



KHS Strengthens Ties with Chelsea Historical Society

The Chelsea Historical Society welcomed Kennebec Historical Society delegates to its annual meeting, held October 13. KHS President Patsy Crockett and Administrative Director Scott Wood presented some of the volunteer opportunities that KHS has available. Previously, CHS had donated hundreds of its items, including historical documents, books and photographs to be preserved in KHS' climate-controlled archive. In order to provide patrons with access to these materials, volunteers are needed to catalog these items in order to make them an accessible part of the KHS collection.

Continued on page 6



Photo by Scott Wood

Clockwise from left: Patsy Crockett, Debbie Lymneos, Sophie Welsh, Sharon Burns, Stuart Burns, Libby Doak (standing), Scott Grady, Tom Winter, Debbie Sliva Violette, and Mary Street.

New Location for Maine Armed Forces Museum

A building expected to house a new and expanded Maine Armed Forces Museum, which will replace the one located at Camp Keyes in Augusta, is being renovated with hopes of opening next spring.

“The goal for us is to tell more of the story” of Maine’s military history, said Peter Ogden, chairman of the board of trustees of the Maine Military Historical Society, which runs the museum. “We hope to begin moving in a May or June time frame.”

The society in December was on the verge of signing a memorandum of agreement with the Maine National Guard, which has provided space rent-free for the current facility since it opened in 1988. The museum’s new home will be in a brick structure that dates back to the 1950s, also at Camp Keyes.

The National Guard is also doing the renovation for the new museum, which Ogden said will be 50 feet by 90 feet, and roughly 1,000 square feet larger than the old one. Part of the goal is to make its library more convenient to museum visitors. The move will also enable the museum to expand its holdings.

Maine’s only museum dedicated exclusively to the state’s military history has among its possessions pre-Revolutionary War artifacts such as militia flags and drill materials, material from the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, both world wars, Korean and Vietnam wars, and items brought back from the Iraq war zone. In addition to uniforms, it houses photographs, medals, a Korean War-era Jeep, and a firearm believed to have been owned by Civil War hero Brig. Gen. Joshua Chamberlain.

Ogden said the museum hopes to open more hours when it opens at its new site. Current hours are from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, and by appointment.

The Maine National Guard headquarters moved recently to a site in north Augusta, leaving more room at Camp Keyes.

— Glenn Adams



Photo by Glenn Adams

The Maine Armed Forces Museum is expected to leave this building at Camp Keyes in Augusta soon.

President's Message



A wonderful time was had by all in the Henry Weld Fuller Jr. home at 107 Winthrop Street in Augusta. No, I'm not talking about an event in the year 1835 when the home was built. Rather, I mean Sunday, December 9, 2018. A Christmas Tea was held by the Kennebec Historical Society at the Fuller home. A Christmas tree was decorated with care, stockings hung by the fireplace, wreaths and bows and dolls among the decorations. There was beautiful music played on the piano by Chris Faris, tea, coffee, punch and oh-so-many wonderful cookies, candies and cakes. The house was full of folks sharing stories and looking at all the wonderful Fuller family items on display.

After a few years without this event, many folks were delighted to see it return. We heard stories from folks who shared fond memories of Mary "Ma" O'Connell, the wonderful home economics teacher at Cony High School, who donated the beautiful tea service to the society. As we sipped tea from the cups, it brought back fond memories to many of us who had "Ma" (as she was known to everyone) for a teacher during our years of attending school in Augusta.

This wonderful event was made possible by volunteers, led by Anne Cough and Emily Schroeder, who helped to decorate the home, plan the food and music, and see that everything was in place and on time. We want to thank Vicki Lawry, Sylvia Reed, Dianne Kelting, Sue Hinkley, Anna Lazaro, Nancy Merrick, Sally Joy, Tom Johnson, Richard Bridges, Kent London, Mary Owen, Joe Owen, Chris Faris, Scott Wood, and everyone who brought food to share. It was wonderful to see everyone so happy to be working together on this festive event.

I'm sure I saw a smile on the faces of the Fuller family members in the pictures in the parlor as they looked down and saw the happy folks in their special home. I want to thank the Fuller family for sharing this beautiful home with the Kennebec Historical Society.

A special thank-you to everyone who took a tag off the tree and purchased the items that are needed by the Society and those who made a cash donation to help us continue to preserve our many treasures of the past.

Just a reminder that if you have not finished your Christmas shopping, I'd like to suggest that you purchase a life membership to KHS as a gift for that hard-to-buy-for family member or friend. I'm sure they will enjoy the membership for years to come and think of you each time they attend an event or visit the society.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the staff, and volunteers, we want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy 2019.

— Patsy Garside Crockett, President

Winter Open Hours

The society's headquarters will be open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. Visitors are welcome during these hours for tours, shopping at the museum shop, independent research, etc. We will not have scheduled hours when a reading room assistant is available to help with research. However, if you want to do assisted research, please call and make an appointment. If you are interested in learning how to become an independent researcher, please call and we will provide training on using the collections database. Our number is 622-7718, or email us at kennhis1891@gmail.com.



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Total membership:

535 on November 1

Life members: 185

The Kennebec Current encourages letters to the editor.

Email letters to

kennhis1891@gmail.com.
All letters are subject to editing for taste, style, and length.

Hearth and Home



Doesn't the phrase "hearth and home" bring to mind feelings of warmth and light in this darkest time of the year? It hearkens back, perhaps, to days where you might find a copper coffeepot on the hob of the wood-burning stove in the kitchen, or maybe a hearty pot of stew bubbling on the spider in the inglenook. In this case, however, it is the name of one of the first magazines for women, running from at least 1894 until 1933.

I romanticize in imagining my hardworking grandmother in the late 1910s, '20s and early '30s, farm wife and mother of eleven, finding momentary respite by escaping into one of the serial stories by various authors of the day. At 25 cents a year, she might have been able to afford it, with a penny saved here and there. Regularly featured columns were "Mutual Benefit Society," "With the Editor," "Songs Requested," and "Useful and Fancy Work." Advertisements throughout were touting cures for all ailments, as well as dangerous solutions, such as a radium back wrap. Each issue also offered many free incentives if you bought multiple subscriptions (sell to friends), so one could "shop" for a lovely pressed glass candy dish, a typewriter, or a baby doll.

In bygone days, *Hearth and Home* was the title of one of a number of monthly magazines being published in our own capital city, Augusta. Peleg Orison Vickery (1836-1902) owned and ran The Vickery & Hill Publishing Company. Having grown up on a farm and wishing to escape such a life, he took courses to become a teacher and then veered into an apprenticeship in publishing. He served in the 3rd Maine Regiment of the Union Army in the Civil War and after that worked for the *Kennebec Journal*. Then he opened a small printing office of his own. Having investigated the potential popularity of publishing a monthly magazine, he produced the first issue of his first publication, *Vickery's Fireside Visitor*, in 1875. He built a publishing house in 1879 to encompass his growing business.

Soon, in tandem with running his business, Peleg was holding public positions of office, including three consecutive terms as mayor of Augusta, and state senator at the time of his death. About 1888, Dr. John F. Hill was convinced to give up his profession to join Vickery in his publishing empire, thus allowing the business to continue beyond the reach of Vickery himself. Vickery and his wife, Ellen E. Greene's daughter, Lizzie Greene Vickery, married Hill, who later became the 45th governor of the Maine, 1901-1905.

Now, for a few architecturally significant buildings related to Vickery, we can begin with the Vickery Building on the east side of Water Street in Augusta. This stunning Italianate was designed of local granite by architect John C. Spofford for Vickery in 1895. Spofford is also known for designing the old City Hall, the Masonic Building, and one of the Maine State Capitol wings. Secondly, the expansion leading to the 1879 publishing house, facing Chapel Street, can be seen in the postcard image below. The right side features a brick addition, on the corner of Court Street, from about 1900. Lastly, Vickery had a home built for himself at 89 Winthrop Street, designed by architect Francis Henry Fassett (1823 -1908), which still stands today. Fassett designed hundreds of homes throughout Maine in Queen Anne and Victorian high Gothic styles, and the Maine General Hospital building in Portland

Vickery & Hill titles also include *Good Stories* (which absorbed *Hearth and Home* in June 1933), *The American Woman*, *The American Needlewoman*, *Happy Hours*, and *Needlecraft*. Stay tuned next newsletter for more explorations into *Hearth and Home* and Vickery & Hill Publishing. If you can't wait, come in and help me organize and better protect the society's extensive collection (the most complete anywhere). It's a lot of fun.

— Kari Mullen-McLaughlin, archival intern



KHS Performs Annual Fall Cleanup



Photos by Scott Wood

Our thanks go out to a small group of dedicated workers who participated in our seasonal fall cleanup day, which was held on November 9. Unseasonable cold and “wintry mix” warnings made this event one we managed to sneak in just under the wire and the day turned out to be sunny and productive. Volunteers finalized the raking and weeding of garden beds, wooded space, and lawn, filling many leaf bags with leaves, twigs, and other wilting foliage. The first phase of mulching was completed along the east side of the building beside the entry porch. Throughout the summer and early fall, this whole foundation bed from the porch steps all the way back to the kitchen steps was refreshed with rich garden soil, new additions, and fresh divisions of Siberian and German bearded iris, variegated hostas, and daylilies.

Just before mulching, a mixture of tulip bulbs were planted. Spring should bring such an explosion of color! A huge *thank-you* to all who helped out.



Ode to the Cast Iron Radiator

A chance comment about discovering a radiator “key” hanging on a nail at the Kennebec Historical Society opened up a flood of memories for me. Cast iron radiators have been a steady, comfortable source of heat for my circa 1904 house. Although there are indications of a previous forced hot air system, our house as we know it is radiator-heated.

Marketed by American Radiator Company, OCS Industries and others and sold and installed by local businesses such as J.H. Cogan & Co. or A.D. Ward, both on Water Street, the radiators have warmed homes for decades now.

The ‘key’ for the radiator fit into the knob fixture at the top end of the coils and was turned to release built-up air in the system. For many years my radiator heating system was a “gravity-fed” closed system, which meant that the heated water coming off the basement furnace expanded and rose to the first and second floor rooms. Later the closed system had a circulation pump installed allowing faster movement of hot water, heating more quickly and efficiently.

Steam radiators work on the same principle and are “bled” the same way. I invite you to read more on the different styles and usages online.

Along with the heating of rooms during the winter, the radiators provided extra attributes, such as drying of mittens, hats, scarves, ski jackets and snowsuits, heavy jeans, sweatshirts, and wool socks. Since we didn’t have an electric clothes dryer, the radiator provided an economical and quick cloth diaper drying area. If one arranged the diapers on the radiator, then spread an extra one along the top, the cats could have a well-padded place for an enjoyable snooze.

Photo by Cindy Thompson



The tops of the warm radiators were a wonderful place to set pans to let bread dough rise, as well as pizza dough. A pan of water would provide some much needed humidification to the rooms.

Perhaps one of the best uses of the radiators was the opportunity to stand atop a radiator and prove one is indeed taller than a sibling!

Stop in at Kennebec Historical Society sometime soon. We’ll show you our efficient, cozy warm radiators. And, the key, too.



Photo by Rich Eastman

— Cindy Thompson, KHS volunteer

Research-ready: Of Posters and Paintings

The MacFarland family donated four Old Hallowell Day posters to the society and we recently purchased a fifth one. This seems like a great start to a collection. If anyone has copies of old posters they would like to donate to the society, we would appreciate it. We currently have the 1992, 1995, 1996, 1999, and 2014 posters. Thank you for your support.

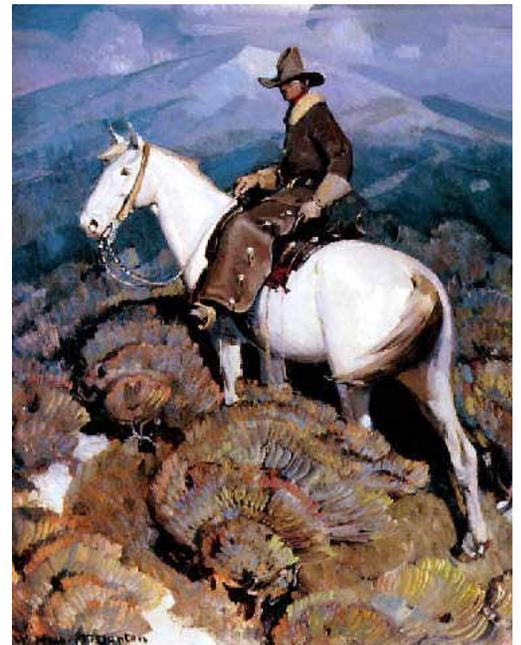
Recently, we received a request for information about the artist who created the six Civil War paintings that were created for *Cosmopolitan Magazine* in 1910 and now hang in Augusta City Center. This work was done by William Herbert Dunton, born in Augusta on August 28, 1878, and died on March 18, 1936, in Taos, New Mexico. The “Cowboy Artist,” as he was called, also went by the name of W. Herbert Buck Dunton. His works are in the collection of numerous art museums, including Colby College.

We have three letters (KHS Item ID 2010.0001.0001) that were exchanged between Dunton and Frank W. Plaisted, one-time mayor of Augusta, and at the time of their correspondence, postmaster of the city. We noted that they had never been transcribed, so we did just that and added the transcriptions to our collection and database.

The letters are an interesting interplay between someone who once washed windows and the former editor of the *New Age* whom he knew at the time. Both had gone on to very interesting lives. Dunton specified how he thought the paintings should be hung together in a public building, such as Lithgow Public Library or the new high school, as suggested by Plaisted. They were mailed in April 1915 as Dunton had moved from his home in New Jersey to his permanent home in Taos.

You may enjoy reading these letters and learn more about a significant artist, who, like Eastman Johnson, lived in Augusta and left to obtain some fame in the world of art.

— Ernest L. Plummer, archivist



The Horse Rustler
by William Herbert Dunton

❄ In Memoriam ❄

Gwendolen Dunbar, 83, died October 17 at home in Pittston. She won a Spirit of America Award for her study of Pittston history and was a longtime member of the Pittston Literary and Historical Society. That group owns the former Colburn School in Pittston, which Mrs. Dunbar attended for several years as a child.

Marian L. Hussey, 93, of Hallowell, a life member of the Kennebec Historical Society since 1998 and a former longtime resident of Bangor Street in Augusta, died December 4 in Augusta. A 1943 Cony High School graduate and Augusta native, she also was a member of South Parish Congregational Church; United Church of Christ, the Women’s Guild of South Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ; the Kennebec Valley Garden Club; and Beta Sigma Phi sorority. Her survivors include her husband of 71 years, Leroy F. Hussey Jr., of Hallowell; two children; and eight grandchildren.

Shirley E. MacKay, 85, of Hallowell, died November 9. She was a native of Black River, New Brunswick, but made her home for many years in Hallowell, where she was honored as Outstanding Citizen of the Year in 1994. She was a longtime member of KHS and other organizations promoting awareness of history. She was a past president of the Central Maine Power Yankee Retirees and an original member and past president of Row House, Inc., a historic preservation group in Hallowell; and she was involved in many other civic groups. She is survived by two sisters and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and their families.

Charlotte E. Stevens, 94, of Augusta, died November 15 in Augusta. A longtime Kennebec Historical Society member, she was a Cony High School and Gates Business College graduate. She worked many years for the Central Maine Power Company before retiring in 1988. She is survived by a daughter, a son, three grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

Letters TO THE Editor

What's in a Name?

Dear Mrs. Mullen-McLaughlin, I enjoyed your article on names in the latest *Kennebec Current* (September-October 2018) and was amused to see three of my unusual names on your list.

I have a Greenlief born in Belgrade in 1811; two instances of a Silas, both born in Belgrade, one in 1796, the other in 1803. My Marcellus was not from Maine, but rather Wisconsin; however, his grandfather was born in Hancock County in 1813. At least we have a pretty good idea of how he got his name! The local circuit-riding preacher was Marcellus Barnum and that is what my great-grandfather was named: Marcellus Barnum Osborne. I think the Greenlief (at least in my family) comes from a Cape Cod surname.

Here are more of some of my odder Maine names, at least by today's standards; Almond (three of them, with one born 1813 in Hancock County, one born 1814 in Belgrade, and one born 1869 in Kennebec County), Abijah (three of them, the oldest died in Litchfield in 1822, one born in Litchfield in 1781, and one born in Turner in 1823), Azuba (born 1800 in Belgrade), Amaziah (female, died 1839 in Sidney), Barzilla (female, born 1828 in Belgrade), Clymena (female, born 1797 in Vassalboro), Date/Datey/Theodata (female, born 1789 in Belgrade), Everard (born 1818 in Belgrade), Keziah (female, born 1843 in Belgrade), Merabah (female, born ca. 1805 in Maine), Zadock (three of them, one died 1824 in Belgrade, the other two born there in 1800 and 1828), and Zeanas/Zenas (one of each spelling, born 1802 and 1826 in Belgrade).

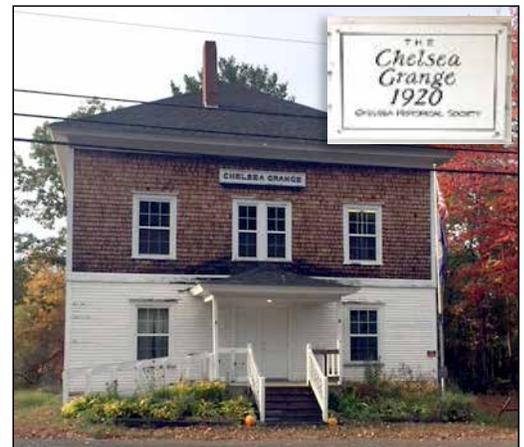
— Karen Wetherell
Orinda, California

continued from page 1

KHS Strengthens Ties with the Chelsea Historical Society

Crockett invited those in attendance to not only assist KHS in the cataloging of the donated materials, but to also consider joining KHS as members and Wood spoke about the importance of preserving the history of Kennebec County. Several members of CHS completed membership applications and in the spring, they plan to help in the sorting and data entry of their donated materials.

The cooperative arrangement between the Chelsea Historical Society and the Kennebec Historical Society is the start of an ambitious project where KHS plans on reaching out to all the historical societies located in Kennebec County. Crockett and Wood will share the various volunteer opportunities, invite them to become members, and explain what KHS and its' facilities has to offer. To enquire how your local society can take part in preserving our history, call us at 622-7718.



The Kennebec Historical Society Welcomes the Following New Members

The Gervais family - Augusta
Matthew Gorman - Waterville
Sophie Welsh - Chelsea
Debra Lymneos - Chelsea

Kristina Stewart - Augusta
Sarah Barnum - Augusta
Linwood Riggs - Augusta

and continues to recognize...

Sustaining Business Members
(\$1,000+ annual)

Kennebec Savings Bank
Dufour's Welding and Machining Services, Inc.

Sponsoring Business Members
(\$500+ annual)

Pine State Trading Company, Distributor, Gardiner

Upcoming Programs

January 2019 Public Presentation: “A Tale of Three Privies”



Contributed photo
Lee Cranmer

“A Tale of Three Privies” looks at the archaeological excavation of outhouses on three diverse sites; an 18th-century fort, a 19th-century farmstead, and a 19th-century urban house. From the large quantity of nearly complete artifacts from these privies, a picture of the lifestyles of the sites’ occupants can be developed along with an understanding of the material culture of the time. We can also determine when these privies were filled in and even speculate as to why they were filled.

Our speaker, Leon “Lee” Cranmer, is a historical archaeologist who retired in August 2010 from the staff of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. He has a Bachelor of Science degree from Stockton University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in anthropology and a Master of Arts degree in history/historical archaeology from the University of Maine. Mr. Cranmer has worked in archaeology in Maine for over 35 years and has conducted archaeology for the state for well over 25 years. Prior to that he spent two seasons in England doing archaeology. He has written one book and numerous articles on Maine historical archaeology and is working on another book on Fort Halifax, a French and Indian War period fort in Winslow. He has excavated hundreds of Maine sites about which he has written or co-authored site reports. Before his archaeology career, Mr. Cranmer spent seven years in the Navy and is a Vietnam War veteran. He lives in Somerville with his wife, Liz.

The Kennebec Historical Society January presentation is free to the public (donations gladly accepted). The presentation will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 16, 2019, at the Hope Baptist Church, located at 726 Western Avenue in Manchester.

February 2019 Public Presentation: “A History of Camp Keyes”

For more than 100 years, Camp Keyes has been known as the headquarters of the Maine National Guard in Augusta. But how did that site on the hill come to be chosen? Who is it named for? Who trained there, and why? Come listen as Capt. Jonathan Bratten, historian for the Maine National Guard, answers those questions and describes the role that Camp Keyes has played in five different conflicts and for generations of Maine soldiers and airmen.

Our February speaker is the command historian for the Maine National Guard. In this capacity, he has produced multiple articles on the history of Maine’s soldiers, appearing in such publications as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Army History*, *On Point*, and *Army* magazine. He has also appeared in the Smithsonian Channel documentary “Americans Underground: Secret Cities of World War I” and served as a historian in France for the Army’s World War I centennial commemorations. Additionally, Capt. Bratten is the commander of the 251st Engineer Company and a veteran of the Afghanistan war. He and his wife live in Portland.



Contributed photo

The Kennebec Historical Society February presentation is free to the public (donations gladly accepted). The presentation will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 20, 2019, at the Hope Baptist Church, located at 726 Western Avenue in Manchester.

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

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U.S. Postage
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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 _____

Email 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

Business hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday through Friday **Assisted research hours:** By appointment during winter hours, please call

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