

# Under the Hump

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- February 17th - Meeting at CBMS at 7PM
- If you have not renewed your membership be sure to renew with Mark Morse by the next meeting so you are not removed from the list.



## CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBER?



Last Issue  
Rachel Sherman

## NOVEMBER MEETING

Numerous members presented Duxbury artifacts at the November meeting from arrow heads by Myra Perry to steeple-jack photos from Julie Wilder. It was a chance for members to get a small taste of numerous pieces of Duxbury history.

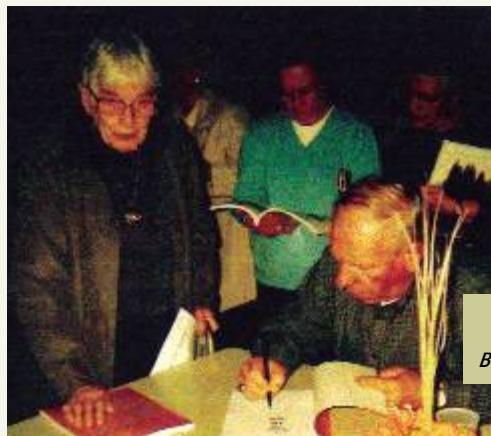
Mark Morse did the drawing for the raffle and announced the winners. John Wilson of Bisbee Hardware received the \$400 first prize. The second prize was a Thanksgiving basket. As he was expressing his concerns that the winner might need to have the basket

attendees. If you would like to get a copy of CAUSE OF THE WILL they are on sale at Vincent's or you can contact Don directly at 244-7558.

Several members of the DHS joined forces with the Waterbury Historical Society and generated a calendar featuring local pictures of days gone by. A similar project had

been done by the Duxbury Land Trust. They decided not to continue so it appeared to be the opportune time to start the project. A 150 calendars were created in short order and sold at local retail locations. Many thanks to Vincent's, Depot Beverage, Squash Valley Produce, Stowe Street Emporium, Bisbee Hardware and Duxbury Country Store. Each society will receive more than \$450 for this first effort. Please keep the calendar project in mind as you look through old photos during the year.

**The meeting has been changed from Feb 10th to the 17th**



Left - Ruth Hartshorn gets her book autographed.

Below - Don, Mary Ethel, and Kelly Welch at the book signing.

shipped across the country his name was selected to make it the shortest delivery possible. Linda Devlin received the \$75 third prize.

After the meeting Don Welch received a warm reception for his first book signing. He sold numerous copies of his book - CAUSE OF THE WILL - about the history of Crossett Hill and autographed them for the



## SOUTH DUXBURY MARBLE QUARRY

Many people are unaware from 1926 to 1931 there were two marble quarries operating in South Duxbury off the Ward Hill Road. They were owned and operated by the Vermont Marble Company that was established in 1880 by Redfield Proctor. After initial prospecting by Henry Webster the land was purchased and the first quarry opened in 1926.

Vermont is known for its beautiful marble, but most people often think of the white or gray marble. Another marble that is known as serpentine is a hydrous silicate of magnesia, but masses of serpentine rock are rarely pure and usually contain varying quantities of such impurities as iron oxides, pyrite, hornblende, pyroxene and carbonates of lime and magnesia.

Many serpentines are green or greenish yellow,

while others, especially the more impure ones, are various shades of black, red or brown.

Spotted green and white varieties are called *ophiolite* or *ophi-calcite*. In these the white is calcite, while the green spots are serpentine, which may contain a core of some other silicate mineral. Verde antique is a somewhat general name applied to green serpentine marbles. This is the type of marble that was quarried in South Duxbury.

Serpentine sometimes has the strength be used in structural or decorative work, but because of the frequent and irregular joints found in nearly all serpentine quarries it is difficult to obtain any slabs except small ones.

As a general rule it is extremely unsafe to use serpentine for exterior work in a severe climate,



## SOUTH DUXBURY MARBLE QUARRY



but for interior decoration its softness, beautiful color, and high polish make it a very desirable stone.

Outdoors it weathers irregularly, can crack, loses its lustre and fades in spots making it an undesirable stone to use outdoors.

The first quarry opened in November of 1926 with ten to fifteen workmen there. There were about twenty five workmen at the second quarry that opened in November of 1928.

Many of the people in the area were employed at the quarry or had boarders at their homes that were from other Vermont Marble company quarries in Rochester and Danby.

The blocks weighed several tons each and were transported to Waterbury to the railroad station. They used teams of horses and doubled up the teams on the hills. When the covered bridge was replaced with steel bridge over the Mad River the blocks were taken to Middlesex. The first quarry operated for several years and was closed in 1929. The second quarry closed in 1931. Both quarries were closed because it became too expensive for them to develop enough stone to make it profitable.

Thirty years later when quantities of gravel were needed to build the interstate highway system, the great piles of abandoned South Duxbury marble were crushed and trucked to Interstate 89.



## IN THE MARBLE QUARRIES OF VERMONT

From *Popular Mechanics*, October 1914.

The greatest marble-producing industry in the world is no longer to be found in the famous Carrara district of Italy, but in Vermont, where one of the richest veins in the world stretches in an irregular line across the state. So great is the production of marble in this section that the inhabitants have lost much of their appreciation of its value, and use it for such humble and utilitarian purposes as paving, underpinning for barns, hitching posts, stepping stones, and drinking troughs for horses. This vein is about 57



GADDING WITH ELECTRIC DRILL

miles long, from 1,650 to 2,200 ft. in width, and runs from 375 to 850 ft. in depth, and from it is being taken in enormous quantities white marble that is equal to the finest Italian marble, as well as an endless variety of blue, yellow, green, and jet-black marbles. For quarrying and finishing the marble, the most up-to-date methods and equipment are used, no part of the work being done by hand that can possibly be done by machinery. Hand methods of drilling, still in vogue in Italy, have been entirely superseded by power-driven drills and channeling machines. The blocks, as they come from the quarry, are handled by derricks and are conveyed in most cases by an inclined railway or a ropeway to the mills, where they are sawed and shaped by power-driven machines, only the last, delicate stage of polishing being done by hand. Blasting is resorted to in removing the decomposed rock overlying the vein, but no blasting, on account of the danger of shattering the marble, is ever done in the actual work of quarrying. The first work is done by the channeling machine, which makes a series of cuts about 6 feet deep along and across the bed, to divide the marble into uniform blocks of a size and shape to be handled by the derricks. The next step is to break out and remove the "keystone." This gives access to the bottoms of the adjacent blocks, and the remainder of the process is comparatively simple. Drills driven by steam or compressed air are then used for drilling holes crosswise through the base of each block so that it can



be wedged and broken from the bed easily.

This process is called "gadding," and is repeated until all the blocks are removed and it is necessary to set the channeling machine to work again. In some of the quarries the marble has been taken out to a depth of over 300 feet.

In the mill, the blocks are first cut into slabs of the required size and shape by

gang saws, which are simply strips of steel carried on a steel frame. As the frame is swung back and forth across the face of the block, a series of cuts is made through the block by the steel strips, sand and water being fed constantly into the cuts to increase the friction. The marble can then be used for many purposes, but if it is to be finished, it is next sent to the rubbing beds where the saw marks and other irregularities are removed. The marble is then ready for the polishing, and this must be done in much the same fashion as it was done by the ancients, as no machine has yet been made that will take the place of the highly skilled labor required for this work. The surface of the marble is rubbed down by hand until it is as smooth as glass, and the final gloss is put on by means of putty and acid.



LOADING MARBLE BLOCKS

# SOUTH DUXBURY QUARRY WORKMEN



BACK ROW L TO R FLOYD PERRY, HENRY LAVANAWAY, \_\_\_\_\_,  
HERBIE MANNING, HARRY BACKUS, MILFORD DURETT

SECOND ROW L TO R ROY WEBSTER- FOREMAN, WILL COTA, FRED FLUERY,  
GEORGE McDONALD, FRANK LAMSON

IN THE MIDDLE SEATED - LEO SMITH, \_\_\_\_\_,  
CLARENCE LAMSON, IN BACK AND WILLIAM GRIFFITH.

ACROSS FRONT L TO R ED STONE, LEO STEARNS, MARK PHILLIPS, JOE  
FLEURY, FRANK HOLDEN, JERRY MANNING, AND MERRILL REAGAN.



# RECOLLECTIONS OF ROY WEBSTER

Danby Vermont  
April 2, 1959

Mr. Wm. Adams  
Proctor Vermont

I have some records but most of this is from memory.

Question No. 1

At the time the quarries were operated the Vermont Marble Co. owned the so called Bernard Durett or Bruce place, The Somerville place, The Charles Sherman place and the Coffrin place.

Question No. 2

Quarry No. 1 was opened in November 1926.

Quarry No. 2 was opened in November 1928.

Question No. 3

About 12 men employed in quarry No.1 during 1927 & 1928.  
Both quarries were operated during 1929 employing about  
24 men.

No. 1 Quarry was closed down at the end of 1929.  
No. 2 Quarry was operated during 1930 & 1931 employing 24 men. At this time the quarry was closed down.

Question No. 4

The stone is a Metamorphic Serpentine, Originally an Olivine or Volcanic stone, Now Calcinated by exposure to Calcium Carbonate carried by Thermal Waters.

Question No. 5

Only a small amount was actually finished and sold because of irregular quality. This was used as interior decorating in veneer work, Weinscoting, Bathrooms Fireplaces etc.

Question No. 6

The quarries were abandoned because of the small percentage of usable stone.

Question No. 7

Superintendent R. L. Webster  
First foreman at No. 1 Quarry for a short time was  
Frank Merrill of Rochester Vt.  
Later until closed Max Davis of Pittsfield Vt.  
Foremen at Quarry No. 2 for the first year  
Harry Colton of Pittsfield Vt.  
From 1930 & 1931 Edward Stone of Granville Vt.  
Others on the payroll who resided in Duxbury as I remember.

Floyd Perry	John Griffith
Henry Lavanway	Mr. Ingalls
Harry Backus	Charles Sherman
Jerry Manning	Joe Cots
Leo Boyce	Morton Driscoll
Frank Lamson	Mr. Whalen
Clarence Lamson	Leonard Sherman
Harold Lamson	Levi Boyce
Mr. Phillips (Mark)	Wilford Durett
William Griffith	Nelson Sly



# RECOLLECTIONS OF ROY WEBSTER

## Question No. 8

We do not know of a Diamond Drill being lost in Duxbury.

## Question No. 9

Verde Antique

## Question No. 10

About ten of the first experimental blocks weighing 4 tons each were hauled to Middlesex by two teams of horses, One owned by George Sleeper one owned by Fred Goss of Moretown Vt. Each team with its own load on sleds and the teams doubling up on the hills. The early full sized blocks were shipped at Waterbury Vt. being hauled over Duxbury Hill with a Linn Half Track Tractor hauling a trailer, This made necessary the shoring up of seven bridges to carry the heavy loads.

This route was necessary because of a long covered bridge across Mad River near the Green Mountain Power Co. No. 8 Power Station too weak to carry the loads, As soon as the covered bridge was replaced by the present steel bridge shipment was made by truck to the loading siding at Middlesex Vt.

## Question No. 11

Henry Webster discovered the deposits of Verde Antique in Duxbury while prospecting for the Vermont Marble Co. a short time before it was purchased and developed.

## Vermont Marble Company

QUARRIERS - IMPORTERS - FINISHERS - CONTRACTORS  
PROCTOR - VERMONT



Branch Offices  
BOSTON - CHICAGO - CLEVELAND  
DALLAS - HOUSTON - LOS ANGELES  
NEW YORK - PHILADELPHIA - SAN FRANCISCO

April 7, 1959

Mrs. Alice DeLong,  
Moretown,  
Vermont.

Dear Mrs. DeLong:

When your letter of March 18 was received, in which you requested information about our company's operations in Duxbury, I sent it down to Danby to Roy L. Webster, who is the superintendent of our quarry there, and I am sending you his reply. Since Mr. Webster was superintendent of the quarry, I think his answers are more authentic than those we could get from any other source and I hope they will be of benefit to you.

Mr. Webster sent me a note in which he says, "I knew Mrs. DeLong well as a girl -- daughter of Henry Backus, one of the listed employees -- now a school teacher."

Sincerely,

*Wm. H. Adams*  
Wm. H. Adams  
Vice President

WHA IF

Marble  
So. Dux.

*R. L. Webster*

ALICE DELONG  
REQUESTED INFORMATION ON THE  
QUARRY AND RECEIVED THESE  
RECOLLECTIONS FROM ROY WEBSTER  
WHO WORKED AT THE QUARRY.

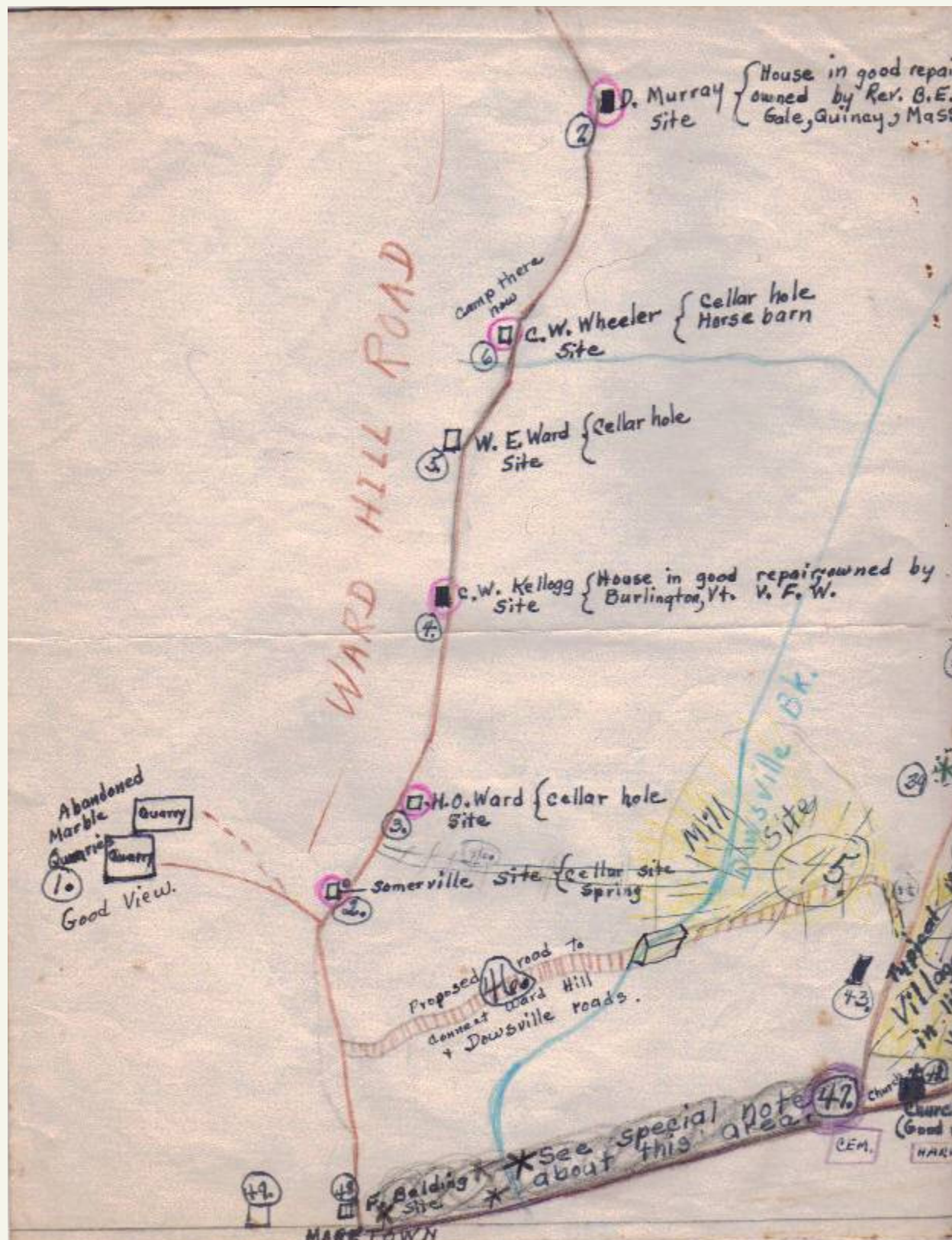
# ABANDONED QUARRY



THE QUARRY  
AS IT  
APPEARED  
THIRTY  
YEARS  
AFTER IT  
CLOSED.



# MAP OF QUARRY LOCATION



## WATERBURY RECORD

## 1927

April 20, 1927 Poles are being set to the marble quarry at South Duxbury, preparing to run a telephone from the farm to the quarry.

## 1929

February 27, 1929 Harry Backus was injured at the Vermont Marble Quarry last Tuesday when he was caught between the bucket and the wall receiving severe bruises. He is now able to be about the house.

March 20, 1929 Vaccination was the order of the day for the employer of the Vermont Marble Quarry and many others in South Duxbury. They went to Moretown where Dr. G. S. Bidwell was vaccinating throughout the day.

May 29, 1929 the big tractors have come from Rochester to draw marble from the Vermont Marble Quarry which will be shipped from Waterbury.

June 5, 1929 - Marble is now being drawn from the Marble Quarry and shipped to Waterbury. The blocks of marble weigh ten tons or over and a load consists of two blocks.

June 12, 1929 - Six car loads of marble have been drawn from the Vermont Marble quarry and shipped from Waterbury, new machinery being drawn back to be installed at the quarry.

August 7, 1929 - One hundred and eighty tickets were sold for the baked bean salad supper given at the pavilion in South Duxbury last Wednesday evening for the benefit of the church repair fund and \$40.80 were cleared. Mr. Chandler said in honor of the men working in the Vermont Marble Quarry in South Duxbury the church has been finished inside in imitation of Venetian marble.

August 28, 1929 - Two tractors owned by the Vermont Marble arrived from Rochester Monday to begin drawing marble from the quarry to Waterbury for shipment

October 16, 1929 - Max Davis and Barry Colton of Pittsfield have completed work at the Vermont Marble Quarry and have gone to Schenectady, NY. Mr. Davis will be employed by the General Electric and Mrs. Colton expects to take up aviation.

Ed Stone of Roxbury has employment in the marble quarry and is boarding at the home of Walter Sterling.

November 6, 1929 Fred Marsh of Rochester is doing carpenter work for the Vermont Marble Company and boarding at the home of Roy Webster.

November 24, 1929 Two tractors belonging to the Vermont Marble Company, one from Roxbury and one from Rochester are hauling marble from the quarry at South Duxbury to Middlesex for shipment. Mr. Robert Curtis of Rochester is boarding at the home of Roy Webster and assisting in shipping marble from the quarry.

December 4, 1929 Middlesex, Vermont The first load of marble was shipped from here by the Vermont Marble Company Wednesday to Middlebury. Morton Driscoll has commenced work for the Vermont Marble Company at the quarry in South Duxbury. He is boarding at Charlie Sherman's in Moretown. Mrs. Driscoll is keeping house for Mrs. Sherman while Mrs. Sherman is at the home of her mother in Waterbury caring for her son, Dalton who recently returned from the hospital.

## 1930

February 26, 1930 Thirty men are employed at the present time in the Vermont Marble Company's quarry at South Duxbury. This quarry was opened up three years ago last November on what is known as the Sam Somerville place. A second quarry has also been opened but is



## WATERBURY RECORD

not being worked this winter. The work is still in the prospecting stage as it takes a long time with a large expenditure of money to uncover stone but hopes are bright for establishing a successful quarry in the near future. Every house in South Duxbury is occupied and families are waiting to get tenements.

March 19, 1930 Henry Webster of Waitsfield is going work at the marble quarry and boarding at the home of his brother Roy Webster.

July 23, 1930 Mr. & Mrs. Roy Webster were in Middlebury Monday. Mr. Webster going in the interest of the Vermont Marble Company.

August 18, 1930 The Vermont Marble Company of South Duxbury was shut down Saturday for a week.

August 20, 1930 Minard Brown has completed work at the marble quarry and has employment at the Waterbury Inn.

September 10, 1930 JB Kidder and son Allan who have been visiting in Randolph visited the marble quarry at South Duxbury Monday. Mr. Kidder is a superintendent of the Vermont Marble Company.

September 24, 1930 Marble is being shipped from the South Duxbury quarry. Mr. Elaray of Boston was there several days demonstrating a new truck. He returned to Boston Saturday.

October 8, 1930 Mr. Mrs. Ed Stone has gone to house-keeping in the Coffrin house now owned by the Vermont Marble Company. Mr. Stone is the boss at the No. 2 quarry.

November 10, 1930 The Vermont Marble Company tractor is hauling marble to Middlesex this week.

January 28, 1931 Roy Webster was in Rochester the first of the week in the interest of the Vermont Marble Company.

## 1931

March 11, 1931 The marble quarry at South Duxbury resumed work on full time last week.

May 20, 1931 The listers have completed their work in town and submit the following report. The grand list this year is \$3,844: the number of poll taxes is #261: the heaviest taxpayers are the Green Mountain Power Company with a list of \$1,062; the Vermont State Hospital with a list of \$330; the LeClair Lumber company with a list of \$247; the Vermont Marble Company with a list of \$198 and the Ward Lumber Company with a list of \$147.

August 24, 1932 The barn on what is known as the Ben Avery place in South Duxbury was destroyed by fire late Monday evening. The building was owned by the Vermont Marble Company but the hay which was recently put in was owned by Roy Wilder. Both were insured. The origin of the fire is unknown. The house which was last owned and occupied by Charles Sherman burned several years ago.

December 28, 1932 Roy Webster returned to his work in Rochester Monday.

MANY THANKS TO  
BOB WIMBLE FOR  
RESEARCHING AND COLLECTING  
QUARRY INFORMATION FROM THE  
WATERBURY RECORD



President: Don Welch  
Vice President: Julie Wilder  
Treasurer: Mark Morse  
Secretary: Eulie Costello

Phone: 802-244-7558  
Phone: 802-223-0006  
Phone: 802-244-7080  
Phone: 802-244-1742

E-mail: vermontmaplemary@yahoo.com  
E-mail: huckfinnv@verizon.net  
E-mail: markmorsevt@myfairpoint.net  
E-mail: euliej@gmail.com

**General Questions**  
**Don Welch, President**  
**136 Hayes Road**  
**Duxbury, VT 05676**

**Membership**  
**Mark Morse, Treasurer**  
**804 Vermont Route 100**  
**South Duxbury, VT 05660**

**Newsletter**  
Kelly Welch  
5631 Vermont Route 100  
Duxbury, VT 05676  
802-244-5627  
Email:

**Newsletter**  
Maureen Harvey  
1293 River Road  
Duxbury, VT 05676  
802-244-8912  
Email: mharvey@harveygear.com

If you have any comments or contributions for the newsletter we would love to hear from you.

**[www. DuxburyVT.com](http://www.DuxburyVT.com)**

DON'T FORGET THE NEXT MEETING FEBRUARY 17TH  
CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL - 7 PM

DUXBURY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY NEWSLETTER  
1293 RIVER ROAD  
DUXBURY, VT 05676

