

ELIOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY - Minutes of the meeting – June 1, 2015

John F. Hill Grange Hall, Eliot, ME

President Rosanne presided over the meeting. There were approximately 30 people present.

Secretary's Report –The minutes of the May meeting were approved as read.

Treasurer's Report – The report for the period May 1-31, 2015 was read and approved. To summarize, there was \$23,770.43 in savings, \$10,809.81 in the certificate of deposit, and \$8,843.99 in checking. See attached.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no reports from Correspondence, Membership, Collections and Grants.

Public Relations and Education Committee – All went well at the annual No. 8 Schoolhouse event for second graders. There were about 50 children there, and as usual Jeanette Paul charmed them. Lena Bernard answered questions, too. There was some new material presented in addition to using the video.

Programs Committee – No meeting in July. August's meeting is the annual cookout at Dead Duck Inn. In September we believe that Zip Zamarchi will be talking to us about bicycles.

Fundraising Committee – Full speed ahead for the yard sale on June 6th and instructions were repeated about when to drop off items. Bakers were urged to bring their best goodies in individual baggies. \$574 was made from the Antique Appraisals day, which is down from the prior year. Also, the Grange did not have us serve them dinner this year, which results in a loss of about \$150 for us as this has helped defray the rental costs of the building. So we hope for a successful yard sale. Cindy Lentz was optimistic that it would be.

Building Committee – The flagpole at the schoolhouse broke, but we are grateful to Robert Fisher who donated the funds to replace it.

NEW BUSINESS

Paul Johnson reported that the stone marker at the historical Town Pound needed to be righted so an industrious group consisting of Keith Leavitt, Eric Christian, Zip Zamarchi, Denny Lentz and Paul Goransson redid the concrete form and righted the stone and mortared it so it is solid and straight again.

We were urged to attend the town meeting to support the Historical Society budget on June 13th and to vote on June 9th.

We were also reminded to attend the Pow Wow at the Raitt Farm that coming weekend. This event, free of charge, was to celebrate the life of Ed Bullock who was much loved by natives of the area. About 1500 people were expected to attend this family friendly event.

The Antique Tractor show was also mentioned as a great event to support in late July.

Walter Hanson will be traveling to Westover, Vermont for a program on the history of the United State Marine Corps and he will be presenting his Vietnam hospital clinic reenactment there and at the Fogg Library in October. This activity is dedicated to his father who was a corpsman and all the medical personnel who supported the troops.

Zip Zamarchi spoke of a weekend work party and suggestions which included 1) identifying more places for historic markers, 2) upgrading where the markers are, especially cemeteries, and putting information about these on-line, 3) inputting historical information we have into a website and possibly using a history major to do this and pay him/her with some of our funds, 4) making sure when we put markers around town that we are able to find them again if we go on-line, 5) putting up a sign at Dead Duck Inn explaining the name, and 6) at Green Acre, putting up a sign about the Nightingale.

Keith Searles brought up that the gravesite of Moses Farmer is in deplorable condition. It is on private property but is in desperate need of maintenance and it is a shame that the grave of such an important person in the town's history has been neglected this way. Others at the meeting suggested asking the town to do it, since they are responsible for all town graves, and it has been suggested that the town's highway department do this in consultation with the Eliot Historical Society. We need to communicate with them about this and remind them of their responsibility. This discussion will be continued.

We thanked Toni and Keith Searles and Jeanette Paul for the evening's refreshments.

The business portion of the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. and the program began.

Program

Rolfe Voltaire had been a high school teacher at Pinkerton Academy for 30 years. Laura Burnham has been the librarian there for a very long time, too. Rolfe had gone through an old barn near a hardware store and wooden building that had had a fire and he found charred boxes containing letters and documents from the 1800s. As fate would have it, Laura Burnham, who had ancestors who were Bartletts, was deeply researching her family roots at the time and learned of these documents. Laura suggested to Rolfe that they be brought to Eliot since they pertained to Eliot Bartletts. Laura has spent more than 10 years cataloguing, transcribing and scanning the historical documents that were found. Rolfe brought her the letters and Laura did the work. Her great grandmother was Laura Bartlett who married a Holmes. Laura learned of Bartlett twins by the names of Lot and Joseph Bartlett, with whom she was related. Rolfe found the will of her ancestors, and she learned more about them. They include Eliot's own John Heard Bartlett who was a teacher, lawyer and captain of the militia. Hall Jackson, a prominent doctor in Portsmouth during the Revolutionary War brought digitalis to America. Nathan Bartlett of Eliot knew him. Evidence of these and other relationships were in the papers that were found, which included Nathan Bartlett's attempt to collect on unpaid bills, an anti-slave letter written by a forward-thinking Bartlett ancestor, and correspondence of James W. Bartlett who married Carolyn Goodwin with her Goodwin papers. Laura has found estate paperwork for Nathan Bartlett. She learned that Sarah Shapleigh Bartlett married George Frost and settled in Lebanon, ME, but he was lost at sea in 1814. So she opened an inn in Alfred, ME and also ran the Frost Tavern in Berwick, which hosted such illustrious people as James Madison and Lafayette. Laura's lineage continues with that of Jeremiah Bartlett and not the Heard family and Nathan Bartlett's family. Most recently, Laura's granddaughter researched early American women and widowhood, using all their primary sources, concluding that although they went through a lot, early American widows managed to survive and pay off their debts. Laura and Rolfe provided those in attendance with a booklet that contained copies of some of the documents they uncovered about the Bartletts. This long path has led to Rolfe donating his Bartlett find to the Eliot Historical Society, as that family probably wished when they brought these two together, which we have already noticed is how the Bartlett ghosts seem to operate.

Respectfully submitted, Helen Goransson, Secretary