

November 6th Meeting: 7PM, John F. Hill Grange Hall. Our program speakers will be the Hanson family – Walter, Barbara, and Ed who are history reenactors. Walter has spent years collecting the necessary instruments and accessories to create a Vietnam era N.A.S.H. (Navy Active Support Hospital). The son of a Medical Corpsman who served in Vietnam, Walter did this in honor of his father and to show what a field hospital looked like. In this picture he portrays a surgeon and Barbara the role of a Red Cross volunteer. [photo by Shir Haberman]



PAST MEETING NOTES and NEWS

Author **Patricia Wall** joined us at our **September** meeting to speak with us about her ground-breaking new book *Lives of Consequence*. She gave us a very new perspective on slavery in this area and shared with us her research into the enslaved peoples and their owners. If you missed this meeting, another opportunity will be provided on October 10th at the South Berwick Library.



At our **October** meeting **Paul Goransson** shared with us, through his lively narration, pictures, and videos the work that goes on at their farm on Depot Road – *Bondgarden*. He explained that he had always wanted to have a farm in Maine and so when they came to the point in their lives that they decided it was time to settle down they began looking around. In July of 1985 they found the Sylvester Bartlett Farm. The house was constructed between 1863 and 1867. The property which had not been farmed since WWI was in bad shape and so they began the overwhelming work of reclaiming the



Photo – Goransson website

grounds and fields and restoring the buildings. He showed us some of the old views of the property and how the landscape around his farm has changed over the years as well as farming techniques during the Bartlett years. Though videos and pictures he explained how the fields are hayed – the baling equipment used and how the bails are transported and grass storage - and by using before and after pictures the improvements that have been made to the barn. It took until 1990 before he was able to get his first livestock – a goat, which didn't work out, followed by his first cow. Today, in addition to the acres in hay production they also lease quite a few acres. They offer both USDA and non-USDA beef as well as turkeys, eggs, broilers, and, of course, hay.

Rosanne represented the **Historical Society** at a discussion held following Green Acre Bahai School's annual turkey dinner on October 1st. She gave a short history of Eliot. The open discussion was sponsored by *ELIOT Connects* to talk about our community and explore our strengths and what can be built upon that we are already doing and how we can make our community better. It was uplifting to hear the comments about our community and ideas about those things that help create a sense of community. Please consider joining the group again on October 21st (see below)

Our **Fundraising Committee** reports that despite the poor turn out for Eliot Festival Day we did very well and had very little left over. A huge thanks to all our bakers and those who helped man the booth!

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 5th- The Bridges of Mrs. Pray: Connecting New England and Russia, 1894-1930



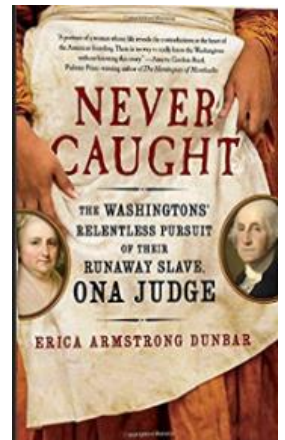
7:30 pm - Counting House Museum, South Berwick

Lecture by Birgitta Ingemanson, Professor Emerita of Russian Studies. Her book, *The Sunny Neighborhood: A Vladivostok Tale*, tells the story of Eleanor Lord Pray, a newlywed from Berwick transplanted to the east coast of Russia in 1894, and three decades of cultural adaptation and political upheaval in a foreign port.

October 10th - Book Discussion - Lives of Consequence: Blacks in Early Kittery and Berwick

with author Patricia Q. Wall. 7:00 pm - South Berwick Public Library

October 10th – The Story of Ona Judge – 6:30pm at Discover Portsmouth, 10 Middle Street, Portsmouth. Jerri Anne Boggis will present the story of Ona Judge, a George Washington family slave who escaped and fled to Portsmouth, NH. Presented by Portsmouth DAR Ranger Chapter. For more information, please call (207) 439-8580.



October 11th – Green Acre, The

Baha'i Faith & Eliot – William Fogg Library, 6pm. An open discussion to answer these questions and others you may have: What is the history of Green Acre? What happens there today? What is the vision for the future? What is the Baha'i Faith? What do Baha'is believe? What do they practice? How is it related to other religions?

**October 14th – History Hike at York Pond Area, South**

Berwick. 10am-1pm. Sponsored by the Great Works Regional Land Trust and the Old Berwick Historical Society. Eliot Historical Society member Rosanne Adams will relate the story of Black Will, his rise from slave to landed farmer in 1700. Space is limited and at this writing there is a waiting list. Please call GWRLT at 207-646-3604 for more information.

October 21st – Community Building: Asset Mapping

Workshop, 10am at the William Fogg Library. This workshop, sponsored by *ELIOT Connects* is open to all who would like to be more involved with the community. The group will be brainstorming as to how we can utilize the many resources we already have in Eliot to make our community a better place.

October 26th - Alliance on the Northern Front: Native Nations in Northern “New England,” 1675-1678

7:30 pm (Berwick Academy)

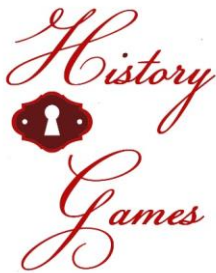
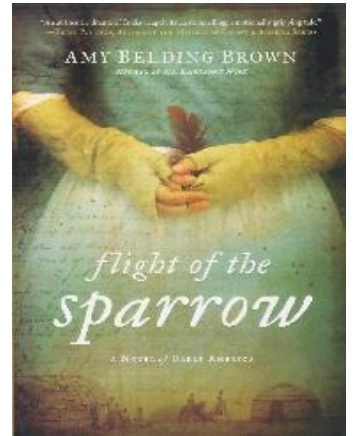


Abenaki scholar Dr. Lisa Brooks speaks about the northern front of King Philip's War in Wabanaki country. New maps of “Native space” and little known historical documents reveal a very different view of both the war and the territory known as northern New England. Brooks demonstrates that the war did not end with the death of the Wampanoag leader

King Philip in 1676, but rather with a process of Native alliance making and treaties between colonial authorities and Wabanaki sachems. *Photo credit: Ken Hamilton*

November 1, 2017 - Book Discussion: *Flight of the Sparrow*

7:00 pm - South Berwick Public Library. Based on the compelling true narrative of Mary Rowlandson, of the Massachusetts Bay, captured by Native Americans, and her struggles upon her return, as she begins to question the Puritan edicts that have guided her. Copies available at the library throughout October.

**November 4th – The History**

Games. A unique fundraising event for OBHS at the Counting House. This adult only event features an interactive scavenger hunt, based loosely on the Hike Through History and a visit to an old Speakeasy. Come with a team, come and join a team, or play solo to enjoy this magical evening! For the games portion of the event, teams will be competing for points and prizes as they collect clues,

participate in team challenges and try to solve the puzzle! Traipse through "old South Berwick" and visit the characters of the past who once roamed our streets. Come experience the drama of Teen Haven, gossip with Sarah Orne Jewett's servants and learn about a scandalous murder that riveted the town. Chat with old sea captains and other interesting folks of the past as you move through town to collect clues and learn about our unique history. End the evening at the Speakeasy in the Wadleigh Ballroom with drinks, food, and a small auction. Winners of the History Game winners will be announced and there might even be a Charleston contest! Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased online and from members. For more information write: info@oldberwick.org.

Speaking of Cemeteries

From: various news clippings and Sanford/Springvale Historical Society reports.

In May of this year construction workers in Sanford, Maine digging a water line to Main Street from the property where the Emerson School had once stood found a grave. The Emerson School which closed in 2013 was demolished the month before and the property sold to Cumberland Farms in 2016.





Woodlawn Cemetery, Sanford, 1899. Lower right

Following the discovery, work was stopped, the State Chief Medical Examiner, and Sanford- Springvale Historical Society were contacted and the Sanford Historical Committee was sent in to investigate along with the Sanford Police Department.

Bones, including a skull were found and they dated the grave between 1880 and 1906. The remains were in a collapsed coffin in the Northeast corner of the former cemetery. The coffin had a single-pane glass window, which was sometimes seen in Victorian Era coffins. The remains were transported to the funeral home in Springvale for evaluation and artifacts were entrusted, by the city, to the Sanford Historical Committee.

The town and the high school used this event as a unique learning experience for the students, involving as many as they could in the investigation of the artifacts retrieved from the grave. They worked under the direction of a city official and a high school instructor. Several classes and school departments were involved in aspects of the investigation giving students a hands-on learning experience and connecting them with history in a way book reading never could.

Years ago, it was the site of Woodlawn Cemetery, Sanford's first municipal cemetery. The town began moving graves out of the cemetery around 1900 to make space for The Emerson School, which was built in 1901 and opened to students in 1902. City records show 77 bodies were exhumed and re-interred at Oakdale Cemetery by 1933 when Emerson School purchased this lot to build a playground.



Two honors students, both headed to nursing school in the fall, cleaned and sorted the bones. Using soft-bristled toothbrushes, chopsticks and water, they spent several hours



cleaning dirt and roots from the bones. They used their anatomy textbook to help identify each bone before laying them out on an examination table to form the skeleton. The pelvis was missing, making it impossible to determine the gender of the child but were encouraged to see the teeth that could possibly provide DNA to confirm the child's identity.



A member of the community had come forward feeling that the remains might be that of her relative and Sanford High School's Advanced Placement Biology class began the work of looking at genealogical information to try and identify a potential DNA connection. Mitochondrial DNA is necessary to form the connection meaning the remains and the living donor need to share a common female

family member. The link had to go back two generations through England in the early 1800s, then back down four generations to a resident living in Southern Maine. The students made a DNA tree to show which living family members would have the same mitochondrial DNA, which is inherited through the mother. A potential relative was contacted and agreed to provide a DNA sample for a test. A forensic lab, specializing in extracting DNA from teeth was found and they agreed to take on the project. First, they needed to extract Mitochondrial DNA from the teeth. Sanford Family Dental volunteered to help, assisted by Emma Graves, who had just graduated from Sanford High and was heading off to college to major in dentistry. They carefully opened the evidence bags and wearing dental binocular loupes, closely examined the teeth. They discovered that the "patient" had reached full adult dentition, which meant they no longer had "baby teeth." It also meant it was very unlikely the patient was younger than 13 years old but more likely in the 14-18 range. Previous dental work was also found and it appeared that at least two teeth had been extracted and they had at least two fillings. The fillings were found to be

amalgam which had been the most popular type of filling for more than 150 so it was not surprising that it was used in Sanford more than 100 years ago.

Another investigation involved determining what wood was used to make the coffin. For this, Building Trades Instructor Troy Hathaway of the Sanford Regional Technical Center prepared a test sample which was sent away for evaluation. It was determined that the coffin was made of American chestnut. They were considered nearly perfect trees and among the largest, tallest, and fastest-growing trees in the country and prized for being highly rot-resistant and straight-grained.



There were also several metallic items recovered and several Sanford High School students were sent out to try and determine the types of metal used.



Looking at the coffin's handle braces they visited a local jeweler who determined that the hardware was plated. The students were shown how to use an acid test kit to confirm or eliminate certain precious metals – silver, sterling silver,



platinum and three different purities of gold. These tests came back negative and it was determined that the base material was “pot metal” also known as “white metal,” commonly used by manufacturers in the 1800s to make inexpensive castings and that the plating was likely nickel since chrome plating did not become popular until the 1920s. Also tested were a pair of rare Victorian-era coffin keys.

This exciting story is still ongoing as the results of the DNA have yet to be disclosed but when all is settled the remains will be re-interred in the Oakdale Cemetery with respect for the family's wishes. Stay tuned!

NOVEMBER 7th - State of Maine Referendum & Special Municipal Election/Referendum