Canton Bicentennial Founders' Dinner Thursday, August 5, 2021

Script for the Historical Item Presentation

DJ: I'd like to introduce your hosts for the next portion of this evening's program. They are Malcolm Ray and Christine Carrigan. I'm sure you know Mac and Christine. They are longtime residents of Canton and own a business in town called RoadSafe. Mac is on the Canton Historical Society Board and has served as a Canton selectman. Christine is currently on the Lake Association Board. Let's have a round of applause for Mac and Christine.

Macolm "Mac" Ray: Good evening. We're here this evening to familiarize you with some historical items. Some of the items are from the Canton Historical Society's collection and some are on loan to us. We think these items capture Canton's history and the people who participated in it.

Christine Carrigan: Presenting this evening's items are some of your neighbors and friends, as well as some folks from away. As you will see, each of them has a connection to the item they are presenting.

Mac: So, let's get started.

A - Town Documents

Presenters: 1) Don Hutchins; 2) Darci Holland; 3) Dawn Daigle; 4) Jason Holland

Items: 1a) Petition for Canton to Become a Town; 1b) Portrait of Dr. Cornelius Holland; 2) Transcription of Book 1

Current Location: 1) CHS (Archive Room); 2) The Norlands in Livermore, Maine; 3) CHS (Archive Room)

Length: _2:04____

[Read by Mac.]

Before Canton became Canton, it was part of the town of Jay. In 1820, a number of Jay citizens felt the town was too large and the distance too far to conduct town business—plus their travel was often hampered by flooding! Jay citizen Joseph

Holland and 58 of his neighbors submitted a petition to the first Maine Legislature asking that the town of Jay be divided and a portion of it be designated as a new town. As a result, on February 5, 1821, the Legislature carved off about a third of the town of Jay to incorporate as the town of Canton.

This evening, we have with us Darci Holland and Dawn Daigle. They are holding a replica of the original petition. Darci and Dawn are direct descendants of the aforementioned Joseph Holland who submitted the original petition. Joseph was also a Revolutionary War soldier, one of Canton's first settlers, and a member of Canton's <u>first</u> Board of Selectmen.

Next to Darci is Jason Holland—also a Holland descendant. He is holding a portrait of Dr. Cornelius Holland that's on loan to us from the Norlands Museum in Livermore. Dr. Holland was the nephew of Joseph. Not only was he a medical doctor and farmer, he held many positions in the town of Canton, including serving as its first town clerk for nine years. He was also a Maine State legislator and United States Congressman.

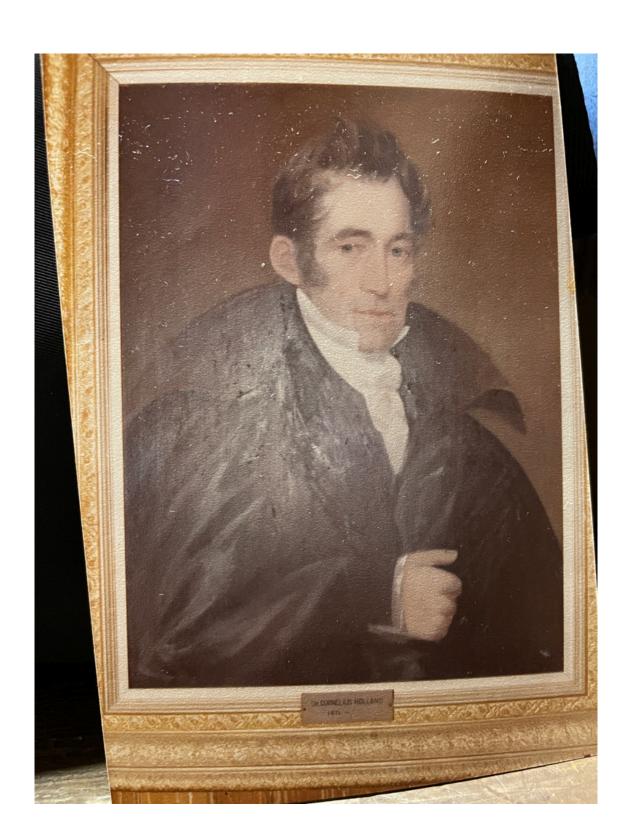
Standing with the Holland descendants is Don Hutchins. Don, whose family has been in Canton for multiple generations, is a past Canton Selectman. It was Don who—at a Select Board meeting in 2015—raised the idea of planning a bicentennial celebration. Don is holding an 1885 abstract or "summary" of Book 1. The original Book 1, which is currently in secure storage, holds Canton's earliest important documents.

At this time, we'd like to ask those of you in the audience who are or have been a Canton selectman, clerk or deputy clerk, or school board rep, to please wave to your fellow audience members.

To the Honourable Senate and House of Representatives for the thate of Maine. The Subscribers Inhabitants of the town of Juy in the County of Onford Humbly represent that daid Town is extensive in point of teretory, that it is inconveniently setuated in its present shope, this a great many of its inhabitants as well as so your petitioners have to travel more than ten as to get to the place of doing their ordinary tou in business they have also to cross the Unceroscoping niver which is very crooked in its course through said Town, that many times in the year there are many places innonceated with water to it is impossible for many of your petitioners to get to the place of doing town business with being oblique to obtain a persage by hosting in three or four different places, beside the anaros inconveniences may be remedied by dietiding duid Town in the following munner, big, begining at Toseph East line on the town of Livermore in the Eighth Range, thence North to the worthe

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B - Boston Post Cane Presenter: Victor Leinberger Item: Boston Post Cane Current Location: Canton Town Office Length 1:24

[Read by Christine.]

Standing in front of you is Victor Leinberger. I know Mr. Leinberger won't mind me telling you that he's 96 years old!

Mr. Leinberger is on stage this evening because he's the recipient of Canton's Boston Post Cane, which he is holding. Mr. Leinberger moved to Canton from New York when he retired. He's been here for 30 years. The Boston Cane was awarded to Mr. Leinberger because he was nominated as the most senior person in our town!

Our Boston Post Cane is one of 700 that were distributed in 1909 to towns all over New England. They were given out by Boston Post publisher Edwin Grozier as a publicity stunt! Mr. Grozier asked that the selectmen ensure the canes be perpetually presented to the oldest man in each town. In 1930, women also became eligible to receive the cane.

The inscription on our town's cane reads "Presented by the Boston Post to the oldest citizen of Canton, Maine." Over the years, the Boston Post Canes in some towns have been lost, stolen, not returned to the selectmen, or accidentally destroyed. Canton is lucky enough to still have its cane!

Thank you, Mr. Leinberger—and congratulations!

At this time, we'd like to invite our fantastic senior citizens to wave to the members of the audience



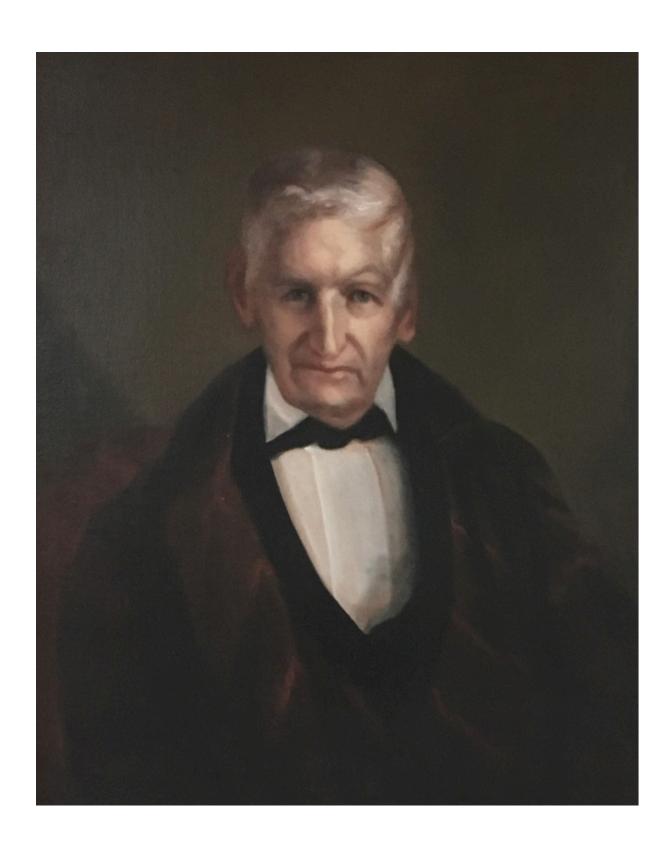
C - Hayford Items
Presenters: 1) Rick Ray; 2) Sam Howes
Item: 1) Portrait of Gustavus; 2) Rick Ray's "Zeri's House" sign
Current Location: 1) Canton Town Office; 2) Rick's barn
Length _1:18___

[Read by Mac.]

The current village of Canton was settled in 1814 when brothers Gustavus and Zeri Hayford moved to the area from Hartford. Gustavus, whose portrait you see here, built the first saw mill and grist mill, as well as the first dam on Whitney Brook. The large tract of land that came with his purchase of the dam site is now Canton Village, but was first known as Hayford Mills. The brothers occupied a log cabin until Gustavus built a home on Main Street and Zeri built his home on High Street, now known has Staples Hill Road.

Holding Gustavus Hayford's portrait is Canton Historical Society Board Member—and my cousin—Rick Ray. Our family has been in Canton for five generations. The Hayford portrait was removed from the Town Office during the Flood of 2001 and put into safekeeping. Rick was a Canton selectman when the painting of Gustavus was rediscovered, and Rick spearheaded the effort to have the portrait restored.

Rick has another connection to the Hayfords as well. He and his family currently live in Zeri Hayford's home on Staples Hill Road. The sign you see here was made by Rick to commemorate the home. Sam Howes is holding the sign. Sam is the Canton Historical Society archivist <u>and</u> a direct descendant of Zeri Hayford's. Look for Sam tomorrow when you board the trolley at the Baptist church—he'll be one of your tour guides.





D - Frank Richardson Violin Presenters: 1) Bette Hills; 2) Don LeBlanc Items: 1) Portrait of Frank Richardson; 2) Frank Richardson Violin Current Location: 1) Bette Hills' Home; 2) CHS (Archive Room) Length _1:13____

[Read by Christine.]

The Canton Historical Society has in its collection a violin made by the late Franklin "Frank" Richardson, who spent much of his life in Canton.

Frank was born in Mercer, Maine, in 1825. When he was 14-years old, he heard the violin played for the first time and became enamored with the instrument. Though Frank was a tailor, he made and played violins whenever he could. After serving in the Union Army during the Civil War, he moved to Canton and became

a photographer—but also continued to make and sell violins. Altogether, Frank Richardson made about 200 violins before he died in 1915. Today, his violins are quite coveted and can sell for over \$3,000 apiece!

Standing on stage is Betty Hills. Betty is Frank Richardson's great-great-grandniece. The portrait of Frank she is holding is from her own collection. The painting was done by Frank's daughter, Mary, who we will talk about next.

Also joining us this evening is Don LeBlanc, a local violinist who will perform for us on the Frank Richardson violin. He is accompanied by his wife, Linda, on guitar.





E - Mary Richardson Portrait
Presenter: 1) Carole Robbins; 2) Barbara Lane (Richardson descendant)
Item: 1) Portrait of Young Girl; 2) Photo of Mary painting that portrait
Current Location: 1) CHS (Archive Room; 2) CHS (Archive Room)
Length __1:21_____

[Read by Mac.]

Now that you've met Frank Richardson, let's get to know his daughter Mary Neal Richardson—also known as "Miss Nettie."

Mary was born in 1859 and went to Canton public schools. As a child, Mary showed a natural talent for drawing, then went on to study formally in the US and abroad. She opened a studio in Boston that she maintained for 30 years. Her works, particularly her portraits, are renowned and have been exhibited in numerous galleries worldwide.

In front of you is a portrait of a young girl named Janet S. Reed Hale painted by Mary in 1935 in Canton. The portrait is part of the Historical Society's collection. Next to the portrait is a remarkable photograph that captures Mary as she paints the portrait of young Janet.

Presenting the painting this evening is Carole Ferris Robbins. Carole is a lifelong Canton resident, a Canton Selectman, and like Mary, an artist. Holding the photograph is Barbara Lane. Barbara is the great-granddaughter of Frank Richardson and the grandniece of Mary Richardson.

In addition to painting portraits, Mary Richardson also painted still lifes and landscapes. A number of her landscapes were painted at her camp on Main Street that overlooked Lake Anasagunticook. She spent many summers at the camp and died there in 1937.





F - Cradle
Presenters: 1) Anne Chamberlin; Kathy Walker
Item: 1) Cradle; 2) Family Photo provided by Anne; 3) Family Photo
provided by Kathy
Current Location: 1) CHS (Museum)
Length _1:29____

[Read by Christine.]

As you probably know, Canton is made up of a number of neighborhoods. One of those neighborhoods is Canton Point where Canton's earliest families settled. Other early settlements were located in the areas of Meadowview and Canton Mountain, where agriculture prospered. Next came the village that was settled by the brothers Hayford, whom we mentioned earlier. The fifth area of Canton is known as Gilbertville and is located near the Androscoggin River. This area was named for the Gilbert Brothers whose steam lumber company was one of the primary employers in the area.

This cradle represents the many families who lived and continue to live in Canton neighborhoods. This particular cradle was used in the late 1870s by baby Clytie DeCoster. Clytie was a descendant of the Hayford family and lived in Canton for much of her early life. The cradle is similar to cradles that would have been used by many families at the time.

Standing with the cradle are two Canton residents who have served on the Bicentennial Committee: Anne Ferris Chamberlin and Kathy Timberlake Walker. Their families have been here for multiple generations. Anne is from Canton Point, as is Kathy's mother. Kathy's father is from Jewett Hill, which abuts Meadowview. You can see some of their family members in the photos Anne and Kathy are holding.

Many of you live or have lived in Canton and know what a wonderful place it is to call home. If you are one of those people, please wave.



G - Business/Manufacturing/Occupations/Agriculture
Presenters: 1) Brian Keene; 2) Kristi Carrier; 3) Loretta Blancato
Items: 1) Oxen Yoke; 2) Reynold's Drug Store Sign
Location: 1) Julie Martin's Barn; 2) CHS (Museum)
Length __1:25____

[Read by Mac.]

Even before Canton was incorporated, businesses began to evolve in this area, starting with agriculture and logging. Near Whitney Brook, where the water could be used to power industries, a tannery, a packing house, a creamery, a feed mill, a foundry, and other businesses operated.

As the area around the lake became a destination for summer vacationers, a number of stores and hotels opened. Blacksmith shops and livery stables also

opened and merchants sold groceries, produce, dry goods, furniture, hardware, and clothing.

This evening we have items representing those businesses. The first is a yoke that is fastened over the necks of two animals and attached to the plough or cart for them to pull. It's being held by two of our selectmen whose families own farms in Canton: Brian Keene, of "Conant Acres" and Kristi Carrier of "Rocky Ridge Livestock." We also have with us Bicentennial Committee member Loretta Blancato whose home-based business, "Specialty Cut Flowers," sells lovely floral bouquets in Canton and the surrounding area. Loretta is holding a sign from the old Reynold's Drug Store, which later became Lindley's Drug Store, and subsequently Canton Variety.

If you have owned or worked in a business in Canton, please wave.





H - Military Items
Presenter: 1) A mannequin; 2) Prudy
Item: 1) Bernard's Dress Uniform; 2) Bernard's Photograph
Current Location: 1) CHS (Museum); 2) CHS (Museum)
Length 1:43

[Read by Christine.]

Just over a year ago, Canton resident Bernard Adams died at the age of 102. He was born in Canton in 1917 and graduated in 1935 from Canton High School.

In September 1943, Mr. Adams joined the United States Army to fight in World War II. He was an infantry rifleman in the 4th Infantry Division. His division landed on Utah Beach in Normandy, France, just two days after D-Day.

On the mannequin in front of you is Mr. Adam's actual uniform. He wore this uniform when he went on leave and when he left Europe to come home to Canton.

The medals Mr. Adam's earned are on his uniform. They are a Good Conduct Medal; a European Theater of War Medal; a World War II Victory Medal; and a Purple Heart Medal for the two times Mr. Adam's was wounded in combat.

Standing with Mr. Adams uniform and holding his photo is Mr. Adam's granddaughter, Prudy Adams. Prudy is one of our town's well-known "Cemetery Ladies." The Cemetery Ladies are a group of four women who have spearheaded the effort to clean and maintain the gravestones in the 15 cemeteries in our town. Recently, Prudy was spotted cleaning the Veterans' Memorial in preparation for its move to the boat launch.

This evening, we salute Mr. Adam and all of those who have served our country. If you have served or are currently serving in our military, please wave.

We hope all veterans will be at our Recognition and Remebrance Ceremony on Sunday at 1 p.m. at the ball field, so that we may again thank you for your service.



I - Fraternal Organizations
Presenters: Scotty Kilbreth
Item: Mason Medallion
Location: CHS (upstairs)
Length _1:16____

[Read by Mac.]

A fraternity or fraternal organization is a brotherhood or a type of social organization that is formed based on a common bond. The organization can be social, academic, professional, or honorary. Members sometimes share a common lineage or faith. Some fraternal organizations date back to early history and often provide services in the community.

Canton's past fraternal organizations include Odd Fellows, Rebekahs, Masons, Eastern Star, Grand Army of the Republic, Veterans of Foreign War, and a Grange. Canton even had a chapter of the Union Order of the Golden Cross—an organization that promoted the total abstinence from alcoholic beverages!

On stage today is Scotty Kilbreth, past member of the Masons' Whitney Lodge No. 167. Scotty, whose family has been in Canton for multiple generations, is a Selectman. Scotty is standing with a medallion that was displayed on the front of his lodge's building on Turner Street before it closed after 145 years. When the Historical Society moved into the building, the medallion became part of their collection.

If you are or have been a member of a fraternal organization in Canton, please wave.



J - Historical Society
Presenter: 1) Phyllis Ouellette; 2) Rob Marshall

Item: Quilt

Current Location: Canton Historical Society (Museum)

Length _1:18___

[Read by Christine.]

[Read by Christine.]

On stage now is Bicentennial Committee member Phyllis Ouellette. Phyllis is also President of the Canton Historical Society. She is joined this evening by the Historical Society Vice President Rob Marshall. Rob, whose family was one of the first to settle in Canton Point, also manages the Canton Historical Society Facebook Group—and tomorrow, he'll be one of your guides on the Canton Trolley Tour.

Phyllis and Rob are holding a quilt that is from the Canton Historical Society collection. This particular quilt is an example of a type of quilt commonly made in the early 20th century as a fundraiser for an organization. On each of the squares are the names of subscribers who donated money in order to have their names appear. This quilt was likely made by the Canton Point Ladies Circle, and there are many recognizable names on it.

This quilt is just one of hundreds of items and documents housed in the Canton Historical Society. The building will be open on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. If you would like to see this quilt or the other items presented here this evening, please plan to stop by. You will be invited to sign the Official Bicentennial Guestbook and provide the society with information on your Canton ancestors.

If you are or have been a member of the Canton Historical Society, please wave.



K - Church-related Items

Presenter: 1) Art Chamberlin; 2) Robyn McClintock

Item: 1) Reconstructed Stain Glass Window; 2) Photo of Star from Belfry of United Baptist

Current Location: 1) Art Chamberlin's Home; 2) United Baptist Church Length 1:27

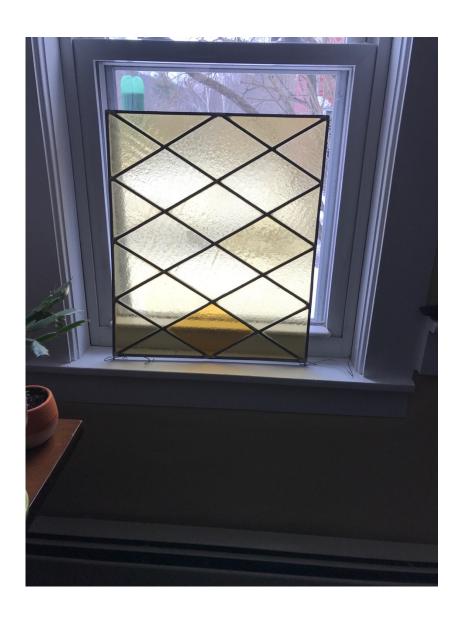
[Read by Mac.]

Canton has a rich religious history. The town has been home to several denominations. Two of the churches still exist and are in operation today. Those two churches are represented here by Art Chamberlin, President of the Bradbury Chapel Foundation, and Robyn McClintock, longtime member of the Canton United Baptist Church.

Art is holding a stained-glass panel made with pieces of glass from some of the original windows in Bradbury Chapel. Bradbury Chapel is a remarkably-preserved wood-frame building on Canton Point Road that was built over a hundred years ago. The funds for building this Universalist chapel came from longtime Canton resident Albion Bradbury who passed away in 1904. The church was in operation until the 1940s. Since then, it has been used for occasional weddings, funerals, and special events—including our Bicentennial church service scheduled for Sunday at 9 a.m.!

Robyn, who chairs the Parks and Trails Committee and serves on Canton's Planning Board, is holding a photo of the star that has hung in the belfry of the Canton United Baptist Church for many years. Canton actually boasted three Baptist churches in its history. The first two merged in 1917 to form the current one.

Canton was also at one time home to a second Universalist church, a Catholic mission, and a Pentecostal church.





L - Fire Department Items
Presenters: 1 Jim Martin); 2) Jason Vaughan
Items: 1) a helmet; 2) a fireman's suit; 3) two fire extinguishers
Current Location: Canton Volunteer Fire Department
Length 1:49

[Read by Christine.]

Canton's first fire company was organized in 1898. Funding came from the town and individuals and allowed the fire company to purchase a second-hand engine and hose wagon—both equipped with runners for winter use. A second fire company was formed on Canton Point in 1937, but it is no longer in operation.

The first firehouse was built in the village next to the tannery in 1943. Since then, the department has moved twice, landing in its current location at 90 Turner Street.

In 1898, the number of members was 56. Today, the Canton Volunteer Fire Department has 15 members. Its Chief is Jason Vaughan. Jason is on stage this evening with Volunteer Firemen Jim Martin who has been with the department for

one year. Jim is wearing a fireman's suit and helmet. Both items are from the past century. The helmet predates the suit.

Jason is holding two fire extinguishers from the early 1900s. The longer one contains a dry powder that was thrown at a fire. The metallic one was hand pumped and dispensed a vaporizing liquid.

Through the years, Canton has had more than its fair share of floods and fires, and our fire department heroes have done their best to address them. We value their contributions to the safety of our community.

If anyone in the audience is or has been a volunteer at the Canton Volunteer Fire Department or their Auxiliary, please wave.

Hopefully, we'll see everyone at the Fireman's Muster at 10 a.m. on Sunday at the Canton Ball Field. In case you don't know, a muster is a competition between local fire departments using skills they use on the job. If you've never been to a muster, this is a "must see."









M - Lakefront Camps
Presenter: 1) Diane Ray, 2) Bill Gray, 3) Carolyn Gray
Item: 1) Vintage Lake Photo; 2) Pinewood Camps Sign
Current Location: 1) Rothrocks' House; 2) CHS (upstairs)
Length _1:23____

[Read by Mac.]

The jewel in Canton's crown is Lake Anasagunticook. Standing in front of you this evening are Diane Ray and Bill and Carolyn Gray. All three are members of the Lake Anasagunticook Association board, a non-profit organization founded to bring together people who care about the lake.

Diane is holding a vintage photo of the lake. Lake Anasagunticook is a spring-fed 600-acre, 50-foot-deep lake located in the towns of Canton and Hartford. The lake is used for recreational purposes, and is a source of drinking water for our town.

The photograph was taken from the east side of the lake. It shows the location of several family resorts around the lake including Green Acres Camp and the three Pinewood Camps. Although those resorts were on the Hartford side of the lake, they were advertised as being in Canton.

The Grays are holding a sign from Pinewood Camp. That camp and the other resorts drew guests from New York and Boston beginning in the early 1900s. The resorts offered lake access, hiking, tennis, horseback-riding, golf, fishing—and lobster picnics.

Unfortunately, all the resorts closed by the end of the 1970s, although many of the buildings are still in use, and the lake itself still thrives!

By the way, on Sunday at 2 p.m., the Lake Association will be handing out ice cream on Canton Beach while a live band plays calypso music. You won't want to miss it!





N - Canton School Items Presenters: 1) George Conant; 2) Gary Dougherty; 3) Chester Johnson

Items: 1) Framed Letters; 2) Yearbooks (2) Current Location: 1) CHS (Archive Room); 2) CHS (Museum) Length _1:42____

[Read by Christine.]

Education has played an important role in Canton's history. As early as 1795, when Canton was still part of Jay, it had five school districts. When Canton became its own town, six school districts were formed. Five additional school districts were added over time.

In 1871, a two-story school building was built in the village. It was initially used as a primary and grammar school, but in 1896 a high school was added. The first graduating class was the Class of 1900, consisting of eight girls.

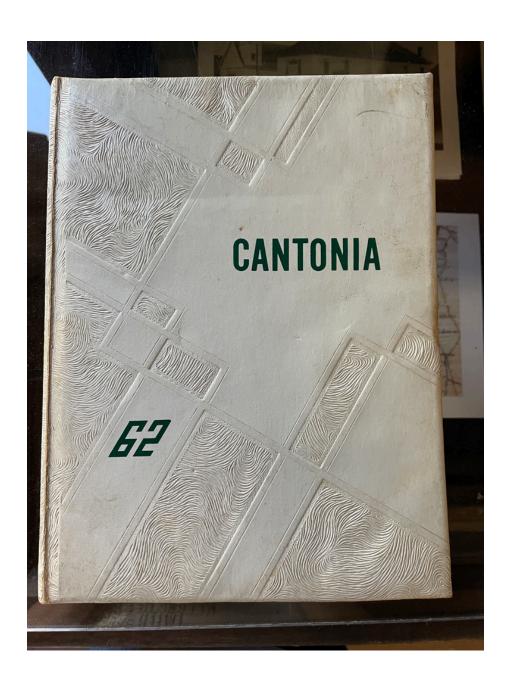
As transportation improved, the smaller schools were closed. By 1928, only the village school and one other remained. Eventually, the high school portion of the village school closed, with the last graduating class being the Class of 1965. The school remained opened for the lower grades for a while, but was permanently closed in 2005. The building still stands on School Street today, but it is not open to the public.

In front of you this evening are members of the Canton Alumni Association: President George Conant, Treasurer Gary Dougherty, and Alumnus Chester Johnson. They are holding three of the many school-related items in the Canton Historical Society collection. Gary is holding a frame containing a number of the high school's varsity letters. George and Chester are holding copies of the school yearbook known as *The Cantonian*.

Everyone from Canton is eligible to join the Canton Alumni Association—regardless of where you went to school.

If you have ever attended or worked at a Canton school, please wave.





O - Stanley Plummer's Paintings of Landmarks*
Presenter: 1) Emily Bourassa; 2) Terry Allen
Item: 1) Painting of Train Station; 2) Painting of Lighthouse
Current Location: 1) Canton Town Office; 2) Tim Kirwan
Length _2:04____

[Read by Mac.]

Two of Canton's most striking landmarks are the train station and the lighthouse. Being displayed now are paintings of these two landmarks. The paintings were done by the late Stanley W. Plummer. Stanley was the Boston & Maine Railroad stationmaster in Canton.

The Canton Railroad Station was built in 1878 to accommodate the railroad that had been serving the town there since 1870. During its heyday, six passenger trains arrived daily, with excursions on Sundays and specials during the summer months. The line was abandoned by the 1960s, and the train station building has served many purposes since then. A recent owner of the train station is Emily Bourassa who is holding the painting this evening. She renovated the property, named it "Canton Caboose," and used it for the seasonal sale of ice cream.

Canton's other recognizable landmark is the faux lighthouse that sits on its own island just off the east shore of the lake. The lighthouse was the brainchild of Charlie Ray, who happened to be my grandfather. As a teenager, Charlie and his friends decided to pile some rocks in a shallow spot in the lake to make a swimming pool. It seemed to Charlie that the next natural step was to build a rock island! In the summer of 1936, the island was completed, and by 1938, Charlie had added a cottage and lighthouse. In the ensuing years, our family enjoyed summers at the island camp. We sold the property in 1997, but its current owner continues to use the island as a camp today.

Holding the painting of the lighthouse is Terry Allen who has joined us this evening from Portland. He's the son of Arnold "Dutch" Allen, who helped my grandfather build the lighthouse. The painting hung in Terry's grandparents' camp for many years.

The lighthouse is unique and has a special place in our town's history My grandfather's creativity and perseverance in getting the lighthouse built is just one example of what the people of Canton have accomplished throughout our history. I'm confident we'll see more of the same in Canton's future!







Wrap-up

Christine: That completes our program of historical items. We hope you enjoyed seeing the items and learning about Canton's history.

Mac: Now, please join us for a cake cutting, then back here for a performance by the improv comedy group "Teachers Lounge Mafia." Thank you!