

The Friends of Westport Island History

June 17, 2021 at the History Center

Present: Jeff Tarbox, Mary Ellen Barnes, Dedee Greenleaf-Hodgdon, Deb Williams, Callie Connor, Joan Mason-Bradford, Connie Ostis, Paul Bonyun and Gaye Wagner with Jean Wilhelmsen-Exter, Dennis Dunbar and Susie Stedman via Zoom

The meeting convened at 4:04 p.m. at the History Center. Callie moved to approve the May minutes; Jeff, 2nd; unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: The Friends have 65 members to date; and \$8,438 in the bank, which includes \$150 in raffle sales. We have an additional \$305 in raffle sales and additional expenses pending. Recent expenses include copies and porta-potty rental for the Scavenger Event and insurance. Next month, there will be a detailed quarterly report with up-to-date income and expenses for the annual meeting.

Appreciation: Notes of appreciation to Roger Higgins, Scott Daniels, Pat Higgins & Jeff Wheeler for pickup, delivery, and installation of the fireproof file cabinet in the HC2 workroom were circulated for signatures.

Bicentennial Event at Boothbay Railway Museum: We will be providing an exhibit of Westport's mills with artifacts, photos of the mills, the Heals, and mill ledger pages, along with other memorabilia. Our exhibit needs to be in place on July 3 – the kickoff date for the Bicentennial exhibit -- and the exhibit will be on view for a month. We do not yet know if a volunteer will be needed to staff the event on the 3rd.

Lincoln County Bicentennial Celebration: For Westport Island's part in the Lincoln County Bicentennial Celebration, Dennis will be leading and seeking volunteers for two docent-led History Trail caravans – at 12 and 2 pm – on the kickoff day, Sunday, August 15. Volunteers will also staff the History Center from 11 to 4 that day. A new exhibit, "My Island Home," will be on view.

Friends Fundraiser: Callie, Joan and Louana have been working on a summer Friends fundraiser. They are proposing a cocktail event "Squam Creek History Alive: The Squam Creek settlement and early families of Westport Island" on August 21 from 5-7 pm with guest speaker Dennis Dunbar.

- Dennis will speak on the trials and tribulations of early settlers and the cellar hole project. There will also be "mini-talks" by descendants of founding families (1740-1800). Westport's founding families established Island values and traditions that follow into today.
- The event will be at Squam Creek Farm, the property of Louana and Ted Frois, and the historic property of Timothy Dunton, patriarch of the Dunton family. The speaking program will be centered at the Timothy Dunton cellar hole/sunken garden on the property.
- The event will be a 2-hour cocktail party generously underwritten by the Frois's.
- Tickets will be sold in advance. Jeff will be setting up a PayPal account and will research an event program as well. There will be from 50-90 tickets sold – price to be determined; Louana has suggested \$25/couple. Different levels will be considered that maintain a reasonable price for islanders to attend with additional levels to support programs and exhibits at the History Center. Connie proposed \$15/individual; \$25/couple; perhaps \$100/\$125 for a "patron".
- This event would provide an opportunity to encourage media – perhaps a TV crew to come on the island -- with a human-interest story centered on Squam Creek and the founding families' history.
- There will not be a rain date. If it rains, the barn can be used – 50 can be seated in the barn – perhaps only a percentage of the tables could be set up inside so there can be a combination of sitting and standing to increase capacity.
- Posters/advertising materials will be needed for the WCA newsletter, newspapers and posting -- initially with a local focus and some personal invitations. Then, if tickets are remaining, open the event to the area to capture possible descendants and "friends" in the local area.

- Perhaps we could get a local artist to make a signature image for the event.

Joan suggested that if this event goes well, we could make it a recurring summer event on other areas of the island with a focus on different founding families, e.g., the Tarbox, Brooks, or Heal families on the south end; the Decker family on the north end, etc. Another topic might be pre-1800 structures or Maine barns – there are some wonderful barns on the island and Ted Frois has offered to speak on post and beam barns.

Annual Meeting: The annual meeting will be on August 29 where we will elect officers and pick the winner of the quilt raffle. More details to follow.

ArtWalk: Mary Ellen has been invited to ArtWalk in Wiscasset from 5 pm to 8 pm next Thursday, June 24, and will be selling quilt raffle tickets there. She is seeking a volunteer(s) to relieve her.

My Island Home Exhibit: Planning is underway by Jean, Callie, Dedee and Gaye for installation of the My Island Home exhibit to be on view on or before August 15. For an optimum layout that allows readability of all the text boards without distracting backlighting, the planning group is proposing the purchase of the display panels originally envisioned for the History Center. Jean briefed members on her research re both used and new options. ProPanels has the best suited panels for our use. Mary Ellen suggested trying the cultural programs listserv for possible used options; she will pass along contact information. Panels will need to be ordered soon for use in this exhibit. The cost will be up to \$1,000 including shipping. Jeff made a motion to spend up to \$1,000 for display panels as discussed; Callie, 2nd; unanimously approved.

History Committee

Present: Same attendance minus Susie Stedman

The meeting convened at 5:24 pm. Callie motioned to approve the May minutes; Joan, 2nd; unanimously approved.

Report of the Nominating Committee: Jeff, Connie, and Anne polled the members for willingness to serve another term and/or as officers. The proposed slate of officers is: Jean and Joan, Co-Chairs, Jeff, Treasurer; and Gaye, Secretary. Anne has agreed to become a full member of the Committee; Louana has agreed to become an Associate Member. Mary Coventry has submitted her resignation. Mary's extensive work and service to advancing the preservation of Westport Island history were noted; her resignation was regretfully accepted. Connie made a motion to accept the Nominating Committee's report; Paul, 2nd; unanimously approved.

History Center Sign: The need for signage at the History Center was emphasized. Jeff will follow up on an MDOT sign which will cost roughly \$100/sign. He is proposing a sign for Rte. 1 and at the top of Ferry Road – perhaps at a future time, a third will be considered for placement on Birch Point Road. Dedee noted the need for a sign (e.g., sandwich board) for events to be placed at the top of Ferry Road to improve safety for turning traffic. Jean and Gaye will follow up on a building and event sign options.

Jeff made a motion to adjourn at 5:33 pm; Connie, 2nd; unanimously approved. The next Friends meeting will be Thursday, July 15, at 4 pm, at the History Center.