

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BOB TEGART



Dear Friends,

It has been a busy summer and fall. Our programs continue to attract a wide audience. The Paula Weldon presentation, consisting of presentations by a panel of authorities on her disappearance, attracted over 130 attendees. The upcoming programs should be equally appealing. The History of the Civilian Conservation Corps in Vermont will be our next program on Sunday October 16th. On November 20th, Carole Corey-Dziubek will talk about the remarkable signature quilt she has been researching; and on December 18th we will learn about the History of the Mohican people of this region. All programs start at 2:00PM and are free to all, thanks to sponsorship from Williams Financial.

The Bennington Historical Society was chosen this year to ring the bell representing the 14th state in the July 4th bell ringing program conducted by the Bennington Rotary Club. Our society was given a plaque to commemorate this event and it will be displayed in the Regional History Room.

The league of Local Historical Societies and Museums has awarded the 2022 Achievement award to the Remember Baker Dramatization held in East Arlington last summer. A group, partly composed of BHS members, will accept this award on October 29 in Manchester.

Hats off to those dedicated BHS members who participated in these events.

Warmly,
Bob

BENNINGTON'S "OTHER" MONUMENTS, NO. 6: WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING CENOTAPH

BY BILL MORGAN

As visitors walk down the path to visit Robert Frost's grave in the cemetery next to the Old First Church, they usually pay no attention to the attractive white marble stone they pass along the way. It was placed there in honor of William Ellery Channing. If anyone notices it at all, they probably believe that Mr. Channing is also buried here, but this is in fact a cenotaph, a monument erected in honor of Channing whose remains are in the Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts. William Ellery Channing's only connection with Bennington is that he died at the Walloomsac Inn across the street on October 2, 1842. According to James Hicks, the owner of the inn at that time, even though he was ill, Channing treated Hicks and his wife as if they were a king and queen. The innkeepers of the hotel held him in such high esteem that until the closing of the inn, a portrait of Channing hung in a place of honor.

Channing was born on April 7, 1780, in Newport, Rhode Island. He became one of the country's foremost Unitarian theologians and influenced many of the Transcendentalists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Nathaniel Hawthorne, both of whom admired his liberal views about religion and morality. His influence spread to people like Elizabeth Peabody, Margaret Fuller, Theodore Parker, and Dorothea Dix. In an era of religious revival Channing was as famous as more recent charismatic ministers like Henry Ward Beecher or

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BENNINGTON'S "OTHER" MONUMENTS CONT...

Billy Graham. His most important sermon is widely known as the "Baltimore Sermon" delivered in that city in 1819 and often reprinted.

In it he laid out the principles of Unitarianism, a belief in the singular nature of God as opposed to the more common idea of the trinity of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thus the name Unitarian. He articulated the basic goodness of all people, thereby rejecting a basic concept of Calvinism. He further explained that the scriptures were meant as a guide, an aid to understanding, but only one of many books that could be used as a source of inspiration, reason, and understanding. During the later years of his life Channing became a staunch advocate for the immediate abolition of slavery and worked for emancipation.



In the summer of 1842 shortly after the publication of a 5-volume edition of his works, Channing decided to take some time off and visit the Susquehanna valley in northeastern Pennsylvania. The weather was terrible and the roads were impassable so he abandoned his plans and retreated to Lenox, Massachusetts for a few months. The Berkshire mountains inspired him and even though he was ill, he gave a public speech in Lenox on August 1 which turned out to be his last. Early in September he decided to return to his home in Cambridge but wanted to visit the Green Mountains on the way, hoping the fresh mountain air would restore his health. When he arrived in Bennington his condition worsened to the point where he could no longer continue his trip. He stayed in the Walloomsac Inn for the next 26 days but in the end succumbed to typhoid fever on Oct. 2, 1842.

At the time of his death the Bennington Banner noted "The Rev. William Ellery Channing died in this town on the 2d instant at 7 o'clock PM. Dr. Channing was a highly distinguished divine and one of the most talented and impressive writers of the age. His loss will be deeply deplored, not only by his family and numerous personal friends, but by the country and the world." One hundred years later, the Banner went even further in their praise: "Channing's insight, vision and courage proclaim him to be one of the greatest prophetic souls that has ever arisen in New England."

In 1942 on the centennial of Channing's death, this monument was dedicated. There were two observances. The first was on October 2, 1942, when Dr. C.H. Pennoyer gave a lecture about Channing and stressed the need for a new League of Nations after the end of World War II, a subject of which he felt Channing would approve. Then on October 4, a memorial service was held in the old church led by Rev. Vincent Ravi Booth. Guest speakers included Rev. Dana McLean Greeley, the well-known minister of Boston's Arlington Street Church, Channing's Church, and Dr. Julius Seelye Bixler, president of Colby College. Following the service the monument was unveiled by Miss Frances Anne Wister, Channing's great-granddaughter and one of Philadelphia's most prominent historic preservationists.

The white marble stone stands at a right angle to all the other markers in the cemetery so it is easy to spot. Beneath an attractive carving of a sunset in the mountains is the inscription: "In this quiet village among the hills, William Ellery Channing, Apostle of Faith and Freedom, died at Sunset October 2, 1842." On the other side of the marker, underneath a carving of a lighted Greek lamp are the words: "Dr. Channing's interment was in Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Mass. The light of his faith lives in the hearts of his disciples throughout the world."

KIDDIE PARADE BIG FEATURE OF STREET FAIR

Charles Dewey found this in the September 10, 1926, Bennington Banner:

The street fair, held last week Friday and Saturday in Old Bennington for the benefit of the Girls Club, achieved tremendous success. According to conservative estimates made late Saturday night, the net profits will equal \$3,000. The street fair was more or less of an innovation in Bennington, but everyone took hold in royal style, and so much interest in the entire affair was shown that the great success was made possible.

The feature of the afternoon, Saturday, was the kiddie parade, which started promptly at 3:30. The procession started from the residence of Richards Kellogg, marched over the road in front of the Congregational Church, around the green, and back in front of the Walloomsac Inn. The children wore all kinds of ornate costumes. One of the most unique displays was a cage of small puppies; on the wagon it said "Bennington College. Watch us grow." The wagon was drawn by a couple of small boys dressed as college students.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS FREE TO THE PUBLIC FROM 2PM TO 3PM

BHS PROGRAMMING IS SPONSORED BY
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Sunday, October 16

- The History of the CCC Camps in VT



View of CCC Camp, 1935-1940, Albert Chorney Peru, Vermont
Gift of Jonathan Flaccus, courtesy Vermont Historical Society

Martin Podskoch will talk about Civilian Conservation Corps camps in Vermont: Their History, Lore and Legacy. Join us to learn of the impact the CCC had on the Vermont landscape and the legacy that they left us.

Podskoch is a retired teacher from Delhi (Catskills, NY) and the author of eleven books including *Adirondack Civilian Conservation Corps Camps: Their History, Memories and Legacy of the CCC*. He has also written books about the CCC camps in Connecticut and Rhode Island, the history of the Catskills, and Adirondack fire towers.

Sunday, November 20

- The Shaftsbury Quilt

Carol Corey-Dziubek will share the remarkable signature quilt that has been in her family since 1888. Since her own retirement, Carol has been researching the quilt, documenting the genealogy and family histories of the 96 people whose names appear on it. Carol will discuss various types of quilts, the construction of this particular quilt, and delve into the stories of a couple of the individuals named on it. She will also touch upon the political climate in Vermont in 1888 – there is one Democrat signature on the quilt, amidst a sea of Republicans. There will be time for close examination of the quilt as well.

Sunday, December 18

- Many Trails of the Stockbridge Munsee Mohicans: The History of the Mohican People of this Region

The Mohican people are the indigenous people of Bennington and are today known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. Tribal Historic Preservation Manager Bonney Hartley will share about the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican people's deep history in the region, their "Many Trails" of forced removals, and their continuing cultural preservation efforts in the region today.

VERMONT SAMPLER DAY

A SPECIAL INITIATIVE

Monday, November 19

- 10AM to 4PM

The Sampler Archive Project (samplerarchive.org): a statewide effort to locate, photograph, and document all American samplers and related girlhood embroideries held in the public and private collections of Vermont. You Can Help!

Vermont has a rich history of providing diverse educational options for its girls and young women. Relatively little is known, however, about the schoolgirl samplers and needlework pictures produced by students in Vermont's early schools, public and private. The Vermont Statewide Sampler Initiative is working to change that! A national survey conducted in collaboration with the Sampler Consortium uncovered more than 300 Vermont samplers in collections across the nation, representing all 14 Vermont counties. In addition, a Vermont-based team is working with the state's museums, historical societies, historic homes, and private collectors. The goal is to photograph and document all American samplers in their collections for inclusion in the Sampler Archive, an online searchable database of American schoolgirl needlework. Although this statewide initiative focuses on Vermont samplers, we are interested in documenting all American samplers residing in Vermont collections. Ultimately, members of the Vermont Statewide Sampler Initiative hope to host an exhibition and publish a book on Vermont samplers and related girlhood embroideries. To support this initiative, you can:

Donate: All donations are used to offset the costs of professional photography and image management.

Communicate: Is there a sampler collector in your life? Have you inherited an ancestor's sampler? Let us know!

Volunteer: We need volunteers to document samplers, either in-person or online. Training and support provided.

Attend: Bring your antique samplers to our Sampler Identification Documentation Days. Watch for future Sampler ID Days near you in 2023.

**BENNINGTON MUSEUM IS OPEN EVERY DAY EXCEPT WEDNESDAY, 10AM-4PM
THE REGIONAL HISTORY ROOM IS ACCESSIBLE FREE OF CHARGE ON
MONDAYS, THURSDAYS, & FRIDAYS 1PM-4PM**

**THE BENNINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETS ON THE FIRST MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH
FROM 4PM - 5:15PM AT BENNINGTON MUSEUM.**

All BHS donors will receive a copy of the newsletter and other BHS announcements via email, and are invited to attend these monthly meetings.

Make a gift to the BHS today to help keep our programming and newsletters free and frequent this coming year!

Bennington Historical Society

A volunteer-operated program of Bennington Museum

Officers: Bob Tegart, President; Don Miller, Past-President; Charles Dewey, Secretary

Committee Members: Ted Bird, Anne Bugbee, Joe Hall, Scott Maguire, Jackie Marro, Bill Morgan, Beverly Petrelis

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