The sweet corn industry proliferated in Western Maine beginning in the 1880s. The harvest season was brief, but the closeness of the fields to the canneries helped guarantee a high quality product. Corn fields were usually within ten miles of the canneries, allowing for a brief time between the picking and the canning of the corn.

Canning corn became a successful specialized commercial crop and by 1891 H.C. Baxter & Brother Company of Portland built corn canneries in Fryeburg, Conway, Denmark, and Lovell. The Lovell cannery opened for business on August 31, 1891 and was in the Village just south of the Route 5 and 93 intersections, on the West bank of Kezar River.

Lovell’s cannery hired hundreds of seasonal workers for a few weeks a year. On September 13, 1900, the Lewiston Evening Journal reported on this activity. The article follows:

On busiest days there are easily four hundred people engaged in the various processes of canning. Everybody in the neighborhood turns out to take his share in a labor which is profitable, if short. The actual work of canning the corn is all done within a fortnight.

What impresses one most is the Anglo-Saxon freedom and absence of red tape about the whole process. In the great factories of the cities the “help” (continued on page 3)
From the President

The summer was extremely busy and very enjoyable. We held two events—the 14th Antique Show & Auction and our 4th Historic House Tour—and two talks on the Civil War. All four events were very well attended.

The Antique Show & Auction was a great success. The weather was perfect, antique dealers were set up inside and outside, and Jay Hanson conducted our fifth auction of contemporary items. Additionally, Linda Matte and Carol Taylor organized our first silent auction. Ruth Mitchell coordinated her cooks and servers, providing delicious food during the event. Many thanks go to all the people, too numerous to mention, who donated their time and gifts. The fortunate winners of the raffle were: Peter & Cary Fleming ($100 gift certificate to Rosies); Dennis & Ellen Smith (wood & cane rocker); and Scott & Carolyn Conti (our 2 publications).

Our fourth Historic House Tour in August proved to be another successful event. Four of Lovell’s finest homes were toured and tremendous thanks are due the home owners and the volunteers who acted as docents and parking attendants. Thanks also to the organizing committee that managed so many details (Bonnie Fox, Jacquie Maranville & Meghan Nyberg) and Robin Taylor-Chiarello for organizing the refreshments at Pleasant Point Inn.

Our Fall Harvest event will take place on Sunday, October 13th from 1 to 4pm. During this family event we will be pressing apples into cider and serving free refreshments. There will be a large harvest bake sale, a petting zoo, free pumpkin painting, and musical entertainment. We will also have our new fiber arts museum open, thanks to a grant from the Mulford Trust, with spinners and weavers displaying their craft. Come and enjoy the festivities!

Best wishes, Catherine Stone

Summer 2014 Internship

We are seeking a donor for the creation of a college internship next summer. The educational opportunity would carry a $2,000 stipend. Over an eight-week period, the intern would participate in a variety of activities, including exhibit research and preparation, special event and programming development, and collections management. Please let us know if you are interested in sponsoring this position.

2013 Events

- Fall Harvest: Sunday, October 13
- Business Meeting: Tuesday, October 15
- Honoring Our Veterans: Sunday, November 10
- Business Meeting: Tuesday, December 10
- Christmas Open House: Sunday, December 15

We appreciate your gifts of artifacts and other forms of historical material. Please remember that all donations become a part of our permanent collection and are the property of the Lovell Historical Society.

THE LOVELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MISSION

The Lovell Historical Society exists to collect and preserve historical and genealogical records, property, and artifacts, and to encourage and support interest in and study of the history of the Town of Lovell and its environs. Its collections are available for consultation by its members and other interested parties. In fulfillment of its educational mission, the Society presents public programs on relevant topics, publishes documents and the results of research, maintains an archive, a library and a museum, provides information and guidance to interested researchers, and collaborates with libraries, schools, and other organizations to carry out historical projects.

OFFICERS 2013-2014

- Catherine Stone, President
- Stan Tupaj, Vice President
- Bonnie Fox, Treasurer
- Claudia Benge, Secretary
- Beverly Bassett, Director
- Linda Matte, Director
- Lou Olmsted, Director
- Christine Scott-Deutsch, Director
- Robin Taylor-Chiarello, Director
- Renee Dutton, Director Emeritus

LOCATION AND HOURS

The Society, located on Route 5 in the 1839 Kimball-Stanford House, is open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9am to 4pm, Saturdays from 9am to 12pm and by appointment. All are welcome to visit our museum and research collections. Business meetings are open to all members and are held at 2pm every other month at specified dates. Our phone number is (207) 925-3234 or (207) 925-2291. Our collection can be viewed at our web site—www.lovellhistoricalsociety.org—and our e-mail address is lovellhistoricalsociety@gmail.com.
are hedged in with all sorts of rules and regulations. Here they move about with absolutely no restrictions. There is abundant jollity and good fellowship. The affair is distinctly social as well as commercial.

One especially feels this air of sociability among the groups of corn-huskers. They seem to have a holiday task. Working under open sheds in groups of about twenty, they gossip and exchange “jollies” all the while they are deftly stripping the husks from the ears.

They have to keep busy to make anything at this part of the process. The huskers are all paid at the rate of four cents a bushel. This means a very small day’s wage to the average worker. One who can do forty bushels a day is considered very speedy. A great many children and elderly people are engaged at this; the able-bodied men and young women are generally drafted into the factory proper.

There one finds less of the picnic aspect, though the utmost freedom still prevails. The corn goes through an interesting process of cutting, straining and mixing with milk. Finally it pours out of a narrow pipe at the bottom of a big cylinder and falls into the cans which are one by one pushed up to it. The cans go to the solderers and then are passed on to the inspector, who weeds out for further soldering those that are defective and sends the perfect cans into the boiler room to be cooked. There they are held for minutes in steam boilers until, with a great explosion of steam, they are drawn out into the open air to be played upon with streams of cold water. The rest of the process is one of labeling, packing and storing.

All the heavier part of this work is, of course, in the hands of men. Although this job comes to them only once a year, they appear to handle it with great deftness. Like most New England farmers they are very handy. They are also well informed about every detail of the business. There is no minute subdivision of labor here; every man is competent to work in any part of the shop.

A great innovation this year is the canning of succotash. This is the first time corn and beans have been put up together at the Lovell shop. The company is making an effort to can all its succotash from green beans and not, as is generally done, from the dried bean raised in Italy. None of the farmers in this immediate neighborhood have as yet raised the Lima bean, but they are watching with great interest the experiments made in Conway, NH, whence the consignment of bean pods for this season’s use came.

A good example of Yankee ingenuity was seen when the first load of Lima beans arrived at the Lovell shop. Nobody had ever handled them before, and everybody supposed that they would have to be shelled by hand. The foreman of the husking department, however, thought otherwise. He sent home for his wife’s clothes wringer and discovered in it a machine perfectly adapted to shelling beans. Within half an hour three other wringers were brought into use and beans enough for 10,000 cans of succotash were shelled in a single day.

(continued on page 4)
Lovell’s corn cannery remained in the Village until it was taken down and moved to a site near Fryeburg Harbor. Unfortunately, the reason for this move has been inaccurately reported ever since Pauline Moore mentioned a legend as a possible explanation in *Blueberries and Pasley Weed: A Story of Lovell, Maine* (1970): “The story is told that one year, about 1917, Mr. Baxter flew into a rage at the sight of his tax bill and swore that he would never process another can of corn in the town of Lovell. He leased some land on the road to North Fryeburg and built a new corn shop of considerable size and value. When the lines were drawn, as they were periodically, he discovered that this, too, was in Lovell.”

Since Moore mentioned this possible explanation for the corn shop move, it has taken on a life of its own. On January 20, 1988, a *North Conway Reporter* article by Steve Smith titled “Corn Shop Days Remembered” repeated the story as historical fact. In 2002, a book by Paul B. Frederic titled *Canning Gold: Northern New England’s Sweet Corn Industry: A Historical Geography* cited the news article and expanded on the story. Frederic wrote that the Fryeburg Town Clerk reported the relocated shop in Fryeburg and the author then decided that for the purposes of his study, it would be considered a Fryeburg corn shop.

Based upon Lovell tax records, Lovell town columns, and the H.C. Baxter Canning account books the following can be stated. The corn shop moved from the Village to a location close to Fryeburg Harbor in 1909. The move from the Village was not to avoid Lovell taxes. There were no significant tax increases during this time period and the company seemed well aware that the new corn shop location was in Lovell. It should be mentioned that when Moore wrote about the corn shop move, she gave a more probable reason for the relocation – “the new site was nearer the source of supply, which was the Harbor area where the corn was being produced in great quantities”.

The Lovell corn shop at the Harbor closed in 1926, at a time when Maine’s corn canning industry was beginning to decline. For thirty-five years, the Baxter’s canning business, under their subsidiary Snowflake Canning, had provided seasonal employment for many of Lovell’s residents.
The following article appeared in the Portland Press Herald, dated September 7, 1942.

The Boston, New York and Washington society folk vacationing at Center Lovell who sacrificed their holiday week-end program to help local farmers gather a crop of corn to be canned as a reserve for Uncle Sam’s Armed Forces are going to stay on the job until it’s done. Several had planned to end their vacations today but they are going to finish out the week, or until the emergency is passed and the corn crop saved.

A Philadelphia artist, a New York doctor, a Boston lawyer and a Radcliffe College professor were among the group that went to work in the fields at 6:30am Sunday to plug the gap of labor shortage that threatened to ruin whole harvests. For their trouble and back-breaking work they received $5 a day, which will be donated to the pet project of villagers, the North Fryeburg Fire Department.

On Sunday the 20-odd vacationists picked 40 acres of corn and topped this mark today.

Farmers explained that because of the unprecedented weather, lack of rain and extreme heat for this time of year, the corn ripened faster than they could pick it. Many of them were faced with financial disaster. The area is figured at 450 acres of corn sufficient to fill approximately 300,000 cans. Efforts of the group on the first day alone accounted for about 4,000 cans.

Marion A. Zimmerman, a Washington, D.C. school teacher, a summer visitor to Maine many years, suggested the idea after hearing a radio plea for harvest help. She was one of 15 or 20 late summer guests at Farrington’s Camps, Kezar Lake. The group was gathered about the fireplace in the hotel lodge Saturday evening when the plea came over the radio. Miss Zimmerman suggested that here was an opportunity for the group to pitch in and help both the

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local farmers and with the war work. She was quickly joined by Anne M. Erentall, 22, an artist from the Tyler Fine Arts School in Philadelphia; Dr. James H. Veith, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and now a physician in New York City; Nancy Bacon, daughter of Allyn Bacon, Boston publisher; Mrs. Abraham Alper, a teacher at Radcliffe College; Abraham Alper, a Boston attorney; Melvin Bernahim, a student at Andover Academy; Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Rothschild and Mr. and Mrs. Sempter of New York City; Charles LeCasce, son of the president of Fryeburg Academy; and Edwin Sargent of Fryeburg, son of the proprietor of Sargent's Camps.

“Never had my truck filled as quickly as these people did”, said one farmer. “The loss to us but for their help would have been tremendous.”

“My 10 acres of corn came in so fast that the entire field would have been a total loss by the middle of the week”, commented another. “I exhausted all my ready cash and was in debt to raise this crop of corn for canning. When I went after men and women to pick corn as I have been for 20 years I found there just wasn’t any help to be hired. I was in debt for my fertilizer and owing the canning factory for seed and the situation was serious.”

Rising at 7am Sunday one of the vacationists admitted it was the earliest she had ever started a day in her life. They took their lunches, reported to Supt. Erlon Jones at the canning factory and went to work for the day with only a brief time out at noon to eat sitting alongside the corn hills or perched on the back of their automobiles. It was a brand new experience to every one of them.

“One day will finish ‘em”, a villager declared derisively. But he reckoned without knowing. They were back 100 per cent on this Labor Day. A golf match that had been in the making for two weeks as a finale of the season went into the discard along with the culminating bridge party and social which had been staged for Labor Day evening in the hotel parlors.

“Them women”, Superintendent Jones of the corn factory declared, “have saved this corn crop. The corn crop came on all of a sudden. We have plenty of workers in the factory where the actual canning is done but picking the corn always has been the farmer’s problem and we have pretty generally allowed the farmer to work out his own salvation in this line.

“Up to Sunday there had been such a shortage of pickers that the factory could only operate eight hours a day. During rush season we usually operate on pretty near a 24-hour schedule.”

Sculptress Erentall had a mild complaint to make tonight. For three months, she said, she has been carefully growing a gorgeous set of long fingernails which up to Sunday morning were delicately tinted in the most fashionable shade. Today they are broken and torn, their glamour lost in the cornfields. But Miss Erentall is happy, nevertheless.

Dr. Veith, who has his offices on Madison Avenue in New York City, charges $5 a visit to New Yorkers who have digestive ailments. He earns $5 a day in the North Fryeburg fields.

“And for the first time in his life,” his sister chided him, “Doc is really earning his money!”

The natives here were somewhat disturbed over the efforts of the summer folk. They thought they should have whatever revenue resulted from the corn picking season. In some cases they were outspoken about the “city folks” taking away any part of their $5 a day. Tonight some of them were chagrined when they learned that while some of the workers are using their money for defense stamps and bonds much of the money has gone into a fund to be turned over to the Fire Department.

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Gifts and Donations

We are very grateful for the following gifts received since the last newsletter: Mercer & Mary Louise Blanchard—Chadborn Coldwell Reel Mower; Bud & Lynn Brown—wrench from the C.N. Brown Mill, permission to scan Bachman/Nester family photos; Katherine Chase (in memory of Holly Mason)—The Civil War and American Art by Eleanor Jones Harvey; Linda Drew—collection of material from the Ring house in Lovell Village including photographs, calling cards, a 1982 calendar from the Lovell Village Olde Country Store; James Fairburn—permission to scan Fairburn family photo, framed photo of Camp 1 at Westways circa 1930s, framed oil painting of William Armstrong Fairburn Sr. horseback riding; David & Kathleen Garcelon—permission to scan photo; Jane Gleason—Bill Vinton pottery, 2 postcards, 1972 map of Oxford County, 1944 dictionary, donation to Antique Shop; Frank & Trish Gravino (in memory of William J. Hartigan, Jr.)—early issues of The Youth’s Companion, The New Testament owned by Esther McDaniels and dated 1892, lace bonnet; Sue Hamlin—2 pair of mittens owned by William Spencer, permission to scan photo; Gus Heim—Victor recordings by Gustav F. Heim; Bill & Nancy Jamison—photographs from the 2013 Lovell Old Home Days Parade & Road Race; Amo Kimball—desk & chair used by Lovell Town Clerks Walter B. & A. Evelyn Stone, wooden box, framed drawing by Nellie Umbstaetter, Kimball Family cradle, photos of Amo Umbstaetter; Diana Korzenik—1949 Camp Mudjekeewis Yearbook, camp merit badges, 1927 A Handbook of Summer Camps; Gloria Neve—August 1961 publication of National Geographic; Nancy Pitman (in memory of Helen Hastings Stearns)—rug braiding stand; Annie Riecken—15 Lovell Town Reports, Hazel Allen’s journal, photographs of the Allen House on Slab City Road; Sam Ring—By-Laws of Kezar Tribe No. 110 Improved Order of Red Men; Al & Irene St. Germain—photographs of Lovell Old Home Days and Historical Society events; Frederic Sater—photographs of the 2013 Auction & Antique Show, Lovell Old Home Days, and Tour de Lovell; Brad Smith—donation to Antique Shop; Al & Jacky Stearns—cookbook owned by Lottie LeBaron, coffee urn; Carol Stewart—Ralph McAllister receipts; Hal & Carol Taylor—information on Harold Severance, piano sheet music of three compositions by E. Lillian Severance; Robin Taylor-Chiarello—It Only Takes One Friend by Robin Taylor-Chiarello; David Tripp—DVD of Fairburn family films at Westways in Ojai, CA and Lovell; Anne Wolf—metal train engine, metal child’s wheel barrow, postcards, donation to Antique Shop; Jason & Heather Ziegler—business ledger from the True, Walker & Heald Store 1908-1911.

Cash donations have been gratefully received from: David & Eva Bradford; Arthur Brecker (in memory of Jacqueline Brecker); Corille Bresee; Lt. Col. William Brooks (in memory of Stub Eastman); Harold & Joyce Buckingham; Katherine Chase; Stephen Chiarello; John & Joan Crowe; Dan Eaton & Linda Whiting; Charles & Sharon Dager; Ben & Nancy Eshleman; Phil Faunterley; Linda Gale; Jim Garcelon & Gene Hoy; Collier Hands; Ford & Patsy Hutchinson; Tom Jerpbak; Bert & Marilyn Kendall; Jeff Knights; Bob & Paula Lawrence; Steve & Libby Bender; Ken & Ann Male (in memory of Glenn Moore); Barbara McAllister (in memory of Erwin McAllister); Jim & Jean McBain; Irene McDeed; Paul McGuire; Ed & Sarah Miller; New Suncook Real Estate; Margrit Newman; Dan & Jeanne Ouellette; William Rice; Bruce & Alice Rogers; Loren & Barbara Rosenbach; Gene & Vicki Royer; Brian Smith; John Smith; Al & Irene St. Germain; Al & Jacky Stearns; Carol Stewart (in memory of Julie Gehman); Hal & Carol Taylor; George & Zoe Trautman; Jim & Nancy Van Metre; Herman & Nancy Voigt; William Walsh (in memory of Maxine Fox Shirley); Beatrice Webster; Wing Family Partnership (in memory of Wilson M. Wing).

If you have made a donation or given an artifact or other form of historical material and it has not been listed here or previously noted, please contact us immediately. We appreciate the thoughtful generosity of our members and friends, and most certainly want to acknowledge and list gifts properly.
In Memoriam

We note with sadness the death of the following friends and neighbors:

**H. Walter Fox Jr.**, 89, of South Paris, ME passed away on July 7, 2013. He was born in Lovell on June 10, 1924, the son of Henry and Agnes Fox. He was a graduate of Fryeburg Academy and was a longtime employee of A.C. Lawrence Leather and a police officer for the Town of South Paris. He was a member of the South Paris Fire Department and the Paris Masonic Lodge 94 AF & AM. He is survived by his three children—Bruce, Brent, and Jeanene Medeiros—several grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren.

**Julia Ann (Eckfeldt) Gehman**, of Ambler, PA passed away on July 8, 2013. Born in Norristown, PA, she was the daughter of Frederick and Vesta Eckfeldt. She summered on Kezar Lake and was a member of this Society. She was predeceased by her first husband, Hugh Gehman, and is survived by her second husband, Frank Boni, her four children—Wayne, Wendy Enstine, Carolyn Conti, and Susan—three step-children, thirteen grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

**Adeline “Bette” (Brown) Hammond**, 89, of Fryeburg, ME died on August 9, 2013. She was born on May 7, 1924, the daughter of Capt. Roger C. and Marion Brown of Lovell. After graduating from Fryeburg Academy, she married Wilbur Hammond and together they built their lumber business, Thomas Hammond & Son, in East Hiram, ME. They also summered on Kezar Lake. Bette was predeceased by her husband and is survived by her six children—Wilbur Jr., Toby, Connie-Lee Jones, Cheryl-Lynn Outram, Thomas, and Christian—nine grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren.

**Edith (Melcher) Patterson**, 81, of Topsham, ME, passed away on August 1, 2013. She was born in Hartford, CT on August 31, 1931, the daughter of Stanwood and Dorothy Melcher. After graduating from Central Connecticut State University, she married Rev. Robert Patterson and pursued a career teaching. She and her family had a summer home on Kezar Lake. She was predeceased by one son, James, and is survived by her husband, 3 children—Anne, Elizabeth Quinlan, and David—and six grandchildren.

**Clarence Snyder Jr.**, 89, of Woodstock, NY and formerly of Lovell died on September 5, 2013. After serving in the US Navy during World War II, he pursued a career as an organist. He worked in Montclair, NJ, Kennett Square, PA, and Greenville, DE. He was also a member of the organ faculty at the Peabody Institute and the Westminster Choir College and founded the Bach Music Festival of North Conway, NH. He is survived by his wife Virginia, six children, twelve grandchildren, and fifteen great-grandchildren.

The Lovell Historical Society
P.O. Box 166
Lovell, ME 04051

If your mailing label doesn’t say “6-14” or “Life”, it is time to join or renew your membership. Thanks!