

The Dash

Published by Freeport Historical Society | *Keeping the past present since 1969.*



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FALL 2018

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Ruth Gruninger:

Student, Teacher, and One of Freeport's "Living Treasures"

BY JIM CRAM

RUTH GRUNINGER STARTED her own formal education in the one room school house at Porter's Landing in 1931, just down the hill from where she was living. For the next 6 years, she and 15 other students were taught by a single teacher, an attractive student-teacher ratio by today's standards until you consider a single teacher (most always a woman) taught all subjects to all six grades! Of course those teachers had a few other chores as well. There was no electricity or heat so there were lamps to light, a woodstove to fill and get started and the shared drinking water bucket to fill. Today, at age 94, Ruth remembers them all, including Miss Fannie Mitchell, Louise Gould, and Leona Toothacher. Miss Gould was her favorite teacher of all time.

There were three girls in her grade. Ruth, Doris Bailey, and Barbara Hilton Brown, who has been her lifelong friend and are still in touch today. When the Porter's Landing schoolhouse was closed and converted to a residence, Ruth obtained one of the double wooden desks. It is now a part of the Freeport Historical Society collections. These desks were an important part of the



"The role of a teacher in society is both significant and valuable. It has far reaching influence on the society she lives in and no other personality can have an influence more profound than that of a teacher. Students are deeply affected by the teacher's love and affection, character, competence and moral commitment."

teaching program as every first grader was paired with a sixth grader. Ruth's youthful mentor was Hope Curtis.

She invited the whole school to her wedding to Alden Grant Sr., the father of Alden Grant Jr. who owns the Nicholson Inn on Main Street with his wife, Jane Chiarini Grant. Ruth still remembers the arbor of roses they stood under during the ceremony.

Ruth has written an account of her early days in Porter's Landing, "A 1930s Childhood in Porter's Landing," that brings

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FALL 2018

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

Freeport Historical Society
Harrington House
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Freeport, ME 04032
(207) 865-3170

www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org

OFFICE & EXHIBIT HOURS

Tuesday to Friday
10 am – 5 pm

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 library@freeporthistoricalsociety.org

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Retail Sales Decline Impacts Your Historical Society

UNDOUBTEDLY, MOST OF our members are aware of the decline in traditional retail sales and the impacts felt nationwide. On Freeport’s own Main Street, multiple storefronts sit vacant in prominent locations. Many of you may not be aware of how this has affected our own income in three different areas.

First, our most significant retail tenant had a five-year lease which expired in mid-2017. Declining sales, especially in the winter months, forced our tenant to seek alternative, less expensive locations to do business. To keep them with us, we negotiated a much lower rental rate; we have many competitors anxious to have that income. This year is the first full year we have experienced that dramatic loss in income.

Second, many of our corporate sponsors derive their own income from retail business. We have had several of our largest and long-term donors reduce their annual donations substantially.

Third, we derive significant income from renting our parking spaces at the rear of Harrington House at 45 Main Street. The Planning Board has recently sent a proposal to the Town Council that will reduce the parking requirements for all downtown businesses. This is a complicated issue. The prevailing argument is that the current requirements place too great a hardship on these struggling retailers. As a result, we will almost certainly see reduced income from parking in the near future.

Your Board of Trustees and Staff are very committed to the long-term financial stability of this organization.

THIS DOWNWARD SWING of operating income resulted in an operating deficit for 2017 and a larger one for 2018. We are not satisfied with this situation. We are committed to breaking even in 2019 and are reviewing all income and expense items.

I believe that our membership is well aware we received a very generous donation from George and Joyce Denney in 2016, given to continue making the Historical Society the “Anchor of Main Street.” Those funds were not given to cover operating deficits and be depleted. The Denneys are all too aware how national chains

are impulsively reactive to short-term financial performance. Your Historical Society is much the opposite. We celebrate every era of our community’s evolution.

Your Historical Society is here for the long run and we strive to preserve, protect, and interpret our collections, Pettengill Farm, and the Harrington House. We are defending the Denney Fund to enable it to make critical physical repairs and improvements to our centuries old buildings. We all cherish them for their message of continuity, stability, and perseverance. Recently the Denneys’ gift, along with some matching grants, have allowed us to make major repairs to the Harrington House windows, dormer, and barn roof. We must better protect our fragile collections from fire and moisture, provide adequate accessibility for elders and youngsters, and respond to a long list of critical improvements to our buildings and grounds.

Our Annual Fund drive this November will be especially important. We are counting on you, our members, to help out, and please – *encourage others to join!*

There is a lot of good news to share as well!

AS YOU LOOK THROUGH this issue of *The Dash*, please observe the large number of events, activities, and other opportunities to engage socially with your neighbors and to learn the history and culture of this area.

Sep. 18: David Coffin, with his cousin Ed, deliver an in-depth presentation on **Mast Landing** during its busiest century from 1760 to 1860.

Sep 30: **Pettengill Farm Day**. Our 43rd Year celebrating history with a fun and family day at the farm!

Oct. 20: **Freeport through the Years**: A new book with over 200 historic photos of Freeport never before published. Author Holly Hurd will present the book, photos, and stories and will sign your copy.

Thank you for supporting this organization for the past 49 years! We are making history as we celebrate it.

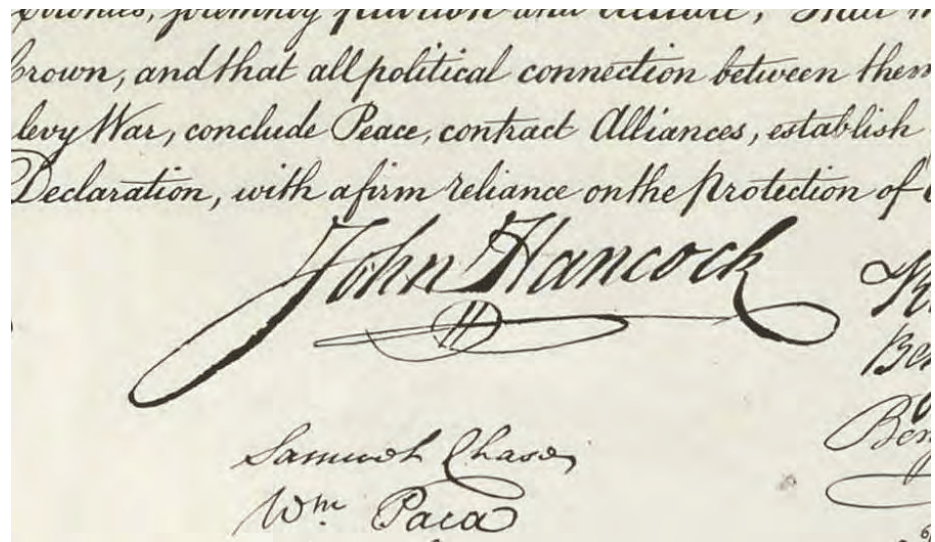
— JIM CRAM, Executive Director

Our Most Famed Freeport Signature (to date)

BY HOLLY HURD, CURATOR & COLLECTIONS MANAGER

ORIGINAL HISTORICAL records can appear uninteresting and inaccessible, written in script difficult to decipher, in language hard to understand. However, they are often full of wondrous stories relatable to most people and discoverable with a little digging. We recently happened upon one such tidbit, buried in the founding records of our town. For the past few months volunteers have been working on photocopying the original town records, kept in the vault at town hall, so they can be made available to researchers at the Freeport Historical Society archives. **We now have copies of the town's official meetings and activities from 1789-1908, and they are fine reading.**

When Freeport was incorporated as a town in 1789, a formal act of separation from its previous township was required since it had been part of "Ancient North Yarmouth," a municipality that also included Harpswell, Pownal, Yarmouth,



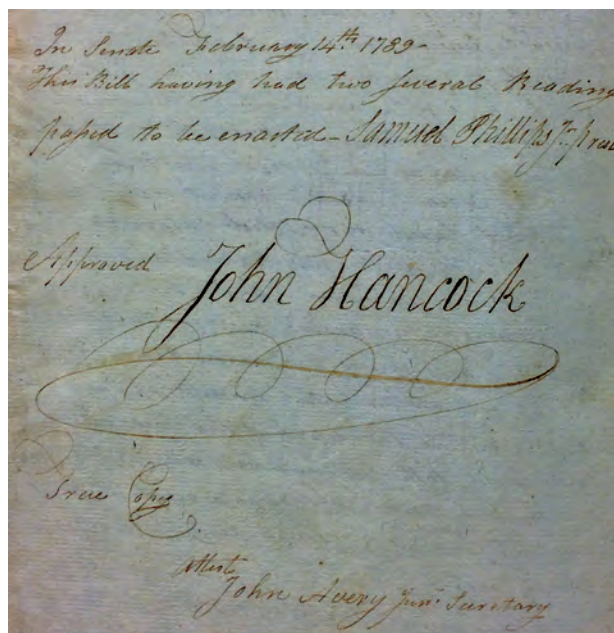
John Hancock's signature on the Declaration of Independence 1776.

Cumberland, and current North Yarmouth. Ancient North Yarmouth and the new town of Freeport were both located in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at the time since Maine had not yet become an independent state. In 1789, Maine was considered the wildlands of Massachusetts, still mostly unsettled and sparsely populated. Boston was the center of state government and official business was generally conducted there.

By happenstance, well-known Bostonian John Hancock was serving as governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1789 and signed all official documents. John Hancock, founder of the Sons of Liberty, president of the Second Continental Congress, and first signer of the Declaration of Independence, also signed Freeport's incorporation papers! These amazing

original documents are bound in the town's first record book and are available for viewing at the town hall.

Hancock was raised by a wealthy uncle, Thomas, who ironically made his fortune importing British-manufactured products and exporting whale oil, rum, and fish. Uncle Thomas passed along his estate to young John, making him one of the wealthiest residents of the 13 colonies. Fortunately for the revolutionary cause, John used his inherited money to support the push for independence. Though initially moderate in his anti-British views, Hancock became extremely popular with Bostonians when he joined the resistance and boycotted the Stamp Act in 1765. Statewide prestige positioned Hancock to lead the new Commonwealth as its first and third governor during the years 1780-1785 and 1787-1793. A handful of other Maine towns also incorporated during those years. Durham, Bowdoin, Blue Hill, Shapleigh, Bangor, Bath, Lyman, Monmouth, and Fairfield share in Freeport's fortune to have their beginnings marked by a father of the revolution. FHS



John Hancock's signature in the town's 1789 incorporation papers.

Ruth Gruninger

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the reader straight to the smells of apple trees, lilac bushes, and the mud flats surrounding the nearby crabmeat factory. Not all the smells of the era were good; it was the depression, and many in town had little. Some of the poorer classmates did not have the resources to bathe or wash their clothing regularly. To be poor at the time meant one would often go hungry or ask a neighbor for food. Luckily for Ruth, her father owned a chicken farm, raising 2,000 Rhode Island reds for market and for family consumption. There was no lack of eggs or meat.

Her essay takes you around the neighborhood and with amazing detail describes who lived in each house and introduces you to the joys of living around farm animals like cows, horses, and chickens. Home canning, iceboxes, and outhouses were not viewed as hardships but the common threads that wove together a community and an era. Playful imagery like tobogganing in the moonlight, floating boats down a gurgling stream, and pulling fresh carrots from a friendly neighbor's garden bring to mind a simpler time at Porter's Landing still fresh in Ruth's memory.



Ruth (Warner) Gruninger, middle row third from left, from a one room Freeport School House to 38 years teaching.

Copies of this essay, "A 1930s Childhood in Porter's Landing" are available at the Historical Society and also on our web site. It is impressive in its thoroughness describing the neighborhood, knowledge of the individuals living there, writing style, and delivery. It is hand written, in pencil, on two sides of lined paper. Simply, wonderful.

Ruth also describes later years. Because her father was working for General Motors and had to move a few

times, Ruth did not attend junior high school and only attended a portion of her freshman year of high school in Freeport. She went on to Colby College for two years and ultimately received both her bachelor's and Master's degrees in Education from the University of Maine. Her first year of teaching was at the Morse Street School, followed by two years at the Grove Street School. In 1967 she came to the Soule School in South Freeport.



Gunkaloogen by Dahlov Ipcar: Dahlov was 'Artist In Residence' for a week in Ruth's classroom at the Soule School. The nationally known Maine artist worked with the children and from their ideas she created the 8 foot drawing that was on her wall for years. When the Soule School closed it migrated to the cafeteria of Mast Landing School where it hangs today.

In a testimonial to Ruth, a fellow teacher at the Soule School, Gene Berg stated, “Soule was controversial when it started in South Freeport with only Ruth and three other teachers. It is hard to explain today, as we sit here an accepted partner of three in Mast Landing School, just how controversial it was.” Gene goes on to explain why the Soule School outlasted most of those schools from the 1970s and 1980s. “The Soule Project was able to build academic credibility – Ruth was respected as a language arts teacher, and during the early Soule years, served as language arts lead teacher for the district.”

Ruth developed many curricula to connect students to their hometown, whether they be about the biodiversity of the tide marshes or a full five-day



A double desk was used at the Porter's Landing School to pair every 1st grader with a 6th grade student to help them adjust to school and learn.

course discussing life at a true salt water farm, growing the majority of food you would eat all year and discussing the importance of proper food preservation to keep through the lean months of the year.

Ruth continued to teach a few years after the Soule School was combined with the Mast Landing School. After teaching Freeport school children for 38 years, Ruth retired. This author can promise you that anyone who has had the privilege of spending time with Ruth leaves knowing that they learned many things worthwhile.

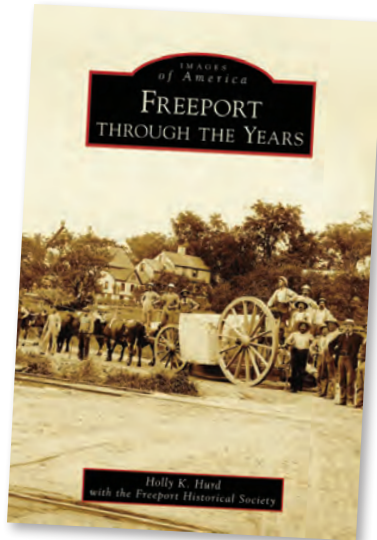
Judge Joe Field still calls Ruth “Three Draft Gruninger,” and as this writer is nervously turning in this article for review, I fear a flood of red Ink is coming! (ED Note: It did!) FHS

Announcing a New History Publication from Freeport Historical Society and Arcadia Publishing! *Freeport Through the Years*

IN 1996, the Freeport Historical Society teamed up with Arcadia Publishing to produce one of their first institutional publications: *Images of America—Freeport*. This book, researched by staff, contained ~200 historic photographs and has sold thousands of copies in the past 20+ years.

Since that time FHS has received hundreds of new (old) photographs, and our burgeoning collection of more than 2,000 images begged for another *Images of America* publication.

Coming fall of 2018, a new historic photograph book: *Freeport Through the Years* by Curator & Collections Manager Holly Hurd. The society will order copies in advance for those wishing to have their book(s) available the day it is released. Proceeds will benefit FHS so please reserve your copy today! FHS



Book Celebration & Signing
Saturday, October 20
from 6:00 – 9:00 pm
Freeport Community Library
Reception 6:00 pm / Book Talk 7:00 pm
Book Signing 8:00pm

RECOGNIZE THESE BUSINESSES?

Collections Committee Member Bob Fusselman needs your help. Contact us and share what you know.



FIRST INSTALLMENT

BY LINCOLN J. MERRILL, JR.

Insurance Protection — IN THE — Town of Freeport

I ATTENDED THE OPENING of the wonderful exhibit on Freeport businesses that Holly Hurd curated. I foolishly admitted that I had information on some of Freeport's insurance agents that I did not see in the exhibit and explained their business operations to her. Holly and I have written many articles for publication over the years, and before I knew it, she had convinced me to write an article on insurance.

It seemed easy. I have been in the insurance business since 1979 and have spoken and written on it several times. I own an extensive collection of Maine insurance items. I know the places to go and the people to ask if I need more information. How hard could it be? Right. I had clearly never researched Freeport and the insurance industry. There is a lot more to investigate than I anticipated, and if allowed, I will research and write on this topic in installments as I chase the leads and tie it together. For this first installment article, let's start over coffee.

In London, England, at Edward Lloyd's coffee shop about 1668, the famous Lloyd's of London had its beginning. Merchants looking to send their products by ship wanted protection for losses should the ship not arrive at the destination. Patrons of the coffee shop agreed to "underwrite" their name and an amount of coverage on a piece of paper for each ship and provide an assurance that they would accept money (a premium) and pay that amount if the ship or cargo was lost or damaged. Thus began our modern day insurance industry.

Eventually, insurance came to the American colonies. In 1752, Benjamin Franklin started the oldest, continually active insurance company in America. It is the Philadelphia Contributorship for the Insurance of Houses for Loss by Fire. It originally insured houses that were built according to good construction standards, and metal plaques in the form of clasped hands were placed on each building they insured. Replicas of this plaque can be seen for sale today. Contributorship is a mutual form of ownership meaning that the policyholders own the company rather than investors or stockholders.

Over the ensuing years, many new insurance companies were started. Large stockholder-owned companies became commonplace in cities like Hartford, Boston, Providence, New York, and New Haven. Rural areas, including many in Maine, complained that these large, urban companies did not want to insure their homes and businesses or would only do so at very high prices.

Rural towns knew that businesses were more likely to open if fire insurance was readily available. Motivated by the need to have fire insurance protection to serve their communities and help them grow, prominent rural residents decided to follow the Benjamin Franklin model and banded together to start *mutual fire insurance companies* that would serve the needs of their towns.

Mutual fire insurance companies in Maine in the 1800s were legally created by the state legislature which would pass laws incorporating each organization. A list of petitioners from the community would accompany the legislative request. Petitioners usually comprised prominent business owners and farmers; the list of names is certainly worth reading for local historians.

How did these mutual companies work? They elected a board of directors and officers who were often just a president and a secretary/treasurer. They met on a regular schedule and determined what individuals and businesses they would insure, collected premiums, sold new policies, and adjusted claims.

Mutual companies held an annual meeting where all policyholders, as company owners, would gather (although this author's experience is that attendance outside of the directors

was sparse). This meeting elected directors; set premium rates; determined compensation rates for directors, officers, and insurance agents; and dealt with any other company business. The notice of these meetings was often posted on the local schoolhouse door or at a local general store so policyholders would see them. Today,

meeting notices must be published in the newspaper.

These mutual companies would issue policies that were in force for up to seven years. They used an insurance premium billing plan that is basically extinct today. They were *assessable* policies, which meant that very little premium was charged for the insurance protection upfront. The policyholders signed a note promising to pay more money through an assessment if someone had a fire. It was not unusual for them to buy a policy





Fire insurance map of Freeport Village 1906. The Sanborn Map Company of Pelham, NY published detailed insurance maps of cities and towns that were used by insurance companies to insure buildings they had never physically seen. The information contained on these maps includes street name and number, building construction type, occupancy, and fire protection such as sprinkler systems. They were used extensively from the 1860s to the 1960s.



Aftermath of the fire of 1909 that burned the Clark and Mallet Blocks on Main Street between Bow and Mechanic Streets.

for \$1 down with the promise to pay up to \$50 more if needed.

Most Maine mutual companies had no insurance agents as we know them today; the insurance was sold by the company directors. The state even had a special insurance licensing law in the 1900s that exempted the directors from certain compliance requirements that other agents found compulsory. Other agents had to be licensed although insurance was usually a side occupation. Many were storekeepers or funeral directors or town clerks.

Into this assessable mutual fire insurance company world

came the Freeport Mutual Fire Insurance Company. The company was incorporated by the State of Maine on February 15, 1862. The Freeport community petitioners were James T. Tuttle, George Aldrich, Alvin F. Tracy, Benjamin Lufkin, Joseph True, W. A. Mitchell, W. R. Kendall, and Samuel Thing.

According to the legislative action, "Said company may insure, in the town of Freeport only, their respective dwelling-houses, stores, shops, barns and other buildings, household furniture and merchandise, the contents of any building in said town, against loss or damage by fire, whether the same happens by accident, lightning or any other means excepting that of design in the insured."

Additionally, the legislature required that "no policy shall be issued by said company until applications shall be made for insurance to the amount of twenty thousand dollars at least." This statement meant that no policies could be issued until there was shown to be support in Freeport for the company by applications totaling at least \$20,000 in total coverage on buildings and contents.

How prominent were these Freeport men who petitioned the Legislature for the company? W. A. Mitchell owned a store at Bow and Main Streets. He had a livery stable, was President of the Temperance Reform Club, where W. R. Kendall was a Vice President, and was Junior Warden of the Freeport Masonic Lodge. George Aldrich was a Selectman, served in the Maine House of Representatives, and was a farmer on Wolfe's Neck.

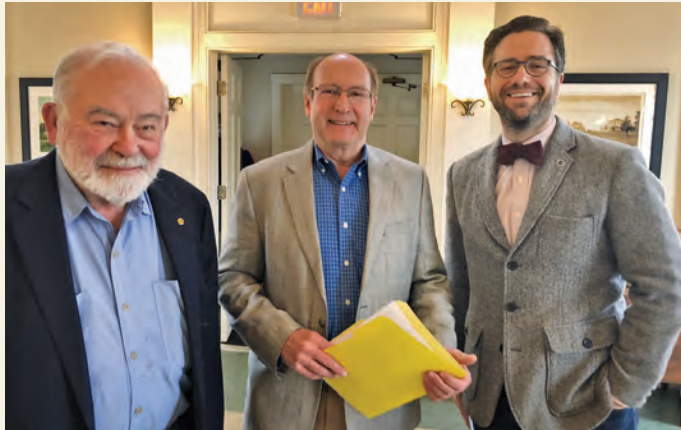
Samuel Thing was Freeport Postmaster from 1841 to 1849 and again from 1853 until 1861. He was a Cumberland County Commissioner and served in the Maine House of Representatives, as did Benjamin Lufkin. He was Senior Warden of the Masonic Lodge. Joseph True was a farmer and ship carpenter.

The success of the Freeport Mutual Fire Insurance Company remains a mystery. Maine did not regulate insurance companies until nearly 1870, which is when they began printing annual reports. The Maine Bureau of Insurance, whose job it is to regulate insurance, destroyed their early records years ago, and have very little information in the files. The Freeport and Yarmouth historical societies have also been unable to uncover any information in their records.

This author has been able to determine that the company was out of business by 1873, but also cannot determine whether the company was ever actively in business. If it did operate, its reasons for closings are unknown; however, it is possible the company

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RECENT EVENTS RECAP



Board Member Lonny Winrich, Director Jim Cram, and President Eric C. Smith at our **Annual Meeting** on April 29, 2018.



We have a great turnout this year at our June 23rd **Annual Harraseeket Harborside Gala at Strouts Point**. Our oyster station was one of our personal favorites. Thank you for celebrating Freeport history again with us this year!



Garden Committee Members Anne Cram, Rebecca Hotelling, and Polly Brann at our **Plant Sale** on Saturday May 19, 2018. It was our most successful year to date.



Coastal Winds July concert at our Harrington House gardens.



Historic Freeport Village guides Scott Miller and Paul Kane. The two along with Kristin Nam and Trish Scott have been offering a glimpse into Freeport's past with guided village tours every Wednesday and Friday.



Guest Lecturer Hannah Peterson at our June **Plant Medicine Workshop** at Pettengill Farm.



May Exhibit Opening: **Blacksmiths & Storekeepers: Freeport Village Crossroads of Change, 1770-1920**.



Fish and Plummer family descendants.

Finding Family in Freeport

ON JULY 5, TWENTY-NINE MEMBERS of the Fish and Plummer families visited FHS's exhibit *Blacksmiths and Storekeepers: Freeport Village, Crossroads of Change*. After hearing a short lecture by Curator Holly Hurd about general Freeport history, Fish and Plummer relatives toured the exhibit and posed with a life-size photograph of storeowner William W. Fish. It was impressive to see the resemblance between Fish and his descendants, which included grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren!

According to Trustee Jan Gerry (who hosts an-

nual family reunions with her husband Ed), William, the son of Rev. Elijah S. Fish and Mary G. Fish, came to Freeport because his parents had lived here when Elijah was pastor of the First Baptist Church. After his father and two brothers died, his mother wanted to return to Freeport because it was her favorite place of all the towns the couple had served. William was a graduate of Freeport High School and Salutatorian of his class. His wife Rosamund was born in Freeport to George Stanwood and his wife, a farming family from Pleasant Hill.

W.W. Fish opened a grocery store in the Nichols Block (near the corner of Main and Bow Streets)

with Louis Curtis about 1895. Verde Morton later joined the partnership, and they moved to an adjacent building where the fire started that burned the block in 1909. A few years earlier, Fish had struck out on his own to become an undertaker and furniture storeowner working in the Warren Block. He later moved to the newly-rebuilt Davis Block where he also ran a Five & Dime. His son-in-law Louis Plummer concurrently ran the I.G.A. next door, which had previously belonged to Fish's business partner L.E. Curtis. Fish's cash register is on display in the exhibit, which runs through the end of the year. **FHS**

Insurance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

did not receive a sufficient number of applications to reach the required \$20,000 in coverage mandated by the state legislature.

The usual cause for a mutual fire insurance company to end business operations was due to the core element of its structure. As mentioned previously, these policyholder-owned companies never collected much premium up front. Assessments were made when a fire loss occurred, meaning the bank account was always empty.

Imagine a situation where a fire would start in a Main Street business. Fire protection was minimal, and firefighting

equipment was often nonexistent. The fire frequently spread to other buildings, leaving devastation in its path. The businesses insured with the mutual company would ask for payment of their loss. The insurance company would try to collect their assessments from their policyholders only to be told that they were also insured by them and could not pay until their own claim was paid.

As a result, no one could collect for their claim, and the mutual insurance company would be declared insolvent and would go out of business. With no insurance payment, some of these businesses presumably closed as well.

Did lack of money cause Freeport

Mutual to close? To complicate matters more, in 1893 the Freeport and Yarmouth Mutual Fire Insurance Company began. Was this new company a successor to Freeport Mutual? Who started them? Why? Who were the local insurance agents, and what do we know about them?

The author looks forward to providing more information in the next installment. **FHS**

Lincoln J. Merrill, Jr., is President & CEO of Patriot Insurance Company in Yarmouth. He is also a director of North Yarmouth-Cumberland Mutual Fire Insurance Company. He is a member of the Collections Committee and

Sponsor Highlight: Mid Coast–Parkview Health

MIDCOAST–PARKVIEW Health is a dynamic healthcare system addressing a full continuum of community health, wellness, and prevention needs. The top-performing, coordinated healthcare system includes Mid Coast Hospital, a full-service 93-bed hospital; Mid

Coast Medical Group, a 100-provider, 23-practice medical group; Mid Coast Senior Health, a senior healthcare and living facility; and CHANS Home Health & Hospice.

A local not-for-profit, community-owned organization, Mid Coast–Parkview Health offers a breadth of integrated healthcare services from

full-service emergency care to nationally certified stroke care, maternity care, and hospice. As part of its mission to care for the health of the community, Mid Coast–Parkview Health is committed to ensuring access to high-quality affordable care for everyone. In fact, Mid Coast Hospital costs are 30% lower than the statewide average.

Who We Are: Eric C. Smith, President

NEWLY ELECTED FHS President Eric C. Smith is a third-generation Freeport resident. He grew up in Freeport village on what was Green Street, overlooking the Eastland Shoe factory and hearing freight trains pass through town.

Eric's grandfather, George Smith, moved to Freeport as a boy to work on the Talbot Farm in South Freeport. George went on to work at Freeport Shoe Company and served as a captain in the volunteer fire company. Eric's father Charles also became a volunteer firefighter, starting in high school, and eventually served as deputy chief of Freeport Rescue.

In those days, the emergency number for the fire department rang at several phones all over town, a party-line at each chief and deputy chief's home.

"We had a red, rotary-dial phone that looked a lot like the bat-phone and would ring every time anyone would call in a fire or emergency. Usually, a few minutes later we would hear the horn sound down at the fire station, and then the call come across the radio. This was all very exciting as a kid," Eric says.

"One of my favorite early memories of growing up in downtown Freeport is opening the wide corner door and stepping onto the well-worn floorboards of the original Leighton's 5¢ and 10¢ to buy penny candy."

That opportunity was short-lived, as the Davis Block containing Leighton's burned when Eric was 5, beginning the transformation of Main Street toward national brand outlets. Even so,

Eric's family remained connected to several local businesses due to their location in the village.

"We were an emergency contact in case the alarm sounded at Brown's Goldsmiths since we were just a block away. Tom Wilbur stored his sausage cart in our garage for a few summers, before he moved into chocolate."

When Eric's mother Linda moved to Freeport and was waiting for her teaching credentials to transfer from California, she took a job at L.L. Bean. At the time, there were six women who opened the mail orders and wrote out the orders to be filled. When one of them retired, Linda filled in, taking outlines customers drew of their feet and determining what size Bean boots they needed. Linda soon returned to teaching at Morse Street and Mast Landing Schools for over thirty years.

When the Green Street neighborhood was razed for a parking lot, the Smiths moved their eighteenth-century cape cod house out of the village in two pieces, and for the decade it took to reassemble it, the family moved to Desert Pines. This was the same year Eric was learning about Freeport history in school.

"Phil LaPierre was my 4th grade teacher and I still remember his explanations of King Pines, Mast Landing, and saltbox houses."

The textbook was *Tides of Change*, Freeport Historical Society's own history of the Harraseeket estuary. The course was capped off with a class visit to Pettengill Farm to inspect the *sgraffiti* and learn the challenges of drawing water from a well.



Eric is a lifelong member of First Parish Church, where he learned how the church's origins are entwined with those of Freeport, which needed a parish before it could become a town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1789. He has served in a number of offices over the years, including president of the congregation while still in high school. His church leadership soon extended beyond Freeport to the Maine Conference of United Church of Christ, later serving on the national staff of the denomination in Cleveland. When he was elected to serve as one of the moderators of the General Synod, the biennial national gathering of the denomination, Eric took a month to ride his bicycle from First Parish in Freeport to Atlanta where the meeting was held, stopping and meeting with congregations along the way.

After more than a decade of living in Portland, Eric returned to Freeport in 2012 to work at L.L. Bean as one of the company's first Bootmobile drivers during their 100th anniversary year. Now a Senior Public Relations Representative and spokesperson for the brand, Eric is engaged in promoting many of the events at the Freeport retail store, as well as other national efforts.

Having witnessed just one of Freeport's many transitions, from outsoles to outlets, Eric is optimistic for what seems like another transition to outdoor destination.

"It's wonderful to see so many visitors exploring beyond Main Street and discovering Freeport's gems that many of us have known for so long. I'm grateful that Freeport Historical Society will continue our mission to educate kids growing up here, adults who move here, and those just visiting, about the rich layers of history that are all around us here in Freeport." **FHS**

Mid Coast–Parkview Health is continuously investing in programs and services that advance the quality of care delivered, with a focus on improving the overall health of the community. Mid Coast Hospital’s recently installed MRI machine is the most advanced in the region, producing more reliable test results at the same or lower cost than other organizations. The Walk-in Clinic Downtown at Brunswick Station offers urgent care



MID COAST HOSPITAL

for minor medical concerns with appointments billed at an office visit rate, which is lower cost than urgent care and emergency care visits.

With a focus on primary care—the foundation of health—and programs and services that improve health through disease prevention and management, Mid Coast–Parkview Health is a trusted partner in providing high-quality healthcare in the community. **FHS**

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FALL 2018 PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

On Mast Landing

Lecture by David Coffin

Tuesday, September 18 at 6:00 pm
Freeport Community Library

A view of the history of the Mast Landing area from 1760-1860, including masting, ship building, the mills, and brickyards. We will look at the impact the Dennison family had on the area and their contribution to the economic growth and expansion of Mast Landing. We will also cover the growth of the road structure and its importance, a timeline of selected homes, and discuss significant lotting maps by the decade compiled by E. S. Coffin. A scale drawing of the mill site will be shown with details on the mills never before discussed. *Refreshments and a display of Mast Landing lotting maps by E. S. Coffin will be on view.*

43rd Annual Pettengill Farm Day

Sunday, September 30 from 10:30 am - 2:30 pm
31 Pettengill Road

Join us for a day of family fun at our pristine 140-acre salt water farm. There is always a lot to see and do on this over 200-year-old farmstead as we celebrate rural life of the 1800s. We will enjoy horse drawn wagon



rides, kid's crafts and games, farm animals, apple cider pressing, specialty walks on the grounds, an agility-dog exhibition, lunch, and more. Old Time Baseball is back again this year and played to 1860s rules. A youth participation

inning is included. The Pettengill Farm house will also be open that day with guided tours available—a wonderful opportunity to explore the residence and its maritime sgraffiti.

Freeport Historical Society is hosting a **NEW Book Celebration & Signing**

Saturday, October 20 from 6:00 - 9:00 PM
Freeport Community Library

**Freeport through the Years by Holly Hurd
with Freeport Historical Society**

Reception 6:00 / Book Talk 7:00 / Book Signing 8:00

From the Images of America series by Arcadia Publishing, this book contains 229 previously unpublished historic photographs with new research and information. Holly's presentation will highlight historic images from the book and include behind-the-scenes bonus material.

Cost is \$5.00 or free with the purchase of a book.

Seating is limited so advance ticket purchase is recommended.

To purchase books/tickets visit www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org, call 865-3170 or email info@freeporthistoricalsociety.org

Ghosts of Freeport's Past

Presented by: Freeport Historical Society and Freeport Community Players



Thursday thru Saturday,
October 25 - 27
at 6:30, 7:00, and 7:30 pm
Woodlawn Cemetery
(on Meetinghouse Road,
next to Wilbur's Chocolate)

*In the event of inclement
weather, one evening show at
7:00 pm will take place at First
Parish Church, 40 Main Street.*

The interred of the Old Parish Burying Ground will provide 45-minute Ghost Tours for all those present in the flesh. Our Ghost Host will greet us with a brief history of the cemetery and introduce us to friends who are haunting the cemetery. All apparitions will be portrayed by actors from the Freeport Players, in period costume, who will materialize and share stories from their mortal state. (Note: The event is historical, not scary, and is appropriate for school-aged children.)

**An indoor performance will take place on Sunday, October 28
at 3:30 pm at First Parish Church, 40 Main Street.**

For more information: www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org or 207-865-3170