The Historical Society of Cheshire County’s summer exhibit, *Hello Mother, Hello Father: a history of summer camps in NH’s Monadnock Region*, highlights the history of an American phenomenon from a local perspective. Understanding the ways in which society at large influenced the structure of a child’s summer camp experience is an important aspect of the story. The exhibit includes a brief look at the ways in which camps incorporated depictions of race as a playtime activity for youth during the 20th century. Unfortunately, these traditions were often portrayed as a singular culture. To Seton and many others, the American Indian was vanishing from the nation’s landscape; camp provided a means of commemorating this heritage before it vanished completely.

Indigenous college students were often hired and trained to use the curriculum. The Woodcraft curriculum mixed rituals, crafts, dances, songs, legends, and games from a variety of Native cultures. The most prominent form of this phenomenon involved depictions of Native Americans and Indigenous culture.

In the early 1900s, youth summer camp organizer Ernest Thompson Seton established a summer camp curriculum known as the *Woodcraft Movement*. It was adopted by national organizations such as the Boy Scouts, and many local camp counselors were trained to use the curriculum. The Woodcraft curriculum mixed rituals, crafts, dances, songs, legends, and games from a variety of Native cultures. 

Continued on page 2:
Charles Eastman (Dakota) and Manabozho (Mohawk) were hired by summer camps across the country including the YMCA, Boy Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls. Charles Eastman/Ohiyesa (1858-1939), of Santee Dakota Sioux ancestry, had already become a professional doctor and activist before landing a role as supervisor of Native programs for the YMCA.

Eastman helped to establish 32 Native American chapters of the YMCA. He and his wife Elaine authored several camp-related books about Indian life including *Indian Boyhood* (1902) and *Indian Scout Talks: A Guide for Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls* (1914). And, in 1916, Charles and Elaine Eastman founded Camp Oahe in Stoddard, NH as a summer camp for girls.

On **July 12, 2023, at 6:30 pm**, Amherst College Professor **Kiara M. Vigil** will present a lecture on the outdoor education created by Charles (Ohiyesa) Eastman entitled *A Dakota Summer Story: Camping at Oahe with the Eastman Family*. She will discuss the "playing Indian" phenomenon that was a large part of the American youth wilderness movement. Her talk will highlight the philosophy of the Eastmans who believed that "Indian play" served a broader pedagogical and political purpose. Their camp sought to teach young white girls about the values of Dakota teachings to recast Indian culture. Vigil’s lecture will provide an analysis of early twentieth-century gender roles, dynamics, and expectations related to Indian people to reveal another dimension of outdoors education in shaping American attitudes toward identity, family, childhood, and nation.

Kiara M. Vigil (Dakota, Mexican, and white heritage) is an associate professor of American Studies at Amherst College, where she specializes in teaching and research related to Native American history, literature, and culture. She is in her third year on the Council for the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) and the Editor for the journal *SAIL – Studies in American Indian Literatures*, published by the University of Nebraska Press.

This presentation and the Historical Society’s exhibition *Hello Mother, Hello Father* are sponsored by Cox Woodworking, Jay and Lisa Blanchard, the Putnam Foundation, Price Chopper, C&S Wholesale Grocers and RiverMead Lifecare Community.
Jaffrey’s 250th Celebration Events

Jaffrey is 250 years old this year and the town is celebrating in many ways in the months ahead.

The town’s actual birthday is on August 17, 2023, 250 years to the day that His Excellency John Wentworth, Governor of the Province of New Hampshire, signed the Charter. Alas, the Charter itself is not to be found but the actual words do appear in the Town history. The celebration on August 17th will be at the Jaffrey Meetinghouse, the frame of which was raised less than two years after the Charter was signed. (In fact, this grand event occurred on June 17th which coincidentally was the date of the Battle of Bunker Hill. Those working on the frame could hear the battle sounds from Charlestown.) This event will start at 5:30 pm with remarks by dignitaries, music, student essays, a keynote address and a birthday cake served under a mammoth tent on the Common which will also feature historical displays.

As part of the 250th celebration there will be a Salute to Veterans on June 17, 2023, which will include a guided tour of the Old Burying Ground, an open house at the Little Red Schoolhouse, several groups of re-enactors, and a cannonade. The celebration will culminate with a chicken barbecue downtown.

On July 15th, a Fireman’s Muster with participation from throughout New England will set up at Humiston Field with lots of antique firefighting equipment over which to marvel and exhibits of Jaffrey history arranged by the Historical Society.

Soon after, Riverfest / Fête de la Rivière will come to town, highlighting the town’s French Canadian heritage. Look forward to some tasty food.

Everyone loves a parade and there’ll be big one on August 19th. Some are predicting three hours of fun on Main Street. This will be followed by a concert and fireworks. And that will pretty much end things for another 50 years!

For more information and to check the schedule including times and places go to the website: www.Jaffrey250.com

(Images and article courtesy of Rob Stephenson and JHS)
Over the past eight years, the Wyman Tavern Brew Fest has become a signature fundraising event for the Historical Society of Cheshire County and a highlight of Downtown Keene’s summer season.

The Wyman Tavern Brew Fest is known for its great local food and music, and the opportunity to taste some of the region’s finest craft beers and spirits. This year offers an expanded selection of alcohol-free and gluten-free beers and spirit-free cocktails.

Enjoy music, food and drinks on the grounds of the historic Wyman Tavern on Main Street in Keene while you support the programs of the Historical Society of Cheshire County.

The Historical Society of Cheshire County thanks the following 2023 Business Sponsors for their support of educational programs, exhibits and fund-raising events.

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Over 45 people gathered at the Bruder House on May 20th to celebrate Alan Rumrill’s 40th year at the Historical Society of Cheshire County.

**Alan F. Rumrill Fund will support a senior staff historian**

On May 20, staff, members, and friends of the Historical Society of Cheshire County threw a surprise party for Alan Rumrill to celebrate his 40th work anniversary. Mayor George Hansel read a proclamation and declared May 20th Alan F. Rumrill Day. NH State Senator Ruth Ward also provided a proclamation, and U.S. Senators Jean Shaheen and Maggie Hassan sent letters. On that same day the Keene Sentinel ran a cover story about Alan’s remarkable milestone, and earlier that week Alan had received a Preservation Achievement Award from the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance for “outstanding leadership in research, public outreach, and stewardship.”

Forty years ago, Alan F. Rumrill became the first paid employee at the Historical Society, a previously all-volunteer organization. Since then, under his stewardship, the organization has grown to have six staff members, 130 volunteers, three buildings, and 150+ programs annually.

At a recent meeting with staff, board, and an interpretive planning consultant, Alan was asked about how he connects with the Historical Society’s mission. He said, “My family has lived in Cheshire County since 1770. As a youngster I became interested in local history stories. Here at the Historical Society, we have learned that people enjoy and relate to local stories, and sharing those tales is one of my favorite parts of the job.”

His storytelling is appreciated not only by Historical Society’s members, but also in the wider community. Alan has personally presented more than 1000 public programs on local topics. He has taught hundreds of classes on local history and museum management topics. He has written and presented more than 1500 radio programs in his “Monadnock Moments” series, and he has written more than 200 newspaper columns called “Moments in (Local) History.”

Alan has written nine books and several articles and book chapters on regional art and history. His latest book, which was published in April 2023 is *Monadnock Originals, Colorful Characters from New Hampshire’s Quiet Corner.*

In honor of Alan’s many accomplishments, the Historical Society has established the Alan F. Rumrill Fund to be used to support the position of a staff historian at the Society for years to come. The fund has already reached $150,000 and we hope to reach $200,000 this summer. A contribution to the Alan F. Rumrill Fund will make a difference for the collection, preservation, and communication of our local history stories.

The celebration included a cake commemorating Alan’s 40 years with the caption, “Alan found his place in history...in 1983.”
Historical Society Guided Tours

The Historical Society of Cheshire County now offers guided tours of the Walldogs Murals, Railroad History, Badass Women of Keene, Domestic Servants of Keene, the History of the Smallpox Epidemic and the Wyman Tavern. During the summer months, public tours are scheduled each month. Private tours can also be arranged by appointment.

**Walldogs Walking Tours:** Join us for a Magical History Walking Tour. Hear the stories behind many of the beautiful Walldogs murals in downtown Keene. Learn some of the amazing but true stories of the people, places and businesses that have contributed to Keene’s rich history and character.

**Scheduled Public Tours:** Saturday, July 1, 10:00 am, Saturday, August 5, 10:00 am

**Domestic Servants Walking Tours:** Join historian and Historical Society of Cheshire County storyteller Becky Barton for a leisurely 1-hour stroll along the shaded sidewalks of South Main Street. Explore the true stories of people who contributed to the prosperity of the families they worked for in Keene. Who were the domestic servants? How long did they work? Which families benefited from their labors?

**Scheduled Public Tours:** Saturday, June 17, 10:00 am, Friday, July 14, 1:00 pm, and Thursday, August 17, 1:00 pm

**Smallpox, the Colonial Pandemic Guided Tours:** Learn about the effect that smallpox had on Keene residents in the 18th century with historian and storyteller Becky Barton. Visitors will take a guided tour of the Wyman Tavern Museum on South Main street and discover what steps were taken to keep the community safe, prior to knowledge about germ theory and transmission. This is a one-hour guided tour in a historic house museum.

**Scheduled Public Tours:** Thursday, June 29, 1:00 pm, Saturday, July 21, 1:00 pm and Saturday, August 12, 10:00 am

**Bad Ass Women of Keene Walking Tours:** In 1920, many women around the country won the right to vote with the passage of the 19th amendment. *The Badass Women of Keene* walking tour delves into the history of that occasion from a local perspective. This history-on-the-streets experience highlights empowered women from the community and shares one city’s involvement with a national movement. The Badass Women of Keene walking tour provides visitors with an opportunity to link local history to national events, and to think critically about the history of women’s suffrage in all of its complexity.

No public tours are scheduled at this time. Call or email to arrange a private tour.

**Railroad History Walking Tours:** How did the coming of the railroad impact New England communities like Keene, NH? Walk the Cheshire Rail trail through downtown Keene with Historical Society of Cheshire County executive director Alan Rumrill. Learn about the arrival of Keene’s first train in 1848. Visit the sites where many industrial firms found success along the tracks in the downtown area.

No public tours are scheduled at this time. Call or email to arrange a private tour.

The cost for each tour is $10/person. Private group tours can be arranged by calling 603-352-1895 or emailing Jenna Carroll at jcarroll@hsccnh.org. For more information or to register for a scheduled tour, visit our website: www.hsccnh.org.
In 2006, old film reels were discovered in a barn in Nelson, New Hampshire. Some believe that the films were once played at the former boys camp, Granite Lake Camp, in the 1910s. Watch segments of these restored short films with a follow-up discussion by film historian Larry Benaquist.

In the 70 years from 1906 to the mid-1970s, at least 19 youth summer camps operated in the towns of Nelson and Stoddard. Alan Rumrill will share a PowerPoint presentation on the history of those camps and discuss how they fit into the development of the summer camp movement in the United States that sought to improve the health and well-being of children by introducing them to outdoor activities.
What’s Happening at the Historical Society?

June through August 2023

Saturday, June 17, 10:00 am, Friday, July 14, 1:00 pm, and Thursday, August 17, 1:00 pm, Domestic Servants Walking Tours (see page 6)

Wednesday, June 28, Exhibit Hall, 8:00 pm
Found Films from the 1910s (see page 7)

Thursday, June 29, 1:00 pm, Saturday, July 21, 1:00 pm and Saturday, August 12, 10:00 am, at the Wyman Tavern, Smallpox, the Colonial Pandemic Guided Tours (see page 6)

Saturday, July 1 and August 5, 10:00 am, Wall Dogs Walking Tours (see page 6)

Wednesday, July 12, Exhibit Hall, 6:30 pm, “A Dakota Summer Story: Camping at Oahe with the Eastman Family” with Professor Kiara Vigil (see pages 1-2)

Thursday, August 3: Historical Society Main Building, Teacher Open House

Saturday, August 5, 1:00 to 5:00 pm, Wyman Tavern Yard, Wyman Tavern Brew Fest (see page 4)

Wed., August 9, 6:30 pm, Exhibit Hall, “Summer Camps of Nelson and Stoddard” with Alan Rumrill (see page 7)

August Date and Time TBD, Wyman Tavern Yard, Ghost Stories with Greg Pratt