

# Highland Lake Grange Hall Restoration Continues

By Donald Gould  
Grange Hall Restoration Committee

At the turn of the 21st century, the Highland Lake Grange Hall (1850) in East Andover was seldom used, slowly decaying from neglect, and in serious disrepair with rotting sills, weak and broken floor boards, and dangerous electrical service.

Restoration of the Highland Lake Grange Hall began in 2006 with the formation of a committee of community members of the Andover Congregational Church. Led by Irene Jewett, the committee has a single goal of restoring

Licensed electrician Lloyd Perreault volunteered many hours to this initial project. And then, with a vision based on past memorable activities within the hall, the Highland Lake Grange Hall Restoration Committee accelerated fund raising.

## 2007

On September 2, 2007, the Andover Congregational Church held a special meeting to approve withdrawal of \$25,000 from its investment fund to match and be used in conjunction with funds totaling \$25,300 raised through donations by community members. The approval was unanimous, and there was a lot of excitement.

Fifield Building Restoration and Relocation began almost immediately to construct a concrete cellar under the Highland Cooperative Union section of the hall for a solid foundation. The surrounding landscape was returned to historic contours for better drainage, and the granite foundation above ground was restored to retain its historic appearance.

## 2008

Unusually high snow fall and subsequent flooding caused failure of the septic system at the church. This moved to top priority a replacement planned several years prior. But, thinking of future plans, the Grange Hall was added to the system, which now services all three buildings. With an eye toward maintaining historic appearance, venting is through mock granite posts, suggested by the system installer, Jon Champagne.

## 2009

Restoration of the Grange Hall continued with replacement of an antique dry toilet, the "one holer under the stairs," with a new handicap-accessible bathroom.

## 2010

Restoration of this section was completed. See Restoration on page 28



Potter's Place in Andover, long past its prime.

# Donna Blinn Probes Into Richard Potter's Life and Times

By Donna Blinn  
For the Beacon

As a genealogy researcher and resident of East Andover since 1982, I have held an ongoing interest in the life and times of Richard Potter and his family who once resided in what is now known as Potter Place. What brought them here, where did they come from, what was their family life like during their years in Andover? What about their lovely homestead and, most intriguing of all, the career of Richard Potter as a celebrated ventriloquist and magician?

I hold all sorts of wonderments about Richard Potter, his wife Sally, and their children. It appears there are no descendants of the Potters, given the unfortunate circumstances of their two children, Jeanette and Henry, who died at an early age, and their other son, Richard Potter, Jr., who "disappeared" in the mid 1800s from the Andover area.

I embarked upon a more in-depth research project several months ago. I have been gathering and studying anything and everything I can about Richard Potter. I am working with other writers, authors, and a retired history professor. I have been in contact with

Mr. Robert Olson, a man who re-enacts (in period costume) the tricks of Richard Potter and have invited Mr. Olson to our area to once again perform Potter's magic here in Andover.

I have been gathering information, documents, and transcribing actual court reports on Potter.

I am still seeking any existing vital records and writings from various sources held in places such as the Andover Historical Society, the Andover Town Hall and Library, the New Hampshire Historical Society, the New Hampshire State Archives Library, and other online resources.

I have found original historical articles and advertisements in newspapers dating back to the early 1800s, including newspapers that existed in Andover during that time. A copy of Potter's marriage certificate from the state of Massachusetts is among my ongoing collection of materials and was obtained in order to update past articles which held erroneous information about Richard and Sally Potter's actual marriage date.

I am hoping to find even more records, contacts, writings, and even local folks from the Andover area who can shed light on Richard Potter. I am following a lead to a potential portrait said to have been done of Potter which may still exist, but its whereabouts is not yet known. What did he look like?

Richard Potter has been verbally described in many articles about his personal characteristics and his nature, and there is an artist's rendition of him based on these descriptions, but is there something more out there that may really show a true picture of Potter?

Richard Potter was born in 1783 in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, the son of a white man, who possibly resided on or near the estate of Sir Charles Henry Frankland (known as "Sir Harry"), and a black servant woman, possibly named Dinah.

Richard married Sally Harris on September 15, 1808 in Roxbury, Massachusetts. Together they had three children,

See Potter on page 25



The new furnace installed in the Grange Hall by Chase Hill Plumbing and Heating lets people who use the Hall be "warm on all sides at once."

Photo: Don Gould

this community meeting hall to current building quality and safety standards while maintaining its historical charm.

## 2006

Immediate action was necessary in 2006, when the carrier threatened to cancel all insurance unless improvements were made. Fuses were replaced with circuit breakers at the service entry, and faulty switches were replaced.

## 2006

Immediate action was necessary in 2006, when the carrier threatened to cancel all insurance unless improvements were made. Fuses were replaced with circuit breakers at the service entry, and faulty switches were replaced.

## 2006

Immediate action was necessary in 2006, when the carrier threatened to cancel all insurance unless improvements were made. Fuses were replaced with circuit breakers at the service entry, and faulty switches were replaced.

## 2006

Immediate action was necessary in 2006, when the carrier threatened to cancel all insurance unless improvements were made. Fuses were replaced with circuit breakers at the service entry, and faulty switches were replaced.

## 2006

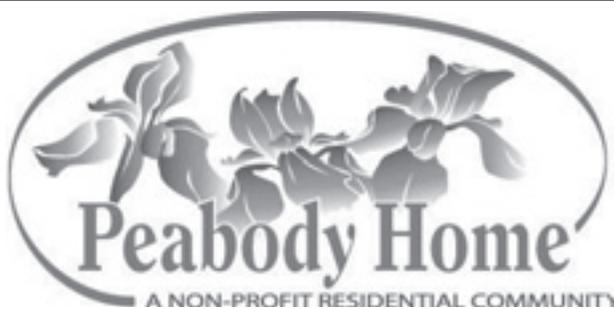
Immediate action was necessary in 2006, when the carrier threatened to cancel all insurance unless improvements were made. Fuses were replaced with circuit breakers at the service entry, and faulty switches were replaced.

## 2006

Immediate action was necessary in 2006, when the carrier threatened to cancel all insurance unless improvements were made. Fuses were replaced with circuit breakers at the service entry, and faulty switches were replaced.

## 2006

Immediate action was necessary in 2006, when the carrier threatened to cancel all insurance unless improvements were made. Fuses were replaced with circuit breakers at the service entry, and faulty switches were replaced.



**CARING FOR THE ELDERLY FOR 70 YEARS**

Nursing ♥ Assisted Living ♥ Independent Memory Loss ♥ Day Program ♥ Respite

[www.peabodyhome.org](http://www.peabodyhome.org)  
603-934-3718

Private Pay – Open To All  
Not-for-Profit

