



## NEWSLETTER FALL 2021

### Message from the President

Dear Friends of the Fifth Maine Museum,

As I write this, the Fifth Maine Museum is closed for the winter, the surprisingly busy 2021 season under her belt.

Over 4,100 visitors came through the doors of the museum, and hundreds more attended our special events, enjoyed a private tour, or just spent time on our beautiful covered porch. Our docents and Guest Service Associates (GSAs) did a fabulous job of enhancing the guest experience – we got thirteen five-star reviews this season. 13!! In fact, every single Google review we got this season was a five-star review. I'm so grateful for the dedication and expertise of our docents and GSAs!

Understandably, we did some things differently in the fundraising arena this year, as concerns about the Delta variant grew. Erring on the side of safety, we canceled our June pancake breakfast and our Harvest Supper. A blow to the bottom line. But the board responded with creative solutions that will become part of our annual calendar. Everyone loved the new Mimosa Bar at the pancake breakfast and our Harvest Quiche takeout fundraiser was a huge hit—those will be back!

During the winter, we'll be developing our programming for the 2022 season. We'll also use the offseason to tackle some maintenance projects. Even as a very fiscally conservative board, we are mindful that delaying some building repairs makes them more expensive in the long run. Our curator, Holly Hurd-Forsyth, will be hard at work in our archive room—a year-round, environmentally-controlled, secure storage room that houses our growing collection. We are grateful to the donors who have pulled their historic artifacts out of their basements or attics to preserve them for the future and share them with the community-at-large through exhibits at the Fifth Maine Museum.

As always, I want to thank our members for their financial support. It's been challenging, but I'm pleased to say that we are emerging from the past two years in good financial shape. Your twice-yearly contributions—Annual Appeal donations in the fall combined with Membership Dues in the spring—have made all the difference. The entire board is truly grateful.

As always, if you have any questions, feel free to call me at 207.332.2443.

Stay safe and be well,  
Susan Hanley  
President

#### **2020-2021 Board of Directors**

##### Officers

President	Susan Hanley
Vice President	Gail Trefethern-Kelley
Secretary	Curtis Mildner
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Perry Sutherland	Kathryn Moxhay
Jason Harding	Matt Reading
Jane Banquer	Ian Stevenson
Geoff Phillips-McEnany	

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## Meet our new Board Member Geoff Phillips McEnany



Geoff Phillips McEnany joins the Fifth Maine board with deep roots in both Peaks Island and Fifth Maine regiment history. His 2nd great grand uncle, Horatio Bumpus, and his cousin, Morris Bumpus, came to Peaks Island as veterans of the Fifth Maine Regiment. A generation later, his grandfather owned a shooting gallery on the boardwalk near Greenwood Garden. Geoff's family has been summering on Peaks ever since. Now, some 160 years later, Geoff is the first member of his family to live on the island year-round – the fulfillment of a lifelong dream. In fact, he and his husband, Brian, named their house on Peaks “Finally Home.”

Community service runs in Geoff's blood: his parents were active members in many island organizations during the 1960s and 1970s. After his recent move to the island, he rediscovered the Fifth Maine and liked what he saw. “I like what the Fifth Maine is doing for the community and I like the care and creativity that's gone into the exhibits. There is so much here that I never even knew existed. I'm excited to be a part of it.”



Let the Fifth Maine be your front porch!

Except during private events, our porch is always open!

Featuring cool breezes and a stunning view!!

## 2021 SEASON WRAP UP

We had so many great events at the Fifth Maine this season. Classes, lectures, community meals, and social gatherings. Most gratifying was hosting a group of veterans who enjoyed lunch on the porch and a private tour of the museum. Here are just a few pictures to enjoy! See more photos on our Facebook and Instagram pages.



Pasta Making Class with Mario



Ian Stevenson's talk about the Fifth Maine & Civil War Vacations



Pancake Breakfast



VAST (Veterans Adaptive Sports and Training) visit



Wine Night at the Museum



Weathering the Storm opening



School field trip



Board member Jason Harding and curator Holly Hurd-Forsyth



Identifying pictures at the History Detective event



Bill Hall's talk about Maine's Bicentennial

## Jimmy Brackett: “Coney Island of Maine” Developer

Excerpted from *Portraits: Early Peaks Islanders (1840-1900)* by Judith E. Richardson



James W. “Jimmy” Brackett was born on Peaks Island on October 20, 1839. When his father died suddenly, he inherited a 45-acre, shore-to-shore parcel of land on the south side of the island and several pieces of property in Portland.

Jimmy was just two months old.

Jimmy and his mother moved to Portland where he became an orphan at the age of eleven. Unlike most orphans, Jimmy had wealth—in the form of real estate. The court appointed Lemuel Cobb, a prosperous Portland grocer, as his legal guardian. Cobb managed Jimmy’s estate, providing good care and schooling to the young boy, and brought him into the family grocery business.

When the Civil War broke out, Jimmy’s early attempts to enlist in the Union Army were declined due to poor health. He eventually served in the Union Cavalry for ten months during 1864, honorably discharged for medical reasons – stroke and paralysis.

After a year of convalescence, Jimmy established his own grocery store in Portland and married Sarah Ross. In the 1870 census, Jimmy’s estate was valued at \$8,000 – a remarkable amount for a 30-year old man who started life as an orphan.

Jimmy and Sarah moved to Peaks Island in 1871 and invested in the growing tourist business, developing a lovely seaside picnic area capable of accommodating 5,000 people—an attraction that became known as “Greenwood Grove.” In 1883, Jimmy and his business partner, Charles Knowlton, fenced off a portion of Greenwood Grove to create “Greenwood Garden” with a vast array of attractions that surprised their guests—street lamps, outdoor seating, an animal menagerie, a skating rink, dance hall, and band stand.

Jimmy added to the attractions each year and planned special events so that Greenwood Garden became a perennial tourist destination. Amusements included swings, a carousel, a camera obscura, an observatory, a zip line, vendors, and side shows. Special events in the early years included fireworks, balloon ascensions, and dazzling colored light displays. Today, the beautiful grounds of the Peaks Island Lions Club encompass what was once Greenwood Garden.

While Jimmy and Sarah never had any children, they worked hard to put Peaks Island on the map as the “Coney Island of Maine.” Both Sarah and Jimmy are buried in Brackett Cemetery on the Peaks Island.



### The Fifth Maine Museum has an ONLINE Shop!

If you’re looking for an easy, safe, and community-minded way to do your shopping, just go to the Fifth Maine Museum website. Our online shop has hats, shirts, hoodies, aprons, books, and more! Stay tuned for new merch that will arrive (we hope) before the holidays!

Visit [www.fifthmainemuseum.org/shop](http://www.fifthmainemuseum.org/shop)  
to shop for yourself or a loved one



## Sharing History: The Collection Grows

by Holly Hurd-Forsyth, Fifth Maine Museum curator



Among the recent donations to the Fifth Maine Museum collection are this image of the Peaks Island Kitchen Sink-a-Pater band, and the Civil War gun that belonged to islander, Oliver N. Leavitt, donated by his great grandson, Geoff Phillips McEnany.

2021 was a busy year in all aspects of the museum, including the number of new items added to the museum's permanent collection. These books, photographs, objects, and scrapbooks, are available for researchers to see and learn from, and for museum staff to utilize while developing new programs and exhibitions.

Highlights include:

- A book donated by Peter "Bridge" Bridgford titled *Prisoners of War and Military Prisons: Personal Narratives of Experience in the Prisons at Richmond, Danville, Macon, Andersonville, Savannah, Millen, Charleston, and Columbia ... with a List of Officers Who Were Prisoners of War from January 1, 1864* written by Asa Isham, Henry Davidson, and Henry Furness and published in 1890. Many Fifth Maine Regiment soldiers served as prisoners of war, and the regiment also took many Confederate soldiers as prisoners themselves, so this book gives helpful context to these experiences.
- Dean Kamp donated several unique items once owned by his grandparents William and Marian Berryman, including scrapbooks and photographs related to island life in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Tucked into the scrapbook is the original key to the Gem Theater. William, a police officer, was in possession of the key when the theater burned in 1934.
- Josh and Heather Tiffany gave the museum Rob Tiffany's collection that documents the multiple island independence movements between 1993 and 2007.
- Geoffry Phillips McEnany donated an absolutely fantastic collection of materials detailing the life and Civil War service of his great grandfather, Oliver N. Leavitt. Leavitt served in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Maine Regiment and spent many summers with his extended family on Peaks Island. He was deeply involved in the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and became Commander of the GAR in Maine in his later years. His son, Bill Leavitt, owned the shooting gallery next to Greenwood Garden on Peaks in the early 1900s. This carefully conserved collection knits together the two parts of the Fifth Maine Museum's mission: The Civil War and Peaks Island history. Look for more information about the Leavitt collection coming soon!

This is just a sample of the generous gifts the museum has received this year. Thank you to everyone who donated. You've helped the Fifth Maine grow and allowed us to tell great stories about the island we call home. If you have something you'd like to donate to the Fifth Maine Museum, first contact the curator at [curator@fifthmainemuseum.org](mailto:curator@fifthmainemuseum.org) to see if it is in our collecting scope, and to discuss the next steps. As always, thank you for your generosity!

## Volunteer Spotlight: Dick Maguire



Dick Maguire's daughter, Joanne, was the first Maguire to visit Peaks Island. She thought her parents would enjoy the community and encouraged them to check it out for themselves. They did – and they did. It wasn't long before they were in the market for a house, eventually buying the building that was once the old Red and White Grocery on Seashore Avenue. By the late 1990s, both Dick and his wife, Jane, were docents at the nearby Fifth Maine Museum.

During his almost 25 years as a Fifth Maine volunteer, Dick Maguire has worn many hats: board member, committee chair, event organizer, and docent. And in every one of those roles, he has excelled.

Dick never missed a meeting during his 10-year tenure on the board. He oversaw scores of projects as chair of both the Collections Committee and the Building Committee. He created the Fifth Maine's "Pancake Breakfast Bible," a step-by-step manual that guarantees pancake breakfast success—mere child's play for a man whose career in project management involved creating task lists for software installation projects that involved thousands of steps. And, as our longest serving docent, Dick has earned the moniker "Old Reliable" (emphasis on *Reliable*), helping to cover unfilled docent slots with very little notice.

Dick says he's motivated by his interest in history and his love of working with people. "It's fun to bring history to life for museum visitors. I love to tell the stories of the men in the regiment, and the history of Peaks Island is fascinating. I learn something more, something new every year—from the evening programs or the other docents."

The building and location hold a special place in Dick's heart. "What a strong bond the veterans must have had. They didn't build this building until 24 years after the end of the war, and they finished the Memorial Hall so beautifully. The museum is a gem that tells a unique story and it needs to be preserved." We couldn't agree more and we are so grateful that Dick Maguire is helping us tell that story!!

## Thank you for being a member of the Fifth Maine Museum!



Dinner on the porch before Our annual meeting



Board member, Ian Stevenson, presents his interesting insights about the rise of the "Civil War Vacation" at our annual meeting.



# ART ON THE PORCH EVOLVES

Among the silver linings we found in the pandemic cloud was re-imagining our Art on the Porch event as an Art Walk. This year, we were able to invite some artists back to the Fifth Maine and some artists sold from their home studios—creating an event that was part destination sale and part treasure hunt. It was the best of both worlds!

## ART WALK ON PEAKS ISLAND



Mixed media artist Dustine Hayes, right, of Germantown, Md., shows off her artwork at the Fifth Maine Museum during the Art Walk Sunday on Peaks Island. Hayes' mother lives on the island and all the art on display was made with materials found on Peaks Island. Sue Hanley, president of the museum board, said the show is usually held at the museum, but they turned it into a walk due to the pandemic so artists and visitors could spread out. This year more than 30 artists participated, with about 17 at the museum and the rest spread out over the island. The fundraiser has been taking place for over 20 years and Hanley says she hopes to raise close to \$3,000 for the museum.



The best salesman on earth! Owen worked all day selling raffle tickets and then "did the honors" at the end of the day by pulling the winning ticket – his own! A perfect ending for our dedicated volunteer.



Artist Mary Murerwa of Peaks Island organizes her table. Murerwa makes Kenyon baskets, sandals, bags and jewelry.



Betsy Gritman Johnson of Weston, VT., mans her table Sunday. The Art Walk takes place once a month during July, August and September.

Write up that appeared in Portland Press Herald, August 9, 2021



Board member, Perry Sutherland, ready to grill!



Daisy was our cashier at the grill. You may recognize her beautiful smile – she was also one of our superb GSAs this summer.

