

Cherryfield Narraguagus Historical Society

May 21st, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Those in attendance Crystal Hitchings, Kelley Wescott, Denise Lavoie, Sarah LaSagna, Rick Harter and Peter Duston.

Guests: Ronie Strout from Addison ; Janie Snider, Cindy Rumery and Gary Willey from Milbridge; Jennifer Stucker, Sue Webber and Rick Morris from Gouldsboro; Larry D. Smith Sr. from Winter Harbor. The meeting began at 6:10 PM.

This was the first meeting we have held where surrounding historical societies were invited to attend. The purpose was to get to know one another, share ideas and stories, as well as brainstorm about what we can do moving forward to increase interest in the preservation of history. Refreshments were served and Mike Sheridan grilled hamburgers and hotdogs to order.

Crystal opened the meeting welcoming everyone for coming and an open discussion began.

Janie Snider let us know that there will be an open house at the Milbridge Historical Society on June 9th to celebrate their 30th anniversary. Among the things Milbridge is doing to encourage interest in the younger generations is to invite the local schoolchildren to attend a timeline series about the town's history, starting with the indigenous settlers and continuing on each year with another segment of years. She also noted that Cherryfield and Milbridge history is closely entwined so often it is a shared story.

Ronie Strout said the Pleasant River Historical Society began in 1978, but they have no building , but are hoping that in time they will have a place to display the numerous items they've collected.

Gary Willey, who is also a member of CNHS, told the story of how the building for the Milbridge Museum came into existence , attributing it to the generosity and diligence of the Hussey's from Milbridge . The Rumery's organize yard sales and do a lot of fundraising on Marketplace from donated items. The society also sells t-shirts, calendars and other related items. They have a special workroom for protected items.

Peter Duston told the group about the WWII discharge documents he has in his possession and about his research into Washington County soldiers killed in WWII.

Jennifer Stucker shared with the group that she has worked 15+ years doing cemetery restoration all over the state. Gouldsboro Historical Society has 2 buildings: the old town house that sits on Route 1 and a second that was gifted to them by old Gouldsboro Methodist Church that is 20x40 with a modern addition. It was given to them for \$1 with the

agreement that they would continue to have bean suppers. They did this for 4 years, bringing in around \$2000, but ended it during Covid. It was never resumed because many of those who participated were no longer available. The town of Gouldsboro gives them enough money to cover operating costs. The rest is raised through events, including a 6 lecture program from May through October . Admission is by donation. When they sold calendars, it was very popular. They have a temperature regulated storage in the sanctuary of the donated church , which is very expensive. Gouldsboro HS is an all volunteer organization dedicated to preserving and sharing history. They receive many inquiries about genealogy and who the former owner of house may have been. They are also involved in arranging the restoration of Big Jim the Sardine Man that stands in Prospect Harbor and Jennifer is doing extensive work digitizing old town records.

Jennifer and Sue briefly covered a program called Adopt A Grave that they established for a cemetery in Corea that they cleared and restored. Some of the buried did not have relatives to contact, while other relatives were not interested in the maintenance. To ensure that the cemetery did not return to its former state, people in the community adopted a grave to care for.

Peter noted that if there is a single veteran in a cemetery, the town is required to take care of the whole cemetery.

Rick mentioned that we have talked about putting together a welcome packet to the town to give to realtors.

Larry Smith became a new member of CNHS. He talked about his years at Grindstone Neck. In Winter Harbor, the historical society building was recently placed on a new foundation and has recently received a million dollar grant for restoration that will require some matching funds.

Ronie discussed the Baseline. On September 26th there will be a tour.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM