

August 14 – Annual Cookout at Eliot Boat Basin (Dead Duck Inn). 5:00pm. The grill will be going. Bring your own food, drinks and eating utensils. If you'd like to bring something for the "sharing table" it is always welcome!

Joined by our friends from Old Berwick Historical Society, we had a great time at the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport on June 21st. The day was arranged for us by **Phil Morse** who is the sponsor of the *Narcissus* restoration project which was the main focus of our visit. He has prepared several special little things that enhanced the visit, connecting Eliot and South Berwick with the *Narcissus*. Upon entering to register we each were given a ticket which was punched with a punch that was used on the Atlantic Trolley line, along with coasters with the flowers for which the trolley cars of the Portland-Lewiston Interurban line were named; "money" commemorating the ride of Teddy Roosevelt on the *Narcissus* and Jane Flahive's book.



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

SEPTEMBER 11- QUARTERLY MEETING. Short Program - History of the Eliot Pre-School Program. This is the 50th Anniversary of the development of the Pre-Kindergarten Program in Eliot. Janice Cerabona

OCTOBER 9- "The Nightingale" Frank Thomas will share with us the history of this famous clipper ship, built at the Hanscom Shipyard in Eliot, Maine.

NOVEMBER 13 - Anne B. Gass, author of many books on woman's suffrage, including "Voting Down the Rose" will join us to talk about her latest book "We Demand - The Suffrage Road Trip".

DECEMBER 11 - QUARTERLY MEETING - ANNUAL MEETING Program: Show and Tell

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With the help of Phil's assistant, conductor **John Mercurio**, who is also the Chair of the Education Committee at the museum, we not only explored the museum's history and that of the *Narcissus* but also got to see first-hand the restoration of the *Narcissus* and talk with those involved in the process.



Conductor John Mercurio greets us and shares the unique beginnings of the museum. It all started with 3 young friends, their love for the trolleys, their dream, and \$150!

Climbing the stairs to an observation deck we were able get a bird's eye view of the restoration work.



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Later, going down for a close up look at the *Narcissus*, **Ernie Eaton**, the Narcissus Project Manager, took us through the restoration process, sharing with us some of the difficulties and head-scratching moments that they have had.

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Seth Reed, master carpenter showed us some of the areas that have created challenges in determining the exact original dimensions of various components and the care with which they map out and check and re-check pieces before putting things back together.



Before breaking for lunch, we visited one of the other car barns to see trolleys connected with the lines that ran through Eliot and South Berwick.



On our way back we saw a very interesting stanchion known as a "Silent Policeman". These were used as early signal lights. It was of great interest to us because we had recently been told about two of these that were discovered at the Eliot Town Garage! One stood at the intersection of Old Dover Road and Goodwin Road and the other at

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the old Depot (Depot Road/236). What a great piece of Eliot history in the time of the trolleys and railroad!

During lunch our host **Phil Morse** introduced author **Jean Flahive**, who shared with us how her book “Teddy Roosevelt, Millie, and the Elegant Ride” came about and her use of the very important audio interview with **Mildred Obrey** in telling of the story.



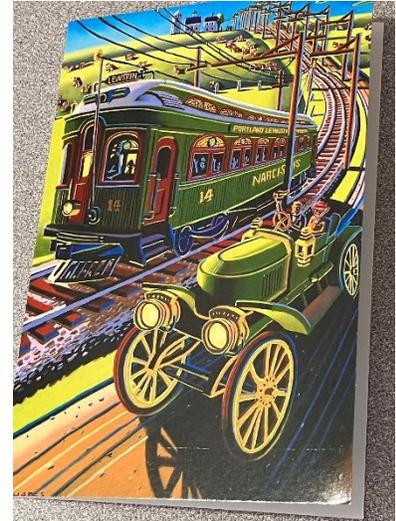
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We had the opportunity to purchase the book, have it signed by Jean, as well as purchase notecards that Phil Morse had produced to raise monies for the restoration. [The book and these note cards are available for purchase during the open hours of the #8 Schoolhouse. Phil conducted a 50/50 sale of these to benefit the Eliot and South Berwick Historical Societies and the Narcissus Restoration Project. The Eliot Historical Society has since received \$100. Our last event together was the taking of a group picture before members went their own



way to further explore the museum, take another trolley ride and just relax before heading back home.

It was a wonderful day and we thank Phil



Morse and the crew at the Seashore Trolley Museum for making it truly memorable!



Photos: Marjorie Brown and Rosanne Adams-Fisher

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SPEAKING OF CEMETERIES

It has been an interesting start to our Cemetery cleaning season, as well as the Saturday open house events at our # 8 School House, with all the rain we have been having. The School house remains open rain or shine but the June and July Cemetery Cleanups had to be cancelled. We have two more, so, fingers crossed, we'll get some work done! AND, if you have a cemetery, you'd like help with just give Rosanne a call at 207-752-0174.

CEMETERY CLEAN UP SCHEDULE

First Sunday of the month, from 1-3pm.

August 6: Hodgdon/Rowe cemetery, 2039 State Road

September 3: Parish Cemetery, River Road

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While the rainy Saturdays have provided rather quiet days at the schoolhouse, Jan **Cerabona** and **Tracey Graffam-Dixon** recently took the time to go through the old papers in a captain’s desk that was given to us in 2021 by Wade Eisner. Inside were journals of carpenter Roland Junkins, who worked on many of the buildings in Eliot and the area (c. 1940) and cards and letters to Alden Torrey and Ferida Junkins (c. 1960s) They separated out the papers and the cards sent to Alden Torrey were scanned, for our collection, by **Rosanne Adams Fisher**.



Recently we had some donations of items to sell to raise funds for the # 8 School house and outreach programs. **Julie Johnson** donated some USPS lapel pins and **Rosanne Adams-Fisher** is donating, each week, new and gently used books, with an historical connection to the town, state, and/or area. These will be for sale at the #8 Schoolhouse on



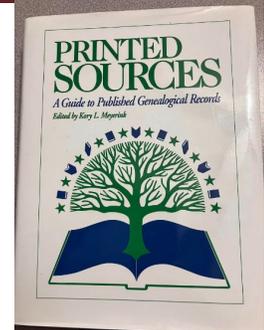
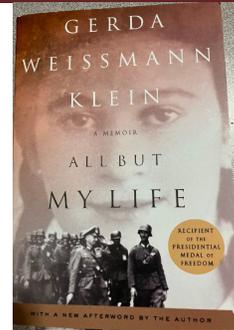
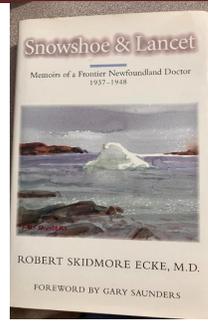
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Saturdays and, with advance notice, you can pick up at our August gathering or September meeting. Many are one of a kind. Stop in and see what is new!



#8 One-Room Schoolhouse Museum is now open every Saturday from 10-2. Stop by, bring your family and friends. Always looking for volunteers to help greet people. Contact Jan to help.

Ferguson - Wylie - Gerrish Family

Editor note: We conclude this series based on the papers given to us by Warren Walkup, by taking a look at the life of Mary Wiley and her husband Willard Gerrish.



William and Francis Wiley's daughter Mary was born on 23 October 1866. She married Willard Peabody Gerrish on October 24, 1896. After their marriage they lived in Cambridge, and in later years with his parents in Ashland, Mass.

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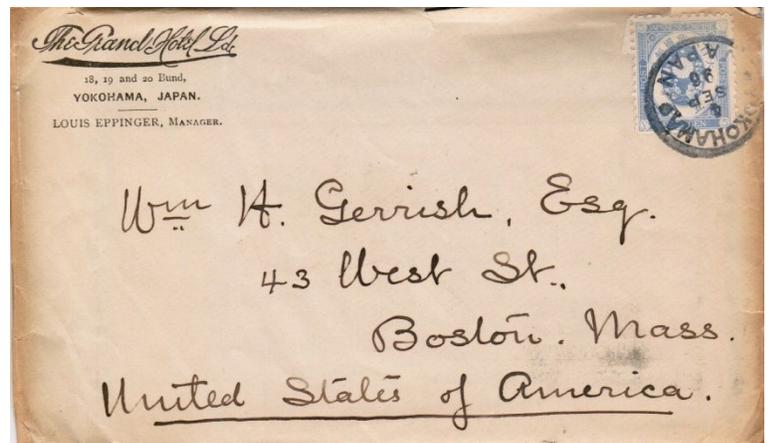
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Willard Peabody Gerrish was an engineer and astronomer. Born in Roxbury, Mass on Aug. 31, 1866, the son of William Hamilton and Eliza Ann (Willoby) Gerrish. He was hired as the first observer at the Blue Hill Meteorological Observatory* in Milton, Mass in 1885 and later, after graduating from MIT in 1887, he became assistant professor of astronomy at Harvard College Observatory and was consulting engineer. He designed a method for driving telescopes by means of an electric motor synchronized by the pendulum of a clock, the first being applied to Harvard's 24-inch reflector in 1907. The drives and other apparatus that he developed helped to more precisely track celestial movement. He also designed a telescope known as the "Gerrish Polar Mount" and a telegraphic cipher code called "The Gerrish System" which was used to communicate astronomical information. He also designed large telescopes at Amherst College and elsewhere.



Shortly after traveling as part of an expedition to Yokohama, Japan, to view the August 9, 1896, total solar



eclipse, he married Mary Wylie, of Eliot, on October 24, 1896 and settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts. They bought the Sir Henry Frankland Garden estate, in Ashland, Massachusetts, in 1911. He was also an author and writer of numerous articles regarding astronomy. His records of the Observatory at

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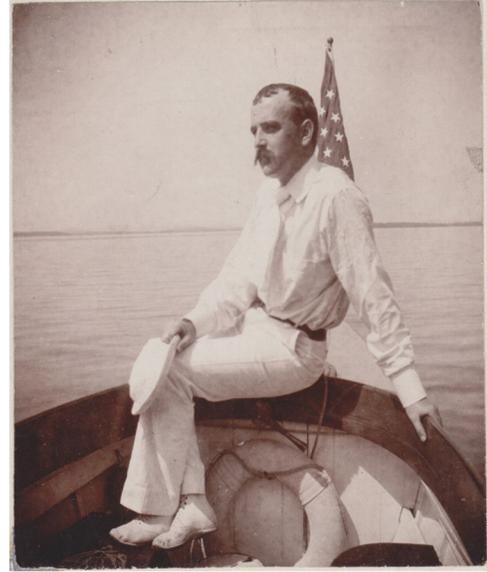
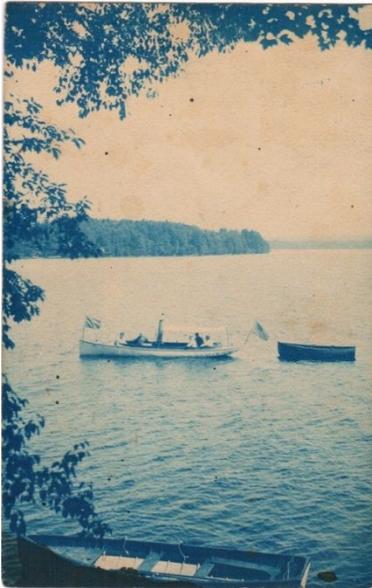
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Harvard reside at the University and a collection of his technical papers and drawings can be found at Brown University in Providence RI.

A sportsman and outdoorsman, he co-founded the Camp Ossipee Association in NH in 1893 which promoted outdoor sports and the natural sciences. He had a vacation home in Tuftonboro, NH which he bought in 1895 and was the licensed pilot and owner of a pleasure steamer. The steam yacht was 25 feet long and designed by George F. Lawley. He was quite a well-known figure on Lake Winnepesaukee.





Mary's mother, Frances, after her husband died, came to live with them in their home on Frankland Road in Ashland, Mass. It was



this home, in Ashland, that Warren Walkup's father purchased, inheriting the papers and other items of the Gerrish family, along with the house. *Frankland Farm*

Daughter Mary, her husband Willard Gerrish, her parents William and Francis (Ferguson) Wylie and other members of the Ferguson family are buried across the street from former Ferguson/Wylie home. The simple stones for Willard Gerrish and his wife give one, coming across this simple New England family cemetery, no indication that a noted astronomer and inventor is buried here.



Our historical society is very fortunate to have a wonderful collection of pictures and papers, as well as the digital copies of



papers and pictures relating to the life, trip to Japan, and career of Willard P. Gerrish, that Warren Walkup and his wife have given to us, to augment the collection.

*The Great Blue Hill Observation Tower, near the 635-foot summit of Great Blue and a few yards from the Great Blue Hill Weather Observatory (which is at the top of the mountain) is a 35-foot-tall stone structure with a rubble stone base that is joined to the Eliot Memorial Bridge. From the top one can about 270 degrees, taking in all of Boston, Boston Harbor, and much of the South Shore. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

It is often referred to as the Eliot Tower, due to its association with the nearby Eliot Memorial Bridge, that was built in 1904 as a tribute to the famous landscape architect Charles Eliot who led the efforts to preserve the Blue Hills Reservation. Great Blue Hill was named "officially" by an act of the Massachusetts legislature in 1776. Beacons were established on its summit and was used as a vantage point during the Revolutionary War. In 1798 a stone and wood observing platform was constructed, blew down four years later and was rebuilt in 1822. Abbott Lawrence Rotch, who had graduated from MIT with a degree in engineering, first proposed the idea of a weather observatory in 1884 and, in September of that year, a two-story



tower and living quarters was constructed. The present structure was built during the time of F.D.R.'s Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), between 1933-1944. Today the Blue Hill Observatory and Science Center



continues to maintain extensive climate records using traditional instruments and observing methods. The associated science center provides educational programs for teachers, students, and the general public to learn about climate and our environment.

<https://bluehill.org>