



Middletown Springs Historical Society, Inc.  
Middletown Springs, Vermont 05757

May 1984

**Newsletter**

Dear Friends:

Since our last letter our plans for the Strawberry Festival have firmed up, and the date is now Sunday, June 24, two to four p.m. on the green. In case of rain, it will be moved ahead one week to July 1. Hope you can be with us to enjoy the homemade ice cream and biscuits!

The request for renewal of memberships for 1984 has brought 70 responses. If you haven't renewed since the beginning of this year, please use the slip below. Much is going on here, and we would like to keep you informed.

Memorial Day was celebrated by the usual colorful display of bands and floats representing nearly all the fourteen organizations in town, including one early A.W. Gray thresher and another actually operating as it went by. The Firemen's Auxiliary served a barbecue, and the Historical Society building was open to visitors. Governor Richard Snelling gave the address.

**BICENTENNIAL**

Middletown Springs is two hundred years in 1984. Joseph Spaulding, who had made a survey of the boundaries, was directed at a town meeting to carry a petition to the state legislature in Bennington. On February 27, 1784, the legislature met, received the request for incorporation, and referred it to the next session. The legislature next met in Rutland and on October 28 passed the petition. At the town meeting on November 17, 1784, a committee was formed "to reckon with sever-

al inhabitants of the town respecting the costs made in getting the town established." For this purpose they voted a sum of two pounds, 12 shillings and 7 pence.

Work is slated for several improvements this summer. Among them is a renovation of the encased display in the Springs Park of pictures and information about the area. Also the stand and notebook for use by visitors to record their names and addresses.

Long needed is the replacement of the old sign uptown that invites visitors to "stay awhile with us", and gives the direction and distance to other towns.

There is good reason to believe that the clock in the schoolhouse will once again tell the time of day as well as call the pupils to their first class. The mechanism of the clock has long been in disrepair, but a few concerned citizens have started a minor drive to raise money for a professional repair job, which is available in our own community. The Historical Society has been asked to be the repository of the donated funds until they are needed.

**THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

There is an active movement afoot to have Middletown Springs apply for inclusion in the National Register. This involves a long and expensive survey by professional historic architects, but if accomplished it is of great benefit to both the town and to property owners. Our Society is behind the project, and a letter indicating our financial responsibility and the

Please make checks payable to M.S. Historical Society and send to Mrs. John VanderSande, Birch Hill, Middletown Springs, VT 05757. The dues are: Individual-\$4; Family-\$5; Contributing-\$10; Sustaining-\$25; Patron-\$50; and Life-\$100

Name

Address

Zip

Amount

formal application to proceed has been sent to the state headquarters.

The cost of the survey will run about \$3,000. The state agency representing the National Register will meet up to \$1,500, the town voted last March to allocate up to \$1,000, and the Historical Society will take on the responsibility of the balance needed.

Ten towns in Vermont have already been entered in the Register, and three others have made application. About three years ago a representative of the Vermont Development Agency visited Middletown Springs and commented that there were plenty enough houses here to warrant favorable consideration.

#### YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Please use the slip on the other side to renew your membership if you haven't already. We need your help in finishing the Adams House renovation!

MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.  
Middletown Springs, VT 05757

#### THE ADAMS HOUSE

Visitors to our Historic Society building have occasionally asked about its history. The town does not have records that go back far enough, but building experts have estimated that the framework of the building was certainly about the first quarter of the 1800s

The first family that was well known was that of Cyrus Adams, Middletown's town clerk from 1822 to 1829. His wife had a hat shop in the east wing of the building, now the town clerk's office. The rest of the building (without the large back wing) served some as a hotel and as a funeral home. Adams processed the corpses on the second floor and let them down through a trap door into what is now the middle or stencil room.

History of later years is scarce, but it was certainly used as a community center. The large upstairs room had the only good hardwood floor in the building, and basketball, dancing and plays took place.

As the years went on it fell into disuse and disrepair. Eventually it was apparently taken over by default by the town. When there was talk of tearing it down and putting up a concrete block building for the town clerk, public sentiment crystallized. The CIA (Civic Improvement Association) did a paint job, then the New Historical Society took over.

And now here we are!

