

Norway Museum & Historical Society

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June
2019



This issue of the Norway Museum & Historical Society Newsletter brings you news about recent changes and activities in our organization.

Our Name Change

Have you noticed we have changed our name to the “Norway Museum and Historical Society?” While there has been no change to our purpose and mission, we feel our museum and the important artifacts within it are of equal importance to the historical society’s responsibility to share the town’s history. We want to emphasize our role as Norway’s Museum.

Over the past two years, we have made major strides to improve our space and how it is used. We now have regularly changing exhibits and intend to show a wider variety of the interesting objects in our collections. Currently our special exhibits are: Vivian Akers Life Masks, Norway High School Class Rings, and Historic Signs and Advertising Memorabilia.

If you haven’t visited our museum in a while, please come by. You will find things you might not expect and maybe your visit will bring back a memory or two.

Building Renovation Update

Last June we celebrated the reopening of Norway Museum & Historical Society after a winter spent renovating the 2nd floor of our building and creating a storage area for our collection in the basement. This work was made possible by a grant from the Davis Family Foundation.

We recently applied for another grant to continue work on the building. Next fall we hope to insulate the back hallway and thereby complete our “conditioned” space envelop which would reduce heat loss and improve our energy efficiency. We also hope to install a heat pump on the 2nd floor which would stabilize the temperature for better care of our collection in this area. With the grant we will also replace old fluorescent light fixtures with new LEDs to reduce our energy consumption and costs.

Now There Are Two

Charles Longley has been our curator for at least 20 years. No one, including Charles, remembers exactly when he started organizing the collection. He has been the man for answering research questions, handling correspondence, processing and storing artifact donations, and preparing artifact displays for programs. These tasks could sometimes be daunting, but Charles always performed them cheerfully.

The NMHS Board of Trustees recently made the decision to name a second curator. Susan Denison and Charles Longley are now co-curators, with related, but different responsibilities. Sue is the Curator/Collection Manager, responsible for the digital cataloging of the entire collection, storage and display of our artifacts, and creating exhibits. Charles is now the Curator/Researcher. He will continue to process incoming donations, but is mainly responsible for handling the many research questions and information requests we receive.

Visit the Norway Museum & Historical Society at 471 Main Street to learn more about Norway’s history. The museum is open to the public year round on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and during the summer on Tuesdays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and by appointment by calling 743-7377, or emailing norwaymehistory@gmail.com. Admission is free. Also visit the museum's website at www.norwayhistoricalsociety.org or the Norway Museum & Historical Society's page on Facebook.

Norway Historical Society Mission:

The mission of the Society is to bring people together to share, celebrate and learn about Norway's heritage, by collecting, caring for and exhibiting Norway's historical treasures; by facilitating the collection of and research into family and local history; and by providing programs that make our history meaningful that engage people of all ages.

We did it!

Thanks to our 19 donors and the Fish Chowder Fest, we raised the \$2,200 needed to restore three more Nash fish. Two of these are larger ones with painted background lake scenes. These fit inside a wooden traveling salesman case, and the case will also get an uplift. The third is mounted on a plain wood background. Due to Gene Bahr's (the restorer) busy schedule they will not be finished until late in 2019 so a welcome home will have to wait until 2020.

For those who do not know, J. Waldo Nash was a taxidermist who had a shop on Temple St in Norway c. 1900-1919. He developed a special technique for mounting fish skins, and often his wife, Alice, painted background scenes of nature for them.

The Norway Museum & Historical Society is grateful to have had this outstanding community support for preserving this unique piece of Norway's history.

Marigold Tearoom

The Norway Museum & Historical Society is preparing for another Marigold Tearoom to be held on the Saturday of the Norway Arts & Music Festival, July 13, 2019. This is an important annual fund raising activity for the society and an enjoyable community event. We sell a variety of pie slices with ice cream and a beverage. Our pies are homemade and we welcome new bakers each year.

If you are willing to donate a pie or help at the event, please call Dennise Whitley 743-7541 or email NMHS at norwaymehistory@gmail.com

Newsletters

The Norway Museum & Historical Society newsletters are changing. For several years Sally Jones researched and wrote about a different topic for each newsletter. Sadly, Sally has moved to Biddeford and will be unable to continue this for NMHS. If there is anyone else who would like to continue her tradition, or start a new one for our newsletters, we would love to hear from you.

MEAC

Another area of our ongoing preservation efforts is our art collection. Two years ago we had the Vivian Akers painting of Norway Lake, that hangs over the parlor fireplace, cleaned and refurbished by the Maine Project for Fine Art Conservation (MEAC) in Portland.

Over the past year MEAC has been working jointly with the historical society, Western Maine Art Group, and Norway Memorial Library to conserve paintings in all three collections. Recently MEAC received a grant to restore five of their paintings. Two of the society's Minnie Libby paintings are part of this conservation project.

We expect all five paintings to be returned some time this summer and we will have a welcoming reception at that time.

Our Board of Trustees

In the past two years the Board of Trustees has welcomed six new members. They are Brian Otterson, Barbara Howard, Dennise Whitley, Marcy Gray, Bruce Watts, and Alana DePerte. We have also said farewell to three members: Tim Adams, Bill Damon, and Sally Jones. They each served the society generously for many years and we thank them for their contributions to our community.

Board members are volunteers and all serve on one of the society's committees which are: Adult and School Programs, Building & Grounds, Collections, Public Relations, and Finance. We welcome other community members to serve on these as well. Please contact any board member or curator to indicate your interest.

Other board members are: Peter Hammond, Alden Emerson, Edward Staples, and Ann Siekman. Our curators are: Charles Longley and Susan Denison.