Board President: Gary Edwards
Vice President: Jeanne Edwards
Treasurer: Lynn Dunbar-Murphy
Secretary: Thelma White
Corresponding Secretary:
Programs: Jeanne Edwards
Scholarship Coordinators:
Gerald Gordon
Lynn Dunbar-Murphy
Curator: vacant
Additional Board Members:
Gail Hastings
Janice Hosking
Marjorie Brady
Margaret Thurston

Historic Urann House, Rte 1 in Sullivan

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2015-2016

The past year has been busy as well as productive. The Society:

- Presented the following programs:
  June - History of the Ashville Church with Larry Newman
  July - Archeological update by Julia Clark of the Abbe Museum
  August - Quilt documentation with members of the Pine Tree Quilters Guild.
- Provided Mountain View summer students with a four-part series on the history of Sullivan and Sorrento.
- Held open houses on Sullivan Daze at the Museum and the Urann House
- Had the Museum open on Tuesdays for the season, thanks to the group of dedicated volunteers who provide coverage on a weekly basis.
- Held regular board meetings to conduct society business. Note: the membership is encouraged to attend board meetings and participate.
- Continued making progress on the Urann Historic Home restoration project (see related story).
- Answered inquiries from all over about area history and genealogy.
- Submitted a successful proposal to the Maine Community Foundation to begin a new project to inventory and organize the Society's collection.

Summer 2016

Visit our website at
www.sullivansorrentohistory.org
or e-mail us at
info@sullivansorrentohistory.org

Drop in at the Historical Society at the Sorrento-Sullivan Recreation Center on Tuesdays 1-3 p.m., or by appointment.

Visit the Urann House! Call (207) 422-0995 or e-mail gandjedwards@gwi.net for an appointment.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Wednesday, September 14
7:00 p.m.
Sorrento-Sullivan Rec Center
Sandy Oliver on "Exploring Down East's Food Past"
Sandy, author of the Bangor Daily News column "Taste Buds" and prize-winning food historian, will talk about the history behind the traditional dishes we eat. Bring along favorite old recipes to discuss, and bring your questions!

Saturday, September 24
8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Hancock Congregational Church
Fall Meeting of the Maine Old Cemetery Association
Sanford Phippen on "Humorous Hancock Funerals." Tour of Riverside Cemetery.

Wednesday, October 19
5:00 p.m.
Hancock Congregational Church
Lights-Out Dinner
Final meeting of the season for combined Schoodic region historical societies. Potluck supper, year-end wrap-ups. Speaker TBA.

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For more information on programs, contact Jeanne Edwards, 422-0995.

2016 SSHS Scholarship Winner

MaryLouise Ross graduated third in her class from Sumner Memorial High School. This fall, she will be attending Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts, where she plans to pursue a master's degree in biomedical engineering.

Quilt Evaluation 2015

Urann House Project Update

Progress is continuing. In March of 2015, SSHS received an $11,000 grant from the Davis Family Foundation for work at the Urann House, primarily a face-lifting exterior paint job. The painting was completed in early October but not before a problem reared its head. In preparing for the paint crew, we removed the lower clapboards on the back side to replace several that had deteriorated because of snow lying against them for a number of winters. This exposed significant deterioration of the sill, which had appeared like new from the inside. Estimates came in at over $15,000 to raise the whole structure and repair the sill damage as well as the known water damage under several downstairs windows. The building was then to be set back on its foundation, and the interior supports leveled and shored up at the same time. We were unsuccessful in obtaining funding from the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation to complete this work and begin interior restoration.

During the summer we finished clearing out the basement with the help of volunteer labor from the Hancock County jail, and Jeanne Edwards, Gerry Gordon and Rich Cunningham continued to keep the yard looking good. A crew of dedicated volunteers put tremendous effort into getting the house ready for the August open house so we could show off its potential as a look into life in Sullivan in the past.

Throughout the year, donations of historic furniture and other artifacts continue to arrive. It is getting to the point that we need to find some additional appropriate storage.

Next steps: If we are to make any progress this construction year, we will need to raise $15,000 through local donations. The new rounds of grant funding do not begin until the new year.

Collection Project

The Maine Community Foundation has provided $7,300 for this project. Their donation is earmarked to support an intern to help with the project and purchase of upgrades to the Past Perfect museum software. Our match includes the purchase of a new computer and other related costs. The project will include:

- An inventory of the complete collection of family records, historical artifacts and the Society archive
- Continuing the process of accessioning of the total collection and entering it into Past Perfect. When this is done, display and retrieval of information, photos, etc., will be easier and quicker.
- Develop a plan for storing and displaying collections
- Find more storage space
- Dispose of duplicate and inappropriate items (every effort will be made to get these things to a better home)

The timing of the grant has made it nearly impossible to find an intern for this summer. We are looking at a school year situation or next summer to implement this part of the project.

Donations

Donations of items, time and cash are a necessary part of the operation of SSHS. Without them we would not exist. Please think about participating in one or more of the following opportunities:

- Monetary donations for:
  - the Urann House project
  - the collection project
  - general operational costs
- Items of historic interest of the area (for either the museum or the Urann House project)
- Family history, genealogy, photos, etc.
- Your time and talents for small projects or larger work days.

Alice S.Turner Curtis Sullivan-Born Author

Alice Turner was born on September 8, 1860, the last of the children of John and Susan Speare Staples Turner of Sullivan. John, a sail maker, was employed across from their home on what is sometimes called Little Sail Island. He was 60 years old when she was born. Her mother, Susan, was twenty-three years younger than her husband. When Alice was a young child, she loved to listen to her mother's stories and poems. She also loved to play among the canvas pieces where her father worked. [Johnson, 1950, p. 360]

Alice had two sisters – Anna S., who was twelve years older than she, and Ella F., who was eleven years older. Ella taught school in Ashland, Massachusetts, and married Edgar Jones. Anna married Alpheus Wooster of Hancock. Anna and Alpheus had a child, Otis P., who was 1 year old at the time of the 1870 census. Little Otis is also listed living with Alice, her sister Ella, and her parents in their home. Anna later married Edgar Pearsall, lived in South Carolina, and had more children. Ella had one child, a daughter, who died young.

Turner Home, Sullivan Harbor

Ella very much wanted to see Alice receive a good education, and at age 19 in 1880, Alice was living next to her sister and husband and working at a thread mill. In a letter to Lelia Clarke Johnson prior to the publication of her book, Sullivan and Sorrento Since 1790, Alice wrote, "When I was 12… (I) attended a well-known girls' school." She went on to say that at 18 she became a file clerk for The Youth's Companion (a popular magazine for young people). She also wrote for The Boston Traveller, and became Literary Editor of that newspaper. For the next seventeen years, she was on the Editorial Staff of The Youth's Companion.

Alice married Irving Curtis, who was originally from Maine, in 1885. In the 1900 federal census, we find Irving, age 63; Alice, age 36; Alice's mother Susan, age 76; and a female servant living in Boston. After Alice's father died, her mother had come to live with her. At this time, Irving listed his occupation as "capitalist." Alice did not list an occupation, but she was constantly writing.

Alice Curtis wrote the "Little Maid Series," stories of happenings in different places during colonial America. A young girl was always the heroine in these stories. These books were immensely popular for a number of years. Altogether she wrote twenty-four books in this series, from 1913 into the 1950s. Among the titles were Little Maid of Old Maine, Little Maid of Massachusetts Colony, and Little Maid of Old Virginia.

Alice Curtis also wrote a series covering the Civil War period, which was called "The Yankee Girl Series." Examples of these books include: Yankee Girl at Bull Run, Yankee Girl at Antietam, and Yankee Girl at Vicksburg. In her letter to Lelia Clarke Johnson, Mrs. Curtis also included information on her six-volume set entitled The Grandpa's Little Girl Books; a four-volume set called The Little Runaways Books; a four-volume set entitled The Little Marjorie Books; and another four-volume set called The Frontier Girls.

In November of 1910, Alice's husband Irving died. He was buried in Southside Cemetery, Skowhegan, Maine, where his family members were buried. I cannot find any information on Alice, until the 1940 federal census, when she is a lodger in a boarding house in Needham, Massachusetts.

In December of 1953, Mrs. Curtis sent $25.00 to the Frenchman's Bay Library. This was accompanied by a new edition of her "Little Maid" series. At that time she was 93 years old.

On the 10th of July, 1958, Alice Turner Curtis died. She is buried beside her husband in Skowhegan. Her parents and a brother who died young are buried in York Hill Cemetery in Sullivan. A photo of Alice Turner Curtis can be seen by accessing the Maine Author's Correspondence at the Maine State Library.

The Sullivan-Sorrento Historical Society would very much appreciate donations of Alice Turner Curtis' books, if you happen to have any!

Jeanne Edwards

SSHS – YOUR WINDOW TO THE PAST

What does SSHS do?

Our mission statement [right] pretty well sums up what we do. As an all-volunteer organization we use all available resources, including the energy of our members, to add to and make our historic collections accessible to the community.

How do we do it?

The officers and directors of the Society meet regularly to plan events, projects and programs. We then look for ways to make our resources available to the public, including:

- Open hours at the museum/archive
- Presenting programs of public interest about local history
- Maintaining a web site
- Answering inquiries
- Providing historical data, photos, etc. for local tourism promotion and businesses

What is available?

- An extensive archive of local family histories (genealogy)
- A growing collection of photographs, both original and digital
- Family photo albums and scrap books
- Hundreds of historic artifacts
- An extensive collection of information about our economic past: granite, mining, mercantile, shipping, shipbuilding, tourism, farming, and just getting by
- Town records, including obituaries, old maps, etc.

Mission Statement

The Sullivan-Sorrento Historical Society collects and preserves the history and the historical artifacts of the community, maintains a facility in which to celebrate and study its history, and promotes the education of its citizens in that history so that present and future generations may build upon it. *[adopted 2010]*

Talk on the History of Clamming in Maine, Sorrento Community Center July 20, 2016

The Sullivan-Sorrento Historical Society is hoping someone can help us fill the gaps in our collection of Sorrento Town Reports. We are missing:

- all issues prior to 1907
- 1946/1947
- 1947/1948
- 1950/1951
- 1955/1956 to 1972/1973
- 1974/1975
- 1978/1979
- 1981/1982
- 1988
- 1990 - 1993
- 1997 - 1998
- all issues after 2002/2003

Current projects

- Adding to our collections
- Continuing to better organize and document those collections
- Providing assistance to folks, both local and from across the country, who are researching their family or some part of our local history
- Restoration of the Urann historic home to be used as an interactive look into life in Sullivan between 1800 and now.

How are we funded?

- Annual donations from the Towns of Sullivan and Sorrento
- Membership dues
- Private donations
- Grants from foundations and governmental organizations

What can I (we) do?

- Take advantage of the available resources of the Society
- Become active members of the Society
- Share your family history with the Society
- Donate your time and skills to help with projects and the business of the Society

Please contact me or any member of the board if we can help with your history.

Gary Edwards, President

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