

Denmark Historical Society

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Volume 17—Number 2

June 2013

Message From the President:

Hi...I hope everyone enjoys this issue, especially those people who weren't expecting one. The reason this issue is being sent to non-members as well as members is to remind you that Denmark does have an historical society, to familiarize you in part with the work we are doing, and the importance of documenting the history of Denmark. And, we want to encourage you to join us. The DHS has a long mailing list, but we are short on participating members. We need your help to remain an active organization. The type of support we need varies from board positions to cataloging and working with our collections, and helping with seminars and public workshops.

Over the last year or two, members of the DHS have worked to make the lower level of the library a much more attractive place with many of our historical artifacts now on display. We now have the ability to show DVD's, scan in pictures and documents people wish to add to our collections, and provide ancestry.com support to members. The DHS, along with the Brownfield Historical Society, also participated in the 3rd grade presentation of *Big Stories from Two Little Towns*. The class interviewed people from both Denmark and Brownfield and drew a mural depicting some of the stories they heard. Also, they produced a play based on the material that was a great hit. We recently held a workshop to add to all the information Winnie Moore discussed in her 1993 interview about growing up in Denmark.

So you see, there are plenty of different activities to get involved with. If you are interested in the history of Denmark and believe that our history is important to us now and also to those coming after us, like to participate in activities that show results, meet people with like interests, please join the Denmark Historical Society and become an active member. We meet the 2nd Monday of each month – March through October at 7:00 PM in the lower level of the library. And, please join us at our Open House on July 13th, 2013 from 1:00 to 5:00 PM, also in the lower level of the library. Thanks, Daryl Kenison

July Open House

Please join us on July 13th, 2013 for the Open House celebration of our historical society display room. The display room will be open from 1:00 to 5:00 PM with members available to help with questions. The Denmark Historical Society display room is in the lower level of the Denmark Public Library. We are a small fledgling historical society, but we have a number of interesting historical artifacts that depict life in Denmark.

In addition to displays, documents, photos and interactive exercises available for review, we will have a ten-minute movie clip of Denmark taken during the year 1949. Scenes from the clip include graduation, the unveiling of the Denmark Honor Roll (originally displayed at the site of the Civil War statue), people at work, main street, businesses, church services and so much more. We will play the clip on the half-hour during the open house.

We will have a guessing display for children with prizes awarded for the most correct guesses. A computer and scanner will be available to scan in any photos or documents you would like to share with us and you will be able to take them home with you, and we will offer genealogy support through our ancestry.com membership. So bring us the names, birthdates, and resident town of your parents or grandparents and we will see what unfolds.

We will have a display of items and documents of Denmark history from 1976 to the present. We tend to think of history as something that happened a long time ago—history in the making happens every day. Sadly, we have more Denmark personal history and photos prior to 1976 than we do from 1976 to the present. If you are a 50s something who grew up or lived in Denmark, or went to camp here, we need your help. Check out the descriptions of the information we are seeking on page 7 of this newsletter and bring us your photos and stories.

We hope you all will join us in celebrating our new Display Room and to support your Denmark Historical Society. Refreshments will be served.

Picket Hill Farm (Smith Farm)



The Smith Farm c. 1909 with the Reuben and Roxanna Smith Family.

An 1858 map of Denmark lists T.S. Smith as owner of a large track of land at the end of what is now Pickett Hill Road. Theophilus Smith and his wife, Mary, built the Smith farm c. 1835, it operated as a dairy farm until about 1950, when then owner, Russell R. Smith deeded the farm to his younger brother, Francis E. Smith. Upon his death in 1977, Francis deeded the farm to his niece by marriage, Florence C. Jope Smith, whose first husband was Ralph Jope, nephew to Francis E. Smith. The Smith Farm remained vacant after the death of Francis E. Smith, until the farm buildings and 42 acres of the land were sold to Brian Grennan and Fritz Von Ulmer in 1980, and it became the Pickett Hill Farm. 250 acres of adjoining land remains in the Smith Family, owned by Ted Jope, grand nephew of Francis E. Smith, and held in the Jope Family Realty Trust. And, Ted Jope says it is going to stay in the Family!

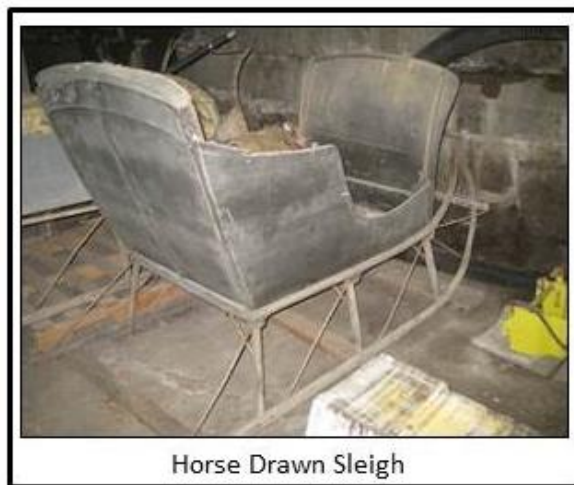
The property itself is a treasure trove of history. Pickett Hill Road once

went past the farm and continued on through the woods to Liberty Corner on what is now Route 302. Does anyone know how Liberty Corner got its name? The barn is a classic Maine dairy barn that

reveals the history of dairy farming in Maine from the 18th century to changes made to accommodate 20th century dairy farming practices. Prior to the practice of baling hay, huge haylofts filled with loose hay were needed to feed the stock through the winter. Cow stalls for hand milking were configured differently to those used when mechanized milking machines came into use. Sometime during the 1920's, the dirt, ground-level floor of the Smith barn was cemented over to comply with new laws governing dairy farming in Maine. The barn is full of old farming and farm-life equipment. Some items are long past their usefulness while others have stood the test of time.



Spring-closed nose ring used to control an ox or a bull.



Horse Drawn Sleigh



Rubble Field and Trash Pile

Brian and Fritz also have made many changes to the farmhouse to accommodate the needs of modern living, but have retained the warmth and charm of a Maine country farmhouse. A near-by rubble field contains evidence of one of Maine's best crops—the unwanted rocks removed from the nearby fields. The rubble pile also was used to discard glass, tin, and other non-combustible trash—all very revealing of the products used, and of over 150 years of life on a farm. One doesn't have to dig very deep to uncover numerous old fashioned vapor rub jars and cough syrup bottles – apparently life on a Maine dairy farm was hard on the lungs.

The *Red Shed* is another change on the old Smith Farm

(see advertisement on the Sponsor Page), the *Shed* is now a comfortable guest cottage for people to rent who want to stay in a country setting, surrounded by spectacular scenery and serenity. Historically, the *Red Shed* began life as two separate buildings. One was the carriage shed and the other functioned as an isolation shed for cows that needed extra care.

The Smith Farm of early Denmark has eased its way through our history to become the Pickett Hill Farm, and along the way has left an indelible footprint of 178 years of life in Denmark.



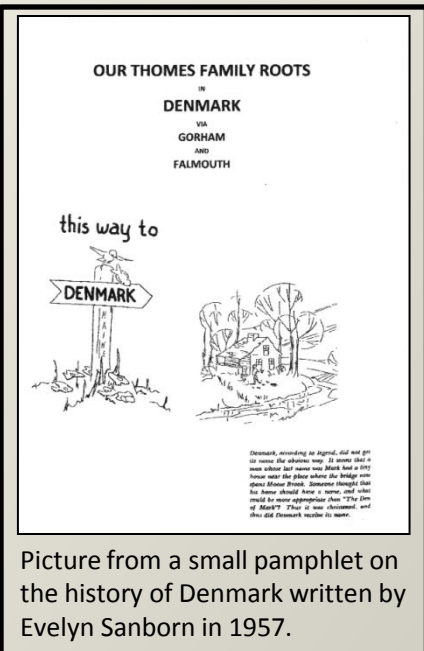
The Carriage Shed c. 1909 with Ralph Jope and Francis Smith.

Thomes Family Roots in Denmark

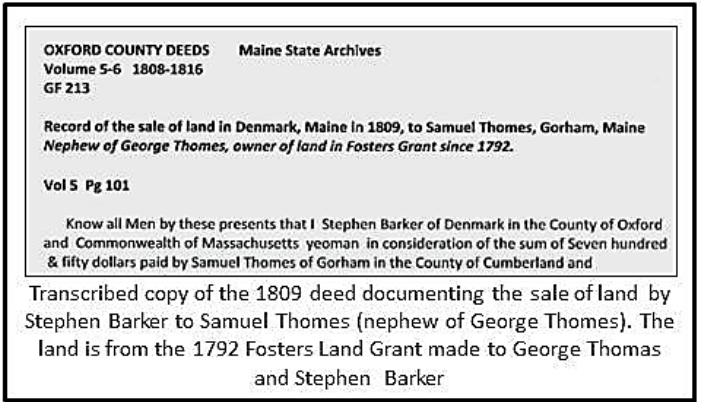
The Historical Society recently received two wonderful donations from Tom and Carol Leach, long-time members of the Denmark Historical Society, one was in the form of a rather generous donation check and the other is a notebook describing the Thomes Family roots in Denmark. Thomas Leach is the great, great grandson of Eleanor (Nellie) Allen Thomes, born in Denmark on May 30, 1861. In 1792 George Thomes and Stephen Barker became owners of land in Foster's Grant in 1792 – on what is now Hancock Pond Road. In 1809, Samuel Thomes, then of Gorham, Maine, and nephew of George Thomes, paid Stephen Barker of Denmark \$750 dollars for about 110

acres of the original grant. That purchase marked the beginning of 162 years of

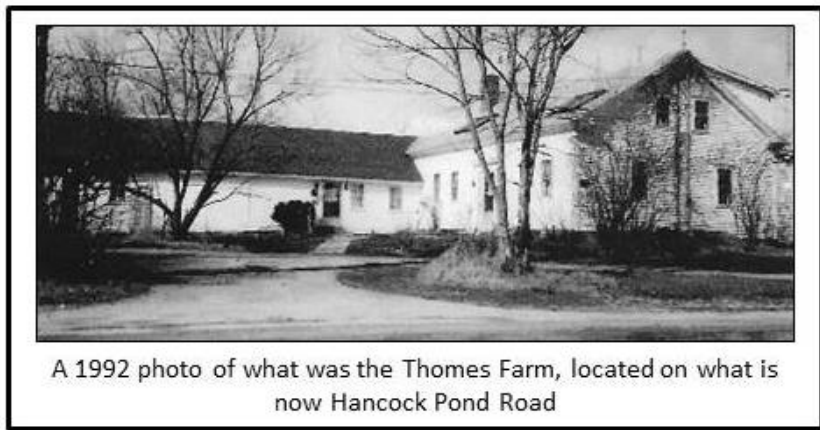
Thomes in Denmark. This documentation of Tom Leach's connection to Denmark certainly is important to the Thomes Family, but also it is important to the history of Denmark on so many levels. First, this type of document provides such a rich field of collateral information about Denmark and other families that were related to and interacted with the Thomes family, a Thomes family genealogy, Denmark cemetery information, pictures and history about an old Denmark home, and pictures that give us a glimpse of daily life in Denmark. Secondly, the Leach's document is an excellent example of how to compile a family history of time and place in a concise, informative, and relational manner. They have even



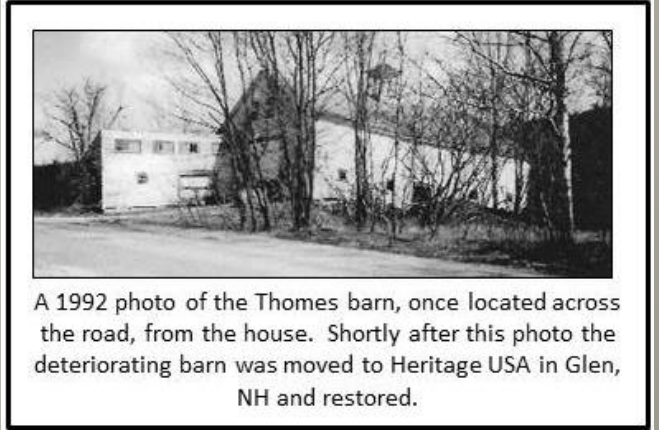
Picture from a small pamphlet on the history of Denmark written by Evelyn Sanborn in 1957.



provided information about where they obtained their data and who helped them. This document will be



A 1992 photo of what was the Thomes Farm, located on what is now Hancock Pond Road



A 1992 photo of the Thomes barn, once located across the road, from the house. Shortly after this photo the deteriorating barn was moved to Heritage USA in Glen, NH and restored.

on display at our July 13th Open House. The DHS has made an outline of the document as a guide for people to follow in putting together their own family histories, along with a list of resources to help you obtain the information you will need. Start with your Denmark Historical Society, we will help you in locating what information we may have, assist you in genealogical searches, and welcome your finished documents as part of Denmark's historical collections. The DHS is very appreciative of the generosity of the Leach's and the addition of *Our Thomes Family Roots in Denmark* to our Denmark Families Collection.

Calendar of Events

- July 8th, 2013 – DHS Business Meeting – 7:00 PM (Library Lower Level)
- July 13th, 2013 – DHS Open House – 1:00 – 5:00 PM (Library Lower Level)
- August 12th, 2013 – DHS Collections Workshop – 7:00 PM (Library Lower Level)
- September 9th, 2013 – DHS Business Meeting – 7:00 PM (Library Lower Level)

Let Them Eat Cake!

Dads and Cub Scouts bake up a storm! This 1981 Bridgton News article shows that Denmark Dads are the best, and they are as at home in the kitchen as they are at their various occupations. When it comes to supporting their children, they are on the job.



Denmark Cubs Cake Auction

¹⁹⁸¹
The Denmark Cub Scouts and Webelos of Pack 199 held a cake auction on Apr. 29. The Scouts and their fathers baked and decorated cakes that were then auctioned off. The cakes were terrific and the pack made \$111.50.

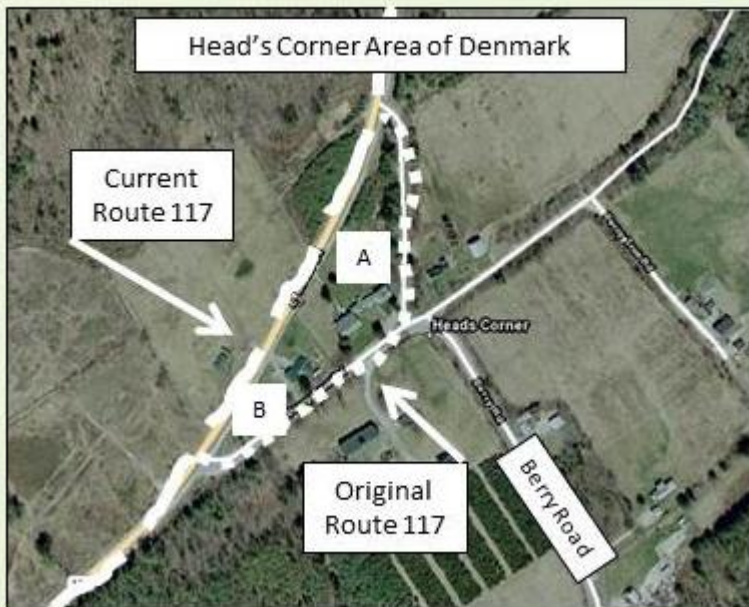
Jason Pingree and his dad made a pineapple upside down cake; Glenn Tibbetts and his sister April, a zoo cake; Jamie Wentworth and his dad, a football field cake; Mark Davenport and his dad, a heart cake; Steven Kiesman and his dad, the R2D2 robot from "Star Wars"; Frankie Day and dad, a clown cake; Chris Eastman

and dad, a Pack 199 cake; Brian McBurnie and dad, a hobby horse; Joey Hubbard and mom, a pig; Leroy Osgood and dad, a Cub Scouts of America cake; Ronnie Grother and dad, a smiley face; Robin Foster and dad, a sailboat; Tiger Tibbetts and dad, a Webelos cake; and Jamie Stacy and dad, a plaid cake.

The Scouts thank everyone who participated in the auction. The enthusiasm and support really made the boy's project worthwhile. A special thanks to Dale McBurnie who was the auctioneer.

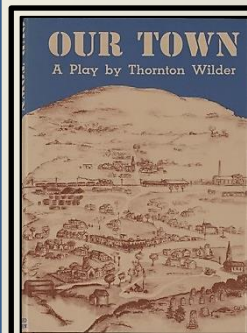
An Island in Denmark

Does anyone know the date that the State of Maine constructed the new section of Route 117 that left the Jewett/Head/Johnson/Cushman Farm on an island between two roads? This map shows the original Route 117 road. We know that there had been many accidents at the sharp bend on the original route and that a fatal accident at the bend prompted the State to finally redirect the road. However, no one seems to recall the year. Please send us an email at denmarkhistoricalsociety@gmail.com with any details you may have.



As you drive by the island you will note that the Jewett Farm (A), built in 1784, faces what used to be the main road; and the Mitchell home (B) built sometime after the road was redirected faces what is now Route 117.

Our Town



A 1938 Promotional Brochure

This April 8th, 1971 article in the Bridgton News reports the success of the Fryeburg Academy production of *Our Town*. *Our Town* is a 1938 three-act play by Thornton Wilder set in fictional Grover's Corners, NH. But could have just as easily been set in Fryeburg or Denmark, Maine.

The play, *Our Town*, presented by Fryeburg Academy last week end was attended by Mr. and Mrs. Roland Blake and family with Kay Park as their guest. Gail Blake had a leading role as did Weldon Jones of No. Fryeburg. Duane Parsons and Steven Harter also had parts in the production. Mrs. Shirley Hatch worked in stage make-up. The production was very interesting and well-done. Since there was no scenery, few sound effects and few props, Weldon Jones, as commentator, explained everything, including what we were supposed to see. I'm sure it was much enjoyed by all who attended the two nights it was performed.

Denmark Through The Years

About 200 Years Ago

When Denmark became a township in 1807 there were no schoolhouses in the town. Within months, a school committee was formed and \$300 was raised for school purposes. The first schoolhouse was erected in the middle of town and was called the Central District. Throughout Denmark's history the number of school districts in town have ebbed, flowed, consolidated, reopened and closed again. For a number of years there were as many as 15 one-room schoolhouses scattered throughout the town, some with as few as 5-6 students – no doubt a factor of winter travel issues. With all the changes, the Central District site remained a constant with the construction of a three-story school house in 1879. This school burned in 1922 and was replaced by a building that served as the Denmark High School until 1952 when it was closed. That building now serves as the current Denmark Municipal Building. The Central District site remained the center of school life in Denmark for over 145 years, and still serves as Denmark's center.

About 150 Years Ago

The following report appeared in the 1861 Denmark Annual Report:

Repairing of Highways

The sum of \$1000, raised by the town, having been expended under the supervision of the several highway supervisors has served to keep our highways passable during the year, except that we had to expend about \$12.00 for opening certain roads blocked up with snow.

About 100 Years Ago

Marriages Recorded: January 1, 1913 to January 1, 1914:

- Hector C. Blake and Minnie M Alexander
- Moses E. Wentworth and Mrs. Lauretta V. Day
- Albert Alonzo Colley and Jennie Louise Small
- Albert L. Robbins and Annie Joanne Wentworth (your editors grandparents)
- Percy E. True and Priscilla J. Brian

About 50 Years Ago

Miss Sarah Hacker Cited as Denmark's Oldest Citizen

On June 14, 1963, Miss Hacker (91) was awarded the Boston Post gold-headed cane.



Miss Sarah Maria Hacker was born in Westbrook, Maine on April 27, 1872. After graduating from college, Miss Hacker served as head of a Portland District Kindergarten for twenty years.

In 1918, Miss Hacker came to Denmark to join the staff of the Cobb Camps (Wyonegonic and Winona). The camps were owned by Charles E. and Harriet (Miss Hacker's sister) Cobb.

Miss Hacker served on the Cobb Camps staff until her retirement in the late 1950s.

2013: History Under Development

The Calendar Girls of Denmark have initiated a Denmark Calendar as a fund-raising activity for Denmark non-profit and service organizations. The Calendar Girls include Heidi Blake, Jennifer Bartlett, Lynzee Murphy, Katie Dunn, and Lea Ann Shand. Jennifer Bartlett (Jennifer Bartlett Photography) will lend her considerable photographic talents to preparing the calendar for printing by Denmark's Cardinal Printing. However, each woman brings distinctive talents to the formatting, promotion, and sale of this uniquely Denmark Calendar. The calendar will be ready in November and is available for pre-sale at many of our community events this summer (including the DHS Open House on July 13th). The cost is \$10 per calendar and \$12 for those that must be mailed. Promoting and supporting Denmark's non-profit and service organizations, the Denmark Business Community, and reminding citizens of how we support and help one another and our Community is history under development.

2014 Calendar Features
Denmark's
Art Center
4-H Club
Congregational Church
Draggers
Fire Department
Historical Society
Public Library
Lions Club
Mountain Hikers
Recreational Department
Rod & Gun Club
Tai Chi Maine

Business in Denmark: Then and Now

Wyonegonic Girls Camps Picture c. 1920

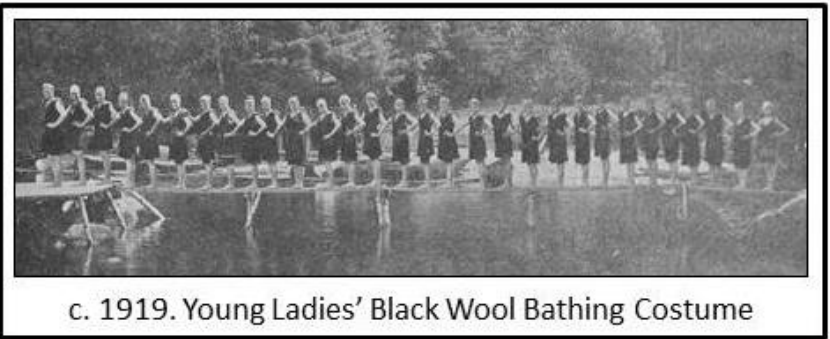


Wyonegonic Girls Camps have been part of the Denmark business scene since 1908, when the camp was moved from Highland Lake in Bridgton to the shores of Moose Pond in Denmark by owners Charles and Harriet Cobb. Wyonegonic held its first summer season in 1902, one of two girl's camps opened – the first in the United States. Of the two camps, only Wyonegonic continues in operation. Outdoor adventures for young Victorian ladies were not popular notions. However, the Cobb's felt strongly that girls and boys should have an opportunity to grow and commune with nature.

George and Carol Sudduth purchased Wyonegonic in 1969. When George passed away in 1991, Carol and their son, Steven, continued running the camp.



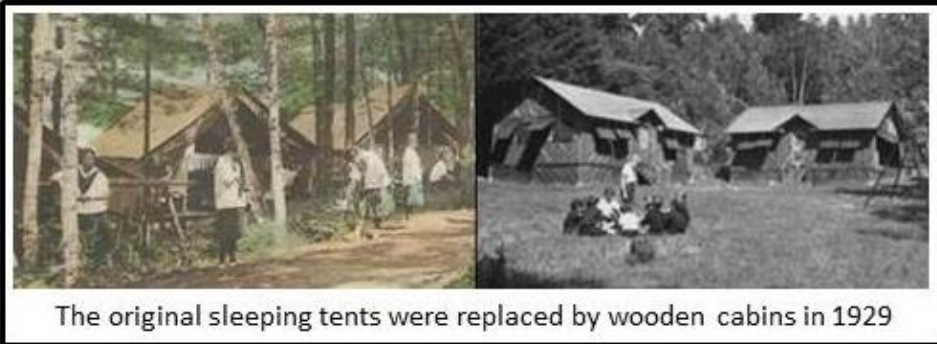
c. 1914. Campers practice archery in bloomers, the accepted sports attire of the day.



c. 1919. Young Ladies' Black Wool Bathing Costume

As our pictures show, so many things about outward appearances have changed at Wyonegonic. Certainly the girls dress very differently and they no longer arrive at camp by steamer and barge. In 1929, the sleeping tents were replaced with wooden cabins. During World War II, the camp accepted 3-5 year old children to aid mothers who were working in the war effort. In 1958, waterskiing became the rage and the camp purchased a ski boat.

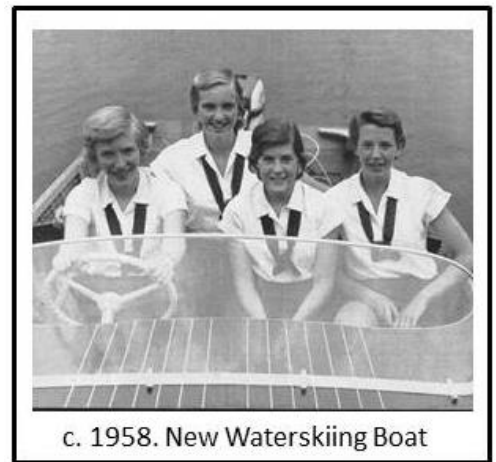
In the 1970s, rising costs and declining interest saw the demise of many summer camps. Wyonegonic remained focused on their campers, generating a love of outdoors, building a community, and forging lifelong friendships to weather the storm. And, today they are on their fifth generation of campers whose mothers and grandmothers recognize the value of Wyonegonic. Among all the changes



The original sleeping tents were replaced by wooden cabins in 1929

to Wyonegonic through the years; it is their value that has not changed: The value of the four essential Wyonegonic ideals of health, happiness, friendship, and simplicity; and the value that Wyonegonic, the Sudduth family, and staff bring to the Denmark Business Community.

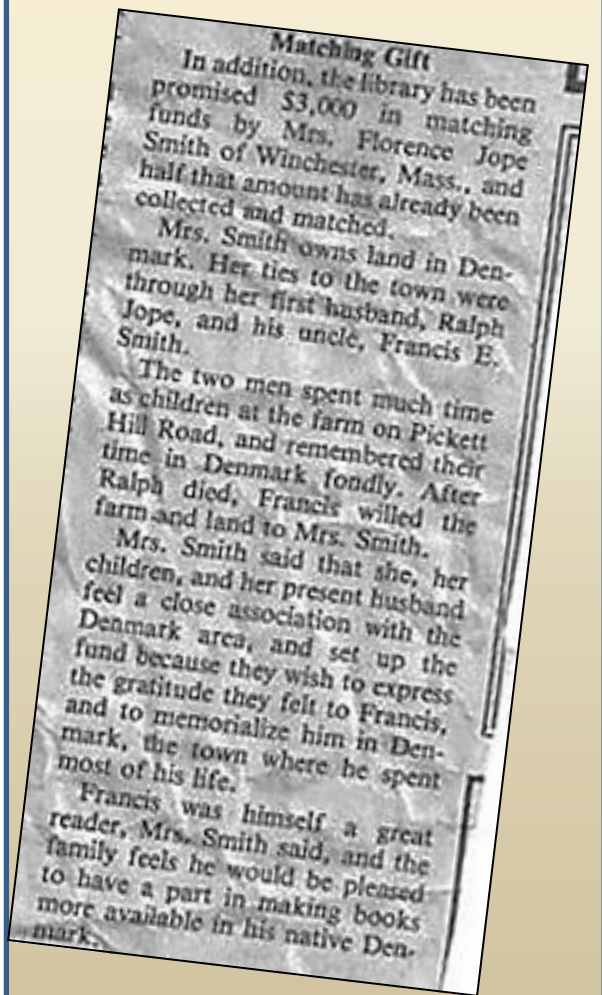
The DHS is looking forward to collecting the next 111 years of Wyonegonic history.



c. 1958. New Waterskiing Boat

Denmark Families

As this July 1, 1982 Bridgton News article can attest to, you don't have to be a full-time resident of Denmark to care about the town and to help in community endeavors. The Smith-Jope Families have a long history in Denmark (see the feature article on page two). When the new Denmark Public Library (dedicated in 1986) was still just a dream in 1982, owners of the old Smith Family Farm on Pickett Hill Road once again became an important part of Denmark history.



Information We Need!

Of course, the DHS is always looking for information about the history of Denmark – of all time periods. However, we especially need detailed information and pictures of the 1976 to present period. If you have not read the Denmark History work by MacDonald, Anthony and La Mountain, entitled *Denmark, Maine Past and Present*. Please take the opportunity to check out a copy from the Denmark Public Library. You will find it a wonderful comprehensive summary of the history of Denmark from earliest settlements to 1976. Over the next several years we would like to collect enough information to do a follow-on version. We need the same detailed and extensive information to correctly portray the history of Denmark from 1976 to the present. Below is a general outline of the type of information we need. Even if you don't have the whole picture, chances are you have valuable snippets. Please share them with us.

- Military Service: Name, Rank, Dates of Service, Conflict
- Outstanding Citizens: Leaders or volunteers who have inspired you and embody the “can do” spirit of Denmark
- Roads and Highways
- Churches
- Schools: Where, dates, teachers, classmates, transportation, activities, favorite memories
- Town organizations and clubs
- Sports
- Summer Camps
- Denmark Events and Celebrations
- Denmark Services
 - Constables
 - Health Care
 - Fire Department
 - Recreational Department
 - Care of the Poor
 - Cemeteries
 - Conservation
 - Planning
 - Government
- Businesses
- Old Houses
- Today's Senior Citizen Interviews

New Artifact Donation



The metal stencil “Denmark Maine Post Office” was found in the Brownfield home of donor Brad York's parents. The DHS is very appreciative of Mr. York's donation. It is exactly this type of donation to our collection that provides insight into the town's history. And, now our work begins. Does anyone know when it was last used and by whom? Was it used on one of our old Post Office buildings, how often, how did it end up in Brownfield? The York's do not know how the stencil ended up in their home, do you? Write to us at denmarkhistoricalsociety@gmail.com with any information you have about this wonderful artifact, new to our collection.

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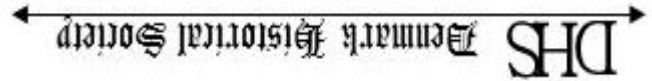
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Join Us!



July 13, 2013

P.O. Box 803
Denmark, ME 04022



Please remember our troops

We hope you will join us in working to keep the Denmark Historical Society Active

You may go to the DHS Website at www.denmarkhistoricalsociety.org to download a full membership form and let us know what your historical interests are.

\$10 individual, \$40 Business Sponsor, \$100 Lifetime Member

Please include this information with your application or dues payment.

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