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January 3, 2012

Greetings,

The new year is upon us and we are looking forward to another great year for The Abbot-Downing Historical Society. In 2011 we had a big change, a new name. This meant a lot of things had to be updated, but the change seems have been worth the effort. We have been getting a lot of positive responses to our broadened approach to the history of the Abbot-Downing Company.

The January meeting will be held on Sunday, January 8th at 2:00 in the Great Room at Havenwood. There will be a Board Of Directors meeting at 1:00 in the same place. The main topic for discussion will be the bylaws.

Esther Crowley has been working hard at drawing up a complete new set of bylaws, starting from scratch. They more accurately reflect the needs of our organization and should serve us for a long time into the future. One of the major changes has been to remove some items from the bylaws and put them into a set of policies. This allows us to make changes in the manner in which we operate without having to change the bylaws. Bylaw changes must be approved by the New Hampshire Secretary of State's office, an added burden. Policies can be changed with their approval,

We have talked about several projects for the barn museum and hopefully this year we can complete some of them. Of high importance is the lighting for the main exhibit area. Also, creating some individual "rooms" featuring unique displays and a new gift shop setup. These will add to the visitors' experience and allow them to get a better understanding of what went into the manufacture of the coaches and wagons. One area will be devoted to the most famous employee, Maria Putnam, the only woman working there for a thirty year period beginning about 1865. Dottie has crafted a Maria mannequin and we have a photograph of her work area that we can use as the basis for this display.

Two more areas that could show the manufacturing processes will be a blacksmith shop and a carpenter shop. We have several of the machines that were used in these areas and many tools, some of which are very unique to coach and wagon building.

Thank you to all who have helped make 2011 a successful year and we hope you will continue to support the Abbot-Downing Society in the future.



The train with Burgum's painting in the background



Alice dressed in Christmas colors



Dottie and Brian with Dottie's train model



Ginny in braids