensaul's March 9th podcast, "The Amazing Lives of Migratory Birds" online at <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/29/982259545/the-amazing-lives-of-migratory-birds>.

JOAN'S SIGHTINGS.

I have every day a beautiful American Redstart. Its coloring is so pretty. I am happy the male Goldfinches in their beautiful yellow now are visiting my feeders all day with the plain but still pretty females. I still enjoy my male and female Cardinals, Chickadee, Grosbeaks, Red-bellied woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch and the White-breasted, too, also Downy Woodpecker and Mourning Doves. I had a couple of Robins under the feeders when the ground was covered in snow (yes, snow in April), lots of different Sparrows, Blackbirds, a Flicker, Red-Winged Blackbirds, Purple Finch, a Catbird for a short time. I am anxiously awaiting the Orioles and Hummers and some warmer days. We have had some warm sunny days but lots of cool cloudy ones, too. I am really hoping to have the 'Jenny' Wren nest here this year. Oh, how I love to hear them sing!! I have seen a Red-Tailed Hawk in the area. My chickens don't like when they fly over. Ron Gouin saw a Bluebird checking out one of his birdhouses. Gary Rand reported a bear at their place. David King gave me a list of birds that visited his feeders this past winter: 3 crows, 19 Blue jay, 100+ Starlings, lots of Chickadees & Goldfinch, 1 White-breasted nuthatch, 2 red-breasted, 1 Downy woodpecker, 2 Hairy, 1 red-bellied, 2 Pileated side by side, 3 Titmice, a pair of Evening Grosbeaks, a pair of Red-winged Blackbirds, 5 Mourning Doves, a flock of Juncos with one sparrow, 1 Coopers Hawk, 1 Barred Owl, 2 Bluebirds, 22 Turkey, 3 does, a fox and big cat tracks. Sounds as if they had a great winter!! Send your sightings to Joan at jwcinvt@gmail.com - Joan Courser

Patrick McAllister saw a tufted titmouse and a hawk on Hanson Road, plus lovely Red Trillium blooming in the woods. Also spotted: turkeys in the sun, porcupine in a tree, 1-inch toad, sharp-shinned hawk, trout lily. -LC



HISTORY (as reported by Edie Fenton in a 1985 Halifax Newsletter)

Thomas Scott was an early settler in Halifax, relocating here from Ashford, CT, in the summer of 1781. He brought with him his wife, Sarah Hale, and six children, Asahel, Clarissa, Thomas, Abel, Sally, and baby Joel. There were born to him after locating here four more: James, Henry, Elijah, and Ruby. The family's origin story appeared in a monograph from the Thomas Scott family reunion held in Halifax in 1906 which described the emigration as follows: A small boy in England was sent on an errand by his parents, was kidnapped, forced on board a vessel, and brought to America, where in accordance with the practice in vogue, he was hired out or sold for a given time to pay for his passage. This was the progenitor of the Scott family in America. Numerous descendants are now residing in different parts of the country.

HISTORICAL BRAINBUSTER Does anyone know the origins of the name, Jolly Mountain? Jolly Mountain is in southeastern Halifax, northwest of Old Stage Road.



Photo C. Lancaster, 2007
Schoolmates, Elaine Fairbanks and Bernice Barnett, at the former Plumb Schoolhouse, now the Halifax Historical Society Museum.

A BIT MORE ABOUT HALIFAX SCHOOLS Here is a wonderful photo that did not make it into April issue.

Elaine Fairbanks and Bernice Barnett stand together in front of the Plumb School blackboard. The building now houses the Halifax Historical Society in the village of West Halifax. The blackboard remains on the wall! We miss the school mates.

Photo courtesy of Constance Lancaster, Halifax Historical Society, from *Born in Controversy, History of Halifax, Vermont Volume 1* (Halifax Historical Society [HHS], 2007)

Newsletter
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Snow on Earth Day (4/22/2021)



Red Trillium on Hanson Road.
Photo by Patrick McAllister

Halifax News

MAY 2021

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Thank you!!!

NEWSLETTER STORIES - Send your Halifax story to

Laurel LaurelACopeland@gmail.com or Joan JWCinVt@gmail.com (PO Box 27 05358).