

PHIPPSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAY 2015

SOCIETY NEWS

ANNUAL MEETING

DATE: Aug 25, 2015

TIME: 7pm

Place: Sportsman's Club

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The keynote presentation at the annual meeting will be the history of Aliquippa House. The presenters will be Christopher Sewall and Peggy Peacock Daley. Christopher will focus on the history of Aliquippa's early settlement and lively role in Casco Bay commerce. Peggy will present Aliquippa's history as one of the popular summer camps that dotted the shores of the Phippsburg Peninsula.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Members and Friends,

Our newsletter, with all the same features, is a little early this year. We, the trustees, felt it would be more practical to assemble the newsletter now, rather than during the busy summer months.

Our annual meeting will still be in August, as usual, at the Sportsman's Club. Please join us for an evening of Phippsburg's historical moments of the past.

The museum will be opening for the season soon. I invite you to stop in and visit. Our exhibits are always changing, and we also have a large area for research.

Due to weather, our cookie walk this past fall was canceled and rescheduled during the Phippsburg Holiday Fair. That proved to be a very successful venue. So look for us next year at the Fair!

The museum did very well this year, thanks to all our volunteers and donations. We have many great ideas for the future, while we continue to maintain the building, and preserve the contents as best we can. We are always looking for new volunteers to help.

Respectfully, Jessie Sutfin

CLIMATE CONTROL AND ARCHIVING COLLECTION

We are profoundly appreciative to our members who have donated generously to the annual appeals campaign over the past two years. We have also received significant memorial contributions. As a result, we are able to begin our stated objectives of creating a climate controlled space and archiving the museum collection. Craig Chapin and Chris Mixon are heading up the team on renovations and installation of climate control. Margaret Webb has been hired as chief archivist.

When you visit this summer you will see these projects in progress.

ONGOING MUSEUM DISPLAY FOR 2014- 2015

Local grocery stores in Phippsburg are the focus of the ongoing exhibit at the museum. Over the years there have been many general stores in all areas of town and this display shows pictures of the original stores and, thanks to Charline Wyman Photography, also includes a present day picture of each location and a display case with old local store items. You might find it interesting to know that as you enter our town in Winnegance you pass by a building that was once the Josiah Perry Store, first opened on September 1, 1840. The 1905-1906 Business Directory lists 12 grocers in the town of Phippsburg, including the areas of the Center, Parker Head, Popham, Small Point, Ashdale, West Point and Sebasco., all the places in town where people used to be able to chat with friends and pick up needed supplies.

Display organized by Lynda Wyman and Charline Wyman

Celebrating Phippsburg's Fishing, Boat building and Musical Heritage

The John and Pearl Murphy House will move to the Phippsburg Historical Museum location as soon as the needed funds are raised to restore this building and provide a perpetual fund. This must first be voted on by the town. Some monies are now available and the restoration process will begin this summer. The 15' x 12' house has historical significance because of its relationship to well-known local boat builder Charlie Gomes who framed the house about 1925. It is one of the very few houses without extensive change that remain from that time period. Several original details remain including the stairway to the second floor and the many layers of wall paper directly over the studs. This building is also significant to Phippsburg because it is the house of an early Phippsburg fisherman and his family.

The Murphy House will be an educational resource for the community and for visitors to the Historical Society Museum. There will be exhibits to honor Phippsburg's fishing, boat building, and musical heritage and to the families that are included in that heritage.

The Historic Preservation Commission has begun the fundraising campaign with a goal of \$30,000, the estimated cost to restore the house and to move it to Historical Society property. \$40,000 is being raised for a perpetual fund to maintain the Murphy House for the future.

Please support this project by donating to the Murphy House Fund. Contributions can be sent to the Phippsburg Town Office, 1042 Main Road, Phippsburg, ME 04562 with the note "for the Murphy House" or to the Phippsburg Historical Society Box 21, Phippsburg, Maine 04562 with the note, "for the Murphy House". We hope that you are interested in being a part of this one-of-a-kind project. Your contribution is tax deductible.

A BRUSH WEIR IN SMALL POINT?

As winter finally relinquished its icy grasp on Small Point Harbor, a mystery has been uncovered. On a low tide this spring I made an interesting discovery while making my way across the mud flats between Tenant's Island and our lobster pound dam on Hermit Island. Protruding from the mud in a straight line, east to west were stubs of wood and branches. I suspect the ice in the harbor this winter may have resulted in the top of the bar being washed away, exposing what I believe, may be the remains of a brush weir.

Brush weirs are an ancient form of fish trap constructed with branches and limbs to create a corral in the intertidal zone into which fish would swim at high tide. As the tide ebbed, the fish would be trapped and harvested. The Wabanaki peoples of Maine used brush weirs as one of their methods of fishing. A Wabanaki weir thousands of years old, has been documented at low water in Newport Me. European settlers also constructed brush weirs: the Reverend Emerson of Georgetown is recorded using brush weirs on the Kennebec during the 18th century to trap salmon. Isaiah Wyman was trapping salmon on the east side of Small Point around the same time. A Federal Fisheries report from the late 1800's documents two different fish pounds created with nets and stakes located in Small Point, one at Bald head, and another along the west tide of Small Point. The second one may have been what we now call the "Bath Tub" at Hermit Island, a place also known as Wallace Head Cove. In the mid 1800's Abner Johnson and members of the Wallace and Gilliam families leased a portion of Morse's Neck (Hermit Island) from Winslow Morse for fishing purposes. This land now forms the east side of Small Point Lobster Pound.

From speaking with local fishermen, there are no recent memories of any weirs in Small Point Harbor. Thus I suspect it may predate 1900. Could this be the remains of "Johnson's Pound"? Shellfish Warden Doug Alexander said that clammers in the past have used brush on the flats to try and increase clam recruitment. Is this

the remains of one of their efforts? I hope over the course of this year to find more details and invite members of the PHS to share any leads they may have on this new history mystery. I may be contacted at Christopher Sewall sewalles@earthlink.net

ON THE NET

Phippsburg Historical Society has a website and a FaceBook page. Please visit and like us!
Phippsburghistorical.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are always in short supply for the museum. From staffing the museum during the summer, to cleaning, arranging, and helping with cataloging, many hands make light work!
Please contact our new Volunteer Coordinator:
Lawson Beals, 207-212-3864
PO Box 65
Phippsburg, Me 04562
OR: Phippsburg Historical Society
PO Box 21, Phippsburg, Me 04562

Phippsburg Historical Society From July 1, 2014 to April 30, 2015

Donations:

Douglas Hall
Mary Albright & Henry Sturm III
Jane Morse
Dianne McAulay PhD
Carole Sargent
Elizabeth & Leslie Smith
William James
Unity Circle
Craig & Merry Chapin
Rock Gardens Inn
Donald Wheeler
William Lowell
Joseph Rogers
John Paul & Nancy Bram Mereen
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Loren S & Leslie Mellott
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Don & Louise Dauphin
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Frederica M Cushman
Houghton M Trott
Samuel M Jones & Rebecca T Halbrook
Doretta A & Joseph a Braun III
Elizabeth B & John G Morse IV
Thomas Lee Hinkle
Martha H & Elliott L Silver
John W & Dorothy D Bradford
Priscilla F Martin
Douglas & Jessie Sutfin
Robert H Cushman
Keith A & Lurene C Wallace
Thank you Joyce Devine for painting PHS sign

In Memory:

Jeanne & Nicholas Sewall
in memory of Laura Nickerson
Judith Mullins
in memory of Dick & Florence Manning
Lawson Beals
in memory of Gladys Scott Wallace
Jim & Linda Totman
in memory of Tom & Anita Totman
E John White
in memory of my mother Phoebe
Ann C Carney
in memory of John B Carney
Joseph C & Mary D Huber
in memory of Ada Haggett
Elnora Joseph-Bijhouwer
in memory of Anda Bijhouwer

Income

Our total income through membership, memorial donations, admissions, sales of books, annual appeal and cookie walk :

Total income for 2014	\$17,251.64
Expenses for 2014	\$ 7,329.01

Net Profit / Loss Standard \$9,922.63

Membership Mailing List

Our membership mailing list is seriously in need of updating. We will provide a form at the annual meeting for you to make changes and add e-mail addresses.

