



Norway Museum & Historical Society

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Charles Longley, in our Meeting Room

Thank You Charles!

If you have visited NMHS with a research question in the past 25 years, you quite likely met Charles Longley, our extraordinary curator and researcher. You just as likely were pleased and impressed with the information Charles located for you. If the information exists, Charles could find it.

In September, Charles made the tough decision to retire from his duties with us. While we were surprised and saddened, we certainly understand.

Charles began volunteering with NMHS after a 38-year career at the Boston Public Library, when he retired in 1979 as the Curator of Microtexts and Newspapers, a position he held for 25 years. He returned to Norway and moved back into the house where he was born. The story goes that his Aunt Charlotte suggested that if Charles wanted something to do after retirement, he ought to see if the historical society needed help. We were lucky.

Charles's contribution to the success and popularity of NMHS cannot be overstated. He *was* the historical society. While his absence will be felt for a long time, we will always be grateful and honored for his service.

Do you need a gift idea for Christmas?

We have collaborated with the Weary Club of Norway, Maine to produce a special 2026 Norway calendar as a fundraiser. The calendar features a vintage postcard view of Norway for each month. See page 5 for more information.

News from the Board of Trustees

While we have sadly said farewell to Charles Longley after his many years of excellent service to the NMHS, we are now looking at some internal reorganization. Sue Denison is now our only Curator, and during the winter we have plans to paint and move her work area to the official Curator's office.

In addition, it is with gratitude that we announce that Brad Cummings will take over as chair of the Board of Trustees of NMHS starting January 1, 2026. Other officers will be Marcy Gray as secretary, and Ann Siekman as treasurer. We also welcome Beverly Curtis who joined the board as a trustee in September, 2025. Other board members for 2026 are: Alden Emerson, Peter Hammond, Brian Partridge, Carol Rice, Edward Staples, and Bruce Watts.

My Favorite Things

Susan Denison, Curator

My favorite thing in our collection changes quite often, especially as we receive new artifact donations. Our collection grows all the time, thanks to your generosity. There is always something we didn't know existed, or something that should never have survived for decades. This time, my column should probably be titled "My Favorite Little Things," because they *are* small.



The LPU pin, a gift of Julie Hermans

The little metal lapel pin in the shape of a shoe was given to us by Julie Hermans. It was found in the house on Danforth Street where Julie grew up. Years ago, roomers occupied part of the house and some of them worked in the Norway shoe factories. We speculate that the pin was lost or forgotten by one of the roomers.

The pin is fascinating, because various shoemakers' tools - an awl, a knife, a hammer, and pliers or cutters - have been fashioned to form a complete shoe. What we couldn't identify were the initials "L.P.U." engraved into the handle of the awl.

Enter historian and old friend Larry Glatz. It didn't take Larry any time at all to tell us the pin was the symbol of the Lasters Protective Union, one of several labor unions in the shoe industry, which was headquartered in Lynn, MA. He even provided a photo of the union's seal.



Lasters Protective Union Seal, courtesy of Larry Glatz

It would take this entire newsletter to detail the workers' unions and the typical conflicts with the shoe manufacturers of New England. Suffice it to say that the LPU had members in Norway. In the 1880s, national LPU leaders pressured the B.F. Spinney Co. of Norway to pay the same wages that workers received in Lynn. It was feared that Spinney would abandon their factory rather than pay Massachusetts wages. Evidently, the differences were resolved, as B.F. Spinney continued in Norway until 1913. The Lasters Protective Union ceased to exist when it merged with the Boot and Shoe Workers Union of Boston in 1895.

There's a lot to look at and a lot of history in this pin that's just an inch long.

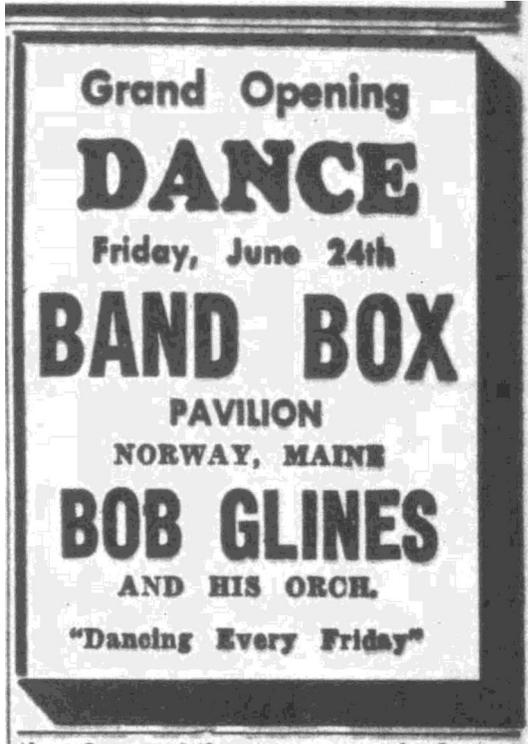
My other favorite little thing is this ticket to the Band Box, a gift of the estate of the late Ben Conant, Paris Cape Historical Society's amazing historian and curator. The Band Box was a dance hall on the southeast shore of Lake Pennesseewassee. Its legacy lives on with Band Box Road, off Crockett Ridge Road.



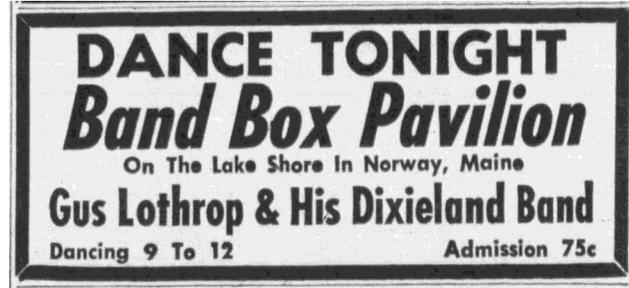
The ticket, a gift of the estate of Ben Conant

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A dance hall operated at this location every summer for many years. Before becoming the Band Box in 1936, the hall was the Pirate's Den, which seems to have started in 1929, replacing the Lake View Pavilion. When it became the Pirate's Den, the local newspaper reported the new management proposed to "change the interior into a typical pirates' den with nautical accessories, skulls, cross bones and curious things, making, as they say, the most novel dance hall in New England." Presumably, the pirate décor was removed when the hall became the Band Box.



June 1949 – Lewiston Daily Sun



August 1959 – Lewiston Daily Sun



The new Band Box Opening
Night – Lewiston Daily Sun
May 1936

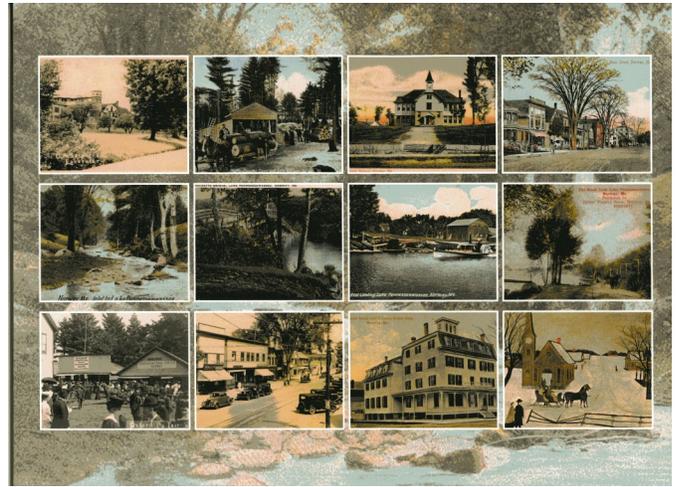
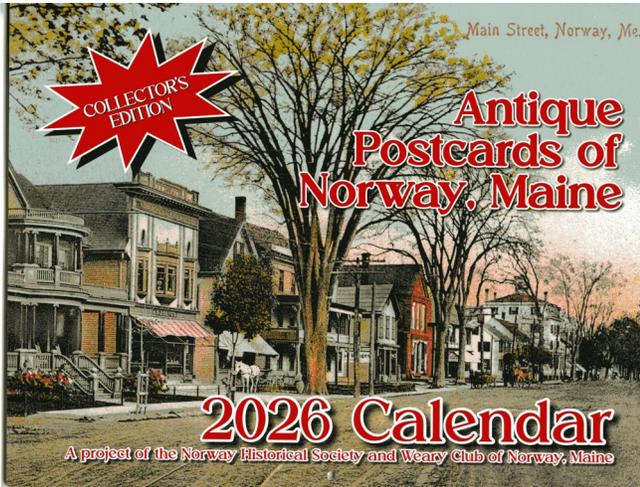


July 1929 Advertiser Democrat ad for the Pirate's Den

Back to this little ticket - the Band Box closed and was torn down in 1960, but the ticket looks like it was printed just a few years ago. The back of the ticket shows evidence it may have been taped into a scrapbook, so I like to think someone had a really nice time there, and saved their ticket for the memory.

No photos of the Band Box/Pirate's Den/Lake View Pavilion building are known to exist. Does anyone have one we could copy? If you have any other memorabilia, we would love to see it.

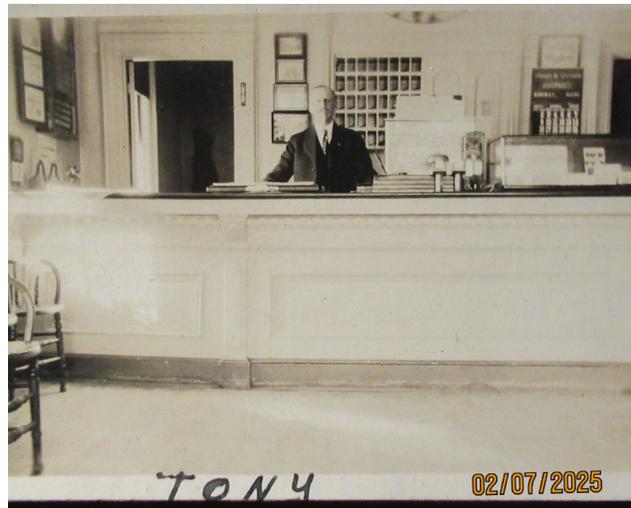
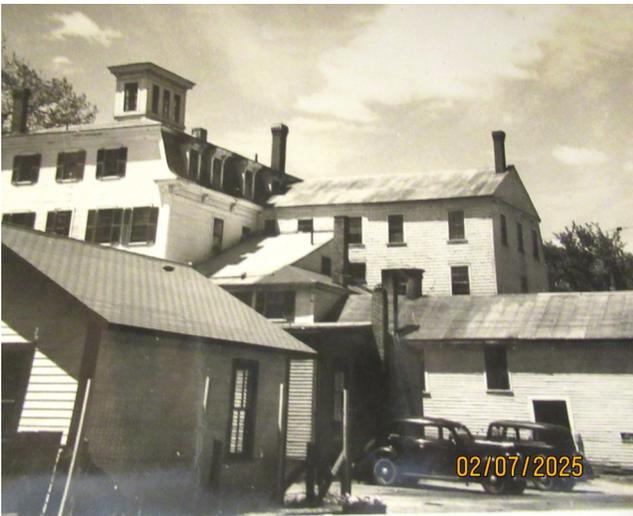
Norway History Calendars



Our beautiful calendars are \$25 and the proceeds will be split between the historical society and the Weary Club. In addition to historical photos, interesting dates in town history are noted. For example, on April 3, 1866, the first deposit (\$5.00) was made at Norway Savings Bank.

You can stop at the museum any Saturday morning from 9:00 to noon to purchase one. If you would like to purchase by mail, please send a check for \$30 (the calendar plus postage) to us at 471 Main St. Norway, ME 04268. Checks should be made out to the Norway Historical Society.

Previously Unseen Photos of Beal's Hotel



In August, we received an email from Mary Smith, of Ontario, Canada, enclosing copies of photos of Beal's Hotel from the 1920s and 1930s. Mary is the great-granddaughter of Robert Seavey, who was the owner of the hotel from 1913 until 1944. Mary took digital photos of the original pictures in her mother's photo album. We are sharing two of the clearest photos because they are so interesting.

One shows the back of the hotel taken from Temple Street, a view we have never seen. The other shows the front desk. The dapper man is Tony Young, who was the clerk at the hotel for 24 years before he passed away in 1938. At the far left on the wall is a large clock in a wooden case that now hangs in the front foyer of our museum. It still works and one of our trustees has made it his duty to wind the clock every time he is in the building.

Norway Museum & Historical Society

Our 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.

Board of Trustees

Ann Siekman, President	Alden Emerson
Peter Hammond, Treasurer	Brian Partridge
Marcy Gray, Secretary	Carol Rice
Brad Cummings	Edward Staples
Beverly Curtis	Bruce Watts
Susan Denison, Curator	

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