

# ELIOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MAY NEWSLETTER 2024

## May 13<sup>th</sup>, Monthly Meeting

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89970965186?pwd=b0JaVFgyOFRnNW11WjRLZFVSRDNLdz09>

**Program:** A look at our most recent display at Marshwood Great Works School, honoring two extraordinary women – Sarah Jane Farmer of Eliot & Sarah Orne Jewett of South Berwick.

**THE SARAHs - SARAH JANE FARMER & SARAH ORNE JEWETT**

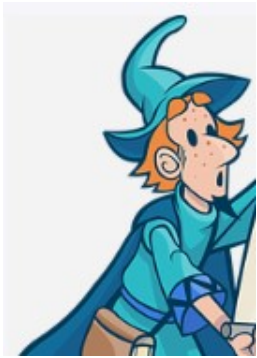
*Did you know... that Sarah Jane Farmer and Sarah Orne Jewett were born two years apart? Sarah Jane was born in Dover, NH in 1847 and Sarah Orne Jewett was born in South Berwick, in 1849. Although they were childhood playmates they did, as adults, become friends.*

*Did you know... that Sarah Jane Farmer joined with prominent men in Eliot to erect the Eliot Hotel (now Sarah Jane Farmer Inn), in 1890? Later, in 1894, she started lectures bringing people from all over the world to Eliot!*

*Did you know... that writer Harriet Beecher Stowe's book inspired Sarah Orne Jewett to write about the lives of Maine people?*

Eliot Historical Society, Monday, May 13 7:00 PM. In person and by ZOOM @ McPherson Hall, First Congregational Church, 1361 State Road.

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## President's Prattle

by Tracey Graffam-Dickson

There are so many fascinating facts and interesting stories about our town's history and those who are a part of it. At the top of the list is Sarah Jane Farmer. In her time here in Eliot, Sarah created a unique setting that attracted visitors from around the world. After attending the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago with her father, she established the Greenacre Conferences in 1894 which encouraged discussion of various philosophical ideas of religion and the peace movement. Attendees included the local women's clubs, the women's suffrage movement, and the attendees from the Ralph Waldo Emerson groups.

Within a short period of time, Greenacre attracted wide attention because of its intellectual and spiritual exchange and brought together several well-known writers, artists and intellectuals. This list includes Booker T. Washington, Julia Ward Howe, W.E.B Du Bois and Sara Bull, the wife of the famous Norwegian violinist, Ole Bull. Sara Bull was also a staunch supporter of Swami Vivekananda, who was a key figure responsible for introducing the philosophy of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world. It has been shared with me, that in fact, the first yoga class may have taken place for the first time in the western world, right here in Eliot, Maine. This is just the beginning of the story of Sarah Jane Farmer. If

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Address: PO BOX 3, Eliot, ME 03903

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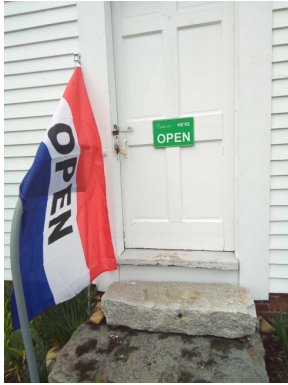
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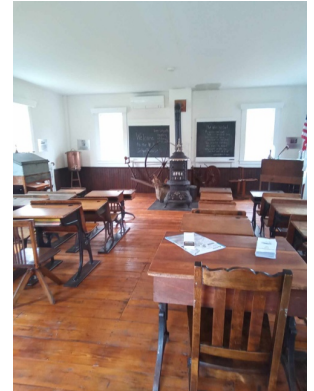
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you are interested in learning more, we hope you will join us at our next meeting, on Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Rosanne Adams and Jan Cerabona will share their learnings about Sarah Jane Farmer, her life and her connection with the seacoast's other well-known writer and neighbor, Sarah Orne Jewett. It is sure to be a fascinating story of the two well-known Sarah's of our area. We look forward to seeing you then! - Tracey Graffam-Dickson



**#8 Schoolhouse Museum will be opening for the season in June. Open each Saturday and Wednesday from 10-2. During the month of May it will be open by appointment. Call Jan @ 207-450-6874**



Our display at Marshwood Great Works School

focuses on the lives of Sarah Jane Farmer and Sarah Orne Jewett. Through an abundant use of graphics and simple explanations, we endeavor to engage the students and help them explore pieces of their town's histories. In this display we used "Did You Know" questions with answers.



*Did you know...* that Sarah Jane Farmer and Sarah Orne Jewett were born two years apart? Sarah Farmer was born in Dover, NH in 1847 and Sarah Orne Jewett in South Berwick in 1849. Although they were not childhood playmates they did, as adults, become great friends.

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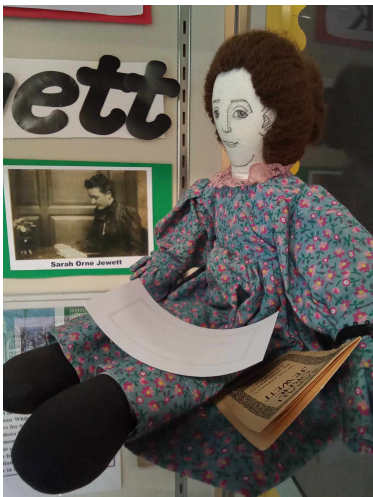
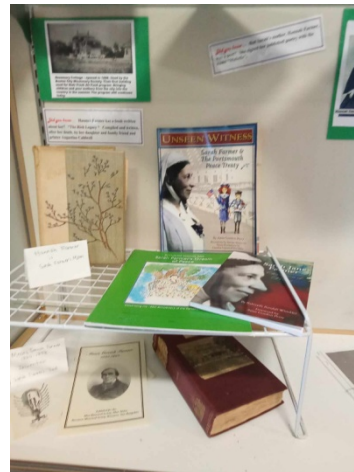
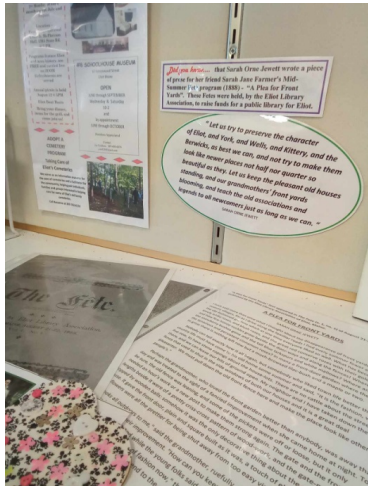
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The display explores the lives of each of these remarkable women, and the similarities of their life stories and connections, by looking at their parents and parental influences, their education, interactions with literary and prominent figures of their day and their individual accomplishments.



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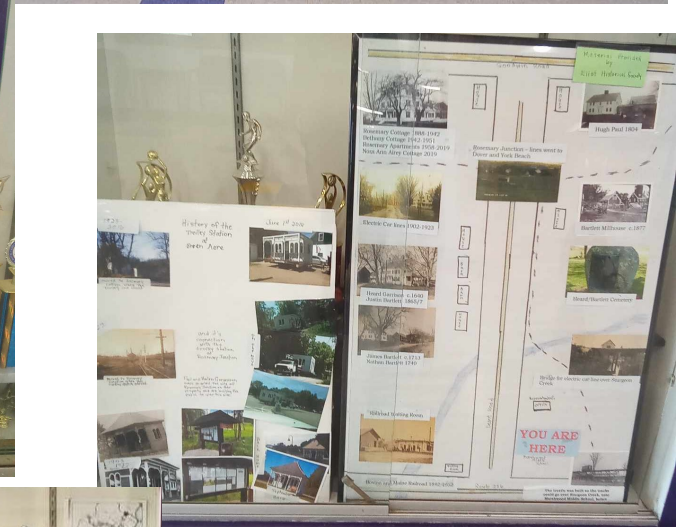
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At Marshwood Middle School Jan re-created our “Trains and Trolley” display, in recognition of the district’s *Hike Through History*, which this year has as its theme – “Transportation”. We had two cases to work with so, in the second, was highlighted the moving of the Green Acre Trolley Stop to East Eliot and then, more recently back again and then the historic sights along Depot Road, from the school to Rosemary Hill.



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## Eliot Area News and Events

*A*pril 25<sup>th</sup> Amanda Cote, who lives in NH and was dog sitting in York, ME offered to help clean up the “Paul” family cemetery” on Goodwin Road. She was joined by Paul family members, Rosanne Adams and Shannon Buzzell. Amanda says she loves cemeteries and is willing to help “anytime”.

*M*ay 4<sup>th</sup> members of the Historical Society and the public joined Rosanne’s family in cleaning up the grounds around their National Historic Register property – *The Paul Family Farm*.

**May 17 7:15 pm** *The Civil War Roundtable of New Hampshire* will meet on at the Harvey-Mitchell Library, 151 Main st, Epping, NH. This meeting will feature: **“Seeing’ the Civil War as it Happened: Through the Eyes of Sketch Artist Alfred R. Waud,”** presented by **Michael Vose**. For more information, visit [www.cwrt-nh.org](http://www.cwrt-nh.org) or call Bill 978-994-4717



Jan Cerabona with students at Eliot Elementary School taking part in the observance of the solar eclipse on April 8, 2024.



Explore diverse musical stories through historic objects, instruments, artwork, photographs, clothing—and of course music! Maine Historical Society’s Gallery at 489 Congress St. Portland, Maine.

Tickets available online at [mainehistory.org](http://mainehistory.org) Digital versions of their exhibits are also available on Maine Memory Network at [www.mainememory.net](http://www.mainememory.net)



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