



CUMBERLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P O Box 82  
4A Blanchard Road  
Cumberland, ME 04021

President:	Carolyn Small
Vice President:	Diana Copp
Secretary:	Elizabeth (Betsy) Huston
Treasurer:	Peter Wilson
Trustees:	Herbert S. Foster, Jr.
	Briam Jensen
	Linda Fulda
	Thomas Bennett
	Nancy Latham
	Jeff Frost

#### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

The purpose of the Society shall be to collect and preserve artifacts pertaining to the Town of Cumberland and its history, making it available to groups, schools, and individuals.

#### **APRIL 2017 VOLUME 137**

#### **APRIL THOUGHTS:**

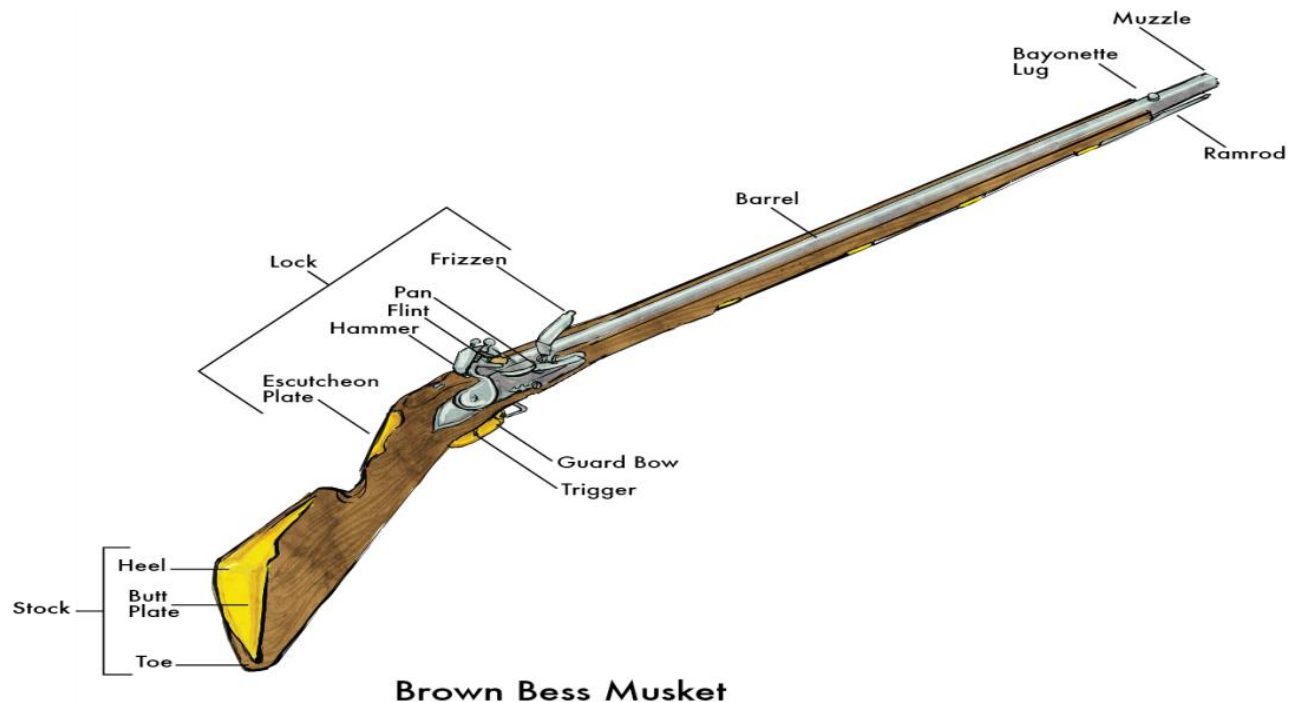
"First a howling blizzard woke us,  
Then the rain came down to soak us,  
And now before the eye can focus,  
Crocus."  
- Lilja Rogers



### PAST PROGRAMS AND EVENTS:

**SPECIAL NOTICE:** The Historical Society will now be open on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month. Spread the word and come visit with friends and family.

The March program with the four 1770's clothing reenactors from the Tate House was a total delight for the 11 folks who attended. Too bad that there were a few other events happening in town that distracted and detracted from a better attendance. An added attraction was Carrie Gagnon, who came attired in her Pilgrim outfit to compare styles of the 150 years differences in styles. Fred Maitland, with help (LOTS of it!) from his wife, Beth, demonstrated men's clothing of that era. He then added a demo of describing a musket and preparation of it for shooting. Not an easy task, mind you! Thank you to Eileen Wyatt for providing another batch of her tasty cookies.



### PENELOPE MARTIN'S SCHOOL FOR GIRLS:

**From Cumberland , Maine in Four Centuries:** "In 1788 William Martin, a London businessman who had come to America with his family, purchased the Jeremiah Powell estate at Broad Cove and moved his family to this town. Here, in the Powell mansion (editor's *note: the door of this house is in the Cumberland Historical Society*) n his daughter Penelope Martin, educated in England, with the assistance of her two sisters, Eliza and Catherine, in 1790 established a private school for girls, which is remarkable as being one of the first institutions in this part of the country to undertake the higher education of women. It was a boarding school in which were taught the branches now included in our high school course as well as those accomplishments then deemed necessary in a girls' school. It became prosperous and well known throughout the state, attracting pupils from a distance because of its reputation for imparting a thorough education. The Misses' Martin School was conducted in North Yarmouth till the family removed to Portland in 1804 and there the school was continued , being one of the first in New

England to bring to it the cultivated Christian elegance of the old world.” Following is a photo of the Powell/Martin house on what is now Powell Road between Route One and Route 88. It was, at the time this photo was taken, unoccupied.



This is from the postcard collection of Cumberland Historical Society. It is a real photo postcard taken from the crest of Spear's Hill on Route #88, near the junction of Tuttle Road looking toward Yarmouth. The photo was taken in the 1920's with the Interurban trolley stop at the left and the Powell/Martin house in the middle right beside the telephone.



**From Old Times in North Yarmouth, Maine, page 1044:**“William Martin’s funeral took place June 18, 1814. He came from England in 1783 and settled in North Yarmouth in trade. He was naturalized in 1787, and in 1790 was a candidate for Congress in opposition to George Thacher and others. He moved to Portland in 1804. His daughters had an accomplished education, particularly Penelope who remained in England till 1790 to complete hers, and who for many years kept a high school for young ladies, both here and at North Yarmouth, which attracted many from abroad, and where a thorough education was imparted. Two of the children were living in 1849, at an advanced age. Samuel died in 1848, Eliza some years ago, and William Feb. 14, 1849 aged 86. The mother, a superior woman, died in 1828, aged 90.” They are buried in Evergreen Cemetery, Portland.

**From Antiques and Fine Arts magazine afanews, summer/autumn publication 2011:**

With permission from afanews, excerpts from an article written by Laura Fecych Sprague:

“The Misses Martin’s School for Young ladies in Portland, Maine, was an important source for some of Federal America’s finest schoolgirl art. A distinctive group of objects, including embroidered silk pictures and paint-decorated tables, can be documented to some students, and attributed to others, attending what was one of New England’s foremost academies.

William Martin (1733-1814), a member of an aristocratic British family, founded the school in 1803. Earlier in life when his father died young, Martin was left ‘very ill provided for’. Instead of following his father’s footsteps at Cambridge University, he became a London merchant. Though initially finding prosperity, Martin met financial misfortune and, like many of his countrymen adversely affected by shortages and poor economic conditions resulting from the Revolutionary War, he decided to relocate to America. In 1783, Martin, his wife, Elizabeth Galpine (1739-1829), and six children settled in Boston, Massachusetts, where Martin imported and sold ‘a choice parcel of Books, and late magazines and reviews,’ along with an extensive assortment of textiles, filling pent-up demand for British goods. Naturalized in 1787, Martin moved with his family to Maine, a district of Massachusetts until statehood was achieved in 1820. In 1787, he purchased the estate of Jeremiah Powell, comprising more than three hundred acres and a shipyard on Broad Cove in North Yarmouth, Maine. Martin set up a trade and quickly gained regard in his community. While representing North Yarmouth in the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts between 1792 and 1797, Martin’s many committee activities included legislation to establish Bowdoin College in 1794; he served as a charter trustee. Financial troubles continued to plague him, however, and another source of income was required to sustain the family. Late in 1803 the Martins opened their school in North Yarmouth, with their ‘genteel house’, several out buildings, a large garden, and orchards with European fruit trees, but with the intention, according to Penelope Martin, of moving into Portland, ten miles south, the following spring.

In 1805, they leased the Ann Street residence on the Fore River that recently had been vacated by the enterprising, but now bankrupt Thomas Robison. Penelope Martin recalled Robison’s property as ‘very large, convenient, pleasant, retired, and possessed a delightful garden, which proved salutary and agreeable to our Scholars.’ The school increased rapidly and here they accommodated thirty-three students. At least four of Martin’s children were involved with the school. The eldest, Catherine (1765-1860) and brother William Clarke (1769-1849), managed daily operations. Penelope (1773-1859) and Elizabeth (1778-1844) taught, with Penelope recognized as preceptress, the school’s central figure. When her family emigrated, Penelope had stayed behind in London to complete her education, attending her aunt’s boarding school where she helped younger students with their lessons; she joined her family in Maine in 1790. Edward Elwell, Portland’s nineteenth-century historian who knew the Martins, observed that the Misses Martin were ‘cultivated English ladies and brought with them the customs and traditions of their own teaching at home. English branches were taught, a little French, music, painting and many kinds of fancywork, lace making and filigree, also geography with the use of globes. They were very successful and theirs was the fashionable school of the day.’

In addition to their general studies in reading and geography, students practiced penmanship because any inked design required facility with a pen. ‘if you would win a Pen of Gold, Learn First of all your Pen to Hold’, exhorted John Jenkins in his 1813 edition of *The Art of Writing*, where he explained the

requirements for fine penmanship and illustrated different types of lettering and their specific uses. The Martins also taught the art of painting on wood, as the decoration was then known. Figured maple or birch, in imitation of Asian satinwood often used for fine painted English furniture, acted as a canvas for what appears to water-based paints.”

To read this entire article, go to <http://www.afanews.com/articles/item/851-schoolgirl-art-from-the-misses-martin%E2%80>. There are, in the article, several photos of the work that some of the students created, and the portrait of Penelope that is featured on the cover of Betty Sweetser Baxter’s transcribed booklet, *An Ornament of Grace*, on sale for \$20.00 at Cumberland Historical Society. Betty acquired the letters exchanged between Penelope and her parents while she remained in England with her aunt. The book includes copies of the original letters written in Penelope’s very lovely 1790’s, but difficult to read, script, alongside a type written translation of each letter. It also lists the young ladies who attended the school.

**APRIL STUMPER:** What other property in Cumberland was owned by Jeremiah Powell?

#### **NEW COMMITTEES ON THE DOCKET FOR NEXT YEAR:**

Bicentennial! The Town of Cumberland will be celebrating its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021, and the Town will be creating a committee to put together the festivities. There will also be a subcommittee from the Historical Society to help implement that. Please think about signing up for that committee, or send some thoughts for activities and events to promote and put forward. This could be a really great endeavor. Another one that might be coming up is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Greely Institute/ High School. Lots of things to do! We have a couple of volunteers already, with Margie Gruber and Linda Fulda, but do need a bigger group to help the Town pull this event off! One other project that we have been asked to help with is the celebration coming up in a few years of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cumberland Fair! A lot going on for this wonderful old town.

#### **ACCESSIONS WORKSHOPS:**

Another workshop was held on the morning of March 29<sup>th</sup>, with Linda Heywood and Carol Gagnon sitting in to learn the process. These two ladies got right into it, and we got a lot of work done. They look forward to another session, which will be coming in May. Any and all others are welcome to attend. Refreshments are served. Bring a lunch and sit in for a session.

#### **ACQUISITIONS:**

Claire Vining donated a deed for her home on Tuttle Road dating back to her great grandfather. Dick and Diane Dennison donated a 1975 geological map of Cumberland Foreside and some of the Center. They are looking for one of the remainder of the Center and the West End.

**COMING UP:** April vacation! No program.

**ALWAYS LOOKING:** For folks to help with refreshments. Bake a cookie or two and add them to the goodie table for us. Thanks.

**ANSWER TO THE APRIL STUMPER:** Prince Tavern, now Cumberland Food Company. From *Cumberland, Maine in Four Centuries* : The land on which this tavern is located was first acquired on August 7, 1733, by John Powell, one of the original proprietors of Ancient North Yarmouth, at the drawing of lots by which he drew #70., one of the 100 acre lots in the early subdivision of the town. This land remained in the Powell family until October 18, 1781, when it was sold by Jeremiah Powell to James Prince, yeoman, for 60 pounds (English money) for the northerly half of lot #70, and in 1793, he sold one acre of this land for use as a burial ground, now the Congregational Cemetery. Ownership was later transferred to his son, Joel Prince, who became proprietor of Prince Tavern. The main highway ran under the archway where stagecoaches stopped and horses were changed from a stable of 15 stalls.



Overnight travelers were accommodated in the spacious house. It is not known how long this establishment served as a tavern, but in 1829, Joel Prince sold the homestead to Nathaniel Blanchard, who in 1833 sold it and 74 acres of farmland for \$3,000.00 to Capt. Enos Blanchard. His son, George, became owner in 1874, and his (George's) son, Arthur became owner in 1935 until his death in 1972. In 1974 it went out of the family when it was sold to Doctor William Wyatt. The following photo shows what the house looked like before it became the café.



**WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CHS?:** Lots of work is getting done on Monday mornings. We have been sorting, accessioning, cleaning, photographing items in our collection, and clipping Cumberland related items from newspapers, among other things. We have had two visits from a structural engineer, Al Hodsdon, for his evaluation of the physical needs of the schoolhouse. He was hired by the Town of Cumberland, and has done a very thorough job. There are some issues for our dear old building, but nothing that can't be fixed. Preparations are being made for things coming up; the SCAVENGER HUNT on May 19<sup>th</sup>, Memorial Day Open House on May 29<sup>th</sup>, May visits from the Mabel I. Wilson School 2<sup>nd</sup> grades for their historical walks, two scheduled historic bus tours on June 20<sup>th</sup> and June 27<sup>th</sup> through Cumberland Rec. department, and the second and fourth Saturdays of the month open doors for visitors. And now, thanks to Eliza Porter at the Town Office, and member Margie Gruber we have a link to the Town of Cumberland website. Check it out. They have worked hard to get this set up, and it will help get us opened up to the world.

**Have you signed up for this yet? Some folks have already!**

**NEW EVENT** that members Judith Taylor Gagnon and Debbie Knight Dugas have cooked up. They have done this sort of thing in the past with the Yarmouth Historical Society, and found it to be a huge success! They have started advertising already and have been receiving requests for applications even now. If you are interested, get your requests in soon!



The Cumberland Historical Society is excited to be sponsoring their first local scavenger hunt on Friday evening May 19<sup>th</sup>. Teams in cars will be taken on a fun, and very interactive adventure throughout the town. The cost will be \$10.00 per person and the proceeds will benefit the Historical Society's GHS Scholarship Fund. If you like to solve riddles, like to laugh and think you know a little bit about our town, then you won't want to miss out on the night. Space will be limited, so pull your team together and get ready for a super fun night. To sign up and request a registration form, contact Judy Gagnon at [DJGagnon@maine.rr.com](mailto:DJGagnon@maine.rr.com) or call 400-9334.

**SLATE OF OFFICERS TO BE VOTED ON FOR THE JUNE MEETING:**

President:	Carolyn Small
Vice President:	Diana Copp
Secretary:	Elizabeth (Betsy) Huston
Treasurer:	Peter Wilson
Trustees:	Herbert S. Foster, Jr.
	Lynda Wilson Jensen
	Linda Fulda
	Thomas Bennett
	Nancy Latham
	Jeff Frost
	Sandra Nickerson

If anyone wishes to submit other names for any of these positions, please do so.

**~\*~\*COMMITTEES THAT NEED HELP STAFFING: ~\*~\***

Education: ____	Fund Raising: ____	Programs: ____	Refreshment: ____	MSAD# 51 50 <sup>th</sup>
Anniversary ____	Nominating: ____	Publicity: ____	Bicentennial ____	Scholarship ____
Cumberland Fair 150 <sup>th</sup> anniversary ____				

## PLEASE JOIN US! CHS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 Individual  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 Household  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$100.00 Sustaining  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$100.00 Business  
\_\_\_\_\_ FREE Student  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mailing

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Town: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

(Home): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (Cell): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

To save printing and mailing costs, it is our policy to send newsletters by email. However if you would prefer to have yours sent to your mailing address, please check the block.

Please mail this form and your check to: Cumberland Historical Society PO Box 82 Cumberland, ME 04021

The Cumberland Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization





SPONSORED BY SEVEE & MAHER,  
ENGINEERS  
4 Blanchard Road, Cumberland, ME 04021



THANKS ALSO FOR THE GARDENING  
SUPPORT FROM SKILLINS  
GREENHOUSES,  
WEST CUMBERLAND, MAINE

