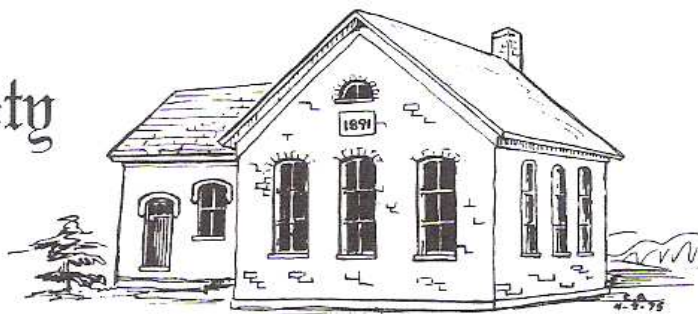


# Georgia Historical Society

P.O. Box 2072  
Georgia, VT 05468

Founded March 14, 1975

- ANNUAL NEWSLETTER—Vol. 9



Brick School Museum

2014-2015

## Georgia Historical Society

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## President’s Message -

From Don Vickers -

Looking forward to another year of special events of the Georgia Historical Society!

We are planning several events for 2015 starting in May and ending in October. We will publishing a list of these events for 2015 in May, as well.

*Continued Pg. 3...*

## FEATURE STORY—

### “GORDON’S MILL - Our Other Museum”

What is the story relating to Gordon’s Mill? Most know about the Georgia Historical Society’s other museum building, the Brick School House Museum. But the Society also owns Gordon’s Mill (Museum). It is located on the Stone Bridge Road and next to the Stone Bridge Brook. The Georgia Historical Society (GHS) stores its larger artifacts, such as, agricultural tools and equipment, furniture, a wood-fired kitchen stove – even a whole, intact, stair case can be seen there. Many more items of the past are there as their sizes make them prohibitive to storing and exhibiting at the one-room, brick school house.

*Continued Pg. 3...*

Colin Conger in a facsimile of the military dress uniform worn by his great, great, great grandfather, Capt. George Conger.—military hero in the St. Albans Raid. Colin appeared in the Georgia Historical Society sponsored program, “150th Year of the St. Albans Raid”, which he presented last August (2014). Note, too, the sword (a copy), which was awarded to Colin’s grandfather. The original sword was regrettably stolen from the family and has yet to be found or returned.



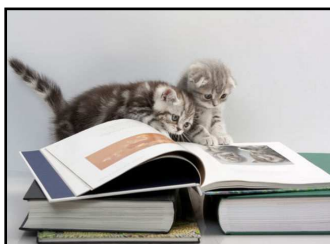


**"GORDON'S MILL - Our Other Museum"...Cont'd from Pg. 1**



This site became a museum for the GHS after the organization purchased it from Robin Pierce on May 10, 1998. This included the mill site with dam rights to Gordon's Pond and the Pierce's storage building (built by the Pierces for use in their pallet business). But the interesting history of this site will always be significant. First, Gordon's Mill was the only mill in Georgia to survive well into the twentieth century. Also, it was located near Stone Brook in Georgia Plains. There was, it was believed, a stone bridge created by natural means, across the brook. Because of this,  
*Continued Pg. 8...*

**The Eloquent Page**—now has copies of **"Families of Georgia"** on consignment for the GHS.



A copy of this hard-covered book is \$35.00. Location—70 N. Main Street, St. Albans, Vermont.

You can call (802) 527-7243—Donna Howard, proprietor. On line at [www.theeloquentpage.com](http://www.theeloquentpage.com).

Great reading with a well-researched and documented history on some of Georgia's prominent and early settlers and citizens. Also, the **Georgia Historical Society** has copies for sale, locally. Contact any of the directors listed on the front page of this newsletter for information.

**President's Message Cont'd from Pg. 1...**

Our first event will be the Annual Essay Contest! It is designed for Georgia students in grades 5-8. Encourage your young family members or neighbors to enter. We are hoping to interest our youth in Georgia history and reward them with a monetary award. Last year we had two winning essays by **Samantha Little** and **Ezra Shamy**, both of whom happen to be in the fifth grade. Additional information can be found in this newsletter. The deadline is May 1, 2015 for submissions!

Last year's events included a house and garden tour at the Pattee Hill Farm, Ancient Roads of Georgia and learning about long ago roads and their histories, celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the St. Albans Raid, an exciting evening of "show and tell" of special items both in our collection and by local residents, and local resident and singer Carol Ann Jones.

We continue to look for some Georgia residents who might be interested in serving on the Board or helping with programs and at the museum. Also, we want to encourage high school and college students interested in history to consider serving on the Board.

Please, too, consider renewing your membership or joining the Historical Society.

We continue to receive donations of artifacts from residents. If you have some of Georgia's history you would like to donate, contact any member of the Board of Directors.

We would encourage residents to make donations to save the General Standard house in Milton. General Standard was a Civil War Hero and resident of Georgia as well.

Don't hesitate to contact me if you are interested in serving on the Board!

Don Vickers  
527-9704

**Stay tuned...**

**The GHS has a Web Page—  
<http://georgiahistoricalocietyvt.org>  
This, and soon on Face Book, will be listed on the Georgia Historical Society section in the Georgia Town's Website!**

**Also, GHS will have more programs listed for the 2015 season. Notification will be sent out to the membership and posted in the local newspapers and GHS webpage, after May 1st.**



## 2014 PROGRAM LINE-UP—REVIEW

### “Historical House Tour” - June 29th— Presentation by owners, Don Vickers & Stephen Donahue

Don and Stephen are the current owners of these 70 acres of land and are the creators of the wonderful gardens and plantings surrounding the farmhouse. This property was originally used



as a dairy farm and this lovely tour took place on this location once owned by the Pattee family as far back as 1734 when the farmhouse was built.

The view from the farmhouse is truly spectacular and well worth seeing it in person. The house itself is loaded with past history and unique designing as well. The house is much as it was 280 years ago. The farmhouse had been renovated several times before the current owners purchased it. One part that was remodeled was the upstairs that has now been converted into the master bedroom and bath and a second bedroom.

In 1998, when Don and Stephen bought the land, there were no gardens as the land was still being used for farming. Since then, Don and Stephen designed and planted the gardens and put in an apple orchard with the assistance of the head gardener, Cathy Carpenter. All of these gardens, statues, fountains, and ponds were placed here by them – 16 years in the making!

As the visitors toured the farm, a splendid view of each of these gardens and the grounds surrounding the farmhouse greeted them. This was indeed a spectacular work of art.

Note that Don and Stephen have opened the farm as a B&B this year!

Folks can borrow the DVD, “GHS Garden Tour 6-29-14” which is located at the Georgia Public Library. This superb video, recorded and edited by Phil Plouf, shows magnificent views of the gardens individually as well as a fantastic aerial view of this vast property and the wonderful gardens overall. You will see, also on the video some great photographs of the interior of the farmhouse taken by one of our GHS directors, David Juare.

### “Ancient Roads & Map Project—in its Completion” - July 16th—

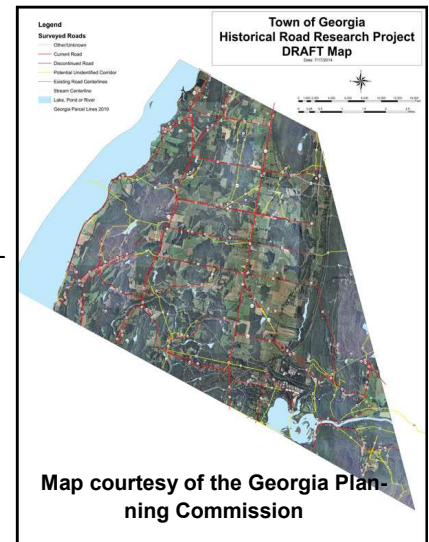
#### Presentation by Tony Heinlein & Patrick Burke

Pat Burke started the presentation with information surrounding the research work involved to provide the facts, locations, and possible changes of ancient roads located in the Town of Georgia—possibly in place since the beginning of the town—250 years ago!

He and Tony Heinlein became interested and involved in this project because in 2006 a law, ACT No. 158, was passed that required any roads that do not appear on town highway maps but were qualified under a legal process would now be recognized as “unidentified corridors” or simply “ancient roads” and could be placed on the official map of towns and highways. These

roads and trails, however, must be identified and records verifying these as such must be done *before* the deadline of 2015 or they would, in essence, vanish forever. So, the Selectboard sent out a request for volunteers to comb the whole town of Georgia in search of these “ancient roads” and trails through town records, historical documents, and even physically trekking all over the Georgia map to check these out. A daunting task to say the least!

Pat Burke and Tony Heinlein answered the call. Pat is a real estate paralegal and Tony sits on the Georgia Planning Commission. Pat has been a resident of Georgia since 2006 and Tony since 1975. Their concern was that these roads and trails are entities for all of us to take advantage. Without finding these and getting them on the highway maps, they could simply fade away. Their goal, therefore, has been to educate the citizens of the town about this one time opportunity.



It would take Pat and Tony seven years to pull together all the information/research - needed. Many times, surveys were all they had to locate a road that had no ruts or trails to identify or find them. Tony stated that he believes the first “official” road in the Town of Georgia is the Polly Hubbard Road, dating back to July 27, 1789 - a year after the establishment of the Town. Some Roads that existed before this were: The County Road which is the Middle Road, today; the Post Road which is Route 7; and the Allen Road which is now Oakland Station Road. A great deal of history is behind many of these roads because of the town’s proximity to Canada in the north and the Revolutionary War of 1812 which necessitated quick passage to the border.

Much of the records that they looked into, as this one, would give information that was somewhat ambiguous or no longer useful as stating that the road started at this tree (now no longer standing) or using “chains” for measurement and so on. Also, a system was set up for identifying the direction of the roads – north to south roads were to be 4 rods; roads east to west were 3 rods. They would have to figure out terms and measurements used over 200 years ago!

There were many changes over time. Changes that ranged from shifting locations - the railroad which involved East Georgia and the Jedd Shepard Road and the Town of Fairfax - drawing people from different routes, the traffic to reach Lake Champlain which served as a main artery for shipping and transportation of goods, the Revolutionary War before and after, industry, population changes, and more. Figuring out all of that was indeed a tedious process as many of the roads ended up to nowhere.

Still another complication was that, back in the day, town clerks weren’t required to record their records or documents – they only had to be on file with the town clerk. Many of these records were found in boxes. They were laughingly called “box roads”.

Pat pointed to a display of two maps. One of these displayed the ancient roads and trails that Pat and Tony researched and found that would serve as “official” ancient corridors. But the problem they pointed out is that these findings – these unidentified corridors – must now be reclassified and re-identified as town highways and trails by the Town and submitted to the Vermont Agency of Transportation no later than February 10, 2015. The folks in the town must contact the Selectboard if they wish to have an ancient road or trail on their property placed on this map; let them know that they want that road or trail to be included. According to law, now, this window of opportunity closes forever, July 1, 2015.

Many had questions and comments. Tony was careful to show all the sides of what could be called controversial points to having these ancient roads and trails legally established. They could serve as wonderful trails for sightseeing, hiking or even a village center sometime in the future – or identifying them as “paper roads” that show on the map but not open to the public. Georgians could find these roads exciting – still others might find them encroachments. Notwithstanding, one could regard title searches involving these roads as a possible gnarly complication, too. Pat and Tony ask that Georgians make the call to their Selectboard regarding these roads either way.

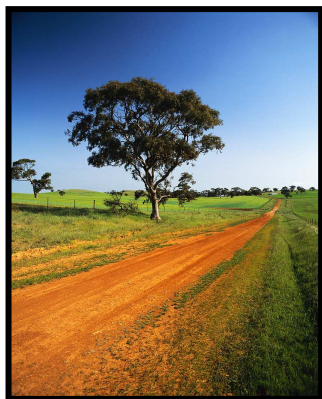
The program was filled with fascinating and challenging information regarding these ancient roads in our town. They brought out good things about them and the complication that some others could bring. This presentation was, indeed, educational, hitting the mark that Tony and Pat tried to provide to the community. Check out the Georgia Public Library in the historical section for the DVD of this program to learn even more. ■

## **“The 150th Anniversary of the St. Albans Raid - Capt. George Conger” and His Role in that Raid on St. Albans**

**August 20—Presentation by Colin Conger**

Director Colin Conger appeared dressed in a replica of the 1862 uniform of the Union army, with a typical uniform hat of an officer of that time (similar to his great-great-great-grandfather, Capt. George Conger’s) and a replica of the actual sword that belonged to his great-great-great-grandfather, Capt. Conger, a resident of Georgia, and a great hero of the St. Albans Raid. The “Raid” actually took place on October 19, 1864.

Colin, himself, though previously a resident of Highgate, Vt., has been a resident of Georgia for 46 years. Colin’s roots, however, go way back in its ancestry as Georgia residents, many of whom were born and buried here. Colin came back to Georgia with his wife, Karen, in 1968.



Colin pointed out that many mistakes have been made in the telling and writings of the St. Albans Raid—some of which are on the internet— and which he points out need to be corrected. He stated the importance of the Civil War as a whole and was surprised to find, while watching the news one day, that many of the college students who were interviewed were in the dark as to the actual history of this significant and extraordinary event. Colin developed a need to present as much as he can regarding the War to any entity of the public in order to educate them about it. Colin stated the first error made in giving the background of Captain Conger held that Capt. George Conger was born in Georgia, Vt., Nov. 24, 1815. Capt. Conger was *actually* born in St. Albans, Vt. and died in Georgia, Vt. He did not come to Georgia, Vt. until *after* the Civil War. He died on April 7, 1895 and is buried in Greenwood Cemetery, in St. Albans.

Colin went on to state the marital background of Capt. Conger: He was married first to Dolly Basford Conger in 1840 and she passed away in 1867; married Fanny Dearborn in 1868 and she died in 1879; finally he married Catherine Bliss in 1881 and she passed away after George died in 1895, in 1898 in Georgia Plains, Vt. While married to Catherine, he attended the Georgia Plains Baptist Church.

Colin went on to explain how Capt. Conger got involved in the military. The Vermont Militia was formed out of concern relating to the Canadian Rebellion. After learning about it, George Conger joined it in 1839 and became a member of the Eleventh Regt.—stationed along the Vermont border. This did not last too long until General Stannard and others revived the militia in 1856 called the “Ransom Guards” because of uprisings and instabilities that were ensuing. At that time, Capt. Conger became 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. The Ransom Guards were mustered into service in May of 1861. The Company was discharged and mustered out in August, 1861. In September of 1861, George Conger raised Co. B, 1st Vermont Cavalry. He was elected and commissioned Captain by his own men and mustered into service on Nov. 19, 1861.

Colin then listed the many battles Capt. Conger fought from active service in the early part of the Civil War, starting with the Mt. Jackson Virginia Battle on Sept. 12, 1862 until his last on Aug. 30, 1862 at the age of 47—the Battle of Bull Run. Some documentation refers to Capt. Conger as being “the young Capt. Conger” when he was actually 47 years old at the time of his resignation.

Colin spoke about the honor Capt. Conger received from his men and officers in Company B in the form of a sword given to him upon his resignation. It was presented to him to recognize the “respect for him as an officer and a man” on Sept. 16, 1862. This is a family heirloom that is now, unfortunately, missing. Colin displayed a replica of the sword for all to see. The original was engraved with the words of the officers and men in his company stating the reason for the gift. But around 1992, after Colin wore the sword as the Grand Marshal in a parade, he then returned it to a family member who loaned it out to be displayed in Montpelier, only to learn that it was not there. Colin said that there is a \$500.00 reward for any information regarding the whereabouts of the sword – even if that someone has it legally, as he wants that information for its history, if not only for the sake of the value to the family. Colin also stated that the family has Capt. Conger’s true carbine with which he fought.



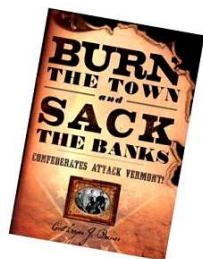
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## Program Review—Cont'd from Pg. 5...

Colin continued to elaborate on even more trivia regarding the life of his grandfather – all just fascinating to learn. But in keeping with the Civil War information, he showed a poster called “The Civil War in Perspective,” which pointed out the names of the wars or battles that took place beginning in 1775 – the Revolutionary War—and ending with the Iraq/Afghanistan War c.2005 (11 wars in total). It also stated that there were 696,000 lost lives and compared these losses with the one Civil War, which totalled an estimated 600,000 deaths with some believing the number is closer to 750,000! The population of the U.S. was 35,000,000, at the time; 35 died from the town of Georgia. The youngest soldier in the state of Vermont came from our very own town of Georgia.

*The St. Albans Raid* – As a result of their defeat in Gettysburg in 1863, the first time they had ever lost a battle, the Confederates decided to push back and bring the war to the north. Here, Colin’s incredible knowledge of the Civil War and the St. Albans Raid really stood out as he expanded upon the events that followed. Colin stated that Vermont sent more soldiers to fight in the Civil War per capita than any other state in the union. Vermont stood out for many other reasons against the south in its values and principles surrounding slavery and freedom. Because of that, the Confederacy was particularly irate over their participation. They were quoted as saying that one should “dig a ditch around the state of Vermont and



throw it into the sea!” Colin went on to tell the history of the St. Albans raid and the heroic part that his great-great-great grandfather played in leading the chase after the robbers stole from the area banks and killed one of the visitors by the name of Morrison, from New Hampshire; ironically, he was one of the Confederate’s own sympathizers.

The Confederates developed a well-planned and well-coordinated effort to take place on October 19, 1864! The real intent was to destroy the border of Vermont and New Hampshire for 150 miles. The Confederacy was to, in essence, ruin the economy of the North and collect needed finances, artillery and ammunition, horses, etc., for the crippled South and destroy anything and everything in its path.

St. Albans, by the way, conducted a huge four-day commemoration on the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this occurrence this past September - 2014. The only living relative, Elizabeth Young Kitsch, who currently resides in Florida, and Colin of Georgia, Vermont, met each other as descendants of the two very strong adversaries! They were honored guests at the event.

Elizabeth’s great-great-grand uncle was William Bennett Young who led the rebels to raid St. Albans; Colin’s great-great-great-grandfather, Capt. George Parker Conger, organized and led the 50-man posse and captured the Raiders in Canada.

The Georgia Historical Society has a collection of news articles (*The St. Albans Messenger; Milton Independent*) surrounding the celebration of the 150th Anniversary and the true story of the St. Albans Raid. These can be seen in the History Section of the Georgia Public Library. This was a wonderful program - loaded with facts, incidents, and episodes which sometimes raised the hairs on the back of the neck in how close things could have gone tragically wrong for St. Albans and Vermont but for the “unexplained” Providence at just the right time, not to mention Capt. George Conger’s incredibly brave leadership!■

## “Show ‘n Tell” - September 17th—

(A sample/display of artifacts from the GHS Collection)

Presentation by

The Georgia Historical Society Directors

This program is a very popular one which has been presented several times. Here the GHS takes old antiques—most of which were owned by folks from Georgia—treasures that they kept through the years; things that they collected, items that are so antique that it’s hard to tell what they were used for— and displays them for all to see and learn about.

First up was Director, **Dee McGrath**, who displayed several items from a very generous donation given by Jerry and Georgina Sweeney back in July of 2008. Of these, Dee selected a 1924 No. 2 box camera in great condition, which, with the help of Director David Juare, a professional photographer, himself, had many unique and first-of-its kind features. It was the first camera to 120-roll film. It has a choice of three apertures, and two small reflecting finders for vertical or horizontal shots. Dee also displayed a genuine straw hat; also known as the “boater”, a handmade/hand stitched little girl’s dress believed to have been fashioned in the 1920’s, a military army hat and still other items from the Sweeney’s generous collection. The Sweeneys also donated a myriad of books and photos, which we hope to share with all in the future.

Next, **Colin Conger**, also a GHS director, displayed a slate from the roof of the Georgia Plain Baptist Church, built in 1887. The one part of the building was built before the actual church, which was constructed within a year after. The roof was made out of slate. But recently, the church had to have a totally new roof as the slate was beginning to fall off and would present a very dangerous situation, as one can imagine. The members raised funds and borrowed money to begin construction. Upon looking at the pieces of slate that had come from the top, Colin observed that, when the slate was first placed on the roof (c.1886), it was probably ¼” thick. But now, he noted, these slates had grown thinner over time. Colin saw, as well, that the shape of the slate always looked round. But as displayed by Colin, when the slate was removed, the slate on one end was square. This showed that the slate was made, when layered, to give the illusion of an artistic round shape. Not only that, but when the slate was harvested, the workers would get it in chunks and actually chipped the slate away until the surface was smooth as demonstrated with the samples displayed. The slate was sawed off to the length needed for the project. Colin also pointed out that to adhere the slate to the roof, holes would have to be made into it for the insertion of nails. So with a special tool the slate was punched with holes in such a way that the nails could be hammered into the roof without causing the slate to be broken or compromised at that point. This was particularly done for the sake of possible damage during rough weather, etc. For sure, the work behind the construction of those with this knowledge and skill can be much appreciated.

To have a new slate roof on the church, even before the slate could be placed on it, a tremendously huge amount of work

would be involved in the construction of each piece, first. Colin stated that around the 1930's, slate roofs were pretty much no longer constructed. And so, it is extremely difficult to find someone with the skills to work with slate these days. As a result, the cost for doing that sort of construction is astronomical. With that, the church members decided against using it for the new roof.

Additionally, Colin pointed out that a great deal of this material (slate) could and still can be found all over the state of Vermont – and most certainly in Georgia; i.e., Georgia Beach. Because of this, it was a big part of the construction trade in the early days besides roofs—it also included such items as chalkboards, grave stones, walkways and so on. It is still used for building and many other purposes, today.

Director, **Sara Vester** brought in a “hip” bath. Though not an item from Georgia, it was purchased from an antique dealer in 2006 and was appraised by antique authority, Duane Merrill, at \$200.00. It is shaped like a chair but that's where the resemblance ends.

It's made of a galvanized material and is supposed to be filled with water. Sara guessed it to be another version of a



type of bathtub, also known as a “sitz” bath. She tried one time to sit in it just to get the idea of its use and found it to be extremely difficult to get out of it. One can view this item at our Brick School Museum.

GHS member, **Rebecca Ballard**, spoke about a big wooden box used to store a stove top hat, scarf and gloves inside. These boxes were specially created just for this purpose as the hat was so vulnerable to being crushed, it couldn't just be placed on a shelf safely. These hats, it is believed, were worn on very special occasions.

She also displayed an old wooden bowl accompanied by a wooden stick with a blunt end—very thick. She stated it was used to crush or pound ginger to make a powder and then used as an ingredient for beverages, such as ginger tea or in molasses. She also pointed out that this ginger was also used for medicinal purposes.

Director, **Cindy Ploof**, displayed what is called a “stereopticon” or stereoscope with a collection of cards to view through the scope donated by Madeline Loomis when she and her husband were living on Loomis Road now known as the Oakland Station Road, at the Curtis Bevins' home. There are 157 cards in this wonderful collection.

Cindy recalled that in the past she would so look forward to a visit to an aunt and uncle of hers as they would have this stereoscope with the cards which she really enjoyed seeing. Cindy then displayed how the cards were inserted. It was delightful to

see the images appear in 3-D! Some of these were amusing as well. At one visit from the boy scouts to the Museum, Cindy showed these items to them and they were a big hit because they saw some really fascinating photos in some and great humor in others—and all from so long ago!

Cindy did some research on these two antiques and learned that the stereoscope invented by Sir Charles Wheatstone in 1838 and was one of the most popular forms of entertainment in the 1800's. Oliver Wendell Holmes later developed a more popular version in 1861. Cindy showed some really wonderful photos from the collection she brought that were incredibly well done and came from so many different sources. Great fun!

Because the Holmes name came up, she discovered that a great deal of interesting history was behind him. She listed at least some of his other fortes – a physician, a professor, a poet, a lecturer. He had a strong philosophical stance on the Civil War, which mainly was to hold the Union together. His son would join the War against his wishes and sustain injuries three times – one in his chest – in 1861.

GHS President **Don Vickers** now came up to display a beautiful picture from his own living room wall – a gift from one of his co-workers a couple of years ago. It was a painting of an engine coming out of the railroad station building, which looked as though it was the St. Albans station– in beautiful color. The artist taught in Milton and his name is Stan Folsome. He taught in the Milton school district for many years in the late 1960's to the early 2000's. He was endowed with gifts including that of a brilliant English teacher, as an amateur boxer in his youth, played great jazz music on the piano, and was an ardent artist and illustrator of Vermont railroad stations along with steam engines and locomotives. One of these was the one Don displayed here. Most often these works of art were created free handed and with only a pen and a ruler. When completed, Folsom would hand-color them, too. Don, for obvious reason, stated that this was one of his very treasured pieces and, so, chose to share it with us.

Lastly, Director, **David Juare**, picked up the 1924 No. 2 box camera that Dee displayed earlier, to point out its further qualities. He brought out the fact that he has a camera of his own exactly like this one and still uses it – with the same type film – and that it still works just fine. He opened it up to display the workings of the inside and demonstrated how one would load the film. He gave a great explanation of each of the parts of the camera and their purpose in order for the exposure to take place on the film. Wonderfully and ingeniously created with a combination of unique ingenuity in its construction and yet simple in its operation.



*Continued Pg. 10...*

## Did you know..?

### MAPLE SYRUP RAID IN ST. ALBANS

**It has been said (though not proven)** The Confederates wanted retribution against Vermont for General George Stannard's Vermont Brigade attack of Confederate Gen. Kemper's brigade during Pickett's Charge in the Battle of Gettysburg. They felt they could best accomplish this by destroying Vermont's economy. And so they plotted to do so and devastate its maple sugar industry.

The Confederate Secret Service agreed eagerly to approve the plan devised by the Confederate agents— many of whom were Kemper's men and who fought with Kemper to infiltrate the Vermont woods, destroy equipment, dump the collected sap from the maple trees, and pollute the raw sap.

The result left the Spring harvest in serious peril with desperate farmers standing guard over it in the woods through the night. The economy of Vermont was so close to bankruptcy it seemed that only a miracle could save it. Webster Finkle, President of the Bank of St. Albans, came up with an idea to use the bank vault which was capable of holding an enormous amount of money. Nearly empty of money because of the devastation left by the destruction of the maple sugaring industry, the vault would serve to store the remaining syrup in the rest of the state from further Confederacy assaults. So, temporarily, Vermont's economy was saved.

The Confederates were angry because their plans were impeded by the ingenuity of these Yankees; they wanted to get even. Bennett Young offered to take charge of an organized raid against the St. Albans Bank in the fall of that year. Thus accomplishing their goal to destroy the precious maple syrup reserve.



The Confederate agents met at an inn located near St. Albans to finalize their plan. Fortunately, however, a free black woman by the name of Aunt Jemima was working as a waitress at the inn. She overheard the Confederates scheming to attack the St. Albans bank. Alarmed, she sneaked out that night and informed the local constable of the impending attack. Because of the foresight and courage of this lady, the local farmers held an all-night boiling session and bottled up the syrup sending it down to Montpelier.

On the following day, as the Confederates entered the bank to blow it up and destroy the remaining syrup in it, they found the vault empty with sticky syrup residue as the only evidence of the syrup having been there. As they exited the bank, shots rang out their way from dozens of Stannard's veteran soldiers clothed in farmers' overalls and hidden in nearby buildings and on rooftops. Many of the Confederates were killed or wounded and the rest were off and running out of town toward Montpelier with the Yankee men (Captain George Conger and his posse) close to their heels.

To this day, the people from the Green Mountain State still honor the memory of Aunt Jemima for her courageous action and lack of fear for her own life in warning St. Albans of the impending attack.

**And so, this legend was born!■**

Craig, Joel. "St. Albans Raid." Civil War Humor. Online. September 2000

### "GORDON'S MILL - Our Other Museum"...Cont'd from Pg. 3



This is a photo taken during a recent tour of the Gordons Mill Museum interior.

the dam at this location was built over and around it, which, by the way, was how the brook got its name. A wooden, covered bridge was later built. Then, finally, a cement bridge would be constructed, replacing the covered bridge, for traffic.

The construction of that bridge was done by Asa Pattee and was dedicated in 1934 to Frank Pierce, the owner of the mill at that time and who died in 1933. One of the workers on the cement bridge was Fred Conger from Georgia (a cousin of our director, Colin Conger's Grandfather). Frank Pierce's house was located on one side of the bridge with the Baptist Church where Mr. Pierce was taken when he died, on the other. A note - The cement bridge of 1934 was replaced in 1994, with the first car crossing the new bridge on Sept. 28th of that year. Construction was completed by Blow & Cote, Inc. of Morrisville. That bridge is what stands there today.

In the Georgia Town records, the first owner of the land



with an interest in a sawmill operation in the area near Stone Brook in Georgia Plains was Nathan Graves. On July



In this recent photo, water is flowing over what is left of the dam constructed to hold back and divert water into the grist and saw mills. The dam created what is known as Gordons Pond, which was quite the gathering place for skating parties, horse racing, etc., on the ice in the winter. Since the demise of the dam, the pond is pretty much a mud bog today.

3, 1806, he sold it to Stephen Howard. To quote the Georgia History Book on Page 590, Graves “sold to Stephen Howard his right and interest in ‘a certain Saw Mill with the privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging.’” There would be at least nine owners of the site before Henry Gordon’s purchase on Feb. 12, 1863. In between that time and Gordon’s purchase, Alvah Sabin, a prominent citizen of Georgia, purchased, on Nov. 6, 1840, “one acre of land and mill privileges.” Apparently the history of the mill really began with his construction of the building, which included in the purchase an artificial channel or trough for conducting water, as one used to transport logs or provide water power, plus the dam. Henry Gordon then built his own sawmill, a gristmill and later, the store, which was established by 1882. From the time of Gordon’s ownership to this day, the mill and mill pond have retained the Gordon name.

The mill was a true center of activity and business. Logs were converted into lumber; equipment such as a planer for dressing the lumber; wood sawed for creating shingles out of cedar blocks; slabs cut up into stove length for fuel. During nearly the entire existence of the mill, it would be a primary location for getting what was needed as wood was the only fuel used in the area of cooking and heating. Besides all of this, Mr. Gordon housed a gristmill. This was a wonderful tool for the farmers in their need for ground animal feeds, and occasionally, corn meal and flour for human intake.

But the mill would not be without its own tragic happenstance. On Sept. 20, 1872, an employee of Gordon’s Mill, John King, age 40, was rafting logs in the mill’s pond. He fell into the water and though he was considered a good swimmer, he drowned, leaving a wife and four children.

The 1871 Beers’ map displays grist and sawmills on the northwest side of the bridge and reveals a large mill pond on the east side. Of particular interest, though, is that the Walling map shows the “sawmill” on the southwest side of the bridge.

In the 1890’s, ice was cut out of Gordon’s Pond for the surrounding community to use for storage of food during the “good ole summer time!” It was also a great place for

recreation in the “gay nineties” – 1890’s, that is.

Mr. Gordon successfully ran and operated his business for 39 years. During that time, he bought and operated a general store situated on a small parcel of land contiguous to the mill site. Also, at some point during this progression of success, he purchased an added one acre of land located across the road from the mill and adjacent to the pond for the purpose of building a home in which he dwelled until the end of his days.

On March 12, 1902, Mr. Gordon would sell the mill and store to Burt H. Wood as a result of his advancing age. The mill at this time was in great need of renovations. The dam was constructed of wood and that was rotting. The equipment at the mill was in very poor condition or even obsolete as was the machinery. And so, Mr. Wood took on an extensive renovation and modernization project for the mill. The dam

would be completely reconstructed with concrete – a metal penstock; e.g., a sluice, channel, or pipe used to control or

supply the flow of water would replace the flume – the water turbine (wheel) would be replaced by a new one. Mr. Gordon also added an entirely new system for sawing logs. The principal feature of this was the circular saw that would replace the outmoded up-and-down type. Mr. Wood even installed a metal grinder to replace the previously used millstone in the gristmill.

Burt Wood continued the undertaking until July 1, 1914, when he sold the mill to his brother, Fred Wood. However, he held onto it for only two years when he sold it to his brother-in-law, Frank T. Pierce – Oct. 5, 1916. Frank. Pierce continued the operation until his death in 1934. His sons, Allen and Robert then took it over.

In April – 1943, a huge and totally devastating fire engulfed the mill – destroying it to the point where the site would end up in its original state before the mill was built. The final owners, before it was sold to the Georgia Historical Society, were Robert and Madge Pierce. In 1962 they bought a sawmill rig, which was purchased in Northfield, Vermont, and placed that at the Gordon’s Mill site for the purpose of cutting and making pallets. In January of 1964, Bob then moved the operation to Georgia Center at what is now Rocky Ridge Storage.

**Continued Pg.10...**



This is a photo of Gordon’s Mill in Georgia Plains as it looked in 1906, with the covered bridge shown (left in back), later - c.1933 - to be replaced by a cement one. This was taken when Bert Wood had the ownership and operation.

## ***"GORDON'S MILL - Our Other Museum"...Cont'd from Pg. 9***

Robin Pierce, Bob and Madge's son, would later (1998), as previously stated, sell the mill site with the dam rights to Gordons Pond, to the Georgia Historical Society.

And so this wonderful enterprise – the mill – with its natural setting – the dam – the land – the stone brook – was extremely significant to the community and Georgia's economy for more than 139 years only to succumb to a merciless and ruthless inferno.

To see the Gordons Mill Museum, it is recommended that a request be made from one of the GHS directors listed on the first page. The curator for the Museum is Colin Conger. Because of the valuable and sizeable artifacts located there, it is locked up. The season for our two museums begins in late June and ends in late September.



The foundations shown in this photo are rebuilt walls (using stones found at the site) on the visible foundations from the mills. These walls were rebuilt by Historical Society volunteers a few years back.

Also, from time to time, the GHS will have a tour through this museum and a history explaining the antique treasures that it has accumulated over the years. These opportunities will be posted through the news media, on our new website, <http://georgiahistoricalsocietyvt.org> or, if you're a GHS member, you'll get a notification through the mail.■

## ***Program Review—Cont'd from Pg. 7...***

David also displayed an item that was strange to look at. At first it looked to be a wooden baseball bat. But he stated that it was an old time fire extinguisher. With the aid of Dick McGrath, also a member and firefighter, it was explained that one of these types hangs in an antique display at the Northfield Fire Station. When it was in operation in the day, it contained CO2 and the individual using it was to turn the neck which released the charge.

The night was very entertaining as well as very interesting to see and learn about these wonderful artifacts from so many years ago! We will again remind you that you can see some of these items at the Brick School Museum when it opens during the summer months and still more at the Gordons Mill Museum. We invite all to see these wonderful treasures for the purpose of sharing them with you, our treasured members and citizens of Georgia, as well as visiting public.■

## ***"CAROL ANN JONES"***

**Georgia's Own Singer & Song Writer  
October 21 - Solo Concert by Carol Ann Jones –**

This listening pleasure took place at the Jimmy Messier Memorial Youth Center in Georgia Plains. Carol sang many great songs – some of which were her favorites and others were famous "oldies".



She displayed some of her albums from which some of her selections came. One album was called "Out of the Blue" and from it she selected the song "No rest for the Weary" – a song she wrote herself.

Carol also sang a song called "Lorena" written by H. D. L. Webster in 1856. The words were so touching and so close to the loneliness and sadness experienced by the soldiers during time of the Civil War, many ran away from the fight-

ing to go home to their loved ones. Because of this, the song was banned at that time.

Carol wrote songs for those who were very close to her, as well. She wrote a tune for her son-in-law who was sent over to the Middle East war, entitled, "From the Driest Desert – To the New England Shore", another for a very dear friend who was mourning the loss of her father, called, "Daddy in the Sky", and she wrote a poem inspired by her mom called "Out of the Blue – Into the Sun". These were really moving.

Carol handed out a list of songs and the words to them in an effort to have the audience sing along – great idea and tremendous fun. Some of these dated back to the Revolutionary War.

Carol's talent is well-known to many. But to actually attend one of her performances is truly an enjoyable and fun-filled experience. All had a fabulous time.■

*This wrapped up the programs for the 2014 season. The GHS will be sponsoring many more programs next season so please watch for them.*



## ***Need help with genealogy?***

***Ginger Phelps, also a director for the Georgia Historical Society, has offered her services to research and help with any family information that may be related to the past.***

**For inquiries you may:**

**Call her at - (802) 879-7484**

**E-mail her at - [gingerp46@comcast.net](mailto:gingerp46@comcast.net)**

**Write her at: 10 Glenwood Drive**

**Essex Junction, VT 05452**



## GEORGIA HISTORY QUIZ

1. **Who is the current Georgia Town Administrator?**
  - a. Krissy Jenkins
  - b. Deb Woodward
  - c. Mike McCarthy
  - d. Laurie Broe
2. **When did Georgia's BICENTENNIAL Parade take place?**
  - a. June 22, 1991
  - b. July 19, 1991
  - c. May 22, 1991
  - d. July 21, 1994
3. **What was the actual date of the St. Albans Raid?**
  - a. July 4, 1777
  - b. October 19, 1864
  - c. September 20, 1864
  - d. October 12, 1862
4. **After whom was Georgia named (1) and what state named it (2)?**
  - a. (1) George Wabbanocker IV, (2) Pennsylvania
  - b. (1) George A. Sabin, (2) Vermont
  - c. (1) King George III, (2) New Hampshire
  - d. (1) Capt. George P. Conger, (2) Vermont

5. **Who was the leader of the Confederates that conducted the St. Albans Raid?**
  - a. Thomas Bronston Collins
  - b. Brig. Gen. George Stannard
  - c. Capt. George P. Conger
  - d. Bennett H. Young
6. **Who is the Georgia Fire Department Chief?**
  - a. Charlie Kuthe
  - b. Keith Baker
  - c. Rick Nye
  - d. Malcolm Baker
7. **What is the name of the railroad bridge that links Georgia Mountain and Route 104A?**
  - a. Lamoille River Bridge
  - b. Milton River Bridge
  - c. Fairfax Lamoille River Bridge
  - d. Georgia High Bridge
8. **Bob's Gun Shop, which was a well known marketer of guns, ammo, and sports equipment, is now closed. When was it founded?**
  - a. 1977
  - b. 1965
  - c. 1998
  - d. 2001

*(Answers in this Newsletter on Page 13)*



**CONGRATULATIONS!**  
**FROM THE**  
**GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**TO**  
**COLIN CONGER**  
**WINNER OF THE**  
**VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S**  
**"INDIVIDUAL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD"**

This distinguished award is presented to the individual who has demonstrated, above and beyond, exemplary efforts in the goal of educating, preserving, and memorializing Vermont's historical events for all. This Award in its significance was given to Colin Conger in November of 2014.



– IN MEMORIAM –

**MARION AGNES BATES**

**October 29, 1933—October 29, 2014**

**It is with much regret that we acknowledge the passing of Marion Bates, a lifetime member and loyal supporter of the Georgia Historical Society for many years. Marion's generous help with her historical knowledge and work have meant so very much to our organization.**

**Marion was known for her work in the community of Georgia in other organizations, as well. She gave her all and was certainly recognized as a great contributor to Georgia's history in every way.**

**We wish to convey our deepest sympathy to her husband, Eugene, also a supporter and lifetime member, and to Marion's entire family and dear friends.**

**The Georgia Historical Society**

***An Announcement from the Editor:***

*It is with heartfelt sadness that I have had to make this my last issue of the **Georgia Historical Society Newsletter—Volume 9, No. 1.***

*I have so enjoyed all the parts of writing, researching, and designing this, at one time twice a year, now annual, communication. My goal here has been to inform our members, the Georgia community, and anyone else who might have the benefit of reading and sharing these birds-eye views of Georgia's wonderful and historic past. Georgia is a wonderful town and one town to be so proud of! The foundation of our town was strong to begin with because of it's great founders – and became even more vibrant because so many lives sacrificed for it – right here where we live!*

*On the positive side, the GHS has a webpage – <http://georgiahistoricalsocietyvt.org> We hope you'll take advantage of that.*

*Of course, I will continue with my love for Georgia's treasured history as a director as long as I can. I hope all of you will take advantage of all you've built and acquired through the many years back.*

***Sincerely yours, Dee McGrath***



## ANSWERS – GEORGIA HISTORY QUIZ

1. c. Mike McCarthy
2. a. June 22, 1991
3. b. October 19, 1864
4. c. (1) King George III, (2) New Hampshire
5. d. Bennett H. Young
6. b. Keith Baker
7. d Georgia High Bridge
8. a. 1977

### HOW DID YOU DO?

**5 Right—You read the paper.**

**6 Right—You know your town.**

**7 Right—You know your town very well!**

**8 Right—You own the Town!**

**(8 Right—You will be the next president of the GHS!)**

***\*Special thanks to Flora Hurteau, Colin Conger, and Dick McGrath, for their contributions to this issue of the 2014 Newsletter. Georgia Historical Society Newsletter Editor, Dee McGrath***

## GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETINGS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Location: Georgia Municipal Building, Ethan Allen Highway—  
First Wednesday of each month from May through October (included) at 6:30 pm**

***Have you borrowed material from the Historical section of the Georgia Public Library, i.e., photos, books, files, and/or records, etc.? We have found many are missing. If you have overlooked or forgotten about taking these for your research, we would very much appreciate it if you would bring them back. Just place any of these on the top of one of the cabinets in that section and write a note saying what the item(s) is or are being returned (we don't need your name) and we'll see that it gets back to where it belongs. Thank you.***

**MEMBERSHIP FORM** Date \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Renewal ☐ New Member

Membership is **\$15.00 ANNUALLY** or **\$100.00 LIFETIME**. Please fill out the information below along with your donation and mail to: **Georgia Historical Society**, Treasurer: Laurie Broe, P.O. Box 2072, Georgia, VT, 05468. If you have any questions, please call: **Ginger Phelps 879-7484** or **Dee McGrath 893-4853**. Our new website is: <http://georgiahistoricalsocietyvt.org>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

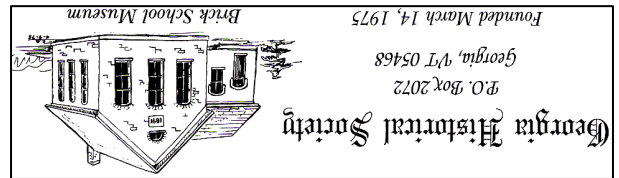
I am interested in (please check all that apply):

☐ Publicity ☐ Parades ☐ Paper Memorabilia ☐ Assisting with Genealogical Research

☐ Board of Directors ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I'm able to (i.e., type, write, help in research, etc.)

☐ I'm unable to participate, but I support the Society's efforts and programs.



***SOMETHING NEW HAS BEEN ADDED!***

***THE GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
NOW HAS A WEB PAGE***

***<http://georgiahistoricalsocietyvt.org>  
CHECK IT OUT!!!***