



From the Collections

The Newsletter of the Falmouth Historical Society

Autumn 2023

FHS at Cumberland Fair

The last week of September found our volunteers back at the Cumberland Fair where we had a table in the Exhibition Hall.



Our table at the Cumberland Fair

It is always enjoyable to see so many familiar faces. More than 100 people stopped by to reminisce about the “good old days” or ask about Falmouth history. We answered questions about modern and Colonial Falmouth (which included the present-day cities of Portland, South Portland, and Westbrook, as well as the town of Cape Elizabeth). A few visitors to our table brought questions about other towns. We told them what we could and then pointed them to their towns’ historical societies.

Summer 2023 at the Museum

Visitors to the Falmouth Heritage Museum this summer found the Museum and Barn humming with activity. We are open most Tuesdays (and by appointment) from May to October. Our volunteers are always ready to show off our collections and answer questions about Falmouth.

Our season began with a field trip by the second-grade classes from Falmouth Elementary School. Students cycled through four stations where they learned about life in the 19th century—including chores they would have performed and the lack of modern conveniences.

Every year at least one family comes to see the 19th century farmhouse housing our collections. This year it was two Leighton cousins whose family owned the house for 122 years. Our visitors had grown up hearing stories about the Leighton farmstead and were excited to tour areas we normally keep roped off and see furniture that once belonged to their family.

Our volunteers have been busy reorganizing our files of documents. They recently consolidated our files on the Presumpscot River into a foot-thick set of folders. People researching the history of our town are amazed by what we have in those files.



Accessioning and organizing collections

Many visitors come to the Museum seeking answers to questions about people, places, and events in Falmouth history. Our volunteers are always ready to help solve mysteries.

We plan to keep the Museum open for the rest of October. Please stop by!

Museum
60 Woods Road
Falmouth, Maine 04105
(207) 781-4727

Web: www.thefhs.org • Email: info@thefhs.org

Mail
190 US Route One
PMB 367
Falmouth, Maine 04105

Marge Merrill Devine Collection

Marge is a past president of our Society and a highly regarded local historian. For years she edited the newsletter which was packed with stories about the history of our town.



Twelve large boxes containing Marge's files

Marge had previously donated material we use in educational programs. This year she generously donated files accumulated over decades while researching the history of Falmouth and its people. Our volunteers expect to be busy through winter cataloging so much material. Thank you, Marge!

Queries from the Community

One imagines town historical societies receiving a steady stream of requests from genealogists asking about distant ancestors. We receive about a half-dozen queries each month, and most deal with a much wider range of topics.

This summer we received a request for information about Falmouth during the Revolutionary War from a producer working for Ken Burns, the filmmaker known for his documentary programs. We provided

what they sought along with colorful details they hadn't seen. We suggested that they contact Maine Historical only to learn that MHS had referred them to us. Yes, we're blushing.

We received a request from the community asking if we could find out what happened to someone who had worked for Shaws in the 1960s. The requestor had only the first name and the fact his mother "may" have lived in Falmouth. Never underestimate the capabilities of a town historical society. We found the answer by reaching out to a resident of Falmouth who had worked for Shaws at the time.

We've received several queries lately about murders in Falmouth. As we dug through the records, we were astonished by the number of homicides in our town. We wondered whether Crabapple Cove in Angela Lansbury's "Murder She Wrote" TV series may have been based on Falmouth.

Our volunteers are accomplished history detectives!

Marion Perkins Memorial Scholarship

We are pleased to announce that Ms. Francesca Pound, Falmouth High School class of 2023, is the recipient of this year's scholarship. Ms. Pound is now a first-year student at the University of Massachusetts majoring in Spanish and business.



Francesca Pound

Marion Perkins was the well-liked and highly respected town clerk of Falmouth from 1963 to 1971. The generosity of her children—all of whom graduated from Falmouth High—made this scholarship possible.

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