

Yesterday's News

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Widow Walker Club

“One of the most novel social organizations anywhere in the country”—*Boston Sunday Post*



At the top of the hill in Lovell Village. To the left is Widow Lucy Walker's home and to the right is Widow Catherine Walker's home. The unidentified women may be walking Widow Walkers.

On August 21, 1910 the front page of the Boston Sunday Post featured an article about six women who lived in Lovell Village. The title of the article was Only Widow Walkers Allowed in Lovell's Unique Club. The article told the story of a club organized by six widows, all of whom lived within a short walking distance of each other. From the title you would expect the organization was a walking club but it wasn't. Instead, the club was organized because the members shared the last name Walker.

Amelia, the widow of William G. Walker, lived at 204 Main Street. Annie, the widow of Frank C. Walker, lived at 212 Main Street along with her mother-in-law Drusilla, the widow of Marshall Walker. Mary, the widow of William H. Walker, lived at 213 Main Street. She was the eldest of the group, having just reached the age of 90. Lucy, the widow of Barnes Walker Sr., lived up the hill at 253 Main Street. Catherine (referred to as Katherine in the article), the widow of Henry G. Walker, lived across the street at 254 Main Street. The six deceased husbands had all been related, three being brothers.

By the organization of the Widow Walker Club, consisting of six widows all of the name of Walker and ranging in age from 45 years to 90 years, the little town of Lovell, Me., possesses today one of the most novel social organizations in the country.

The Widow Walker Club consists of only the six widows.

Nothing in the records of the organization mentions anything about man, and ostensibly none of the widows has set her cap for another husband, but there is a great deal of speculation and gossip in Lovell concerning the mysterious reason for the club's formation.

The members of the club, presided over just now by Mrs. Mary Walker, who is 90 years old and still hale and hearty, meet at regular intervals behind closed doors. The widows declare that they merely gather for social diversion.

The formation of this remarkable club came about with little deliberation on the part of the members.

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From the President

We've had a very busy summer with more renovations to the Kimball-Stanford House, fund-raising events, new memberships and volunteers, and great additions to our collection, two of which are featured in this newsletter. Thank you so much for all your support!

Thanks to the efforts of Allen Dotson and his crew we were able to paint the roofs of the Kimball-Stanford House just in time for our Antique Show and Auction. The beautiful weather drew a large crowd and we again had Kevin McElroy playing his violin in the barn. Antique dealers were set up inside and outside and Jay Hanson conducted our third auction of contemporary items. Ruth Mitchell coordinated her cooks and servers, providing delicious food during the event. Many thanks go to all of the people, too numerous to mention, who donated their time and gifts. The fortunate winners of the raffle were: Brian Smith (Oak Mirror); Hal & Carol Taylor (Pine Commode); and Peter & Cary Fleming (*The Lovell News & Kezar Lake Memoirs*).

Our third Historic House Tour, on August 14th, proved to be another successful event. Four of Lovell's finest homes were toured and tremendous thanks are due the home owners and the volunteers who acted as docents and parking attendants. Thanks also to the organizing committee that managed so many details: Renee Dutton; Bonnie Fox; Jacquie Maranville; and Meghan Nyberg.

On September 24th we presented "West Lovell Conversations", a round table discussion featuring Al Stearns, Marcia Hamlin, Byron Shaw, and Ron Leavitt. They discussed growing up in this unique section of town and the major changes they have witnessed. About seventy-five people came to hear this lively discussion and we hope to focus on other parts of town in the future.

Our Fall Harvest event will take place on Sunday, October 16th from 1 to 4 pm. During this family event we will be pressing apples into cider and serving free refreshments. There will be a large harvest bake sale, a petting zoo, free pumpkin painting, and "Birds on a Wire" will be playing live fiddle music. Come and enjoy the festivities!

On Sunday, December 18th from 1 to 4 pm we will host our Christmas Open House. We plan to have our museum and research center open that afternoon and will provide refreshments, a bake sale, and good holiday cheer for all members of our community. We also will be raffling some exciting items to coincide with this event.

Last but not least, we now have available for sale our most recent publication—*Kezar Lake Memoirs*. Pick up a copy at the Society or we'll mail it to you!

Best wishes, Catherine Stone

The Fall Harvest

Sunday
October 16th
1-4pm

Live Music
Refreshments
Petting Zoo
Bake Sale
Pumpkin Painting
Cider Press Demo

THE LOVELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MISSION

The Lovell Historical Society exists to collect and preserve historical and genealogical records, property, and artifacts, and to encourage and support interest in and study of the history of the Town of Lovell and its environs. Its collections are available for consultation by its members and other interested parties. In fulfillment of its educational mission, the Society presents public programs on relevant topics; publishes documents and the results of research; maintains an archive, a library and a museum; provides information and guidance to interested researchers; and collaborates with libraries, schools, and other organizations to carry out historical projects.

OFFICERS 2011-2012

Catherine Stone, President	Directors:
Stan Tupaj, Vice President	Lou Olmsted
Mary Heroux, Secretary	Beverly Bassett
Bonnie Fox, Treasurer	Renee Dutton

LOCATION AND HOURS

The Society, located on Route 5 in the 1839 Kimball-Stanford House, is open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9am to 4pm, Saturdays from 9am to 12pm and by appointment. All are welcome to visit our museum and research collections. Business meetings are open to all members and are held on the third Tuesday of every month at 2pm. Our phone number is (207) 925-3234 or (207) 925-2291. Our collection can be viewed at our web site—www.lovellhistoricalsociety.org—and our e-mail address is lovellhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

There is no social organization of any sort in the village in which the women may take part outside of the few societies connected with the church. And while intercourse during the summer is an easy proposition, during the long evening of winter there is little if anything to furnish an excuse for the meeting of friends, however much the solitude may pall upon them.

It was during one of these unusually doleful periods of the last winter that the club was formed. While Mrs. Katherine G. Walker and Mrs. Lucy Walker, aged 78 and 79, respectively, have for 40 years or more lived directly opposite each other on the main street, in brick houses of identical pattern, their calls were more less a matter of "give and take". There was little spontaneity about them, and they came more in the nature of a bargain. One repaid what the other gave in the way of polite inquiries as to each other's health and the whereabouts and activities of their families.

A little further down the street Mrs. Drusilla Walker lived opposite Mrs. Mary Walker. Their proposition was a duplicate of that of Mrs. Katherine Walker and Mrs. Lucy Walker, four houses above on the hill. The odd Mrs. Walker, by a more specific denomination Mrs. Amelia Walker, lived still further down the main street—three houses further—and had no one living opposite her by the name of Walker whom she could visit. This was because the remaining Mrs. Walker of the remarkable sextet, Mrs. Annie Walker, lived in the same house with Mrs. Drusilla Walker.

This was the state of affairs as they stood about the middle of last winter when the new move was decided upon. This move consisted simply of the organization of a club—a social club—by which the polite frigidities of the townspeople and the rude chilliness of the Maine winter might be thawed a little. This club was organized for "social, literary, and religious enjoyment". Nothing was said, however, about the similarity of names, though it played an important part.

On account of her age and the fact that she was admittedly fully as active and even more literary than the rank and file of the other five, Mrs. Mary Walker was made president. The secretaryship and treasurership were given into the charge of Katherine and Lucy Walker respectively to have and to hold as their judgment dictated, while the offices of vice-president, recording secretary, and librarian were voted to Drusilla, Amelia, and Annie Walker respectively. There were some difficulties incident to this election of officers since each officer upon her nomination was compelled to pleasantly disclaim any desire for official honors, although they were, of course, forced upon her. Each one of the other five voted five times in succession for the sixth one and



Mary (Dresser) Walker

this solved the difficulty.

For several generations the Walkers have had the monopoly of the town government of Lovell. By right of eminent domain, as well as by right of might and social standing, the family has always been prominent from remote colonial days. The men Walkers were eminent Indian fighters and soldiers even under George III, and their feminine descendants seemed to inherit the same initiative and ability. In this connection the members of the Walker Club were in a position which admitted more or less the assumption of social leadership, and the club began its meetings.

At the present time, and it is in its eighth month of existence, the Walker Club is by far the most enterprising as well as novel social organization boasted by any town in the State. Aside from the original idea of the club itself, however, the extraordinary situation of its charter members is interesting.

Every one of the members of the Walker Club was born in Lovell and has passed at least 30 years of her life there. Three or four of the number have lived in the village for 40 consecutive years, and one of them for 60 summers and winters. All of the Walkers are widows, and none of them were ever married more than once. All of them live on the same street and within 100 yards from each other.

To carry the train of similarities still further, two of the number, Mrs. Katherine Walker and Mrs. Lucy Walker live opposite each other. Each lives in a brick house and each house is the counterpart of the other. The two women are the widows of brothers and are

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within a few months of being the same age. Also, Mrs. Amelia Walker and Mrs. Mary Walker both answer to the designation "Mrs. William Walker" since both ladies married men who bore the same given name.

As a social organization the Walker Club has scored a tremendous success. While its president is now in her 90th year it is by no means on account of her age that she reaps all the honors. In fact it is by no means necessary to an octogenarian or septuagenarian to figure prominently in the club. In contrast to the generous allotment of years granted the president the vice-president is only 45. All the others, however, are in their seventieth year or over.

According to the present arrangement the various members of the club have held their meetings at their houses, taking turns in entertaining the club. It has been suggested that a club house be erected for the purpose of accommodating the club members and for holding social affairs in which the club members take an interest. This matter will be decided at the next meeting.

Since the formation of the unique organization Mrs. Mary Walker had not missed one of the weekly meetings. She walks to and from her house to these gatherings and takes entire charge of the happenings.

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Note: Mary Walker died two weeks after this article was published.



Amelia (Gordon) Walker standing outside her home, 204 Main Street



Barnes & Lucy (Kilgore) Walker's House, now known as the Kimball Homestead, 253 Main Street

Photo donated by Ruth (Kimball) Libby



Frank & Annie (Bemis) Walker's House, 212 Main Street



Henry & Catherine (Dresser) Walker's House, 254 Main Street

Photo donated by Jack & Beverly Bassett

Otis True Returns to Lovell

In 2005, the Lovell Historical Society received correspondence from a Long Island man asking who Otis True was. He had recently purchased a painting of Mr. True at auction and discovered that he had once lived in Lovell.

We provided him with Otis True's biographical information and couldn't resist asking the new owner if he would donate the painting to the Society. He declined but did send us a photograph of the painting.

Last month the owner contacted us again. He was moving and was willing to sell us the painting for his purchase price. Not having the funds budgeted for such an expenditure, we organized a quiet fundraising drive. In a short period of time, we raised the necessary funds thanks to the contributions of Pam Bliss, Harold and Joyce Buckingham, Bob Chiarello and Robin Taylor-Chiarello, Ford and Patsy Hutchinson, Ken and Ann Male, Dave and Ruth Morine, and Robin Siegel.

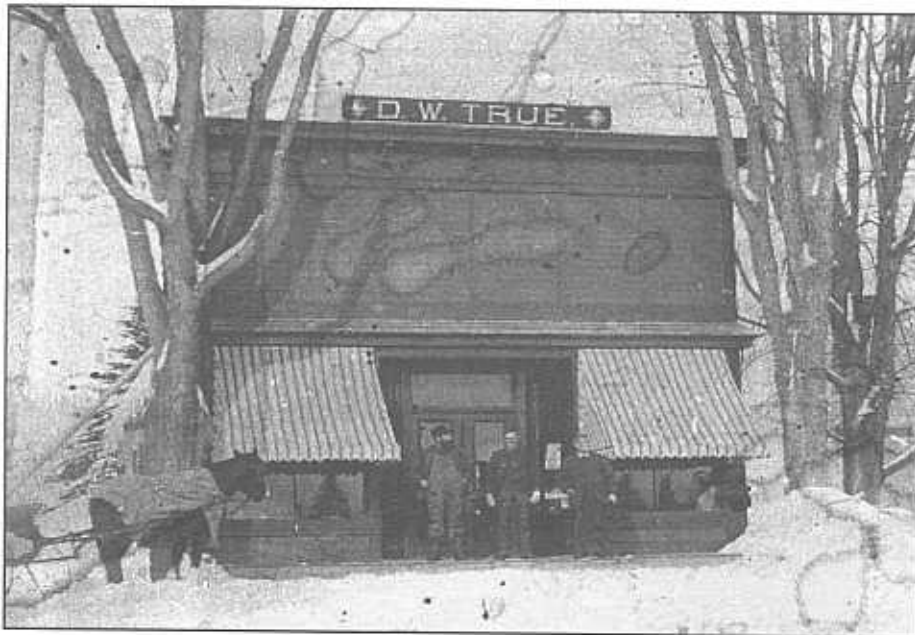
As to the importance of Otis True (1814-1901), he first moved to Lovell in 1874 and quickly became a prominent citizen. He was born in Poland, ME, was widowed twice, and had owned several hotels in the area and a general store in Norway. He was a successful entrepreneur. In 1874, he purchased the American House in Lovell Village. Living a few houses down was the widow of Josiah Wood, Hannah (Walker) Wood. Five months after purchasing the hotel, Otis married Hannah and moved into her home, which is now known as Millbank Manor. At the time



of their marriage Otis was 60 years old and Hannah was 46 years old. Otis went on to open the D.W. True general store with his son Daniel and died in Lovell Village after 26 years of marriage to Hannah. The painting hung in their house until grandson Josiah True sold it.

In the next few months we plan to display this beautiful painting. We hope you will stop by to see it and welcome Otis home.

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Deny Walker, John Hutchins, and Otis True standing outside the D.W. True General Store during the winter of 1887-1888.

Photo donated by the Donald Andrews Family

The Kimball-Scott Library Collection

The Lovell Historical Society recently received an extensive collection of material from Oliveanne Kimball-Scott. She lives at the top of the Village hill in the Barnes Walker home, which has been owned by her family since 1919 and is now known as the Kimball Homestead. Over the years, Oliveanne has meticulously documented the history of her family and this town.

Oliveanne was born on January 3, 1932, the daughter of Fred Don and Irma (Towle) Kimball. Her father was a partner in the Kimball & Walker Store in the Village, following the footsteps of his father who conducted a general store in Center Lovell. She attended Fryeburg Academy and the New England Conservatory of Music, where she met her future husband James G. Scott Jr. They resided in Northborough, MA and had three children—Fred, Doug, and Cecilia. Jim was a music teacher in the Northborough public schools while Oliveanne raised their children, gave piano lessons, and volunteered for numerous organizations. When Jim died in 1985 she returned to her family home in Lovell.

The Kimball-Scott Collection encompasses fifty-seven scrapbooks, thirty-six photo albums, and thirty-nine books. Much of the material is indexed. Notebooks contain correspondence, news clippings, and early family photos. There are notices of births, deaths, and marriages. The history of Lovell's churches, houses, schools, and prominent citizens is documented. There are a large number of early photos of Lovell families including the Kimbells, Hills, Towles, MacAlasters, and McDaniels. In total, the scope and organization of the material is phenomenal, and constitutes a major addition to our collection.



Four generations at the Kimball Homestead. From left to right: James Gilmore Scott Jr.; Oliveanne (Kimball) Scott; Alice (Hill) Towle Hurd; Irma (Towle) Kimball holding J. Frederick Scott; Carrie (MacAlaster) Kimball; Fred Don Kimball. The photo is dated September 11, 1952.



Oliveanne Kimball-Scott standing beside a portion of her donated collection.

In Memoriam

We note with sadness the death of the following friends and neighbors.

Ruth (Fox) Powers, 81, of Hartland, ME died on August 11, 2011. She was born on December 1, 1929, the daughter of Elmer and Ethel Fox. As a youth, she summered in Lovell with relatives. Ruth worked for over thirty years as an administrative assistant and teacher's aide for St. Albans Elementary School. She was predeceased by her husband Harlow and is survived by her two children—Randy and Kathy Nichols—five grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

Marcia (Bell) Hurd Ingraham, 89, of Lovell passed away on September 22, 2011. She was born in Fryeburg, the daughter of Merton and May Bell, and graduated from Fryeburg Academy. Marcia was the past president of the Fryeburg Lovell VFW Auxiliary, a member of Order of Eastern Star, and a contributor to this Society. She was predeceased by her husbands, Merwin Hurd and George Ingraham, and three sons—Merwin Jr., Norman, and Colin. She is survived by three children—Jeffery, Herbert, and Lynn—seven grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren.

Priscilla (Bassett) Johnstone, 82, of Holiday, FL and Bangor, ME passed away on September 16, 2011. Priscilla was born in Lovell on March 8, 1929, the daughter of Jack and Edna Bassett. She graduated from Fryeburg Academy and for many years was the postmaster at the Center Lovell Post Office. She was a member of this Society and the Lovell United Church of Christ and Ladies Auxiliary. She was predeceased by her husband Russell and is survived by her four children—Russell Jr., Jill Jutras, Jayne Libbey, and Jacalyn Fearon—four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Alfred Pleasonton, 85, of Elizabethtown, KY died on March 22, 2011. He was born in New York City on January 27, 1926, the only child of Major Eugene and Bronwin (Chubb) Pleasonton. He spent thirty-six years in the military and summered at his family home in North Lovell. He was predeceased by two children—Christine and Keith—and is survived by his wife Alli, daughter Daphne, six step-children, and three grandchildren. Alfred was a life member of this Society.

Frances Riecken, 94, of Washington, D.C., died on April 9, 2011. She was a native of Chisholm, MN and spent her career as a speech pathologist. She also worked as a production potter and ceramics instructor. Frances summered on Kezar Lake and was a member of this Society. She is survived by her husband Henry, three children—Susan, Gilson, and Anne—and two granddaughters.

Irene Jewett (Kenerson) Yoder, 88, of Lovell passed away on July 13, 2011. She was born on November 30, 1922 in Fryeburg, ME, the oldest daughter of Percival and Arolin Kenerson. After graduating from Fryeburg Academy, Irene served during World War II in the Navy Waves. She and her husband Orville owned the Jockey Cap Store before moving to Towanda, PA. She summered on Kezar Lake and was a member of this Society. Irene was predeceased by her husband and is survived by her three children—Kenneth, Bryan, and Zoe Trautman—three grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Gifts & Donations

We are very grateful for the following gifts received since the last newsletter: **Craig Adams**—permission to scan photos; **Mary Adams**—postcard of Camp Agawam Kezar; **Russell & Penny Allen**—photos, permission to scan photos, Annie Heald School report cards; **Sandra Barty** (in memory of Dick Beckhard)—framed Juanita Perkins photo of Upper Kimball Pond, framed photo of Richard & Sandra Beckhard's camp on Kezar Lake in 1982, framed Batik print of the Beckhard camp; **Pam Bliss**—2011 House Tour photos; **Patricia Chandler Family**—photographs; **Phyllis Chandler**—permission to scan photos, correspondence, and news clippings; **John & Joan Crowe**—permission to scan photos; **Scott & Sandra Cushman** (in memory of Merle Cushman)—photo of the Fryeburg-Lovell Stage, portrait of Theona Farrington; **Davey Family** (in honor of Sally Davey)—three 1945 calendars from Morton's Market, oak walker; **Rachel Deans**—John Charles Eastman family bible, 2 early photo albums belonging to the family of Marjorie Buswell; **Linda Drew**—1947 Center Lovell Christian Church calendar; **Joanne Eastman**—wooden cradle; **Susan Fahey** (in memory of Richard Lamm)—*Chapters in the History of the Arts and Crafts Movement* by Oscar Lovell Triggs; **Theda Gilman** (in memory of George & Avis Stearns)—5 property guides for the years 1981-1985 from Severance Realtors; **Marcia Hamlin**—permission to scan photos; **Cliff & Eileen Hill**—framed photo display of Maine's 1901 State Representatives; **Bill & Nancy Jamison**—photos of Lovell Old Home Days and the Antique Show; **Edward & Amy Josephson**—*Maine Automobile Road Book 1915*; **Bert & Marilyn Kendall**—framed photo of the Kendall house, permission to scan photos; **Oliveanne Kimball-Scott** (in memory of James G. Scott, Jr.)—the Kimball-Scott Library Collection consisting of 57 Scrapbooks, 36 Photo Albums and 39 books; **Richard Krasker**—Camp Rod & Reel brochure, permission to scan Camp Rod & Reel deeds, plot plans, and a prospectus; **Leotus Morrison** (in memory of Perkie & Prydee)—Camp Mudjেকেewis

questionnaires, bookmarks, and a printing block; **Nancy Pierce** (in memory of Helen Elizabeth Jones Lewis Goss)—photographs from Camp Mudjekeewis in 1956-1957, 1994 Camp reunion photos; **Ring Family**—sign for Harry Ring's tea house and framed health license; **Edwin & Joanne Sargent**—8 hand-forged tools, 2 children's tea sets, wooden trolley car, wooden blocks; **Frederic Sater**—photos of Lovell Old Home Days; **Margery Sholes** (in memory of William Stearns Dallinger)—four ribbons from Brown's Camps for Water Sports events in 1924 & 1928; **Jill Stempler**—Camp Mudjekeewis merit badges, horseback riding ribbons, canoe paddle, jewelry, and 1967 yearbook; **Robin Taylor-Chiarelo**—*The Clam Digger's Ball* by Robin Taylor-Chiarelo; **Carol Tickton**—poster and photos from Lovell Old Home Days in 1964 and 1967; **Bill & Carol Vance**—permission to scan photo; **John Vinton**—Fay Burg's *Lake Kézar Cookbook*; **Dewey & Diane Watson** (in memory of Harold & Mary Watson)—1956 Annie Heald School Yearbook, 1974 *Lovell Community Environmental Inventory*, *Village Memories* by W. Lawrence Stone; **Jason Ziegler**—permission to scan Severance Lodge Club sales brochure.

Contributions toward the purchase of the Otis True Painting have been gratefully received from: Pam Bliss; Harold & Joyce Buckingham; Bob Chiarello & Robin Taylor-Chiarelo; Ford & Patsy Hutchinson; Ken & Ann Male; Dave & Ruth Morine; Robin Siegel.

Cash donations have been gratefully received from: Glenn Allison; Raymond & Kathy Bessette (in memory of Bill & Irene Pitas); **Mercer & Mary Louise Blanchard; Margot Bleier; Joan Brown** (in memory of Milton Brown); **Katherine Chase; Marjory Chase; Hank Croteau & Jacquie Maranville; Joanne Eastman** (in memory of Durward "Bud" Eastman); **Ben & Nancy Eshleman; Louise Fletcher; Peter & Elisabeth Foukal; David & Betsy Freund; Beth Gallie; John Kaplan; Susan Keber** (in memory of Theodore Linkfield Arnheiter, Jr.); **Oliveanne Kimball-Scott; Jean Marble; Irene McDeed; Paul McGuire; William & Janet Nichols; Marion Osman; Alli Pleasonton** (in memory of Alfred Pleasonton); **Ginny Roriston; Gene & Vicki Royer; Bob & Edna Russell; Frederic Sater; Al & Irene St. Germain; Robert & Joan Stearns; Steven & Patricia Stearns; Carol Stewart; David & Alison Tomlinson; Linda Wallace; Betty Webster.**

Donations in memory of Irene Yoder have been made by: Walter Linder, Bob & Ruth Nyce and children; Pythagorean Chapter #169 Order of the Eastern Star; Ray & Carol Swartzendruber; Kenny & Lynn Yoder. If you have made a donation or given an artifact or other form of historical material and it has not been listed here or previously noted, please contact us immediately. We appreciate the thoughtful generosity of our members and friends, and most certainly want to acknowledge and list gifts properly.

The Lovell Historical Society
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If your mailing label doesn't say "6-12" or "Life",
it is time to join or renew your membership. Thanks!