



8 RIVER RD., P. O. BOX 34, BUXTON, ME. 04093

BUXTON-HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

INCORPORATED 1970

[http:// www. buxtonhollishistorical.org](http://www.buxtonhollishistorical.org)

SPRING 2012



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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Happy Spring Everyone!

Our accessioning and cataloging project was successfully completed this winter, making it much easier to access our substantial printed resources and other materials!! Heartfelt THANKS go to Paul Senechal, our data entry guru, and Brenton Hill for guidance and direction. We look forward to our volunteer training on Sat., March 31st to put the new info to use!

Last year our Board made the decision to make the effort to try to preserve an important part of our area's heritage—our historic old public buildings—Hanson School and Hollis High School. It has been another busy winter working to try to save the Bar Mills Elementary School from demolition. Along with Hanson (which was certified last year), it has been certified recently as a "contributing" building in the potential Bar Mills National Historic District by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. This building, most recently the home of the MSAD 6 Administrative Offices was the first (and, for 40 years, the only) consolidated school in Buxton. It made possible the consolidation of three one-room schools in Buxton and one in Hollis. The BHHS Board has made two proposals to the Facilities Committee of SAD 6, which are discussed in a bit more detail on pg. 3 of this newsletter. We await School Board action.

We continue to support the work of CHARM (Community Heritage Alliance of Rural Maine) in their efforts to save the old Hollis High School and their Board voted to assist us with the old Administration Building.

A friend sent me a quote which applies to our efforts: "If you think you are too small to make a difference, then you have never been in bed with a mosquito!" HA! The bottom line for me is "Keep the faith, work hard for that in which you believe, then release the outcome!"

Other news is that our Librarian of over 15 years, Rita Bradbury, has had to step back because of personal reasons. She is sadly missed. Her knowledge, interest and enthusiasm for history and her positive attitude have been a



great addition to the Board. We plan to see her at meetings, though, as time permits.

So, we are looking for a new Librarian. If you would be interested or know of someone who may be, please call 929-8895.

Please note that our library hours have changed this year to the *second and fourth Friday and Saturday* of each month (April-October), except for Memorial Day Weekend in May when we will be closed.

We have an exciting year of programming planned and we hope you will find something that interests you in the schedule. We will kick the year off with a power point presentation by Hollis landscape architect, Theresa Mattor, of the rational and plans for landscaping unfolding this spring at the National Historic Register Elden Store. This program will be held at the nearby N.C. Watson School, so we can easily walk over to check out progress, weather permitting.

In October we have *two* events—one a fundraising night of sharing spooky stories in preparation for Halloween and the *Haunted Cemetery Tour* at South Buxton Cemetery the following Saturday.

Annual meeting this year will be another fundraiser—this time a pot-luck dinner at the Bar Mills Parish House for a change. We hope you will mark your calendars now and join in the fun.

Jan Hill, *President*

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS 2012

Tues., April 17, 6:30 P.M.: “Bringing Elden Store Into the 21st Century” with Theresa Mattor, Landscape Architect of Hollis and Jan Hill, President of BHHS & Elden Store Project Manager. Power point presentation including early photos, recent improvements to this National Register building; period landscape plan in process, all made possible by grants from *Narragansett Number One Foundation*. Join us for a short tour of the site following the presentation, weather permitting. **N.W. Watson One-Room School, Groveville Rd. (Just behind Buxton Centre Baptist Church on Rt. 22, Buxton Center)**

Tues., May 8, 6:30 P.M.: “What’s Going On in Bar Mills?” with Julie Ann Larry, Principle, ttl-architects of Portland, ME— Maine Department of Transportation consultants have drawn lines of an estimated historic district that would be affected by the upcoming replacement of the Memorial Bridge connecting Bar Mills, Buxton and Hollis sides. This has prompted discussion about the advantages of a formal application for historic district eligibility by Bar Mills residents in Buxton and Hollis. **Old White Church, 15 Salmon Falls Rd., Buxton**

Tues., June 12, 7:00 P.M.: “Virtual Tour of Painted Theater Curtains in Maine”—Based on a 2011 state wide survey by *Curtains Without Borders*, Chris Hadsel of Vermont presents over 140 examples of historic theatre scenery. Two local theater curtains, including Hollis’s old Odd Fellows Hall curtain, will also be on display. **Saco River Grange, 29 Salmon Falls Rd., Buxton**

Sat., July 21, 9:00 A.M.: Buxton Community Day: There will be a **“100th Birthday Celebration Party of the historic Bar Mills Elementary School”** at the Historical Society SALE table and YOU are invited! Built in 1912, the school was the first graded consolidated school in Buxton and the only one for the next 40 years! It’s construction made possible the consolidation of students from three one room schools in Buxton (Bar Mills, Scribners & Buxton Lower Corner). Students from Bar Mills, Hollis side, were also tuitioned there until 1958 when it became the MSAD 6 Administrative Offices. Come by, have a piece of Birthday Cake, celebrate the charm of this 4000+ sq. ft. beauty and learn of its pending threat of demolition! **Tory Hill Church Lawn, Corner of Rt. 202 & Rt. 112.**

Sat., Aug. 25, 9:30 A.M.: “Walk the Trails of Indian Cellar with Guided Interpretation” by John Mattor—Get your copy of the newly printed trail map and join us for a stroll in this historic and magical natural area with special attention given to the botany and bird life. **Meet @ at the parking lot on the corner of Salmon Falls Road & Rt. 202 (across from Salmon Falls Library in Hollis).**

Friday, Sept. 21, 7:30 P.M.: “In the Blood—A documentary film uncovering the life, skills and character of turn of the century Maine lumbermen and river drivers—held in conjunction with the Saco River Grange Hall. Film and music by Sumner McKane. Adults \$12, Seniors and Students \$10. Call 929-6472 for reservations or information. **Saco River Grange, 29 Salmon Falls Rd., Buxton.**

Sat., October 20, 6:30 P.M.: “Share Spooky Stories”—Share a strange ghost story or just listen as we prepare for the spookiest season of the year at this BHHS Capitol Campaign fund raiser to raise money for an eventual permanent home for our history center, museum and library. Adults \$10, Seniors and Students \$7. **Old White Church, 15 Salmon Falls Rd., Buxton.**

Sat., October 17, 3:30 P.M.: “Haunted Cemetery Tour”— Gather on the lawn of the First Congregational Church (Tory Hill), corner Rt. 202 & 112 for another haunted tour of the South Buxton Cemetery as “new” spirits come alive to greet you! Halloween treats to follow in the Royal Brewster Barn. Sponsored by the *Buxton-Hollis Historical Society* and the *South Buxton Cemetery Association*. Donations gratefully accepted.

Sat., Nov. 10, 5:30 P.M.— ”The Rise and Fall of West Buxton Village, A center for Manufacturing and Merchandizing” presented by past President Brenton Hill. This 42nd annual meeting will be a pot luck supper fund raiser for the Society’s Capital Campaign. Supper will feature spiral ham, casseroles galore, salads and yummy home made desserts! \$10. For reservations, contact Nancy Kneeland @ 929-8773 or email Nancy@sacoriver.net. For more information or if you would like to help, contact Berty Ramsdell@ 929-4529 or email wramsdell1@roadrunner.com. OR Jan Hill @929-8895, hillclan@sacoriver.net

Two Public Buildings In Grave Danger of Demolition in Buxton & Hollis

Precious few historic public buildings of any consequence exist (or are left) in Buxton or Hollis. Historic buildings that are in grave danger of demolition this year are the old RSU 6 Administrative Office Building (1958-2011), previously known as the *Bar Mills Elementary School* (1912-1957) and the Hollis Learning Center or old *Hollis High School* (Built 1941).



Old Bar Mills Elementary School —a Contributing Building in a DOT National Register Historic District

Both buildings have been offered back to their respective towns and have been refused by the Selectmen, while so many towns around (and in Maine) are preserving their New England character by valuing and making good use of their quality old public buildings.



Hollis Learning Center

The School Board will vote on Monday, March 19 on a motion from the Facilities Committee to offer the old Administrative Office building for sale on the open market for a suggested 3 months with a stipulation that it be moved (nominally for parking). A plan has been put forth by the new Superintendent to retain the attached portables (which have almost twice the footprint of the old building, none of the character, quality of workmanship or historic significance of the old building). It should be noted that only a small portion of these portables are being used (for paper record storage), while the majority of space in these poor quality buildings remains vacant.

In an attempt to encourage responsible fiscal management and preserve the historic character of Bar Mills Village, on March 8, the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society Board presented two proposals to the Facilities Committee of the School Board. The first proposal was that the District sell the 1912 Bar Mills Elementary School building on the open market to a low-impact complimentary business to not only earn money for the District, but save taxpayers demolition costs. It was suggested that this could include land or be a condo sale. In either case, easements could be granted or received, as needed, for well, septic and parking. The second proposal was that the District sell the building to the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society for a token fee for use as an history center, museum and genealogical library, while granting necessary easements for well, septic and parking.

Additionally, the Society applied to the *Maine Historic Preservation Commission* for a ruling on the eligibility of the building for the National Historic Register of Historic Places. A judgment has been made that the old Admin Building (a.k.a. Bar Mills Elementary School) qualifies, along with the Berry Memorial Library, as a "Contributing" building to a potential National Historic District that exists in Bar Mills. An application for National Register eligibility is also being prepared for the old Hollis High School.

Funds have been budgeted for demolition of both buildings in the 2012 School Budget and will be voted on at the May, 2012 School Budget meeting to be held at the Buxton Center Elementary School.

In 2011-12, the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society led an effort to save the historic Hanson School from demolition by RSU 6. Although voters narrowly defeated a referendum question which would have allowed Hanson to be studied and used as a much needed community center, the referendum bought enough time for a leadership change in the school district. With the short term leadership of interim Superintendent Mark Eastman, the Board faced the facts which had materialized by then: *first*, there were (and are) serious accreditation issues at Bonny Eagle, at least one of which has been solved by moving the existing portables off the high school campus and moving the School District's Maintenance and Technology Departments to the classroom portion of Hanson; *second*, there will be no more state funding coming into RSU 6 for at least 15 years. (The District is 32nd on the list, behind several new high schools.) As a result, the School Board decided to use its asset, Hanson School, versus demolishing it. In addition, the gym section of Hanson is now serving as a space to accumulate the District's excess furniture in preparation for a disposal process yet to unfold.

ELIZA S. Libby.....*Buxton Teacher Extraordinaire*

*Article and Research by Meg Gardiner and Roberta Ramsdell

Eliza S. Libby was born in 1872 and died in 1960. She spent more than forty-four of those years teaching the young people of Buxton, primarily at Buxton High School. Teaching appears to have been both her life's work and her life's passion. There is, however, universal agreement that Eliza S. Libby was an excellent teacher. In the 1960's the elementary school, now the new RSU 6 Administrative Offices, in Bar Mills was named for her.

It is probable that Eliza S. Libby began her career as a teacher at the school at Dearborn Hill. It seems likely that she became a teacher directly from her own high school completion, which was often the practice at that time. At one place in a town report her educational background is listed as "summer school."

At some point she began teaching at Buxton High School prior to the construction of the new building. This event also highlighted substantial changes to the structure of education at the secondary level.

Educational practices involving funding, the role of the State, administrative practices, and curriculum focus evolved rapidly and drastically during the early years of the Twentieth Century. Some of these changes included more State funding (especially for rural schools) and forming school unions that replaced smaller districts, adding more uniformity to the way in which schools were administered. Another new concept moved away from the one-room schoolhouse that encompassed all grades through eighth grade and toward separate graded classrooms (Bar Mills Elementary School, 1912). Curriculum changes included a greater emphasis on practical subjects that were more useful to the local industrial, trade and agricultural occupations. Prior to this, high schools emphasized classical academic preparation for colleges such as Harvard. Science became much more important, as well.

Miss Libby taught at Buxton High School from 1909–1939 inclusive. During the years 1918 – 1920 she was the principal of the school at a time when women were not generally elevated to that position. We speculate that the town fathers were unable to find a man for the job because of the double decimations of World War I and the flu epidemic. After 1920 she reverted back to her position as "teacher" and a new male principal replaced her. The greatest change in acknowledging her status that I noticed was that prior to becoming principal she had always been categorized as "assistant teacher." After her temporary promotion, the "assistant" appellation was dropped, and she was listed from then on as "teacher."

In the early 1900's the school year consisted of three terms: winter, spring, and summer. This was a flexible schedule that suited the daily lives of the students, as they could choose which terms they wished to attend. Usually the teachers took off one or more terms to suit their personal needs. Ms. Libby seems to have usually taught during all three terms on a regular basis, resulting in her teaching career becoming a full-time, all year position. At one point, she received pay of \$1,000 per term.

The only break found in her teaching career was when she "retired" to care for her elderly, sick father. She returned to teaching after he died.

According to long time Buxton resident, Harold Smith, who was a student of hers during her last year of teaching (1939), Miss Libby was very, very strict about neatness. In fact, Harold maintains that the reason he prints everything he writes even now is because of Miss Libby's emphasis on written perfection. She taught English, World History, and Biology.

Both Harold and his father had Miss Libby as a teacher. Harold says his father went only to the Dearborn School; hence, the supposition that she taught there prior to Buxton High School.

Eliza Libby never married. Married teachers were not allowed until quite late into the twentieth century; one wonders whether that was a deterring factor in Miss Libby's decision to remain single. We know that she loved and was dedicated to teaching.

The students seem to have appreciated the difficulty of her task through the generations, as a feature of their yearbook, *The Crescent*, included a "Jokes" page. The jokes described were illustrative of student-teacher interactions, and Miss Libby was featured more than any other teacher for years and years. Examples of a few of these interactions follow on page 5.



Eliza S. Libby 1872-1960

Miss Libby (in Biology class): "Joe, tell me the use of the cranium."

Joe: "It is a covering for the heart and lungs."

Miss Libby: "Well, I've heard of people wearing their hearts on their sleeves but never in their cranium."

Miss Libby (in Civics): "Henry, tell me what the Hull House is?"

Henry (rather reluctantly): "How do you spell it?"

Miss L.: "H-U-L-L."

Henry (after several minutes of hard thinking): "It's where they hull corn."

Miss Libby (in Biology): "Edna, what are rodents?"

Edna M.: "Horses, cows, and us."

The recipe below was submitted by Eliza S. Libby to the first cookbook compiled by the Dorcas Society, which was published in 1911. Called Dorcas Dishes, it was edited by Kate Douglas Wiggin. Here is the excerpt from the Introduction, written by Ms. Wiggin:

"...This modest volume does not aim to be a complete compendium of scientific cooking nor a practical guide to the young housekeeper; neither can we claim for it any startling originality. It has been compiled because we have many enterprises in hand for which we need money, and we believe the book may be one of the ways in which we can fill out treasury.

....We are helping to build a new Parish or Community House where boys' and girls' clubs can meet; where gatherings of many sorts can be held, and such lectures and entertainments as are appropriate for a small audience room; where also the social hospitalities of the church can be dispensed with comfort and dignity."

Cranberry Pie

Recipe submitted by Eliza S. Libby (1872-1960)

1 cup cranberries chopped fine	1 tablespoon flour
1 cup sugar	½ cup boiling water, scant
1 cup chopped raisins	Salt and vanilla

Mix flour and sugar. Add water, then raisins. Beat smooth. Add cranberries last.

Bake in two crusts.

BHHS Library & Museum

BHHS Society Library & Museum Hours

8 River Rd., Rt. 112, West Buxton

Primarily a Non-Lending Library for Historical and Genealogical Research

Buxton, Hollis & York County

Open 2nd & 4th Fridays & Saturdays April-October, 2012

1 – 4 P.M.

(Closed Memorial Day Weekend, except by appointment)

1 - 4 P.M., April 1st — October 15th



BHHS Museum & Library—West Buxton

An Update on CHARM (Community Heritage Alliance of Rural Maine)

A non-profit organization dedicated to the acquisition, conservation, protection, re-purposing, and management of community spaces that matter

Many of you are familiar with CHARM, the non-profit organization of concerned Buxton and Hollis citizens formed after the referendum initiatives to save Samuel D. Hanson High School and Hollis High School failed. Countless meetings, letters, and school tours later, we take satisfaction in some achievements, in particular that both schools were scheduled to be demolished by July 31st, and both schools remain intact.

Amazingly, through the work of a new interim Superintendent, RSU #6 Directors realized there were no state funds coming to RSU 6 for at least 15 years and that the District needed to address numerous accreditation issues at Bonny Eagle. RSU 6 Directors realized they had a use for Hanson after all, and they have done some renovations, including two new bathrooms. Over February vacation, their Maintenance and Technical Service Departments moved into the classroom section of the building. (They promise an Open House at some point!) The District also needed storage for surplus equipment as they decide what to keep and how to dispose of the rest; that, too, has found its way into the gym annex. Now there is talk of refitting the gym for community use during the next few years. It seems the building is indeed an asset, not a liability, after all!

The fate of Hollis High School is unfortunately still undecided. The school district is now plodding through the legal requirements set by the State before they can demolish the building. Since the Town of Hollis rejected the building, the District is preparing to offer it on the open market at "fair market value." The limits of that offer are not known now, but it appears that they will offer the building only, unless the District is able to acquire acreage to the right of the elementary school, which should eliminate land issues for the old building.

CHARM has had two successful fundraisers. One of these was a public supper in December 2012. The Hollis Lions Club generously donated the use of their hall for the location, and many, many community members donated the most wonderful casseroles, salads, and desserts. Everyone agreed that the food was outstandingly delicious! The second effort was generated by Susan Orfant Gillette, President of CHARM, who gathered a dozen of her lovely oil paintings of the area and had them reproduced as a beautiful calendar. Additionally, many community members have made generous donations. Expenses to date have been primarily the application fee for status as a 501C3 non-profit organization (over \$800) and fees associated with State licensing requirements.

Please consider attending one or all of the CHARM meetings so that they can continue to strengthen this organization and its role in preserving our important historical heritage. Meetings are the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 6:30 p.m., Old White Church, Salmon Falls Road, Buxton (in Bar Mills). Their email is: maine-charm16@yahoo.com and they can also be found on Facebook or at their website

Article by Meg Gardiner



Membership Drive Continues — New House Signs For Sale

Beautiful new house signs are now available through the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society and area carpenter, Jim Shula of *Salt Water Workshop*. OLD or NEW homes—it doesn't matter! Signs are \$75 (\$10 of which is applied towards a membership in the society). Choose your preferred background color of dark green, wine or black—all with gold lettering. All signs have three possible lines. Specify if you want drilled holes in each corner for hanging or not. FMI, call Kathy @ 229-9498.

Elden Store Adopt A Tree or Bush Program

The *Elden Store Adopt A Tree or Bush Program* will help the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society with needed funding to complete the landscaping project at Elden Store, along with "beautifying" Buxton Center, a potential small local historic district.

This is your opportunity to adopt a small, but hearty tree or shrub already place on the professionally designed landscape plan. (We have been advised by our landscape designer that small trees are less expensive, yet catch up very quickly to larger, more expensive larger trunk trees.) Each of the adopted trees will be fertilized annually and will have cedar bark mulch placed around their trunks. *A marker in memory of a loved one or as a thank-you to you for your generous gift will be placed at the base of your adopted tree or shrub!* (Please see the next page to Adopt A Tree or Shrub.) FMI, call Jan @929-8895. THANK-YOU!

**N. C. Watson One-Room
School Museum**

Groveville Rd., Buxton Center

Open

First and Third Saturdays

April 7 to October 20, 2011

1 – 4 P.M. Regular Museum Hours

OR

**Arrange a Special Time for your
group’s program!**

Call Stacey @ 929-2141



From THE NARRAGANSETT SUN

“Tidbits,” Wednesday, June 23, 1897

A man called at the dentist’s the other day to have a tooth extracted; the bill was fifty cents. The man grumbled at the price, saying “Why, you will pull two for fifty cents, won’t you?” “Yes.” “Well, I guess that I will have another one pulled.” So down he sat and had another extracted, got up, paid the bill, and went home satisfied that he had beaten the dentist out of a tooth.

“Some Names of Places and Their Origin”

December 1915

EGYPT

After the cold summer of 1816 there was a great scarcity of seed corn in the town of Buxton as well as other places. The next spring it was said that there was only one place in the town where seed corn could be procured, and that was from Mr. Stephen Palmer who lived about a mile above Bar Mills, a quarter of a mile above the railroad station. Mr. Palmer had a large tract of interval land bordering on the Saco River, which was very productive, and he usually raised a large crop of corn. The year 1816 seems to have been no exception. The reason for this seems to have been this. The corn field was on this interval land near the river and it was thought that the spray from this river kept the corn from being killed by the frost which had killed about all the young corn plants elsewhere.

Mr. Palmer raised a good crop of corn and instead of canning it for speculation, kept it for his neighbors for seed.

One day in the spring of 1817 Mr. John or Jacob Eaton, who lived two miles above Palmer’s, was harnessing his horse and his wife asked him where he was going. He replied, “I am going to Egypt.” She thought he was joking, and she was so surprised at his answer that she didn’t ask any further questions, but when he was driving off he told her he was going down to Stephen Palmer’s to get some seed corn, and he called it Egypt, and it has held on to the name ever since.

New Gibeon Bradbury Floral Note Card Available 2012

The fourth in a series of six lovely floral note cards of Gibeon Bradbury paintings, “*Wild Rose, Arrowhead, Great Willow Herb and Pipisewwa*“ will debut on Buxton Community Day, courtesy of Beverly and Richard (Sandy) Atkinson of Bar Mills.

The first card offered in 2009 was Bradbury’s *Trillium, Lilies and Violets*. The second, offered in 2010, was *Wild Roses and Hummingbird*; and the third, *Mayflowers in Glass Tumbler* in 2011. Cards are \$1.25 each or 4 for \$5.00. They will be available at the Buxton Town Hall, BHHS Museum, the Saco Museum or for order on line @

www.buxtonhollishistorical.org



Wild Rose, Arrowhead, Great Willow Herb and Pipisewwa

by

“The Artist on the Saco”:

**Gibeon Elden
Bradbury**

Oil on Canvas 1865

18” x 14”

2011-12 Membership Form

(Please Print Clearly)

Name (s): _____

Street Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Please send us your updated email address to help keep our contact list current !

_____ Please send my newsletter electronically. _____ Please send my newsletter by snail mail.

Phone: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____

Committee/Area of interest: ___ Genealogy ___ Library ___ Life Stories ___ Newsletter

Other? _____

Annual Dues Level (For fiscal year starting April 1st):

___ Individual (\$10) ___ Family (\$20) ___ Patron (\$50) ___ Sustaining (\$100) ___ Founder (\$500)

*To determine if your membership is current, if you receive a snail mail newsletter, please check the year posted at the right of your mailing address label to determine when payment was last received, OR call Kathy Kendrick @ 229-9498. **Donations are Tax Deductible and are Gratefully Accepted!** Please make checks to the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society and mail to: Kathleen Kendrick, BHHS Membership Chair, P.O. Box 236, Hollis Center, Maine 04042.*

THANK-YOU!

BUXTON-HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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