



# HENNIKER HISTORIAN

JULY 2022 NO. 88

NEWSLETTER OF THE HENNIKER HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

## Henniker Historical Society Board 2022-23

**President:** Marc McMurphy

**Vice President/Newsletter Editor:** Ellen Reed

**Treasurer:** Sue Fetzer

**Secretary:** Kristen MacLean

**Members:** Diane Carpenter, Deb Dow, Martha Taylor

## PRESERVING LOCAL HISTORY

When a local citizen posed a question about Henniker in the late 1790's, Kristen MacLean, a volunteer at the Henniker Historical Society, sought out the answer in the town records. Since the town's incorporation in 1768, the original minutes of all town meetings have been kept in the town vault.

MacLean found the handwritten minutes of 1770 to answer the question, but sadly, over 200 years had taken a toll. The leather binders had decayed, pages were fading, and 'post-it' notes of previous readers were scattered throughout the pages. Preservation was needed to save this important piece of town history. A grant to the Henniker Historical Society from the Davis & Towle Insurance Agency together with support from the Town of Henniker, allowed 52 years of town records to be cleaned, protected with acid-free 'sleeves,' and rebound. The Henniker Historical Society also obtained a digital copy of the records for future research.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Everyone,

Just about everything we experience has a link to our history in one way or another. When we go to Town Hall, we are stepping into history. The roads we drive on, the land we live on – all have a history.

Unfortunately, many of us are so focused on today, on our rush to get to work or our rush to get home, we hardly have a thought about why this road is where it is or what life was like for the people using these roads before us. In other words, we rarely think about our history.

It is the past though, that helps us understand where we are today. Perhaps more importantly, our history helps to understand where are we headed?

History isn't a waste of time it is a record of time. It is as much what happened 200 years ago is it is what happened yesterday. It is an unbroken chain of links going back infinitely and leading directly to your hands holding this newsletter.

Today is because of what has happened in our history. The road you drive on, your job, and our town didn't just appear. They have a history. All of us too, have a history. There is no doubt that it is a good thing to know our history.

What about where we are headed? What about tomorrow? Well, that depends on today. If we can truly see today in the context of history, then we will now more about shaping our tomorrow. And when tomorrow comes, it can be better than today.

Sincerely,

Marc McMurphy  
President – Henniker Historical Society



Marc McMurphy, Ryan Towle and Kristen McLean with newly bound town records. Old covers shown below.



## New Maple on Maple St.

Last year, the large maple in front of Academy Hall was removed due to its deteriorating condition. This spring we planted a replacement and hopefully it will last us for many years to come. Special thanks to Tyler Lawn Care for coming by to help with the labor of getting it into the ground. We couldn't have done it without you!



HHS board members, Sue Fetzer and Kristen MacLean, with help from Tyler Lawn Care, plant our new maple.

## Plummer Cemetery Tour

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, from 1-4 pm. we will conduct tours of the Plummer Cemetery on River Rd.. Meet some of the residents of one of Henniker's oldest cemeteries and hear the stories of Henniker's past! Check our website for more information.



**Don't forget to visit our website for our virtual tours!**

**Member Code: HHS2021**

VISIT US ON THE WEB

[www.hennikerhistory.org](http://www.hennikerhistory.org)  
email: [hennikerhistoricalsociety@tds.net](mailto:hennikerhistoricalsociety@tds.net)  
Facebook

VISIT US AT ACADEMY HALL  
51 Maple St  
Henniker, NH 03242  
603-428-6267

### BUSINESS MEETINGS

Monthly board meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 9:00 am in Academy Hall. Members and prospective members are invited to attend

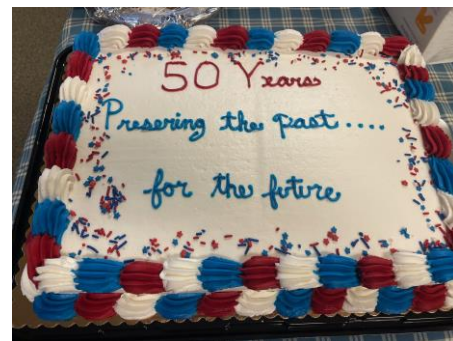
### MEMBERSHIP

To renew, send \$25.00 per household, \$15 per individual or \$7.50 for seniors 65+ (checks can be made out to Henniker Historical Society) along with your name and address to:

Henniker Historical Society  
PO Box 674  
Henniker, NH 03242

## 2022 ANNUAL MEETING

Thank you to all the members that attended our Annual Meeting in June. The new by-laws were approved as was the slate of officers. Sue Fetzer's talk on the history of the Henniker Inn was well received and highly informative



### Need cool Henniker gifts?

Don't forget to check out our website for books, booklets, Cats Meow building replicas, Henniker afghans, historic house plaques and other fun and informative items for all your Henniker gift needs!

[www.hennikerhistory.org](http://www.hennikerhistory.org)



## Items From the Museum

### Stereoscope



In the mid-1800s, photography was growing in popularity, and a British scientist by the name of David Brewster discovered that if you looked at two photos taken at slightly different angles through his special viewer, the image appeared three dimensional, thus giving birth to a new fad.

Almost overnight, the stereoscope became the most popular form of home entertainment in middle- and upper-class homes. Companies rushed to produce not only the viewers, but the photo cards as well. Photographers fanned out across the world taking photos of anything and everything and people, hungry for new views, snatched them up. Now people could “visit” landmarks and natural wonders from across the globe in stunning 3-D clarity.

For 60 years, the stereoscope was a must-have in every home, and it wasn't until radio became the next big thing, that interest gradually faded away. In 1939, with the advent of Kodak's Kodachrome color film, the stereoscope found new life as the popular View-Master toy, which is still available today.

### HHS Co-Sponsors Community Concert

On July 6<sup>th</sup>, the Henniker Historical Society, along with White Birch Community Center, co-sponsored the Henniker Concert Series performers, the Freese Brothers Big Band Combo. As part of the Independence Day celebration, Selectman Peter Flynn, HHS VP Ellen Reed and HHS President and WB Director, Marc McMurphy, each read a portion of the Declaration of Independence.

## New Volunteers

This summer, we have been very fortunate to have two young volunteers help out at the Historical Society. Joseph Riva-Clement has been working with us since this spring sorting through our rock and arrow head collection. Eli Marquardt has just joined and has been assisting Joseph in his endeavor. We cannot tell you how much we appreciate their hard work and dedication.



Some of the arrowheads in our collection.



Selectman Peter Flynn reading the Declaration of Independence

## Henniker Notables

Arthur A. Kendrick (1927-2020)



Fourteen students graduated from Cogswell Memorial School in 1946, one of them was Arthur Kendrick. While starring on the school's basketball team he worked at his father's IGA store on Main Street in Henniker (now Sonny's on Main Street). After graduation, he served in the Army for 3 years and then returned to Henniker. He bought and ran the 'Nook' restaurant for four years. The Nook was later removed for the park and location of the Edna Dean Proctor fountain on Main Street. He and his wife moved to New Jersey, but after 21 years and retirement returned to Henniker. They opened the Country Spirit Restaurant.

Arthur's energy and enthusiasm for Henniker were limitless. He was active in the Henniker Lions Club, Henniker Masons, Henniker Old Timers and one of his passions, the Henniker Historical Society. His dynamism helped shaped Henniker as a town. In 2013 the town of Henniker formally recognized him for 32 of volunteering. In a 2016 interview, Kendrick reflected on the name of the restaurant he owned, "You can't get mad at the word country, you can't get mad at the word spirit."

In memory of Arthur and to honor his love of Henniker, an ornamental flowering apple tree was planted by the Kendrick family, including his children, Toni Kendrick Johnston, Kathryn Kendrick Reynolds and Michael Kendrick outside of Academy Hall. A plaque will be installed at a later date.





## A Visit to Proctor Square's Past

Henniker is fortunate to have an attractive town center where Main St. and Western Avenue meet up with Maple and Bridge Streets. This crossroads is known as Proctor Square. While it has certainly changed a lot over the past two centuries, there are still much that remains familiar. We thought you might enjoy seeing Proctor Square through the years.



This photo dates from about 1865 and is the one of the earliest photos facing west towards the pharmacy building and Western Avenue. The image below dates from the early 1900s, also looking west.



The photo below, looking east, is from the early 1870's. The brick building in the left photo burned down in February 1876 and was replaced with a new building called the Childs Block (right) in the 1880s. It now houses Scoops Ice cream.





Dating from 1888, notice the water fountain near the pharmacy porch. You can see it in several of the photos. It was used for watering horses.

In 1893, a terrible fire destroyed a large section of the south side of Main St.. Notice the man standing with a safe in the lower center part of the picture (also that water fountain to the left!). The safe was the only thing rescued from the building and still exists today.



In 1894, George Preston quickly rebuilt his new establishment (it is the three-story building in these photos). It still exists, although has been altered significantly over the years.







In 1914, a new building was finally erected at the end of Main St. It is now occupied by the Davis and Towle insurance company.

The Preston building has changed considerably with a dramatic change in the roofline. Sonny's on Main restaurant is now there.



About 1955, the town has a more modern look.

Proctor Square today



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**July 2022 Newsletter  
Issue No.88**



## **FIRST MURDER TOUR: The Untimely Death of Nettie Douglass**

We are again offering our FREE Henniker First Murder bus tour. Join us as we visit many of the places in Henniker associated with the tragic 1894 event and tell you the sad story that put Henniker on the map. The death of 14-year-old Nettie Douglass was reported across the country and caused a huge sensation throughout New England.

Seating is limited to 10 people/tour. To register, please email us at **[hennikerhistoricalsociety@tds.net](mailto:hennikerhistoricalsociety@tds.net)** with your number of guests and preferred time(s) and we will get back to you quickly to confirm. Tours last about an hour. Check our website at [www.hennikerhistory.org](http://www.hennikerhistory.org) for more information.

This is a fascinating tour and will give you a new perspective on our town and the people who lived here.



**Sunday, August 14**  
**Times: 1:00, 1:30, 2:00, 2:30 pm**