

## CHESTER 300TH ANNIVERSARY MEETING

Minutes August 8, 2016

Jean Methot called the meeting together at 7:00 PM at Stevens Memorial Hall.

The group has no Chairman as of yet -- looking for a volunteer to step forward.

There were no changes to the Minutes from the Jun 27, 2016 meeting; those in attendance approved (Tim Bortz, Ed Karjala, Jean and Diane Methot, Chris Hadik)

Jean talked about having attended Deerfield's 250th celebration that was held July 15-17, 2016. He described it as being somewhat like the usual yearly Deerfield Fair. They also had an antique car show and their parade was held right on the fairgrounds so that it didn't interrupt traffic on the local roads. Jean talked with members of different regiments who were there, including men representing the French and Indian War. He said their presentation was very informative. He also said the people involved with the encampment were very informative about how life would have been during that time. Jean has picked up a lot of cards and brochures of various groups to have for future information and possible contacts.

Jean shared information about his and Diane's trip to Dover (established 1623!) to the Woodman Museum. We could probably get a group rate if we could get some interested people who would like to go there. Dover had a special celebration in 1998 (it would have been their 375th anniversary!) which was held over the course of a few days with many different events during that period.

On July 16th the Methots went to Exeter's American Independence Festival. Jean didn't feel it was as "extensive" as in previous years.

Using Wason Pond area was discussed as a place possibly to have a re-enactment and encampment for Chester's anniversary -- a great place to spread out for activities and for the "soldiers" to hide in the trees.

COMMITTEES: Much discussion followed about the various committees and which ones could actually be combined, thus cutting down on the number of volunteers needed to run these committees. The time frame for the year-long celebration could begin in the fall of 2021 (October 1st) - with the kick-off of the annual Scarecrow display around town. The fair would wind up in September 2022 with a two day fair (taking the place of the usual Chester Town Fair which is

only one day). The fire dept. would be in charge of the fireworks finale for the celebration.

Ed Karjala and Tim Bortz led discussion about having a 2 day finale, possibly with rides, etc. for children. The idea of having a "passport" for the year-long event was also discussed -- people would get a "stamp" on their "passport" at each event they attended over the course of the celebration and then receive a prize (possibly a T-shirt, special coin, etc.) depending on how many "stamps" they collected. It might be a good project to get the Chester PTA involved with. Having a treasure hunt in the cemetery was another idea, and could tie in with the geo-cache also proposed.

Ed and Tim said they would be talking to Police and Fire about planning events around town and making sure there is sufficient coverage for the celebration events.

Tim mentioned that larger outside businesses might be willing to lend help financial support for the celebration. Various people in town work for some of these larger businesses (such as BAE, Raytheon, etc.). We should start asking in advance (maybe five years out) so we know what we have to work with. Hopefully smaller local businesses will want to be involved also, as well as Granite State Telephone who is always so supportive of Chester.

Chris Hadik suggested making up a special 300th calendar to sell as a fundraiser with old photos and events of the celebration listed throughout the calendar (possibly an 18 month calendar). We could check with Ed Stewart about printing it? Need to do at least one year out from the celebration. At the next meeting, we should make up a rough "draft" of a proposed calendar and start filling things in, deciding what photos we'd like to have in it, etc.

Jean will meet with Greg from the Fire Dept. to give him a heads-up about our plans and figure out what needs to be done ahead of time, especially if any permits are needed for anything.

The Wason Pond Pounder is generally held in May. We need to speak with that group and see if we can incorporate their event into the 300th celebration, if they are still holding it in 2022. Perhaps they would be willing to contribute some of their proceeds and be willing to advertise for us.

Chris thought it might be a good idea to have a Scarecrow Contest -- with prize for various categories -- Most Original, Most Historic, Best Business, Best Kids'

representation, etc.?? Have to come up with the best way to have people "vote" for their favorites without having any problems about fairness.

Tim said he would like to see a "Homecoming Ball" or "Harvest Ball" - maybe in October of 2021. It would be a good way to start off the year of celebration. Possibly have it costume???

Discussion followed about having a play. The play would involve both children and adults. Possibly have it in spring (May) of 2022 to avoid the February and April school vacations. Jean will get a copy of it to Ed to read over. It also needs to be "reprinted". Ed offered his services for any computer/publishing/website work that needs to be done.

One project we need to work on ASAP is a logo design for the 300th celebration something that could be used for "buttons" to sell for admission, booklets, t-shirts, banners, etc. And we should get it copyrighted at the same time. It was suggested having this open to the public for a design idea get the word out and give people six months to turn in their design. Many artistic people in Chester.

It was decided that we would like to have banners and commemorative flags out along the roads leading into the center of Chester for the 300th. Need to check about permission and regulations to do this. Should have them up by October 2021; maybe take flags down for winter time and put back up in spring from May to Oct. 2022; keep banner up throughout the year.

Tim mentioned that Andrew Hadik knows someone involved with American Elm Trees and could be a contact if we decide we would like to sell them to commemorate the 300th. We also discussed selling American Chestnut Trees (though messy) -- could be planted somewhere other than along the main roads.

Jean has spoken with the Rockingham Herb Society about the Historical Society wanting to possibly selling daffodil bulbs and planting them along the main roads in commemoration also. The Herb Society said they would bring it up to their membership at next year's meeting.

Mention was made of having a road race, etc. from Nottingham to Chester to commemorate the original march made all the way from Nottingham, NH to Lexington, MA by men leaving their homes to fight in the Revolution.

We would like to have a muster or tug o' war group that would travel around to each of the five neighboring towns during their town celebrations it would be a great way to get people to visit each other's town celebrations.

Some of the groups suggested to join in planning for the 300th: Chester PTA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Agricultural Commission, and any other interested groups.

Ed Karjala mentioned that his son, Ben, is hoping to start up his own brewing company it might be an idea to have our own Chester home-brewed "beer" with local hops even! Ben discovered that about 200 years ago, a man named Israel Senter who had a farm in Chester, grew hops for beer brewing. There may even be some of the original hops still around!

Our next meeting will be held on Sep 12, 2015 in Stevens Memorial Hall at 7:00pm. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Pepper, Secretary