

# WATERBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



SPRING 2019

Volume 20, Number 1

## The Perry Hill Caboose Building a Bustling Family Camp

By Chuck Magnus

*Editor's note: Mr. Magnus spoke of the history of the caboose and its renovations for a local program, "Backyard Goldmine," at the January program meeting.*

The "Caboose" property is located on Perry Hill off the Henry Hough and Middlesex Notch Roads. The property was purchased by my grandparents, Charles (Bumpy) and Florence (Nanny) Morrell, in two parcels in 1956 and 1959. Charles, Florence and their five children were all living in Waterbury at the time--my grandparents on Swasey Court--and my grandfather had been looking for a piece of property for a family "camp."

My grandfather was raised in Bethel, Vermont, by Italian immigrants who lived and breathed the railroad life. He worked in several capacities for the Central Vermont Railroad, beginning in the early 1920's until his retirement in 1968.

After having found the perfect spot for camp on Perry Hill, my grandfather had the caboose (circa 1907) and the passenger car (circa 1860s) moved from the Barre & Chelsea Railroad yard in the summer of 1957. The rail cars were loaded using a crane and trucked on flat beds

*continued on page 4*



The Morrell Family Caboose on Perry Hill. Photo: Chuck Magnus

## Adventures in Rural India

By Calvin Dow

*Editor's note: Mr. Dow is a regular contributor to the WHS newsletter. All views expressed here are his own.*

Jackalabanda was a small village on the All India Railroad. I was a passenger on the Assam Truck Road halfway between Gauhati and Jorhat. My orders sent me to our airport in Chabua Assam, where I would fly over the Himalayan Mountains to Kunming, China. While waiting for priority space I was assigned on temporary duty to our Signal Corps in Jacka. We had no food facilities. We had to drive a weapons carrier three times a day to a pumping station ten

*Continued on page 3*

## In This Issue

- Annual Appeal Donations
- Relocation of Mural
- Annual Meeting and Program
- Call for Nominations
- Bylaws Amendment
- Ghost Walk Save the Date

# Beloved Local Mural Relocated

By Jack Carter

A year after the Larkins donated the Arvard's mural, by Sara-Lee Terrat, to the Waterbury Historical Society, it is now installed in two places in Town. Ten panels of the 16 are at the Community Room of the Train Station, and the remaining panels are now in place in the Steele Community Room of the Waterbury Municipal Center.



Panels of the mural by Waterbury artist Sarah-Lee Terrat. The mural once hung in Arvard's restaurant, and the owners donated the mural to the Historical Society when the restaurant was sold.

Photos courtesy of Jack Carter.

## Remembering a Tiger Scare in India

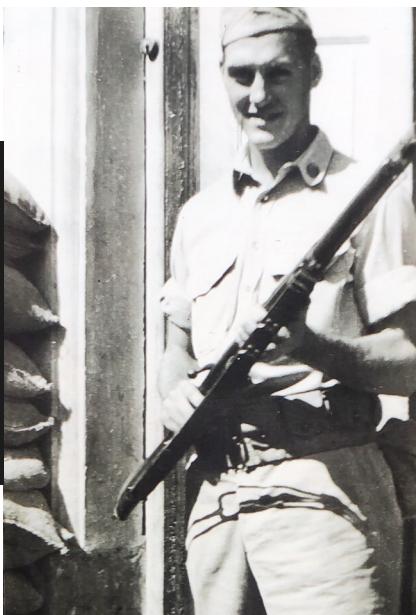
Continued from page 1

miles away.

Life there was repetitious. We did not use the word "boring" then -- that was a word we learned from our grandchildren. The station was so small I was the highest-ranked non-commissioned officer.

One day about noon I was driving over for lunch. I noticed a cow standing in the tall grass. The cow suddenly disappeared from sight. Knowing how valuable their animals were to the villagers, I pulled off the road and we all got out to see what happened. Looking for the cow, we suddenly heard a deep growl and saw a yellow and black tail begin to swish above the grass. Then a large tiger's head appeared. His mouth was covered with red gore. He looked at us with his baleful yellow eyes and roared at being disturbed. We dashed back to our carrier in a flash and headed for our own lunch, while Mr. Tiger finished his lunch.

Three days later, a party of hunters appeared from Gauhati. Beaters made noise in the bush and drove the tigers toward the hunters. One of those tigers had become a "man-eater" addicted to the taste of human flesh. The Pukka Sahibs, as the villagers called the British and American hunters armed with rifles, dispatched the poor creatures and sent them to Tiger Heaven. The excitement soon subsided and Jackalabanda resumed its somnolent state.



Sgt. Dow guards against Bengal Tigers in 1942.

Photo courtesy of Calvin Dow.

## WHS Thanks Donors for Annual Appeal Generosity

All monetary donations go to support the mission of the Society in its work to preserve and document Waterbury history and provide quality programming to the public.

Anonymous Donors	Cathy Jo & Luther Leake
Lynne Alden	R Allyn & Sandra Lewis
Susan & Jeffrey Amestoy	Brian Lindner
William April	Sharon MacMahan
Bradley & Judy Ather	John Malter
Elaine Beal	Virginia Martin
Milton & Joan Beard	Sandra McGrath
Richard & Dianne Bilodeau	Erin Mooney & Peter
Elizabeth Bordeaux	Plagge
Rob & Holly Buck	Mark & Bonnie Morse
Karen Carpendedo	Herschell Murray
Jack Carter	William O'Brien Sr.
Susan Chamlers	Cynthia Parks
Eileen Chittick	Nancy Patterson
James & Carolyn Comley	Edward Perantoni
David Cutter	V. L. Perkins
Darby, Kolter & Nordle	Katherine Powell
Ann Dedell	Kevin & Debbie Rogers
Janet Diblasi	Meredith Rogers
Helen Dill	Wilford Sayah
Calvin Dow	Ted Schulthies
Rebecca Ellis	Dale Smeltzer
Barb Farr & Marc Metayer	Stephen & Addie Soule
Karen Fiebig	Karen Steele
Elizabeth & Douglas Finlay	Ruth Sugg
Judith Gale	Grace & Tom Sweet
Janice Gendreau	Stephen VanEsen
Roger & Shirley Gilman	Val & John Vincent
Joanne Goyette	K. Allan Wallace
Breta & Steve Grace	A. James Walton, Jr.
Harold & Shirley Grout	Don & Mary Welch
Ron & Marge Gulyas	Lisa Clark Wernhoff
Patty & Paul Haverstick	Frederick & Karen Weston
Job Heintz & Christina	Paul & Jane Willard
Pellechio	Scott Wood
Marty & Sue Johansen	Gordon & Theresa Wood
Gordon Johnson	Mr. & Mrs. Wulff
Robert & Betty Jones	Edward Ziedins
Roland Lafayette	John Zimmerman

We are grateful!

# Welcome New Members!

**George Clement**  
Nashua, NH

**Mary Jane Grace**  
Waterbury, VT

**Greg & Lisa Probst**  
Waterbury, VT

**Tony & Lisa Walton**  
Waterbury Center, VT

**Bob Woodruff**  
Waterbury, VT

**Julie Young**  
Waterbury, VT

## Donations

*We appreciate your monetary and artifact gifts to help us fulfill our mission!*

**Anonymous** — \$45

**George Clement** — \$50

**Mary Jane Grace** — \$25

*For information about the process of donating artifacts, contact Archivist Tracey Haerther at archivistwchs@gmail.com*

*Monetary donations can be sent to: Paul Willard, WHS Treasurer, P. O. Box 708, Waterbury, VT 05676*



## Limited Edition Railroad Ties

The Waterbury Historical Society is selling a limited number of these beautifully restored railroad ties from the Mount Mansfield Electric Rail, which ran between Stowe and Waterbury between 1897 and 1932. The ties can be purchased at the Annual Meeting on April 24, 2019.

**Small railroad ties: \$25/each ~ Large railroad ties: \$40/each or \$75/pair**  
**Cash or check accepted.**

## Perry Hill Caboose

*Continued from page 1*

through downtown Waterbury to Perry Hill at around 3 a.m. in order to avoid as much traffic as possible.

The crane unloaded the two cars back-to-back onto railroad tie wood cribbing and set in place. The caboose was plumbed with a kitchen sink and toilet, and the passenger car was renovated to a screened-in “dining car” with a large table with bench seating.

Within a few years my grandfather contracted the excavation and installation of a 30' diameter bituminous asphalt swimming pool that was just over 5' deep. The water for the swimming pool came from a mountain brook and was gravity-fed down to the pool with about 1200' of 1-1/2" steel pipe. The steel pipe had been previously removed from the Central Vermont Railroad's “round house” boiler system in St. Albans.

The “Morrell family” children, grandchildren and many friends have learned to swim in the cool brook-fed water. Planting vegetable gardens, raising grapes, blueberries and apple trees were included in my grandfather's daily chores at the caboose.

Over the years we celebrated family birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, and family reunions and had lots of cookouts at this special place. In the fall and winter the caboose was used for a hunting camp, snowmobiling, snowshoeing and cross country skiing. The caboose was also a cozy cold-weather escape with the wood stove going.

My (2) brothers and I purchased the property in 1986, just prior to my grandfather's passing in 1987.

# Meeting Minutes, January 23, 2019

Steele Community Room, 6pm—Respectfully Submitted by Cheryl Casey, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 6 PM by President Barb Farr.

Paul Willard gave the treasurer's report - Total amount in the treasury of all accounts is \$128,564.73. We now have 200 members. Paul asked that if anyone present wasn't a member, that they consider filling out a membership form available at the table.

Curator's Report - Jack Carter mentioned the Old Center Cemetery exhibit board in the back of the room. It will be installed at the Old Center (Route 100) Cemetery in the Spring. We are working on reprinting the Historic Walking Tour brochure. Jack pointed out the Sarah Lee Terrat mural panels that were on the back walls and said the remaining panels are at the Train Station along with other railroad artifacts.

Education/Outreach - Jane Willard spoke about the Sunday afternoon Trivia Event that will be held in the Steele Room on February 10th from 2 to 4:30. She is taking reservations for tables of six. Prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be served. This event is co-sponsored with the Vermont Historical Society.

Program Committee - Betty Jones said at the April 24th meeting Brian Lindner will talk about train wrecks in Waterbury. The July meeting will feature square dancing instructions and participation. She introduced Camille Mason who introduced the evening's program presenter Chuck Magnus.

Chuck Magnus's presentation was the story of the abandoned caboose that his grandfather Mr. Charles Morrell acquired in the 1950s from the railroad and moved it to Perry Hill.

## ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM

April 24, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Steele Community Room

**Train Wrecks in Waterbury, Featuring Brian Lindner**

The railroad has been a critical part of the Waterbury region history since 1849 when tracks were first laid. Over the decades there have been many dozens of wrecks ranging from the simple up to the spectacular. This presentation will cover a general history of those wrecks and will be illustrated with photographs that have taken years to locate. Did you know there was once a fatal train accident on Lincoln Street? How about a head-on train wreck in Stowe? These stories and many more will be included.

The program is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.



# Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,

Your excellent article by Kay Wallace recalls that 5,000 years ago we lived in a matriarchal society and there were no bloody wars every day somewhere on this planet.

Then men got organized, took over the women and declared a patriarchal society. Since then women have been the most persecuted people throughout all of recorded history. Why was this programmed into the brain of human men?

Does the WHS have any photos or information about the peddler who routinely toured through Waterbury and Waterbury Center in the 1920s selling hot mulled cider from a wooden keg?

Your Connecticut Member  
Calvin Dow

To the Editor,

This little jewel of a guide (*pictured below*) was given to us at Christmas by dear friends. What a fun read, and surprisingly the tourism message still resonates to present day Waterbury. Thanks to the WHS for unearthing and reprinting it. It is available for sale at Bridgeside Books or by contacting the Historical Society. We highly recommend it.

Laura and Bob Parette  
Waterbury Center, VT



## Save the Date!

for the  
**Annual WHS Ghost Walk**  
**Monday, May 27, 2019**

*More details to come. Visit  
[www.waterburyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.waterburyhistoricalsociety.org) or  
@waterburyhistoricalsocietyVT on Facebook*

## Call for Nominations

WHS seeks candidates interested in running for the following positions:

- ✓ President
- ✓ Secretary

Elections will take place during the annual meeting on April 24. For more information or to make a nomination, contact Nominating Committee Chair Jack Carter, [empstowest@aol.com](mailto:empstowest@aol.com) .

## Musical Entertainment in WWII China

By Calvin Dow

He was the principal violinist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. I was a musicologist from Vermont. We were stationed for two years in wartime Kunming, China, and became good friends. We talked with our Special Services officer, whose job it was to plan events that would raise the morale of our troops who were so far from home.

Sgt. Ralph Yochim and I gave a music concert recital, with him playing famous masterpieces from the violin repertoire. Music-loving refugees from Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Kunming would also attend. We had a good time trying out various violins in downtown Kunming, a city of two million.

*Continued on next page*

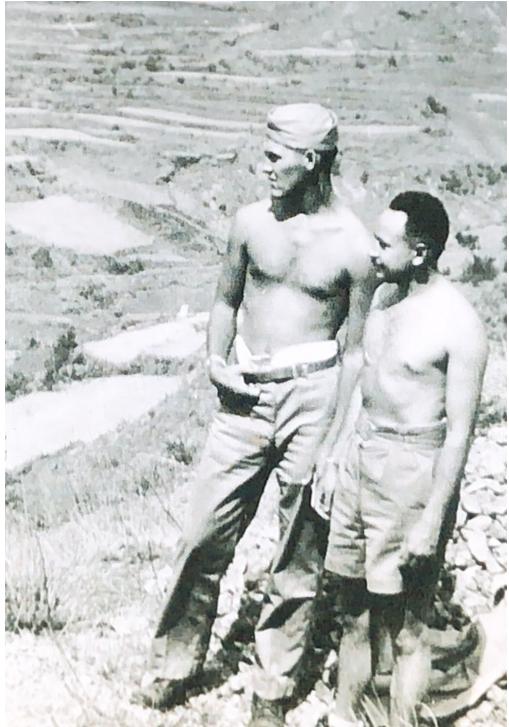
# Downtime on the WWII Front

*Continued from previous page*

Also attending was General Lung, the warlord and chief factotum of Yunnan Province. He was invited along with a local Greek businessman.

I invited my new friends from the Kunming Tennis Club and tennis players from our Air Corps that was commanded by General Chennault, leader of the famous Flying Tigers. Also attending was Julia Child, a member of a covert operation from Washington, D.C. I met her on the S.S. Mariposa during our 60 day voyage from the U.S. to Karachi, India.

Ralph played the Chinese National Anthem and popular music from the big band era. But the absolute highlight of the evening was the beautiful pianissimo music of the second movement of the third violin concerto created by the genius composer, Camille Saint-Saëns. I was mesmerized! So were all the people in that audience.



## WHS Board Proposes Bylaws Amendment

### General Membership Asked to Vote at Annual Meeting

*The Board of Directors submits for the general membership's consideration the following addition to Article V Committees and Appointments:*

**Outreach Education Committee:** There shall be an Outreach Education Committee consisting of at least three members appointed by the Board at the annual meeting. The Nominating Committee shall recruit members to be appointed. Additional members of the Outreach Education Committee beyond the minimum of three (3) may be recruited by the committee and appointed by the Board at any time. The Outreach Education Committee will do outreach to the community to increase awareness of and participation in the Waterbury Historical Society.

**Rationale:** *The Outreach Education Committee has been functioning for some time as an established entity within the Society and consistently undertakes initiatives to support the Society's mission. Like the other regularly-functioning committees acknowledged in the Bylaws (Program Committee and Nominating Committee), the Outreach Education Committee should be likewise formally recognized.*

**Top: Sgts. Dow (L) and Yochim on West Mt. in Kunming, China, 1943. Bottom: Sgts. Yochim (L) and Dow in Cairo, Egypt, 1944. Photos courtesy of Calvin Dow.**

## SUBMIT CONTENT

To submit a letter to the editor, stories, or photos for an upcoming issue,  
email the editor at [cheryl.casey1010@gmail.com](mailto:cheryl.casey1010@gmail.com) or send by post to:  
Dr. Cheryl Casey, 1389 Kneeland Flats Rd., Waterbury Center, VT 05677.

Quarterly submission deadlines: February 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15



**Donations Welcome** - We are a community organization that deeply appreciates the support and interest of our community. You can donate online at our website below.

### **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP**

\$10 per person  
\$15 per family (couple and children under 18)

(Check the mailing label on your newsletter to see when your membership expires.)

### **Please help the Historical Society GO GREEN!**

Contact us to opt for email-only delivery. Benefits include cost-saving, paper-saving, and a newsletter in color!



**[waterburyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:waterburyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)**

**[www.waterburyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.waterburyhistoricalsociety.org)**

**FB: [@waterburyhistoricalsocietyVT](#)**

## **About Us**

**Board of Directors** - Stephen Van Esen, Jack Carter, Jan Gendreau

**President** - Barbara Farr

**Vice President** - Jim Walton

**Secretary** - Cheryl Casey

**Treasurer** - Paul Willard

**Archivist** - Tracy Haerther

**Assistant Archivist** - Jill Chase

**Curator** - Jack Carter

**Program Committee** - Betty Jones, Camille Mason, Anne Imhoff, Cheryl Casey, Josette Metayer, Betsy Ayers Shapiro

**Outreach Education Committee** - Jane Willard, Grace Sweet, Skip Flanders, Diane Gardener

**Newsletter Editor & Facebook Community Manager** - Cheryl Casey

**Webmaster** - Paul Willard

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

**Waterbury Historical Society, Inc.**

PO Box 708

Waterbury, VT 05676-0708