



# Kennebec Current



125 years of preservation and study of Kennebec County history (1891-2016)

Volume 26 Issue 5

KENNEBEC HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

September-October 2016



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### **Total membership:**

454 on October 13  
Life members: 158

## Returning to the Early 20th Century

Because of chipping and peeling paint, the Kennebec Historical Society headquarters, at 107 Winthrop Street in Augusta, has needed a paint job for a couple of years. This year, through generous donations and grants, the work happened! In considering repainting the building, and in looking at historic images of the building, society officials decided to return to the earlier, historic presentation. We have on file images that date from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present, including clear presentations of the building from the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Because the early images are only in black and white, an analysis of the paint on the building was undertaken to determine what colors it was actually painted (the images showed a clear and marked contrast between the walls and the trim). Sutherland Conservation and Consulting, the only area company capable of this work, did an extensive paint analysis and informed us there were nine color schemes for the building.

Given the current architectural presentation of the house with the porch and sunroom additions from something between 1930 and 1940, this was the time period for the color selection. Color samples were obtained, and the presentation with the most appealing colors was selected. CertaPro Painting was the winning bid for the painting work. A crew from Massachusetts came and spent the week scraping, washing, and painting the house, and the company completed it on October 7. The work to finish the restoration includes restoring the shutters, dealing with the aluminum storm windows, and reglazing and painting the window frames. Grants are being sought for those tasks.

Come by and see! The building looks very much like it did in the 1939 Works Progress Administration – and shortly will look exactly like that!



*See related items on page 2 regarding our need for shutters and hardware.*

## President's Message

The bulk of this column was presented at the annual meeting in September. I hope the members who attended don't mind reading it again.

The Kennebec Historical Society is currently working on painting the exterior of the Henry Weld Fuller Jr. House, replacing the shutters that were removed, and repairing the windows to make them more weather-tight. These endeavors take a great deal of money and the Development Committee, along with a grant writer, is striving to raise it.

The future of the society depends on the commitment of its members to make use of its resources and help others make use of them also. We need volunteers to guide visitors to the various collections that we have; this is something the current staff is willing to train you for.

The Fuller House also is in need of an expansion to allow for the growth of our archives and display areas. The current thinking is to replicate the carriage house and horse barn that were at the back of the main house.

The current volunteer staff works very hard to keep everything in order, but we do have collections that have been held for 20 years and are still not processed.

Thank you.

— Kent London

## Shutters and Hardware Needed – Can You Help?

### Shutters – Have any you do not need?

The society has just had the building at 107 Winthrop Street painted in one of its historical color schemes, and now we want to get the shutters back up. The building had shutters for most of its duration, and we know this from the sequence of images we have from the past. The shutters were removed sometime in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century when the building was painted, but the plan now is to restore them to take the building back to looking as it did for most of its existence! There are five sizes of shutters that we need, so if you have any in storage or on your house that you are planning to remove, please give us a call and we can determine if they will fit. The plan is to paint them in the trim color, and install them as soon as we have the hardware and enough shutters. What we are looking for in hardware can be seen in the section below. Take a look! Call if you can help out or if you can refer us to someone who might be able to!

### Shutter Hardware

The society is looking for hardware to install the shutters we will be getting – hinges, hooks, and tie-backs. The images below are what we need. If you have any in your “old pieces of metal” collection and would like to get rid of them, please call 622-7718.

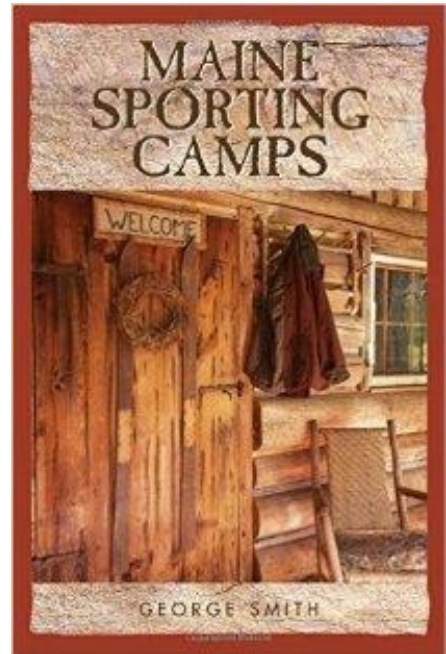


## November Program “Maine Sporting Camps”

Maine has an abundant history of outdoorsmen and sportswomen. The Great North Woods has been the destination of choice for residents and visitors who are looking to bag a trophy buck or land a record brook trout and there have always been sporting camps to cater to the "sports" and guide them on their excursions. However, the outdoor sports of hunting and fishing have had decreasing numbers of participants. As fewer and fewer people seek game in the North Woods, the sporting camps have been forced to adapt in order to survive. People now head to the wilderness for other activities such as biking, hiking, bird watching, kayaking, or simply experiencing the tranquility found in the woods. Today Maine sporting camps offer diverse services, from animal and bird watching excursions to wildflower and native plant guided walks; and camps also vary from offering gourmet meals and the finest amenities to unheated, unplumbed cabins for a true wilderness experience.

George A. Smith is an outdoor writer, newspaper columnist honored with awards from the Maine Press Association, television show host, and former executive director of the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, the state's largest sportsmen's organization. He writes monthly columns for *The Maine Sportsman* magazine (for more than 30 years), a weekly editorial-page column for central Maine's two daily newspapers (for 20 years), and a blog for *Down East* magazine's website (started in 2009). He is co-host of a unique weekly television show called "Wildfire," a talk show now in its 11th year and focused on conservation and environmental issues. He is the father of three children and grandfather of two boys. In addition to his family, his interests include hunting, fishing, birding, writing, reading, and eating.

The presentation, free to the public (donations gladly accepted), will take place on Wednesday, November 16, at 6:30 p.m. at the Maine State Library, located at 230 State Street in Augusta.



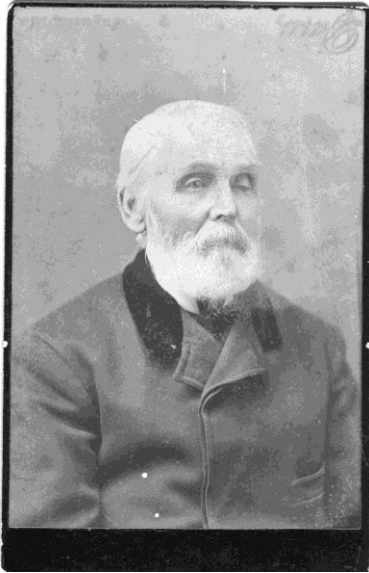
### From the Weekly Kennebec Journal of June 23, 1865

“On Saturday evening last there was in this city a thunder shower of uncommon force. The dwelling house of Capt. James B. Hall, on Winthrop street, was struck, but only slightly injured, the roof scorched, the plastering somewhat torn, and a barrel of flour burst up. The rain was very copious, the water descending in sheets, flooding the streets and gardens, and giving the grass fields a drink which will last them until after the Fourth of July.”

Captain Hall (1815-?) was the husband of Eliza Dillingham (1804-1892), who purchased 107 Winthrop Street, the Kennebec Historical Society's home from William Treby Johnson (1815-1881) in 1858. They sold the house on August 12, 1865, less than two months after this lightning hit.

We wonder if the price was reduced and also how a barrel of flour “burst up.”

## The Collections Box



We recently acquired through auction a studio card of a distinguished senior gentleman. Unlike most cards we acquire through purchase or donation, this one had the gentleman's name on the back and further identified him as from Augusta and a stage coach driver. This provoked my interest. This was Augusta, not the Wild West. I decided to draw on the resources in our library and archive and see what I could find out about him. This is his story.

Hiram Reed was born to John and Mary A. Reed in Augusta on September 26, 1812. John kept a tavern at the corner of Winthrop and State Streets. He was the first messenger of the House soon after the State House was constructed. It turns out that Hiram began driving a stage coach at an early age.

The first mail stage line in Augusta was founded by Colonel T. S. Estabrook in February 1806. It ran from Augusta to Brunswick twice a week. The trip took 23 hours. The *Kennebec Journal* for December 11, 1826, reported that Burley and Arnold began running a stage to Bangor three times a week. In May 1827, Smith L. Gale began several routes, one of which ran through Vassalboro and China to Bangor. In January 1842 George W. Stanley advertised that he would begin a new route from Augusta to Bangor through the towns of Freedom, Knox, Brooks, Monroe, and Frankfort. The stage left at 7 a.m. on

Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Although after years of delay the first railroad, or "steam cars," arrived in Augusta on December 24, 1851, the stage coach business continued strong.

On January 21, 1854, *The Tri-Weekly Age* reported that N. D. Pinkham, having secured the contract for carrying the mail from Augusta and Waterville to Bangor, purchased the entire stage properties on the routes of Joseph Shaw, of Bangor, for \$30,000. The property included 125 horses with carriages and harnesses. Pinkham also had the route between Bangor and Calais. His annual compensation from the government for the mail on all these routes was \$12,000.

Hiram drove the Bangor route for many years before changing to the Portland run, but eventually the railroad prevailed, and after 30 years of driving, he retired. He was a favorite driver and was famous for the tales he would tell. His popularity contributed to his success when he opened a livery business on Winthrop Street near the old Cushnoc House. He invested in real estate and over time owned three properties on Oak Street. For several years he was the head of the Augusta chapter of the ASPCA. He sold out the business in 1881.

When his health began to fail, he moved to Boston to live with his three children until his death on June 5, 1889. Funeral services were first held in Boston. The body was then brought back to Augusta, and after a service led by Reverend Dr. Ricker, he was buried in the family plot in Forest Grove Cemetery.

All of this information was found in the society's library and archive.

For the Collections Committee  
– Bruce Kirkham

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## KHS December Program

The Kennebec Historical Society provides free public programs each month at which a variety of guest speakers from around the state share their expertise and information. It is a great way for KHS to continue fostering the thirst for knowledge for not only our members, but also nonmembers.

The December public presentation is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 14**, at 6:30 p.m. Our speaker will be Duane Prugh. He will be speaking on the topic of "Maine's Big Trees" at the Augusta City Center, which is located at 16 Cony Street in Augusta. Further details about the December program were not available by this newsletter's print deadline; however, more information will be announced on our website near the end of November. We hope to see you there!



## Can You Help?



The above photo was taken about 1919-1920 in Hallowell. The truck and workers are assembled outside a shoe box factory. If you know the location, please call us at 622-7718 or e-mail at [kennhis1891@gmail.com](mailto:kennhis1891@gmail.com).

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## An Unidentified Building



This photograph of a shingle structure was donated from an auction box of assorted materials. On the back it says, basically, “my friends, Water Street, Augusta.” We can find no evidence that a structure like this ever existed on Water Street. Do you have any information about it? If so call, 622-7718 or email the society at [kennhis1891@gmail.com](mailto:kennhis1891@gmail.com). Thanks.

## The Kennebec Historical Society Welcomes the Following New Members

Donna Martin – Augusta  
 Joan Lathe – Augusta  
 Clarence F. and Irene McKay – Gardiner  
 Robert and Beverly Davis – Randolph  
 Jane B. Thompson – Augusta

Bruce C. and Susan R. Williams – Augusta  
 Gannett House Project – Augusta  
 Imelda Yorkus – Whitefield  
 Vicki Lawry – Gardiner  
 Mr. and Mrs. Michael V. Jennings – Winthrop

and continues to recognize our  
**Sustaining Business Member**  
 Kennebec Savings Bank, Augusta  
 and our  
**Sponsoring Business Member**  
 Pine State Trading Company, Gardiner

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## A Shout-out to Some New Volunteers

Richard Coffin has been working with the society for the past three summers, spending one day a week for six weeks each year. This year he helped us with the wrap-up of the Kennebec Journal photo project. We appreciate his work and the conversations about Scotch-Irish immigration to the area. Have a nice winter, Dick.

Jamie Carter Logan has stepped in to administer our Facebook page. For some time, the call of other priorities has made the page inactive, but we're back in business again. If you've followed us in the past, come on back; if not, drop in and join us. Thanks, Jamie.

Paul Adams has started the process of taking over the maintenance of our website at [www.kennebechistorical.org](http://www.kennebechistorical.org). This promises to be a great help, since constant updating is needed and we have let it get ahead of us. So thanks to Paul, we hope to stay ahead. Drop in to see what's going on. If you see new ways of using the website, don't hesitate to contact us.

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## Fuller Reunion



Robert G. Fuller Jr. and Henry Weld Fuller. Among those unable to attend were Randolph J. Fuller and Martha Fuller Clark.

The Kennebec Historical Society's pre-eminent benefactor, the Fuller family, held a small reunion August 22 at the society's headquarters, which was built by and is now named for their relative Henry Weld Fuller Jr. During the catered gathering, the participants toured the building, which many of them had not seen since the restoration of the first-floor rooms occurred a few years ago. This photo shows them gathered in the Fuller Parlor, a double room in the front of the first floor. Standing, from left, are Benjamin Athorp Gould Fuller III, Moira H. Fuller, Emily Fuller Hawkins, Graham Morgan, Genevieve Anderson Morgan, Alexandra Fuller Anderson (mother of Genevieve Anderson Morgan), and Ridgeley Fuller Googins. Seated, from left, are

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## Salmon and Peas and Alley Jinks

Recently, I rediscovered three interviews done in the 1990s that had been sitting on a library shelf, uncatalogued.

They were titled:

- “Mike Burns interviewed by Nate Lajoie [27 Feb 1992]”
- “Mr. and Mrs. George Hunt interviewed by Jose [24 Apr 1999]”
- “Ruth King interviewed by Heide Munro [8 Jul 1999]”

Since they had never been catalogued, I did that and at the same time created PDF text files and indexes for the documents.

As I read through the documents, I was fascinated by the stories they contained about people and places in Augusta during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. I certainly didn't know about kids rolling used tires down Winthrop Street so that they would bounce off the railroad tracks as they reached the bottom of the hill, or anything about Alley Jinks, who was notorious for attending funerals and whose funeral was celebrated by the people in the city, including the mayor and the governor of Maine. I since learned that he was also an avid attendee at all the local fires and actually died in the Capitol Theater.

But it was a considerable cause of curiosity to learn that at least in Augusta, and maybe in all of Maine, there has been a tradition of eating salmon and peas on the Fourth of July. A quick survey of people in the society suggested that this tradition may have pretty much disappeared; it would be great to know more about it.

Regardless, I am considering putting the interviews up as searchable PDFs on our website, [www.kennebechistorical.org](http://www.kennebechistorical.org). In a couple of weeks, you can check them out. If these are interesting to you, let us know and we will look for other similar documents.

I am also curious to learn about the project that created those three interviews. Were more than three people interviewed? If so, where might the interview documents be? If they are on tape and not yet transcribed, maybe we can get support to have them converted to text and made available in our database and online. Who was involved in the interviews and organizing the project? If anyone is aware of this project, please let us know at 622-7718 or [kennhis1891@gmail.com](mailto:kennhis1891@gmail.com).

– Ernie Plummer

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## In Memoriam

**Holly Hock Dumaine**, 77, of Mount Vernon, a former library director of Cumston Public Library in Monmouth, died October 6 at her home on Echo Lake. A Maine resident almost all of her life, she was a longtime member and generous supporter of the Kennebec Historical Society. She is survived by husband Christopher and their children and grandchildren.

**Carl J. Schroeder**, 68, of South China, a carpenter, cabinet maker, former teacher, and husband of longtime Kennebec Historical Society secretary and Executive Committee member Emily Schroeder, died October 1 in Augusta.

Kennebec Historical Society, Inc.  
PO Box 5582  
Augusta, ME 04332-5582  
**Address Service Requested**

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Augusta, ME 04330

**KENNEBEC HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. – Application for Membership**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Business \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Type: New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Category: Individual (annual) – \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

Family (annual) – \$30 \_\_\_\_\_

Senior (60+) (annual) – \$15 \_\_\_\_\_ Senior Family (annual) – \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

Student (full-time) (annual) – \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Life (1 person) – \$200 \_\_\_\_\_ Life (Family) – \$300 \_\_\_\_\_

Business (annual, fewer than 25 employees) – \$75 \_\_\_\_\_

Corporate (annual, 25 employees or more) – \$125 \_\_\_\_\_

Nonprofit group (annual) – \$35 \_\_\_\_\_

Donation (optional): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

This is a gift membership, given by: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please send to Kennebec Historical Society, P.O. Box 5582, Augusta, ME 04332-5582.)

***This line and below for society use only:*** Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

file 2.8.2

**Reading Room hours:** Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; other times by appointment

**Mailing address:** P.O. Box 5582, Augusta, ME 04332-5582

**E-mail address:** [kennhis1891@gmail.com](mailto:kennhis1891@gmail.com)

**Telephone:** (207) 622-7718

**Web site:** [www.kennebechistorical.org](http://www.kennebechistorical.org)