

LCHA CHRONICLE

Lincoln County Historical Association

Letter from Ed

Dear Friends,

Spring is here and Chapman-Hall House, Museum and Old Jail, and the Pownalborough Court House are once again awakening, dusting off and beginning to prepare for a busy season.

You will be reading about many of the plans for LCHA in this newsletter, aptly put together for your information and enjoyment by Chris Hopf-Lovette. Thank you Chris; it is quite a project.

When I am asked to say a few words I always come back to one of the most important aspects of our organization— the volunteers who make things happen. It is not simply that they have the time, but they have the heart to use their time in this way.

Please consider giving of your time in some small way. It will be so appreciated and will give you an opportunity to develop new skills, meet new people and connect with the community. We look forward to a busy, productive summer and hope you will choose to be involved. As Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a *life* by what we give."

I look forward to visiting with you at our upcoming events.

Ed Kavanagh, President
Board of Trustees

LCHA receives Costume Society of America grant

By Kerry Cushing

At the end of the month of May, a group of 'angels' will descend upon the Old Jail Museum in Wiscasset. The angels are Costume Society of America members who have volunteered to work with LCHA's collections committee and staff to document, label and preserve the textile collections of LCHA's three museums.



Embroidered log cabin quilt from our textile collection

CSA members are individuals who are involved in the study, education, collection, and preservation, presentation, and interpretation of dress and appearance in our past, present, and future societies. The Angels Project was founded in 2006 to support one small museum each year from a location near the Costume Society of America's National Symposium. We are fortunate that the

2017 National Symposium is to be held in Portland, Maine this May.

On Monday, May 29th, 15 Angels will take a tour of Castle Tucker and attend a reception at the James Kochan Gallery before staying with their hosts for the night.

On May 30th, CSA volunteers will spend the day at the Museum and Old Jail in Wiscasset to demonstrate proper care and preservation of textiles and teach LCHA collections committee members these techniques. They will also provide expertise and additional human resources to document, catalogue, photograph, label, and store objects from LCHA's textile and costume collection. If needed, conservation treatment will also be provided on premises. (Shipments of some \$2000 worth of supplies and equipment for textile conservation and preservation have already arrived.)

It is a great honor for LCHA to be chosen for the Angels Project. The training will ensure that the Association's textile collections will be properly preserved for future exhibits and storage.

Another Fine Winter Lecture Series

by Esther Danielson

Spring-like weather is arriving right on time, not too long after the last winter lecture. If you couldn't attend, here's what you missed:

Weaver Marjie Thompson impressed and enthralled the audience with her knowledge of and enthusiasm for her subject. Margie spoke about weavers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In particular, she described the arduous steps in the production

of linen yarn, from growing the flax, to retting, scutching and spinning. She illustrated her talk with a variety of antique handwoven fabrics.



Marjie Thompson explains the handweaving process

Sumner McKane's presentation of his video "In the Blood" came next. The film combines historic photos, movies, and voice recordings of Maine's lumbermen and log drivers, along with Sumner's own music and commentary. Sumner has produced other videos and performs accompanying music, as well. Look for his performances locally.

Orman Hines and shipwright Rob Stevens described their research and work to date on the reproduction of Maine's first-built ship, the Virginia, being assembled by volunteers in Bath on the banks of the Kennebec. This impressive project is scheduled for launching in 2018. You can visit the Virginia behind the Freight Shed.

The final talk of the season featured Deane Van Dusen's photos of his extensive collection of painted furniture. Deane's collection focuses on early nineteenth century pieces with their original finishes. Truly a feast for the eyes!

We in Midcoast Maine are lucky to have these knowledgeable people among us who have generously shared their passions at our lecture series.

From Winter into Summer 2017

by Louise T. Miller, Education Coordinator

Despite the heavy snows, the Education Department continued to expand its outreach to schools during the winter months. During a December visit with Chewonki's president Willard Morgan and several of his staff members, we discussed some of the areas where our two educational endeavors could work together. It was a wonderful opportunity to share experiences in reaching young people.

In February I participated in the *Winter Carnival Day* at the Center for Teaching and Learning for the third time. During the carnival students were invited to participate in a variety of activities put together by teachers and parents. This year my project was Mittens as Art. I explained that some designs used in knitting mittens were at one time a specialty of specific areas of Maine and the Maritimes. Students drew their own designs on a large paper mitten cutout that had historical information printed on the reverse side.

Also in February, I prepared an interactive Colonial Life presentation for Hilary Gallione's 5th / 6th grade class at Bristol Consolidated. The students were given a variety of colonial household items and asked to identify them. Their questions and discussion enriched the experience.

March was National Reading Month as well as Women's Month. This was an opportunity to share the rich history of Lincoln County and the historic sites maintained by LCHA. For

National Reading Month, libraries assisted me in promoting books based on historical themes. Titles relevant to local areas and the state of Maine were suggested. All eleven libraries in Lincoln County were contacted and the response was very rewarding. For Women's Month, we submitted articles to local newspapers about women that related to each of the three LCHA historic sites.

Carolyn Hardman of the Nobleboro Historical Society is helping with a presentation for Cindy Sabina's 6th grade class at Nobleboro Central School about ship captains from Lincoln County who transported goods around the world during the 19th century. We have found information about Capt. Samuel Randolph Goodwin from Pownalborough Court House records and Capt. Hopkins of Nobleboro from the Nobleboro Historical Society. The student discussion will center upon the experiences of the two.

Local schools have been invited to attend the 17th century program sponsored by the LCHA Education Department and Colonial Pemaquid Historic Site in May and June. Dates are not yet finalized as we await school input due to calendar changes influenced by the recent snowy weather. The two-hour program, which will be offered twice on each of three days, will be presented by knowledgeable men and women in period costume. The program will offer a look at 17th century fishing station activities, navigational tools and foods of the period, as well as archeology evidence that tells some of the story of Pemaquid Point and early Lincoln County history.

Activities for the 2017 *Summer with the Past* children's camp are now being planned. Each LCHA site will host a week-long program. Dates will be available on the LCHA website. Members' children will qualify for a discount on the fee.

Stewardship Reports

Chapman-Hall House

by Louise Miller

The Chapman-Hall House Stewardship Committee has been busy these last few months preparing our calendar of events and for our 2017 major fundraiser. Each year the Committee determines a priority for the historic site and earmarks monies raised to assist with that project. This year's major fundraiser will be a Signature Quilt. The Annual Yard Sale, held each July for a number of years now, will be given a rest.

The inspiration for the Signature Quilt project was prompted by work done to prepare for the CSA Angel's Grant which focused on the textile collections of all three of the LCHA historic sites. While photographing textiles long resting in closed chests in the house, the Esther Jameson Newbert signature quilt was discovered. Esther's quilt was given for display when the house was still in the care of the Chapman-Hall Preservation Society. Dated to 1856, research has shown that Esther must have been preparing her hope chest, as she did not marry until 1864. Each of the 35 patch-work squares is signed by the maker and some have a small verse written on them as well. The patch-work pattern used was Cat's Cradle.

Those who sew, as well as quilters, are being invited to make a square and sign it, becoming a part of this very special signature quilt. A news release has gone out and brochures announcing the project have been accepted at the local fabric shops. It is planned to have our version of Esther's signature quilt ready

for display and tickets sales in June. Watch for more details.

In preparation for the open season, we will hold our Annual Shredding on Site event (a good time to get rid of all those "old" various papers piling up) on May 26 from 9AM - noon and the Annual Plant Sale on May 21. "Three Traditions," which has now become our annual opening weekend presentation, will offer insights into the Native America presence in Maine, navigation of coastal waters, and the role of the settler/militiaman. Jeff Miller will be back at Chapman-Hall House on June 24th demonstrating the work of the 18th century blacksmith on his traveling forge. "Summer with the Past" children's week is scheduled for June 26 - 30.

As with all the LCHA sites, volunteers are our lifeblood. At Chapman-Hall House there are a variety of ways to be involved: one can be a docent, help with special events, or help with research and collections. If you are interested please contact Natalie House via email at info@linconcountyhistory.org or by phone at 563-8411.

Old Jail

by Christine Hopf-Lovette

This winter the Jail has seen more activity than usual. David Pope and Ed Kavanagh decided to grease the hinges and latches on the cell doors, and David has been in and out — keeping track of the relative humidity in the cells to see if the heat from a single light bulb helps to keep them drier. Bill Danielson has spent many hours inside one of the cells in his quest for the best photo of the map graffiti to be used for an educational panel. Bill will be joined in this effort by a PhD candidate who has requested access to the Jail in

order to photograph graffiti for his thesis on graffiti in historic buildings.

There's always something new to learn about the structure of the Old Jail and Jailor's House. We had thought that moisture in the fireplaces must seep in through the sides of the chimney or through loose flashing because the top of each chimney has a slate chimney cap. But Ed Kavanagh discovered that snow blows right in.



Who knew? Snow comes right down the chimney.

Just prior to opening for the season, the Jailor's House will be filled with visitors from the Angel's Project, a group of experts in the preservation of textiles who will help us to properly catalog and store the items in our collection. The event is the result of a grant request made by Kerry Cushing and the LCHA Collections Committee. We have been chosen to receive not only expert help and advice, but also a considerable amount of collections materials (including a vacuum and acid-free boxes) plus additional cash for future purchases that the Angels determine are needed after their visit. On Memorial Day weekend, some 20 professionals will arrive in Wiscasset. Many will stay overnight at the homes of committee members.



Alice Smith Duncan, a committee member and museum professional who has recently returned to her family home in Alna, has offered to curate our summer exhibit. She's been having great fun researching the history of tattoos in 19th century America. The exhibit will be called

"Dungeons and Dragons" and we hope the topic will draw a wide variety of visitors. Alice has ideas for a summer lecturer on the subject as well as gift shop items for us to sell.

We open for the season on June 3. Our tag sale will be held on Saturday, June 17. We'd love to have your donations. Judith and Bill Sutter have once again agreed to store items in their barn. Please call them at 882-7230 to make arrangements.

Pownalborough Court House

by Merry Fossel

Michael Emmons, a PhD candidate at U. Delaware in Preservation Studies whose thesis concerns graffiti, recently visited the MOJ and the PCH. He specifically came to see our ships. Michael and Jay Robbins spent two hours at PCH examining every non-plastered surface from floor to ceiling, he with wand light in one hand and camera in other. Hundreds of photos later he said "Wow!!" Our building has one of the most extensive and impressive collections of graffiti he has seen.

Not only do we have the carved Rev. War Sloop Polly in Tavern Room, chalkings throughout and James Flagg's builder's signature in the parlor, we

discovered a cute cat in a corner of the loom room, a caricature of pointy nosed “Johny” on right as you go loom room to tool room, a whole fleet of “banana” boats in Court Room and elsewhere, at least three other inscribed or penciled ships, a hatchet on the stairs to attic with the words “the axe that cut off her hand”, the word “tickets” by the filled in window in the little room at top of stairs on third floor, penciled words “Emma died North Dresden, 1896” 3rd floor hallway outside Jury room, and more.

We also found builder's compass daisywheels, sketches of buildings, lots of carved initials, other tool mark doodles, many dates and fascinating stuff that I had never noticed. With Michael's help and photo archive, Jay will list out the locations of these findings. We look forward to Michael's assessment and help in understanding the human element behind this wonderful historic record.

Our PCH Stewardship Committee has been busy planning for projects and programs this summer. We scheduled our Volunteer Workday to get the museum ready for the season on Saturday, May 6, from 9-12 noon. All LCHA members and friends are welcome to help us out on this day! And don't forget to join us for our 63rd annual Memorial Day Observance on Monday, May 29 at 11:00 AM. We will read the roll of those buried in the cemetery, lay flowers on the graves, and hold our hands over our ears whilst a company of re-enactors fires a fitting salute. The Court House will be open for docent-led tours after the Observance.

Kermess on the Kennebec

by Christine Hopf-Lovette

This year's Kermess fundraiser party will be a pig roast on Sunday, July 23 at

Pownalborough Court House, LCHA's historic property on the banks of the Kennebec River in Dresden. If you have never visited the court house, this is a perfect opportunity; if you have been there, you know that it's a great place for a party. We hope you'll bring friends, too.

Our planning committee had so much fun working on last year's Kermess lobster bake that the core group volunteered to make this year's event another great success. Chris Hopf-Lovette is chair, and Linda Pope, Terri Wells, Elizabeth Potter, and Merry Fossel are working with her to nail down the details. Tom and Wendy Eichler have agreed to chair the host committee to ensure that we reach our fundraising goals.

- **Raffle tickets for restaurant gift certificates** will be on sale prior to the event.
- **Vegetarian menu of Columbian dishes** by Jorge Pena will be offered as an alternative.
- **During the party, we'll have a Cake Walk.** Some of our best bakers will create sumptuous desserts for the auction.
- **Entertainment will be period music by Castlebay.** They will be in costume, and anyone who wishes to do so is invited to come in costume, too. The range of styles is as broad as the dates of our LCHA properties. This includes the 18th and 19th centuries.



Board Retreat

by Christine Hopf-Lovette

On Saturday, March 25th, LCHA trustees gathered for a workshop at Skidompha Library in Damariscotta. Pam Gormley, Executive Director of the library and a skilled mediator, led the discussion, which included a review of trustee responsibilities, a look at our accomplishments, and a list of goals for the coming year.



Goals for 2017 were set at the trustee workshop

The Board has achieved many of the goals we set last year. Among our successes, we:

- held our first signature event, Kermess at the Sortwell Farm
- hired a part-time director, Kerry Cushing
- developed educational panels for each site with a grant from the Davis Foundation
- brought in new trustees from the Dresden area, which had been under-represented
- hosted a field trip to historic Salem
- honored our volunteers for their outstanding achievements

One of our goals for the future includes a stretch beyond our mission. We will initiate plans to make Lincoln County a prime vacation destination for historic places. This will involve cooperation with many other Lincoln County historical organizations.

Getting Ready

by Kerry Cushing

I can't believe it is time to prepare to open for the summer. This winter the stewardship committees have been working hard to prioritize the immediate and long-range facility goals for our museums. We appreciate the work of former Board members Judith Sutter, Linda Levenson, Perry Palmer, Elizabeth Potter and Merry Fossil. Fortunately, I will still get to see them as they continue to volunteer for LCHA.

LCHA is very fortunate to have so many wonderful and loyal supporters.

Thanks to Esther Danielson, Sally Gemmill and Beth Quivey for providing us with a great lineup of speakers for the Winter Lecture Series. The talks were interesting and educational. I would also like to thank everyone for their support of our 2016-17 annual campaign. We are hoping to raise \$15,000 by the end of the summer. Now we are gearing up for our May membership drive and preparing for the Costume Society of America's on-site assistance with textile conservation.

How you can help LCHA

The Annual Campaign supports the general operations of LCHA. From building maintenance to the electric bill to the education program and salaries, gifts to the annual campaign are completely unrestricted. Gifts are 100% tax deductible.

Memberships support the mission of LCHA. They support the benefits associated with the institution and provide a healthy level of support and involvement. Members and volunteers also help to keep costs down by working on exhibits, events, tours, and other activities during the year.

Thank you for your support!

Lincoln County Historical Association 2017

Executive Director, Kerry Cushing
Education Coordinator, Louise Miller

Executive Committee

President	Ed Kavanagh
Vice President	Bill Danielson
Secretary	Christine Hopf-Lovette
Treasurer	Bill Brewer

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Newsletter editor: Christine Hopf-Lovette

Please watch the mail for your 2017 membership reminder. Your support makes a difference.