

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume VII, Number 7

October 2016

Into the Woods

Tales from Marty Clark, Billy Carr, and Gary Pease on their lives as lumbermen and how they wouldn't have it any other way. See pages 10-12.

Right: Tools of the lumber trade.

The Future of Sandisfield: Master Plan Potluck, October 14

You can help plan Sandisfield's future.

All Town Boards and all residents—seasonal and part-time—are invited to review and discuss the Master Plan's implementation. Bring a dish to share. See page 3.

The Great 1911 Moonshine Raid Not Exactly "Maple Syrup"


Behind a locked door, down into the cellar ...
See page 7.



INSIDE PAGE

HONORING WORLD WAR II VETS	2
WILLIE'S FIRST 30 DAYS	5
THE GOAT MAN	9
BOB THE CAT	13
THE JOY OF SPLIT WOOD	15

Honoring World War II Veterans

A program to honor Sandisfield's World War II veterans will be held Saturday, October 15, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the American Legion Pavilion on Rt. 8 at New Boston. Our surviving veterans from the 1941-1945 war are Rosemary Allen, Norton Fletcher, Walter Linkovich, and William Tacy. 



STANDING UP THE STONES



Photo: Kathie Burrows

Cemetery Commissioner Ben Campetti was busy in August and September repairing markers and remounting gravestones in the New Boston Cemetery. He was assisted by Steve Harasyko, John Kuzmech, and Willard Platt.

Get Rid of Sharps and Old Medicines

BUT APPROPRIATELY, PLEASE


By John Skrip, Select Board member

Clean out medicine cabinets and drawers of outdated medications that have been shoved into a corner.

Also, safely get rid of used syringes and outdated needles.

The Fire Department will host a second medical waste disposal drop-off on October 9, Sunday, from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. Note the change in the drop-off site: Fire House # 1 on Rt. 8 in New Boston, just north of Villa Mia.

Bring sharps in a sealed container. A coffee can will do. All medicine must also be in a sealed bag or container.

If for any reason you need your medical waste picked up, please call John Skrip at 258-4788, and John will arrange a pick-up for you. The Select Board thanks the Fire Department again for sponsoring this public service. 

From Town of Sandisfield,
Dolores Harasyko, Town Clerk

STATE AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION INFORMATION

Below is the most updated information available regarding voting in October and November in the State and Presidential Election.

The State and Presidential Election

The State and Presidential Election is on Tuesday, November 8, 2016, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Rd.

Absentee Ballots: There are three reasons a voter may vote by absentee ballot:


1. Absence from their town during the hours the polls are open
2. Disability prevents them from going to the polling place
3. A religious belief prevents them from going to their polling place

You can obtain an absentee voting application by calling the Town Clerk's office. Ballots are usually available three weeks before the election.

The State has added **Early Voting** for biennial state elections. This means that you can vote two weeks before the actual election.

Early voting will take place in the Town Clerk's office at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road. The schedule for early voting is as follows:

- October 24, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- October 25, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- October 26, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- October 27, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- October 28, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- October 31, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- November 1, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- November 2, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- November 3, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- November 4, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

If you have any questions regarding your voting status or about the elections don't wait until the last minute. The Town Clerk would rather answer questions ahead of time. 

Primary Election Results (Votes)

STATE SENATE

		Berkshire County
<i>Democrat</i>	<i>Sandisfield</i>	
Del Gallo	13	901
Harrington	29	5,024
Hinds	27	6,695

Republican (unopposed)

Canning	14	690
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GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL

Hurley	43	6,798
Morneau	15	2,998

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Normally we happy few who write, edit, design, proof, and distribute The Times each month – and put it live online – work in the shadows.

Not many readers actually know – or care – who does the paper or how. They just want it every month, on time and reasonably accurate.

But this month we have a treat. You can see one of us at work.

Jean Atwater-Williams, on a long vacation driving through much of the American West with her husband, Ron Bernard, snapped a picture of Ron at West Shore Lodge on Lake Tahoe in late September. Ron was so engrossed he didn't know she took the picture.

Ron is at work proofreading the paper, catching errors, correcting grammar, improving things for the issue you are right now holding in your hands.

He does this every month.

But this time he is doing it 2,800 miles from Sandisfield, thanks to the wonder of the internet. And the wi-fi system at the lodge's restaurant.



Along with proofing, Ron writes for the paper, helps edit it, handles advertising, distribution, and subscriptions. He does a lot of other things for the paper, but he won't say so. His wife Jean, who took this photo, is the Times' webmaster as well as treasurer. Without these two, the work of the rest of us would be much harder and maybe impossible.

Thanks, Ron and Jean, and come home safe.

Bill Price
West New Boston

A note from the author: Once in Ireland, I went to Sligo to visit Yeats' grave. The moment I arrived at the gravesite, a huge swarm of crows rose up, darkening the sky.

The Crows Over Yeats

There are three possibilities:

At 65, feeling mortal,
He chose his great grandfather's church graveyard
Already crowned with crows
That rise, screaming and chattering
Like black yeast ... or suppose

Someone brought the crows
And set them there for us to see
And make his poems, poems that grow
From verse to prophecy.

Or there is some small chance
That Yeats uneasy lies
And speaks through crows
Whenever justice dies.

Val Coleman
Town Hill Road

The Future of Sandisfield Is In Your Hands

By Bill Price

The Master Plan potluck dinner will be Friday, October 14, at 6 p.m. at Fire Station #2. Dinner will be until 7 p.m., when all Town Boards and Town residents – seasonal as well as part-time – will take part in a review and discussion of the future of our town.

Everyone is invited. If you have guests in town for the fall foliage, bring them. If you have relatives visiting their Sandisfield cousins who have been in town for generations, bring them. If you're here for the weekend, come up early on Friday so you can voice your concerns.

Leading the discussion will be Tom Matuszko, Assistant Director, BRPC (Berkshire Regional Planning Commission). Tom and Eammon Coughlin, a commission planner, worked with the Town's Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) to develop a working draft and then a final document that would address factors shaping the town and its future.

A public meeting was held in April in which residents responded to the draft version. "We had good feedback during the public forum," said Eammon. "Residents used sticker dots to identify their top priorities. These were incorporated into the final draft that is available now."

The Plan can be viewed in hardcopy at the Town Hall Annex and the Library during business hours. The final version can also be reviewed

online at: berkshireplanning.org (go to Current Projects and find Sandisfield Master Plan).

The MPSC, a subcommittee of the Planning Board, included two members of the Planning Board, representatives from other town boards, and several interested residents. The process incorporated community input through the development of a public opinion survey, two public informational meetings, and personal interviews conducted by the BPRC. Development of the Plan has taken over a year from start to finish.


Plan topics include Population and Demographics, Economy, Infrastructure, Services, Housing, Transportation, Land Use, Natural and Cultural Resources, Open Space, and Recreation. Key issues are identified and problem areas flagged. Each topic then lists specific goals, objectives, and actions to reach those goals.

The Plan was formally adopted by the Sandisfield Planning Board in May.

The Plan, which offers a vision of future possibilities and blueprints for reaching those goals, is intended to serve as a living guide that should be revisited every five or so years to determine if the town is on the correct course to reach its goals and if those goals have changed.

But, said Select Board Chairman Alice Boyd, "Master plans are only good if they are implemented."

To go into effect, the Master Plan must be adopted by the Town at a vote at Town Meeting next spring. The alternative is that it will be filed away to be used as a blueprint for when the Town revises its hopes for a Master Plan sometime in the far future.

Bring a favorite dish to share at the potluck. For information, contact Kathy Jacobs at 258-4535 or Lynn Rubenstein at 516-408-0597. 

AROUND TOWN HALL

By Alice Boyd, Chairman, Select Board

Progress

Our town is in the midst of a major administrative transformation. The work has been difficult and results will take time, but substantive progress is being made. Here's a synopsis of what's happening and what you can expect in the months to come.

FISCAL & POLICY

Our Treasurer and a municipal financial consultant are working to rebuild our books and deal with numerous financial and bookkeeping challenges. We anticipate that it will take approximately six months to put our fiscal house in order.

We're still working with the IRS, the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, and numerous vendors regarding money we owe and bills not paid. A visit from a representative of the Department of Local Services assured us that our situation is not unique, that we're not the first and won't be the last Massachusetts town to deal with these types of issues.

We'll need a Special Town Meeting, likely in November, to fund the extra consulting and staff hours required to reconstruct the books.


BROADBAND & BONDING

Our Town Administrator has researched and identified an alternative public finance option available for Sandisfield: State House Notes, a form of bonding.

We've engaged bond counsel, a requirement to access our Broadband grant, and we're closing in on our readiness to proceed with the state-sponsored MBI (Massachusetts Broadband Institute) since Wired-West is no longer an option.

Jeff Bye, our volunteer Broadband Project Manager and former NASA engineer, continues to attend meetings and training sessions throughout the Commonwealth.

We're pursuing parallel tracts on how to provide fiber to your home. If we need to build we now have the financial resources to do so. But we're also investigating options to have a larger corporation fund, build, and operate our Broadband network with little or no cost to taxpayers. The corporation that potentially wires and operates our system would be recouping their investment with a monthly service charge to the end-user. An RFP (Request for Proposals) will be issued this fall to identify interested vendors.

And finally, our new website has just been unveiled. Visit www.Sandisfield.info, changing shortly to www.Sandisfieldma.gov. And revisit the site regularly as we upload more content and post all meetings and minutes. Register to get automatic notifications, pay your taxes, download forms, or get Broadband updates. 



TOWN NEWS

By Bill Price

Town Website

The new website will be launched soon, if it hasn't been by the time this issue is on press. It may be mid-October before the new domain name, sandisfieldma.gov, becomes "live." The new site will have links to local farms and businesses and a "Things to Do" link with activities.

How About That Pipeline?

For a report on the legal maneuverings of *Citizens v. Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company* over the proposed pipeline through a corner of Sandisfield, *The Times* is pleased to refer our readers to the September 27 issue of the online newspaper, *The Berkshire Edge*.

For those residents with access to wi-fi, the website for *The Berkshire Edge* is www.theberkshiredge.com. Search for "sandisfield pipeline spawns water quality battles."

In a complex story, reporter Mary Douglas writes that just when Tennessee Gas thought it was ready to roll into Town and start digging, a group of citizens concerned about the protection of Spectacle Pond and nearby wetlands and rivers "stuck a stick in the spokes of the project's wheel."

They alleged that the Water Quality Certification issued by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection failed to comply with state codes governing water pollution control. At risk were Spectacle Pond, the Clam River, Worthington Brook, and Spectacle Pond Brook.

After a ruling that would have delayed a legal decision until next year, Tennessee Gas appealed. The Citizens appealed the appeal, and now three jurisdictions are involved – MassDEP, the Federal District Court, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

Court dates are being scheduled into January 2017.

Closer to home, in late September Judge Agostini of Berkshire Superior Court ruled that the Town of Sandisfield could pursue civil litigation regarding its promised but not forthcoming compensation from Tennessee Gas, slightly more than \$1 million, but he could not find in the Town's favor because such a decision was beyond his purview.

Tennessee Gas and the Massachusetts Secretary of State, meanwhile, have not yet been able to negotiate a payment of the state land that would be taken in building the pipeline.

Yanner Park

Building Inspector Eric Munson having determined that the abandoned Albert Cornish cabin at Yanner Park is hazardous, the building will be demolished this month by the Highway Department. The foundation and chimney will remain.


Town Accountant

At the Town Meeting in May, the position of Town Treasurer was changed from an elected position to an appointed one and a new job of Accountant was created to support the Treasurer and replace the elected position of Tax Collector. No one knew then that the jobs would be filled by two experienced Sandisfield residents.

As most readers know, Town Treasurer Theresa Spohnholz was a senior auditor in Alaska and a professional accountant before moving to Montville in 2013. She was hired first as the Town's Librarian and in June as Treasurer.

In September, the Select Board hired Dawn Lemon as Accountant. Dawn has worked as a bookkeeper/accountant since 2008 and has lived on South Sandisfield Road with her husband and two children since 2007.

She currently provides accounting services for several businesses, as well as non-profits, and handles the financial end of grant programs for a number of towns.

The Accountant position is part-time, a good thing since Dawn does a few other jobs around town: secretary for the highway superintendent and the Planning Board, bookkeeper for the Arts Center, treasurer of the PTA at the Farmington River school, and she recently helped develop the new Sandisfield website. The Secretary of State has ruled that none of the Town positions she holds create a conflict of interest. 

Preserving Values While Moving Ahead

PROCEDURES ARE NECESSARY, EVEN IN SMALL TOWNS

By Willie Morales, Town Administrator

In a report on his first 30 days on the job, the Town's new administrator assessed the broad challenges facing Sandisfield.

I agree with our Department of Local Services (DLS) representative, Jim Podolak, that Sandisfield is not the only town facing what I like to call "administrative growing pains."

Fortunately, through the Baker-Polito municipal modernization act, we have tools to help provide much-needed updating to the way our town is run. Many administrative department heads will be encouraged to participate in continuing education opportunities. Additionally, all administrative department heads will be participating in DLS seminars geared towards educating town leadership on the changes caused by the municipal modernization act.

Currently, I am updating the personnel procedures manual, which along with the town's bylaws will serve as the official measure of Sandisfield's administration. Experience has taught me that within local town government, tradition is often accepted as official policy. The town's manner of operating has relied heavily on the strengths of personal relationships and social trusts instead of necessary checks and balances.


One of the challenges for my role as town administrator is to preserve as much of Sandisfield's home-town values as possible while also implementing a solid professional structure. This is not meant to imply that the town or its department heads have not been providing professional services throughout the history of the administration. On the contrary, I seek to provide each department with the autonomy, professional training, and accountability necessary to serve the residents of Sandisfield.

To that end I am implementing a fiscal strategy that incorporates necessary reporting as controls for the town's fiscal operations. In the town's previous day-to-day operations, trust in an individual's ability to perform and recall pertinent fiscal data was enough to authorize sensitive operations. It is due to the town's strong neighborly bond and integrity that our present fiscal setback is not much worse.

Many of the operations performed in town hall require a broad dissemination of administrative law, economic theory, accounting expertise, and tax law familiarity. Amazingly, the town's personnel have been able to mitigate through all of

these different disciplines without a set system of checks and balances. That said, any human being can experience personal hardships, loss, happiness, and or even simple boredom, all of which can lead to mistakes. Because the town's administration is a living entity, mistakes in its operations have compounded through the years. I believe that we have an opportunity to address the town's fiscal challenges; the lack of reporting, the lack of delegation of tasks, and the lack of separation of powers.

Fiscally, some adverse decisions have had more weighted impacts than others. The town has felt the sting of these decisions most recently because it seemed that the lack of audits could have prevented the town's access to public finance mechanisms badly needed for broadband purposes. I have addressed the doubts regarding the town's ability to secure funding for the broadband project. Through DLS' State House Notes program, financing broadband is a feasible reality for Sandisfield.

I hope that this brief summary of our town's progress instills a sense of security in the reader. Your town's administrative staff and leadership is dedicated to protecting the interests of all Sandisfield's residents. We still have plenty of work ahead of us, but we are in no way derailed by our recent fiscal setback. We have learned important lessons in personnel administration and fiscal accountability, but most importantly we are all learning to preserve our humanity and humility in service to the Town of Sandisfield. 

AT THE TURKEY ROLL


By Tom Christopher

Sandisfield's high rollers were all down at the American Legion pavilion on Route 8 on the evening of Friday, September 23.


The occasion was the annual Turkey Roll of American Legion Post 456. For the payment of two dollars you could roll the dice to win a turkey, Cornish game hens, a spiral ham or shrimp, and for a few more dollars buy tickets for a selection of power tools or an evening out at a local restaurant. Refreshments were also served, and young and old enjoyed the hot dogs and fries.

Post Commander Maria Domato presided. All the funds raised by this annual event, she said, typically in the neighborhood of \$1,000, go to the maintenance of the pavilion which is available for rental to "anybody...."

The Sandisfield Recreation Committee can use it any time they want, she said. Members [of the American Legion Post] can rent it for \$185, non-members for \$300, a day." It's used, Maria explained, for everything from weddings to graduation parties, and the renters get the use not only of the pavilion but fire and horse-shoe pits and the ample parking.

The Turkey Roll is held on the third Friday of every September. It's a chance to enjoy a local institution and to show respect for the veterans who make up our local American Legion Post. Put it on your calendar for next year. 





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Clam River Trail Work Completed

By Bill Price



Photo: Sandy Parisky

In mid-September, Sandisfield hikers joined Doug Bruce, Stewardship Manager for the BNRC (Berkshire Natural Resources Council), on a walking tour of the Hammertown Loop, the newest trail in the Clam River Reserve.

The 1.6-mile Loop begins roughly midway between the Sandisfield Arts Center and the bridge across the Clam River on Hammertown Road. The Loop leads generally eastward toward the Clam where it turns north to parallel the river, emerging at the bridge. The trail then circles back to its beginning, following the road.

The new Loop connects with the well-marked Clam River Trail that leads south to the Clam River Loop that begins and ends at the Town Hall Annex parking lot.

The three trails – which lead past stone walls, a well-preserved 18th century foundation, a hemlock-hardwood forest, huge white pines, and the ruins of an 18th century mill – are a welcome introduction to the BNRC's Clam River Reserve and a rich asset to Sandisfield. The Clam River Loop is included in 50 Hikes in the Berkshire Hills, Lauren Stevens' collection of the best hikes in the Berkshires. In the next edition, the three connected trails should be included.

Local hikers included Janet and Ron Bumstead, Connie Canty, Anina Carr, Mary Ann Grammer, Steve Kopiec, Elizabeth and John Kuzmech, Sandy Parisky, and June Wink. The tour was sponsored by the BNRC and the Sandisfield Arts Center.

A second opportunity to hike the new Hammertown Loop will occur on Wednesday morning, October 12. Hikers can join Mike Leavitt of the BNRC on a 2-hour guided walk along the same route taken by the hikers in September. Sign-up is unnecessary. Meet at 9 a.m. at the pull-off opposite 35 Hammertown Road, about a half-mile uphill from the Arts Center.

The trail includes one steep descent and one long, moderate ascent. The steep sections are on a trail with good footing. If questions, contact Mike Leavitt at 413-499-0596 or mleavitt@bnrc.org.

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The Great 1911 Sandisfield Moonshine Raid NOT EXACTLY “MAPLE SYRUP”

By Lorraine German

To the casual observer, Nathan Kalman and his neighbor, Abraham Kravitz, were just two more immigrants from New York's Jewish ghetto who had bought defunct farms in Sandisfield in search of a better life.

But the relative seclusion of Kalman's house up on Town Hill Road provided the perfect cover for one of the largest illicit brandy stills in the state.

Making illegally distilled liquor, known as moonshine, was a lucrative source of income during the early 20th century since it evaded the \$1.10 per gallon tax (equivalent to about \$29 today) that legitimate distillers had to pay the Internal Revenue Service.

Illicit kosher brandy was especially profitable because the large Jewish population in New York City provided those who made it with a market eager for their product.

In fact, the investigation into the source of the moonshine began after large quantities of kosher brandy, disguised as “maple syrup,” began showing up in Jewish neighborhoods.

The IRS agent assigned to the case was Green Miller, an investigator who had been instrumental in uncovering illicit stills in his home state of Kentucky. After a month following leads, Miller tracked the shipments of illegal brandy back to Kalman and Kravitz in Sandisfield.

He obtained warrants for the two distillers in Springfield and enlisted the help of another revenue agent and a deputy U. S. marshal.


On a cold February day in 1911, the three

officers headed to Kalman's house on the outskirts of Montville in northwest Sandisfield, first by train and then by sleigh. They arrived late in the afternoon and found Kalman and Kravitz at home, along with another man and several women and children.

As they searched the house for evidence, they came upon a locked door, which Kalman, in broken English, tried to dissuade them from entering. Breaking open the lock, they went down stairs into the cellar where they discovered a well-constructed still, capable of holding 150 gallons. Stacked around the room were containers marked “soda” that held grape sugar and copper-lined crates marked “maple syrup.”

After destroying the still with an axe, Miller and the officers returned to Springfield with their prisoners and the evidence.

The raid in Sandisfield uncovered one of the most important illegal distilleries ever found in the United States and authorities believed that it had been in operation since Kalman moved into the house four years earlier.

Kalman and Kravitz were indicted for conducting an illicit still. Kalman's brother-in-law, Max Frankel, who received the brandy in New York City, was indicted for conspiracy to violate Internal Revenue laws. Nathan Kalman was sentenced to five months in jail. Frankel received a three-month sentence, suspended until Kalman's release so he could care for Kalman's family in Montville. The case against Abraham Kravitz was filed as pending and it's unclear whether he was ever sentenced. 

Demolished in 1980, the Jonathan & Thankful Smith House is believed to have dated to the 1780s with a main house added several decades later. As with many abandoned farmsteads in Sandisfield, by the early 1900s the property was changing owners frequently. Nathan Kalman, who apparently had been living in the house, took title in April 1910 and sold in late 1911.

Today the place is an overgrown lot offering no hint this had been a thriving farmstead – and for a short time a major bootleg operation.

*Photo: 1961,
Sandisfield Historical Society*



A CENTURY OF JEWISH LIFE: UNDER PREPARATION

Lorraine German, of Sandisfield and North Granby, Connecticut, is the principal researcher and author of *A Century of Jewish Life in Sandisfield*, expected to be published in early 2018. The book aims to be a definitive history of the local Jewish community between the 1890s and 1995.

All aspects of Jewish experience in Sandisfield will be included: roughly three eras of family settlement; economic, cultural, and religious life; and family biographies and genealogies.

Lorraine's research has uncovered long forgotten incidents and stories reported in Berkshire and Litchfield county newspapers such as this vignette about local moonshiners.


If you have family histories related to the narrative of the life and times of Sandisfield's Jewish community, please contact Lorraine at 860-653-5733 or by email at madriverrantiques@aol.com or Ron Bernard at 860-324-3669 or Ronbernard@aol.com

Jewish Life in Small-Town New England

**Dr. Michael B. Hoberman at
the Arts Center, November 12**

The local group researching and writing a book about Sandisfield's Jewish history in the early 20th century, to be published in early 2018, has announced that nationally known historian and author, Dr. Michael B. Hoberman of Fitchburg State University, will speak at the Arts Center next month on the history of Jews in rural farming communities in the Berkshires.

A professor of American literature, Dr. Hoberman is the author of books and scholarly articles on New England folklore and early Jewish American history. He will draw on oral history research from his work, “How Strange It Seems,” including the mostly untold story of Jewish farming communities in the Berkshires since the late 1800s. He will also devote attention to his more recent exploration of the relationship between Jews and Puritans in the colonial and Revolutionary War period.

Co-sponsored with the Sandisfield Arts Center, event admission is free and is scheduled for Saturday, November 12, at the Arts Center, 11 a.m. For more information on the event or the book project, contact Sandy Parisky at 860-798-1091 or email at Sandy@SanfordParisky.com or Joanne Olson at 718-227-6427 or Joanneo@aol.com. 

MEMORY LANE

SANDISFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS



Noel and Carolyn Nilson, formerly of Rood Hill Road, sent this 1980 photo of their then neighbor, Michael Cormier, who was helping the Nilsons restore their 1896 pipe organ. Michael is standing inside the works of the organ. The Nilsons have since moved to Cleveland, Ohio, while Michael lives in Sandisfield. The organ is now the property of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York.

We would like to include your photos of Sandisfield people or events between 1950 and 1990 in our Memory Lane column. Please send photos to us at PO Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255. If you're online, send your photos to editor@sandisfieldtimes.org. Include your name and telephone and a note with as much detail as possible: names, dates, locations.

Photo: Noel Nilson

OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

When an interesting pair of hikers passed by **Simon Winchester's** place on Silverbrook Road, he stopped his chores to engage them in conversation. They said they were hiking all of Sandisfield's dirt roads. If you are one of these hikers or know who they are, please get in touch with the editor at 413-429-7179. We'd like to find out who they are, how they're doing on their hikes, when did they start, why Sandisfield when the Berkshires are cluttered with dirt roads, all the stuff that interests readers of our newspaper.



Farmington River Regional School

DATES TO NOTE IN OCTOBER


- Oct. 3: School Committee Meeting, Library, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 10: Columbus Day, no school
- Oct. 11: School Council Meeting, 3:15 p.m.
- Oct. 13: Picture Day
- Oct. 15: Otis Cultural Council Fall Arts Festival, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at FRRS
- Oct. 20: PTA Meeting, Library, 3:15 p.m.

In the Art Room

Plans from Laura Catullo, Teacher

Upper-grade students will be designing postcards illustrating fun they've had over the summer. Lower-grade pupils will begin with chalk and pastel illustrations of fall scenes and still-lives. This year all classes will begin units of art appreciation/history as well as projects designed to increase awareness, understanding, and appreciation of individual differences.

Our second annual art exhibit will be at the Otis Library in late Fall.

Everyone is invited to visit us on a Tuesday or Wednesday or come into share your art talents with one of our classes. 


ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEEDS BOXTOPS

The Farmington River Elementary School PTA has issued a call for more box tops.

The PTA raises money to help provide programs and resources for students, and last year the group earned over \$1,000 by collecting box tops. The PTA total fundraising was nearly \$15,000.

You don't have to be connected to the school or the PTA to participate in box top collecting. Clip the box tops and store them until you have a good-sized batch. Throw away tops with expired expiration dates. You can ask friends to collect for you.

When you have a batch, send them to the school with a student or mail them to the Farmington River PTA, PO Box 679, Otis, MA 01253. Each one counts. If you have a student in school, write your child's name and grade on a cover sheet because the classes are competing.

The next PTA meeting is October 13 at 3:15 p.m. Family Fun Night is scheduled for November 4, with the Scholastic Book Fair open to the public. The Book Fair will be open November 7-10. 



historia (Greek) - "Inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation." The discovery, collection, organization, and presentation of information about past events.

Historia

The Goat Man

By Ron Bernard

It was the 1940s, a different, more innocent time.

One resident of the upper Montville-Lower West Street neighborhood was especially memorable. His name was Archie — nobody knew his last name — but he was called, simply, “the goat man.”



Nothing is known about Archie’s past or what brought him to Sandisfield. He lived alone in a shack on Lower West Street with his beloved goats. Children loved to run after his wagon and goats and try to get a ride on the mounds of hay he carted around.

One of his young fans was Maria Domato of Lower West Street. “The goat man, who could forget him?” she said.

“My little sister and my two cousins, Sherry and Butchie Soldan and I used to go to his house and ride in the hay wagon. We tried to ride his horse, Ned, but we got knocked off a lot. He used to make us cocoa with goat’s milk. I remember him making biscuits too. Sometimes he would walk up to our house and borrow some flour from us.

Once in a while he would come up and watch TV with us. But we had to spray air freshener after he left because of the strong odor of his goats.

“He was a kind old man,” Maria continued.

“I remember one particular dark night. I was walking home from a friend’s house in Montville and I was nervous about that. He let me borrow a kerosene lantern. I can still remember the relief when I got that light.

“His favorite goat was named Sara. When I got goats of my own one summer I named the mama Sara. Another favorite memory was the pungent goat cheese he brought to us. He had a grinding wheel, an old-fashioned peddle type, which he used to sharpen his scythe so he could cut hay.”


Michelle Sandler Lewis also had fond memories of the goat man.

She said, “He lived on Lower West Street in a shack he built himself and he had a lot of goats that were allowed in the house. His place was on a small dirt road just before West Street. He was a very nice person. He drove a horse and wagon for picking up hay.”

She added, “We thought he looked a lot like Santa Claus with his white hair and long beard.”



Others remember and appreciate that Archie the Goat Man could be counted on as a good neighbor when an extra hand was needed, for example to help on the chicken farms.

No one knows what ultimately happened to this gentle, colorful man but he touched the lives of Montville children and we are glad to know about him. 

This article originally appeared in Sandisfield Then & Now: 1762-2012.

Photos: Sylvia German



Corrections to Town Directory

Town Treasurer:

Theresa Spohnholz; 258-4712 or sandisfieldtreasurer@verizon.net.
Mon/Tues, 1-4 p.m.; Wed, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., or by appointment.

Library:

Email address is library@sandisfield.info.
Hours are Mon/Tues: 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Wed: 2-5 p.m. Thurs: 5-7 p.m.
Sat: 9 a.m.-noon.

Into the Woods

Local Lumbermen Wouldn't Have It Any Other Way

By Tom Christopher

Photos: Bill Price

If he is re-incarnated, Sandisfield resident Marty Clark says, he hopes that it will be as a logger. Despite his 70-plus-year career in the woods, he still hasn't gotten enough.

The harvesting of wood was, of course, one of the first industries in Sandisfield. Aside from the need to clear the land for agriculture, there was a voracious appetite for timbers and lumber in the young and fast-growing community. Local historian Ron Bernard has uncovered a record of a sawmill in operation at Spectacle Pond in 1770, just a decade after Sandisfield's incorporation as a town. By 1829, according to Ron's book, *Sandisfield Then and Now*, there were eight sawmills in town, "a number that soon doubled."

Many Yankee farmers in those days filled in during the slack winter season by cutting trees with axe and saw and floating or hauling the logs to the nearest water-powered mill. Logging was hard and cold work, but it was a vital source of cash for many local families.

MARTY CLARK



This was still the situation in 1944 when Marty Clark first went to the woods at age 16, working for a family named Hood. Marty's job was to cut blackberry brambles with a scythe so loggers could get to the base of the trees with crosscut saws. There were six men with double-bitted axes and saws, and Hood senior, the father – "all he did, he was an old man, he would file the saws [to



Billy Carr's sawmill not far across the line in Tolland

sharpen them] right in the woods. We had three sets of saws going."

Marty, who lives in Otis near the border with northern Sandisfield, served with the U.S. Army in Korea during the war. He was home by 1952, "and the first day back I went to work for my brother cutting logs" in Sandisfield, though by then his brother had a chainsaw. That transition wasn't easy for everyone. Clark remembers one Sandisfield logger of his generation who reached to grab a running two-man chainsaw the same way he would grasp a two-man crosscut saw and cut the fingers off his hand.

The old ways were hard, but Marty still likes them best.

Horses did less damage to the woods than the huge, modern machines, he says, and if they were slower, well, "we were all slower in them days. If you went to a sawmill then, you sawed three or four thousand [board feet of lumber], you had a hell of a day. Now if you don't saw 20,000 something's wrong with you, the modern equipment they've got today."

A logger had to be a generalist then, and besides learning every aspect of practical forestry needed to know how to calculate accurately the potential yield of a woodlot. Marty became an expert sawyer, tuning the sawmill to get the most out of each log.

He learned this trade, he says, from Willie Worden, a blind, former sawyer in Otis. Marty was restoring an old abandoned mill to cut lumber in his spare time. The mill was junk, he said, with logs rotting on the skidway, but Marty worked on it at night, gradually getting it back in shape. Whenever he ran into a problem he couldn't solve,

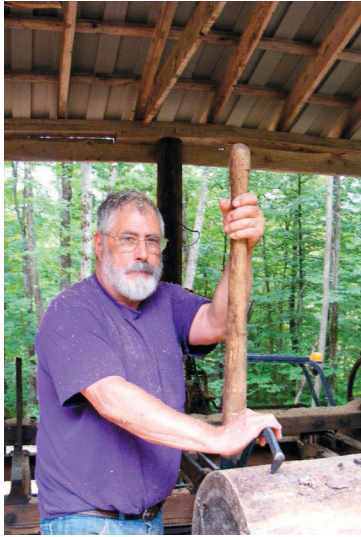
he would describe it to Willie. "Worden would be sitting there in a rocking chair ... but in his mind he could see that sawmill's whole operation. He would tell me what to do."



Marty passes this trait along. He often helps his friend Billy Carr at Billy's sawmill. Billy said, "I like to work with Marty. When something goes wrong, he can tell me how to fix it."

"Sawmill people used to be drinkers," Marty said. "When it's too wet to work in the sawmill, you can drink or go fishing, one of the two." Clark, presumably, got in a lot of fishing, for he never drank a drop, a fact to which, along with never developing the smoking habit, he attributes his longevity.

BILLY CARR



Flipping a switch, Billy Carr brings the clattering diesel engine to life and pulls a lever, setting the big circular saw blade in motion. Soon he's cutting slabs off the sides of a white pine log, squaring it up so he can reduce it to one-inch boards.

A friend, who wants to build a hunting blind and a chicken coop, has brought a truckload of logs, and Billy is cutting them up as a favor. He has worked construction most of his life, but he put in six months here and there working for a logger in the winter or at a pallet mill during high school.

When he wanted to build a barn behind his West New Boston home,

he bought a lumber mill, which he set up on property he owned not far across the line in Tolland. He wanted to cut his own lumber for the barn. Long after the barn was finished, he has continued to operate the mill, one of the last of its kind in the area.

He confesses that it took him months to assemble the 1950-era mill, which was delivered in the early 1980s as a pile of parts by a logging truck from New York State.

Years ago, though, a sawyer had to be able to take a mill apart on one day and reassemble it the next, for the sawyers followed the loggers into the woods. Instead of hauling logs to the mill, a slow process when pulling was done by horse, the loggers brought the mill to the area to be cut, setting it up on posts driven into the ground with sledgehammers. Then as the cutting moved farther afield, the mill would be moved again.



Billy recalls coming upon piles of sawdust and slabs in the woods, a sure sign that a mill had once been there.

So valuable was timber, Billy Carr said, that only a generation ago loggers who wanted to cut a woodlot would often buy the land outright, take the wood and abandon the land.

GARY PEASE & SONS



Converse Pease, Gary's father, was a logger who warned his son against following in his footsteps. Better to learn a trade such as welding or auto mechanics, he advised.

He could have saved his breath because Gary, who began following his father into the woods by the time he was seven years old, was already hooked. And, Gary says, "The woods have been good to me."

Related to one of Sandisfield's founding families, Gary is 56 now and has taken

his two sons, Chad and Cameron, into the family business located on Rt. 57, Sandisfield Center..

To thrive in this manner, Gary has had to shift with the times.

He came into logging when the wood was pulled by crawler tractors, then skidders. He recently invested in a feller-buncher, a massive machine that cuts the tree off at the base with a circular "hot saw," then grabs it with a hydraulic claw to lay it down on a pile. It's faster than cutting the trees by hand, he says, and it's safer for the logger – a critical consideration, Gary adds, when you have your sons working for you.

Modern logging, he says, is a matter of getting every nickel out of the wood that you can. How and where you cut a log can add or subtract \$200 from its value, so he spends a lot of time studying a tree before cutting it. There are 20 grades of logs for some species, depending on lengths and diameters, and the logger has to know how to extract the best grade from every tree.



Cont'd p.12



Gary Pease is flanked by his sons, Chad, left and Cameron. Here they are clearing a building lot in Tolland.

A Walk in the Woods

Cont'd from p.11

Local commercial sawmills are a thing of the past – Gary sends all of his logs to Canada or sells them to a broker who ships them by the container-load to Southeast Asia.

Because the prices offered for timber varies from broker to broker, Gary is very selective about where he sends logs: one mill will pay more for cherry and sugar maple, another pays more for oak or pine.

He cuts by the season, too: white pine, for example, loses value as the weather warms because pine borers attack the logs and fungi may stain the wood, so he cuts pine mostly in the winter.

Nor does he waste any part of the tree. He sells the chips from shredded limbs and branches to a company that produces electricity from biomass. “It doesn’t pay much, but it’s something.”

Thanks in part to Massachusetts’ Chapter 61 program, which offers a tax deduction to landowners who keep their land in active forestry, Gary has little trouble finding woods to log. He’s pleased to be able to hand a flourishing business off to his sons, and he’s clearly in love with what he does.

Laid up last year with a hernia operation, Gary passed the time reading books and watching YouTube videos about the history of logging. “Once you get sawdust in your veins,” he explains, “they say you’re done.”



A DANGEROUS OCCUPATION

By Bill Price

Several other loggers and lumbermen make a living from the Sandisfield woods.

Ron and Roger Kimberley at the north end of Town Hill Road continue to run a lumber and wood mill that is the oldest continuously operated business in Sandisfield.

Bob Tarasuk, a logger and forester who has been in the wood business in Sandisfield for 30 years, was recently featured in the local film, “Bob and the Trees.” Sandisfield has enough loggers, in fact, that for a scene in that film the director had no trouble filling MJ Tuckers on Rt. 8 with real-life loggers bellying up to the bar.

Bill Riiska worked many years as a logger and still keeps at it. He recently won the contract to log woods owned by the town behind the Center Cemetery. And logging is a dangerous profession, as Bill can tell you.



Local reporter Brigitte Ruthman wrote in the Torrington Republican-American in 2008:

“Logger and farmer Bill Riiska thought he was done cheating death when he returned from Vietnam half a lifetime ago until November 4, when a falling tree limb nearly killed him. As he had done thousands of times before during the 40 years he has worked with chain saws in the woods, Riiska cut down a large oak tree.”

A large limb from a nearby dead ash tree broke free and hit Bill “at an angle across his back, compressing six vertebrae along his lower spine and breaking three others, his shoulder, and several ribs as it drove his body to the ground.”

Bill’s logging companions, Richard Hamilton of Sandisfield and Billy’s stepson, Keith Larson, told him not to move. Paramedics were dispatched from New Hartford along with a Life Star helicopter. As hurt as he was, reported Brigitte, the sound of the helicopter brought Bill memories of Vietnam.

In time he recovered from the accident, but with his logging days limited Bill got more serious with his apple trees and added more and more until Riiska Brook Orchards is now one of the largest fruit farms in the Berkshires.



Bob the Cat

No foxes on Fox Road the morning Calvin Rodman took this photo in early September, but this tall, lithe bobcat strolled along at his leisure. The bobcat might, but probably doesn't, know that Fox Road, plotted in 1773, was renamed for Thomas Fox, a selectman in the early 1900s.

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Sandisfield Historical Society



Apple Fest, October 8 DON'T MISS IT

By John Kuzmech, President

Anticipating an eventual comeback of the Sandisfield Historical Society (our group went inactive last month), Butch and Lois Platt created a Facebook page for the Society. Please check out on FB a close-up of the poster accompanying this article. As well as other great old photos submitted by Sandisfield residents, past and present. My thanks to Butch and Lois. If you'd like to, please add to the collection.

A century-old poster that hangs in the Sandisfield Historical Society's Meeting House gives us a glimpse of Fall Festivities for people who inhabited our homes and neighboring farms.

The poster – for the New Boston Cattle Show and Fair in 1916 – suggests a big event. There are 43 local names of officers and judges in eleven different divisions.

Sports at the event include the greased pole, greased pig, potato race, and my favorite, the “Ladies Contest for Driving Nails.” If a hard-working eligible bachelor were practical, he might have wanted to train his eye on the contestants in that event. The winner or even the runners-up would be of hearty stock and make a good future partner in the fields.

Our lonely young man might take part in the tug-of-war between the neighboring communities of New Boston vs. the now-gone Colebrook River.


(The latter village site is now beneath the Colebrook Reservoir.) If lucky, a valiant show of effort on the rope and the young man could catch the eye of a different type of young lady in the audience, perhaps a skilled contestant in “Needle and Fancy works” division. And later, he might vie for either woman's hand on the dance floor at Strickland's Hall and find out which type of woman sweeps him off his feet.

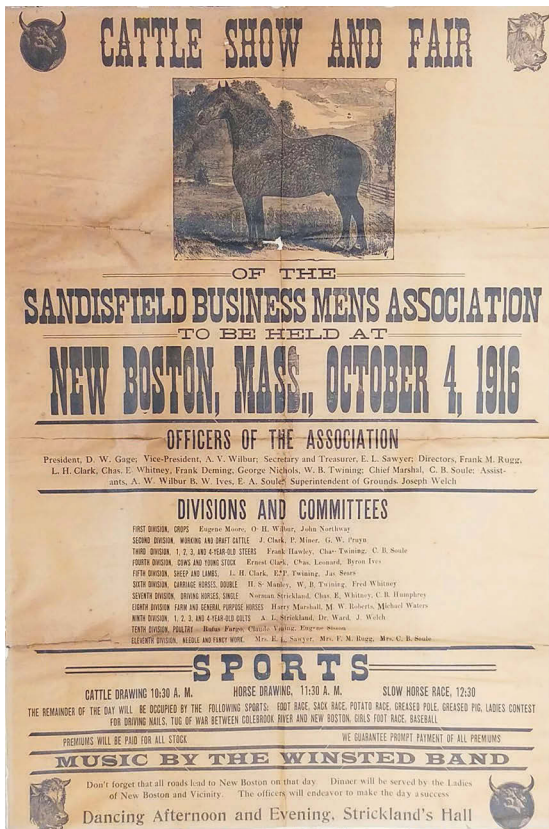
I inquired with friends as to the whereabouts of Strickland's Hall. Of course, Norton Fletcher knew. Wendy Strickland previously told Norton that when her father, Charlie Strickland, ran the New Boston Inn he operated a dance hall on the second floor, down the hall from the Ballroom in the ell above the kitchen. Apparently, Strickland's Hall grew to be too rowdy and the Ballroom was converted to three guest rooms. It was eventually restored to the ballroom we now see.

Almost 100 years after the New Boston Cattle Show and Fair, on October 8, 2016, the Sandisfield Historical Society will host its annual Apple Festival and Fair.

We need your support. We count on the income from this event for operating expenses like heating fuel, insurance, and electricity. We will have vendors, hot dogs, hamburgers, and an array of treats in our Bake Sale. Just as was advertised 100 years ago, “Food will be served by the Ladies of New Boston and Vicinity.” Thanks in advance to our main ladies Kathie Burrows, Laurie Loring, and Josephine Freedman.

We will also demonstrate an apple press with Riiska Brook Orchard apples. Unlike 100 years ago, we won't be serving hard cider.

To borrow another line from that old poster, Don't forget that all roads lead to Sandisfield on that day: the Apple Festival, Route 183, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. We will have the tag sale “to end all tag sales.” All items will be cleared out at 2 p.m., for \$5 a boxload. 



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The Joy of Split Wood

By Simon Winchester

“He who cuts his own firewood, warms himself twice.”

Whoever wrote that irritatingly inspiring aphorism – Ford, Thoreau, and the scribes behind Isaiah 44:15 all lay claim – didn’t count on my deciding to attack our log pile in the scorching dog-days of late August.

No, I didn’t need to warm myself even once, thanks very much, by wielding an axe on an afternoon that was already ninety-two degrees in the shade. And if these logs piled high before me would ever crackle merrily with snow lying thick outside, then this August it was almost impossible to imagine it.

It is fifteen years since I moved to Sandisfield, and to my shame I’ve never really got into the business of log-splitting. Stacking, sort of. Each year, at some moment perilously close to the first frost I would call around and discover someone who would deliver a truckload of costly cut wood. I would cluster the dumped pile into a zigurat of laughable untidiness, and curse all my neighbors who had fashioned theirs into structures of arboreal perfection, three by three and neatly lapped at each end.

But this year my conscience pricked.

I had long ago injured both my arms (breaking one of them arm-wrestling, for example) and they were now pretty fragile. I don’t like weights, nor push-ups. Why don’t I split wood, I thought. It was an epiphany. My wife agreed – an exercise that actually had some point to it.

Roger Kimberley, whose family has logged the northern end of Town Hill Road for the better part of two centuries, sounded skeptical. Yes, he would happily supply me with round logs – two cords should see you right, he said – but are you quite sure you don’t want them split? You do have a log-splitter?

Just my arms, I replied, and a nice new axe. He stifled a chortle. Buy a log-splitter. Doing it by hand is hard.

That was in August. It was the aforesaid

ninety-two when Mr. Kimberley, Sr., turned up in a truck so old it seemed held together with baling twine. He dumped two cords, a veritable Matterhorn of unsplit lumber, beside my woodshed. I wrote him a check. He wished me luck, grinning knowingly.

I took up my axe, a nice eight-pound Wetterling from Sweden, and placed an eighteen-inch billet of black birch vertically onto my chosen chopping block. I adopted what seemed the right stance, lifted the axe high above my head – and brought it down with enough thunderous force to cleave the world.

The axehead hit with a deafening thud – and bounced. More by luck than judgment I kept hold of its handle and just managed to stop it swinging back before it hit my shins.



Discouraged and surprised I bent down to see what I had done. There was barely a scratch on the cut surface. Maybe a mechanical splitter was a better idea.

But I examined the surface more closely, and spied a tiny hairline crack in the face, a feature which I should have seen before I took a blow. So I aligned this faint crack in front of me as an aiming point for the second strike. I raised the axe again, brought it down with steely ferocity – this time managing to miss by a full inch, the axe bouncing into the sky once more.

Now it was getting hot. I was getting bothered.

I was also sweating incontinently. My spectacles were fogging up. I wiped them clean, aimed more carefully this time – and by great good fortune, hit the crack head on. With an unforgettably triumphal sound the log split in two and a pair of glistening, sweetly scented pieces of fresh firewood flew off the block.

From that moment I never stopped. I chopped and split, chopped and split, gaining skill and confidence as I did so. I learned which woods come apart easily – ash, cherry (and that scent!) and silver birch. I learned to avoid old maple, with eyes and stubs and whorls and webs of wood-fiber that proved quite intractable.


I bought a second axe for the really tricky baulks – a Finnish creation, lopsided and with an oddly weighted head. It did its job perfectly, but its skewed balance started niggling at a muscle in my back, so I went back to the ever-sharpening and perfectly balanced Wetterling, its hickory handle now glossy with repeated contact with my hands.

After a month of mornings and evenings spent at axe-work, so the woodpile began to settle, to flatten, to empty. Soon I could see patches of grass between the logs.

And equally soon the weather began to cool.

As I realized that I was actually going to finish, Henry Ford’s adage began to seem true. I now welcomed the warming of my task each chill mid-autumn dawn, and could well imagine the flickering fires come wintertime.

By mid-month all was done: a sudden happy feeling of achievement. I’m now quite prepared for the season: there are the stacks, three by three and neatly – well, sort of neatly – lapped at each end.

So come on winter, do your worst: my handiwork is ready for you, to keep the chill at bay. Just me and my axe and one joyous month out in the fresh air. Fifteen years late maybe, but one country skill acquired. Many more to go. 

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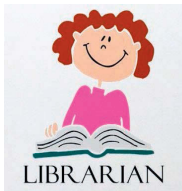
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The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

Bookworm Bliss: Finding a new author; then discovering they have written over a dozen books.

October, that fabulous month when mornings and evenings are crisp like MacIntosh apples and the warm days are wrapped in a delightful palette of gold, orange, and red. Autumn has arrived, gentle breezes scatter the leaves about and whisper that summer is gone again. It is a reflective time for me.

Each year it brings another birthday and small laments that I did not take that bike ride along the Ashwilticook Trail nor spend enough time kayaking. But I did come to know my grandfather better by delving into *War and Turpentine* by Stefan Hertmans (a Flemish soldier in World War I), traveled the backroads of Appalachia once again with Sharyn McCrumb in her book *Prayers the Devil Answers*, and found a new musician to enjoy (Django Reinhardt) by reading *The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto*.

I love discovery.

After new books are covered and catalogued, returned books gently placed back on their appropriate shelf, I sometimes find myself meandering in the library stacks, beginning at the A's and ending at the Y's (There are no "Z" authors in Sandisfield) trailing my hand along the spines. It is akin to lightly running your finger over a photo in an album. You stop and remember a great book, a not-so-great book.

And then the magic of discovering an author never read. The finger stops and I pull the book out, intrigued by the cover art, the title or just the name of the author. So I peruse the cover flaps.

It piques my interest and, voila!, a new author is discovered – well, new to me. And I read the first one and want more and often there are. The mother lode! This year it was Elizabeth George and her DI Lynley stories.

The library is my album of magic, where I can discover other times and places, travel without passport or baggage, and upon completion of the journey find that nuggets of wisdom have been gathered

So bite into an apple and find a book to travel down the road with.

This month's featured author is Alice Hoffman (born 1952), an American novelist and young-adult and children's writer, best known for her 1995 novel *Practical Magic*, which was adapted for a 1998 film of the same name. Many of her works fall into the genre of magic realism and contain elements of magic, irony, and non-standard romances and relationships.

New books that grace our shelves:

The Perfume River, Robert Butler

A Week in Paris, Rachel Hore

Girls, Emma Cline

A Gentleman in Moscow, Amor Towles

Happenings at the library:

Join Vicki Bakunis in the library (lower level) for some beautiful card making, conversation and delicious snacks. Twice a month, usually on Saturday afternoons. Call Kathie Burrows at 258-4943 for details and to register.

Ladies Book Club – 4th Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. October's gem is *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight* by Alexandra Fuller. Everyone welcome.

Game Night – Thursday October 13th at 6 p.m. Bring your game face – the one with smiles. We will be subduing boredom with boarddom. Scrabble, Yahtzee and Sorry anyone?


Please note the library will be closed October 10 for Columbus Day. 

Once upon a time ...

It's a magical world of kings and queens, princesses, witches and evil step-mothers, heroes, talking animals in enchanted forests.

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Don't miss it. It'll be a lot of fun.

Sandisfield Arts Center, Sunday, October 9 at 4 p.m. Children are free; adults \$10. 



Council on Aging

Hello everyone, and welcome to fall.

Don't forget to come to the Historical Society's Apple Fest on Saturday, October 8, from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., and purchase a pie – or just a slice – to support Friends of COA and the Sandisfield Library's childrens' books in memory of Cora Barrett.

Come and join the Qi Gong classes on Mondays and Fridays from 11 a.m.-noon at the Old Town Hall.

There will be training for I-Pads, I-Phones, and other useful items of the 21st century. Dates to be announced. Watch for flyers.

Fall flower arranging class on November 14, 2 p.m., \$10 fee.

Stop in and visit us on Wednesdays 11a.m.-2:00 p.m., have lunch, visit and borrow a book to take home and read.

Home Modification Program regarding zero or low percentage loans for home repair, additions, heating replacements, and other home improvements for the elderly. Watch for posters with dates and times.

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Old Bridge Becomes Too Popular

When The Times published photos of the old Rt. 8 bridge over the Farmington River last month, we didn't know we were going to start something.

Because of this summer's drought, the bridge emerged again from its normal life beneath the Colebrook River Reservoir. Our two photographs, one taken late July as the bridge was emerging from the water and the second a month later when it was possible again to walk across the bridge, were testimony to how little water was flowing into the reservoir.

Compare those photos with Sandy Parisky's photo, above, taken on Labor Day, September 5.

And the bridge became famous. Sandisfield's Suzanne O'Connell sent a web link to a September 10 article in the Hartford Courant. www.courant.com/community/colebrook/hc-marteka-colebrook-river-ghost-town-0911-20160910-story.html.

In the story, reporter Peter Marteka outlined how the village of Colebrook River and a sizable portion of South Sandisfield had been submerged, along with the bridge and this stretch of old Rt. 8, under the 750-acre reservoir, and how the site of the village, along with the bridge, has re-emerged.

The web story and accompanying photos are a good reason to have a solid internet hookup.

If you don't, stop by the Library and ask Terry Spohnholz to set you up so you can see the bridge in "glorious Technicolor."

The story and the video, which includes a historic photo of the village of Colebrook River, drew many Connecticut visitors to the bridge. The result was officialdom. The Courant website now includes this announcement: "Note: Officials have now closed off public access to the bridge since the column came out. But visitors can still hike along abandoned Route 8 and see the bridge."

And the drought continues. A water level chart for the West Branch of the Farmington at New Boston, maintained since 1913 by the US Geological Survey, shows that the usual discharge at this time of year is 40 cubic feet per second. Right now the cfs is a low 4.1.

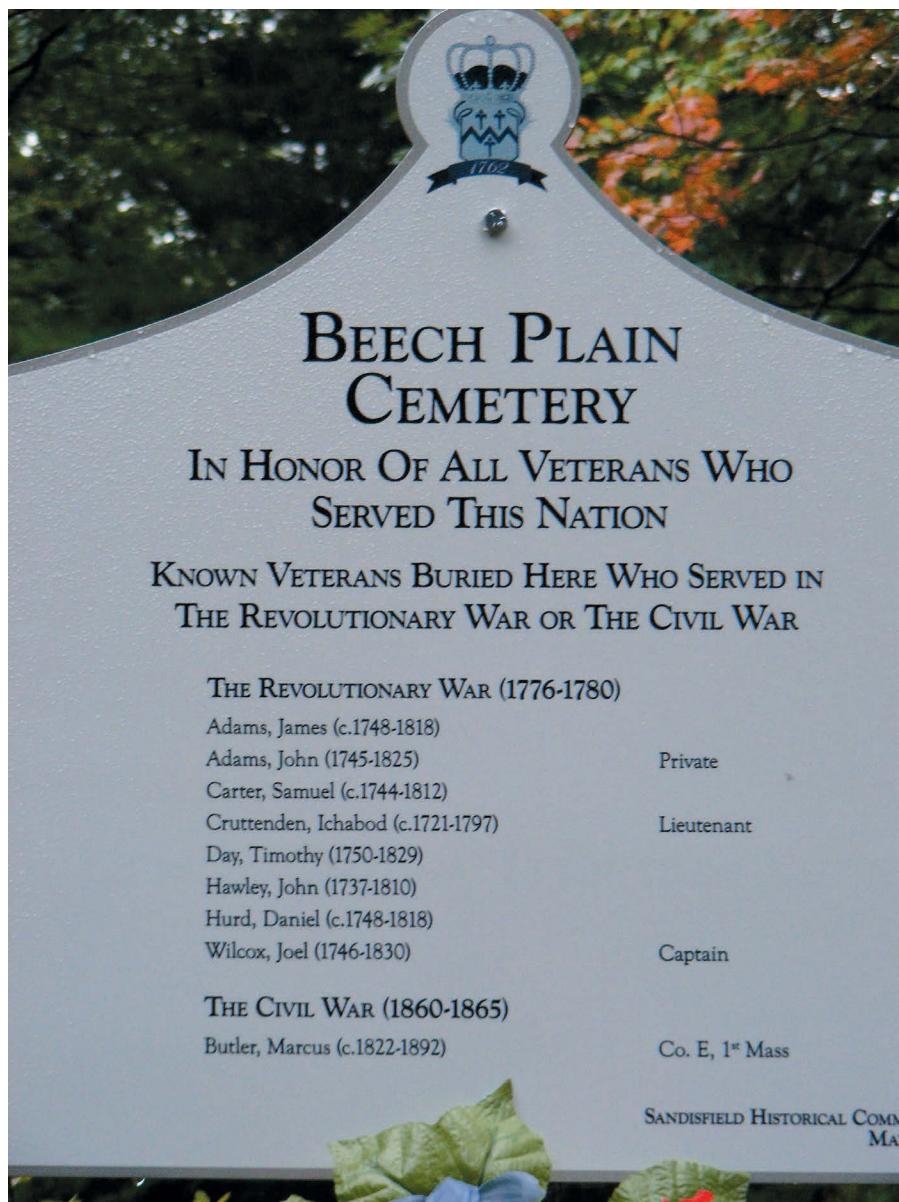
In Honor of All Veterans

The white markers in each of Sandisfield's five cemeteries are dignified historical plaques that honor all veterans who served our nation. They are a significant contribution to our town and help identify who, what, and where we are.

Installed this spring by the Cemeteries Commission and the Highway Department, the markers are under the auspices of the Sandisfield Historical Commission.

The marker shown here is at the Beech Plain Cemetery on North Beech Plain Road. It lists the eight known individuals buried there who served in the Revolutionary War and one veteran of the Civil War. The markers provide, when known, an individual's rank and birth and death dates.

Similar markers have been placed at the New Boston, Center, Roberts Road, and South Sandisfield cemeteries.



NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.

Please send notices for Now Hear This! to calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org.

OCTOBER EVENTS

Forum on American History, Culture And Politics: The 2016 Presidential Election Discussed with Val Coleman and Bill Cohn on Saturday, October 1, at 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. Donations appreciated.

An Evening with Alison Larkin on Saturday, October 1, at 8:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. Ms. Larkin, an acclaimed comedienne, will talk about England, life in the Berkshires, and how to make a perfect cup of tea. \$20, tickets online at sandisfieldartscenter.org or at the door.

The Future of Sandisfield on Friday, October 14, 6 p.m. at Firehouse #2, Route 57. Master plan potluck dinner, all residents—full and part-time—are invited. Tom Matuszko of BCRP will lead a discussion of the Master Plan final draft. You can participate and help guide Sandisfield into the next few years. Bring a dish to share. See article on page 3.

Apple Fest on Saturday, October 8, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Historical Society, Route 183 at South Sandisfield Road. Vendors, food, huge tagsale, and pies made by cooks from the Council on Aging.

Church Service on Sunday, October 9, at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, 4 Sandisfield Road (Route 57).

Gallery Opening Reception on Sunday, October 9, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. The Gallery will feature paintings by Robin Crofut-Brittingham, on display October 9-30 and open during performances.

Fairy Tales Brought to Life Inspired by the Paintings of Robin Crofut-Brittingham and Presented by Ben Luxon and the Sandisfield Players on Sunday, October 9, at 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. \$15.

Hike the Hammertown Loop of the Clam River Trail on Wednesday, October 12, 9:00-11:00 a.m. Join the BNRC on a guided hike of the newest section of the Clam River Trail. Meet at the pull-off opposite 35 Hammertown Road. Trail difficulty: 2 miles, one steep descent and one moderate ascent (steep sections are on a trail with good footing). Please contact Mike Leavitt at 413-499-0596 or mleavitt@bnrc.org with questions.

Card-making Class on Saturday, October 15, from 12:00-3:00 p.m. at the lower level of the library, \$10 makes 6 homemade cards! Please register, by calling Kathy at 258-4943.

Honoring World War II Veterans on Saturday, October 15, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the American Legion Pavilion. Veterans Rosemary Allen, Norton Fletcher, Walter Linkovich, and William Tacy.

Easy Ridin' Papas on Saturday, October 15, at 8:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. \$20.

Winds and the Wilderness Players on Saturday, October 22, at 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. \$20.

Harvest Dinner on Saturday, October 22, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Firehouse #2, Route 57. Turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, squash, stuffing, and more. Adults, \$12; under 12, \$6. Tickets at the door. Takeouts will be available.

Card-making Class on Saturday, October 29, from 12:00-3:00 p.m. at the lower level of the library, \$10 makes 6 homemade cards! Please register by calling Kathy at 258-4943.

Emerging Models of Wellness Care vs. Disease Care on Saturday, October 29, at 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. \$10. Join Drs. Larry and Nancy Bronstein for a talk and Q&A.

Halloween Costume Party on Saturday night, October 29, 9 p.m.-1 a.m., at the New Boston Inn. Wear a costume or just be there. DJ and buffet included in \$15 entry fee.

EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Monterey Octoberfest on Saturday, October 1, from noon-4 p.m. Locally sourced brats from Red Apple Butchers; craft beer from Berkshire Brewing; home-baked goods; live music from area musicians; plus crafts, games and more. Monterey Community Center Corner of Route 23 and New Marlborough Road.

Otis Arts Festival & Otis Historical Society Tag Sale on Saturday, October 15, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Farmington River Elementary School on Route 8 in Otis. Pottery, leather, oil paintings, photography, quilts, jewelry, wood crafts, and more. Musical entertainment by Bruce Mandel. Food available for purchase. Otis Historical Society tag sale further north on Route 8 at the Otis Poultry Farm.

SAVE THE DATE

Jewish Life in Small-Town New England on November 12, Saturday, 11 a.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. Dr. Michael B. Hoberman, Fitchburg State University, will discuss rural farming communities in the Berkshires drawn from this author's books on Jewish settlement patterns, civic involvement, and religious life since the late 1800s.

SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER



5 Hammertown Rd, Sandisfield, MA
413-258-4100

INFO/TICKETS:

SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG

OCTOBER

SAT, OCT 1, 4:00PM, donation
FORUM AMERICAN HISTORY,
CULTURE AND POLITICS:
THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
Facilitated by Bill Cohn and Val Coleman

SAT, OCT 1, 8PM, \$20
AN EVENING WITH ALISON LARKIN

In the Gallery OCTOBER 9 - 30
ROBIN CROFUT-BRITTINGHAM
RECEPTION: SUN, OCT 9, 2-4PM
(No fee For Reception)

Followed At 4PM By
INTO THE WOODS:

A performance of fairy tales with Ben Luxon
and members of the Sandisfield Players.
(*\$15 for performance only*)

SAT, OCT 15, 8PM, \$20
EASY RIDIN' PAPAS

WILL CONKLIN AND ADAM BROWN
Country Blues & Western Swing

SAT, OCT 22, 4PM, \$20
WINDS IN THE WILDERNESS PLAYERS
Music from Renaissance to Contemporary

SAT, OCT 29, 4PM, \$10
EMERGING MODELS OF
WELLNESS CARE VS. DISEASE CARE
Drs. Larry and Nancy Bronstein of
Mahaiwe Chiropractic & Health Services

These programs are supported in part by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

P.O. Box 584

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www.sandisfieldtimes.org

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Donations of all sizes are needed to ensure the continuation of this newspaper. Please send checks to: *The Sandisfield Times*, P.O. Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255 or donate online at our website: www.sandisfieldtimes.org.

Copies of *The Sandisfield Times* are available in Sandisfield at A&M Auto, the Arts Center (in season), the Transfer Station, Post Office, the New Boston Inn, New Boston Sleds, Villa Mia, MJ Tuckers, When Pigs Fly Farm and Town Hall. Copies are also available in Otis at Berkshire Bank, Katie's Market, Papa's Fuel, Otis Library, Farmington River Diner, and Otis Poultry Farm. Locations in Monterey include the

Library, the Store, and the Roadside Cafe. Available also at the Southfield Store in New Marlborough. Back issues are available for purchase.

The Times can be mailed to your home by paid subscription (see form below left) or you can read it (free) online as a PDF document at www.sandisfieldtimes.org.

We welcome submissions, comments and suggestions, including letters to the editor **BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR**. We may edit for space, style or clarity. We will try to publish Public Service Announcements when we have room, with priority given to Sandisfield organizations. No portion of the *The Sandisfield Times* may be reproduced without permission.

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