

THE PIONEER II

EXETER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 141
EXETER, ME 04435-0141

NEWSLETTER
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2003
VOL. 4, NO. 5

MEMBERSHIP FEES:
SINGLE - \$8 / FAMILY - \$12
DUE ANNUALLY
TEL. 285-7903 OR 379-2449

We held our Annual Fall Trash & Treasures Sale and Bake Sale on September 6 at the Masonic Hall, with great success.

We are selling patriotic baseball caps for \$15.00 each. Each purchase gets a chance on a raffle for a queen size fleece patriotic blanket. The caps are all embroidered, no silk screening.

A big congratulations goes to Mabel Hawes of Exeter. On August 12th she received the Boston Post Gold Headed Cane for being the oldest citizen in Exeter. She was born as Mabel Rogers on September 10, 1918 in Washburn, Maine. She married Elvin Hawes on September 22, 1935, and they made their home at the old homestead next to the Exeter Center Cemetery. Elvin passed away in March of 1980. Mabel still lives on the home place. She is an active member of the Exeter Historical

Society. Congratulations Mabel!



MABEL HAWES

The Boston Post Gold Headed Cane was born in August of 1909 in Boston, Massachusetts. Edwin A. Grozier, publisher of the Boston Post newspaper, forwarded to the Board of Selectmen in 431 towns in New England, a gold-headed ebony cane. It was requested that the canes be given to the oldest male citizen of each town, for his use for as long as he lives, or moves from the town. At his death, the cane would be returned to the town to be given to the next oldest male. It was an expensive advertising campaign just to gain new customers. In 1930 the holder of the cane was opened to include women. The canes were made by J. F. Fradley and Co. of New York. The ebony was shipped in seven-foot lengths from the Congo in Africa. They were cut into cane lengths, seasoned for six months, turned on lathes to the right

thickness, coated and polished. They have a two-inch long, 14-carat gold head, decorated by hand, and a furrled tip. The head was engraved with the inscription: Presented by the Boston Post to the oldest citizen of (name of town) --- To be transmitted. No towns in Connecticut received a cane, and only two in Vermont received one. Many of the canes have been stolen, lost, destroyed, or just sitting in storage collecting dust, and it is not known how many are still in existence and being used for their intended purpose. One cane was found by an antique dealer in California. He was about to melt down the head when he noticed the town name on it. Curious, he called the town to find out it's historical significance, and now the cane resides safely back in Vassalboro, Maine. Exeter's cane will now be placed in a display box at the town office, and a certificate will be given to the recipient. The cane will be presented to the individual for photo opportunities, then will be returned safely to the display box.

Exeter Harvest Day was held September 20th at the Exeter School. The Historical Society ran a table there, and we also ran the bake sale table for the recreation department. The festival began with a soccer game between the Exeter team and their parents. There was also games and prizes, a bounce castle, pie eating contest, food, a raffle, bake

sale, historical society display, and entertainment by the Abbott Hill Ramblers, and juggler Zachary Field. A good time was had by all those who attended. A special thanks goes to all those who made food for the bake sale and volunteered their time.

A special lamb was auctioned off at the Bangor State Fair on August 1st. It was for the Azure Dillon Scholarship Fund through the Maine 4-H Pine Tree Foundation. Dillon died in a car accident last December. The lamb was donated by Hannah Holmquist. It was raised by Justin Spencer of Glenburn, and sheared for the fair by Gabriel and Peter Guerin of Glenburn. Dillon was a member of the 4-H and her lambs took Grand Champion for many years at the fair. The sale brought over \$600 for the fund.

Much change has taken place at Crawford Memorial Park in Exeter. The baseball park has been extended to now include a new soccer field, and more work is being done to construct a better parking area. Construction was completed on a new building at the park. The building will house all of the town team's sports equipment and it has a kitchen and will have concession windows.

The 2004 historical calendars sell for \$7.50, plus \$2 shipping. Our 2003 calendars are now \$3.

EXETER CORNER VILLAGE

The first store was built here by John Shaw in 1822, and he stayed here until 1851. He had many partners including Ezekiel Hayes in 1824, and Andrew Shaw and John Walker in 1825. In 1835 John Prescott opened his store. Joseph & Josiah Paine bought out Walker in 1835 and then sold to Andrew Pease in 1836. At this time Joseph & Henry True opened their store. In 1839, William French commenced trade in the old Shaw store. In 1842 Augustus French became a partner to Shaw, and Lewis Joscelyn opened his store, then sold out to John Walker in 1847. Francis Hill opened his store in 1843 after buying out John Prescott. This was known as the Hill Store for many years. He sold to Thomas Mansfield in 1855. Samuel Heard was in business here in 1848, and others here have been Joshua Gammon, J.T. Morton, Noah Smith, & Ezekiel Page. George Hill went into trade in the 1850's in the Hill store and remained until 1875, when he became Rector of the Holy Trinity Church. He sold to George Lufkin who stayed until 1894, and was followed by A.P. Shaw who sold to Francis Hill. Hill sold out to Washburn & Chase, who were followed by Fred McCard, and he by Charles Buswell. The Clyde Smith family ran this store for decades, and it is now Exeter Variety. John Prescott built a hotel & store, which he sold to John Whitney, who remained

many years. He sold to Absalam Gordon, who passed it on to Georgia Holbrook. Moses Lufkin opened his harness shop in 1856 in the building later known as the Colbath & Hill Store. David Dinsmore had a tailor shop here, and Drs. Chase and Higgins ran a drug store, and made some of their own medicines. David Adams opened a cabinet shop in 1821. Hotels included the Exeter House, Hotel Hill, and Buswell Hotel. There was a creamery operated here for many years, selling cream to Hood. The original building burned, and a new one was built. The Masons, Pacific Lodge No. 64 was organized in 1850, and they met on the third floor of Exeter Variety until they built the hall in 1915. The Exeter High School was built in 1855, and the Episcopal Church was built in 1874. The first Post Office was opened here on May 1, 1824. The Methodist Church was built in 1829, burned in 1835, was rebuilt in 1836, and burned in 1896, along with the John Walker farm. Lawyers here included John Hill (1827), followed by Samuel Cony (Governor of Maine in 1864), Josiah Crosby, David Barker, and many others, while doctors included Benjamin Evans (1817), Francis Wheeler, John Small, Samuel Redman, and many others. There is much more history of this village than we can print in these columns.

EXETER CORNERS - MAP OF 1859

