



100 MAIN STREET, ROUTE 4A ♦ BAR MILLS, MAINE

BUXTON-HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

INCORPORATED 1970 ♦ <http://www.buxtonhollishistorical.org> ♦ 207.929.1684 ♦ FALL 2016

President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

Looking back over the 2016 summer months, it all seems a blur of exciting activity for BHHS! We had a well-attended kayak/canoe trip on the Saco - *Cruising the River II*. We put in at Skelton Dam and after our scenic trip UP the Saco, we were greeted by John and Kathy Larry as we landed at their lovely riverside picnic site in Bar Mills. (I must disclose that because of a painful right arm, I was towed much of the way by hubby, who took pity on me. Thank you, Brent!) Once again, following the "cruise", we enjoyed a plentiful BBQ and good conversation in the wonderful Burt and Barbara Pease barn in Bar Mills, an annual favorite destination. Our gratitude to the Larry's and Pease's, as well as to old and new friends who came along on the trip!

A very successful fundraiser was held in August—the *Benefit Bash in the Brewster Barn*, which replaced the *Box Lunch Social Auction* of several prior years. (Please note all the "b's" in the event title!) The theme for the evening was "b's" and "bees", so the color was yellow: napkins, tablecloths, etc. were yellow and the yellow frosted cake was decorated with bees. We had such hilarity planning this wonderful evening! 105 people reserved their places. We've had many reports that the large pieces cut from 18 assorted homemade pies were enticing and delectable; and, if audience attention was any measure, the appraisals by Bruce Buxton, were an especially huge hit. So, "bee" sure to see the follow up article of the event written by Martha Muldoon later in this newsletter! Hope you will plan to join the fun next year!



We are looking forward to a busy autumn of programming. Be sure to check our program listings for details of the September 20 program on stone rubbing with Paul Barasel, the October 15 Memorial Fountain re-dedication and the October 18 program on historic funeral customs with Chad Poitras.

Our first major exhibit, *All Roads Lead to Bar Mills*, is nearing completion, after many months (actually, two years!) of steady volunteer visioning, creativity and hard work! Be among the first to tour the exhibit! Attend an **Exhibit Preview** at our **2016 Annual Meeting Pot Luck Supper on Saturday, November 5th**. A video presentation of the exhibit is also being created in conjunction with Saco River Community Television, for first floor exhibit viewing by visitors not able to access the second floor. The **official Bar Mills Exhibit Grand Opening** will be held in the spring of 2017 on Saturday, April 8 from 10 A.M. - 3 P. M. (More information on this to follow in our spring newsletter.)

This fall we are also preparing storage for an exciting newly gifted vintage clothing collection from Dorcas Society President, Carla Turner. During the winter months, we hope to continue to chip away on our capital projects and have time to accession a number of recently gifted family treasures. Strategic planning is also on our radar for the fall and winter months, so stay tuned for more on this as we go forward.

We look forward to seeing many of you at our entertaining and informative fall programming. Visit our website www.buxtonhollishistorical.org and www.bhhsnewsletter.weebly.com for more information.

Best Wishes for a Happy Autumn,
Jan Hill, *President*



(l-r) Janice Lane, Jan Hill, Nancy Pierce, Meg Gardner, Bertie Ramsdell, Betsy Clay, Barry Plummer (Brent Hill was behind the camera lens)

BHHS OFFICERS

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Marguerite Gardner, *Vice-President, Hollis*

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2016 MEMBERSHIP FORM..... back cover

What is the Memorial Fountain in Buxton All About?

by Jan Hill

At the intersection of Main and Fountain Streets in Bar Mills sits a very impressive stone fountain. Have you ever wondered as you traveled Main St. in Bar Mills what that stone structure is all about? Have you ever taken a moment to stop to read the inscription mounted on its center? If you haven’t, or even if you have, there will soon be an opportunity to recognize and ponder the lives of the people it was built to memorialize on October 15 at 11 A.M. at the site.

The Memorial Fountain was completed and donated in 1894 by the Woodman family to honor the Rev. Paul Coffin, who in 1763 was Buxton's first settled minister, and his grandson, Cyrus Woodman. Originally used for watering horses in the early days before cars, it was designed by John Calvin Stevens, Portland's most famous architect.

Coffin ministered at Tory Hill until his death in 1822. He was postmaster and farmed the large ministerial lot in Bar Mills and was credited with naming the town “Buxton” at its incorporation for unknown, but often incorrectly speculated reasons. One of his daughters, Dorcas, married Dr. Royal Brewster who commissioned the construction of what is now the National Register Royal Brewster Mansion in 1805.

Cyrus Woodman was born and raised in Buxton. He was the partner of the famous real estate developer, congressman and Civil War general, Cadwallader Washburn, in Galena, Illinois; he sponsored the publication of Goodwin’s *Records of the Proprietors of Narraganset Township No. 1, now Buxton, Maine*, both the 1800 and 1852 Dennett maps of Buxton, a publication of Paul Coffin's sermons and a genealogy of the Woodman family. He established the Buxton Scholarship Fund at Bowdoin College and was a sponsor of the Buxton Centennial in 1872.

In 2015, through the initiative and generous support of Richard and Beverly Atkinson of Bar Mills, the Memorial Fountain, a significant and artfully designed reminder of Buxton’s thriving history, has been restored. Their awareness of the need to preserve this unique structure, which reflects the rich heritage of Bar Mills, and their willingness to pursue that end are deeply appreciated.



We hope you will attend this re-dedication ceremony being sponsored by the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society (complete with music and lunch, as well as a horse and carriage) being held to recognize the 2015 restoration of this beautifully designed historic memorial. For many years, it served the citizens of Buxton (and their horses) and has now graced Bar Mills Village for 122 years! Hopefully, it will now go on in restored form well into the future!

Revisiting Thoughts of Our 2016 Year

by Meg Gardner

The falling leaves...drift by my window..." I hated that song when I was young (actually, I still do), but the tune was chosen for our eighth grade graduation class song and I had to accompany the class as they wailed it out. We are closing in on the end of 2016 and many of us have picked up a lot of information as we went along. You may remember some of our high points, both recorded and not recorded, during the past BHHS year.

We again hosted a tour for Scouts, this time Buxton Wolf Pack 14 led by Erin Curtis. We thoroughly enjoyed our evening with them. They were interested in many things, but most of all - Donna and Millie Hanson take notice! - their gracious thank-you note said that they liked the old pump organ that was saved from the Fire of 1947 best! I am sure that the expertise of President Jan Hill at the keyboards (and pumps) contributed to their admiration. It is wonderful to have students in and about asking questions about history and appreciating all of the unique artifacts donated by Hollis and Buxton residents. We hope many more will become part of our visiting and participating volunteers.

In the same vein, wasn't it great to have Maypole dancers from the *All That Dance Studio* at our Victorian Social in May? Again, young people bring history alive with new eyes, new vigor, and new enthusiasm, and encouraging them to be part of BHHS enhances everything that we do. I hope those adults who work with children in some way will approach us with their ideas so that we can continue to liven up our offerings. We had so many people that our cake was too modest and there wasn't enough for everyone. On the other hand, that was a really good outcome for us as we tried out a new idea.

Jan Hill chose the hottest day of the summer to repair and paint the ceiling in one of the upstairs rooms.

The new fundraising idea that moved from a *Box Lunch Social Auction* to an informal appraisal estimate, but remained in the Atkinson's intriguing Brewster Barn attracted a big crowd as Bruce Buxton threw out some surprises (and a few duds, but he was gracious about those as well). The sushi platter hors d'oeuvre was very popular; who'd have thunk, out here in the sticks of Maine, that sushi would outweigh baked beans on a summer Saturday night?

(continued on page 7)

VISIT OUR HISTORY CENTER

100 Main Street, Route 4A, Bar Mills, Maine
OPEN:
Thursdays 4:00—8:00 p.m.
Saturdays 9:00—12:00 a.m.
Except holiday weekends

The BHHS newsletter is proudly sponsored by
Chad E. Poitras Cremation and Funeral Service

Funeral Home ☞ Cremation Provider
498 Long Plains Road, Buxton
929-3723

www.mainefuneral.com

Chad Poitras, BHHS member

"A local resident serving locals with dignity and respect"

ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER

The Buxton-Hollis Historical Society Newsletter is published typically in the spring, summer and fall. The purpose of the BHHS newsletter is to develop, inform and foster a network of citizens and institutions, in the Buxton-Hollis area of Maine and beyond who unite in thought and action in collecting, preserving and publishing the early and late history of the towns of Buxton and Hollis. Contact info. provided on pg. 1.

VISIT US ONLINE

Be sure to check out our webpage (www.buxtonhollishistorical.org) and Facebook page, both managed by our own "Molly Woodman" for event photos and more news than we have room for here. Additionally, visit www.bhhsnewsletter.weebly.com to see the online version of the BHHS newsletter.

DONATIONS NEEDED!

We have many local resources available for research at our research library and museum due to generous donations over the years. Two things very helpful and interesting to genealogical researchers are needed--**Saco River Telegraph & Telephone phone books before 1965** and **Bonny Eagle High School yearbooks**. If you have either of these items or know of someone who might donate them we would be very glad to accept them for our collection and future use!



A LOOK BACK IN TIME

Harry Davis and his apple press. The cup he is holding was used every year! Follow BHHS on Facebook for more historical photos!

Upcoming Events 2016

Tuesday, September 20, 6:30 P.M.: "Life in Stone"

Stone rubbing is the practice of creating an image of surface features of gravestones on paper and can reveal what was going on in an area or a specific time. Paul Barasel will discuss gravestone funeral art symbolism from the early 1600's through the late 1880's. Mr. Barasel, who has done numerous talks on the subject, began his fascination with gravestone rubbings over 40 years ago. Most recently, Mr. Barasel authored an article entitled "*This Hobby Makes 'Getting Stoned' Have a Whole New Exciting Meaning*", which appeared in the "Up Portland" Newspaper, February, 2016 edition.

*Refreshments served. *Suggested donations: \$10, Seniors \$8.*

Saturday, October 15, 11:00 A.M.: Memorial Fountain Re-Dedication

We come together to re-dedicate this beautiful restored monument honoring two of Buxton's most important and influential early leaders. Designed by John Calvin Stevens, Portland's most famous architect, the Memorial Fountain at the corner of Main St. and Fountain St. in Bar Mills (Rt. 4A) was completed and donated in 1894 by the Woodman family to honor the Rev. Paul Coffin, who in 1763 was Buxton's first settled minister, and his grandson, Cyrus Woodman (read more about them in a short article found in this newsletter). Following the speaker, Brenton Hill, Past President of BHHS, a reception is being planned with music, a light lunch and horse and carriage at the site. The fountain was restored in 2015 through the initiative and generous support of Richard and Beverly Atkinson of Bar Mills. An RSVP to Jan Hill 929-8895 would be helpful for lunch planning. You won't want to miss this event! Donations are always welcome to support BHHS capital projects.

Tuesday, October 18, 6:30 P.M.: "The Evolution of Funeral Customs in New England"

As with so many other things in our daily lives, *funeral traditions* stemming from the earliest days of America have changed and evolved over the years. Customs at colonial funerals were quite different and some might even be considered strange today. Victorian society dictated strict rules for the observance of rituals related to death and dying. Today, many modern funeral customs are focused on personalizing arrangements tailored to fit the life of the deceased. Explore changing funeral customs with Chad Poitras, serving area residents and their families since 2001. Chad is Funeral Director at Chad E. Poitras Cremation and Funeral Service. *Refreshments served. *Suggested donations: \$10, Seniors \$8.*

Saturday, November 5, 5:00 P.M. - Annual Meeting & Potluck Dinner "All Roads Lead to Bar Mills" Exhibit Celebration

Once again, we will gather together at 100 Main Street, Bar Mills, for our Annual Meeting, election of officers and delicious potluck dinner! The program will be slides of our new Bar Mills exhibit creation process and a chance to view the exhibit. Exhibit visionary, local history resource and past BHHS President Brenton Hill, assisted by Curator Steven Atripaldi; BHHS President Jan Hill; Buxton Vice-President, Barry Plummer; and graphic design guru, Beth Gardner, have been working to create and complete our first major BHHS exhibit. It has taken an incredible amount of time and energy and we trust that you will find it well worth the effort! For dinner reservations, call Berty Ramsdell @ 929-4529 or email robertaramsdell@myottmail.com. **Suggested donations: \$10, Seniors \$8.*

***Please note that suggested donations are used to support on-going capital improvements to our new history center building.**

N.C. Watson School One-Room School



Groveville Road
(behind Buxton Centre Baptist Church)
Buxton Center
*Open 2nd Saturday of each month
from June—October
1:00 to 4:00 P.M.*

For more information, to schedule a group, or to make an appointment outside posted times, please contact Stacey Gagnon
cell: (207) 229-9540
email: staceygagnon19@gmail.com

Bruce Buxton Appraisals Bring Surprises

by *Martha A. Muldoon*

An Arrowhead Collection to be donated to the BHHS by Dr. Peter Larrabee brought an estimate of \$1000, a Dancing Minstrel toy by a famed doll maker brought an estimate of \$1200 to \$1500 and a John Calvin Stevens watercolor estimated by its owner at \$500 was found to be worth between \$1000 and \$1200.

These were just some of the surprises served up at an entertaining and educational session as treasures of all types were examined and valued by Bruce Buxton. Buxton, a nationally known appraiser and representative of Skinner's Auctioneers of Boston, made his fourth appearance for the Buxton Hollis Historic Society during the Brewster Barn *Benefit Bash*, which replaced BHHS's entertaining *Box Lunch Auction* held the previous three years.

Many of the items brought to be evaluated were of unknown value to their owners, as they represented heirlooms inherited or handed down to recipients by relatives. But whether they proved very valuable or not, everyone present was interested in hearing Buxton's evaluations as he drew on his extensive knowledge of antiques and art. Carrying on in his usual "Buxton" style, sometimes feigning horror at the condition of a framed piece or asking to take one or another item home with him, he kept the very attentive audience of nearly 100 attendees entertained through almost fifty evaluations.



Some other appraised highlights included:

- A set of hunting lithographs by A.B. Frost, estimated by its owner at \$1200 for both, turned out to be valued between \$700 to \$1000 each.
- A 1950's Maine Central Lionel freight car in its original box was estimated to be worth between \$65 and \$70.
- A handsome 14K gold woman's pocket watch by Elgin was valued at \$450.
- A wood cut (thought to be of Paris) purchased for \$4 was estimated at \$100.
- A miniature 1877 Micmac Indian basket approximately 3" high was valued at \$350.
- Another larger Micmac basket with original finish, estimated by owner at \$100, was valued at \$350.
- A hand hewn wooden trencher in original condition was valued at \$450.
- A lovely Yellow Ware milk pitcher, estimated by the owner at \$135, was valued at \$300.
- Two small German motif pottery mugs made in Portland, Maine were valued at \$200 each!
- A wonderful large Les Touraine French Car Poster from the twenties in very good condition was valued at \$3000.

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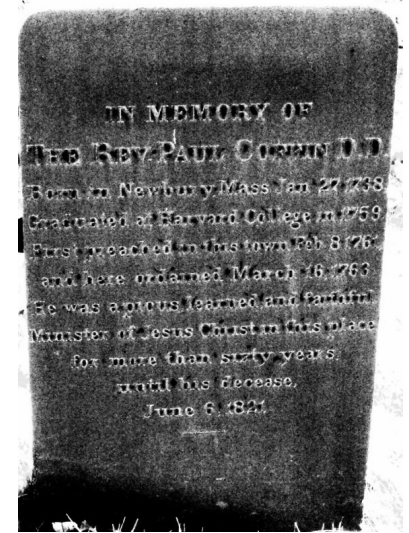
Press Release: "Life in Stone"

Humans have an irrepresible urge to memorialize their personal and cultural history. For thousands of years, one of the more effective methods to do so has involved stone cutting. The Buxton-Hollis Historical Society's program on *Tuesday, September 20th, at 6:30 p.m.*, will feature Paul Barasel, who has been fascinated by and has studied gravestone carvings for more than forty years. He will illustrate how gravestones document human lives, social and cultural history, matters of life and death, and popular culture. We will also learn how the art of the stone carver can be further preserved by us today by "stone rubbing," which creates an image of the person, places, and symbolic beliefs individualized and celebrated by each gravestone.

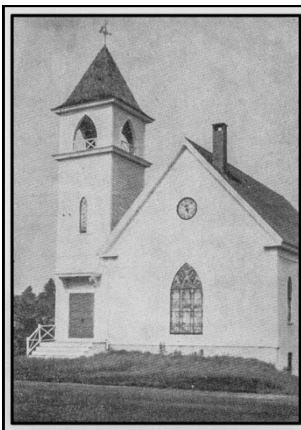
For example, the gravestone of one of the area's most influential and earliest settlers, the Reverend Dr. Paul Coffin (buried in the South Buxton Cemetery), gives us the history of his most important accomplishments. Unfortunately, it is sparse on his personal life, except for verifying his birth and his death, so we may have to look to other gravestones in order to fill in the blanks. However, as a means of obtaining correct dates for historical and genealogical purposes, this stone is a clear expression of the life of a man who was "...a pious learned, and faithful Minister of Jesus Christ in this place for more than sixty years."

Some of the saddest gravestones are those belonging to young children. Too often a family had to bury all or nearly all of their offspring. One such collection at Bear Hill Cemetery in Hollis has five little gravestones all in a row, and the family has no more children named after the last one died. From the dates on the stones, it seems probable that all of the children were sickened by one of the many virulent maladies such as influenza or whooping cough that we hardly consider a life-or-death matter now. Often cherubs graced these small memories.

Dr. Coffin's gravestone has a lot of writing and very little embellishment. This may be more the exception rather than the rule of early stone gravestone carvers. Although the Puritans preached a life of plainness and absence of decoration, often the gravestones in the late 17th and early 18th centuries belied their Spartan ethic. Indeed, their gravestones were often quite fancy and full of symbolism, depending on the fashion, place, and date. We will have an opportunity to explore these apparent incongruities with Mr. Barasel, who will address gravestone funeral art styles and symbols from the early 1600s through the late 1880s on Tuesday. Refreshments will be served; suggested donations are \$10 for adults and \$8 for students and Seniors.



Hollis Center Baptist Church



circa 1917



present day

The Hollis Center Baptist Church is celebrating its One Hundredth Birthday in 2017! The birthday party is scheduled for July 22nd and July 23, 2017; be sure to save those dates, as more information will be coming. Right now the community is looking for ANY ephemera/ memorabilia/pictures/general information that pertains to the church, its pastors, its congregations, and its milestones. Weddings, funerals, baptisms, and social events will be welcome additions to the church's collection and will be displayed during the festivities. There is a special need for information from the early years (1920 - 1950 and 1960). Pat Garrett is the contact person and can be reached at this email address: hbc100@hcbaptist.com. Stay tuned!

(continued from page 3)

The first really extensive exhibition we planned has taken about two years longer than we anticipated to mount, but it is going to be spectacular: Bar Mills Village. We have had some amazing donations for the exhibit and we can't wait to show everything to you. Brent Hill, Barry Plummer, and Steve Atripoldi, along with assistance from President Jan Hill, have done the lion's share of the work in between multiple other "minor" projects - such as redoing the whole back entrance to make our Community Meeting Room handicap accessible.

Do you realize that it has been seventy years since the "Great Fire"? Some of us still think of it happening the day before yesterday. We trembled at the drought we had this summer, so much like the summer before the fire.

We have had a few people contribute articles to the newsletter, and they are a great addition. Memories and first-person stories are always better than culling something from a "dull" history book. If you would like to contribute to the newsletter either in writing or with pictures (or both), or if you are curious about a topic and would like me or another member to research and write about it, please leave me a message via BHHS contact information. Be sure to leave your name, idea, and contact information. The more I am involved with history, the more it seems "curiouser and curiouser!" to me, just as Alice cried when she encountered Wonderland.



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- A large charcoal illustration, estimated by owner at \$150, was valued between \$1200 and \$1300.
- A whale oil lamp of flint glass with flat panels, estimated by its owner at \$175, was actually Sandwich Glass and valued at \$450.



Good News Bad News

The biggest surprises of the night included an old Moxie bottle, valued at \$25 by its owner, and valued by Buxton at between \$200 and \$300. And a submission described as "an original Jean Cocteau bronze vase worth \$15,000" was found to be a reproduction worth only about \$250.

Although the weather was warm, it was matched by the warmth of friendships renewed and begun over a summer supper of hors d'oeuvres, sandwich rolls, chips, fruit salad and the most wonderful assortment of

homemade pies! Thanks to all who attended and contributed to a wonderful evening at Bev and Sandy Atkinson's fabulous Brewster Barn.

*** Proceeds from the \$25/person admission are to benefit the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society's Capital Projects.*

2016 Membership Form

(Please Print Clearly)

Name (s): _____

Street Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email address: _____

Phone: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____

Send my newsletter electronically _____

Send my newsletter by U. S. Mail _____

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

We are in need of volunteers to help rehabilitate our new headquarters, assist patrons in our research library and help create our new museum displays at 100 Main St., Bar Mills, Maine. Please note below how you would like to help.

2016 Annual Dues Level

(Our membership calendar year is January 1 to December 31)

___ Individual (\$10) ___ Family (\$20) ___ Patron (\$50)

___ Sustaining (\$100) ___ Founder (\$500) ___ Other

Donations are Tax Deductible and are Gratefully Accepted!

Please make checks to: Buxton-Hollis Historical Society

Send to:

Buxton Hollis Historical Society

Attn: Membership Chair

P. O. Box 34

Buxton, ME 04093

Questions? Please call 929-1684 and leave a message on our office answering machine OR go to *Contact Us* on our website www.buxtonhollishistorical.org

THANK YOU!

BUXTON-HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 34

BUXTON, MAINE 04093-0034

