

# Kennebec Current

Discovering, preserving, and disseminating Kennebec County history since 1891

Volume 31 Issue 3

KENNEBEC HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

May-June 2021

## Gettysburg Land Deal Safeguards Maine Troops' Legacy

A tract of land next to a Battle of Gettysburg site where the Union's 5th Maine Battery fended off Confederates while under the command of a Belgrade native has been protected from development.

The nonprofit American Battlefield Trust announced its purchase of the land as part of a 49-acre acquisition of three parcels in March.

The neighboring battlefield site is Stevens' Knoll, named for Capt. Greenlief T. Stevens (1831-1918), who was wounded on July 2, 1863, the second day of the three-day battle in Pennsylvania. Stevens later was elected to the Maine House of Representatives, representing Waterville and West Waterville (now Oakland), and the Maine Senate. He moved to Augusta after that, becoming the Kennebec County sheriff, and, still later, the county's judge of probate.

The Battle of Gettysburg, one of the Civil War's bloodiest, is considered by many historians to be the turning point of the four-year war, which the Union ultimately won.

"If any battlefield is universally considered 'hallowed ground' by Americans, it is Gettysburg, where President Abraham Lincoln coined the phrase," American Battlefield Trust president David Duncan said in a news release announcing the land purchases. "This is a place quintessential to the American experience and it is our privilege and honor to ensure that it remains a sacred place of memory and contemplation for future generations."

The nonprofit organization completed the land purchases by leveraging private donations from American Battlefield Trust members against matching grants from the federal American Battlefield Protection Program. The federal government allocated \$573,000 for the project.

Born, raised, and educated in Belgrade, Greenlief Thurlow Stevens became a teacher and a lawyer. The Civil War broke out just before he finished his law degree at Harvard University, so upon graduation he accepted a commission as a first lieutenant in the 5th Maine Battery. A shell fragment wounded him at the Battle of Chancellorsville, two months before Gettysburg.

During the July 2 action at Gettysburg, in addition to Stevens, 12 other men were wounded. As a result of the battery's effort, the high point once known as McKnight's Hill became Stevens' Knoll. The knoll itself was set aside for preservation in the 1860s.

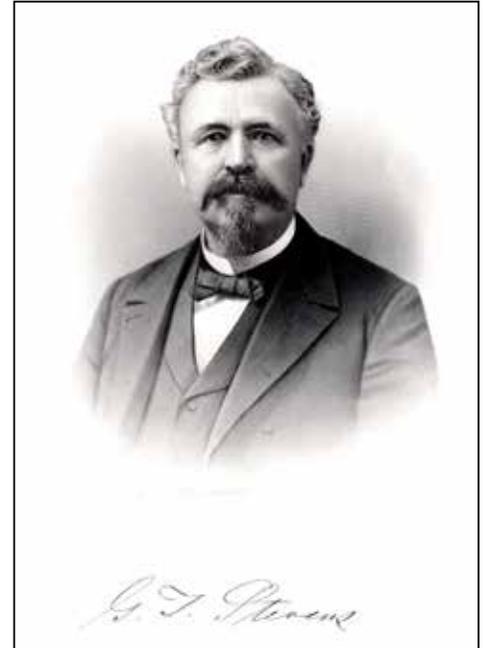
Stevens later participated in Civil War battles at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Winchester, and Cedar Creek. He was promoted to brevet major in February 1865, about two months before the war ended. He was mustered out of the Army in July.

In Augusta, Stevens lived at 44 Green Street, on the southeast corner of the intersection with Chapel Street, during and after his tenure as county probate judge. Other judges lived at the same intersection around that time, which prompted the location to become known as "Four Judges Corner."

Stevens died in 1918 and was buried alongside the the grave of his wife, Mary Ann, in Woodside Cemetery in Belgrade.

As part of the Maine Gettysburg Commission, Stevens played a role in determining the location of monuments to Maine participants on the battlefield at Gettysburg.

The American Battlefield Trust said it has protected a total of 1,231 acres in and around Gettysburg National Military Park. The 2021 purchases also include the historic James McKnight House, located along the Baltimore Pike near East Cemetery Hill.



An illustration of Greenlief T. Stevens from Henry D. Kingsbury's 1892 *History of Kennebec County*.

From the KHS collection

— by Joseph Owen

## President's Message



I was pleased to be invited by the Vassalboro Board of Selectmen to join them April 26 for a celebration of the town's 250th anniversary at the Civil War memorial near the East Vassalboro boat landing on China Lake.

As this newsletter reported in its last issue, three other Kennebec County communities – Hallowell, Winslow, and Winthrop – marked their 250th anniversaries on the same day.

In Vassalboro, speaking as head of the Kennebec County commissioners, I presented a resolution from county government congratulating the town on reaching the 250-year milestone. I also mentioned some highlights of the town's history, including those cited here.

- By 1771, the year when the Massachusetts Colonial government approved Vassalboro's incorporation as a town, Native Americans had lived for centuries in that area of the Kennebec Valley. They were mostly driven out of the area before any permanent English settlement was established, however. The most accurate records of these times were kept by Jesuit missionaries from France. Other records kept by captains, traders, and historians were sketchy and mostly reports of individual incidents.
- Vassalboro was named after the Vassal family. Its members were some of the wealthiest residents of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. By the 1700s, six members of the family had graduated from what is now Harvard University.
- In 1792, the Massachusetts state government created the town of Sidney, which originally had been part of Vassalboro. The two towns settled the separation of their financial accounts the following year. What remained of Vassalboro was the section on the east side of the Kennebec River, which is what the town is today.
- The town bought two acres from a blacksmith, John Roberts, in 1811 and paid him to build a "poor house" for indigent families there.
- In 1818, the town clerk first recorded the town's name as "Vassalboro" instead of the original "Vassalborough."
- The town voted in 1845 to prevent the "immoral" and unlicensed sale of liquor and to buy a stove and a funnel to warm the Town House.
- By 1860, Vassalboro had a population of 3,181 — about three-quarters of what it is today.
- The town paid for road work in 1880 at the rate of 15 cents per hour for men, 15 cents for oxen, and 20 cents for horses.
- In 1903, the Seven-Mile Brook bridge was built at a cost \$2,131.55.
- In 2021, renewable energy began powering the town's municipal and school facilities.

We can all be assured that in the future there will be as many interesting changes in Vassalboro as there have been since 1771. Congratulations to its residents for doing their part to make Vassalboro a lovely, family-friendly place.

— Patsy Garside Crockett, president

### KHS Welcomes the Following New Members

Andy Molloy — Hallowell  
Douglas Rooks — West Gardiner

Earl & Barbara Smith — Belgrade Lakes  
Elaine Staples — Albion

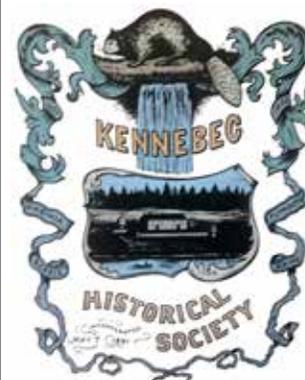
*and continues to recognize ...*

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

G & E Roofing  
Kennebec Savings Bank  
Meadow Park Development

**Sponsoring Business Members**  
(\$500+ annual)

J. S. McCarthy Printing  
O'Connor GMC



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**Total membership:**

810 on June 15  
Life members: 213

The Kennebec Current encourages letters to the editor. Email letters to [kennhis1891@gmail.com](mailto:kennhis1891@gmail.com). All letters are subject to editing for taste, style, and length.

## KHS Reopens for Walk-in Research



Executive Director Scott Wood displays the open flag to remind patrons of the new hours for research, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday.

Photo by Joseph Owen

As the entire state of Maine begins to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kennebec Historical Society is pleased to announce that it opened to walk-in researchers starting on June 1. Regarding masks, KHS is following current Maine CDC guidelines and would encourage anyone not feeling well to refrain from visiting.

The Henry Weld Fuller Jr. house, which was previously open only by appointment, allows visitors to research its Kennebec County collections and receive a brief tour of the building. The Fuller house, which is the society's headquarters, is located at 107 Winthrop Street in Augusta. Its climate-controlled archive is recognized by the state of Maine as an alternative repository for government records.

The society collects documents, photographs, manuscripts, books, ephemera, maps, and scrapbooks related to all Kennebec County communities and their history. Over the years, KHS has accumulated these unique personal holdings, which cannot be found anywhere else. Visitors include mostly the residents and former residents of Kennebec County's 30 municipalities who are interested in local or Maine history, people researching the history of their homes or families, and students doing research for high school or college assignments. Additionally, the society answers many email requests from all over the United States for genealogical and historical information.

Open hours are Tuesday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Researchers are still able to schedule appointments if unable to come during normal operating hours. If you have any questions, please call Scott Wood, executive director, at 622-7718 or contact him by email at [kennhis1891@gmail.com](mailto:kennhis1891@gmail.com).

## KHS, Cemetery Group to Host Joint Program July 24 in Augusta

The Kennebec Historical Society and the Maine Old Cemetery Association plan to host a joint daylong program on cemeteries July 24 at South Parish Congregational Church, located at 9 Church Street in Augusta.

The Saturday event, which begins with registration at 8:30 a.m., will include lectures, displays, the association's business meeting, and a tour of five nearby contiguous Augusta cemeteries.

KHS and MOCA members and the public are invited to attend. The cost at the door is \$3 per person.

The agenda starts at 9:15 a.m. with a welcome by KHS Executive Director Scott Wood and MOCA President Jessica Couture, followed at 9:30 by "Death and Burial at the Kennebec Historical Society: Examining the Evidence," KHS Archivist Emily Schroeder's one-hour description of cemetery- and burial-related items in the society's collection.

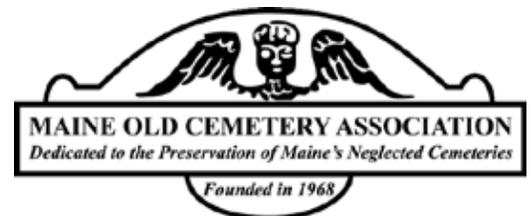
After a break, MOCA will conduct its regular business meeting at 10:45 a.m., followed by an 11:30 a.m. address by Glenn Roberts, of the Maine Veterans' Cemetery System, showcasing grave markers and the current web-based mapping project at four veterans' cemeteries in Maine.

Exhibits will be set up throughout the morning. Participants are invited to bring their own displays of photographs or other material that may be set up on tables provided at the church.

In the afternoon, a tour of five cemeteries near and at the top of the hill on the north side of Winthrop Street will occur. The cemeteries are Mount Hope, Mount Pleasant, Bien Venue, Fuller Extension, and Mount Vernon.

KHS will provide breakfast snacks and coffee. Lunch consisting of a variety of make-your-own sandwich options plus salad, chips, and dessert is available from noon to 1 p.m. for \$9 per person, payable in advance by July 17 through the MOCA website at [moca-me.org](http://moca-me.org). Participants who are unable to register online may email Joy Harvey at [jharvey0109@gmail.com](mailto:jharvey0109@gmail.com) or call or send a text to her at (207) 318-0109.

For more information about the event, call KHS at (207) 622-7718.



## Winthrop's Former Woolen Mill Thrives in New Role

A landmark industrial site in downtown Winthrop, once a place dedicated to making things from wool, now is focused on getting people well. Carleton Woolen Mill had nearly a 200-year history as a manufacturer of woolen and other products, but in recent years the mill complex has housed a full-service branch of MaineGeneral Medical Center in Augusta.

At one time, the mill was the nation's largest manufacturer of woolen blankets. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Since it closed in 2002, putting hundreds of employees out of work, investors have renovated it. The creation of medical offices there, using nearly all the space in the sprawling mill, is one of the most successful repurposing projects in Maine. It is now called the Winthrop Commerce Center.

A plaque in the downstairs entrance to the building praises the men and women who worked in the mill, starting in 1809.

David Cook, Winthrop's town historian, said the first industrial facilities at the Carleton site were a sawmill and a grist mill.

"John Chandler started it and called it Chandler's Mills. His son ran it after he did," Cook said.

The mills were built on Maranacook Stream, also known as Mill Stream, which runs from Maranacook Lake under what is now Main Street to Annabessacook Lake.



The former Carleton Woolen Mill has stood the test of time, having become the Winthrop Commerce Center.

Photo by Tom Johnson



Three Carleton employees stand in the Spinning Room in 1930 near the machines made by Whitin Co., of Massachusetts.

Photo courtesy of Carl Swanson

The mill produced both cotton and wool products until 1938, when it was purchased by Wilton Woolen Co. In 1954, the mill was sold and then operated as Carleton Woolen Co., producing exclusively wool products until it closed in 2002. It was one of the last woolen mills to operate in Maine.

Carl Swanson worked as the head electrician at the Carleton mill for 25 years, from 1975 to 2000. He had been working at Statler Tissue Corp. in Augusta.

By 1972, Swanson said, Carleton Woolen Mill had outgrown its space in the downtown mill, so it opened a new one-story production facility on the other side of U.S. Route 202 from downtown. State offices and the company that operates the Tex Tech Industries mill in North Monmouth have occupied that building since Carleton closed in 2002.

Swanson said Carleton Woolen Mill had 500 employees at its height.

Cook said there were four or five dams on the stream at one time. A horizontal tub water wheel at the site of the Carleton mill generated more power than conventional upright water wheels.

"It meant people didn't have to walk to Hallowell to grind their corn," Cook said. "It was probably a one- or two-man mill. It later became a textile mill. The mill did provide a lot of people with a lot of employment. It was sold and resold. It was up and down its whole existence."

Cook said a lot of Franco-Americans came from Lewiston, Augusta, and Quebec to work in the mill. Among its products, the mill made felt to cover pool tables.

The Winthrop Mills Co. was founded in 1866 by investors from Boston. The mill produced both



The Weave Room, shown in 1930, had one big electric motor in the ceiling powering a long shaft, from which various leather belts would transfer that power to each successive machine in the room.

Photo courtesy of Carl Swanson

*Continued on page 5*

It was the biggest employer in Winthrop. It was the only woolen mill in New England that expanded over the years, according to Swanson.

“They had different blends of wool they were working with,” he said. “They had to keep adapting. They made Navy peacoats at one time.”

Near the end of his career, Swanson said, he was only making \$13 an hour, but he averaged 20 hours of overtime a week.

Swanson said Ed Leveen owned the mill in the 1950s and 1960s. In addition to the main mill building, the company owned about 10 acres of land extending out to U.S. 202.

In 2002, Winthrop investor Lou Carrier bought the closed mill with several associates. Carrier had been a partner in Macomber, Farr & Whitten, an Augusta insurance agency, and he said he has “dabbled in real estate all my life.”

“I’m 87 years old. I don’t want to retire yet,” he quipped. “I’ve been in Winthrop all my life and I wanted to see something productive happen with that property. It could have just sat there.”

Each of Carrier’s partners paid \$66,000 as their share of the purchase. The group also paid \$55,000 in back taxes. The investors included Augusta barber Marshall “Duke” Dulac, Gene Green, and Ken Lajoie. They did major renovation on the building before leasing it to the hospital.



Woolen mill workers pose for the camera in 1930.

Photo courtesy of Carl Swanson



The Dye House kettles, as seen in 1952.

Photo courtesy of Carl Swanson

“We’ve refurbished a lot of it,” Carrier said. “In some situations, it has been done by us; and in some cases, it’s been done by the leasing properties.”

Carrier said new elevators were installed at each end of the building, which varies from three to five stories in height. Dozens of new windows were installed.

“We’re still looking for a first-class restaurant. Winthrop could use one since Pepper’s and Sully’s both closed,” he said.

The first and largest tenant to move into the Winthrop mill was Winthrop Family Medicine, a medical practice with more than a dozen doctors and caregivers, in addition to nurses and other staff members, who had been working in a cramped facility across town. MaineGeneral also operates Winthrop Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, MaineGeneral Orthopaedics, a radiology

and imaging center, a laboratory, and sports medicine and physical therapy services.

Joy McKenna, a spokesman for the Augusta hospital, said the Winthrop medical offices had 37,646 patient encounters in 2019.

Asked about the hospital’s role in Winthrop, Chuck Hays, MaineGeneral’s president and CEO, said, “MaineGeneral is committed to providing the services our community needs close to where they live, work, and play. We’ve grown our presence in Winthrop, consolidating primary care, express care, imaging, lab, and other services at the Winthrop Commerce Center. Patients appreciate the convenience of having high-quality health services under one roof right downtown.”

— *John Hale, of North Monmouth, worked as a reporter for the Capital Weekly, as State House Bureau chief for the Bangor Daily News, and as a reporter for the Kennebec Journal.*

## ✧ In Memoriam ✧

**Louise (Nichols) Beale**, 95, of Augusta, a longtime Kennebec Historical Society member, died April 29. An Augusta native, she worked many years at the Augusta Television Co., and she and her late husband, Julian, operated a television sales and repair business until they retired in 1987. Her survivors include three children and three stepchildren, a sister, 13 grandchildren, and many great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

## KHS Volunteer Makes Big Splash as “Jeopardy!” Contestant



KHS volunteer Jamie Logan shows off her parting gift from her “Jeopardy!” appearance.

Photo by Joseph Owen

**T**he answer: A 1970s science-fiction movie about a young couple fleeing a dystopian 23rd-century society in which overpopulation and pollution prompt the government to decree that all adults must submit to execution when they reach the age of 30.

The question: What is “Logan’s Run”?

That’s how the game show “Jeopardy!” might have presented this trivia topic in the past.

Now, however, the question should refer to Augusta resident Jamie Logan, a writing and website consultant and mother of one who recently finished a rewarding three-day stint as a contestant on the iconic TV program.

Logan, 35, a member of the Kennebec Historical Society’s Publicity Committee, has coordinated the society’s monthly online history lectures since the worldwide coronavirus pandemic made in-person gatherings taboo in early 2020. Last March, though, the video camera was trained on her instead of on a KHS speaker; and the camera was in a Los Angeles television studio.

Logan, a Portland native, moved to Augusta in 2012 to be closer to her State House job. She now lives on South Chestnut Street with her husband, Bill, and their 2-year-old son, also Bill. She began volunteering for KHS off and on in 2013, and got more deeply involved in the society about four years ago. Her “Jeopardy!” association is far older, however.

“I grew up watching it for as long as I (can) remember,” she said of the game show, noting that she wrote a fan letter to late host Alex Trebek when she was about 8 years old. She said she has prepared to be a contestant on the program since she was in college,

adding, “I used to read Trivial Pursuit cards to myself.”

Most nights, Logan and her husband, who works for the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, watch “Jeopardy!” at home, just as they both have done since childhood. Each grew up with a different family etiquette about when and how to shout out the questions that match the show’s answers, however, so they had to compromise on what their own rules would be when they got married.

The hurdles prospective players must overcome to appear on the show start with a 50-question online test, she said. If an applicant passes the test, he or she is invited to take another test in person, then take part in a mock version of the TV show. Those whose results are impressive enough are invited to take part in the real thing.

Logan was called to do a live audition for the “Jeopardy!” Tournament of Champions twice while attending Catholic University in Washington, D.C. The first audition was held in New York; the second, in Washington. That’s as far as she made it each time. Later, she sought a slot on the regular version of the show, resulting in three more live auditions – once each in Boston and York, and most recently last winter via Zoom conference because of the ongoing pandemic.

Finally, in February, she got an invitation to California to participate in the real thing.

“I tried out all these times focusing on the trivia,” she said, adding that for some reason, she had not considered the fact that she also would need to deal with the pressure of being on television and later would need to confront the reactions of people who saw her on the show.

She said history, literature, and pre-1980 pop culture are her strong suits; but post-1980 culture is her downfall. She can handle questions about baseball or basketball, but not much about other sports.

“Jeopardy!” shoots a week’s worth of shows in a single day. For Logan, a single afternoon encompassed her two triumphs and her defeat. Still woozy from jet lag, she was eliminated in the third session by failing to supply correctly a question about England’s King James I, but she walked away with a three-day total of \$52,200 in prize money.

“I’m sure the IRS will take a chunk of it, and student loans will get the rest,” she said.

Logan flew home two days later, sworn to secrecy about what happened until her episodes were broadcast on three successive evenings in May. The game show’s rules prohibit Logan from ever being a contestant again, so she settles – as many “Jeopardy!” veterans do – for taking part with her husband in LearnedLeague, a web-based trivia competition in which players are referred to as “LLamas” – a word that incorporates the game’s acronym.

And later, maybe, just maybe, they could train little Bill to carry the family “Jeopardy!” legacy into a second generation.

Would that be Double Jeopardy?

— by Joseph Owen

## Off the Shelf: Maine Antique Post Card Show

Greetings! Two of our members volunteered recently to go “out into the field” as it were, to scout out a potential source of vintage paper. They had a successful trip. Anthony Douin and Joe Owen attended the Maine Antique Post Card Show on May 16 in Portland, obtaining some choice items. It’s always fun to read the messages to friends and loved ones about their trips, activities, and opinions of the places shown on the cards. History is captured on front and back!

Their highlights include depictions of the Rome Inn in Winthrop; the Salmon Lake House, North Belgrade; the Augusta police in a parade, 1906; the crew on Rail 5 at the Augusta post office (undated); a bear cub in the deer park at Togus, dated 1927; a real photo of the State House in winter, tinted blue, postmarked 1906; and several scenes in Waterville: Main Street, 1922; Water Street’s French-Canadian neighborhood, 1913; Central Maine Park, 1907; the railroad depot, 1912; the Eagles’ home, 1907; and the Hathaway Shirt factory, whose flip side has a message that was never mailed — hence, no postmark.

Of the 28 cards, 15 are categorized as real-photo post cards and were produced from 1900 on. The date of any type of card can be narrowed further by considering the format of the side used for correspondence. The images here are of China Lake and Cooper’s Store in South China village. Both have divided backs: the message is on the left, with the address on the right. These were available from 1907 to 1915. I’ve featured these two as I live in South China and have a particular interest in the local history. Both were used and postmarked, which is an additional aid in dating them; the lake view has a 1909 postmark, but the 1909 mark on the Cooper Store card is unclear and a guess at best. This card brought three main questions to mind: Does this building still exist? Where was/is the building? And who was H.D. Cooper?

The precise location continues to baffle me (though I can guess), and requires more study. According to the classic history of China (*China, Maine: Bicentennial History Including 1984 Revisions*, 1975 and 1984, by Mary M. Grow, published first in 1975 by Marion T. Von Strien, Weeks Mills, Maine), this building was built around 1900 in South China village by Louis Masse and Samuel Starrett, as a store with an upstairs apartment. The first storekeeper was Samuel’s son George. The business was continued by Henry Cooper (undoubtedly the “H.D. Cooper” on the sign), Frank Hawes, Alvin Brown, Victor Stimpson, and Lincoln S. Reed. The store closed in 1960, with Reed continuing to reside there until 1972.

So who was Henry D. Cooper? Thanks to city and county directories, town histories and Ancestry.com, all available at the Kennebec Historical Society, much can be discovered. Cooper was born January 22, 1866, in Whitefield to the Rev. Freeman and Clara Douglass Cooper. By 1888 he had established himself in South Windsor and was appointed postmaster. Henry D., “our” Henry’s grandfather, was operating James Wingate’s store on the corner of Routes 17 and 32 in 1887. Wingate sold out to Freeman the following year, establishing the family’s storekeeping interest. The Cooper store was sold in 1910.

In the fall of 1892, Henry D. married Rosie (Rosa) Bullock, and they went on to have two sons, Lancelot and Earl E. The family moved around Kennebec County with some regularity. By 1900 they were in Augusta; five years later, back in Windsor; then in Augusta again in 1907. City directories report their presence in China from 1909 through 1914, narrowing the time range of our postcard’s image even further.

Henry D. Cooper died on October 11, 1940, and is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery, on Route 32 in Windsor, with his parents.

Isn’t it amazing what you can find out about someone once the search begins? And isn’t it great that KHS can provide such information to those who want it?

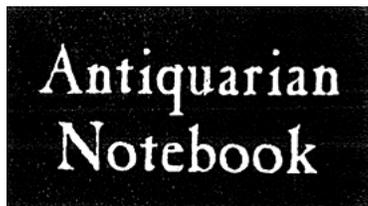
Until next time!



These two real-photo postcards were recently acquired by KHS for its collection.

From the KHS collection

## Thoughts on the “Antiquarian Notebook”



*Editor’s Note: In 1997, KHS member and local historian Anthony Douin began writing a historical column for the Capital Weekly that ran for 12 years. Life member and Kennebec Current contributor Sally Furber Nelson has catalogued those articles.*

Like many of you, I assumed that Augusta’s Cony High School was named for someone in the Cony family. But which one? When I read Anthony Douin’s article “Daniel Cony: Doctor, Soldier, Statesman, Educator,” published April 24, 2002, in the *Capital Weekly*, I found the answer. Born in Massachusetts in 1752, Daniel Cony studied medicine with Dr. Curtis of Tewksbury and married his niece, Susanna Curtis, in 1776. While in Tewksbury, he joined the militia and answered the call to march to Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775. Later he became an officer in his unit and was present at the surrender of British Gen. John Burgoyne at Saratoga. Daniel and Susanna Cony moved to the fort settlement, now Augusta, in 1778 with his father, mother, brother, and their families.



This 1938 post card shows Cony High School.

From the KHS collection

Daniel Cony believed that a liberal education meant “teaching citizens to be able to govern themselves as persons and as a political community.” He was instrumental in obtaining charters for Hallowell Academy and Bowdoin College. In 1815, he built a school on the corner of what are now Bangor and Cony streets and established in that building Cony Female Academy, the first school for women in Maine. The school flourished until the 1850s but ceased to exist in 1857.

Meanwhile, Augusta did have a high school, which was designed by architect Francis Fassett, but it was becoming quite crowded. The trustees of Cony Female Academy, mostly Cony descendants, had accumulated over \$20,000, which they offered to the city if the city would name a new school Cony Free High School. The new high school opened September 5, 1881, and served the city for 28 years. A new Cony High School building — the still-standing Flatiron building — was dedicated November 12, 1930. And now, as we all know, that building has been replaced by still another — all a tribute to the vision of Daniel Cony.



Carrie LeProhon’s class of first- and second-grade students at the Laurel Hill School in 1896.

From the KHS collection

Did you know that Augusta once had a public school for French-language pupils? Anthony Douin wrote about this French school, called Laurel Hill, in an *Antiquarian Notebook* article on September 25, 2003. In response to an increase in the number of French Canadians in the Augusta area, the city’s Village District voted in 1886 to build a school expressly for the French-speaking children. The Laurel Hill School was a two-story building with new desks, seats, and a furnace. Marion Cyr, a recent graduate of Madawaska Training School, was hired as the teacher. It opened in the fall of 1886 with 60 students; the enrollment soon grew to 127 and an assistant teacher was hired. Laurel Hill School served the community for about 20 years, closing in 1903.

Augusta also has a long history of commercial colleges. Soon after the Civil War, S. P. Adams established Augusta Commercial College in Waverly Hall on Winthrop Street. The college soon moved down to Water Street; unfortunately, the building housing it burned in the Great Fire of 1865. However, the school was rebuilt and continued to flourish, becoming incorporated as Dirigo Business College in 1867.

Dirigo Business College was always coed. In addition to business classes in bookkeeping, real estate, merchandising, business correspondence, and commercial law, there was a Telegraphy Department, which included instruction about the telephone, microphone, and telegraph. The school also offered normal preparatory courses for those who wished to be teachers or engineers, as well as language, art, and music classes. The school continued under different names for nearly 140 years.

KHS now has a complete set of the *Antiquarian Notebook* articles, cataloged by topic and time period, with a list of names and the illustration included. If you are interested in learning more about these articles or other topics, call 622-7188 for an appointment for further research.

— Sally Furber Nelson, KHS contributing editor

## Upcoming Facebook Programs

### July: “Pretty Rugged – True Stories from Women of the Sea”

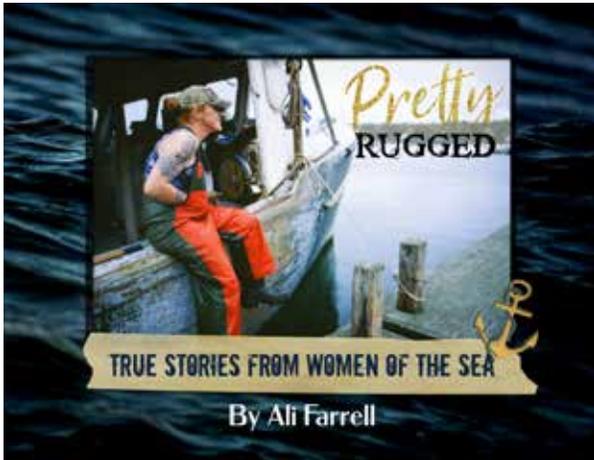


Photo courtesy of the presenter

**P**retty Rugged dives into the gritty lives of female commercial fishermen as they hunt their prey on the dangerous seas in the commercial fishing industry off the rocky coast of Maine. Expect to see and hear a lot of true stories of dangerous situations they face on the water, the realities of the fishing lifestyle, and learn some family history on generations of local Maine fishermen. Viewers will also learn about both the fishing communities and the current state of lobster fishing in the North Atlantic. During the July 21 presentation, there will be stories about some of the fishermen, the strange history of the Maine lobster, and COVID-19's effect on the Maine seafood industry. After the presentation there will be an opportunity to ask the author questions.

KHS speaker Ali Farrell is a two-time published author, living in mid-coast Maine. Farrell is president of the United Fishermen Foundation, which supports fishermen and their families through

education and advocacy. She has had her own photography business for nine years. Farrell is the mother of a 6-year-old boy and an 8-year-old girl. She is also the author of *Pretty Combat: Nonsense, Shenanigans and Tactful Life Domination*, and she plans to publish a children's book in the summer of 2021 called *A Lobstergirl Can*.

To view this presentation, head to the KHS Facebook page at 6:30 p.m. July 21 and the video will air live. It will also be available to watch later. If you have a question, please submit it in the comments during the live video presentation. Here is the link to the KHS Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/KHS1891>. If you have questions about the program, please call Scott Wood, executive director, at 622-7718.

### August: “250 Years of Maine Quilts”

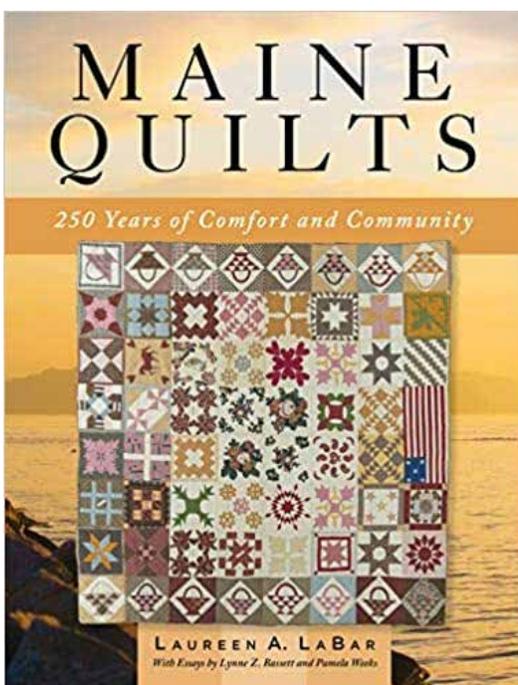


Photo courtesy of the presenter

**F**or centuries, Maine women have kept farms, businesses, and families together when men were at sea, at war, or in the woods. The quilts they made are striking and often beautiful works of art. But they can also reveal information about how these women lived, the social networks that supported them, and the ways Maine changed through the years. Most Maine quilters were middle-class women, who are usually absent from historical records. The information we can glean from their quilts enriches the story of Maine's past.

KHS speaker Lauren LaBar is the chief curator of history and decorative arts at the Maine State Museum. A former archaeologist, LaBar received her master's degree from the University of Delaware's Winterthur Program in Early American Culture, and returned to Maine to become a curator. LaBar is an award-winning author. *Maine Quilts: 250 Years of Comfort and Community*, co-published by the Maine State Museum and Down East Books, is her third book.

To view this presentation, head to the KHS Facebook page at 6:30 p.m. August 18 and the video will air live. It will also be available to watch later. If you have a question, please submit it in the comments during the live video presentation. Here is the link to the KHS Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/KHS1891>. If you have questions about the program, please call Scott Wood, executive director, at 622-7718.

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