

## The King of England's Claim in Freeport, Maine

by Holly Hurd, FHS Collections Manager

In the early period of Freeport settlement, when the area was a colony of Britain, wood was the commodity that fueled the economy, much as oil is that natural resource today. During the colonial era, wood was used for most everything from housing structures to fuel, and including, importantly, sea-going vessels. Great Britain was successful in colonizing different parts of the world primarily because they were a dominant force on the open seas. A good part of the British interest in New England was its primitive forests, rich in gigantic trees that could be serve as masts for Royal Navy vessels.

A number of laws known as "Broad Arrow Policy," enacted between the years 1691 and 1729, gave the Crown the right to claim ownership of all trees 24 inches in diameter growing within Massachusetts lands (including Freeport at the time) that had not been granted to an individual. The penalty for unauthorized

cutting of such steep-- 100 message to the steer clear of valuable Predictably, the despised by the believed that woodlands bounteous gift



a tree was pounds—a colonists to the King's property. laws were settlers, who the rich were God's to them.

Abuse was rampant, but was curbed by the presence of British deputies who patrolled the forests and areas where masts were loaded---in Freeport, this was Mast Landing, the tidal headwaters of the Harraseeket. To further aid the King's cause, informants of broken policy were offered half the imposed fine as a bounty.

Even with policing, the laws were almost impossible to fully enforce, and extant 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings show evidence that colonists tacitly exerted their perceived rights. Boards over 24 inches wide appear in a number of structures built in colonial Maine, sawn and used under the watchful eye of the monarchy. As an amusing example, the floorboard hidden under the deacon's bench in the Harpswell Meetinghouse, built in 1759, is ~30 inches wide. According to Harpswell Historical Society's President David Hackett, this was the colonists' very intentional act of thumbing their noses at the Crown's policy. Importantly, the Broad Arrow Policy increased tensions between the colonists and the Motherland long before the Revolution came to a head in Massachusetts, which may explain the large number of Patriots that emerged in Maine.

White pines large enough to qualify as Royal property were identified by a symbol known as the "King's Broad Arrow." The mark was axed into the tree bark by British surveyors, presumably at swinging-arm height and with the arrow pointed upward, as depicted in Samuel F. Manning's book *New England Masts and the King's Broad Arrow*. According to the Tate House Museum, where George Tate served as the 18<sup>th</sup> century

(Continue on Page 3)

# The Dash

## Winter 2016

The Dash is published four times annually by Freeport Historical Society for its members.

### Freeport Historical Society

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www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org

### Office Hours

May to Oct. 12, Mon to Fri 9-5  
Oct 13 to May, Tues to Fri, 10-4

Appointments may also be made for a weekend visit.

We encourage a phone call prior to any visit, to verify that the office is open.

Research and visits involving the collections require an appointment in advance. Call 207-865-3170 to speak with Holly Hurd or email info@freeporthistoricalsociety.org

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## A Sense Of Place:

It is great to be *here*...and I mean that!

It is great to be, here, in Freeport because this town is so much more than an address or just a place to live it is a place to be from. *Freeport has a Sense of Place.*

This sense is first made apparent by the still evident bones of the best of our past's architecture. Enlightened

leadership has influenced building renovations and new building design in a way that enhances the streetscape of our bustling downtown. We have prevented highways and disposable architecture from defining our visible character.

We have picturesque and history laden villages in Mast Landing, Porter's Landing, South Freeport village and the many authentic houses and farmsteads spread across Wolfes Neck, East Freeport and along the roads leading west to Pownal, Durham and Yarmouth.

We have the histories of all these people who came before us. The human stories of their achievements, their struggles and their losses.

Our population is infiltrated with dedicated volunteers who serve tirelessly on town government boards, throughout the school system, at Freeport Community Services, in our church congregations, at Wolfes Neck Farm, on the Land Trust or here at the Historical Society. These volunteers do all they do because they believe in this place, their community, as they have for centuries.

Freeport is a microcosm of life in the New World since the early 1600's. Our's is history rich with the tales of pioneers, sailors, ship builders, farmers, merchants and manufacturers, all at a scale we can become familiar with, understand & enjoy.

Come with us at Historic Freeport as we explore these stories.

The more you know, the more fun it is!

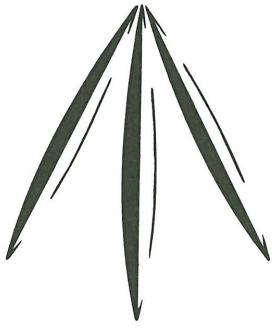
Jim Cram  
Interim Executive Director  
*Please write me at:* Director@FreeportHistoricalSociety.org

## What was *The Dash*:

The schooner *Dash* was built in 1813 at Porter's Landing, Freeport. She was commissioned as a privateer to harass the British during the War of 1812. This speedy ship operated off the East coast, from Maine to the Carolinas, and all the way to Haiti. She and her crew made 15 successful voyages until they disappeared at sea in a storm in 1815.



## (continued from page 1)



Drawing of "Kings Broad Arrow" mark.

most agent in Falmouth (now Portland), there are no known examples of such a mark on a tree or board from the masting era. Photography was invented well after mast logs ceased being shipped from Maine, and any live tree with the symbol would be in the vicinity of three centuries old.

According to Professor Robert Seymour of the University of Maine's School of Forest Resources, the oldest pine trees in Maine today are living in Acadia National Park and are only about 150 years old. A number of pines in Ontario, Canada are in the neighborhood of four centuries old, a contrast that reflects how extensively large pines were harvested from Maine in the colonial period and beyond. Given these facts, the King's Broad Arrow blazed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century has probably never been seen by modern eyes in living trees. However, could a board from a house built in the 1700s potentially bear the marks of the King's centuries-old claim?



Recent renovations at John Coffin's house at Mast Landing. This view shows the eastern side of the house. The marked edge is on the bottom of the lower wainscoting board, below the window center right.

David Coffin, lifelong woodworker, Board Trustee, and enthusiastic patron of FHS, believes he may have found such a mark. Recent renovations at his brother John W. Coffin's house at Mast Landing revealed a wainscoting board marked on the bark edge with what may be the King's Broad Arrow. The home sits on the ridge above the Mill Stream, and is believed to have been built in 1795 by Joseph Lufkin, and later lived in by Captain Justus Richardson, David's great, great, great-grandfather. David noticed the markings because he had never seen such a thing in all his years renovating old houses. His familiarity with the mast trade in Maine led him to look closely, photograph the board, and consider whether it could be an 18<sup>th</sup> century marking. The wainscoting is 30 inches wide, so it certainly came from a tree that was big enough to have been labeled as the King's property.



Close up view of the markings on the board.

As David and I discussed this exciting possibility, several problems emerged that would need to be explained to support this interpretation. First, the marking is 7-8 feet from the end of the board, meaning that if it came from a tree blazed by a British surveyor, it was well above a height that could have been made by a man standing on the ground. We considered whether the marks could have been made while sitting on a horse, which would extend the blazer's reach, and this idea seemed like a real possibility. Also, because the wainscoting was cut along the length of the tree, the three marks would represent the apex of the King's Broad Arrow--one hatch mark left and one hatch mark right of the center blaze made by two swipes of the axe at 90 degree angles. This interpretation means that the arrow would have been pointing sideways rather than upwards on this particular tree.

Not knowing whether records actually state that the arrow was to be blazed pointing upwards, or whether some surveyors might have made the marks differently, we also considered the possibility that the broad arrow was blazed after the tree was felled. In that case a sideways-pointing arrow would make more sense, as that would be the natural way to mark a log already on the ground. The final problem was the date of the house—1795 is 20 years after all monarchy-directed masting activity ceased, with the start of the Revolutionary War.

A possible interpretation that fits all of these observations is that the tree was noticed and blazed by a deputy after it had been felled. Royal policy stated that even if a tree of the proper girth was not marked by a surveyor, all 24-inch+ diameter pines belonged to the King unless the cutter could prove it had been harvested on his own land-- thus disputes sometimes arose about large trees found after they were cut down. Perhaps the wainscoting in the Richardson/Coffin house was derived from such a tree—illegally cut and later discovered by British authorities. After it was marked by the agents, the log may have been left sitting on the shores of Mast Landing, as was known to have happened at the harbor in Portland, if its movement down the Harraseeket was interrupted by war. If this is what happened, Lufkin may have found a large log advantageously close that he had cut at the nearby sawmill, and then used as wainscoting in the house he built. Or maybe none of this story ever happened. Certainly the mark is intriguing, and shows how sharp eyes paired with historical knowledge can make the past come alive.



The Captain Richardson House at Mast Landing, ca. 1900.

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## The Annual Fund at Work

The 2015-16 Annual Fund campaign was made successful by you our very loyal members. This year's Annual Fund raised just over \$27,000. This represents approximately 15% of our annual operating budget.

With this donation we can continue to collect research, teach and advocate for Freeport's history to students, Freeporters, regional neighbors and visitors from away. We are able to outreach through our exhibits, community service school projects, and public programs.

The Annual Fund is essential to our meeting those challenging goals and we thank you for contributing.



Cub Scouts visit in March



Students from the Coastal Studies for Girls using the archives for research.



Tree Pruning Workshop

## New Faces of Freeport Historical Society

### **Interim Executive Director**

**Jim Cram** has been a member of our Historical Society since about 1980 when he was a Trustee and served as President and also chairman of the Freeport Townscape Committee. His career has been in construction with an emphasis on sales and project management spending 18 years as the export manager for Acorn / Deck House. This included building 310 housing units in ten countries. While in Hollis, NH Jim was on several boards including Chair of the Architectural Review Board and named Citizen of the Year in 2007 for the successful restoration of a 1760's triple English barn into a heavily used community center. Currently he is on the board of Greater Portland Landmarks and the Freeport Project Review committee. Jim and his wife Anne are very pleased to be back in Freeport.

### **Office Managers**

**Jennifer Pollick** comes to the Freeport Historical Society from Greater Portland Landmarks. She has 20 years experience as a Museum Educator in NY and ME. She is the Project Director of *The City is a Classroom*, a workbook for all third grade students in greater Portland which was awarded the 2014 NEMA Publications Award for Best in Show. She holds an M.S.Ed in Museum Education from Bank Street College for Education. Jen will be in the office every Wednesday until the end of the school year when she finishes her teaching position. Jen lives in Cape Elizabeth with her husband and daughter.

**Yvonne Devine** recently moved from Bend, Oregon to Freeport, Maine. She is a certified professional coach and the owner of a small coaching and training organization that supports women entrepreneurs and

small business owners. She holds a B.A. in history from the University of Michigan, an M.S. in Systems Management from the University of Southern California, and an M.A. in Media Psychology from Fielding Graduate University. Yvonne retired from the United States Marine Corps during 2003 as a Lieutenant Colonel. Yvonne will be filling the hours until Jen can join us at full capacity.

### **Board Members**

**Jay Flower** is originally from Brunswick and has lived in South Freeport for the last ten years with his wife, Julie, and two daughters Liza and Kate. He is a Portfolio Manager with H. M. Payson. Jay received his BA from Hobart College and spent seven years in Boston primarily working in the financial industry before he and his wife realized they wanted to raise their family in Maine and quickly established roots in Freeport. He is currently serving in his eighth year on the Board of Trustees at North Yarmouth Academy.

**David Coffin** comes from a long line of Coffins that settled in Freeport in the 1700's and grew up at Mast Landing. He has been interested in history since his youth and has an extensive collection of historical memorabilia accumulated over the years. Dave is an invaluable font of information regarding most every event and person in Freeport's living history. (and beyond!) As a professional carpenter Dave has also collected an impressive skill set and has been very generous in helping with many projects in and around the Historical Society. Donating time, tools and materials so much so that in 2015 he was awarded the 'Mel Collins Award for Community Service' our highest volunteer award.

## Annual Meeting

At our Annual Meeting on April 10, 5-7 PM, Curator/Collections Manager Holly Hurd will give an illustrated presentation on "Freeport, Then & Now." The talk will include historic images from the collections of FHS



66 Main Street: Then

juxtaposed with current photos to show how Freeport has changed over time. A history of the town related to the photographs will be described, which will benefit participants in our *NEW* event coming this summer: Freeport History Trivia Challenge.



66 Main Street: Today

## Educational Programs

Several different groups contacted the Freeport Historical Society over the past few months to request historical programs offsite and at Harrington House.

The following programs were offered by Curator/Collections Manager Holly Hurd from Dec 2015- Feb 2016: On Dec 4, the Archaeology class from Pine Tree Academy visited the archives. These students were engaged in a dig at Pettengill Farm for several months under the guidance of Archaeologist Norm Buttrick. They learned archaeological techniques from Norm that they then put to use looking for remnants of the old wharf and brickyard on the shore of the Harraseeket River. Holly gave the students a historical tour of the house and farmstead in October, and they visited the archive to study primary research materials. In addition, Norm and Holly showed the students a number of artifacts that had come from earlier digs at Pettengill.

### A Piece of Wild Earth

A piece of wild earth  
Netted in a shawl  
Capped like an acorn  
Imprisoned in a scrap of black satin  
And staring at me,  
Eyeless.  
Never to be buried  
She lies in her cardboard coffin  
On a snowbank of tissue paper,  
Mercilessly patient.  
Once, a plaited girl must have tamed her,  
Coaxed her to stand while she pointed to letters on a blackboard,  
Made her tea and gingerbread and one day,  
Put her in a box in a musty attic to die.  
Someone must have found her,  
Lifting the lid  
To find the gaze of a lost child  
Reaching for the light.

-*Sylvia Holland*



The applehead doll, ca. 1860s that inspired the poem *A Piece of Wild Earth*

In mid-December, Holly and her daughter Nikola Champlin, a poet from the Iowa Writers' Workshop, developed a program for High School students to help them write poetry inspired by historical artifacts. On Dec 10, Nikola presented a "Historic Objects Workshop" to Pine Tree Academy students and on Dec 11, to Maine Coast Waldorf School students. One of the students from the Waldorf School, Sylvia Holland, shared her poem inspired by an 1860s applehead doll from the FHS collections. ("A Piece of Wild Earth").



Students researching at the FHS archive.



Norm Buttrick showing students how to determine the age of a pipe by the diameter of the stem's hole .



Nikola Champlin teaching at Pine Tree Academy.



A student at Pine Tree Academy writing a poem about a historic baseball and glove.

On December 14, Holly presented an illustrated talk on the “History of Shoemaking in Freeport” to the Oak Leaf Terrace Club.



Nikola Champlin teaching at Maine Coast Waldorf School.



Student writing historical object-inspired poetry.



Students writing historical object-inspired poetry.



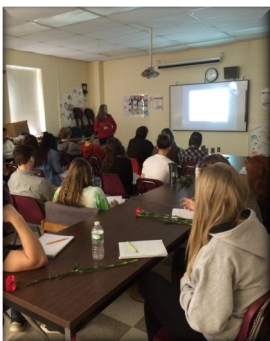
Holly explaining how a shoe is made to Cub Scouts visiting the exhibit.



Cub Scout pack 45, ages 6-8.



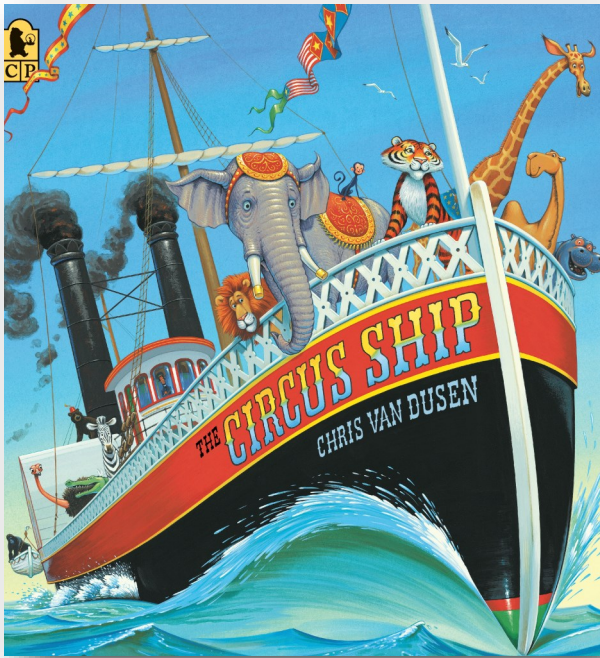
Cub Scouts viewing the exhibit.



Holly talking shoe history with Freeport High School students.

On January 2 Cub Scout Pack 45 and their parents returned to Harrington House to view our exhibit on shoemaking.

On February 11, Holly presented an illustrated talk about Freeport’s shoemaking history to 36 students in teach Geoff Dyhrberg’s American Studies class at Freeport High School.



## Unusual Cargos - The Circus Ship

This year's Harraseeket Heritage Day, June 25, 2016, is themed "The Circus Ship", having drawn from the fun loving story by Maine children's author and illustrator, Chris Van Dusen. Although based on the tragic story of the *Royal Tar* a steamship carrying among other cargo a circus and it's band that sank on October 25, 1836. The *Royal Tar* was sailing from St. John, New Brunswick to Portland Maine with 103 passengers, an elephant, two lions, a tiger, a leopard, six horses, two camels, a gnu, two pelicans and a collection of exotic serpents and birds.

With such unusual cargo, the journey started out in a festive mood. The circus band played and people cheered as the animals were paraded around the deck for exercise. But when the *Royal Tar* ran into a gale off the island of Vinalhaven, disaster struck. Through a series of

miscommunications, the boiler overheated and the ship went up in flames. The scene turned to panic and chaos as people and animals perished. There are rumors, however, that the elephant (named Mogul) survived the disaster by swimming to nearby Brimstone Island. Later, unidentified leg bones from a large animal were discovered there. On Crotch Island, off Stonington, people reported seeing exotic serpents for many years after the wreck.

**From the "Author's Notes" at the end of *The Circus Ship* by Chris Van Dusen.**

In the weeks leading up to the Gala, Freeport Historical Society will highlight some of the other unusual cargos that sailed in and out of Maine. If you would like to contribute an article for review to be published please contact Jim Cram, [director@freeporthistoricalsociety.org](mailto:director@freeporthistoricalsociety.org); or Jen Pollick, [info@freeporthistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@freeporthistoricalsociety.org)

## History at Risk...Hopes for a Collections Vault

On January 28, 2016 WGME Channel 13 aired an interview with Collections Manager Holly Hurd and Interim Executive Director Jim Cram. What was to be a Real Estate Report, turned into a call for action to protect the Freeport Society's precious collection. As Holly points out in the interview the collection is housed in the wooden ell of the Harrington House, making it particularly vulnerable should there be a fire. The solution is simple, the Historical Society has wanted to build a climate controlled vault for decades. Jim Cram made the point that this project has been studied for 20 years and the time to act is upon us. Look for more info on this exciting project in the coming months.



Collection stored in the wood famed ell.

**To watch the full interview go the WGME website:**

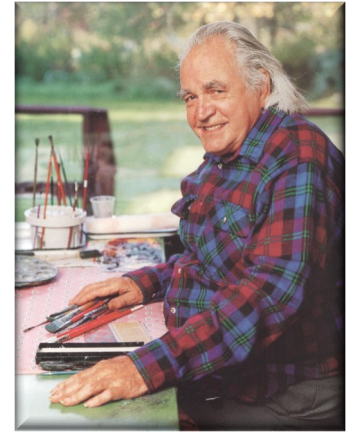
<http://wgme.com/real-estate-report-freeports-history-in->



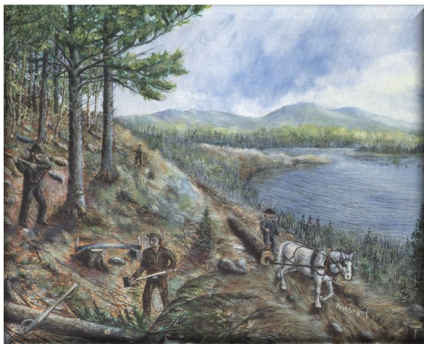
# Early 20th Century Logging in the Maine Woods

February 1 through March 25, 2016  
Tuesday - Friday 10 am - 5 pm

This exhibition features nineteen paintings Alden Grant, Sr (1911-2002). on loan from the Rangeley Lakes Region Logging Museum. Mr. Grant is the grandson of the founder of Grant's Camps in Kennebago. His paintings show the process of logging in the Rangeley region from 1915-1928.



Artist Alden Grant



Working in his family's sporting camp as a logging camp clerk, Mr. Grant grew up watching the men who felled the "pumpkin pine" and balsam fir to provide lumber and paper. He also watched the artists he met: "sports" who painted with oils; loggers who used tar to fashion forest scenes on slabs of wood and who carved wooden chains and fans; and the celebrated taxidermist, Herbie Welch.

In 1986, soon after he retired, Mr. Grant began working on the paintings shown in this exhibit, and spent 4 years completing the set. The goal of such an undertaking, done in his late seventies, was to fix on canvas his memories of early 20th century logging with crosscut saws, hand axes, and horses.

The exhibition also features 19 photographs on loan from the Deering Lumber Company, taken from the 1920s to the 1940s in the Deering lumber camps along the Saco River. The combination of the paintings and photographs bring early 20th century logging to life.



Logging on Beech Hill Rd, 1914

**Thank you to our exhibition sponsors:** H.E. Brewer Pulp & Logging, Hancock Lumber, and Taggart Construction,

## Opening Reception a Success

Thank you to all of our guests who came out for the opening reception for *Early 20th Century Logging in the Maine Woods*. A special thank you to our trustees, sponsors, donors and the many members of the Grant family.



Alden Grant, Jr., the artist's son.



## VOLUNTEERS



We are ever grateful and thankful for our very dedicated and loyal volunteers. These volunteers give us countless hours of their

time, which allows our small staff to operate successfully.

With two National Trust properties, extensive collections and an active schedule of public events and exhibits, Freeport Historical Society offers a range of interesting and varied volunteer opportunities.

### *Some Opportunities are:*

- Gardeners a Harrington House
- Greeter & exhibit guides
- Office support and mailings
- Poster & brochure distribution
- Collections cataloguing & data entry
- Special event planning & staffing
- Gallery exhibit preparation

### *At Pettengill Farm*

- Herb garden maintenance
- Trail clearing
- Spring clean-up (2016 date TBA)

### *Contact:*

info@freeporthistoricalsociety.org

## Wish List

- Lawnmower for Harrington House
- Legal size, fireproof file Cabinet
- New (used) phone system for six work stations
- Mapping software and specialist

## Pettengill Farmhouse Beetle Abatement



Thank you for answering the call. Powder post beetles feed on old wood inside buildings, and the Pettengill Farmhouse, with its old-growth wooden beams and wide-spaced floorboards, provides quite the feast.

Thankfully, the means of ridding the Farmhouse of these invaders was relatively straightforward. A non-toxic solution of boric acid was carefully applied to the exposed woodwork in the house, which will kill the beetle larvae when they emerge in the Spring, and prevent new insects from making their homes in the historic house.

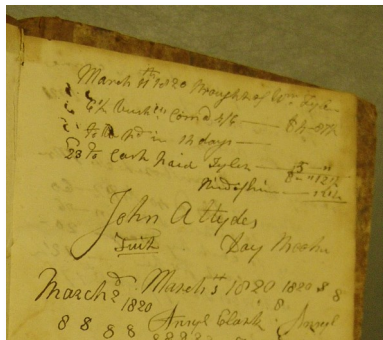
With your help we raised \$2,070, the total cost of abatement was \$6,136. Although we did deplete our "Rainy Day Fund" somewhat, we are VERY thankful for your donations and we have saved Pettengill Farmhouse.

### *Thank You to Our Beetle Abatement Donors*

Anne Ball	Alice Ingraham
Emily & Gregg Carville	James Mitchell
Robert Christie	Elizabeth & Robert Moore
Anne & Jim Cram	Sandra Nickerson
Sherilyn Dietrich	Sally W. Rand
Richard & Jeanette Dillihunt	Ineke Schair
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Rebecca and David Hotelling	Greta & George Waterman
Elinor & Wheaton Hudson	Helen Richmond Webb
Mr. and Mrs. David Hurd	



## New Collections Fund



Recently FHS had the opportunity to purchase four early 19<sup>th</sup> century account books kept by Dr. John Angier Hyde (to be highlighted in a future issue of *The Dash*). To ensure that

the Historical Society has monies available for such purchases, we are opening a “New Collections Fund,” which will be used exclusively to purchase Freeport-related artifacts as they turn up on eBay, at auctions, or from antique dealers.



## Collections Fund Donation

Donation Amount \_\_\_\_\_

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Freeport, ME 04032

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## THANK YOU TO OUR 2016 BUSINESS SPONSORS

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## JOIN US

Membership has its benefits: A copy of the book *Tides of Change: A Guide to the Harraseeket Historic District*, a trail map of Pettengill Farm, and our quarterly newsletter, *The Dash*, are included. Members also receive three hours of research time in our archives (a \$75.00 value) and invitations to all Society events and exhibits at free or reduced rates.

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*Please make checks payable to Freeport Historical Society and mail to 45 Main Street, Freeport, ME 04032, or join us online at [www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org](http://www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org)*

## Membership

A new year means it is time to renew your FHS membership for 2016. All memberships run for a calendar year, so if you joined us in 2015, you will likely need to renew your membership for this year.

We will be sending out a paper reminder shortly, but you can preempt another piece of mail in your box by renewing today. The easiest way to renew is online, at [www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org/membership](http://www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org/membership), or you may renew over the phone or in person.

# Save the date

February 24, 2016 6: 30 pm—Program: **Meet Millie** at Harrington House, 45 Main St., Freeport.. The event will feature a dramatic portrayal of Millie Pettengill She will talk about her interests, her family, life on the farm, and the homestead’s early history, with the aid of historic images and artifacts. (\*Written by Elizabeth Guffey with Freeport Historical Society)

Thru March 25, 2016— Exhibit: **Logging in the Maine Woods** at Harrington House, 45 Main St., Freeport. Tuesdays-Fridays, 10 am-4 pm. Admission: \$3 members and children under 12 and \$5 general public.

April 10, 2016, 5-7 PM—**Annual Meeting** Curator/ Collections Manager Holly Hurd, will give an illustrated presentation on “Freeport, Then & Now.”

May 2016 (Opening Date TBA)—Exhibit: **Artists of Freeport** at Harrington House, 45 Main St., Freeport. Tuesdays-Fridays, 10 am-4 pm. Admission: \$3 members and children under 12 and \$5 general public.

June 25, 2016—**Harraseeket Heritage Day and Gala** The theme is “The Circus Ship”

Visit us online:

[freeporthistoricalsociety.org](http://freeporthistoricalsociety.org)



@Historic\_Freeport



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