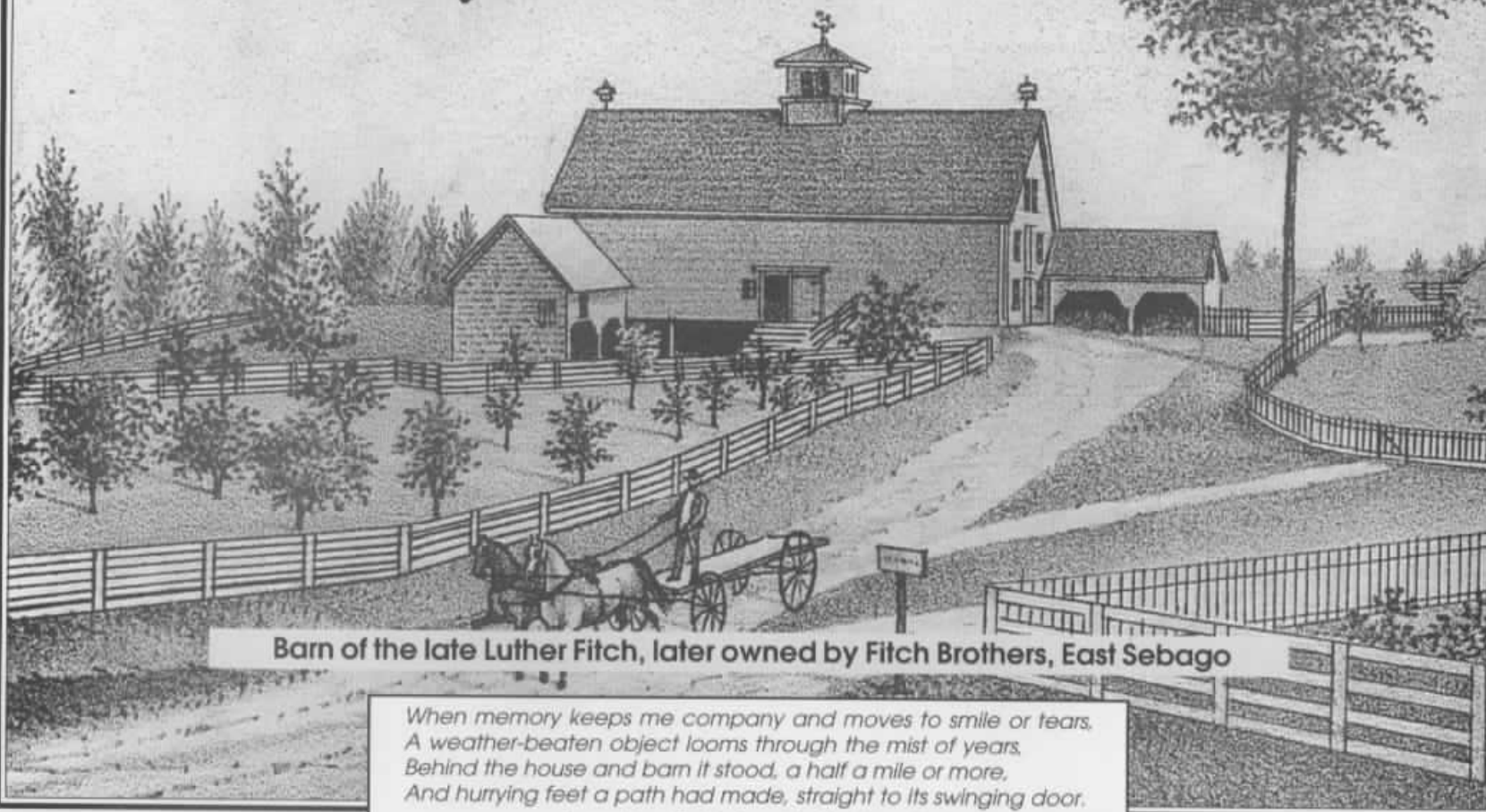


Sebago Historical Society Presents



Barns and Outhouses

You may have known & loved



Barn of the late Luther Fitch, later owned by Fitch Brothers, East Sebago

*When memory keeps me company and moves to smile or tears,
A weather-beaten object looms through the mist of years,
Behind the house and barn it stood, a half a mile or more,
And hurrying feet a path had made, straight to its swinging door.*

Excerpt from "The Passing of the Backhouse" by James Wilcomb Riley

The outhouse has been called many names. It was the one-holer, two-holer, etc. privy, backhouse, and throne. Most rural families used corncobs, newspaper or pages from old catalogues as toilet paper. Toilet paper as we know it was considered a luxury. Lime was used to control the "fragrance" of the outhouse.



The barn at left was built in the Convene section of Sebago and is known as the Weed Homestead. Current owners are Shriver-Christian.

The barn to the right was owned by Clara Dyke and is on the Dyke Mt. Road. It was built in the 1800's and was originally owned by her uncle, Kimball J. Dike. The property now belongs to the Timothy's.



Excerpt from
"House Behind the House"

*Off times in dead of winter,
The seat was covered with snow.
'Twas then with much reluctance
To the little house you'd go.
With a swish you'd clear the seat,
Bend low, with dreadful fear
You'd blink your eyes and grit your teeth
As you settled on your rear.*

Submitted by Billie Kirk



The barn to the left was known as the Old Jackson Place. It was one of the oldest farms in town.



The William Fitch barn (below), built in 1860, is located in Mud City on the Bridgton Road. It is presently owned by the Wilson's.



The barn above was known as the Martin barn off Long Hill Road. It was built in the 1930's.



A Folly Road outhouse.

The Outhouse

(excerpt from John Hill)

*When I was young,
away back when
We had things that you
don't know about . . . then,*

*An outhouse was something
you couldn't do without,
Each home had one
near about.*

*This was a little wooden house
down a path . . .
out back.
The door was kept closed
by a latch,
held with a tack.*

*When Grandpa had to "go out back"
and make his morning call,
We'd bundle up the dear old man
with a muffler and a shawl.
I know the hole on which he sat -
'twas padded all round,
And once I tried to sit there - '
'twas all too wide I found,
My loins were all too little,
and I jack-knifed there to stay,
They had to come and get me out,
or I'd have passed away,
My father said ambition
was a thing that boys should shun,
And I just used the children's hole
'til childhood days were done.*

Those Were the Good Old Days

*You have to go awful bad and be mighty bold,
When the snow piles up and the wind blows cold,
One thing about it - there's no lost motion,
You don't go out till you get the notion,
You don't sit and read or linger long,
You do the job and then move right along.*





On the Kimball Corner Road, in what was known as the Ward's section of town, stands the McKenney barn. The Balchunas family presently owns it.



The Gregory barn at the foot of Jim's Shaw Hill was built in 1912. It is still owned by a member of the Gregory family.



This picture was taken in 1934 of the Clarence Ward barn on the Kimball's Corner Road. It is no longer standing.



The Sanborn barn on the River Road is currently owned by Gaye Burnell.

More Verse by "Backhouse Bob"

Privacy - Who Needs It?

*We weren't much for frilly flairs
And didn't put on any fancy airs.
We went without a lot of things
And didn't exactly live like kings.*

*We didn't have electric light
But got along fine, day and night.
Times were tough on the old
home place
And to "go without" was no disgrace.*

*But there were things, without
a doubt,
That folks just shouldn't be without.
Rugs weren't essential for the floor -
But everyone needed a privy door!*

2007 APRIL 2007



The Wilbur McKenney barn was on the McKenney Hill Road in North Sebago.

The Barnes' barns, to the right, were originally owned by Frank and Nellie Haley. They are situated off the Robinson Hill Road.



The John Tron barn below was located on Peaked Mountain off the Folly Road. It burned in 1968.



Backhouses were incorporated into barns. In the days when many people couldn't read, a little crescent moon on the door or side of the outhouse meant it was for the ladies. The men's privy sported a full moon.



The barn to the left was the Andrew Douglass barn built in 1915. It burned in 1948.



The barns above, located on the Sandy Beach Road - now known as the Folly Road, belonged to Cassius Marcellus Clay Norton Bickford White. They were built across from Perley Pond.

Outhouses Were Sometimes Stand-Alone Buildings



The Brown's barn to the right is located on the Robinson Hill Road. It was known as the Owen and Eva Hanson place.





This is the Fred Robinson barn on the Robinson Hill Road. It was probably built in the late 1800's. Note the outhouse connected to the house and the barn. A great grandson, Frank McClare, is the current owner.



This barn, still standing on Peaked Mountain Road, was built in 1846 by E.J. Wight. The Allen's are the present owners.



Uncle Hant (Joseph H.) and Aunt Carrie Bachelder were the original owners of this barn. It is currently owned by building contractor, William Nason.

The outhouse that served the Nazarene Church (the current Historical Society building) was not held sacred by two teenagers, Joyce and Marie, in the 1940's. They painted red sayings on the outside, then painted the edge to the hole inside and replaced the cover which dried in place and couldn't be removed.



The former McKenney barn located in North Sebago is now owned by Betty Sawyer. It was built circa 1856.

When city relatives came to visit they brought their own toilet paper. They didn't appreciate having to soften by scrunching; newspapers, catalogues, and other assorted papers.

Some outhouses had a hanging chicken switch to dispose of flies and other creatures.

Douglas Mountain Outhouse



This barn on the Hancock Pond Road was struck by lightning and burned in the late 1970's. Originally built in 1840 by E.L. Newcomb, it was later rebuilt by Henry Ross.



2007 AUGUST 2007



The barn to the left, owned by Joanne Chessey, is on the Hancock Pond Road, and is connected to the historical Babb House which was built in 1817. The outhouse is located in the barn. Note the step and the little hole. A calendar and a catalogue were considered necessities in most outhouses. The calendar shown is at least 50 years old.



The barn at the right was owned by Guy Lewis. Photos above show the inside construction and date, 1893, when it was erected. It is now owned by his daughter, Dena Lord.



The barns below belonging to C.A. Newcomb were built in the early 1800's. They were erected on the Hancock Pond Road. Several hangings occurred on this road in the 19th and 20th centuries.



This outhouse was erected in the early 1900's. It was a very modern facility with plastered walls, an inlaid linoleum, and an electric light hanging from the ceiling. It was built onto the backhouse section of the homestead.

2007 SEPTEMBER 2007



These are outside and inside pictures of the New Limington School District No. 2 outhouses in the schoolhouse on the Convene Road. The three-holer, with a stool for the little ones, is exclusive for the girls. The boys had just a two-holer. Outhouses are still useful as covers to drilled wells.



This barn was built by Peter and Almon Young, in the mid 1800's. It changed ownership many times and was eventually known as the Ben Douglas property. It currently belongs to the Curran's.



The old Larrabee barn, still standing on the Kimball Corner Road, was owned by several generations of Larrabees. The date built is unknown. The Stewlow family is the present owner.



Miniature outhouses are still useful as covers to drilled wells.



This is the William Haley barn in Convene built in the early 1800's. In the mid 1900's it became Usher's General Store. Later it was known as MacDonald's Hobby Farm. Currently it is part of a private residence.

2007 OCTOBER 2007



This is a remodeled barn that was built in the early 1800's. It is on the Robinson Hill Road and was originally owned by Henry Lombard. It is presently owned by the Audette family.



The Jeremiah Decker barn on Decker Mountain, Sebago was built in the early 1800's. It had a five-holer privy in the woodshed next to the barn.



In North Sebago, the Nason Homestead barn is one of the oldest in the village. Ann Farley, a Nason descendant, now lives on the property.



The average outhouse was 3 to 4 feet square by 7 feet high. It had no window, no heat, no electric light. Many outhouses were built between 50 and 150 feet from the main house, often facing away from the house. Since the odor of the outhouse was so unpleasant, many people left the door open - facing the woods - while they were using it.



USED UNTIL ABUSED

Most outhouses were one-holers. Large families often had two or three-holers. There was one known hotel in the West that had an outhouse with 12 seats!

2007 NOVEMBER 2007

Staples of an outhouse were a calendar, a bucket of lime, a Sears and Roebuck catalogue, and corn cobs.



The White Brother's farm(below)on Hillside is currently owned by the Axtman's.



This is the Oliver Pike barn, built in the Convene section of Sebago, in the mid-1800's. The barn burned in 1949. The property is currently owned by the Allen family.



The John MacDonald barn at Mac's Corner was built in the mid 1800's. Arthur Dyer purchased the property in 1869 for \$600.00. It is presently owned by the Greene heirs.



2007 DECEMBER 2007



The barn at the right, located off Route 114 in Sebago, was built by Osborn Shaw in 1895. Later Elmer and Dorothy Shaw owned it. Currently, it is owned by the Newcombs - Wendy, and artist; and Grosvenor, a carpenter. The outhouse on the back is a three-holer.



The barn above, located on Route 107, was built in 1901 and owned by Howard and Geneva White. It burned in 1977 and was rebuilt on a smaller scale in 1979. It is currently owned by the Mayberry's.



The barn below was razed during the 1970's. It was originally part of the Abbie Douglas property on Hogfat Hill. Later it was owned by the Robert Brown family.



*Pa said to prop it up real good,
So I fixed it up as best I could.
If we can use it a few years more,
Pa says he'll buy one at the store . . .*

*One of them kind that's real neat,
With running water and a lift-up seat,
He says they build'em now inside,
Ya' don't have to go out and freeze
your hide.*

*They come with paper, rolled on a stick,
He says it's soft and none of it's slick.
It sure is great - this modern age -
But I think we'll miss the catalog page.*





This barn, on the Bridgton Road, was built in the 1830's by Samuel Meserve. It was owned by three generations of the Meserve family until it eventually became known as the Chessey Place. It is presently owned by Crabtree's Old Books and PYO Blueberries.



The Morton and Grover Douglas barn, on the Hogfat Hill Road, is currently owned by the Tinkham's of the Stop and Chop Tree Farm. The outhouse in the connecting shed served the upstairs family. There's also a three-holer for the downstairs family.

Outhouses were set over a hole about 5 feet deep. These sites are now places of historical interest since outhouse holes were popular places to throw trash, and sometimes yield old bottles, pottery shards, etc.

*"Big house, little house, backhouse barn"
was a jingle used by children to jump rope.*



The last person in Sebago to use his horse for work and transportation was Shirley Usher on Hogfat Hill. Dinah, his horse, was housed in this barn.



Pa's Last Privy and Poem

OUTHOUSE BLUES

*So much of my early life
was spent suspended
Above that black and gargoled pit.
Hanging there in the cold
ammonia draft,
Remembering the horror stories
of a cousin
Who disappeared forever,
When he was grabbed from below.*

E.H. Martin



The barn below, located at Mac's Corner, was built in 1837. It was originally the John MacDonald property. It is now part of the Greene property.



Wallace Shaw was the original owner of the barn at the left. The date of construction was in the 1830's. It is currently owned by the Foye's.



This barn on the Robinson Hill Road was first owned by Grace Dyke. It was later known as the Edson Brown Farm. The Bates' horse appears to be happy in this setting.

*And as she sat, a voice below
Struck terror, fright and fear,
"Will you please use the other hole,
We're painting under here!"*

We wish to thank everyone who contributed to this calendar. Some Sebago barns are not pictured if they were featured in previous calendars. Photos of some barns were not available.



Calendar Committee

June Allen, Roberta Douglass, Diana Letellier, George Tinkham and Kathie Whitcomb