

# Hancock Historical Society of the Town of Hancock August 2018 Newsletter

---

## **The President's Report by Sanford Phippen**

### **The Historical Society of the Town of Hancock**

The Historical Society of the Town of Hancock was incorporated in 1979 at a meeting held at the Hancock Point Library with the late George Haskins, late Lansing Hammond and librarian Sanford Phippen. All three men had been active participants in the 1978 Hancock sesquicentennial celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> birthday of the town founded in 1828. Haskins, a nationally known Constitutional historian and lawyer, and Hammond as a retired professor who had served for many years as the international recruiting scout for the Commonwealth Foundation (bringing top scholars to the U.S.), were both keenly aware of the importance of preserving our history. Haskins had asked Phippen to help in 1975 with the publication of the then new Hancock history book, which came out in 1978 when we re-enacted the first Hancock town meeting. Another important advisor in the early stages was Clement Silvestro, author of "How to Start a Local Historical Society", who gave direction on collection development.

The reason we made the official name "The Historical Society of the Town of Hancock" was because we didn't want to be confused with the Hancock County Historical Society, then active in Ellsworth.

We held our first organizational meeting on Sept. 21, 1979, wrote the by-laws and chose our first officers and directors on October 12, 1979. Our first public meeting was held on November 9, 1979 at the Hancock Town Hall. Deale Salisbury, history teacher at Bangor High School and the president at that time of the Ellsworth Historical Society was our first speaker. By 1980, we had started accumulating material, much of it left over from the Sesquicentennial, and we hired our first employee, David Johnston, who did the filing that first summer with our first file cabinet kept in the Sargent Room in the back of the Library. In 1988, Phippen retired from the Library and with help from David, moved the Historical Society files to the upstairs of the Town Hall where we now have our Lois Johnson Historical Museum.

---

### **News Items**

*Ellsworth American, April 15, 1898:* "The Busy Bees met last Friday at Mrs. Cynthia Grant's. They made a hive in log cabin quilt."

*Ellsworth American, August 31, 1898:* "Henry A. Ball of Hancock has been appointed Deputy Collector at Mount Desert Ferry Collector Henry Whiting of Ellsworth."

*Ellsworth American, March 23, 1893:* "We are glad to note the arrival of schooner Alice J. Crabtree, Capt. O.L. Crabtree at New York after a voyage to St. Jago, Cuba."

*Ellsworth American, August 16, 1892: Fair and Lawn Party.* The Ladies of the Hancock Point Chapel Society gave their first annual fair and lawn party Tuesday afternoon and evening at Crosby Lodge, the spacious summer home of Judge L.A. Emery and wife, who very generously placed their entire grounds at the disposal of the society for the day. The cottage through was beautifully decorated, and in the evening house and grounds were illuminated by Japanese lanterns.

The cottage proper was devoted to the fancy goods department, under the direction of Miss Johnston, Mrs. Hyde, Miss Crabtree, Miss Allen, Miss Clarke and Miss Vose. The annex was given to the art department with Mrs. Prentiss and Miss Elinor Clarke in charge. On the broad veranda were the cake and ice cream departments under Mrs. Emery, Mrs. Crabtree, Mrs. Whiting, Mrs. Ropes, Mrs. Colby and Mrs. Wing, and the lemonade and confectionery departments under Mrs. Bowen, Miss Crowell and Mrs. E. L. Sterns. On the lawn were arranged rustic tables and chairs for those who preferred to enjoy the refreshments in the open air.

Much of the success of the fair is due to the executive committee consisting of Mrs. Hartshorn, Mrs. Buzzell, Mrs. Hammatt, Mrs. McFarland and Miss Crosby, and the appraisal committee, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. I. K. Stetson, Miss Nathalie Lord, Mrs. Emery and Mrs. L.F. Sterns.

The Net proceeds of the fair were \$350.00 which will be used in paying the debt remaining on the chapel



**Pamola Grange Store**

## **Don't You Know? We're Related**

By Anne Pomroy

I moved from Hancock in the mid 1960's following high school but maintained frequent contact with my family. During one evening phone conversation with my father, A. Clayton Pomroy, he told me he had attended Cecil Havey's funeral that afternoon in the little Baptist church once visible through the trees from our house on the East Side and had run into Estelle Springer, an Ellsworth school teacher. Why was she there, I asked. "Don't you know, Anne? We're related."

That was the moment I realized the depth of my roots not just in Hancock but more specifically down the east side from US Route 1 into the dips of Tidal Falls, Martin's Avenue and the Pomroy Road, to the top of Grant's Hill. That's where I pedaled my blue Western Auto bike during the 1950's and walked the shoreline in the 1960's. I grew up in the house once owned by my great-grandmother, Flora Orcutt. Her son, my grandfather Calvin Pomroy, lived just the church and a field away and had rows of raspberries which my mother picked each summer. She wheeled me and a dozen wooden berry boxes there in a stroller and made a den for me among the brambles where I napped with a blanket, teddy bear and book while she worked the rows.

Beyond the raspberries was the Townsend Hall, whose floors sent up clouds of dust as contra dancers swatted at the mosquitos coming through the open windows. Here, too, Vacation Bible School was conducted each summer by earnest young men from Ohio, who told stories of foreign lands using paper cut outs on flannel board and who asked me if I wanted to be saved.

Next to the Townsend Hall was my Aunt Ruth Moon's white farm house. Walking through the fields and woods behind the houses, I crossed the old railroad bed near the shoreline and explored the tiny cemetery where my ancestor Thomas Moon, III, who settled on that shore in 1766, is buried.

I usually traveled no further than Aunt Ruth's but a few times I zoomed down Grant's Hill on my bike to visit cousins at the Ferry. Cousin Margie Springer (Nankervis) encouraged me on climbs into the hayloft in the old barn at her house and introduced me to chewing raw sticks of rhubarb dipped into sugar. Pushing my bike back up Grant's Hill was not fun, but the adventure and sense of daring had been worth it.

And once I walked the eastern shoreline from Moon Cemetery to Hancock Point with Junemma Foss, finding myself enroute at Gull Rock and staring at a scene I was sure was painted by Robert McCloskey for "One Morning in Maine". When my mother first read the book to me as a little girl, I knew I was Sal.

Across from Aunt Ruth's was the Pomroy Road. In the late fall, Dad drove me out past the old William Pomroy farm house, home of his grandfather and the place of his birth in 1915. He piled the

bed of his old pickup truck with spruce and fir branches to layer over rolls of tar paper, banking the house against winter drafts. There were always extra branches to hand to Mom for wreath-making.

James and Erma Johnston lived in the small house next to the Pomroy Road. James faithfully delivered the mail, the newspaper and the Sears Roebuck catalogs, even dropping everything into a bushel basket Dad had had to stick in the snowbank the winter our mailbox was buried in drifts. There was so little traffic in the 1950's that we kids could ride our sleds in the middle of the road down the hill in front of my house. James was ever alert, calling my mother the day he spied me pedaling out of Aunt Ruth's driveway into the road without first looking for cars, and a number of years later asking me "Does your father know?" when I enrolled as a Democrat.

Ed and Elaine (Phippen) Tibbets lived near James in what was once the East Side School my Dad had attended as a child. Elaine had decorated it elegantly with 1950's blond furniture and a white rug, and Ed later added a room for Elaine to set up shop as a hairdresser. Before the shop opened, I bicycled to the house so she could practice shampooing me over her kitchen sink and cutting my hair with the scissors packed in a portable case.

Thelma and Leroy Nason lived in walking distance. Their house was a glorious destination because their tiny front room was a neighborhood store. A glass case was filled with penny candy and a freezer held five-cent fudgesicles and fifty-cent quarts of Hancock County Creamery ice cream.

Back at our house, Dad had huge vegetable gardens beside the road and out back, with Mom canning dozens of jars of vegetables for winter meals and making quarts of pickles. She added jars sealed with paraffin containing jams and jellies. She would buy quarts of shucked clams from Mildred Dow and her son, Durell, who lived across from the church and whose driveway smelled of crushed clam shells. And she loved the jars of wrinkles Ronnie Hudson would hand to her.

In the summer I was delighted to be included by the Knowlton, Warford, Frye, Hudson, Kief and Griffin kids in softball games in one field or another. Their older siblings, Joan Christie, Janet Hudson, and Marsha Warford (Gatcomb), had babysat me and Leone Frye had walked me home the Sunday morning I burned my hand on the wood burning pot-bellied stove in the center of the Baptist Church.

All these families on the East Side – Moon, Martin, Kief, Partridge, Knowlton, Johnston, Hudson, Frye, Wilbur, Carter, Butler, Gatcomb – are my family. I knew they were nearby as I grew as a child and I often benefited from their protection and company, but it took me many years to understand fully the blood and history that connects us to one another.

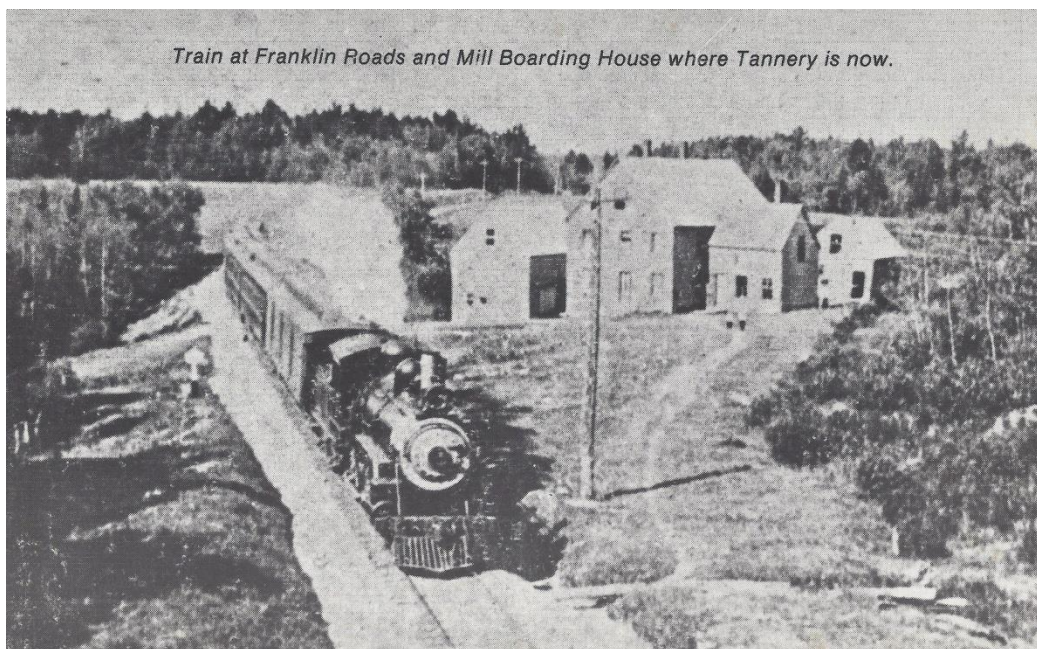
## The Future

By Bob Foss

Yes, your historical society is looking to the future as well as preserving the past. In this case *“it’s out of the old and into the new”*.

During the last few months we have been exploring options of moving the museum and historical society headquarters to a new location. If you have visited us in the last few years you know we are located on the second floor over the Hancock Town Hall. This location is difficult to access due to the steep stairs and is often uncomfortably hot when we are open during the summer months. We owe our rich town history a better home where visitors can truly enjoy the exhibits, genealogy research can be performed and our volunteers can work in a comfortable environment.

So the search is on to find a new ground floor location somewhere close to our town center and a way to fund this move. Stay tuned for news as our plans evolve. If you have suggestions or would like to help with this activity please contact any of the officers or stop by the museum during open hours.



*Train at Franklin Roads and Mill Boarding House where Tannery is now.*

Postcard available for sale at the Lois C. Johnson Historical Museum

Historical Society of the Town of Hancock

PO Box 212

Hancock, ME 04640

Membership Form

Hancock Historical Society of the Town of Hancock, PO Box 212, Hancock, ME 04640

Yearly dues: \$10.00 per individual or \$150.00 Life Membership per individual

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletters by EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ or Regular mail delivery \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ \$10.00/Person \_\_\_\_\_ \$150.00 Life Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Donation Thank You!