



Harpswell Historical Society

Newsletter

Summer 2001

The Harpswell Historical Society is dedicated to the discovery, identification, collection, preservation, interpretation, and dissemination of materials relating to the history of Harpswell and its people.

Members and Friends of the Society

Momentum is a wonderful word and it certainly has swung in our Society's direction. The sign on the porch roof of our newest building proudly proclaims Harpswell Historical Society Museum & Archives. A few weeks ago after some advertising and phone calls, the first attempt to clean out the former Bailey's Store was met with very great success. I was able to count at least fifty of Harpswell's citizens who came armed with curiosity and goodwill. A woman came in and said that she was going to the Recycling Center and was there anything that she could take. We promptly filled her car! A young man came in to see what was going on and took 4 truck loads away. At the end of the day the building was very nearly cleaned out. Our Society has many friends. Thanks to all.

For our Society to create a Museum & Archives is certainly a leap of faith. That large leap of faith is helped by the good work of Walter Norton. Since starting last August Walter has raised \$150,000 dollars for our cause. His fund raising is ongoing this summer to meet our goal of

\$250,000. Walter's good work does not let any of the rest of us off the hook however.

Soon we will be sending a letter urging financial support for our cause to all in town. Please be generous, ask your friends and neighbors as well.

Together we will build a place to be proud of, our common history deserves nothing less.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Hackett III

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Harpswell Genealogy

During the course of a year the Harpswell Historical Society receives many inquires for genealogy information. In the past there has been very little to offer them. In anticipation of having a new home for the society at Bailey's Store, a genealogy group has been formed and is meeting at 4 PM on the second Sunday of each month at the Orr's Island Library. Anyone who has an interest in talking about and/or collecting information on any of the old Harpswell families is welcome. We currently have information on the following families and are looking for more.

Alexander	Merryman
Sinnett	Doyle
Doughty	Britt
Holbrook	Darling
Dunning	Linscott
Johnson	Prince
Black	Green
Pinkham	Webber
Barnes	Sylvester
Wallis/Wallace	

Families we are actively interested in include

Bibber	Orr
Allen	Curtis
Hackett	Stover
Bailey	

We also have a copy of the births, deaths and marriages from the town reports 1888-2000 in both chronological order and in alphabetical order, (copies of the alphabetical list is available for sale from the Society for \$19.75), burial lists for several of Harpswell's cemeteries, church

baptismal records for the 1700's and some Casco Bay Directories.

Additionally, we are looking for copies of photographs of the older residents of Harpswell, school year-books, school group photos, town reports, copies of the family info in family bibles, old deeds, Casco Bay Directories prior to 1950 and in general any material which might help a researcher to identify an ancestor or a place of residence at a particular time. If you do not wish to donate the original material to the society, we will carefully copy it for our genealogy reference library and return it to you. All material which we collect will be stored in a locked glass front bookcase and will be made available to researchers for study, but these materials will not be removed from the premises.

When the new Historical Society Museum and Archives is ready, the collection will be moved there and original documents will be stored in a climate controlled vault when not being used.

If you have, or know of, any genealogical material or are interested in attending a meeting please contact Gerry York 833-5873, gyork@clinic.net or just show up at one of the meetings.

Officers and Directors

2000-2001

Ralph Black, Jr.
David Hackett, III (President)
Peg Newberg
Burr Taylor
Gerald York (Secretary/Treasurer)

Centennial Hall:

Use of the Hall got off to a great start at the beginning of this millennium: a Memorial Day exhibit, the annual meeting of the Harpswell Land Trust, an art show, flower show and meetings by the Harpswell Garden Club, a night of music and song by local artists, Matt Newberg, Matt Guite and Susan Marley and the annual meeting of the Society. We anticipate increased activities as improvements continue to develop. Projects to be considered include limited kitchen facilities and putting back the ceiling.

Many thanks to contributors of artifacts:

- ◆ Marie Allen
- ◆ Ellen Berry
- ◆ Lee Chipman
- ◆ Marj Greenhut
- ◆ Family of Linwood and Virginia Johnson
- ◆ Susan Lowery
- ◆ Maine Public Broadcasting
- ◆ Nancy and Jonathan Swinchatt
- ◆ The estate of Burt and Elizabeth Whitman
- ◆ Charles and Virginia Wolley

Calendar for 2000-2001

- Oct. 25th Board Meeting—
Old Town Meetinghouse
- Nov. 29th Board Meeting—
Old Town Meetinghouse
- Dec 13th Board Meeting—
Old Town Meetinghouse
- Feb. 28th **Public Meeting**—
Cundy's Harbor
Community Hall
Public
Guest Speaker: Jarrod
Diels-Roll of the
**Pejepscot Historical
Society; Topic:** Joshua
Chamberlain
- Apr. 25th Board Meeting—
Old Town Meetinghouse
- May 23th Board Meeting—
Old Town Meetinghouse
- Memorial Day Centennial Hall
- June 27th ***Public Meeting**—
7:30 pm Location and
speaker to be announced
- Jul. 25th Board Meeting—7:00 pm
Old Meeting House
- Aug. 22nd **Annual Meeting**—
Centennial Hall, topic and
speaker to be announced.

*to confirm meeting or speaker
call David Hackett (833-6322) or Peg
Newberg (833-6336)

All members are welcome to attend both the board meetings and the public meetings. If you wish to attend a board meeting, or have a comment please contact David Hackett (833-6322), Box 121, Harpswell, 04079.

Bailey's Store

The Harpswell Historical Society was formed in 1979 with the intent to serve the town as a repository for history and artifacts and as caretakers of the old town records. In the 20+ years since that beginning, a number of successful projects has been

shipbuilding heritage of the area and a genealogy section with reference material and collected family histories. There will be included a climate controlled fireproof archival vault and possibly some larger display pieces in side rooms. The second floor will become storage, office space and a workroom where conservation and



pursued, but a building that could serve as a home to the Society eluded us. However, this spring brought us to a turning point with the purchase of Bailey's Store at Harpswell Center. This Harpswell landmark will now become a centerpiece for the Society's collections. The first floor is expected to house displays reflecting each of the town's smaller communities at Bailey Island, Orr's Island, East Harpswell/Great Island, Cundy's Harbor, Harpswell Neck, Birch Island and Haskell's Island. Also, there will be displays showing the fishing and

preservation of artifacts will be done. A small photographic copying facility will be on this floor. The facility will have a security system which will allow not only the safe keeping of our own collections but will allow us to borrow artifacts from other institutions for short term display. Displays reflecting the steamboat trade and vigorous summer trade are also planned. Nothing as exciting as this newest development has occurred during the past 20 years of the Historical Society. All are welcome to be involved in this project.

Fisherman's Memorial

Over this past fall and winter, the Board of Directors was contacted and asked if the Historical Society would like to assume responsibility for the care and upkeep of the Fisherman Memorial Statue at Land's End on Bailey Island. The Committee that worked to have this memorial placed at the site in the mid 1970's felt it was time to pass the torch and we feel fortunate that they chose the Historical Society for this responsibility.

The statue was sculpted for the State of Maine by Victor Kahill to be displayed in the Maine State Pavilion in the 1939 New York World's Fair. The model was fisherman Elroy Johnson of Bailey Island. After the World's Fair the plaster casting was displayed in Portland City Hall where it was damaged over time. Eventually, it was stored at Bigalow Labs in Boothbay Harbor in rather poor

condition. After Elroy's death in 1973, interest was revived in the statue and three bronze castings of it were made. One was placed in Augusta at the State House but was later removed and taken to Washington D.C. where it sits on Maine Avenue. The second casting is in Portland at Canal Plaza and the third and last casting is Harpswell's own. At Land's End it sits on a parcel of land deeded by the Hutchins family, where it can look out over the fishing grounds worked by Elroy throughout his fishing career.

The final paperwork for the transfer of care for this Harpswell landmark was complete in April and became another addition to the responsibilities which the Historical Society accepts in keeping with its dedication to preserving the unique heritage of Harpswell.



Harpswell Cemeteries

Do you have an old family cemetery on your Harpswell property or know of one on a neighbor's property? The Historical Society is interested in cataloging and recording the location of any of the many small family plots which once served the small farms and homesteads. These old burial grounds of sometimes only one or two plots are slowly being forgotten and lost to development and undergrowth. Stones are eroding and valuable family information is being lost to future generations. The first step in reversing this trend is to record the inscriptions on the stones and the location of the plot. If you have information which can assist in this project please contact Gerry York 833-5873 or email gyork@clinic.net.

Web site:

www.curtislibrary.com/hhs

Remember the Society's web site! There you can find the latest update in the schedule of Society events, the newest projects, updates for ongoing projects, miscellaneous Harpswell history, old photographs and post-cards, read the latest Society newsletter, discover links to other history related pages and find contact information for Society officers. Bookmark the Harpswell Historical Society WebPages for your history needs.



Do you know where this picture was taken? Or what happened here that was unusual? If you think you might know the answer, send it to Burr Taylor, 45 Taylor Rd., Harpswell, ME 04079. We

will choose two winners at random from all correct entries received by August 15, 2001.

If you would like some help, check our website at www.curtislibrary.com/hhs.

Harpswell - a poem

Harpswell, dear old Harpswell, the place I was born,
Many happy hours I have passed with those that are dead and gone;
But some day I hope to meet them in a place that's bright and fair
And dwell with them forever in a world that's free from care.

It was here I passed my school days, my happiest and the best,
But among all my schoolmates but very few are left;
They have all gone to a better place than this
To be with God in Heaven a place of perfect bliss.

I wish I could have my childhood days come back to me once more,
And have my dear ones with me as I did in days of yore;
But I know that can never be,
They have crossed the dark river and are from sin and sorrow free.

But when the silent Messenger some day for me shall call,
I hope I shall be ready to go and join them all;
And meet them all together in a world that's free from pain,
And be with them forever NEVER to part again.

Mrs. Philena Catlin

Harpswell Historical Society					
Membership					
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$10.00	Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$15.00	Family
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$25.00	Contributor	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$50.00	Patron
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$200.00	Life	<input type="checkbox"/>	____.	Other
Name _____					
Address _____					
Town, State, Zip _____					
Winter address, if different _____					

<i>Your Contribution is tax deductible</i>					
Please make your check payable to Harpswell Historical Society and mail it to c/o Gerald York, Treasurer; Harpswell Historical Society; 1334 Harpswell Islands Road; Orr's Island, ME 04066					