

Currents

207 York Street ■ P.O. Box 312 ■ York, Maine 03909 ■ 207.363.4974

The mission of the Museums of Old York is to preserve and promote the rich history of the York region through programs and educational experiences that enhance historical perspective and build on community pride.



www.oldyork.org

LET'S TALK: WE WANT YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT KEY THEMES IN YORK HISTORY

Staff, trustees, and volunteers have been working for several months to fulfill the first goal of our recently adopted strategic plan: creation of a master interpretive plan for Old York. In plain terms, an interpretive plan defines what subjects we treat and by what means.

The Old Gaol Museum was founded 112 years ago by people focused on colonial America, which they looked back upon as a more noble time. The buildings and artifacts they preserved were thus mostly from the 1800s. Museums like ours with Colonial Revival beginnings have tended to emphasize the high-style possessions of wealthy residents. York's history includes much more than wealthy people from colonial times. If we are to appeal to more people and represent the history of the entire town, we need to treat the entire history.

Our current effort is to identify the key themes and stories that characterize this town and span the four centuries since English settlers first set foot here. Staff members have defined six broad themes we think tell our community's story. We now would like to know what others think of these themes. We are particularly interested in reactions from members of Old York. Here they are in very broad, summary form. To read fleshed-out versions, please go to our website www.oldyork.org.

York is where Maine began.

York was one of the region's earliest settlements and served as the de facto capitol of York county until 1820, when its people and their cultural and religious influences spread to other parts of Maine. *Image from MOY collections: 18 century communion tankard*



Periodic waves of newcomers have altered the character of the town.

Starting with the first English settlers in the 1630s, different groups have come to town and brought significant influences: Massachusetts Puritans, Scottish prisoners, summer vacationers, and year-round residents "from away".

York's rivers and the ocean dominate its history.

York's location by the sea with two small rivers was a natural attraction for fishermen, traders, shipbuilders, sailors, and eventually tourists. York peaked as part of England's global trade network, and contracted after independence. Because York's rivers could not support large textile mills like other 19th century Maine towns, the town remained rural.



Image from MOY collections: Compass

OLD GAOL
1719

ELIZABETH PERKINS HOUSE
c. 1730

JOHN HANCOCK WAREHOUSE
c. 1740

EMERSON-WILCOX HOUSE
1742

OLD SCHOOLHOUSE
1745

JEFFERDS' TAVERN
1754

RAMSDALL HOUSE
c. 1820

GEORGE MARSHALL STORE
1870

LIBRARY & ARCHIVES
1900

VIRGINIA WEARE PARSONS
EDUCATION CENTER
2008



Themes article continues on page 3

WELCOME TO NEW TRUSTEES



Dawn Fernald (left) and Georgia Cadwalader Bennett (right).

Dawn has lived in York since 1982 when her family moved to Cape Neddick from the suburbs of Boston. The current Marketing & Planning Director for York Hospital, Dawn has been very active with local organizations (having served executive committee roles with both the York

Public Library Board of Trustees and the Greater York Region Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors) and civic groups (she was the vice-chair of the York Beach Subcommittee of the Planning Board). She has a passion for the community she grew up in, and currently lives in Cape Neddick with her husband, Ryan, who also grew up in York.

Georgia's professional career is in education counseling, and school and college placement, for individuals and dependents of relocating corporate families. She owned and ran Bennett Educational Resources, Inc (BER) from 1991 until 2009 when it was sold, and continues to counsel private clients for boarding school placements. Her volunteer commitments have been with Planned Parenthood, the Junior League of Philadelphia, the Secondary School Admission Test Board, the Employee Relocation Council and the Society for Human Resource Management. Georgia lives with her husband Steve Bennett in York. She serves on the Women's Committee of Trinity Church and the Foundation Board of the York Harbor Reading Room.

IN MEMORIAM

Roderick Richards was a recent addition to Old York's board. He brought great energy, clear thinking, and good cheer to his role as Collections Committee Chair. We truly regret his loss as a colleague and friend.

STAFF COMINGS AND GOINGS

My plan to step down as Executive Director of Old York is old news by now, but it would be odd to make no mention of it in our newsletter. Old York has been a dream job in many ways. The buildings and collections are endlessly fascinating. The legacy of their preservation and care for 112 years is truly inspiring. It has been a huge honor to be a temporary steward. Most rewarding of all has been working with the many people who make the organization thrive, from great staff to dedicated trustees and committee members, volunteers, members, donors, Junior Docents; the list goes on and on. Many people have made possible every step we have taken. Old York has a strong board and a really good team at the staff level. A new leader with fresh perspective will have the chance to play a pivotal role in the museum's future as we continue working through the strategic planning process. I look forward to seeing what my successor brings to the table, and to keeping in touch as a member of Old York.

Over recent weeks, we have said farewell to three valued, long-time staff members. Richard Bowen, Lezlee O'Connor, and Frith Foss, who worked diligently for Old York in our education, development and administration departments, have moved on to new endeavors. We will miss them all. Meanwhile, we are pleased to welcome Eileen Sewall upstairs to add to her Library Assistant duties by taking on the role of Program Specialist, focusing on enhancing our adult program offerings. ~ Scott Stevens

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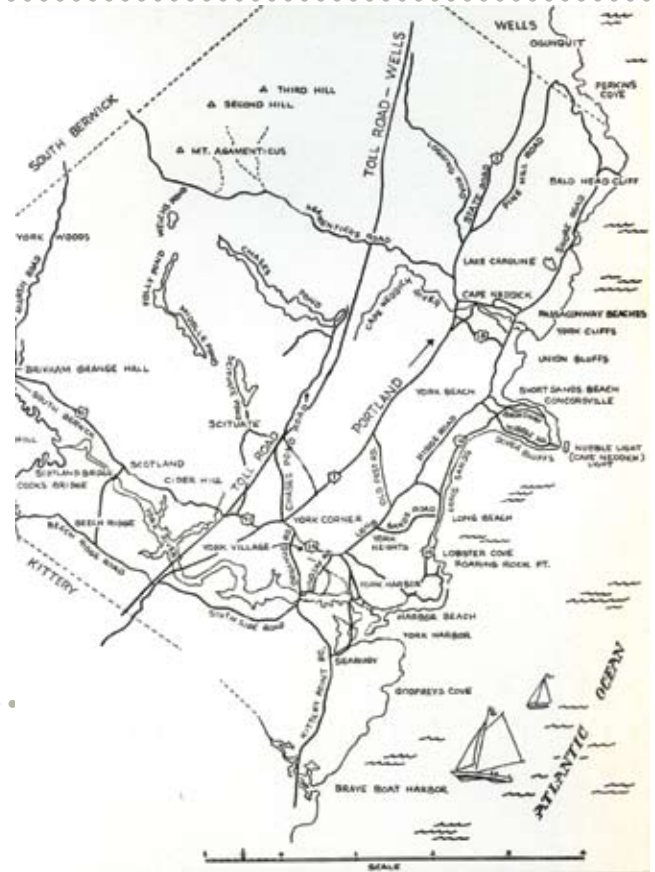
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Jody Nilsson, *Staff Accountant*

GEORGE MARSHALL STORE GALLERY

Mary Harding,
Curator of Contemporary Art

York emerged out of separate villages, each with distinct identity.

The separate sections of York developed individually and retain defining identities: York Village, York Harbor, York Beach, the Mountain, the Ponds, the Scotland District, and Cider Hill, Cape Neddick, Seabury, and Brixham.



The interstate highway brought dramatic growth and change.

Route 1, and later Route 95, allowed former summer residents to settle in York year-round, and commute to work in the cities. The population boomed. Competing interests of newcomers and locals resulted in controversies over the structure of town government and growth control. Traditional ways of life were threatened by rising property values, retail chains, regional malls and national businesses.



Summer seaside recreation transformed York.

Shortly after the Civil War, York became a summer destination for urban people seeking refuge by the sea, spurring development. Year-round residents adapted their farms and other businesses to the needs of summer crowds. Summer residents brought demands for services such as town water, electricity, and the telephone, and started preservation and beautification movements.

What do YOU think? Join in the conversation.

We seek reactions from all our constituents. Do these themes reflect accurately our town's story? Are there others we have neglected? Are they interesting, perhaps some more than others? Finally, how might we pursue these themes? What will residents and visitors enjoy and benefit from most in coming years? When we have reached the final version of these themes, they will serve as the basis for all our activities in collecting, preserving, and educating. We want them to be clear and meaningful to all our area's residents and visitors, and to spark greater interest and participation in our mission. With this goal in mind, we are convening several discussion groups over the next few weeks called "Let's Talk About York History." We hope you will take part. We encourage people to write, email, or join us for lively discussions. You can also join the discussion on our blog at www.oldyorkmuseums.wordpress.com/

You're Invited to Join Us for...

"Let's Talk About York History!"

A lively discussion about important themes in our town's history and exciting, new ways to interpret them!

We want to hear your ideas, opinions and questions on six potential themes for the future of interpretation and programming at the Museums of Old York.

When: Sunday, February 26, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
OR Wednesday, February 29, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Where: The Parsons Center at Museums of Old York
3 Lindsay Road, York Maine

For More Information and to RSVP:
Please call Zoe Keefer-Norris at 207-363-4974 ext. 12
or send an email to: education@oldyork.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The events listed are for a general audience. Please see our website for upcoming children's programs.

February



17 Tavern Dinner.

The Tavern Dinners have been increasing in popularity so the Museum is responding by making them a monthly event! Come and dine by the open fire in historic Jefferds' Tavern where staff and volunteers dressed in colonial costume will prepare a fabulous meal at the hearth while guests relax by the fire and kindle new friendships. Keep an eye on our website for upcoming menus and for announcements of special dinners with guest chefs or unique entertainment. Love to cook? Email Eileen Sewall at programs@oldyork.org if you would like to be on the Tavern Dinner direct e-mail list or to join our spirited volunteer cooking staff as we slice and dice!

The February 17th Tavern Dinner will feature a top round roast sizzling on the hearth. A special dinner guest, a Colonial Soldier, home from the battle against the British, will tell stories of Indians and War. Having you there will make our evening complete! 6-8 p.m. at Jefferds Tavern, 3 Lindsay Road, York. Cost: \$30 members / \$35 non-members. Reservations are required. Please email programs@oldyork.org early to reserve your space.



Homeschoolers pressing cider with Educator Doug Dickey during Thanksgiving dinner in the Parsons Center.

19 Blue Grass Jam with Kevin Dyer and Friends.

1-4 p.m. at The Parsons Center at Museums of Old York, 3 Lindsay Road, York. \$4 donation appreciated. FMI, call 207-363-4974 ext 13.



March

2 Curator's Potluck.

Join us as we thank last year's donors to our collections. Bring your appetite and a favorite dish to share. 5:30 – 7 p.m. at the Parsons Center. RSVP to Cynthia Young-Gomes at 207-363-4974 ext. 20 or email registrar@oldyork.org.



18 Blue Grass Jam with Kevin Dyer and Friends.

1-4 p.m. at The Parsons Center at Museums of Old York, 3 Lindsay Road, York. \$4 donation appreciated. FMI, call 207-363-4974 ext 13.

25 Andrea Quartet at the Parsons Center

Come listen to beautiful classical music by Haydn, Dvorak and Grainger at the Remick Barn. Learn about the composers and their work from violinists Augusto Salazar and Theresa Carr; violist Katie Backus; and cellist Michael Danielski. 3 Lindsay Road, York; 2 p.m. Stop by the museum office or call 207-363-4974 ext. 14 for tickets. Adult \$10, Student \$5, Family \$25.

31 Tap, Tap, Tap..... A Special Jefferds Tavern

Dinner Fundraiser!

Celebrate the very end of winter and help us raise funds for the winterization and restoration of Jefferds Tavern. A much beloved historic building, the Tavern continues to be a focal point in York Village and is used year-round for the Museum's educational programs, Tavern Dinners and the annual Christmas Tea. The building stands as a shining example of how a group of concerned people can protect history while at the same time making a building relevant to the community. Today the tavern needs insulation, new clapboards, and "buttoning up" so that it can be used throughout the winter months with energy efficiency. Once this work is completed, there will be no better or more charming location for bridge parties, sewing groups, poetry readings, book clubs, tavern dinners, and the new educational programs for both children and adults. Watch for your invitation in early in March. At the Parsons Center, 3 Lindsay Road, York Village, 6:30 p.m. for wine and hors d'oeuvres, 7:30 p.m. for dinner; \$125 per person; RSVP by March 16, 2012; FMI call 207-363-4974 ext. 13 or email development@oldyork.org

April

20 Tavern Dinner.

Traditional hearth cooked meal in a cozy, colonial tavern environment. Menu to be announced. 6-8 p.m. at Jefferds Tavern, 3 Lindsay Road, York. Cost: \$30 members / \$35 non-

members. Reservations are required. Please email programs@oldyork.org early to reserve your space or to volunteer to help us prepare and serve the feast.

27-28 "Before Tour" of Harmon House.

Take a peek at our 23rd Annual Decorator Show House at 19 Harmon Park Road, York Harbor before the designers and landscapers have at it! Hours: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Admission: \$5.

May



3-6 May Sarton 100 Anniversary Event.

May Sarton was a poet, memoirist, and novelist who spent the last 22 years of her life in her "house by the sea" in York, Maine. A volunteer group of her followers have planned a symposium on May 3-6, 2012 to mark the centennial of her birth. The presentations will be scholarly and celebratory, focusing on Sarton as a major 20th century literary voice. Events will also feature a special New England clambake, poetry reading, and music. Old York is a partner in this symposium. For more information and to register for the events, visit www.maysarton100.org/.

SAVE THESE DATES FOR SUMMER EVENTS



Old York's 23rd Annual Decorator Show House set for July 14 - August 11!

We are delighted to announce that we've chosen this year's show house. With special thanks to homeowners Bobby and Paula Hoy, we will present "Harmon House" at 19 Harmon Park Road in historic York Harbor. The event will open with a preview party on the evening of July 13 overlooking York Harbor and the York River. Beverly Young and Pam Carnicelli are returning this year as our Event Chair and Assistant Chair, respectively. We're planning some new programming and are looking forward to another fun spring and summer getting ready and presenting this wonderful house. Please email development@oldyork.org or call 207-363-4974 if you have any questions about the event -- or if you'd like to volunteer!

5th Annual Old York Antiques Show Moves to July 21-22!

Big change for this year -- we've moved the date from September to July and will be transforming Jefferds Tavern and the Parsons Center into twenty-two exquisite booths for our boutique show. We'll see returning dealers as well as some new exhibitors this year. The dates of the show are July 21-22 with a preview party scheduled for July 20. Please email development@oldyork.org for more information.

CELEBRATING WORKING AND PLAYING ON THE WATERFRONT



It may be the middle of the winter now, but a team of staff and trustees are looking ahead to summer and have been working to create an array of programs for 2012 all under the theme *York's rivers and ocean dominate its history*. The first settlers in York came to make a living in fish and timber because of the town's location on the ocean. York's two small rivers afforded sheltered locations for wharves and docks and after the threat of Indian raids diminished in the 1720s, York flourished as a small port town with several residents making their fortunes as merchants. Shipbuilding and other maritime services grew to support York's ocean-based economy. The heyday for York's mercantile economy, with its many ties to the British global commercial network, ended with the War for Independence. Jefferson's Embargo and the War of 1812 snuffed out the last of York's global trade, causing economic decline. For much of the nineteenth century domestic trade flourished with firewood and other commodities traveling aboard schooners and coasters to be sold in other cities. While York's streams and rivers powered small saw and grist mills, they did not have the falls required for the large textile mills established in other 19th century Maine towns. Because of this, and the fact that train service didn't arrive until 1886, York retained its rural, backwater feel.



Wharf from Harper's Weekly.

Celebrating our heritage on the water will take many forms. A series of fun and educational programs will be offered throughout June-July-August including workshops, lectures and demonstrations on the history of lobstering, fishing, boat building, waterfront stories, riverscape painting, the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, and more! A brochure will be coming out in May detailing all the offerings over the summer.

Get the Latest Breaking News!

To stay informed about the events you care about, sign up for our electronic newsletter at www.oldyork.org. Sent out twice a month, the eNewsletter provides the most up-to-date information on membership benefits, programs, activities and events at Old York.

You can also Like us on Facebook and Follow our Blog.

Southern Maine and the seacoast region are steeped in fascinating history. This blog is for people who enjoy learning about this history through fun and interactive discussions. Whether you are looking for new and innovative ways to engage with history, or simply love learning about the past, you'll want to be part of our conversations. Join by visiting www.oldyorkmusuems.wordpress.com and click on "Follow."

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR 1631 PARTNERS

In 1998, the Museums of Old York created the 1631 Partners, an honorary association to acknowledge the museum's most generous supporters. The name honors the founders of our town, Colonel Walter Norton and a group of visionary investors who first settled what was then known as Agamenticus. Like their namesakes, 1631 Partners are visionary investors – they share our belief in the importance of preserving York's heritage through our mission-based programs and exhibitions.

Jim B. Bartlett and Susan M. Christmas
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PLANNED GIVING: LEAVING YOUR LEGACY

Planned giving can benefit your personal financial strategy and also enable you to serve as a partner with the Museums of Old York. Consider leaving a bequest to the Museums of Old York. A simple bequest might read: *I devise and bequeath to the Museums of Old York, located in York, Maine, the sum of \$ _____ to be used for the museum's general purposes.*

Over the past year we were saddened by the deaths of some dear friends of our organization. Each left us an enduring legacy of contributions to Old York.

A native of York and descendant of families here for centuries, **Paul Blaisdell** donated many precious heirlooms to our collection. He was a good friend with a deep interest in history whose visits were always enjoyable.

Marion Fuller Brown was a much-loved, highly-regarded

resident of York who left a wonderful legacy to the community and the state. She led by example, serving on the board of Old York and its predecessor organizations. Marion may be best known for her success in the state legislature eliminating billboards from our highways. Her gifts of land for conservation and endowment funds, including Old York's, will ensure that people enjoy her generosity for generations to come.

Museums of Old York was honored to be named as the recipient of gifts in lieu of flowers by the family of **Anne Erwin**, who passed away recently. Among Mrs. Erwin's many contributions to her community was active involvement in the Old Gaol Committee and the Old York Historical and Improvement Society, our predecessor organizations. We put all memorial gifts into our endowment, so they become a permanent legacy of the person honored. Thus the gifts in Anne Erwin's name will help support Old York in perpetuity.



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George Marshall Store Gallery News

Winter Installation



The gallery is installed for the winter with a selection of work; some will be familiar and others will be new to you. It is nice to have a reason to come together during these quieter winter days. This is the time of year that I travel, visiting artists' studios and making selections for the coming exhibition season. When not traveling, I am often in the gallery or near by, so please call to make an appointment or stop in if you see my car out front.

George Marshall Store Gallery January - April 8, 2012

~ Mary Harding, Curator

George Marshall Store Gallery
140 Lindsay Road / York / Maine / 03909
Gallery 207-351-1083 Cell 207-752-0205
www.georgemarshallstoregallery.com

Images Above / Top to Bottom and Left to Right / All details: Tom Glover, Kathi Smith, Grant Drumheller, Steven Holt, Stuart Ober, William Irvine, Lynn Karlin, Carole Rabe, Tom Curry, Charles Ramsburg.