

Kennebec Current

"The groaning of the poor fellows, as they were lifted from one boat to another, was heart-rending." — Maine's Civil War nurse Sarah Sampson, describing wounded soldiers on the James River in Virginia (see page 3)

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New Owner Reviving *Freddie*, Cobbosseecontee's Heirloom Boat

Contrary to popular belief, the Woolworth estate, which at one time consisted of 15 houses and 2,000 acres along the Monmouth shore of Cobbosseecontee Lake, was not owned by Frank Winfield (F.W.) Woolworth of the Five and Dime fame.

It was owned by his first cousin, Frederick Moore Woolworth, who managed the Woolworth Three and Six Penny stores in the United Kingdom. In 1923, Frederick Woolworth suffered a stroke and died in London. The Maine property devolved to his wife, Velma; and her three children, Norman, Pauline, and Frederick Jr.

Woolworth Three and Six Penny stores were no less successful in Britain than Woolworth Five and Dime stores were in the United States, so the summer house in Monmouth continued to flourish. Celebrities and wealthy visitors stayed for extended holidays.

In 1932, Bath Iron Works was in such a low state that the company was willing to take whatever work there was. By definition, Bath-built boats usually are made of metal; but on this occasion, Velma, who was known on the BIW work order as "Mrs. F.M. Woolworth," commissioned what Maine Maritime Museum acknowledges as the only wooden boat the company ever built, a 26-foot launch that she christened *Freddie*, after her recently born grandson Frederick, a namesake of her husband.

The boat would have a beam of 9.5 feet; feature a 25 horsepower Red Wing four-cylinder flathead engine; and include a large ice-cooler, ostensibly – as it was still during Prohibition – to hold "fish," should anyone ever put down a martini

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The deteriorated wooden boat *Freddie*, which rode the waves of Cobbosseecontee Lake in the early 20th century, arrives in September 2021 at the Cobbossee Marina after Randy Gannett retrieved it from a Massachusetts boatyard, where it was about to be junked.

Photo by Harvey Lipman

Former Atlantic Hose Headquarters Gradually Becoming a Home



Richard Beaudoin stands next to the Cony Street fire station.

Photo by Joseph Owen

What can you buy for a dollar? A couple of pens, a can of soda, or perhaps an hour's worth of parking somewhere in downtown Portland. Richard Beaudoin did better than that. He bought an old fire station.

It was a tiny purchase with a giant string attached. The seller, the city of Augusta, required him to bring the now-158-year-old Cony Street structure into conformity with building codes within two years. That deadline has come and gone, but Beaudoin said the city seems satisfied that he is making considerable progress toward the goal.

Beaudoin, a native of Manchester, New Hampshire, has worked as an Augusta firefighter and paramedic since 2010. He and his wife live in Winthrop. He is using his spare time to convert the former station into a single-family home.

The history of organized firefighting in Augusta dates to 1790, when the first company of volunteers banded together for mutual aid in protecting their respective buildings. With each major fire that occurred, the firefighting force gradually become more sophisticated. The city's first fire chief, John A. Pettengill, was appointed in 1850.

The Great Fire of September 1865 - which destroyed most of Augusta's downtown business district and imperiled the Kennebec Bridge, at that time the only fixed link between Augusta's east and west sides – showed how such an emergency could leave the part of the city east of the Kennebec River unprotected, as well as prevent anyone on

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Society Quietly Achieves Financial Milestone



Editor's Note
Joseph Owen

An innocuous piece of insurance paperwork arrived in March in the Kennebec Historical Society's mail. One line stood out, reminding us how much the society has progressed and how much it still hopes to achieve.

KHS has owned the Henry Weld Fuller Jr. House debt-free since 2012. Our insurance company has provided a replacement cost estimate of \$811,000 – undoubtedly more than the house would fetch if put up for sale today. On the other hand, the Augusta assessor's office places a tax valuation of \$437,700 on it – seemingly less than it's worth. The average of those two figures, \$624,350, is probably closer to the property's actual value. If you add that to the society's endowment investments, its cash assets, and the value of its collection, the total rises to at least \$1.05 million.

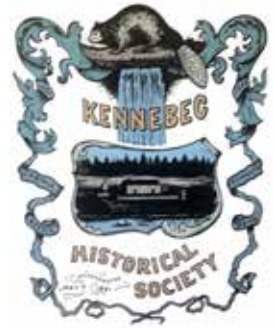
All of this back-of-the envelope calculating shows that for the first time since its founding in 1891, and after a long series of baby steps and big leaps, KHS has a net worth of more than \$1 million.

Money isn't what we're all about, of course, and most of it is tied up in the property and the KHS endowment anyway. However, our current situation looks absolutely rosy compared to that of, say, 25 years ago, when KHS owned no property, occupied rented space, had a tiny income, and maintained a cash reserve of only a few tens of thousands of dollars.

Reaching this milestone doesn't put the society metaphorically at the top of Mount Katahdin; we're merely pausing to catch our breath and have a swallow of water just above the tree line. The hike will resume momentarily.

The society's leadership still is striving for more space, up-to-date equipment, an archive that reflects Kennebec County more fully, better interaction with the public, more effective fundraising, and more members. Support from the membership and the community at large is as important as it ever has been.

For a moment, however, we should allow ourselves the privilege of briefly enjoying the view from this altitude, and then keep climbing.



Discovering, preserving, and disseminating the history of Kennebec County, Maine, since 1891

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Kennebec Current Our 167th Issue

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The *Kennebec Current* encourages letters to the editor. Email letters to KennebecCurrent@gmail.com. All letters are subject to editing for taste, style, and length.

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Publication of a second story about people who lived or worked on Winthrop's Mount Pisgah in the 19th century, originally scheduled for this issue, has been postponed because of space limitations.

Maine's Sarah Sampson Set Standard for Civil War Nursing

I'm often sidetracked by something else I discover while looking for information. Recently I was examining Volume 1 of the *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Maine for the Years 1864 and 1865* and found an extraordinary section titled "Mrs. Sampson's Report." It turns out that Mrs. Sampson was Sarah Smith Sampson, of Bath, wife of Charles Augustus Ludlow Sampson, a lieutenant colonel of the Third Maine Regiment during the Civil War. Sarah Sampson decided to serve her country too, as a nurse.

The Third Maine was organized at Augusta on June 4, 1861, and filled a train heading south the following day with upward of 1,000 soldiers. (Just over 100 would return in 1864.) There were 10 companies. Most of the men were from Kennebec County, coming from Augusta, Clinton, Gardiner, Hallowell, Readfield, Vassalboro, Waterville, Winslow, and Winthrop. The exceptions were Company A and Company D, which drew from the Bath, Bowdoinham, Phippsburg, and Woolwich area. Charles Sampson, a renowned Bath ship carver, joined as captain of Company D. Sarah Sampson wanted to be with her husband and assist the men – the Third and anyone else in need, especially if they were from Maine.



Sarah S. Sampson

Courtesy of the
Maine State Archives

Sampson went as an agent of the Maine Soldiers' Relief Association and quickly proved herself an able and caring nurse. Nurses received no formal training then; everything was learned on the job. In the course of four years, she served in an amazing number of hospitals, on battlefields, and at other sites. She bathed, bandaged, fed, and otherwise provided for hundreds in hospitals set up in empty buildings, tents, or open spaces in fields. She read to soldiers, wrote letters when they couldn't, and prayed for the dying. She arranged for transport of the wounded and the dead, regardless of the personal danger. During those years, she took only two breaks – one during her husband's return to Maine in 1862, which, interestingly, is not mentioned in her report; and the other during her own illness in 1864.

She wrote constantly – letters to those who could supply needed items, letters to parents informing them of their sons' deaths, and reports of her activities. She had started a journal that was destroyed, along with her clothes and other items from deceased soldiers intended to be given to survivors, when the home she was staying in was destroyed by enemy fire on June 25, 1861. She left notes in soldiers' pockets about their friends and relatives so that "in case of death, some one should write to them." (*Report*, page 113)

Her report names many places familiar to Civil War buffs, such as Meridian Hill, Fortress Monroe, White House Landing, Savage's Station, Chantilly, Brandy Station, Belle Plain, Port Royal, City Point, and others. She was a part of it all.

Sampson worked with, befriended, and corresponded with Dr. Alonzo Garcelon, the surgeon general of Maine and a future Maine governor, who gave her a letter of recommendation for her service. She nursed the wounded Maj. Gen. Oliver Otis Howard, of Leeds, who, in his autobiography, credited her with saving his life. She earned the respect of everyone she encountered, from privates to generals.

Sampson returned to Maine on October 9, 1865, but not before making sure her last patients were being cared for in hospitals. She remained in Bath with her husband, far from idle. In 1866 she established the Bath Military and Naval Orphan Asylum, known by the 20th century as the Bath Children's Home. It closed in 1996.

According to the 1880 census, she had two daughters. Mary P.J. Sampson was born in 1868 and Beatrice followed three years later. They are not mentioned in Sarah Sampson's obituary, and it is unclear what happened to them.

Charles Sampson died on January 1, 1881, and is buried in Oak Grove Cemetery in Bath. His wife returned to Washington, D.C., two years later, in search of support. Congress granted her a pension in 1885, and she obtained work in the Pension Office until 1907. Her last visit to Maine was to attend a reunion of the Third Maine Regiment Association held in Gardiner. She died December 22, 1907, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery on Christmas Day.

The last few sentences of her report to the adjutant general sum up her philosophy and work ethic: "I have been rewarded a thousand times for all I have sacrificed or endured for the soldiers. Sacred tears of gratitude, blessings from pale lips, and seats beside the death beds of our country's noblest sons, have been mine; and though some still live who



The Archivist's Pen
Emily Schroeder

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Sarah Sampson

remember the ‘cup of cold water;’ the many have ‘sealed their devotion to their country with their lives.’” (*Report*, page 128)

In addition to the adjutant general’s report, information for this column was gathered from online sources including Newspapers.com, FamilySearch.org, and Digital Maine; from Lynda V. Sudlow’s 2000 book *A Vast Army of Women: Maine’s Uncounted Forces in the American Civil War*, and from *Ladies On the Field: Two Civil War Nurses from Maine on the Battlefields of Virginia*, a 1996 book by Libby MacCaskill and David Novak.

— Emily A. Schroeder, KHS archivist

Atlantic Hose

Continued from page 1

that side of the river from being able to assist firefighters on the west side in such an emergency. As a result, the city built the Cony Street station in 1866. It became the headquarters of the Atlantic Hose Company.

Firefighters used the site for nearly a century. Then the city took on the fledgling University of Maine at Augusta as a tenant in the mid-1960s. In an era when it had no campus, the university used the building to house administrative offices and classrooms for a few years. Then Cony High School, located right across the street at the time, took it over for use as a band room, a gymnasium, and a computer workshop. It sported a “Cony Pride” sign on the front wall for many years.

When Beaudoin removed that sign, he found that it was covering a UMA sign. And under that lay vestiges of a sign that says “2 Atlantic Hose 2.” The gold-colored raised letters that spelled out the sign’s message are long gone, but the name persists in the unpainted wood that lay behind them.

Asked if he knew that the original sign was there, Beaudoin said, “I had a suspicion, because the frame was underneath.”

With some help from friends, relatives, and fellow firefighters, Beaudoin has fixed leaks, installed a rubber roof, and ripped down many mold-covered gypsum interior walls. The biggest task lies ahead, however – jacking the building up in order to adjust and repair its warped foundation.



This is how the fire station looked in 1960s when the University of Maine at Augusta was using it.



The Cony Street fire station, shown here in its early years, had a round cupola and an open-gable roof when it was built. During a later renovation, the cupola was removed and the roof was made flat.

Photos courtesy of Richard Bouchard

“That’s a big hurdle. I need to get all my ducks in a row,” he said, explaining that he plans to get cost estimates for all the jobs and get a loan to cover those expenses. He also wants to open up the walled-off front entrance again and put new garage doors there, imitating the way that entrance looked originally.

When visited for an interview recently, he was grinding and polishing a fire pole that a fellow firefighter had found for him. He plans to install it in the old station.

Beaudoin said he has approached the Maine Historic Preservation Commission about getting the building listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the commission reacted favorably to the idea.

He said the city sold him the building because it had become a “money pit” and city officials had no further use for it.

“It’s my problem now,” he said, laughing.

— by Joseph Owen

Owner Reviving *Freddie*

Continued from page 1



The dilapidated wooden boat *Freddie*, seen in September 2021 at the Cobbossee Marina in Manchester, still carries its name on the stern.

Photo by Harvey Lipman

long enough to catch one.

This boat had a long first life. Randy Gannett, of Manchester, remembers that as a 10-year-old boy, he saw the Woolworths gassing up at the dock in 1959, the first year the Cobbosseecontee Marina was in business.

Imagine Gannett's shock when in 2021 he discovered *Freddie* was in a Newburyport, Massachusetts, boatyard. The owner, considering it beyond salvaging and preparing to haul it to the dump, had advertised it one last time with a photo as "free to a good home" before making the final decree.

Driving down to Newburyport on a Sunday morning without thinking about bringing anyone along to help, Randy spent six hours alone there, gently winching the vessel onto his trailer, a bit unsure whether it was secure enough to be transported back home. Three hours up the Maine Turnpike and 62 years after Gannett had last seen it at the lake, there it was again, just across the cove from the gas dock where it once had been fueled up.

Since then, *Freddie* has been surveyed three times, each boatbuilder shaking his head "no" to the prospect of restoring it. There was dry rot in the stern. The hull was "hogged," meaning there was a semi-permanent bend in the keel. Nearly all the ribs needed to be replaced, and most of the planking as well.

The Maine Maritime Museum had the build sheet, but Bath Iron Works had not kept the drawings, if they ever even existed. The only way to restore the boat would be to replace each rib, one stick at a time – in other words, use each old piece as a jig to build its replacement, stick by stick, until all that is left is new and all that was replaced is thrown away.

The problems seemed overpowering. Then again, there was that name, "Freddie," and this boat's ancient link to Cobbosseecontee. Gannett owns one of the magnificent mahogany boats that circle the lake on Sunday mornings. Except for a high-speed Porsche, he said, there is nothing more beautiful than a wooden boat. Gannett would run his hand along a rough plank and, as if it were using Braille to communicate, there was something inside the rescued boat that spoke to him, telling him to "keep trying, just keep trying."

In the end, all Gannett and *Freddie* had to do was to get in front of the one right person – or in this case, the two right people, Brad Ellsworth and Andy Watras at A&B Classic Boat Works in Rockport. The boat is there in the shop, the hull aligned with new ribs and cedar planking upon a sturdy keel of seasoned Maine white oak. Off to the side sits a modern 27-horsepower Yanmar diesel motor, waiting to be installed.

While it is certain that *Freddie* was built by Bath Iron Works in 1932 and plied Cobbosseecontee into the 1960s, little is known about what happened to it between then and now. Before Newburyport, it was acquired by a man in Wakefield, Massachusetts, who had the idea of converting it to steam power, a project that never happened.

What seems certain is that it will leave Rockport this summer for its new home at a Cobbosseecontee dock, its hull swelling as the water soaks into the seams and oakum.

Its first cruise? South past the lake's Horseshoe Island to the Monmouth shore to lay off (anchor near) the Woolworth estate, where its water voyages first began 91 years ago.



Rehabilitation of the *Freddie* continues in March at A&B Classic Boatworks in Rockport.

Photo by Brad Ellsworth

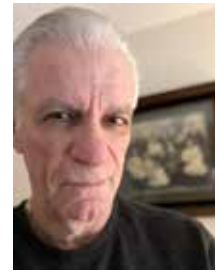
– by Harvey Lipman



Ancestry.com: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly



Since December 1998, when Ancestry.com launched its initial website as MyFamily.com, registering more than 1 million users in its first 140 days, Ancestry has become the largest genealogy company in the world. It now reaches over 3.5 million subscribers and boasts access to more than



Rich Eastman

30 billion records.

Though Ancestry can be costly, the monthly charge of \$24.99 for the basic package is fairly inexpensive, given the vast collection of digital records available. Consider that a trip to the nearest federal archive would cost you at least that amount in gasoline, and that online you get to keep the digital record on your computer. Ancestry has more expensive packages for a broader reach, including added world records and access to Ancestry partners Fold 3 and Newspapers.com. The most expensive All Access package starts at \$59.99 per month.



Ancestry is an invaluable tool for researching family history, but what may seem accurate on the site at first glance often proves to be false upon closer inspection and further research. The reason for this is, well, people — and people make mistakes. If you have used Ancestry and want to check out the hints that come up from other family trees, you click on a leaf and it takes you to the other person's tree, with all their information, all their children, all their ancestors and pictures — and all their mistakes. In several cases I've seen family details that just don't make sense logistically, with children being born long after a parent's death, or someone having had children at the age of 7, or someone having died in the Sulawesi Sea when the person supposedly spent an entire lifetime in Waldo County.

When checking out hints, be aware that what is in someone's tree may not have been carefully researched and might even have been copied from some other tree that was in error. Fact-check what you accept on your own tree by doing the research yourself through available records.

Another of Ancestry's limitations is that though records are well indexed, people hired by Ancestry often get names wrong. They may have read "Hillman" as "Hellman" or "Janes" as "James." Their misspellings in indexes often throw researchers off, requiring a more time-consuming stroll through the site's records. Sometimes, trying variant spellings on your search can pick those up. A good example of indexing errors is in my family's line in Easton, Massachusetts, where an indexer has listed all Easton vital records as belonging to Easthampton, Massachusetts. When you click the record link, it clearly shows an Easton vital record, but now hundreds of people's Easton trees state their particular event occurred in Easthampton.

Got some Ancestry puzzles of your own? Why not submit your genealogy query to the *Kennebec Current*? Please keep your query relevant to Kennebec County and as brief as possible. Submit them with your name and the method by which you wish to be contacted. We will publish your query in an upcoming issue. Submit as many queries as you wish. Total queries for any one issue will be limited to space available, and leftover queries will run in a future issue. You may submit them by mail to Your Kennebec Roots, c/o Kennebec Historical Society, P.O. Box 5582, Augusta, ME 04332-5582; or email them to Rich Eastman at reastman1952@gmail.com.

SMILEY: KHS archivist Emily Schroeder is in touch with a gentleman from Strasbourg, France, who wishes to locate the relatives of a Robert Smiley, of 5 Amherst Street in Augusta, who was born in 1918 and died on July 23, 2002, in Winthrop. He is in possession of Robert's dog tags from when Robert was attached to the 8th Air Force's 292nd Bomb Group during World War II, and flew the B-24 Liberator. One of his dog tags would be gratefully returned to a relative. Email Emily Schroeder at buffywg@yahoo.com.



Almshouse Novel Brimming with Gardiner Residents

Current BOOKSHELF



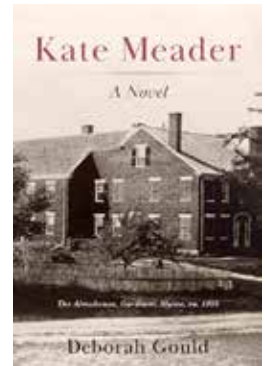
In *Kate Meader*, by Deborah Gould, the reader meets several of the real people who populated Gardiner in 1900. Though the story itself is historical fiction, the characters who populate it actually existed, and many may have slipped through the cracks of history without Gould's research. The setting of the Gardiner Almshouse is also real, and anyone familiar with Gardiner will also recognize the numerous other places mentioned around town.

Kate, the title character, is the almshouse cook, and it's through her eyes and experiences that we get to know the almshouse residents and others in Gardiner. She, like those around her, has tragedies in her past that color her present.

The book's tone is heartwarming, with heartbreaking moments intertwined. It is, after all, a story about daily life – and one in an almshouse. There is laughter, and there are moments of pleasantry and leisure, notably the joy Kate finds in a simple daily game of solitaire. Gould also deftly weaves in information about the wider town and region through the use of newspaper blurbs read aloud to the almshouse residents from the *Reporter-Journal*, which was a real paper of the time.

Whether you're looking to pick up some information about Gardiner's history or just want a good novel to read, *Kate Meader* fits the bill. It's a slim volume at only 194 pages, with a few more dedicated to biographical sketches of the people featured in the book.

The book is available through Maine Authors Publishing (www.maineauthorspublishing.com).



Book cover courtesy of
Maine Authors Publishing

– by  Jamie Logan

KHS Welcomes the Following New Members

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Jody West — Benton

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Heide L. Munro, 82, of Augusta, died March 29 in Augusta. A longtime Kennebec Historical Society member and a life member since 2002, she was the society's vice president in 1999 and 2000 and was a frequent KHS volunteer after that. She was a Bayreuth, Germany, native who was educated in Germany, France, and Britain, as well as at St. Francis College in Biddeford and the University of Maine at Augusta. She worked for 30 years as a travel agent in Augusta and was a member of many community organizations. Her survivors include husband Orton "Bo" Munro, three sons, and two grandchildren.

Arthur Charles Ray, 80, died March 12 at home in Sidney. He joined the Kennebec Historical Society in 2006 and became a life member in 2015. Ray was a graduate of Waterville High School and the University of Maine, where he earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. He spent his career working of the Central Maine Power Company. Genealogy and Maine history were two of his abiding interests. He lectured on history at KHS, for many other local groups, and for the Senior College program at the University of Maine at Augusta. He enjoyed skiing and was an enthusiastic artist. His survivors include two brothers, three nieces, a nephew, and friends.

Harold Snow, 98, a longtime resident of Prescott Road in Manchester, died April 25 in Augusta. A retired electrician who also had a summer home at Ocean Point, he is survived by a son, a stepdaughter, and five grandchildren. When he became a Kennebec Historical Society life member in 2022 at the age of 97, he apparently did so at a more advanced age than any of the hundreds of other people before him had done.

Benton Alewife Festival Celebrates Migrating Fish’s Dramatic Rebound

For thousands of years before dams were built at Augusta and Winslow, alewives – also known as river herring, the most abundant of all migratory fish – were swarming up the Sebasticook and Kennebec rivers every spring by the hundreds of millions. These anadromous (sea-run) fish spend most of their lives at sea, but when they are around 4 years old, using their sense of smell, the adult fish return in the spring to the fresh water of the Sebasticook to spawn in the same rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds where they were born.

Only about three of every 100,000 eggs laid survive to adulthood. From mid-July through October the tiny juvenile alewives zigzag their way downstream past Benton, eluding hungry predators, to the Atlantic Ocean, where they grow to adulthood before making the return journey to their former nurseries. Generally, the great migration upstream occurs between early May and mid-June, depending on water temperature and water flow. The fish run on the Sebasticook, between Winslow and Benton, is the largest in Maine, if not in the United States.

This year, to celebrate this natural wonder, Benton will host its annual Alewife Festival from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 18, rain or shine, in the park at the Benton Town Office. The festival, launched in 2012, is a family-friendly event for people of all ages. Attendees will be able to watch the harvesting process; eat free food, including samples of smoked alewife; enjoy music and children’s games; visit educational booths to chat with wildlife and environmental specialists; and check out the Benton Historical Committee’s table.

Attendees also will see a living history exhibit set up by Ken Hamilton, a 17th- and 18th-century Native American woodland interpreter. This display focuses on the Wabanaki lifestyle, including how they lived and dressed, their travel routes along the Sebasticook and Kennebec rivers – the primary portage point to and from the Kennebec was located at Benton Falls – and the importance of local fishing grounds and the gear used by the Indians. The informal question-and-answer presentation will include a historical camp setup and examples of fishing spears, drag nets, baskets, and other authentic Native American artifacts (some original and some Hamilton has made), with demonstrations on fire-starting and cooking of alewives over a campfire.

The annual fish run on the Sebasticook has always been important to the inhabitants of the area. For the Native Americans and early Colonial settlers living along the river from the early 18th to the mid-19th centuries, alewives, shad, and salmon, to a lesser degree, were valued primarily as a food source – dried, salted, pickled, and smoked – or used as fertilizer for corn crops. Records indicate by the late 1700s to early 1800s, fishing had become an important income-producing industry for Benton, which then was part of Clinton. Thousands of barrels of salted and smoked fish were hauled away by the wagon load or shipped downriver by longboat annually. Carleton E. Fisher, in his *History of Clinton*, cites an entry from the journal of the Rev. Paul Coffin, who toured the area in July 1796:

“30th, Clinton. Rode two miles to Capt. Johnathan Philbrick’s on the Sebasticook, just above the falls, where they catch herring and shad. Thousands of barrels of herring have been taken this spring. They put four quarts of salt to a barrel of them, and when salted enough, they smoke them. They are then handy and quite palatable. Mr. Hudson had three thousand of them hanging over one’s head in his shop or smoke house. A pretty sight.”

When dams started to be built on the Sebasticook at Benton Falls to power sawmills, they affected the fishing industry significantly. Accounts indicate that the first dam erected at the “Upper Falls” (about a mile north of the Winslow line), built prior to 1775, had a gap that allowed the fish to pass. However, another dam standing close to 12 feet high, erected in 1809 at the “Lower Falls” (only one-half mile from the Winslow line, where today’s Benton Falls dam is located) had no fishway. By the time the selectmen ordered it removed in the period from 1814 to 1816, the town’s fishing industry had withered severely. Residents were so outraged by the loss of fish that in March 1815 the town’s newly formed “fish committee” (fish wardens) authorized the delivery of a maximum of 200 fish to every inhabitant living along the Sebasticook.

In 1817 the town voted to auction off fishing privileges on the Sebasticook from the Winslow line to the upper limit of the town, a distance of about five miles. This stretch of the river was divided into five divisions, with winning bidders paying from a high of \$117 to as low of \$16.50 per division. At that time, \$100 had the purchasing power that about \$2,348 would have today. The following year, 1818, the town entered into the practice of price-fixing for the fish trade. The practice of auctioning off fishing rights continued for the about another 20 years, but by 1836 the Benton/Clinton fishing industry’s fate was finally sealed by the building of what later became known as the Edwards Dam in Augusta. In 1838 the fishing industry had declined to such a degree that voters elected their last fish warden, marking the end of the fishing trade along the Sebasticook.

Henry D. Kingsbury and Simeon L. Deyo's 1892 *Illustrated History of Kennebec County* says: "An industry sui generis [there is nothing like it] was previous to the building of the Augusta dam practiced on the Sebasticook in 1836. Herring in the countless thousands, and number of shad ran up the river every Spring, and the privilege of taking the fish was sold at auction, by the town, to the highest bidder. Teams came from a radius of forty miles to obtain the herring, which were thrown into carts literally by the shovelful. The townspeople enjoyed the prerogative of a fixed price for the fish: viz: twenty-five cents per hundred of alewife, and four cents apiece for shad."

Fast-forward two centuries. In 1999 the Edwards Dam came down; and the smaller Fort Halifax dam and hydro station, built in 1909 at the mouth of the Sebasticook in Winslow, was removed in 2008. Thanks to these actions, the efforts of conservationists and state and federal agencies, installation of fish ladders, modifications at other dams for fish passage, and water quality improvement, today alewives and blueback herring again are swarming up the Sebasticook through Winslow and Benton by the millions as they migrate upstream to spawning grounds in lakes and ponds. Restoring alewife and other herring has bolstered other struggling fish species and provides a feast for a vast number of other creatures – striped bass, American eel, lamprey, landlocked salmon, white and yellow perch, pickerel, turtles, mink, otter, racoons, heron, osprey, and bald eagles. The half-mile stretch along the lower Sebasticook from the Winslow line to Benton Falls has become a bald eagle and osprey viewing hotspot. In 2011 two harbor seal pups, following the alewives all the way from the Atlantic Ocean, swam over 60 miles inland to Benton Falls.

In 2005 the Maine Department of Marine Resources granted Benton commercial harvesting rights on the Sebasticook River based on its documented history of lucrative fish harvesting in the early 1800s. In 2006 a fish lift was installed at the Benton Falls Dam. Since 2009 Benton has held annual commercial harvests, while supporting sustainable alewife runs in the Sebasticook watershed. There are now so many herring that they queue up at the base of the dam by the thousands to wait for a ride up the fish lift. According to Richard Lawrence, Benton's alewife warden, the number of alewives passing up the Sebasticook to spawn increased from 50,000 in 2005 to over 3.5 million in 2021, and it has averaged nearly 4 million in each of the last few years. Lawrence also noted that thanks to the completed Alewife Restoration Initiative, sponsored in part by Benton's voters, in 2022 an additional 837,000 fish migrated up the Sebasticook to spawn in China Lake.

River herring harvesting is subject to approval at town meeting each year. Anyone with a valid Maine fishing license may take up to 25 alewives per day from the Sebasticook for personal use. However, commercial harvesters must hold a Maine Commercial Pelagic (oceanic) License and are required to submit a harvesting plan to the MDMR. Once the plan has been approved and after at least 250,000 fish have passed up the fish lift at Benton Falls, harvesting may begin. The harvests have generated substantial income for the town. The alewives, now used primarily for bait, have become a vital resource for Maine's lobster industry and are a lucrative form of income for not only the town, but the harvesters as well, prompting the expression "that to a lobsterman on the coast, a dead alewife from Benton smells of money." Benton's share of the harvest income increased from \$19,108 in 2009 to \$91,530 in 2022; the total income for the period was \$449,564.

It is too early to predict whether warming in the Gulf of Maine and the severe, back-to-back storms in January that wreaked so much havoc along the coast of Maine by damaging fishing infrastructure, especially the lobstering industry, will affect the 2024 alewife run and the ability of the harvesters to sell their haul. Regardless, the Benton Falls harvest is scheduled to begin in May as soon as conditions allow.



Alewives swimming upstream in the Sebasticook River cluster about 20 years ago at the Benton Falls dam in Benton.

Photo by Heather Perry

Continued on page 10

Current FOLLOWUP

\$1 million upgrade of Readfield landmark begins

Long-planned structural improvements are about to begin at the historic Readfield Union Meeting House, according to John Perry, treasurer of the nonprofit group that owns the Readfield building.

In an April 26 interview, Perry said the arrival of Preservation Framing Timber Inc. workers was imminent. “In early May, hammers should start hammering and saws should start sawing,” he said of the \$1 million-plus project.

The work includes replacing rotting timbers in the front tower so it can support a bell again, installing new clapboards, replacing the tower’s long-absent spire, and making new clock faces for the tower clock. The clock itself, already restored, is on the meeting house floor, awaiting its elevation to the tower. Perry said he expects the work to be completed in the summer of 2025. His group, the Readfield Union Meeting House Company, began planning the project several years ago (*Kennebec Current*, November–December 2020). The 1828 building is Maine’s second-oldest brick church structure. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The property also includes a building once identified as a vestry, but now restyled as Capt. Smith Hall. The Meeting House group has installed a new kitchen and a bathroom that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in the vestry building, which dates to 1809 and was moved to the site from about a quarter-mile away. The organization hopes to put it to use as a community center hosting meetings, suppers, musical events, and other activities. A May 5 high tea scheduled to be held there already was sold out by the time of Perry’s interview.

“We have been fundraising for five years, and donors have been very good to us,” Perry said, identifying the major benefactors as the late Jack and Anita Smart, formerly of Readfield; Robert G. Fuller Jr., formerly of Winthrop; and late Readfield resident and board member Marius Péladeau and his wife, Millie.



The late Jack Smart, left, a major Readfield Union Meeting House benefactor, and John Perry, treasurer of the nonprofit that owns the building, stand behind the newly restored clockworks a few years ago in the meeting house in Readfield.

Photo courtesy of John Perry

Benton Alewives

Continued from page 9

The commercial harvest at the Benton Falls dam typically occurs every day of the week, including on the day of the Alewife Festival, but the public is prohibited from descending to the river from the access road off Clinton Avenue (Route 100) at the dam/hydro station or from the park at the Benton Town Office. Maine Rivers, on its 2022 Alewife Trail Map, suggests that “the best viewing of the migration is from the opposite side of the river, but you will still be well above the river.” From the Clinton Avenue side, use the Route 139 bridge to cross the river, turn right onto Falls Road and then right onto Brimstone Hill Road, where harvesters access the river. Bring binoculars to watch the harvest and eagles, but avoid heavy equipment and trucks.

About a half-mile down the Sebasticook from Benton Falls on Garland Road, just over the Winslow line, is a good spot to observe the alewives up close. A small run of alewives goes up a brook to Pattee Pond to spawn. The pond and brook are natural and have no dams or permanent fishways. Alewives can be watched near where the brook goes under Garland Road at Fish Bridge and enters the Sebasticook River. Although the bridge’s concrete foundation creates a small waterfall and the wooden fishway that high school students installed beneath it a few years ago has deteriorated, enough Pattee Pond-bound alewives shoal together to make for an exciting alewife viewing experience.

This year the Maine Department of Transportation is expected to begin replacing Fish Bridge, which was built in 1911, and installing a new fishway. The project is expected to be completed in 2025. To get there, follow the directions above, but continue straight on Falls Road, which becomes Garland Road at the Winslow town line, where it crosses Pattee Pond Brook. There is a small turnoff where you can park while viewing the fish.

For a complete list of Benton’s Alewife Festival activities, visit the official festival website, <https://go.evnt.com/2346617-0>, or consult the Benton Alewife Festival page on Facebook.

The author, Benton resident Barbara Warren, is a member of the Kennebec Historical Society Board of Directors and of the Benton Historical Committee.

Waterville to Host Sixth Edition of Kennebec Classic Tennis Event

The Kennebec Historical Society's sixth annual Kennebec Classic tennis tournament will be held starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, August 4, at Waterville's North Street Recreation Area tennis courts.

The event will feature singles and doubles competition for both men and women. The registration fees have not been determined yet. Tennis balls will be available, and each participant will receive a tournament T-shirt. In case of rain, the tournament will be postponed until August 5.

To register, contact tournament organizer Billy Noble by email at bnoble24@gmail.com or call or text him at (207) 313-6976.

More details will be posted later on the society's Facebook page.

The tournament drew a record-setting 37 players in 2023, when it was held at the same location.



Players compete in a doubles tournament during the 2023 Kennebec Classic at Waterville's North Street Recreation Area.

Photo by Rich Eastman

KHS Members Invited to Seashore Trolley Museum

Back in January, Phil Morse presented his Kennebec Historical Society program "Electric Railways Serving Augusta and Kennebec County" via Facebook Live. Morse now is inviting KHS members to be his guests, free of charge, at the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport.

A tour of the model railroad and exhibit barns and a trolley ride to see several trolleys in various states of restoration will be included in the visit. Participants also will be able to speak with Jean Flahive, the author of *Teddy Roosevelt, Millie, and the Elegant Ride*, a book by about life during the early 1900s in rural Maine, and how an electric railway system changed that life.

KHS members could pack a lunch to eat on the museum campus or buy lunch in one of the nearby restaurants. After lunch, the members would be welcome to continue exploring the museum until closing time.

Those interested in attending who are not KHS members would need to pay the standard visitor ticket price. The society encourages all interested to join KHS and enjoy the benefits of both organizations. For more information about the Seashore Trolley Museum, visit its website, located at www.trolleymuseum.org.

The tentative date for the members' visit is Wednesday, June 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Carpooling opportunities might be available. If you are interested in participating or if you have any questions regarding the trip, please call KHS Executive Director Scott Wood at (207) 622-7718 before May 16.

KHS to Sell Fresh Crop of Used Books at End of May

The Kennebec Historical Society plans to host a used-book sale from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday, May 30, Friday, May 31, and Saturday, June 1, in the driveway and the garage at the society's headquarters, which is at 107 Winthrop Street in Augusta.

The society has received numerous hardcover and paperback book donations. Types of books include fiction, biography, history, travel, business, sports, cookbooks, and much more. Hardcover books are priced at \$2 each, and paperbacks cost \$1. There will also be a table of specialty books and books signed by the author that will be priced as marked.

The society traditionally holds a book sale after Memorial Day, but for the last two years it has held an additional sale in February to clear out leftover books and make room for new donations. In recent years, because of extremely large donations of books, KHS has needed to stockpile some books for future sales.

For more information, please call the society at (207) 622-7718.

Kents Hill School Celebrating Bicentennial of Its Ambitious Founding

Kents Hill School is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year, tracing its origin to a Duxbury, Massachusetts, native named Luther Sampson (1760-1849). The skilled carpenter and Revolutionary War veteran turned his sights northeastward in 1799 to the District of Maine, where he settled on a sparsely populated hill that, because of his efforts, blossomed into Kents Hill village by 1825.



History Through
a Keyhole #12

Sampson was a devout Christian, so his first priority was to single-handedly complete a partially built house of worship, which he finished within a year. The new Kents Hill Methodist Meeting House was dedicated in 1800 by the Rev. Jesse Lee, a renowned Methodist missionary who five years earlier had

dedicated Maine's first Methodist Meeting House in East Readfield. Sampson heard various visiting clergymen preach there over the next few years and concluded they were not as knowledgeable about the scriptures as they should be. He wrote: "It lay with weight on my mind that those who should be called to fill so important an office to call sinners to repentance for whom Christ has suffered and died, should have a decent education. Some young men who labored here could not even read a hymn well." Sampson decided to start a school where men could be educated properly for the ministry.



The tower of Kents Hill School's Bearce Hall pierces the fog on a winter day earlier this year in Readfield's Kents Hill village.

Photo by Rich Eastman

The seven-page deed provides a detailed, expansive list of real estate and items he donated. The fourth schedule within is especially touching: "Furniture and furnishings in the west part of the new (1821) house for my daughters." He was referring to his only daughters, Charlotte and Silvia, who had gone to live with the Shakers in Sabbathday Lake, six years earlier. They would be welcomed back and have a home waiting for them on Kents Hill should they ever decide to return, which they never did.

Within two years, Sampson realized the trustees were not going to give the level of support for which he'd hoped. They leased the real estate and livestock for a year, then tried to persuade Sampson to let them sell the property as they saw fit, instead of following his directive to make improvements and spend only the income. Sampson refused their proposal, and by 1823 his dream was fading. He realized that in order to succeed, he needed a partner who could teach religious education, mechanical skills, and traditional courses. His prayers were answered when he met Elihu Robinson,

Answer to Keyhole #12

Q: What is this?

A: The bell tower on Bearce Hall, which was built in 1873 and houses Kents Hill School administrative offices, Deering Chapel, and several other school departments

Q: Where is it?

A: On the Kents Hill School campus on Route 17 in Readfield's Kents Hill village

Q: What's historic about it?

A: The school, which is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year, is believed to be the oldest co-educational private secondary school in the United States.



His own schooling was limited, but he had personal wealth and land that he could contribute. He was also a successful farmer and a skilled craftsman. and he had a good head for business. So at 61 he started a public charity and invited five men from the Methodist Episcopal Church to join him as administrators: Dr. John Hubbard, of East Readfield (father of Gov. John Hubbard); the Rev. Zachariah Gibson, of Winthrop; Charles Kent, of Kents Hill; Abraham Morrill, Esq., of Monmouth; and John Morrison, of Wayne. They presented a request for incorporation to the Maine State Legislature at its very first session. It was approved February 26, 1821, and Gov. William King signed it two days later, creating the Readfield Religious and Charitable Organization.

From Sampson's memoir: "I deeded 140 acres of good land on Kents Hill in good order, well fenced with a new house well furnished and painted in and out. Also two barns, two sheds, a woodshed, hogsty and about 50 acres for a pasture well stocked with cattle and sheep. Also farming tools and household furniture. ... (Value of) the whole sum was \$10,000."


a schoolmaster in Augusta.

Robinson and his wife, Susannah, had started a school in 1818 at their house. Their philosophy and format matched Sampson's vision; and like him, Robinson was a cabinetmaker. The couple's school had been so successful they had outgrown their space by 1823 and were eyeing land for expansion. Had that materialized, the Maine State Capitol complex would be elsewhere today, for that is the location the Robinsons had set their hopes on. Sampson soon recognized the potential in their combined efforts, for he had the resources and they had experience as educators. They accepted Sampson's offer to move to Kents Hill and manage a new school.

Sampson convinced his trustees to dissolve the charter of the Readfield Religious and Charitable Organization. He wrote a new plan in which some charities were reduced and others eliminated, and resources were re-directed to the establishment of a school on the 140 acres he had conveyed in 1821. Instruction would include experiential Christian religion, theology, literature, agriculture, and mechanical arts. Sampson resigned from the board and Elihu Robinson was elected in his place, and he was appointed superintending committee chairman as well. The first classes were held in the little Cape Cod-style house that Sampson had built for his daughters. That building still stands and is known as the 1821 House. Sampson remained keenly interested in the school for the rest of his life. Some referred to him as "the power behind the throne."

On December 29, 1824, the new school was named Maine Wesleyan Seminary. The Legislature approved the articles of incorporation soon afterward. College graduates who were hired as teachers and administrators developed a curriculum that expanded the school beyond Sampson's fondest dreams. Throughout the 1800s their male seminary students were assigned to churches in various parts of central Maine, where they learned experientially. From the first, women were educated in practical courses and the arts at the secondary school level, which was unusual for the times. Scholars whose parents could not afford tuition were offered the chance to work their way through school in Sampson's cabinet shop or on the farm. Classes eventually included business, music, theater, composition, and languages as well as the traditional subjects of mathematics, literature, and science.

The well-equipped farm that Sampson had donated provided the student body and faculty with food, and a live-in manager oversaw care of the livestock and property. Villagers rented rooms to students who enrolled from other parts of Maine and states farther south. Kents Hill introduced baseball in 1863, becoming one of the first schools in the country to do so. In 1860 a college curriculum for women was added and the school became known as the Maine Wesleyan Seminary and Female College, the first in the United States to grant women a degree – predating Wellesley, Vassar, and Smith. A music program was established in 1847 and later became known as the Morse Conservatory of Music, after the lead instructors Wilson and Ella Morse. The conservatory remained in operation for nearly 100 years.

Kents Hill School is thought to be the oldest co-educational private secondary school in the country. Its notable alumni include politicians, authors, military officers, publishers, educators and business people. 

The writer, Dale Potter-Clark, is a Readfield historian, author, and co-founder of the Readfield Historical Society, where she sits on the board of directors. She is a 1966 graduate of Kents Hill School.


History Through a Keyhole — Puzzle 13

Allen "Flash" Nelson recognized the tower on Kents Hill School's Bearce Hall right away in our March-April issue. It wasn't hard for him to get it right, because he looked at that tower every day when he was a student at the school. In fact, he reports that he was a classmate of Dale Potter-Clark, who wrote our story about the school's 200th anniversary. We congratulate him.

The photo at right, showing – alas! – another tower, is the latest clue. It is easily visible from a public road in Kennebec County. Readers who can identify it are asked to contact the *Current* and tell us three things: what the object is, where it is, and what the historic significance of the property is.

Answers may be sent by email to KennebecCurrent@gmail.com or by postal mail to Kennebec Historical Society, Attn: Kennebec Current, P.O. Box 5582, Augusta, ME 04332.

The winner, to be selected randomly from all correct answers submitted, will be awarded a year's membership in KHS for the respondent or a friend or relative. If nobody meets that threshold, the editor reserves the right to make the award to a respondent who provides a partially correct answer.

The full answer and more information about the subject will be provided in the July-August issue of the *Kennebec Current*. Answers are due by June 30. Good luck. 



Around Kennebec County

AUGUSTA

Old Fort Western is hosting a program on May 18 titled “Martha Ballard’s World: Wife, Mother, Healer, Horticulturist.” The event will feature a series of stations set up at the fort that depict scenes or activities described in Ballard’s diary. The stations include an interactive kitchen and garden health, use of textiles, techniques of healing (in the same room where Ballard practiced those skills), afternoon tea (where Ballard drank tea as a visitor), herbs and medicines, and Ballard in fact and fiction, focusing on depictions of her in Laurel Thatcher Ulrich’s Pulitzer Prize-winning book *A Midwife’s Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* compared to Ariel Lawhon’s new novel *The Frozen River*, in which Ballard is the lead character in a murder mystery. The event is scheduled for 1 to 4:30 p.m. at the fort, located on Cony Street next to the Kennebec River. The admission charge is \$25 per person. To register or obtain more information, call the fort at 626-2385 or visit www.oldfortwestern.org. In the period before the event, Old Fort Western’s Facebook page is featuring daily quotations from Ballard’s diary.

CHELSEA

The **Chelsea Historical Society** is offering instruction on how to clean gravestones properly. Anyone interested in learning about it may contact the society by email at chelseahistoricalociety@gmail.com or through the Chelsea Historical Society page on Facebook. The society hosts Zoom meetings at 10 a.m. every third Saturday of the month. It also hosts cemetery tours, including graves of Revolutionary War and Civil War veterans, by appointment.

CHINA

The alumni office at **Erskine Academy**, a private secondary school, is hosting an all-alumni reunion at 1 p.m. on June 1 at the school. It will be the first such gathering since 2019. The admission charge is \$30. The Proper Pig restaurant, of Waterville, is catering the event. The alumni office also is hosting a cocktail reception from 7 to 11 p.m. June 30 at the Augusta Elks Lodge. For more information, call the office at (207) 445-4026.

HALLOWELL

Vaughan Woods & Historic Homestead, located at 2 Litchfield Road, is hosting its annual garden party from 5 to 8 p.m. June 15. The event features food provided by mobile caterer Crêpe Elizabeth, live music by Marcia Gallagher, lawn games, and a cash bar. Tickets cost \$35 in advance or \$40 at the gate if available. More information is available by consulting the organization’s website at vaughanhomestead.org, emailing info@vaughanhomestead.org, or calling (207) 622-9831.

PITTSTON

The **Pittston Literary & Historical Society** will open the **Pittston Fair Museum** on Mast Road to the public throughout the town’s annual fair, which is scheduled for June 20-23 this year. The society holds its regular meetings at 6 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month at the museum.



Attendees at a meeting of the Central Maine Heritage Council – a regional consortium of historical societies and similar organizations – look over the Waterville Historical Society’s LaVerdiere Apothecary display April 20 at the Redington Museum, located at Silver Street in Waterville. At far left, WHS Outreach Coordinator Jessica Couture talks about one of the display cases with Kennebec Historical Society Vice President Kent London. The Waterville society’s newly revamped museum is open for tours from 2 to 6 p.m. Fridays and by appointment.

Photo by Joseph Owen

READFIELD

The **Readfield Historical Society** is hosting free history walks in May and June in a continuing celebration of the 200th anniversary of the founding of Kents Hill School (see page 12). On May 10, the society is offering a guided tour of Kents Hill Cemetery from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Participants should park across from the Readfield United Methodist Church, which is at 1564 Main Street. On June 14, another history walk will focus on Kents Hill village, the people who lived there, its current buildings and those that have been removed. That walk also is scheduled for 10 to 11:30 a.m., and participants should meet at the same location reserved for the May walk.

WATERVILLE

The **Waterville Historical Society** plans to host longtime Alford Youth & Community Center CEO Ken Walsh as a lecturer May 9 about the history of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterville, which is 100 years old this year. The lecture is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. at the society’s Redington Museum, located at 62 Silver Street in Waterville. Admission is free. Doors open at 6 p.m. and refreshments will be served.

Upcoming Programs

June: “Logging in Maine”



This photo of a log-hauling operation was taken around 1915 by author Mary Morton Cowan’s grandfather Clarence Morton.

Image courtesy of the Morton Family Archives

Since Colonial times, settlers have cut trees from Maine’s millions of acres of forest, and Britain cut thousands of tall pine trees for masts for their navy ships. The Kennebec Historical Society’s June lecture and slide presentation by Mary Morton Cowan describes logging from its earliest methods, including primitive cutting and hauling methods and water-powered sawmills, to the development of steam log haulers and steam-powered sawmills in the early 20th century, the era described in her latest logging book, *Trouble in Nathan’s Woods*. Log drives on the Kennebec River and other waterways will be discussed.

Cowan’s passion for writing about forests and logging was inspired by her family’s history. The Mortons owned the Paris Manufacturing Company, located in South Paris, where they manufactured wooden sleds, skis, and other wood products. They also operated a large lumber

camp, where her father lived as a young boy. The program includes pictures of 19th-century logging camps, shows how logs were harvested and hauled out of the woods, and includes historic photos taken by her grandfather.

Cowan has been writing books and articles for young readers for more than 30 years and has completed several courses focusing on that genre. A Maine native, she graduated from Westbrook High School and Bates College, where she concentrated her studies in English and music. She is a member of the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators and of the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance.

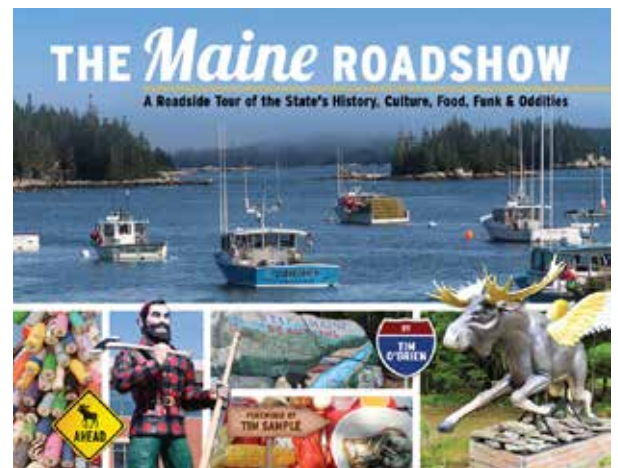
The presentation is free to the public (donations are gladly accepted) and is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 26, at the Augusta City Center, located at 16 Cony Street in Augusta. If you have questions about the program, please call Scott Wood, KHS executive director, at 622-7718.

July: “The Maine Roadshow”

After spending five years traveling thousands of miles around Maine, here are a few things writer Tim O’Brien has learned, according to a summary of his recent book, *The Maine Roadshow: A Roadside Tour of the State’s History, Culture, Food, Funk & Oddities*: “There’s a one-ton replica of the Liberty Bell on the grounds of the Maine State Capitol. The seeds for the Space Shuttle Pines, now growing in Augusta, travelled 2.4 million miles before being planted. Our state has more moose per mile than any of the other lower 48 states. Maine’s oldest town was incorporated 125 years before the birth of the United States. There’s a building in Columbia Falls that looks like a blueberry and one in Wells that looks like a hunk of cheese.”



Tim O’Brien, KHS’ July speaker



Cover photo courtesy of Tim O’Brien

O’Brien, the Kennebec Historical Society’s speaker for July, has captured these and other Maine highlights in his illustrated book. His lecture, supported by a PowerPoint presentation, will be about the book. A resident of Belgrade and Nashville, Tennessee, he is a photojournalist with 18 books to his credit. He has worked for decades as a communications specialist in the entertainment industry chronicling theme parks, amusement parks, roadside attractions, circuses, carnivals, and sideshows.

The lecture, co-sponsored by the Maine State Library, is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. July 17 at the library’s temporary location, 242 State Street in Augusta. Donations are gladly accepted. Questions about the event can be directed to KHS Executive Director Scott Wood at (207) 622-7718.

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Nonprofit group (annual) – \$50 ___ Donation (optional): \$ _____

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This line and below for society use only:

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Business hours: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday or by appointment. Appointments are highly encouraged. Call first.

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

Society's email address: kennhis1891@gmail.com

Telephone: (207) 622-7718

Website: www.kennebechistorical.org

Current email address: KennebecCurrent@gmail.com