

The Hancock Historical Society Newsletter

June 2019

HANCOCK MEMOIRS

Memories of an Eastside Childhood

Margie Springer Nankervis

I grew up on the lower East Side of Hancock and was one of six Springer kids. Between us, the Shaw and Hardison girls, John and Tom Johnston, Bruce and Loren Clarke and a few singles from the immediate neighborhood, we always could put together an impromptu baseball game to while away a summer afternoon. Two big kids would toss the bat, one to the other and then inch up it hand-on-hand till one of them could touch the very top and middle of the bat end to win the pole position to pick his first team member. No matter how many kids showed up, everyone got to play and were told what position to get in. I usually ended up in left field. Probably someone kept score and the number of innings or it just got too dark to play or we all got hungry and went home to eat. But it was a great way to spend a lazy summer afternoon when we were just kids.

There was a bunch of us who hung out together and we roamed around our end of town from the Ferry to the Point and up to Nason's store on the upper Eastside if we could conjure up enough energy to hike up Gran's Hill and had some pennies to spend. I remember old Mrs. Nason would sit outside the store on the bench by the trees in the shade and we kids

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sanford Phippen

This is our 40th season of the Historical Society. We have added a column to our newsletter entitled "Hancock Memoirs". Our contributor for this newsletter is Marjorie Nankervis. Margie was born Aug 13, 1948 the daughter of Albert and Ethel Springer. After graduating from Sumner High School in the class of 1966, Margie married her high school sweetheart, Sam Nankervis in 1967 and together they settled in Franklin along with their two children, Karen and Teddy. This year Margie and Sam celebrated 52 years of marriage. Tragically, Margie passed away on March 17, 2019. We are pleased to be able to share Margie's article with you.

This year's programs are listed on page four of the newsletter. We hope they will be of interest to you.



President and founder of Hancock Historical Society, Sandy Phippen.

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would get our penny candy or ice creams and go outside to sit with her, and we would take turns trying to walk with the crutches she had. She must not have minded because she never ran us off.

We were quiet an eclectic mix of youngsters roaming to and fro around town always looking for the next adventure and we always had our token dog with us. For years it was Hercules, the big old Bulldog that Wendall Hardison owned. He went everywhere with us and always waited patiently while we stopped to climb trees or go wading for polliwogs in some pond or crawl through the culvert at the end of the Crossroad, Old Herc was a good old dog but as we strolled along he had a tendency to have a line of drool hanging out of his jaws and it would get so low to the ground as to gather up dirt and rocks and every so often he would suck that all in, chomp and snort and start over again, That dog must have eaten more dirt than all of us put together.

I remember all the great snow forts we built and the terrific snowball fights we would have, especially the one in Tom and John Johnston's front yard where the boys took on the girls and the boys made ice balls and managed to knock our fort wall right over on top of us.

Going ice skating on any patch of frozen water we would find and hunting all over town for the ultimate Kamikaze hill to go sliding on. We used anything we could find for flying saucers. I had the round cover of my mother's wringer washing machine – it worked great.

A lot of summer evenings we would run over to my Uncle Paul Johnston's to watch the men gather to pitch horseshoes in his front yard. We would quietly sit back and watch while the men talked, joked and smoked sometimes past dark and I'll never forget the metallic sound of a first-class ringer.

I have always bemoaned the fact that my own children never knew the fun of playing in a barn. Jumping in the hay mow from a high beam. Searching for eggs in the hen pen. Riding in the hayrack with a team of horses pulling it and tramping down the hay the men pitch forked up over the side. Watching baby chicks grow into chickens, piglets into pigs.

I'll never forget stepping into my Uncle Bob's barn on a bitter cold night and being greeted by the warmth that welled up from within from jus the hay and cows inside. The smells, sights and sounds are all ingrained in my memories, some of which I hope I never forget because they are so precious.

One memory that has always stayed with me was of a hot August afternoon and I was walking home from somewhere and I was just scuffing along the side

of the road raising the dust with my white Ked sneakers and the only sounds I could hear were the buzzing of a few lazy bees flying about the excited voice of a baseball announcer wafting out of an open window at Jimmy and Hilda Hancock's house. It was warm, the air was fragrant with summer smells, I was almost home, Life was good.

CURATOR'S REPORT

The Lois Johnson Historical Museum is once again open for the season. This year we have changed our schedule to be open on Wednesdays from 10 – 12, May through June and Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 – 12 July, August and September. We will close at the end of September to give museum volunteers a chance to begin the daunting task of packing the collection for the move to the new facility. (See the update in this newsletter).

We hope you will find time this summer to visit the museum. Tuesdays, Anne Pomroy and Joan Hildreth and Wednesdays, Jean Foss, Page Riggs, Marcus Clemons and I will be at the museum to greet you when you visit. We hope you will find a few moments to drop in during this our last year in our Town Hall home. Perhaps take a look at files related to your family name. We welcome additions of articles or photographs relating to local families or businesses. And by all means, if we are missing a family or business in the file collection please share that information with us. We have maps, school books, photographs, family bibles, and memorabilia of our town that we would love to share with you.

Next year we are looking forward to the opening of our new museum space. We are planning festivities to celebrate the event to coincide with the State of Maine Bicentennial Celebration. Stay tuned for details

Email hancockme.history@yahoo.com

Join our Facebook Group at

Hancock.me_historical.society

UPDATE ON HANCOCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S NEW LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

We are happy to report that construction is about to begin on the long anticipated new home for Hancock Historical Society's Library and Museum. After exploring a number of sites, we were able to come to agreement with the Hancock Woman's Club to build a connected structure behind their Community Center.

Last spring HHS's Board of Directors appointed exploratory Building and Fund Raising Committees, and in October authorized them to work towards a definitive structure plan, and to raise needed funding.

Both groups have worked hard since then, resulting in a building plan and a fund raising campaign that has already secured cash, pledges and grants that will cover about two thirds of completed costs. Fund raising continues. The Board voted on June 5th to proceed with construction.

We will build a 2,100 square foot single story structure, to be joined to the Woman's Club by a new main entrance to both buildings. This entry will include an ADA compliant restroom and a coat room. The HHS building will have 3 sections. The front half will be the museum, including a volunteer guest greeting and work area by the front door, display space, and an audio-visual area. Beyond the museum space, separated by a half wall, will be the library, housing the extensive family history and topical files that are the hallmark of HHS. This will be a public workspace with tables and chairs. The back quarter will be closed off as secure storage, and will house the Curator's work space and office.

Key to this plan has been the cooperation and encouragement from our two new neighbors – The Woman's Club, and the Pierre Monteux Memorial Foundation. We will own our building, and lease the ground under it from the Woman's Club – sharing expenses. The Monteux Foundation (owners of Tamarack Place) is donating a strip of land to allow us to replace parking taken by the new building, and to add additional spaces.

The Hancock Planning Board signed off on our application on June 12. We should have our Building Permit in hand shortly, and hope to begin land clearing and preparations for the foundation slab at the end of June, with building to start in July. Construction will continue into the fall. We should be able to start moving our collections over the winter, and be ready for a Grand Opening Celebration next summer.

2019- 2020 OFFICERS

President, Sanford Phippen

Vice-President, Myrna Coffin

Secretary, Charlotte Stetson

Treasurer, Don Parker

Board of Directors

Robert Foss

Jean Foss

Herbert Hodgkins

James Singletary

Elizabeth Singletary

Alan Gray

Joan Hildreth

Heather Parker

Anne Pomroy

Edith Lounder

Pat Moll

Bill Thomas

Rick Merchant

David Johnson

Hancock Point Schoolhouse

Open for tours and programs by appointment:

Pat Moll, 422-3408

Lois C. Johnson Historical Museum

May and June

Wednesday 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

July, August and September

Tuesday & Wednesday 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

By appointment:

Charlene Clemons, Curator, 412-9777

2019 PROGRAMS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FRIDAY JULY 12

NEW MUSEUM PROJECT

7:00 PM COMMUNITY CENTER

For the past year, we have been busily raising money for a brand-new museum to be built behind the present Community Center on Route One. (See the article on page two). The planners, designers, and society members will be on hand to explain the plans and answer question.

FRIDAY AUGUST 9

HANCOCK, MAINE, THE POSTCARD VIEW

7:00 PM COMMUNITY CENTER

Hancock resident Alan Gray, a volunteer in the photo archives of the Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport will share selections from the Eastern Illustrating & Publishing Company. The slide show and talk will consist of the story of the postcard company and historical views of Hancock and neighboring towns. The company was founded in 1909 in Belfast by Rudolph Herman Cassens whose goal was to photograph small towns and rural areas from Maine to California, producing "real photo" postcards that would be valued for promoting tourism. The images are fascinating on many levels. They take viewers back in time to when roads were still dirt, horse drawn carriages outnumbered cars, coastlines were undeveloped and elms lined the streets.

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 13

THE STORY OF DR. EVA REICH, MD

7:00 PM COMMUNITY CENTER

Renata Moise, CNM, presents a program telling the story of her mother, Dr. Eva Reich, MD: A family physician in Hancock during the 1950s and 1960s, who was a pioneer of family planning and midwifery in Maine.

FRIDAY OCTOBER 11

THE GARAGES OF HANCOCK, PAST AND PRESENT

7:00 PM COMMUNITY CENTER

A panel discussion featuring local mechanics, Rich Merchant, Allen Stevens and Jasie Piper, along with tales of the past when the Community Center was a blacksmith's shop and later a gas station run by Harold "Yogi" Holler and others. For many years the late Hugh Joy ran a Texaco garage and oil delivery operation at Waukeag. The main building was the old train station at Hancock Corner that was moved.

Special Events

July 8

The Hancock Historical Society will have a table at the Tidal Falls Preserve Grand Re-Opening. 4:00 pm – 8:30 pm
First Monday Music of 2019 featuring The Crown Vics at 6:00 pm

October 16

Lights Out

5:00 PM at the Masonic Hall in Winter Harbor

This year's annual end-of-the-season dinner for local historical societies will feature a spaghetti supper and "Ghost Stories and Legends" from each participating town.