

May 2018 E-Newsletter **Eric Hooglund, Editor**

Published monthly for members of the Belgrade Historical Society

Spring arrived very late in Belgrade this year, with small patches of snow still visible in the woods and on sheltered lawns on May 1. But within one week, daffodils and forsythia were in bloom and green shoots were popping out of the earth in flowerbeds. Thoughts naturally turned to the spring rituals that mark the end of another school year and the approaching tourist season. When Belgrade still had its own high school, from 1904 to 1969, this was the time of year to prepare for graduation. Thus, it seems appropriate to look back 100 years ago to the Belgrade High School class of 1918. It was a small class, only seven graduates. The yearbook, *The Echo*, does not seem to have existed back then, as the earliest one in our collection is from 1924—but if any member does have an earlier one, we most gratefully would like to borrow it to scan into our archive of images. Meanwhile, thanks to the diligence of Phronie (Guptill) Hammond, class of 1942, we have a typed list of the graduates in each class from 1908 to 1969. Thus, we know who were the seven graduates in 1918. In alpha order by surnames, they were:

Frances Lydia Minot
J. Lawrence Minot
Evelyn Sawyer
Herbert Elmer Trask
Iola Tibbetts
Neleta Tibbetts
Floyd Lawrence Yeaton

Frances L. Minot (b. 1901) and J. Lawrence Minot (1900-1985) were siblings, a daughter and a son of George Linville and Elnora (Farnham) Minot, as well as the niece and nephew of both editor/writer John Clair Minot and the latter's sister, the artist Blanche Minot. In 1926, Frances Lydia married Stanley Clyde Tillson, who had graduated from Belgrade High School in the class of 1919. Her brother J. Lawrence married Velma Briggs (1898-1980), and settled on the family farm on Minot Hill above Belgrade Depot. There the couple raised their 4 children, including son J. Lawrence Minot, whom everyone called Jamie throughout his life and who became the 6th generation of the Minot family to live on the farm. Jamie was active in Belgrade community affairs during most of the 20th century. He operated a dairy farm

on the family property, drove the school bus for many years, served on town committees, and was a member of the Old South Church, taking a leading role in its much needed renovation in the late 1990s. Jamie Minot never married and died in 2002.

The two Tibbetts young ladies in the class of 1918 also were siblings. With regard to the younger sister, Neleta (b. 1900, we have an interesting piece of information about her as a young girl. According to an August 1913 item in the Waterville *Morning Sentinel's* local news section, 'Miss Neleta Tibbetts, the daughter of Frank and Aura B. Tibbetts [of Belgrade], was recovering in Augusta from an appendix operation. By the time she graduated from Belgrade High School five years later, she obviously had recovered very well! But after high school, we have no information about Neleta Tibbetts, except that she married a man with the surname of Noyes. Her older sister, Iola Victoria (b. 7/17/1897), married Charles Franklin Frost. Like their classmates, the Minot siblings, the Tibbetts sisters descended from one of the town's earliest settlers, Moses Tibbetts, who arrived here before 1800, and his sons had farms in the Depot area in the early 19th century. An Ephraim Tibbetts was Belgrade's representative in the State Legislature in 1839, and, according to John Clair Minot's 'History of Belgrade' (1892), the former opposed the legislature's decision to dissolve the West Pond Plantation and annex most of it to Belgrade. Nevertheless, a majority of Tibbetts' colleagues ignored his protests and voted to increase Belgrade's size by adding to it the area now known as North Belgrade.

Evelyn Sawyer (1901-1990) was the oldest child of Carroll R. and Annie L. (Yeaton) Sawyer, who owned a farm along the Manchester Road (Route 135). As a young girl, she was mentioned twice in the *Morning Sentinel's* local news column about Belgrade, in both instances because she was visiting her aunt in Augusta (August 1911 and August 1912). Evelyn had two younger sisters and three younger brothers. Her sister Addie Ella Sawyer graduated from Belgrade High School in 1924 and later married Sam Tibbetts (a younger sibling of one of the Tibbetts misses in the 1918 class?). Evelyn Sawyer never married, but she became a teacher and was active in Belgrade's grange for many years.

Herbert Elmer Trask (1898-1950) was the son of Herbert and Nellie W. Trask of Sidney. This Trask family probably lived on a farm in the area of Sidney that borders South Belgrade. Sidney did not have its own high school, and some of its students attended Belgrade High School.

The eighth graduate was Floyd Lawrence Yeaton, a direct descendant of first settler Paul Yeaton, who had moved to Belgrade in 1794, when it, along with Mount Vernon, comprised Washington Plantation. Paul Yeaton had two sons, Paul II and Richard, and Floyd Yeaton's line of descent is through Richard, his great-great-grandfather. Floyd's parents were George and Mary Swan (Caswell) Yeaton, and he was the youngest of their 7 children. His oldest brother was Guy Yeaton (b. 1883) who had a farm in the Depot and participated in town affairs for over 60 years. Floyd Yeaton's nephew, Chester Gowell, was a 1938 graduate of Belgrade High School. Floyd married Clara West Andrews; they had one son, Carl George Yeaton.

The 1918 graduates attended the old high school that set on a small hill in the Depot. Originally, it had been the grammar school for the Depot area, but in 1904, the wooden frame school was renovated and expanded to become the town's first public

high school (see photo). By the time these students entered high school in September 1914, it had become an important part of the town's social life.



Belgrade's first high school, 1904-1923

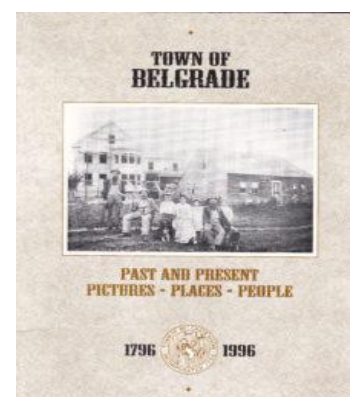
BHS Collection

Visit Your History Room

The Belgrade Historical Society's History Room, located in the Center for All Seasons on Route 27, is open Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10 am to 2 pm, May 1 to August 31. All are welcome to come and view our exhibits of historical artifacts and photographs and/or to explore our archives of old camp and family photographs and our ever-expanding genealogy files.

Looking for gift ideas? Don't know what to get? How about one of the reprints of the Belgrade Past & Present! All proceeds support the BHS!

The books have lots of information about old Belgrade and many of the families who resided here as well as pictures of many of the old buildings that make up this historic town. The 2nd printings of the Town Of Belgrade Past and Present, Pictures -Places -People 1796-1996 available for sale at the Belgrade History Room, Day's Store and the Belgrade Town Office. Pricing for these books are \$30.00 each or \$27.00 for



Members. The BHS also has the 2nd printings of the 1774-1976 Soft Cover "Past & Present", Pictures and People of Belgrade, Maine Books prices are \$15.00 or \$13.50 for Members.

There are also many more gift items to choose from at the Center Historical Room or visit our website at <http://belgradehistoricalsociety.org> to view the items available

"SAVE THE DATES!"

Belgrade Historical Society 2018 Program and Summer Fair Schedule

This year is an exciting year for the Belgrade Historical Society (the Society). This is because we have started our major capital building fund campaign. As you may recall the Executive Committee has been working on plans to renovate/restore the old Town House, located on Cemetery Road after membership authorized this action in 2015. We hope to raise the \$225,000 for the project by the end of the year. Consequently, because of the work involved, we have reduced the number of programs that we will offer this summer to four. Our program schedule is:

- 1. June 21, 2018** – Following the annual meeting, Rod Johnson, our local storyteller and member of the Society, will present, "*A Brief History of the use of Outboard Motors on the Belgrade Chain of Lakes.*" As part of the presentation, Rod will have several motors from the early 1900's to the early 1960's on display. Come prepared to learn from a "local" about the use and impacts of outboard motors on the Belgrade Lakes Region.
- 2. July 19, 2018** – We invite you to journey with us "Uptah Camp" with our guides, Bernard Fishman, Director of the Maine State Museum, and Jennifer Dube, Friends of the Maine State Museum. During this presentation, you will take an historic journey that spans a century of sportsmen traditions in a unique, multi-media, history program. The presentation will include 60 visually stunning, century-old historic stereo view images of Maine Sporting Camps in 3-D format, followed by a documentary video that includes rich stories of avid Maine sportsmen and women who share a deep and important traditional knowledge of this important Maine heritage.
- 3. August 11, 2018:** The Belgrade Historical Society will hold its annual Summer Fair. Fabulous Food, Fantastic Bargains & FUN! We are accepting donations of furniture, plants, household items, etc. Please contact Adelaide Lalime at 207495-3581
- 4. August 16, 2018** - The Belgrade Historical Society will hold a program in Pine Grove Cemetery: Come Meet your Ancestors! A Cemetery Walk; Curious about who is buried in Belgrade, come hear about some of our ancestors and illustrious forefathers and mother's. August 11th: The Belgrade Historical Society will hold its annual Summer Fair

5. September 20, 2018 –Join us for this presentation, “The Life and Mysterious Death of Maine-born Millionaire, Sir Harry Oakes.” Mr. Oakes’ career, fortune and death garnered worldwide attention, but he never forgot his Maine roots. David Leigh, a local historian and Maine educator with a 31 career teaching and administering provides a program filled with mystery and intrigue involving a yet unsolved but brutal murder.



Remember...history not recorded is history lost!

Oldest Photograph of the OLD TOWNHOUSE

One of the oldest extant buildings in Belgrade is the Old Townhouse on Cemetery Road beside the Woodside Cemetery. Built in 1815 and in use as the location of the annual Town Meetings until 1873, the facility has a long and interesting history.

Dennis “Denny” Keschl, of the Belgrade Historical Society’s Board of Directors, has been researching this historically significant building. One thing he’s not been able to find is a photograph showing the building without the front porch, which was added in the early 1940s. With his deep interest in the Old Townhouse, Denny is personally putting up a prize of \$100 for the oldest known picture of the building prior to the porch’s addition.

If you have an old photograph of the Old Townhouse, please send us a copy with descriptive information to verify its provenance to:

Belgrade Historical Society

P.O. Box 36A

Belgrade, ME 04917

After reviewing the photo and information, our Collections Committee will make a determination as to which photograph will win the reward. If more than one copy of the winning photograph is submitted, then the one that we receive first will be the winner. The society will keep copies of all the entries submitted for our use. If an original is submitted, we will make a copy and return the original unless it was given as a donation. The reward will be made immediately after the oldest photograph is selected. If you have any questions, please contact Denny at: keschl@yahoo.com tel: 207-495-2973 ~ cell: 207-441-3701