

Sebago Historical Society Presents...

OUR
TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY
2013



“Through The Years”

HISTORICAL SOCIETY BEGINNINGS

January 2013

Almost 40 years ago, the concept of organizing like minded citizens into a Historical Society was born. These people met in July of 1974 and quickly selected Franklin Irish President, Merle Douglass, Vice President and Rebecca Jones, Secretary. In November of that year the Selectmen appointed the organization as a Bi-centennial/Sesqui-centennial committee to prepare for celebrating in 1976. This became the focus of the first year of operation. Activities included the selection of a town seal, updating the centennial publication of 1926, obtaining a flag pole for the town office property and placing a marker for the Lakin property, the first site of permanent settlement in Sebago. Also included was preparation for a mock election of incorporation to be included at the March Town Meeting and selecting events to be held throughout the year. Most of the meetings for the next seven years were educational programs. Lacking purpose and no place for possible collections may have been the cause of dwindling membership. This resulted in legal action to cease activity, with trust conditions for resumption of the group within twenty years.



Trivets were sold to raise funds to help defray expenses, using the newly designed seal, created by Rose Barnes.



Participants of mock election included early settler descendants as much as possible. First row: Harry McKenney, Elmer B. Shaw, Ralph Brown, Robert H. Brown Second Row: William Nason, Franklin Irish, Robert A. Brown, Carroll Babb, Lawrence Shaw Back Row: Merle Brown, George Fitch, John Douglas, George (Buddy) Babb, Merle Douglass, Moderator: Philip White, Clerk: Laurence Fitch



DONATES FLAG—Flag for new pole at Sebago Town Hall is turned over to Selectman Ted Greene by Mrs. Alice Bachelder. Mrs. Bachelder donated flag to town in memory of her husband, Walter.

AUG 1976

February 2013

Reorganization

In 1993 renewed interest surfaced and the Historical Society was reorganized with George Tinkham, Robert Adams and Leona Greene as officers. The Maple Grove Grange Hall at the Potter Building was offered as a meeting place with a small area for displays.

By 1996, a growing collection of historically important documents created the need for a larger home. At the 1996 annual Town Meeting, citizens voted to purchase the vacant Nazarene Church in Convent for use by the Society. In July of that year, Seletman, George Tinkham, right, passed the key for the building to President, Ann Burns, next to the Lakeview Farm sign, which for years had marked the road to the Shaw establishment in North Sebago.



Displayed collections in our museum



Potter Academy display case

Renovations of the choir areas and Sunday School rooms provided for a façade of the North Sebago Post Office and a display room for our collections. No major changes to the sanctuary were needed. Special displays are created for Open House occasions with several permanent exhibits on view, including new donations as received. These exhibits provide interest and education for visitors and contain multiple Summer Camps Memorabilia, Clothing and Accessories, Grooming and Health Items, Kitchen Ware, Church Supplies, Potter Academy and Elementary School Materials, and Post Office Equipment.

March 2013

Display Shed

By 2000 the collection was growing quickly with some larger pieces, indicating the need for additional display space. The land adjacent to the Church building being appropriate, a request at town meeting in June was approved for expansion.

Several local friends of the Society assisted by cutting the pine trees, and sawing them for stacking to dry. These would be used as siding the following year. Fill was obtained and leveled, enabling a cement pad to be poured in November of 2002.

A carriage shed style building was designed by Ted Greene, Construction headed by Ralph Brown and Fred Harrington began in the Spring. Artifacts and displays for farming, lumbering, and home activities were moved in for an Open House on August 24th.



Elroy Gregory and William Guptill are sharing memories of old tools.



The open door presents a backdrop for tools, skates, and ice tongs.



The Open House included live demonstration, and displays of larger items.

April 2013

Public programs

Education is an important part of the Society's mission. Programs promote knowledge of the Sebago area's past. Presentations have included "Canals and Canal Boats" by Ernest Knight, "Kitchen Tools" by Ruth Floyd, "Civil War Memorabilia" by Jim Libby, "The Narrow Gauge Railroad" by Bill Shelley, plus Concerts and Sing-Alongs.



Harry Hepburn III, antique dealer and appraiser, provided a fundraiser for our group with appraisals such as one for these coal hods.



Jack Barnes, local educator, historian, and pictorial author provided many programs and book signings



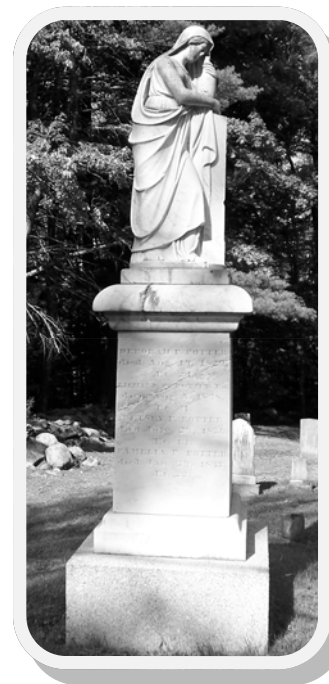
Jo Radner, storyteller, shared "Burned into Memory" the story of the local 1947 forest fires.

May 2013

Cemetery Documentation

One of the most frequent and useful reference guides for public use has been our collection of cemeteries and gravesite information used in genealogy requests.

This three phased project was begun privately by Beverly Harmon in 1969. The second phase occurred during the summers of 1998 and 1999. It included revisiting every cemetery to update and record the engraving on each stone. This lengthy task was completed by Joyce Vilas, June Allen and Diana Letellier. Anne Brown then typed and compiled their information for the Historical Society record book. The third phase was entering this information to a website for easy access by interested individuals. Sherrill Brown completed these entries during 2002 and updates it as needed. The website is located at the following address:
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mcseebag/Index.html>



The unique stone of Deborah F. Potter



Wentworth Cemetery cleaned up—stones uncovered and ready to place upright again



The faithful companion of the Kenison family has his own stone next to his master's.

It simply states, "Our Dog JEFF"



One of the 45 burying places in Sebago

June 2013

Historical Church Service

Since the history of the Society's new "Home", the 1844 Freewill Baptist Church, played an important part in the community, it seemed natural to portray this aspect with a Historic Church Service. In 2000 Historical Society members represented some of the original pew owners, many being descendants of those found in church records. This program was held annually for five years. The photos shown here were from the first service. The Rev. Greg Young led the service for each of the five years.



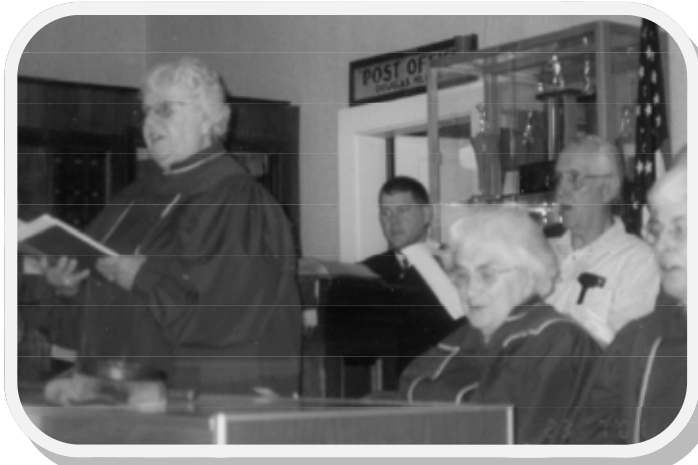
AT THE SERVICE — Some of those participating in the Sebago Historical Society's re-enactment of the 1853 church service at the old Convene church, now the society's headquarters, were, left to right, Ann Burnas, Marge McAloney, Clayton Douglas and June Allen. June's grandchildren are on the steps.



These youngsters enjoyed the refreshments on the steps of the church, Elliott Allen, Darren Usher, and Joshua Allen



Elliott Allen, bellringer.



Roberta Douglass led the congregation in "lining", a method used to introduce new hymns to the church goers. She was assisted by Jane Grass, Fred Porter and other members of the Sebago Center Community Church choir.



Anne Brown pumped the organ donated by the North Sebago Methodist Church, to accompany the hymns.

July 2013

Sebago Days

The Society participates annually at Sebago Days using a rustic style sales booth built in the mid 1990's. Here we promote our activities and sale items. This is always the introduction of our latest calendar for the following year. One of the most popular features of our booth is the children's "String Game" with prizes for all.

Each year we create a float following the parade theme, for which we have had many winners.



Shown below is the 1994 float as it passed the judges stand with Ted Greene driving his mother and Robin Gosbee, as they depict "the Good Old Days".

A family picnic represented "Summer in Sebago" for 2001 with Joshua Allen, Elliott Allen, Lin Greene and Clayton Douglass for another blue ribbon award.



Robin Gosbee displaying our 1st place award for 1994

August 2013

Historic Sebago Tours

In 2009 we instituted a very popular annual Tour program where we visit three or four places of interest as a group. Our first included the WWII Observation Tower on Dyke Mountain and the Ella Haines, aka, the George Booth home, which had served as a tea room, an early mail depot and is now a private residence. We also included the 1844 Freewill Baptist Church, now the home of the Sebago Historical Society and a historic site at Mac's Corner - the stone trough and the store at Dyers, which had also been a sail shop. These places were explained by Ted Greene, who is shown to the right with some tour participants.



Ted with Rick Dennen and wife Susan Gassett



Back side of the Dyke Farm



Betty Sawyer and Susan Gassett



Tour guest, Cliff Whitney, in front of an 1860s home in "Mud City", which was once used as a general store and service station

In 2010 Allison Meltzer gave a tour of her property which was originally Dr. Dennett's cottage home on Winn Mountain. The Clara Dyke Home, part of the Dyke Mountain Farm, now owned by Dr. & Mrs. Robert Timothy was our second stop. The group then visited the present home of Betty Sawyer, which was built by Daniel Nason and was known as the Laughing Loon Guest House and Cottages in North Sebago. Those desiring then traveled to the Lakin Property near Peabody Pond to view the site of the first home built in Sebago. A well defined foundation remains and is marked with the engraved stone erected in 1976.

In 2011 the Langs guided us through their Douglas Hill home known as "The Studio" which has many interesting original features. A description and tour of "Mud City", once the "center" of town, included now non-existent homes and places of business as well as those remaining. Our tour concluded at the Nason Homestead in North Sebago, which is presently owned by Wayne and Ann Farley.



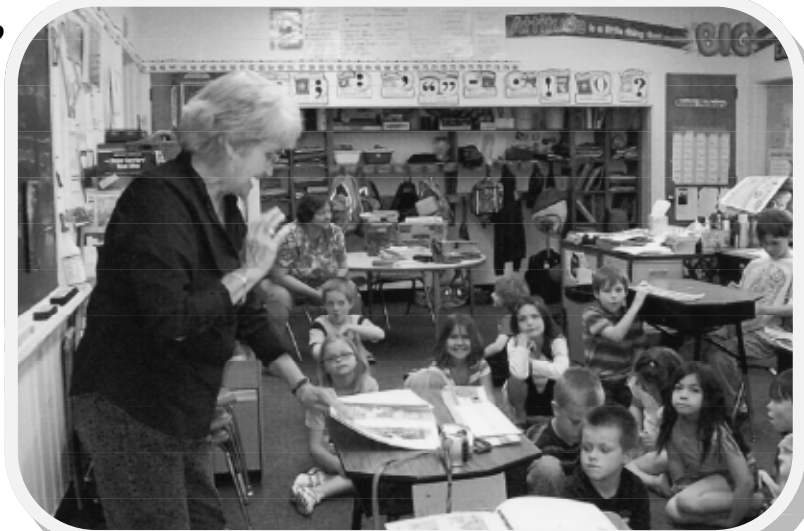
September 2013

SCHOOL VISITS

One aspect of our mission is to develop educational displays and programs.

In promoting this idea, we emphasize the historic value of Sebago and its families by inviting the local students to visit the Society building. While visiting, they may experience "hands-on" activities such as sorting mail, using old food preparation utensils and laundry duties, or viewing displays with oral presentations.

Traveling exhibits have also been prepared for visits to individual classrooms.



Shown above is Diana Letellier relating school days as she experienced them in a one room school for grades sub-primary through grade eight.



Ann Burns and students washed clothes in a galvanized wash tub, then wrung them out and hung them on the line to dry.



October 2013

Live Demonstrations

The educational part of our mission quite often can be private research, but the most popular activities seem to be our live demonstrations.

One of our first, which has been repeated several times because of its popularity, was hand-cranked ice cream for a "Sundae in the Park".



Lin Greene appeared to enjoy E. Norman Durrell's efforts at cranking.



Tom Allen waited as Robert Greene prepared fresh pressed cider.

Robert demonstrated how to grind an axe.



Sherrill Brown carded the wool, while Lynne Brown spun it into yarn.

November 2013

Veteran's Monument and Walk

Shortly after incorporation, the Historical Society members realized there was no visual recognition of individuals from Sebago who served our country in any of the armed services. There was a single monument erected in front of the school for WWII veterans. About the same time the town officials began work to create a small park at the intersection of routes 11 and 114, on the Butler property. Individuals and local fraternal groups donated funds for a gazebo. The monument was moved to this location at that time. A Historical Society committee researched to find the names of all of the servicemen and women who served from the Revolutionary War thru 1998. The larger monuments were designed as wings for each side of the original one, with 269 names inscribed. Now names are being added to the reverse side. On Veteran's Day 1998, the monuments were unveiled at a ceremony featuring the Lake Region Band, Sebago Elementary School students, Post 155 American Legion, political representatives and the Sebago Lion's Club. In 2001 the Historical Society presented an article at the annual Town Meeting, which was approved, to name the park, "The Veterans' Memorial Park". Our efforts are proudly shown on the cover of this calendar.



The Veteran's Day observance in 2002 gave special recognition to those honored here.



Col. Todd Clow read the veterans names aloud.



There are many other veterans who were originally from other locations outside of Sebago, so plans were made to honor them with individual granite blocks. These indicate their name, service, and years served, and are placed to create a Veteran's Walk in front of the monuments.

December 2013

Boston Post Cane

In 1999 the officials of the Town of Sebago bestowed the honor to the Historical Society for presenting the Boston Post Cane to recipients. This oldest citizen award was first presented in 1909 to Amos Ward and since then to fourteen known Sebago elders. In 2001 the original cane was placed in a display case in the Town Office. This case was specially created to protect and preserve the cane's historic value. A replica cane was crafted for presentation to individuals. It included a brass plate recognizing the honor of Sebago's oldest citizen.



We next presented the cane in 2001 to Lillian Amrhein, a young 96 year old whose family was the most important part of her life. With her are one of her daughters, Diane, and son Marc.



Our sign previews a special announcement.



Our first honoree in 1999, was to the 93 year old lawyer, politician and real estate agent, Vinal G. Good. Shown here are Vinal, his wife Dorothy and then Historical Society president, George Tinkham.



Ninety year old Mary Frances O'Neil was joined by her husband John and four of their six children when she was honored in 2009, 100 years after the first presentation. A very active former teacher and realtor, her latest activities involved the Spaulding Library Friends group.



Nason's Beach Picnic 1996—Betty Tinkham, George Tinkham, Lucretia Douglas, Mariemma Jordan, Herberta McKenney, Joyce Viles, Don Coford, Leona Greene, and Ann Burns



Alan Crabtree lining up his next shot at Summer Games Picnic in 2005.



Christmas Caroling 2001 with June Allen, Bob Burns, Kathie Whitcomb, Debbie Taylor, Cyndy Adams, Betty Tinkham, Ann Burns, Bob Adams, George Tinkham



Douglas Hill Neighborhood BBQ 2004 Sue Cummings, Joan Morford, Jimmy Snow



Camp Winaco Picnic 1995 Pearl McKenney, Leona Greene in back, Marie Crawford on right.



Christmas Party 2002 with Bob Adams, Kathie Whitcomb & Scottie Doughty

This calendar compiled by Sherrill Brown and Ann Burns, with contributions of information and photos from Society members, and is as accurate as can be determined.



Marty Chambers hits it home at the Summer Games in 2005, with Penny Crabtree in back