
Nobleboro Historical Society

198 Center Street, PO Box 122
Nobleboro, Maine 04555

Spring 2024

Greetings to Members and other Friends,

The good news is that the Nobleboro Historical Society is coming back to life as we celebrate our 46th year! This newsletter will catch you up on what's happening. I am transitioning from being NHS president since 2005 to becoming an active and enthusiastic volunteer – and the trustees are now working to recreate a vibrant NHS. I have thoroughly enjoyed the last 19 years since George Dow persuaded me to be president of NHS. I was a retired widow from away with a science background when George got me involved, and as part of the Society I learned about Nobleboro history and met so many people I will always remember and became part of the community. I love Nobleboro and it's the most wonderful place that I have ever lived!

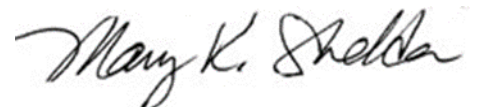
The Society now needs volunteers with many varied backgrounds who love Nobleboro like we do and who want to do their part for the Town and to make this transition. Together we can make a difference, have fun, and honor Nobleboro's history and build the future.

What's happening now as the transition begins?

- The first Annual Potluck Dinner in 4 years is Saturday, June 1, at North Nobleboro Center – was organized by the Program Committee! Mitchell created the poster and emailed it.
- Mitchell Wellman assembled & snail mailed this newsletter with articles by Carolyn & Mary.
- Carolyn Hardman and her Education Committee, Rhonda & Stewart Hanna, Ellen Najpauer held “history” classes for Nobleboro Central School students in grades 3, 4 & 6 in 2023-4.
- Public evening programs are starting this summer with Carolyn & the Program Committee, Rhonda, Ellen, Patty Alfieri.
- The Scholarship Committee has awarded two \$1,000 scholarships every year with Pam Edwards and Scholarship Committee Carolyn, Ellen, Lynn Plumb.
- Dewey Meter, treasurer, completed all the information for NHS taxes.
- Gene Vogt agreed to be genealogist.
- The Historical Center was cleaned by Rhonda, Ellen, Mary & two hired young women.
- Henry Simmons stained the front stairs to the Center; David Brydges removed algae & dirt.
- The 18th AppleFest revival will be Saturday, October 5, 2024!

Projects to do:

- Positions to fill: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, corresponding secretary, investment chair.
- Update and improve displays/exhibits in museum; make new labels.
- Totally reorganize artifacts in the basement to make interesting exhibits.
- Integrate several cartons of donated artifacts from local families into NHS collections.
- Scan genealogy files and make them available online.
- Repair overhead fluorescent lights in basement.
- Town will improve drainage around the Historical Center.



Mary Sheldon, President

NCS classes study Native Americans

by Carolyn Hardman and Rhonda Hanna



Last fall Paula Schuster's third graders, Tuesday Courand's fourth graders, and Tamara Kaler's fifth graders came to the NHS Center to learn about how the Native Americans lived in this area for thousands of years. Most of our collection is tools that were used in the past 200 years by Nobleboro farmers, fishermen, and sailors. We did our best to display some examples of how people in a previous culture had made use of the same environment.

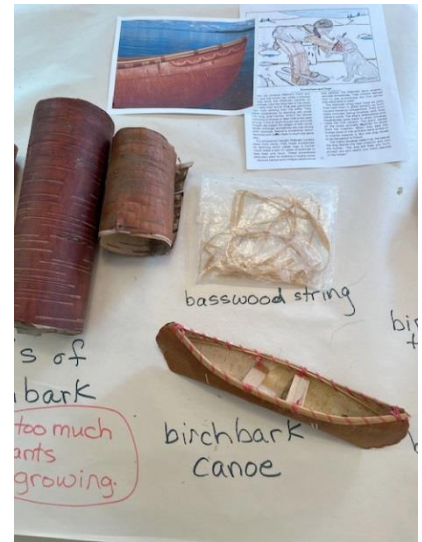


The students arrived with clipboards and pencils in hand, eager to draw and write their observations. You can see in the photos how interested they were in the arrowheads and stone tools. Some of these tools were found by early Nobleboro farmers as they plowed their fields. Others were found in the shell heaps on the Damariscotta River. Carolyn added a roll of



birchbark so they could see how thick the Wabanaki cut it. Everyone wanted to handle the models of a birchbark canoe and a teepee. We displayed corn, squash, and beans next to an illustration of how the Wabanaki grew the "three sisters." Their visit gave the children a chance to handle some of the artifacts they had learned about in class.

The students were also impressed by the native ingredients we baked into the delicious cornbread with blueberries that Rhonda served for their snack.

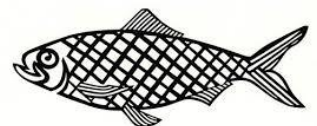


Damariscotta Mills Fish Ladder Restoration Quilt Raffle

The last day for selling at the Fish House is **Sunday May 26**, but tickets for the quilt raffle remain on sale at Skidompha library until 2pm on **Friday August 23**. The quilt also remains on display at the library.

The drawing will be held at NHS on **Saturday August 24**.

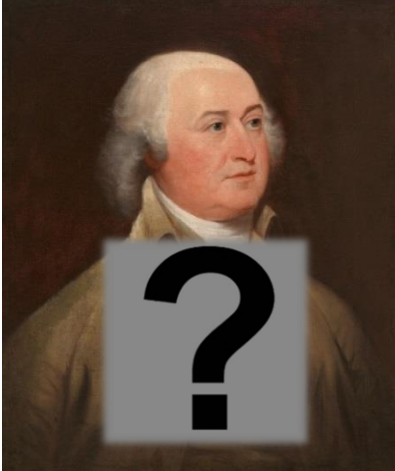
Please see <https://damariscottamills.org/quilt-raffle/> for further details including how to buy tickets by mailing a check.



DAMARISCOTTA MILLS
FISH LADDER RESTORATION

Where's John Adams?

by Carolyn Hardman



In June 4, 1765, Arthur Noble, Jr. appeared at the Lincoln County Courthouse in Pownalborough to defend himself and his partners against a suit by the Kennebec Proprietors who claimed they didn't have a legitimate claim to Damariscotta Mills and the surrounding 1060 acres of land. The 1060 acres had belonged to William Vaughan, who had built the first mills there in 1730. Arthur Noble's uncle, James Noble of Boston, was one of the heirs of Vaughan's land, and he had leased 1060 acres of it to Arthur and two local partners. The Kennebec Proprietors were wealthy Bostonians who had inherited a land grant the Plymouth colony had received from the king in 1629. The Plymouth grant extended for 15 miles on both sides of the Kennebec River. The Proprietors had a habit of accusing their less affluent neighbors of occupying pieces of their land. None of the land had been surveyed.

An interesting facet of this story is that the lawyer who traveled from Boston to defend Arthur Noble's claim was 29-year-old John Adams—future diplomat, Founding Father, and second President of the United States. Probably James Noble had met Adams in Boston and asked him to be his family's attorney.

Even more interesting is Adams' account of his journey with its description of Maine roads in 1765. He wrote:

From Falmouth, now Portland in Casco Bay, to Pownalborough there was an entire Wilderness, except North Yarmouth, New Brunswick, and Long Reach (Bath), at each of which places were a few houses. In general, it was a Wilderness incumbered with the greatest number of trees, of the largest size, the tallest height, I have ever seen. So great a weight of wood and timber, has never fallen in my way. An Hemlock had blown down across the Road. They had cut out a log as long as the road was wide. I measured the but at the road and found it seven feet diameter, 21 feet in circumference. The Roads where a wheel had never rolled from creation, were miry and foundrous, incumbered with long sloughs of water. The stumps of the trees which had been cut to make the road all remained fresh, and the roots crossing the path some above ground and some beneath so that my horse's feet would frequently get between the roots and he would flounce and blunder, in danger of breaking his own limbs, as well as mine.

In 1765 and for several decades later, most travel in Maine was still on the waterways. It's curious that Adams didn't travel by sailing vessel from Boston or Portland to the Pownalborough courthouse which was (and still is) beside the Kennebec River. When Nobleboro was incorporated in 1788, there was only one road across the town. Going through Damariscotta Mills, it extended from east to west, and it may have been as crude as the road Adams rode on. Road-building was the first task the citizens of the new town undertook. Before a town house, before a church, before schools, what they needed was roads.

Returning to the courthouse--Adams' plan was simply to ask for proof that "any lands in the Defts Possn are within the Limits of the Plymouth Property." The Proprietors had no evidence to back up their claim, so Adams won the case and within a few days, he was back in Boston, "perhaps a bit saddle sore," as George Dow wrote in his account of this story.

I've been reading about William Vaughan, Arthur Noble, and the growth of Nobleboro to the 1820s, and I keep running into John Adams. He keeps popping up like "Where's Waldo?" Although he didn't live in the District of Maine or visit often, John Adams has turned up five times in my reading of Maine history from 1765 to 1820. Maybe there's a story or two for future newsletters...

Most of the information in this article is from George Dow's research.

Spring PotLuck

Come to our Spring Potluck Dinner on **Saturday, June 1st!**

We will return to our tradition of sharing a potluck dinner at the North Nobleboro Community Center at 6:00 pm on Saturday, June 1. At 7:00 Jody Bachelder, author of the book *Here First*, will give an illustrated talk on the famous Wawenock sagamore, Samoset, and his people.

Jody, a New Harbor native, has done extensive research into Samoset, who spent most of his life on the Pemaquid peninsula. She has spoken to groups throughout and beyond the former Wawenock coastal territory. She has a way of talking about history that makes you want to know what happened next.

Samoset became a significant figure in US history when he surprised the Plymouth colonists after their first hard winter by walking into their settlement, smiling and welcoming them in English. He shared information with them and also brought local Wampanoag leaders to conference with them, establishing friendly relations which lasted for 40 years. Jody started her research with the questions: Why was Samoset there, 200 miles from his home? Why was he the one to make the first contact?

During Samoset's lifetime, 1590-1653, he and his people found themselves at the heart of the initial contacts with European colonizers. For thousands of years they had enjoyed a comfortable way of life in the midcoast. But in the early 1600's a large majority of the Wawenock people didn't survive the years of inter-tribal warfare and epidemics.

We will learn about the complicated history of the Europeans bringing tools that made their lives easier, but also guns, alcohol, and other things that were gradually destructive.

Join us for some fellowship and an insight into the history of our area.

For the potluck dinner at 6:00, please bring a dish to share and your place setting (there will be dishes and utensils if you forget.) Or, join us at 7:00 to hear the talk. There will not be a business meeting. We'll enjoy getting together again!

The North Nobleboro Community Center is located at 546 Upper East Pond Road in Nobleboro. From Route One, drive about four miles north on the East Pond Road. Turn right at the first stop sign. It's next to the North Nobleboro Baptist Church.

Questions? Contact Carolyn Hardman at cbhardman14@gmail.com or 207 380 1900



AppleFest 2024

Mark your calendars!! AppleFest 2024 will be held on **Saturday, October 5 th**
(here are some photos from AppleFest 2023)



Membership Dues

Your membership and participation are key to the success of the Society!

Now is the time to pay your dues for 2024.

Your continued support helps maintain the legacy of one more small Maine town through the Society's scholarships, history programs, Nobleboro Central School student programs and the Museum's genealogy files and exhibits.

A fillable membership form is located on our website and can be printed and sent in with your check.

<http://www.nobleborohistoricalsociety.org/Join.shtml>

Please also include your email address, as we send email reminders for activities.

If your email address has changed or you think we may not have it, please email it to Mitchell Wellman, Corresponding Secretary at <mailto:mwellman2@roadrunner.com>



Scholarship Program

The NHS Scholarship is for eligible high school and post-secondary students and those who will attend an accredited undergraduate post-secondary school or college in the 2024-2025 academic year and who **reside in the Town of Nobleboro**. Also, students who are members or children of **members of the Society** are eligible.

Scholarship Recipients for 2022

- **Allison Mank**, University of Maine at Augusta, nursing or business degree
- **William Sherrill**, Maine Maritime Academy, marine transportation operations

Scholarship Recipients for 2023

- **Marley LeBel**, University of Connecticut, Physiology and Neurobiology, LA Grad
- **Isobel Petersen**, Union College in New York, Mathematics, LA Grad
- **Eliza Spear**, Maine Maritime in Castine, Marine Engineering Technology, MVHS Grad

Congratulations to these Recipients !!



Community Conversations

This summer, Nobleboro Historical Society will launch community gatherings to discuss local history in July and August. **The roundtable discussions will start with social time, snacks, and drinks at 6:30 pm.** These evenings will be facilitated by people with knowledge of Nobleboro's early families. Community members will be encouraged to share their own stories.

On **Wednesday, July 17th**, Jim Bickford, Hudson Vannah's grandson will lead "Vannah Farm: history and stories." Mr. Bickford worked alongside Hudson as a young man learning not only Hudson's farming techniques, but also the history of the Vannah family, land, and buildings.

In **August**, the topic will focus on North Nobleboro led by people from that area. Exact date to be determined.

Everyone is welcome to attend and join in the story telling! NHS would like these evenings to be an opportunity to learn more about our history and share common love of Nobleboro. For more information and comments, email Patty Alfieri at alfieripatty@gmail.com.



Program Previews

The Program committee—Patty Alfieri, Rhonda Hanna, Ellen Najpauer, and Carolyn Hardman—has been planning evening meetings with speakers for the fall. So far we have two. **We will begin with social time and snacks at 6:30, with a brief business meeting at 7:00, followed by the speaker.**

On **Wednesday, October 23rd** "Two Tales about Acadians" by Carolyn Hardman and Dick Picard. Carolyn wanted to know how Nobleboro's namesake, Arthur Noble, Sr., died in 1747 in the Acadian village of Grande Pré, Nova Scotia. She will talk about the Acadians' unique culture and how the Battle of Grand Pré was connected to the English expulsion of the Acadians from their homes. Longfellow's poem "Evangeline" was set in the same area.

Dick Picard grew up in Madawaska, Maine. He lives in Alna and volunteers every year at the Apple Fest. Dick will speak about the journey of some of the Acadians to Madawaska and how it was to grow up in a town considering itself Acadian, not French-Canadian.

On **Wednesday, November 20th** Captain JB Smith of Nobleboro will talk about his life as a sailor, captain and educator.

Quoting from the press release for his award from ASTA (The American Sail Training Association):
"Captain Smith, known by his students and colleagues as JB, is the Senior Captain of the Ocean Classroom Foundation (OCF) in Boothbay

"Thanks to all of you for your support of NHS. The Historical Society makes a difference in our Town – as we share our history and make Nobleboro an even a better place to live."