



THE SHIRETOWN CONSERVER

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society

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Observer Building Sports "New" Look



The restored facade returned the Observer Building to its look from the late nineteenth century. Photo by Jack Battick.

"When I turned the corner onto Main Street it was like going back 60 years", Lou Stevens told us, delighted when he first saw the restored Observer Building facade in July. "It's just like it looked when I first approached the building to apply for a job as a reporter."

The Society has known for several years that something had to be done about the cracked and sagging bay window installed in the 1970's. And faced with the cost of replacing that window we had as our goal restoring the original business facade which many of us remember as the "face" of the *Piscataquis Observer*.

We began a fund raising drive late this winter fully expecting that it would take us several years to raise sufficient funds to allow the project to be completed. But thanks to the volunteer efforts of two generous and talented individuals who did 100% of the labor for free we were able to stretch our donated funds to complete the project this year.

Our Homecoming visitors got to see the renovated front room complete with the restored Koritsky curved glass display case moved from the Blacksmith Shop museum, refinished completely, and relocated to its new home in the downtown museum.

The Society especially wants to thank all who contributed whether members, business sponsors, or friends. Without your dollars we couldn't have done it.

Inside This Issue

Ike's Secretary in DF	Pg. 2
Grandeur of the Past	Pg. 3
Homecoming 2008	Pg. 4
Historic Committee	Pg. 5

Mattie's Story by Jack Battick



Mattie A. Pinette, born in Fort Kent, rose to the rank of Lt. Colonel in the WACs and served as General Eisenhower's personal secretary during WWII. Photo courtesy of *Echos: Recovering Community*.

In the Gray Cemetery in Dover-Foxcroft, there stands a white marble stone with the simple engraving PINETTE. The inscription faces the West and along that edge of the lot are flat stones proclaiming the graves of Joseph Pinette, his wife "Melia" [Amelia] Pinette, and their daughter Corinne. On the East side of the lot are flat stones marking the graves of their daughter Cecile, their son Joseph Junior, and a standard Veterans Administration marker bearing beneath a cross the legend

Mattie A. Pinette
Lt. Col. U.S. Army, World War II
Feb. 7, 1903 Aug 27, 1999

Mattie [Méthaide] Pinette was the fourth of thirteen children born to Joseph and Amelia Lapointe Pinette. She was brought up in Aroostock County by an aunt and uncle after her

immediate family moved to southern Piscataquis County. She attended parochial school, graduated from the Madawaska Training School (precursor of the University of Maine at Fort Kent), then came to Bangor to study at Beal Business College and Gilman Commercial School. There, her talent as a shorthand transcriber became apparent. On the basis of that skill - 200 words per minute - Mattie was hired in 1923 by the Federal Bureau of Weights and Measures in Washington, D.C. where she began a four-decades long career as a federal Civil Servant.

Transferred to the fledgling Civil Aeronautics Board, she was sent in 1937 to Lakehurst, New Jersey to take down the testimony of survivors and witnesses of the crash of the zeppelin *Hindenburg*. While in Washington, she took advantage of the opportunity and took courses at George Washington University and American University. Early in U.S. involvement the Second World War, with the advantage of those courses, Mattie joined the Women's Auxiliary Force which then became the Women's Army Corp (WAC) and was commissioned a second lieutenant. After a stint as liaison officer with the Army Air Force where she helped select those posts which might be filled by women, her administrative and secretarial talents saw her selected for special training in Britain. Assigned to the U.S. Army staff at HQ in Algiers, she was present at the Casablanca conference of the allied heads of state Roosevelt and Churchill, (with Gen. George C. Marshall and other high military officers) where she helped transcribe the proceedings. For her excellent work there, she was chosen to be the personal and confidential secretary to Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Forces.

She accompanied "Ike" to all but the most secret of Allied conferences prior to the D-Day invasion in 1944, transcribing and typing matters of utmost importance to the carrying out of the war. Her fluency in French was extremely (Continues on Page 9)

Grandeur of the Past By Lou Stevens



The Kittredge House, date unknown. Photo courtesy of the author.

This large homestead for many years occupied land between Pleasant Street and East Main that was once only Dover, and then became the united town after 1922. Court Street (in this photo) is to the left of the large barn with the cupola. A deed at the Registry of Deeds' office at the Piscataquis Court House says that this lot of land, now occupied by the Varney Agency, and the premises were sold on December 16, 1846 to Jane Dyer by John Gould Mayo, who had come to Dover two years previously in 1844. Also in 1846, he and two others started the woolen mill in Foxcroft.

The next known owner was Calvin Kittredge who is listed in a 1904 book, *The Town Register of Dover and Foxcroft*, as being a bank cashier. This could have been at either the Kineo National or the Piscataquis Savings which together occupied at this time the right side of the brick bank building in Union Square which opened in 1887.

He sold the property (incidentally, it is difficult now to be precise as to how the buildings were altered or enlarged over the years) in 1906 to

Dr. Clarence Holt who is listed in the 1904 book as a doctor living on High Street.

Dr. Holt apparently stayed here only a few years because three years later in 1909 he sold the property to Bion Anderson. In the book *Biographies of Dover-Foxcroft, Maine*, published in 1947 by Frank W. Keniston of Milo, it says that Mr. Anderson's profession was insurance agent. But he also had two public jobs as well. He was Registrar of Deeds for three years from 1911-14, and Postmaster of Dover from 1916-24, at a time when this was a political appointment. In 1916 he built a three story structure on South Street, later attached to Ward's Store, and decided to move the Dover Post Office there from Merrick Square. Despite objections from the Dover residents the office was moved by the postal officials in 1917.

Anderson's three sons - Bion, Jr., Wendell, and John in a deed dated August 30, 1952, sold the property minus the large barn which had been owned for many years by Fred Mower who operated a machine shop there, to Natalie (Story continues on Page 7)

Homecoming 2008



Elvis, a/k/a Bruce Nye meets our '50's costumed hostesses: l-r: Nancy Battick, Elvis, Carmen Smith, Mary Annis. Photo by Jack Battick.

On Homecoming August 2nd over 160 visitors signed our guest register and enjoyed exhibits, costumed hostesses, the float, talking with Steve Rainsford about his new book, and much more. Thanks to the following who gave of their time to make the day extra special: Mary Annis, Carmen Smith, Jack Battick, Lou Stevens, Lois Lopez, Steve & Ellen Rainsford, Jim Brown, Dave Lockwood, Jim Annis, and Nancy Battick.



Lou Stevens talks about the WWII exhibit during a quiet moment. Photo by Nancy Battick.



Our float in the Grand Parade featured historic signs. The float was constructed courtesy of Steve & Ellen Rainsford, Jim Brown, & Dave Lockwood. Photo by Jack Battick.



Ellen & Steve Rainsford at the book signing for Steve's new book in the Images of America series. They generously donated a portion of the sales to the Society. Photo by Nancy Battick



Jack Battick answers questions on the WWII exhibit. Photo by Nancy Battick

See You Next Year!

Society to Advise on Historical District

At the request of the town office, the Society has formed an Historical Advisory Committee to formulate voluntary guidelines for the preservation of historic buildings in Dover-Foxcroft and to indicate which structures in the town are worthy of inclusion on a list of such structures. It may also advise the establishment of an historic district where so warranted.

The committee seeks input and possible assistance from citizens in carrying out its charge. If you believe your home or business merits consideration as an historic structure, or if you wish to join the committee in its work, please contact Chris Maas, committee secretary at 564-2666 or Jack Battick, committee chairman at 564-3576.

Ornaments Selling Fast

Looking for a great Xmas gift idea? The Society's first ever Christmas ornament, silver glass with a sketch of the Blacksmith Shop in red, is available for \$6. Combine that with a gift membership in the Society (\$10 or \$7 for seniors) for the perfect Dover-Foxcroft gift. Or you could add our wonderful dvd of Dover & Foxcroft scenes for another \$10. One, two, or all three makes a great gift, but be warned. Our ornaments are selling fast and there were only 100 to start. Once sold we won't be reordering. Instead there'll be another collectable ornament in 2008 with a different historic building. To order call Mary Annis at 564-0820.

I.Give & Shaw's

A reminder that the Society is still collecting Shaw's receipts which we redeem for cash from the generous folks at Shaw's. Please save your receipts for all purchases & prescriptions and turn them into Mary Annis.

And, if you shop online as so many people do these days please take time to register with Igive.com. Chances are good that you'll find at least one or two companies you do business with among the hundreds listed. Once you're registered and indicate you want a percentage of the costs of your purchases to go to the Society you'll just have to click on igive then on the merchant you're visiting. A percentage of what you spend (it will not cost you anything extra) will then be paid to the Society. It's as easy as that. Among the many merchants are Staples, Jo-Ann, Current, Lands' End, and literally hundreds more.

Our Business Sponsors

Every issue we're pleased to acknowledge those local merchants who support the Historical Society with services and money. We couldn't accomplish what we do without your generous support:

Friends, Services

Mister Paperback
Bob's Hardware
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Patrons (Donations \$50-\$99)

Brothers Chevrolet
Dover Auto Parts

Sponsors (\$100 plus)

Rowell's Garage
Lary's Funeral Home
Drs. Steinke & Caruso
Dr. Ellen Anderson
Foxcroft Veterinary Services
Howard Insurance Agency
Maine Highlands Credit Union
The Green Door Gallery
The Piscataquis Observer

Please be sure to thank these generous merchants when you patronize their businesses.

The Society's Unknown

This recently donated photo, taken in the early twentieth century, shows what appears to be the student body of Foxcroft Academy. Does anyone recognize the photo and know the date or even any of the individuals pictured?



Observer Building Chimney Repaired

It's been a busy summer at the Observer Building Museum what with the work on the Union Square facade and restoring the front chimney in the building.

Our chimney has needed work for some time. In order to preserve the look of the historic building aged bricks were used in the process. Again, our deepest thanks to our donors including a generous gift from *the Piscataquis Observer* which made this work possible.



Photo by Jack Battick.

Grandeur from page 3. Koritsky with the right to raze the property. It was taken down and replaced by the brick home of Jake Koritsky.



In this undated photo of Union Square and the Observer Building the Kittredge place looms in the background. Photo courtesy of Dennis Dyer.

His estate left the property to Esta M. Koritsky who sold the place to Judge F. Davis and Margaret Clark in October 1988. They then sold it to William Varney in August 1997.

And the large barn? Others owned it after Mr. Mower and it was purchased and demolished when the Rite Aid store was constructed to provide more space on the Pleasant Street side.

Exhibits for 2009

Because we opened late for the 2008 season we have decided to hold over many of our exhibits for the 2009 season. This will allow visitors who couldn't get in this year to view our exhibits. We will probably be changing some of our exhibits, but the major World War II, 1898 logdrive, and 1950's exhibits will remain.

And, for the World War II exhibit we're still seeking photos for our memory wall. If your relative served and you have a photo we'd be pleased to add it to our exhibit. No originals are displayed. If you could lend us your original photo we'll scan it, return the original safely back to you, and display the copy. Just get in touch with Nancy Battick at 564-3576 or e-mail her at nbattick@roadrunner.com to arrange details.

Past Perfect Cataloging Begins in September

As we announced earlier this year the Society received a grant allowing us to purchase Past Perfect museum cataloging software. Training sessions on using Past Perfect and work on transferring our current catalogs and indexes into the new software will start. If you'd like to help please let us know right away.

It is our intention to scan all the documents and photos (where possible) in our collection into this master catalog.

Editor's Corner

I'm always surprised at how quickly one issue of the *Conservator* follows another. It seems as if I was just putting the summer edition together.

I hope you enjoy this issue. A thank you to Ed Johnson for alerting us to the fact that Mattie Pinette, General Eisenhower's secretary, is buried in Dover-Foxcroft. If you have ideas for a piece in the *Conservator*, please let me know.

As always the editor tips her hat to those who submitted material for this issue: Lou Stevens, Jack Battick, and Mary Annis. Kudos to Chris Maas for keeping our mailing labels in order and to all who help make this newsletter a reality.

Nancy Klimavicz Battick

Attic Sale Great Success

This year's attic sale was a wonderful success for the Society earning over \$1,300 for the treasury. None of that would have been possible without the great volunteers who worked so hard from sorting, pricing, picking up and delivering, publicizing, and posting signs. Our thanks go out to:

Sylvia, David, & Tom Dean
Sharon & Scott Phillips
Mary Annis
Carolyn & Carlson Williams
Ellen & Steven Rainsford
Edie Hussey
Wayne Bennett
Jim Brown
Dave Lockwood
Carmen Smith
Jack Battick

The tradition will continue in 2009. If you have items you'd like to donate now please call Sylvia Dean at 876-3663.

Raffle Winners

Our annual raffle winners this year were:

Jess Brown	Picture
Jane York	Blanket
Linda Anderson	Tea Set

Congratulations to the winners and for those who didn't win this year we'll have another set of great prizes in 2009.

Thanks to our hosts

We want to thank all of you who acted as hosts at the Observer Building this season. Even though it was a short season it was a great success and it wouldn't have happened without all of you. In no order here's a list of our hosts: Carlson & Carolyn Williams, Carmen Smith,

Lois Lopez, Sylvia Dean, Edie Hussey, Lou Stevens, Jack Battick, Mary Annis, Jim Annis, Chris Maas, Jim Brown, Ellen & Steven Rainsford, Barbara Lockwood, Janice Boomsma, Martha Rollins, Connie Chase, Lois Reynolds, and Nancy Battick.

Thanks so much for your time and efforts.

Changes at the Blacksmith Shop

Dave Lockwood is hard at work restructuring the interior of the Blacksmith Shop. This is a work in progress and won't be completed this season, but we urge members to drop by and see the changes to date and check in again next year. At the moment Dave is using light wood to brighten up some dark corners of the shop.

Special Summer Events

On June 29th members of the DFHS and Daughters & Sons of Union Veterans combined to host a special showing of the film "Gettysburg" at Center Theatre. The lobby held special exhibits, the costumes of the DUV & SUV, and special goodies for sale all combined to make a wonderful day netting over \$400 for the Society. Thanks to the following: Carmen Smith, Linda Tozier, Mary & Jim Annis, Eric Boothroyd, Wayne & Tootie Bennett, Edie Hussey, Jack & Nancy Battick, and Frank Applebee for making this event memorable.

The next day, June 30th, members of the Society were up bright & early to wait tables, wash dishes, and help in the kitchen of the Nor'easter Restaurant in a breakfast fundraiser. Thanks to the great folks at Nor'easter and our volunteers: Carmen Smith, Dave & Barbara Lockwood, Ellen Rainsford, Sylvia Dean, Jim & Mary Annis for raising well over \$300 for the Society.

And on July 19 Lou Stevens conducted a sold-out bus tour of Old Foxcroft, another resounding success. Thanks to Lou, Jack Battick, Mary Annis, Carmen Smith, and all who helped.

Mattie's Story from Page 1. significant when Gen. DeGaulle was involved as she could check on the accuracy of the interpreters' translations of the dialogue. Some of the most important pre-invasion directives passed through her hands as the great Cross-Channel assault was being prepared. Absolute efficiency, accuracy, speed - and secrecy - were her stock in trade as secretary to the Supreme Allied Commander.

When on the fifth of June Ike went off to visit the airborne troops who were to be the spearhead of the Allied invasion, she remained at the general's field HQ. The General returned about one o'clock in the morning of D-Day, just as the first parachute troopers were jumping out of their transport planes over Normandy. After a brief conversation with him, she went to her tent and prayed for the men who were facing death at that very moment.

The success of the Allied landings in France saw Eisenhower move his HQ to the continent but Mattie was transferred to the staff of Major General John T. Lewis, charged with liaison with the government of newly liberated France. Again, her fluency in French was the decisive factor. Gen. Lewis could converse through her with the civilian administration and deal with the problems of the liberation. She was present when the German military chiefs signed the surrender at Reims on May 7, 1945.

The end of hostilities in Europe eliminated her job in France, so she was posted as military administrative assistant to Henry F. Grady, future U.S. ambassador to Greece, sent by President Truman to observe the elections in that newly liberated country. No doubt her French was a bridge between the ambassador and the troubled postwar government of Greece. Most diplomats and statesmen of the time spoke French, unlike today where English is the international language. She resigned her Army commission in 1946, returned to Washington where, her organizational talents and interpersonal skills having been appreciated, she was appointed Chief of the Employee Development

Branch of the new Atomic Energy Commission. Thus, the significant task of administering the procurement and training of the clerks, secretaries, lab assistants, etc. of that extremely important - and hush-hush - branch of the federal government fell to her.

Her years in government service ended in 1964. Along the way, she was awarded a Bronze Star Medal, an Army Commendation Medal and a French Croix de Guerre for her military service as well as promotion to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. At the AEC, her work earned her a Sustained Superior Service Award. After her retirement, she made many trips to Maine to visit her relatives. She remained single. In 1970, she was voted one of two Outstanding Alumnae of the University of Maine at Fort Kent. And in 1999 she was to have received the UMFK Gold Cane as the oldest living graduate of that college at an alumni banquet in Fort Kent on October 9. Unfortunately, Mattie Pinette died that August.

But Mattie's distinguished career might not have happened at all. The many significant experiences she had, the illustrious service she rendered in both the military and civilian spheres, her marvelous talents and administrative excellence, might never have been realized. In 1943, the transport ship in which she was traveling to Algiers was torpedoed and she and survivors of the sinking spent ten hours in a lifeboat before being rescued by a British destroyer. Now, instead of in the Mediterranean Sea, her remains lie with those of her kin in Gray Cemetery in Dover-Foxcroft, Maine.

Note on Sources: Numbers 42 through 44 of *Echoes: Recovering Community*, published in Caribou, Maine, contain excerpts from her personal papers as well as information provided by George Hall, her nephew. University of Maine at Fort Kent "Valley Vision" webpages were also used in preparation of this article. Mattie's wartime diary and other papers are part of the President Dwight D. Eisenhower National Library in Abilene, Kansas.

What Would They Think If They Could See Us Today?

In the December 20, 1901 issue of the *Bangor Daily News* the following column, originally published in the *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, ran under the title of "Telephone Fiends: If They keep it up they will be known by their ears and voice". We can't help wonder what the author would think if he could see people today who seem joined at the hip and ear, literally, with their cell phones.

"The telephone habit has become a disease with a great many persons" said a New Orleans specialist yesterday, "for it is a curious fact that there are many persons who are almost constantly rushing to a telephone for one purpose or another. I have a friend who is fearfully afflicted in this way, especially when he is under the influence of liquor! If he gets a few drinks ahead of the normal supply he immediately begins to telephone. He begins to call up his friends, and he will talk and talk until one would that his tongue and ear would tire. But he keeps it up, and there are many other men who do exactly the same thing under the same circumstances.

The telephone habit, however, is not confined to the men who occasionally get under the influence of liquor. Sober men frequently do the same thing. The woman are by no means exempt. Take many of the younger women, and they will find that they are passionately fond of calling their "friends up over the telephone, and chatting with them about the little nothings of the girlish life. . . .

The telephone is a great thing. Electricity is a healthy article. But it cannot be successfully contended that talking over the telephone is the perfectly natural way of talking. There may be some harm in it.

The ear is pressed too close against the head, and the voice is greatly strained beyond the

natural pitch. On the other hand, however, distinct the voice may be at the other end of the line there is a perfectly natural, but probably unconscious dread in the part of the listener that all that is said will not be heard and so the hearing is strained. So it might happen that in course of time the physical appearance of the human ear would be changed if the practice is indulged beyond the point of reason. The ear might be flattened out until it would be as smooth as if it had been pressed with a flat iron. It might be without the little creases and curves which add so much to beauty of its appearance. The human voice, too, may lose something of its mellowness, and the hearing may be considerably deadened

Just think of the awfulness of the thing! Here is the telephone flattening out the human ear, and on one side of the head at that, robbing the human voice of its mellowness, and deadening the hearing and here is the bicycle bumping the human back and straddling the human legs. Really it is not a pretty thing to look upon."

Demise of the East Dover Woolen Mill

In the March 5, 1891 *Piscataquis Observer* the closing of the East Dover Woolen Mill was explained as follows:

"The East Dover woolen mill has closed operations on account of the incompatibility of temper shown by the parties who lately attempted to work the machinery. All the stock and material on hand has been sold to Mayo & Son and taken to their mill at Foxcroft. The right man or men could do a thrifty business on a limited scale at the now abandoned factory. This mill has been operated profitably and can be again."

Editor's Note: Many factories and mills have closed in Maine over the years but this is the first time I've seen incompatibility given as the reason.

Message From Mary

The summer is nearly gone and we have had a very busy one. Our facade is all complete, the comments from the community are very kind. Inside the front room we have moved a wonderful old display case from the Blacksmith Shop. This case was from Koritsky's Department Store originally. It is very unusual and thanks to a member it has been completely refinished and is the centerpiece of the front room.

We are now looking at that part of the year where we get to our cataloging in earnest. Now that we have the Past Perfect Software thanks to a grant from the Maine Community Foundation, we can have easy access to our treasures. We need help with inputting the data. Let us know if you can help.

Some of our trees are beginning to turn, soon they'll be bare. The seasons slip by quickly.

Mary I. Annis, President

Final Program of 2008

Our final meeting and program for 2008 will be held October 1st at 7 p.m. at Thayer Parkway in Dover-Foxcroft. Earle Shettleworth, Jr., Director of Maine's Historic Preservation Commission, joins us with a selection of slides from the Commission's Dover-Foxcroft stereoptican collection. Many of these slides are quite rare so be sure to join us for this one-time showing.

Mary will soon be at work on the 2009 schedule. If you can present a program or have an idea for a program please get in touch with her at 564-0820.

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society Membership Application & Donation Form

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Town/City: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Annual Dues beginning 2009 (\$10.00 per person; \$7.00 per senior member) \$ _____ Donation:
\$ _____ (tax deductible)

Please make checks payable to: Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society. Mail to: 874 West Main Street, Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426. Dues cover January to December.

If you are giving a gift membership, please include the name and address and we'll gladly notify the recipient of your gift. The Society is on the web at www.rootsweb.com/~medfhs; e-mail us at dfhistory@yahoo.com.

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ME.



Undoubtedly most visitors to the Gray Cemetery casually pass this gravestone without a second look. But Mattie Pinette played a vital role in the success of U.S. efforts in World War II and links Dover-Foxcroft to General Dwight D. Eisenhower. Learn about Mattie Pinette starting on page 2.