

# HERITAGE HIGHLIGHTS

*Thanks to your continued support, LCHA is making meaningful impacts across Lincoln County. This letter from Luke Suttmeier highlights just one inspiring way your generosity is helping bring history to life.*

*Summer 2025*

Dear Heritage Circle Members,

Allow me to introduce myself for those of you who don't already know me. My name is Luke Suttmeier. I've been a teacher in Lincoln County for the last dozen years, a member of the Lincoln County Historical Association board of trustees since 2022, and the chair of the LCHA Development Committee since January. As a local educator, I have the pleasure of both being an LCHA trustee and getting to see LCHA's local educational outreach efforts in action.

I'm a big believer in experiential, hands-on, outside-the-traditional-classroom learning. Getting to "see, smell, feel, hear, and touch" history on my own is what sparked my interest in history as a child. I can still remember smelling the sulphuric scent of gunpowder at reenactments, witnessing the commanding view of Lake Champlain from Fort Ticonderoga, and re-listening to the audio tour of Gettysburg in bed at home long after we had returned from the battlefield. Now in the position to pass my love of history on to others, I try to give my students as many opportunities to learn this way as possible. Thankfully, LCHA has helped make this happen, as my 7th grade class at Nobleboro Central School has had the incredible opportunity to work with LCHA educators Louise and Jeff Miller on a number of occasions over the past few years.

Two years ago, my 7th graders at NCS participated in a mock trial at Pownalborough Courthouse as part of the "Before the Judges" program. Louise came to the classroom to introduce the program and provide valuable background information for the students. Students then adopted historical roles, researched the 18th-century legal system, and crafted arguments for both sides of the case. We then traveled to Pownalborough Courthouse where students (playing all the traditional roles) argued guilt and innocence, called witnesses, and thought creatively on their feet in front of a jury of their peers. It was so rewarding as an educator to see how seriously the students took their roles and how long they still debated this case afterwards. These students graduated 8th grade this June, and as they departed many remarked on how memorable that particular learning experience was for them.

This past fall, Jeff and Louise lent their expertise to help my 7th grade class at Nobleboro Central School design and frame out a Wabanaki wigwam behind the school. Before construction, Louise taught students about the various traditional methods of wigwam construction. Saplings were cut and a clearing made prior to the construction and students were taught how to use draw knives and other tools to strip the bark and branches from the saplings. Once the saplings were stripped and readied, they were lashed together to construct the wigwam frame. The students participated in every step of the process and we now have a full-size wigwam frame to show for it. This fall, students will create a cover of either real birchbark or canvas painted to look like birchbark to complete this project.

LCHA also joined the NCS 7th graders for two cooking classes run by the CLC YMCA's FARMS program, one on traditional Wabanaki cooking and the other on Civil War cooking. In creating these recipes, students were able to work directly with traditional ingredients and learn from Louise about cooking methods and technologies. In addition, to supplement students' learning on colonial America, Louise and Jeff Miller brought in 18th-century "market bags" to share with students. These market bags were filled with objects and pictures of objects that would have been utilized and traded in the 18th century and helped students better understand the trade and barter systems so common in 18th-century New England.

Overall, this partnership between Nobleboro Central School and the LCHA's Education Department has helped students see, feel, and experience Lincoln County's history firsthand. These are the types of educational experiences that drew me to education, and I believe these are the experiences that are most likely to be remembered by students. We are so lucky to have LCHA as a partner to supplement and enhance the "traditional" learning also taking place.

I hope to see many of you at the upcoming Heritage Circle event on July 29 at Pownalborough Courthouse, where I look forward to expressing in person how grateful I am for these educational partnerships and the generous support that makes them possible.

Best,  
Luke Suttmeier



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## PROJECT NEWS



A recent assessment of our archives set us on a path to optimize their care and long-term stewardship! The materials pictured here will soon be on new shelving and ready for an updated inventory.

We are excited to share fantastic project news made possible by the generosity of our donors!!

- LCHA recently received a grant from the Davis Family Foundation to support our *Collections and Archives Storage Optimization* project. This vital work at the Old Jail involves cleaning and improving storage spaces, as well as creating a stabilized archives room to ensure the long-term care of our paper-based materials. This project builds on recommendations from last year's archives assessment funded by the Maine Historical Records Advisory Board. Ultimately, it will result in a more accurate inventory and enhanced access for researchers. LCHA's ability to contribute funds strengthened the grant application, and we are deeply grateful to all who made this possible.
- Thanks to a generous grant from the Elise and William Viles Foundation, we will be installing *UV-protective window shades at the historic Pownalborough Court House*. These shades will safeguard the building's historic interiors and collections from damaging UV light while maintaining public accessibility for education and engagement. The grant will cover installation for approximately half to two-thirds of the windows, with the remaining costs made manageable through the continued support of our annual donors.
- Finally, we are pleased to announce the *Detailed Documentation work at the Chapman-Hall House*. This project will produce precise, scaled architectural drawings essential for preservation and guiding future restoration efforts, ensuring repairs remain true to the original design. These drawings will also serve as a lasting record of the building's current condition. This important work is made possible by the ongoing generosity of donors!



## UP NEXT: JAILHOUSE ROCK!

For the second year in a row, we're excited to host **Jailhouse Rock**, a lively community party at the Old Jail in Wiscasset on August 9<sup>th</sup> starting at 5:00. This event brings people together with great music, food, yard games, and tours of the historic jail cells. We're proud to collaborate with Wiscasset Partners in Education and the Wiscasset Community Center because we believe in working together to serve our community.

Jailhouse Rock is a friend-raiser, not a fundraiser, and it's a fun way of sharing this incredible local treasure with the public. Last year, many visitors told us they'd driven by the jail for years without ever stepping inside and appreciated the chance to explore.

This year, we're adding a fun twist with a mock arrest of band members from The Leopard Girls. Funds raised for their "bail" will support the Old Jail and help bring live music back to our stage. We're grateful for the opportunity to connect with the community and share this unique piece of our history. We hope to see you there for a fun and relaxed August evening!

None of this would be possible without your incredible support.

Thank you!