

# ANDROSCOGGIN HISTORY

February 2005

Newsletter of the Androscoggin Historical Society

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## LEON M. NORRIS (1918-2004)

The death on 19 December 2004 of Leon M. Norris, an honorary director of our Society, has removed an important figure in the history of the Androscoggin Historical Society. Upon his retirement from the Auburn Fire Department in 1977, Mr. Norris became curator and executive secretary of the Society for about a decade.

Leon's handyman skills contributed greatly to the development of our current quarters. In May 1975 he and John White painted the library and put down wall-to-wall carpet. He was in charge of a major renovation project in 1979 that involved change of the displays, cleaning, and painting. In 1983 the minutes report a "face lifting" of all the museum rooms with the help of a Boy Scout troop under Leon's supervision. This involved laying new carpet, painting the walls and ceilings, hanging peg boards for exhibits, cleaning the glass cases, and building new cases.

Leon's loyal service made it possible for the Society to maintain more regular hours, being open every weekday afternoon during his tenure. Before that we were open mainly by appointment, with a few short periods when volunteers staffed regular hours one or two days a week.

We remember Leon's friendliness and good humor. He once told a story on himself and other men in connection with the 1979 renovations. They were moving things around when they came upon a collection of old hats. "Each man chose a hat and placing it atop his head, continued to work. These included an 1800's deputy marshal cap, a Civil War dress cap, an old W. C. Fields-style top hat, a policeman's helmet, and a Poland Spring doorman's cap. As they labored, two little old ladies came to the entrance. Confronted by a group of men in such unique attire, hard at work, the women beat a quick retreat. ..." (*Lew. Eve. Journal*, 19 Oct 1979)

The Society extends sincere condolences to his widow, Jane (Parsons) Norris, who herself has served the Society in many ways, including valued work as treasurer.

## CO-OPERATIVE MUSEUM VENTURE

The Board of Directors of our Society voted at its meeting of 19 January 2005 to participate in an exploration of the viability of a museum-art-cultural facility in Lewiston-Auburn. Sponsored by Museum L-A, a fledgling museum on local textile, shoe and other industries, this study assumes that any new institution that emerges would preserve the separate identities, organizations, and holdings of the respective organizations. They presumably would benefit by sharing overhead, such as fund-raising; a building with common display, lecture, and storage space; utilities; and general staff. President David Young appointed Doug Hodgkin and Dennis Stires to represent the Society in these deliberations.

Elliott Epstein has been the prime advocate and organizer of Museum L-A. Other organizations that may participate in the discussions are L-A Sports Hall of Fame, Great Falls Railroad Club, Lewiston Historical Commission, Maine Heritage Weavers, and veterans' organizations. Bates College Museum of Art, Lewiston-Auburn Railroad, Franco American Heritage Center, and Franco American Heritage Collection have indicated interest to the extent of possibly lending objects and materials for particular exhibitions.

Our Society badly needs space, greater visibility, and expanded financial grounding. If the new museum becomes a reality, in your editor's opinion, this may be an opportunity that provides the best hope for survival of our Society.

## MEETING NOTICE

On Tuesday, 22 February 2005, at 7:00 P.M., **Dr. William Hiss**, Vice President for External Affairs, and **Darcy York** of the Bates Class of 2005 will speak at our museum in the County Building on "**150 Years of Bates College in Lewiston and Auburn.**" The College is observing its sesquicentennial this year.

## LEWISTON TEMPERANCE SOCIETY

The following are the records of the Temperance Society in Lewiston, embracing the Constitution of the Lewiston, Danville and East Minot Temperance Society organized in Lewiston July 13<sup>th</sup> AD 1828. This Society continued its united and successful operations together until the 30<sup>th</sup> day of November AD 1833, when it was thought proper and unanimously voted and agreed upon in a Meeting of said Society previously notified, for that purpose, "That said Society be divided and the Members of said Society in Lewiston constitute a Society by themselves."

December 12<sup>th</sup> 1833. The Members of the Lewiston, Danville and East Minot Temperance Society residing in Lewiston, met in convention at the Brick school House at Lewiston Corner [intersection of Sabattus and Main Streets], to organize themselves into a separate society. [They revised the constitution and elected Dr. Calvin Gorham President and William Garcelon Recording Secretary.]

Dec. 26 – 1833. [Adopted a new constitution:] Art. 2. This Society recognizes as a fundamental principle total abstinence [sic] from all concern with ardent spirits as an article of refreshment, entertainment or traffic, and we whose names are hereunto annexed do severally and unitedly agree, that in all suitable ways we will discountenance the use of it in the community except as a medicine.

Art. 3. The sole object of this society shall be the promotion of Temperance, by concentrating the efforts of its friends through out the town, by diffusing information, and by moral influence, of precept, advice and example.

... on motion it was voted that the recording secretary shall omit transferring the names of those Members of this society from the Old constitution to the new one who have been known to have violated their pledge –

January 23<sup>rd</sup> AD 1834. Agreeable to adjournment I attended at the Friends Meeting House, but on account of the extreme cold weather there were but two or three attended + the members did not proceed to open the meeting – William Garcelon R. Secretary

March 13<sup>th</sup> 1834 ... 1<sup>st</sup> on Motion it was voted unanimously and expedient to make an effort to form Temperance Societies in each school dist. in town if practicable [sic] to be auxiliary to the Town Temperance Societies.

[Voted to raise funds] and to endeavour to procure a sufficient [sic] number [of publications] to supply each family in Lewiston with a temperance paper monthly through the ensuing year. [Total of \$8 recorded as subscribed by Calvin Gorham, Wm Garcelon, Noah Litchfield, and Samuel Pickard.]

[The next meeting was the annual meeting 24<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1834 to choose officers and delegates to state convention.]

Jan 15 1835 ... no business done.

Jan 22 1835 [Samuel G. Phillips requested his name be removed from membership.]

Feb 26 1835 [James L. Herrick made the same request.]

Nov. 4 1835 ... voted to expel James S. Truphant from this society

2<sup>d</sup> voted to raise a committee to ascertain [sic] who have violated their pledge and to collect such evidence as will be in their power to substantiate the fact.

3<sup>d</sup> voted that Jacob Golder William R. Frye and Alonzo Garcelon be the above committee

Dec. 23. 1835 [annual meeting elected officers and delegates.]

On motion voted to accept the report of J. Golder Wm R. Frye, + Alonzo Garcelon. [no indication of content of report]

Resolved that the thanks of this society be presented to Col. Tebbets and Lieut Col. Chaney for refusing to furnish ardent spirits at their late military election –

Dec. 28. 1836 [annual meeting re-elected officers. Voted to meet on 23 Jan 1837 with a speaker, but the records end at this point.]

Initially, the temperance movement in the United States, and as indicated above locally, adopted the strategy of persuasion through example and the distribution of educational materials. They did support government licensing of sellers of ardent spirits, but did not seek prohibition. During this period, the Lewiston advocates appear, on the basis of these records, to have been fairly inactive and ineffective.

The following are the earliest Lewiston members of the Lewiston, Danville and East Minot Temperance Society:

Male Members	Female Members
July 13. AD 1828.	July 13 <sup>th</sup> 1828.
Benjamin Murray	Maria Page
Ephraim Richardson	Roxana Hutchnes
Calvin Gorham	Hannah M. Jepson
Nathan Reynolds	Mehitable Davis
Samuel W. Farnham	Priscilla Murray
Edward White	Annis Waire
Jonas Davis, removed	Annis P. Waire
Ezra Purinton “	Mary Purinton
Ira Purinton “	Betsey Clough
Jacob Golder “	Eleanor Robinson
Robert Thompson “	Dorcas Purinton
Hezekiah R. Thomas removed	Apphidelia Golder
Dan Read Jr	Lurana Gorham
Winslow Chase removed	Sophonria Paul.
Robert F Ellis “	
Upham Thompson “	

List to be continued in the next newsletter.

**ACQUISITIONS.** We have acquired the following

items recently:

## Donations

- Two scrapbooks from AARP #4077, 1987-96 & 1996-2001, by the chapter.
- Senior class photo of ELHS, 1927, by Beverly Crockett of Addison, TX.
- Peoples Bank weather forecaster, ca. 1960s, & six Auburn Hall picture-tile photos, taken in 2002, donated by Maurice Fournier of Auburn.
- *Poland Spring - Walk Hand in Hand with History - 1790's to Today*, ca. 2004, by Mel and Cyndi Robbins, donated by Elliott Levy of the Poland Spring Preservation Society, Poland.
- Collection of United Baptist Church directories, bulletins, and newsletters, with one bulletin from South Lewiston Baptist Church, ca. 1950s to the 1970s, from Laura Hodgkin, of Lewiston.
- Aerial photograph of downtown Lewiston, ca. early 1930s, donated by Anonymous.
- *Mainebiz 2004 Book of Lists*, published by Mainebiz.
- In return for our selling a collection of *Hilltop Magazine* to the Poland Spring Preservation Society, we received twenty-two microfilm rolls of the *Hilltop* from Elliott Levy of the PSPS.

## Purchases

- *Mainebiz 2003 Book of Lists*, published by Mainebiz.
- *The Wabanakis of Maine and the Maritimes*, with CD, published by the American Friends Committee, 1989.
- *A Wabanaki Guide to Maine*, published by the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance, n.d. but recent.
- *Maine Lighthouses - Documentation of Their Past*, by J. Candace Clifford and Mary Louise Clifford, published by Cypress Communications, Alexandria, VA, 2005.
- *Maine Register - State Yearbook and Legislative Manual*, No. 135, by Tower Publishing Company, 2005.
- *Israel Washburn Jr. - Maine's Little-Known Giant of the Civil War*, by Kerck Kelsey, Picton Press, Rockport, Maine, 2004.

## GOINGS-ON AT THE SOCIETY

By Michael Lord, Executive Secretary

1) Calendar Year 2004 business totals are as follows: Telephone calls -744; Museum visits -387+; Library visits -332; Correspondence -882; Programs sent -179; Meeting attendance -169; Meeting Notices sent -591; Board & Committee Meeting attendance -86; Newsletters sent -472; Great Falls Balloon Festival attendance -9+; Annual Dinner attendance -32; Book meetings - 27 (there was a little yet to do in January 2004); Book advertisements - 216; Emails - 1,950.

2) December 2004 donations were Mr. Irving Isaacson of Brann & Isaacson of Lewiston, \$200.00; Prof. Douglas I. Hodgkin, \$200.00; and Mrs. Bonnie Lounsbury, \$50.00. Thanks to all. Total for this fiscal year thus far, \$1,150.00, not counting the donation box.

3) Our books received free publicity on Maine Public Radio about the third week of December, according to Bill Greene, salesman for WLAM. I'm sure this helped sell them. There was also an article in the *Sun Journal* about them that helped, in addition to our radio spots.

4) Our books are available! *Alnôbak: A Story of Indigenous People in Androscoggin County*, by Canyon Wolf, aka Nancy Lecompte, and *Androscoggin County, Maine: A Pictorial Sesquicentennial History, 1854-2004*, edited by Michael C. Lord & W. Dennis Stires. \$45 the set, or \$20 & \$30 each, respectively, plus Sales Tax of \$2.25, 1.00, or 1.50. Please add \$5 S&H for mail order. Available at the Society's office in the County Building, the Book Burrow, Mr. Paperback, Rÿsen, Republic Jewelry, and many town offices. Please browse these two web pages for the books:

[http://www.avcnet.org/ne-do-ba/ad\\_book1.html](http://www.avcnet.org/ne-do-ba/ad_book1.html)

[http://www.avcnet.org/ne-do-ba/ad\\_book2.html](http://www.avcnet.org/ne-do-ba/ad_book2.html)

5) 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.

## MUNICIPAL COURT

Salmon Ellms in the year of our Lord one thousand eighteen hundred and sixty-three and on the 13th inst., took several matutinal nippers to drive dull care away, and as a consequence got very “ow are ye.”—His spirits were so jubilant that he disturbed the peace of the community—which has a remedy, which is Judge Smith. The Salmon was accordingly brought before this tribunal. In this frying pan the fish was somewhat uncomfortable. A fine of three dollars and costs being too big for his depleted treasury, he was put in quarters at the Jail.

On Monday Marshal Shirer, feeling the necessity of eating or dying, preferred to eat; feeling the necessity of dying or stealing, he preferred to steal, —which he did, and “God forgive him, if he isn’t sorry and won’t do so any more.” He did break into and enter a dwelling house, and did abstract therefrom a quantity of flour, as is reported. Brought before Judge Smith. Ordered to recognize for his appearance at Court. Couldn’t do it on account of inflation of the currency. The law severely just, thrust him into the jail over to Auburn.

From *Lewiston Daily Evening Journal*, 18 February 1863, p. 3.

## 1908 MAPS

We have acquired very detailed maps of Androscoggin County from ca. 1908. These maps are in the computer; please ask to see them. We can send you these maps by (a) file transfer or (b) mailing a CD-ROM disk. If you prefer physical maps, you can get them printed on fresh, strong paper.

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## ANDROSCOGGIN'S FIRST WOMAN LAWYER

The Supreme Judicial court, especially convened in Auburn Tuesday, to receive Mrs. Alice M. Parker of Lewiston, as the first woman member of the Androscoggin Bar Association. Active Retired Justice John A. Morrell of Auburn presided and the oath allowing Mrs. Parker to practice in all Maine courts was administered by Clerk of Courts John L. Reade.

The introduction to the court was made by Attorney Tascus Atwood of Auburn, dean of the Androscoggin Bar, who stated it was well recalled with what uniform efficiency and courtesy Mrs. Parker had served as clerk in the probate court during the years past. He said he felt honored to receive one of her high intellectual and social standing into the legal profession.

Mrs. Parker was a candidate for nomination as register of probate in the recent Republican primaries.

Present among the spectators for this ceremony were Elvert E. Parker cashier of the Manufacturers’ National bank, husband of the new woman barrister, and a group of women friends including Miss Annie L. Barr, Mrs. W. H. Newell, Miss Maude Huskins, and Miss Eloise Huskins.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Mrs. Parker was presented a bouquet of roses.

Present on the bench with Justice Morrill were Superior Court Justice William H. Fisher of Augusta, who was about to open the September term of Superior court in Auburn, and Rev. Fr. Armand Chabot, pastor of Sacred Heart parish, Auburn, who invoked the blessing.

Source: “Alice M. Parker Becomes First Woman Lawyer in Androscoggin County,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 6 September 1932, 1.