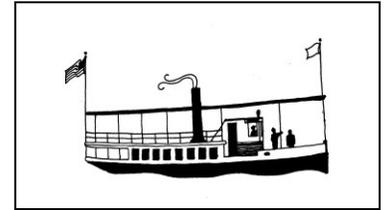


# Sunapee Echoes

Sunapee, New Hampshire Historical Society, Inc.  
P. O. Box 501, Sunapee, NH 03782  
sunapeehistoricalsociety.org  
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603-763-9872  
Fall 2023



## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

**HAPPY HALLOWEEN!** We hope the Great Pumpkin is good to you.

**Thanks!** The museum is now closed for the season, but we want to offer a hearty and heart-felt **Thank You!** to all who helped make the summer such a success—volunteers including docents/museum greeters, 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary party sponsors, silent auction item donors, party goers, and program presenters! We hosted over 4200 guests from as far away as Colombia, Greece, Canada, California and many points in between and presented 6 programs and a fly-tying workshop.

Thanks also to Sunapee Gardeners! They took care of the gardens at the museum all summer and have recently planted a bunch of daffodils at both Sunapee Archives/Thrift Shop and at the museum. We look forward to enjoying their cheery display in the spring—and for many springs to come!

**Major Projects.** We were hoping to install a new walkway at the Archives to connect the parking lot with the handicap ramp, but the weather conspired against us and our contractor ran out of time to do the job. Look for that early next summer. It will mirror the walk to the

Thrift Shop and has been planned since we purchased the property.

We're also working on having the propane tanks at the museum moved a bit so they will stop trapping rain against the siding causing rot.

**Looking for a gift?** As gift-giving season approaches, we call your attention to the many items we have for sale—books, a trivia game, ornaments and more. All are available for pick up at Sunapee Archives or delivery. See SunapeeHistoricalSociety.org/our-store for all the details. Several items were added this year in celebration of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Those are highlighted on a separate page sent with this newsletter.

**Conservation Commission Invitation.** We are all invited to visit the site of a historic 19<sup>th</sup> century pasture—the Dewey Woods Meadow near Mount Royal Academy—on Monday, 6 November at 1 pm. The ConCom will tell us about their plans for its restoration. Please park on the side of Seven Hearths Lane.

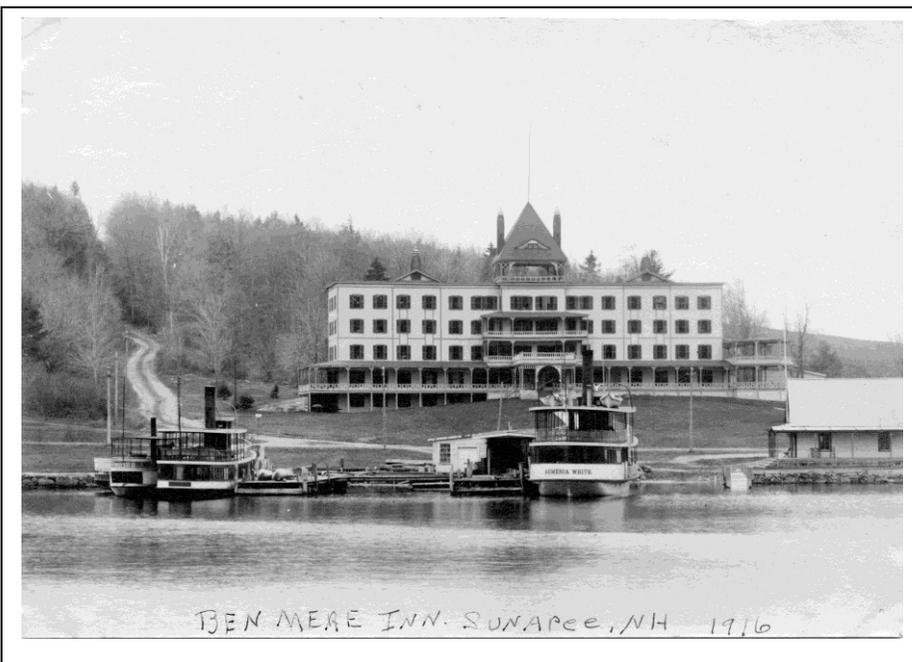
**Harbor History.** As we contemplate possible changes in the Harbor, it may help to know its history. Please see page 2 for a brief rundown.

**Giving Tuesday.** The annual day set aside for giving to our communities' non-profit organizations is coming up on November 28<sup>th</sup>. If you're someone who appreciates this reminder to be generous, we hope you'll think of the Sunapee Historical Society. And if you've already made your donations for the year, we thank you!

**Sunapee Archives Open.** Please remember that Sunapee Archives remains open on Monday afternoons (1-4) year-round. Much of Sunapee's history is on display there and visitors are welcome. We'd love to see you!

Enjoy what's left of the foliage!

Becky Fitts Rylander



## ***Did you know?.....*** Sunapee Harbor History

A number of historic buildings remain in the Sunapee Harbor area. They include—in order of their construction dates—what are now:

The Wild Goose Gift Shop\* (built in 1835-1836)  
The LSPA Center for Lake Studies (1890)  
The Flanders-Osborne (SHS) Museum (1891)  
Osborne House\* (1907)

The Harborside Trading Company\* (1889)  
The Livery (1890)  
The Anchorage\* (1901)  
Fenton's Landing\* (1944--rebuilt after Pike's Bazaar burned)

Gone are Pike's Bazaar (1904-1943), the Ben Mere Inn (1890 to 1968), the Harbor House Hotel (1888 to 1979), Pike's Hall (1909 to 2000), Woodbine Cottage (c.1820 to 2008), and the Red-Neck Yacht Club (c.1851 to 2018).

Sunapee Harbor-Riverway now owns those marked with an \* as well as Stacy's Smoothies (originally the Ben Mere Grill, built in 1955), the parking lot at the corner of Main St and River Rd, the Quack Shack, and the land that the Harbor House Hotel was on, adjacent to the Livery. As our community debates the future look of our harbor and ways to attract sufficient business to fund upkeep of the buildings while maintaining the harbor's historic character, this short history may be useful. For the full story by Barbara Chalmers, please see our Facebook page or the 12 September 2023 issue of the *Intertown Record*. For more on the histories of the buildings, please see *Sunapee's Historic Buildings and Places*, Vols 1 & 2 by Barbara Chalmers and/or our online walking tour on the free "Clio-Your Guide to History" app.

An economic downturn in the Harbor began in the 1960s with several business foreclosures and was augmented by the Arab Oil Embargo and a national recession in 1974. Several old boathouses on the Garnet St. shore were removed in 1974 and replaced with many floating boat slips. The Ben Mere Inn property, torn down in 1968, might have been turned into house lots, but was saved by a citizen effort that turned it into the park we enjoy today. In 1980, Fay Osborne bought his family's former boat repair barn and donated it to the Sunapee Historical Society to be our museum.

But the Harbor's future continued to be uncertain. Sunapee had instituted a planning board with subdivision regulations but the town had resisted passing any zoning for decades. An emergency one-year zoning ordinance was adopted in 1984 but not made permanent until 1987.

Through the 1980s developers purchased many properties, but then experienced foreclosures and other problems. Many of the Harbor's commercial buildings remained empty and in disrepair. In May 1991, four concerned Sunapee citizens, Paul Grevstad, Dick Webb, Jolyon Johnson, and John Rauh, formed the Harbor Riverway Cooperative to spear-head a community effort to buy foreclosed commercial properties with the aim of blocking undesirable development, revitalizing the area, and retaining its historic character. A for-profit NH corporation, Sunapee Harbor-Riverway, Inc., was formed, 6,000 shares were sold across the community, and a large board was selected. Buildings were purchased, cleaned up and leased. Elsewhere in the Harbor, Woodbine Cottage restaurant closed in 1994, but Sandy Rowse purchased the Knowlton House in 1995 and renovated it into a tea room and events center thus bringing some new business to the Harbor. (Knowlton House has since been purchased by LSPA and renovated again to be its Center for Lake Studies.)

The landscape has changed a bit over the years, but the relaxed character of the Harbor remains!



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★CRUISES★**



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

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**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  
 Send future newsletters by postal mail

**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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