

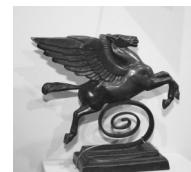
The Log

Kennebunkport Historical Society

PO Box 1173, Kennebunkport ME 04046 • 207.967.2751 - kporths@roadrunner.com • www.kporthistory.org



CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND WORK OF RICHARD ADAM DABROWSKI



On Sunday, January 15, approximately 120 people filled the Pasco Center for the opening reception of “Richard Adam Dabrowski at 100: Designer, Sculptor, Illustrator.” The exhibition, curated by Richard C. Dabrowski, Carolyn Smith, and Gina Davis, is a powerful tribute to the amazing career and talent of a remarkable man. The work benches and wall panels chronicle the various mediums in which Dabrowski worked and also tell the story of his life and accomplishments.



MORE DABROWSKI EVENTS see page 2



Join us at the Pasco Center on Wednesday, February 29 at 7 pm for a gallery “Walk and Talk” with Richard Dabrowski and his family. They will describe some of the processes of creating art using examples from the work benches on exhibit, and discuss the development and evolution of his career. This promises to be an enlightening and delightful evening to learn more about the creative spirit of Dabrowski’s diverse work and talents.

DESIGNER SHOW HOUSE AT KENNETH ROBERTS ESTATE TO BENEFIT THE SOCIETY

2012 is shaping up to be an action packed year!! From June 23 through July 14, the Society will be sponsoring a Designer Show House at Rocky Pastures, the former Kenneth Roberts estate in Kennebunkport. Designers from throughout the southern Maine region are participating to transform this fabulous house from an empty building to a dream home. Garden designers, landscapers and artists also help to make the show house a success. If you would like to be involved, we would love to hear from you.



Kenneth Roberts took inspiration for some of his novels' characters and settings from the people and locations surrounding his quiet and beautiful home.

Rocky Pastures, a sprawling stone house, was built for Kenneth Roberts in 1938 by the architect Frazier Forman Peters of Westport, CT. Set in rolling meadows and wooded areas with ancient stone walls, Rocky Pastures is a 6,000 square foot house with 12 rooms including a black and white tiled entrance hall, a sunken living room, five bedrooms and four and a half bathrooms. The house was recently updated and has a gourmet kitchen with stainless steel appliances. Set on 23 acres, the property is a stone's throw from Kennebunkport's picturesque Ocean Avenue.

Rocky Pastures provides the perfect canvas for talented designers from throughout the region to display their creative talents. The spacious rooms are light filled with views

onto verdant pastureland, a stone-walled garden and an English style potting shed.

It was here that Kenneth Roberts penned his popular novels of historical fiction that earned him a 1957 Pulitzer Prize in the Special Awards and Citations category "for his historical novels which have long contributed to the creation of greater interest in our early American history."

Much of the success of the show house depends on volunteers who are involved in every aspect of planning, organizing and running the project. If you would like to be involved, please email us at kporths@roadrunner.com or call the office at 207-967-2751.

DABROWSKI AT 100 PRINTS & A PARTY!



On Sunday, March 11 at 2 p.m. the Society will host two very special events - A Centennial Birthday Party for Richard Adam Dabrowski and an event entitled *One Hundred for \$100 at 100*. Through the generosity of the Dabrowski family, the Society is offering 100 limited edition prints that will be hand signed and numbered by Richard Dabrowski. *Lobsters Unloaded* is a white line engraving of Cape Porpoise Harbor that evokes the enduring charm of this Maine fishing village. The prints will be available at \$100 each to the first hundred people who sign up. This is a wonderful way to celebrate the life of our friend and neighbor and to support the Historical Society in a unique way. Be sure to place your order early so that you won't be disappointed. You may have your print inscribed to you or someone of your choice. All proceeds from the sale will benefit the Society. An order form is attached for your convenience. We look forward to welcoming you for this gala celebration!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Inscription if desired _____

Check Credit Card Credit Card # _____ Exp Date _____

Please make check payable to *The Kennebunkport Historical Society*.

For more information or to place an order by phone, please contact 207-967-2751 or kporths@roadrunner.com

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Are you a “Nott House-phile?” Admittedly, I am because I am a fervent admirer of its beauty, its history, and its intrinsic value to Kennebunkport.

30 Years and Counting

This year the Kennebunkport Historical Society celebrates the 30th anniversary of acquiring the Nott House. In fact, the actual date Elizabeth Nott conveyed it to the Society was November 10, 1981, but it took a little time to open its doors to visitors.

The White Elephant

Shortly after its acquisition, Joyce Butler wrote an article for *DownEast Magazine* entitled “Saving a White Elephant.” The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines a *White Elephant* as “*a: a property requiring much care and expense and yielding little profit; b: an object no longer of value to its owner but of value to others.*” Then and now, both of these definitions seem to apply.

Much Care, Expense, and Little Profit

From the outset, the acquisition was undertaken with considerable trepidation and caused more than a little controversy. Yet on September 24, 1981, those who saw this as a no-strings-attached windfall prevailed over those who cautioned that this would put a monumental strain on the organization’s limited resources.

This organization that had previously operated with an annual budget of \$9,000 voted to accept a property with a projected annual upkeep of \$6,000. In terms of profit, the first year about 1000 visitors toured the house, paying \$1.50 per person, and during Prelude, a tea was held for 300 guests at \$1.50 per person.

For 2012, the Society’s annual budget is approximately \$150,000; the property’s annual operating expenses for the Nott House are roughly \$15,000; its necessary maintenance and upkeep needs over the next 5 years hover in the \$100,000+ range. The income generated in 2011 through house tours, village walking tours and Prelude events, plus designated gifts, totaled \$10,000.

Value to Others

If the foregoing sounds discouraging, consider that Elizabeth Nott must have placed the value of the Nott House to Kennebunkport far above its value to her. To this day, it remains an icon of Kennebunkport. What are two of the most frequently used scenes in Kennebunkport’s promotional materials – Dock Square and the Nott House!

Why do visitors flock to our village every year? What is it that keeps the summer residents returning year after year? Why do people, like me, fall so in love with this place that we move here permanently? I think it is because of the way it looks and feels – the extraordinary natural beauty, the enduring architecture, the stunning gardens, the history, culture, and the wonderful sense of community.

Elizabeth Nott gave us the Nott House so that we could continue to promote the history and culture of this town, thereby benefitting every resident and merchant. The Nott House has impressive architecture, beautiful gardens rolling down to the cove, and never-ending stories about the three generations who lived there. Interwoven through these tales are the history and evolving culture of not only Kennebunkport, but the country and the world from 1853 until 1982.

Time for a Visit

Come visit the Nott House this year – and bring your family, friends, neighbors, and guests. Think about its past and its present. Enjoy all it has to offer, and then give it your support. You, too, just might become a “Nott House-phile.”

Carole Madden
President



DIRECTOR'S LETTER

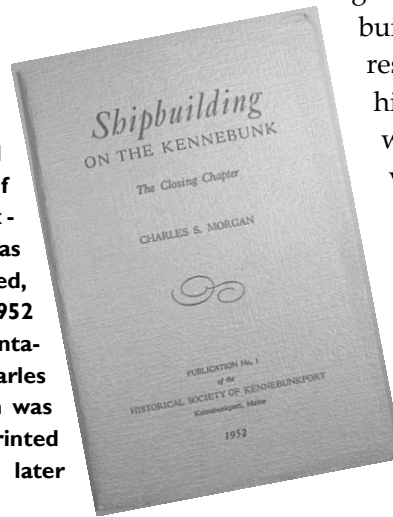
For centuries, Americans have had a compelling interest in documenting and preserving state and local history to enlighten future generations. As early as 1791, efforts were afoot to establish historical societies to preserve the culture of the new United States. The first was the Massachusetts Historical Society, followed by the New York Historical Society in 1804, and the American Antiquarian Society in 1812. Our own Maine Historical Society, founded in 1822, is the third oldest state historical society in the country. It was quickly followed by others in New England and the mid-Atlantic states. The Centennial Exposition of 1876 and the Colonial Revival movement were simultaneous with the proliferation of historical societies on a much broader scale.

According to the Society's first historian, Melville Freeman, the inspiration for the establishment of a historical society for Kennebunkport was drawn from an illustrated lecture on old houses presented by Mrs. Ralph Smith to the Olympian Club in October 1951. A group of interested citizens felt that *"There ought to be some sort of organization in this historic old town through which its annals, now available, may be preserved and interest in its accomplishments and traditions may be kept alive."* No doubt, this was also spurred on by planning for the

town's tercentenary.

A group met in November 1951, resulting in the decision to establish the Historical Society of Kennebunkport, a name that was in effect until it was amended in 1995. The first public meeting of the organization was held on February 15, 1952. Maritime historian Charles Morgan presented a lecture *Shipbuilding on the Kennebunk – The Closing Chapter*. This was subsequently published by the Society. In October 1954, the Society was granted its state charter with the following officers and directors signing the charter: Ralph L. Smith, Faith J. Eckler, Charles R. Chisholm, Dorothy M. Carr, Frank A. Beard, Grace M. Fitzpatrick, Melville C. Freeman, Mabel Low Gooch, Arthur J. Hendrick, Elinor T. Nedeau, and Helen Emery Smith.

The first public meeting of the Historical Society of Kennebunkport, as it was originally called, was held in 1952 with a presentation by Charles Morgan, which was adapted and printed in this book later that year.



We owe much to the foresight and dedication of these citizens for what has been described as *"one of the most significant developments and one of the most important civic betterments that has ever occurred in this historically rich town."* For all of its history, the Society has been led by vibrant corps of volunteers who have devoted timeless hours, creativity, energy and expertise to shape the organization and move it forward as a vital part of our community. It is only through the undying efforts of these individuals that the Society has prospered and grown from the operations at the Town House School in 1955 to include the Clark Shipyard Office, the Town Jail Cells, the Nott House, the Pasco Center, the Benson Blacksmith Shop and most recently, the Louis Norton Studio, giving us a rich diversity of buildings and collections representing Kennebunkport's history, art, and culture. As we celebrate our 60th anniversary year, we salute our founders and their families and all the individuals who have made such an impact in preserving our legacy.

Susan C.S. Edwards
Executive Director

The Kennebunkport Historical Society exists to inspire our community to enjoy our heritage by discovering the past, enlightening the present, and enriching the future.

NATIONAL YOUTH ART MONTH CELEBRATED WITH "CHILDREN'S CREATIONS: ART FROM THE MILDRED L. DAY SCHOOL"

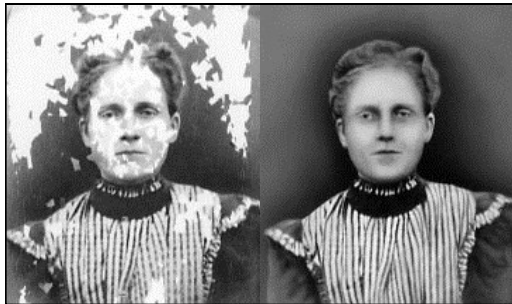
In honor of National Youth Art month, the Society will host a multimedia exhibition of student art from the Mildred Day School in Arundel. The show will feature students from kindergarten through grade five. Audrey Grumbling, art teacher for Consolidated and Mildred L. Day Schools will serve as the curator for the exhibition. Work will include clay dinosaurs by first graders, metal repousse bas relief sculpture by fifth graders, imaginative drawings of

Maine animals inspired by Maine artist Dahlov Ipcar's "Bull of Dreams" by fourth graders. Third grade clay birds will also be shown, as well as landscape paintings, mini shoji screens and cherry blossom sumi-i paintings.

An opening reception will be held on Sunday, March 25 from 2 to 4 pm at the Pasco Center. The exhibition will be on view through April 20. Come and bring your family to see what is happening in the youth art world!



PHOTOGRAPHIC RECOVERY



On Wednesday, February 22, David Mishkin of Just Black and White in South Portland will present a lecture on photograph preservation. After the lecture, David will also be available to answer questions about identifying photo types or preserving digital images. The lecture will begin at 7 pm at the Town House School. Admission is by donation.

Just Black & White is a photo lab that specializes in photographic restorations. They are specialists at copying and enhancing faded salt and albumen prints as well as daguerreotypes, tintypes, ambrotypes or any other types. Just Black & White has been in business since 1983 and provides services for museums, historical societies, genealogists and families helping them to preserve their family photographic heritage.

David Mishkin received a B.S. degree in photography from Rochester Institute of Technology and graduated from their Photographic Preservation seminar series. He has presented lectures on preserving photographs and documents for over fifteen years from Boston, MA to San Francisco, CA. Mr. Mishkin has recently completed two terms as the President of the New England Regional Genealogical Conference and has served as the Conference Chair in 2002 and 2005. He has written several articles in photographic magazines as well as genealogical and historical magazines and publications.

Currently, David serves as President of the South Portland Historical Society.

CALENDAR

David Mishkin

"Preserving Your Family Photographs"

at the Town House School
Wednesday, February 22, 7 pm

Gallery Walk and Talk with the Dabrowskis

Pasco Center
Wednesday, February 29, 7 pm

Richard Dabrowski

100 for 100 at 100 - Birthday Celebration

Pasco Center
Sunday, March 11, 2 to 5 pm

Opening Reception

"Children's Creations: Art from the Mildred L. Day School"

Pasco Center
Sunday, March 25, 2 to 4 pm



ONGOING

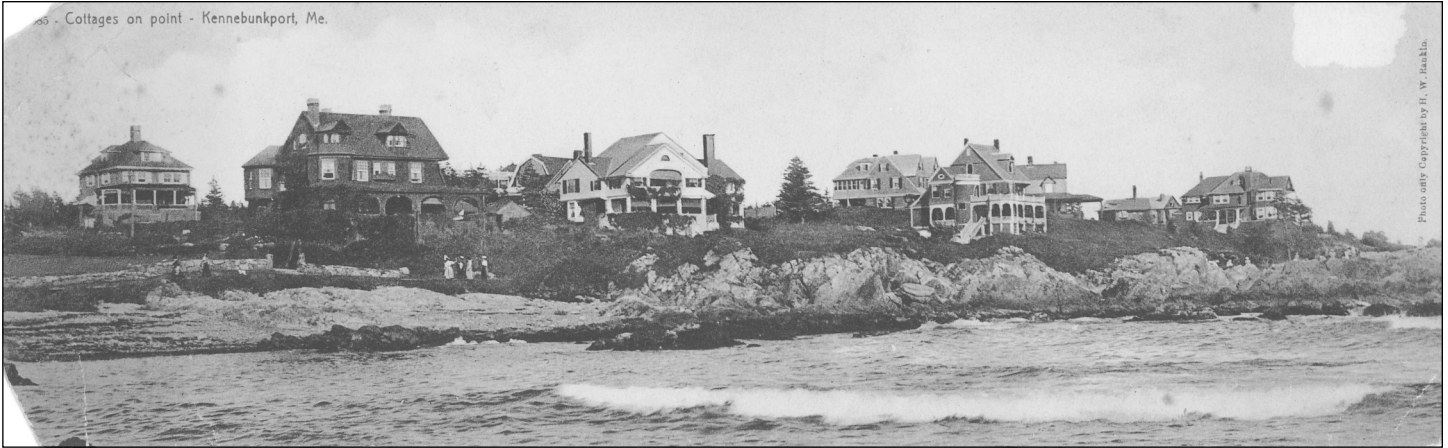
Pasco Center

Tuesday through Friday, 10 am to 4 pm

Town House School

Wednesday and Friday, 10 am to 1 pm

A PEEK AT THE PAST



Cottages along the point at Cape Arundel.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CAPE ARUNDEL

In anticipation of this summer's main exhibition on Cape Arundel, the Society thought a short article about the history of this special area might be of interest.

During the latter quarter of the 19th century, Kennebunkport began to attract summer visitors from the large cities in the eastern and mid-western part of the country. The well-to-do wanted to escape these cities with their heat, humidity and growing pollution during the summer months. Visitors from Philadelphia, New York City, Chicago, Saint Louis, Boston and other metropolitan areas began to find refuge in small towns along the eastern seaboard. Tourism began to flourish in these villages, especially those situated on the Atlantic Ocean where cool breezes and sandy beaches beckoned. With the advent of train service (and also local trolleys), whole families would set off for places such as Kennebunkport for the entire summer season, often accompanied by nannies to look after the children. In order to accommodate this new seasonal influx hotels sprang up as well as small guest houses. Soon many of these seasonal visitors decided to build their own cottages and places like Cape Arundel began to proliferate along the coast even as far as Bar Harbor.

In the 1870s, a group of men from Arlington, MA joined with others from Massachusetts along with local residents Enoch Cousins and Charles C. Perkins to found the Boston and Kennebunkport Sea Shore Company. They bought 700 acres of land along the shore from Cape Porpoise to Lord's Point in Kennebunk. Soon they began making improvements by converting some old farmsteads into boarding houses, building large hotels such as the Ocean Bluff (\$3 a night) and laying out more roads. Their grandiose plans suffered a brief setback when the Panic of 1873 occurred, but by the early 1880s the economy had righted itself so that the group could again proceed with

their plans. Another plus was the opening of a spur line by the Boston & Maine Railroad to Kennebunk Lower Village.

This development encouraged a boom in hotel construction as well as the building of large individual cottages along the shore (present Ocean Avenue) designed by noted architects Henry Paston Clark, William Ralph Emerson and John Calvin Stevens (of Portland). These shingle style and Colonial Revival examples proliferated with their piazzas, stables, garages, boat houses and, of course, elegant gardens. Originally the group had drawn up a map showing hundreds of small cottages along dozens of streets just inland from the shoreline. Luckily cooler heads prevailed and the cookie-cutter plan never materialized.

As the summer population grew so did the need for amenities such as a yacht club (The Kennebunk River Club in 1889), a golf course (Cape Arundel), the Arundel Casino in 1886 and finally a summer chapel (St. Ann's) in 1887. The newly established summer newspaper, *The Wave*, reported that twenty-six cottages were built in the years 1887-1888. More were added in the ensuing years.

As time progressed, Kennebunkport began to attract its share of authors: John Townsend Trowbridge (1827-1916), one of the original investors, was also known for his poems, novels and short stories especially for boys; the Boston novelist Margaret W. Deland (1857-1945), who penned over thirty books, built a cottage on the Kennebunk River just before the Nonantum Hotel; and Booth Tarkington (1869-1946) the Indiana novelist best known for his Penrod books as well as novels based on local characters (see *Mirthful Haven*). Later Kenneth Roberts (a Kennebunk native) penned his historical novels about Maine, many with Kennebunkport characters.

Artists soon found the area attractive. Prosper Senat (1852-1925) of Philadelphia had a house and studio on

Cape Arundel where he held exhibitions of his works. Boston's Abbott Fuller Graves (1852-1925) was a prolific artist who owned and built several houses in town (see the modern one on Ocean Avenue in the style of Frank Lloyd Wright). He was also actively involved in the Village Improvement Society which established the town's fire company, brought lighting to the town and erected the Dock Square monument.



A cottage on Cape Arundel. Are you able to help us identify this house?

The many summer residents brought a new energy to the town as the ship building industry wound down. Their many cultural interests and nationwide contacts brought a new vigor to the town. This era of prosperity increased with the advent of the automobile, which allowed people to become more mobile. It also meant a need for more and better streets. A boardwalk was built along River Road (now Ocean Avenue) which made walking to Cape Arundel a bit easier especially for those ladies in long skirts during mud season.

The best days of Kennebunkport's summer colony lasted from the 1880s to the 1920s. During the next forty years life slowed some, but rebounded in the 1960s. Recent years have seen some of the old cottages torn down and replaced by very large contemporary homes. Even though the area was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983, the town has not seen fit to create a National Historic District with strict guidelines as to

demolition, new structures and other changes detrimental to the integrity of the Cape Arundel area. Three town-wide votes have been negative. Hopefully some time in the not-too-far distant future Kennebunkport's voters will see fit to enact such a provision to save Cape Arundel before too many more of the original cottages are lost forever.

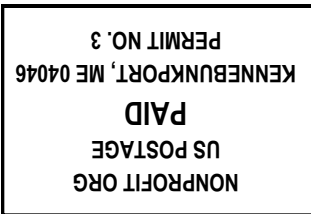
Sources: Joyce Butler, *Kennebunkport Scrapbook*, 1977
 U.S. Department of the Interior,
 National Park Service,
 National Register of Historic Places
 Inventory – Nomination Form

Sheila H. Meek 



River Road, now Ocean Avenue, showing the Kennebunk River Club on the right.

Return Service Requested



The Kennebunkport Historical Society
 PO Box 1173
 Kennebunkport, ME 04046

MEMBERSHIP & VOLUNTEER INTEREST FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Alternate address – please include dates you are at this address:

Life: \$1000 _____ Benefactor: \$500 _____ Supporting: \$250 _____

Contributing: \$100 _____ Household: \$60 _____ Individual: \$40 _____

Donation: _____

Business memberships are available.

Please call 207-967-2751 or email kporths@roadrunner.com for more information.

I would like to help by volunteering in one or more of the following areas:

History/Genealogy Researcher _____ Gardening _____ Docent/Tour Guide _____

Light Carpentry _____ Office Help _____ Special Events _____

Other (please indicate) _____

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM WITH YOUR CHECK TO:

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