



19th Century Curran Village

Summer 2020

372 Fields Pond Road, P.O. Box 107, Orrington, ME
207-205-4849 • 207-745-4426
Email: thecurranhomestead@gmail.com
Website: curranhomestead.org

Director's Message

Progress In the Wake of the Pandemic

Covid-19 Crisis has affected everyone and everything in some way in recent months, including the Museum. In March, the Museum cancelled forthcoming events and programs in response to the necessity for social distancing. Although our interaction with the public for the most part is temporarily on hold, our board, some volunteers, and our director have focused on the consolidation of our two museum villages in the interim. If you have had the opportunity to see the Orrington/ Holden location, you would have noticed major transformations underway, or as one Facebook fan remarked “some crazy fast development.”

With this unprecedented development period we are also faced with its cost. Our shared concern over financial uncertainty due to a slowed economy from closures and restrictions in response to the pandemic have resulted in far less income for our nonprofit than usual. In addition to memberships and donations, we depend on revenues generated from our offered workshops, which have



Our new main entrance and thoroughfare.

One reprieve, **Ron Sucey**, our Board treasurer, notes: “we have applied for and received a **Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP)** forgivable loan with assistance from the **Small Business Administration (SBA)** and **Bar Harbor Bank & Trust** to cover the cost of our museum director’s salary and some minor expenses for two months.”

also been cancelled until further notice.

Additionally, we need your continued support, if possible. The development underway comes at a cost but is necessary to fully utilize our educational resources for our greater Maine community and beyond than ever before. We see our current work adding to the quality of life for our present and future, and we need more of you to be a part of that not only through financial contributions but volunteerism.

For the time being, public gatherings at 19th Century Curran Village at Orrington/ Holden are on hold. We anticipate that

our Giant Yard Sale and series of activities during Old Home Week in Orrington will go forward as planned. For updates, consult our website: curranhomestead.org or our **Facebook page**, “19th Century Curran Village.”

With our events and programs on hold, work on the Village has continued with the felling of many trees and clearing of vegetation along Fields Pond Road for the sake of greater visibility. On other portions of our property, trees were harvested last year by **Brewer High School’s Forestry**

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Museum Director's Message



19th Century Curran Village

Museum Director
Robert Schmick, PhD

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Program, and this spring more than 18,000 board feet of hemlock and pine boards, joists, and beams were sawn by **Jon Weed of Eddington** for the sake of planned construction.

The construction of a new **Hands-On History Building** was planned for this spring on the site of the **Heavy Equipment Shed** but due to the shutdown of federal programs, **Penobscot Job Corps** could not begin the project as anticipated. This construction will resume as soon as possible, as we will need the space of this proposed 1800 square foot building for some of the hands-on learning exhibits being re-located like the **Victorian Kitchen** and the **Dr. Trafton Dining Room and Sitting Parlor**, among others. Until that construction can begin, we will pursue smaller projects.

Certainly, when things normalize, there will be opportunities to participate in outdoor construction projects through offered workshops. A beginner's workshop in stick construction has been posted on our website and with expressed interest from you, we could schedule some dates. The **North Castine Post Office** was fitted with a metal roof this past week with contributions from board members, our director, and volunteer Doug Dolan of Hollis Center, who will be one of the co-instructors for a future building construction workshop. The **Post Office** roof utilized exclusively recycled

materials from a structure dismantled and stored at Newfield many years ago.

Windows, doors, and clapboard sheathing will be fitted to the **Post Office** soon, as the structure will house a reconfiguration of the **Titanic and Carpathia Marconi Radio Rooms** originating at Newfield. Let us know if you wish to volunteer time towards the building's completion. The change to the telegraph exhibit is that its presentation is confined to two sets of long tables with an attached bead board panel backing where all instrumentation is mounted including greater presentation of working period electrical fixtures. These two telegraph stations were recently re-worked to be mobile units for the **2020 Maine Science Festival** until the event was cancelled.

The plan is to have a permanent set-up in the new **Post Office** that is connected by an underground conduit to our barn's former "Milk Room" that is being remodeled for the purpose. This room situated at the back of the Curran barn ell will serve to create a greater distance between communicators than previously existed at Newfield; students could previously hear their Morse code message being received in the adjacent room of the same building, but that will no longer be possible. In the process of remodeling the "Milk Room" \$1,000 dollars in "1929" and "1934" series treasury and reserve notes was discovered inside an Edgeworth tobacco plug tin in the ceiling!



An Edgeworth tobacco tin filled with money.

Museum Director's Message



LEFT: Dr. Trafton's Sitting Parlor.

BELOW: The Post Office has a new metal roof.



ABOVE: Dr. Trafton's Dining Room.

RIGHT: The Victorian Kitchen includes a step-in shelving unit.



Carousel Building Heading to New Home

Currently, we are making frequent trips between our villages as we relocate artifacts. We have initially focused on larger and heavier artifacts like those found in our farm equipment, granary, haying and gas engine collections. Large quantities of packing materials have been purchased for the sake of thousands of smaller artifacts destined for relocation. The carousel will soon be disassembled for the first time since 1922, as it was restored over some 15 years in the 1970s and 1980s and eventually set up for the first time in more than 50 years as a permanent exhibit and amusement, but it has not been taken apart since Ivory Fenderson did so when he retired it. We will put our string of horses in temporary storage as the plan is to move and re-erect the octagonal building containing it.



Make way for the Carousel!

This carousel building was built by the **U.S. Army National Guard, Company B, out of Saco and Sanford, Maine** between 1989-1990. To re-erect it within Holden we are looking for a construction firm to excavate and pour frost walls from the original blueprints of the 50' x 50' structure.

A newly constructed 25' x 205' gravel road accesses the planned site, which will make the structure visible from Fields Pond Road.

The stepped-up schedule for relocating structures from Newfield became more of a reality with a pledge from **Guy Pilote**, owner of **Tancrede Building Movers**, in **Lewiston**, to move buildings at cost waiving his own fees. He assisted in the original construction of the **Carousel Building** as a **U.S. Army** soldier in 1989, Guy was especially taken with our plan to preserve as much of the former museum as possible and create a museum village in Orrington/Holden. The three deeded properties that make up the Newfield Museum are for sale as of May, so there is a necessity to act quickly in the relocation of both collections and buildings.

Sponsorships of Buildings and Collections Available

There has been much planning of where collections from Newfield will go at Orrington/Holden, and how they might be better utilized for hands-on interactive experiences. A description of where collections might be housed, and their future exhibition can be found in a series of working documents on our blog site that allows us to post photos and text as well as seek comment:

19thcenturycurranvillages.blogspot.com

These blog articles include specific descriptions of individual or grouped buildings and collections to be relocated as well as proposed future constructions that will house collections and serve programming. **We are offering the opportunity for principle, long-term sponsorship and naming rights to buildings and collections for the first time, as well as annual sponsorships for recognition of one year in association with a building or collection. Please contact us at (207) 745-4426, or (207) 205-4849, if you wish to discuss the possibility of a principal or other sponsorship for the following:**

- A. The Victorian Kitchen and Sewing Room, including the Foot Treadle Sewing Machine Exhibit & Workshops
- B. Car Culture Building: Model Ts, Jitterbugs/Doodlebugs, and Car Conversions
- C. The 1894 Herschell-Armitage Carousel and Building
- D. The Cider and Grain Mill
- E. The Doctor's Office, Family Sitting Parlor and Dining Room
- F. The Multi-Tradesmen's Shop: Broom-Making, Harness & Saddle Maker and Cobbler (Shoemaker)
- G. Dining Pavilion & Relocation of Restaurant & Ice Cream Parlor Equipment & Furnishings
- H. One Room Red Schoolhouse
- I. A Rural Maine Letterpress Printing Office
- J. Metal Arts and Mechanics Complex
- K. Hoof, Paw, Foot and Hand Power Exhibit
- L. The Cooperage Exhibit (Barrel-Making)
- M. 19th Century Women's, Men's, Children's Clothing and Accessories Exhibit
- N. The Creamery Exhibit
- O. Carriages, Wagons, Sleighs, and Sleds Livery Building

On the Move: Collection Relocation

To relocate collections from Newfield, the Orrington/Holden facilities have been consolidated where possible to serve as temporary storage. For example, our **Heavy Equipment Shed** now houses much heavy equipment including the Marsh Hay Sled, Chase Shingle Mill, Poole and Sons (Hildreth-esque) wood splitter, slab cutter and more. We repaired and adapted several non-collection buildings into collections storage facilities with the plywood reinforcement of an entire floor and replacement of a roof. Additionally, leased semi-trailers from **Maine Trailer** are serving as temporary storage for collections loaded for relocation to Orrington/Holden Village.

Work is underway on the relocation of the first of up to ten museum buildings from Newfield. For more details about specific buildings to be relocated and their intended use visit our blog:

19thcenturycurranvillages.blogspot.com

To house, exhibit and utilize as a working collection for educational purposes the wonderful Willowbrook legacy, a larger infrastructure at Orrington/Holden is obviously necessary. Many buildings at Orrington/Holden have been under-utilized and need some repair after seeing major renovation nearly thirty years ago when they became part of a museum.

The **Curran farmhouse** received a new porch roof and some clapboard replacement last fall through a donation, and workers are scheduled to return to replace moldings and paint the exterior this spring.

With the drainage work at the back of the Curran barn and ell completed, this summer's work will also include the barn's renovation. Permanent cables will be installed above in the hay mow to stabilize the structure, and deteriorated framing members, support posts, floor joists, and plank flooring will be replaced where necessitated and for improved visitor navigation. Volunteer assistance is especially needed to complete this work. When completed, a new metal roof will be professionally installed to insure its longevity, as asphalt shingles have necessitated constant replacement on the ever-windy knoll above Fields Pond.

Work is underway on the relocation of the first of up to ten museum buildings from Newfield



Loaded for relocation to Orrington/Holden.



Temporary alteration of the Tom Flagg Smithy necessitated to meet height restrictions en route to Orrington.

The New Entrance Road Paves the Way

As buildings start moving down the road, a new entrance and access to the field beyond the stone wall that divides the townships of Orrington and Holden on the Curran property had to be completed. **Mike Nelligan Construction** completed the 25-foot-wide gravel road that enters through a widened opening in the white picket fence between the Curran farmhouse and the Fields House. The road forks at the new Carpenter's Shop before going on to a point 205 feet into the property to the future site of the relocated Carousel Building and other structures. The road spur that connects the front of the **Carpenter's Shop** extends beyond and around the back to an alcove behind the Curran ell buildings where poor drainage and the resulting frost heave has shifted them as well as the main barn. The excavation work has included sculpturing a declination for water coming off roof tops and the replacement of topsoil with gravel and stone. The building pad



A road to the site of our relocated Carousel Building and our extended museum village.

that accommodates the Post Office and Carpenter's Shop has been enlarged. This will soon be the site of the first three relocated buildings to be known as the **Metal Arts and Mechanics Complex** for knife making, metal fabrication, metal casting, milling and engine work.

Another facet of our current plan of action has been to determine what parts of the collection do not fit our mission. We are focused on rural New England village

life from the 1850s-1920s. With any mission there is always anticipated change especially as cash and non-cash donations may present new opportunities for developing our educational offerings.

With anticipated growth in mind, there are still many artifacts, especially that characterize Victorian domestic life, that will be placed in an auction in September. A working document of chosen artifacts to be sold only at auction can be found on our blog. We will not be gifting items to other institutions as the earnings from this auction will be invested directly into the development of the Orrington/ Holden Village. This is in keeping with the original intent of the Willowbrook board in gifting the bulk of the collections and properties of the former Willowbrook, so that it would eventually serve to perpetuate the Willowbrook legacy through further development and realization of a museum village in central and eastern Maine.

Charitable Donation Form

By contributing to the **Annual Fund** or the **Rural Heritage Endowment Fund**, you will help prepare a new generation for the challenges of the 21st century with lessons from the past.

These funds insure 19th Century Curran Village's immediate needs and long-term sustainability.

Please print legibly:

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Cell _____

Email _____

*Your contact information is used only to inform you of upcoming events, volunteer opportunities and membership offers. It is not released to others. Please be aware that credit card charges for Curran Homestead Village are processed by the **Bangor Letter Shop** as a savings to the museum and their name will appear on your credit card statement.*

Please make checks payable to **"The Curran Homestead"**

VISA MC DISCOVER # _____

Name on Card _____ Exp. Date: _____ CVV _____

Signature: _____

I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE TO:

(Please indicate choices)

RURAL HERITAGE ENDOWMENT FUND

___ \$1000 ___ \$100

___ \$500 ___ \$50

___ \$250 ___ Other amount

\$ _____

THE 2020 ANNUAL FUND

___ \$1000 ___ \$100

___ \$500 ___ \$50

___ \$250 ___ Other amount

\$ _____

Please fill out forms and return with payment to: Curran Homestead, P.O. Box 107, Orrington, ME 04474

CUT OUT, FILL OUT & MAIL OUT

Please Join or Renew Your Annual Membership Today!

Membership helps us preserve our Maine and New England rural heritage as well as perpetuate an invaluable community educational resource.

Membership comes with free general admissions on Open Days at Orrington in 2020, discounts on programs and workshops, and our frequent newsletter. Treat yourself or someone else to a step back into time!

Visit us on Facebook or our website.

SELECT A MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

___ **Dual: \$50**

___ **Family: \$75**

___ **Historian: \$100**

___ **Historical Society,
Museum & Library: \$150**

___ **Business: \$200**

___ **Business Plus: \$350**

___ **Sustaining: \$300**

___ **Benefactor: \$500**

___ **Homesteader: \$1000**

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Please print legibly:

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

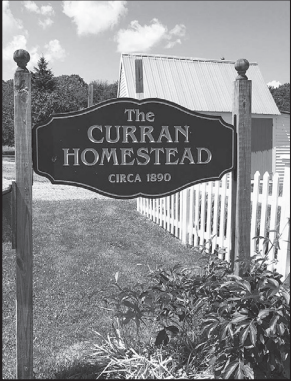
Telephone _____

Email _____

2020 Membership Levels & Benefits

- All members get free general admissions to Orrington in 2020.
- Consult our calendar for Open Days at Orrington. Some memberships receive guest privileges
- Membership includes reduced priced tickets for our Annual Fund Dinner in March.
- **CHILDREN:** (ages 0-17) Free general admissions
- **DUAL: \$50** (2 adults) 10% discount on workshops
- **FAMILY: \$75** (up to 3 adults) 1 guest pass, 10% discount on workshops
- **HISTORIAN: \$100** (up to 3 adults) 2 guest passes, 10% discount on workshops
- **NEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MUSEUM, & LIBRARY: \$150.** We will issue a pass for a family of four. You can reproduce two of these passes and share with your members (and their family) for each day we are open at the Orrington campus.
- **BUSINESS: \$200** Free admission for any employee's family of four each day event or opening, one business advertisement in our newsletter and website, 2 free guest passes. For **\$350**, get all the benefits of a business membership, and a business advertisement in each of our newsletters in 2020. Our normal admission is \$12 Adults, \$10 Seniors, Free for Children 18 and under and Active Military with ID.
- **SUSTAINING: \$300** One additional membership, 4 free guest passes, 20% discount on workshops
- **BENEFACTOR: \$500** Two additional individual memberships, 6 free guest passes, 20% discount on workshops
- **HOMESTEADER: \$1000** Four additional Individual memberships, your annual contribution recognized as a co-sponsor of a Curran Homestead event of your choice, 8 free guest passes, 20% discount on workshops.

19th Century Curran Village at Orrington & Holden

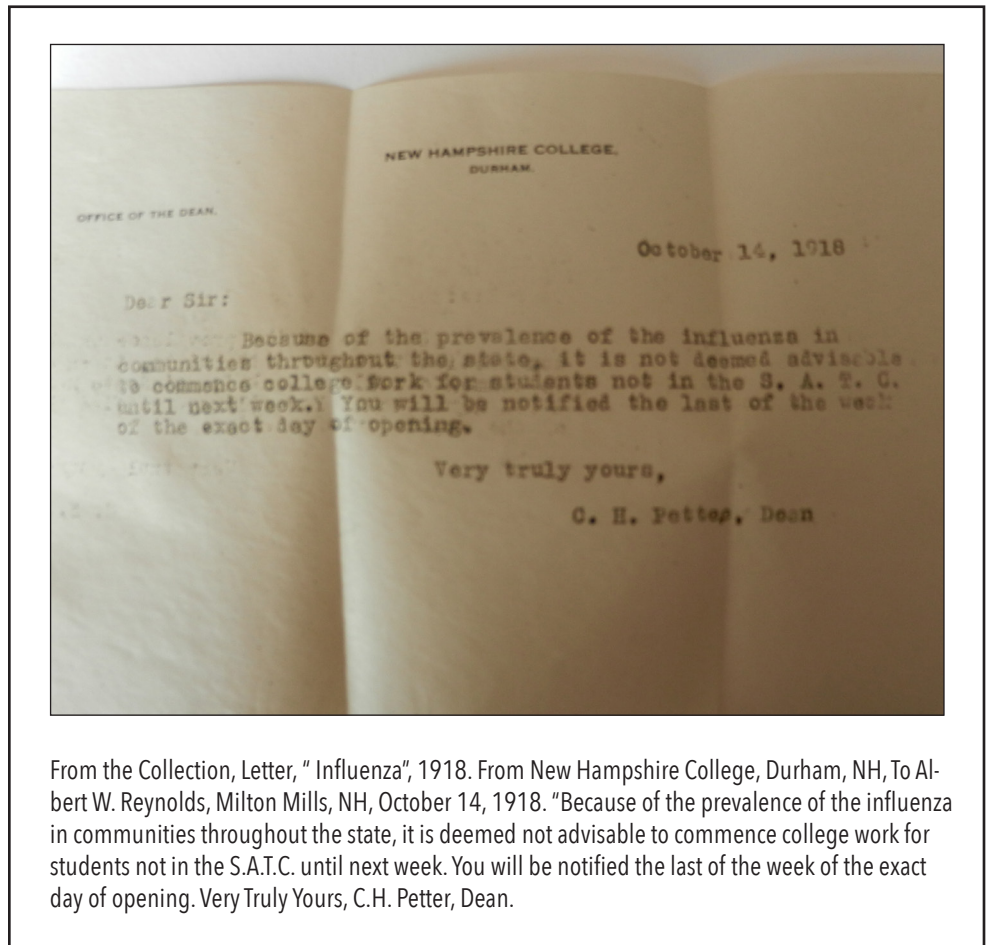


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The Learning Barn Developed for Hands- On Learning

After renovation of the Curran barn and ell, the newly rechristened “**Learning Barn**”, will serve not as a collection storage space as it has long served but as a space for learning with the installation of many hands-on learning exhibits from Newfield especially newly developed interactive elements added to static exhibits from Newfield’s Durgin Barn. These include a site for telegraph communications, **1900s Laundry**, **Early Radios and Crystal Radio Set Building**, **Simple and Complex Machines**, **Hoof, Paw, Hand and Foot Powered Machines**, **A Cooperage**, **A Creamery with a Mechanical Milking Cow**, **A Harness**, **Saddle Maker’s, & Cobbler’s Shop**, and a **Broom Maker’s Shop**.

*Keep safe, and we look forward
to seeing at the Village!*



From the Collection, Letter, “Influenza”, 1918. From New Hampshire College, Durham, NH, To Albert W. Reynolds, Milton Mills, NH, October 14, 1918. “Because of the prevalence of the influenza in communities throughout the state, it is deemed not advisable to commence college work for students not in the S.A.T.C. until next week. You will be notified the last of the week of the exact day of opening. Very Truly Yours, C.H. Petter, Dean.