

# ANDROSCOGGIN HISTORY

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## Excelsior No. 2 Hand Tub

In 1991, our Society purchased a fire-fighting hand pump engine known as Excelsior No. 2. It was one of a pair of the very first engines used in the Lewiston-Auburn area. Excelsior No. 2 was the one used in Auburn beginning in 1849.

We are grateful that the Auburn Fire Department has housed this ancient piece of equipment for us for twelve years. However, now they have run out of space. Our board of directors has voted to lend it for display in the Jay Fire Department Museum.

Our newsletter of October 1991 provided the following description: "Each engine was an open tub with a copper lined tank mounted on four wheels and hauled by hand. Two piston type pumps -- one on either side -- ejected the water as six to eight men on each side pushed down on the rails. If the hand tub were near a source of water, then a suction hose twenty feet long could draw up the supply. Otherwise the tub had to be filled by a bucket brigade."

Some members of our Society are proposing that we have Excelsior No. 2 restored in appearance and returned to working order. It could be displayed in parades and it could compete in firemen's musters against similar pieces of equipment owned by nearby towns. Might this be a community project for the county's sesquicentennial next year?

No official action has been taken. We welcome your comments and advice. If you are interested in organizing the fund-raising of between \$5,000 and \$10,000 for this project, please contact Michael Lord or David Young. If you wish to make a contribution, we shall be delighted to receive it.

## Budget 2003-2004

The Society's board of directors has adopted a budget of \$33,967 for the fiscal year 2003-2004. Almost all of our income is derived from our endowment. Major expenditures are for the executive secretary's salary, rent, insurance, and acquisitions.

## Hotel Register of the Elm House by Doug Hodgkin

The Society has acquired the 1901-1906 hotel register of the Elm House, one of Auburn's leading establishments on Court Street between Main and Turner Streets. Examination of this document provides hints of the role of the hotel.

Of course, many traveling business people would stay there. Only a few identified their companies, which included Matonkee Medical Co., Al Martz Specialty Co., and New England Tel. & Tel. Co. Two employees of the latter were Bert Shaw and Byron Nevens, who identified themselves further as "broken down sports of Livermore Falls."

Traveling entertainers appear to have included those who performed at the hotel itself. One group was The Virginia Troubadours, who advertised themselves as appearing in the hotel hall "To-Night Dec. 18, 1901. Prices 15 and 25 Cents." Another was Towle's Orchestra, with G. F. Towle, violin; G. M. Ludden, clarinet; W. A. Lucas, cornet; and C. F. Oldham, bass. Of them, someone wrote, "This was the event of the season, a very nice gathering, long to be remembered." On another occasion, G. B. Burgess was added on trombone. Another group was Lirem's Electric Entertainers.

Local organizations met there, including the Buckfield Fur Club and the North Turner Shooting Match, with captains Alton Libby and C. F. Young in October 1902 and captains R. G. House and C. F. Young in October 1905. Members of each team are listed.

Names of many local people were guests as well in connection with functions held in the Elm House or as business travelers. If you have relatives who lived here during that period, you might want to search for familiar names. The author found the signature of his great grandfather, A. F. Douglas of Lisbon, who traveled about the county purchasing cattle to butcher.

Opposite every page containing guests' signatures is the identical page of advertisements for local

businesses, including F. A. Conant (insurance), Geo. A. Whitney & Co. (hardware and tools), apothecary Chas. A. Abbott, dentist E. H. White, florist Ernest Saunders, attorneys McCann & Kavanagh, High Street Laundry (Auburn), Gray's Business College (Lewiston), plumber T. W. Kerrigan, and the stable of Geo. W. Furbush with his office at the DeWitt House.

Unfortunately, the book is marred by the writings and drawings of a young boy of North Turner, apparently done in 1915-1916. He practiced his signature, entered fictitious names of guests from among North Turner residents, and sometimes simply scribbled. The reader must carefully distinguish his handwriting from the legitimate entries.

## Meeting Notice

Topic: Pineland Revisited

Speaker: Richard S. Kimball

Location: The County Building

Time: October 28 at 7:00 P.M.

## Seven Elephants

### Run Amuck in Union Square, Lewiston

#### Escape From Gate House Believed to Be an Inside Job—Detectives Quail at Onslaught—Sailors in Peril as Craft Pitches—Little Nemo Left Homeless

LEWISTON, Me., April 1.—Seven full grown elephants which had been confined thru the winter in the Gate House at the head of the canal broke their chains and crashed thru the flimsy walls of the building at noon today and rushed into the store and factory crowds on their way home for dinner—leaving in their path, bewildered and astonished people.

One of the elephants crashed thru the railing on the canal bridge into the water and swam down stream with the current. At one of the lower mill gates, the animal was held up and it was not decided what measures would be taken to get it out of the canal.

Six elephants rushed down Lisbon street. The Turner car was in front of the waiting room. One of the elephants brushed against it and the car toppled over into the waiting room frightening two newsboys and a passenger. The crew was not in the car at the time. The passenger was an elderly man.

Business was paralyzed; the news spread rapidly and the streets were deserted all the afternoon.

[Reprinted from *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 1 April 1919]

## GOINGS-ON AT THE SOCIETY by Michael Lord, Executive Secretary

2) We're publishing a new Androscoggin County history with Penmor of Lewiston. The financing is being done by Mechanics Savings Bank of Auburn. Its title is: Androscoggin County, Maine: A Pictorial Sesquicentennial History, 1854 - 2004. Edited by Michael C. Lord & W. Dennis Stires. Nancy Lecompte will also, using the same loan and printer, produce a volume on Native American history.

3) Our Corporate Membership Drive for this coming fiscal year totals \$900 so far; we thank Atty. Irving Isaacson of Brann & Isaacson of Lewiston for \$100 on 12/11/02; Pres. Sherwood C. Moody Mechanics Savings Bank of Auburn for \$500 on 4/23/03; Mr. Ronald A. Vallee of Maine Thread & Machinery of Lewiston for \$100 on 5/21/03; Mr. Daniel L. Gagne' of the Cote Corporation (Crane - Rigging) of Auburn for \$100 on 6/12/03; Mr. Irving Isaacson of Brann & Isaacson for \$100 on 6/18/03. If any reader wishes to join corporately or knows of someone who does, then please contact your Executive Secretary. Thank you.

## ACQUISITIONS

We have acquired the following items during the past few months. There are also several other items that have not been processed and will be reported in February.

### Donations

1. *Taken at the Flood - The Remarkable Unfinished Story of Banknorth Group of Portland, Maine, 1824 - 2002*, by James Hayman. Pub. by Banknorth Group of Portland, Maine, 2003. We helped them w/ some photos; they sent us two copies.
2. One Durham Bicentennial Medal, dated 1989, by the Durham Historical Society.
3. Photographs, 1929 ELHS yearbook and baby book relating to Alice Sawtelle Conrad, 1911 - 1982. By Jeanne Conrad of Homosassa, FL.

### Purchased

1. *Papa Martel*, by Gerard Robichaud. Pub. by U.

Maine Press, Orono, 2003. This book by a Lewiston author uses a photograph from our collection for its cover.

2. *Pearl Business*, by Sarah Dugan. Pub. by the Author, 2001. This juvenile work is by an Auburn author.

3. *Marty on the Mountain*, by Martin Engstrom. Pub. by the author, 2003. This local author has autographed our copy.

#### Boilerplate for Occasional Inclusion

1. Reprints of the 1891 History of Androscoggin County, Maine, edited by Georgia Drew Merrill, are available. Please allow up to ten weeks for your order. Please give us your mailing address and telephone number. The price is \$90.00 plus \$5.00 S&H plus \$4.50 5% Maine Sales Tax. A must for the serious Androscoggin historian.

2. We have antique Lewiston & Auburn postcards for sale. Please add \$3.50 S&H plus 5% Sales Tax. (We have more Standard Sets than Collectors' Sets.)  
LEWISTON STANDARD SET - 26 Cards: \$20.00;  
LEWISTON COLLECTORS' SET - 42 Cards: \$40.00;  
AUBURN STANDARD SET - 16 Cards: \$12.00;  
AUBURN COLLECTORS' SET - 28 Cards: \$25.00;  
BOTH STANDARD SETS - 42 Cards: \$30.00;  
BOTH COLLECTORS' SETS - 70 Cards: \$60.00.

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3. Would you like to receive a tax deduction? You may do so by making a donation to our society, since we are tax exempt under I. R. S. Code 501 (c) 3. If you have any questions, then please contact your tax advisor or us. Thank you.

4. Did you know that, since we are exempt from Federal taxes, remembering the Androscoggin Historical Society in your will could reduce your Federal Estate Taxes? Simply include the following in your will: "I devise to the Androscoggin Historical Society, County Building, 2 Turner St., Auburn, ME 04210-5978, \$\_\_\_\_\_, in cash for its general purposes." If you, your attorney, or tax accountant need more information, then please contact this Society. Thank you.

5. Morin Brick Company of Danville has kindly donated some custom-made bricks imprinted with "Danville 1802 - 2002" for Danville's Bicentennial. We have them on sale here for three dollars a brick, or six for fifteen dollars, plus tax. We've sold about 80% so far; help buy down our brick wall in the hall! We have thirty-some left.

6. Our guide Cultural Resources of Androscoggin County, Maine is now free for the asking. Please include \$2.00 S&H for orders of 3 or less; \$3.00 for more, or pick it up for free here at the Society and elsewhere. Suggested donation of \$2 per copy.