



# Chatham Times

## Past and Present

### A Stonewall with a Story

By: Margery “Mardy” Eastman

In the fall of the early 1960s, I was walking with my grandmother (Margery) Layne, my mother (Arline), and my sisters Ellie and Berta. We were up on the Butter Hill Cottage property, looking for wild grapes. We came across an impressive stone wall, higher and wider than normal, like a raised path. I haven't seen it in years, but I remember there being a lot of little rocks in the middle.

I mentioned to my Uncle Herbert (Eastman) that my favorite stonewall is near Butter Hill Cottage. He knew of the wall and who made it. His great-grandfather, Asa Rollins, was hired to build the wall for one dollar a rod. At completion he was paid \$80.00. I do not recall how long the project took. The 80 rods equals 480 yards (1 rod is 5.5 yards.) or nearly five football fields in length. Or put another way, over a quarter mile. The \$80.00 was used to buy a team of oxen. (Visiting my uncles is always a chance to learn some history!)



*Berta, Ellie, and Mardy Eastman with their grandmother, Margery Layne, around 1960*



*Berta, Ellie, and Mardy Eastman walking on the Butter Hill stonewalls, 2023*

Asa Rollins was born in Ossipee or Freedom, NH in 1811. Before moving to Chatham, he had lived in Freedom, Effingham, and Tamworth, NH. His land on Rollins Ridge Road in North Chatham was purchased in 1851 and 1853 from Daniel Emerson (source: David Crouse).

Uncle Herbert added that Mr. Rollins was asked why he purchased such rocky farm land instead of living in Fryeburg. He replied, “Most of the time, *that* land is under water!”

In 1879 he sold the property to Charles K. Bickford. He then lived with his second daughter, Clarinda (Clara) Hastings, in North Fryeburg until he died in 1895.

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## Notes from the President

One of the best parts of my experience is getting to know more past and present residents of Chatham and to hear their stories. I love to learn new things about Chatham! Welcome to our newest members: Stephen and Mary Lilley, and Loren Eastman.

We had a wonderful crowd at the September Town Picnic. Thank you to the many people who helped out in so many ways. Congratulations to the winners of our raffles: Dinner for 4-6 prepared by Tad Furtado – Brenna Schneider; painting by Ann Landers – Karen Deitz; Stow Corner Store gift card – Paul Lusky; apple pie – David Alden; blueberry pie – Eric; Gundt teddy bear – Paul Lusky.

We had been asked to put together a photo exhibit for the Fryeburg Fair. David Crouse printed for us a collection of about 30 groups of school children from Chatham and Stow over the years. Most of the children are identified. The exhibit included some memories of “school days” from alumni of our one-room schoolhouses. The exhibit is now at our museum for all to see. If you have other photos of school children, we’d love to make copies for our exhibit.

A special thank you to Becky Knowles who has formatted and printed our newsletters for the past five years. And thank you to Brenna Schneider for taking over the formatting job. I am planning to write an article this coming year about the building of the Basin Pond and the other flood control dams in Stow. If you could share any details about those events to be included in the article, please let me know. As you have perhaps figured out, I love little details. Have you fished or hiked around the Basin before or after the dam was built? Do you know someone who was involved in the construction? Did you watch it being built? Do you have a photograph?

We are also working on a publication of short historic stories and puzzles relating to Chatham. We are looking for someone to do some sketches to go with the stories. Please let us know if you might be interested.

Be well this winter!

*Jeanne Eastman*

### **Board of Directors**

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### **Contact Us :**

1061 Main Road, Chatham, NH 03813  
chathamnhhistoricalsociety@gmail.com  
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### **Board Meetings**

April – October, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 6:30 PM

### **Open Hours**

Tuesdays 9 – Noon

## The Peddler's Pack

*a bundle of news from the neighbors over the years*

**Barbara Eastman** (from her notes): I remember when I was in grade school and in 4-H Club in Stow, we went caroling each Christmas season. At the Crouse home, Guy would play the fiddle and Mattie always had a treat for us. And I remember going to the Eastman Schoolhouse in the 1960s, which at that time housed the Chatham Community Library, for county extension programs and Christmas oyster stew suppers with the Garden Club and Library members.

**From Early Families of the Cold River Valley, by David Crouse:** William Cox (1730- 1817) a veteran of the American Revolution, left his property on Butter Hill Road to his son Isaac (1765- 1851), who married Susan Walker. Susan was “a woman of energy, endurance, and education. She understood surveying and ran many of the lines in Chatham..” Isaac was a farmer and inn keeper and gave a quarter acre of his land to the Town in 1825 for a cemetery.

**Alice Eastman Harriman**, 1917 diary: Jan 5 It has been cloudy today and tonight it snows. I did some cooking this forenoon and Frank went with the cream to No. Fryeburg this afternoon. I have been at work on my coat. Have not seen but just four persons today. Have been very lonesome. Jan 6 It has been colder today and the wind has blown all day and blows tonight. I have been very busy doing my cleaning up. Have washed floors and swept and done a little cooking. Frank went with the roller this afternoon. I have sewed and he has read. Miss Anne Hutchins and Fred Thurston called here.

**Frank Eastman:** “I paid \$90 of my own money each year, starting the fall of 1950, to ride the bus to Fryeburg Academy. I walked out to the end of the road, by the Chatham Center Cemetery, to get the bus. My senior year, the bus didn’t come down Route 113B. I would have had to walk out to Stow Corner. So I didn’t go my Senior year.”

**Jim Layne**, a 1949 graduate of Kennett High School, was inducted into the Kennett High School Sports Hall of Fame in 2000 for his skiing and football accomplishments. Jim said of skiing off the 171-foot high Nansen ski jump in Berlin, NH, “I was scared to death!” and of alpine skiing, “If I didn’t fall down, I won.”



*Jim Layne, 1949, alpine racing for Kennett High School*



The history of the land on Butter Hill and the Rollins, Eastman, and Layne families is intertwined like a thicket of wild grape vines. When Asa Rollins bought his property, the Harriman families (brothers Charles and James along with their sons Charles, Amos, Lorenzo, and Benjamin F.) lived at the top of Butter Hill. One, or all of them, hired Mr. Rollins to build the stone wall.

The first Rollins daughter married her neighbor, Lorenzo Harriman. The third Rollins daughter, Eliza, married Loren Eastman; they are my great-grandparents. The fourth daughter, Susan Emma, married Russell Brickett. Loren's youngest sister, Alice O. married Frank Harriman (Benjamin's son). Loren and Eliza Eastman's first child, Ashley, was raised by Russell and Emma Brickett.

The Bricketts owned the Butter Hill Camp from 1912 to 1913 and then sold the camp to Frank Packer, keeping the surrounding land which Ashley later owned. (Frank Packer's parents had sent him from Lynn, MA to spend the summers with Emma and Russell Brickett, in Fryeburg ME.) Packer's sister, Inez, became a part - owner with Frank in 1936. In 1944, Inez married my grandfather, Everett Eastman. Frank died in 1947.

In 1949, the camp was sold to four people, one of them being Whit Duprey. Grandpa (Sumner) Layne's youngest sister, Mattie, had been married to Whit Duprey when she died in 1936. At the time of our walk in search of wild grapes in the early 1960s, Uncle Whit was still a part-owner of what we called Whit's Camp.



*Inez (Packer) Applegarth Eastman sitting in front of a stonewall near the Butter Hill Camp*

By this time, it may have been Ashley Eastman's son, Harold, who owned the surrounding land. I recall my mother saying that the area to the west of the upper road had been recently logged by Harold. Uncle Herbert most likely hunted there, and it may have been pasture when he was young. Ashley was Uncle Herbert's uncle.

Jeanne Eastman got permission from the current owner, Lori, for us to view the stonewall again. This past October Jeanne and Steve Eastman, my sisters, and I found the wall and walked along it and on top of it. It is still as I remember. The wall has many branches, spreading like vines in multiple directions, forming paddocks near the house. Each branch is a double wall with smaller stones in the middle. At 2 (or 3) junctions Asa formed triangles that are filled with stones. This may have been to reinforce the wall or to just get rid of more stones. The wall is still intact and in very good condition for its 172 years. It is as I remember, but now I know how sprawling it is. The section we saw over 60 years ago is still solid, high and wide. There are other places on the property that are divided by nice, but regular, stonewalls.

In addition, Jeanne and Steve showed us two cellar holes. The first, below the top of the hill, is a modest rectangle. Its sturdy stones hold two burly white birch which germinated decades ago. They jut out from the walls over the cellar which is deep with leaves and water. The second is on top for the hill and west of the stonewall. This one is larger, and L shaped. The hearth stone is still visible. Its walls of medium stones are precisely placed and over five feet high. Only one of the top layer stones has succumbed to gravity. Jeanne also pointed out the adjacent well, its tiny opening partially hidden by a flat moss covered stone.

## Honoring Our Veterans

### Honoring Barry Kronberg

On January 17, 1961, Chatham resident Barry Kronberg, was just shy of his 20th birthday and not happy in the New York City draftsman office where he was working. So he left, went down the street and volunteered for the military draft. By volunteering, he shortened his duty to two years, instead of the usual three years.

Barry was first trained in intermediate-speed radio, learning Morse Code signals, then trained as a clerk/typist, and then the Army became aware of his experience as a draftsman. From September of 1961 to December 1962, Barry was stationed in Poitiers, France, with the 28th Transportation Battalion, part of the 37th Command, where he used his drafting skills to make charts of the locations and volumes of small arms, ammunition, and fuel. This was at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Algerian Crisis, and the Cold War. Barry's job was logistically important for getting fuel to tanks, trucks, and helicopters, and ammunition to soldiers.



*Barry Kronberg  
reporting for duty, 1961*

He had "need-to-know" clearance, and clearance to go wherever he needed to go. When traveling in vehicles, he rode shotgun and was ordered to shoot if anyone should stop the vehicle. At this time Algerians were hi-jacking trucks. In one example, Barry was in a tractor trailer hauling 20 tons of hand grenades, and they were told not to stop for anything. They came to a railroad crossing that had a barrier up. To avoid the barrier Barry told the driver to go around it, running over the unoccupied stone house of the railroad operator. Fortunately, during his service, Barry did not have to shoot anybody.

Barry was an excellent marksman. Because of his understanding of trajectory, his perfect eye sight, and calm, he was offered a spot on the Army Rifle Team when he had 5 or 6 months of duty remaining. If he had accepted this offer, he would have had to re-enlist, perhaps going to Vietnam. The Officer in Charge advised, "Don't do it." Barry was discharged from duty December 20, 1962. He is proud to have been able to serve our country. Thank you, Barry, for your service.

### Honoring George Andrews

George had finished two years of schooling at SMVTI and had been married four months when he got a letter from the Draft Board to report for a physical. In November 1969, at 20 years old, he went to Manchester, NH for the physical and was immediately sent to duty in the U.S. Army, to the surprise of everyone including his wife who was waiting for him at the bus station.

George went to Fort Dixon, NJ and then Fort Gordon, Georgia where he was trained in radio. On July 12, 1970, he was sent to Vietnam. He spent three weeks at Long Thanh doing in-country weapons training, tactical training, patrols and perimeter guard. During this time, he was exposed to Agent Orange. From there he went to Long Xuyen in the Mekong Delta and served in the 52nd Signal Battalion, Co. B as a forward radio operator at a remote radio relay station.

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George was promoted to Sergeant E5, with fifteen radio men under him. He once volunteered to lead a team of four other men in a rescue of nine men broken down in unsecure territory at night. Everyone returned safe.

In 1971, President Nixon ordered that field people could be sent home after eleven months. Because of George's accomplishment in the rescue, he was the first one sent home, one month early. He was discharged from active duty June 12, 1971. George said that he gained more from his military experience than was lost. He knows he was one of the fortunate ones to have made it home.

Thank you, George, for your service!



## It's Christmas Time!

*Christmas time for Frank and Dora (Brickett) Hill with their granddaughter, Donna Hill*



Pictured above, Frank Hill (1866-1946) was a grandson of Jonah Hill who, in 1810, started the carding mill in South Chatham. The grandparents of Dora Brickett (1874-1948) had settled around 1810 at the base of Evan's Notch in Stow. Their son, Clifford, married Mary Eastman who had grown up in Chatham, a daughter of Chester Eastman. In addition to being an undertaker, Frank was co-owner with Chester of Fryeburg Monumental Works. Donna Hill is the daughter of Clifford and Mary.

## Upcoming Events

### December 17th:

6 PM Potluck supper in conjunction with 7 PM Carols and Candles at the Chatham Church

### January or February 2024 TBA

Potluck supper and bonfire

### March Maple Weekend TBA

Chili and baked goods fundraiser

### April TBA

History hike

### May 16, 6 PM

Historic Quilts, with Pam Weeks of the New England Quilt Museum.

Pam will be speaking on the history of fabrics and quilting through the ages. She encourages you to bring any old quilts or family quilts, and she will answer questions about any quilts.

Bring a friend!

## In Memory

Our deep sympathy to the families of these loved ones:

**Clyde Wiggin**, 91; passed away August 23. Clyde grew up in Chatham. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He worked at Riverside Farm for 13 years, at Kearsarge Metallurgical Corp., and as a carpenter for Littlefield Builders. He served as a master at the Eagle Grange in Chatham. He was also a member of the Fryeburg Lovell JC's, Fryeburg Fish and Game Club, the Alumni Association Board of Fryeburg Academy, the Cemetery Committee of Fryeburg, the Interstate Sno-goers Snowmobile Club, and a past member of the Chatham Historical Society.

**Robert Crowley**, 86; passed away October 21. Bob was a veteran of the U.S. Navy. He worked as a lineman for Mass Electric for 35 years. He was a Life Member of the Chatham Historical Society. Birding was Bob's passion; he was an organizer for the local Christmas Bird Count; over his lifetime, he had sighting of over 700 different bird species; he was tied for third highest lifetime sightings in Carroll County, NH, and was Number One for bird sightings in Oxford County, ME. Bob has hiked the forty-eight 4,000-foot mountains in NH. He loved genealogy, history, gardening, and photography.

**Ben Eklof**, 77; passed away October 24. Ben has had a summer home in Stow for nearly 40 years. He was a member of the Chatham Historical Society. He was a professor of Russian history at Indiana University, Bloomington until he retired in 2020. Ben was a devout runner, cyclist, and hiker. One of his favorite things to do was to take his daughters on long hikes through the White Mountains.

## Donations

**Allen Wilfong** – a transcription of 1880 surveyor's record of layout of new road, north end of Butter Hill.

**Sue Crowley** – a collection of old Chatham postcards, deeds and obituaries.

**Sandra Layne Greenleaf** – photos to scan.

**Monetary donations:** Judy Bailey, Dan Markey, Dick Anderson, Suzanne Layne, Sandra Layne Greenleaf, Scott Aiman (in memory of Bob Crowley), Anonymous, John Ham.

Thank you so much for your generous support!

Chatham Historical Society  
1061 Main Road  
Chatham, NH 03813

### Dues and Donations

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