



Jonesport Historical Society Newsletter

“Preserving Our Heritage”

Message from the President

There was a lot of JHS activity this past Spring and Summer. We had about 95 visitors to the museum and helped several of them research their Jonesport ancestors. The fourth great-grandfather of one of them was Clement Hopkins, who in the 1850s was in the Maine State Legislature, the town treasurer and the first selectman. The ancestor of another was Captain Thomas F. Kent, master of four- and five-masted vessels, and another was David Charles Mitchell, superintendent of a sardine factory in Jonesport.

Several visitors donated artifacts from Jonesport, including documents and photos, a vintage wooden dolly designed for carrying barrels, a 24-inch model of a lobster boat made by John V. Sawyer III, a wood carving of a sea bird made by Charlene Nelson, square dance record albums used in a town dance hall, and a pair of bronze medallions commemorating the 150th anniversary of the town. Gary Wooler from Boothbay donated an exquisite model of the William Underwood sardine carrier which he built from scratch in 2018.

On June 16th the Boston Post Cane was awarded to Florence Amelia (Manchester) Smith. At the age of 99 she became the oldest resident in Jonesport after Barbara N. (Manchester) Dobbin died at the age of 102.

The big event of the season was the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Jonesport Historical Society hosted by the JHS Board of Directors on Sunday afternoon, July 23rd. Between 50 and 60 JHS members attended the Open House in the JHS Museum and Meeting Room, where they enjoyed plenty of appetizers, sandwiches, refreshments and desserts. A door prize was given every half hour, where prizes included local history books, a framed copy of the historic town tax map, JHS DVDs, luminarias, note cards, matted photos of Jonesport landscapes and seascapes, and lighthouse T-shirts. A silent slide show *20 Years in 20 Minutes* ran continuously. See Page 3 for photos of the event.

The last of the season activities was on Saturday, September 2nd, when JHS was invited to set up a sales and promotion table at the Jonesport Library End of Summer Celebration. We sold some books, photos and T-shirts, and signed up a couple of more members, which brought our current membership count to just over 300.

Bill Plaskon, President

Autumn 2023

The following public presentations took place this Summer:

Finding Thomas Kelley
by Billy Milliken

Downeast Weir Fishing
by Eric Kelley & Ernest Kelley

The following free movies were shown this Summer:

Way Back Home
Wreck of the Portland
Historic Jonesport Videowalk

023 Board of Directors

Officers:

William Plaskon, President
Jean Gupill, Vice President
Charles Alley, V.P. Emeritus
Nancy Sawyer, Treasurer
Eric Kelley Jr., Historian
-- Vacant -- Secretary

Directors:

Gregory Campbell
Barbie Cirone
Aaron Dennis
Holly Dennis
Andrew Hutnik
Betty Kelley (temporary secretary)

Twenty Years in Twenty Minutes

by Bill Plaskon

During the JHS 20th Anniversary Open House this past July, a continuous silent slide show called *20 Years In 20 Minutes* was shown on a big screen. Consisting of 277 Microsoft Office PowerPoint® slides, the show is divided into six parts.

Part 1 is an introduction to the beginnings of Jonesport Historical Society. On May 23rd of 2003 a small group of local citizens interested in preserving the history of the town met at the Harbor House in Jonesport to discuss the possibility of establishing a historical society. That group included Maureen and Gene Hart (owners of the Harbor House), Donnie Woodward, Charlie Alley, Cathy Perry, Jim Hubert and Linda Sebok. The group met again on June 4th to organize a Board of Directors. Bill Plaskon attended that meeting and joined the Board. It was decided that a top priority would be to video record interviews of local senior residents who best remembered the history of the town.

Part 2 contains a slide of each person interviewed, in sequence by date of interview, showing the full name of the person interviewed and a photo of the person taken at the time of the interview. Over the years 78 residents were interviewed, and their stories are now digitally preserved and available on DVDs. Lately they are also being saved in MPEG-4 format.

Part 3 contains 52 slides showing photos of all the renovation work to the interior of the first floor of the Sawyer Building, which was donated to JHS by John Vassar Sawyer II on January 25th, 2011. Work began that May when Donnie Woodward, Andy Hutnik and Bill Plaskon started removing loose paint and rust from the original tin ceiling. The following January the three of us began removing interior walls from what would become the future meeting room in the back section of the building. In March 2012, after we removed the carpeting, linoleum and Masonite flooring, we hired someone to refinish the original floors in the meeting room. By the end of May 2012 construction in the meeting room was finished by the three of us, including electrical re-wiring, installing fluorescent light fixtures, ceiling fan, and ceiling-mounted digital projector, building a multi-media podium with a Bose five-speaker system, and installing a wall-mounted projection screen. Barbara Plaskon volunteered to do most of the painting in the room. From November 2012 through April 2013 we concentrated on the two existing rooms in the front of the building. Besides removing the carpeting, linoleum and Masonite flooring, we also had to install tongue-and-groove flooring missing from along two walls. After Andy installed fluorescent light fixtures, we hired the same person to refinish the original floors in the future museum. We spent the good part of May 2013 cleaning out the basement, which occasionally got flooded after heavy rain. We hired a contractor to replace most of the first floor windows in August 2013. In August 2016 the roof was re-shingled and dormers were re-sided. Then in September we had the basement water-proofed, a new sump pump installed with a battery backup, and a dehumidifier/air filtration system installed in the basement.

Part 4 has a slide for each of the 107 monthly public presentations that were given by guest speakers over the past twenty years, with each slide showing the poster that advertised the event. Most of those events were video recorded and are available for sale on DVDs.

Part 5 has a slide advertising the poster for each of the free movies and videos that were shown since JHS was founded in 2003. Most of them were historic documentaries related to DownEast Maine. Nine of those movies were either partially filmed in Jonesport, mentioned the town of Jonesport, or contained residents of Jonesport in the cast. Jonesport Historical Society was included in the credits in five of those movies.

Part 6 contains a slide with a photo of each of the more than 28 community projects in which the society participated. These include setting up promotion tables and demonstrating the digital databases at public events, awarding the Boston Post Cane to six of the oldest town residents, winning second prize for a float in the July 4th parade, replacing a missing gravestone of a Jonesport Civil War soldier, and inviting Jonesport and Beals students to the JHS museum to learn their genealogy and to handle some of the artifacts.

If you did not attend the Open House in July and did not see *20 Years In 20 Minutes*, perhaps you will have the opportunity to see *25 Years In 25 Minutes* in 2028.

Photos from the JHS 20th Anniversary Open House



Barbie Cirone's poster, and Barbie checking in guests Eric Kelley & Faye Carver Holly Dennis & Andy Hutnik

Some of the lucky door prize winners



Rick Snyderman



Rick Crouthamel & Dona Cuppett



Barbara Malcarne



Rodney & Kyle Boone



Annie MacMichael



Some of the attendees socializing, enjoying the food, and watching *20 Years In 20 Minutes*

**Membership Form (Q)
2024**

Please print all information clearly. Use a separate form for each person. Membership is 5.00 per year per person.

Name _____

Maiden Name (optional) _____ **Phone (required for ID)** _____

Mail Address _____

Town _____ **State** _____ **ZIP** _____

E-Mail _____ **Contact me about volunteering**

\$ 5.00 **2024 Membership**

\$ _____ **2025 Membership (\$5.00)**

\$ _____ **2026 Membership (\$5.00)**

\$ _____ **Tax Deductible Donation**

\$ _____ **Total Amount**

Make check payable to *Jonesport Historical Society*

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