



PORTSMOUTH

Historical Society

PHS February 2019 Newsletter

(A Personal Note: The Portsmouth Historical Society has come a long way in the past few years. We have stabilized as an organization and with the great work of our Board of Directors we have made everyone in town well aware of what a great historical society we have. I have been very proud of my long association with the Society dating back to 1976. I have now decided to move on as President as of the end of the current fiscal year in June. I intend to read, research, write and continue lecturing on local history. Thank you all for your continuing support).

The new President will be selected from the Board. With that in mind the Society has created a Nominating Committee under the leadership of Anne Northup Burns. An email address has been created phsnominating@portmouthhistorical.org. More information will follow, and any early interested candidates for our Board can contact the committee through that address.

We had a great turnout for my lecture on “Aquidneck Island Trolleys” on 28 January. 72 people squeezed into the Library’s meeting room.. There is such a strong interest in local history. It is rewarding to see good crowds.

We have scheduled a total of 22 events for the Historical Society for this year.....so far! Under the guidance of VP Doug Smith we are getting to work on our Spring events. We will celebrate Founders’ Day on 7 March (11 AM-1 PM) and we will again have the 1638 Portsmouth Compact on display, with a short talk on that very special document.

Also on 14 March we will have our third annual Portsmouth History Trivia Contest for Middle School and High School students. It will be held at the Gulf Stream Restaurant at Melville and we would encourage all of you to, in turn, encourage your children to participate. We always have a lot of fun doing this. There will be an adult contest in April at the Valley Inn, so prepare!

The next meeting of the Society Book Club will be on 25 March. The book is Gerald Carbone's biography of General Nathanael Greene, a great Rhode Island leader of the Revolutionary War.

Board members Bob Watts and Curator Nancy Crawford have done some research on the two school bells that we have in our museum. They date from the 1870s from two of the one-room schoolhouses that we had in town. Information about the bells is posted in the museum; be sure to take a look when we open in May.

The Curator Committee is beginning to work on our annual museum display. Titled "Evolving Past to Present" it will feature antique items and their modern counterparts. Typewriters? Dial telephones? Lots of others. Who remembers?

The Society received a recent donation from Jan Menzi whose grandfather had a farm where the high school athletic fields are. The collection included his baseball letter from Henry F. Anthony School, his 1957 graduation program from that school and two early color photographs of the farm. We are very grateful to Mr. Menzi for his donation and that is just the kind of local archives that the Society is looking for. Please keep us in mind if you encounter items of local interest.

The Society was very pleased to have received a State Legislative grant of \$1000 from State Senator Jim Seveney last month. This will be used to help pay for our newly-installed security system at the Museum. We are very appreciative of this grant; thank you, Senator Seveney.

Much of the restorative work has been done on our property and plans are being made to upgrade our facilities even more. Thanks to all of the Patron memberships and significant other donations that we have received recently They are listed on our website.

Thanks for your continued support,
Jim Garman
President

Taking Pride in Portsmouth's History