

**Dexter Historical Society – Annual Report
October 18, 2006 to October 24, 2007**

At the annual meeting on October 18, 2006 the following officers were elected:

President – Peter Prescott
Vice-president – Thomas Tillson
Treasurer – David Pearson
Secretary – Carol Feurtado
Director – Richard Whitney

Secretary’s report: Regular monthly meetings were held on the third Wednesday in the Crawford Conference Room, except July when we were invited to Jim Greehey’s home.

Treasurer’s Report: Total for the 2006 fund drive was \$5,317 from 76 donors with 62 requesting membership. Donations have been received in 2007 for work at the Abbott Museum totaling \$3,750. A newsletter for 2007-08 will be out soon.

In Memory donations were received for Evelyn Bruce - \$685, Virginia Larson - \$130, Lee Stone - \$70 and additional funds for Raymond Whitney, Jr. to total \$1010.

The final report for the Facilities Grant of \$5,000 that we received in 2006 was sent in March.

We reduced the office rent for the Dexter Public Health Association to \$60 a month.

Director’s Report: A kitchen range was donated for the Millers House apartment and the thermostat on the hot water heater was replaced.

At the Abbott Museum work continued on the lower floor. Ceiling tiles were installed in the entry, the Granger Room and the Fay-Scott Room. The three remaining rooms have been sheetrocked after wiring work was done. They have also had their ceilings strapped, ready for tiling.

A sump pump was installed in the basement to control occasional water entry.

Committee Reports:

Museums: The Grist Mill Museum opened on June 14 and closed September 29, 2007, with attendance of 1078. The Key Club helped with pre-opening clean up. Amanda Pullen returned for her fourth year as intern.

The woodstove made by Wood Bishop in Bangor for Tillson’s, that Peter Prescott donated, was cleaned and made a wonderful addition to the kitchen area. A display featuring the high school class of 1957 was set up to celebrate their 50th reunion.

Groups toured from NOE, scouts doing badge work and Mr. Whitney’s history classes. Attendance was good during Wild West Days, although the Friday evening concert had to be canceled due to thunderstorms.

Several special exhibits were offered at the Abbott Museum in the Lancaster Reading Room. Students of a MSAD #46 Adult Education art class presented their work in May and June, with an opening reception. A display was presented with each of the five discussion meetings held during the summer. The Call/Thoreau exhibit was set up August

25 after returning from Concord, MA. Erik Stumpf presented “Glimpses of Paradise; the Waterfalls of Piscataquis County”, a collection of over seventy-five color photos.

The Fernwood company did a block of the Abbott Museum for 2006 and both the Park Theatre and the Town Hall for 2007.

Shop sales for 2006 were over \$14,000, thus far in 2007 sales are \$13,373 with attendance of 2041.

Tom Tillson donated a copy machine for the office and Tillson’s donated a gas fireplace for the reading room. Ron Potvin donated his time for an update of the computer system that was necessitated by changes made by the internet provider. Bob Crawford donated a lovely large computer desk for the office.

We applied and were awarded a Conservation Assessment Program grant by Heritage Preservation. Two assessors, John Leeke and Teresa Myers spent two days in August looking over our buildings and collections and will soon send their reports with any recommendations for improving the condition of our facilities.

Acquisitions: Many items were brought from the Grist Mill vault, rehoused and placed in the new archival vault at the Abbott Museum in the fall of 2006. New collections cataloged in 2006 were 108, for 2007 are 81 so far.

Items of particular interest are various volumes of Universalist Church records, a copy of a portrait of James Crawford in Civil War uniform, two CDs of music by the Nitehawks recorded in 1972, photos of harness racing on the ice at Lake Wassookeag, a memoir by Marguerite LaFlamme, the 1951 football, lettered with game statistics, a painting of Main Street by Helen Wilkins, a wooden sign for W.J. Haseltine, harness maker.

Framed Boston Post Canes with framed photos and biographies of current holders was on loan from the town for the summer.

Genealogy and Research: Recorded queries for 2006 numbered 94, for 2007 are at 91 so far.

The owners of the Lakeshore Lunch copied some of our lake photos for their dining room.

We provided information about Joseph Witherell to a lady who collects 19th century children’s magazines and learned that he published several, as well as founding our newspaper.

We learned more about two early settlers, David Page and Jonathan Corliss by assisting their descendants. Members of the Herrick family visited and we exchanged information about them and the Eldridge Brothers company that their ancestors ran. We also learned more about the owners of the Harrison and Hindle Soapworks by working with a family member.

Other genealogy work was done with researchers on the Olsons, Dr. Blanchard, the Gates, Maurice Richard, the Fitzgerald/Bean family, the Mountains, John D. Shaw, and “Jimmy” and Vietta Michaud.

Publications: The 2007 calendar featured school sports teams. We provided editing services and some photos for Anita Ambrose Savage’s book of memoirs, “Growing Up In Dexter, Maine” printed by Lakeside Printing. We assisted with printing of the catalog for the Call/Thoreau exhibit.

Outreach: Regular press notices were sent to newspapers and placed on our website. A report was printed in the Town Report.

We held a book signing for Fred Wintle's "When Weavers Wove" in February. In March Walter MacDougall gave a talk on his book about Moses Greenleaf, early Maine mapmaker.

A display on the history of Dexter's schools was presented at the SPCCC Expo in Guilford.

In the summer we offered a discussion series to share memories of different aspects of Dexter history that was well received.

Frank Spizuoco prepared an exhibit of photos by Bert Call following the routes of Thoreau's three trips in the Maine Woods that was presented in Concord, MA in July/August and then at the Abbott Museum in September.

We held a book signing with Anita Ambrose Savage for her book on October 20.

Curator Whitney was interviewed about Senator Brewster by Bill Green for his television program.

Our scholarship for 2007 was awarded to Bethany Greenlaw. Various groups hold their regular meetings at the Abbott Museum.

This year has seen an expansion of all of our multi-faceted activities that serve to enlighten and entertain the public and to offer natives and tourists alike a vibrant and exciting place to be "at home".