

BUXTON – HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

100 Main Street, Route 4A , P. O. Box 34, Buxton, Maine 04093 **June 2025**

Incorporated 1970 www.BuxtonHollisHistorical.org (207) 929-1684

President's Message: by Nancy Ponzetti ***Upcoming & New Events! Save the Dates!***

April began a new season at BHHS complete with a schedule of new educational programs. Our Society hosted well-received Tuesday programs in April and May-*Salmon Falls National Historic Districts: West and East, Local Railroading, Alias Agnes: A Gilded Age Spy, and a Genealogy Workshop.*

Upcoming programs will be on September 16th with Jim Libby, and our Annual Meeting on October 25th.

Happily, BHHS is excited to announce an additional program on Saturday, September 13th from 11:30 am until 2 pm: *Wabanaki Stories and Lunch.* Our guest will be Jennifer Pictou, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Aroostook Band of Micmacs. Ms. Pictou was also the Museum Educator at Mashantucket Pequot Museum, Education Programs Supervisor at Mystic Seaport, Connecticut, and Executive Director for Bangor Museum and Center of History. She is the owner of Bar Harbor Ghost Tours, a subsidiary of Dawn Land Tours LLC.

From 1-2 pm Ms. Pictou will tell Wabanaki tales including the indigenous side of Squando's curse of the Saco River. From 11:30 am until 1:00 pm, lunch will be served: homemade chilis (venison, turkey/white chili, meatless), cornbread, and desserts. There will be vegan, lactose-free, and gluten-free options.

Native American crafts and BHHS merchandise will be available for purchase. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$5 for children ages 6-12, and free for children under 6. Your ticket includes lunch and

the hour of Wabanaki stories. Seating is limited so reservations are suggested. You may call 207-929-1684 or email bhhs@buxtonhollishistorical.org.



**We look forward to seeing you on
Saturday, September 13!**

Volunteers Needed: Buxton Community Festival

Each year the Buxton Hollis Historical Society participates in the Buxton Community Festival Lawn Sale. Hosted by the First Congregational Church (Tory Hill Meetinghouse), this year's sale is scheduled for **Saturday, August 9, 2025 from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm.** Volunteers are needed for the BHHS merchandise table that includes maps, books, framed and unframed prints, locally crafted wooden ornaments, and Buxton coverlets. If you are able to volunteer any time during that day, contact BHHS at 207-929-1684 or bhhs@buxtonhollishistorical.org. This is a rain or shine event, so please come join us for a fun-filled day.

Historic Sites and Buildings: Hollis, Maine

By Nancy Ponzetti

The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects worthy of preservation for historical significance. Criteria for inclusion on the National Register are established by the National Park Service. Properties must be at least fifty-years-old, have a high degree of integrity, and historical significance.



Salmon Falls (West)

A National Historic District may contain buildings, structures, objects, sites, and landscape features, or any combination of these resources. The district must possess a significant concentration of sites united by integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and location. One of Maine's recognized National Historic Districts is Salmon Falls (West), named a national historic district in 1987. It consists of ten properties, eight contributing and two non-contributing. Overall the district covers approximately thirteen acres and was once a manufacturing and mercantile center with four stores and a shoe mill. In or near the district were a shingle mill and a grist mill powered by Saco River waters. The two oldest houses, circa 1794, were built by Isaac Lane and Jabez Bradbury. Other houses in the district were built between 1820-1840. Architecturally, the homes are one-and-one-half story capes to two-story Federal/Greek Revival style dwellings. Except for the brick house of Moses Dunn, all other contributing structures are wooden frame construction.

Included within the National Historic District is Quillcote -- Hollis' only building on the National Register of Historic Places. Quillcote is the former summer home of Kate Douglas Wiggin: author, musician, teacher, playwright, and at one time, an international celebrity. With her sister, Nora Archibald Smith, Kate established the Salmon Falls Village Library in 1911 and formed the Dorcas Society, a charitable organization.

Quillcote



Along with these nationally recognized properties, the Town of Hollis’ website lists twenty-four historic public buildings. Two of those properties, the Memorial Bridge and the Indian Cellar Teahouse may be removed from that list. The Memorial Bridge was replaced in 2012, and the Indian Cellar Teahouse was moved from Hollis across the Salmon Falls Bridge to Bar Mills on May 11, 2025.

In keeping with its mission to collect, preserve, and publish whatever may be related to the early and late history of the towns of Hollis and Buxton, the Buxton Hollis Historical Society has spent many hours finishing the Hollis Roadside Survey. This survey identifies and documents all resources over fifty-years-old and evaluates their eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The completed, published survey is then submitted to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for final review and acceptance.

The Salmon Falls Library



Prior to the expenditure of federal funds, all federal agencies must consider the potential impacts of a project on historic properties. Federal law codified this under the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106. Projects such as the replacement of the Salmon Falls Bridge, and the installation of the traffic light at the intersection of Routes 35 and 202, required architectural surveys before the projects could be approved. The Maine Preservation Commission works with federal agencies on these surveys, and its job will be made easier by the Hollis Roadside Survey.

These architectural surveys have identified possible areas and properties that could be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places or Districts, for example, the Odd Fellows Hall or a Moderation Road Residential District.

Historic buildings and structures represent an important part of how Hollis is viewed by residents and visitors alike. Only about 20% of all currently occupied housing units in Hollis were built before 1960, due both to the wildfires of 1947, which burned many historic homes in Hollis, and to recent residential growth. The existence of strong recognition and educational programs related to historic and cultural resources is nearly as important as the resources themselves. Recognizing historic buildings and sites raises public awareness which in turn builds public and financial support for preservation. Presently, the Buxton-Hollis Historical Society provides these services for the Town through educational programs recorded and made available for on-demand viewing by Saco River Community TV. BHHS publishes seasonal newsletters mailed or electronically received by its members. Non-members may obtain copies of the newsletters at local stores or businesses or at Society Headquarters, 100 Main Street, Route 4A, Bar Mills. During its public hours or by appointment, residents may access the BHHS' library for local history or genealogical research.

Acquired by Indian deeds in 1660, incorporated in 1798, the Town of Hollis has a rich and vibrant history preserved in its buildings, cemeteries, stone walls, and archeological sites.

Odd Fellows Hall at Moderation Village, Hollis

The building was home to the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs beginning in 1875. It hosted plays, dinners, movies, and community events. It is currently under restoration by Lee Hoagland, an historic restoration specialist. He, wife Katie, and family live in an 1840's cape in Groveville that they restored instead of demolishing, as the latter had been assumed by the sellers.

www.thehallinhollis.com



Moderation Village at West Buxton, late 1800's, before construction of the power station.



2025 Programs and Events

BHHS is open Thursdays, 4 to 8 pm,

August 9th, Saturday 9:00-2:00

Buxton & Hollis Community Days

Two venues, 2 parades, 2 sets of fireworks!.

New Event!

September 13th, Saturday opens at 11:30

Wabanaki Story Hour, with Jennifer Pictou.

Ms. Pictou is Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Aroostook Band of Micmacs.

Lunch - 11:30 -1:00 pm Story Hour 1:00-2:00

\$12 adults \$5 ages 6-12 free under 6

September 16th 7pm

So You Think You Know Hollis and Buxton?

with Maine State Senator James D. Libby

Join us for an interactive program based our communities on the Saco River.

We changed the date of the Annual Meeting:

Saturday, October 25th Dinner at 6:00pm

Social and potluck dishes at 5:30 pm

Annual Meeting and Potluck followed by:

The Gunpowder Mills of Gorham & Windham, Maine

Saturday, December 6th 10am to 2pm

Second Annual Santa's Shindig

Join us for Crafts, Books, Food and Fancies

BHHS OFFICERS

Nancy Ponzetti - President

Dorothy Bell, Vice President – Buxton

Steve Roberts, Vice President – Hollis

Vicki Walker, Secretary

Linda Towle & Steve Roberts, Co-Treasurers

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Janice Hill, Past President & Life Story Editor

Brenton Hill, Historian & Tech Support

Nancy Pierce, Membership Chair

Nancy Pierce, Librarian

Sue Schaller, Newsletter Editor

Bette Robicheaw, Hospitality Chair

Opportunity Knocks to be: Social Media Director

Opportunity Knocks to be: Accessions Registrar

Robert Yarumian, Clerk

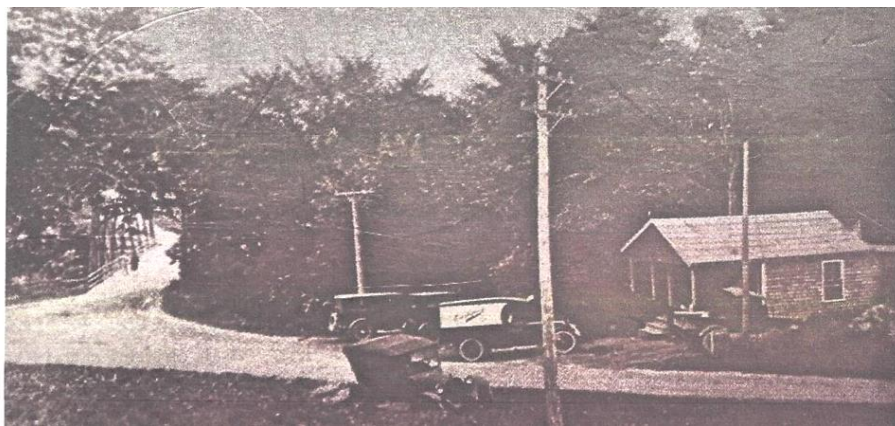
John Myers, Auditor

History on the Move: Indian Cellar Teahouse

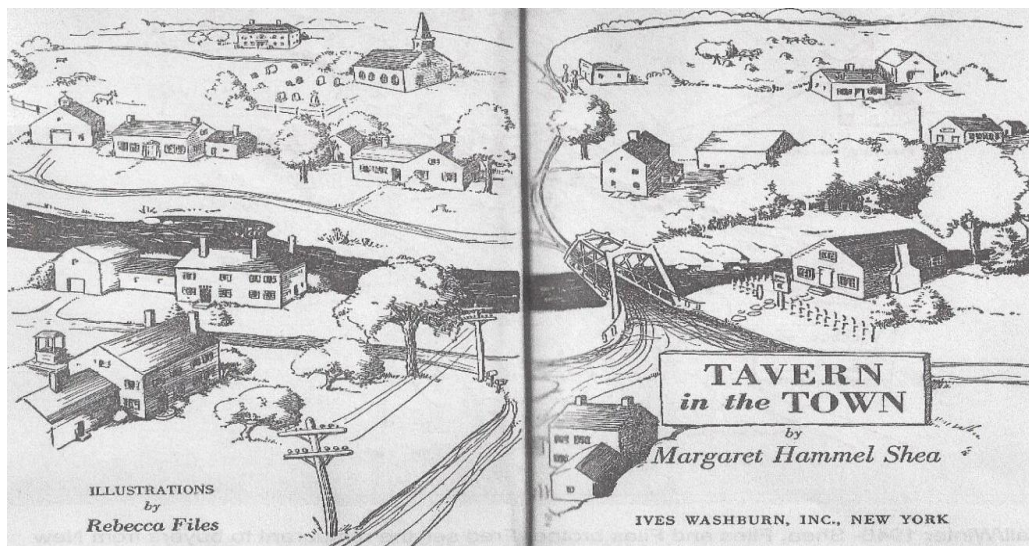
By Nancy Ponzetti

In 1911 Kate Douglas Wiggin and her sister, Nora Archibald Smith, purchased an “eyesore” of a house near the Salmon Falls Bridge for a library and a kindergarten. The sisters renovated the house with the upper floor becoming the Salmon Falls Library, housing 2,000 books for public borrowing. The first floor of the library became a tearoom serving afternoon tea, punch, sandwiches, and cakes under the direction of the hostess, Mrs. William Moulton. This was the first teahouse, or tearoom, at Salmon Falls.

During the 1930s a small building was constructed across from the Salmon Falls Library in Hollis on the banks of the Saco River. On June 27, 1934 the Salmon Falls Teahouse opened with Dorothy Trask as the proprietor, operating seasonally in July and August.



Ownership of the teahouse changed in January 1946 when Margaret Shea, Rebecca Files, and Rebecca’s brother Fred bought the building adding several renovations: a fireplace, a toilet, a cover over the spring used for drinking water, a septic system with a pipe emptying into the Saco River, and an addition for takeout dining. These owners would name the restaurant the Indian Cellar Teahouse, and Margaret Shea would author a book *Tavern in the Town*, published in 1948. After one summer season, these owners sold the Teahouse to buyers from New Jersey.

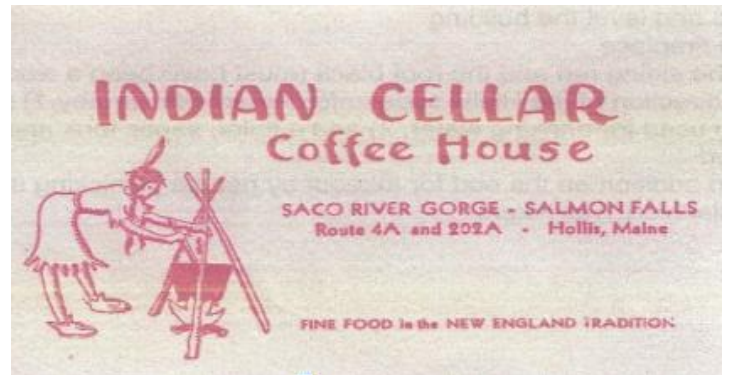


By 1948 Ida Sawtelle became the proprietor and renamed the building the Indian Cellar Coffee House. The menu included toast, sandwiches, beverages, ice cream, and special lunches made to order for those wishing to picnic outside.



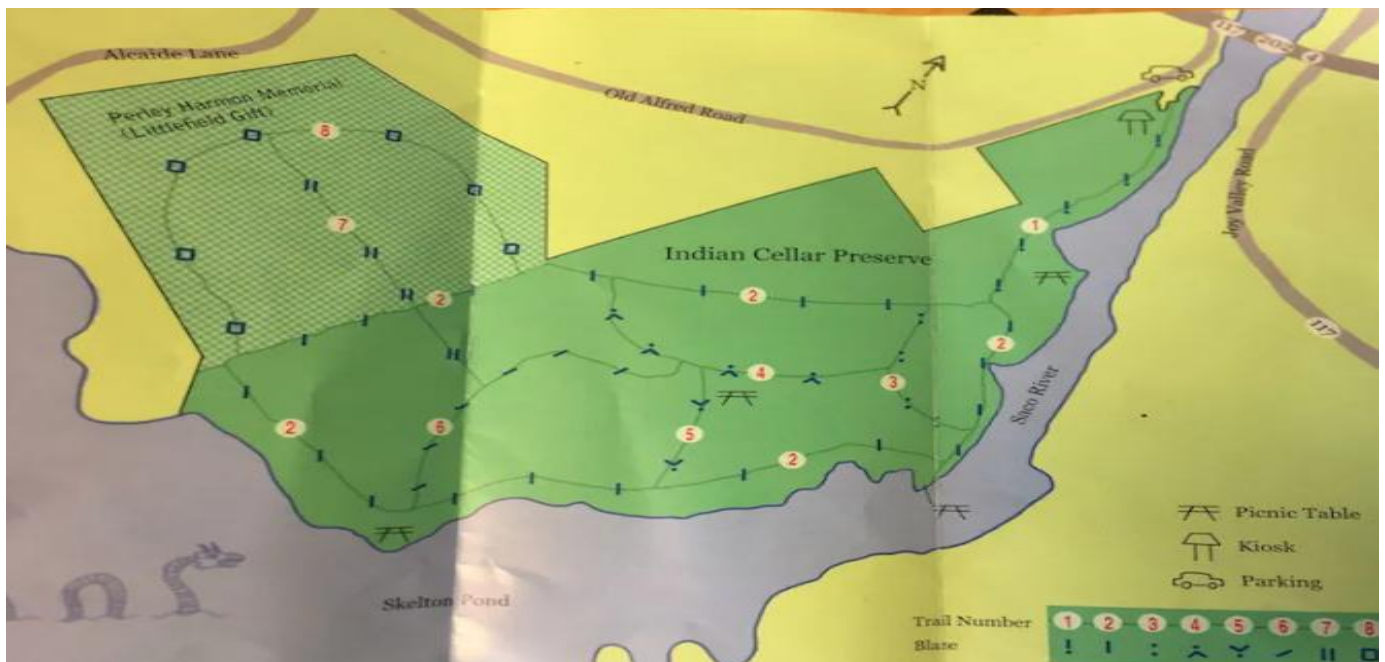
Courtesy of Buxton-Hollis Historical Society

*Taking Brown Bread from an
Old Fashioned Steamer
Indian Cellar Coffee House
Rt. 202 A, Hollis, Me.
Ida Sawtelle, Prop.*



Circa 1950 the Coffee House was owned and operated by Jane Frothingham from Buxton. The last guestbook entries from the Indian Cellar Coffee House came in 1965.

From 1970 to 2000 the building was used as a real estate office, a canoe retailer, and other retail businesses. In 2021, after years of being empty and derelict, the Indian Cellar Teahouse was headed for demolition, only to have the Town of Hollis purchase the property as part of the Indian Cellar Recreation Area.



Fate had other plans for the old Teahouse. A group headed by the owners and board members of the Saco River Theater offered to move and restore the Teahouse on property across from the theater. After years of planning, fundraising, grant writing, permitting, and weather delays, the Indian Cellar Teahouse was moved over the Salmon Falls Bridge to its new home on the Salmon Falls Road, Bar Mills (Buxton). The building will serve as a scene shop for creating play sets and storage for theater props and scenery.



Fittingly, this early Sunday morning Mothers' Day move occurred during National Historic Preservation Month. Beginning as a week-long celebration in 1973, extending to a month in 2005, May is dedicated to recognizing the importance of historic places and promoting their preservation. Thanks to the donations of residents and businesses, the Indian Cellar Teahouse has journeyed through the years and through the streets to its new home near the Saco River.

Moving Day-May 11, 2025: Photos courtesy of Patrick Bonsant, Saco River Community Television



Tea House on the move....



Crossing Salmon Falls Bridge



The Tea House arriving on Salmon Falls Road, Buxton side, opposite The Saco River Theatre



The BHHS Newsletter
Is sponsored by

**Chad E. Poitras
Funeral Home**

**Funeral Services and
Cremation Provider**

498 Long Plains Road
Buxton, Maine 04093
207 929-3723

Chad Poitras, BHHS Member
and local resident,
Serving the community
with dignity
and respect.

Interesting local history for summer visitors:

The Prince Project runs daily historic tours of Eastern Cemetery in Portland. This year they are offering *Black History in the Old Burial Ground.*

Online at: www.princeproject.org

Also open now: The Portland Observatory on Munjoy Hill, Wasdworth-Longfellow House, and the Tate House Museum, and Maine Historical Society

Available online: our May 20th program on Local Railroading, with Jonathan Wells

<https://vimeo.com/1092501369>

Thank you to Patrick Bonsant and Saco River Community Television for making our programs available on video.

Do you have old BHHS Newsletters?

We are looking for copies from these dates to complete our own historic files:

1974-1977, 1980-1981, 1984-2007

Membership Year 2025 (by Calendar Year)

Today's Date _____

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Phone – mobile _____

Home _____

Send my Newsletter to my email
 to my USPS mailbox

Annual Dues Levels

Student \$5 Individual \$10

Family \$20 Patron \$50

Sustaining \$100

Lifetime Individual \$450

Couple \$500

Please make checks to:

Buxton-Hollis Historical Society

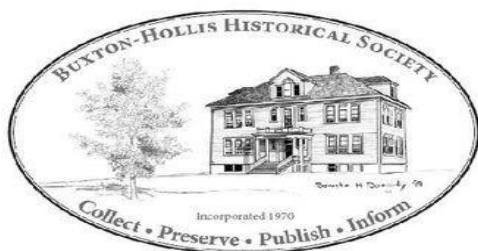
Send to: Buxton-Hollis Historical Society

Attn: Membership Chair

P O Box 34

Buxton, ME 04093

Thank you for your support!



BUXTON - HOLLIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 34

BUXTON, ME 04093

Open Hours Thursdays 4-8 pm

August 9th 9:00-2:00

Buxton & Hollis Community Day

September 13th 11:30-1:00 & 1:00-2:00

Lunch, Indigenous Market &

Wabanaki Story Hour with Jennifer Pictou

September 16th 7:00 pm

Hollis & Buxton by James D. Libby

October 25th – social 5:30 dinner at 6:00

Annual Meeting, Potluck Supper & program

December 6th – 10:00 – 2:00

Santa's Shindig – crafts, food, books & fancies