

January 7: Our meeting will be held at the John F. Hill Grange Hall, State Road beginning at 7 PM. For our program Len Bogh will speak about his experiences teaching in a one-room schoolhouse on Chebeague Island, off the coast of Maine. Refreshments will be served by Julie Johnson.

Officers Elected for the Coming Year:

President: Paul Johnson
 Vice-President: Dennis Lentz
 Secretary – open
 Treasurer – Pam Ashley

Board of Director elected to replace outgoing member Polly McDonough is Robert (Bob) Fisher

Presently the position of Secretary remains open. If you would be interested in taking the minutes of our monthly meetings please contact Paul Johnson @ 439-2542.

Marshwood Christmas Bazaar

A HUGE thank you to all our wonderful bakers and supporters who made our fundraiser a success!



The movement to separate from Massachusetts began at least as early as 1785 and gained momentum as a result of the War of 1812. When the US Congress linked the admission of Maine with Missouri (where slavery might be legal), a major political controversy flared across the nation. Early separation conventions were held in Falmouth/Portland in the 1780s and 1790s. Six popular votes occurred for statehood from 1792-1819. Lack of military support from Massachusetts for the District in the War of 1812, especially during the British occupation of downeast Maine in summer/fall 1814, revitalized the separation cause. The final campaigns for independence from 1816-19 were championed by Republican party leaders and their newspaper the *Eastern Argus*. Votes in May and September 1816 failed to get the extra-majority required by the Massachusetts legislature. A key change in 1818 to the federal coasting law (having to do with paying customs duties on inter-state maritime commerce) spurred the final successful effort. The popular vote for statehood in July 1819 had majority support in all nine Maine counties.



Performing artist and educator **Susan Reid** provided a lovely musical evening of songs from the World War I and II era at our November meeting. From “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy” to “I’ll Be Loving You Always” the sing-a-longs and trivia made for a lively evening of music and laughter. Especially moving were two pieces

she has written based on her work with Alzheimer patients. You can visit her website at <http://www.eldermusicactivities.com/>

A Barn Raising

(Photographs courtesy of Bondgarden Farms)

If you have happened to travel down Depot Road this year you've had the privilege to watch the progress of a "barn raising" - not in the sense of a new barn going up but of an old barn being preserved on the former Nathan Bartlett Farm.* From the moment Helen and Paul Goransson made Eliot their home they have shown a commitment to preserving the town's farming history and sense of place. They have already placed over 90 acres of their lands in conservation easements with Bondgarden West (2006) protecting 27 acres of forest and fields on Route 236 including a tributary to Sturgeon Creek and Bondgarden South's (2001) 70 acres of agricultural and wetlands surrounding Marshwood Middle School (Rt.236/Depot Road)

This latest endeavor preserves, for at least another hundred years, an iconic symbol of Eliot's farming history. But this is not the first barn they have restored. In 2010 they had extensive work done, inside and out, on the barn at the Sylvester Bartlett farm, next door, where they live.



Sylvester Bartlett Farm



In 2017 Paul and Helen bought, from Katherine Thompson's estate, 36 acres which included the 1740 Nathan Bartlett house and its 40x80 foot timber frame Civil War era barn.



They realized the barn was in very bad shape. It disturbed them that many barns had already been lost in Eliot and the area due to family circumstances, as well as neglect and indifference. Even though it cost just as much to restore as to replace with a brand-new barn,

tearing it down was just not an option for them. They were determined to save the barn of their newly acquired historic property.

Arron Sturgis, of Preservation Timber Framing in Berwick, was called in to assess the needs and plan the work to be done. Arron, interestingly enough, was also the preservationist who donated his company's services in evaluating our # 8 Schoolhouse and laid out the plans for its restoration. Sturgis estimated the Goransson's barn was constructed between the 1870s and 1880s, based on the style of the silo built in its center.



During this past summer the barn was lifted approximately 10 feet in the air. (For those of us vertically challenged it looked like 40!)



The rotting away of the undercarriage of the barn, caused by years of wet animal manure being dropped below, where there was already a problem with lack of drainage, made it necessary to remove the basement and place the barn at grade level.



The underpinnings were replaced and the building is now back on the ground on a new foundation. The side boards are being put on as they work to button it up before the gales of winter come

We will continue to check on the restoration progress. We thank Helen and Paul for saving a piece of our history and a fading symbol of our once vibrant farming community.



*Some of the history of the Bartlett family, focusing on Sylvester Bartlett and his son Ralph and this area called "Rosemary Hill" is chronicled in Helen's recently written novel called "Views from Rosemary Hill". The book is available and proceeds of which Helen has donated to our Historical Society.

Area News and Events

Emergency Management and Preparedness: Are You Ready?

December 12, 2018 – The **Eliot Aging in Place Committee** and **Baran Place** are sponsoring the second in a series of community education opportunities for all Eliot residents. “Emergency Management and Preparedness” will be held at 4 PM on December 12, 2018 at Baran Place, located at 150 Beech Road, Eliot. Parking is available on-site and attendees should enter the door at the flag pole.

Join our speaker, Arthur Cleave, Director of York County Emergency Management Agency, to learn more about how you can be ready. Emergency management personnel recognize that one of the greatest challenges is getting citizens to be prepared for an emergency. Mainers are known for their resilience and ability to “tough out” a storm, but there are specific actions all of us should be taking to be fully prepared for any incident. You will learn the hazards in our area, how to sign up to receive alerts and warnings about local emergencies, what to include in an emergency kit, and how to create a family communications plan. Did you know that you should text family members during an emergency rather than call? Join us to find out why and to learn more steps on how to be prepared!

RSVP is requested but not mandatory. Contact Melissa Albert at the Eliot Town office: 207-439-1813 x 108 or malbert@eliotme.org

November 30- December 22, 2018: 28th Annual Gingerbread House Exhibit at Discover Portsmouth, 10 Middle Street. Daily 9:30am-5pm (until 8pm on Nov 30th & Dec 1st and 7th. EXHIBIT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

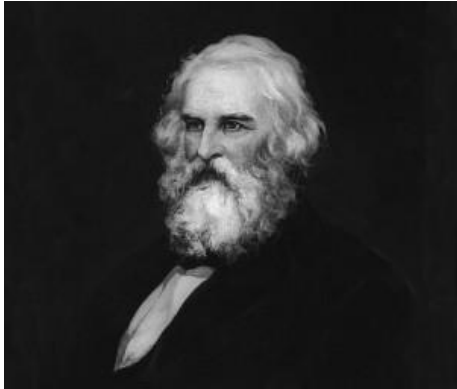
December 22: Green Acre Baha’i School will hold a **Table Talk – Community Conversations, Great Fellowship and Free Meal**. Noon to 2 PM. Space is limited so register early at greenacre@usbnc.org or call 207-439-7200.

Although Old Berwick Historical Society’s groundbreaking exhibit, *Forgotten Frontier*, will be closing their Society is publishing a new book - *Forgotten Frontier: Untold Stories of the Piscataqua*, an exhibition catalog documenting a turbulent century on northern New England's contested frontier.

A Christmas Carol

(Source: newenglandhistoricalsociety.com)

On Christmas day in 1863, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was inspired to write the poem we now know as the Christmas carol, *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day*



Longfellow had fallen into a depression in 1861 when his second wife Frances died. She had been sealing envelopes with hot wax when a flame caught her clothes on fire. Henry had rushed to her aid and tried to smother the flames. But by the time the fire was out, Frances had been burned beyond recovery.

She died the next day. Henry, burned badly as well, was too sick to attend her funeral.

The death marked a turning point in Longfellow's life. His physical appearance changed dramatically as he began growing his beard because the burns disfigured his face. Mentally, he sank into depression. In the wake of her death, he spent much of his time translating other works and less on his own creation.

On Christmas day in 1862 he would record in his journal: "A merry Christmas' say the children, but that is no more for me." And even 18 years later he would still be mourning Frances' loss, when he wrote *The Cross of Snow*. In 1863, Longfellow suffered another blow. The poet was a staunch abolitionist, but he, like the entire country, was troubled by the Civil War. His son Charley in March of 1863 had decided that, regardless of his father's wishes, he would join the fight. He ran off to Washington to enlist in the 1st Massachusetts Artillery. In June, Charley came down with fever. Longfellow went to Washington and brought him back to spend summer on leave at the family cottage in Nahant, Mass. In November, Charley's own luck ran out. At New Hope, Va., his unit was engaged in a battle and he was shot. The bullet went through him from back to shoulder, just nicking his spine. Again Longfellow had to travel to Washington to retrieve his son from the hospital. They arrived back at their Cambridge home on December 8, and a grim Longfellow set about the months-long process of trying to nurse his son back to health. The circumstances challenged his resolve, but he was inspired when he heard the bells and found in them a message that peace would come again to the troubled nation. They inspired him to write the poem, **Christmas Bells:**

*I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men !*

*And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men !*

*Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men !*

*Then from each black, accursed mouth,
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men !*

*It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men !*

*And in despair I bowed my head ;
"There is no peace on earth," I said ;
"For hate is strong
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men !"*



*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead ; nor doth he sleep !
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men !"*



Did you know that when Maine became a state in 1820 it had 9 counties? *Prior to statehood, Maine was officially part of the state of Massachusetts and was called the District of Maine.*

Nine of the sixteen counties had their borders defined while Maine was still part of Massachusetts, and hence are older than the state itself. Even after 1820, the exact location of the northern border of Maine was disputed with England, until the question was settled and the northern counties took their final, official form by treaty in 1845.

Happy Holidays!
See you next year!