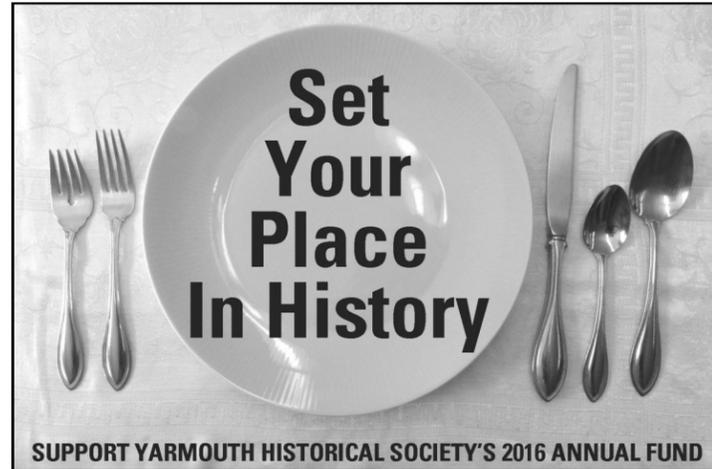


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YARMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Yarmouth History Center
Newsletter

Fall 2016 118 East Elm Street, Yarmouth, Maine 207-846-6259

House Tour Delights

"It's a perfect day for a tour!" This was the refrain we heard throughout the day on September 17th, the day of the Yarmouth Historical Society's fifth biannual Historic House Tour.

For tourgoers, the weather was only part of the perfect day. Seven spectacular homes were featured on this year's Tour; most were built on lots outlined on the 1847 plan of the Cutter-Humphrey Subdivision, one of Yarmouth's first planned neighborhoods (see page 3). This neighborhood was home to sea captains, merchants, and tradesmen, many of whom set their place in Yarmouth's history through their successful pursuits.

We are grateful to the homeowners who generously allowed us to view their historic homes. For tourgoers, it was an opportunity to see how these homeowners have preserved the character of the houses while incorporating modern amenities to enhance their lives. Our tourgoers walked away inspired to forge ahead with their own renovation projects.

Some of the homeowners on this year's tour connected with past owners to gather information, photographs, and in some cases, artifacts. The Captain Curtis house on South Street, c 1848, stayed in the Curtis family until 1983. The current owners met with the descendants of the Curtis family and staged the home with Captain and Mrs. Curtis' possessions. One thrilled visitor commented that the home had been transformed into a mini museum. It was a treat to learn so much history while touring Captain Curtis' former home.

Another surprise on this year's tour was a 1950s ranch built on lot 41 of the Cutter-Humphrey plan. It might surprise some that this ranch, being at least 50 years old, meets the first requirement to be considered for placement on the National Register of Historic Places. The fact that this house could be eligible for this status leads one to consider that it



Above: Lorah Igo welcomes visitors to the Samuel Prince House on West Elm Street, sponsored by our Event Sponsor, F. O. Bailey.

may be time to start thinking of mid-20th century homes as historic and worthy of preservation. One visitor stated that she never thought she would have 'ranch envy,' but the space created by the owners of the ranch on our Tour made her see the ranch-style home in a new light.

Support from our generous sponsors made this Tour possible. Our sincere thanks go to our event sponsor F.O. Bailey, media sponsor Maine Home+Design and house sponsors: Estabrook's Farm and Garden, Hancock Lumber, Kate Huntress at Re/Max Heritage, Main Line Fence, and Norway Savings Bank. Thank you for your support and for bringing Yarmouth history to life!

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From the Chair

As we turn our attention from outdoor summer activities to the more cerebral indoor activities of watching the Red Sox in the playoffs and Presidential debates, it is natural to consider how we got to this point. Of course, much of the answer lies in understanding past history. The quality and talent of today's Red Sox team and of our Presidential candidates is the result of many decisions, some of which were made many years ago.

This leads me to thinking about the Yarmouth History Center. The Center helps us to use our imagination to envision Yarmouth's past history – a community where ocean-going sailing ships were built in the harbor; where pulp was made on the Royal River; and where Main Street was a thriving commercial center with horse and buggy traffic! The process of looking back to better understand our history helps us make good decisions about our future.

Thankfully, the Yarmouth History Center is a thriving and vibrant organization that is dedicated to helping us better understand our local history and celebrate our wonderful community. But we cannot take this gem of an institution for granted. Shortly, you will be asked to support our Annual Fund. The Annual Fund is critical to the continued success of the History Center. If, like me, you value the lectures, movies, exhibits and programs at the Center, please join me in generously supporting the Annual Fund. Donating to the Annual Fund is a smart investment in the future of our community!!!

Thank you in advance for considering a donation to the History Center's Annual Fund.



Thank you.
Bill Harwood

Amy Aldredge, Dallas Historical Society

Executive Director



Amy Aldredge

The Yarmouth Historical Society recently said goodbye to longtime staff member Amy Aldredge, who had served as Executive Director since 2014, following stints as Program Director, Curator, Board Member, and volunteer. The Board of Trustees and staff wish Amy well as she embarks on a new challenge as Executive Director of the Dallas (Texas) Historical Society.

Current Program Director Katie

Worthing has been named Interim Executive Director. Katie joined the staff of the History Center in 2015. A Brunswick native, she holds a BA in Art History and Environmental Studies from Bowdoin College and a PhD in Art History from the University of Glasgow.



Katie Worthing

Save the Date!
Saturday, December 3

At the Yarmouth History Center
118 East Elm Street, Yarmouth



This fair is part of the town-wide Hometown Holidays Event.

Loring Descendants Visit Yarmouth

The Munno Family of Bayport, NY, descendants of Ansel Loring, visited the History Center this summer to check out Loring's desk, which he used at his Grist Mill from 1863–1870. Mr. Loring engaged in seafaring, mining, and business. At the time of his death it was believed Loring was the last "Forty Niner" in the United States.

Left to Right: Dana Loring, Vanessa, Jesse, and Hanna Munno.



Inspiration From the Collection: The Dunce Cap

This story was written by Evie King as she sat in the one-room schoolhouse on West Main Street during the Young Author's Camp, sponsored by the Southern Maine Writer's Project. This is the third year that the Yarmouth History Center has hosted this camp. We look forward to next year and more great stories.

I stared at the chalkboard I had been given, my hair falling in front of my face, ready for instructions.

"Good morning class," my teacher said with pursed lips. She had pearly white teeth and vicious blue eyes.

"Good morning Mrs. Turnstale," the class chimed reluctantly and half-heartedly. I looked up towards the teacher's desk and glanced at the assortment of different lessons that dotted the large chalkboard.

"This morning we will be focusing on grammar," she said with a voice like a cat who was preying on her twenty-three mice which, ironically, was us, her students.

"Please write down on your boards what the past tense of spell is."

I wrote my answer down in three seconds flat and waited for the rest of the class to write their answers down. The sound of chalk scraping boards filled the room and chalk dust was clearly visible in the air.

"Now I assume all of you are going to get this answer correct because I expected you to be practicing it this summer."

As the words left her mouth, a few kids twiddled their thumbs nervously, showing they hadn't practiced at all. Well, my mother was an English teacher in the upper grades and she had had Mrs. Turnstale as well so she practiced with me every summer and it really paid off. I have never gotten a dunce cap once.

"Please show your boards," Mrs. Turnstale snarled

and we all held them up above our heads.

"Nelson, Little and Maxwell, all incorrect! Everyone else...well done!" She said it like she didn't want to. My best friend Penny Maxwell sniffled quietly behind me.

"Ms. Maxwell, Dunce until after recess!" Penny stood and walked towards the front of the room, still sniffing. "No crying!" Mrs. Turnstale shrieked unfazed, showing no pity. Penny sat and placed the dunce cap over her head. The rest of the period I stared at Penny, but she never looked up from her feet, a stony look on her face.

"Recess, class dismissed!" Everyone filed neatly out of the room but I stayed and walked up to the teacher's desk. Without even looking up she said, "What is it, Ella?"

"Well, I want to remind you that Penny's mom is blind so it's harder for her to study --." She cut me off.

"I am well aware of the circumstances, Ella!"

"I don't think she deserved a dunce though ma'am." She didn't reply. I walked over to Penny and sat next to her. I stayed there for the rest of the school day and I was surprised Mrs. Turnstale didn't do anything about it. Penny didn't say anything to me until the end of the day.

"Thank you, Ella," she exclaimed.

"If you want to you can come to my house to study," I said.

"Yeah, that would be great!" I may have gotten my first dunce that day, but I had a feeling I was the first person to be happy about it.

Upcoming Events and Programs

Lectures are free for Yarmouth Historical Society Members and \$5.00 all others.

The Lecture Series is sponsored by the Leon and Lisa Gorman Fund

September through October

Exhibit: Paintings

by Margaret Lawrence

Stonewall Gallery at the Yarmouth History Center

Free

October 15th at 11:00 am

Walking Tour of the Baptist Cemetery

with historian Ron Romano

Baptist Cemetery, Hillside Street, Yarmouth

Free



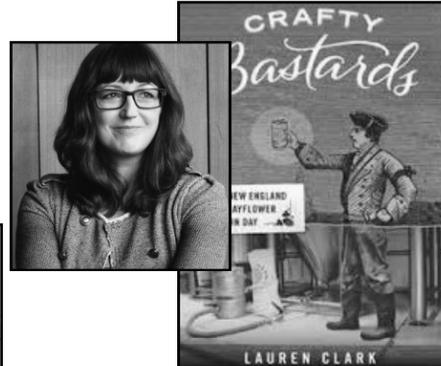
October 17th at 7:00 pm

Lecture: "The History of Beer in New England"

Speaker: Lauren Clark

Free for members, \$5.00 for non-members

Sponsored by the Leon and Lisa Gorman Fund



October 20th at 7:00 pm

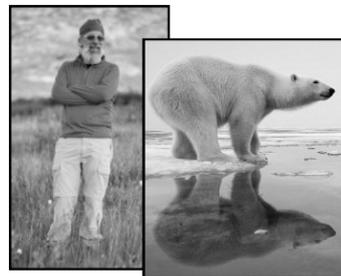
Royal River Film Series

Film: Polar Bear Man

Yarmouth History Center

Sponsored by R. M. Davis

Free



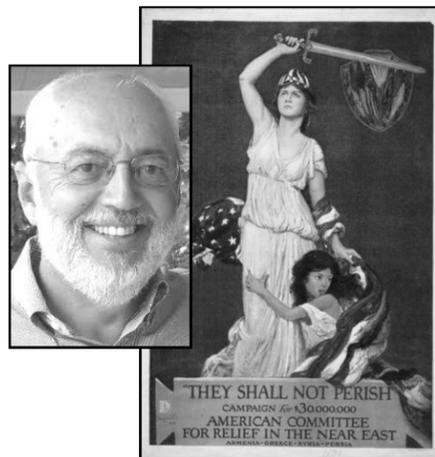
November 15th at 7:00 pm

Lecture: "Armenian Genocide and the Relief Efforts mounted by Americans, including some Yarmouth residents"

Speaker: Journalist John Christie

Free for members, \$5.00 for non-members

Sponsored by the Leon and Lisa Gorman Fund



November 17th at 7:00 pm

Royal River Film Series

Film: YERT

Yarmouth History Center

Sponsored by R. M. Davis

Free



The Royal River Film Series is sponsored by:

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See more at yarmouthmehistory.org

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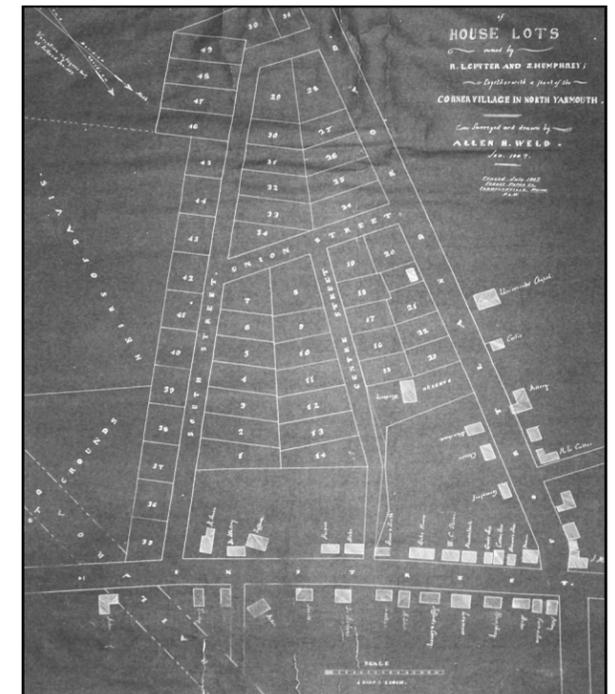
Richmond Cutter - Zadoc Humphrey Subdivision: Planning for Yarmouth's Future

This piece was written for the 2016 Yarmouth Historical Society Historic House Tour's Program Guide. The Cutter -Humphrey Subdivision was one of Yarmouth's first planned neighborhoods and was the neighborhood featured in this year's Tour.

An important development of this time was the laying out of the plot of land between what is now Cumberland and Elm Streets. This was purchased by Zadoc Humphrey and Richmond L. Cutter and by them cut up into lots and the streets built through... many of our most beautiful residences were built there.

-William H. Rowe

*Ancient North Yarmouth and Yarmouth, Maine:
A History, 1937*



1847 blueprint of the Cutter-Humphrey Plan

It's easy to hear the word "subdivision" today and think of it as a recent development: a plot of land divided up for a new neighborhood, something that might have happened within the last 50 years or even more recently. The Richmond Cutter-Zadoc Humphrey neighborhood in Yarmouth village, however, is a subdivision that was first conceived in the 1840s, as Jonathan Deering sold a large parcel of land to Cutter and Humphrey for the sum of \$1,125 in August of 1846. Cutter and Humphrey proceeded to cut the land into individual lots and build streets based on a plan that was accepted by the town in 1847. Their motivation in developing the area was very likely speculative: this part of town was conveniently located near the planned Main Street crossing of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad, a major route to Portland and beyond which later became part of the Grand Trunk Railroad.

The two developers were already prominent citizens of Yarmouth at the time of the subdivision. Richmond Cutter later assisted in efforts to separate the towns of Yarmouth and North Yarmouth in 1849. Zadoc Humphrey served as a Town Selectman in 1843, President of the Casco Lodge of the Masons in 1849, and President of the Antislavery Society in 1834. He was also a member of the Baptist Meeting House and one of several town librarians charged with keeping a portion of the collections of the North Yarmouth Social Library in his own home.

Cutter and Humphrey were not alone in their hopes for the economic and civic benefits that would come

to Yarmouth alongside the arrival of the railroads and, later, the electric trolleys of the 1890s: a hotel was built on Main Street across from the Grand Trunk station, the Village Improvement Society took charge of former dump land near the station and turned it into what is now Village Green Park, and the businesses and industries clustered around the corner of Main and Elm Streets flourished.

Today, the neighborhood clearly displays its mid-19th century origins in the Greek Revival details of the earliest houses from the 1840s. Buildings from the later decades of the 19th century, such as the Queen Anne style cottage on South Street, were added to the existing fabric of the area. Now there are 20th-century homes in the mix of this historic neighborhood, proof that the neighborhood has retained its vibrant and attractive character over the first century of its existence. This spirit is evident today as homeowners preserve and care for their historic properties while making room for a 21st-century lifestyle.

Katie Worthing
Interim Executive Director

If You Build It, They Will Come

It's Wednesday at 9:20 am on a lovely September morning at the Yarmouth History Center. There is lively conversation from the senior coffee group filtering into the office from the William D. Hamill Room. Outside the window, the clamor of voices and hollow drumming of canoes is heard as the Yarmouth High School freshman gym class launches from the landing at the end of the parking lot. The landscaper is out in the front garden as four out-of-town visitors enter the building. It was not quite opening time but our volunteer docent, who is also a member of our Board of Directors, welcomes them and guides them around the museum. A client is scheduled to view the Hamill Room and researchers are set to arrive to review the Pratt family files. Another day at the Yarmouth History Center begins. . .



With an oncoming summer storm as a dramatic backdrop, Board Member Tim Wheaton captures the old and the new elements of the History Center's design.

Four years ago the Yarmouth Historical Society was located on the third floor of the Merrill Memorial Library. It had been located there since its inception over fifty years ago. When the Society needed to move to make way for the library's renovations there was a diligent search for a new home. Eventually the Society and the town agreed to utilize the stone water district building at 118 E. Elm Street.

The Historical Society chose architect Scott Simons to design a building that would incorporate the stone structure of the existing 1923 water district building. Simons' team succeeded in creating a wonderful combination of old and new. Completed in 2013, the History Center opened its galleries, office, and meeting space to the public on January 25, 2013. As we come to the end of our fourth year on the banks of the Royal River we find that the Center has become the destination all envisioned.

While on the third floor of the Library, the Historical Society saw approximately 1,000 visitors a year. The Yarmouth History Center, now capable of hosting all of its lectures, programs, and events, welcomed more than 7,000 visitors last year. We are confident that we will surpass that number by the end of this year and log over 20,000 visitors since the Center opened.

We owe our gratitude to our Capital Campaign contributors. They are the true foundation of this new building. As donors they have set their place in the history of the Historical Society. They are the reason we open our doors early, invite teachers to bring their classes to the History Center, encourage researchers to use our primary source materials, and keep our doors open and admission free five days a week so the History Center and the history we share can be available to all.

Local Artist Shares Vision of Historic Homes

Local artist Shirley MacLeod recently spent a week in the village on a mission. Her mission was to capture the essence of the seven homes featured on our 2016 Historic House Tour. Shirley donated her pen and ink drawings to the Historical Society to be presented as gifts to the homeowners who opened their homes for this year's Tour. All were thrilled with their gifts. Thank you, Shirley!

Left: Katie Worthing and Shirley MacLeod view Shirley's drawings.
Above Right: One of Shirley's house drawings.

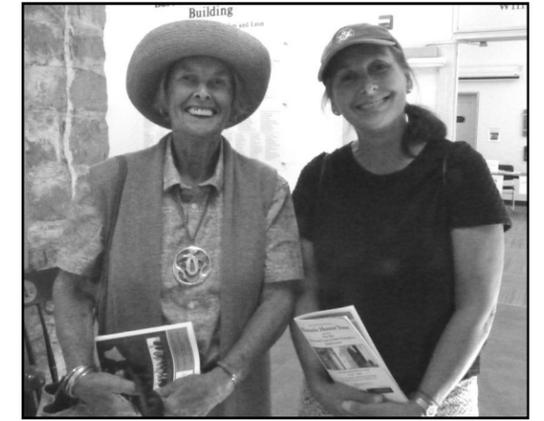


2016 Historic House Tour Yarmouth, ME



Above: Volunteer Leslie Hyde, staff member Raleigh Goessling, and tour attendee Jane Bates enjoy the front porch of the George Coombs House.

Below: Tour docents Ann Noyes and Yarmouth High School student Sophie Dwyer welcome visitors to the Edward H. Smith House.



Top: Charlotte Brennan and Marjorie Keene get ready for a fun day of touring.

Above: Tourgoers Kelsey Goldsmith, Emily Murray, and Lori Olson finish up the tour on South St.

Left: Linda Grant, the Society's House Tour Maven.

Below: Main Line Fence, sponsor of the c.1847 Jeremiah Loring House.

