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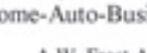
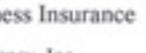
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A Short History of Andover Periodicals



Community efforts from 1819 to today

By Paul Fenton, Jr.
Publisher of the first *Andover Beacon*

The current *Andover Beacon* is publishing its 100th issue this month. The method of spreading the news of things of interest that were happening in Andover over the last 250+ years is sketchy at best. Neither the Eastman nor the Chaffee town histories make mention of any newspapers in Andover.

John Eastman in his history mentioned: "Andover has always been essentially a farming town, and the busy life of those who wrest a living from the soil of New Hampshire is not favorable to the writing of many books or most other forms of literary effort."

In very early times, if you wanted an update to what was going on, you went to the blacksmith shop and talked with those present about what events of interest had occurred recently. The other option was to go to the local store and visit around the cracker barrel or the pot-bellied stove for an update of recent events.

Many times, the information gained was more humorous than factual. With the advent of the telephone, listening in on conversations was a great past time and a wonderful source of tidbits of information that many preferred others did not know. People listening in had to be careful not to chuckle at some of the things they heard or that they did not have a clock ticking in the background, otherwise one of the parties would know someone was listening.

Some communities had a town crier who walked around town calling out the news. It is not known of any such thing being done in Andover.

1819: Religious Informer
In July 1819, Elder Ebenezer Chase started a monthly periodical called *Religious Informer*. Mr. Chase was both editor and printer. His paper covered the principles of the denomination to which he belonged. This would suggest that it covered little news about happenings

in Andover but rather how his religion should relate to the daily life of those in the community.

To see the front page from each of two issues of *Religious Informer*, visit Bit.ly/13GqchH.

1879: Our Venture
There was a publication in 1879 called *Our Venture*. It was published by John T. Woodbury, who had a printing shop in Andover. The only known copy is the August 1879 issue, the original of which Robert Peters still has.

To see each page of the only known copy of *Our Venture*, visit Bit.ly/13GqchH.

After *Our Venture*, if anyone in Andover wanted information from a newspaper, it would come from papers published in Franklin, Concord, or Manchester until *The Andover Star* came along.

1896: The Andover Star
The Andover Star was started around 1896. It was founded by Julie Mayo, with the support of Dane Loomer, Cindy Benson, Shirley Currier, Chris Norris, Dennis Melchin, Elizabeth Miller, and Paul Fenton Jr. It stopped publication in the fall of 1989.

1991: The Andover Beacon
The Andover Beacon was first started in June of 1991. The principal people involved were Paul Fopiano, Dane Loomer, Cindy Benson, Jay Fitzpatrick, Irene Jewett, Betty Dickerman, Dorothy Ford, Paul Fenton Jr., Cherry Fenton, Shirley Currier, and Dennis Melchin.

Dennis designed the logo for the paper. During the discussion of what to call the paper, it was noted that in the 1940s there was a beacon on top of Mount Kearsarge with a red light on one side and a white light on the opposite side. It would spin around during the night for airplanes to see and warn them away from the mountain top. Thus, the name *The Andover Beacon* was born.

Volunteers continued to dwindle over the years, and the paper ceased publication with the June 2002 issue. The corporation was disbanded, and the cash assets were given to the Andover Rescue Squad, as provided for in the incorporation papers.

Today: The Andover Beacon (again)
In 2004, a new group of people under the direction of Charlie Darling started a new corporation and a new paper. With permission, they adopted the name *The Andover Beacon*, because people were accustomed to the name and what it had brought to the community in past years.

Check The Web Site!

Check the latest news at
AndoverBeacon.com every day!