



Jonesport Historical Society

*“Preserving
Our Heritage”*

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JHS ANNUAL NEWSLETTER: April 2022

The Jonesport Historical Society started off the year 2021 with 324 paid-up members. Since then another 31 people joined the society. However, during that period at least 10 members died and several moved out of the area and dropped out of the society. One of those who died was JHS Officer Cathy Perry, who shortly before her untimely death received a Certificate of Appreciation for her outstanding service as JHS Treasurer and Genealogist for the past 18 years.

NUMBERS MATTER—Here are two reasons why:

- 1) When applying for grants it matters that our numbers are growing, and we offer dynamic programs.
- 2) Grants are usually awarded to growing concerns and not dying institutions.

JHS stands out among other historical societies by our dynamic programming and large membership role. Since historical societies tend to be made up of older people, we naturally lose a few members every year and must remain vigilant in attracting new people. When you visit the museum or attend our programs you feel the energy that makes us winners, so please renew your membership and invite family and friends to also join!

Changes to the JHS Board of Directors:

Ashley Faulkingham has returned to the Board and is now Secretary. Her husband Leland Faulkingham Jr. joined the Board as a member-at-large. Board Member Nancy Sawyer is now Treasurer with Bill Plaskon assisting and Ashley Faulkingham as a backup. Board Member Jean Guptill has volunteered to be acting Vice President.

Although COVID-19 restrictions have limited our activities this past year, there were still many things that took place. The JHS museum was open to visitors by appointment only, but at least 30 requests came in, with more than 50 visitors. Some of those visitors donated historic photos and artifacts. The most treasured artifact was the remains of the World War II monument that at one time stood outside the old brick high school on Main Street. Board Member Andy Hutnik and Bill Plaskon restored parts of it and hung it on a wall in the Meeting Room with other military items. In July JHS Historian Eric Kelley and Bill Plaskon were interviewed by a reporter from the *Ellsworth American* newspaper, as the three of us drove through Main Street in Jonesport and told stories to the reporter about the current and prior factories, stores, churches, businesses, marinas, wharves, opera house, and library that lined the street. The article appeared in the *Out-and-About* section in September. In August 52 JHS members and guests enjoyed a mussels tasting event outside of Ralph Smith's Moosabec Mussels, Inc. facility, followed by Ralph's talk on the history of his mussels business.

In January 2022 JHS and the Peabody Memorial Library hosted a Zoom presentation by Galen Koch from College of the Atlantic. Galen introduced an exhibit in the library, consisting of about 30 photos taken by Greta Rybus. The photos of Jonesport and Beals citizens and places had attached QR-codes, which when scanned played audio stories by the people associated with the photos. JHS Board Member Charlene Nelson and librarian Heidi Hinkley arranged the exhibit. Galen also explained the Soundwalks she and a College of Atlantic student created for Jonesport and Beals Island. These Soundwalks can be taken by anyone with a smartphone, or with an MP3 player which will be provided.

The Quarterly Newsletters which are emailed to JHS members continue to be a success, thanks to the efforts of editor Sharon Josephson. In the past year stories have been submitted by Sharon Josephson, Barbara Ostenberg, Annie (Sawyer) MacMichael and Greg Kelley. Please consider submitting your own story.

IF YOU ARE NOT RECEIVING THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER IT IS BECAUSE WE DO NOT HAVE A VALID EMAIL ADDRESS FOR YOU. PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IF YOU HAVE ONE. PLEASE NOTE THAT WE DO NOT SHARE OUR EMAIL CONTACT LIST, AND WE BLIND-COPY ALL OF OUR MASS MAILINGS.

About 600 photos and more than 2000 pages of text were added to the Archives database in the past 12 months. The Archives database now contains more than 18,000 photos, 30,000 pages of text, and 470 video clips that run 16 hours. You will be amazed at what you can find in the Archives. Search for the word “Jaffa” and discover that there is a connection between Jonesport and Abraham Lincoln’s Secretary of State William H. Seward, and a connection between a group of Jonesport residents and Mark Twain’s best-selling book during Twain’s lifetime. Search for “Seth Parker” and find out why four million people listened to a radio program every Sunday about Jonesport, and how Bette Davis got her Hollywood start in a movie about Jonesport. Do a search for “Lapwing” and discover a link between Jonesport and American author T.S. Eliot, and a link between a Jonesport fisherman and the Library of Congress. Look up “Barna Norton” and learn about the Jonesport man who claimed ownership to an island that has been in dispute with Canada since the 17th century, and whose story has made it into the *Wall Street Journal*.

Volunteer help is always needed, especially with scanning photographs and documents, publishing the Quarterly Newsletter, fundraising, and greeting museum visitors. Please let us know if you can help.

In 2022 we are hoping to find a venue for Passamaquoddy language and cultural historian Dwayne Tomah to do his presentation on the world’s first wax cylinder audio recordings, performed in 1890 in Calais. At least one other presentation is being explored. We will notify you by email if these presentations materialize. We are also trying to line up a few more video interviews with local senior citizens.

BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THE MUSEUM WILL BE OPEN THIS YEAR ONLY UPON REQUEST. PLEASE CALL 207-747-8228 TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT. SOMEONE IS USUALLY AVAILABLE TO OPEN THE MUSEUM WITHIN A HALF-HOUR AFTER THE CALL IS MADE.

Membership Renewal

Your address label shows the end of year that your dues have been paid. If you have paid your dues through 2022 or later, your new membership card is enclosed along with a donation form. If you are a member who owes dues for 2022, a membership form is enclosed. You are not required to pay dues prior to 2022. It would be greatly appreciated if you also pre-pay 2023 and 2024. If any information is incorrect or missing from the label attached to either form, please print the correct information on the form. If you are not already a member but would like to become one, a blank membership form is enclosed.

Bill Plaskon, President
Eric Kelley, Jr., Historian
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