



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

President:	Carolyn Small
Vice President:	Diana Copp
Secretary:	Linda Fulda
Treasurer:	Peter Wilson
Trustees:	Herbert S. Foster, Jr., Trustee Emeritus
	Brian Jensen
	Margie Gruber
	Thomas Bennett
	Nancy Latham
	Sandy Nickerson

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.

OCTOBER 2017 VOLUME 142

OCTOBER THOUGHTS:

I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers. ~ Anne of Green Gables



OCTOBER STUMPER: What towns were part of what is now known as Ancient North Yarmouth?

NEW COMMITTEES ON THE DOCKET FOR NEXT YEAR:

Bicentennial! The Town of Cumberland will be celebrating its 200th 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 150th 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 150th anniversary of Cumberland Fair!

ACQUISITIONS:

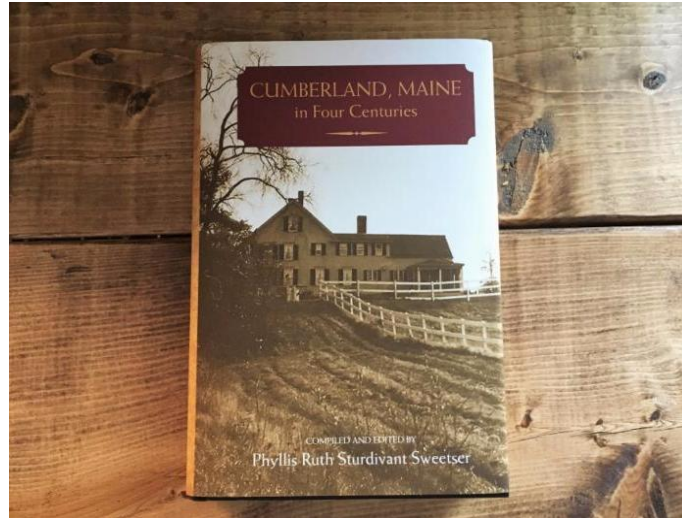
The family of former member Evelyn Thurston, who passed away in September, has donated three big photo albums to add to all the other wonderful items that they donated recently. Gail Worthen, a descendant of Louville Merrill donated a beautiful painting done by her great aunt, Maud W. Merrill, a daughter of Louville and Mary Wyman Merrill. Gail has downsized and moved to Vermont last month, thus the reason for Cumberland Historical Society acquiring the painting. Maud, born May 6, 1872, married Jack Thomes (maybe John Blanchard Thomes, son of Oren and Abbie Thomes?), but had no children. Later on, as an older woman, Maud moved in with her sister, Grace Jenkins, wife of Charles Jenkins, owner of Jenkins Greenhouses, (later Small's Greenhouses) on Blanchard Road. When Gail gets her stuff unpacked, she will look in her genealogy, and give us more finite details. Meanwhile, here is the "scoop" on Oren Scott Thomes from the Phyllis Sweetser book:

"Oren Scott Thomes (pronounced 'toms') was born in Cumberland, May 2, 1837, the only child of Capt. Ebenezer and Dolly Rideout Thomes. He married Abbie Eveleth of New Gloucester in 1861. In his youth he attended Cumberland schools. (Ed's note: He would not have graduated from Greely Institute because it would not have been built at the time he would have graduated.) At eighteen he went to Boston where he served as an apprentice for three years, learning the carpenter and builders' trade and later attended Lowell Institute. He returned to Cumberland and had a store for general merchandise by the name of Thomes & Blanchard. This store was located at the present 299 Main Street, in front of old Union Hall (Ed's note: that's now the private home between the Center Cemetery and the south entrance to Greely High School.).

In 1877 Mr. Thomes was called to California to take charge of the estate of his uncle Robert H. Thomes. The of over 26,000 acres of land was one of the largest land grants by the Spanish Government, then part of Mexico, and Mr. Thomes had the original deed. The ranch had 4,000 head of cattle, 500 horses and 400 hogs with over 200 Indians living and working on the land. His uncle was one of the first persons to undertake the hazardous journey to California in 1841 and a member of the first party to discover gold. His land was rich and he was the fortunate person to take out the largest run of gold, when one shovelful was valued at \$300.00. After settling this vast estate Mr. & Mrs. Thomes and their sons, Robert and John returned to Cumberland and lived in their home at 42 Blanchard Road where he engaged in agriculture, ran a modern stock farm and carried on a grist and saw mill business. In 1882 he built a fine mansion across the street. 'Daddy Thomes', so-called by everybody in town, liked to recall that he cast the first vote for Abraham Lincoln as President. He was a carpenter who did the woodwork on Greely Institute and who remodeled the Congregational Church in 1907. He was a spry little man and even in his 80's the only person in town who could climb the weather vane of the church. He and his wife celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in August 1911, at the spacious mansion, which burned in 1913. Even at his advanced age he rebuilt the house, but not on such a grand scale. For some

years he served as town treasurer, and was a member and deacon in the Congregational Church. He died in 1931.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CHS?: Cumberland, Maine in Four Centuries



Don't miss out on getting an updated copy of *Cumberland, Maine in Four Centuries*, written originally in 1976 by Phyllis Sweetser! With the forthcoming 200th anniversary of this town in 2021, this book is a must for you and your family. Books can be purchased for \$25 (plus \$1.38 sales tax) at the Town Hall or through the Cumberland Historical Society.

For further information, contact Carolyn Small at 829-3757, 415-4589, or by email at csmall1943@maine.rr.com. There are only 500 of these books printed, so get your copies while you can!

The two bus tours in October seemed to go over well. The weather was perfect, and we got a bus that was air conditioned, had seats that did not have high backs, and had a working PA system. Each trip hosted 16 people for a 3 hour tour (like Gilligan's Island!), with a brief stop in the middle for a visit to the Cumberland Historical Society, a snack break, and use of the "facility". We managed to sell a few of the Sweetser books, too. We are making plans for more trips next year.

COMING UP:

Greely High School Craft Fair on November 18th.

The Phyllis Sweetser updated book is selling well, but there are still some remaining. It would be a really nice Christmas gift! If you purchase it at the Greely High School Craft Fair, it will be gift wrapped for you. How's that for a deal?



Just a quick reminder that the 2017-2018 dues are due.

The Officers and Directors of the Cumberland Historical Society are pleased to announce that Carolyn Small has been chosen to be Curator of the Cumberland Historical Society. Carolyn's wealth of knowledge of the history of the Town of Cumberland, her dedication to the importance of maintaining Cumberland's historical papers and artifacts, and her continuing focus on educating students and the community about their town are only just some of the reasons that Carolyn was the ideal person to become the Society's first Curator. Board of Directors

In keeping with the new bylaws of the Society, the new officers and directors at large are now in place until the annual membership meeting to be held in the fall of 2018. They are as follows:

Chairman of the Board: Linda Fulda

Vice-Chairman: Brian Jensen

Treasurer: Pete Wilson

Secretary: Margery Gruber

Directors at large: Diana Copp, Elizabeth Huston, Nancy Latham, Sandy Nickerson

The board meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month except in December, July and August.



SHE DID IT!!

Erin O'Donovan has now officially earned her Girl Scout Gold Award. Check out her hard work on the Town of Cumberland website, under Cumberland Historical Society. She and her very proud parents attended a Town Council meeting in September to make a presentation to the Town. The following is the preface to her work. CONGRATLATIONS on a job well done!

My name is Erin O'Donovan. I am an Ambassador-Level Girl Scout, and I am a Junior at Greely High School. For my Girl Scout Gold Award project I worked with the Cumberland Historical Society to gather and document oral histories about the early schools in Cumberland. I interviewed long-time residents of the town to hear about their experiences in the schools they attended as kids. I then worked with the Town Hall to create a special webpage for the historical schools. I hope this brings alive some of our town's history and that you enjoy it as much as I did.

5/17

Cumberland Schools Through the Ages ~An Oral History~

Did you know that Cumberland used to have 15 Districts and each had their own one room schoolhouse?

Did you know that Greely High School used to be called Greely Institute and was built in 1868?

Did you know that the E.K. Sweetser Building was once a school for 4th and 5th graders?

Did you know that J. Brother's store used to be the District 4 "Shawtown School"?
Did you know that the Cumberland Historical Society used to be the District 3 School?
If you would like to learn more about the schools and hear first hand stories and see more pictures, go to the School History Page under the Cumberland Historical Society section of the Town's website.

You can learn about Cumberland's historical society, town history, and the Society's upcoming events by logging on to www.cumberlandmaine.com and then go to "Community Activities" on the website.



CONDOLENCES:

To Bob and Margaret (Bolduc) Leighton and family on the death of their daughter-in-law, Erin. Erin was Dennis's wife.

ANSWER TO THE OCTOBER STUMPER: North Yarmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, Pownal, Freeport, and parts of Brunswick and Harpswell. Islands included Great Chebeague, part of Little Chebeague, Hope, Sturdivant, part of Jewells, Crotch(later Cliff), Bangs, Basket, Bates, Cow, Crow, Goose, Nest, Ministerial, Rogues, Sand, Stave, Stockmans, Upper Green, and West Brown.

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

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

A BIT OF PUMPKIN TRIVIA FOR OCTOBER!

Pumpkins have been grown in America for over 5,000 years. Native Americans called them "isqoutm, or isquotersquash".

A pumpkin is actually a squash. It is a member of the Cucurbita family, which includes squash and cucumbers.

Pumpkins are grown all over the world. Six of the seven continents can grow pumpkins. Antarctica is the only continent that cannot grow them.

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THANKS ALSO FOR THE GARDENING
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The Cumberland Historical Society (CHS) was founded in 1939 through the dedicated efforts of Herman and Phyllis Sweetser. The meetings were first held in the Prince Memorial Library; in 1989 the CHS moved into a home of its own. That building was built in 1853 as a one--room schoolhouse; the bricks of which were fired right in the town. The CHS is a group of 100 or so members; a totally volunteer group. Open Houses are held on the second and fourth Saturdays of most months, and on Memorial Day after the parade. In May, a two-hour walking historical tour of the center of town is given to the second grades at the Mabel I. Wilson Elementary School as a part of their community curriculum. Individual tours are offered to anyone else who contacts the CHS. Historic bus tours are usually scheduled through the Cumberland Recreation Department. There are over 200 homes in the town that are over 100 years old; 50 from that inventory are over 200 years old. The museum is the repository of an interesting collection of artifacts that connect with the town. They range from home deeds from the 1700's to pieces of dinnerware brought back from England by one of the town's sea captains to his wife. Indian artifacts, Revolutionary War, Civil War, WWI and WWII items are available to view. A number of family genealogies and histories of businesses of the town are in development.

The Cumberland Historical Society is located at 4A Blanchard Road, in the center of Cumberland, about 13 miles north of Portland, just off of Route 9, which is Main Street for the town.

