

MORETOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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THIS ISSUE- MORETOWN TOWN HALL

If These Walls Could Talk



The Meeting House in Moretown Hollow

In 1832 the legal voters decided to move their meetings from the Common to the Hollow.

In 1835 the new Meeting House was built.

150 years later repairs became a community effort and celebration.

There was a parade, street dances, barbecue, entertainment and a Christmas tree!

If these walls could talk, we might hear some of these memories-

I remember there was a large wood cook stove in the kitchen, boy did it get hot. Burton Ward used to sponsor the sugar on snow party which was always well attended, Mildred White and Melba Ferris did the cooking of the syrup. I also remember Bernadette had the Town Clerk's office downstairs before the town bought the Blair house and fixed it up. She had it in her home before that. Nice Christmas parties and gatherings over the years, many celebrations, some happy some not. The Methodist Church used it for services

while the church was being redone around 1922. I was once a “fortune teller” for the Foolish Folks Fair, had my Ouija board and told the future (for a penny) **TM**

My first memory of the town hall was attending town meetings with my grandparents (Allen and Gladys Foster) and eating lunch in the basement—baked beans and brown bread. No memory of what was being discussed upstairs though. I was too young to care. In 1965 my grandparents’ 50th wedding anniversary was at the town hall with many family and friends in attendance. I love looking at the pictures of folks that have long been gone.

Dances during my teens. Don Tucker and the Nighthawks. There was a couple (I think their name was Grove) that sang. They had beautiful voices along with their daughter. Also, square dances with Doug Reagan being the “caller”. What fun it was!

We held our (Art’s and mine) wedding reception at the town hall in October 1967. I can barely remember it. The hall was the only place that we thought of using.

There were the talent shows and the Foolish Folk Fairs that drew in lots of people. I can still hear and see Judy Grandfield singing the Auctioneer’s Song in her get-up.

There were the mother/daughter banquets held in May of each year and sponsored by the Moretown Methodist Church’s UMW. We attended many as a family with multiple generations joining in.

Twenty-five years after our wedding reception, my son and his bride (Artie and Dawn) held their wedding ceremony and reception at the hall in October 1992. It was a beautiful fall evening.

We celebrated my mother’s (Irma Farnham) 90th birthday in May 2009 with an open house at the town hall. She was beaming with happiness and joy to see family and friends enjoying themselves.

Of course, one of the most memorable uses of the hall was when it was “Command/Volunteer Center” after the devastation of Tropical Storm Irene in August of 2011. I spent many a day there helping individuals with supplies, answering questions, dispersing information and assisting with the coordination of assigning volunteers to where they were needed. It was a trying time but we all pulled together as a town and in the end, we were survivors not victims.

LFH

The Church (or the Grange) would have dinners there and in the afternoon, the organization ladies would be downstairs preparing food. In the warm weather they would have the window open in the kitchen and leave pies there to cool. Some of the boys from the village would sneak up under the window and take a pie and then leave the empty tin or cut the pie and remove a slice or two and then put the rest back on the windowsill. The

boys would get a good laugh when the ladies came back for the pies and found some missing.

There were numerous dances at the Hall. Square dances, round dances, teen dances, you name it. Gene White and his band would play for the dances and he never got out of the hall without playing “Silver Wings” at least once during the evening.



Can you name these people?

They played at the Moretown Town Hall.

First one to call or email and guess it right

Will win a prize! (Excluding MHS members and donors of our archives!)

E-Mail to MMurphy917@aol.com or

Call 496-2901- leave your name, phone number and answer!

There were New Year's Eve parties. One in particular ran into the wee hours of the morning. After the midnight toasts and snacks and the band stopped playing around 12:30 or so, a group of people were cleaning up, talking and reminiscing. They sort of lost track of time and before they knew it, it was around 3:00 am. Doug Reagan, who owned the Moretown Store at the time, asked if anyone was hungry. He then went to the store, got bacon, eggs, coffee and juice and came back to the hall and cooked breakfast. That was a long night but one that will not be forgotten.

If you have ever noticed the curtains on the stage at the Hall you may wonder why there are there. They were part of a backdrop for plays held at the Town Hall.

The Foolish Folks Fair was an annual event! There would be side shows that might cost a penny to enter, games such as ring toss, bean bag toss, and fish pond with prizes, a Pick-a-Pocket lady with a skirt covered with pockets that kids could reach in and bring out a prize. A fortune teller, candy and fudge table and refreshment booth rounded out the fair.

There would sometimes be a cake walk on the stage during the fair. You might find Judy Grandfield singing “the Auctioneer Song” or Little Brown Jug”. Eunice Ferris may have written a poem, song or skit for the occasion.

DRG

I remember the dances, chasing girls and getting into the beer in good shape. Didn't have to worry about the cops picking you up so much then. That ole bridge saw some action too! We would roar around town then go back and dance, chase and drink some more. I think they were “the good old days”.

ANONYMOUS

I remember going to school on the Town Hall stage with 20 or so other kids. Mrs. Herrick our teacher and her dog were ever present, except at lunch time when we were “on our own”. Recess found us playing by the river (unheard of now!) and swinging from the trees, life was without too many complications.

Also can't forget the 50 years of Christmas Bazaars, held on the 1st Saturday of December, sponsored by the Methodist Women. It has always been a fun community event and a good time to prepare for the Holidays.

MMB

For Sale

Moretown Coffee Mugs (\$20.00)- Moretown T-Shirts (\$20.00)- Moretown History Booklets (\$5.00)- Taplin School Book (\$18.00)- Moretown Poetry Book (\$8.00)
Draw Logs From Dowsville Book (\$15.00-\$30.00)

50/50 Raffle Tickets Available, Drawing April 18th at the Spring Fling and Spaghetti fest.

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

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