

MORETOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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THIS ISSUE- SUMMER IN MORETOWN

Summer in Moretown



What did folks do for fun in the summer in Moretown? Then, as now, families probably tried to fit in as much fun outdoor activities as they could in the time from the dismissal of school in June to the reopening in September. These sunny days and good times would have to sustain them through the long cold days of winter until summer rolled around again.

So, what did you do for fun if you lived in Moretown? Of course, swimming was always a favorite summer activity and with the Mad River running through Moretown village, there was easy access to several swimming holes along its course. One of the favorite spots was on Pony Farm Road. Known as the “Big Rock”, you could find many Moretown families there in the evenings taking an after supper dip or on the week-ends. It was not unusual to see the cars of young people with swim trunks hanging from the outside mirrors all summer long, ready for the impulsive trip to the swimming hole.

As the river changed course and the next generations came along this was still a popular swimming spot, but it was now known as Bis-May and while the younger kids played in the shallow area near the gravel bar, the older kids were allowed to go up stream where there were deeper pools and rocks. Now

Bis-may is not a widely used spot but you can find swimmers at the old creamery site, at the lower mill site and, with car travel, at the Ward Swimming Hole down stream just above the present hydro dam # 8.

Another summer activity involving the river was fishing. Young and old alike enjoyed casting a line into the Mad River to try their luck at catching the “big one”. When the dam was in to provided power for the lumber mills, it created quite a large mill pond behind the Town Hall, the Goss residence and the present Post Office. The pond was large and deep enough to launch a small rowboat for fishing.

For several years the kids from the Common School ended their school year with a trip to Mallets Bay. Kids, parents, grandparents and teachers would make the trip where all would enjoy a pot luck picnic, swimming and sand castles at the beach and then an afternoon of skating at the roller rink. Top it all off with ice cream cones before packing up for the trip home.

Who could resist a lazy Sunday afternoon concert by the Moretown Military Band at the band stand located beside what is now Frank Piazza’ apartment house. A picnic lunch, a blanket and a band could make for an enjoyable afternoon.

How many know that Moretown had it’s own men’s baseball team? Moretown, as well as several of the valley towns, Montpelier and Barre had men’s teams who would play each other for the championship. Some of the Moretown players in the period around 1914 to 1920 were Kio Granai, Kenneth Ward, Milford Grandfield, --Wheaton, --Shontell, --Atkins. They played every Saturday afternoon, but never on Sundays. According to Mr. Granai, the Moretown team was good!!

Moretown also had a woman’s softball team in the 1970-80’s. They started out as a group of ladies who would get together on Sunday afternoons to play a pick-up game of ball. They were asked to join the valley league and play against other valley towns. They were in it for the fun and winning or losing was not of great concern to them. They were known as the Moretown Misfits.

Kids made their own fun, riding bikes, playing games, catching fireflies, camping out, all the fun things that kids like to do. Go back in your mind and think of the things that you did as a kid to have fun in the summer.

It was not all fun and games though, there were still chores to be done, haying to do, gardens to tend, lawns to mow, canning to be done and a host of other everyday jobs that did not stand still for summer.



We would love to hear from you about summer memories that you have. Let us know and we will consider publishing them in a future newsletter.

Enjoy your summer and relive some of your childhood memories or make some new ones!

This is an old time thirst quenching drink that was popular during haying season.

Swichel

2 quarts water

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar

4 tablespoons vinegar

1 teaspoon ground ginger

Mix all together in a pitcher or jar, chill. Then take to the hay field. Molasses, maple syrup or honey may be substituted for some or all of the sugar



Moretown Historical Society
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We have gifts for sale!

Did you know there was a “MORETOWN” coffee mug? (\$20.00)

Or a MORETOWN T- shirt? (\$20.00 each or 2 for \$35.00)

How about “Drawing Logs from Dowsville” a book by Mary Gow and Kitty Werner which includes the history of the Ward Lumber Co. and lots of great pictures and other local history? (\$30.00 or \$15.00)

There is also a pamphlet of POETRY written by Moretown folks and compiled by Earline Marsh. (\$8.00) Also by Earline Marsh a book on the history of the Taplin School and more (\$18.00)

We also have two little booklets one written by Lydia Billings (1963) and one by Mary Reagan, (1982) which outline the history of MORETOWN (\$3.00 for one or both for \$5.00)

Please contact Mary at the Moretown Historical Society for ordering or more information. 496-2901 or MMurphy917@aol.com

Are you doing some local research? Give us a call or drop a line, perhaps we can help!

How About Those New “Welcome to Moretown Village” Signs!

Thanks to all who supported us in this effort!

WATCH FOR OUR RETURNING BINGO NIGHT COMING THIS FALL!