

# Middlebury Community House News

Main Street . Middlebury, Vermont 05753

Spring 2008



Early sketch of the house Horatio Seymour built in 1816

## Mission Statement:

Partners for The Middlebury Community House was formed to promote financial support to assist with responsible caretaking and maintenance of the historic home belonging to the citizens of Middlebury.

## Reservations:

The Middlebury Community House is available for meetings, receptions and private parties. Call Pat at 388-2071 to discuss your needs.

## The House - Yesterday & Today

Glenn Andres, Professor at Middlebury College and local historian calls the Middlebury Community House, the most complete Federal Style building still intact in Middlebury. In *A Walking History of Middlebury*, Mr. Andres points out the following details about the Community House. Built in 1816 - 1817, the house has four high rising chimneys and is crowned by a white wooden balustrade over the eaves. The white wooden fence along a stone wall terrace, has alternating long and short pickets that emphasize the height of the house outline and broaden the base line. The graceful curved door hood, called a Belcast, shelters the doorway. It is the only one left in Middlebury. The builder of the house, the Honorable Horatio Seymour, was a native of Litchfield, Connecticut and was born May 31, 1778, son of Major Moses Seymour and Mary Marsh Seymour. Horatio's father served in the Revolutionary War, represented his town in the state legislature and was the town clerk for almost 40 years, instilling strong community values within his children. Horatio graduated from Yale University in 1797. He spent his first year out of school as an assistant teacher at the Academy in Cheshire, Connecticut. The following year he decided to study Law in Litchfield. Horatio arrived in Middlebury in 1799 to continue his law studies with Honorable Daniel Chipman. In 1800 Horatio married Lucy Case, daughter of John Case of Addison and sister of Loyal Case, Esq. a friend and attorney with whom Horatio worked. Mr. Seymour became licensed to practice law and entered immediately into an extensive practice. He quickly became an esteemed lawyer in Middlebury and Addison County. He was appointed postmaster when he arrived in Middlebury, was one of the first directors of the Vermont State Bank when it was established in 1806 and was elected to the U.S. Senate where he served from 1821 - 1833. He supported the incorporation of Middlebury College, Addison County Grammar School and the Female Seminary founded by Emma Willard. Horatio was certainly one of the leading citizens of Middlebury; in 1847 he was honored by Yale University when he received an Honorary Doctors of Law Degree.



Horatio and his wife, Lucy had four children. Three sons: Ozias, Moses and Horatio, all became lawyers. Only Ozias stayed in Middlebury where he practiced law with his father for a time. The Seymour's daughter Emma married Phillip Battell, another well known Middlebury name.

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The Directors of the Middlebury Community House publish a newsletter twice a year as a way of educating and communicating with Partners for The Middlebury Community House. Within each newsletter we aim to give family history, information about the House past and present use. Information about Honorable Horatio Seymour was taken from *History of the Town of Middlebury In The County of Addison, Vermont* by Samuel Swift.

View our newsletter on the website:  
[www.middleburycommunityhouse.org](http://www.middleburycommunityhouse.org)  
Your membership shows interest and helps us retain our 501-c3 status. Tax deductible in accordance with the law.

## Partners Memberships

With this newsletter you are invited to join the Partners for The Middlebury Community House. The organization, formed a few years ago, has helped fund a designated improvement to the Middlebury Community House each year. Past support has proven to be very valuable, but we need more interest. Your membership will make a difference! Please consider sending in the enclosed sign up form and your donation of \$20. This is the first appeal mailing we have sent. Area residents who have used the Community House in the past were selected to receive this mailing. It is our hope that people who are familiar with the Community House will understand the importance of maintaining this wonderful property.

# Look Who Uses The Community House

The Community House proves to be busy throughout the winter and spring season, here is a look at some of the events.

**Santa visits**  
are always a big hit with parents,  
grandparents and children in the area  
JOINT VENTURE WITH MIDDLEBURY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Holiday Parties

Family Reunions

*Christian Services weekly meetings*

## Monthly Potluck for Hospice Support Group

Children's Tea's  
and  
Teddy Bear Social

Reception for new book preview  
**THE TASTE OF PLACE**  
AMY B. TRUBEK

Meetings. . . to name a few:  
Middlebury Business Association  
United Way of Addison County  
Court Diversion & Community Justice  
Frog Hollow Jury Showings

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## 2008 Partner Improvement Goals

The Directors realize the need to continue our maintenance of the exterior of the house, keeping the fence freshly painted as need arises and painting one side of the house each year to prevent further brick deterioration. We are looking into making needed changes on the interior as well. We have secured estimates to upholster five pieces of furniture, to replace a 12' x 15' area rug in the boardroom and to carpet the library and parlors on the ground level. The area rug and upholstery will be designated as first projects. If enough money is raised the carpet will also be replaced. Estimate for these projects is \$13000.00.

Would you or a group you belong to like to sponsor a chair? We can give you information on individual costs for a specific piece of furniture that you can adopt. Last year, Partners assisted in funding the capping of the basement dirt floor. In the past a slow fuel leak on the dirt floor had caused an odor to be present. The contaminated dirt was removed and a concrete floor was poured. The results are amazing! The odor has been eliminated and the space in the basement is more usable. Please join today! Renewal notices will be sent late fall for the next calendar year.

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## Generous Community . . . our sincere thanks go to . . .

Julia Blocksma and Grace Weber for resurfacing the piano. Julia and Grace both teach piano lessons at the Community House, they wanted to improve the piano for their students needs as well as to extend the life of our piano.

Laura Begnoche who donates much of her time to help in the kitchen during non-profit events held at the Community House.

Charles Bain for his help with our computer operation and internet access.

Kim and Judy Loewer, of Loewer and Associates, CPA for their generous donation to the Partners for The Middlebury Community House.

AA for their donation towards fuel for the Community Cottage.

Middlebury Garden Club for the year round beauty they supply with bouquets in the house.

### Directors of Middlebury Community House

Lynda Rheame, President

*Member at Large \**

G. Kenneth Perine, Finance

*President National Bank of Middlebury \**

James Swift, ESQ.

*Rep. Swift/Stewart Family \**

Raymond Churchill

*Member at Large \**

Nancy Merolle

*Rep. President Woman's Club*

Jessica Liebowitz

*Rep. President Middlebury College*

Phyllis Cunningham

*Regent, DAR*

Richard Emilo, Clerk

*Member at Large \**

Kevin Newton, Bldg./Gds.

*Member at Large*

Fletcher Brush

*Member at Large*

### Staff:

Patricia Hornbeck

*House Director*

Mari Quesnel

*Treasurer*

Elizabeth Quesnel

*Housekeeper*

Norm Grenier

*Maintenance*

*\* Trustees*