

Thomaston Historical Society

Fall Newsletter– October, 2023



Things Are Changing ... in the Museum

Thanks to the new display cases from Sandi Hoekstra, some new large donations and a lot of observations on what visitors are most interested in, we are in the process of planning and implementing many changes in the Museum displays. For example, since so many visitors are interested in ships built here, we are moving to the first floor and expanding our ships and sea captians exhibit. This gives us room to go into more detail on how ships were built and feature the key ship builders upstairs. Also seen above is the prison sleigh that greets visitors.

We also are renovating the prison exhibit and adding a Medicine Then and Now exhibit. We encourage you to come visit the museum to see what is in the works. It is a perfect time to give us your input on changes and what new exhibits you would like to see – or to lend a hand.

Susan Devlin, President and Curator

SUCCESSFUL THOMASTON HIGH SCHOOL REUNION BANQUET

SUCCESSFUL Thomaston High School Reunion Alumni Banquet (Currently known as the Thomaston Academy Bldg.) The building started out as the Thomaston Academy in 1845 with just the center portion. In 1860 it became the Thomaston High School. It was expanded in the 1920's. In 1962, 102 years later, it graduated its last class when a new school, Georges Valley High School opened. Thus, we were pleasantly surprised when an alumni group decided to hold a reunion. Assuming that the 1962 graduates were around 17 years old we were looking at the youngest being somewhere around 78 years old! Your historical society volunteered to hold an open house on Friday June 23 and Saturday June 24 to welcome graduates to review our collection of high school banners and mementos that we have acquired over the years. Also, we asked if they had any memorabilia, yearbooks, photos etc that they might like to donate to the museum. It would be greatly appreciated.

Were we surprised!! Both afternoons were well attended with much hilarity and enjoyment expressed by the attendees. The earliest class graduate was from 1948. States represented were from Maine, New Jersey to California. Items were donated and several attendees stated they would mail some to us. The banquet held at the Elks Club was well attended with about 115 graduates. All told, it was a successful change to open our doors and participate.



Bill Gay – Vice President

FOURTY DAYS OF SUMMER – EXPANDING OUR REACH

We worked together with the Museum Administrator of the General Henry Knox Museum, Barbara Siemion, to host two activities for the young people participating in the library's Forty Days of Summer.

- Building Privateers - We designed little sailing ships made of wine corks and sailcloth and worked with the kids for each to build and decorate one, while telling them a bit about the Privateers during the Revolutionary War.
- Archeological Dig – We met at the historical society and saw some of the finds from the dig in the Lyman Field. Then the kids dug in a “pool” full of sand to see what could be found – guess what was old and what was new.



Susan Devlin -- Dig Planner and Boat Designer

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS RETURNS!

The Thomaston Historical Society invites you to join us as we celebrate the holiday season by bringing back *Home for the Holidays* on Friday, December 8 from 5-7 PM and Saturday, December 9 from 10 AM to 3 PM. We will be greeting you at Bill and Jen Leszczynski's home at 8 The Mall in Thomaston and sharing this lovely Greek Revival, circa 1846, with its beautiful architectural details and special collections of European posters and other collectibles.

Friday's event features a Live Auction, a Silent Auction, and House tour as well as savory hors d'oeuvres and sweets with wine and seltzers. On Saturday The House Tour and Silent Auction will be available.

Great items are coming in for the auctions already, including an old Singer pedal sewing machine (shown here), a sextant, several paintings, and more.

Tickets for this event are limited and must be purchased in advance for Friday at \$20/Members and \$24/Non-members. Saturday tickets can be purchased at the door for \$10/Members and \$14/Non-members. Contact Mimi Zwick at (207) 354-7029 for tickets and more information.

Mimi Zwick, H4H Chair



OUT AND ABOUT

The Rockland Historical Society invited us to participate in their Postcard and Ephemeral Show and Sale on Sept 30 at the Congregational Church in Rockland. We were given a table to display and sell our various books. A pleasant day was had. Our table display was quite attractive and we had many and varied discussions with the attendees about your Thomaston Historical Society. Unfortunately, the book sales were not what we had hoped for, but the promotion of the Society was strong.



Bill Gay – Vice President

HAVE SOME FUN AND HELP US NOW

New Board Members/Officers - We could use some new blood and new ideas. Let us know if you are interested in exploring opportunities. A start could be working on a short term project.


Publicity – We have been functioning without a dedicated publicity person to help write news releases and newsletters. Our President has carried this load with too many other functions for too long. It is not too big a job and would benefit from a dedicated, creative writer to focus on this.

Building and Grounds Chair – Don't get scared, this does not mean cleaning, mowing and painting, but learning/tracking what needs to be done and finding the contractors or volunteers needed. A retired contractor would be an asset.

New Display Cases – We need to mount new cases for ship building / sail making exhibits. This requires building a frame to set them on. It is easy but we could use some help.

O'Brien Exhibit - A summer visitor helped us add information about John Ruggles for an expanded exhibit. Now we want to add a special O'Brien exhibit to use family information we recently received.

THANK YOU TO OUR CURRENT GOLD BUSINESS MEMBERS



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