

THE NORTH YARMOUTH GAZETTE

MAY, 2021

A publication of The North Yarmouth Historical Society

Vol. XX, No. 1

Talkin' North Yarmouth: Test Your Knowledge of Our Historic Town!

by Hannah Austin

On the night of February 25, 2021 the North Yarmouth community talked history together in a Zoom presentation. Moderated by Rob Wood, the panel addressed questions pertaining to the rich history of North Yarmouth. Test your own knowledge of the town's history with the questions that were asked, and the answers may teach you something new!



Q: Which five neighboring towns (in addition to North Yarmouth of course!) were once a part of North Yarmouth?

A: Harpswell, Freeport, Pownal, Cumberland, and Yarmouth were all once a part of North Yarmouth. However, this is actually a bit of trick question – Chebeague Island, incorporated as a separate town in 2007, was also once a part of North Yarmouth, along with other surrounding islands. The question of whether or not Malaga Island (now a part of Phippsburg) was once part of North Yarmouth was posed, and as of now that answer is not known.

Q: In 1820, the year that Maine became a state, Portland, as the largest town, was named the capital. Its population at the time was 8,581. Which town had the second-largest population?

A: Believe it or not, it was North Yarmouth! Our town's population in 1820 was 3,679.



Q: North Yarmouth's current population is around 4,000. What year did it total a mere 569?

A: 1930. After the Civil War, the town experienced a decline in population. Some soldiers from North Yarmouth either perished in the war or moved elsewhere. This pattern of decline could also be seen in other nearby towns and it persisted into the years leading up to World War II. In North Yarmouth the decision was even made to close one of the town's one-room schoolhouses because there weren't enough students.

However, at around the time of the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, coastal Maine began to see an influx of new residents. North Yarmouth's population began increasing, and the Town Hall (Old Town House) was converted into a schoolhouse to accommodate the growing number of children. The population continued to increase after the end of the war and, by around 1960, North Yarmouth saw a return to its pre-Civil War numbers. *(Cont'd inside)*





NORTH YARMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Katie Murphy, President
Sandy Burnell, Treasurer
Dixie Hayes, Secretary
Charlie Bacall
Susan Doyle
Sandy Green
Mark Heath
Joy Malloy
Linc Merrill

CONTACT INFO

NYHS, c/o NY Town Office
10 Village Square Road
North Yarmouth, Maine 04097
(207) 846-4379 (Pres.)
(207) 829-3705 (Town Office)

nyhs1680@gmail.com
northyarmouthhistorical.org

NYHS ARCHIVES

Walnut Hill Station
463 Walnut Hill Road
North Yarmouth
(also home to North Yarmouth
Fire and Rescue)

Usually open 9 AM–12 NOON,
first Saturday of each month,
but due to safety concerns during
the pandemic, we are currently
closed. Meanwhile, please email
us with questions about town
history, your old house, your road
...more!

MEMBERSHIP

Join us! Please go to
northyarmouthhistorical.org
and click on Join/Donate.
THANK YOU!



Property, Land, and Acknowledgement

North Yarmouth Historical has had a busy spring online! Besides **Talkin' North Yarmouth**, NYHS hosted two great programs.

- Folks curious about the previous ownership of their home and property zoomed in on March 11 and 18 to find out how to become a historical detective. In **Land Title Research in Maine**, real estate and title lawyer Hugh Maynard de-mystified the process of researching a property's "chain of deed" by using North Yarmouth's Deacon Jacob Hayes house to show us the tricks of the research trade. "But be careful," said Hugh. "Deed research is fun, but it can quickly become addictive!"
- On April 28 Bates College history professor Joe Hall presented **Wabanakis in Maine**, a program about the people who lived on the land we now occupy, and how that Wabanaki past is still present. "It's easy to forget that Maine is a Wabanaki space," said Prof. Hall. "Our landscape is filled with non-Indian names like "North Yarmouth" or "Interstate 295," but we also speak Wabanaki languages when we talk about Casco or Presumpscot. Wabanakis continued to consider these places part of their homelands for centuries afterward and into the present."

Both Hugh and Joe started off their programs with a similar statement: "I want to acknowledge that we are on Wabanaki Indian land. This land was taken from the Wabanaki Indians by European settlers and soldiers in the 17th and 18th centuries." This is a significant reminder that the history of North Yarmouth began long before European settlers arrived here. This was not unoccupied land. And for the hundreds of thousands of Native Americans who called this place home, land ownership was a foreign concept; they believed that human beings belonged to the land, not vice versa. This acknowledgement recognizes that the study of history has long downplayed the importance of Native American occupation of these lands and that a deliberate effort to create a more inclusive can and should be a goal for us all.

We are grateful to our funding and support partners. THANK YOU!



GAZETTE STAFF & GUEST WRITERS: Hannah Austin, Charlie Bacall, Sue Clukey, Dixie Hayes, Linc Merrill, Katie Murphy, Ruthie Ristich, Kathy Whittier, ... and maybe you, too! Call or email us (*left*). Join the gang, meet around the table for breakfast, talk history, tell stories, research like crazy, get historical!

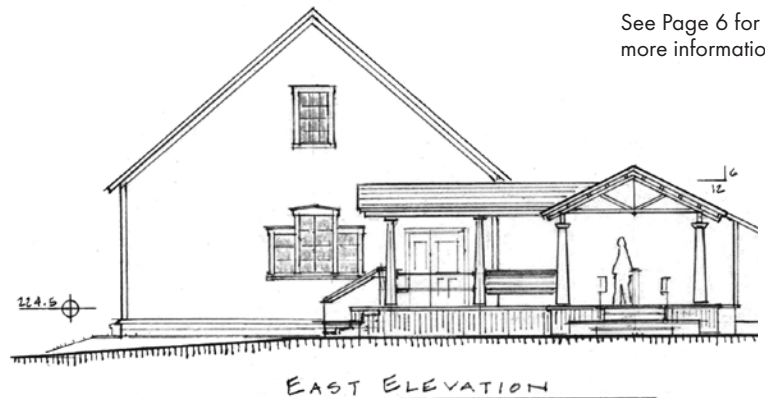
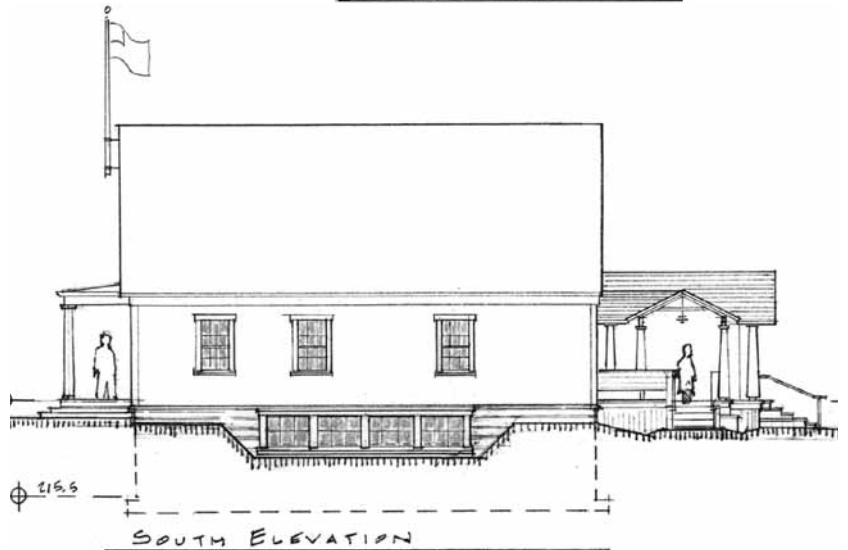
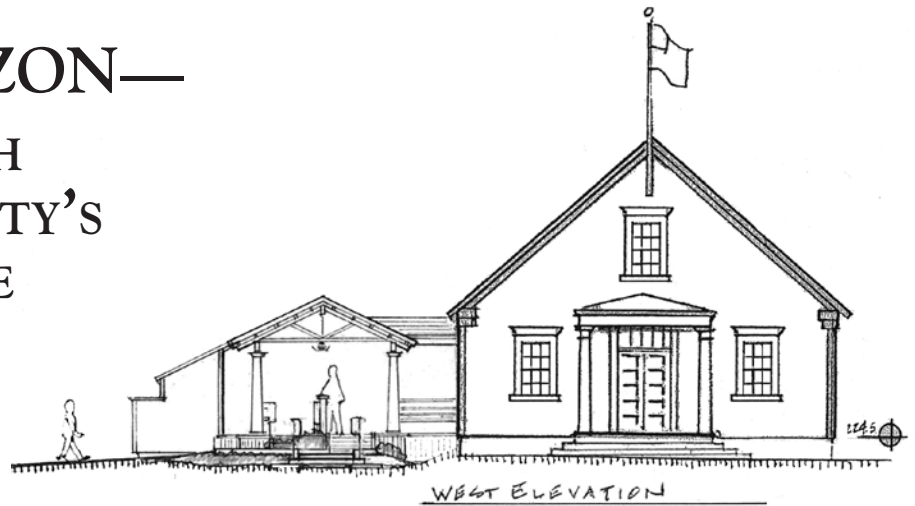
ON THE HORIZON— NORTH YARMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S OLD TOWN HOUSE

Moved, Renewed, Back in Operation

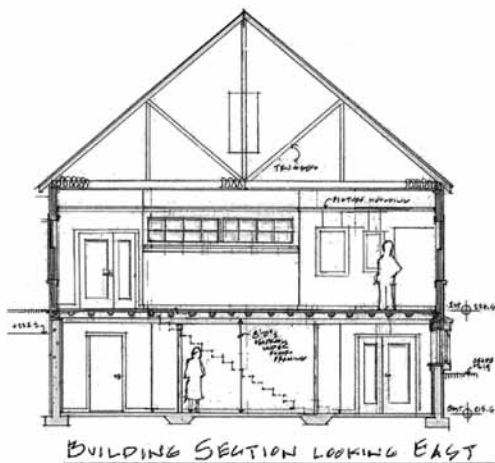
WE'RE GETTING CLOSER!

North Yarmouth Historical will move Old Town House, currently at 470 Memorial Highway, to 475 Walnut Hill Road, at the edge of the Village Green. The project has a price tag of \$735,000—a high bar, but achievable! Thanks to several generous donors who have already committed \$360,000+, we are on our way.

This project has been years in the planning, with more intensive efforts starting in 2018. The vision of NYHS's Old Town House Planning Committee has led to hard work by both Building and Capital Campaign Committees. Architect Buell Heminway has produced an exciting and functional plan: a renewed Old Town House with a first floor that includes a large meeting area, a smaller meeting and exhibition room, and a kitchen. An open-air porch constructed with reclaimed timbers will provide comfortable seating and a connection to the Village Green. Plantings and landscaping will surround the building.



See Page 6 for more information.



The renewed Old Town House will at last have indoor plumbing, heat pumps to keep us warm, and upgraded electrical systems. Most importantly, a downstairs area will have dedicated storage, work, and research space for priceless documents, objects, and more.

We plan to make a public announcement of the project once the initial goal of \$500,000 has been reached—and then a campaign to raise the remainder of project's funds will begin. It's a challenge, and an exciting one. *Old Town House is moving into the future: rescued, renewed, and in a central location. See more at northyarmouthhistorical.org!*