

## December 2017 e-Newsletter

*Eric Hooglund, Editor*

Published monthly for members of the Belgrade Historical Society

**The Belgrade Historical Society wishes all its members a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year!**

### **Reminisces of Christmas Past**

The Waterville *Morning Sentinel* provides a few accounts of how Belgrade prepared for Christmas during the first decade of the twentieth century. For example, below are some news items from the paper's edition of December 23, 1909, sent to the paper by its Belgrade correspondent:

*\* The Belgrade Sunday School will hold a Christmas tree and entertainment at the church [name not specified but the Old South Church] Friday evening [Dec. 24] at 7 o'clock. It is hoped that a large number will be present and assist in making a success of the evening's entertainment. All welcome.*



\* *The fair and sale at Grange Hall Wednesday afternoon and evening [Dec. 22], under the auspices of the "Ladies Aid" was a great success. The hall was prettily decorated for the occasion. The mystery tree was in charge of Mrs. Wadleigh, Mrs. Clark, and Mrs. Pulsifer. This proved to be very attractive, especially for the younger ones.*



*The Ladies Aid Society of the Old South Church in 1923. Left to Right - Children: George Penney and Edward Gerald. 1st Row: Blanche Minot, Lillian Yeaton, Celia Penney, Dorothy Penney, Frances Minot and Addie Gerald. 2nd Row: Ruth Minot, Nora Minot, Mabel Farnham, Donna Yeaton, Esther Gerald, Minnie Penney and Lillian Cottle.*

**(Find the ladies mentioned in our story about Christmas in 1909)**

*The apron table, as usual, was well patronized, being in charge of Mrs. F. G. Yeaton, Mrs. Groves, and Mrs. Effie Minot. The fancy table was carefully looked after by Mrs. E. F. Yeaton. The candy booth did a good business, both afternoon and evening. Mrs. Nora Minot had a very attractive both, with a little of everything from a barrel of flour down to a cake of shaving soap. This booth cleared \$35. Supper was served from 5 PM to 7 PM. At 8 o'clock the doors were opened to the hall below, where the play, "How the Story Grew" was given by eight of the aid ladies. The play was enjoyed by a good sized crowd.*

The *Morning Sentinel* provided a follow-up on the Christmas Eve event in its Jan. 1, 1910 edition:

*The entertainment and Christmas tree at the Old South Church Christmas Eve was*



*enjoyed by all present. The entertainment consisted of music and recitations by several of the Sunday School, also a song by Mrs. Lillian Yeaton accompanied by her daughter, Miss Donna Yeaton. Special mention should be made of little Oliver Hanson, the four-year-old son of Percy Hanson, this being his first appearance before the public. Two trees were well filled with gifts for the old as well as the young.*

A note on names: Mrs. Lillian Yeaton and Mrs. E. F. Yeaton are the same person, as Lillian Yeaton was the wife of Edwin F. Yeaton. Mrs. F. G. Yeaton is Ann Yeaton, the wife of Freeman G. Yeaton. Edwin Yeaton and Freeman Yeaton were double first cousins, as their fathers, Paul Yeaton, Jr. (Edwin's dad) and Andrew (Freeman's dad) Yeaton, were bothers who married two sisters, Lydia (with Paul) and Ann (with Andrew) Goodrich. Donna Yeaton, the daughter of Lillian and Edwin Yeaton, was, along with her older brother Paul, a 1908 graduate of Belgrade High School. At Christmas time in 1909, both Donna and Paul were students at Bates College in Lewiston but back at home in Belgrade (on the West Road) for Christmas break.

Mrs. Effie (Parcher) Minot (1840-1940) was the widow of George Evans Minot (1836-1897), and she lived in the Minot farm on Minot Hill with her elder son, George L. Minot, daughter-in-law, and young grandson. Her younger son, John Clair Minot, had been the editor for the *Kennebec Journal* for 13 years, but was Literary Editor for the Boston *Herald* in 1909. Her daughter, Blanche Minot, was a teacher in Massachusetts and a painter noted for her watercolors. John Clair and Blanche came home for Christmas in 1909. Mrs. Minot's older sister, Miranda Parcher (1832-1929), had married Charles W. Stuart (1825-1895) and also was a widow.



### **Belgrade voters approve BHS project to renovate/restore old Town House**

By a vote of 945 in favor and only 140 opposed, Belgrade citizens approved the Town Warrant on November 7 to authorize the BHS to raise private funds to restore and renovate the old Town House, which originally was built in 1814, and modified in 1834. It was used for town meetings from 1815 to 1872. For the past 145 years, the building has been used for storage of town equipment and as an office for the cemetery sextant. Because of modifications made to the building over time, BHS was not successful in getting the old Town House listed as a National Historic Site. Nevertheless, the old Town House still is a place of significant historic importance for the town of Belgrade. For that reason, BHS is committed to preserving it. The very positive support of Belgrade citizens, as demonstrated in the Nov. 7 vote, allows BHS to move forward with our capital campaign to raise the funds necessary to rehabilitate the old Town House and utilize it as a space to exhibit some of the many special and unique historical artifacts donated to us over the years by both year round and seasonal residents. Look for more information on this project in the January e-Newsletter.





**Locusts House**

Christmas was celebrated at the Locusts House in Belgrade Lakes, a popular summer place operated for many years by Edwin F. Megill. It's now the Village Inn

Thanks to the many people who visited the BHS History Room in the Belgrade Community Center for All Seasons during the annual Holiday Fair and Stroll on Saturday, December 2. Visitors enjoyed looking at the enlarged photographs of old Belgrade that we have mounted on the walls of the History Room. The photographs are grouped to 'tell' the story of Belgrade's past as a successful farming community that exported apples, corn and potatoes and its transition during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries into a very popular tourist destination. In addition to our permanent photo exhibit, we had a special seasonal display of antique toys and photographs, some of which members had donated for sale to benefit the BHS capital campaign to renovate the Old Town House. And what an array of fresh baked goods were in our History Room! The ladies of the BHS Board had baked them so sell, in the tradition of the Ladies Aid societies that were such an important part of the social history of Belgrade, as indicated in the above article,



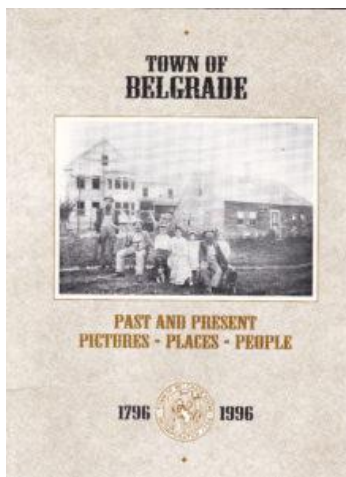
‘Reminisces of Christmas Past.’ Our sweet treats must have been very good, because every single one sold out!



**Looking for ideas for Christmas Presents? Don’t know what to get? How about one of the reprints of the Belgrade Past & Present! All proceeds support the BHS with the purchase of one of these fantastic books.**

**There is lots of information about old Belgrade and the many families who resided here as well as pictures of many of the old buildings that made up this historic town. There are many more items to choose from at the Center Historical Room, please visit our website at**

**<http://belgradehistoricalsociety.org>**



***The BHS has 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. We also have the 2nd printings of the 1774-1976 Soft Cover “Past & Present”, Pictures and People of Belgrade, Maine Books, are available for sale at the Belgrade History Room, \$15.00 or \$13.50 for Members.***

**In closing for the year, the Belgrade Historical Society and its Board of Directors would like to thank all of you for your support this year. We could not have done it without you. Best wishes for a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season to all!**