

History Committee

September 29, 2021 at the History Center

Present: Mary Ellen Barnes, Joan Mason-Bradford, Jean Wilhelmsen-Exter, Dennis Dunbar, Jeff Tarbox, Connie Ostis, Louana Frois, and Gaye Wagner

The meeting convened at 4:05 p.m. at the History Center.

Jeff made a motion to approve the Minutes; Louana, 2nd, unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: Jeff reviewed the financials: the History Committee has a total of \$3,748.48 total in the Operations and Trust Fund accounts. The Friends have a total of \$13,849.68 in available cash (last year's carryover and this year's income [\$14,169.95 with outstanding expenditures]). In 2021, we have netted \$9,597.83 – the Squam Creek event netted about \$5,500; the quilt netted \$960. We have 71 memberships to date. Jeff requested that volunteers fill out sales receipts with breakouts of items sold/donations for bookkeeping purposes.

New Acquisitions: Donations received with appreciation this past month include:

- 1) From Greg Gale: On loan for digitizing -- letters, business documents, postcards, and publications re William and Harriet Heal and the Heal Mill;
- 2) From Trudy Metzger: On loan for digitizing as well as physical donations of family photographs, documents and genealogical information from the Harriman family, much of which had been collected by her mother Bea Harriman – the loaned items have all been digitized and are viewable in Catalogit; and
- 3) From Bill & Jill Cooney: A donation of photographs, documents and memorabilia from their house, once the "Lyre's Nest" guest house, with items from the Galvin, Burt, and Anderson families.

Cloud Storage: Jean addressed the need for cloud storage to be used in concert with Catalogit because of the volume and storage requirements of items being scanned. She recommended Dropbox as most suited to our needs. Joan made a motion to purchase Dropbox for \$10/month, Louana, 2nd, unanimously approved.

Catalogit: Jean proposed developing teams of two – a scanner and a cataloger – to make cataloging sessions at the History Center more enjoyable and efficient. Training sessions will be developed for volunteers. Cataloging tasks that could be undertaken by at-home volunteers include transcribing hand written documents uploaded to Catalogit to make them searchable and more readable; and adding biographical information to the Person profiles from resources like the Bea Harriman book, the Cemetery Book, etc.

Signage: The Westport Island History Center signs from Joe Ruzyckij have been installed on the face of the Wright Landing House. Jean has put the "Open" sign she made at the back corner of the house, so it can be easily picked up at the beginning of a History Center shift and placed at the top of the Ferry/Main Road intersection before opening the History Center. Gaye will get a reflective fire department number sign for the end of the driveway.

Visits: Members have toured the Doggett House at 44 Castle Lane thanks to the hospitality of Mara and Donald Giulianti; and we have been invited to visit the old Jewett ice dam on the James Garland property – it will be best viewed in the late fall when the leaves are off the trees. A date will be set next month.

MAM: Jean reviewed training sessions available through Maine Archives and Museums (MAM) and the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC). She will distribute email announcements. Jeff will distribute the annual MAM conference information which will be via Zoom Thursday and Friday, October 7 & 8; he is registered.

History Center Hours: Public hours at the History Center will change to 12 pm to 2 pm beginning Sunday, November 7th. Jean will advertise in the Community Association newsletter; Gaye will change the Town calendar.

Meeting Hours: Jeff made a motion to change the History Committee/Friends monthly meeting time from 4 pm to 4:30 pm beginning at the next meeting, Wednesday, October 27, Dennis, 2nd; unanimously approved.

Cellar Hole Project: Dennis found a previously undocumented cellar hole on Knubble Bay Road – appearing to be a Hubbard family member from the late 1700's. He will update documentation on the Cellar Hole Project this winter.

The Friends of Westport Island History (“Friends”)

Present: Same attendance.

The meeting convened at 5:25 pm.

Workroom Lighting for HC2: Mary Ellen will review her lighting estimates for both work rooms for the next meeting so we order and get better lighting installed. Gaye will look into additional display lighting for the exhibit area to improve panel and cabinet lighting.

UV Film: Mary Ellen asked for updated quotes for UV film on the windows. In 2020, Mary Coventry received quotes from Window Film Depot (\$3,553) and Maine Sun Solutions in South Portland (\$3,395). Jean will put the question out on the listserv for additional vendor recommendations.

Wright Landing House: Jeff sealed above the fireplace with Kilz; and we did not have water intrusion from this last storm. Mary Ellen volunteered to be the liaison with the Wright Landing Committee for work on the outside of the house. One item to promote for repair: the rotting roof trim on the west side of the house.

Events Committee: Joan reported on events under consideration:

- 1) A family-centered event around the “My Island Home” exhibit. Dede would speak as a “Colby-Greenleaf” descendant and be the “Master of Ceremonies” for other family speakers. The winter event would be a celebration of Verlie’s birthday -- February 19 -- with personal invitations to family members.
- 2) A speaking engagement by Professor Joseph Hall, Bates College. His specialty is the Midcoast Native Americans; his topic would be what the Wabanakis did in the summer here on the island. Joan recently learned of an event that was catered by Native Americans with traditional Native American fare and is investigating the possibility of doing such a dinner here as a ticketed event to coincide with the event. Event scheduling TBD by Professor Hall’s schedule.
- 3) A July 2022 fundraiser centered around the “dueling Tarboxes – Cornelius vs. Samuel Tarbox”. This is envisioned as an informal event adjacent to Jeff and Callie’s houses, with a talk, viewing of the Cornelius Tarbox house murals, with sausages and beer as refreshments -- possibly engaging Sasanoa Brewing.

Events that are not centered around an ongoing exhibit could include “mini-exhibits” using the panels to have accompanying visuals and narratives.

Calendar: Joan proposed a History Planning Calendar showing exhibits and events, e.g., My Island Home viewing dates; the next exhibit start date; volunteer training, etc.

Next Exhibit Ideas: With the proposed July Tarbox fundraiser event, a Tarbox family exhibit was suggested to dovetail with the fundraiser. Other exhibit suggestions: the island’s lobster and fishing industry; Westport Island veterans and their history of service; the history of the ferry and the ferry landing site.

Notecards: For Christmas sales, reprints are needed, and a new set is suggested to increase interest for seasonal giving. Interested members will meet on Friday, October 15, at 4 pm to consider possible artwork/photos for card sets; and put together a recommended printing order. All are welcome.

Dennis made a motion to adjourn at 6:19 pm; Jeff, 2nd; unanimously approved. The next meeting will be Wednesday, October 27, at 4:30 pm, at the History Center.