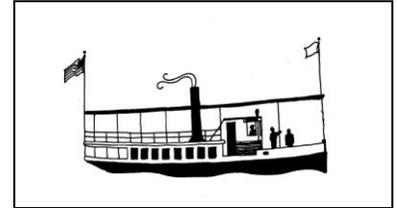


# Sunapee Echoes

Sunapee, New Hampshire Historical Society, Inc.  
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Fall 2015

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

And suddenly it's fall. I'm not sure how that happened, but here we are. Our thanks go out to all our docents, handymen, gardeners, and other volunteers for another great summer! The museum is now closed for the winter, but don't miss our Halloween decorations—friendly ghosts peering out the window. Boo!



*Whooo could these fellows be?????*

As summer fades, we begin to think about fun in the snow that's sure to follow. Please join us for our fall program on Sunapee's winter sports, **Sunapee Ski Tows**. And speaking of winter fun—we'll be participating in the New London Inn's **Thursday's Child** program on **25 February**. The Inn will share its profits for the evening with us, so save the date and start planning your table. Thanks!

**Fall Fundraiser.** Although we operate the museum on a shoestring, we need your support, whether you're an annual member, a life member, or a non-member friend! If you have not yet donated this year, now is the perfect time. Anyone sending in a contribution will be entered in a drawing for 2 tickets aboard a **Lake Sunapee History Cruise** on the MV Mt. Sunapee that we are planning for next June 27<sup>th</sup>. Simply fill in this form and mail it with your check:

Name: .....  
Phone: .....  
Email address: .....

**Library Update:** Final agreement between the town and the library trustees regarding disposition of the original Abbott Library building is edging closer. With a couple of tweaks, the document will be ready for court review. Once it is signed and approved by the court, the town will be able to lease the building. I am hoping to have more significant news for you by the first of the year!

**Holiday Gifts.** As you're casting about for the perfect gift, don't forget that we have items available in every price range—everything from note cards to our coffee table book, *Wild Goose Waters from Above*. Please see page 3 for announcement of an exciting new item and find the full list on our website.

**New acquisitions.** We've been the recipient of several new (to us) old items including a cane with Mt. Sunapee 1913 carved on it, the plane that was used by Frank Holmes (carpenter extraordinaire), photos of Frank and his family, and two lovely Alexander hay rakes. Many thanks to the donors of these items and more!

*We're hoping to see you on the 28<sup>th</sup>!*

**Announcing our Fall Program:  
~ Winter Fun ~  
Sunapee Ski Tows & Ski Jump  
1938-1976**



**Wednesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>  
7pm at the Methodist Church  
Free ~ Everyone Welcome!**

**Did you know...**

**...that bowling was once a popular activity in Sunapee?!**

Over the years, Sunapee has hosted at least four bowling alleys, two of them on the islands. The first belonged to Nathaniel Gardner, one of the first promoters of Sunapee as a vacation destination. In a historical address given in 1918 in honor of the town's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Albert D. Felch reported that:

*"N.S. Gardner purchased of Moses George about 1860 what is known as Little Island in Lake Sunapee for fifty-cents, and in 1875 built the first public building thereon with **bowling alley**. At that time there were but twelve rowboats on the lake and one sailboat, but immediately following Lafayette Colby built several for the accommodation of those desiring to go to the Island. In 1876 N. S. Gardner purchased and placed on the lake the small steamer called the Penacock, for the benefit of his fifty-cent Island enterprise."*

By 1879, according to the Sunapee column in the *Argus and Spectator*, Gardner's Island boasted of "bowling alleys and victualing accommodations," and Great Island had a similar establishment. Those businesses appear to have continued at least through 1881. Local lore has it that the men-folk got to carousing on the islands. Their women objected, and evenings on the islands ended. Here's a view of the Great Island bowling alley as seen from Birch Point.



Perhaps you've seen a wooden bowling ball in one of the cases at the museum? We believe it came from Great Island.

Later on, the Harbor was the location of choice. In 1885, Runals House (later expanded into the Ben Mere Inn) built a bowling alley. It can be seen here—the long narrow building on the water's edge. You'll find another photo of it on the back page—that one taken from the water and showing the Ben Mere in the background. That's a tennis court beside it. References to it in the local papers run into the 1890s, but it was torn down in 1905.



In 1906, Perley Graves built a bowling alley on the back of his café--the building that has become the Anchorage. It evidently operated until 1919 when, according to the *Argus*, it was purchased by the Brampton Woolen Co. to use as a club room for their help. It's not easy to see in this photo, but the long extension just visible between the buildings on the near shore is marked "BOWLING."

And there may have been a fifth one: the 20 Jan 1905 *Argus* noted that a "ball alley and pool room opposite the Woodsum Steamboat wharf" was to be built.

*by Becky with Lois Gallup and Barbara Chalmers*

## Coming soon!

We'll soon have on hand a lovely ornament that will be perfect for a gift or on your own tree. It celebrates our fabulous past and our new steamboat logo and will be the first in a series. Once they are available, we'll let you know by email, and they will appear on our website. It's gold plated solid brass 3mm thick and will come in a gift box



## Another new item...



*The Old Information Booth*



You may not have seen a new item that we added at the end of the season. We now offer notecards. They come with a variety of scenes—then and now photos from around the harbor and some of the old hotels. They are available in packs of 5 for \$10 or individually for \$2.50 each.

*Find more gifts and other information on our webpage and if you're on Facebook, don't forget to join our group page!*

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*A word about membership renewals and donations:* Renewals are not due at any specific time of year, so we include the form below in every issue of this newsletter. We simply hope that you will remember to renew or send a contribution at a time of your choosing during the year. If you forget that you've already done it, or if you are a life member who sends in a renewal, we will be glad to consider it a donation. We deeply appreciate your support. Thank you!

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### Sunapee Historical Society

#### 2015 Membership, Renewals, and Contributions

\$15 Individual     \$25 Family     \$200 Life Individual     \$350 Life Family  
 \$50 Business or Professional     Other Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town, State, & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send future newsletters by email.

I'd prefer to receive newsletter by mail.

Please make checks payable to:  
Sunapee, NH Historical Society, Inc.  
PO Box 501, Sunapee, NH 03782

Thanks!

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**Sunapee NH Historical Society, Inc.**  
**PO Box 501**  
**Sunapee, NH 03782**

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***2014-2015 Board of Directors***

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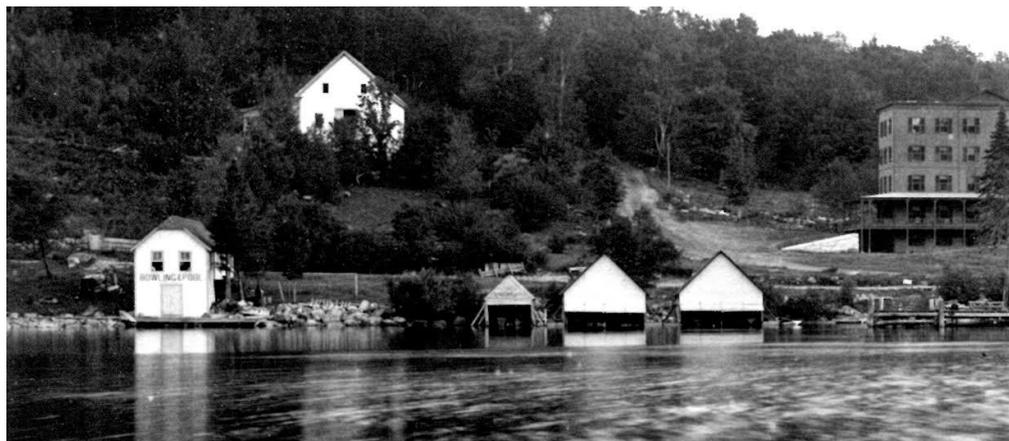
Lucy Young

*Nominations:*

Ron Garceau

*Ex Officio:*

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*The Harbor Bowling Alley from the water, Ben Mere Inn in the background.*