

SAVE THE DATES

To Comfort, Heal & Cure-A survey of 18th c-20th c Medicine in Coastal Maine exhibit continues at Harrington House, 45 Main St. Mon-Fri 10a-4p \$3.00pp

And public programs related to our exhibit:

Sunday, October 13th 1:30p at Freeport Community Library, presentation by Carolyn E. Lawson, *Civil War Myths, Medicine, and Minie Balls.*

Sunday, Nov. 3rd, 1:30p at Freeport Community Library, Tom Kelleher, Sr. Curator at Old Sturbridge Village, *Phrenology: Quackery or Science of the Mind?*

Both programs are \$5.00pp

Sat Oct 5th 9a-3p 4th Annual Barns & Quilts Tour. \$35pp Reservations required. Visit four unique barns and learn about vintage quilts from our experts. Donuts and coffee start the day at Cottonweeds and we end with music and cider in John Libby’s barn (Houses & Barns by John Libby.)

Sun Oct 6th 10a-3p 38th Annual Pettengill Farm Day at historic Pettengill Farm.

19th c. Historical Conjuring, Juggling, Kite-making and Flying, Haywagon, Master Trades & Women’s Arts, House Tours, Food, Fiddle Music and lots more! \$5.00 adults \$2.00 children

4th Annual Dry Stone Wall Building Workshop with Chris Tanguay, Sat & Sun Oct 12/13. 9a-4p. Come one day or both. Lunch included. \$65./\$110. Register today- always a sell-out!

Watch for forthcoming information about our late October Ghosts of Freeport’s Past tours and events!

FREEPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Harrington House
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Freeport, ME 04032
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The DASH

Fall 2013

The Newsletter of Freeport Historical Society
Keeping the Past Present Since 1969

Revisiting Freeport’s
Role in Maine Statehood

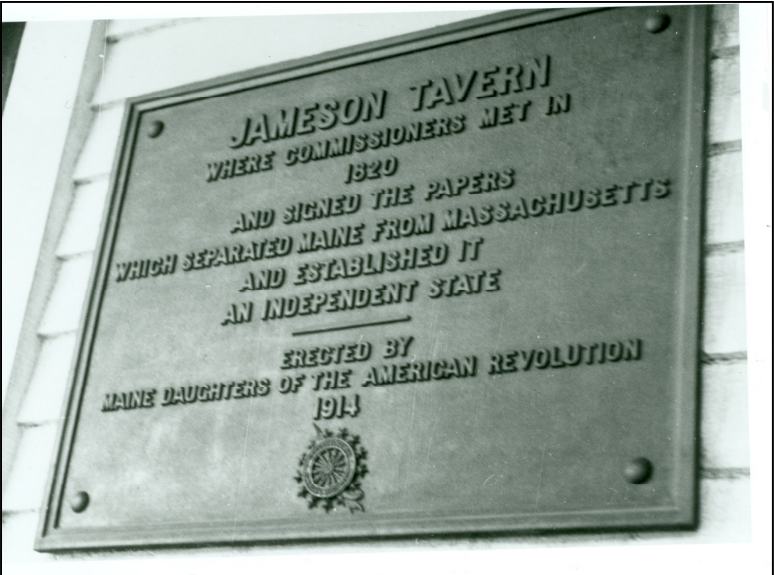
When the Jameson Tavern abruptly closed last winter, the story in the *Portland Press Herald* raised questions about the role of Freeport in Maine’s effort to separate from Massachusetts in the early 19th century. Letters and clippings from our Reverend John B. Carruthers Collection do not support the long cherished view that Freeport served as “the birthplace of Maine.” Carruthers’ detailed research in the 1920’s and 30’s traced the confusion about the town’s role in Maine statehood back to a small, hand-lettered sign. It abruptly appeared in a window of the Jameson (a.k.a. Codman) Tavern in 1889 when Freeport residents were preparing to celebrate the town’s centennial birthday. In their rush to commemorate the proud heritage of the community, local residents eagerly accepted the tavern’s erroneous claim that “commissioners” met there on March 15th, 1820 to sign the papers separating Maine from Massachusetts. Long after statehood was achieved, a joint commission was established to resolve lingering issues between the two states, but that

group never authorized statehood and never met in Freeport.

The origin of the Freeport myth undoubtedly arose from an important meeting that was indeed convened at the Jameson Tavern in July 1819. Unfortunately, those who attended were unanimously opposed to separating from Massachusetts. To make matters

worse, the citizens of Freeport voted against statehood in all six referendums held on the issue between 1792 and 1819. In a 1920 speech, Reverend Carruthers pointed out that these fundamental facts had been jumbled and turned upside down as they were retold over the years. By 1889 when Freeport celebrated its centennial, Freeport residents had convinced themselves that their town was indeed “the birthplace

of Maine.” That notion was treated as an article of faith to be passed from one generation to the next and it became enshrined in various guidebooks about Freeport that appeared in the early 20th century.



Plaque from Jameson Tavern
FHS, Edmund P. Skillin Photograph Collection

(Continued on page 2)

Those guidebooks played a key role in making Reverend Carruthers skeptical about Freeport’s claim to be “the birthplace of Maine.” This fact is revealed in several remarkable letters that are part of the Carruthers’ Collection. In the summer of 1935 and 1936 he had a feisty exchange with the Freeport lawyer, Paul L. Powers. As the president of the Freeport Chamber of Commerce, Powers clearly recognized the value of preserving the mystique that Maine statehood began at the Jameson Tavern. For his part, Reverend Carruthers pointed out that he also believed in the legend until he tried to ask the state legislature in 1920 for money to commemorate Freeport’s role in Maine statehood. In Augusta, Carruthers quickly realized that he needed more convincing evidence than the guidebooks and a few clippings. His research took him deep into various archives and the collection of the Maine Historical Society. He reported to Powers that he had found absolutely no support for the tradition that Maine statehood began in Freeport. In good lawyerly fashion, Powers responded that the Reverend had not offered enough evidence that Free-

port was not the state’s birthplace. Clearly exasperated, Carruthers restated that there was no evidence because the event never happened.

During Maine’s centennial celebration in 1920, Reverend Carruthers cautioned that Freeport’s misplaced willingness to promote itself as the “birthplace of Maine” was likely to make the town look “ridiculous.” Although his arguments did not sway Paul Powers, the Chamber of Commerce or local popular opinion, Carruthers did influence Florence Thurston and Harmon Cross who wrote the standard history of the town (*Three Centuries of Freeport*) in 1940. They agreed that the joint commission never met in Freeport to discuss any aspect of Maine’s separation from Massachusetts. Despite all the evidence to the contrary and Reverend Carruthers’ very sincere efforts, the idea that Freeport was the birthplace of Maine was so appealing that it refused to die.

-Alan Hall

Jennie / Louise – A Bit of Freeport History 7,000 miles from Home

It was 1869 when the bark *Jennie S. Barker* slid down a launchway at the Bliss shipyard in South Freeport and into the water of the Harraseeket estuary. She then sailed off to begin thirty five years of service as a cargo carrier on the world’s oceans – about as unremarkable in her day as an 18-wheeler on an Interstate highway today. The details of the *Jennie’s* history as a cargo hauler are largely unknown, but a few highlights make her worthy of special note.

Although her name is unknown to most present-day sailors, they owe her a significant debt because of an accident at sea. As the *Jennie* was approaching the British port of Liverpool in June of 1875



Harpoon tip from *Jennie S. Barker*, FH Collections

she collided with the steam powered tugboat *Spindrift*. The tug’s owners promptly sued for damages, claiming that the *Jennie’s* captain and crew were responsible. An admiralty court, however, absolved them of any liability and established the basic and still-operative legal principle that a vessel under sail has the right of way over a powered vessel under almost any circumstances.

In 1880, the bark was sold to Norwegian interests for use in the Baltic timber trade, and was renamed *Louise*. Nothing more is known of her until, in 1904, she was purchased by Norwegian Captain Carl Anton Larsen, and fitted out carry a cargo of

(Continued on page 3)

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The Dash Fall 2013

Harrington House
45 Main Street, Freeport, ME 04032

The Dash is published four times annually by Freeport Historical Society for its members.

Our Public Hours
Tuesday—Friday, 10:00am-5:00pm
and by appointment

To conduct research, please call 865-3170 and speak with Ned Allen, Collections Manager, for a convenient appointment.

www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org

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JOIN US

Membership does have its benefits!
A copy of the book *Tides of Change: A Guide to the Harraseeket Historic District*, a trail map of Pettengill Farm, and our quarterly newsletter, *The Dash*, are included. And members receive three hours of research time in our archives (a \$75.00 value) and invitations to all Society events and exhibits at free or reduced rates.

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Winslow Parks 60th Anniversary!

This year we acknowledge and celebrate the generous gift of Winslow Park by Adelaide Winslow Harb to the inhabitants of the Town of Freeport, Maine.

We are grateful to Dr. George Connick for preparing this brief history of one of Freeport's most beloved areas.

October 16, 1950

Adelaide Winslow Harb deeds 90 acres to her attorney, Paul Powers. This 90 acres is the current Winslow Park.

January 12, 1953

Opening paragraph in letter from Board of Selectman, Town of Freeport, Maine to Paul L. Powers, Trustee, [see letter dated 5/20/1953 below] refers to "vote of the Inhabitants":

Concerning the above property [i.e., Adelaide Winslow Harb Trust] which Mrs. Harb has offered as a public park please be advised that this letter is written pursuant to the authority invested in the undersigned Board of Selectmen by vote of the Inhabitants of the Town of Freeport on January 12, 1953.

April 4, 1953

Paul Powers deeds 90 acres to the Town of Freeport. It is to be known as DELIA B. POWERS WINSLOW MEMORIAL PARK. Delia Powers was Adelaide Harb's mother.

April 6, 1953

Notarized statement from Adelaide Winslow Harb expressing "my approval of the within conveyance of the property described therein from Paul L. Powers, Trustee, to The Inhabitants of the Town of Freeport"

May 20, 1953

Letter from Board of Selectmen of Freeport to Paul Powers accepting the terms and conditions in his deed of 4/4/1953 and referencing the Town vote on 1/12/1953.



FHS Office and Events Coordinator, Kim Vassel, leads a guided historic walking tour of Freeport Village.

GREAT NEWS AT FHS!

Maine Archives and Museums' Program Committee informed us that our proposal, "Beyond Policy and Procedure: Writing a Collections Plan," has been accepted as a session at the 2013 Annual Conference which will be held in Orono on Tuesday, October 29.

Ned Allen authored this white paper which is a direct outgrowth of our two-year Collections Planning grant. Kudos to him!

equipment and supplies to establish a whaling station at a place called Grytviken on South Georgia, a remote island in the South Atlantic almost on the doorstep of Antarctica. It would be her final voyage, but not the end of her useful life.

Having completed that voyage of more than 8,000 miles and safely delivered her cargo, the *Jennie / Louise* continued to serve for a number of years as a storage facility for the whaling station until, probably in the 1920s, her hull lost buoyancy and settled onto the gravelly bottom of Grytviken Cove.

For decades the hull remained basically intact but gradually deteriorating until, by the 1970s, it resem-



Jennie S. Barker, 1990-1991, photo by John Sppletstoesser

bled the hulks of the schooners *Hesper* and *Luther Little* that many may recall as long-prominent fixtures along Wiscasset's waterfront. Then, in the aftermath of the brief and asymmetric 1982 Falklands War between Argentina and Great Britain, a training exercise by Royal Marines stationed at Grytviken resulted in an unintentional fire that burned the hull to the waterline.

Despite those misfortunes, the lower portion of the hull still survives, along with portions of the upper structure that may have collapsed inward or outward during the fire, and who knows what else. The surviving elements are the oldest known identifiable

remnants of a Freeport-built vessel and, as such, they're of legitimate interest as relics of Freeport's shipbuilding and maritime heritage.

Archaeological survey and sampling work has recently been undertaken on what's left of the wreck, although these activities are currently suspended with the southern hemisphere now being on the grip of winter. Sampling of debris within and adjacent to the hull has yielded few discoveries, but some tantalizing ones, including two maker's plates from ship's pumps patented by George Moulton, Jr. of Bath, Maine, in May of 1866. The presence of these brass plates provides encouraging evidence that, in addition to the hull structure itself, some elements of the ship's original equipment may still be present and recoverable.

Would it ever be possible – or worthwhile – to repatriate some token portion of the *Jennie's* hull to its Freeport birthplace? That's hard to say at this point, but we have asked to be kept informed regarding the plans, progress and findings of the current survey initiative at Grytviken. In general, the British South Atlantic Authority, which governs South Georgia, does not permit the removal of artifacts that are legitimate components of Grytviken history – but there are precedents for the repatriation of Maine-built ship components from that jurisdiction to their home state.

A hull section of the Phippsburg-built ship *St. Mary* now resides in Maine's State Museum, and portions of the clipper *Snow Squall* have been returned to South Portland where that ship was built.

The Freeport Historical Society has neither the funds that would be needed to salvage and transport any meaningful portion of the *Jennie* back home – nor the facilities that would be required to stabilize the waterlogged timber – nor space in which any such relic might be effectively displayed and interpreted. Nevertheless, we think it appropriate to maintain an awareness of, and to express an interest in, the inves-

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tigations taking place on a gravelly beach just over 7,000 miles from here. What lies there is unquestionably a part of Freeport’s history and, in the absence of any comparable example of a 19th century Freeport-built vessel, it’s an *important* part. At the very least, we’ll hope to obtain and share photographic records of the investigations.

Meanwhile if you have any friends or relatives who may be planning travel to the Antarctic aboard one of the small cruise ships that makes a stop at Grytviken, please ask them to take lots of pictures of the *Jennie / Louise* and send them home to Freeport.

-Ron Kley -- Museum Research Associates

2nd Annual Harraseeket Heritage Day and Harborside Gala—a great success!

At Brewer South Freeport Marine, located on the waterfront in South Freeport, a lively public celebration of Freeport’s maritime past, including sails aboard the schooner *Frances*, pirate-themed kids' activities, guided historic walking tours, knot-tying and oyster-shucking demonstrations, maritime shanties and jigs, and lunch courtesy of Hannaford Supermarkets was enjoyed by families and children who joined us!

On a sunny June 22nd a number of wonderful organizations and individuals hosted educa-



Exploring the Touch Tank

tional and fun areas including the Compass Project, showcasing their skills in boat-building; the crew of the *Frances*, teaching knot-tying; Freeport Shellfish Commission and Maine Clammers Association, featuring a saltwater touch tank; and Maine Oysters Inc., offering a sampling of their delicious Flying Point Oysters. Face painting, pirate tattoos, photo booth, mini-boat building, and storytelling were also enjoyed. Hannaford Supermarkets provided a festive barbecue fare for lunch, while neighbor Harraseeket Lunch & Lobster Company served up their famous chowder.

(Continued on page 5)



Making Mini-Boats

Completing Exterior and Interior Work on the Historic Saltbox House at Pettengill Farm

Perhaps unique on the Eastern Seaboard of the United States, Freeport’s Pettengill Farm is a treasure. This special place, marked by its saltbox house, rolling farm fields and the snaking Harraseeket saltwater estuary is enjoyed by individuals and families from Freeport, the region and beyond. Maintaining the 140 acre Pettengill Farm and its historic saltbox is an ongoing process which Freeport Historical Society (FHS) takes seriously.

Please join us now and help us insure the future of historic Pettengill Farm by contributing to our Pettengill Phase 2 Campaign.

In recent years, FHS has repainted the building, continued to monitor temperature and humidity fluctuations and evaluate next-steps in terms of care for the unique maritime sgraffiti illustrations. In 2011, we added back to the landscape a replica of the privy-shed. The Milk Shed was added-back in 2006.

Road culverts have been replaced, the fields are bush-hogged annually, the apple orchards are receiving regular pruning (next step: an arborist) and we mow bi-weekly around the house and other structures.

Last year we completed Phase 1 work on the historic saltbox house (ca. 1800.) The most water- damaged windows and sashes were replaced, sealing the basement foundation walls and floors from water and moisture

infiltration was completed as was sealing the bulkhead and securing the structure via a new basement door. Through an RFP process, Taggart Construction was awarded the work.

Late in 2012, we received funding to complete Phase 2 which includes planned window replacement and select interior restoration work (which was a result of vandalism decades ago.) The generous funding we received (\$8000) must be cash-matched, dollar for dollar, and will be used to complete this important work.

In 2015, FHS plans a community celebration that will focus on how the preservation activism of the Smith Family and the students and teachers at Morse Street school, resulted in the property being donated to FHS for the benefit of the community.

The work on the saltbox, which we plan to complete late in 2013, will insure the integrity of the structure and allow us to celebrate its legacy.

Our goal is to raise \$8000 in pledges by October 1st with gifts received by October 30, 2013. Gifts are tax - deductible to the extent of the law.

Please join us now in this exciting campaign by sending in your pledge. Doing so will help insure the future of historic and unique property which is Pettengill Farm.

Troop 45 Visit to Pettengill Farm

On the weekend of April 6th, BSA Troop 45(Freeport/ Pownal) undertook a *Fundamentals of Navigation Basics* lesson. Leading the lesson were “Star” ranked Boy Scouts, who taught Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts of various ranks (Tenderfoot, Webelos II, and Wolf.) Using a Map and Compass, Scouts learned how to use a map, compass with a map, along with a discussion of how to use the compass in- hand to find degrees. In addition, the Scouts received an introduction to different types of compasses.





Our Medicinal Garden in the Harrington House courtyard complements our History of Medicine exhibit.



Volunteer Betsy Bradford works in the Harrington House Gardens.

To Comfort, Heal, & Cure: A Survey of 18th c. – 20th c. Medicine in Coastal Maine

Exhibit and programs

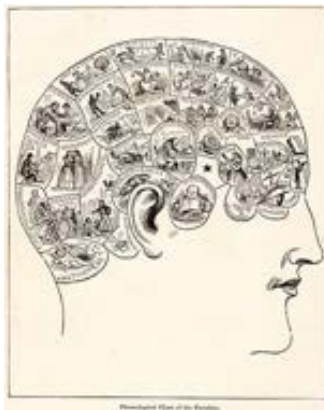
Since the topic of health care dominates public discourse these days we decided that an examination of Freeport's (and surrounding communities) health care history would be timely and of interest. This subject gave us the opportunity to showcase items from our collection which have not been exhibited in some time or perhaps ever and it places them in the context of both local and regional health-care.

Civil War Medicine, Myths, and Minie Balls
with Carolyn E. Lawson
Sunday October 13, 1:30-2:30p
Freeport Public Library Community Room—\$5

More than 620,000 soldiers died during the Civil War, but the death toll would have been even higher had it not been for the work of doctors and nurses who treated the sick and wounded. The program provides a first person report of the state of medicine "at the front" and dispels some of the myths about Civil War era medicine. A reproduction hospital cot and nurse's equipment are part of this unique presentation.



Phrenology: Quackery or the Science of the Mind
with Tom Kelleher
Sunday November 3, 1:30-2:30p
Freeport Public Library Community Room—\$5



Phrenology is the belief that one's mental abilities can be discerned by examining the shape of a person's head. This authentic, historically-costumed dramatization includes "reading of cranial bumps" on one or two volunteer heads followed by a discussion of the history and enduring legacy of this once-popular pseudo-science, a parent of modern psychology and neuroscience.

That evening, a fabulous Harborside Gala took place at Brewer South Freeport Marine. Entertainment included by pianist Wally McPherson and the Jason Spooner Band, sushi bar with chef, delicious hors d'oeuvres, Gritty's beer, and signature Harborside beverage featuring New England Distilleries Eight Bells rum. Silent and live auctions featured Red Sox, Celtics, and Patriots tickets; L.L.Bean paddleboard package, Thos. Moser Cabinetmakers stool;



Gala tent filled with guests!

mentally conscious vessel, sailing traditionally without an engine aboard.

In addition to the other activities, architectural Historian, Annie Robinson, led two very special walking tours of historic South Freeport.



Compass Project—Oar Making

Harraseeket Castle charm by Brown Goldsmiths; and much more. All proceeds benefited Freeport Historical Society and our public programs and two historic properties.

Celebrating the maritime history of Freeport, the schooner *Frances* docked on Friday afternoon and took guests sailing on Saturday. Owned by Maine Sailing Adventures, whose mission is to bring the lore and memory of the traditional windjammer era back to southern Maine, the *Frances* was built in Portland with support from Wallace Soule, a Freeport native and carpenter, who was an integral part of the hull and finish work construction. She is an environ-



Learning to Tie Knots

(Continued on page 6)



L to R: Trustees Steve Smith and Cito Selinger, and Brewer South Freeport Marine General Manager John Brewer

Premier sponsors include Brewer South Freeport Marine; Hannaford Supermarkets; and Todd H. Doolan of Morgan Stanley. Additional sponsors include Autowerkes Maine; Bob Knecht, Town & Shore; Harraseeket Lunch & Lobster Company; Mary K. Noyes, entrepreneur (e); and Curtis Thaxter, Attorneys at Law.



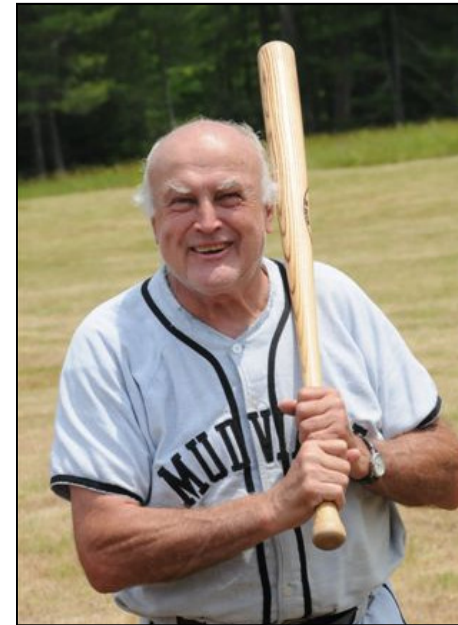
*Harriseeket Heritage Day and Harborside Gala Committee
L to R: Stacey Lodato, Kristen Peterson, Emily Carville, Meghan Palmer, Julie Flower, FHS Trustee Cindy Doolan, Hilary Jessen and Winnett Ordway*



The Brewer South Freeport Marine crew were a great help!

4th Annual Vintage Baseball Game

Though our kids mini-baseball camp and Fun Run was cancelled due to rain, by late morning on June 23rd we had beautiful blue skies to welcome our 4th Annual Vintage Baseball game.



Maine Baseball Hall of Famer Mort Soule performed a moving recitation of "Casey at the Bat"

event with greetings to the crowd. After thanking a number of volunteers and event sponsors, Alex announced Mort Soule who, in full uniform, masterfully recited **Casey at the Bat** (in April, Mort recited "Casey" at Fenway Park's Maine Day!)

At 1:30p, the Vintage Baseball game between rivals Dirigo (ME) and Ipswich (MA) commenced. Ump Jeff Peart shared the 1860 game rules with the "cranks" (fans, in 1850 parlance.) There was some fine fielding, great pitches and gloveless catches! After the teams played, lots of

community members—young and old--- took their chances at bat.

Our favorite accordion band, The Maine Squeeze, was on the field for the event playing all our favorite old time favorites. And, a terrific vintage baseball card collection was on display.

The "cranks" enjoyed hot dogs, ice cream, lemonade and beer (only because it is historically correct!)

Thank you to Jay Yilmaz, Guy and Phoebe Quattrucci, Ben & Jerry's Freeport and Mercury Brewing for being such community-minded sponsors and volunteers.

We again thank Norway Savings Bank for generously underwriting this wonderful family event and for providing all of the terrific volunteers for the day from the Freeport branch.

