

**FEBRUARY MEETING – February 12<sup>th</sup>** 7:00PM - McPherson Hall, First Congregational Church. 1361 State Road. In person and by ZOOM

**PROGRAM:**

From the Archives:



We will take a look at some old valentines and welcome you to come and share some your valentines, letters or old communications and interesting stories.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89970965186?pwd=b0JaVFgyOFRnNW11WjRlZlZlVSRDNLdz09>



**President's Prattle**

**by Tracey Graffam-Dickson**

On this beautiful Sunday afternoon in February, while sitting in our south-facing window, I close my eyes and enjoy the sun's warmth on my face and take in all the benefits it brings. It's the perfect afternoon to write my Valentine's Day cards. This is the one *non-official* holiday that I most enjoy writing and sending out cards to family & friends near and far. Often the least expected and most appreciated, especially after the long cold winter days of December and January. The idea of giving Valentine's Days cards which started for me and many others in our childhood days was renewed about 7 years ago, when I found it to be a wonderful activity that my grandmother of 94 years and I could share. Together, we would shop and write and then mail them out to loved ones and special friends. My grandmother had passed this tradition down to her daughters – my mother and my aunt; both of whom continue to preserve the seemingly lost art of letter writing and corresponding by snail mail. Although this "analog" approach to correspondence and communication seems to have gone by the wayside for so many; I revel in this means of communication. While thinking through possible program ideas for our February meeting, we thought what better way to celebrate the month's special day than by sharing some unique cards and letters from our archives. While reviewing her own collection, Rosanne discovered some wonderful examples of Valentine Cards from days past. Here is just one example of the many we will share at our next meeting scheduled

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for Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. An interesting aside... this special Valentine card was printed by the company "Raphael Tuck and Sons". After doing a bit of research, I found that in addition to cards, Tuck and Sons made a significant contribution in the selling of "movable" books; they were specifically well-known for the publication of the Father Tuck's Mechanical Series in 1890. Their "movables" unfolded to reveal multi-layered, three-dimensional scenes and books that contained pull-the-tab and peep-show mechanisms. Check out some unique examples of movable cards and books at the following website: <https://library.unt.edu/rarebooks/exhibits/popup2/tuck.htm>. We hope you will join us on Monday, Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> and share your unique cards, letters or books in celebration of writing, printing and corresponding in the non-digital ways of days past.

~ Tracey

**A**t our January meeting **Kelly Vaughn** shared with us the story of Virginia Woods Bellamy, her life and creation of a method of knitting called "Numbered Knitting".



Kelly later sent along this picture of one of Virginia's knitting classes. Perhaps someone in our Society might be able to identify the location (if it was in our area).



Virginia and her daughter Jean lived in Eliot for a number of years and Jean graduated from Eliot High School in 1949. Eric found this newspaper ad for a fashion show that Virginia gave as a fundraiser for the Senior Class. While Jan Cerabona and I were looking for



Virginia Woods Bellamy teaches her knitting secret.

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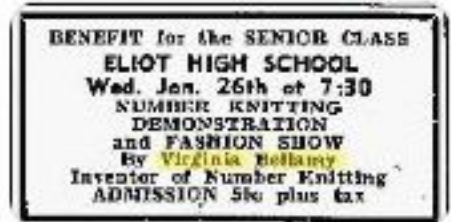


information on the Bellamys in Eliot, Julie Johnson gave Jan Cerabona some materials the Historical Society’s collect to look at. In it was this picture of the class of ’49. Going through the class yearbook, as I read through some of the class “superlatives” - “Tallest in the Class” - Jan easily picked out Nancy Bellamy in the picture. Jane was one of the literary editors for the class “year book” (our Society member, Donald Ketzler, was the assistant editor); was in the dramatic club for the last three years of high

school with Mildred Obrey as the advisor and in the class play, her junior and senior year; press club, sophomore and junior year; prize speaking her junior; debating her senior year and home economics.

Jane “liked” French fries and “disliked” walking to school. Kelly estimates it was a 1.3-mile walk, from her home on River Road, to the High School (today’s Eliot Elementary School). She was voted the “best dressed”.

Looking at the picture of the class, they ALL were a pretty sharp looking group! In the Christmas Concert, Jane played “the Madonna” to Leon Place’s “Scrooge”. To learn more about Virginia Woods Bellamy and “Numbered Knitting”, check out the various postings by Kelly Vaughan and the short synopsis of her presentation in our January meeting minutes, on our website [eliohistoricalsociety.org](http://eliohistoricalsociety.org)



Kelly would be very pleased to hear from anyone having information about Virginia and Jane, while they were in this area. Her address in PO Box 14, Kipling, NC 27543 or you can email her at [kelly@knitswag.com](mailto:kelly@knitswag.com) She also has a Facebook group and instructional videos have been posted on YouTube.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/7157299430993217/>

<https://linktr.ee/Knitswag>



For our January meeting **Jan Cerabona** brought with her some old pictures of Eliot and South Berwick for people to see if we could identify them. The Eliot pictures were part of a January display at Eliot Elementary. Left up for students and staff to try and identify, they recently also included their counterpart, present day pictures, with them to see how well people did.



## NOTICES

**DUES:** If you are a yearly dues paying member, they are now due! Please send a check to Sylvia Moynihan at 1471 State Road or bring to a meeting. Thank you for your support.

### EHS INITIATIVES

We have agreed to take on a number of projects this year, if you need more information about any of these or are interested and able to help, in ANY way, please contact Tracey, Rosanne, or Jan.

1. Continue “Comprehensive Plan” update for Historical and Archaeological section’
2. #8 Schoolhouse Museum staffing during spring/summer/fall
3. “Memory Walk” initiative in collaboration with Eliot’s “Aging in Place
4. Cemetery Cleanups- Spring/ Summer/Fall

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Both the Eliot and South Berwick pictures have now been placed at the *Great Works School* in South Berwick for an interim display, as we get ready to put up a “stores” display.

The present display, at Eliot Elementary School, focuses on three of Eliot’s teachers – **Esther Morrow**, **Verna Staples**, and **Mildred Obrey**. Students have been challenged to find the plaques that have been placed designating the “Staples Wing” and the “Obrey Wing” at the school, as well as the three teacher’s “home



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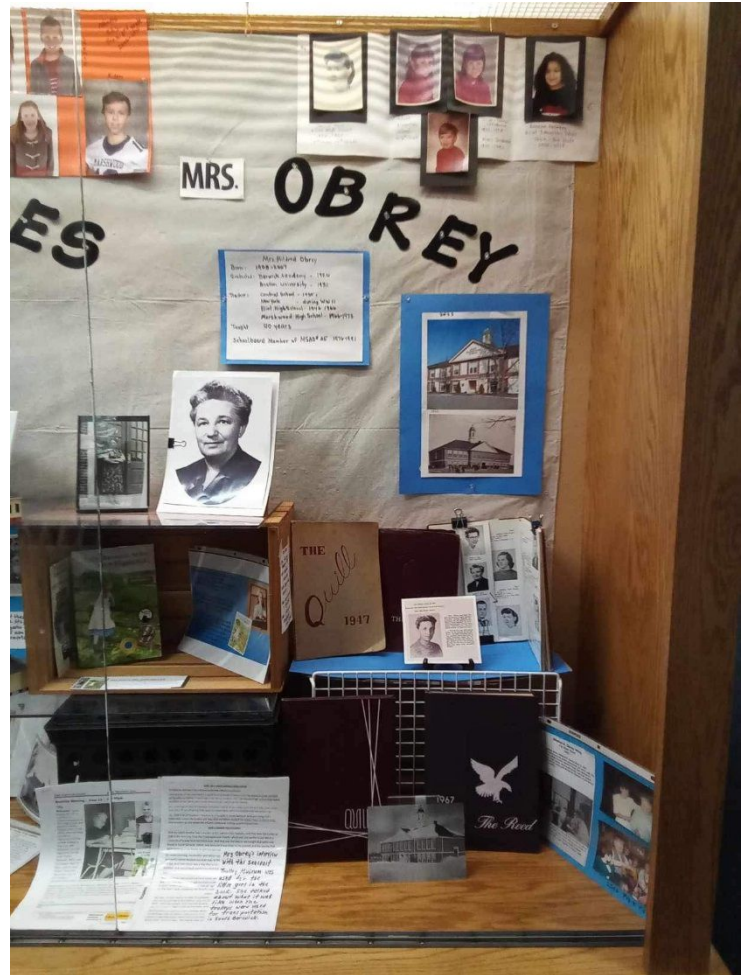
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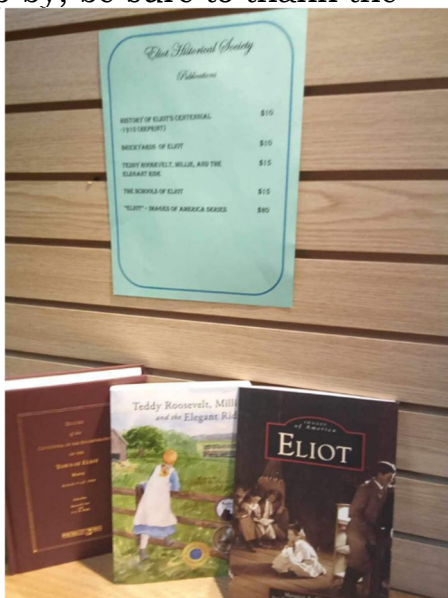
rooms” which have pictures of the teachers to mark them. And, as always, the display is generating the opportunity for students, staff and visitors alike to share memories. We’d like to thank **Helen Sullivan** and **Esther Morrow** for loaning us their materials and helping us put together this display.



*We would like to thank Rose Trafton and the family of Florence Moulton for their recent donations!*



**The William Fogg Memorial Library** has graciously given us space in which to display a collection of books that we have for sale. Please let your neighbors, family, and friends know and, when you stop by, be sure to thank the library staff for hosting this!



### Area Events

**February 10 A Decadent Chocolate Affair 9AM**



**Indulge in a tempting array of chocolate goodies at the William Fogg Library's annual chocolate sale.**

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## **February 28** Webinar: Maine and the West Indies Trade, with Seth Goldstein

6:00 pm

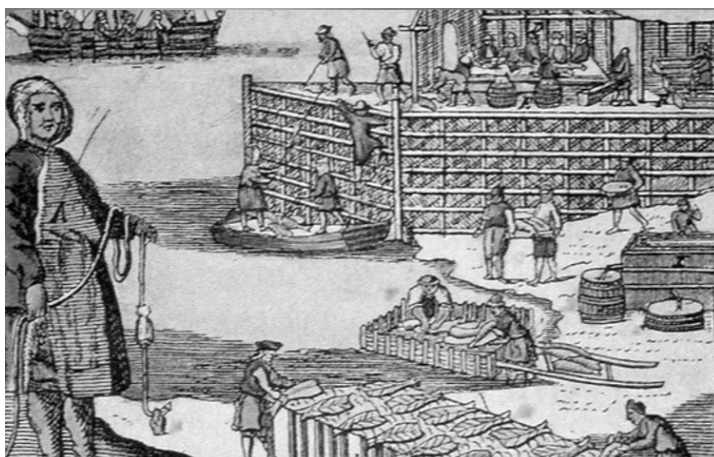
via Zoom

FREE (registration required)

Olde York Historical

Historian Seth Goldstein explores how historically Maine's economy was linked with the plantations of the West Indies. Goldstein discusses the various commodities, such as lumber, draft animals, and salt cod, that Maine supplied to West Indian plantations, where enslaved Africans labored to produce molasses, rum, and other luxury goods that were

consumed here in Maine. Link for registration:



<https://www.simpletix.com/e/webinar-maine-and-the-west-indies-trade-wi-tickets-154371>



BERWICK PUBLIC LIBRARY

## **Wanted: Donations for Spring Book Sale**

With their big spring book sale right around the corner, from **March 19th-23<sup>rd</sup>**, they are accepting donations of new or gently used fiction and non-fiction books for their sale. Please no textbooks, out-of-date reference books, or items in rough condition or with that "basement smell."

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