



THE SHIRETOWN CONSERVER

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society

Volume XIV, Number 1

Spring 2010

Towns Supported Area Soldiers & Civilian Refugees in WWI

By Lou Stevens

The Crowned Mad Dog of Europe
PRO-GERMANS NOT WANTED TO SEE IT
Extra!



Frothing with venom for America
He has sworn to make America pay
the price his rabid hatred demands

As He Ravaged Belgium
As He Ravaged France
As He Ravaged Serbia

So he would crush America under
his mailed fist, devastating our
cities, despoiling our women.

THE KAISER
"The beast of Berlin"

Better Death Than This!

SEE THIS BLOOD-MADDENING DRAMA
AND VOICE YOUR ANSWER
SOCIETY HALL, MAY 8 and 9
MATINEES AT STAR

PRICES 25 and 50 CENTS. Seats on sale at Blethen's.

World War I anti-German propaganda reached into Dover-Foxcroft throughout the war.

Let's go back to the early days of World War I. Europe had already been at war for almost three years when on April 6, 1917, the United States entered the conflict. Thus, our soldiers were enemies of the German Empire for about nineteen months before the armistice of November 1918. But local citizens were indirectly involved in the war well before April 1917. And at least two local institutions would be casualties of that war.

Three years before soldiers from this area sailed for Europe there had been a great appeal for neutral countries to come to the aid of civilian war victims in Belgium. Part of the trench lines in western Europe ran right through Belgium and civilians on both sides had become refugees from the battle zone.

The calls for aid brought a response from citizens of Dover and Foxcroft in the form of 330 pounds of clothing collected by a local Belgian Relief Committee and \$38 raised by the Daughters of the American Revolution to help

send the clothing to the needy via neutral Holland. The DAR raised the money by selling Belgian flags.

With so many men of all countries engaged in warfare in Europe, there was a strong demand for American farm products to feed both soldiers and civilians abroad. Willis Barrows, an excellent athlete at Foxcroft Academy at the time, told the author that so many Academy boys were engaged in the harvest in the fall of 1918 that his beloved game of football was canceled and the opening of school was re-

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The Society's legal address is 28 Orchard Road, Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426. The Shiretown Conserver is published quarterly. Contact the editor at 308 Foxcroft Center Rd., Dover-Foxcroft, Me 04426; e-mail: nbattick@roadrunner.com or by telephone at 207-564-3576.

The Society is on the web at www.rootsweb.com/~medfhs and on Facebook. Visit us online.

Attic Sale June 12

The Society's annual attic sale is planned for Saturday, June 12 at the Dover-Foxcroft Fire Station. The Observer Building Museum will re-open that day as well.

Sylvia Dean, chairperson of the Sale is urging members and friends to donate items for the sale. Almost all items are accepted but not large appliances, non-working electronic items, and

clothing.

This year an antique and special items auction will be held in conjunction with the sale beginning at noon. We'll have more details on this in the summer issue of the *Conserver* and on our website and Facebook page.

For pickup of items for the sale please contact Sylvia at 876-3663.

Society's New Webmaster

The Society is pleased to announce we have a new webmaster, Sean Letarte. Sean has been a volunteer cataloguer at the Observer Building Museum for over a year and



now has added responsibility for the website and our Facebook page to his duties. Nancy Battick has agreed to act as Assistant Webmaster assisting with content.

We have plans to revamp portions of our website and add more items. Among other things we will have an online archive, a section for queries, more photos, more news about the Society and its projects, and more links. Please let us know the kinds of things you'd like to see on our website. Tell us what would make it more meaningful to you.

Visit us online at www.rootsweb.com/~medfhs and on Facebook. You can contact Sean at seanlet@myfairpoint.net and Nancy at nbattick@roadrunner.com.

Friends of Central Hall UPDATE By Mary Annis

The Friends of Central Hall have been meeting regularly, with the goal of saving Central Hall firmly set in their minds.

From the main committee of approximately 10 people, several sub-committees have been established, including fundraising, publicity, formatting a business plan, grants, building needs, and legal issues. Fundraising began with a letter asking for pledges. The response has been very gratifying, making the committee very aware of the feelings of those who love the Hall. Fundraising and publicity joined forces and held a meeting at Central Hall on January 26 asking for input from several groups in town. These committees plan an Open House on March 6 inviting the public to see this wonderful structure.

The business plan committee is seeking ideas for the long term use of the building. Your ideas would be most welcome. It is important that Central Hall become a self-sustaining entity and an asset to the community.

The building committee is looking into the soundness of the structure (so far it's good) and what renovations are needed. And the grant committee is searching for grants that will help accomplish the goals of the building committee.



Brand new and shiny, Central Hall was completed in 1882.



Central Hall, ca. 1890.

This is a huge task and the committee feels fortunate to have such dedicated members and a supportive community. Whether these attempts are successful or fail, the committee and the Historical society can sleep soundly knowing they have done all they could do to save this wonderful structure.

Editor's Note: To help with the effort to save Central Hall please contact Mary at 564-0820 or online at mjannis@hughes.net. Visit the Friends of Central Hall on Facebook to stay posted on the latest efforts of the group.

More on the East Dover Bridge

In response to the feature story on the East Dover bridge in our last issue, we received a wonderful letter from new member Lewis H. Dow and a truly great photo of the bridge.

The article on the East Dover Bridge brought back many memories of the old bridge. Being born and raised on the farm one mile East of the bridge, made it a focal point in my life as in the lives of anyone who lived near it during its existence. We could hear the trucks and cars as they rattled the planking of the bridge floor on quiet nights, as the sound traveled very quickly down river. The Bridge was the meeting place for us, as we grew up in the period from 1935 until its replacement in 1947. The East Dover Bridge was an important piece of the Fourth of July Celebration on each year, when, I believe it was Orman Hill, who owned a small cannon that was always fired off the Bridge as the final parting shot for the Celebration. That Boom!!! Was as loud as if it had been fired on our front lawn, a mile away. The East Dover Post Office, that also sold candy, tobacco, kerosene and any other necessary items and a General Store were adjacent to the Bridge, making the location the place to be for adults to socialize and we as kids a chance to spend two or three pennies and throw rocks into the river. I recall that one boy in the neighborhood, did the walk up and over the arch of the bridge. It was attempted by all of us at one time or another, however, the climb did not go any distance when the fear of falling into the river made us back down. But, there were many boasts that we could and would accomplish the feat one day. I do not know of anyone else ever doing the walk on the arch.

Below, a photo of the Bridge in 1947. In our next issue we'll have more memories of the East Dover Bridge from member Nathan Hall including photos of the bridge's dismantling. Don't miss it.



The East Dover lenticular bridge in 1947 shortly before being dismantled. Photo courtesy of Louis H. Dow.

A Sad Letter Home: From Our Archives

We sometimes forget in today's era of almost instantaneous communication that our ancestors sometimes waited months or years to hear from absent loved ones. This letter from our archives tells the sad story of how one woman learned of her husband's death far away from home. The letter was sent first to a man who was asked to break the news to the new widow if no other word had reached her first.

New Orleans May 9, 1849

Dear Eliza

It is with heart felt sorrow that I set down to write a few lines to you. I feel it a sad task to inform an affectionate Wife that her beloved companion is no more. Capt Chadbourne died yesterday of Cholera between the hours of 4 and 5 o'clock he died without a struggle or groan. he was taken sick on Saturday but had not been well for several days previous. he came to our house on Sunday. he was attended by three physicians and had every thing done for him that friendship could suggest. Myself and Husband waited on him as we would upon a Brother and when all was over I closed his eyes in his Death. he was visited by many friends who took a lively interest in his welfare and rendered every assistance in their power, (he was universally beloved.) Capt Perkins took a lock of his hair to send to you. I also took a lock for fear that should not reach you. I have his ring also which if I have an opportunity I shall send to you, if not I think I shall visit it this summer when I shall have the pleasure of delivering the same to you. it is determined that the remains of your Dear departed Husband shall be sent to his friends. you will be advised of it by the gentlemen, render My kindest remembrance to all your friends. and believe Me your sympathizing friend

Abba Eunice Bidwell

Mrs Eliza Chadbourne

Transcription (all spelling, etc. as written in the letter)

New Orleans May 9, 1849

Dear Eliza

It is with heartfelt sorrow that I set down to address a few lines to you. I feel it a sad task to inform an affectionate Wife that her beloved companion is no more. Capt Chadbourne died yesterday of Cholera between the hours of 4 and 5 o'clock he died without a struggle or groan. He was taken sick on Saturday but had not been well for several days previous. he came to our house on Sunday. he was attended by three physicians and had every thing done for him that friendship could suggest. Myself and Husband waited on him as we would upon a Brother and when all was over I closed his eyes in Death. he was visited by many friends who took a lively interest in his welfare and rendered every assistance in their power, (he was universally beloved,) Capt Perkins took a lock of his hair to send to you. I also took a lock for fear that Should not reach you. I have his ring also, which if I have an opportunity I shall send to you, if not I think I shall visit Fr this summer when I shall have the pleasure of delivering the same to you, it is determined that the remains of your Dear

departed Husband shall be sent to his friends. you will be advised of it by the gentlemen, render My kindest remembrance to all your friends and believe Me your sympathizing friend

Abba Eunice Bidwell

Widow Eliza Chadbourne, with son Francis, aged 6, and daughter Eliza, aged 3 were in the household of Nathaniel and Mary Towle in Saco in the 1850 U.S. census. Abba Eunice Bidwell, with husband Henry, a Ship Chandler, were in New Orleans in the same census. Abba was born in Maine in 1821. Henry was born in New York and while in New Orleans owned 3 slaves. If anyone knows more of the stories of Eliza Chadbourne and Abba Bidwell please let us know.

The Society's Unknown



The Neighbor Club of Foxcroft Center, ca. 1953. 3rd couple from left are Betty and Dick Hews; 5th couple from left, Anthony and Elthea Klimavicz, 6th couple from left may be Eddie and Catherine Green. Does anyone recognize the others? If you do please contact Nancy Battick at nbattick@roadrunner.com or at 308 Foxcroft Center Road, Dover-Foxcroft or by phone, 564-3576.

Annual Junktique Show

The Society will host a table at the annual Junktique Show held on March 13th at Morton Avenue School. The show offers a variety of items for sale and we hope you'll stop by our booth and say hi.

If you'd like to help us out that day, please get in touch with Sylvia Dean (876-3663) or Mary Annis at 564-0820.

Cataloguing Project

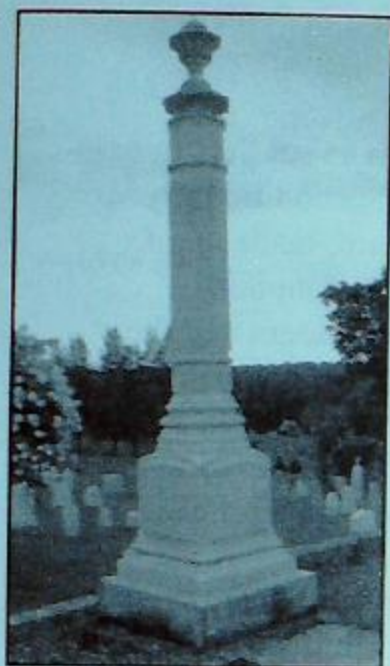
As you may recall the Society purchased professional quality museum cataloging software two years ago with the help of a grant from the Maine Community Foundation.

Volunteers are still busily entering items into the new system called Past Perfect. While we had a cataloging system prior to Past Perfect the transfer of items into the new software must be manually done.

As of this date all textiles, Blacksmith Shop artifacts and most of the Observer Building's artifacts have been entered. We are still photographing many items for the catalog. In addition our library collection of books is in the new system and we are working on documents (estimated at 85% completed) and photos (10% completed).

If you would like to help with this effort please get in touch with Jack Battick at 564-3576.

The Cemetery Project



Your Historical Society, working with the Town of DF, Lary Funeral Home, and the American Legion, is building the first-ever electronic database of all of the inhabitants in the town's cemeteries. So far, we have over 15,000 names of individuals. Unfortunately, many of these records are missing the exact location of the burial sites. In addition, we suspect that there are people buried in the

cemeteries for which we have no paper records.

To help us sort this out we will be walking through the cemeteries this spring, likely in May and June. If you would like to volunteer to help, contact Mary Annis (564-0820 or mjannis@hughes.net) before April 1. There are over 2,800 separate lots in the town's cemeteries and, at about 10 lots per hour, plenty of volunteer time available. When you volunteer, tell Mary approximately how many hours you can dedicate to this project and which cemetery you want to walk. We will provide a map and a list of all of the names in the lots assigned to you. We will offer a brief training course in early May for all volunteers. If you have a digital camera to photograph the gravestones that would be a plus, but not necessary.

Besides being a great help to the town, this will be an enjoyable and deeply satisfying experience for all participants. The entire database, plus photos, will eventually be available for researchers on the Society's website.

Curator's Corner

January and February have been bumper months

for gifts to the Society and our core of volunteers have been very busy cataloging and conserving recent accessions (that's gifts). I list the recent accessions in alphabetical order as follows:

Marjorie Gross Bragg: large collection of Academy Reviews for the years she and her late husband, William Bragg, Class of '41, attended FA. Lee C. Darcy sent us an advertising blotter promoting "Paroid Roofing" available from Walter L. Brown, Foxcroft. David L. Finley donated a wonderful collection of American Legion photos and clippings as well as bottle from Lanpher Drugstore.

Dot Gray donated an extensive photo collection with family photos, formal portraits, and a large number of photos relating to the Gray Farm. She also donated carbon copies of several reminiscences which add greatly to our research collection.

Fred Merithew donated a copy of a stereo view card of Union Square; George & Brenda Merrill a collection of memorabilia; Dr. Harold Sherman donated a large and varied collection of veterinary medical instruments and supplies, and loaned some personal memorabilia.

Dr. Sherman is being interviewed by Carmen Smith in connection with our forthcoming exhibit on his veterinary practice in DF.

I wish to extend a warm Thank You! to our volunteers who have put in many hours at the museum, cataloging, conserving and preparing items for this year's new exhibits. In alphabetical order they are Mary Annis, Nancy Battick, Susan Burleigh, Sylvia Dean, Sean Letarte, and Carmen Smith.

If you would like to join us to share this interesting work, please call me at 564-3576 or Mary at 564-0820. I guarantee you'll enjoy our work sessions.

Jack Battick

From Page 1. scheduled for November 11th. The news of the surrender of Germany that day further delayed the opening, by which time it was too late for football.

Demands upon resources for the war effort was such that *the Piscataquis Observer*, like most other newspapers, was forced to use unbleached newsprint. Limited rationing of foodstuffs

**AMERICANS ASKED TO
LIMIT USE OF SUGAR**
**Must Use No More Than Two Pounds
Per Person a Month if the Present
Meagre Allied Sugar Ration
Is Maintained.**

Limits on many commodities challenged housewives in WWI.

began in 1918 when sugar was available at only half a pound per person per month.

The *Observer* published many

sugarless recipes to help housewives eke out their meager supply. The Red Cross urged women to knit scarves, sweaters, and mufflers for the troops. The Red Cross also held bandage folding sessions each week. About that time it was reported that a local soldier, Dan Christie had received a head wound in France. Churches in the towns collected Christmas packages for the soldiers overseas.

Four civilian residents in the two towns should be mentioned for their efforts during the war. Congressman Frank Guernsey, whose home is now the site of the Police Department, paid for two Liberty Loan ads in the *Observer*. One ad featured drawings on one side of some children and some soldiers on the other with the large type caption, "GIVE YOUR LITTLE ONES AN INTEREST IN THE FUTURE. HE NEEDS GUNS, AMMO, TRUCKS, AEROPLANES, CLOTHING, AND FOOD." Guernsey's ads were said to have helped raise \$120,000.

Another Liberty Loan drive ad was jointly paid for by Colonel Edward J. Mayo and John J. Hughes. Mayo would donate his home to the town for a hospital in 1935. No figure was published about the results of their ad, but Ethel Hughes, daughter of piano factory owner John Hughes led a campaign to erect a roll of honor

of those from the two towns who served in the war. The memorial was dedicated on the lawn before the old Academy building in September 1918.

But what about those who went as soldiers in 1917 and 1918? Company F, Second Infantry Regiment, Maine National Guard, made up of men from the vicinity had been taken into federal service well before the U.S. entered the World War. In mid-June 1916, the company went by train to Augusta after being given a concert in Monument Square and escorted to the station on Summer Street. They soon relieved regular Army troops along the Mexico-Texas border to prevent Mexican bandits, including Pancho Villa, from raiding small towns on our side of the border. The men left the fresh air of Maine for a stifling, hot, and dry time in Texas in the worst heat of the summer.



Bugler from Co. F wakes the troops surrounded by cacti and desert in the 1916 Mexican campaign. DFHS Photo Collection, courtesy of Wayne Bennett.

Back home folks started a fund to provide amenities for the men and eventually \$552 was sent to Captain Charles Norton for the men's use. A baseball game was held to raise funds to aid the families of those serving on the border. In October 1916 Company F returned home to a

tumultuous welcome at the station. Less than a year later they mustered again, this time to join the Yankee Division and go overseas to face possible lethal gas, artillery smoke, the stench of trenches, and the chance of dying in France. What great contrasts in living conditions they experienced in less than a year!

The work of Academy boys in helping with the harvest has already been mentioned. Academic credit was awarded them for their efforts. Nearly 30 men enlisted in the service that first year. A film entitled "The Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin" was shown at Society Hall in the Opera House. Ads were printed urging people to "Paste the Kaiser" by buying War Savings Stamps costing \$4.17, to be redeemed for \$5 on January 1, 1923. Many stores had collection boxes where people could place tobacco products to be sent to the boys in service. By the end of the war, the 3,958 residents of Dover and Foxcroft had raised over \$127,000 in Liberty Loan campaigns.

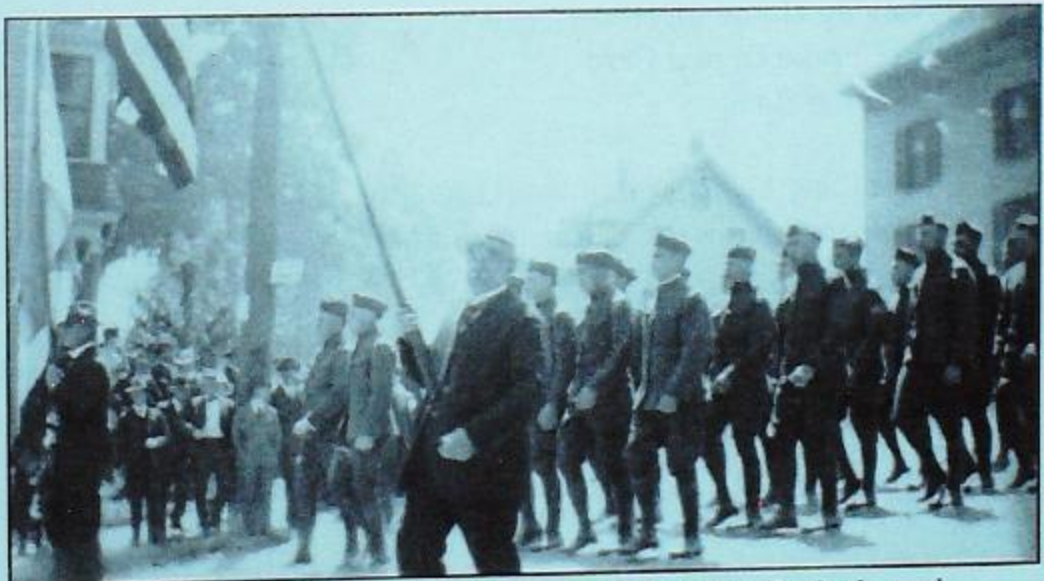
After the Armistice, a different type of ad appeared in the *Observer* entitled "Peace & Thanksgiving." It was sponsored by town stores, banks, and businesses here. The Piscataquis Savings and the Kineo Trust paid for an ad for Liberty Loans to help pay for the costs of the war by calling for "A Pledge that our dead upon the battle fields of France shall not have died in vain."

The first group of soldiers arrived home in mid-December 1918. Among them was Sergeant Errol Brawn who had been severely wounded in France. St. George Folsom, son of Civil War veteran Frank Folsom had also been wounded. In June 1919 there was a huge reception, with 500 soldiers marching. A company was hired to decorate the towns with WELCOME HOME signs. There were river sports, baseball games, and band concerts to celebrate the "boys" return.

Just as the veterans of the Civil

War formed the Grand Army of the Republic, so veterans of World War I quickly formed American Legion posts throughout the United States. Two Company F men killed in the war were honored by having their names given to the local Legion Post: Dominique Babineau and Arthur Chadbourne. Captain Charles Norton, who led the company off to war, was elected first post commander in September 1919. He had returned to operate his grocery store once more and was often the Marshall of Memorial Day parades. His old friend, Ora Evans, editor of the *Piscataquis Observer*, called him a "deeply respected citizen and soldier." Mr. Norton died on July 4, 1950 at Togus. Two doctors, C.C. Hall and Charles Stanhope, also came back from the war to practice medicine in Dover and Foxcroft.

And those two businesses that were victims of the war? The race track on Park Street ran its last fair and harness races in the fall of 1917. Its directors said their concern about the war helped make the decision to close, perhaps in the interests of wartime austerity. But Academy football and baseball teams would continue to play on the infield of the track until 1922 when they moved to the fairgrounds on Fairview Avenue. The inability to obtain special woods such as those from Australia and the difficulties of getting special woods from the south by rail due to the war restrictions led John Hughes to close his piano factory, once a booming concern, in November 1920.



Area towns welcomed their "boys" home with parades, festivals, and patriotic fervor. Photo from old negative in DFHS Photo Collection.

Today all veterans of the war are long gone as is the first honor roll. But their names may be found in the various cemeteries about town.

And there is no evidence that the race track or the piano factory ever existed on Park and Mechanic Streets save in the pages of old copies of the *Observer*, files in the Historical society, and in the Thompson Free Library.

Note: A version of this article appeared in the *Eastern Gazette* in June 2006.

Our Corporate Sponsors

A grateful thank you to the following businesses whose funds support the Society and its efforts to preserve our history. When you shop or see these folks please tell them thank you for their support.

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Camden National Bank

If you know of any business that would like to join our sponsors, please get in touch with Mary Annis (mjannis@hughes.net or at 207-564-0820)

Editor's Corner

Is that spring in the air or are we just overly optimistic up here in Maine? In any event at the Historical Society we're busily working on new exhibits for both museums, cataloging, reaching out to try to save historic Central Hall, and increasing our outreach through our website and now Facebook. What an exciting time for our Society. Also in the works is a new walking tour. Stay tuned for more on that, our upcoming Attic Sale, and other news in our next issue.

There are lots of volunteer opportunities from hosting in the summer months to helping with exhibits, cataloging, photographing cemetery stones, transcribing, and a host of others so if you're finding time hanging heavy on your hands, want to help preserve this community's heritage or just want a stimulating project to occupy your mind be sure to contact us. We can use you!!

This issue offers a variety of feature and Society news items. As editor I'm overjoyed when people come forward to share their memories, photos, and stories and I urge you to send me yours. Each one of us is important, our families are interesting, and our memories precious so please share yours with us.

For this issue I want to give a tip of the editor's hat to the following who contributed: Lou Stevens, Mary Annis, Lewis H. Dow, Chris Maas, and Jack Battick. Thank you all so much.

Nancy Klimavicz Battick

You can reach Nancy by e-mail at nbattick@roadrunner.com, by phone at 207-564-3576 or by snail mail at 308 Foxcroft Center Road. If sending photos you want returned we will scan them and send them back quickly.

Please suggest ideas for future articles, features, or just things you'd like to know about.

A Message From Mary

Here comes 2010! Time marches on. Looking ahead we are setting up two new exhibits in the Observer Building. This is always a lot of work, but fun, too, as we watch the ideas take shape. I hope you can stop in this summer and check them out. We'll soon have our 2010 collectible ornament available. This year's shows Central Hall in gold on a red glass background. We hope to have them available in time for the Junktique Show in March.

Sylvia Dean's barn is beginning to fill up with items for the Attic Sale in June. There are some wonderful items we've been collecting throughout the year. This year we're trying something new with an auction at noon. Hope you can join us. And if you have anything to donate call Sylvia at 876-3663. She even does pickup!

Cataloging continues and we're probably over half done. It's amazing to realize what wonderful things we have in our collection. The latest is a collection of old veterinary items from Dr. Sherman and these will be on display this year. Hopefully we'll see you this summer. We're waiting for you.

Mary I. Annis, President

Program & Meeting Schedule for 2010

All meetings held at Thayer Parkway at 7 p.m. unless otherwise indicated. Need directions? Contact Mary Annis at 564-0820.

Wednesday, April 7	Annual Meeting; election of officers. Program: Lou Stevens "Tossed Salad From the Observer: Happenings from 1850-1880"
Wednesday, May 5	Nancy Battick & Chris Maas: "Working with our Cemetery Records"
Wednesday, June 2	Carlson Williams: "Treasure Talk: Stories of Treasure found in Piscataquis County"
Wednesday, Sept. 1	Chris Maas: Lincoln Street Walking Tour
Wednesday, Oct. 6	Board of Directors: "What's Happening at your Historical Society?"

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society Membership Application & Donation Form

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Town/City: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Annual Dues (\$10.00 per person; \$7.00 senior membership):\$_____ 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 and on Facebook.

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Over There or Over Here. Co F, Maine National Guards in Augusta, Maine - see page 1 for story of World War I in the towns of Dover & Foxcroft