

History Committee

March 30, 2022 at the History Center

Present: Joan Mason-Bradford, Mary Ellen Barnes, Jeff Tarbox, John Henderson, Dennis Dunbar, Dedee Greenleaf-Hodgdon, Connie Ostis, and Gaye Wagner with Louana Frois via Zoom

The meeting convened at 4:38 pm. Joan opened the meeting with a review of the minutes. John made a motion to approve the February Minutes; Mary Ellen, 2nd, unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: Jeff noted the largest 1st quarter expenses: UV window film and utilities. Friends' income included an anonymous donation and History Center donations; total in the bank \$10,468+/- . The History Committee treasury holds \$3,800+/- between the Operating Account and the Trust (Money Market) Account. Dennis made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report; John, 2nd, unanimously approved.

Cataloging: Gaye reported that most of the cataloging effort this month was devoted to documenting and organizing the William & Harriet Heal collection, which is on-loan, in preparation for digitizing; Joan and Ann (Springhorn) have been adding items in Catalogit from the Colby Greenleaf and the Frank and Phoebe Cromwell Collections; and Jean and Gaye went through a chest of items donated re Donald Knight. The Donald Knight that is the subject of the Collection was from Camden/Rockport and a student at the Baxter School for the Deaf. There was nothing found relating to Westport Island, so there will be follow-up with relevant historical societies.

Fort McDonough Subcommittee: John spoke to Dr. Bradley's assistant, Sheila MacDonald, who had visited Fort McDonough with Dr. Bradley; she had no recollection of the visit but will consult her files from the time. John has also been nudging Jim Kochan to reach out to his contact, Dr. Lawry, who may have some information related to Dr. Bradley's work. Final work at Wiscasset Library is still pending.

Internship Subcommittee: The Internship subcommittee decided that the internship/summer employee should focus on the Gale (William & Harriet Heal) Collection because it is on loan. Jean has drafted a job description; and Jeff and Joan have put out feelers for prospects to: the University of Maine digital program; consultant Ellen Dyer; Maine Archives & Museums; and the Executive Director of the Tate House Museum. Fundraising will likely be the funding source for the internship; if grant money becomes available, that will be pursued. We currently have funds to get an internship underway. Members liked the fundraising idea of "quantifying and selling" historical preservation, e.g., \$100 pays for preserving a chapter – e.g., 50 pages -- of Island history.

Clocks: Jeff summarized an offer from Ted Loranz to donate two 30-hour clocks – a grandfather clock and a shelf clock. The grandfather clock is believed to have originally been owned by the Shattuck family and sat in what is now Callie's house; the shelf clock came from Ronald Tarbox, Sr. – original provenance unknown. Ted would like to donate the clocks and perhaps have them on view at the History Center. John made a motion to accept the clocks; Dennis, 2nd; unanimously approved.

Archaeology Maps: Mary Ellen made copies of archaeological maps created by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission in 2006 showing Island shell middens to replace maps that are missing from the green file cabinet. Dennis noted that the two most significant shell middens are at the southeast point of the island and on the Back River side near where Bayside Oaks was located. Jeff believed there was also a midden adjacent to the Colin Dunn property at the lower end of Hockomock Bay, which is not marked on the map.

WCA Newsletter: Clarence Day's "History of Maine Agriculture, 1604-1860" and research by David Smith, UM, formed the basis of Dennis's most recent WCA newsletter submission about the difficulties of early farm settlers.

Clough Point: Dennis circulated a photo of the proposed plaque to be dedicated on May 16 at Clough Point.

Annual Housekeeping: After review, John motioned to approve Jean's Annual Report for the Town Report; Jeff, 2nd; unanimously approved. Connie and John agreed to call members to update/confirm 22/23 appointments.

The Friends of Westport Island History ("Friends")

Present: Same attendance. The meeting convened at 5.31 pm.

Plumbing: The toilet has been out of order at the History Center. The lift pump servicing the Wright Landing House froze. The toilet is now working. Richard DeVries will manage the installation of a new lift pump which will cost about \$2,500 and will be paid from the Wright Landing Account.

Friends Proposed Budget: Jeff noted that without a membership drive this year, we opted for some targeted fundraising. If we can't meet the proposed budget's ambitious fundraising goal of \$12,000, we will need to limit the Internship/Summer Staff project. Mary Ellen suggested that with the emphasis on fundraising, we may want to create a new promotional piece to support our efforts. She suggested increasing the Membership/ Fundraising budget line from \$500 to \$1,000. After discussion, Jeff moved that we accept the proposed budget as amended with an increase of \$500 in Membership/Fundraising; Dennis, 2nd; unanimously approved.

Spring Fundraising: Mary Ellen asked for timing input for a spring fundraising letter. Louana suggested the Friends needed to jump on it now with the Internship being a priority or wait until after the July fundraiser so the two fundraisers don't conflict. She liked the "Buy a Chapter of History" idea to help underwrite the internship, giving an example of a group that needed to replace a shed, sent out a picture of the existing shed, and created a "New Shed" fundraising site anchored by the old shed's picture. The effort overshot its goals; it was simple with low overhead. Members liked the online format idea for a "Scanning & Preserving Chapters of Westport Island History" fundraiser with an end-of-May conclusion so as to not conflict with the July fundraiser. Jeff noted that we have a PayPal account but not an online landing page. To develop an electronic mailing list, the Friends should use the same approach successfully used by the Event Subcommittee: start with the Friends mailing list of 73 member addresses and then solicit names of other likely interested people from History Committee members.

Electronic fundraisers can easily be replicated for other goals. The History and Westport Island Facebook pages can be used for promotion. Louana offered to match up to \$1,000 in donations as an **anonymous** donor. John made a motion to go with a Spring "electronic fundraiser"; Dennis, 2nd; unanimously approved.

Event Committee: Joan updated members on plans for the Sunday, July 17, 5-7 pm summer fundraiser "History Picnic at Tarbox Cove" with the presentation, "When Brothers Disagree... Diverging Paths Chosen by Samuel and Cornelius Tarbox, Jr.":

- She and Jeff did a site walk-through last week to discuss logistics: parking, tent placement, asking people to carpool, and seeking permission from the Select Board to use the Town Office as a carpool lot.
- Needs: Event signs; volunteers to staff the sign-in/book sales tables; possible organic compound to use for mosquito control (still to be discussed with Kyle); help for traffic flow and parking; and event insurance.
- Current Partners: Deb and Rose, WCA, for food; Donna Curry for flowers; Kyle for beer.
- Callie would like to use the photograph of James Heal Tarbox with a yoke of oxen in front of her house for the invitation and would like the "Tarbox Women" exhibit panels in her east parlor adjacent to the murals.

Chamber of Commerce: The Wiscasset Chamber of Commerce is giving the Friends, as a member, an opportunity to discuss any events/projects with tapings done on a Monday/Tuesday morning at the History Center. Pat Cloutier, the Chamber, will facilitate. John volunteered to do this; others are welcome to be involved.

Gaye made a motion to adjourn at 6:28 pm; Dennis, 2nd; unanimously approved.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 27 at 4:30 pm at the History Center.

History Committee/Friends Minutes 03-30-2022