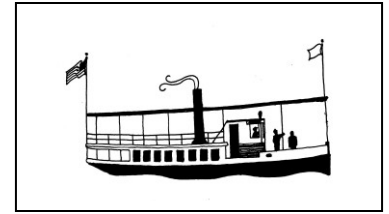


# Sunapee Echoes

Sunapee, New Hampshire Historical Society, Inc.  
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603-763-9872  
Spring 2022



## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

We're busy planning for a busy summer featuring Volume 3 of *Sunapee's Historic Buildings and Places* by Barbara Chalmers, a couple of new exhibits at the Museum, a new ornament, three history cruises, and our usual 4 programs assisted by some new AV equipment.

**History Cruises.** If you haven't made your reservations for one of our history cruises, this is a good time to do it. We've scheduled three evening *history cruises* (same route from Gardner Bay to Georges Mills each time). See our attached program card for details. Send us an email at [sunapeehistory@gmail.com](mailto:sunapeehistory@gmail.com) to ensure a spot on your favorite date. We'll record your reservations on a first-come first-served basis and will collect your money when the time gets closer.

**Programs.** We've scheduled our usual 4 programs, every other Thursday evening in July and August. Please see the accompanying program card for full details. No, we won't offer a spring program in late April or early May. Instead, we're working on our summer line-up. Hope to see you at one or all of those!

**New Technology.** Thanks to a grant from NH Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities, we are able to upgrade our audio-visual equipment at the Museum. We plan to have a ceiling-mounted projector, a couple of wireless microphones, and a stand-alone monitor for slideshow viewing by visitors.

**New Ornament.** Our new ornament sports a full-color representation of the famous Sunapee Golden Trout. It is available for \$22 and can be purchased at the Archives now and at the Museum once it's open for the summer.



**Cemetery Records—a request.** Now that “our” Barbara Chalmers is serving on the Cemetery Commission, she's recreating lost plot maps for some of Sunapee's cemeteries. If anyone has an old plot deed for Georges Mills Cemetery in particular and is willing to share its information with her, she'd be immensely grateful. Thanks!

**Recent Acquisitions.** As always, we are grateful for additions to our collection. Recent items include a 1904 London-made cutaway morning coat ensemble that belonged to T.P. Chandler, a Woodsum Steamboat Company wooden wharf chest, A North Road farm traverse, a farm cordwood sled, 1905 photos of the lake, and postcards from Charley's and Norm's Ski Shop. It was news to us that Charley Boyce and Norm Perkins ran a ski shop on Central Street for a while. Do you remember it? Please think of us for Sunapee items when you're cleaning out your collections. We'd be glad to provide a permanent home for all sorts of Sunapee memorabilia.



**New Hampshire Gives!** This year, we are participating in a giving opportunity sponsored by the NH Center for Non-Profits—a 24-hour online period (7-8 June) when funds will be collected for non-profits state-wide. Look for our page at [NHGives.org](http://NHGives.org). As always, we are glad to accept your donations directly, too.

**Maintenance.** Our spring project at the Archives was the installation of a new roof. Thanks to enthusiastic recommendations from some of you, we contracted with Derek Cook's Roofing Specialists. They proved to be highly professional, responsive, and efficient. The job was done in one day!

**Cleanup at the Museum.** Join us on Saturday morning, 21 May, from 9-noon to help us get ready for the season.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Becky Fitts Rylander

## *Did you know?.....*

Our town was named Wendell for a time, we still have Wendell Marsh, and the western section in the vicinity of Old Wendell Depot is known as Wendell—all named in honor **John Wendell**. But who was he? Was he the father of our town? Or a land speculator? Or perhaps a little of both?

John Wendell was born in Boston in 1731, entered Harvard College at the age of 15 and graduated in 1750, then moved to Portsmouth, NH and became a real estate attorney and broker of some repute. He received honorary Master's degrees from Yale (1768) and Dartmouth (1773) and was well connected to powerful men in Portsmouth and Boston.

When our town was formed as a proprietary in 1768 and named Saville, Wendell was one of 85 proprietors. He served as clerk for proprietors' meetings that were held in Portsmouth, advertised in Portsmouth for settlers, and otherwise worked to ensure successful settlement of this town and others. Records of the Saville proprietors' meetings are held by the Sunapee Town Clerk.

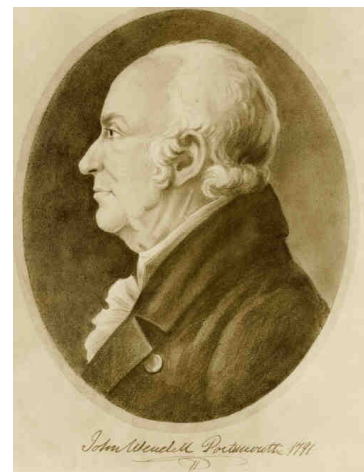
From 1768 until his death in 1808, John Wendell bought and sold lots in town in at least 80 real estate transactions. But he was more than just an absentee landlord. About 1770 he built a log cabin on the north side of Rand Pond on the Province Road, and he paid to have a small bolt mill (a kind of saw mill) built in 1774 on the Rand's Pond outlet brook for use by the local inhabitants. That's in the part of town that was first settled and later sectioned off to help form Goshen. The proprietors granted him one lot in exchange for building the mill and four lots came from Dartmouth College when he made a \$300 donation and received that honorary degree.

Wendell declared his support for independence in 1776 when he signed the Portsmouth Association Test and, according to Governor Bartlett in *Story of Sunapee*, he provided ammunition for defense of the town. When the town was incorporated in 1781 in the new State of New Hampshire, the name was changed from Saville to Wendell in his honor. That remained our name until it was changed to Sunapee in 1850.

When John Wendell died in 1808, he left his widow with 1,900 acres in Wendell, 2,000 acres in Springfield, and 6,800 acres in six other towns. Over the next 40 years, Widow Wendell and her sons sold about 50 lots in Wendell and let some of the property go in unpaid land tax sales. Most reports of our town's name change in 1850 attribute that action to a decision by the townspeople to match the name of the town to that of the lake and mountain. A report on town name changes in an 1862 Portsmouth *Journal* article, however, says that the only known reason was dissatisfaction with the family that owned so much land on which they paid so little taxes. So perhaps Wendell bought lots from proprietors eager to sell but then was unable to "flip" them. Certainly, he does not appear ever to have planned to live here.

John Wendell's permanent residence was in Portsmouth. At one time he resided here (photo at left), at 7 Islington Street on the corner of Bridge Street, in a home now known as Buckminster House. It was built in 1720 by Daniel Warner and was later owned by Reverend Joseph Buckminster, pastor of Portsmouth's North Church.

*Sources for this article include Saville Proprietors' Meeting Minutes, land records, The Story of Sunapee, and press reports.*



***In Memoriam.***

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Herb Stiles on April 9<sup>th</sup> at the age of 97. He served in the US Navy, had a career in sales, was a long-time member of our organization, and was the proud holder of Sunapee's Boston Post Cane. We are grateful that his suggestion for memorial donations was the Sunapee Historical Society.

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And when ordering from Amazon, please use the **smile.amazon.com** website and list the Sunapee, NH Historical Society as your chosen charity. Thanks!



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*We're glad to accept your membership renewal or donations at any time!*

**2022 MEMBERSHIP – RENEWALS – CONTRIBUTIONS**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOWN, STATE, ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHECK MEMBERSHIP TYPE:**

\$15 Individual     \$25 Family     \$50 Business     \$100 Patron     \$300 Sustainer

**CONTRIBUTIONS:**

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_     I wish to remain anonymous

**NEWSLETTER**

Send future newsletters by e-mail  
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**Please make checks payable to:**

Sunapee Historical Society, Inc.  
P.O. Box 501  
Sunapee, NH 03782

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Thank you!

***Sunapee Echoes***

Sunapee Historical Society

PO Box 501

Sunapee, NH 03782

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*The Wendell Family Seal, courtesy of the Portsmouth Athenaeum*