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Lyme Gazette

A Public Newspaper for Lyme and Lyme Center, New Hampshire



Memorial Day in Lyme: "Honoring and Remembering..."

*by Barbara E. Balch
and Mary vanRoden*

Prior to about 1916, what we call Memorial Day was called Decoration Day, after the custom of decorating veterans' graves with flags and flowers.

In 1868, General John A. Logan, Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, designated May 30 as a day to honor the Union dead. Since then, the tradition of remembering the soldiers buried in Lyme's five cemeteries is unbroken, as each year on this day members of the James Young Post of the American Legion place between 250 and 300 flags on the graves of fallen soldiers, and townsfolk gather on the Common for the ceremonies.

The Town has appropriated funds since at least 1900 for these ceremonies, which were always well attended. P.H.A. Claffin's 1893 diary entry reported "Several hundred people gathered for a procession, flag-raising on the schoolhouse pole, speeches, music and a dance."

Lucy King wrote of the first Decora-

The procession, first led by McClure's Band from Woodsville and then by the Lyme Town Band, began the march down Market Street to Grant Brook where another wreath would be cast. On alternate years, the parade would proceed down Route 10 to the bridge crossing the brook near the Ed Jenks homestead.

Continuing to the Old or Highland Cemetery, the grave of one Lyme soldier was honored with the firing of three rifle volleys and the playing of *Taps*. From there, it was back to the Common where, from 1918 to 1968 (missing only two years), Lyme Center's Arthur E. Derby would open the ceremonies with a recitation of the Gettysburg Address. Someone else would deliver the famous war poem "In Flanders Fields", the Commander of Lyme's Post 80, school children and town officials would speak, and prayers would be offered.

Following the placement of a large wreath at the foot of the Civil War Monument, the band would lead all present in the National Anthem. In

Monuments on the Lyme Common



tion Day she remembered, in 1907: each school child chose a soldier's grave in the Old Cemetery to decorate with fresh flowers—her own bouquet of lilacs went to the grave of William Stark, who had enlisted in the Northern Continental Army in 1776, serving under Captain Ebenezer Green.

More recently—through about 1977—the Legion would sometimes meet at the Lyme Center Baptist Church and march to the bridge crossing Grant Brook at the foot of Baker Hill. There a wreath would be tossed into the water honoring the Navy dead.

Then, according to Frank Cutting, Sr., “they would high-tail it down to Lyme” to join with other parade participants: town officials, organizations and citizens, the Lebanon Legion and Auxiliary and the White River Junction VFW and Auxiliary, whose members have marched in Lyme’s Memorial Day observance since 1969.

cent years, the rifle volleys and the playing of *Taps* have occurred at the Monument.

Historically Memorial Day has been a time for us to remember and honor not only those who have died serving their country, but also relatives, friends and neighbors who are no longer with us. There are many, for example, who remember Freddie Dunbar, a Lyme local who lived on the outskirts of town, standing with his head bowed, holding a handmade cane in one hand and clutching a bouquet of purple lilacs in the other. The distance this man traveled, on foot, to participate in these services each year exemplifies the spirit and caring of the Lyme community.

This year's Memorial Day observance will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday, May 21, on the Common. This date was chosen to permit the participation of out-of-town delegations in Lyme's smaller-scale ceremonies.

Why Only a Two-Page Gazette?

As we mentioned in last month’s full-sized issue, this month found the *Gazette* very understaffed due to the vacations of both our editor and advertising manager. (If we had a larger staff, we’d have a bench to draw on...HINT, HINT!).

But rather than be absent for a whole month, we’re bringing you what we can: the ever-popular and ultra-useful calendar page, plus some timely history about Memorial Day in Lyme. With luck, we will be back in your mailboxes June 1, at 12 pages.

The *Gazette* staff is heartened by the nearly-100% favorable results of the questionnaires returned to us last month. We appreciate our financial contributors, too, who ensure that the *Gazette* can continue to be mailed to you free of charge.

In our new office upstairs at One Lyme Common, several more of us are

beginning to learn the basics of page-layout, using a donated computer and office furniture on loan. We’d love more company. We hope more will help us by joining the staff of volunteers.

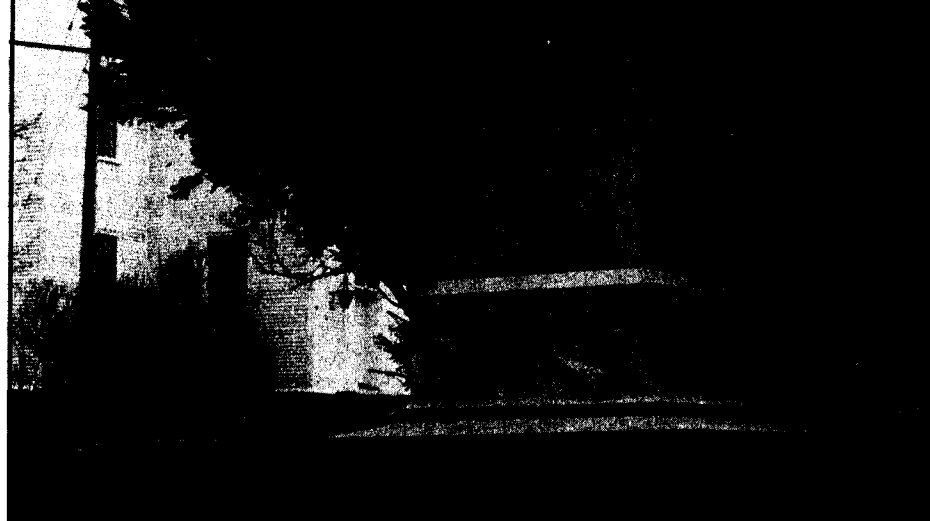
COMING NEXT MONTH

Look forward in the next issue to a new feature called “Lyme Wants to Know,” dedicated to finding answers to your long-standing questions about this fascinating town, such as: Has the Lyme Congregational Church always had two floors? and What’s a fulling mill and where was Lyme’s?

We’ll print the questions and invite anyone in town to respond.

Surely you have some lingering questions, too. If so, send them to us at P.O. Box 72, Lyme 03768. And those of you who know about the church or the fulling mill, please send us your wisdom!

The Editors



The Union soldier atop Lyme’s Civil War monument witnesses another Memorial Day observance, May 21, oblivious to a quiet controversy. Photo by Andy Lumley

THE CIVIL WAR MONUMENT (1917)

Planning for a monument to memorialize those soldiers from Lyme who perished in conflicts on American and foreign soil began in 1916 following the annual picnic of the Grand Army of the Republic and the Women’s Relief Corps of Lyme.

Charles H. Dimick, a Civil War veteran, raised \$1200 in donations to pay for the tall granite statue and engraved base, brought into town by horse and cart from the East Thetford Depot.

The dedication, at the town’s 1917 Decoration Day ceremonies, included a “basket picnic”, a hot dinner served by the Women’s Relief Corps, reading of a letter from New Hampshire Governor Keyes, recitations and several moving patriotic speeches. Following musical selections by the Lyme Cornet band, and vocals by the Church choir and a chorus of five young ladies, the monument was unveiled by Mrs. Elizabeth Southard Wright, chief donor to the monument fund.

Strangely, it was discovered that the names of 27 Lyme soldiers who had lost their lives in the Civil War were not to be found in the inscrip-

tion — an unfortunate discrepancy still causing some concern to linger among the families of those whose names are missing.

The Memory Stone (1987)

Seventy years after the Civil War monument was dedicated, a new monument was placed on the Common a few feet west of the flagpole.

Clyde Cutting, a former Commander of Lyme’s American Legion Post, brought to the town the idea of honoring those who served in American wars subsequent to the Civil War: the Spanish-American War (1848), World War I (1917-18), World War II (1941-45), the Korean conflict (1950-53) and Vietnam (1961-75).

Once voters approved expenditure of up to \$2000 for it, Cutting spent a full year making it a reality, with support from Lyme’s Legionnaires and others.

The carvings on the four-foot-tall piece of Rock of Ages granite were designed by Lyme’s Glen Buzzell, who described their meaning as follows: on the east-facing side, an American eagle looks to the rising sun, holding

—MONUMENTS continues on page 2

Submit items for listing in the calendar to Calendar Editor Peg Ackerson:

- By telephone: 795-4405
- By mail to Peg Ackerson, RR 3 Box 414, Lyme 03768

- By drop-off at Peg Ackerson's house on Dorchester Road, Lyme Center, or
- At the Gazette office, second floor, One Lyme Common, above Simi.
- Deadline: May 18 for June events.

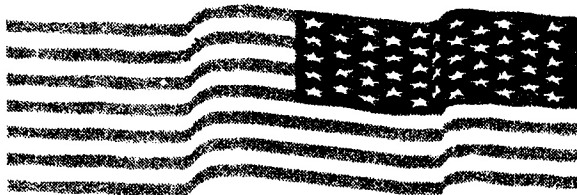
The Gazette calendar will include only events which are:

- Scheduled to take place in Lyme;
- Open to the public; and
- Sponsored by a non-profit organization.

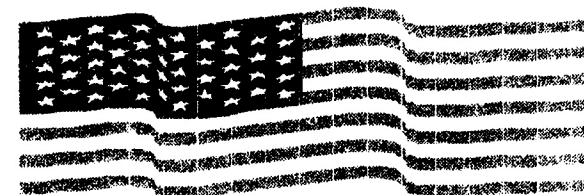
Submitters of calendar items should be sure to include complete information.

Notes: The symbol "\$\$" will indicate admission is charged for an event.

① = See article on page 1 for more info.



MAY CALENDAR



1 Monday

Photo Exhibit. "It Had to Be Done So I Did It." An exhibit sponsored by Friends of the Lyme Library and N.H. Humanities Council, portraying the lives of rural N.H. women. Library, through May 31.

7 p.m. Lyme Recreation/L.A.F. Monthly meeting. Fire Station meeting room.

7:30 p.m. Library Trustees. Monthly meeting. Contact Elisabeth Smallidge, 795-4474. Library.

7:30 p.m. Conservation Commission. Monthly meeting. Contact Steve Maddock, 795-2946. Town Offices.

8 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous. Weekly meeting. Call 448-6655 for NH & VT & Al-Anon info. Lyme Library.

2 Tuesday

9 a.m. Needlework group. Home of Lucy Birch.

10 a.m. - Noon. Bag Day rummage sale. Lyme Center Baptist Church Vestry. Sponsored by Ladies Aid.

7 p.m. Girl Scout Organiza-

4 Thursday

12:30 p.m. Senior Lunch. Lyme Congregational Church.

7:30 p.m. Zoning Board. Monthly meeting. Town Offices.

5 Friday

9:30 a.m. Selectmen's weekly meeting. Town Offices.

10 a.m. Observance of Arbor Day. Grades K & 1. School.

6:30 p.m. Potluck supper. Betty Lee, speaker: "Christian Art and Architecture in Turkey"—from her recent trip to the Middle East. Lyme Congregational Church.

8 p.m. American Legion. Monthly meeting. James Young Post 80. Contact Tom Husband, 795-4467. American Legion Hall.

6 Saturday

Green Up Day. Promoted by the Conservation Commission. Trash bags donated by Nichols' Hardware. Better yet, make every day Green-Up Day!

9 a.m. Utility Club Plant Sale. Lyme School.

7 Sunday

7-9 p.m. Lyme Town Band. Weekly practice. School.

10 Wednesday

1 p.m. Ladies Aid meeting. Lyme Center Baptist Church Vestry.

7-9 p.m. Community Computer Course. Second in a series for beginners and intermediates, to be given 4 consecutive weeks. \$10 per session. Space limited; registration is a must: call Alix Howell, 795-4717 eves. Lyme School Computer Ctr. \$\$

7:30 p.m. Lyme Planning Board. Bi-weekly meeting. Town Offices.

7-8:30 p.m. Boy Scouts. Weekly meeting. Lyme Congregational Church.

11 Thursday

9 a.m.-Noon. Well Child Clinic in Orford. Contact Ellen Heudeska, VNA VNH, Lebanon Office, 448-1597 for app't.

7:30 p.m. Lyme School Board. Regular monthly meeting. School.

12 Friday

9:30 a.m. Selectmen's weekly meeting. Town Offices.

16 Tuesday

Church Newsletter mailing.

9 a.m. Needlework group. Home of Lucy Birch.

7:30 p.m. Friends of Lyme Library. Annual Meeting. School Community Room. Featuring a dramatic reading of "It Had To Be Done So I Did It." Contact Judy Russell, 795-4136. Lyme Library.

7-8 p.m. Weekly Hymn Sing. Lyme Baptist Church.

7-9 p.m. Lyme Town Band. Weekly practice. School.

17 Wednesday

7-8:30 p.m. Boy Scouts. Weekly meeting. Lyme Church.

18 Thursday

Gazette calendar deadline.

19 Friday

9:30 a.m. Selectmen's weekly meeting. Town Offices.

20 Saturday

Armed Forces Day

21 Sunday

9-11 a.m. Recycling and

22 Monday

Bargain Barn starts accepting contributions. Please leave in Horsesheds, not on back porch of Lyme House.

23 Tuesday

12:30 p.m. Utility Club. Annual Luncheon Meeting. Home of Jo Grant.

7-8 p.m. Weekly Hymn Sing. Lyme Baptist Church.

7-9 p.m. Lyme Town Band. Weekly practice. School.

24 Wednesday

7-8:30 p.m. Boy Scouts. Weekly meeting. Lyme Congregational Church.

7:30 p.m. Lyme Planning Board. Bi-weekly meeting. Town Offices.

26 Friday

9:30 a.m. Selectmen's weekly meeting. Town Offices.

7:30 p.m. "Hello Dolly" performance. Lyme Drama Club. School Community Room. No admission; donations welcomed. School Community Rm.

27 Saturday

needed for Lyme troop next fall. Contact Patty Hudson, 795-4535. Meeting will be at Latham Library, Thetford Hill.

7-8 p.m. Weekly Hymn Sing.
Lyme Baptist Church.

7-9 p.m. Lyme Town Band.
Weekly practice. Contact Earl Strout, 795-4587. School.

7:30 p.m. Lyme Pinnacle Snowmobile Club. Monthly meeting. Contact Alice Small, 795-2627. Dowd's Country Inn.

3 Wednesday

6 a.m. Men's Breakfast Group. Contact Jim Mason, 795-4346. Lyme Congregational Church.

7-8:30 p.m. Boy Scouts. Weekly meeting. Contact Robert Pantel, 795-2742. Lyme Congregational Church.

—*MONUMENTS continued from page 1*

a quiver of arrows representing "commitment to defending America against aggression, and an olive branch, representing willingness to seek peace whenever feasible." On the reverse, a carved wreath faces the setting sun above the cursive inscription "Lest we forget."

Set on a base prepared by Jasper Day and Russell Estes, the Memory Stone was dedicated May 24, 1987, following the Memorial Day parade.

Frank Cutting, Sr., also a former Commander of Lyme's American Legion, has undertaken to have the stone's inscription updated. Working with present Post Commander Tom Husband and Jim Harris of Fairlee, he hopes to have the names of Lyme's veterans of Lebanon, Grenada, Panama and the Persian Gulf wars added to the stone in time for this year's Memorial Day observances.

These articles on Memorial Day include material from Dorf Sears' history "Lyme Common, Part II, 1785-1977."

dump hours. Town garage.

8 Monday

Testing week at school.
Grades 3, 4, 6, 8.

6 p.m. Deadline for Church Newsletter. Dropbox at Lyme House, or mail to PO Box 44, Lyme.

7 p.m. Volunteer firefighters. Monthly meeting. Contact Don Elder, 795-2936. Fire Station meeting room.

8 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous. Weekly meeting. Lyme Library.

9 Tuesday

1:45 p.m. Shinzumi Assembly. Japanese dance. School Community Room. All welcome.

7-8 p.m. Weekly Hymn Sing.
Lyme Baptist Church.

13 Saturday

10 a.m.-1 p.m. Lyme Nursery School May Play Day. Fund-raiser for Lyme Cooperative Nursery School. \$3 kids and adults, max. \$20 for family. Contact Anne Gamble, 795-4604. The Nursery School, at the Congregational Church.

2-4 p.m. Art Show Opening. Artists: Keita Metz, Larry Howard, Gary Hamel. Library.

14 Sunday

Mother's Day

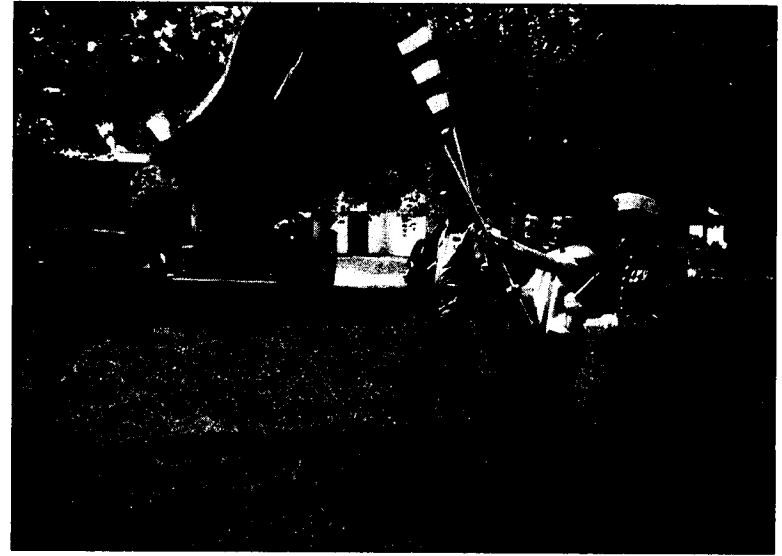
9-11 a.m. Recycling and dump hours. Town garage.

15 Monday

7:30 p.m. Connecticut River Joint Committee meeting. Contact Adair Mulligan, 795-3155. Town Offices.

11 a.m. Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony. Lyme Common.

7:30 p.m. Heno Dolly performance. Lyme Drama Club. See listing above.



The 1994 Color Guard: Brian Rich, Tom Husband, Bob Thebodo, and Shawn O'Keefe, left to right, led the parade on a beautiful spring day.

Green-Up Day

In contrast to previous years, when Green-Up Day in Lyme has alternated between extremely organized and non-existent, the Conservation Commission is trying a middle path this year.

Instead of having neighborhood "captains" organize each stretch of road in town, Lyme residents are asked to collect trash along their own road frontage this year.

Many, of course, do this periodically anyway, but the Commission hopes the entire town can be covered on Saturday, May 6.

Nichols Hardware will give out Green-Up Day trash bags at the store through May 6.

Recognizing that roadside trash often contains debris, residents are asked to recycle only clean cans and bottles, and deposit all other trash in the packer truck.

Let's make Lyme SHINE May 6!

RiverFest '95

Lyme will be a major participant in the upcoming "Connecticut RiverFest '95", a two-week celebration of the Connecticut River and its tributaries, June 19 through July 1. Most towns from Claremont to Haverhill have planned special events, with Lyme involved in three of the major ones:

- A Saturday morning bird-walk, breakfast and "ramble" to Trout Pond on June 24, and
- On July 1, a breakfast-and-lunch bicycle tour from Lyme to Haverhill, and a River Parade for canoes, kayaks, rafts, classic wooden boats and "floating art," accompanied on the water by the Lyme Town Band.

The celebration will close with a concert in Wilder featuring popular folk singer-songwriter Bill Staines and the dance group Taino-Inglase.

RiverFest '95 organizers hope to make it an annual event, promoting year-round awareness of and involvement in ongoing efforts to restore and maintain the River's ecological integrity.

Carola Lea is Lyme's contact person (795-4127). Look for details in the June *Gazette*.

28 Sunday

9-11 a.m. Recycling and dump hours. Town garage.

29 Monday

Memorial Day

School closed.

Town Offices closed.

Library closed.

8 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous. Weekly meeting. Lyme Library.

30 Tuesday

7-8 p.m. Weekly Hymn Sing.
Lyme Baptist Church.

7-9 p.m. Lyme Town Band.
Weekly practice. School.

31 Wednesday

7-8:30 p.m. Boy Scouts. Weekly meeting. Lyme Congregational Church.