

# ***THE SHIRETOWN CONSERVER***

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*The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society Newsletter*

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*Volume 5 Number 1*

Spring 2001

## ***Veteran Names Sought***

In a news article in the Piscataquis Observer, members of the Chadbourne Merrill American Legion Post 29 are looking for the names of veterans to place on the Roll of Honor in front of the Legion hall on Park Street. A new Roll of Honor with two bays has recently been erected. It is of fairly substantial size and will accomodate many names. Names of veterans having served in America's wars have been difficult to locate. Hopefully, this newsletter will be far more reaching in finding all the veterans from Dover-Foxcroft. Many of the *Conserver's* readers are from great distances and not privy to the Observer. Your help is needed.

A Roll of Honor with many veteran's names located in front at the Piscataquis County Jail has disappeared. This forces researchers to start from scratch. The Roll of Honor was supposedly relocated to the town hall when an addition was made to the jail in the 1980s. Researchers have been unable to find it.

A list donated by Roger Mullins names some of the area veterans. Lists from the state and VFW have provided some names, but not all are from Dover-Foxcroft. American Legion Post Commander Gary Nelson said, "It's a major project to sort all of this out. We need some ways to cross-reference all of the names."

Nelson urges anyone with any pictures of the previous roll or knowledge of participants in the War for Independence, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Spanish-American War, the First World War, the Second World War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Gulf War to please contact him at (207)876-3257.

Nelson says, "We're hoping to be able to dedicate it on Memorial Day 2001."

## ***The Observer Museum In Winter***

Another Christmas season has passed and the lights framing the Observer Museum have been extinguished pending Christmas 2001. "Not much has been happening at the Museum," said Mary Annis Historical Society president. "I guess we're kind of catching our breath until spring cleanup in preparation for the time when summer visitors descend upon the town demanding a look at their museum and all the Dover and Foxcroft artifacts," she added.

Ryan Stitham has been working steadily on the back room bringing brightness and cleanliness to the third and last room on the first floor. "I can see progress in the bills I receive from the True Value store," joked Jim Annis the Society's treasurer. "We can afford whatever it takes to bring that room around," added Jim.

Kurt Baird has finally painted the wooden storm windows for the first floor windows. Installation will be next. "We've waited a long time for the windows," said Jim. "I just hope the value of the storms shows up in the oil bill," he said. The storm windows had to be wooden in order to comply with the strict rules of the National Register of Historic Places. "It shouldn't be too long now before the whole first floor is completed," said Jim.



***The Piscataquis Observer, Serving Its  
Readership for Over 158 Years  
Exerpts from an article in the 1997 Historical  
Guide to Piscataquis County***

Since 1838, *The Piscataquis Observer* has played a major role in the history of Piscataquis County.

Under the name of *The Piscataquis Herald* the paper's first edition was published on June 1, 1838. Four years later, in 1842, it became *The Piscataquis Farmer*. It kept the name of *The Piscataquis Farmer* for five years. In November 1847 the paper became *The Piscataquis Observer*.

Throughout its many years of reporting the news happening in Piscataquis County, the paper has had six owners: George Edes; his son Samuel Edes and Fred Barrows together; Liston Evans; his son Ora Evans; James Thompson; and current owner Northeast Publishing Co.

The paper has been edited and published in eight different locations. Its first home was on the second floor of a store in Merrick Square. The next five homes were in various buildings located around Union Square. It moved to the second floor of the Mayo Block, which later became P.E. Ward. In 1905, it moved to the "flatiron" building at 126 Union Square. *The Piscataquis Observer* donated the building to the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, Inc. in 1997 and moved to 8A Union Square its current location.

Through the years the printing of the paper has progressed with time. For its first five years the method of setting type at *The Piscataquis Observer* was done by hand compositors seated on high stools silently setting stories by hand. Each letter had to be picked up by hand and placed in the lines for print. In the early 1920's, all that changed with the purchase of lineotypes which provided a tremendous leap forward in the quickness and accuracy of setting type.

In the 1960s computers came to the Observer. As computers advanced with technology, so did the Observer. Today stories are typed on the computer, placed on the pages by means of pagination on the computer at the Observer office, sent to Presque Isle via modem, burned into the template and run off on the presses in Presque Isle. The papers are then hauled back to Piscataquis County in the Observer truck and distributed to stores and post offices.

No photographs were printed in the Observer until the November 25, 1897 when an engraving of Foxcroft Academy appeared. In the late 1920s an engraving apparatus was purchased. The old, but reliable, Speed Graphic camera was used to take the original pictures. During the middle 1950s to the early 1970s a Scangraver machine was used to make engravings.

Today, though 35 mm cameras are still used, most of the photos are taken with a digital camera, fed into the computer where they are changed from color to shades of gray, cropped, sized, and sent to Presque Isle via modem for print. Each week one photo is published on the front page in color.

Into its 159th year, *The Piscataquis Observer* continues to provide its readers with news and photos from throughout the county.



## *In The Summer of 1900.....*

The average life expectancy in the United States was forty seven.

Only 14 percent of the homes in the United States had a bathtub.

Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone. A 3 minute call from Denver to New York City cost 11 dollars. There were only 8,000 cars in the U.S and only 144 miles of paved roads. The maximum speed limit was 10 MPH.

The average wage in th U.S. was 22 cents an hour. The average worker made between 200 and 400 dollars a year.

More than 95 percent of all births in the U.S. took place at home.

Ninety nine percent of all U.S. physicians had no college education. Instead, they attended medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press and by the government as "substandard."

Sugar cost 4 cents a pound, eggs were 14 cents a dozen and coffee cost 15 cents a pound.

Most women washed their hair once a month and used borax or egg yolks for shmpoo.

The American flag had 45 stars. Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Hawaii and Alaska hadn't been admitted to the Union yet.

Scotch tape, crossword puzzles, canned beer and iced tea hadn't been invented.

One in ten U.S adults couldn't read or write. Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.

Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at corner drug stores. According to one pharmacist, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and the bowels and is, in fact, a perfect gardian of health."

Coca-cola contained cocaine instead of caffeine.

### **And these were the "good old days."**

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If there is a date on your address label in red, it means your dues are ready and payable. If not, please wait until April 1, 2001 to pay your dues. The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society's annual dues are still \$3.00 per person per year. We are holding the line despite a U.S. Postal increase in Third Class Non-Profit mail rates. Every membership household will receive a copy of the *The Shiretown Conserver*, mailed four times each year. Any amount tendered above the \$3.00 membership is considered a donation and is federally tax deductible. Please accept our thanks! **Please check your mailing label!** Red numbers are the years your dues are in arrears - now payable together with annual dues for April 2001 - 2002. Those in arrears for three years are dropped from membership and mailings of the newsletter.

Annual dues are \$3.00 payable April 1 of the current year to April 1 of the following year.

Dues \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to **Dover- Foxcroft Historical Society.**

**MEMBER'S NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY AND STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP CODE** \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: **Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, Inc.**  
**c/o Madelyn Betts**  
**11 Harrison Avenue**  
**Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426**



## *From Our Readers*

Enjoyed Jim Annis' article on the start up of the Mayo Hospital in January 1936 in the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society Newsletter, Winter 2000 Volume 4, Number 4, but maybe it could have mentioned the medical staff that was working at Mayo Hospital then. I believe that two of the nurses were my mother Katherine M. Day and Dorothea Rice, RN. Dorothea Rice became my wife's stepmother when she married Kenneth Field in 1964.

Sincerely yours,  
Sidney S. Day Zephyrhills, Florida

## *Society's Programming for 2001*

On Wednesday April 4th, the annual meeting will be followed by the election of officers. Anyone wishing to be considered for a position of leadership should call Mary Annis at 564-0820. A program will follow featuring Gordon Andrews who will tell us about the history of county government. Dave Lockwood will portray the "Duke of Bridgewater" in a program on Wednesday, May 9th. "An Evening of Song" by Sid Stutzman will be the program for Wednesday, June 6th. He will give us a look into the songs he has written pertaining to area history. A tour of the East Dover cemetery by Lou Stevens will be the program on Wednesday, September 5th. At our last meeting for the year, October 3rd, Berta Fitzgerald will share the poetry of her father Fred Washburn. All the meetings will start at 7:00 PM except for the cemetery tour which will start at 6:00 PM.

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## **WARM, WINTER COVERLETS**

*While Supplies Last!!*

These handsome coverlets feature historic portraits in fiber  
of the Shiretown's most notable architecture including  
\*Foxcroft Academy \* The Blethen House \* The Congregational Church\*  
\*Central Hall \* Opera House\* and other landmarks\*

Woven in Foxcroft Academy colors red/maroon and cream

A coverlet in your home will boast of your hometown in a keepsake  
that will provide years of service and will become a family heirloom.

The cost is \$38.00 each. Please add \$5.00 for shipping  
Place your order with: **Jim Annis, 10 Orchard Road, Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426-3706**  
Or if you're in town, they can be purchased at: **Dave's World on Summer Street**

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## ***New Century Library Grant Aids Access To Newspaper Archives***

***by Helen Kelly***

Genealogists, researchers and casual readers will find *The Piscataquis Observer* archive at Thompson Free Library easier to use, thanks to a recent index and microfilm project.

A microfilm record of the library's collection of *Observers* is being brought up to date, and an index of late 19th century vital records moved ahead. When documents are on microfilm, anyone can sit at the microfilm viewer, look for information, and print it on the machine's printer.

During the course of the project, which has been underway for nine months, newspaper copies from 1986 through 1999 are being microfilmed and are available for public use at the library in Dover-Foxcroft. A duplicate of the new films will be presented to Fogler Library at the University of Maine, Orono, and copies will be made available to the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society when it is ready to accept them.

In addition, marriage and death records from 1859 through 1875 were indexed. The project continues work begun by library volunteer, Madelyn Betts, who created an index of the first 37 years of these Piscataquis County records. Madelyn is currently the secretary of the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, one of many organizations to which she belongs.

The project is supported by a New Century Community Library Grant, made possible by funds from the allotment available to the Maine State Library for the enhancement of public library services and cultural cooperation. It is designed to assist the community in preserving and strengthening its cultural and educational resources and increase access to them.

Based on a system made possible by the grant, the library expects to microfilm and bind current issues of *The Piscataquis Observer* every two years, setting aside budget funds specifically for that purpose.

By providing microfilm access to this archival material, the handling of original and fragile newspapers is kept to a minimum. As a result, the library is better able to prevent wear and tear on its historical collection, thus conserving and preserving the actual newspapers for future generations.

With the exception of two years, 1890 and 1945, the newspaper archive at Thompson Free Library is nearly complete. It provides an historical timeline of weekly events in Piscataquis County over a period of 163 years, events witnessed by people who experienced them.

Assisted by the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, the discovery research project is recognized as a "Model Communities" project - a collaborative effort by multiple organizations - and serves as a basis for community economic and social development.

Later this spring, Thompson Free Library and the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society will offer public training workshops for adults and teens on methods of historical and genealogical research. For more information, call librarian Helen Austin at (207)564-3350.



## **The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, Inc.**

10 Orchard Road

Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426-3706

### **MESSAGE FROM MARY**

Dear Members,

Spring is on its way and along with it wildflowers, birds, the smell of growing things recovering from the cold, hard Winter, the planting of gardens and outdoor activities requiring no bundling up. Then on to summer and days at the lake, lawn parties and Historical Society programs. This year, I've put together some very interesting programs. All are bound to pique the curiosity of some and fascinate most of our members.

All the meetings are to be held at the **Thayer Parkway Community Room** at 7:00 PM except for the cemetery tour which will start at 6:00 PM.

April 4, 2001	Annual Meeting Election of Officers Gordon Andrews	September 5, 2001	Cemetery Tour 6:00 PM
May 9, 2001	The Duke of Bridgewater	October 3, 2001	Fred Washburn's Poetry
June 6, 2001	Sid Stutzman		