

MONTHLY MEETING ~ April 10

7:00 PM: In person and by ZOOM @ McPherson Hall,
First Congregational Church, 1361 State Rd.

Program: **ELIOT'S STORES** We will take a look at the newly installed display at the Eliot Elementary School, showcasing some of Eliot's old stores, 1800-present. It isn't meant to be a comprehensive look, but just highlighting the ones we know the most about, so we are looking to find out more information from those of you who have memories of stores in the town. Throughout its history Eliot has had stores, first in the homes of its residents and later stand-alone shops offering groceries, meats and other provisions. The newly re-opened MAINE MARKET continues this long tradition. It is the only continuously running store in Eliot, having been open for at least 149 years. Beginning as the Liebman Store, run by Saunders Liebman (1874) and later son Frank, it has seen various owners



over the years and, today, continues the long tradition of providing a social meeting place for the citizens of Eliot. **Knowledge about our town's history is always evolving as more information comes to light. So we invite you to come share YOUR memories and pictures of this store and any others that you may**

remember, as we all learn a little more about the town.

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89970965186?pwd=b0JaVFgyOFRnNW11WjRlZlVSRDNLdz09>



President's Prattle

by Tracey Graffam-Dickson

Presidents Prattle April 2023

April Fools?? I don't think so...here on Wisteria Lane, the early signs of spring have arrived and with it, the Daffodils and the Crocus bulbs have made

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

MAY 8 - DO YOU KNOW AS MUCH AS A SECOND GRADER?

Second grade teacher Ann Shapleigh-Shisler will join us as we find out more about what second grade students are learning about the history of Eliot. Will have an activity.

JUNE 12 - THE NARCISSUS

We'll learn about one of the cars of the electric railway and the recollections of SAD #35 teacher Mildred Obrey, which contributed to the writing of Jean Flahive's book "Teddy Roosevelt, Millie and the Elegant Ride". Member trip to Seashore Trolley Museum planned later in the month.

SEPTEMBER 11- HISTORY OF THE ELIOT PRE-SCHOOL

PROGRAM This is the 50th Anniversary of the development of the Pre-Kindergarten Program in Eliot. Come learn about how it all started, with one of the developers of the program and Eliot's first Pre-School teacher, Janice Cerabona.

themselves known and proven once again how resilient they are, having made it through another long New England winter! Before we know it, it will be time for spring clean-up and student visits to our #8 Schoolhouse. But before we get to that and share with you all the wonderful programs, events and gatherings we have planned, I want to first say “THANK YOU” to those who took the time to fill out the Membership Survey that we sent out in February. We have been going through all the feedback that we have received and over the coming weeks we will be working with our committees and volunteers to deliver on the list of priorities that have been clearly laid out for us. A full report with the feedback will be provided at our April meeting, however, I wanted to highlight for you a few of the top priorities which were clearly ranked as most important:

- 1) Ensure the ongoing preservation of the town’s Historical Records and Acquisitions through the investment in a new laptop.
- 2) Continue to support inquiries and provide information on historical structures, sites, and info. to the Town of Eliot and community members.
- 3) Support the ongoing maintenance of private cemeteries throughout Eliot.

As I write this, we are close to finalizing the selection of the new laptop (a sizeable investment for sure); last week, after extensive research and work, Rosanne submitted the very detailed & updated draft of the Historical and Archaeological Inventory Chapter for the Town of Eliot Comprehensive Plan; and over the days ahead, we will be publishing dates & times to help with the spring cleanup and maintenance of a number of the private cemeteries throughout town. In addition to all of this, the mighty Program Team (of 2) has put together a complete schedule of programs, collaborations, gatherings (and field trips too!) right through the end of the year! So, we hope you will get your calendars out and make notes of all the good things happening both for Eliot Historical Society and within our community. We also hope that you will help us in any way you can support these important efforts! As they say... “Many hands, make little work!” I look forward to working with you over the weeks ahead!

Sincerely,

Tracey

REMINDER – If you haven’t paid your yearly dues, they are due in January. As a non-profit organization, members are a major source of financial resources. The work toward preserving the past would not be possible without you. A membership costs \$10.00 per person per year, \$50.00 per member for a lifetime membership or \$75.00 for a lifetime family membership which includes immediate family and children living at home under the age of 21. Please mail check to our Membership Chairperson: Sylvia Moynihan, 1471 State Road, Eliot, ME 03903

#8 One-room Schoolhouse Museum

With our opening day, on Memorial Day, just around the corner, we could use your help to keep this valuable teaching tool and Historical Society presence open to the public. This year we will be open every Saturday from June to the Saturday before Eliot Festival Day in September. Jan will be there every Saturday from 10am to 2pm. Perhaps you have a few hours you could spend at the school house or maybe you and a friend would like to do it together – one Saturday a month? Or just once or twice during season? An hour or so, or a couple of hours? We would appreciate any help you can give! Give Jan a call at 207-450-6874.

*District #8 Schoolhouse Museum
67 Greenwood Street*



Open Memorial Day and each Saturday through
September 23
10am – 2pm

MAY 3 we will be hosting the annual visit of Eliot Elementary School’s 2nd grade students and **MAY 22-26** South Berwick Central School 2nd grade students will make their first visit to our schoolhouse. We are SO excited!

Cemetery Cleanup Schedule

Call Rosanne at 207-752-0174 for more information and to let us know you are joining us.

May 7: Remick Cemetery, off Main Street (need one person); Shapleigh Cemetery on the corner of Governor Hill & State Road and then moving, as time allows, to the nearby Hill and Dependence Shapleigh family cemeteries, on State Road.

June 4: Knight Cemetery, off Beech Road (Next to Steve’s Auto Body). Raising stones and, if there is a large crew, we’ll also clean the Remick cemetery, near the entrance of Fernald Lane.

July 2: Neall Cemetery, Goodwin Road (off Woodside Meadow Road)- checking the cemetery and removing brush, if necessary

August 6: Hodgdon/Rowe cemetery, 2039 State Road.



**ADOPT A
CEMETERY
PROGRAM**
Taking Care of
Eliot’s Cemeteries

**“Adopt A Cemetery”
to care for or come
join us for our
monthly cleanup of
an old family
cemetery – May to
September - First
Sunday of the
Month, 1-3 PM**

Call Rosanne at 207-752-0174



September 3: Parish Cemetery, River Road

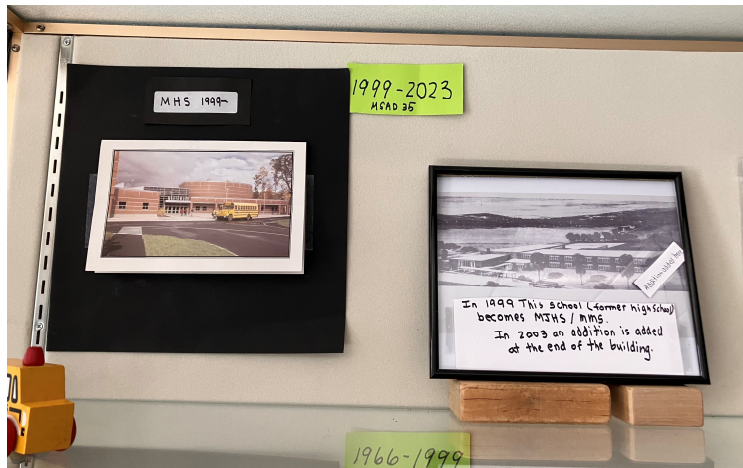
Eliot Historical Society Displays ~ At the end of March Jan and Rosanne got really busy with two new displays being installed. At Marshwood Great Works School, the theme was **“District Schools”**. This is a joint venture with the Old Berwick Historical Society. They have been working with **Norma Keim** and **John Demos** in setting up displays showing the earliest schools in each town; the subsequent schools as they served the students over the years; and the schools that evolved, with the creation of SAD #35. Because of the nature of the display it was agreed to have our society do the present display and then OBHS would take over the cases at the beginning of May, for their display, rather than try to showcase both towns at the same Using the two display cases, each level of the larger case is presented as a timeline.



The lower level shows the schools in our eight original districts along with the 1906 High School, which later was Central School and the Laura V. Dame School, along with school changes from 1940 to 1966, with the building of the 1940 High School (now the Elementary School). The

second level takes us through the buildings and their changes from 1966, when Marshwood High School (now Marshwood Middle School) opened to 1999, when the present high school was built.





The top shelving shows the school buildings we have today beginning in 1999 with the new high school building. Highlighted is the Pre-School (now Pre-K) program. A special tribute is paid to **Jerry**

Burnell who has served as a principal, in our district, for 32 years, first at Eliot Elementary School, and presently at Marshwood Great Works School. Thank you, Mr. Burnell and congratulations!

In the smaller case are various items from some of the schools.



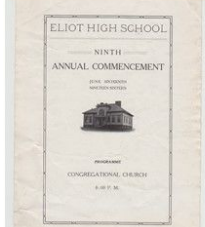
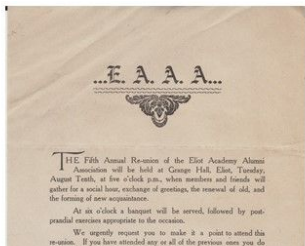
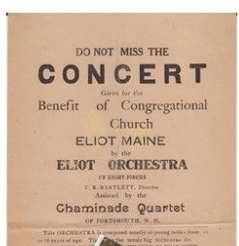
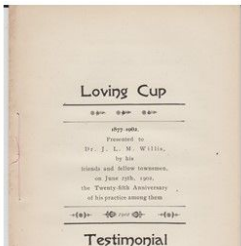
At Eliot Elementary School the theme is “**Eliot Stores.**” Taking a look at some of Eliot’s stores from the 1800s to the present. Along with pictures and information are various items from our collection and the collections of our members. At the center is a store “model” that was found at the **William Fogg Library** and loaned for the exhibit. It was a fun exhibit to put together and we want to especially thank **Eric Christian** who helped us put the exhibit up.





Recent Acquisitions

Beth Johnson, the great-granddaughter of Dr. John L.M. Willis contacted us through our website. After the family had gone through the materials, she had two boxes for our collection. Just starting to go through what is there but we are seeing publications and pictures we have not seen before. It is proving to be a treasure-trove of Eliot History. Our great thanks to Beth and her family for their donation.



Another connection through our website came from **Rose Trafton**. She has donated two very important research books to our Society - *Inhabitants of New Hampshire, 1776* by Emily S. Wilson (1983) and *Genealogical Dictionary of Maine and New Hampshire* by Noyes, Libby, & Davis (1972). Rose had previously contacted us in 2021 as we were cleaning up the Tetherly/Spinney cemeteries on Kings Highway North, and had made a generous contribution toward the work in her family cemetery. Thank you again Rose for this contribution.



Susan Olson-Pendergast contacted us through our Facebook page. She is the great-niece of Mildred and Gladys Horning. Gladys was an excellent photographer and in her collection were hundreds of slides of Eliot places, roads, buildings, etc. that she may have gathered for program use. All are labeled (something wonderfully surprising) and came with the slide carousels for storage. **Eric Christian** is hard a work scanning them for us.

Back Row: Sylvia Leavitt McKay, Gladys Horning, Eleanor Goodwin Pearsall. Front Row: Ruth Leavitt, Mildred Horning, Dorothy Leavitt Bate "Hopi Indian Club" c. 1936

Area News & Events

MAY 25 @ 6pm - Eliot History Studies Presentation Eliot Elementary School Gym. 2nd grade student's will share what they have learned during this year's "Eliot History" studies. Bring your family and friends!

JUNE 2 - Hike Through History, South Berwick. 3rd grade students from Eliot Elementary will be participating this year.

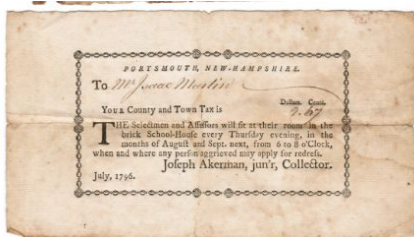
JUNE 7 @ 9am-11am - Colonial Games & Cookout - Eliot Elementary School Ballfield. Rain date: June 8th. A special invitation has been extended for Society members and friends to join the 2nd grade classes for this intergenerational event. Please let Jan or Rosanne know if you will be/or are thinking of coming so they will know how many to plan for.

Ferguson - Wylie - Gerrish Family

Editor note: This continuing series explores the Ferguson, Wylie, Gerrish family through further research, using the papers brought to us by Warren Walkup. If you have corrections or more information please contact us so that we can gain a more accurate understanding of this family and their lands.

Benjamin Ferguson (1806/7-1863), the son of Timothy (1776-1844) and Elizabeth (Demerell) Ferguson was elected to serve as Lieutenant of the 3rd company of the infantry in the 2nd Regiment, in the 1st Brigade and 1st Division of the Town's Militia on July 3, 1834 and was commissioned on 14 March 1835.

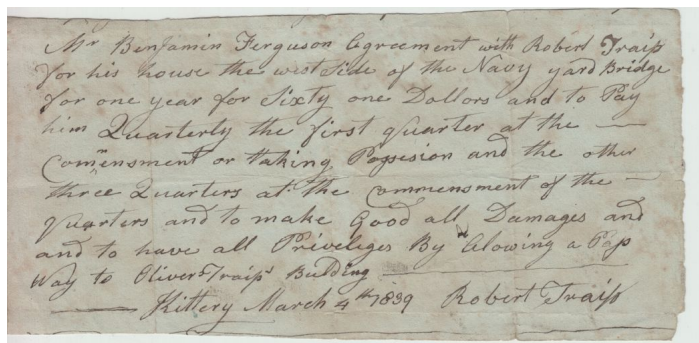
Benjamin Ferguson's wife, Mary C. Piper (1811-1889), was born in Kittery. At present it is unclear who her parents were, although there may be



some clues

in the papers of Isaac Martin (died 1807), Jonathan Piper, James Creighton (Crayton) and John Rogers families that are in the collection. These include probate papers for Isaac Martin; letters from Elizabeth Martin to Mary C. Ferguson; an 1813 marriage certificate for Mrs. Elizabeth Martin to

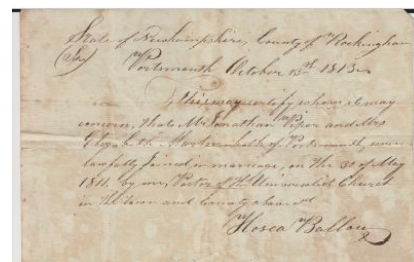
Jonathan Piper, both of Portsmouth; an 1876 letter, from Amanda C. Clark, to "Aunt Mary" (Mary Ferguson) telling her of "your dear sister Frances death" and referring to Frances as "our dear mother. Death records for Frances give her mother as Elizabeth Martin. From these, it appears that Mary C. Ferguson maybe have been the daughter of Elizabeth (Rogers) Martin Piper Creighton, but it will take more research



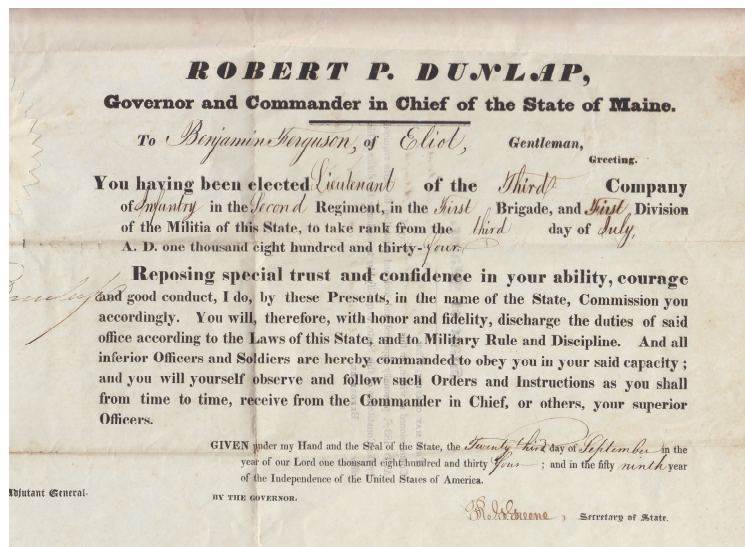
to work out those connections.

Several papers tell of troubles

between Benjamin and his neighbors for not paying their road bills and an agreement (1839) between Benjamin and Robert Traip for the use of his (Traip)



house, located on the west side of the Navy Yard Bridge [Kittery Naval Shipyard]. Benjamin is to pay Traip \$60 quarterly, beginning when Benjamin takes possession and agrees to make good any damages to the property in exchange for having the privilege of a passage way to Oliver



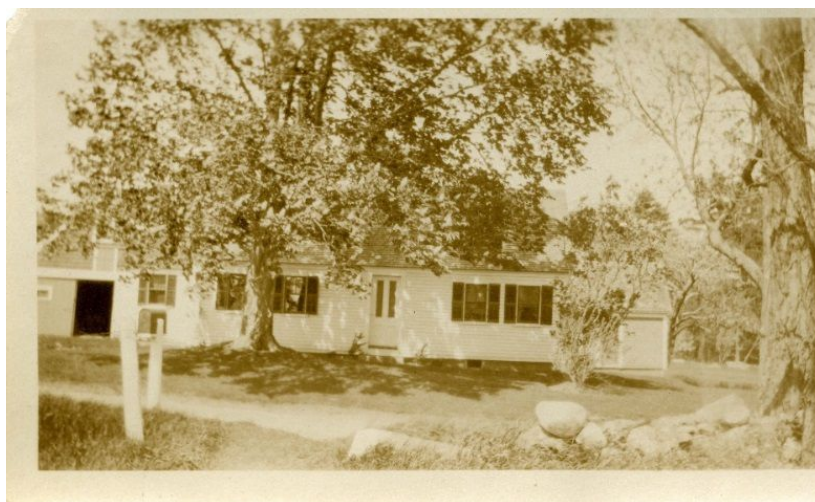
Traip's building. The receipt, on the back of the slip shows that all quarterly payments were made. Just what Benjamin was doing with the building is unclear. Could he have been selling goods to Navy Yard workers?



From the probate papers (1863) we learn that Benjamin's son Owen was administrator of the estate of his father. In the copy of Benjamin's will, son Owen is given all his estate (minus what is set off for the widow's dower). At the time of his decease, Benjamin's homestead consisted of 27 acres of tillage, pasture and woodland and was valued at \$1238. His other lands included 10 acres, with buildings; 2 acres called the "Ferguson Lot"; 2 acres of wood and pasture known as the "Great Hill lot"; 6 acres of pasture known as the "Scammon pasture" and $\frac{7}{8}$ of an acre at Rocky Hills, appraised at \$1460. His

widow Mary, for her dower, was given $\frac{1}{3}$ part of the income valued at \$ 9.73 $\frac{1}{3}$, part of the homestead lot beginning at the highway adjoining the land of Francis Frost by land of Owen Ferguson and the public highway (amounting to 4 acres and 120 rods), along with 5 acres of pasture land by lands of Nathan Ferguson and James Hubbard and the lands of Joseph Emery and the widow Butler. In her home Mary was

given use of 3 rooms on the first floor, the back room and SE bedroom; privilege to use the front entry and the cellar stairs and $\frac{1}{3}$ of the cellar, the south bay in the barn, the shop and with son Owen to have permission to pass and repass through her pasture to his land. Benjamin's home is located at 676 Goodwin Road. Although the tax card records say the house was built 1875, it is shown on the



1856 Eliot Map as "B. Ferguson". *To be continued....*

