

The Brentwood Historical Society Newsletter

Winter 2023-2024

Annual Meeting for 2023

Hello to the members of the Historical Society! It's good for all of us to stop and look back at the major events of the past Fall and Winter and look ahead to what's happening in the coming months.

The first thing is to list the current roster of officers and directors who were elected at the November Annual Meeting until the next election in November 2024.

Officers

President	Dexter Swasey
Vice President	Linda Rousseau
Treasurer	David Menter
Recording Sec'y	Karen Ellis
Research Corresp.	Albert "Skip" Belanger
Curator	Karen Ellis
Lifetime Advisor	Alma Vahey

Directors

Dick Chamberlain	Ralph Murphy
Rebecca Dunham	Frank Northrup
Laura Hajjar	Mark Tremallo
Dawn Higley	Robin Wrighton
Caleb Labbe	

The program after the business meeting centered on genealogy. Erin Moulton, a noted genealogist, spoke about the basic steps to start producing a genealogy of one person or a family. Her presentation was supported with a grant from the New Hampshire Humanities Council. She was well received and answered many questions during and after the program.

The Old Days

A trip to Hampton Beach meant hitching up the horse, going to Exeter, putting the horse in a livery stable, boarding an electric streetcar for Hampton Beach and renting a bathing suit on arrival.

Open Houses Beginning Now

A Brentwood Historical Society Open House has become a truly interesting place to spend an hour or two on a Saturday morning. There are six Open Houses during the warmer months: **the First Saturday of the month in April through October, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**



The items you see in the many different displays were handled and used by people who walked and rode on these streets, who lived and ate and slept in your houses (the older ones), who raised animals and plowed for crops on your land, who worked in those mills and factories and black-smith shops that were all around here.

The Open Houses will always have one or two officers on hand who will walk around with you and talk about what you're seeing or let you browse on your own. There are two rooms on the first floor and two more on the second floor, three of which have organized displays. The fourth room is the Flanders Hall/Keeneborough Grange Room.

It's still helpful to remind folks about The Grange Room. Not everyone realizes it is now the main seating room for the Historical Society programs. It has returned as a venue for public gatherings just as it was for some 150 years. To

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experience the Grange artifacts, the refurbished backdrop curtain on the stage, and the firm benches while being entertained or addressed by a speaker, will be nostalgic for some, while better lighting and the new mini-split units for cooling or warming make it more comfortable for everyone.

Back to the Open Houses, one other special spot a visitor wants to head for is the Library Corner. The Society has a large collection of books that focus on New Hampshire history, many that are not easily found these days but interesting to read. We also have many scrapbooks with newspaper clippings and others with photos that people enjoy. When you pick out a book or a couple of scrapbooks, and then find a chair and settle down with them, you can become immersed in scenes you remember in the past, and leave with a sense of having had a great mini-vacation.

captured by the British, and how they eventually made their way back to New Hampshire.

She will bring the flags so that they can be seen up close. This presentation will give us an idea of the importance of flags for groups of lightly governed people.



“The Concord Coach”

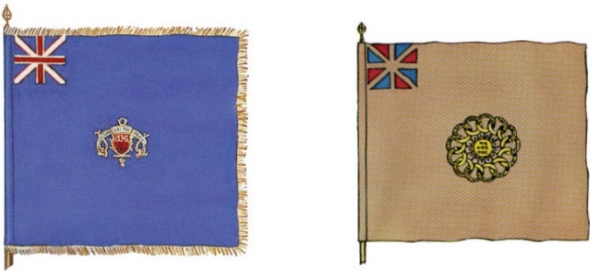
The second subject we’ll hear about that night will be the story of the beautiful “Concord Coach.” Concord coaches were used everywhere but are most closely associated with the settlement of the American West. Beautifully constructed, they were also decorated with original works of art, many of which celebrate New Hampshire.

This program will take place in the Grange Hall at the museum on TUESDAY, MAY 14, AT 7:00 p.m. We emphasize Tuesday because many of our programs take place on Thursdays. This speaker was already booked for Thursday, so we scheduled her for Tuesday of the same week.

This program will be sponsored in part by New Hampshire Humanities. It will be free and open to the public.

Programs Scheduled for 2024

1. “Granite State Stories”



“Two Flags from the Revolutionary War”

There are numerous stories in our Granite State about particular places or things. In May we’ll hear Mary Adam, a featured speaker on the NH Historical Society staff, tell us about “Two Flags from the Revolutionary War,” both from the Second NH Regiment, being two of less than thirty-six Revolutionary War flags existing today. She’ll tell how they were made, how they were

2. “Tour of Fuller Gardens”

For our second program of the year, in June, we are planning a guided tour of Fuller Gardens. Fuller Gardens is a public botanical garden that was a part of the summer estate of Alvin T. Fuller, former governor of Massachusetts, on Ocean Drive in North Hampton, NH. The gardens feature horticulture at the highest level,



with thousands of rose bushes and hundreds of other plants that bloom all season long. Formal English perennial borders, a Japanese Garden and a tropical conservatory are all framed by sculpted hedges.

We are hoping to schedule our group for **June 20**. Booking does not open until May 1, so we will update you—our members—soon after.

3. “African-American Soldiers and Sailors of New Hampshire During the American Revolution”

The third program this year is scheduled for **Thursday, September 19, at 7:00 p.m.** Many of us heard nothing about this subject when we were studying about the battles of the American Revolution. Glenn Knoblock, the presenter, examines the history of the African-American soldiers’ service during the war, including how and why they enlisted, their interaction with white soldiers, service on the battlefields, how

they were perceived by the enemy and the officers under whom they served, and their treatment after the war.



Glenn is an independent scholar and author of over twenty books. His work documents a wide variety of subjects in New Hampshire and New England history. We last heard him when he gave us a great talk on beer and ale brewing in Colonial New England. This program will once again be partially funded by a grant from New Hampshire Humanities.

On October 17 we are planning a program on “Johnny Appleseed.” And on Sunday, **November 10**, we expect to have a “Traveling Trunk” program as part of our Annual Meeting. More details on those later.

Thank-you to the Following:

- To Nick Wrighton for his work in designing and constructing our new website.
- To Curtis Rousseau for assisting us with access to the Internet when we need it, in the most economical path possible.
- A special acknowledgement and recognition to Karen Ellis for her countless hours of accessioning donations, corresponding with the membership, and stepping up with performing the multitude of minute issues and duties at the museum.

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Recent Artifacts Donated



A custom-made "fowling gun" musket used for duck hunting in the 1800s.



Small stool used at the Grange for seating children at social events.



A wooden sign from the original Gray Post Office on Middle Road



Found in the museum attic rafters, 2 different "D.O. Waldron" referenced shipping boards.



A barn hay fork from the Wilson barn.



A red Willie Nelson neck scarf from a Recreation concert fundraiser, July 1987.

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