

Andover Celebrates History with Old Time Fair, Black Heritage Trail

Richard Potter marker stone unveiling August 7

Press release

The Andover Historical Society will dedicate its new historical marker com-

memorating the life and works of celebrated black ventriloquist and magician Richard Potter, one of America's first showmen to become a nationwide celebrity. Festivities will be held on Sunday, August 7, at the Potter Place Museum in conjunction with Andover's annual Old Time Fair.

Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire

The Andover Historical Society has been invited to join the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire (BHT), which tracks historic places across the state that are important to New Hampshire's African American history. An audience from across the state will witness the unveiling of the Richard Potter historic marker stone at the Andover Historical Society's Old Time Fair on Sunday, August 7, at 10:30 AM alongside the Potters' gravestones. The Richard Potter marker will put Andover on the map of the BHT.

See Fair on page 20



Merzi Excavation volunteered to move and install a large granite stone that will hold a historical marker as a part of the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire. The stone will be unveiled on Sunday, August 7, at the Andover Historical Society's Old Time Fair. Pictured are Brian Jones, Dan Merzi, Bill Chadwick, and Tim Sterns. Photo: Lindsey Schust



The Andover Historical Society's historic caboose beside the Potter Place Railroad Station was recently weatherized and painted, complete with a new logo. Photo and caption: Larry Chase

New Book, *Beech Hill*, Follows the Elkins Family of Andover

Book for sale at the Historical Society

Galen Beale, Author of *Beech Hill*

Beech Hill follows the Elkins family who lived on Beech Hill in Andover for five generations. Much of the information in the book is taken from a set of 50 journals written by Wendell P. Elkins and recently donated to the Andover Historical Society.

Captain Samuel Elkins, a Revolutionary soldier, settled on Beech Hill in 1790. His son, Josiah, Sr. continued the farm, but became caught up in the religious fervor of the time, and he took his family to join the Enfield Shakers in 1837. In a few years Josiah, Sr. was back on Beech Hill, but his family remained at the Shakers. Eventually 16 members of the Elkins family entered the Shakers, but only five died in the faith. Hervey Elkins, the focus of this book, remained for 15 years and, as his journal reveals, he continued to keep up his friendship with his Enfield Shaker friends.

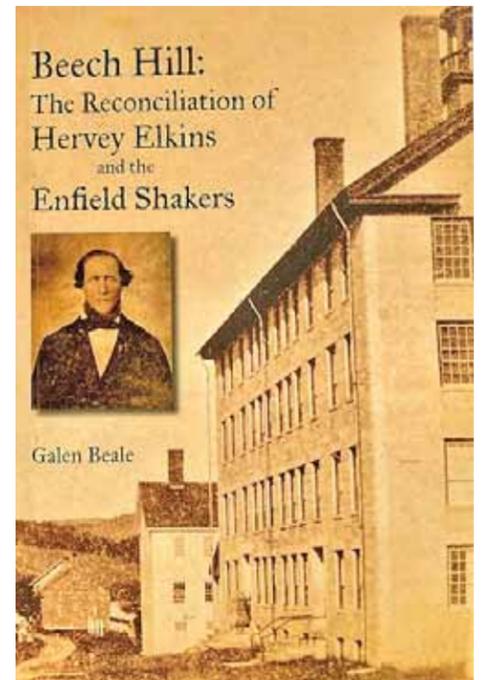
As they came and went from Beech Hill, the Elkins family always managed to keep the farm going, often with the help of John Proctor, who frequently loaned them money. The Elkinses attended the Beech Hill School and Proctor Academy and made a living off their farm. Hervey's wife, Eleanor, sent her son, Wendell, to Harvard College and Harvard Divinity School from the proceeds of her egg business. They worked in the Peg Factory and the Hame Manufactory, both in Andover, and regularly visited the Shaker community.

Hervey Elkins was the last of Josiah, Sr.'s children to run the farm, and after his death, his son Wendell took over the farm. Wendell eventually passed the farm to his two sons, Hervey and Kimball. The farm remained in the Elkins' family for 205 years, making it a Bicentennial Farm.

Captain Samuel Elkins and his son,

Josiah, Sr. are described by Wendell in his journals:

"Samuel Elkins was a rustler, a fine militia officer; good looking and graceful, social, and very popular. He might have been a colonel but for the officers had to victual [feed] the men, and his wife induced him to refuse, as she didn't like so much expense and rum-drinking. He died of heart disease, after a prosperous, busy life. I wish his children had had his business ability! He married into the Robinsons, an upright



Galen Beale recently published this book that follows the history of the Elkins family of Andover, especially as it pertains to the Enfield Shakers. The book is available at the Andover Historical Society. Photo: Galen Beale

but unsocial and peculiar race. Josiah Elkins was like the Robinsons: odd, cranky, whimsical, and unpractical."

Beech Hill: The Reconciliation of Hervey Elkins and the Enfield Shakers by Galen Beale, is published by Couper Press, Hamilton College, in Clinton, New York. It is available for sale at the Andover Historical Society. Visit AndoverHistory.org for more details.

Happy 4th of July

We will be closed all day July 4th.

We wish our staff, family & friends a Happy & Safe 4th of July.

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