



## A Tale of Two Schools Pinehenge, Elan, and Years of Turmoil

The Keoka Farm of Senator and Mrs. Harold Pike had been a dairy farm, a market garden, a restaurant, and a guest home with cottages but in 1969 the 200-acre property changed usage dramatically. Three teachers came from Plymouth, Massachusetts to open a “free” co-educational boarding school in the manner of A. S. Neill’s Summerhill School in England. This might have left little historical impact on Waterford except for the extensive media coverage which exists in the Waterford Historical Society (WHS) archives.

The founding teachers—Glenna Plaisted, William Dillon and Thomas Marino— had a philosophical ideal of a school without grades where students could choose their subjects of interest. “Pinehenge,” as it was called, was meant to be a community of love and acceptance where learning was a natural process, and the only rules were for health and safety.

Classes were held six mornings a week, with subjects ranging from anthropology to Spanish. Attendance was not mandated but everyone seemed to go. In the afternoon there might be films, lectures, walks, book discussions or “bull sessions.”

In the beginning there were nine teachers and 19 students from ages three to 19. Tuition was \$2800 annually (\$3400 later, with 35 students). Self-motivating materials from Harvard and Yale included math games, photography, theatre and other proven academic methods. It was not “experimental” but ungraded; it did aim to prepare students for college.

The *Advertiser-Democrat* called it “a quiet revolution on a hilltop” in the ten-room Waterford farmhouse, barn, and cottages. “Going to school is an enjoyable privilege here,” said Bill Dillon. Glenna Plaisted wanted children to see that failure was not permanent, merely “a step in the process of learning,” so there were no report cards.

Tom Marino, who at the same time taught at Telstar High School in Bethel, was nurse, cook, carpenter and geometry teacher at Pinehenge. Everyone was learning what they needed to know. *Continued on Page 5*

*At right: Harold Pike Farm before porches (circa 1900). Photo given to WHS by June Pike.*

*The property was originally claimed by Thaddeus Brown (1797), the timber buyer for Waterford Plantation. Lots 8/9/Range 6-7 were transferred To William Brown, Solomon Stone, and John Brown. Sanders Kimball owned It from 1831 until 1845 when it was transferred to Amos Flint. Amos’s daughter or granddaughter was Elizabeth “Lizzie” Flint who married Eldridge Pike—the parents of Harold Pike.*



## President's Corner by Andrew Dabczynski

The Waterford Historical Society's 2023 season of events is drawing to a close, and we look back on many successes and changes. At our June Annual Meeting, held again at the Waterford Inne (much gratitude to the Vanderblue family) the 75+ members in attendance released with thanks former WHS trustee and President Bonnie Parsons. And we remembered with fondness the contributions of Henry Plate, who passed last year. The membership enthusiastically approved the filling of those openings on the board of trustees with newcomers Marilyn (Ting Ting) Doore and Doss Hasson, and we're so grateful for their willingness to serve.

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, WHS was represented in the parade by a vintage Jeep (thanks to the Fannings!) and a busy open house at the museums. In August, trustee Nancy Eaton led a discussion at Keoka Farm, hosted by the Murrins, where memories of the Pikes, Pinehenge, Elan and more were shared. September's meeting at the Bear Mt. Music Hall focused on a presentation by our "historian laureate" Nancy Marcotte and owner Elizabeth Roth describing the South Waterford Grange Hall.

New WHS brochures were developed along with other helpful materials. Throughout the winter and spring, the trustees will continue to maintain and organize the Society's collection, with an eye to digitizing pictures and documents to make them available to the public. We will be conserving the Selectmen's Hall by having some painting done. In the coming months we hope to partner with the Waterford Library in sponsoring presentations of interest to the citizens of Waterford and beyond. In addition, we hope to engage the interest of young people by developing some educational programming and resources.

There is much to do! But the trustees cannot do it all themselves. We invite members to join us and get involved. Pick a project or an area of interest; volunteer for museum duty on Mondays beginning next spring. We will close the building on October 9th, but you can find us on Facebook or at [waterfordmehistoricalociety@gmail.com](mailto:waterfordmehistoricalociety@gmail.com). And we will have two more meetings in October and November.

After all, as I have said before, Waterford IS history—the history of family, of the community, the landscape, the way of life that draws us here—and the history of you. As the sign on the town green has declared for decades, "THIS is Waterford."

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The Waterford Historical Society newsletter is published to benefit its membership. The Society, founded in 1965, is a non-profit Corporation created for the purpose of preserving and making available to persons interested, any and all historical and other material that shall be deemed valuable and worthy of preservation, in an effort to perpetuate for this and future generations, events, customs and traditions of local history, past, present, and future, and to make possible the diffusion of such knowledge.

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We have the following publications for sale at \$10 each: "History of Waterford 1775-1875;" "History of Waterford 1875-1976;" "This is Waterford 1803-2003" (reduced price). Add \$8 to ship one book, or \$12 to ship two or three.

## In Appreciation

Charlie Bigonski, Lilo Willoughby, Jane Kimball, Victoria Haynes & Preston Haynes have given us gifts this summer. Nancy Hohmann and Ted Chadbourne shared their recollections of the Waterford Inne building on Chadbourne Road. Thank you to ALL the speakers who have shared recollections at our meetings! Diane Dabczynski created instant brochures for both museums and her husband Andy has been working with Newell Andrews for some interesting cemetery programs.

Ted Gerber is coordinating our 2025 calendar, which we hope will be color photographs of Waterford places. We appreciate Greg and Patti Tingley for revitalizing the fountain which was originally part of the Lake House property, but which has not flowed in 100 years! See pics on Page 4. Waterford is a place where things are happening. Climate Change discussions, Childrens' Programming, energy conservation at the Library have added to Coffee Fridays, knitting group, gardening and book discussions.

After our last issue, we got a wonderful letter from Priscilla Gammon Stinson, remembering Keoka Farm: *The article of Harold and June Pike's Guest House brought back memories of my first job after graduating Norway High School. I was one of two girls and a boy hired to work the summer of 1959. The boy slept in a cabin beside the big barn and worked in the garden and yard work, etc.*

*There were two bedrooms at the end of the shed in the back of the white barn. The two girls shared one and Esther Leeds and two children (Audrey and Loren) shared the other, with a bathroom in between. My job was to help serve breakfast to the guests and while they were eating, I made the beds in three bedrooms upstairs and one down, cleaning the two bathrooms. Then Esther and I would clean the bungalows—making the beds and cleaning the bathrooms daily.*

*There were always dishes to wash...the wood stove to keep burning with scraps and dowels from the shed, helping with vegetable preparation, and hours of ironing. The clothes were dried on the line, and everything ironed by hand or with a mangle. This was done on the back porch, which was open and a nice place to work. There was a big table to work on and it was nice for a big work family meal once a day. When we were done with the work, we three kids would go for a walk along the roads to unwind before bed.*

Please keep sharing memories!



## The Women of Waterford

by Nancy Chute Marcotte

Our first history book (1775-1875) ends with many historical speeches given on the occasion of the Centennial of Waterford. If one takes the trouble to read them, one finds a poetry of description of the early settlers from Massachusetts to the “unbroken wilderness” of the District of Maine.

Of course, it wasn't unbroken from the point of view of the original settlers, but the European ancestors saw it from the perspective of English law, which was tilled land, fences, and substantial shelter.

Rev. William Warren spoke in 1875 of the “fathers and mothers” who came to Waterford in the previous century, “under the inspiration of a noble manhood and womanhood.” He spoke of their varied skills and service, which “felled the forest, turning it into fields and farms, and planted institutions as well as vineyards.” And though he listed the young men who came into the plantation first, he also said this: “I name the men, but the women are equally deserving and were largely influential in their families in the rearing of noble sons and daughters.”

Young women followed here fairly quickly to help their men build rude cabins, then sawmills and barns, then schools, churches and bigger homes for growing families. We don't necessarily know their names because they didn't play official roles in the plantation, so most of them are not in official records.

Women in the late 1700s had no vote and few legal rights but they had skills which most men did not: weaving, sewing, healing, churning, cooking with the particular chemistry of open hearths and bake ovens. And then babies were born, beginning with Ephraim Hapgood (first boy in 1786) and Clarissa Johnson (first girl, 1787).

The average family in our early villages had seven children, though only half of them might live to adulthood. If a pioneer man chopped a tree down on himself or died of consumption, his wife (cont. pg 4)

could usually carry on, planting seeds, milking cows and chopping wood—especially if they had big sons or hired hands. A man who lost his wife (often in childbirth) would most likely be stymied by household tasks, including baby care. Childbirth itself remained treacherous, so we see our first Waterford men marrying two or even three times.

In the Centennial, Rev. John Douglass concluded with: *There is one class among those who live or have lived in Waterford that should not be forgotten today, and that I, at least, shall never cease to honor; a class that had no small part to perform in making Waterford and its children what they are. The deeds of the fathers of Waterford have been related—the hope and the promise of the young men have been described—the young ladies have had their share of praise, and now remembering some who will be seen here no more, as well as many who still live to do us good, I propose as a toast: The Old Ladies of Waterford.*

The Civil War provided a shock to the American system: women had been noticed, writing and speaking against slavery, advocating proper nursing, taking the places of men who went off to fight (some even fighting themselves). So many young men died from battle and disease that there was a generation or two of women who could not be married. Many of them became well educated and formed partnerships with other women that were so prevalent they were called “Boston marriages.”

It’s not for us to know if they were romantic relationships but they certainly contributed much to American society, especially in literary education, social work, health reform (protection of children), temperance and women’s suffrage.

Waterford has been blessed with strong and giving women. Think of Miss Mabel Gage, Mary Gage Rice, Jeanette Payson and Louise Huntington. The WHS has benefitted greatly by the gifts of Ruth Rounds. The library exists because of the Knight sisters. Miss Susan Hamlin Wilkins is featured on the last page of this newsletter.

There also have been many strong and traditional women in town: the columnists Charlotte Fillebrown and Flora Abbott, for example. We had many influential women teachers, postmasters and storekeepers. Lilo Willoughby saved the historical

society when it was slowing down. Margaret Sawyer was influential in the town office. Think of any organization, church or club in town and you can name many women who are as well-known as the men of Waterford. I couldn’t possibly name them all, but they all make this a better place to live.

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## The Waterford Fountain Flows Again After a Century

Excerpted from Sun Journal – Sept. 20, 2023

August 25 marked a special day in Waterford on the Flat, where a fountain that hasn’t flowed for 100 years was rejuvenated and turned on.

The fountain is now owned by Greg and Patti Tingley. About a month ago, the Tingleys began digging out the base of the fountain, then put in a liner to keep the water in the basin. Greg replaced granite blocks around the top and villagers brought rocks with family names on them to fill in spaces between the blocks.

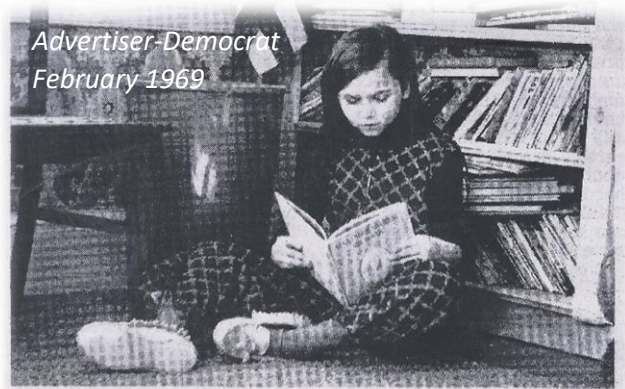


Above: Ginny Raymond, Ted Colburn, Dodi Wait, Al & Jean Struck, Ting Doore, Doretta Colburn, Denny Raymond, Patti Tingley at Waterford Flat fountain celebration Aug. 25<sup>th</sup>.



At right: Owner Patti Tingley & her fountain.

## Pinehenge and Elan (Continued from Page 1)



Advertiser-Democrat  
February 1969

**DIRECTOR'S DAUGHTER** — Laurie Dillon explores the Pinehenge "organic library" where over 500 books are available to students day and night. The unique library stores only those books requested by students. (Williams photo)

In 1973 a modern dormitory building was added, designed by a Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) architect, and built by Marino and local carpenter Arthur Ward. But the school was not making money and soon closed. The mortgage was taken over by psychiatrist Gerald Davidson and Therapeutic Director Joseph Ricci, who operated a rehabilitation center for kids with behavioral issues, called "Elan One."

Elan I, which was at Potter Academy in North Sebago [and eventually had six locations], was a treatment center/school with the complete opposite educational point of view from Pinehenge. It was operated with, as Oxford County Sheriff Alton Howe said, "a cloud of controversy."

### **Chain of Owners** – compiled by Nancy Eaton

Keoka Lake access was acquired by Harold Pike in 1948.

Harold Pike sold some acres to Elaine Morse in 1947 and to Wilson Morse in 1956.

Agnes and Alan Blake acquired some in 1960.

June Jillson Pike transferred the Passaconaway property to Glenna Plaisted and Thomas Marino in 1967, and to Pinehenge in 1968.

Joseph Ricci acquired it in 1973.

Elan I transferred various bits to Dale Sanborn in 1974, Samuel Faulkner and Patten Corp. in 1986, and Michael Pomerleau in 1987.

Marcia Pomerleau sold to Jeremiah Burns in 1996.

Jeremiah Burns sold to Blue Sky Partners in 2014.

Blue Sky Partners sold to Michael Murrin in 2018.

At a cost of \$1200 per month, kids from many different states were brought to the woods of Maine to face primal scream therapy, confrontational encounter groups, and no freedom until it was earned, according to the Maine Times (1973).

And thus began years of turmoil, anxiety and fear in quiet Waterford, which anyone who lived through it will never forget. In 1975 a public meeting at the Wilkins House asked Elan II to make some changes. A chain-link fence with razor wire was erected behind the farmhouse, but it didn't help.

There were dozens of escapees—16-year-old boys and girls who ran away but had no idea which way to run. One boy went out an upstairs window in winter, barefoot, and was later found with frostbite. Kids were found in Webbs' barn on Johnson Road and in Hazel Kimball's shed, up by Mutiny Brook.

Vehicles were stolen from Hubbards, Moxies, Waldeiers, Pikes, Stockwells, Spencers, Doores, Sanborns, Blakes, Keoka Beach, and others. A rock was thrown through Springers' Store window so beer, candy, cigarettes, and cash could be stolen. The Maine Sunday Telegram headline said, "Waterford Residents Edgy."

One of the problems was that escapees were hunted down by other Elan students in treatment, like vigilantes who intimidated villagers. Local people began sleeping with loaded guns and some people drove by the school to harass them with shouted obscenities and thrown beer bottles.

Elaine Morse, a near neighbor, expressed the consensus of Waterford folks when she said, "we don't mind treatment, we just don't want to let a lousy organization have any kids." Some gave refuge to the runaways.

Eventually, the property deteriorated; it was fire and safety issues that shut them down. Selectmen [Clarence Whiting, Freeman Merrill, Bill McDaniels] were quoted as saying this was not the right place for a center where graduates of the program became the staff.

Elan hired a qualified teacher and nurse when Mel Allen and his wife Carole came from the Peace Corps and moved into the Twitchells' cottage on Keoka [today Tarbells.] Mel later became editor at

(Continued on next page)

Yankee magazine and wrote in 1975 the most thorough news article of all of them. He said, “Elan is a dilemma for an outsider. And we are all outsiders. Every staff member is a graduate of the program. Because of this, Elan drips with paranoia.” He qualified the suspicion and distrust on all sides. “If a kid can’t succeed in the [family] he’s been raised in, then let him start over, learn what success means, learn what it means to endure.”

Mel Allen disagreed with their educational goals, but he came to see that the treatment had success with some “tough” kids. “So many of us,” he wrote, “look on, sniffing the mystery of Elan... like boxing glove beatings and curses and screams, and never think that perhaps this is the price you pay if it’s the last stop and you’ve come from nowhere.”

But it was not the price of living in a small Maine village. When the State came to look at conditions for licensing Elan, 44 residents wrote a letter which read, in part: “Why should their personnel be out in the woods screaming for a runaway at midnight behind homes of neighbors? Meeting groups of kids with sticks... can be a frightening thing if you are alone or are on the road on horseback... More cars have been stolen in town since Elan’s arrival than most old-timers ever remember. Why? Cottages, homes, a store and post office have been allegedly broken into by Elan escapees. It is our town which is hurting.”

Some states withdrew their students. Dr. Dewing’s car was stolen by an escapee, who crashed it almost immediately. The farmhouse septic system was destroyed and began polluting the lake. 1980 was the last year of the major crime wave in Waterford. Elan III opened in Poland Spring.



*Bill Haynes Photos 1997      Controlled burn of farmhouse by Waterford & other fire departments*



## In Memoriam

**Craig E. Adams**, 74, of Stoneham, died Dec. 6, 2022, in Stoneham. Born Apr. 24, 1948, son of Howard and Barbara (MacKenzie) Adams, he graduated from Oxford Hills High School in 1967. Craig served in the Army and did a tour of duty in Vietnam. He married Kathleen Chandler on Sept. 26, 1970, in Lovell. Craig was a wood mill worker, retiring in 2002. He was a former Stoneham volunteer firefighter. A history and genealogy buff, he helped Lovell Historical Society. Surviving Craig are his wife, Kathleen; daughter, Bethany Cagle (John); son Jesse Adams (Nicole); five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; brother Brad (Karen).

**Timothy C. Bigonski, Sr.**, died May 18, 2023. Born Feb. 19, 1969, son of Charles and Brenda (Pike) Bigonski of South Waterford. Tim graduated from Oxford Hills High School in 1987, and earned a degree as a Technical Lineman from KVTS in Fairfield. He worked for Oxford Networks/First Light until 2022. Tim had a passion for music, and enjoyed cooking, hunting, fishing, and yard sales. He never met a stranger. Tim is survived by his parents; children Timothy Jr. and Saylor Mae; sisters Shelli (Richard), Stephanie, and Jennifer; two nephews; two nieces.

**Donald C. Chase**, 93, died at his Bethel home on June 22, 2023. Born Aug. 22, 1929, in Hunter, MA, to Hunter and Otta Louise Chase. Don said his life began when he moved to Maine at 10-years-old. He was a United States Marine from 1946-1948. Don and his first wife, Marion, raised five children in South Waterford, ME. He married Beverly Smith in Feb. 1984. They lived in Bethel. Don was a Master Electrician whose favorite pastimes included hiking, rock climbing, ice climbing, and playing guitar. He is survived by his wife Beverly; son Rick; daughters Donna, Debra and Nancy Chase; his children's mother, Marion. Predeceased by his parents; brother Charles; sister Nancy; son Alan. Don donated his body to research at University of New England in Biddeford, ME.

**Priscilla M. Crosby**, 94, died June 14, 2022. Born in Norway on May 16, 1928, to William and Georgie (Frost) McDaniels. She worked at Bridgton area restaurants before working with husband Roy at Country Crosby Motel & Cottages on Highland Lake in Bridgton. In recent years, Priscilla volunteered at Responsible Pet Care and Stephens Memorial Hospital. She enjoyed music, dancing, cooking, and time with family. Surviving are her son, Gregory (Vicki); daughter Kelly (Trey Branch); granddaughters Southern Dotson and Tobi Crosby; three great-grandchildren; special nieces Sally Brown and Dede McAllister.

**Ellery E. Gammon**, 81, died Oct. 10, 2022, at Maine Medical Center. Born Nov. 26, 1940, the son of Leslie and Helena (Wentworth) Gammon. A graduate of Norway High School, he served in the United States Navy and then worked various jobs. Married to Priscilla Andrews on Dec. 27, 1979, they raised four children. He was a member of American Legion Post 139. Ellery is survived by his wife, Priscilla; son William (Shelly) Brackett; daughters Stephanie (James) Valliere, Rebecca (Scott) Edwards, Darrah Gammon; three grandchildren; sister Audrey (Michael) Lawson; two nephews; one great niece.

**Prentiss T. Kimball**, 92, died July 19, 2022. The youngest of three sons of P. Harold and Genevieve (Tuttle) Kimball of Waterford, he was born Dec. 4, 1930. Class of 1949, Bridgton Academy. Married Edith Tower of Sweden, ME, on Sept. 23, 1950. They raised three children. A builder by trade, Prentiss added the job of Plumbing Inspector in 1965, becoming certified, and retiring 47 years later. He and Edith owned Kimball's Hardware in South Waterford. A lifelong member of Bear Mtn. Grange #62, and Mt. Tire'm Lodge #132. Prentiss was predeceased by his parents, wife Edith, daughter Sheree Fortier, son David, brothers Reginald and Rodney. He is survived by daughter Doreen Johnson and five grandsons.

**Winfield Kimball**, 75, of South Waterford, died July 11, 2023. A son of Merritt M. and Bertha H. Kimball. Winfield was a talented, innovative carpenter. He is survived by his children, Karen Leavitt, Kristen Ellington, Kelly Parrott, and Kyle Kimball; brothers Davis and Merritt; sisters Elaine Kimball and Nettie Bennett; his longtime partner, Nancy Graiver; several nieces and nephews.

**Paul L. Krinsky**, 94, died June 17, 2023. Born Nov. 9, 1928, in Brooklyn, NY, to Nathan and Hilda (Rosengard) Krinsky. Paul attended James Madison High School, City College of NY, and graduated from US Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point in 1950. He and wife Audrey moved to Waterford after retirement. She died in 1999. Paul spent 20+ great years with Anita Brause. Surviving Paul are his partner, Anita Brause; his sons Ross (Kirstin) and David (Lori); daughters Debra Brause (Mike Dieffenbach) and Caryn Brause (Steve Breslow); eight cherished grandchildren.

**Shawn M. Pomerleau**, 45, died Nov. 30, 2022. Born Sept. 30, 1977, he grew up in Waterford. Shawn played and enjoyed multiple sports. He attended Oxford Hills High School in South Paris, ME, and White Mountain High School in Whitefield, NH. He worked in all aspects of pipeline construction for 25+ years, and built and painted houses, including working on the Teen Center in Oxford, ME. Shawn, partner Bethany, and her two sons made a life together in Alabama. Shawn is survived by Bethany Johnson, George and Bentley Goumares; mother Marcia (Dale) McAllister; father Michael (Althea); brothers Christopher (Lisa), Brian, Brandon (Halyne), and Mason; sister Melissa Pomerleau; step-sisters Katie McAllister and Kristina Wilson; four nieces; one nephew; Bethany's parents.

**Betty E. (Rice) Rust**, 86, of Westbrook, died July 27, 2023. Born on Sept. 27, 1936, to Ralph and Ida (Jennie) Rice, she was raised in North Waterford. Betty graduated from Norway High School in 1955. She married Rev. Norman F. Rust on June 20, 1964. She was a devoted minister's wife for 50+ years, and a loving mother to Brian and Barbara. Betty is survived by her son Brian (Deborah Amori); daughter Barbara (Anthony) Staires; three grandchildren; four great grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband and her parents.

**Ronald A. Springer**, 78, died of Alzheimer's on July 3, 2022, at Maine Veterans Home, South Paris. Born Nov. 14, 1943, to Fred and Wilma (Smith) Springer. Entered the United States Army after graduating high school. Ron worked 40+ years at Norway Highway Department, eventually as Road Commissioner. Norway Fire Department volunteer for 50 years. MSAD#17 Board of Directors for several terms. He coached Tri-County Babe Ruth League. In high school, Ron was lead singer for Scrapper Pratt's Falcons. Later, he and friends formed "The Belairs" and played for dances in the Oxford Hills area. Ron is survived by his wife Beth and her son James (Lindsay) Remington; his son Ronald, Jr. (Lisa); daughters Shelley (David) Baker, Terry (Tim) O'Connor, and Rhonda Springer; seven grandchildren.

## From Our Files

## Susan Hamlin Wilkins



Susan Hamlin Wilkins & her home at Waterford Flat

“The death of Susan Hamlin Wilkins at Waterford, Oct. 13, 1927, in her eighty-seventh year, was an event of more than ordinary significance. During her long life, and wherever she was, she exerted a very real influence for good.” So began a newspaper article in our files. It reads like a biography and praises her distinction as a teacher for many years in Waterford and Brooklyn, New York.

Miss Wilkins brought girls and boys from the city to Waterford for their vacations and many continued to return as adults: businessmen, ministers, musicians, writers. Waterford was her home “and she loved it passionately,” which forged this connection to Brooklyn which still exists to this day.

She was born Nov. 23, 1841, the daughter of John Wilkins, a tanner, and Lydia Hamlin Wilkins, the daughter of Waterford founders (Africa Hamlin and Susan Stone). She made her home with a “devoted sister,” Eliza Atherton, described as a center of hospitality. The sisters “generously supported the church, the circle and the library.”

Having retired to the Flat, Miss Wilkins made plans for a meeting and performing space for the young people. She died before these plans could be realized but seven months after she died the Congregational church and vestry building burned in the fire of May, 1928. It created an opportunity to build a more appropriate space and the Wilkins House was given by her “devoted companion” Miss Katherine Baird in memory of the entire Wilkins family. In Nov. 1929 the new church and meeting house, designed by famed Maine architects John Calvin Stevens and John Howard Stevens, was dedicated. For many years the community celebrated Miss Wilkins’ birthday with a party each November.

The article, signed T. H. G. (Thomas Hovey Gage?), concludes with this: “we shall no longer meet her driving about the hills she loved so much with her devoted companion and friend... or feel the contagion of her enthusiasm for Waterford. Her death leaves us all poorer.”

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