

Please join us at the Catamount Hill Association's 30th Quinquennial Reunion

Saturday, August 8, 2020

Virtual Meeting at 11 am EDT via Zoom



The Catamount Hill Association was formally organized in 1875 to honor our ancestors, and we have gathered every five years since. Celebrate 145 years with us!

Maintaining Our Traditions During a Pandemic

This year our 30th Quinquennial Reunion program via Zoom, a digital video conference service, will be vastly different from the first reunion in 1875 held near the caves known as "the dens." In that year numerous folks came from the American middle and west to reconnect with those at home in the old neighborhood on the Hill where their forebears had established their homes and built a community as part of the fallout from the Revolutionary War.

In 1875 the postal service, the telegraph, and the steam railway were the available communication systems. It is hard to imagine what they would think of our use this year of 21st century technology as a means to remain true to our tradition of holding meetings at 5-year intervals.

They would have understood the ravages of a historic epidemic such as COVID-19 (they were well versed in Biblical lore after all), but our use of the electronic devices we have today would be difficult for them to comprehend. It will not be the same as meeting in person, but the technology at our disposal in 2020 allows us to remain true to our traditions and faithful to our by-laws and the bonds which have united our families for multiple generations. We remain hopeful that conditions will permit in-person gatherings in all future years.

How to Access the Meeting Using Zoom

If you are receiving this newsletter by email, you will be sent a link to the Quinquennial Reunion a day or two before the meeting. If you have not used Zoom before, there will be a link in the email to allow you to download the app. There will also be telephone numbers that will allow anyone without easy access to the Internet to call in to the meeting.

If you are receiving this newsletter as hard copy by mail, please email us at catamounthill1875@gmail.com with your contact information so we can send you the link or the phone number and password to log onto the meeting. Although our program will be adapted to the circumstances, we will retain some familiar features:

- Welcome from the Association President
- A reading from the old Farley family Bible which has been present at every Reunion since 1875
- A reading of Fanny Bowen Shippee's poem, *The Story of the Catamount Hill Flag Raising*
- And a brief business meeting including reports from the clerk, the treasurer, the historian, and the election of officers

The 2020 Reunion via Zoom will include a narrated presentation of historic and contemporary images



What You Can Do

- Share a brief story about your ancestor's life on the Hill
- Mail or email a letter to be read at the meeting

2015 Group Photo



Current Officers

President	Sonya Hamdan
Vice President	Toni Manning
Clerk	Barbara James
Treasurer	Douglas James
Historian	Prentice Crosier
Board	Sarah Davenport Dorothy Giffin Susan Samoriski

Election Candidates

President	Toni Manning
Vice President	Sonya Hamdan
Clerk	Linda Wagner
Treasurer	Diantha Wholey
Historian	Prentice Crosier
Board	Dorothy Giffin Richard King Susan Samoriski Ellen Shaw

Catamount Hill resident – Ezra Willis

Ezra Willis was born October 28, 1763, in Sudbury, MA. At the age of 17 he signed on to fight in the Revolutionary War for six months and then continued his military duties until the end of the war. Ezra married Susannah Haynes, also from Sudbury, and they had their first five children there.

In 1793 shortly before the death of his father, Ezra bought 100 acres of land on Catamount Hill in Colrain, MA. Although the records are confusing, it is thought Ezra purchased the land using his military script. In 1795, Ezra moved his family to the Hill where he had cleared enough land to build a log cabin.

Ezra died in Charlemont, MA on April 30, 1818, at age 54.

Meadow Place, Catamount Hill



Foundation ruins, visible in the photo above, mark the location of Meadow Place, a small farmstead built in 1812 by Artemis Churchill at the north end of a beaver pond. 12 years later it was occupied by Dr. Nathaniel Davenport and his family. "Dr. Nat" drained the pond in order to grow potatoes, but about 1840 moved down the Hill to Griswoldville. The next inhabitants of Meadow Place were the nephew of Dr. Nat's wife, Alice Farnsworth (Davenport) Davenport, Orrin B. Davenport. Orrin married Rosanna "Roxy" Farnsworth in 1851 and the young couple lived at Meadow Place until Orrin's untimely death in 1861, and Roxy, Meadow Place's last resident, returned to the home of her father, Abram Farnsworth. At the very first Catamount Hill Reunion in 1875, Dr. Ammon Davenport from North Adams, Dr. Nat's son, described Meadow Place as "left desolate to this day." 25 years later at the Quinquennial Reunion of 1900 he noted "...the old house...sometime since went up in flames and smoke, and the home of our early boyhood is no more".

Visit our new website:

www.catamounthillassociation.org

Find us on:

[Facebook](#) at CatamountHillAssociation



"The First Flag Raising at an American Public School 1812", Painting by Frank E. Schoonover

The image above is a painting by the American illustrator, Frank Earle Schoonover (1877-1972). He did most of his work in the early 20th century for book covers and magazines such as the *Ladies Home Journal*. This illustration was created for a calendar which presented a different patriotic American theme for each month. It depicts the Flag Raising of 1812 by members of the Catamount Hill neighborhood in opposition to the Federalist Party's complacency to the fact that American sailors were being taken off ships at sea and impressed into the Royal Navy. Another depiction is a poem by Fanny Bowen Shippee which is read at Quinquennial Reunions. Both Shippee's poem and Schoonover's painting capture the fervor our ancestors expressed in 1812, in an event which we descendants still celebrate today.

Catamount Hill Publications make great family gifts

<i>A Sketch of the Origin & Growth of the Catamount Hill Association of Colrain, MA</i>	\$20.00
<i>The Puzzle of Catamount Hill</i>	\$8.00
<i>Where the Schoolhouse Flag First Floated</i>	\$7.00
<i>The Young Housekeepers' Companion</i>	\$6.00
<i>The First School-house Flag</i>	\$6.00
<i>The Toad and The Eagle – A Catamount Tale</i>	\$7.00

(includes shipping -- see more details on our website)

Request publications by mail or email

catamounthill1875@gmail.com

Tax-deductible donations will help support our mailings, website, meeting expenses and future activities.

Checks may be made out to:

Catamount Hill Association
P.O. Box 8
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

The Catamount Hill Association is a non-profit 501(c)(3) public charity organization.