

ELIOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Minutes of the meeting – May 5, 2014

John F. Hill Grange Hall, Eliot, ME

President Rosanne Adams called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. There were 30 people in attendance.

Secretary's Report – The minutes of the meeting of April 7th were read and approved, with one correction noted. This correction has been made.

Treasurer's Report – Toni Searles presented the April financial report. The balance in the savings account as of 4/30/14 was \$20,935.89, with earned interest of \$1.72 during the month. For the same time frame, the balance in the certificate of deposit was \$10,763.13, with interest of \$3.66. The checking account, which started with \$5,975.96, ended at \$5,475.57, with credits from dues, book royalties, and book and map sales totaling \$128.44 and debits of \$628.83 for electricity, rent, and a fee to the State of Maine for the change of agent report. The report was approved as presented.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Building – Paul Johnson reported that there was a work group on Saturday at the No. 8 Schoolhouse to fix the crooked flagpole, clean, rake, etc. All the work was completed in two hours.

Publicity and Education – Carolyn Bogh reported that on Friday, May 16th, there will be 51 children, all second graders at Eliot Elementary School, visiting the No. 8 Schoolhouse. Paul Johnson and Jeanette Paul will be there. They always enjoy Sally's cookies, too. She urged all to come, since this is fun for us, too. As in the past she has told parents to contact her if they want to come, but none have responded yet. On the next day, May 17th, the schoolhouse will be open to everyone, in case parents see the note and are interested. Carolyn will submit an article afterwards, following the Richardson event at which we will be dedicating the bench on that Saturday afternoon.

Fundraising – Cindy Lentz announced that on July 12th we have planned a Historic House and Garden Tour. There will be 4 houses followed by a garden tour with refreshments. We will need help with set-up, ticket sales, greeters and monitors at the homes, and food donations. We will limit shifts to up to 2-1/2 hours so members can also visit the homes and gardens. We will be posting information about this throughout the seacoast region, and making brochures and flyers for the event. Bobbi Beavers suggested we inform the other historical societies as well. Cindy expressed that any and all support with the event is greatly appreciated.

Correspondence, Membership, Collections, and Grants – Nothing new to report.

Old Business – Rosanne reminded members that the dedication of the stone bench at the No. 8 Schoolhouse in memory of Fran Richardson was on Saturday, May 10th.

Denny Lentz recounted the latest developments in the saga of the damaged cemetery. Thanks to his persistence and their detective work, he and the town manager found the missing payment for damages and the town manager will take care of it. There was a second check for over \$9,000. Come July, it will be two years since someone drove through the cemetery and caused a lot of damage there. At that time Zip Zamarchi and Denny obtained an estimate of \$11,000 for reparations. The town received \$1,100 earlier, but now, with the additional \$9,000 the repairs should be done right and that work will be guaranteed.

NEW BUSINESS

Keith Searles mentioned that the next time we are in need of funding for a project we should consider approaching the Kennebunk Savings Bank, which is community-friendly. In a similar vein, Julie Johnson noted that the bank's annual community ballot is still open until May 15th for those who wish to designate the Eliot Historical Society as a recipient of their community funds. Last year, we received a generous donation from the Kennebunk Savings Bank as a result of the balloting.

Jeanette Paul encouraged the group to make people aware of all that the Eliot Historical Society does and invite them to our meetings. As an example, the Adopt-a-Cemetery project now has approximately 165 cemeteries that we have received approval to care for. Rosanne added that about 35 cemeteries are taken care of by individuals, some by family associations, some by high schoolers and Boy Scouts, but we still encourage help with this. Many cemeteries are very old, too, and in disrepair. Carolyn Bogh volunteered to write an article about it. Recently another one was found which had been used as a dumping ground, but we probed and found other stones and disordered that people were indeed buried there. Although only 7 stones were found, it had been a large cemetery. Rosanne described another one that belonged to the Remick family on State Road, and Paul Johnson mentioned another one on Depot Road half-way between State Road and Route 236 that belongs to the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.

Denny Lentz reported that Eric Christian has been hard at work on an interactive map project intended to be put up on the website that identifies each cemetery, lists who is buried there, and provides GPS locations and even photos and backgrounds about them. Rosanne already has GPS coordinates for many of these and this is a wonderful

community service or eagle scout or potentially grant-funded project for a vocational student specializing in computer applications. The state has just reaffirmed the statute for ancient cemeteries, i.e. those from 1860 or before, and if there is a veteran buried in a cemetery then the town is responsible for maintaining the cemetery. So we are doing the town a great service by taking this on.

Carol Zamarchi stated that Rosanne has performed a tremendous amount of work on this for quite some time and she deserved a round of applause (which she received).

A group of people, including Denny, Rosanne, Carolyn as a liaison with school groups, Paul Johnson, and which should include Eric Christian, volunteered to help with a proposal to better serve the town in this endeavor. It was noted that if we are serving the town in this way we would be protected under the town's liability insurance.

As another item of new business, there is a "Stuff-the-Truck to End 68 Hours of Hunger" at the Eliot Commons for those who wish to contribute items.

Rosanne brought up that Denny spoke with the Budget Committee about the Historical Society and told them we ARE the town and we take care of the town's work. We care, store, catalog, etc. FOR the town and that is why we ask for money in the budget. The Budget Committee was impressed with the No. 8 Schoolhouse and all the expenses we bear without using town funds, but they mustn't forget that these are THEIR school-house, cemeteries, grange, artifacts, catalog and storage, and all we ask for all that we do for the town is around \$3000.

Bobbi Beavers, in her capacity as a state representative, reported that on the previous Thursday there was a sentiment read at the State House for John Sullivan. She shared it and her floor speech with us. It was a fitting tribute to the man also known as "Mr. Eliot". Helen Sullivan thanked Bobbi for the experience and kind gesture.

Carol Zamarchi announced that refreshments for June would be provided by Fran and Sally Hartford.

The next meeting will be on June 3, 2014.

Rosanne thanked Grant and Ruth Hirst for the refreshments.

The business portion of the meeting adjourned at around 8 p.m. and Carol Zamarchi introduced the evening's program on this Cinco de Mayo. She also asked folks to consider taking over the program chairmanship as she wishes to step down at the end of the year. Please let her know if you are interested.

We viewed a short film probably produced by the navy yard during the construction of the old Memorial Bridge in 1923. The bridge was used from 1923-2012. Prior to the bridge there were piers from Badger's Island and out into the river where the ferries ran. There were no more tolls to get into Maine and NH once the bridge was up. Jeanette Paul recalled, as a young girl, that she was allowed to go up and sit in the middle of the bridge because her friend's father worked for the bridge. In addition to the film, Zip Zamarchi prepared a disk of formerly stereo-viewer photos of the bridge and photos from around the 1890's of the scenes along the river when the Spanish-American War was brewing. We saw a variety of old photos of the nearby islands and sights, and even of cows pulling the heavy loads.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Goransson - Secretary