

ELIOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MINUTES
MONTHLY MEETING
DECEMBER 11, 2023

McPherson Hall, First Congregational Church, Eliot, ME

PRESENT: 3 people on ZOOM and 20 in person

Meeting opened at 7:00PM

President Tracey Graffam-Dixon opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She explained that this was our Annual Meeting for the election of officers and also our quarterly business. Our program is a "Show and Tell" and we will close the meeting with refreshments.

Business

1. The Minutes of September and October, as sent out to everyone, were unanimously APPROVED. The November minutes were not ready and will be available for correction/approval at the next quarterly meeting.
2. Treasurer Kathy Runey gave the report for September through the end of November. It was unanimously approved.
3. Correspondence: Helen Sullivan reported that she attended the funeral of David Raitt and delivered a condolence card, from the Society, to the Raitt family. Tracey will send Helen a copy of our mailing list to help facilitate communications with members.
4. Collections: Julie Johnson reported that a new location for the collection is being sought and she has reached out to some of the churches. The Advent Church is most interested in exploring the possibility of offering space. The Methodist Church has merged with Kittery and between them have three buildings and they have said that perhaps, in the future, they might be in a position to explore options. In the meantime, Julie has been sorting through things and cataloging, getting ready for a move, when it comes. If there is anyone interested in helping, please contact her.
5. Building: Paul Johnson reported that there has not been a need to do any maintenance this past year, due to the work done the previous year. It was in use every Saturday through the efforts of Jan Cerabona.
6. Grants: Jan Cerabona and Rosanne Adams reported that they are talking about grant possibilities for the displays that they are doing and could also add on other projects. Let them know if there are other needs.
7. Education: Jan Cerabona talked about the two displays that are planned for both the Spring and the Fall, this coming year, at Eliot Elementary School (Pre-School History; Teachers Staples, Morrow, and Obrey) & Great Works School (Country Stores: Maine Market and Flynn's; Sarah Farmer & Sarah Orne Jewett). The only display that is ongoing at the Middle School right now is one in May, associated with "Hike Through History" events. Jan asked if we could loan the large framed picture of Depot Road, that was donated by Keith Searles and is downstairs in the Grange Hall, to Marshwood

Middle School for their display case. It clearly shows the road and it is hoped it will spark conversations about the history in that area. At the Schoolhouse, the goal is to make it available to more people and to host more people, so this coming year the plan is to have it open 2 days per week - a Wednesday and then either Saturday or Sunday. She also plans, in an effort to get more people in, offering the 2nd graders, if they bring members of their families in to see the schoolhouse, a choice of either the "Brickyards of Eliot" or the "Schools of Eliot" books, since we have plenty. She has visited the Kittery Museum and plans to visit Hamilton House and OBHS Counting House to propose reciprocal posting of our respective fliers at our buildings, hoping to generate increased visibility for all involved. (The Kittery Museum was pleased to do this.)

8. Election of Officers : The Nomination Committee presented the slate of officers for the coming year. The list remained the same, with the addition of Janice Cerabona to the Board of Directors, for a 3- year term, replacing Kathy Runey, whose time was completed. Tom O'Leary made a motion to accept the slate of officers, it was seconded and APPROVED.
9. Financial Auditor: Julie Johnson volunteered and it was ACCEPTED.
10. The President went over the 2023 Initiatives - those projects we had previously decided to undertake and those that are on-going. She reminded us that in order to accomplish these, we need people to step forward and if anyone has an additional project then they are asked to spearhead that project and find people to work with. Please contact Tracey and/or members involved in these initiatives (see Agenda for this meeting) if you would like to volunteer.
 - a. It was asked about the Snow Roller project. Rosanne reported that she contacted the Bartlett Historical Society after Sylvia said she had seen one in Bartlett and the person who restored their snow roller sent back a great deal of information that should help someone to get it ready to be put in a prominent location in town. Because nothing can be done right now, we will wait till the Spring to find someone and we do have someone in mind.
 - b. Memory Project w/ Aging in Place Committee - Tracey asked if there are people who would like to help to let her know. She has had preliminary talks with Jenny Isler.
 - c. Comprehensive Plan Update - Eric and Rosanne, with input from Tom have been working with the town planner on this. The inventory has been pretty much worked out and the next phase will be implementation strategies. Rosanne said she hasn't heard anything more from the town planner, yet but perhaps they are waiting until the start of 2024 to move forward.
 - d. Silent Policemen: This is a collaboration between the Select Board and us. Will begin the talk again after the first of next year.
 - e. Cemetery cleanup - plans are to continue one day a month and encourage people to take on their own cleanup projects, as well.
 - f. EHS Programs: Rosanne and Jan have stepped down. Tracey reported that received possible programs that were on their list and she has been working on the 2024 program line-up and welcomes any suggestions.
11. Tracey thanked Rosanne for the Newsletter.

PROGRAM - Show and Tell

There was a wealth of items brought to this year's show and tell. Margie Brown started things off with a beautiful piece of tatting made by a family member, which sparked conversations from others of their parents or someone in their family who did tatting. Cheryl Remick shared pictures and information on her ancestors - Inez (Izzy) and — , Remick, twin sisters, who were both school teachers and never married. Izzy taught at the #8 Schoolhouse. Sally Hartford said that she and her late husband Fran have been members of the Congregational Church in Eliot, making her the oldest and longest living member of the Church. She brought to share with us a model of the Church that was made by Charlie Remick (Cheryl's dad's brother). Charlie made many models of places around the town that are truly treasures. Jan Cerabona brought a plaque that gives the names of the students with the most school attendance in 1937-38 and also a sign that was once used at the library, that probably people would not recognize. It says "No Talking Aloud ". The third item was a framed poster showing the postage stamp designs that were issued in 1974. Tom O'Leary shared some Native American baskets and talked about the intricate work and the history of basket weaving. Guest Kelly Vaughn joined us from Raleigh, NC with a piece of Eliot related history. Virginia Wood Bellamy invented a new method of knitting, called "Number Knitting" and lived in Eliot during the 1950s where she talked about and demonstrated her method at the Kennebunk Brick Store Museum. In her book she gives thanks to many familiar Eliot people, including Mildred Obrey, who was her daughter Jane's English teacher at Eliot High School, who were helpful with her work when she was here. Virginia's book, today, is very rare with only 27 known copies existing in the country (in libraries). It is hoped to have her back for a program to share the full story. Polly McDonough brought some pattern designs used in the 1800 and early 1900's by girls, along with a sewing box and pen and ink drawings. Julie Johnson shared one of her older family scrapbooks that she has made and talked about some of the people in them, including her grandfather who was in the 27th Maine Regiment, during the Civil War and received the Medal of Honor; and the family tree for her family. Bud Moynahan brought an artifact that was found down about 11 feet when they were filling in the Puddle Dock area in Portsmouth to build Prescott Park. Tracey Graffam-Dickson brought an old, handcrafted pie carrier from her 2nd cousin's collection.

Meeting closed at 9pm, followed by refreshments.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosanne M. Adams, Sec.