



KHS Participates in Maine Museums Day

On February 5, the Kennebec Historical Society joined with the New England Museum Association and Maine Archives and Museums on Maine Museums Day to celebrate the diversity and unique achievements of museums and other collecting institutions in Maine. The schedule for the day consisted of advocacy training in the morning at the Maine State Archives, followed by time to meet with legislators, and a reception in the Maine State House’s Hall of Flags, featuring guest speakers and displays from participating institutions.

The advocacy training was conducted by Dan Yaeger, the executive director of the New England Museum Association, and focused on current issues and how to practice an advocacy story. The training was attended by KHS Administrative Director Scott Wood and KHS volunteers Doreen Harvey and Kari Mullen-McLaughlin. Yaeger spoke about the importance of collecting institutions having an “elevator speech,” a brief, concise message about what the organization does and why what it does is important. KHS attendees also learned some tips on having conversations with representatives about issues that are relevant to KHS.



KHS volunteers Doreen Harvey, Kari Mullen-McLaughlin, and Cynthia Thompson, helped to inform state legislators about what KHS has to offer.

Photo by Scott Wood



Representative Catherine Nadeau speaks with KHS Administrative Director Scott Wood. Photo by Jamie Logan

At the Hall of Flags reception in the Maine State House, KHS was able to exhibit many of the ways it preserves Kennebec County history. KHS was well represented, with KHS volunteers Cynthia Thompson and Jamie Logan joining those who attended the morning advocacy training. The reception featured opportunities to have conversations with colleagues from other collecting institutions while listening to inspiring speakers, such as David Cheever, state archivist and vice chairman of the Maine Bicentennial Commission; and Margo Lukens, director of the Clement and Linda McGillicuddy Humanities Center at the University of Maine.

The KHS exhibit included handouts on how to catalog, brochures on membership and artifact donations, information about its monthly programs, samples of the archival boxes that KHS uses to preserve the collection, and a large stand-alone sign bearing the KHS logo. Representatives Thom Harnett, Catherine Nadeau, and

Bruce White along with Senator Shenna Bellows all stopped by to see and hear about the important work KHS is doing and the effect these efforts have on the entire county.

President's Message



As I write this message to KHS Members and prospective members, I'm full of pride and excitement for all the interesting activities taking place at our wonderful Fuller Home.

In this article, I'd like to give you a glimpse into one of the projects that I have been working on since becoming president of the Board of Directors. We have a new ad-hoc committee, the Carriage House Expansion Committee. I co-chair this committee with Kent London. Other members are Ernie Plummer, Joe Owen, and Phyllis vonHerrlich. Our purpose is to find the best solution to our need for space for the ever-expanding historical collection we have in our archive and our library. We are bursting at the seams! We have people coming in every day to do research on their family history, research their homes, and look at old maps. We also have students doing research for school projects and some who just look at the old pictures of Kennebec County. We are proud of our collection and the wonderful work our many volunteers do to make sure these items are cataloged in a way that you can come in and find what you want in a way that makes it fun and easy to do research.

The Carriage House Expansion Committee wants to be sure the addition to our building blends in with the existing Fuller House. To achieve that, the decision was made to place the addition as nearly as possible on the footprint of the old carriage house. With this in mind, going down the street you might not even notice the addition. We also want to be sure to add six parking places on our land to accommodate folks who come in to do research. We don't want to have cars parked on the street and we want to be good neighbors. Most of all, we want to keep the neighborhood looking as it has for years. We are proud to be in the Fuller residence, an early 19th-century Greek revival house, your Kennebec Historical Society home.

We have hired E.S. Coffin Engineering and Surveying, Inc. to assist us with the design. We must have climate control for our archive, and of course, we want to be sure this new addition will be handicapped-accessible. Although we do have students doing research, a large percentage of our members are senior citizens and we want them to be able to come in and do their research without any barriers.

We are in the early planning stage of this expansion for our archive and will keep you updated as we move forward with our plans. We hope you will find KHS an interesting place to come and do your research and enjoy a few quiet moments during your hectic day.

If you are not a member, please consider becoming one; and if you are a member, please consider helping us by inviting your family, friends or neighbors to become members.

— *Patsy Garside Crockett, President*

Intern Positions Open for Summer of 2019

Are you a student or do you know a student who will be looking for employment this summer? Do you have an interest in history, library science or computer science? Would you like a hands-on experience with a historical society?

For the seventh year, the Kennebec Historical Society has established two paid summer internships for the summer of 2019. The positions will be for 12 hours per week for 10 weeks. Training and supervision will be provided by the library/archive staff. Successful candidates will be pursuing college-level studies in history or library science, will show an excellent attention to detail in their work, and will be competent in the use of Microsoft Office tools. An application can be sent by email to kennhis1891@gmail.com and should include a brief description of your current course of study, available dates, and a short CV that includes GPA and academic references. A job description for this position is available on our website, www.kennebechistorical.org, home page at the Summer Intern Job Description link. The decision on offers will be made in March.



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Total membership:

546 on February 1

Life members: 188

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 (part 2)



As promised last issue, this month I'm revisiting interesting aspects of KHS' *Hearth and Home* Periodical Collection. We protect over 280 issues of this title alone (the collection is about 90 percent complete), published from the late 1890s until 1933. The extent of our holdings affords an eye-opening perspective on what was a woman's place in the home and what women might have aspired to within the confines of society at that time. *Hearth and Home* was one of many periodicals printed monthly in Augusta by Peleg O. Vickery and John F. Hill, of the Vickery and Hill Publishing Company. This publication proves to be a snapshot in time of literature, fashion, craft, medicinal quackery, and other topics surrounding the lives of women. Let's peruse three sample issues over the publication's run.

November 1894:

Two serialized stories: "Mrs. Chetwynd's Secret or the Forsaken Abbey" by Constance Sterling and "The Mystery of Hedgate Hall" by Herbert Linton, M.D. Included are two regular columns, "Useful and Fancy Work," conducted by M.E. Bradford, which addresses sewing, tatting, and embroidery; and "Mutual Benefit Society," conducted by A.G. Spofford. An invitation there reads: "Every lady reader of *Hearth and Home* is cordially invited to contribute to this department. Questions, answers and correspondence on all subjects of special interest to housekeepers, will be very welcome." The "Pantry" sub-section features recipes sent by readers. In this issue they are: "a useful cake," "cookies," and a "nice omelet." An advertisement sample for a free gun with cigar purchase suggests a very different reality from today.



December 1915:

In addition to past regular features, now we find "With the Editor," "The Latest Paris and New York Fashions" (sample seen here), and "Songs Requested." Serialized stories include "The Blue Ridge Mystery," by Robert Adger Bowen; "Course of True Love," by Etta W. Pierce; "The Magic Key" or "The Master Mummer," by E. Phillips Oppenheim; "The Stolen Stocking," by Mary Minor Lewis; "The Flying Girl," by Richard Marsh; and "But Yet a Mother," a "Poetic Tangle," by Howard Dwight Smiley.



April 1930:

Florence England Nosworthy is of particular note, having illustrated the majority of the red-enhanced themed covers. Her run began in about 1920, when this type of cover was introduced. Featured columns are still going strong but advertisements are beginning to take over the copy and serials have shorter entries. This issue has chapters of "Sanctuary," by Ann West; "The Armytage Arms," by Gertrude Pahlow; and "Renewal," by L.G. Moberly. Now the "In The Pantry" contributions show somewhat more sophisticated recipes: cream puffs, apple catsup, scones, spaghetti with mushrooms, macaroni salad, cream layer cake, and honey cakes. Within the many ads for various cures of ailments and bits and bobs to order at reduced rates, there are no less than three ads for products containing radium. Degnen's Radioactive Solar Pad says that "Radium is restoring health to thousands." Ingersoll Radiolite has a pocketwatch whose luminous dial "enables one to tell the time on the darkest night." The working women who painted these dials with radium were known to lick the paintbrushes, become disfigured and die within months. The last ad for Radiwoll can be seen here.



A consideration to take away from *Hearth and Home* and other periodicals marketed to women is: To what extent were the contents propaganda that held women back, and how much was inspirational, offering opportunity and networking? The women who subscribed to this magazine were integral to the content and evolution of *Hearth and Home*. Mailing addresses printed on the issues in our collection include Woubawick, Ontario, Moultonborough, New Hampshire, and Kingston, New York. More local addresses include Mrs. L.H. Beal, of Mechanic Falls; and Mrs. James Sullivan, of Houlton. We can wonder at the influence this publication had on these women's lives. Did they feel heard? Were their needs answered? Did their knowledge and skills increase? Were they connected with the larger female society in a supportive way? Did they get snookered by a quack medicine or send for things of low quality? Is this any different from the women's magazines of today?

— Story and photos by Kari Mullen-McLaughlin, archival intern

The Collections Box

It's February, and we are all enjoying the weather we prayed for last July. To help fill the empty hours, here is a selection of items we've added to our collections over the past few months.

Among the manuscript materials are the following. In a letter T. Pratt in Gardiner wrote to Moses Emery in Saco, dated February 12, 1835, he discussed lumber sales and water rights. On December 16, 1847, R. Rice, of Augusta, wrote S.S. Nolman of Saint John, New Brunswick, of financial matters concerning Mr. Emery and Mr. Nealy. Ed, of Hallowell, wrote to Charles F. Moore, of Livermore, on April 14, 1852, with news about school where there were about 15 scholars and plenty of good-looking girls. Asa G. Leighton, of Columbia, wrote to his brother Levi, of Augusta, on March 4, 1854, with news from the logging camp. "It's cold and wet," and he wants to quit lumbering. Gordon T. Henry, of Readfield, ordered a 40-mph engine and a 60-gallon boiler from J. W. Penny and Sons in Readfield on October 16, 1894. On June 27, 1829, in Windsor, Jesse Harriman indentured Joseph Young and his wife from June 27, 1829, until the first Monday in April 1830 and promised to pay them 57 cents a week. Anthony S. Coombs, an overseer of the poor in Windsor, wrote to the overseers of the poor in Edgecomb on April 29, 1840, requesting reimbursement for relief paid to Martha Catherine, of Edgecomb, who was in distress in Windsor. Jerimiah Graham asked Reuel Williams, of Augusta, on March 24, 1822, for permission to survey his road. William R. Smith, of Sabattus Lodge No. 6, in Augusta, wrote to the secretary of Kenduskeag Lodge No. 1 in Belgrade on June 2, 1844, to plan the forthcoming Fourth of July celebration and parade. Nancy, of Limerick, wrote a love letter to Albert F. Pease, of Readfield Corner, April 7, 1877. D.B. Laret in Waterville ordered handles from William A. Andrews in East Turner on March 24, 1834. On March 3, 1836, David Watson, of Waterville, a blacksmith, wrote to Stephen Watson, of Pittsfield, and reported news from several towns in the area. On November 20, 1912, Annie Thanum, of Windsor, wrote to chide Miss Mattie Jackson about her Sunday school attendance. George Plaisted, of Gardiner, wrote to L.W. Carroll, of Norwich, Connecticut, on May 12, 1852, to inquire if he could use some belt leather. From Hope, on March 25, 1837, Jesse W. Payson wrote to James P. Weston, of Waterville, about possible shoemaking opportunities there. Mr. Parker's debt for a farm in Hallowell was the topic of a letter from W. Robinson, of Hallowell, to William D. Sohier, of Boston, Massachusetts, on September 30, 1828. Henry James, of Winn, a dealer in dry goods, asked H.D. Eaton of Waterville on June 22, 1874, to help him collect a debt owed by Harry Emery.

In addition to manuscript items, we added several books to the library. *The Society of Friends in Kennebec County, Maine*, by Rufus Matthew Jones; *Dictionnaire Généalogique des Familles du Québec a 1739* by René Jetté; Messalonskee High School's *Eagle Talon* yearbooks for 2001, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Fayette Town Report 2015; 17 copies of the *Pinnacle* yearbook of Erskine Academy; *Cross Hill* by Clara Curtis; *Water Village* by Earl H. Smith; 1940 Augusta District Telephone and Telegraph Company Directory; *History of the Cives Corporation*; *Recipes and Reminiscences*, by Phyllis Siebert; *The Weeks Mill "Y" of the Two Footers*, by Clinton F. Thurlow; *Historical Notes on Augusta, Maine, Part Two*, by Joseph Beck; *Days Gone Bye* and *Golden Notes*, by Cay and Norm Gallant, respectively; the *Maine Register 2007*; Annual Report of the Town of Pittston for 1937; *The Echo* yearbook of Belgrade High School 1955, 1959, and 1961.

We try to add to our photo collection only images that satisfy at least two of the following criteria: identity of the subject, date of the photo, and the name of the photographer. Additions satisfying at least two of these three criteria enabled us to add the following images; 81 photos of the Robbins, Young, Maynard, and McCoy family of Augusta taken in the early 20th century; John Titcomb, of Waterville; Olive Norton Collins, of Gardiner; Hon. H.C. Reed, March 1863; photos of the MacDougall, Hunt, and MacLeod family tentatively related to the Enman family; photos of the Fisk family, of Augusta; Waterville Sons of the American Legion, Post No. 5 band; and the Hallowell Fireman's Association Band.

Through a grant from the WPA in the 1930s, the Augusta Assessor's Office was provided with photos of every taxable property in the city. Because this project did not include photos of surrounding towns, we are attempting to fill the gap with early 20th century postcards, preferably the real-photo type. To that end we recently added the following; Hallowell, Hubbard Library, State Industrial School, and Water Street; Readfield, Post Office Square; Gardiner, the March 15, 1909, ice house fire, the steamer Islander; Litchfield, Fleischmann house; Clinton, Church Street, Pleasant Street looking south, post office, residential part of Main Street, Clinton High School, the Decker residence, lower Main Street; Fayette, the old mill, looking west, Underwood homestead guest house; Fayette Mills, post office and bakery; Albion, Robbie's Bargain Mart; and Oakland, panoramic view.



Research-ready: Unlocking the Historic Content, Context, and Significance in Artifacts

Unlike the process of data entry in a bank or personnel office, cataloging historic items requires the cataloger to seek to understand the historic content, context, and significance of the artifact.

As an example, the new year brought an impulse to follow the dictates of Marie Kondo and tidy up my desk at the society. I uncovered a project involving four handwritten documents that I had set aside for transcription some time ago.

The four manuscripts were related to the establishment and maintenance of the Read Free School on West River Road, Augusta. Spanning the period 1830 to 1848, they are a deed providing the land and building for the school, two bond agreements for the funds provided and a draft of bylaws for the Read Free School fund provided by the donor, George Read or Reed. They named 18 people involved. (See ItemID 2019.0007.0001-0004.) So much for content.

In my tidying zeal, I moved on to the collections database. By a prepared mind, or pure luck, I noticed an entry that had one of the surnames I had seen in the four documents. It was one of the early transcriptions that had been entered, in full, in the database. The story from the *Kennebec Journal* was about Lora Belle Saunders (nee Parkman), a 90-year-old descendant of George Read, and it was all about the school and Lora's ancestor, George Read. (1960.0001.0001)

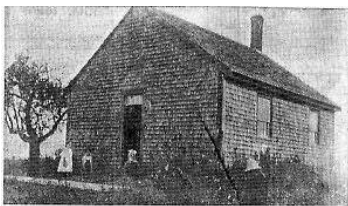
In addition to this document, the following became available:

- an article provided by Anthony Douin from 1913 indicating the school closed in 1889
- a genealogical search of the families who were involved in the school
- the 1875 Augusta map showing the school prominently (as does the 1851 map)
- an internet article by Janet Doerr, another George Read descendant, that added to the story and provided pictures of the school. (Thanks to Kari Mullen-McLaughlin.)



1875 map of Augusta showing location of Read Free School on River Road.

KHS archive image



File photo of the Read Free School from 1875.

KHS archive photo

We have been able to understand a bit of the context in which the school existed. We have one anecdote about why it was built between the Ballard School and the Cony School, both free public Augusta schools and each about half a mile away.

We also found George Read in the 18 articles published by the *Maine Farmer* in 1876 and 1877 and authored by Capt. Daniel Cony (1817-1888) called “Random Thoughts and Recollections.” He reported that George Read was commonly known as “hard-tary Reed, on account of the frequent use he made of that word, and his eccentric pronunciation of it.”

Anthony Douin, in an Antiquarian Notebook article titled “Over the Hill to the Poorhouse” (Anthony J. Douin, *Capital Weekly*, Page A6, March 19, 2009) also indicated that he was appointed, in 1805, as the first superintendent of the Augusta town poorhouse, which was located just north of Ballard's Corner. The poor house moved to North Street in 1834.

Although we would appreciate more, this is where our search for context currently stands.

The problem now turns to the historic significance of these items. Perhaps their significance is as a record of an early, formal home or community schooling project. One wonders how well it worked.

This is an ongoing project. We would like to invite anyone who had a relative at that school or knows more about it to contact us at 622-7718 or kennhis1891@gmail.com.

— Ernest L. Plummer, archivist

Augusta's Howard Hill: One Family's Playground Becomes Public Asset

by Richard Scott Coffin

Let this serve as an invitation to join with Mother Nature in a hike over Howard Hill to gain a better appreciation of her handiwork. Initially, I thought “Howard Hill, an urban park in time” would make a good title for this article. It is certain that this park land will continue to function as a place of learning, remaining a magnificent gift to this central Maine region. *Down East* magazine has referred to the Howard Hill property's promise as being “an urban wilderness retreat.” And, so it is.

In his article, “What Makes a Good Urban Park?,” published in 2007 in the periodical *Public Square*, Peter Katz, who played a key role in shaping and implementing a range of nationally significant community design and development projects, reflects, “A good park should allow you to both see and walk through it. Part of this relates to obvious issues of safety, but this principle also relates to the (Peter's) earlier point about ‘overdesign.’ In many new parks, I feel like a victim of planning, forced to navigate an obstacle course just to get through.”

It is natural that youngsters have a great deal of curiosity about the world around them, and it is their parents' responsibility to protect them from harm. When I was a youngster living in the southwest part of Augusta, my Dad would take me by the hand and we'd walk up Sewall Street to one of two access points into the Howard Hill property. Sometimes we had a family outing that included my late sister, Mary Sturtevant, my sister, Carolyn Ladd, and my late brother, David. Our childhood home was, as Avery Siler, a 2015 intern with the Kennebec Land Trust, noted, “a short walk from the woods that became their backyard and playground. The (Coffin) girls share memories of wildflowers: lady slippers, jack-in-the-pulpit, Solomon's seal, and in the springtime, trillium. Yellow violets were their favorites.” Mary spoke of Howard Hill as being “a refuge,” Avery reflected. Favorite plants that I still recall from our nature hikes were those tasty teaberries, and the hardwood tree, hop-hornbeam. Shelley Wigglesworth, an award-winning freelance journalist from Maine and certified Master Gardener, shared this item on the newengland.com website in 2018: “Teaberries were used commercially in the making of Teaberry chewing gum, one of the first chewing gums marketed in the United States at around 1900 — which is still available today. My grandfather Scott Stewart who had wandered over this same area 130 years ago, spoke of using American hop-hornbeam for making his axe handles. “Its wood is very resilient and is valued for making tool handles and fence posts,” according to a Wikipedia article about the tree. It



The wooded area behind the Capitol building in Augusta, known as Howard Hill, will become an urban park.

Photo by Keith Edwards, courtesy of the *Kennebec Journal*

is one of the hardest for deciduous, hardwood tree species within the Northern Hemisphere, in my view. As I am a former “timber cruiser” for International Paper Co. myself, that particular tree has always been special to me. Go out there for yourself and see if you can find one!

Regarding those access points into Howard Hill, one was opposite from Brooklawn Avenue, and the other was uphill along a power line from where the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife facility is now located on Federal Street. William Howard Gannett's home stood at the crest of Western Avenue, quite near where Applebee's Restaurant is now located. His home had been the primary access point into the Howard Hill property long before Capitol Street was extended westerly from Florence Street, which took place in the late 1950s. A fourth point of access, and one that will continue to function, is from the south and is still gained from Hallowell's Winthrop Street. Incidentally, William Howard Gannett (1854-1948), father of Guy P. Gannett, was the founder and publisher of *Comfort* magazine and a member of Maine's Legislature from 1903 to 1905. For a number of years he sponsored recreational activities in Augusta for its youngsters.

Ganneston Drive is now located where the woods road was that Mr. Gannett maintained over his 350-acre property. It still intersects with that power-line, so hiking southerly along that woods road 0.4 mile farther, we'd come to an intersection of another woods road on the left leading easterly 0.2 mile to what we youngsters then called “Lookout Point.” It's a high, prominent location where in 1915 Mr. Gannett built a treehouse that he named “The Bird's Nest.” In the mid-1940s, when I was there with my

Dad, all that treehouse structure except for dangling sill logs had collapsed into the woods below, and today the only obvious sign remaining is the granite landing once used to support the treehouse ramp. From that elevation is a wonderful, broad vista easterly of Kennebec Valley, as well as of the Capitol Building.

Returning to the main north-south trail running over Howard Hill, we hiked southerly one-quarter mile to the Hallowell line at a hayfield or pasture, which still exists, then continued for another half-mile south past the former Stevens School onto Winthrop Street in Hallowell. Then we walked back home from there via Hallowell's Pleasant, Page and Second Streets to Sewall Street, being a four-mile round trip, plus an added half-mile to include that Lookout Point site. It's a hike taken with my own three children several times.

The pasture mentioned is now part of the Effie L. Berry Conservation Area (more on that site below). An alternative trail from the pasture went easterly downhill along the north line of Hallowell for 0.3 mile, and then northerly for a half-mile leading onto Sewall Street just opposite Southern Avenue. Due to real estate development along the west side of lower Sewall Street in the late 1950s through 1970s, that former trail or woods road no longer exists. Timewise, repeating our nature hike leisurely would involve approximately three hours.

Johnson's Pond, which likewise is no longer there, was another attractive feature of Howard Hill. Many of Augusta's youngsters had skated and played ice hockey on it during the wintertime, while others swam there in summer. It may have been in the 1970s when an Augusta youngster drowned that the dam was dynamited and the pond drained. This former pond site has since reverted to again being part of the woods. I'm not aware that cross-country skiing ever became popular at Howard Hill, but skied there myself a couple of times as a teenager.

Between 1930 and 1969, Howard Hill, also known formerly as Gannett's Woods, and Ganneston Park, had been designated as a state game preserve. It is noteworthy that a great deal of health-related value will continue to exist in what now is a city park. You could also say that as a community, we are truly blessed.

Since Howard Hill is now undergoing trail and access improvements, it is important to share with you the

following operational perspectives. Your patience may be required until facilities including access and parking spaces have become operational.

The city of Augusta now owns the 164-acre site. The city's Bureau of Parks and Recreation oversees and maintains the use of the Howard Hill property primarily in the form of foot trails.

Offering a broader perspective, Augusta's Parks and Recreation Bureau offers a wide range of sports and recreational activities for both children and adults. If you have any questions about the recreation programs, please contact the Buker Community Center at 207-626-2350.

The department's ongoing function "provides an environment where the citizens of Augusta and its surrounding communities can engage in fun, healthy activities all year long." Presently there is no off-street vehicular parking. There are plans to develop an access road and parking lot when funds have been raised to accomplish this goal.

The Kennebec Land Trust holds a conservation easement on the Howard Hill property. The conservation easement assures that the property will be retained forever in its essentially undeveloped condition; protects plant and wildlife habitat and environmental quality; and permits limited, sustainable harvesting of timber and nontimber resources and public recreational use. Recreational uses include hiking, nature

observation, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and bow hunting by permission only. No motorized vehicles are permitted on the trails. (See the Kennebec Land Trust brochure online at: <https://www.tkl.org/howardhill>.)

The eight-acre Effie L. Berry property, owned by the city of Hallowell and protected by a KLT conservation easement, is contiguous with Howard Hill and has similar conservation values. Parking for the Effie L. Berry Conservation Area is at the end of Coos Lane in the Stevens School complex. The parking area provides public access to the Effie L. Berry and Howard Hill trail network. More online: <https://www.tkl.org/effie-l-berry-conservation-area>.

KHS member Richard Coffin, an Augusta native who now splits his time between Maine and Florida, is a retired civil engineer who worked for most of his career in park design for the Maine Department of Conservation.

For more information, here are related email contacts:

Bruce Chase, director of Augusta's Parks & Recreation:
bruce.chase@augustamaine.gov

Ansley and Janet Sawyer, KLT Howard Hill volunteer land stewards; Ansley, Augusta Conservation Commission;
howardhill.augusta@gmail.com

Jean-Luc Theriault, KLT Stewardship Director;
jtheriault@tklt.org

Theresa Kerchner, KLT Executive Director;
tkerchner@tklt.org

Rosemary Presnar, Chair, Hallowell Conservation Commission;
rlpresnar@hotmail.com

Postcards: The Legacy of Social Media

In recent weeks, my colleague Cynthia Thompson has been exploring our society's postcard collection. The majority of this correspondence originates from the early 1900s. Through investigating these postcards, she's discovered their many historical uses. They contained messages between prospective couples, humble and not so humble brags, and everyday news between friends and loved ones. They were also used as records of vacations, and even for local advertisements.

Through the investigation of the society's postcard collection, Cynthia has found that this past form of social networking serves as a precursor to today's social media statuses and messages. These postcards contained short correspondence and were delivered promptly. How promptly? Cynthia noted two cancellation stamps with the same date on one postcard—it had reached two post offices in a day. In fact, Mainers would use them to tell loved ones that they couldn't make it to dinner, or that they'd be stopping by a friend's house later in the evening.

In her search, Cynthia discovered an especially noteworthy postcard from 1916. It was delivered so quickly, it serves as a contemporary example of an "instant message." This missive was sent from Miss Violet Hewins, of High Street, Augusta, to Mrs. Mabel Brown, of Gage Street, Augusta. The single-dated postmark reveals that Miss Hewins' letter reached her friend across town in one day. On the back, she writes: "Please do not call Tuesday as Myrtle is sick in bed with the grippe." At the time, the "grippe" was the colloquial term for the flu.

In 1916, when this postcard was sent, telephones would not have been in use by the average Mainer. It wasn't until the '20s that they began to reach the average consumer. Because of this, it's safe to assume that for most, a postcard was the fastest form of indirect communication. Thus, a postcard filled the same role as today's social media message and serves as a precursor thereof.

— *Hannah McLaughlin, membership ambassador*

The Kennebec Historical Society Welcomes the Following New Members

and continues to recognize...

Gianine Lupo - Hallowell
 Karen Varney - Orlando, Florida
 Christopher Faris - Richmond
 Renee St. Jean - Augusta
 Amanda Laird - Hallowell
 Nancy Moore - East Providence, Rhode Island
 Daena M. Creel - York Springs, Pennsylvania
 James H. Weymouth - Augusta

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

❁ In Memoriam ❁

Susan Jacques Pines, 93, a retired nurse, former legislator from Limestone and Kennebec Historical Society member for about a decade, died Jan. 28 in Palo Alto, California. She worked as the office nurse in the practice of her husband, Dr. Philip Pines. When Loring Air Force Base closed, she was a leader of the group planning for the future of Limestone and setting up the Loring Development Authority. She was an early supporter of the Maine School of Science and Mathematics, with funding, legislative support and hosting some of its first students. She later lived at Granite Hill Estates in Hallowell until moving to Palo Alto in 2016 to be closer to her son, Jack. She is survived by her son, six grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

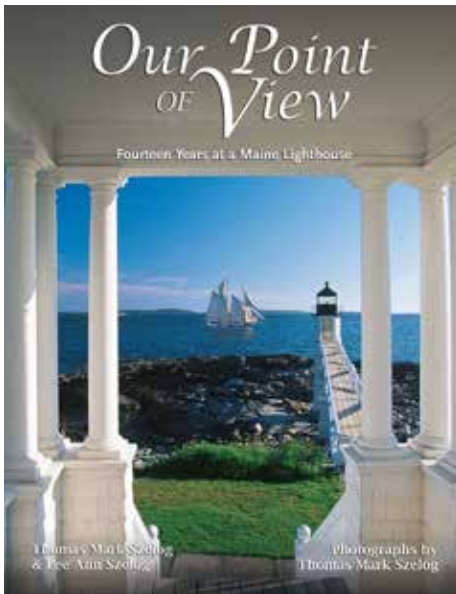
Marjorie May Tribou, 94, of Manchester, a KHS member for the last 14 years, died Jan. 2 in Augusta. Born in Northampton, England, she met her future husband, Phillip Tribou, when he was a soldier stationed near Northampton during World War II. They lived in South Portland, Bath, and Orono before settling in Augusta, her husband's hometown. She worked for the Maine Teachers Association, now the Maine Education Association. After retirement, they moved to a new house on Cobbossee Lake in Manchester. She is survived by two children, as well as grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Hope Wing Weston, 103, a former KHS member, died Jan. 9 at the Hospice House in Auburn. Born and raised in the Philippines, she graduated from the University of Maine in Orono. She and her husband, the late Lowell Nathan Weston, lived in Augusta and East Winthrop. In 1997 she published her autobiography, *Hope's Two Lives*, a copy of which is in the KHS library. She is survived by two sons, six grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren, seven great-great-grandchildren, and one great-great-great-grandson.

Upcoming Programs

March Public Presentation:

“Our Point of View — Fourteen Years at a Maine Lighthouse”



Cover photo by Thomas Mark Szelog

Imagine living in a century-old lightkeeper’s house on the coast of Maine. It sounds like a fantasy, but for Tom and Lee Ann Szelog, dream became reality when they settled into the keeper’s quarters at the Marshall Point Lighthouse in Port Clyde. Join the Szelogs to experience what it’s like to live in an authentic and operating lighthouse on the Maine coast. In a narrated photography presentation based on the Szelog’s book, *Our Point of View – Fourteen Years at a Maine Lighthouse*, witness the ever-changing tide of emotion and drama through compelling stories and extraordinary photographs. Published by Down East Books, *Our Point of View* has been honored as one of the best photo books by *Shutterbug* magazine and was the winner of Best Maine-themed Book in the Maine Literary Awards from the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance. The book also is a Gold Medal winner from the Independent Publishers Association.

The Kennebec Historical Society March presentation is co-sponsored by the Maine State Library. It is free to the public (donations gladly accepted) and will take place at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 20, at the Maine State Library, located at 230 State Street in Augusta.

April Public Presentation: “Stagecoaches on the Kennebec”

Travel from Portland to the Kennebec Valley by stagecoach had begun long before Augusta had been selected for the Capitol site. As early as 1792, Caleb Graffam rode the post and conveyed newspapers from Portland to Hallowell. By December 1793, he carried passengers from Portland to Hallowell in a sleigh. This was just once every two weeks, but it made a good start. Up until the advent of the railroads in Maine, stagecoaches carried visitors, politicians and businessmen between Portland, Maine’s interim capital, and Augusta. Stage owners were frequently tavern owners as well. What better business model than being able to physically carry your customers to your tavern’s front door? The KHS presentation will cover the roads, stage lines, and taverns used to convey and accommodate travelers from Portland to Augusta and include stories of actual travelers who braved the winter snow, summer storms, and some reckless stage drivers.

KHS speaker, western history author, entrepreneur and inventor Leland J. Hanchett Jr., has now published his first book on Maine’s history and his ninth book overall. After sixteen years in computer design and manufacturing, Leland started his own manufacturing company, founding Hanchett Entry Systems, Inc. A Swedish company bought him out in 1998. Lee then wrote six books about Arizona followed by one on Montana. During his engineering career, he patented thirty electronic, optical and mechanical devices.

The Kennebec Historical Society April presentation is free to the public (donations gladly accepted). The presentation will take place at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 17, at the Hope Baptist Church, located at 726 Western Avenue in Manchester.



Photo courtesy of Leland J. Hanchett Jr.

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

E-mail address: kennhis1891@gmail.com

Telephone: (207) 622-7718

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