

Thomaston Historical Society

Spring Newsletter– May, 2022



As we cautiously emerge from Covid lock-down, lots of things are happening at the museum thanks to the donation of five exhibit cases, like the one above, and some of the projects mentioned below.

Our primary limitation is help. Do you have just a couple of hours to help finish a task or suggest a new exhibit, are you willing to take on a special project like a new display for our satellite gallery in the town municipal building, or would you enjoy being a regular volunteers for just two hours a week or a half day a month to explore our archives for new exhibits or help visitors? If restoration is your thing, we need a new Building and Grounds chair to help track and arrange keeping our 1795 building in good shape. We also need a new Membership chair. More hands make for lighter work and more fun together.

Susan Devlin

President and Curator, Thomaston Historical Society

SAVE THE DATE - Summer Garden Tour June 18!

We will host a tour of eight local gardens and Community Garden Stand on Saturday, June 18 from 1-4 PM (rain date June 19). Maps and a listing of garden locations will be provided when tickets are purchased at 225 Main Street, the first stop on the tour. Guests may visit the other locations in their order of choice.

This is the 2nd Garden Tour sponsored by our Historical Society. This year the Thomaston Garden Club (TGC) will be working in collaboration with us for the event. The focus is to feature different kinds of flower and vegetable gardens.

A High Tea will be available for all ticketed guests, also at 225 Main Street, with various garden-related items for raffle choices.

Tickets are \$20 for THS and TGC members and \$25 for non-members. Tickets include tea, lemonade, and light refreshments. For additional information, please call Mimi Zwick at 354-7029.



Mimi Zwick – Tour Chair

SAVE THE DATE - Annual Membership Meeting and Talk June 21st

We have not had a membership annual meeting in three years. We have lots to tell you and a new board to elect. It will be brief so we can get to our first talk of the year – and a special one.

Thomaston Fire Chief Mike Mazzeo will talk about fire safety and prevention for those buying or restoring old homes, backed up with experiences and great stories. Steep stairs, balloon construction, concealed spaces, no fire stops between floors, and old electric systems are just some of the challenges in historic homes to be discussed.

Join us on June 21st at 7 pm in the hall on the lower level of the Federated Church (8 Hyler St.). The entrance is from the parking lot (easy access) behind the church, accessible off Hyler or Dunn Street.



Aleta Kilborn, Program Chair

Veterans Profiles Popular Municipal Building Gallery Display

Our second display at our new satellite gallery featured profiles of Thomaston patriots who served in wars from the Revolutionary War and War of 1812, thanks to help from Joanne Richards and the Tolman Cemetery project. It also covered soldiers in the Civil War, WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam and the Mideast. We



received lots of feedback and even added more profiles after the picture shown was taken. The later wars were part of our ongoing project to interview veterans or family members. This led to the Salute to Veterans reception that Sandy Moore now chairs each fall.

Currently you can visit the town office to see a Timeline of the Foot of Knox Street – covering Fort St. Georges, Montpelier, the Thomaston train station (now our Museum), some businesses including Black and Gay Cannery, and four shipyards. In late May we will feature old school graduation photos and events. Let us know what else you would like to see – especially if you willing to help plan an exhibit. We hope to cycle four exhibits a year.

Interesting Inquires Keep Coming In

A year ago we highlighted some of the questions we were asked. Here are a few more received in the past few months.

1. *I am trying to find a little bit of information on the J. A. Creighton & Co. I am specifically looking for information on the Monroe's Roller Rotary Harrows and Cultivators. I have a salesman sample model of a harrow and would like to find out more about the company and the equipment. I would love to find any patent numbers the company may have gotten and any sales literature they would have used to promote the rotary harrow.*
2. *My wife and I bought the Olof & Eve Anderson home on Main St - the 1838 Captain Robinson Estate. Recently, we discovered there is a "doll house" story regarding this beautiful property and wondered if there is book about that? We have many questions about the home history and the Knox Era and believe the answers may be at the historical society. We are very excited about finding this gem.*

NOTE: We have taken over support of the website Olof built about the dollhouse for the family. You can visit it at <https://thomastonhistoricalsociety.com/ThomastonHistory.html> and click on the Capt. George W. Robinson House link. The new owners are now in touch with the person restored the house for the Andersons.

3. *We have relatives from Friendship who died at sea June 29, 1865 off of Cape Hatteras, NC. There was also a Cushing boy on the same ship. Curious if this ship was built in Thomaston?*
4. *We thought you might like to see this letterhead. (W.L. Barrett Dealer in Horses, Thomaston, Maine) We don't know where he lived or the location of his business in Thomaston.*
5. A request to help find the Gold house? **NOTE:** We located it near where Dwight and Elm intersect and provided names and locations of graves for family members in our cemetery.
6. *Can you help with our genealogy research on the Thorndike family who came from Germany in the 1700s.*
NOTE: We provided a copy of a hand-drawn map of earlier settlers of So. Thomaston, showing several Thorndike plots and grave locations.

If genealogy is a special interest, let us know if we can draw on your help when a question comes in.

Bill Gay, Vice President

New Museum Exhibits

Thanks to Sandra Hoekstra, we have five new display cases she donated when closing her store on Main Street to focus on her lucrative online presence for antique books, maps and other ephemera.

We now can expand our displays and are rethinking how to freshen all our exhibits to be more



informative. The picture on the first page of this newsletter shows two table top exhibit cases. Here is one of two other floor cases – this one will feature Fort St. George and Montpelier artifacts collected by Thomaston citizens or during our recent archaeological dig led by Harbour Mitchel.

We are upgrading the quarry and shipbuilding exhibits on the second floor, as well as making room on the first floor for the restored Prison sleigh, a vintage clothing exhibit, and Dr. Hodgkin's early 20th Century medical tools. We still need help for sanding and painting the sleigh!!

Curators Susan Devlin and Kyle Barter

Other 2022 Events Coming Up

All our Tuesday talks will now be in the basement of the Federated Church which faces Hyler Street. The back lot entrance gives us a parking lot, no stairs to climb, and plenty of room.

Sat. July 23 - General Henry Knox Annual Memorial Service. This annual 10:30 AM service honors Revolutionary War General Henry Knox. It takes place at the gravesite in the Thomaston Town Cemetery off Erin Street. A reception follows on the Knox Museum grounds.

Tues. Aug. 9 – What I found in the Pacific Ocean 53 Years Ago - Apollo 11 Astronauts. Retired naval officer, Bill Wasson, will help us relive this piece of history from his experiences on the retrieval ship.

Tues. Sept. 13 - Still in negotiation.

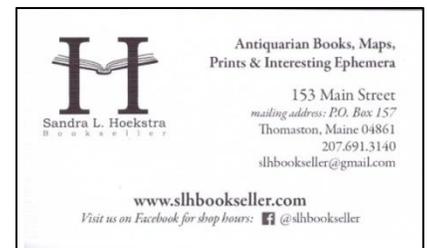
Tues. Oct. 11 – Meeting Hall Maine. Artist Michelle Hauser has created an historic network of fraternal societies with records that document Maine's hundreds of meeting halls for posterity.

Membership Renewal Time

Thanks to the many who have renewed their memberships and to our new members last year. We hope you will renew your memberships for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. See included form.

Also, a big thank you goes to the Gold Business Members shown here.

Aleta Kilborn, Interim Membership Chair, and Ron Gamage, Treasurer



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