



# Hubbell House



## Rooms

Singles: 17

Doubles: 2

Walk-through Doubles : 0

## Public Spaces

Kitchen

Living Room

0 Public bathrooms

## Laundry

0 Washers

0 Dryers

## Communications

Cable: 1 jack per room

Phone: 1 line per room

Ethernet: 1 jack per bed

## Disability Accommodations

None

## Other Features

- \* \* TV with cable & DVD player
- \* Near Dodd Dining Hall
- \* Volleyball net outside
- \* Close to the Tennis Courts, Paddle Tennis Court, and Basketball Hoops

Commonly known as "Hubbell," Mary Hubbell House was named for Mary Hubbell, the wife of Mark Hopkins. First located where Chapin Hall stands today, it was moved to its present location, just north of the cemetery, in 1910.

Famous for its huge "Hubbell Doubles," and nice singles, the house boasts beautiful hardwood floors, bathrooms for most rooms, bay windows, high ceilings, and a nice kitchen. One room has its own porch off the back!

# Williamstown Historical Museum

## Newsletter

Williamstown, Mass.

Spring 2013

Volume XIII Number 2

## The Amos Lawrence Hopkins Memorial Forest

By Henry W. Art

The Hopkins Memorial Forest is a 2,500-acre tract that lies a mile and a half northwest of the central campus. A century ago the land was largely the farm of Amos Lawrence "Lawrie" Hopkins, the sixth of ten children of **Mary Hubble and Mark Hopkins, then President of Williams College.**

In 1887 A. L. Hopkins started to assemble his "Buxton Farms" and by 1910 had amassed 1,636 acres stretching from the eastern slopes of Northwest Hill west to the New York State line and north to Vermont. This horse-powered farm had several teams, more than 300 sheep, and a sizable dairy herd. The 36-room mansion was one of more than 15 buildings on the farm, including cow and sheep barns, ice house and wash house, a farm manager's house, and other houses for year-round farm employees and their families. The carriage house and stable, constructed in 1906, even had a tower clock that struck the hour.

In 1908 Arthur E. Rosenberg, then aged 17, came to work as a farm hand. He kept his eyes open and became a care-

ful interpreter of the landscape. On April 3, 1912, Hopkins died in Boston, a week shy of his 68th birthday. His wife continued the farm for another dozen years before auctioning off most of the farm equipment and disposing of the horses and livestock on Nov. 1, 1924. Rosenberg, who had more than proved his trustworthiness, was kept on as a caretaker. Mrs. Hopkins had the mansion boarded up and became an increasingly infrequent visitor. During the 1920s, northwestern Williamstown reposed in agricultural quiescence.

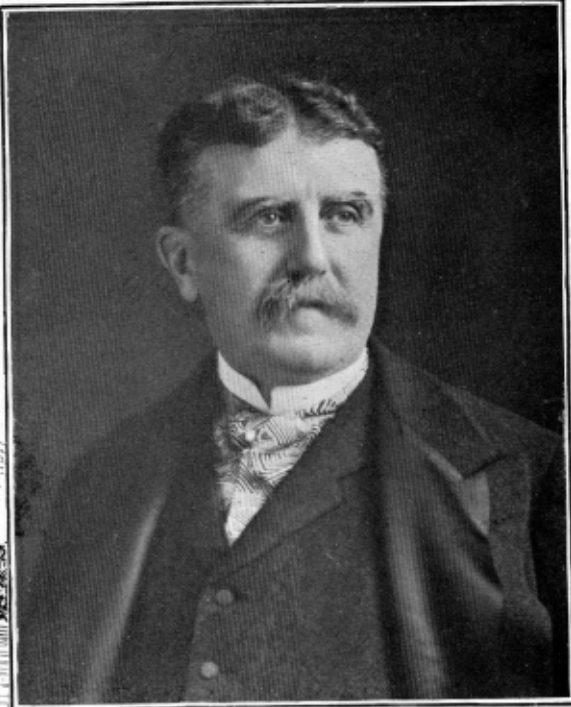
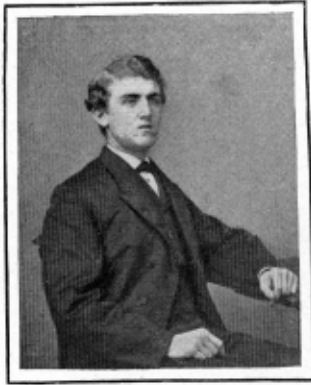
In November of 1933 Mrs. Hopkins wrote to Williams President Harry A. Garfield indicating that she would like to give Buxton Farms to the College as a memorial to her late husband. Six months later the trustees were involved in negotiations with the U.S. Forest Service to establish the Hopkins Memorial Forest as a research facility.

Between 1935 and 1968 the Forest Service conducted research on hydrology, forest growth, and tree genetics in the Forest. It had been hoped that the Forest Service could use the



**The 36-room Hopkins Mansion, the main building in Amos Hopkins' Buxton Farms, was home to the Hopkins family. The house was razed shortly after the U. S. Forest Service took over the property in the mid-1930s.**

*The author is the Samuel Fessenden Clarke Professor of Biology at Williams, the Director of the Center for Environmental Studies, and the former Director of the Hopkins Memorial Forest.*



AMOS LAWRENCE HOPKINS

**Hopkins as a Williams senior and 30 years later, in 1903.**

Hopkins mansion as a headquarters, but had to raze the structure shortly after they arrived. Its condition had deteriorated.

The second story of the Buxton Farms carriage house was converted to a dorm for the 45 Civilian Conservation Corps men who worked in the Forest in the mid-1930s. It later became a combined residence and depot for trucks. In April 1968, the USFS returned the Hopkins Memorial Forest to the College and vacated the site.

The initial plans of the College were to liquidate the land, but over the course of 1971 there was a sea change in the view of the administration regarding the highest and best use of the property, and it was agreed that a Center for Environmental Studies proposal to use the site for environmental education and research be adopted. Students quickly took advantage of the recreational opportunities of the newly accessible trails and registered for independent study opportunities and summer research positions. The permanent forest inventory plots established by the USFS in the 1930s were reinventoried to determine changes that had occurred over the 35-year period.

Peter B. McChesney, class of 1975, through his research experiences in the Forest and course work in environmental studies and history, developed an intense interest in land-use history. During his senior year he wrote a proposal for the establishment of the Hopkins Forest Farm Museum in the center of Buxton Farms, to be housed in a relocated and renovated barn used by the Moon family a century before in a small farm which remained independent in the midst of the Hopkins holdings. The dismantling, raising, and restoration of the Moon Barn into the Hopkins Museum would be part of Williamstown's observance of the U.S. bicentennial.

In July 1977, a two-year grant was secured from the National Science Foundation for the conversion of the carriage barn into a field lab, classroom and office complex, and the addition of a caretaker's residence. The main challenge of the project turned out to be renovating the 1906 carriage barn into a modern field station facility that would meet building codes while not violating the aesthetics of a graceful structure historically significant to the site. It was not easy to carry out this bridging of the past to the future, but the combined creative skills of a group of young architects from RPI (Tech Associates), the Williams Buildings and Grounds Department, and a project advisory committee managed to prevail. In addition the college administration willingly doubled the Williams contribution to matching funds once the project got underway.

On Oct. 20, 1979, the renovated carriage barn was officially dedicated as the Rosenberg Center in honor of Arthur E. and Ella M. Rosenberg. The structure was appropriately named for a farm family which had maintained close ties, first to Buxton Farms and then to Hopkins Forest, as well as to scores of Forest Service personnel and Williams students. In the dedication address I remarked:

"In one respect, the Rosenbergs are a uniquely human resource—active participants in the landscape's history with its field patterns and fence lines accurately traced on their memories. This alone is deserving of recognition. But more than that, it is their wit, charm, and love of the land and its people that serve as a foundation for the facility which we dedicate today."

Since the Hopkins Memorial Forest has returned to



**Arthur Rosenberg at the wheel of a 1909 Model T Ford.**



**Farm Manager's house at the top of Bulkley Street.**

Williams, it has grown to over 2,400 acres through gifts and purchases of land, although a few small parcels have been sold from time-to-time. In addition to the original Buxton Farms in Massachusetts, purchases of land and various gifts have extended the reach of the Hopkins Forest to include the adjacent crests of the Taconic Range in New York and Vermont.

The site is used for many courses in Environmental Studies, Biology, Geosciences, and even Studio Art and Religion. We have continued long-term research of the changes in the landscape over time and the role of human history and its influences on biological and geological processes. In addition, we have initiated limited experimental studies requiring the manipulation of small areas of forest. When David P. Dethier joined the Geology Department in 1982, he expanded the scope of research in the Hopkins Forest to include a systematic collection of meteorological and hydrological data.

Not all of the activities in the Hopkins Forest are of a strictly academic nature. The Williams Outing Club in the 1980s cut a new trail, known as "The Shepherd's Well Trail," to connect the Taconic Crest Trail with the upper portion of the RRR Brooks Trail and at one time built a low "ropes course" just inside the Bulkley Street entrance to the Forest.

There have been numerous changes in the Buxton Farms/Hopkins Forest landscape during the past century. The configurations of land ownership have been altered, the uses of the land have changed from agriculture to education, recreation and research. And the cast of characters interacting with the land has turned over several times. However one constant has become most evident as we study the linkages between the past and the future: the intense identification with the land that has been embraced by those who have interacted with this landscape. Early in the century it was Amos Lawrence Hopkins, later the Rosenburgs, and then the employees of the U.S. Forest Service. During the last several years, this sense of place has been felt by dozens of Williams faculty and the hundreds of students who have conducted research and the thousands who have taken courses, to say nothing of the tens of thousands of townspeople who have enjoyed the Amos Lawrence Hopkins Memorial Forest as a place for recreational and spiritual refreshment.



**Buxton Farms work crew in the 1930s.**

# Williamstown Historical Museum

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ CELL \_\_\_\_\_

## JOIN or RENEW your MEMBERSHIP

Mail to: WHM

1095 Main Street

Williamstown, MA 01267

ENCLOSED is my membership contribution for:

\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_ Other

\_\_\_ I would like information about volunteering

\_\_\_ Sponsoring a gift membership

My EMAIL is: \_\_\_\_\_