



Kennebec Historical Society Commemorates 1978 Cony High School Boys Basketball Champions

The KHS commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the Cony High School Boys Basketball New England Championship turned out to be a big success, as measured by attendance and news coverage that drew attention to the society and underscored its interest in community involvement.

This outreach event March 25 attracted 11 of the 14 living players, and members of many of the players’ families, former Assistant Coach Rusty Atwood, State Sen. Roger Katz, State Rep. Donna Doore, Augusta Mayor Dave Rollins (himself a former Cony star) as well as the “voice of the Rams,” Don Roberts, who gave a rendition of his play-calling in the final eight seconds of Cony’s semifinal 75-74 buzzer-beater over Central High School of Providence, Rhode Island. The final game, a win over Windsor, Vermont, the next night, was a truly historic event for Augusta, where Cony is located, and Kennebec County as a whole.

Some people traveled from Massachusetts and New Hampshire

to attend the KHS event. They include Tom Field, who is writing a book about this outstanding team and was instrumental in helping KHS to contact all of them. Cony Athletic Director Paul Vachon presented the players with plaques mounted on pieces of the old Cony floorboard, and he brought the team’s championship gold ball. Then players took turns recalling their favorite stories about their teammates and their experiences.

Coach Atwood read a letter written by former head coach Dave Pound, who lives in Florida and could not attend the event. Pound thanked those who helped to develop the players from their time in youth development leagues to the time they won it all through their relentless, punishing offense. The team scored 100-plus points in three games — and this before the three-point rule — and defeated playoff opponents by an average of 24 points.

“But perhaps most of the credit should go to the boys themselves who spent countless hours on the courts honing their skills so they could claim the Maine State Championship and the subsequent New England Championship. As their coach during that fabulous year, I can only say that they were a wonderful group of young men with whom I had the pleasure to work,” Pound’s letter said.

“I would like to thank the Kennebec Historical Society for hosting this remarkable occasion. I am truly sorry that I could not be with you this afternoon as I have a conflict with cataract surgery. It certainly would have been fun to see all of you again and swap stories,” Coach Pound wrote.

Photos by Mark Ellis



Members of the 1978 New England Championship boys basketball team from Cony High School: Front row from left, Steve Busque, Allyn Bridge (team manager) and Tony Seymour. Middle row: Steve O’Brien, Doug Drummond, Dave Gallagher, Gary Towle and Assistant Coach Rusty Atwood. Back row: John Fitts, Mark Sutton, Ralph Colfer, Ray Felt, Kirk Cooper and Augusta Mayor Dave Rollins, who played on the 1973 state championship team.

At left is Paul Vachon, Cony High School athletic director.

President's Message



We could use a little help getting the Kennebec Historical Society grounds ready for the busy summer season. Now is the time to renew and spruce up our homes and yards. This is such a wonderful time of year. You can feel the energy in the clear fresh air.

On Saturday, April 28, we will have an outside clean-up and spruce-up day at KHS. We need some folks to work on clearing out pesky weeds, and the shrubbery needs to be controlled. Other folks are needed to do some painting. Still others can help wash some painted areas.

We sure would appreciate your help. If you can spare any time, please stop by at 107 Winthrop Street in Augusta.

Thank you.

— Patsy Garside Crockett, President

KHS Commemorates 1978 Cony HS Boys Basketball

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In the Kennebec Journal article about the KHS event the following day, author Field said he sees the team's accomplishment "as a significant piece of Augusta history that I wanted to write about as a way to give something back to the community."

Team members who attended included Steve Busque, Tony Seymour, Steve O'Brien, Doug Drummond, Dave Gallagher, Gary Towle, John Fitts, Mark Sutton, Ralph Colfer, Ray Felt, and Kirk Cooper. Team Manager Allyn Bridge traveled from New Hampshire to attend.

As a follow-up, KHS sent letters to the main guests and invited them to join KHS (brochures were enclosed). Coach Atwood signed up before the letters even went out.

Open House for History and Social Studies Teachers

Plans are on for Kennebec Historical Society's April 26 open house for county history and social studies high school teachers. The Membership Committee's Kim Michaud assembled the list of teachers at high schools throughout the state. This will be more low-key than the recent basketball event, but seeks to acquaint teachers with KHS services and resources. In our invitations, we suggested teachers join KHS and encourage their students to do the same. Archivist Ernie Plummer will address the teachers.

Spring Book Sales

John Merrill, the Hallowell bookseller, is downsizing and moving from 134 Water Street to 110 Water Street. He has generously donated sixty-five boxes of books for our book sale. That volume will require three sales: May 19, May 26, and June 2. All will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the society's garage. Hardbacks and trade paperbacks will be priced at \$1 each; mass market paperbacks at 50 cents. At 1 p.m., the prices drop to \$1 a bag. Please hold all book donations until after the June sale.



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Total membership:

500 on April 16

Life members: 183

The Kennebec Current encourages letters to the editor.

Email letters to

kennhis1891@gmail.com.

All letters are subject to editing for taste, style, and length.

The Collections Box

Winter is over, and the Collections Box is full again.

Among the purchased or donated books were *Connecting Maine's Capitals by Stage Coach*, donated by the author in recognition of our help in researching material in our archive; Catherine Lyman Adams. *Parlor Lectures on the New Testament*; The Winthrop Winner for 1924; Cary W Clark. *Real Photo Postcards Kwik Guide*; 19 issues of Cony High School's yearbook, the *Coniad*; annual reports from Pittston, Augusta, Belgrade, Litchfield, Monmouth, and Windsor; L. E. Barrett, *The Boys from Joppa* and *Dummers Lane*; *Memories: A Historical Look at Augusta and the Lower Kennebec Valley*; *Reflections: A Historical Look at Waterville and the Upper Kennebec Valley*; and *The Daily Kennebec Journal's Home Cook Book* for 1932.



Manuscript acquisitions were also varied. Bartholomew Nason in Augusta to Harvey Chase in Fall River, Massachusetts, August 6, 1830.; B. T. Jr. in Augusta to James Means in Ellsworth, January 28, 1834; A. H. Dolliver, owner of an Augusta clothing store, to Miss M. E. Weeks in Jefferson, February 8, 1860; G. Richardson in Bath to George Crosby in Augusta, June 5, 1835; J. Swift in Portland also to George Crosby, March 23, 1836; Silas Leonard, of Granite Bank in Augusta, to the Assessors of Readfield, May 1, 1848; and Thomas Little for the Assessors of the Poor in Augusta to the Overseers of the Poor in Embden, October 2, 1841.

An exceptional manuscript accession is a ledger or diary kept by Franklin S. Scammon (1810-1864) of Pittston from July 2, 1831, to February 11, 1843, and May 1886 to June 17, 1886, the latter section in a different hand (see story, page 5). Franklin S. Scammon was the son of Ezekiel Scammon and Joanna (Young) Scammon and the brother of Civil War Brigadier General Eliakim Parker Scammon, and marine biologist and whaling Captain Charles Melville Scammon. The donor wrote from Wellfleet on Cape Cod that she is the family genealogist and “this afternoon in our family homestead here in town I came across a large folio ... of handwritten copies of correspondence from a Franklin Scammon ... [which date] from 1831 to 1843 and are mostly financial in nature. Having worked on our family tree for 25 years, I don't recognize any of the names ... nor do I know how the book came to be in our homestead which has been in the Newcomb family since 1859.” As various branches of her family were in New Hampshire and Vermont, but none in Maine, “this folio is a mystery.” She asked if KHS would like to have the volume; we said yes. Currently, volunteers Kari Mullen-McLaughlin and Cynthia Thompson are transcribing the ledger.

We recently added four photos to the collection. A photo of a man in a boat on Water Street during the 1936 flood are quite common, but we purchased a 5-by-7 photo of the 1923 flood looking north from the south end of town. We also added the flooded Augusta Community Building, taken the same year. A stereo view of the Hallowell granite quarry horse barn with workers assembled in front will be added to our granite quarry collection. The Arlington (Massachusetts) Historical Society sent a photocopy of four tent mates newly enlisted in the 3rd Maine Infantry Regiment.

And then there are maps: Hallowell east of the Kennebec, December 1815; Pittston, Parts 1 and 2, 1836, by Phillip Bullen, Surveyor; a CD of Maine canal maps including the never-built Cobbosseecontee; the Olmsted plan for Capitol Park; and the Maine General Highway Atlas for 1946.

Two postcards are worthy of mention. A real-picture postcard of the Augusta Trust Company car from the 1920s, and a cyanotype real-picture postcard, an early developing process, of St. Mark's Home, c. 1905.

Most of the snow is gone, and the crocuses are up. It's spring, almost.

For the Collections Committee

— Bruce Kirkham

Reading Room Expands Its Open Hours

The Reading Room at the Henry Weld Fuller Jr. House will be open for research on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. starting June 1. Until June 1, the Reading Room is open only on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., but appointments can be made to accommodate the public and our valuable members. Simply call the society at 622-7718 and if no one answers, leave a voicemail and someone from KHS will get back to you shortly.

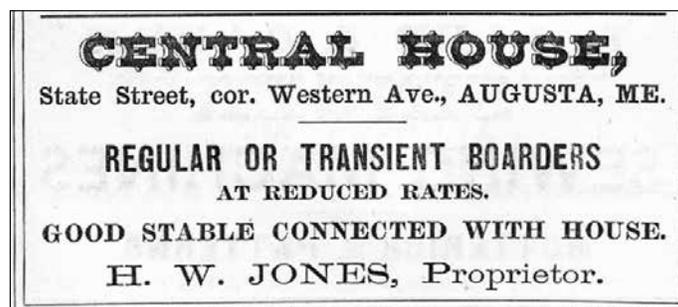
Research-ready: Central House Real Photo Postcard

Recently, Cynthia Thompson decided to take on our extensive postcard collection as a project. That collection represents hundreds of postcards, some in archival boxes, some in notebooks sorted by location, but mostly uncatalogued and difficult to find. What's really good is that in the process, Cynthia will be recording the sender's names and messages as well as the recipients', so we then have easy access not only to the pictures, but to the story of people's lives — a record of the "Facebook" of the early 20th century.

Cynthia started on a collection of 700 postcards that Anthony Douin and Joe Owen purchased around 2007. Among these postcards were two real-photo postcards that sparked considerable interest. One of the pictures is shown below:



As it turns out, Anthony Douin was able to identify this as the Central House Hotel and knew that it had been located at the northwest corner of State Street and Western Avenue. He also knew that it had been moved to 79 Capitol Street, just behind the Blaine House; he knew this because his grandmother lived in the house after it had been moved to Capitol Street.



We were curious to learn when that move took place because the postcard, a divided back postcard that could not have been issued before 1907, suggested it might be around 1907 or later but we could not immediately find a reference to the Central House in that period.

A search in our invaluable collection of directories of Augusta led to the conclusion that the building was moved about 1894. The house was built by Levi Johnson some time before 1855 and subsequently owned by H. W. Jones in 1876, H. A. Brick in 1880, John F. Murphy, 1886, and H. W. Jewell in 1888. In 1890, however, it is listed as Park Hotel (formerly Central) and is owned first by Charles H. Chisam and then by Charles W. Trask and Frank L. McLain, but in 1894, the last year it appears in a directory, it is owned by William S. Lamson. In 1895, it was no longer at State Street and Western Avenue, as shown in the Sanborn insurance map of Augusta.

If you have more stories about the Central House Hotel or any of the owners mentioned above, we would like to hear them.

Surely there are more stories that Cynthia will uncover as she catalogues more postcards; the pictures and text will be available for viewing in our database at the society.

What does Franklin Say?

Dr. Franklin Scammon (1810–1864), Hallowell pharmacist, is the author of a journal/ledger we received in January and immediately began transcribing, scanning, and entering into the database. This bound collection with entries dating from July 20, 1831, to February 11, 1843, seems to have been used as a copy book of his business letters, orders to purveyors, requests for advertising, collection of accounts, checks on banks and the like. Through the process of puzzling out handwriting tics as well as abbreviations specific to pharmacy ingredients both chemical and botanical, and with the aid of tangential research forays, some sense of who Scammon was has become a bit clearer. Understanding his familial influences adds to this a bit more.

Early on in the process, Kennebec Historical Society archivist Ernie Plummer made the connection to Franklin being part of the Scammon family originating from Whitefield and Pittston. Franklin's parents, Ezekial and Joanna (Young), must have been proud of their illustrious children. Famous whaler and naturalist brother Charles Melville (1825–1911) authored the book *Marine Mammals of the Northwestern Coast of North America* in 1874. Brother Eliakim Parker (1816–1894) trained at the U.S Military Academy at West Point, New York, was a professor of mathematics, served in 3 wars and many more battles, and rose in the rank to colonel, at which time two future presidents, Hayes and McKinley, served under him. Brother Jonathan Young (1812–1890) moved to Chicago at 23 as a lawyer; founded the city's first newspaper, the *Chicago Journal*, in 1844; and four years later helped to found the first railroad from Chicago. A few years later, he founded the Marine Bank and created the Chicago Historical Society. He was a friend of Abraham Lincoln, whose son studied under him in his law offices and then became his partner.

Franklin himself, meanwhile, graduated from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, also graduating in medicine, and practiced in Hallowell approximately 1831–1843, based on the dates in the journal. By 1846 he had moved to Chicago to join his brother, J. Young. Like this brother who founded the Swedenborgian Church in Chicago in 1843 and who held the position of secretary, Franklin joined in as a founder/member in 1847 in the role of treasurer. He still kept a toe in the Hallowell business pool however, listed in 1847 as the only stockholder (one of eight total) not currently in the Kennebec County area, of the Hallowell Steam Cotton Manufacturing Company. Back in Chicago, Franklin ran the firm F. Scammon and Co. 1851–1857 and from 1850 on also was involved in a joint venture manufacturing linseed oil. In 1859, he founded the Chicago College of Botany (as seen in the photo) and as “pioneer druggist and botanist of this city” held the position of president. As a well-known botanist, he ended up the first professor of botany at the University of Chicago. He also joined his brother as a charter member of the Chicago Historical Society. Sadly, because of ill health, he declined quickly and died at age 53.

What I want to share today is some of “the flavor” of Franklin's letters. I have tried to choose some excerpts to reflect both the businessman and the time in which he lived.

Until next time!

— Kari Mullen-McLaughlin, Intern

“I am sorry to hear that Mr. Ludwig blamed you about my seeing him as there is not the least reason for him to blame you. As you have never advised me to send the note, but advised me not to send it, but to write to Mr. Ludwig myself – If anyone is to blame it is Mr. Ludwig for not paying the note when it became due, I should have sent it when it was due if you had not advised me to the contrary as you thought the note would be paid in a short time—”

“I am going to Boston in a short time. I am in want of some money very much, if you could conveniently help me in the amount of your account or a part of it next week I will be very much obliged to you.”

“We lately had occasion to open one of the Kegs of Salt Petre + we are sorry to have to inform you that we do not consider it a fine dry type. It is so wet that it melts whatever it is put on + it appears to have been running through the kegs short weight...I think you had better get some of your friends in Philadelphia to examine it...”

“I need the articles in good order. I am sorry to hear that you were so unfortunate as to have your articles burnt. Mr. Minton did not ship the whiting by the Hellispoint Captain Lewis which was fortunate for me as if he had I should have lost it as she wrecked at Cape Ann during the last gale...you can probably find one of the granite vessels to sail for this place soon. I am in want of the whiting immediately”

“I am in immediate want of the Poppy Flowers, and if you cannot send the whole, I wish you to send what you may have by Stage, as soon as you receive this.”



The Kennebec Historical Society Welcomes the Following New Members

Larry W. Mayes — Lewiston

Matt Dunlap — Old Town

Harry Elliott — Augusta

Jennifer Day — Augusta

Patricia K. Rogers — Windsor

Amy Heiderscheidt — Augusta

Nancy Morse — Augusta

Zaid Dajani — Rome

Chelsea McLaughlin and Mason Douglas —
Gardiner

Hannah McLaughlin — Manchester

John L. McLaughlin — Manchester

Sharon Borns — Chelsea

Libby Doak — Augusta

Christopher Stultz — Whitefield

Corey Wilson — Winslow

Alison Maxell — Chelsea

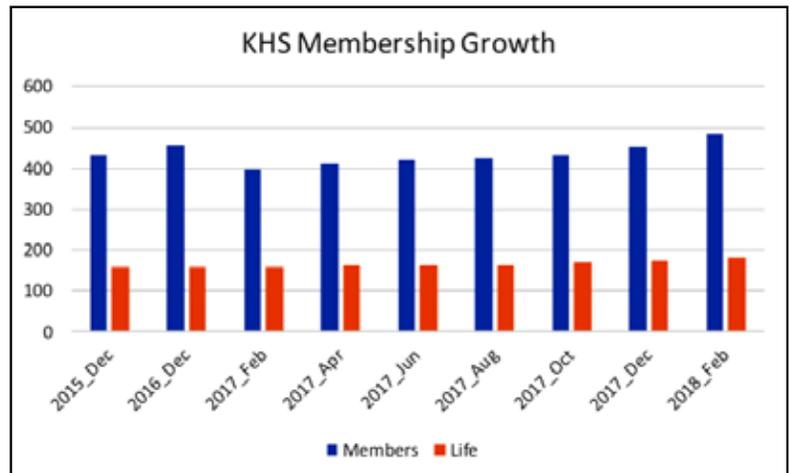
and continues to recognize...

Sustaining Business Members (\$1,000+ annual)

Kennebec Savings Bank
Dufour’s Welding and Machining Services, Inc.
Kennebec Journal

Sponsoring Business Members (\$500+ annual)

Pine Tree Trading Company, Distributor, Gardiner



Collection of School Yearbooks Enjoys Growth Spurt

The Kennebec Historical Society’s collection of school yearbooks, already several hundred strong by the end of last year, has grown substantially in recent months.

The society acquired several issues of the Gardiner Area High School yearbook a few months ago that are new to the collection, boosting the society’s total to a few dozen.

Then in March, Augusta’s Cony High School donated 19 different volumes of its yearbook, the *Coniad*, to the society. With the exception of the 1978 yearbook, the latest donation gives the society a complete run of the *Coniad* from the late 1960s to 2017 — nearly half a century. The society also has several dozen earlier volumes from Cony, including some from the early 20th century, when the yearbook was called the *Calumet*.

KHS has many other yearbooks from Kennebec County schools in its collection, including volumes from Colby College, Hall-Dale High School, Hall-Dale Middle School, Maranacook Community High School, Messalonskee High School, Oak Grove-Coburn Academy, Waterville High School, and Winslow High School. The society would appreciate donations of any yearbooks that would fill in the many gaps in its collection from those schools, as well as from any other schools in the county.

To inquire about the possibility of donating, please call the society’s librarian, Bruce Kirkham, at 622-7718 or email him at kennhis1891@gmail.com.

Upcoming Programs

May Public Presentation:

“Go and Set the World on Fire: The Tragic Story of How a Jesuit Mission to the Abenakis of Maine Went Up in Flames”



Death of Father Sebastian Ralé of the Society of Jesus

“Go and set the world on fire” was St. Ignatius of Loyola’s famous call to the Jesuits to preach the gospel to the far corners of the world. Father Sebastian Ralé followed the call of his order’s founder and left France in 1689 to give his life to caring for the souls of native Americans. This he did for thirty years in a small mission village amid the Abenaki people far up the Kennebec River. The village was called Narantsouack (i.e. Norridgewock.)

But this peaceful mission was not to last. In those few decades, Ralé’s little village got caught in a blaze of controversy that ended in the mission being burned by a Massachusetts militia and its pastor being shot. Joseph Moreshead, a seminarian for the Roman

Catholic diocese of Portland, will discuss the origins of this conflict among Ralé, the New England colonists, and the Abenaki people and how competing interests among the three parties led to such a tragic end. Joseph Moreshead is a native of South Portland, and a current student at the Catholic University of America, studying to be a Catholic priest in Maine. A graduate of Cheverus High School and Fordham University, Moreshead was educated for eight years by Jesuits like Ralé.

After extensive research on the Jesuit Relations, he led a pilgrimage to Ralé’s grave last August. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy and classical languages.

The Kennebec Historical Society’s May presentation is free to the public (donations gladly accepted) and will take place on Wednesday, May 16, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary’s Church, located at 41 Western Avenue in Augusta.

June Public Presentation:

“Jigsaw Puzzles, A Short History”

Jigsaw puzzles originated in Europe in the mid-1700s in the form of “dissected maps” to teach geography to young children. American production began around 1815 for children’s puzzles, and almost one hundred years later for puzzles that would interest adults. During the early 1930s there was a yearlong craze for jigsaw puzzles. Large and small companies, including many in Maine, worked at that time to satisfy the huge demand for hand-cut wooden puzzles. After World War II, die-cut cardboard puzzles replaced the more expensive wooden ones. Today only a handful of companies continue to make hand-cut wooden puzzles, one example being Elms Puzzles, of Harrison. Anne Williams, our presenter, will cover the earliest puzzles and some nineteenth-century examples. Her discussion of post-1900 puzzles will focus on Maine puzzle makers.

Anne Williams has been fascinated with jigsaw puzzles since early childhood and has collected seriously since the late 1970s. While teaching at Bates College and the University of Pennsylvania, she authored two books, several exhibition catalogs, and many articles on jigsaw puzzle history. In 2014, the Strong Museum, in Rochester, New York, acquired 7,500 of her puzzles and related research materials for its permanent collection.

The Kennebec Historical Society’s June presentation is co-sponsored by the Maine State Library and is free to the public (donations gladly accepted). The presentation will take place on Wednesday, June 20, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. at the Maine State Library, located at 230 State Street in Augusta.



Anne Williams
Photo by Rick Tucker

Kennebec Historical Society, Inc.
PO Box 5582
Augusta, ME 04332-5582
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Augusta, ME 04330

KENNEBEC HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. - Application for Membership

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Town/City: _____ State: _____ ZIP code: _____

Telephone number: Home _____ Business _____

E-mail address: _____

Type: New ___ Renewal ___

Category: Individual (annual) - \$20 ___ Family (annual) - \$30 ___ Senior (60+) (annual) - \$15 ___

Senior Family (annual) - \$25 ___ Student (full-time) (annual) - \$15 ___

Life (1 person) - \$200 ___ Life (Family) - \$300 ___

Business (annual, fewer than 25 employees) - \$ 75 ___ Corporate (annual, 25 employees or more) - \$125 ___

Nonprofit group (annual) - \$35 ___ Donation (optional): \$ _____

This is a gift membership, given by: _____

(Please send to Kennebec Historical Society, P.O. Box 5582, Augusta, ME 04332-5582.)

This line and below for society use only:

Date received: _____

Cash _____ Check #: _____

file 2.8.2

Reading Room hours: Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; other times by appointment

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E-mail address: kennhis1891@gmail.com

Telephone: (207) 622-7718

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