



Hampden Historical Society

Newsletter – Fall 2022

Annual Christmas Bazaar Saturday, November 19 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.



Please stop by on **Saturday, November 19**, at the Kinsley House which will be once again filled with holiday cheer! Our Christmas Bazaar is back and we are looking forward to welcoming everyone. As in years past we will have holiday crafts, fancywork and soft goods, some antiques and jewelry as well as holiday arrangements and swags. We will also be back with our delicious food sale, and last but certainly not least, our White Elephant room! Volunteers are already organizing for this event, and you, too, can help. In fact, we can't do it without you.

As we work to build our inventory of items for sale, we hope that all of you crafters, knitters and others will keep us in mind. We welcome donations of gifts so that we can ensure that those who visit us on November 19 will leave with a holiday smile that will help brighten the season. Closer to the event date we will be in touch with members to ask for baked goods for the food sale.

Volunteers are currently in the process of seeking gift certificates and/or items from local businesses and individuals for the Holiday Raffle. We will be sending out raffle tickets to sell in the near future. We already have a beautiful handmade Maureen Carter quilt as the grand prize followed closely by a garage door opener from PDQ Door. These are just two of the many things that will be available as prizes for the raffle.

Other than for the food sale, if you have items that you would like to donate to the sale, please drop them off on any Tuesday between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. If you have any questions, give us a call at 862-2027 or email Ellyn Chase at ellynchase@gmail.com or Hampden Historical Society at:

hampdenhistorical@gmail.com.

As we have said many times, the Christmas Bazaar is our largest fundraiser. All of the proceeds go toward the maintenance and upkeep of our buildings and grounds and helps to pay our monthly bills. So, we look forward to seeing you soon. Together, we can make this a great day for Hampden Historical Society. *Happy Holidays!*

Trolley Stop Hut Project A Work in Progress

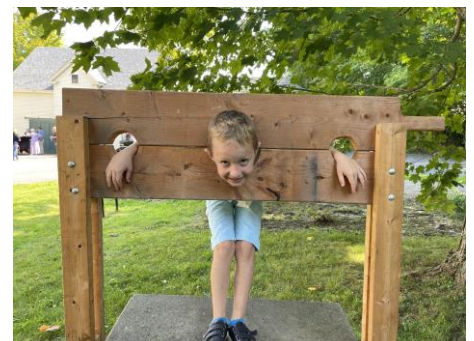
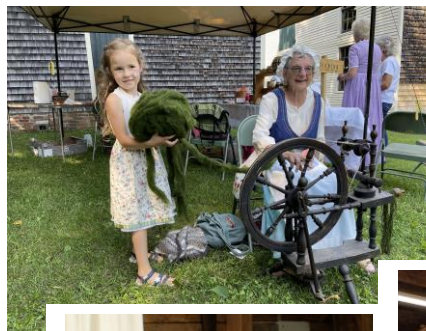
We are pleased that the Trolley Stop Hut, donated to the Society by Dr. and Mrs. John Swalec (Main Road North in East Hampden), has reached its final destination on the grounds of Hampden Historical Society.



Will and Rod in front of the Trolley Stop Hut

Our thanks to Rod Stanhope and Will Nickerson for their backbreaking work in removing the hut from its original site and for their relocation efforts at HHS. There is plenty of restoration work yet to be accomplished but we are thrilled to have this addition to our grounds. Thank you to the Swalec family and to Rod and Will. If you are interested in donating funds to help with this restoration project, please give us a call or drop us an email.

Heritage Day 2022
Please enjoy this glimpse into a phenomenal day at HHS!



Update From Your Board of Directors

Jim Husson, President

Using a Maine term, I'd say it was a *wicked good time*. After six years of being delayed due to construction and Covid, Heritage Day was back, and it was a huge success.

I would stand in the doorway of the Law Office and look out at the crowd of people that just kept strolling in and how everyone stayed and stayed. Kids were everywhere. Everyone was having such a good time.

When I could break away from my duties, I would wander around and watch as our volunteers (all 42 of them) demonstrated and educated our guests by showing them how things were many years ago. We had tours, exhibits, demonstrations and events. Talking with some of our guests later, they said they planned to stay for a short time but found themselves staying for hours. They praised our volunteers for how knowledgeable and entertaining they were.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped set up, worked the venue and took it down. And thank you to all who attended. We are excited to do this again.

Heritage Day took a lot of our time and effort. However, even with that, a lot has been going on at HHS. We continue to work on digitizing our records and artifacts, the barn is finally going to be painted, the Trolley Hut has been moved into place and restorations have begun, our Tuesday volunteers continue to work on multiple different projects, and we continue with our monthly meetings with some great programs. Plus, there is always a stream of people looking for information or donating items.

The Board of Directors continues to strive to make this Society one of the best in the state. We have a first-class museum, excellent educational programs, an outstanding archive full of resources and the best volunteers. Your Historical Society remains active. It is here for you to enjoy. We are now open Tuesdays and Thursdays. We hope you stop by.

In Memorium

We wish to acknowledge the recent passing of the following HHS members.

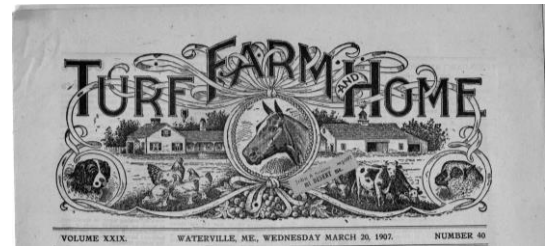
Our deepest condolences are extended to their family and friends.

Bunny Gibson
Judy Taylor-Dann

When Trotting Horses were “The Sport of Kings”

Well, boys and girls, we are just finishing up with “fair-time” in the state of Maine—one of my favorite seasons. I've been frequenting Maine fairs since about 1940. My father was a great fan of the trotting horse and Bangor, Skowhegan, Windsor and Union fairs were usually attended by our little family. My father would spend the afternoon in the track grandstand, hoping for a land-fall win, while my mother and I would ramble through the array of cattle, sheep and poultry barns.

This past summer I've been leafing through some old farm papers that have been “aging” in our basement for many years, looking for “fair” news and I came upon this bit relating to Hampden - (From *Turf, Farm and Home*, Sept 19, 1906, a periodical paper for rural Maine, published in Waterville).



“Daniel Ryan, of Hampden, had a fine string of trotting bred horses at the Eastern Maine Fair (Bangor, August, 1906). Tarratine, the black 13-year-old stallion, headed the list. A number of his colts were on the grounds and were all good ones.

“In this same bunch was a two-year old stallion by Senator Wilkes. This is surely a good colt, bay, weighs 1130, dam, Country Girl. In the next box was a yearling stallion, full brother to the last, which promises to be very speedy.”

The keeping and competing with racehorses was a very popular sport from the early 1800s up to the present, although in recent years the interest is waning. In 1875 it was noted in *The Maine Farmer* that there were 49 tracks in operation in Maine. In most cases the fairs with trotting parks were managed by local agricultural societies. Many towns in our area sponsored the agricultural fairs. The two most popular tracks were in Waterville at the Central Maine Park and in Bangor at Maplewood Park (Bass Park). But Newport also had its driving club as did Pittsfield, East Eddington, Ellsworth, Patten, Skowhegan, Belfast, Cherryfield, Exeter and even Monroe.

I especially remember attending the fair at Monroe as a young lad. My grandfather lived in that town and it was a treat to have him accompany us through the

exhibits. I remember, especially, a little building filled with an array of strange creatures, mostly stuffed or in a liquid preservative. The one item that has always come to mind from that diverse collection was a two-headed calf in a large tank of preservative. I remember the big brown eyes (all four of them) peering down at me and I've always felt kind of sorry for that little guy having to spend eternity in a jug of alcohol.

There were many breezy pieces in my copies of *Turf, Farm and Home*, usually describing someone's horse stock or farm management systems. But then in a later issue (July, 1907) of *T.F. & H.* was this article entitled, "The Future of the Horse Business," which gave pause to the idea of a continued popularity of the pleasure horse over the motor car.

"Professor Carlisle, who is in charge of government horse breeding in Colorado, warns farmers against the indiscriminate breeding of horses intended for the future market. He suggests that farmers confine themselves to either the heavy draft horse or the heavy harness horses. This suggestion may be exceedingly timely. The greatest menace that most men see in the breeding of horses in the future is that the automobile may possibly be a substitute for the horse. We do not expect that at any time in the future that the automobile will seriously interfere with the usefulness of the heavy draft horses or any of the well-established breeds.

"Undoubtedly the automobile will, to some extent, take the place of the horse for light harness work. At present, however, it is mainly a fad of the rich man and the man who would like to be considered rich; even the rich who are able to hire a chauffeur and stand the expense of keeping up their machine will, after a while, have his stylish heavy harness or coach horse.

"In time the farmers of the United States will fall into the same methods as prevail in other horse breeding countries. The farmer will own the mares, sell the colts as weanlings or two-year-olds to a grazer or some farmer who has a particular fancy for handling horses. He in turn sells the trained draft horses to the farmer who does not desire to breed horses, but buys youngsters, using them on the farm until they are five years old and then they go into the city to be worn out.

"We believe that in the future that the Standard type stock of the larger breeds will furnish the very best material for the coach horses which will always be in demand as long as rich men are striving to find some way of gratifying their taste and getting rid of their surplus cash."

We can appreciate that the editorial staff of the *Turf, Farm and Home* might seem overly optimistic on the future of the horse. Promoting horse racing and

therefore horse breeding, as they did, it was in their best interest to have a sympathetic group of subscribers. In 1907 the automobile was just getting under way and few people would have predicted how that would evolve.

The first "car" to appear in Hampden sailed up from Boston on the "Boston Boat" in 1908. Perhaps the road was not passable for motor cars from southern Maine to Bangor. Hampden's first auto was a bright red Cadillac owned by Capt. Warren Hopkins, which he drove at the top speed of 15 miles per hour out to the brick house on the Kennebec Road at the intersection with the Meadow Road. That house is now owned by Harold and Cassie Gibbs. The auto muffler had not yet been invented so the noise of that engine could be heard for a few miles in each direction. Capt. Hopkins paid a visit to his relative, a Mrs. Loud, and put himself into the history books for the town of Hampden.

The Hopkins family is one of the original Hampden families. Isaac Hopkins arrived here in 1769 and served on various early town committees. He and his descendants built some of the early Hampden sailing ships. The sloop, "Penobscot Packet," was launched in 1809, built by Isaac Hopkins and David Piper with Isaac Hopkins, Jr. as the mariner. In 1816, Isaac and Benjamin Hopkins launched the schooner, "New Packet" and in 1824 Isaac and Ezekiel Hopkins launched, "Amazon." The final ship we find associated with the Hopkins name is the, schooner, "Packet" owned by Benjamin Hopkins, Ellen Hopkins of Hampden and Joseph Francis of Boston. Ellen Hopkins may have earned a spot in Hampden maritime history by being the first woman listed as a schooner builder/owner. From all this Hopkins boat history we assume that Capt. Warren Hopkins and his red Cadillac were of this family and he may have earned his status of "Captain" from sailing on the Penobscot.

It's an interesting coincidence that on at least one occasion, early road building in Maine was tied to the fair season. One of Maine's largest fairs at the time, was the Central Maine fair in Waterville and at the association meeting in 1905 there was a discussion of road maintenance in the Waterville area and points south in order to get folks "safely and comfortably" to the fair.

Since most people in Hampden, and presumably surrounding towns had never seen an automobile prior to 1908 it is not surprising that the editors of the "Turf, Farm and Home" would write it off as a non-threat to the survival of the horse. Well, we know what happened and now the auto

reigns and the Hollywood Casino is having a challenging time maintaining interest in the trotters at Bass Park.

A final story relating to Bass Park and also to Hampden. One of the early local racing fans was Mr. Ezra Sterns who was then owner, and son of the founder, of Sterns Lumber Company in Hampden. Ezra was a founder of the Eastern (Bangor) State Fair and served as Secretary for many years. He owned a famous roan trotting gelding named, "Ezra L" [pretty original name] foaled in 1874. Ezra L., the horse, eventually passed away and on August 29, 1896 a horse funeral was held at Maplewood (Bass) Park. A special casket for Ezra L. had been constructed by Abel Hart of East Market Square and on a Saturday afternoon, following the races, a procession formed at the stable area. After circling the track, the cortege halted in front of the judge's stand, a bell was tolled, following which the group moved to the track infield where a grave had been dug. There at sunset before several hundred mourners (yes, history says several hundred) and a few horses, Ezra L. was laid to rest. This little bit of history, I think, illustrates the interest and the regard that some folks held for the "Trotter."

- Bob Hawes

Sources: *Historical Sketches of Hampden*, 1976. HHS Archives
A History of Maine Roads, 1970. Maine State Highway Commission Report
Bass Park Historical Notes, 1883 to 1926, 2003. Clark P. Thompson
Maine's Trotting Horse Heritage Trail, 2009. Clark P. Thompson



Please let us know when any of your contact information has changed. This includes email addresses, telephone number/s and mailing addresses. It is important to us that we keep you apprised of all that is happening at HHS. You are important to us and we thank you for your help.

The Kinsley House Cane

The Kinsley House Cane is presented by the Hampden Historical Society to the oldest known resident in the Town of Hampden. We are proud to announce the recent presentation of this cane to Evelyn Clisham. While no longer able to join us at the Kinsley House, Evelyn and her family welcomed our president Jim Husson, member Patsy Husson, and former president and board member Jerry Stanhope to her home for the presentation of this honor. The plaque, noting the recipients of the Kinsley House Cane since 1996, will be displayed along with the cane in the Museum's Great Room for all to see.



Evelyn in a 2010 Heritage Day photo



The Kinsley House Cane Plaque

Board of Directors Adopt Revised Vision/Mission Statements

At its September 12 meeting, the Society's Board of Directors adopted the following revised Vision Statement, Mission Statement and Values. It has been several years since the Board has reviewed these statements and believes that the revisions are in keeping with the ideals set forth in 1970 by the Society's original Charter Members.

Vision Statement

Hampden Historical Society is dedicated to the history, culture, and heritage of the Town of Hampden, Maine.

Mission Statement

The preservation, exhibition, and sharing of historically significant artifacts and records by maintaining the Museum's buildings, properties, collections, and archival records.

Values

- Volunteerism
- Stewardship
- Passion
- Dedication
- Inclusion
- Community
- Partnering
- Cultural Respect

Kinsley's - *Believe It or Not!*

Every town has had its share of hermits, hobos or eccentric people, and Hampden is no exception.

Around 1900, there was Charles Cole, aka Robin Redbreast, a hermit who came into the village only when his larder was low. At times he walked in with a sled to carry the supplies that he purchased at George Higgin's store (manufacturer of Carriages and Sleighs). At other times he would travel with a cart hauled by oxen. In his cart would be dishes he traded for the things he needed. No matter which way he traveled or the time of the year, he always wore the front of his shirt open. His hairless chest was always red. Thus, the name Robin Redbreast.

Following the loss of his mother, he never used the front door after her coffin was carried out. Robin would always go in and come out through the window.

That is, if you believe it or not.

From Our Kitchen to Yours Deep Chocolate Cake

Melt together in double boiler:

- 1 can (1 pound can) of chocolate syrup
- 10 plain chocolate bars
- 2 teaspoons of vanilla (add after melting chocolate mixture)

Mix together in large bowl:

- 2 sticks of butter (beat butter until creamy)
- 2 cups of sugar (added slowly)
- 4 eggs (added one at a time and beat after each one is added)

Add chocolate mixture, and the following:

- 2½ cups of flour
- ½ teaspoon of soda
- 1 cup of buttermilk
- 1 cup of chopped nuts

Pour into greased and floured tube pan

Bake at 350 degrees for 1 to 1½ hours

Frost with chocolate frosting.

This cake will become a holiday favorite with family and friends! You are going to love it!

§



Charles Cole aka
Robin Redbreast 1909





Hampden Historical Society's
2022 Christmas Bazaar

Saturday, November 19

8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Enjoy our old-fashioned bazaar!

*Holiday crafts, fancywork and soft goods,
bake sale, white elephant room, antiques,
swags and holiday arrangements*

Also featured: the annual Raffle and Silent Auction

Visit with Santa!

83 Main Road South - Hampden



Schedule of Meetings and Activities

Monday, October 24 7:00 p.m.
Monthly Meeting
Program: TBA

Saturday, November 19 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Annual Christmas Bazaar

Monday, March 27, 2023 7:00 p.m.
Monthly meeting
Program: TBA

Monday, April 24, 2023 7:00 p.m.
Monthly meeting
Program: TBA

Monday, May 22, 2023 6:00 p.m.
Annual Meeting

Note: All meetings/events subject to change.

Hours of Operation

Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Other days/times by appointment

***Call 207-862-2027 or email
hampdenhistorical@gmail.com
to schedule an appointment***

Masks are requested but not currently required.

To ensure the health and safety of our volunteers and guests, we will continue to monitor the situation as we move forward and will make adjustments as needed.

HHS Contact Information

Telephone: 207-862-2027

Email: hampdenhistorical@gmail.com

Website: www.hampdenhistoricalsociety.org

Facebook: Hampden Historical Society

**Hampden Historical Society
PO Box 456
Hampden, ME 04444**

Address service requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit 201
Hampden, ME