

Sept. 2016
vol. 131



CUMBERLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

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|-----------------|--------------------------|
| President: | Carolyn Small |
| Vice President: | Diana Copp |
| Secretary: | Elizabeth (Betsy) Huston |
| Treasurer: | Jeff Frost (interim) |
| Trustees: | Herbert S. Foster, Jr. |
| | Lynda Wilson Jensen |
| | Linda Fulda |
| | Thomas Bennett |
| | Nancy Latham |
| | Jeff Frost |
| Facebook Site | Kathy Allen Merrill |
| | Nancy Mason |

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.

SEPTEMBER 2016 VOLUME 131

SEPTEMBER THOUGHTS:

Choose your attitude; I choose to smile. Debbie Freeman Sweester

JUNE PROGRAM:

The election of officers was completed as thus:

Carolyn Small; President
Diana Copp; Vice President
Elizabeth Huston; Secretary
Susan Wall; Treasurer

Trustees:

Herbert Foster, Jr., Lynda Jensen , Linda Fulda , Jeffrey Frost, Thomas Bennett, Nancy Latham

We regret to announce that Sue Wall submitted her resignation this summer as Treasurer due to the numerous other obligations that she has. She is also decreasing her responsibilities from a couple of other

committees that in which is involved. A full time job and too many committees can put a lot of strain on your life, and she decided that she needed to stop doing that! She will remain as a member, thank goodness. Her fine job these past years will be missed. So, with that happening, our next step was to find somebody to fill that gap. Jeff Frost stepped up to the plate, and will work, at least until next election in June 2017, in that position. Thank you, Jeff

OPEN HOUSE

Instead of having a regular program, we held an OPEN HOUSE on September 11 for folks to come, visit, have a drink of coffee or lemonade, snack on some tasty treats and view the new set-up that we have at the museum. Past members were invited to come an hour early for a special time to give a look at what we have done. They all seemed to give us a nod of approval. It was a succesful day, with about two dozen visitors. Thanks to Lynda and Brian Jensen, and Laura Willis, who got in early to get the palce ready, to Jeff Frost for providing tech ability to see the interviews done by the USM students this spring, to Sandy Nickerson for sprucing up the gardens and grounds, and to Nancy Latham, Linda Fulda, and Carolyn Small for providing the "MEET AND GREET" part of the day.



Some of the artifacts that were on view:



Forest Lake cabins



bed key



lard buckets

SEPTEMBER STUMPER:

When did Greely Institute begin?

NEW COMMITTEE 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!

WORKSHOP THIS FALL:

Because we have received so many wonderful items the past couple of years, the accessioning process has fallen way, and I do mean WAY, behind. We had planned to have a workshop this summer, but the summer seemed to get away from us! Sometime after Cumberland Fair, we will try again. It is not a complicated process, and you do not need to know about the history of these things. It is mostly a bookkeeping procedure. We always have refreshments on hand, and really do need the help. If you are interested in attending one of these workshops, please contact Carolyn at 829-3757, or 415-4589, or csmall1943@maine.rr.com. As always, refreshments will be on hand! We have had a few folks express a wish to join in on this workshop, so looks it will be a go! Further details will be available after the Fair.

CONDOLENCES TO:

The Sweester family for the death of Greg's wife, Debbie Freeman.

John and Barbara Chandler for the death of their son, Matt.

The Bolduc and Leighton families for the death of brother and brother-in-law, Philip.

The Small family for the death of Carolyn's mother, Florence Fordham, and George & Francis' sister Lorraine.

Been a tough summer!

ACQUISITIONS:

Rand Surgi donated, among other things, some blueprints of the Cumberland Water Company that his grandfather, Ernest Rand, had drawn up. Other items included four Congregational Church family catalogs, and several Town Reports.

Pat Mullen donated numerous photos and ephemera from the Mullen family. There are also a lot of these items that will be going, with her permission, to the Falmouth Historical Society. We've already made contact with them, and will deliver them soon.

Claire Vining donated a Wilson genealogy, and a Farm Bureau notebook, naming many folks from the general Poland Corners area, and includes a lot of info about farming techniques and improvements. A great research resource.

And, Connie Sweetser has been cleaning out the Sweester attic again, and brought another box of photos and "stuff"! We just love it when attics get cleaned out.

One of the visitors to the museum on Sunday currently lives in the Louville Merrill house on Maine Street. She has sold the house is moving in six weeks, and had some items that she thought we might be interested in, so Jeff Frost and Brian Jensen followed her back to her home and brought the items back. Great stuff; a ship's auger, two ice tongs, two fireplace items, two shoe lasts from the cobblers business that was in that home many years ago, a crowbar, and two drying rods that attach to a wood cook stove. This made us happy to receive them, and made her happy to get rid of them!

ALWAYS LOOKING: We are still missing the Greely Shield yearbooks from the years 1965, 1967, 1975-1977, 1982, and 1985. If you have one of these that you would like to donate to us, please help us

out. Also looking for folks to help with refreshments. Bake a cookie or two and add them to the goodie table for us. Thanks.

LOOKING FOR AN ANSWER:

Brian Jensen sent this interesting little Cumberland history tidbit. Does anyone have a definitive answer to it? "Sitting here perusing the 1927 summer-fall phone book for Portland District, I found a listing for the Tamarack Inn, Gray Rd., West Cumberland. The phone number was 51-4, if that helps. We think it's probably what became known as the Leighton Hotel, but it will be interested to try to figure out.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNER:

Thanks to the volunteer efforts made by member Leigh Fulda, we received a \$500.00 donation from her place of work, TD BANK, to be used as seed money for our scholarship fund. The officers and trustees voted to add a matching amount of \$500.00 to create a scholarship for a Cumberland Greely graduate. We received 17 very worthy applications, and the committee had a hard time choosing just one. The applicants were required to write an essay, no less than 300 words, and no more than 500, along with the other requirements, like GPA scores, activities in school, community service, and jobs. Congratulations to this year's winner, Matthew Morgan. He and his family were invited to the June 16th meeting and were introduced to the membership. Matthew thanked us all for the scholarship, and gave an update on his future plans, plus, we got to meet the Morgan/Croce/Gibbs families, who are all a sheer delight. Matthew plans to go to SMCC to study law enforcement.

GOOSE POND:

This was found by our scholarship winner, Matt Morgan. It solves the mystery of when Goose Pond became Forest Lake. Thank you, Matt!

Chapter 246.

An Act to change the name of Goose Pond in Cumberland County.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

The body of water situated in the towns of Gray, Cumberland and Windham, in Cumberland county, about one mile and a half in length and from one-half to three-quarters of a mile in width heretofore called the Goose pond shall hereafter be named and called Forest lake.

Name of
Goose pond
changed.

Approved March 29, 1911.

FEATURE PIECE:

Rachel Bragg Macgowan wrote this piece for a college class, and her professor asked for permission to have it published in the 1989 winter edition of THE NEWS, a publication of the Maine League of Historical Societies/Museums. This is part II of article, entitled "Cumberland: Evolution of a Maine Town Part II. Part I will be included in the newsletter when and if it can be found!

In 1922 extra-curricular activities were stressed more than previously. Particular note is made of successful baseball and basketball teams, class socials, drama club, and annual speaking contests. Boys and girls are now required to take courses in physical education. The Domestic and Agriculture Courses are heavily applauded. The "school poultry netted a profit of \$1.00 per hen and supplied the domestic arts course with eggs for a year. The school garden realized a profit of \$8.00." In 1924 seventeen of the twenty-two boys at Greely Institute were enrolled in the Agriculture Course. The Agriculture Course held

a successful school fair and a Poultry Club was formed. The principal reported that there were plans for the farm shop to install a 200 egg incubator and a 500 chick brooder house. Also milk testing was done under the supervision of a certified tester and the public was encouraged to use the agriculture department for testing. School prizes were awarded for the year included the Chase Memorial Prize given to the girl baking the best bread and a \$5.00 prize awarded to Richard Blanchard for developing the greatest interest in agriculture.

1924 was also a year for considerable expansion of the water main on Tuttle Road by the Portland Water District and also on the road to Walnut Hill, North Yarmouth, Middle Road, Wildwood, and Greely Road. Hydrants for fire protection were requested on all extended lines. Street lights were requested on the outskirts of town, free dentistry for school children considered and an appropriation for sidewalks in the village was requested.

In 1926 Article 44 was "to see if the town will vote to purchase a seal for the town clerk's office and a design for stationery." A request was made to raise money for Memorial Day Services, money appropriated for the newly established Prince Memorial Library built in 1923, and the Budget Committee's recommendations were published for the first time.

In the Report of Greely Institute (in its 58th year) the introduction of a vocational course was cited for boys and girls not going to college. "The practical value of the Agricultural Section of Boys' Vocational Course is demonstrated by a review of the occupations selected by the boys graduating from the Agricultural Course during the last five years. Seventy percent of the number graduating of the number graduating from the Agricultural Course during the past five years are engaged in agricultural occupations. A record such as this shows the sound foundation on which this course is based and the importance of placing all possible emphasis on this work. Over half of the boys graduating from Greely Institute select farming as their vocation and we can give the greatest benefit to this majority only by developing the Vocational Agricultural Course to highest degree of efficiency, - John Downing, Principal."

In 1927 social welfare seemed to prevail. Article 53 asked for an appropriation to aid a school clinic in investigating the condition of school children's tonsils and adenoids, and the PTA got \$250.00 from the town to hold a free dental clinic for children. James Dunn, health officer, noted that objectionable conditions concerning the gymnasium floor were corrected. He also reported cases of diphtheria, scarlet fever, typhoid, mumps, and chicken pox. Electric lights were added to several schools. By 1928 Article 57 requested the purchase of a school bus for \$2,600.00 for the transportation of school children. Money was requested for construction to alleviate crowded facilities at Greely Institute and a two-story wing was added in 1929. Article 43 requested the adoption of a new set of by-laws and there were 278 automobiles as opposed to 195 horses in town.

The years 1929-1930 saw an increase in articles concerning the growth of the fire department and use of the automobile. In 1929's Article 36 was a request to raise money to buy a siren whistle, and Article 37 to raise \$250.00 for the Cumberland Fire Company. Motorized vehicles were becoming more popular and roads had to be widened. In 1929 the road commissioner reports "I eliminated the use of horses almost entirely dragging, using the tractor and road machine for smoothing roads. I find this a more economical way and I get much better results." By 1931 Article "to see if the town will vote to give no aid to any family operating an automobile." Also in 1931 Article 55 called for the election of seven citizens to a planning board "to investigate the merits of town planning, zoning, and beautifying and to enact anything relative thereto." The need for the establishment for a town dump to deal with the waste of a growing town was cited and the creation of a town forest was applauded.

The early 1930's saw expansion of roads throughout the town and improvement in their quality. Tar was added to many roads and many roads were prepared for tarring, surfaced with gravel, and blasted for the removal of ledges.

In 1934 Building Codes appear for the first time in Article 45 "to see if the town will vote to add the following section to the By-laws. No person shall erect, within the borders of the Town of Cumberland, a building to be used for a dwelling without first presenting a plan showing dimensions and propose location and securing from the Selectmen permission to build." Also in 1934 a manual training course was introduced at Greely - "we are mindful of the fact that only a small percentage of our students can

continue their education beyond high school. The manual training course given the first time this year to Institute pupils is being very efficiently taken care of and fills a long-felt gap in the curriculum." In 1939 Supt. Cole states "New tools for manual training and agricultural courses were purchased. A study of general shop is being made with the idea of making the Manual Training Course more practical for the average student. This course work will eventually include units of general carpentry, household mechanics, printing, sheet metal work, machine shop and various arts and crafts that should prove to be of value to all boys who at some time will be assuming the duties of maintaining a house." Also in 1939 the town had an article to employ a qualified social worker.

By 1940 the town annual reports were lengthy and detailed with the town expenditures carefully delineated. Consolidation of schools and abolishment of district schools was a major topic. A committee was formed to study the possibility of centralization. In 1944 Article 21 "to see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of money to start a building fund in anticipation of a consolidated elementary school." As the town population increased, so did the school population. In 1946 the Cumberland Overall School Building Committee reports that schools are crowded and that an overflow of three classes has been housed on the main floor of the Town Hall. In 1946 a Commercial Course was begun at Greely Institute and a music supervisor was hired for the school system.

A major event in the changes in Cumberland occurred in 1946 with the designs for the first housing development by Owen Farwell. Article 53 "to see if the town will vote to accept for a town way a deed to the title in fee of the streets of Cumberland Center Terrace (Farwell Avenue and Prince Street) from D. Owen Farwell when the streets have been in the judgement of the Selectmen put into passable condition by NMr. Farwell and when such a deed is offered."

With the beginning of organized development in 1946, 1947 saw growth in town governmental control. Article 54 "to see what action the town will take in authorizing the Selectmen to establish a modern accounting system, including the necessary filing and office equipment and to hire a clerk to do the office work now done by the Selectmen and to raise and appropriate therefore. Article 52 "to appropriate money for acquiring a small scale map, including the islands." Also Article 58 "to see if the town will vote to provide for a zoning committee and authorize it to act in lieu of a planning board in recommending enactment of a zoning plan under the provision of Chapter 80, Revised Statutes of Maine 1944 as amended" and Article 59 which was to decide the town would vote to revise the by-laws. New by-laws were drawn up and printed - copies published March 1, 1949. Also in 1949 an article was presented to close the district schools, sell three of the schools, and use the money from such sale toward the construction of a new consolidated school. Such actions were passed and in 1950 the Cumberland Elementary School was ready for occupancy.

In 1951 the Cumberland Center District Brick School was secured for use as a town hall and Article 46 called for the town to hire a firm of appraisers for re-evaluation of the town. By 1953 a request for a new building code appeared qualifying size of lots, front yard restrictions, and creating a limited industrial zone. By 1954 growth in the town created the need for the town constable to be replaced by a full time police chief who requested a two-way car radio. By 1955 Article 44 "The Chief of Police shall have full power to regulate parking temporarily along all public roads and ways in town whenever he considers it necessary for the public safety." Also in 1955 an eight inch water main was installed along Main Street as seen in Article 72 "to see if the town will raise \$36,000.00 for construction of a stand pipe on land furnished by Cumberland Center Water Co. in relation to installation of eight inch main from stand pipe to Center Junction. " This was done in response, partly, to terrible water pressure in homes.

In 1956 Cumberland Foreside saw development with Robert Walker's first subdivision at Sea Cove, with the construction of upper-middle income homes. The Foreside was changing from an area of large estates of the wealthy and summer homes to a rapidly growing area for successful professionals to make their homes.

The 1956 annual sees subdivision as an uncontrollable area and seeks to gain control with Article 5 "to see if the town will vote to adopt the Subdivision Ordinance for Cumberland, Maine, "and article 54 "to adopt a new building code." In 1957 the town voted to dispose of the old school tractor as the agricultural course was dropped from the curriculum.

1958 marked the year of the publication of the "Preliminary General Plan of Cumberland." It is now noted "Cumberland is predominantly a residential town... a majority of those engaged in making a living work outside of town." "The character of Cumberland as a so-called bedroom town is evident." In the 1958 annual concern for the loss of areas for light industry was expressed "if Cumberland is to have its share of light industry, it must have suitable land available for industry. Industry requires railroad and highway transportation, as well as water and power. We have but one remaining strip of land that will answer those requirements, the land adjacent to Maine Central Railroad tracks... The suggested Subdivision Ordinance will tell potential residential developers exactly what they must do to make the development satisfy local conditions such as street construction, drainage, installation of utilities, street widths, size of lots so that the town will not be liable for any of that initial work nor be burdened by excessive maintenance costs."

1959 saw three newly developed areas in the Center of Cumberland and one on the Foreside. By 1961 Arthur Blanchard had sold his pasture acreage and streets were put in and developed where I went as a small child to watch him cross his dairy herd across Tuttle Road at milking time. That same year more development was seen on the Foreside.

By 1965 the town voted to have a full-time fire headquarters and dispatcher, but more significant, Article 28 "to see if the town will approve a Council/Manager Charter" as 1964 the town had carried the vote on Article 36 "to see if the town will vote to authorize a Charter Committee to draw up a Charter/Manager form of government and to present it to the State Legislature for adoption."

The 1966 annual report contains a copy of the accepted charter. The Center was rapidly developing with the appearance of several more streets. By 1967 the planning board takes note that "one of the most pressing problems the town faces is sewerage."

By 1967 Cumberland was an attractive community to which people moved to enjoy its rural atmosphere. In 1966, in response to the Sinclair Act, Cumberland, after bitter debates, formed School Administrative District 51 as Cumberland joined schools with the Town of North Yarmouth. Greely had enlarged its facilities by building an entire new complex complete with swimming pool. A new elementary school (Mabel I. Wilson School) was built to replace the outgrown first consolidated school in 1967.

Industry of years was waning. Cumberland's poultry farmers retired as no one wished to continue the businesses. The carnation business which thrived in the early 1900's also died. Chase Bros. turned into Chase's Greenhouse, a florist shop, still run by my uncle, Cap Bragg. Jenkins' Greenhouse was sold to Maurice Small and closed shortly after his death. Sunnyside Greenhouse, started by Howard Blanchard in 1919 was run, but eventually closed, by Blanchard's son-in-law, William Garsoe.

In 1975 by referendum vote, the townspeople voted 2-1 to support the town council's decision to buy the Val Halla Country Club. The Recreation Department in Cumberland is extensive now. As a suburban community, Cumberland has become a place to live and play, but not work. Attracted by an excellent school system, (both the Senior and Junior High Schools have been named National Schools of Excellence in the past two years); more developments have been built with increasingly higher priced houses.

In the past few years places such as Cumberland Estates and Pond Shore Estates and Cumberland Hills have been developed in the Center and in West Cumberland with houses from \$250,000 to \$400,000 – prices which, not long ago, were seen only on the Foreside.

After several attempts by citizens to stop development, Cumberland Meadows, a condominium cluster, is now a reality in more of Arthur Blanchard's former cow fields. Nearly all the old farmsteads have been sold and the farm lands sub-divided and developed. The Whitney farm is now Whitney Estates and the Oulton Dairy Farm on Winn Road has closed its business this year – the fields now being developed into a private golf club and housing complex. Springbrook Farms operated by relatives of Richard Blanchard who won the 1924 award for the boy with the greatest developing interest at Greely Institute, is the only operating farm in Cumberland today. The rural character of Cumberland is fading in every part of town. My family has lived, in the house in which I live with my family. For five generations. We are "old timers" and watch with some regret the disappearance of rural Cumberland. Cumberland, however, is still a very fine place to live.

Thank you, Rachel, for letting us include this interesting piece in the newsletter! It is obvious that a lot of hard work and research went into it. Think of how much change has happened in our town since 1989, when this was written.

Historical Bus Tours of Cumberland

We did three bus tours of the wonderful Town of Cumberland this summer, and had SUCH FUN!!!! Vice President Diana Copp was our bus driver, and President Carolyn Small, did the narration. You notice that the **really** important person was placed first here! The tours lasted for about three hours, and covered the entire town with historical facts with "Inquiring Minds Want to Know" tidbits included. Halfway through the trip, we stopped at the Museum for a break and some light refreshments, and then finished up. We got a lot of positive feedback, and earned some money as well. We very much appreciate Cindy Stennett at Cumberland Recreation Department for promoting this for us. We hope to do another this fall. Wouldn't it be a pretty jaunt with the fall foliage?

ANSWER TO THE SEPTEMBER STUMPER:

Greely Institute was established through the generosity of Eliphalet and Elizabeth Loring Greely. Eliphalet Greely (1784-1858) was a sea captain, businessman, bank president, state banking commissioner, member of the Maine Legislature and mayor of Portland. His will designated \$27,500 to the Town of Cumberland, with \$6,000 for construction of Greely Institute, which opened Sept. 28, 1868. The Corporation of the Trustees of Greely Institute was dissolved in July 1953 after a Town Meeting vote to establish a free high school.

DUES ARE DUE!

Membership Application
2016-2017

Please join us!

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ \$10.00 Individual | _____ \$25.00 Household |
| _____ \$100.00 Sustaining | _____ \$100.00 Business |
| _____ Other/Gift | _____ Students: Free |

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Do you want your newsletter sent by USPS? _____ Or email? _____

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

Please mail this form and your check to:

Cumberland Historical Society

PO Box 82

Cumberland, ME 04021

~*~*~*~ COMMITTEES THAT NEED HELP STAFFING: PLEASE SELECT ONE ~*~*~*~

Education: _____ Fund Raising: _____ Programs: _____ MSAD# 51 50th Anniversary _____
Refreshment: _____ Nominating: _____ Publicity: _____ Bicentennial _____ Scholarship _____

UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

Still a work in progress.

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