

# Jonesport Historical Society Newsletter

“Preserving Our Heritage”

## Message from the President

I hope all of you are staying healthy and following the rules to avoid getting the Coronavirus. For our part, the JHS Board of Directors has decided to delay the April mailing of the annual newsletter and membership drive until it is safe for the membership committee to work side by side to get out the mail. It takes quite an effort to prepare all the paperwork and stuff all the envelopes that go out to almost 400 people. Then there is the work involved in processing the mail you return and responding back to you. So please do not send in your dues and donations until you receive the membership or donation forms that will be mailed in a few months. Until then, we will email only the annual newsletter to you shortly, to let you know what we have accomplished in the past year and what is planned for this year.

You will notice that we are not attaching a blank membership form on the last page of this newsletter.

*Bill Plaskon, President*

## Gene T. Hart: 1935 - 2020

When the Jonesport Historical Society was organized in June 2003, Gene T. Hart, my sister Maureen Hart's husband, joined the JHS Board of Directors and volunteered to be on the Technology Committee. Within the first four months he designed the society logo, helped formulate the by-laws, digitized dozens of century-old photographic glass plates and converted them from negative to positive images, created a slide show of those images, and presented that slide show at the first public meeting in October 2003 which was attended by more than 100 people.

In 2004 Gene played a major role in applying for a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to purchase computers and other electronic equipment needed for preserving local fisheries knowledge, and for developing a computer database for a Jonesport Heritage Center. In June of 2005 NOAA granted \$16,000 to JHS to implement those projects. Gene then assisted with the purchase and installment of that equipment, and he then designed the layout for the main menu of the Archives database, that, with only minor updates, is still in use today.

Gene continued to serve actively on the JHS Board of Directors until July 2012. The Harts relocated to Topsham, Maine in 2014. On February 5, 2020 Gene T. Hart died at the age of 85.

## Spring 2020

### 2020 Events

(subject to change)

- Jun 11- Historic Maine in 3-D Photos  
- Bernard Fishman
- Jul 9 - Maine and the Civil War  
- Donald Rivard
- Jul 23 - History of Moosabec Mussels  
- Ralph Smith
- Aug 27-Passamaquoddy History and  
1890 Recordings  
- Dwayne Tomah
- Sep 24- Weir Fishing  
- Former Weir Fishermen

## 2020 Board of Directors

### Officers:

*William Plaskon, President*  
*Charles Alley, V.P. Emeritus*  
-- Vacant -- Vice President  
*Catherine Perry, Treasurer*  
-- Vacant -- Secretary

### Directors:

*Byron Carver, Jr.*  
*Kylie Hinkley*  
*Andrew Hutnik*  
*Eric Kelley*  
*Janice Kristo*  
*Charlene Nelson*  
*Michele Romanini-Pollard*  
*Nancy Sawyer*

*The following response to the Winter Newsletter, from member Linda Harvey, is a very welcome letter to the editor, and it is of such interest that it needs to be shared. Your letters, whether they be a few sentences or considerably longer, are encouraged. Contact info is on the back page.*

### Thoughts on the Winter Edition

Thank you. I enjoyed the winter newsletter which included Cathy Perry's article of her Kelley Point family, and the section of excerpts from the early *Jonesport Enterprise* newspaper.

Cathy described her great-grandmother Esther Jane (Donovan) Kelley, who was a half-sister to my Daniel Rogers Donovan (1827-1909). In 1858 Dan married Olive A. Kelley. He was a ship carpenter, stone mason, and house mover. He towed houses to the ocean on skids, pulled by his horse Old Tige, rafted them to the shore near the new site and skidded them up to be set. As brother and neighbor, he may well have been the one who moved the family houses that Cathy described.

Genealogist and descendent Darryl Lamson wrote about Dan, "He was characterized as a tough old Irishman. Stories told to exemplify his character include: when one of his toes was hurting, he chopped it off with an axe; when fumes from a coal stove filled their house one night killing his first wife, it took four hours to revive him but he recovered; and later his bull ran into him and tore his stomach open but he recovered after being held together in a coat and carried home."

It is fun to hear these century-old family stories, although we rarely know how much is distorted over time. Working in the JHS database, I found an article from the *Jonesport Enterprise* that reported on one of the stories.

Dan was aged 75 at the time, living in his home that once stood near the northeast corner of Albert Kelley Road and Degenhardt Drive. The field was on the northwest side of Albert Kelley Road.

*Jonesport Enterprise* 19 Aug 1903: "Daniel Donovan, of Kelly's Point met with a serious accident Tuesday, while driving an angry bull from his pasture, where his presence interfered with the public. The animal turned upon him, gored him in the right thigh cutting a hole four inches deep also loosening about three ribs and tearing the right ear in two."

I remain grateful to JHS for collecting and preserving these important resources that bring rich life to our history.

—Linda Harvey

### Unknowable Summer

There's no telling how the Covid-19 virus will affect the programs planned for Jonesport Historical Society this summer. But updates by email will be sent as the need arises.

### Identifying Artifacts from JHS Archives



Only two people tried to guess the identity of the glass bottle (above, shown in the Winter edition). One thought it was a mezuzah, a small decorative case containing a rolled up Jewish prayer, that is attached to the doorpost of Jewish homes. This is unlikely since there were hardly any Jewish families living in Jonesport long ago, and one bottle (of the two we are aware of) was found along the shoreline of Sawyer Cove. The other person thought it was a perfume bottle.

The bottle brought back from Jaffa was labeled "Tear Bottle." So-called tear catchers were supposedly used at one time by women to collect their teardrops when mourning the loss of their loved ones who died or went off to war. However, most antique dealers claim that tear catchers were never actually used to hold tears, but to hold perfume.

—Bill Plaskon

## Laundry Memories

A list about old-time laundry habits made the internet rounds, and Jonesport-raised Maxine (Smith) Morris added bits from her own memories of laundry etiquette and experiences. A quote from a book she recently read adds to the story. An edited version of these items follows:

- Monday is wash day. Never hang out clothes on a weekend, especially not on a Sunday.
- Wash the clotheslines with a damp cloth before hanging any clothes.
- A wooden clothes pole is handy for propping up the clothesline to keep long items from brushing the ground.
- Hang socks by the toes.
- Hang pants by the cuffs.
- Hang shirts by the tails.
- Hang sheets and towels on the outer lines to screen the unmentionables.
- Overlap clothes so that each item shares a clothespin with the next item.
- Have the clothes off the line before supper.
- Gather the clothespins as you take down the laundry. It is tacky to leave pins on the lines.

*When I was young, Jonesport had three sardine factories burning soft coal. So if you lived near one of the factories, you coiled the clotheslines and stored them in the entry after each wash to keep the lines clean. I think we prayed for two particular things on wash day: that Underwood's wouldn't "get up smoke," and that fog wouldn't come. If either of those things happened before the clothes were dry, we'd rush to take them in anyway, hoping that the next day would be both smoke-free and sunny—something you couldn't rely on in Jonesport.*

*As a child I would occasionally help my maternal grandmother, Clara (Woodward) Kelley, hang out the clothes at her home off Kelley's Point Road, the last house off the Campground Road. I would tease her by stretching out her bloomers as much as the elastic would allow, and then ask her if that was the right way to hang them. She would laughingly tell me to "scrunch them up."*

*In paternal grandmother Agnes (Farnsworth) Smith's neighborhood, near Middle Factory, there seemed to be a competition among the women to see who could get her wash on the line earliest on a Monday morning. Grammy Smith generally put a dish towel "in to soak" on a Sunday night so that she could earn bragging rights by rushing out bright and early Monday morning and pinning it on the line.*

Bragging rights weren't unique to Jonesport. The late author Philmore Wass grew up east of Moosabec Reach at Libby Island light station, populated by three households. He notes in his *Lighthouse in My Life* that "I can remember Mother commenting that she needed to get up earlier than usual on Monday so that she could be the first to hang out her laundry."

Do you have a laundry memory to share? Newsletter contact info is on the last page.

## Did You Know...?

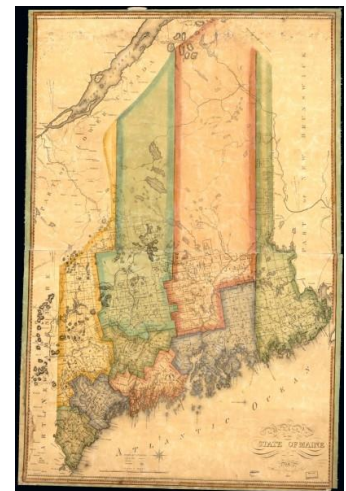
What we know as Jonesport was first populated by European settlers in the 1770s, before the colonies separated from England, and long before Maine became a state.

Before statehood, Maine was the "Maine District of Massachusetts." Statehood came as part of the 1820 federal legislature's Missouri Compromise; Missouri was admitted to the Union as a slave state, and Maine as free.

At the time it was admitted as the 23<sup>rd</sup> state, on March 15, 1820, the population of Maine was 298,335. (The 2020 population is estimated to be 1,350,000—about 4½ times the 1820 figure.)

Back in 1820, Jonesport, Beals, and Roque Bluffs were all part of Jonesborough. Their combined townspeople gave Jonesborough a population of 675 people at the time of Statehood. It would be another 12 years before Jonesport (then including Beals) became its own town in 1832. It was 1925 when Beals Island and Great Wass separated from Jonesport.

The current population of Jonesport by itself is estimated to be 1,295 people.



1820 Map of the new State of Maine



**JONESPORT WELCOMES  
ITS OWN!**

**Phillips H. Lord, Adopted Son  
Is Given Keys of Town**

A remarkable demonstration of support, loyalty and affection was given by the citizens of this place last week to a young man they had never seen before. The welcome was so wholehearted and freely given that the distinguished visitor was made to feel at home wherever he went.

Phillips H. Lord who has made the name and character of Seth Parker, his Jonesport singing school and his cottage prayermeeting familiar subjects throughout the nation, visited this town last week to get acquainted with its people, learn their aims and ambitions and to learn where he could further help them.

The business men gave him a luncheon and reception in the Masonic rooms one night and the affair was thoroughly enjoyed by all present. Mr. Lord gave an interesting talk telling many of his youthful experiences which led him to his present work. A real educational feature of the program was the opening of Seth Parker's, some of which comes here although people are requested to address it in care of the broadcasting station. About 300 letters from 30 different states were opened by the business men who were very much surprised to learn the universal praise of the Seth Parker programs from so widely separated people.

Saturday evening, in response to insistent demands Mr. Lord made a public appearance in the "Opera House" and gave a fine talk that was much enjoyed.

**ADDISON, MAINE, WEL**

**MOVING PICTURES OF  
JONESPORT SEAPORT TOWN  
TAKEN TO HOLLYWOOD**

Jonesport, Maine, July 8;—Jonesport has been on the air and now Seth will put her on the silver screen and maybe her name will blaze forth in electric signs on film row in every small hamlet and every big city in this country and also in foreign lands. The RKO Pictures Corporation will make a moving picture featuring Seth Parker and his Sunday Evening Prayer Meeting cast in an interesting talking, singing and scenic play which will bring in down east customs and shore scenery.

Mr. Macrae, an efficient photographer of New York, was in town recently and took about two hundred and fifty views of our streets, buildings, shore scenes, Mansfield cows going to pasture, interior views, boats and other pictures too numerous to mention. These photographs are to be sent to Hollywood to aid the set up men in erecting another Jonesport near the big lights, sound recorders, megaphones, famous directors and skilled help which is so necessary in producing a finished movie.

This is, without doubt, the greatest advertising that Jonesport and the State of Maine ever had or could ever hope to have and when the country reverts back to normal times once more we may expect to reap the benefits of world wide advertising. Hats off to Phillips Lord and his loyal band of workers, who not only preach the old fashioned religion of extending the helping hand, but also live right up to their principles.

There's no membership form here because, as explained on the front page, our "social distancing" keeps us from dealing with the labor-intensive membership procedures at this time. Please wait to hear from us about renewing.

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The Jonesport Historical Society Museum and Heritage Center is open July and August, Tuesdays and Saturdays, 11:00—3:00, or on request May through October. Please phone to confirm.