

March 5th Meeting: Our speaker will be Society member **Eric Christian** who will share with us his research of what are called **"The Baylands"**. This area of ledge and submerged island extending from Frank's Fort (by Green Acre) to Watt's Fort and extending back to Marsh Hill were laid out in 1682. Here cattle once grazed on the prized marsh grasses on what were the most fertile of pasture lands. The meeting begins at 7pm. Refreshments will be served by Bob and Sophia Dennis.



*On February 3rd a fine representation of our Society gathered to witness president Paul Johnson accept the check from the month-long fundraiser at the FABULOUS FIND in Kittery. The Society received **\$4288.69!** A HUGE thank you to Helen Goransson, our grant chair, for making this happen and to all our members for supporting this effort! **Job Well Done!!!***





FEBRUARY 8TH The Historical Society celebrates its 121st birthday. Founded in 1897 by Dr. John L. M. Willis, who was also our first president, and who produced and edited, on behalf of the Society, the nine volumes of “Old Eliot.” The stated purpose of our Society was “for the collection and preservation of historical facts connected with the town of Eliot and its surroundings”. Then, as now, meetings were held on the first Monday of the month.

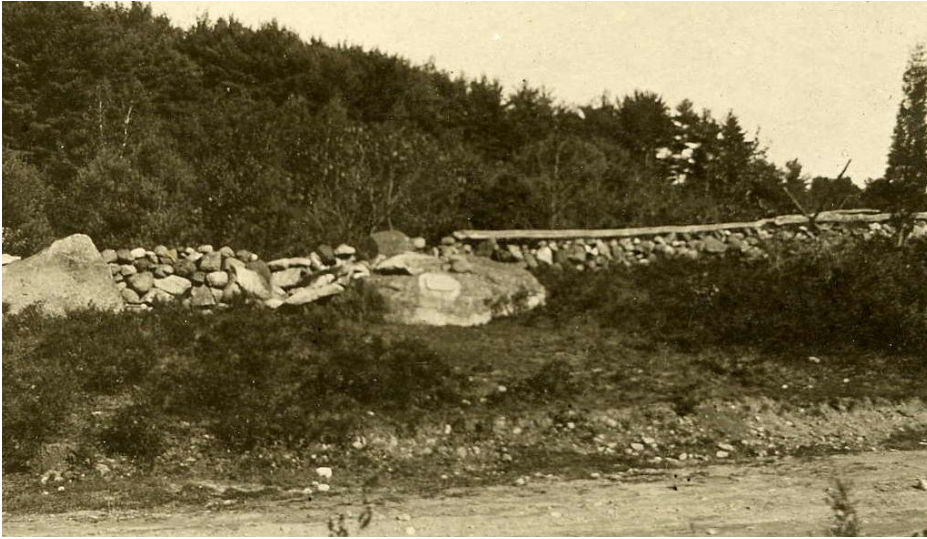
The Society’s first public event was a “Field Day” for the “Commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of the Death of Maj. Charles Frost, July 4, 1697.” Over 1000 people, including Frost family members from around the country, gathered at 11am on the western side of what was called Frost’s Hill (now Great Hill). Following a concert by the North Berwick band and a basket lunch, the formal program was opened with a prayer, the singing of the National Anthem and introductory remarks by president Willis. Following several talks, a procession was formed and proceeded to *Ambush Rock* where the school children opened the program, followed by an address by Francis Keefe, vice president of the Society and the unveiling of a marble marker



commemorating the events at “Ambush Rock”. Years later the marble marker was replaced with the bronze one seen there today. Great Hill is remembered as being the place where Maj. Frost’s body, having been disinterred by the native peoples, was taken and displayed. Following this the body was taken down and re-buried with a large tablet of granite placed over



the grave to prevent it from being disturbed again. Great Hill is located behind the Frost homesite and near his resting place.



Early marble plaque. Note how the road today is much closer to the site and has been raised. It is said that the stone walls were used in the building of the road as

Charles Ffrost of Canada visits the grave of his ancestor and namesake in 2014.



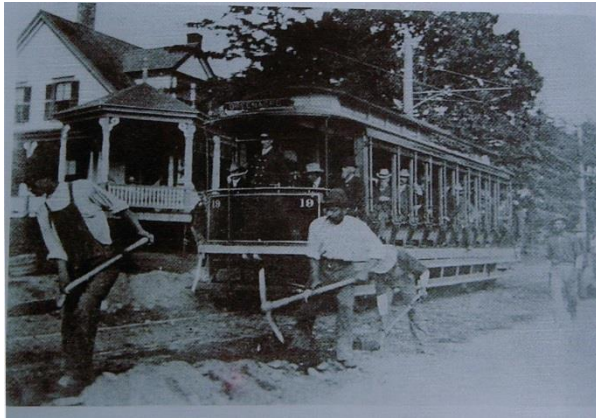
Meeting News:

Guests at our **February meeting** included Don Ketzler who grew up in Eliot on Brixham Road in the old Frost house that was torn down a few years ago. He shared that he hadn't been back in the Grange Hall since 1948 when he was in the graduating class' class play and was struggling to remember his lines!

For our program **Dom Metreaud** shared with us the story of the old electric trolley waiting station that was moved last year from "Rosemary" back to its original location at Green Acre. **Dom** works at Green Acre and was instrumental in the moving and restoration of the building.

The waiting station was built and placed at the entrance to Green Acre in 1903, one year after a new line of the Portsmouth, Kittery and York Street Railway (PK&Y) was built, providing a link from the Kittery station on Badger's Island, across Spinney Creek at Eliot Neck and into the neighboring town of Eliot. The new bridge that was

built over the creek, between Kittery and Eliot, was 360 feet long and was built by contractor and Eliot native Alfred Spinney, who also built the Boston and Maine railroad lines that ran through the town. Harry Getchell of Kittery was in charge of the



overhead electrical work. A newspaper of the time reported that the work on this line was in great part done by Italian workers who dug and moved the heavy loads of earth and rocks with their teams.

The newspaper reported that about three hundred Italian workers were employed and that Martin Parry Tobey, one of the original group who, along with Sarah Farmer, built the Green Acre Inn, had built a building on his nearby property to house these workers. The building of this new line necessitated the running of its electricity down to Green Acre; however the Green Acre Inn would not be wired for electricity until 1915.

The Green Acre electric trolley waiting room is one of the few waiting rooms still in existence, many having succumbed to vandalism, fires (as they were heated by wood stoves) and decay over time. When the use of the trolley lines declined one of the first lines to be closed in, 1921, was the one going by Green Acre. This waiting station was then moved to Rosemary Junction, at the base of Rosemary Hill in Eliot, when the building at Rosemary burned in December of 1922. It was reported that Mr. Wylie, who tended the building and had a small store and lunchroom here, had left the building for a short time, and leaving the stove open, caused the building to burn down. By the next year, all the electric railway lines were abandoned, despite a valiant effort by the citizens of Eliot and Kittery, who raised monies to try and keep the lines running.



The waiting room was then moved to the property of *Rosemary Cottage* at the top of Rosemary Hill. *Rosemary Cottage* was founded by Hannah Farmer, the mother of Sarah Farmer. Hannah had turned over the keys, after it was built in 1888, to the City Missionary Society of Boston. It became their first Fresh Air Fund facility.

The waiting room, which stood on Rosemary Corner, at the junction of Depot and Goodwin Roads was an Eliot landmark and, no doubt, people thought it was always a part of the Rosemary Cottage property. For many years there had been talk at Green

Acre about seeing if it could be returned to the property. In September of 2015, I approached the owner, on behalf of Green Acre, to see if he might be willing to part with the building and arranged a meeting between Green Acre and the owner. The parties met and through the generosity of its owner Bruce Jones plans were made.

Bruce has a long and special connection and attachment to the property and a deep respect for its history, not only because this is where he grew up but also because his mother, Ginny Jones, actually worked at “Rosemary Cottage” in her youth when it was still part of the Fresh Air Fund. His parents, Donald and Virginia (Ginny) Jones, bought “Rosemary Cottage” many years ago, when it closed as a Fresh Air Fund facility, and turned it into an apartment house. Bruce’s sister Louise, who joined us for the program accompanied by her sister-in-law Pam and Pam’s daughter, shared with us that the kids in the neighborhood used the building as a play house. They called it the *Ghost House*.

The old waiting room made its way back to Green Acre in the fall of 2016. Green Acre’s maintenance crew, headed by David Walters and Dominique Metreaud, carefully removed the building from the “Rosemary Cottage,” property and brought it to Green Acre. In an unusual move the top of the building was removed so chains could be placed around it and then was lifted by an excavator and put onto a trailer.



Arriving at Green Acre it went through several months of painstaking restoration work before being taken and laid to rest approximately 70 feet from where it originally had been placed in 1903 at the head of the lane to the Green Acre Inn.

They found the building in remarkable condition and structurally sound with everything intact except for the

ornament that set at the roof’s peak. Layers of paint were examined to determine the original colors used on the building; the roof shingles





were replaced; the ornamental columns were stripped and repaired and then a paint underlayment added to increase longevity before applying the exterior paint; the floor sills and joists were replaced with pressure treated wood.

The goal was to preserve the building far into the future with the use of the newest and best building materials they could find while making sure everything done to the building was historically accurate. The shakes on the roof were custom made by Cory Rhodes at his shingle mill in Liberty, Maine, to match what had been there

originally. The beams and ornamental molding are all original to the building.

One of the most surprising and interesting discoveries was a board with the name of the builder Curtis Carter of Augusta, Maine and the date he completed the building - April 16, 1903. It is assumed it was built in Augusta and brought down to Eliot, most probably by rail. At the time Curtis was a carpenter, living on Bridge Street in Augusta. By 1910 he and his wife Bertha (nee Berry) had moved to Fall River, Massachusetts where she had been born. Research shows that he was born in 1876 in Brooklin, Maine and died in 1970. There has been no information found as to whether



he built other waiting stations for the trolley lines or the railroad or to why he was commissioned to build this one. A newspaper article in 1903 announces the placing of the waiting station at Green Acre but gives no other information. Today the small building sits at the entrance to the Green Acre on Main Street. Its restoration, nearing completion it stands as an iconic symbol of Green Acre's early days and beginnings when electric trolley car lines provided transportation along Maine's seacoast. It reminds us of a time when hundreds of people traveled up from Boston, then over by ferry from Portsmouth to board the electric cars for the trip



to Green Acre to attend its *Green Acre Conferences*, when people traveled the roads in carriages pulled by horses; when the age of the automobile was just dawning in this small town located on the tip of the state and when the only automobile in town belonged to the town doctor John L. M. Willis.

Dom welcomed people to visit the trolley station, stop and sit awhile and mentioned that tours of the campus are held at several times during the year to which we were invited to come and see the beautifully restored old buildings and enjoy the feel of this historical place.

President Paul Johnson has announced that following our vote at the January meeting to ask the Select Board if they would turn over to us the archaeological artifacts found in Punkintown during the *York River Study Committee*, those artifacts have now been placed in the care of our Society. Ruth Drake, Polly McDonough, and Carolyn Bogh were selected to serve on a committee, with the assistance of Julie Johnson, to see just how they can be displayed and presented to the public. If you have any ideas please contact any of these individuals.



SAVE THE DATE:

ITALIAN DINNER FUNDRAISER

MARCH 24th at the Congregational Church

Area News and Events

Old Berwick Historical Society:

The Counting House Museum in South Berwick has announced their NEW Winter hours on 4th Saturday of the month: Jan. 27, Feb. 24, Mar. 24 and Apr. 28 from 1:00-4:00 pm. If you haven't yet seen their "Forgotten Frontiers" exhibit stop by!

February 10, 2018 - History Hike - *Garrisons in the Colonial Landscape* 10:00 - 11:30am Walk the **Raymond & Simone Savage Wildlife Preserve** on the South Berwick/Eliot line with anthropologist **Meghan Howey**, who will explore what it was like

to be situated in a conflicted frontier setting, and the ways early colonial settlers managed their lives in this landscape including through the building and use of garrisons to defend against Native attacks. Unique features of this 26-acre property include Shorey's Brook, restored by dam removal in 2011, and trails through woods, fields, tidal marsh and freshwater stream.

Presented through a partnership with the Great Works Regional Land Trust. Limited to 25 people and reservations are required. Call GWRLT at 207-646-3604 or email info@gwrlt.org for more information, hike status, and weather updates.

February 22, 2018 - Taverns, Ales and Alcohol on the Piscataqua's Forgotten Frontier 7:30 pm (Berwick Academy Arts Center) Reliable drinking sources, liquid sustenance, and promoters of sociability, beer and ale played an important role in early New England. Archaeologists know this through the many artifacts excavated at the Chadbourne Site and elsewhere in the Piscataqua region. Dr. Emerson Baker, Project Scholar for the Forgotten Frontier project, will discuss these finds and their significance. He will also describe his efforts with Portsmouth's *Earth Eagle Brewings* to recreate colonial ales from historical recipes.

Pontine Theatre

at the Strawberry Banke Museum at 14 Hancock St., Portsmouth. Performances: Friday @7, Saturday @4, & Sunday @2. Tickets: \$24. 603-436-6660.

February 9-11 - The Devil and Daniel Webster. Stephen Vincent Benet's celebrated story performed by guest artist David PB Stephens. A hard-luck New Hampshire farmer sells his soul to the Devil and then in contrition enlists the help of Daniel Webster to win it back at trial. The Devil summons a judge and jury of the worst criminals and traitors from history, and Webster must convince them to set free their fellow man.

February 16-18: Burnt Into Memory: How Brownfield Faced the Fire, performed by guest artist, Jo Radner. In October of 1947, after a season of terrible drought, wild fires burned all over the state of Maine. The town of Brownfield was one of the worst areas: eighty percent of it, including all churches, schools, post offices, and other public buildings, was completely destroyed in the space of a few hours. Drawing on newspaper accounts, letters, and oral history interviews with survivors of the fire, Jo Radner's performance presents an extraordinary story of terror, courage, neighborly responsibility and recovery.

York River Study Committee

February 13th 10:15am-12:15pm - next watershed resource meeting at the York Public Library. Maine DEP staff will present data and findings from their 2017 water quality sampling for the York River conducted from June to September at six river sites. Wells Reserve staff will present findings from the 2017 fish surveys and fish

habitat assessments for the York River. Please call or email Jennifer Hunter in advance if you plan to attend this meeting. 207-641-9122 JH.YorkRiver@gmail.com

February 15th - Presentation on historic resources surveys -

Groundroot Preservation Group and *Northeast Archaeology Research Center*, contractors hired by the YRSC to conduct historic resource surveys in the upper York River will present their findings at the *Great Works Regional Land Trust's* Annual Meeting **at 7:30pm**. The meeting is free and open to the public but registration is requested, even if attending just the presentations. For more information and to register for GWRLT's meeting: RSVP 207-646-3604 or info@gwrlt.org. First Parish Federated Church, 150 Main Street, South Berwick, 5:30 Gather & Chat | 6:00 Potluck Dinner | 7:00 Business Meeting | 7:30 Program

William Fogg Library

Family Movie Nights – The First Wednesday of every month beginning February 1st at 5PM

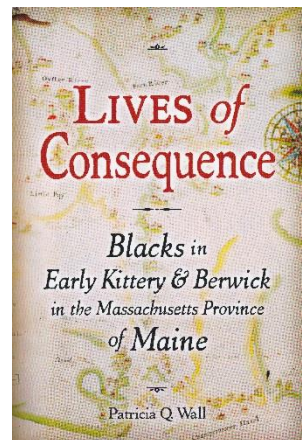
Free Tax Preparation (federal & state) and e-filing at the Library on Mondays 1-4pm and Thursdays 10am-2pm from February 1 – April 12, 2018.



Friends Annual Red, White and Chocolate Sale

Tuesday, February 13th 10-5 pm
Wednesday, February 14th 1-8 pm

In recognition of Black History Month, on Saturday, February 24th @ 10am -author Patricia Q. Wall will talk about her new book *Lives of Consequence*. Books will be available.



Another FABULOUS FIND for Polly!
"Birds of a feather..."