

Middlebury Community House News

Main Street . Middlebury, Vermont 05753

Spring 2006



Early sketch of the house Horatio Seymour built in 1816

Mission Statement:

Partners for Middlebury Community House was formed to promote financial support to assist with responsible caretaking and maintenance of the historic home belonging to the citizens of Middlebury.

Reservations:

The house can be reserved for your meeting, reception, or other occasion by calling Pat at 388-2071 to discuss availability.

The House - Yesterday & Today



In offering a little history, we would like you to meet Mildred Baker. Mrs. Baker was house director for thirteen years, beginning in 1983. Three afternoons a week she was assisted by Noreen Halpin, who acted as hostess.

Mildred told me the house was busy with weddings and meetings while she was the director. Ilsley Library went through an expansion, and during construction, the Community House picked up many meetings that would have been held at the Library. Mildred lived at the house during her tenure and enjoyed being downtown where she could view parades and other events from her front yard. I asked Mildred if she could share some stories with me about when she was working at the house. One day to her surprise, the Town of Middlebury's work crew showed up out front and started removing the slate walkway. Mildred was quite alarmed since she knew nothing of the removal and didn't think the Board had been notified of the change. She went outside and stood in the dirt where the first slate had been removed. She insisted the crew go in the house and call

Tom Langevin, the president of the Board of Directors. Mildred refused to move until Tom had discuss the change with the town. It was decided to keep the slate walkway because of the historical value. That is why, she said, one large piece of slate is broken. When the crew tried to put it back in place, the weight was too much to control and the piece cracked. I questioned Mildred regarding stories she could tell us about Jessica Swift. She reiterated what we already know about Jessica; that she was a wonderful gentle lady who loved children, was considerate of the people working around her and valued friendships. Mildred had a relationship with Mrs. Swift before she went to work for the Community House. She would help out in the kitchen at Mrs. Swift's home on Thanksgiving for family events and social functions. Mrs. Swift was always generous, respectful and very human. Mildred tells me that more than once Mrs. Swift entered the kitchen and asked Mildred to finish zipping her dress. We, ladies, can all relate to that situation.

Thank you Mildred for sharing your time with us. *submitted by: Lynda Rheame*

Call to Action

Progress continues on repair projects at the Community House. The Board of Directors need to be very mindful in their spending this year, since our needs seem to always outstrip our resources. We are looking at a window replacement/repair project. Bids, cost comparisons and creative ways to divide the job into multi year tasks are all being considered. In the past we challenged Partners for the Middlebury Community House to help repair our fence. Many community members stepped up to the challenge, and we truly appreciate your interest and participation. The fence repair has been completed and we are enjoying the polished look.

Are you up to the challenge again this year? Please join or rejoin the Partners and help us fund window repair. The benefits to the house will be very clear to see!

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**Visit our website:** [www,middleburycommunityhouse.org](http://www.middleburycommunityhouse.org)

## Join the Partners

I/We wish to become a Partner for the Middlebury Community House and help repair the windows.

- Annual Membership \$15       Renewal \$15
- Additional Contribution is enclosed

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks Payable to: Middlebury Community House Partners  
Mail to: 6 Main Street Middlebury, VT 05753

**Contributions will go directly towards window repair.** Partners will receive two newsletters each year with information about the House and updates regarding maintenance projects. A 501 C-3 Organization, your donation is deductible in accordance with the law.

# A Look at Who Uses The Community House



*Phoenix Group enjoying the Community House and company of others. New members welcome anytime, call Hospice Volunteer Services at 388-4111 for information.*



The Phoenix Group meets once a month for a pot luck social. The group was founded in the 1980's by Catherine Studley, the then director, of Hospice Volunteer Services. Phoenix means rising from the ashes. The program was designed to give widows and widowers the opportunity to meet others who were experiencing the loss of a loved one. People come from throughout the county. Some are recently widowed while others have been alone for quite

some time. The group is purely social and new friendships blossom. One such friendship resulted in a marriage. I have been fortunate to have visited twice. The food and fellowship is wonderful. When I asked what the group likes about meeting at the Community House, I was told they feel pampered while they are here.

*The Board of Directors is pleased that such lovely guests use the Community House and find a bit of comfort each month. The Community House will again offer summer hours. Call Pat to schedule your event.*

## The Middlebury Community House Salutes Laura, A Loyal Volunteer.

Laura Begnoche has been volunteering for special events at the Middlebury Community House for over ten years. She is very at home in the kitchen and helps our events run smoothly. *Would you like to join her in assisting Pat Hornbeck with events at the Community House?* It is a great way to enjoy the house and meet members of the community. Various volunteer responsibilities might be greeting people at the door, walking through the house at the event to make sure everyone is safely enjoying the space, and helping with food presentation. Events such as children's tea parties, Santa visits, receptions and weddings are occasions for volunteer assistance.

Perhaps the outdoors is where you would like to spend your volunteer time? We are looking for someone to give our garden some TLC. Please call Pat at 388-2071 to learn more about how you can help.



## The Board of Trustees

Fletcher Brush, President

*Member at Large*

G. Kenneth Perine, Finance

*President National Bank of Middlebury*

Anne Ginevan, Clerk

*Rep. Swift/Stewart Family*

Raymond Churchill, Bldg./Gds.

*Member at Large*

Linda Busier

*President Woman's Club*

Jessica Liebowitz

*Rep. President Middlebury College*

Phyllis Cunningham

*Regent, DAR*

Richard Emilo

*Member at Large*

Kevin Newton

*Member at Large*

Lynda Rheauame, P.R.

*Member at Large*

## Staff:

Patricia Hornbeck

*House Director*

Mari Quesnel

*Treasurer*

Elizabeth Quesnel

*Housekeeper*

Norm Grenier

*Maintenance*

## Generous Community

The Trustees of the Community House are grateful to the individuals and organizations who are giving back to Middlebury by supporting this historic house and the programs we offer. We extend our formal thanks to Ray and Teresea Churchill who have donated fresh, local Christmas trees to the house each year to decorate for our holiday celebrations. The Churchills built and maintain the Community Events Bulletin Board that is between the House and the Post Office on Main Street. Ray is a valuable member of the Board of Directors who is on call whenever any building or grounds services are needed.

This newsletter was published as an introduction to the newly established Partners for the Middlebury Community House. Please consider becoming a supporting partner. Your interest in the Community House can ensure a solid foundation for generations to come. If you want more information please call 802-388-2071. We appreciate your time and any donation you feel able to give.

A 501-C 3 Corporation, contributions are tax deductible according to the law.