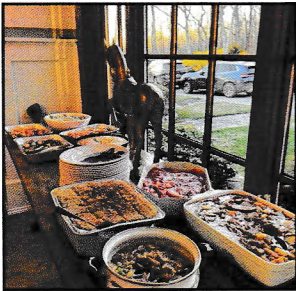


THE WACCABUC REPORT

WACCABUC LANDOWNERS COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

SPRING / SUMMER 2026

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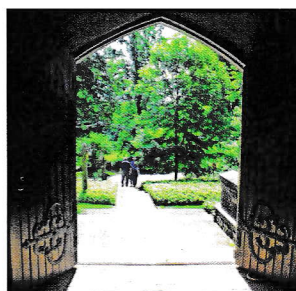
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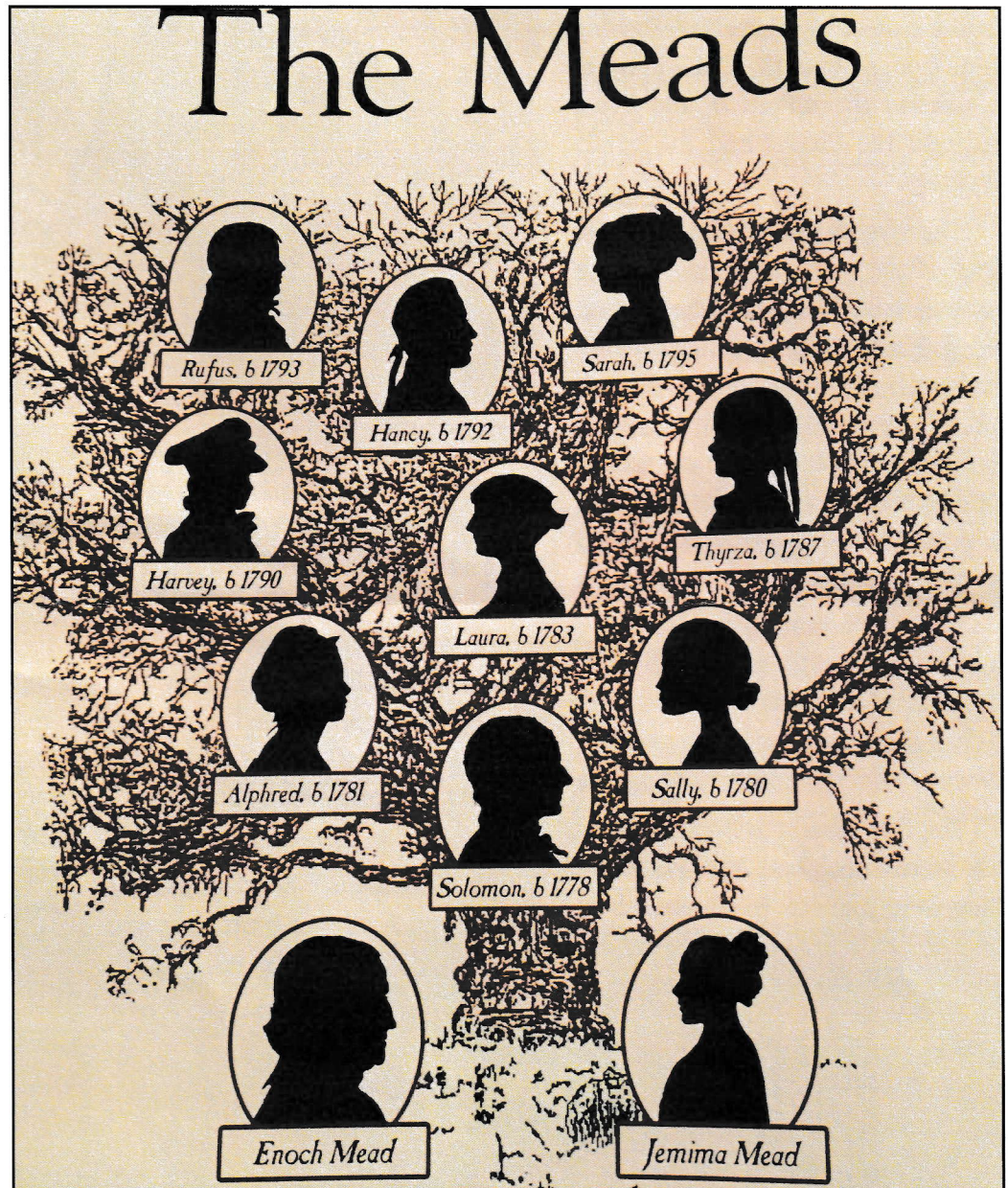
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Waccabuc has always been a scenic and idyllic place. And it must also have seemed so to Enoch Mead and his new bride, Jemima, as they embarked on a honeymoon tour from his family home in the Horseneck area of Greenwich, CT in 1776. They were on a 'journey of exploration', looking for a place in which to settle. Whether or not the horse went lame (or died, depending on the story), they did stop near Lake Waccabuc in their travels and decided this was the area they wanted to start their life together. And thus began the history of our beautiful hamlet.

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The 2026 Mead Family Reunion

by Linda Broudy

Each year, the eleven members of its Mead Memorial Chapel Board of Trustees meet in Waccabuc - having come from all over the U.S. - in order to discuss the affairs of the Trust and visit the Chapel and the family cemetery.

This year, for the first time since 2005, the annual Trustee meeting coincided with the Second Mead Family Reunion. An entire weekend of activities, dinners and a special presentation were planned, culminating in a special commemorative service that was held at Mead Memorial Chapel on Sunday morning, June 14 (see page 10).

But first, a little history (because I can't help myself), as related on the Mead Chapel website. I encourage you to read the histories contained there: www.meadmemorialchapel.org.

The first Meads to find their way here were Enoch and Jemima Mead. They were married in Greenwich in 1776. Both the Mead and Studwell families had settled in Greenwich,

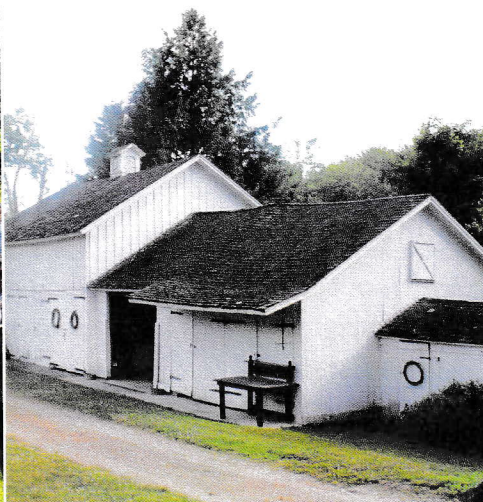


Connecticut and as the story is told in *The History of the Mead Family 1180-1900* by Spencer P. Mead: "He and his bride as a wedding tour took a trip to Massachusetts on horseback. On their return journey, one horse going lame at Lake Waccabuc, N.Y. they decided to go no further and settled about one-half mile south of Lake Waccabuc on the New York and Albany Post Road."

In 1780, Enoch built a log cabin in the meadow near Elmdon's spring, and here was born their son Solomon. A new house was built

during the Revolutionary War known as "Elmdon" (49 Mead Street). (N.B.: While the family's origins are Norman from the 1100s, William Mead - the ancestor of the Westchester and Greenwich branches - emigrated here in 1635 from the family's seat in Elmdon, County Essex, England.) He prospered as a farmer and continued to acquire adjoining farms. The family grew and homes were built along the Post Road, until the neighborhood became known as Mead Street.

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putting one's breath into the words. If you breathe properly, then the feeling automatically comes up and **out**. It takes the author's written word, brings it out of you and makes it go **out there**, to the audience. Only then can you achieve and hear the passion being conveyed." We agreed it was similar to singing, something I know about, having been an avocational singer my entire life, particularly opera.

In the spring of 2023, the Trustees of Mead Memorial Chapel decided they wanted the Chapel to be open to the community on a more regular basis. It was decided to begin holding a series of nondenominational

meditative services on certain Sundays. The Rev. Dr. Martha Jacobs, retired Senior Minister of First Congregational Church in Chappaqua, was retained, an organist was brought in to play the 1947 Hammond organ and the services began - with very modest attendance for the first year or so. Deb happened to meet Martha at a local neighborhood party one afternoon and wondered aloud about the possibility of poetry being added as an additional element to the service, to help expand its emotive reach, in addition to the music and silent meditations. Martha liked the idea and later contacted Deb, asking her to read a poem related to the theme of the next service. Deborah told me she'd never really read poetry before,

but reasoned it wasn't that different from acting and thus agreed to the request. The idea caught on. Having now heard her over the last couple of years, I can attest to the fact that she reads eloquently, always adding emotion and depth to both the words and the service. (For similar reasons, back in 2021 I had also asked Deb to read the Clement Clarke Moore poem, *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, at the annual carol service every Christmas eve at the Chapel. She has both children and adults enthralled.)

Thus endeth my short triumvirate of our always interesting neighbors and my thumbnail profiles of what they like to do. I like to think that it is our conversations that animate the history that we continually create.

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Enoch and Jemima had eight children. In 1820, Enoch's third son, Alphred, built the Mead Homestead (36 Mead Street), occupied by family descendants to this very day. Alphred and his wife, Polly, had seven children. One of them, George Washington Mead married Sarah Francis Studwell in 1858 and they had twelve children. After his death in 1899, Sarah commissioned the building of Mead Chapel in his memory. It was built in 1905, consecrated in 1907 and has been in use since that time.



Today, the approximate two-mile-long Mead Street is a sort of outdoor residential museum, with nature conservancies and four-acre zoning. The old Mead houses still stand, all lovingly restored by each generation of new owners, but still recognizable to the originals. They each have names given by the various Mead families who built them: Elmdon, The Homestead, Gaardhouse, Fair Acre, Lakeview, Hendy Hap, Tredinock, Tarry-a-Bit, Meeko. Our jewel of a post office stands near the "center" of town and of course the remarkable and serene Chapel commissioned by "Mother Mead" looks out on a vista that has not changed much in the past 250 years. As quoted by Field Horne, who wrote an extensive article on the family's history for The Westchester Historian in 2008: "The Meads were ultimately successful in creating a quiet and beautiful 21st-century



community. They were "land-poor," yet they chose to forego development schemes that might have produced large returns. Their great love for the countryside and their judicious, if halting, decision in the face of great pressure (to develop) left their mark on Waccabuc, a landscape that is a living memorial to a single family."



The Mead Memorial Chapel Nondenominational Service

June 14, 2026

To conclude their reunion weekend in Waccabuc, Mead family descendants met at the Mead Memorial Chapel on Sunday morning, June 14th for the final service in the 2026 Spring series. While approximately 80 family members had come to Waccabuc for the reunion, from all over the U.S., not everyone was able to attend the nondenominational service that morning. But it was still a very good turnout, with about 45 people in attendance. The theme of the service was ***“What kind of legacy do you hope to leave?”***

The Rev. Dr. Martha Jacobs spoke eloquently in her reflection about the kind of legacy that most people hope to have created and wish to leave when their time on this earth has been completed. When there are endings



of some kind, we think about our own lives and how we might want to be remembered. She said, “Our legacy survives as long as the values that we display and live - including values of family and faith and compassion and

service and respect for others – they are passed on and strengthened from generation to generation.”

Martha gave a short history of the Chapel – relating how Sarah Frances





Mead had faith and an abiding love of family. Sarah Frances left us her legacy in the building of the Chapel, done in faith and in memory of her beloved husband, George – so that we could all connect with each other and with community.

And the space itself is a legacy. It has been handed down to us, to continue to encompass caring for community and for others. Martha echoed what I think those of us who have attended these services all feel – we are deeply grateful, and thankful, to the Trustees for opening its remarkable doors for our community.

At one point in the service, Deborah Carlson read the Mary Oliver poem, *When Death Comes*:

“When it is over, I don’t want to wonder
if I have made of my life something
particular, and real.
I don’t want to find myself sighing and
frightened, or full of argument.
I don’t want to end up simply having
visited this world.”

With her final reflections and using this poem as a basis, Martha challenged the assembled, “As we sit here, in this beautiful space of legacy, what kind of legacy do you want to leave? Not all of us can afford to build a physical structure but we still can make an impact on those we come into contact and those who are important to us. The memories created, the blessings shared and the way we make people feel is a part of our legacy.”

Martha commented that she doubted that Sarah Frances thought that she was leaving a legacy for generations of strangers when she commissioned the Chapel 119 years ago. “We are the benefactors of her legacy and her love for her family. We don’t walk through this life alone; others impact us in the way they live their lives, just as we leave a legacy for those who follow us. And friends, you can decide the kind of legacy you want to leave. Large or small, it really doesn’t matter. What matters is that you not leave this life simply having visited this world.”

May we all continue the legacy that the Mead family started for this community so long ago.