

ECHO
The Newsletter of the Essex Community Historical Society
Fall 1996 Vol 8

Annual Meeting of Historical Society will be on Tuesday, October 8 at the First Congregational Church in Essex Jct.

Colonel John Williams will present on the history of church

Colonel Williams will tell us about the history of the church. For almost 130 years the distinctive red brick church has stood on Main Street. The First Congregational Society of Essex Junction was formed in 1867, and the church building was completed in 1869.

Colonel Williams served in the Army for thirty years, and taught military history and law at Norwich University. He also served as editor of State Papers in the Secretary of State's office. He authored The Battle of Hubbardton, American Rebels Stem the Tide, published by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation.

He has served as president of the Chittenden County Historical Society. Colonel Williams served as editor of A History of the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction, Vermont published in 1967. He has lived in Essex Junction since 1962.

The Society will have some artifacts from its collection on display at the meeting. We will feature a portion of our political button collection.

Contributed by Richard Allen

Museum Volunteers Are Important

Thank you to our summer volunteers. Our museum could not have been open each week-end throughout the summer without your help. Our last week-end to be open will be October 5 and 6. We have had a total of 30 visitors so far this season. Our summer volunteers were:

Harry Landon	Nancy Bartlett
Kay Helfrich	Deedee Cemel
Kathy Dodge	Marlene Emerson
George Clapp	Barbara Mudgett
The Russell Priors	Sherry and Hubie Norton
Tom Tailer	Sally and Judy Wright
Stan Bloomfield	Eva Clough
Jim Overfield	Mary Tewarson
Melissa Boomhower	Nancy Nye
Noah Thompson	Lorraine Marshall
John Deforge	Faye Soderberg
Betty Tucker	Alicia Shanks
Judy MacDonald	

Historical Society is in Business

The membership committee recently presented a new membership program to the ECHS board of directors. The proposal was to include businesses in our membership structure. Why? Businesses are an integral part of our community and our history.

A business can join the historical society in one of four categories: Member, Friend, Contributing, and Sustaining. Listed below are businesses which have already joined. We are thankful for their support and hope to see this program expand in the future.

Brown's River Bindery, Inc.
Morse Lumber
Ettenborough L Enterprises (Foodee's)
Vt. Conservatory of Ballet
Kolvoord, Overton & Wilson
Village Copy, Inc
Gordon's Window Decor

ECHS Goes to the Fair

Champlain Valley Fair celebrated its 75th birthday this year. We hope you attended the fair and saw the display celebrating it's history from 1914 to the present day. The ECHS helped with this project. The display has become a permanent fixture at the fairgrounds. You may have purchased the commemorative booklet if you to the fair this year. It will become a collector's item as only 1,000 copies were printed.

Mudgett & Company Provided the Necessities of Life for Essex Area

R.O. Mudgett & Company , once a thriving hardware store located at what is presently 7+9 Main street in the village of Essex Junction, was owned and operated by Ralph Oscar Mudgett who brought his growing family to our community in 1902. He and his wife, Marion (Scott), raised their six children directly above the store. Glenwood ranges, which were widely used in those days, were sold and serviced by Ralph. He and Marion were devoted advocates of education and assisted Samuel Brownell in establishing the Brownell Library.

The Mudgett children, Edward William, Madeline, Helen, Margueritte, Charles Scott, and Ruth, not only completed high school but also graduated from college, becoming successful in their chosen fields of endeavor. Charles graduated at the top of his class from the UVM College of Medicine, and Edward William formed Chittenden County Insurance Agency (64 Main St.) in 1932. Edward also served our town in the state legislature and state senate as well as local offices.

Many years after Ralph's death, long-time customers of his store often called Edward's son, Stuart Chapin Mudgett, for parts and service in order to keep their Glenwood ranges in operation.

Contributed by Barbara Mudgett, wife of Stuart.

Below is a picture of the RO Mudgett & Company parade wagon carrying a Glenwood Range. We assume this was a Fourth of July parade. Can anyone identify the wagon masters? Date on the back, 1912.

