

Newsletter

Summer 2018

Brentwood Historical Society



Half Way through a Busy Year

Hello to the members of the Brentwood Historical Society! The year 2018 has been full of new planning, reorganizing, and making improvements in the museum building. This will bring you up to date on what is happening for the Society and the Museum.

The Programs

The programs this year have each had a capacity audience (about 40 people), we're happy to say. And people haven't hurried home. Everyone enjoys the snacks and conversation afterward.

April 12 "The Conservation Story in Brentwood"

Doug Cowie, Dick Chamberlain, and Jeff Donald were the speakers. Betty Stevens, Emily Schmalzer, and Joan Pratt were recognized and honored for their families' major contributions to the town's conservation activity, which started in the 1980s.



Photo by Linda Rousseau

Pictured, left to right, Betty Stevens, Doug Cowie, Dick Chamberlain, Joan Pratt, Jeff Donald, Kate Donald, and Emily Schmalzer. Dot Rowe looked on in the rear.

June 14 "Songs & Stories from World War I"

Ramblin' Richard Kruppa, at the Library. An enjoyable evening of hearing many old songs, singing along when we could, learning the stories behind them, in the 100th anniversary year of Armistice Day, November 11, 1918.



July 14 "Powder Horns, Flintlocks, Muzzle Loaders & More"

Bill Payson and Mark Richardson, regular volunteers at the Col. Paul Wentworth House in Rollinsford, in militia and regimental

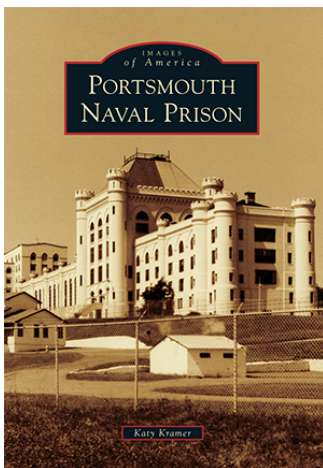


costume, presented an array of 13 priceless antique guns dating from the late 1500s to the Civil War, plus powder horns, lead bullets, and other military paraphernalia. They generously allowed the audience to handle all the items, which many were very glad to do. The audience was allowed plenty of time to examine everything, ask questions, and trade anecdotes. Then everyone went out to the patio.

Continued

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Bill and Mark each loaded and fired a musket. Bill ended by demonstrating how to start a fire by striking steel against a flint-stone in cotton fibers, and blowing the sparks into a flame.



The Next Program
**Thursday,
September 20,
2018, 7 p.m. at
the Mary
Bartlett Library**

The Historical Society and the Library will join in presenting **Katy Kramer**, author of the

recent book, **Portsmouth Naval Prison**, published in July 2016. Ms. Kramer, who lives in the area, did research for over 10 years to assemble the details in the book. The photographs are primarily from special collections, libraries and museums. Currently freelancing and teaching college composition, she has written features for magazines, university publications, and local newspapers.

The prison, on the end of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard on Seavey Island, opened in 1908 and was decommissioned in 1974. Known as "The Castle" or "The Rock" with its deceptively appealing exterior, it has long had a fearsome reputation. But it was also among the first to use the latest advancements in rehabilitation reform. We hope to see you on September 20!

**BAKE SALE AT THE
COMMUNITY CENTER,
PRIMARY ELECTION DAY,
SEPTEMBER 11.**

**NEEDED: Assistant Coordinator;
Volunteers for 8-10, 10-12, 12-2, 2-4.
Please call to say which slot you
can help with.**

**PLUS HOME-BAKED ITEMS from
MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.
Bring items to Community Center on
September 11 or drop off the night
before at the home of
Linda Rousseau, Coordinator –
772-4534 or lindarou@comcast.net.**

**Thanks to David Abusamra and
Albert Belanger for their photos.**

Brentwood Historical Society
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The President's Letter

Friends,

Summer greetings! As you can see from this issue of the newsletter, the Historical Society has been a very busy place with more news to come in the fall.

A tentative date for the annual meeting of the membership has been set for November. Watch for a "save the date" and agenda in the fall. A Nominating Committee will be appointed in September to present a slate of officers and directors. If anyone is interested in serving on this committee, please contact me at: president@brentwoodnhhistory.org.

As the Society's bylaws were last reviewed in 2004, the board felt it was important to evaluate them to ensure the document was in compliance with current state regulations for charitable organizations. A committee of Karen Ellis, Dick Chamberlain and Skip Belanger took on this important task. Lawyer and Historical Society member, Mark Tremallo, will be doing a final review. The committee will present the updated bylaws for a vote by the membership at the November annual meeting.

The interior of the building is also undergoing review and evaluation. It is owned by the town, and the board presented a request to the selectmen for work to bring the building into compliance with fire and safety regulations. As a result, the selectmen allocated up to \$10,000 toward the work and will be seeking bids for construction and electrical work.

This Spring, the Society purchased Quickbooks to efficiently keep our financial house in order. Many thanks to Jim Wiesman for completing our state and federal forms for 2017. The board also approved the purchase of PastPerfect museum software to catalog the collection. It will be easier to utilize the collection and do genealogical searches. This work will begin in the fall, with Curator Becky Davis overseeing the process.

If you happened to stop by during one of the three summer open houses, you would have seen the main meeting room in disarray while undergoing reorganization. Volunteers included Suzanne Austin, Karen and Nate Ellis, Heidi Dunham, Skip Belanger, Nick Wrighton, Robin Wrighton, Eric Klemarczyk, Gary Farnham, Linda Rousseau, Alma Vahey, Frank Northrup, Bill Dunham, and Becky Davis. Some of the work done already includes: all the display cases are on casters, so the exhibit space can be rearranged; woodwork has been painted in the entrance; new curtains were installed on all the first floor windows; the textiles are inventoried and stored in acid-free boxes; photographs are collected and in the process of being labeled.

And, thanks to UNITIL, we now have new file cabinets in which to store files. (HINT HINT: We still need a new large desk in the office, so anyone with a desk to donate please contact me at the above email for specific details.)

As you can see, a lot has been accomplished so far this year. We are still proudly a pure volunteer-run organization. I hope that many of you will volunteer to help with the ongoing work of labeling photographs, developing new exhibits, helping with cataloging of the entire collection, and serving on a committee. We also need some help moving furniture, objects and artifacts to storage on the second floor. Volunteering can be as little as one or two hours – whatever and whenever works for you. Please contact me or a board member to arrange a time to volunteer.

And please - come and see the new exhibits. The 275th anniversary celebration, the salt cellars, and the Veasey powder horn, donated to the Society, are but three of the new exhibits. Again, thank you for joining the Society and for your interest in supporting Brentwood's history.

All the best,

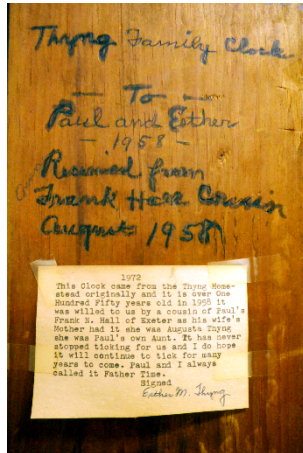
Becky Dunham

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The Society was very happy to receive the gift of a tall case clock from the Thyng family of Brentwood. It will need some repair and assembly. The handwritten notes on the inside of the door are of special historical interest.



Useful Contacts

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Historical Society Wish List

If you are interested in donating any of the following items, contact Becky Dunham at president@brentwoodnhhistory.org.

Volunteers for Exhibits and Nomination Committees

2 gallons gray floor paint

3" paint brush, 2" angle paint brush

Help with minor repair projects

Filing help

Set of screw drivers, metal measuring tape, pliers, hammer, yard stick

"Commander" brand picture hooks various sizes

Picture wire

Acid free document boxes – legal size

"Flat" file for maps and large documents

Acid free photo boxes 4 x 8

Acid free document boxes (letter size)

Desk Lamp

Desk and Hutch- please speak with Becky Dunham about this for space and dimensions.

Upcoming Events

Thursday, September 20: Program on Portsmouth Naval Prison by the author, Katy Kramer, at the Library, 7 p.m.

Saturday, October 20: Private tour of the Fremont Meeting House and 1819 Village Cemetery, guided by Matthew Thomas. 9:30 a.m. More details coming soon.