

# Marlow Historical Society

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## Historic Burnap House May Be Saved!

### *Moving the Home a Possibility*

Late in 2007, Marlow Historical Society learned that James Burnap's original home on Mill Street, recently purchased by Audio Accessories, was due to be demolished in a controlled burn. The Marlow Historical Society immediately made a proposal to save it.

This is the Marlow home that James Burnap built before he moved into the house on Route 10 that is now known as The Christmas Trees Inn, owned today by PC Connection. The Mill Street Burnap home is historically important, not only because it is a fine example of Marlow's vanishing Victorian architecture, but also because James Burnap, owner of the Burnap Mills, was in his time considered to be a man "who had done more to further the growth and enterprise of the village than any other man." James Burnap represents Marlow's own Horatio Alger story. Born in Nelson, N.H. in 1816, James Burnap lived in several N. H. towns before he purchased Marlow's tannery, woolen mill, and saw mill just before the middle of the nineteenth century. He also became a banker in Keene and served as president of Citizens Bank there. As well as being a successful businessman, Burnap was an important figure in his community and state, serving Marlow as Selectman for many years and N. H. as State Senator, State Justice of the Peace, and member of the Governor's Council.

To see the Burnap house as it was in its heyday, visit the Marion Nicholl Rawson painting which hangs in the Marlow Library. The house has three bedrooms upstairs, a central staircase with two large rooms on either side of the front door, and arched double doors. Today it has fallen on hard times and needs foundation work and a new roof to stabilize it as well as period siding and restoration of lost architectural features.

In its written proposal of January, 2008, Marlow Historical Society suggested that, if Audio Accessories donated the home to MHS and leased its 1.5 acres to The Marlow Historical Society for a nominal fee, The Marlow Historical Society would form a restoration committee and fund the restoration work through grants and donations, seeing the building as a possible future home for The Marlow Historical Society and its museum.

In February, The Marlow Historical Society received a counter-proposal from Tim Symonds of Audio Accessories. Audio Accessories would be willing to donate the Mill Street Burnap house if The Marlow Historical Society would move it further up Mill Street

or to some other location.

Furthermore, David Hall and Patricia Gallup would be willing to donate the Mill Street land on which the Pockett house had stood, "provided The Marlow Historical Society move both the Burnap House and the Aldrich House structure (on Route 10) to the Pockett lot on Mill Street." A building once used as a slaughterhouse and now a private residence remains on land abutting the Pockett property, Tim Symonds wrote, "...so it seems the perfect location for The Marlow Historical Society to create a compound to display the buildings... We see this as a very unique situation for The Marlow Historical Society to create a setting on Mill Street to preserve some historical buildings in town..." (We at The Marlow Historical Society believe the Aldrich House is in part an unusual plank house.)

Realizing that the cost of moving the two buildings could easily reach \$80,000 before foundation and restoration costs are counted, the Marlow Historical Society Executive Board wrote to Audio Accessories in March that it needs "more time to consider how to fund the endeavor and determine whether or not it is feasible." MHS has much to investigate, including zoning, surveys, deeds, inspection, and contacts with restoration professionals, the Conservation Commission, county and state historical societies, and especially grant resources such as LCHIP and Preserve America as well as contractors. As Marlow Historical Society goes through the hard work of researching its options, it remains cautiously optimistic that somehow there will be found a way to preserve this important Marlow history and architecture for future generations. The Marlow Historical Society would be most grateful for any information or offer which could lead to this outcome.

