

PHIPPSBURG HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
AUGUST 2014

SOCIETY NEWS

In loving memory, the 2014 newsletter of the Phippsburg Historical Society is dedicated to Ada Catherine Minott Haggett

IN MEMORIUM: *ADA HAGGETT*

Ada Haggett passed away on Sunday, September 29, 2013. She was born on December 13, 1923 in Boston, MA, the daughter of Charles V. and Rebecca Brown Minott. She grew up in Boston and spent her summers at the family home at Phippsburg Center, where she often played the organ for services at the Phippsburg Congregational Church, in her early teens. Ada received her BA in 1945 from the University of Maine, Orono and her Masters' degree in English in 1947. Ada married Frederick M. Haggett on August 23, 1947 and the couple resided in the Minott house in Phippsburg until 1979 when they relocated to the Dromore region of Phippsburg.

Mrs. Haggett was well known for her interest in the history of Phippsburg and of the Minott shipbuilding and shipping interest. She spent many years organizing the records and artifacts from the Minott business and over the years she made significant donations from these resources to the Maine Maritime Museum and other historical institutions in Maine. Ada

was a founding member and the first president of the Phippsburg Historical Society, which was formed in the early 1960s, and she led the effort to acquire the Phippsburg Center one-room schoolhouse and converted it into a town museum. She was very involved in preparing the exhibits and served as a volunteer during the museum's open hours for many years. She was a key member of the writing and editing team for preparation of the award-winning town history Phippsburg, Fair to the Wind for the town's sesquicentennial celebration in 1964.

Ada had a passion for music. She loved classical music and opera, and was an accomplished pianist and organist. In the late 1960s, she began plying the organ regularly for services at St. Mary's Church and continued to do so for many years.

She was a supporter of the Phippsburg Land Trust and similar organization with transfers of property. In 1994 she sold Lee Island, in the Kennebec River to the State of Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife under a National Coastal Wetlands conservation grant.

She is survived by her two sons, Stephen of Phippsburg and Frederick and his wife Karen of Connifer, Colorado, grandchildren Catherine, Frederick and his wife Rachel, Caroline and Michael.

Mrs. Haggett's husband, Frederick Mitchell Haggett, a former Phippsburg Selectman and Phippsburg Town Meeting moderator, passed away on June 16, 2014.

LAURA A. NICKERSON

The Society would also like to acknowledge the passing of Laura A. Nickerson, a tireless volunteer for many years.

Laura, 73, passed away at her home with her family at her side May 14th, 2014. She was born in Bath, Maine on August 19th, 1940, the daughter of Lawrence and Arlene Libby. Laura grew up in Phippsburg and attended Phippsburg and Bath schools. She married Norman Nickerson on December 1st, 1962.

Laura worked several jobs in her lifetime including Mayer's Electrical Shop, Rock Gardens Inn and the Lobster House in Phippsburg. She also worked at Hyde School, Mid-Coast Senior Center and New Meadows Inn. Laura held the position of ballot clerk in Phippsburg for many years.

She was an active member of the Unity Circle, a longtime member of the Phippsburg Fire Auxiliary and very active on the 200th Anniversary committee for Phippsburg 200th Birthday.

Laura was a person you couldn't help but love. She had a heart of gold, there wasn't anything she wouldn't do to help anyone. She loved spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren, Jenn, Jocelyn, and Matthew. She also loved music, dancing, and old photos, gardening, sewing, baking, and eating what she baked. She was a special lady who will be missed by all those who loved her.

GREETINGS FROM PHS PRESIDENT, JESSIE SUTFIN

Our museum is also celebrating its 50th birthday this year.

The museum is open even though the Parker Head Rd is going through construction. Please stop by and visit. Our new board has been busy this year. We have planned several new events and installed a new exhibit about Phippsburg Stores. We continue to catalog the museum documents and to add to our research room.

Our future sounds exciting, with the possibility of a climate controlled area, and the donation of a historic building that would be filled with the things about fishing industry in Phippsburg. Gloria Gray has put together a great book entitled, "Phippsburg Fisherman". She donated all proceeds of the first printing to the Society. I urge you to buy one. They are available at Bisson's General Store. Her second book, Round Cove may be available at the annual meeting.

NEW MUSEUM DISPLAY FOR 2014- 2015

Local grocery stores in Phippsburg are the focus of the newest exhibit at the museum. Over the years there have been many general stores in all areas of town and this display shows pictures of the original stores and, thanks to Charline Wyman Photography, also includes a present day picture of each location and a display case with old local store items. You might find it interesting to know that as you enter our town in Winnegance you pass by a building that was once the Josiah Perry Store which first opened on September 1,

1840. The 1905-1906 Business Directory lists 12 grocers in the town of Phippsburg, including the areas of the Center, Parker Head, Popham, Small Point, Ashdale, West Point and Sebasco. So come on in and find all the places in town where people used to be able to chat with friends and pick up needed supplies. Display organized by Lynda Wyman and Charline Wyman

THE MURPHY HOUSE

The Trustees of the Phippsburg Historical Society have agreed to have a new building added to its property. The Murphy House, built in Sebasco, will be restored by the Phippsburg Historic Preservation Commission and then moved to its new location next to the Phippsburg Historical Society Museum. The purpose of this house is to honor the history in Phippsburg of the fishing families and their music traditions, especially those of the Sebasco and West Point. The Commission is grateful for the acceptance of this building and is about to start its fund raising campaign for the restoration process. Donations can be made out to the Phippsburg Historical Society with a note that the donation is for the Murphy House. The following is the story of the Murphy House as we know it.

John and Pearl Murphy came home from a day of fishing in 1925 to find the frame of their new home. The builder of this 12 by 15 foot house was their neighbor and friend Charlie Gomes, a boatbuilder well-known throughout the Midcoast. The Murphy house, with its boat planks for floorboards, would sit close to the

road in the village of Sebasco for the next 77 years.

The small house originally had two rooms--one upstairs and one down. The family covered the interior walls with various layers to keep out the drafts, including newspaper, flour bags and wallpaper wrapped around the frames. The Murphy's four sons used a ladder-like stair to reach their beds under the eaves. Eventually two small additions would be constructed, including a kitchen.

The Murphys' circumstances were typical for many families in the fishing villages of Phippsburg during the 1920s and 30s. Although their home and means were modest, the family was a pious one as well as a musical one. Old photographs show their living room full of musicians as likely as not playing the kind of country gospel songs that one son, Ivan, would later record.

In 2002 owner Rink Varian wanted to demolish the house and build a rental cottage. He generously gave the Historic Preservation Commission time to save the house, which was moved to a temporary location with donations of labor, supplies and expertise from many townspeople. At its new permanent location the little Murphy house will be in a unique position to illustrate the daily life of fishing families in the early decades of the 20th century.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: TALL TREES, TALL SHIPS, AND ERNEST HASKELL BY JOHN GOFF

For our annual membership meeting this year, the PHS is pleased to present a talk by preservation architect John Goff.

John, who grew up in south Bath near the Winnegance Mill sites, has been actively involved with the Tide Mill Institute in detailing the workings of New England tide mills and has most recently discovered the work of Ernest Haskell. Haskell's early 20th century etchings provide detailed images of some of Phippsburg's historic mills. Join us for an evening of learning and discussion about what the work of Ernest Haskell can teach us about the mills of Phippsburg, significant features of our historic working landscape.

PHS Donations in Memory of: 2014

Donations in memory of Ada M.

Hagget:

Merry Craig Chapin \$100
Kathleen Watson Goodwin \$25
William and Frances Bowen \$50
Jean and Ron Flink \$50
James and Linda Totman \$50
Lawson J Beals \$50
Peter Hutchinson \$50
Joseph & Daretta Braun \$50

Donations in Memory Of:

Wallace R. Baker \$100
In memory of Charlotte Bowker Baker

Ann C. Carney \$300
In memory of John B. Carney

Priscilla F. Marton \$100
In memory of the Hill Family

William James \$1000
In memory of Arlene James

Ewart and Kathryn White \$100
In memory of Phoebe White

Peter Hutchinson \$100
In memory of Adelaide Campbell Hutchinson

Edwin Pert \$50
In memory of Ellen Staley

Carol & Charles Main \$20
In memory of Anda & Jan Bijhouwer

Thomas Henkle \$50
In memory of Barbara Mason

Joseph Huber \$20
In memory of the Wildes Family

Doug and Jessie Sutfin \$50
In memory of Newbold and Dorothy Varian

Merry and Craig Chapin \$100
In memory of Marlene, Anda, Paul Wallace, Woody Dana

Peter Hutchinson \$100
In memory of Adelaide Campbell Hutchinson

Donation in memory of Ruth Darling \$50

Elna Joseph \$50
In memory of Anda Bijhouwer

Donation of note:

Patrick B. Shekleton \$10,000

There are many donations given by generous members to PHS. They will be posted soon.

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