
LCHA CHRONICLE

Lincoln County Historical Association

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President's Letter

The spring of 2021 brings hope of new beginnings and emergence from the pandemic that has been with us for so long. We are cautiously planning events and opening our properties where possible according to state guidelines. Tours are by reservation only, with social distancing and masks required.

Another new beginning occurs in June when we welcome Shannon Gilmore as our new Executive Director. I would like to thank Joe Zoellers, Bill Danielson, Christine Hopf-Lovette, Bill Brewer and George Keyes for joining me on the search committee very ably headed by Ryan LaRochelle.

LCHA manages three historic properties in three communities. Until now we have not had year-round office space because none of our 18th and 19th century properties has heat. Thanks to Sherri Dunbar of Tim Dunham Realty, we now have a dedicated office at 152 Main Street, Wiscasset in the Carl MP Larrabee Agency building.

Stewardship of our historic properties and their collections is central to our mission. George Keyes has written a thoughtful remembrance of one of LCHA's greatest benefactors, William G. Waters, who has donated land, collection items and endowment to support our mission.

We also thank descendants of the Canby family for their donation in support of the restoration of a portrait by Henry Cheever Pratt as well as objects belonging to the Goodwin and Johnson families, early residents of Pownalborough Court House.

We appreciate the generosity and continued support of our members, donors, and visitors to our historic sites and programs. Please join us as we gradually re-open our doors.

Michael Chaney
President, Board of Trustees

Meet Shannon Gilmore, LCHA's new Executive Director



Shannon Gilmore

In our quest for a new director, a seven-person search committee headed by RyanLaRoche had the good fortune to interview a large number of well-qualified applicants. In the end, it was Shannon Gilmore's blend of organizational and historic preservation experience, plus her

engaging personality, that convinced the committee she is the right person for the job.

Shannon is currently an administrative and programs associate at Freeport Historical Society and has served on the board of trustees at Pejepscot Historical Society since 2014, most recently as board president and previously as vice president, chair of the development committee, as well as a docent and educator at the Skolfield-Whittier House. She is also currently working on her Master's degree in Historic Preservation at Goucher College.

Shannon has held a strong interest in local histories, beginning as a youthful volunteer at her hometown historical society. She went on to Bowdoin College where she concentrated her studies on 19th Century American History. After college she was introduced to the behind-the-scenes professional museum world, American material culture, and museum operations in Historic Deerfield's Summer Fellowship program.

An internship at the Stanley Museum in Kingfield gave her experience in member relationships, fundraising, and connecting with the public. Subsequent work with a consulting company in Montana took her to state historical societies, small museums, libraries, and the National Archives. All of this exposed her to a broad range of ways to interact with a historical organization and helped

her to develop a clear understanding of how we balance operations and offerings that benefit the public.

"I'm very excited about getting to know the organization," she said, "and I look forward to working with the staff, board, and volunteers to grow our community and develop innovative ways of sharing the stories of LCHA's fascinating properties."

LCHA's executive director is currently a 24-hour per week position, and Shannon begins work on June 2. Her office will be located at 152 Main Street, Wiscasset, in space generously donated by Sherri Dunbar of Dunham Realty. *Editor*

Maine Bicentennial - Plus One

by Ryan LaRoche

Planning is underway for the Lincoln County Pilgrimage, a week-long series of events and activities to commemorate Maine's (belated) Bicentennial. Events will take place from Sunday, August 15 through Sunday, August 22. Keep an eye on our website for more details as they become available.

Pownalborough Court House and the Old Jail will be open during regular hours by reservation during the Pilgrimage week. Chapman-Hall House will be closed for the season.

LCHA will participate in the Bicentennial Parade in Lewiston on August 21 with a float that replicates the facades of all three sites. We need a driver with a CDL for the truck. Please contact Christine Hopf-Lovette at chopflovet@gmail.com.

Save the Date!

Kermess at Pownalborough Court House
Pig Roast
Auction of Cakes & Experiences

September 12, 2021
4:00PM

William G. Waters (1915-2016)

by George Keyes

Through his sustained and extraordinary generosity William Waters is, without doubt, the most significant donor to LCHA since its inception roughly seventy years ago. In 1960 he was instrumental in saving the Chapman Hall House from demolition and setting up the foundation that initially supported it. Bill Waters then took the initiative to transfer this property, its contents, and its endowment to LCHA in late 2008. It should also be noted that many of the contents of this house were also donated by him over the years.

During the short time that I had the privilege of knowing this shy and retiring man, he presented many gifts to the Pownalborough Court House (PCH) including several pairs of brass andirons and fireplace implements, pewter dinnerware, furniture items and sundry other decorative arts pieces. These have been incorporated into the new presentations of the various rooms of the courthouse which greatly enhance the visitor's experience of this remarkable historic place.

Finally, and most significantly, Bill Waters in his will not only left a sizable endowment to benefit the PCH, but more importantly a tract of 54 acres of woodland that abuts the original PCH woodlands flanking the east side of highway 128. Together the two parcels now total more than 125 acres and have been developed in recent years into a truly wonderful network of walking and hiking trails. These have proven to be immensely popular particularly during the covid pandemic. Averaging more than 400 users per month, this recreational facility has provided a source of inspiration and solace to its many users who have come to appreciate its unique importance to their lives.

In recognition of Bill Waters' decisive impact on LCHA and more specifically, on the PCH, George and Elaine Keyes recently gave LCHA a transitional flat-topped cherry and tiger maple high chest of drawers in memory of Bill Waters. While largely in the Queen Anne style, this piece of case furniture



Trail in a part of the woodland donated by Bill Waters

retains vestiges of the earlier William and Mary fashion. Probably dating from about 1740-1760 this high chest of drawers is a characteristic example of excellent country cabinetmaking and could have been made anywhere from the Massachusetts highlands north of Worcester, across southern New Hampshire or even southern Maine. It is exactly the kind of piece of formal furniture that could have graced homes across this region and is, therefore, a fitting example of furnishing gracing our 18th century LCHA properties.



Cherry and tiger maple chest of drawers donated to the Court House by George and Elaine Keyes in memory of Bill Waters

Education Outreach

by Louise T. Miller, Education Director

The two new booklets, *Settlement during the War Years – 17th & 18th Century Challenges*, and *The 1800s – A Century of Highs and Lows*, are now online through the LCHA website. Members wishing to access these files are asked to request the passwords; it is through requests that we can monitor how much interest the booklets are getting. Please note, the new e-mail address: lchamaine1954@gmail.com.

Spring has brought a flurry of activity for the Education Department. Our first Zoom historical cooking program of the year was partnered with the FARMS kitchen at the Central Lincoln County YMCA, Damariscotta and the South Bristol School's 7th & 8th graders. The theme was foodways of the Civil War era. When asked by their teacher, Kayla Wright, to write about the experience, the majority of the students commented on the recipe for apple pie made from crackers – apples not required. I had two Civil War recipe booklets, one Confederate and the other Union, from which to offer highlights to the students.

Wiscasset Elementary School 4th graders are preparing for Maine history studies. Becky Hallowell, 4th grade teacher at the school, is planning a Zoom meeting for the students with me to discuss their prepared questions. For their Revolutionary War studies, I compiled documents and information highlighting activities and individuals from Lincoln County and Maine.

Because the 17th Century Lincoln County program at Colonial Pemaquid Historic State Site will not be presented this year, Great Salt Bay School is looking into smaller version of the program at the school.

In preparation for the summer, I am working with the Wiscasset Middle High School on a new experiential summer program involving three one-week sessions. The project is intended to bring together 6th, 7th, & 8th grade students and local non-profits for activities in which the students can

learn while they provide some man-power for on-site projects.

The unknowns of the past several months are beginning to be worked through and stronger connections are building between LCHA and students in private, public and home schools.

Collections

by Faye Snyder

The Collections Committee welcomes spring! As the weather warms up so does our access to all three of the LCHA museums. Progress is being made. During the winter months we numbered, described and entered over 1200 material objects into our new data base *Catalogit*. Now that the weather is warmer, we will go back to Pownalborough Court House to add photographs of each object and tie up loose ends. We will then move on to the Museum & Old Jail where we will photograph and enter into the database the inventory for the kitchen, a number of clothing and textile items, and all the objects in storage. Chapman-Hall House will be next, starting with the outstanding tool collection and moving through the many objects in their inventory.

In addition to the *Catalogit* project, members of the Collections Committee, along with other contributors, wrote articles for the *Object of the Week* feature on our website and FaceBook pages. These stirred great interest and positive feedback from our members and the community. A big thank-you to everyone who submitted these interesting articles and photographs.

Lastly, we are pleased to announce that LCHA has received a generous donation from descendants of the Canby family to restore the Hooper Children portrait by Henry Cheever Pratt. Included with the donation were several historically significant objects belonging to the early Goodwin and Johnson families. The restored portrait and other family objects will be on display this summer and will help give our visitors a better insight into early life at PCH. Please make it a point to visit our museums.

Stewardship Reports

Chapman-Hall House

by Louise Miller

Chapman-Hall House Spring Chronicle 2021

Although the committee has not met in person since September, the house has been monitored regularly. The most serious damage was that the sign in front that marks the historic site was broken from the storms and winds.

Through April and May several projects will be completed: new windows for the second floor, a handrail for the stairs to the second floor, repair of the ridge cap on the ell damaged by the winter weather, a new threshold for the ell door, repair of the damaged sign. A new door for the ell is on the drawing board.

The Chapman-Hall House now has a blue highway sign on Route 1 in Damariscotta. Visible to traffic coming into town from the North, the sign is on the right, a short distance before one reaches the NC Hunt Lumber Yard and the cut-off on the left to the Damariscotta business district.

At this writing the house is not scheduled to be open this summer, but the garden and grounds will continue to be maintained and enhanced. The house will have its spring cleaning in early June. The annual fund-raising events are pending as we watch how the Covid restrictions relax. Pending also is the archaeology dig that was planned for last August. A new fundraiser, one that can navigate Covid protocols, is our Tea Towel project. A generously sized 18" x 22" white cotton towel has been imprinted with Maurice "Jake" Day's line drawing of the Chapman-Hall House (done in 1960). Many thanks to Sandi Day for permission to use the design. Details for purchase will be publicized in early June.

Pumpkinfest, a long running annual event in Damariscotta, is again on the calendar for October, and Jeff Miller, Blacksmith, will be participating this year at the site. Jeff plans to set up his reproduction

18th century traveling forge and demonstrate blacksmithing techniques.

Chapman-Hall House, a sentinel at the head of Main Street, remains an important reminder of the MidCoast's past.

Pownalborough Court House

by Dave Probert

The Pownalborough Court House Stewardship meeting in April was the first since October of 2020. We gathered at Pownalborough Hall wearing face coverings and observing social distancing.

The number of people using the Court House trails remains high at 400+ people per month. These trails provide such a great service to surrounding communities for outdoor recreation for adults, kids, dogs, and sometimes cats.

The Court House has made it through another Maine winter with little to no ill effects.

Our Stewardship Committee will prep the house in May for the Memorial Day opening. We may be having tours by reservation only, a maximum of four per tour. Two docents will be on hand.

Carriage House repairs are slated to take place later this spring: new roof, some clapboards, steps for a second bathroom, scrape and paint.

Events being planned, within Covid-19 limitations.

- May 31 - Memorial Day
- June 12 - Johnson family recognition
- ~~June 20 - Trek Across Maine canceled~~
- July 11 - Dresden Summerfest
- Aug 15 to 22 - Bicentennial Pilgrimage
- Aug 21 - Historic New England's Bowman House events (Possible collaboration)
- Sept 12 - Kermess
- Oct 3 - Cider pressing
- Oct ?? - Halloween event

Museum & Old Jail

by Christine Hopf-Lovette

The Old Jail Stewardship Committee met twice in April, first to conduct regular business by Zoom, and a second time in-person at the Jail to talk about how we might open and safely lead tours. We decided that we can alter the format of our tours so that the tour guide maintains a safe distance from the visitors. A handout will augment the experience.

We decided to hold off opening until July 3 so that the electrical upgrade and any essential re-plastering can be completed. As the Board of Trustees recommended, tours will be available by reservation only and masks will be required. Visitors are requested to contact Christine at 207-522-7397.

One result of the 18-month closure of the Jail was that the bats and other creatures enjoyed free range of the cells. In addition, a great deal of whitewash has flaked off the walls. We are deeply indebted to Ed Kavanagh, Greg Shaw, and David Pope for having the fortitude to go in with a shop vac and brooms to clean up. The committee will tackle the cells once again when we prepare for opening day.

This season's exhibit in the parlor and dining room of the Jailer's House is a selection of photographs compiled by Kevin Johnson, Photo Archivist for the Penobscot Marine Museum. Entitled *Lincoln County through the Eastern Eye*, the story of the collection follows this report.



Patrikos at the North Side bridge, South Bristol, 1911,
Penobscot Marine Museum/MMM#105896

Our committee welcomed two new members: Deborah Morgan and Stephen Ludwig. We appreciate their fresh insights. Both are looking forward to being docents, which brings our total to 15 — enough to give us flexibility in scheduling

Lincoln County through the Eastern Eye

by Kevin Johnson, Photo Archivist, Penobscot Marine Museum

The photography collections of the Penobscot Marine Museum (PMM) include nearly 50,000 glass plate negatives of images for “real photo” postcards produced by the Eastern Illustrating and Publishing Company of Belfast. Founded by Herman Cassens in 1909, company photographers traveled throughout New England and New York State each summer, capturing images of towns, cities, vacation spots, tourist attractions, working waterfronts, industries, and other subjects postcard recipients would enjoy. Cards were printed by the millions in Belfast into the 1950s.

While old postcards often evoke nostalgia, today, they are important historical records. Maine is well documented in the Eastern collection, and PMM has developed a number of regional and thematic exhibits from it. In addition to being featured on Maine Memory Network, *Lincoln County through the Eastern Eye* was one of a continuing series of county exhibits. Outreach to local residents and community historians yielded personal recollections, family connections, and disappearing history, enriching photo captions. The Lincoln County exhibit travelled to various venues from 2016-2019 and can resume travel again if requested.

Lincoln County through the Eastern Eye features photographs from towns, tiny communities, and summer colonies, the majority taken from about 1910 to the 1920s. Steamers and sloops threaded through bays and harbors, around islands and rocky peninsulas, carrying passengers, freight, and inventory for general stores that were centers of community life. They brought summer people to

the growing number of hotels, boarding houses, resorts, and cottages.

Local residents earned their living by fishing, tending store, or working in boatyards, seafood processing plants, or one of Lincoln County's few manufacturing industries. New work opportunities arose as tourism businesses multiplied.

Images in the exhibit are a small sample of Eastern Illustrating and Publishing Company photographs that tell a big story about life in Lincoln County a century ago. Lincoln County through the Eastern Eye was a broadly collaborative project coordinated by PMM Volunteer Liz Fitzsimmons. Visit MaineMemory.net to see this online exhibition, PMM's four other shows, and watch for the Sagadahoc exhibition this month, also on Maine Memory Network! Learn more about the Penobscot Marine Museum at penobscotmarinemuseum.org.

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Hermit, Monhegan Island, ca 1910, Penobscot Marine

It's Membership Renewal Time!

We value your membership. If you have not received a renewal request by mail, please renew or join online at lincolncountyhistory.org

Rowdy occupants of the Old Jail

Jo Cameron of Edgecomb recently discovered a note tucked away in an old book. The typed message, written by her mother, Catherine "Kitzi" Colby, refers to events of 1945. Jo included the original note, along with her membership renewal check, in hopes that it would amuse us:

Even though V E Day had already occurred in June of that year B.I.W. was still operating at top capacity, laying a keel, launching a hull, completing trials, delivering the vessel, as I recall, about every 10 days. As a consequence there were full crews for 7 destroyers in Bath continuously.

So came V J Day & a glorious binge which got beyond the holding capacity of ships' brigs or Bath lockups or the small cage in the Lincoln County Courthouse. So the shore patrol delivered a number of sleepy drunken sailors to the old Jail, the last...or most recent.. occupants of the dark stone cells. Kitz Colby

Lincoln County Historical Association

www.lincolncountyhistory.org

Executive Director

Shannon Gilmore as of June 2, 2021

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Collections Committee members Perry Palmer and George Keyes measure, describe, and catalog objects at Pownalborough Court House.