



THE HISTORIAN



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SUMMER 2014



Jacob Thompson House 1811



Fuller House 1869

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings:

Since the last newsletter a group of us Board Members met with John Clemson the consultant we have hired to help us list the Jacob Thompson House on the National Register of Historic Places. Look for an ongoing series of articles on this procedure as they unfold.

The Fuller House fire and security system has been updated and we will soon have the necessary inspections completed.

There is still a business rental vacancy in Suite 2 at Fuller House, also there is a Garage Unit available.

On the issue of Memorial Hall Code/Safety Compliance, I have to say I am greatly disappointed with the progress. Memorial Hall work was supposed to have been completed so the Hall could be open on the 4th of

July, that has come and gone. The specs for the project still have not been completed and I have to wonder when it will ever go out to bid. I have attended almost every meeting to put in my opinion on any part of the project that would impact the historical nature of any of the work. It seems that this project has taken on the looks of a bureaucratic project on the state level. Months go by with little or no progress. The Town Planner and the Architect cannot seem to agree as to what is required for the bids to go out. Worst of all in this whole project the G.A.R. Hall our Civil War Museum can still not be open for public use. Even after all this money is spent from CPA funds the second floor will still not be able to be accessed due to safety regulations.

We had our Annual Meeting at the Jacob Thompson House on Sunday, May 18th

and the election of Officers took place. There were no changes to the bylaws.

We are hoping to apply to the Community Preservation Committee for funding to restore and repaint the exterior of the Jacob Thompson House, which will include re-siding the garage area in something more period appropriate. Hopefully we will be ready for the fall round of grants.

Also, you will probably notice the change in our quarterly newsletter. After many years EmmaLadd Shepherd has retired from her position as Editor and for her work we thank her. My wife Mary and myself have decided to try our hand at it, wish us luck.

Dennis Swierad, President



Officers:

President – Dennis Swierad
Vice President – Tamara Cabey
Secretary – Tamara Cabey
Treasurer – Kevin McNabb

Board Members:

Denis Duquette 2015
Lynn Russell 2015
William Dominick 2017

Board Member Emeritus:

William Hatton

Voting Positions:

Accessions Manager – Mary Swierad
Collections Manager – Mary Swierad
Building & Restoration – Dennis Swierad
Historian – Dennis Swierad
Membership – Denis Duquette
Annual Meeting – Denis Duquette
Rental Manager – Tamara Cabey

Mission Statement

To obtain and preserve historical data and articles pertaining to the town of Monson, Massachusetts, and to encourage and develop the pursuit and expression of such interests in all suitable ways.

Visit us on the web at www.monsonhistoricalsociety.org

Email us on the web at info@monsonhistoricalsociety.org

Do you need information about the history of Monson? Write, call or email us. We may be able to help.



*Memorial Town Hall
Erected in 1884 as a credit to the
town, and an honor to the soldiers
it was designed to commemorate.*

MONSON IN THE CIVIL WAR

On the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War we would like to taken the opportunity to reflect back at Monson's part in the historic fight. The following information was taken from the written words of Dr. George E. Fuller's in the Town of Monson section of the Congregational Church's Dorcas Dishes Cookbook of

1906.

"The first gun fired at Fort Sumter, April 12, 1861, aroused the patriotism and indignation of the people of Monson as well as that of the whole loyal North."

"As near as can be ascertained, Monson furnished 280

men for the service and at its close had to its credit 18 men over and above its quotas as called for by the state and national government."

The following story is about one of the many brave men from Monson who fought in the War of the Rebellion.
1861-1865

CAPTAIN HOWE

BY DENNIS AND MARY SWIERAD

On this the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War we thought it would be fitting to resurrect some stories about the bloody conflict of 1861 – 1865. In Monson this conflict was referred to as the War of the Rebellion. We would like to start out with a story about a Monson native son, Captain George Howe who sealed his devotion to the cause of his country with his life. He met his demise on July 30th, 1864 before Petersburg at the Battle of the Crater.



GEO. H. HOWE,
CHIEF, 57th MASS.

George Howe was born on December 23, 1839 in Monson the son of George and Irena Howe. He was educated at the academy at Wilbraham and by the time the war broke out he was a young man holding a lucrative position as a teacher in one of the educational institutions in Canada. He returned home to Monson and enlisted at the age of 23 in Company G of the 46th Mass Regi-

ment. He was appointed first Lieutenant on October 15, 1862, was mustered out by expiration of service on July 29th, 1863, reenlisted November 2nd of the same year becoming 2nd Lieutenant of the 57th Mass. Regiment. He went to Palmer where he helped fill the quota of that town and several others, helping to raise a Company E, which was mustered in as the fourth company to complete its complement, January 25th, 1864, and was appointed its captain. Soon after taking the field in Virginia he was appointed assistant inspector-general on the staff of the brigade commander, which position he held at the time he was killed.

General Ulysses Grant laid siege to Petersburg. He authorized a regiment made up largely of Pennsylvania coal miners to tunnel under the rebel fortifications, there they planted 8000 pounds of black powder and blasted a crater 170 feet wide in the Southern line. The crater was occupied by the 57th and other regiments, and the men were so crowded as to be incapable of acting to advantage, but they

maintained their position against every attempt of the enemy to regain it. A terrible charge of the rebel infantry followed and the affair, which promised so much in the beginning ended in disaster and defeat.

After considerable time had been wasted by the First Division, orders finally came for them to push forward to the crest, but by that time the enemy was there in force, with troops forming to the right, left and front for the attack. Every attempt to move forward to the crest was repulsed and the troops driven back again to the crater. Major Prescott made an attempt to collect the regiment and move forward in obedience to orders, but was killed while leading. Captain Dresser took his place, but was killed almost immediately after. Captain Howe, being a staff officer of the brigade, made a gallant attempt to lead it in a charge on the crest. Mounting the extreme outer ridge of the crater in face of

*"CAPTAIN HOWE,
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CREST."*

the enemy, who was now advancing in force, he waved his sword for the brigade to follow, but fell back almost instantly, shot through the heart.

It was a day of intense heat. The unburied dead lay between the lines exposed to the hot rays of the sun until the second day after the battle, when they were buried upon the field under a flag of truce.

The body of Captain Howe was the only one recovered. He was brought out before the surrender and taken to the City Point Hospital where it was embalmed and forwarded to his relatives in Monson, Mass for burial. The burial service was conducted by the Masonic Fraternity, of which he was a member. The funeral was to have been held

in the Methodist Church to which he belonged but the assembled multitude was so great that not one-tenth of them could gain admission, hence the ceremony was held in the open air. It was a beautiful Sunday in August. The people for miles around the country came flocking in to pay their last tribute of respect to his memory, as his remains were placed at rest surrounded by the peaceful hills of his native town in Hillside Cemetery.

There is an interesting story about the sword Captain Howe wielded in battle at the time of his death. Before mustering into the war for the second time, Captain Howe was presented with a sword by the members of Company E. 57th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers, to show

their gratitude for his bravery and loyalty to his country. The scabbard was engraved "To Capt. Geo. H. Howe from the members of Co. E. 57th Masses. Vols. March 2nd 1864"

Many years later, in 1942, the sword was returned to Monson by one of his descendants Ralph Harrison Howe and it now resides on view as a relic of that great battle in the G.A.R. Hall at Memorial Hall.

Bibliography
History of Monson Massachusetts; Compiled by Monson Historical Society 1960
Anderson, Captain John U. S. Army; The Fifty-Seventh Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers in the War of the Rebellion. 1896

"...HE WAVED HIS SWORD FOR THE BRIGADE TO FOLLOW, BUT FELL BACK ALMOST INSTANTLY, SHOT THROUGH THE HEART."



Sword Captain Howe wielded in battle at the time of his death. Currently housed in the G.A.R. Hall

OPEN HOUSE AUGUST 10TH 1—4 PM

We will be holding an Open House at Jacob Thompson House on August 10th from 1 to 4 p.m. featuring the Sword that Captain Howe was wielding during the Battle of the Crater in which he was killed. The sword has not been on public view for many years and this would be an opportunity for any one interested in seeing it. Captain Howe's grave at the top of Hillside Cemetery will be marked for people wanting to visit his final resting place.

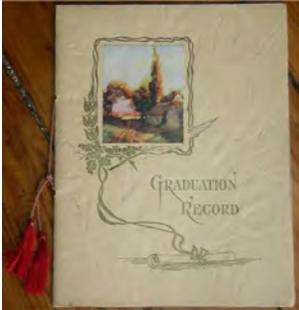
The sword will be on temporary loan from the Monson Historical Commission. There will also be a display of some of the Historical Society's more recent acquisitions.

Refreshments will be served in our air-conditioned Museum.

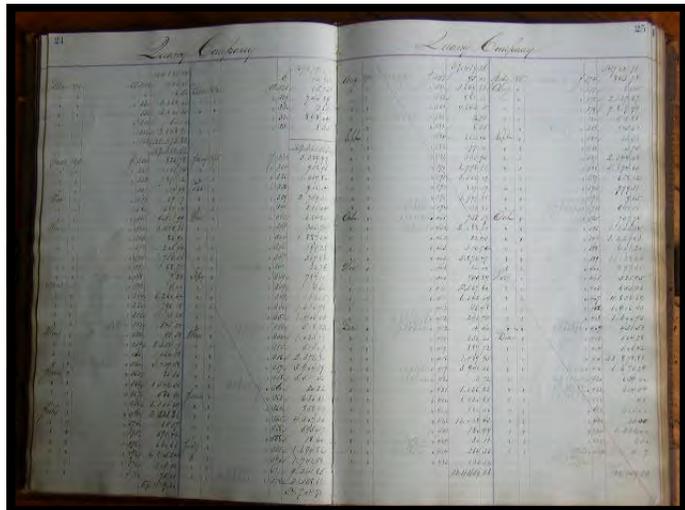
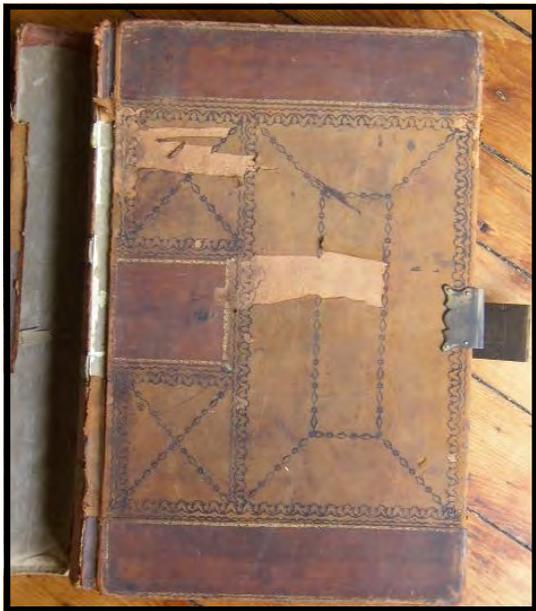


Captain George E. Howe's Tombstone

New Acquisitions



*Monson Academy Graduation Class Photos
Late 1800's, Early 1900's; House on
Main Street; South Main Street School
Class Photos; Monson High School Class of
1936 Graduation Record Book*



Flynt Granite Company Ledger 1870's



Early 1900's Comical Cards



*Late 1800's Trade Cards
Grout's Store*



*Token from Monson House
which stood where Cushman
Apartments are now*



*Fall Term Banquet Program
Monson Academy 1911*

Jacob Thompson house quest for national trust listing

In early spring the Historical Society met with John D. Clemson at the Jacob Thompson House to begin the process of applying for National Register of Historic Places listing. We took John on a complete tour of the exterior and interior of the House. We tried to point out as many features as possible that would support listing on the Register. John took pictures of all the features he thought would be important. After he toured the house, in his opinion we had a good chance. His first project will be to update the State Register Listing from the town of Monson. Once he submits this updated form to the Massachusetts Historical Commission and receives approval, he can begin the process for listing in the National Register.

John D. Clemson, Preservation Consultant from Winchester, MA received his Masters Degree from the Boston University Preservation Studies Program. He has 20 years of experience in preservation planning; surveying Historical and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth; documenting National Register of Historic Places nominations; and histories and assessments for private property owners.

If you would like to investigate more about listing a property visit www.nps.gov/nr/

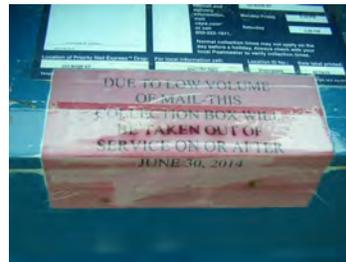


Left to right: Kevin McNabb, Dennis Swierad, John Clemson

New Member

David Recko Scottsdale, AZ

IN MEMORIAM



A sign of the times. After many years, all the neighborhood United States Postal Service mailboxes in the town of Monson have been removed.

OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE

Suite 2 in our Beautiful Historic Fuller House on 1 Green Street is available for immediate professional business rental. The Suite, which is conveniently located on the first floor, includes three spacious rooms with approximately 425 sq. ft of area. The front room could be easily used as an office/reception area, with the interior room used as the main office workspace. The back room contains a kitchenette with a bathroom just off the main office space. The historic quality of the building is retained with a wonderful Oak fireplace mantle surrounded by Minton tiles and hardwood flooring in the main office room and the original woodwork throughout while still having all the modern amenities to accommodate any electronic/professional need of your modern business. Rent is reasonably priced at \$450 per month. If you know of anyone, or if you are



interested yourself, please contact Tamara Cabey at 413-267-5244 to arrange a tour. You would be getting a great place to work while at the same time supporting the Historical Society.



Items for sale

1960 History of Monson Book

The history of Monson, written in 1960 for the Bicentennial of the formation of the town is now available in PDF format on a CD.

- If you are currently a member of the Monson Historical Society, the fee to obtain the CD is \$15.00
- For non-members, the fee is \$20.00 which includes, 1 year free membership and our quarterly newsletter "The Historian".
- Shipping costs for the CD are included in the fee.



The W. N. Flynt Granite Company
Monson, Massachusetts



Please indicate whether you are a member or not and mail your request to:

Monson History CD
Monson Historical Society, Inc.
1 Green Street, Suite 1
Monson, MA 01057

Please include your email address
Make your check payable to *Monson Historical Society, Inc.*

Also available is the 12 page booklet titled "The W. N. Flynt Granite Company Monson, Massachusetts which gives the history of Mr. Flynt and the Quarry. Cost \$3.00; which includes shipping.

Membership renewals occur on May 1st of each year. If you receive our newsletter through postal mail, please check your mailing label. Current memberships should read "5/1/2015" or later. If your label reads "5/1/2014", you need to renew for another year. If it reads, "5/1/2013", you need to renew for 2 years to be up-to-date.

For those who receive our newsletter via e-mail, please check the subject matter. If it reads "Monson Historical Society Newsletter", your membership is current and there is no need to renew. If it reads "Monson Historical Society Newsletter & Renewal", you will need to update your membership. Please read the text to see if you need to renew for 1 or 2 years.

Please take the time today to complete the membership form above and mail it back, along with your check, to the address listed on the form. Your membership will be updated through 5/1/2015.

And as always, we **Thank You** for your continued support of the Monson Historical Society!

If you receive the newsletter via e-mail, please be aware that all newsletters will be forwarded from this e-mail address (DCDuquette@msn.com), with the subject matter regarding Monson Historical Society.

MONSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail Address (for newsletter) _____

Please indicate a membership category & enclose a check made out to "Monson Historical Society, Inc."

(Note: **Membership renewal is May 1st of each year**)

- Individual (under age 18) \$5⁰⁰ Individual (age 18 & over) \$10⁰⁰ Family \$20⁰⁰
 Life Membership \$500⁰⁰ Corporate Membership \$50⁰⁰

Return to - Membership, One Green St., Suite One, Monson, MA 01057

Any information you provide us will be kept in strict confidence & would never be given out or sold at any time