



Winter 2015/2016

The Seven Vehicle Purchase

COMING EVENTS

We will be having our belated Holiday party and a wrap up of our 2015 activities on January 24th, 12:00pm to 3:00pm at the Hopkinton Library. Houston Drive in Contoocook



This was an exciting year for the Society. We had an opportunity to purchase seven Abbot and Downing vehicles to add to our collection. These vehicles add to the diversity of our collection, showing that Abbot and Downing manufactured a wide range of vehicle types and not just the Concord Coaches for which they were famous. In the late spring we were given until Labor Day by the owner to raise \$100,000 for six of the vehicles and if we were able to do that, we had until July 2016 to raise another \$75,000 for the Shattuck. We established a fund raising committee that put together a brochure and posters, and other items necessary to attract the public to help us with this effort. With only a few weeks to complete this monumental task, they set to work and with the help of many of our members made great progress. As Labor Day approached, the seller could see that while we almost there, we would need more time to reach our goal of \$100,000, and graciously granted us an extension.

We had two challenge grants. One from St Paul's School for \$5000 when we reached the \$90,000 mark and one from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation when we reached \$95,000. The members worked all summer and fall soliciting donations and doing fund raising activities. By mid December, we had reached the \$90,000 mark and the challenge grants kicked in. The challenge grant payments were made and the purchase was completed.

During the summer, the City of Concord was approached about purchasing the Shattuck and becoming a partner in this venture. This idea was approved by the seller. In September, the City Council voted to spend \$75,000 of its Economic Development Fund to purchase and own the Shattuck if the Society achieved its goal of raising the \$100,000. We did and they did!

The seven vehicles continued:

Because winter was coming and we did not want to be transporting the vehicles in bad weather, it was decided by the seller that they would be delivered even before payment had been made. On November 3, 2015 the first group of six vehicles were delivered. About a week later the Shattuck was brought to Concord. Tom Prescott agreed to allow the city to store it rent free in his museum until they can find a location of their own. The final delivery, the big Lamprey Dray, was on November 24th.

This was the largest undertaking the Society has attempted in many years, maybe even larger than building the barn/museum at the Hopkinton Fair Grounds. It took the work of many dedicated members pulling together to reach our goal and the results will help in creating a world class collection!

Well done everybody!

In addition to the Shattuck shown earlier, here are some delivery photographs of the other six vehicles. You can see the diversity that they represent.



The Roof Seat Break

The Abbot-Downing Company made a large number of pleasure-driving vehicles. One of the more sporting vehicles in their line was the Roof-Seat Break, a vehicle which came into being when the sport of four-in-hand driving became popular on summer estates.

Thoroughbrace Wagon

Used to haul dynamite. Its thoroughbrace suspension gave it a smooth, gentle ride for the dangerous cargo.





Three Spring Express Wagon

Used for general deliveries,
similar to a modern pickup
truck

The Crawford House Mountain Wagon

The mountain wagons were
used by the Grand Hotels to
transport guests to and
from the depot and on
sightseeing excursions .
Rugged for their size, they
were suitable for
the mountain roads.





Two Seat Pony Sleigh

There is no relationship between the name and the size of the horses used to pull it. This may be the only one left in existence.

The Lamprey Dray

This dray or heavy wagon was built to carry extremely heavy loads. The axles are solid steel and the springs are very thick and heavy.



The Shattuck

(Pictured on page 1)

The Shattuck Wagon is one of the rarest of the Abbot-Downing vehicles. There are only three that are known to currently exist. Built to carry school baseball teams to away games, large parties to the beach, or other such outings. Having seats along the long sides, in the manner of a Wagonette, with the ever-present Abbot-Downing turned wooden spindles and a top rail, such a vehicle could easily accommodate twenty passengers. This particular one, named 'The Shattuck' after the school's first rector or headmaster, was one of three made for St. Paul's School in Concord, NH.

The Shattuck is presently owned by the City of Concord and housed in Tom Prescott's museum on Airport Road in Concord

Concord 250 Activities

This year the City of Concord celebrated its 250th anniversary. The Society worked hard with the Concord 250 committee to bring the message about the importance of Abbot and Downing in Concord's history.

We participated in many events, most often with one or both coaches on public display. It generated tremendous interest with the many visitors and we picked up several new local members.



The two coaches in front of the New Hampshire State House flanking the statue of Daniel Webster



The first Concord 250 event that we participated in was at the Riverside Park in Penacook for a concert by the "Wildcat Regiment Band" on May 23, 2015. This event was sponsored by the Penacook Historical Society and was very well attended. We set up a small gift shop table and handed out brochures about the Society and our fund raising effort.

Other Summer Activities

In addition to the Concord 250 activities, we participated in several other events. We should mention that these activities would not be possible without all the time and effort put in by many of our members. There is always plenty to do and plenty of different things to do so you can find a way to help out that you are comfortable with. Please join in the fun this coming year.

Some of the places that we took coaches this summer include, the dedication of the Allenstown Meeting House, Tom Prescott's Open House with two coaches, the Sanbornton Old Home Day, The Andover Old Home Day with two coaches, The Allenstown/Pembroke Old Home Day Parade.

Other events include The Hopkinton 250th anniversary parade, Hillsborough Living History Days, The Audi Gala, and ending up with The Warner Fall Foliage festival, and the four days of the Hopkinton State Fair.

The Fair is our biggest event each year and this year we had very good attendance and an excellent display. We entered two different categories of flower displays, one in the Community Arts building and one in front of the museum. We received \$225.00 for these efforts. We also collected \$310.00 in the donation boxes and had \$510 in gift shop sales.

The gift shop is one of our largest sources of income. In 2015 we had \$2,069.00 in sales and only spent \$347.65 for new inventory. We did purchase a large number of the popular pressed glass sun catchers late in 2014 and still have a good quantity of them. These are our best selling item. They are locally made by Old Hancock Glass in Antrim.

Newsletter Input

If you have any ideas for articles for the newsletter or want to write an article, it would be most welcome. Maybe you would even like to be the newsletter editor.

I would really like to pass this on to someone else. I would be glad to continue to do the printing and mailing if that would be helpful to a new editor, but possibly it is time to find someone with new fresh ideas to put it together.

Peter James

Dues Notice

Included with this newsletter is a dues notice for those who pay their dues on an annual basis. If you are a life member or joined late in 2015, you do not need to pay dues.

The dues go a long way to covering our expenses and are another of our major annual funding sources, so please help out by paying them promptly. It is helpful if you fill out the information on the form and include an email address if you have one and also your areas of interest.