

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

Nutfield 300th

DERRY  NEWS

Thursday, August 15, 2019

Londonderry's Old Home Day celebration includes many historical activities taking place at the Morrison House museum on Pillsbury Road. There will be historic tours, demonstrations by artisans and military encampment activities. Old Home Day is Aug. 14-18.



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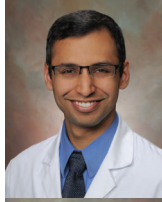
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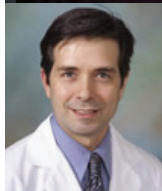
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Honoring Nutfield's first settlers

By JULIE HUSS

When a band of Scottish-Irish Presbyterian families trekked to New England from Londonderry, Northern Ireland in 1718 to start a new life, they brought with them strong leadership in their ministers, including the Rev. James MacGregor.

They also brought hope as they ventured to their new land.

The original 16 families eventually came to an unoccupied and ungranted tract of land where chestnut, butternut and walnut trees flourished — “Nutfield.”

On April 12, 1719, MacGregor delivered his first sermon in the new land.

“The spot chosen for this first religious service was under a large oak, on the east side of Beaver Pond,” according to George Willey’s Book of Nutfield. “Mr.

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...that the history of Cobbett’s Pond in Windham began with a man named the Rev. Thomas Cobbet? Cobbet received the pond in a land grant in 1663. However, he never actually lived on the land and neither did any other Europeans until 1719. Much of Cobbett’s Pond’s early history involves the Native Americans of the Penacook tribe who lived in the area.

MacGregor’s text was from Isaiah 32:2, ‘And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.’”

Willey’s massive, Please see **SETTLERS**, Page 56



The graves of the earliest of Nutfield settlers are located at Forest Hill Cemetery in East Derry.

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SETTLERS

■ Continued from Page S4

comprehensive 1895 history of Nutfield including his own introduction where he stated that he hoped to offer a detailed look at the beginnings and the history that followed.

“Here is the material for real history,” Willey wrote. “Back of the so-called public events behind the acts of public bodies, lie the causes which spring from the character of the people and always in them centers our real interest. In the southwestern part of Rockingham County are many historic places. Many of her citizens have played as prominent a part in the life of State and Nation as those of any other section of New Hampshire. To pay fitting honor to the men and women of the past, and at the same time do adequate justice to those of the present is the object of this work.”

Historian Richard Holmes writes in his book “The Road To Derry” that in June, 1722, Nutfield received its charter, signed by Gov. Samuel Shute of Massachusetts and Lt. Gov. John Wentworth of New Hampshire on behalf of King George I of Great Britain.

“The new town took the official name of Londonderry after the Northern Ireland county where the Aghadown pioneers had emigrated in 1718,” Holmes writes.

As part of the original



First sermon in Nutfield, April 1719, courtesy image from Willey's Book of Nutfield.

NUTFIELD TIMELINE

April 11, 1719: The original settler families arrive in what is now East Derry and the following day the Rev. James MacGregor leads a service on the shores of Beaver Lake, his “first sermon.” That day, April 12, is considered the official start of Nutfield.

1722: Nutfield becomes the town of Londonderry.

1742: Windham splits off and is chartered.

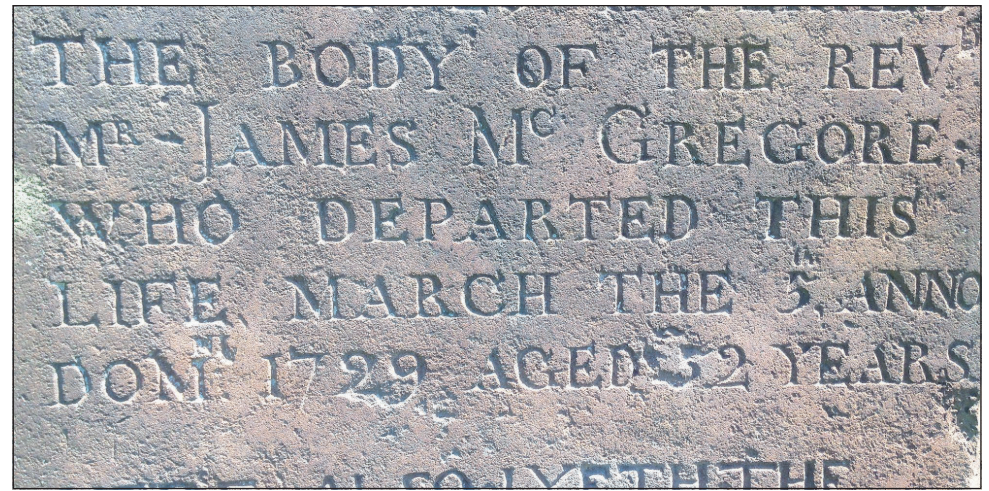
1752: Derryfield is chartered and eventually becomes Manchester.

1827: Derry splits from Londonderry and is chartered as its own separate town.

NUTFIELD300TH.ORG

charter, certain rules had to be followed including: a meetinghouse had to be built within two years; each year in October a peck of potatoes must be sent to the royal governor as a token rent; no one is permitted to cut down trees that were of sufficient size to be used as ships’ masts; a town fair would be held every May and October and a town meeting would be held every March.

Holmes writes that as each year passed, Londonderry grew larger and larger with more people coming there to live. By the mid-18th century it was the second largest town in New Hampshire with Portsmouth taking the top honor. The 114 square miles of Londonderry would not remain intact forever as soon, it would be broken off into pieces to become new communities



Gravestone of the Rev. James MacGregor, who led the original 16 families to the new world, known as Nutfield.

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...the Windham Presbyterian Church was founded in 1742 with its first pastor the Rev. William Johnston? Services were held three times on Sunday and a prayer service was included during the week. The first church structure was on Copp’s Hill, now known as Cemetery Hill. In 1798, a new meeting house was built, currently the present Town Hall. The original meeting house was transported to Salem to become a family home.

including Windham, Derryfield in Manchester and eventually Derry and Londonderry.

As 2019 continues on, the spirit and traditions of those earliest of settlers to this area remain strong as communities honor the past, the present and look to the future.

AT BEAVER LAKE

“...a hiding place from the winds and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”

--Ezekiel 32:2, from the first Nutfield sermon by the Rev. James McGregor, Beaver Lake April 12, 1719

As evening fell along the shore,
worried too much about the rent,
I think of kin, anxious and poor,
that crossed the sea
to a new and dangerous continent.
Follow me.

Through miles of wilderness they took
their bearings in a trackless wood.
They settled by West Running Brook,
weary but free.
The fathers said they’d found it good.
Come with me.

How did those immigrants endure?
How did they make it through that year?
They, too, were fearful and unsure
of what would be.
I thought I heard the sermon here:
Believe in me.

— Robert Crawford

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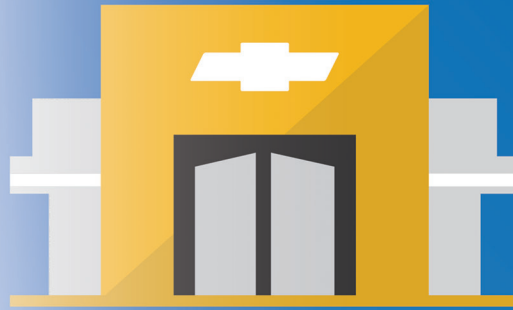
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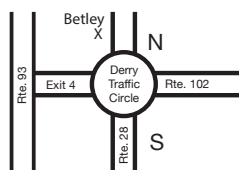


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It's been quite a ride to Nutfield's 300th anniversary

By **Richard Holmes**



Celebrate! The Nutfield towns are now 300 years old, having first been settled in 1719; a time when your great, great, great, great, great, great grandfathers and grandmothers

were likely alive and perhaps living in Europe, Africa, or Asia.

As an historian, I am always impressed by how well that the Nutfieldians' (my word) towns have turned out. It hasn't been easy. For three centuries our people have lived with the forces of derision, both from within and without. Think of our history as resembling a couple of the rides at Canobie Lake Park — sometimes it's like the quiet, sedate ride on its merry-go-round but other times it's more like the park's corkscrew roller coaster with head-spinning turns, and anxiety causing loop-de-loops. For 300 years it's been quite a ride! And despite it all, Nutfield has managed to survive and has kept intact that well defined sense of community that was first brought here by those pioneers in 1719.

When we first arrived at the Nutfield Grant in the great forest wilderness, we were perhaps 200 Presbyterian emigrants from the north of Ireland. These so-called Scottish-Irish settlers were led by their pastor, the Rev. James MacGregor, known throughout Ireland as "The Peacemaker." His

congregation left Aghadowey in county Londonderry to escape economic, social, cultural, and religious persecution by the British. Within a few years Nutfield's population began to grow larger and was soon incorporated by the royal government as a town called Londonderry.

During the first dozen years after 1719, our citizens were occasionally threatened and violently attacked by ruffians from Haverhill who claimed the Nutfield Grant was their land, not ours. There was also the ever present fear of attack and kidnapping by Indians led by the French from Canada. Despite all these dangers, we stood together and bravely made the land ours.

By 1740 the town was becoming more English than Scottish. Soon a religious schism forced the town to build two meeting houses. The less populated, western half of the town apparently remained mainly Scottish Presbyterians who while being very strong in their faith, also enjoyed a "live and let live" attitude toward life. This was called the Londonderry Parish. The majority of those in the more populated eastern half of the town seems to have been more English and doctrinally rather like the Calvinist Puritan of Massachusetts who took a rather strict and dour view of life. This was the Derry Parish. Two parishes. One town.

In 1769 we had managed to survive our first 50 years and but were now pondering the question of whether we should we remain loyal to Mother Britain or should we join the Patriot cause? That year a group of our men pointed

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...that First Parish Church in East Derry was the first church in Derry, and the historic tower, a symbol for the community and a landmark of history, was a Christopher Wren designed structure, added in 1824? Wren was an acclaimed English architect and designer of churches. Other churches with Wren's designs are scattered around New England.

their muskets at a squad of British soldiers sent here to rescue a few deserters, who no longer wanted to be in the King's army. At the start of the Revolutionary War, our men officially voted 372-15 to support independence and there were public threats of death against anyone who might be secretly pro-British. How split we really were is unknown but more than a 100 of our men did enlist in the Patriot Army and Dr. Matthew Thornton of Derry Village signed the Declaration of Independence. On the other side, one of our selectmen proved to be the biggest British spy in Northern New England and had to flee our town under the cover of night. The English Range Road was also believed by many to be a covert of clandestine king-loving Tories.

Over the years parts of the old Nutfield Grant began to break off to found their own towns. The southeast corner of our town became Windham; the northwest corner became Derryfield in 1751, now part of Manchester. In 1778

the southwest corner became a part of the town of Hudson. Originally Nutfield was 114 square miles, but by 1778 it was reduced to just 78 square miles and now contained just the Derry and Londonderry parishes which were culturally, politically and economically very different from each other. In 1827 after some mean spirited town meetings and sneaky land grabs by Derry's power brokers, the state allowed the two battling parishes to split and become incorporated as the present towns of Derry and Londonderry. I do hope that the angst of 1827 is now forgiven by the kind people of Londonderry. We really did treat you very badly back then. Sorry!

The pages of local newspapers like the Derry News were filled with the accounts of the causes of tension within the Nutfield towns. Our citizens over the generations vigorously argued the pros and cons of abolitionism, on how to keep hobos out of town, giving women the vote, mercy killing, the legality of the sale of alcohol, opposition to the war in Vietnam and raising or lowering taxes, etc. There were many on each side of these issues. Starting in the 1870s we began to see the end of our agricultural-based economy, and soon most workers were employed in factories or in the service industries. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, we suffered with an unemployment rate of somewhat over 30% as many local factories, businesses, and stores closed.

During the 1930s, '40s and '50s, the Nutfield towns began to experience population stagnation. Many of our young people left town as

soon as they were of age as there were few jobs available locally: we had become a part of "The Great East Coast Rust Belt."

This economic down slide changed in 1963 with the opening of Interstate 93. Soon Nutfield area's population doubled, then tripled and finally quadrupled. New housing developments now sprang up all over the area. Soon gone were the pastures that were once grazed by many hundreds of cows. Seemingly overnight century-old forests were cut down and ancient homes razed to be the site of apartment complexes. We were now part of "The Great East Coast Megalopolis."

While this growth brought economic prosperity it also brought about new problems. Our roads became markedly more crowded and traffic lights had to be installed at many now dangerous intersections. This population boom meant there was the need for a larger police and fire departments. Classrooms became seriously over crowded and new schools had to be built. To pay for this necessary improvement to our infrastructure our taxes had to be raised and in the 1990s the shrill voice of taxpayers' "revolts" was heard throughout the land. In 2003 many disgruntled locals supported an attempt to make East Derry a separate town. What ever we went through, we went through it together.

Despite 300 years of political, religious, social, and economic struggles, we are still here.

Throughout our long history, after all is said and done, the majorities

Please see **HOLMES**, Page S10

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DERRY: A look back

DERRY — The big celebration officially began in Derry in April, honoring the 300th birthday of the original Nutfield settlement.

The kickoff Founders Weekend drew crowds to the historic First Parish Church in East Derry, known as the original meeting house in the area, for a long list of historical activities, tours, demonstrations, family ancestry, research opportunities and guest speakers.

First Parish is playing a big role in the Nutfield anniversary all this year, and is undergoing a major renovation project.

During Founders Weekend, a Nutfield Gala was held at the Derry Opera House where more guest speakers spoke of the history of the area and connections between America and Northern Ireland.

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

....that it wasn't just Alan B. Shepard Jr. that catapulted into local history and beyond as the first American in space in 1961? His father, Col. Alan Bartlett Shepard Sr., Class of 1909 at Pinkerton Academy, served the local community for more than 50 years as the organist at historic First Parish Church in East Derry.

Cemetery in East Derry, and the 135th birthday of the Molly Reid Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, honoring the group's founder Annie Bartlett Shepard, grandmother to astronaut, first American in space and East Derry native Alan B. Shepard Jr.

Gala guest speaker Richard Hanna, representing the Ulster-Scots Agency, told gala guests it was a privilege to be included in the Nutfield celebration.

"We consider all of you as our kinfolk," Hanna said.

Derry's first poet laureate Robert Crawford also read an original poem for the occasion, "At Beaver Lake."

More anniversary events followed including a "Living Treasures" luncheon, a Sons of Union Veterans and Allies in a Civil War military encampment at Forest Hill



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Students from the McGonagle School of Irish Dance perform for the crowd during the Nutfield 300th gala celebration in the Derry Opera House.

MORE PHOTOS, PAGES S10 AND S11

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HOLMES

Continued from Page S8

of Nutfieldians always manage to put aside their differences and work together for the common good. Perhaps this attitude may have been inherited from Nutfield's founder, MacGregor, The Peacemaker, who knew and preached that toleration and agreement were always needed in order to survive as a family, a neighborhood, a people, or a town.

What will be the future of the old Nutfield towns? I don't know. I'm a historian, not a prophet, despite my long white beard. All I know for certain is that in 2019 I find in the area many, many schools filled with excellent teachers and eager students, well maintained town halls, fire, and police stations, each with truly professional staffs, fabulously stocked local museums run by dedicated volunteers, and neat neighborhoods lined with well cared for homes. All of this

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...on April 12, 1719, the first party of families arriving in this, the new world, would gather on the shoreline of Beaver Lake in Derry to hear the Rev. James MacGregor preach his very first sermon in this, what would be called "Nutfield? That day is considered the official founding of Nutfield.

leads me to believe that our future will be good — though likely not without struggle, disagreements, and dissent. To borrow some of the words of William Faulkner, I truly believe that because of our citizens' pride of place, compassion, and awareness of the area's history and traditions, our sense of community will remain, and it "will not merely survive ...it will prevail."

Richard Holmes is a historian, educator and author of many books and articles on local history.



TIM JEAN/Staff photos

First Parish Church in East Derry looked a bit like a renovation project as the official Nutfield 300th celebration kicked off in April of this year. The historic meetinghouse is undergoing a major renovation project.

The giant church bell seen from inside the original tower at First Parish Church in East Derry. The historic church is undergoing a major renovation project.



Michelle Parrish demonstrates how the early settlers would use a flax brake to turn flax into fibers, then spin and weave them into linen during the Nutfield 300th celebration Founders Weekend kickoff at First Parish Church in East Derry.

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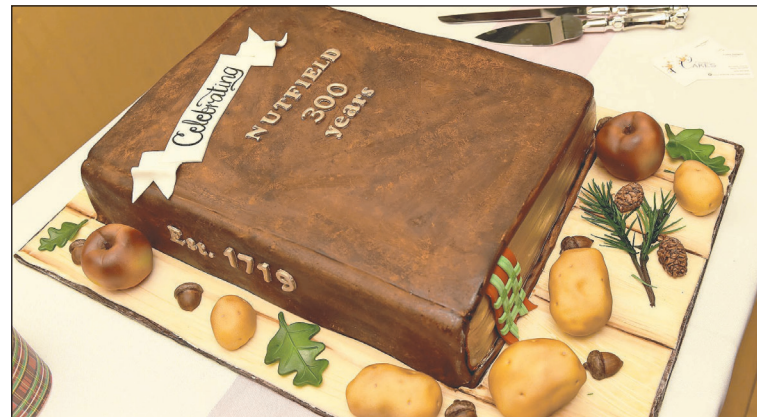
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TIM JEAN/Staff photos

ABOVE: Eleanor Strang, left, of Derry, listens during a tour inside the First Parish Church sanctuary, led by volunteer Wendy Williams of Windham during the Nutfield 300th celebration kickoff of Founders Weekend at First Parish Church in April. The East Derry church is a focal point of this year's 300th anniversary schedule of events.



RIGHT: Carina Hultgren, owner of Carina's Cakes in Derry, made this cake for the Nutfield 300th gala celebration at the Derry Opera House.



JULIE HUSS/Staff photo

A gathering of "spudcrows" dressed as some of the area's original settlers were perched on a hill near the historic First Parish Church in East Derry to help honor the 300th anniversary of the original Nutfield settlement.




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Derryfield honors its history

MANCHESTER — It was in 1752 that Derryfield was officially chartered as its own community, breaking off from the main land known as Nutfield.

Derryfield eventually became Manchester, but the most historic part of town celebrated the 300th anniversary of the original Nutfield settlement earlier this year with historic tours, guest speakers and other activities.

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...that in 1725 the new community of Nutfield voted to build a grammar school near the current Taylor Library in East Derry? The school was made of logs and had two fireplaces. The first teacher was David MacGregor, the son of the Rev. James MacGregor, Nutfield's founding father and first minister.



This rock marks the location where the original Derryfield meeting house once stood. Derryfield was part of the original land known as Nutfield, breaking off in 1752 to become its own community and eventually becoming Manchester.

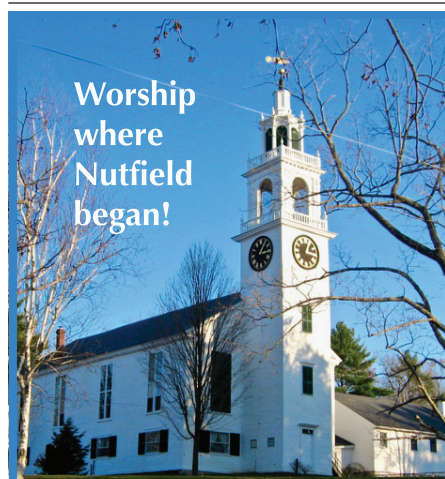


People came out in May for the Derryfield Old Home Day celebration, marking its role in the original Nutfield settlement that included Derryfield, Derry, Londonderry and Windham. Derryfield is now a historic part of Manchester.

Courtesy photos/Nutfield History



People came out to learn more about the history of Derryfield, part of Manchester and an original part of the Nutfield settlement. The original 16 families came from Northern Ireland to the new world and settled here in land that would eventually become Derry, Londonderry, Windham and Derryfield communities.



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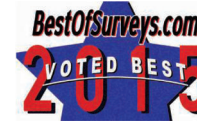
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WINDHAM: A look back

WINDHAM — It's a birthday like no other for area communities once calling their land "Nutfield" and Windham is one of the originals.

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...when Nutfield celebrated its 200th anniversary in 1919, a play was performed as part of the historical festivities? The show, "Historic Pageant of Old Londonderry," was written by Mrs. Jesse G. McMurphy and included actors playing the roles of the Rev. James MacGregor, John Morrison, James Nesmith, along with settlers, townspeople, dancers, singers, and various other historical characterizations.

Windham officially kicked off its 300th anniversary schedule of events in May, honoring the original Nutfield settlement and the area's first settlers, who arrived here in April 1719 to call this area home.

That kickoff then led to more activities to honor history and community, including the 36th annual Strawberry Festival and Book

Fair held at Windham High School in June. Special historical activities also were part of that longstanding Please see **WINDHAM**, Page S16



Members of the First New Hampshire Regiment prepare the cannon for a gun salute to kick off the town of Windham's 300th anniversary celebration.

CARL RUSSO/Staff photo



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Cathy Souter, a Nesmith Library Trustee adds the strawberries to a strawberry shortcake during the 36th annual Strawberry Festival, and Windham's Nutfield 300th celebration.



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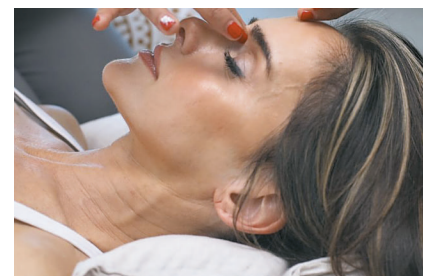
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MacGregor fountain flows with history

By JULIE HUSS

DERRY — It once stood sturdy in downtown Derry, cooling the thirst of passing horses, dogs and even citizens.

Now an old cast iron fountain has a new look and life, thanks to one family with deep roots in town and local Rotarians who took on the labor of love to bring the structure back to its original state.

Derry Village Rotary Club members and other supporters brought the fountain back to life and plan to give it a special spot of honor this year.

This year also marks the 300th anniversary of the original Nutfield settlement, when a group of 16 Scots-Irish families came to the new world, led by the Rev. James MacGregor.

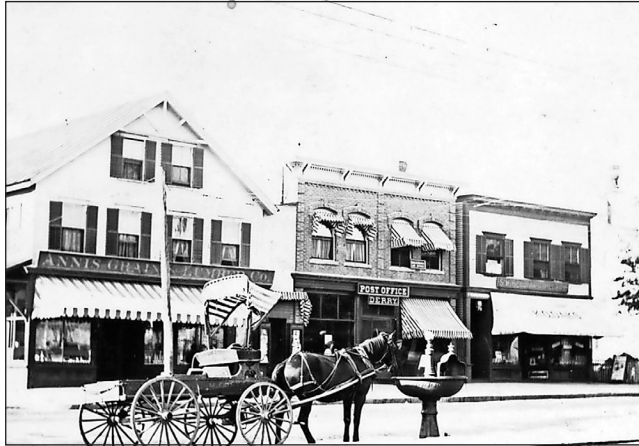
Resident Mark Brassard called the project “Operation MacGregor” and said restoring the historic water bubbler was not only a part of Derry’s past, but also a testament to the community as it moves forward.

The fountain dates back to when Derry’s streets were dust and dirt, when horses pulled carriages and wagons, and both animals and humans often stopped for a cool drink.

The structure stands about as tall as a man, weighs anywhere from 1,800 up to 2,000 pounds. It’s styled with a large 4-foot diameter bowl that horses would use for drinking, plus a smaller trough for dogs at the bottom and a side area for people hoping to catch a cool bit of water.

The Derry fountain was forged by the Concord Foundry and cost \$112.60 around the turn of the 20th century.

Historical photos dating back to around 1904 show the fountain standing in front of what was then the Derry Depot train station, now Sabatino’s restaurant.



COURTESY PHOTO/Derry History Museum collection

A vintage photo shows the fountain on the streets of Broadway in Derry. The refurbished fountain now stands in MacGregor Park in Derry.

It stood there for decades until Thanksgiving night in 1954 when a local apple orchard truck knocked the fountain down.

“The town didn’t see a need to reinstall it, so it was tossed in the dump,” Brassard.

The fountain eventually ended up being taken from the local trash heap and became a focal point in the yard of Richard and Pauline MacGregor on Bypass 28.

The fountain had a place of prominence, Brassard said, with flowers filling its bowl every spring and family photos being taken around its large spaces.

“For 60 years it was cared for by this family,” Brassard said.

Add in the fact that there is a connection to the MacGregor family and it’s a history tale that means a lot, he added.

Richard MacGregor died in 2014 and was an eighth generation descendant of that first settler who preached his first new world sermon in East Derry in April 1719. After his death, his widow Pauline said it was time to turn the fountain over to the town after deciding to sell her home.

Rotarians went to the MacGregor home, pulled the fountain from its ground

base, secured it on the back of a truck and brought it to Simpson’s Painting on Rockingham Road where it was sandblasted and primed.

Rotarian Charlie Crompton said Pauline’s generosity saved the old fountain and its future.

“With new homeowners, it might have found its way back to the transfer station, or a melting pot, lost again,” he said.

Crompton said there are only about 15 of these patented H.W. Clapp/Concord Foundry fountains remaining in New England. Other New Hampshire towns with similar fountains include Pittsfield, Hopkinton, and Bennington. The company sold hundreds of the fountains all over New England.

He added that a spot in MacGregor Park has already been designated to be the fountain’s final resting place once restoration is complete.

Brassard said credit needs to be with the MacGregors.

“The MacGregors are Derry’s royal family,” Brassard said. “Some are still living here 300 years later. This community has benefited from the generosity of this family.”

Derry has many symbols



COURTESY PHOTO

Derry Village Rotary Club members stand with the historic fountain after it was officially planted in the ground at MacGregor Park earlier this year.

dedicated to the family, including the name of Derry Public Library, stained glass panels inside the library showing the MacGregor coat of arms, and the namesake park next door. The Rev. MacGregor and other

early settlers are buried in Forest Hill Cemetery in East Derry.

The fountain eventually was placed in its current location near Derry Public Library in MacGregor Park. A dedication ceremony was

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

... that the first official display of musical instruments in church in New Hampshire happened in Londonderry? According to the history book “Two Hundredth Anniversary Celebration of Londonderry,” a local minister had formerly been a chaplain in the British army and had played the violin. He brought his stringed instrument to America and one night, a church elder heard the minister playing his music, “peeping through the window and discovered the man of God in the very act of drawing the bow.”

held in April as part of the kickoff Founders Weekend of Nutfield anniversary events. MacGregor family members and descendants were present for the fountain unveiling.



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WINDHAM

Continued from Page S14

community event to help honor Nutfield's big birthday.

The town also produced a commemorative medal and held a time capsule ceremony in the front of Town

Hall, with descendants of Windham's notable Armstrong family participating.

Other events helping honor the 300th anniversary included tours of the Armstrong town museum, a ringing of the chimes at the Searles School and Chapel, a charity road race, car show, music, church services, events and dinners.



Dr. Michael Speidel dressed as the Duke of Windham and Joanne Dickie as his wife the Duchess of Windham attended the opening ceremony in Windham. The town of Windham kicked off its 300th anniversary



Volunteer Wendy Williams, left, of Windham demonstrates how the early settlers would turn flax into fibers to be spun and made into linen during the 36th annual Strawberry Festival and Windham's Nutfield 300th celebration in June.

TIM JEAN/Staff photo

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Londonderry honors history, community with Old Home Day

'300 Years of Family and Friends' is 2019 celebration theme

By JULIE HUSS

LONDONDERRY — For generations, people have been invited to come home to Londonderry.

That includes those who moved away, or even the stalwart resident born and raised in the area who still call the rustic, historic community home.

This year is no exception as Londonderry hosts its 120th annual Old Home Day celebration, running Aug. 14-18.

This year's theme, thanks to fourth-graders in Kelly Murphy's class at South Elementary School, is "300 Years of Family and Friends," a nod to this year's 300th celebration of the original Nutfield settlement.

Londonderry was an original part of that early land that also included what is now Derry, Windham and the Derryfield part of Manchester.

Old Home Day is traditionally held the third Saturday of August, but Londonderry kicks off its multi-day schedule a few days earlier with the annual

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...one of Londonderry's older graveyards off Hovey Road is the final resting place of several illustrious ancestors of the area? Known in history books as the Old Hill Graveyard, the burial grounds include the graves of John Bell, Major John Pinkerton, and David and Margaret (Clark) Woodburn, Horace Greeley's maternal grandparents.

Senior Night, concert, Kidz Night, fireworks, music, and other activities with the big culmination on Saturday, Aug. 17 with the Town Common full of booths, food, games and community spirit, along with a parade down Mammoth Road.

As Londonderry honors its rich traditions this month for five days, there will be things that make this town special, with an extra bit of Nutfield history tossed in, too.

At the historic Morrison House museum on Pillsbury Road, there will be many activities, demonstrations,

tours and other events to honor the history of Nutfield.

And when Londonderry held its Old Home Day in 1919 — the 200th anniversary of the original Nutfield settlement — the town hosted a grand parade with eight divisions, each one led by a member of the local American Legion post.

Now that the 300th anniversary is here, the 2019 Old Home Day will once again host a grand parade, with New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu making an appearance along with guests representing the other Nutfield towns marching down Mammoth Road. Descendants of those original first Nutfield families may also make a parade appearance.

Once the parade ends, people can enjoy the day on the Town Common where specialty historical booths and displays will be offering Nutfield information, demonstrations, and souvenirs including commemorative coins each Nutfield town designed and created.

Derry's coin features images of the First Parish Please see **OLD HOME**, Page S18



TIM JEAN/File photo

Gov. Chris Sununu, left, shakes hands as he walks in the parade down Mammoth Road during Londonderry's Old Home Day celebration last year. Sununu will make a return visit to help celebrate this year.

CELEBRATING 300 YEARS OF NUTFIELD



As a token of celebration for our 300th Anniversary, the Town has commissioned a special commemorative medallion (pictured front and back). These medallions are available for purchase at \$5.00 each, and are currently for sale in the Town Clerk's office in Town Hall. They will also be available for purchase on August 17th and 18th at Booth #44 on the Town Common during our Old Home Day celebration. Be sure to come out and celebrate this special year with us!

Londonderry Old Home Days
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OLD HOME

Continued from Page S17

Church, early industries, inspiration by Robert Frost and a tribute to first American in space Alan B. Shepard, an East Derry native. Londonderry's coin will show images of historic homes, the Presbyterian Church and notable buildings. In Windham, that community's coin pays tribute to notable residents, and the Armstrong building now housing the town's museum. All coins will share a similar Nutfield 300 anniversary side.

To also mark the 300th Nutfield anniversary, a time capsule that was filled during the 250th anniversary will be opened during Old Home Day. Resident Reed Clark will be assisting with the honors of opening the capsule, that has been safely housed in the New Hampshire Room of Derry Public Library. Clark had participated in filling the 250th anniversary capsule.



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Londonderry High School Lancers Marching Band perform in the parade down Mammoth Road during last year's Old Home Day.

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...the original Nutfield settlers putting up their homesteads planted the first crop of potatoes in the new world? According to Richard Holmes' "The Road To Derry," not having enough food that first winter also had settlers "following the suggestion of an old Indian called Ezekiel and caught shad, salmon, and eels at the Amoskeag Falls on the Merrimack River."



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Derry's big party honors Nutfield 300

By JULIE HUSS

DERRY — Plans are in place for the town's biggest party.

Derryfest 2019 is set for Saturday, Sept. 21, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at MacGregor Park on East Broadway.

This will be the 30th year for the celebration and to honor this year's 300th anniversary of the original Nutfield settlement, Derryfest will offer some historical touches during the day-long celebration, along with the regular vendors, community organizations, food booths, entertainment and much more.

As the year moves forward to celebrate all things Nutfield, Derryfest will put its own historical spin on the day with specialty activities.

During the lineup of entertainment featured on the MacGregor Park stage throughout the day, Irish band Ulster Landing will make an appearance and following the performance, a new Nutfield 300th time capsule will be assembled and filled.

Nutfield 300th organizer Paul Lindemann will also offer comments to the crowd about the history of the area and the significance of honoring the traditions of the past that were the original Nutfield settlement.



Derryfest is set for Sept. 14 in MacGregor Park in Derry.

There will also be special Nutfield 300th and Friends of the Meetinghouse historical booths at Derryfest, offering information, display and souvenirs including commemorative coins representing Nutfield towns including Derry, Londonderry and Windham.

Demonstrations may also include a look at how flax was made in the past.

And the Derryfest fun and community spirit doesn't end once the park closes up at 5 p.m. The popular "Derry After Dark" event returns to downtown Derry on Manning Street near the Municipal Center, a street beer festival that features local breweries and eateries offering their products and beers. Derry After Dark is held from 6 to 9 p.m.

Historical booths will also be set up at Derry After Dark to keep history on tap throughout the evening.

Visit Derryfest at derryfest.org or visit Derryfest on Facebook.



MIKE SPRINGER/File photo

Morgan Torre of Londonderry performs with the Red Star Twirlers during last year's Derryfest celebration in MacGregor Park.

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...the town of Londonderry was known in Colonial days for producing the finest of linen? According to historical records, the local linen was possibly worn often by both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

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Londonderry Presbyterian Church had its beginning in 1719 with Presbyterian Minister Rev. James MacGregor in East Derry. In order to alleviate the long travel necessary to attend services on Sunday mornings, the church established a West Wing in which later became Londonderry and a South Wing at a later time in Wyndham. After the Town of Londonderry was named, the West Wing officially became the Londonderry Presbyterian Church in 1735. At that time the congregation was led by James MacGregor's son David, who had made the trip from Ireland as a baby in the arms of his parents.

Londonderry Presbyterian Church has a rich history, with its original congregation of early settlers who carved a living out of a rough and rock-laden land, farmers who grew the first potatoes, and eventually, fine linen makers for which this area became famous. Today's church is honored to carry this heritage forward and pray that the Lord will bless its people as He has blessed them for the last three hundred years.

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Nutfield churches standing tall

By JULIE HUSS

Three of the eldest Nutfield churches are still standing tall throughout centuries of history and are the focal points of celebration and tradition as communities honor the 300th Nutfield anniversary this year.

First Parish Church in East Derry is playing a key role in the 300th anniversary, as it was the original established meetinghouse in the area, hosting the official Founders Weekend 300th kickoff schedule this past April and continuing to invite its members and the community in to see its renovation progress and history.

The current church was built in 1769 to replace an earlier structure built by the area's first European settlers. The tower was added in 1824. It is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Matthew Thornton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, once rang its bells and served on its building committee.

The massive restoration work got underway in 2011 when a First Parish team completed an analysis of what projects were deemed the most urgent and structured a multi-year work plan.

In 2015, the church tower was separated and dismantled for repair work under the guidance of Arron Sturgis, owner of Preservation Timber Framing. The 2,200-pound bell was also lifted out and stored safely.

The tower was showing its age. Wood was crumbling and was being held together basically by paint.

In 2016, the 250-ton church was meticulously raised so crews could work underneath to secure the foundation. The building was then slowly lowered back into place.



DERRY NEWS/File photo

The Windham Presbyterian Church is seen from inside the Town Pound on North Lowell Road.

Nutfield 300 fun facts

Did you know...

...that when the railroad came to Windham, it gave the community a big boost for both travel opportunities and those coming in to live or work? The first railroad to come to Windham was the Manchester and Lawrence Railroad, arriving in 1848. Images of Windham Junction and nearby businesses became popular focal points of postcards of the day.

After that, a new connector project got started that will eventually hold a new elevator to help access various levels of the building. As 2017 drew to a close, the new 60-foot tall corner posts were hoisted up and lowered carefully into the frame of the tower.

In June of this year, the church steeple/tower was reconnected in a show of history in the making, with many people gathered on the meetinghouse lawn to watch crews meticulously raise the upper portion of the structure to rejoin the remainder of the tower.

Once back together, the weather vane on top was gleaming in the sun.

The First Parish renovation project also includes interior work on the

sanctuary and other rooms. Services have been held in the Currier Hall at First Parish while major work is being done.

Other churches in Nutfield towns can also say they have been towering over their communities for generations.

The Windham Presbyterian church was founded in 1742 with its first pastor, the Rev. William Johnston. The first structure was located atop Copp's Hill, now known as Cemetery Hill. In 1798, a new meetinghouse was built that is now the Town Hall and the original building was taken to Salem to become a private family home. The current church building was built in 1835 and several years later, a bell was installed.

Londonderry's Presbyterian Church honors its roots and history dating back to 1735 when David MacGregor, son of the Rev. James MacGregor, original Nutfield founding father, became its minister and led services at various locations around the area. Church officials say the church is believed to be the oldest continuing Presbyterian church north of Boston and the current sanctuary at the corner of Pillsbury and Mammoth roads, is the most recent and was built and dedicated in 1838.



TIM JEAN/File photo

The Londonderry Presbyterian Church stands at the corner of Pillsbury and Mammoth roads.



Workers from Preservation Timber Framing guide a crane operator as the crane lifts the steeple back in place at First Parish Church in East Derry in June. The steeple was part of a major renovation project of the church.

TIM JEAN/File photo

the **YMCA**

FALL INTO A BETTER YOU

At the YMCA, our community is getting closer and living better in order to learn, grow, and thrive. Everyone from youth to seniors are engaging in physical activity, learning new skills, and building self-confidence with classes like: **My Lil Rookie and Me | ABC Art Outside | Nerf Blasters | CoderZ | Adult Craft Days | Archery**

Fall I class registration begins August 26

YMCA of Greater Londonderry
603.437.9622
www.graniteymca.org
Financial Assistance Available

Serving the Nutfield Communities since 1880



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Illustration by the late Nancy Wimmer, long-time Derry News employee



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*Loving God
Loving People
Making a Difference*

Come Home. You Belong.

Worship Times:

7:30am	Traditional
9:00am	Contemporary
10:00am	Sunday school for all ages
11:00am	Traditional

Come join an intergenerational, spiritual and missional based community. Mission projects are local, regional and global for people of all ages and stages of life to participate in. We build bridges of hope with ourselves and others experiencing the impact of health and housing insecurity, addiction and mental health crisis, incarceration and spiritual needs. We have teams for disaster relief.

Music, mission and scripture about God's love are at the heart of who we are. Laity and staff, children, youth and adults participate in Sunday leadership. We speak and are sensitive to - among others - Recovery, Dementia, Cancer, Allergies, Autism, ADHD, Mental health and LGBTQIA. Grape juice and gluten free bread are served at communion on the first Sunday of each month.

Spirituality without dogma. Friendship without judgment.
Come home. You belong.



We were planted in 1854 and have been harvesting the results ever since. Today, we creatively continue the tradition of planting and nurturing present and future legacies. Thank you to the Greater Londonderry Community and all who enrich these legacies.



www.londonderryumc.org 258 Mammoth Road, Londonderry
A Christian church following God in Hope, Reconciliation and Salvation.