

## President's Message

**D**ear Members and Friends,  
 It seems hard to believe that we are approaching the time of year when volunteers are invited to help us ready (clean) headquarters on March 18 beginning at 9 A.M. in preparation for our BHHS opening day on Saturday, April 1st!

We are excited to announce that our new exhibit, *All Roads Lead to Bar Mills 1855 - 1956*, will officially be open from 9 -2 on **April 8!** A video presentation prepared by Saco River Community Television of the exhibit will be playing on the first floor as well. Lots of volunteer labor and time have gone into the planning and creation of this exhibit, which is one of several on the drawing board in the next few years



Buxton-Hollis Hospital Medical Instruments



Switchboard and Chair used at Saco River Telegraph and Telephone Company before 1956

covering the villages of Buxton and Hollis. The old Bar Mills fire truck will be on display in the parking lot. Refreshments will be served. We hope you will visit us on April 8th!

same house where Alida boarded. This fascinating booklet will be available for sale in our Museum Shop this spring.

Be sure to check our 2017 list of programs in this newsletter. The program committee has done their best to assemble a varied and interesting schedule of events for the year!

I am excited to announce, as well, that editing is near completion on a winter project of producing a booklet of Alida Rogers Wolf's memoirs of her Six Months Teaching (and living) in Buxton, Maine in 1923. Alida taught at the S. D. Hanson School and boarded at the Haseltine house on Long Plains Rd., just up the street from the former school. Her memoirs were sent to us by her son, Robert Wolf, who gave us permission to use them. Included in the booklet is house and family information collected by Don Kopp, who now lives with his wife, Ba, in the very



Young teachers Mildred Bickmore and Alida Rogers by rear ell of Haseltine house where they boarded in 1923.

Best Regards,  
 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)

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- Janice Hill, *President*
- Barry Plummer, *Vice-President, Buxton*
- Nancy Ponzetti, *Vice-President, Hollis*
- Vicki Walker, *Secretary*
- Betsy Clay, *Treasurer*

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# The Cochrane Craze

by Nancy Ponzetti

“Issuing from the door of the Riverboro Town House, and winding down the hill... came a procession of singing men and singing women. Convinced of sin, but entranced with promised pardon... the band of “Cochranites” marched down the dusty road... dancing, swaying, waving handkerchiefs, and shouting hosannas.” <sup>1</sup>

In the first chapter (“Saco Waters”) of *The Story of Waitstill Baxter* by Kate Douglas Wiggin (1913), the influence of a non-denominational preacher, Jacob Cochrane, is introduced. Although fictionalized in this novel, what is truly known of this man who suddenly appeared in the Saco River villages in the early 1800s?

Born in Enfield Center, Grafton, New Hampshire on July 9, 1782, Jacob Cochrane Jr. would wed Abigail Stephenson Colcord and father five children. Between 1813-1815 Cochrane moved his family first to Conway, New Hampshire then to Fryeburg, Maine. Operating a grocery store during those years, he conducted retail operations in both towns while developing his hypnotic skills over susceptible people. In 1816 Cochrane moved to Scarborough, Maine and began his association with the Freewill Baptist denomination. Lacking evidence that he was ever licensed to preach or had ever been ordained, Cochrane eventually became a popular preacher in Scarborough and surrounding towns.

Between 1816-1819 Cochrane expanded his preaching into York County, especially into the towns of Saco, Buxton, Hollis, and Kennebunk. He created a new sect, *The Society of Free Brethren and Sisters*, claiming success in miracle-working and exorcism. Cochrane also instituted *holy dancing* and frenzied *reaping* in which participants were “thrown into the greatest agitations; a violent exertion of the arms and body for a long time together.” <sup>2</sup> Eventually Cochrane would dismiss traditional marriage vows for the polygamous doctrine of *spiritual wifery* assigning women to men, but mostly assigning women to himself. Cochranites also strove toward living in communal order where all possessions would be held in common.

By 1819 Jacob Cochrane would be arrested, tried twice, convicted, and imprisoned on several charges of adultery, open and gross lewdness, and seduction. Cochrane was sentenced to four years

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# All Roads Lead to Bar Mills:

*An Exhibition Developed, Built, and Presented by BHHS*

*by Meg Gardner*

We are bursting with excitement about the first major exhibit that we have mounted in our new building. Our plans project eventually to encompass all of the Buxton/Hollis villages that span the Saco River, the silvery thread that has tied the two communities together throughout at least 5,000 years of history. Where better to begin than with our own “home,” the village that houses our beautiful History Center? The Grand Opening is April 8<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Wander down the timeline and contemplate the rich history of Bar Mills; weigh yourself (if you dare) on Dr. Drummond’s scale from the Buxton-Hollis Hospital; and then treat yourself to some delicious refreshments!

Many of you have seen and appreciated the beautiful restoration/rehabilitation results that have been effected by so many BHHS dedicated volunteers. We have tracked literally thousands of volunteer hours. Honestly, we have amazed ourselves. This tremendous effort, dedication, time commitment, and just plain hard and often dirty physical labor has resulted in a showpiece that celebrates not only our past history but also a spirit of adventure and determination that tackles each obstacle and looks forward to the future. Many, many people contribute to this effort. They provide generous financial support, donations of precious historical objects, hours of labor-intensive attention to the accessioning and other vital clerical tasks, provide outstanding delicious food for all of our programs and our annual meeting, and - let’s face it - some even clean the bathrooms. As a matter of fact, now that the subject of cleaning is on the table, so to speak, our big spring cleaning effort is scheduled for Saturday, March 18 from 9 AM until it is done. Come when you can. We could use your help! This is a very big job: we have a whole lot of building, artifacts, and books to clean and to get ready for the coming season. And, remember, if cleaning and more painting, etc., isn’t really your bailiwick, there are all kinds of other opportunities to fit your abilities and interests.

If you’ve looked at the program list you may have noticed that there is a wealth of activities and programs for 2017. Consider joining either one special project or an ongoing one. We understand that one size doesn’t fit all, but there is so much to do,

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**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

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Chad Poitras, BHHS member

*“A local resident serving locals with dignity and respect”*

**ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER**

The Buxton-Hollis Historical Society Newsletter is published three times a year, typically in the spring, summer and fall. Its purpose is to inform a network of citizens and institutions of the work of BHHS and to foster an appreciation of the importance of Buxton and Hollis history.

**VISIT US ONLINE**

Be sure to check out our webpage ([www.buxtonhollishistorical.org](http://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](http://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**

Adorned in fine hats, Emma Palmer McKenney and Carrie Call on Bar Mills bridge. Follow BHHS on Facebook for more historical photos!

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## Upcoming Events 2017

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**Sat., April 8, 9 A.M. - 2 P.M.: GRAND OPENING of "All Roads Lead to Bar Mills"** - Come celebrate the new detailed and quality exhibit spanning both Buxton and Hollis sides of the Saco River in the key years of 1855-1956. It is the first of several major exhibits being planned to focus on the villages of Buxton and Hollis. In addition to touring the exhibit, we hope you will enjoy viewing the 1914 antique Bar Mills fire truck and sampling the refreshments. A video of the exhibit will also be playing. *\*Donations gratefully accepted.*

**Tues., April 18, 6:30 P.M.: "PAINTING & FRAME RESTORATION"** with Johanna Hoffman, *Chief Design Consultant & Restoration Specialist* at the Saco Frame Center. As a freelance artist, illustrator and professional picture framer proficient in many mediums (including sculpture), she has been manager of the Saco Frame Center in Pepperell Square for 25 years. Johanna will bring examples and share some restoration challenges she has faced in her career. Johanna also volunteers as a member of the City of Saco's Historic Preservation Commission and is an advocate for preservation. Donations gratefully accepted.

*\*Suggested donations \$10; Seniors, \$8.*

**Sun., May 21, 1 - 3:30 P.M.: "VICTORIAN WHITE PARTY WITH MAYPOLE DANCING II"**. Enjoy for the second year the very popular celebration of the arrival of spring with the *Movers and Shakers Competitive Dance Team of All That Dance Studio* of West Buxton. Come rain or shine with your entire family as we gather on the front and south lawns of the historic Quillcote summer home of Kate Douglas Wiggin, 20 Salmon Falls Rd. in Hollis. Music, refreshments, croquet, horseshoes and floral crown wreaths in abundance! FMI, contact Jan Hill 929-8895. *\*Donations gratefully accepted.*

**Tues., June 20, 6:30: "THE TWO NARRAGANSETT TOWNSHIPS, NO. 1 & NO. 7"** - Join us for this joint meeting of the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society with the Gorham Historical Society as presenters Robert "Butch" Yarumian of *Maine Boundary Consultants* of Buxton and a representative of the Gorham Historical Society discuss the common events that led to the formation of the two Narragansett Townships, Buxton and Gorham respectively. *\*Suggested donations \$10; Seniors, \$8.*

**Sat., July 22, 9 A.M.:** We are excited to announce a new **"NATURE WALK TO INDIAN CELLAR"** with expert tour guide, John Mattor, of the Hollis Conservation Commission. Many improvements have been made to the trails over recent years. Gather & park in the lot across from the Salmon Falls Library at the junction of Rt. 202 and Old Alfred Rd. The **Nature Walk will be followed by a delectable Noon BBQ in the Burt & Barb Pease barn** at 59 Depot St. Hamburgers, hot dogs and beverages will be provided. Anyone wishing to contribute to the menu may drop side dishes off at the Pease residence prior to the Nature Walk. To R.S.V.P. needed for cook out only, contact Roberta Ramsdell at 929-4529 or email [robertaramsdell@myottmail.com](mailto:robertaramsdell@myottmail.com) *Donations gratefully accepted.*

**Sat., Aug. 5, 9 A.M.: "DORCAS FAIR & CAR SHOW"** - Visit us as we participate in the Dorcas Fair at our BHHS sales tent on the Royal Brewster Mansion back forty, 8 Brewster Place, Bar Mills. The BHHS Research Library & Museum will be closed for this event.

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**Sat., August 19, 5 P.M.:** “**BENEFIT BASH IN THE BREWSTER BARN** – Lovely Summer Buffet with sumptuous homemade pies followed by *Antique Appraisals*” featuring *Bruce A. Buxton*, acclaimed appraiser and representative of *Skinner’s Auctioneers* of Boston. Tickets \$25/person. All donations benefit the BHHS capital improvement fund. Be sure to R.S.V.P. Bev at 929-6495 to reserve your seat, 8 Brewster Place, Bar Mills.

**Tues., Sept. 12, 6:30:** “**GENETIC GENEALOGY: Case Studies to Help with Traditional Genealogical Research**” with Nancy Milliken Mason who will follow up on her first popular program with more case studies and a focused exploration of which modality to explore to answer YOUR specific questions and more. A genetic genealogist and member of many national and international historical / genealogical societies, Nancy has been doing traditional genealogy research for over 30 years. She is a member of the Maine Genealogical DIG (DNA Interest Group) and is a speaker for ISOGG. She teaches local Adult Education programs and is available for DNA research consultations. \**Suggested donations \$10; Seniors, \$8.*

**Tues., Oct. 10, 6:30 P.M.:** “**THE COCHRANE CRAZE**” presented by Nancy Ponzetti. At its height between 1817-1819, the *Cochrane Craze* swept through York County particularly in the towns of Saco, Buxton, Hollis, and Kennebunk. Non-denominational preacher, Jacob Cochrane (1782-1836), founder of The Society of Free Brethren and Sisters, promoted the doctrine of *spiritual wifery* while encouraging *holy dancing* and frenzied *reaping* in worship. Cochrane’s ascension and demise will be discussed in this program as well as his possible influence on both the Oneida Community and the Church of Latter Day Saints. Nancy Ponzetti, historian and educator, is the current vice president of the BHHS for Hollis. \**Suggested donations \$10 ; Seniors, \$8.*

**Sat., Nov. 4, 5 P.M.:** “**APPRECIATING ANTIQUE HOMES, FROM ARCHITECTURE TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY**” Join us for our *Annual Meeting and Potluck Dinner* with well respected Real Estate Specialist, Linda Griffin of Linda Griffin Homes. She will be presenting local home slides, identifying styles and features and discussing numerous ways to make antique homes more energy efficient. As a preservationist and Vice-President of the Windham Historical Society and President of the Cornish Historical Society, Linda is concerned that many people these days are purchasing new homes because they are unaware of relatively easy ways to make older homes energy efficient. To reserve your seat at the table, please R.S.V.P. Roberta Ramsdell at 929-4529. \**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](mailto:staceygagnon19@gmail.com)



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hard labor at the Massachusetts State prison in Charlestown (Maine not yet being an independent state).

Membership in *The Society of Free Brethren and Sisters* dwindled while Jacob Cochrane was in prison, and other Cochranites were brought to trial on similar charges.

Several years after his release from prison, Cochrane established a colony in Grove township, Allegany County, New York. Concurrently living

in that area during the 1830s were several founding members of the Latter Day Saints Movement. Saco Valley historian, G.T. Ridlon, described Jacob Cochrane as the “John the Baptist” for Mormonism since many Cochranites were converted and moved westward with the Mormons under Joseph Smith Jr.’s leadership.

In 1836 Jacob Cochrane died in Stratham, New Hampshire. Once buried on the Dennett Farm, North Saco, his body was exhumed and reburied in an unknown, unmarked site in Enfield, New Hampshire, his birthplace. This ‘State o’ Maine’ prophet “who spoke as if the Lord of Hosts had given him inspiration; as if the angels were pouring words into his mouth just for him to utter”<sup>3</sup> would have been all but forgotten except for his fictionalization in Kate Douglas Wiggin’s novel and his inclusion in early Mormon history documents. The epitaph Wiggin wrote for Jacob Cochrane in that tale of “Saco waters” remains uncarved in stone:

“He spread his arms full wide abroad,  
His works are ever before his God,  
His name on earth shall long remain,  
Though envious sinners fret in vain.”<sup>4</sup>

#### Notes

1 Wiggin, Kate Douglas, *The Story of Waitstill Baxter*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913, p. 7.

2 <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com>, p.3.

3 Smith, Nora Archibald, *Kate Douglas Wiggin: As Her Sister Knew Her*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1925, p. 243.

4 Wiggin, p. 195.

5 [http://www.originalbookofmormonrestored.com/Polygamy-Masonry\\_Cochranites.html](http://www.originalbookofmormonrestored.com/Polygamy-Masonry_Cochranites.html)



Cochranites<sup>5</sup>

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so little time, and so much fun getting involved with BHHS activities that you will never regret doing so. While we are on this subject, remember that all are welcome to attend our Board meetings, which are scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month, beginning at 6:30 P.M.

BHHS has been blessed with generous financial donations, beginning with the \$20,000 grant Narragansett Number One Foundation promised us (for a new boiler and water heater) if we were able to acquire a lease from MSAD #6 for the 100 Main St. building. In spite of extensive costs associated with rehabilitating the building, we have been able to pay our expenses and establish a savings account for needed future capital projects. Although we are still focusing on the main building, we plan eventually to expand and rehabilitate the portable section as well. We are saving up in order to be able to re-roof the main building when the time comes, which isn't imminent, but which we know will be very expensive.

The "portables" have offered invaluable storage and work space during the renovations. However, area people - and some who have roots here but live elsewhere - have come forward with many beautiful and precious gifts to add to our collection. These range from an extensive collection of vintage clothing to an important collection of Native American tools to wonderful family photograph albums and books. You will have an opportunity to admire many of these fascinating items when you visit the "*All Roads Lead to Bar Mills*" exhibit. The collections are eclectic and stunning.

Preservation of these artifacts is a responsibility and privilege that the donors have entrusted to BHHS. One of the most vital components of preservation for all of these categories means that they must be protected from a damp environment. The National Register of Historic Places publishes an extensive collection of "Preservation Briefs" that supports this important consideration. The interior walls of all buildings including those of the Bar Mills School encourage insidious "wicking" of basement moisture that rises from wet or damp basements and permeates the floors and air above. Consider that we have a collection of valuable books; manuscripts; antique photographs and irreplaceable artwork; maps; vintage clothing and linens; and many very old family photographic albums, diaries, and scrapbooks in our collection, just one floor up from the damp and moldy basement. Continuing up to the second floor, we have a workroom full of treasures that are accessioned in their acid free boxes and our beautiful exhibit room with all of the Bar Mills treasures awaiting the moisture and its unsavory companions (including unhealthy air) from the basement. Even the third floor attic space cannot escape, in spite of the best efforts of our resident ghost, Will, to maintain and protect the building and its contents. It is obvious that, with our building lease secure, with the immediate renovations nearly completed, and with our collections expanding, we need to pay serious attention to waterproofing the basement. We also need more dry storage, which would be a bonus result of a solid, dry basement space.

For these reasons, the BHHS Board is unanimously committed to beginning a capital campaign in order to correct the problem in a comprehensive, lasting manner. After having researched various methods and their pros and cons, we have decided on a basement remediation system that meets our needs. The system we have targeted will meet all of the caveats we have listed and more, both by its comprehensive approach and its longevity. In order to move forward with the project, which is admittedly an expensive option, we will have to do a substantial amount of preparatory work, using both volunteer assistance and some of our own funds for contractors to complete the first phase. We will also research and write grants for this purpose. Additionally, however, BHHS must rely on targeted fund raising activities and individual donations in order to meet our financial goal. Thank you for your continued support.



THANK YOU!

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

**Questions?** Please call 929-1684 and leave a message OR visit *Contact Us* on our website

Buxton, ME 04093

P. O. Box 34

Attn: Membership Chair

Buxton Hollis Historical Society

**Send to:**

Buxton-Hollis Historical Society

**Please make checks to:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining (\$100) \_\_\_\_\_ Other

\_\_\_\_\_ Patron (\$50)

\_\_\_\_\_ Couple (\$500)

\_\_\_\_\_ Family (\$20)

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual (\$450)

\_\_\_\_\_ Paid Lifetime

**Annual Dues Level**

(Please Print Clearly)

Please note that membership year runs from January 1 thru December 31.

## Buxton-Hollis Historical Society Membership Year 2017

BUXTON-HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 34

BUXTON, MAINE 04093-0034



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