

# St George Historical Society Newsletter

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An IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit organization  
November 2024

## A YEAR IN REVIEW By Scott Hodgkins, President

2024 was another successful year at the St George Historical Society. Before I begin with the year in review, I want to take this opportunity to thank our many financial contributors. Since we are strictly a volunteer organization, we would not exist without you! So, thank you! Also, I'd like to thank all the folks who have donated historical items to the Society. Those donations expand our inventory and add to the variety of displays we can create to engage the public. Finally, thanks to the valuable hours donated by all our Trustees, other volunteers and presenters who help create the journey into St. George's past.

**March** - After a delicious potluck supper, a former teacher of the St. George Annex, Mr. Morris Berry delivered a talk on his years of teaching 6-8 grades in the 1970s. The St. George Annex, formerly St. George High School, functioned as a junior high school from the mid-1960s until it closed in the mid-80s. Those of us who are "locals" truly appreciated the memories!

**April** - Following another potluck in April, Mr. John Anderson shared stories about ship Capt. Anders Anderson, his grandfather. Captain Anders Anderson sailed many parts of the world with various cargoes, including granite from right here in St. George. Mr. Anderson's book, *Borne On the Wind*, was the basis for the presentation where he also shared an in-depth

and engaging PowerPoint presentation of his grandfather's life. I suspect many regret not being able to attend. But remember, all or most of our programs can be viewed on our website!

**May** – Several dozen attendees had a treat in May when the owners of Wheeler's Bay Wildlife Sanctuary (formerly Hocking Granite Quarry on Clark Island Road) opened their home and property for tours. We heard from the owners about the quarry's transformation and walked the trails around the old quarry. An amazing amount of work has transformed the slag heaps and quarry hole into a welcoming sanctuary protecting and enabling wildlife and plant life to thrive.

**June** - Following the June potluck, Seth Dube and his 10-year-old enthusiastic son, Tommy, engaged the audience with *Lobstering: Then and Now*. Real life work experiences were presented, and attendees had many questions for the father/son duo. Seth and Tommy lobster out of Saco's Camp Ellis. Seth is a 6th generation lobsterman, making Tommy the 7th. July 2024's issue of Down East Magazine featured an article about Tommy being one of Maine's youngest lobstermen.

**July** – The Historical Society hosted its first annual *Wine and Cheese Open House*. Despite the extreme heat and humidity, about 86 people visited the museum, browsed, socialized and gained information. For some, it was their first visit to the museum and many vowed to come back. The goal was to declare

that 'we are here' and to showcase how we collect, preserve and present the rich history of St. George. It was wonderful to see the Museum full, and we hope to continue this new tradition next summer and for years to come.

**August** – After another potluck, we presented *Music and Dance Venues in St. George*. In addition to an extensive display of instruments and artifacts, I presented a slide show about the musical history of our town, plus the venues where dancing and other social events were held. Joanne Parker and Chris Stickney added and helped clarify information. Mr. Stickney even brought and demonstrated instruments, and Joanne donated a St. George High School band uniform to the Historical Society.



**September** - Dale Pierson and Chris Cook regaled a crowd of 60+ at Martinsville for our program on *Martinsville, the Martins and Mosquito Harbor*. Starting at the old Cook property across from the Martinsville Grange, the crowd learned of how the early Martinsville families became interwoven into the history of the area. From there, we moved down to Donut Point and learned of that area's contribution to the history of Martinsville with facts and stories about the Dwyers, Bickmores, Martins, Vickery and others. We'd like to thank David Morey for his insights and information about Martinsville, and donating copies of his book for sale.



**October** – We held our Annual Meeting. We re-capped our year full of events all of which helped capture the unique and rich history of St. George.

Officers were elected and re-elected as follows:

- President: Scott Hodgkins
- Vice President: Sara Leavitt Goldberg
- Secretary: Tammy Willey
- Treasurer: Jenny Hall Maltais



### ANDREW ROBINSON HOMESTEAD

The Homestead had another successful year with programs attended by more than 300 visitors from May to October. In May we held our first fiber event **Fleece to Fabric** with several artisans demonstrating the numerous steps involved in making their products. On June 1st the Homestead was open for those attending the **Grand Opening of the rebuilt Fort Point Trail** that runs on what was once Robinson family land. Later in the month we held our annual **Country Tea**, a favorite event of the area. July found us highlighting the **History of St George**.

In August we showcased the produce grown at the on-site Community Garden with the program **Seeds to Soil**. We shared numerous grilled items of the fresh harvest.

In September we opened the House and Barn for **Arts in the Barn**. Several local artisans demonstrated various art and sold their wares.

October brought our annual **Apple Day**. As usual we had loads of people attend with their apples to help and taste fresh milled cider



Visitors to both our Country Tea and Arts in the Barn events experienced the music of harpists Alexander Bigney and his two sons.



Maintenance and repairs continued at the Homestead. The brooder house behind the barn has been substantially renovated. This building houses larger items belonging to the Robinson Family and other donated items. The work on the barn's exterior continues. Fundraising goals for the homestead include inside painting, trim and gutter repair, updating of electrical service and heat pumps installed to preserve the historical artifacts displayed.

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### **COMMUNITY GARDEN at the ANDREW ROBINSON HOMESTEAD**

The community garden is in its 3rd year of operation. Overall, we had a very good growing season this year with both vegetables, flowers and herbs. We had five families involved and we were able to donate 148 pounds of fresh produce to the AIO food pantry in Rockland. All available plots are currently spoken for the 2025 season. If you are interested in being put on a waiting list for a plot, please contact Brian Howard via email at [brian.howard.67@gmail.com](mailto:brian.howard.67@gmail.com).

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### **SCHOOL HOUSE MUSEUM**

Two 3rd grade classes from our St. George School visited the School House in the Spring. They learned how it was in a one room school in the 1930's. Though it was cold (adding to the authenticity) the young students liked the cold, set in the real desks and used other items in the classroom. Many of the students asked about coming back to play school. On Saturday

July 20th (St. George Days), over 80 visitors came into the School House, many of whom were former teachers or went to a one room school. Some were accompanied by children who loved that they could use the classroom and "play school". We are now closed for the season, open only by appointment.

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### **LEASE RENEWAL WITH THE TOWN**

As you may know, our Museum at 38 Main



Street is located on Town owned property (formerly the Jackson Memorial Library). In 2019, the Town, through the Selectboard, granted a 5-year lease to the St George Historical Society, in exchange for the Historical Society being responsible for the repair and upkeep of the property. During the last five years, the Society has replaced the roof, painted the exterior including trim and decking, maintained shrubs and flowers, and paid for liability insurance, heat, electricity and the maintenance of the heating system. Doing so has allowed the Society to be open to share the history of the building, and our town with visitors from the area, the state and the nation.

The Society is making plans for the future of the Museum and preserving the Town's history with further improvements to the building such as installation of heat pumps to more efficiently heat the building at the same time controlling the humidity to safely store our Town's historical records. We are unable to proceed with these plans until the lease renewal issue is resolved with a lease term more realistic for the proposed improvements.

In the new year, the Historical Society will be asking the Town for lease renewals not only for the **Museum, but also for the School House**

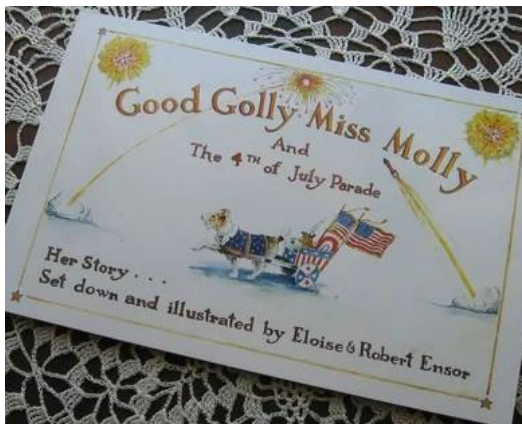
**and the Marshall Point Lighthouse Museum.** We are asking for terms much longer than the 3-year term which the Selectboard is currently empowered to grant. The public will have an opportunity to learn more at a public forum to be held in February (date TBD) and then vote on a lease renewal at the Town Meeting in May 2025. The neighboring Town of South Thomaston has shown its support to their own Historical Society by granting their Society a 99-year lease for their town owned property. This is a true example of a Town's commitment to preserving its history.

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**MARSHALL POINT LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM**

While 2024 started with a challenge no one expected with the January destructive storms, Marshall Point has made a great recovery. We have great hope that the work to repair the walkway will be completed before the next Memorial Day, but if not, it will be completed in the fall, after the 2025 summer season.

The many volunteers at the Museum saw 21,787 visitors this year from the U.S. and all over the world, representing 36 countries. Please visit [Marshall Point Lighthouse & Museum](#) for more information.

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**GOOD GOLLY MISS MOLLY**



With the gracious permission of author, Eloise Ensor, and a generous contribution from Jake Miller and the **First National Bank**, we were able to reprint the children's book *Good Golly, Miss*

*Molly*, which is available for purchase in our Museum and on our website. The story is about a mischievous dog and her participation in the parade held on Main Street in Tenants Harbor. Illustrated by Robert Ensor, it depicts recognizable scenes on Main Street including our Historical Society Museum. The Ensors are also known for their book *Nellie the Lighthouse Dog*, sold at the Marshall Point Lighthouse.

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**COLLECTIONS NEWS**

The Historical Society has created a sub-committee which is tasked with the responsibility of receiving items from the public, and if accepted into the collection after committee review, adding them to our searchable online database. We currently have over 3500 objects to review and catalog.

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**RECENT ADDITIONS TO OUR COLLECTIONS**

We have received many donations of items pertaining to our town's history this year. Among them was a collection of about 33 large scrapbooks from Randy Watts prepared by his grandmother. The scrapbooks document events from the 1940s until the 1980s and are filled with newspaper clippings and photos relating to a vast number of locals who lived here during those years. Thank you Randy!

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**CLEANING HEADSTONES AT SEASIDE CEMETERY**

Over the Summer, our committee cleaned headstones at Seaside on four Saturdays with as many as 13 people helping with the cleaning. Despite being rained out on two Saturdays, our volunteers exceeded 200 volunteer hours! Come join us next summer – no skill required. We will provide the tools necessary to clean the headstones with nontoxic cleaning solution, pump sprayers, and plastic scrub brushes, as well as brief training. You only need to bring work gloves, drinking water and bug spray. We have applied to the

Maine Old Cemetery Association for a restoration workshop and believe we are on their 2025 schedule. Stay tuned.



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**WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS**

The St George Historical Society exists solely on volunteers. Open hours at the Museum and all our programs are led by our fabulous volunteers. We thank them for the hundreds of hours they put in this season. Two of our longtime Trustees have stepped down this year to pursue other interests. We want to give special thanks to Carolyn Garratt-Reed and Stephanie Smith for their dedication to the Society.

We are very pleased to introduce Sara Leavitt-Goldberg as the newest Trustee and Vice President. In her past life, Sara was a professional curator and archivist. Welcome Sara!

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**MEMBERSHIP DUES**

We are now accepting dues for 2025. Membership dues cover the calendar year and we have added additional prestigious levels of membership as follows:

- \$20 Individuals
- \$25 Family
- \$50 Historian
- \$100 Archivist
- \$250 and above, Preservationist

Preservationist Members have the option to be included on our website as dedicated members.

Checks for dues can be mailed with the application form on the next page to SGHS, PO Box 14, Tenants Harbor, ME 04860 or can be paid online at [Membership & Donations](#).

Please include your mailing address if you pay your membership dues online. Thank you!

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**MEMBERSHIP STATS**

We are pleased to report that we have over 250 members helping to support our group and its activities. Over 500 people have provided email addresses to receive emails and other notices. PLUS, we have more than 1.2K followers on Facebook! We hope you all enjoy what we do.



# St George Historical Society, Inc.

P O Box 14

Tenants Harbor, ME 04860

*stgeorgemainehistory@gmail.com*

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

*Membership is for a calendar year – runs from Jan 1st to Dec 31st*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

### Type of Membership:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$20 Individuals

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 Family

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Historian

\_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Archivist

\_\_\_\_\_ \$250 and above, Preservationist \_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I want to be listed on your website

\_\_\_\_\_ No, please keep my donation anonymous

Areas of interest \_\_\_\_\_

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**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY!**