



THE STATE OF THE UNION MEETING HOUSE

Vol. VIII, No. 2

Readfield, Maine

Summer 2018

ALERT

News That Developed as This Newsletter Went to Press

FOR THREE YEARS YOU HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE ONGOING ATTEMPT TO REBUILD THE FLOOR, REPAIR THE ARCH IN THE APSE, AND THE LARGE PIECE OF PLASTER IN THE SOUTHWEST CORNER THAT WAS IN DANGER OF FALLING. JUST AS THE BOARD WAS BREATHING A SIGH OF RELIEF THAT ALL THESE PROJECTS WERE ACCOMPLISHED, WE ARE NOW TOLD THAT THE BEAUTIFUL PAINTED CEILING IS IN EXTREME DANGER.

ONCE THE INSULATION WAS REMOVED FROM THE ATTIC OUR CONSERVATOR, TONY CASTRO, EXAMINED THE CEILING FROM ABOVE. HE NOTICED THAT IN SEVERAL LARGE AREAS THE "KEYS" THAT HOLD THE PLASTER TO THE LATHS HAD COMPLETELY DETERIORATED AND THAT VERY LITTLE WAS HOLDING UP THE CEILING.

WE WILL NOT GO INTO DETAILS IN THIS BRIEF NEWS BULLETIN, BUT IT APPEARS WE HAVE A MAJOR PROBLEM ON OUR HANDS. PRESIDENT JOHN PERRY IS ALREADY DROPPING DEFINITE HINTS OF THE NEED FOR ACCELERATED FUND-RAISING, A NEW PLEDGE DRIVE, AND MEMBERSHIP GROWTH TO MEET WHAT MAY BE A SIX-FIGURE EXPENSE. THE BOARD HOPES THAT ALL THOSE WHO LOVE THE MEETING HOUSE AGREE THAT IF THE CEILING FELL IT WOULD BE A DISASTER. STAY TUNED.

President's message

Ahhh....spring. Snow is finally melted, tulips have come and gone, bumblebees are humming in the lilacs. And yes, black flies are doing their black fly thing. After this past winter, spring never looked more welcome.

Your Union Meeting House has had an eventful and productive winter and spring, with completion of the underfloor timber replacement project, and cleanup of insulation and bat guano from the attic so that a thorough inspection of the plaster, roof support framing and metal roof could be made. Now the floor is in excellent condition, level and solid, The roof structure will need a few repairs but is in good overall condition for a 190-year old building—a credit to the craftsmen of 1828!

We are scheduling the following work for this summer: install a moisture barrier over the soil in the cellar; improve attachment of ceiling plaster to ceiling laths and joists; and rebuild the bathroom, and electrical system.

Having already held two fun and profitable dinners this spring, we are looking forward to a full slate of events this summer. A schedule is included in this newsletter. Please try to attend some of these happenings, and bring a friend, meet your neighbors and have a good time. We are striving to make the Meeting House an enjoyable gathering place for members of the Readfield area community.

YOU and YOUR SUPPORT are maintaining, improving and restoring the Meeting House, and making it an attraction for residents and visitors. The Board of Directors thanks you for the help you provide. In 2017, your financial support helped to leverage a \$50,000 matching grant and over \$30,000 in Foundation grants.

My personal thanks, and wishes for a wonderful summer — John Perry

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Readfield Union Meeting
House
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Readfield, ME 04355

See us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/readfield.union.meeting.house/

Check our website at:
www.unionmeetinghouse.com

The Readfield Union Meeting House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

It is a 501 (c)(3) entity under I.R.S. law. Gifts to the Readfield Union Meeting House are tax deductible.

Readfield Union Meeting House

Condensed Statement of Income and Expense for 2017

Income:

Memberships, donations	\$97,908
Interest & income from Trusts	\$15,099
Income from Grants	\$42,672
Income from Events	\$7,045
Use of Cash from Savings	\$18,428
Total Income	\$181,152

Expenses:

Operation & Maintenance	\$6,100
Event expenses	\$936
Projects to improve Crawl Space	\$155,271
Projects to repair & restore plaster and artwork	\$17,200
Preparation for attic work	\$1,645
Total Expenses	\$181,152

Memo:

Funds held in trust by RUMH as of 12/31/2017	\$43,247
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SUMMER IS HERE!

Union Meeting House members and the Readfield community can look forward to a wide variety of activities that will be taking place at the Meeting House this summer. Please mark your calendars so you won't miss out on any of them.

First, May 26 kicked off the weekly open house tours. From 10 a.m. to 12 noon each Saturday through October 6 the RUMH will be open to the public. Bring your guests and friends to visit Readfield's historic landmark. Trained docents will be available to lead tours. Ask them if they are familiar with *trompe l'oeil* painting? Are you? A visit to the Meeting house is a wonderful way to entertain out-of-town visitors on a rainy Saturday. Tours can be also arranged in advance if you give our docents a little lead notice.

June 30 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. a special program for children will be held by members of the Meeting House's Community Outreach Committee and the Readfield Library. Titled "Gnome Huts and Fairy Houses", the two groups will supply all the natural materials for the children to create homes for the gnomes and fairies along the trail leading from the Library to the Meeting House. Parents can tour the Meeting House while their children are busy. At the end of the event there will be a mini farm animal petting area on the Meeting House's lawn. Light refreshments will be served.

The second annual Strawberry Festival and pie sale will be held on July 7. From 1 to 3 p.m. strawberry shortcake will be served, using freshly picked local strawberries and a generous topping of real whipped cream. Come, bring friends, neighbors and visitors for a treat that will be served on the UMH lawn. Save yourself from baking and buy a homemade pie for only \$15.00. In case of rain the Festival will be held at the Maple Tree Community School, two buildings away on Church Street.

An earlier Quilt Exhibit at the Meeting House a few years ago proved so popular it will be repeated this summer on August 11. It will be held simultaneously with the Lawn Sale noted elsewhere in this newsletter. Last time as many as 100 persons attended. Also on display will be a quilt made by the Loose Threads Chapter of the Pine Tree Quilters that will be raffled off to benefit the restoration of the UMH off during intermission of the Birdie Googins show on August 25.

The Meeting House welcomes you this summer.

BIRDIE GOOGINS AT THE READFIELD UNION MEETING HOUSE



On Saturday, August 25,, the Union Meeting House will present a comedy program by Birdie Googins. Known in a past life to television viewers as The Marden's Lady, she is now on the loose around Maine and will burst onto the Meeting House stage at 7 p.m. that evening. An eccentric of the highest order Birdie brings her own distinctive style of Maine humor to the stage, delighting audiences with her quirky take on the economy, politics, love, and tales of high adventure.

An accomplished actress, playwright and comedian, Birdie's a Maine native who has her finger on the pulse of our great State of Maine and the people who live here. In her words, "Mainers? We're pretty much all eccentric. I don't have to look far for material. Just walk out the door and start listening. We're known for our great sense of humor and off-the-wall true stories. It's an honor getting to walk around this great state meeting fabulous people. They keep me laughing - and laughter's one the sweetest things we can share."

Don't miss this appearance by one of Maine's most famous personalities! (Last time she appeared at the UMH the place was sold out!) Her show is an interactive family-friendly fun fest and she guarantees you'll have a hoot!

Tickets will be \$12 per person, with small children admitted free. All profits will go towards repair and restoration of the Union Meeting House, an historic and artistic National treasure.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The Community Outreach Committee (COC) has held several robust, productive meetings since its inception in January 2018. All seven members are bursting with a great number of creative ideas for making the Meeting House and Vestry more visible and usable places for our community and surrounding towns. Their plan is to bring the Vestry into a condition that meets the building codes, clean it up and then have it a space that could be rented out for use by businesses, arts programs, music, lectures, etc. Having events there would, potentially be a money-generating undertaking.

Currently the COC is having assessments done of the facilities, in order to have a clear sense of the scope of what needs to be done to make this lovely building viable. (It is expected that much of the work ahead will be donated by volunteers.)

To attract more young people, COC members sponsored—in conjunction with the 3rd graders of Readfield Elementary School—a May Basket-making activity. After the baskets were created, the children distributed them to "seniors" at the Senior Cafe at Maranacook School. They then assembled at the Meeting House to hear Historian Marius Péladeau talk about the history and artistic features of the building.

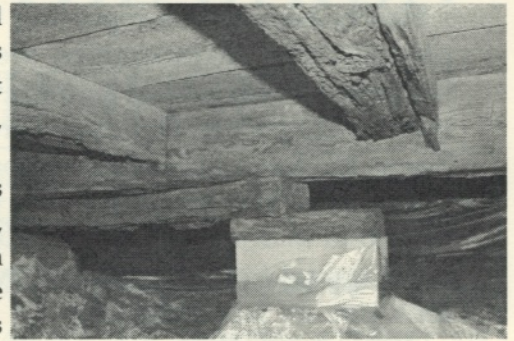
The RUMH Board greatly appreciates the enthusiastic support of the COC. Way to go!

THE FLOOR WORK IS DONE !

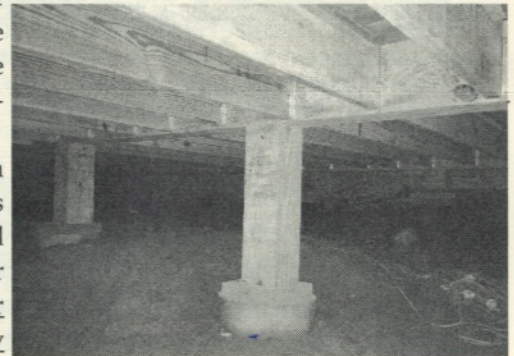
After three-years of work and with the generous support of donors the Board can report that the major project of replacing all the under-floor supports has come to a successful conclusion. The project came in on budget at about \$250,000. Thanks are due to Maine Barn Company, its president, Erin Connolly, and her hard-working crew, for doing such a thorough and professional job.

The work started with the replacement of the narthex beam and all the beams and joists that support not only entrance floor, but also the stairwells to the attic, the choir and the steeple itself. The crew returned this past October and began the replacement of everything under the sanctuary. The first step was to clear the crawl space of boulders and debris. The replacement main carrying members were five pressure treated 7" x 10" beams running the length of the sanctuary, spliced together with scarf joints. The next step was to then install the 144 joists that connected to these beams. Finally, temporary vertical supports were removed, the floor leveled and permanent posts on concrete footings were inserted. As the newsletter was going to press the crew from Mainely Moisture Control was installing the large plastic membrane that will cover the entire sub-floor area to keep further moisture from rising and damaging the new sub-floor.

The floor is now safe and solid. That's why the Board has scheduled an ambitious schedule of events at the RUMH this summer for the community's enjoyment. The Board thanks all of its generous friends who bought a memorial joist. Only two(!) remain unsold of the total 144 that were needed. Any takers for the last two at \$25. each? In closing, the Board wishes to thank the Windover Foundation, the William and Elsie Viles Foundation, the Morton-Kelly Charitable Trust and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for their generous assistance over this three-year period.



Before



All Done

Readfield Union Meeting House Five Year Plan Synopsis

A seven page **Five Year Plan** for the Readfield Union Meeting House was developed and approved by the Board of Directors in January 2018. This is a synopsis of that Plan. Please refer to that Plan for more information and details.

The Five Year Plan identifies and prioritizes funding and expenditures by line item for each year from 2018 through 2022. Income and expenditure projections range from \$80,000 to \$149,000 a year, with a total of approximately \$570,000 over 5 years. Expenditures are entirely for the Meeting House, except for \$12,000 allocated for a feasibility study for the Old Vestry. The plan also specifically identifies nine initiatives to support and advance the Board's mission and vision.

Income includes membership fees, facility use fees, donations, pledged donations, Bracy Trust, Town of Readfield, various grants, and fundraising events. A five year bank loan of \$125,000 is used to manage a more accelerated restoration program.

Major restoration and upgrade expenditures over 5 years include the following:

- Crawl space membrane to reduce humidity
- Artwork restoration
- Attic insulation and bat guano removal
- Attic structural repairs and ceiling repairs
- Electrical and plumbing upgrades
- Miscellaneous exterior building repairs
- Tower and clock restoration
- Old Vestry feasibility study
- Custom match carpeting
- Attic re-insulation
- Reinstallation of bell
- Construct and install replica spire and weathervane

Nine strategic initiatives will be undertaken to further improve the management and administration of the Meeting House:

- Outreach for Community Involvement and Support
- Employ Best Practices in Managing the Restoration Program
- Host Programs that Entertain, Educate, and Enrich the Community
- Enhance Fundraising Efforts and Plan a New Pledge Drive
- Attract new Members by Offering Compelling Programs and Social Events
- Attract and Enlist a New Generation onto the Board of Directors
- Engage Others to Write Grants
- Document the History of the Readfield Meeting House
- Develop a Purpose, Need and Plan for the Old Vestry

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE FOR JUNE 2018

Membership status reporting in the RUMH was changed this year. In the past all donations, gifts, pledges, and memberships were included under the membership category. This year we are keeping a membership list of people who filled out the membership form and checked off a specific membership level. Donations and other monies are being recorded by our President/Treasurer John Perry. We have 120 members for this 2018 year. Membership is up and we want to extend a grateful thank you! We are appealing to past members to send in their Membership dues if they have forgotten to do so. We have included a membership coupon for that purpose.

An appeal to local business owners to join as members at the new rate of \$35.00 for the year was sent out in late February. Of approximately 50 letters sent out, we received 5 new business memberships. With a business membership comes promotion of the business at all our events. Thank you to Gerard Poulin & Sons, Wildwood Disc Golf, Fike's Custom Cutting, By the Board Lumber Co., and the Weathervane Restaurant and Lounge for joining. A goal for next year's business memberships will be to at least double this number.

A FALL EVENT

Looking to the fall, the RUMH wants to spread the word that we will once more sponsor a Pumpkin Festival on October 27 from 5 - 7:00 p.m. Last year 22 students from Maple Tree Community School and 7-8 RUMH members carved over 30 pumpkins and displayed them using battery powered votives to light the Pathway Trail behind the library leading to the RUMH. It was a spectacular sight to see. This year we want to extend an invitation to any community member who would like to bring a carved pumpkin to be part of the display along the trail. Look for posters and information that will be in the *Readfield Messenger* and *Community Advertiser* in October.



UPCOMING YARD AND CONSIGNMENT SALE

The Meeting House is again having a yard sale, since the previous ones were so well received and earned good money. The sale will happen during a busy weekend around Readfield, with many organizations hosting events both days.

Our sale will be held on Saturday, August 11th, from 9am to 2pm. It will again be at the Vestry, the little white building next to the Union Meeting House on the Church Road.

This year, we will be adding a consignment option, for those folks who have good items that they don't need anymore, but don't want to give away. We will split the sale 50/50, with the donor getting 50% of the price and UMH getting 50%. We hope that by doing this we will attract larger items, such as furniture, watercraft, and other nice things. Crafters are invited to apply for the ten table spaces available for \$10 and display their own wares. You don't have to be on hand to sell; we will sell for you.

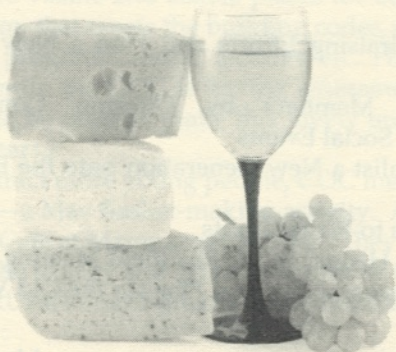
If you have something to donate, or to consign, please call Flo Drake at 685-4662 or Marianne Perry at 685-3531. We will arrange to meet you at the Vestry, or send a truck if you need help with transport.

On September 14 the Board of the Meeting House invites all its members, both corporate and individual, to its second annual Wine and Cheese Social from 5-7 p.m.

This is a modest way of saying "thank you" for all the help it has received in the past year.

The biggest achievement, of course, is the completion of the floor support project.

Save that Saturday and come have a glass of wine and some tasty nibbles.



Readfield Union Meeting House Membership Application

Please enter my membership in the
READFIELD UNION MEETING HOUSE
at the level indicated below. My payment to
the 'Readfield Union Meeting House' is enclosed.

Mail to: P.O.Box 451, Readfield ME 04355

Please circle the ANNUAL Membership
level desired:

for individuals
STUDENT \$ 5.00
SINGLE \$ 25.00
FAMILY \$ 45.00
BENEFACTOR \$100.00
SPONSOR \$200.00

for Businesses

BUSINESS \$ 35.00
CORPORATE \$200.00

Donation (in addition to membership)
\$ _____ (to help us reach our restoration goals)

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

Home phone _____

E-mail _____

(important for mailings and notification of events)

Join Because

The Union Meeting House is an
integral part of Readfield's history. It has
historic, artistic, and cultural value, and
also serves the community as a social
gathering place.

The Readfield Union Meeting House was
incorporated in 1828, and is listed on the
National Register of Historic Places.
It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Your support is greatly appreciated.



2018 Events for the Readfield Union Meeting House

<u>Dining & music at the Weathervane</u>	<i>(sorry, you missed it)</i>
<u>Quilt raffle</u>	at all events until 8/25
<u>International Dinner</u>	<i>(sorry, you missed it)</i>
<u>3rd grade students from RES visit</u>	May 21, 9:30 am
<u>Saturday open for visitors</u>	Saturdays, 5/26-10/6, 10-12
<u>Strawberry Festival</u>	July 7, 1-3pm
<u>Yard Sale</u>	August 11, 9am-2pm
<u>Quilt Show</u>	August 11, 9am-2pm
<u>Birdie Googins Comedy Show</u>	August 25, 7-9pm
<u>Wine & cheese open house for members</u>	September 14
<u>Pumpkin Festival</u>	October 27, 5-7pm

Background is a detail of "trompe l'oeil"
painting on ceiling of Meeting House

www.facebook.com/readfield.union.meeting.house/