

# THE STATE OF THE UNION MEETING HOUSE

VOL. X, NO. 1 READFIELD, MAINE FEBRUARY 2020

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**Linda Tukey**  
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**Meeting House**  
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[www.facebook.com/readfield.  
union.meeting.house/](http://www.facebook.com/readfield.union.meeting.house/)

[www.unionmeetinghouse.org](http://www.unionmeetinghouse.org)

*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. laws. Gifts to  
the Readfield Union Meeting  
House are tax deductible.*

## The Light at the End of the Tunnel!

The past year was a breakthrough year for the Meeting House! We christened our new sanctuary floor with a very successful Summer Series of concerts and talks. We began refurbishing the Vestry with a goal to transform it into a Community Center. The Friends of the Meeting House and Vestry was established and conducted a number of successful fundraisers. Thank you all for your continuing dedication and work.

But it's the next 3 challenging years that brings us to the light at the end of the tunnel. An ambitious Capital Fundraising Campaign matched with a prolific Restoration Program will bring our decade long Restoration Program to 95% completion! Featured is the restoration of the steeple, clock, and belfry, topped with a replica of the original 30' spire, all planned for next year, 2021! And coinciding with the Meeting House, the Vestry will be transformed into the envisioned Community Center over the same three years. (See page 3--Meeting House and Vestry Restoration)

This summer we will have our second annual Summer Series of entertainment, as well as our ever popular International Dinner, Strawberry Festival, Pumpkin Festival, and lots of other events. (See page 2 for more information)

This is an exciting and promising time for the Meeting House and Vestry. With your help, our ambitious goals will be met. The next three years are critical; after that we plan to be self-sufficient.

Shortly, we will begin our new and final three year Capital Fundraising Campaign. We look forward to your participation and support. Together, we will complete this historic mission. Thank you one and all.

Jim Tukey, President of the Board  
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## Maine Preservation recognizes the Readfield Union Meeting House

Maine Preservation has announced its 2019 list of Maine's Most Endangered Historic Places, which includes the Readfield Union Meeting House. In announcing the list of nine irreplaceable historic treasures, Greg Paxton, Executive Director, said, "Maine's 2019 Most Endangered Historic Places List demonstrates the wide range of buildings that make Maine special. From high-style mansions and small, rustic vernacular houses, to both grand and humble meeting houses-and one enormous fort-the 2019 list reflects the diversity of our built environment, and their strong sense of place and the history they provide us are key parts of what make Maine, Maine."

Enclosed is a reprint of the front page of the *Kennebec Journal* which recognized the Union Meeting House's inclusion on the Maine Preservation list.

Maine Preservation is the only statewide, non-profit membership organization promoting and preserving historic places, buildings, downtowns and neighborhoods, and strengthening the cultural and economic vitality of Maine communities.

## A Recap of 2019

Two important projects were undertaken last year. First, our master artwork conservator, Tony Castro, was busy through the spring and fall continuing the stabilization of the ceiling plaster in the sanctuary of the Meeting House. This project began in 2018 and will be completed in the next few months. Second, a new roof was installed over the kitchen area of the Vestry, an important first step in making this building functional.

2019 was a year of planning for the future. The Friends of the Vestry and Meeting House are compiling plans for a future Community Center at the Vestry, and are supporting this concept with new fundraising ideas. The Meeting House Building Committee has been hard at work with professional studies of the bell tower, the clock, and the exterior of the building, getting ready for upcoming repairs and restoration--read more about it on page 3!

A total of 19 different events were held from February through October, all designed with two purposes in mind: to bring community members together for fun activities, and to help raise money for restoration of the Meeting House. Success on both fronts!! Over a thousand visitors and nearly \$9,000 in net benefit. Thanks to all who attended, and our appreciation to the dozens of volunteers who helped to share the work. It wouldn't happen without you!

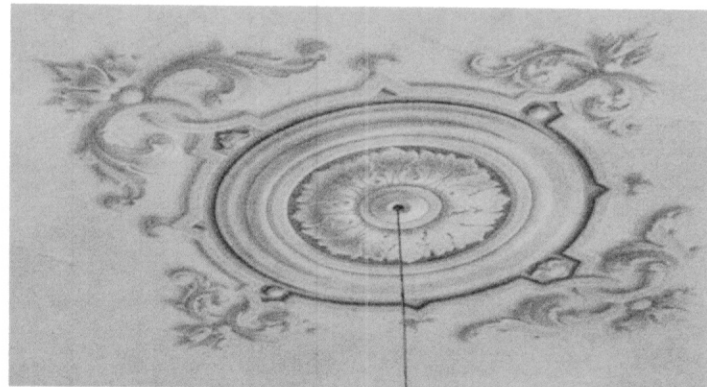
### 2019 RUMHCo. Consolidated Financial Statement

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Cash on hand 12/31/2018	\$56,146	\$43,474	\$99,620
Income 1/1-12/31/2019			
Memberships	\$2,197	\$0	\$2,197
Donations	\$31,398	\$0	\$31,398
All fundraising	\$21,244	\$0	\$21,244
Grants	\$32,285	\$0	\$32,285
Interest	\$613	\$173	\$786
Total Income	\$87,738	\$173	\$87,911
Expenses 1/1-12/31/2019			
Administrative expense	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Operation & Maintenance	\$922	\$0	\$922
Meeting House restoration	\$52,791	\$0	\$52,791
Vestry restoration	\$2,207	\$0	\$2,207
Fundraising expense	\$12,337	\$0	\$12,337
Total expense	\$73,256	\$0	\$73,256
Net Income	\$14,482	\$173	\$14,655
Cash on hand 12/31/2019	\$70,628	\$43,647	\$114,275

### Looking for Volunteers!

RUMH is always looking for persons to help with the many activities and restorations that are needed. If you want to help in any way, go to our web site:

<https://unionmeetinghouse.org>



### Changes on the Board of Directors

In 2019, two valued members of our Board resigned to pursue other ambitions: Flo Drake has been a huge part of our summer programs, and Karen Peterson was our valued Secretary. We will miss them and their passion to restore the Meeting House, but still look forward to seeing them around town. Thanks to Flo and Karen for their many years of service to RUMH.

Also in 2019, Donn Harriman resigned from the Meeting House after two decades of service. He had served as Board member, as Treasurer, and as Advisory Committee member. Thank you for your years of support, Donn.

The Board was fortunate to have two new members join us: Welcome to Cindy McInerney, who brings years of experience from working at Kents Hill School and other area non-profits, and a welcome back to Marius Péladeau after a a year of other activities. Thanks to Cindy and Marius for bringing their visions to the Meeting House. You both have important skills and perspectives to help the Board's task of restoring our historic buildings. Thanks for joining us!

## Meeting House and Vestry Restoration Plans

The light at the end of the tunnel is within sight! We are about to roll out a breathtaking three year restoration program. The tower, the clock, the belfry and a replica 30' spire will once again adorn Readfield's Union Meeting House. At an estimated cost of \$460,000, the work will take approximately seven months, and is scheduled for 2021. The work will not interfere with our summer programs and events.

In 2022, the restored clock, with its three faces, will be operational, and the historic bell will ring out. Following, masonry repairs will take place, the attic will be bat-proofed, balustrade and urns will be added to the base of the spire, and custom match carpet will be laid.

This year we have less glamorous tasks to complete. The ceiling conservation work by Tony Castro, noted conservator, will continue. Long overdue restoration and painting of the eaves, cornices, trim and windows will happen. Needed drainage and culvert work will be completed.

Next door, the Vestry has its own three year rehabilitation program. During this period, it will be transformed into a lovely community center. Volunteers are coming forth to donate labor for plumbing, electrical, carpentry, sheetrock and painting. This year, the kitchen and bathroom will be built; and a second accessible bathroom and storage will be added to increase the Vestry's usability. In 2021, we will renovate the main room and entry, followed with upstairs improvement in 2022. Estimated at \$65,000, this will enhance the use of the Meeting House, as well as a stand alone year-around center for limitless activity. Together, Readfield will have an historic venue for entertainment, music, meals, dancing, art, weddings, memorials, meetings, and more.

Fundraising is the key to our success. Two efforts are already underway: a Ceiling Conservation Challenge and a three year Pledge Campaign. The next three years are critical. We need everyone to help make it happen.

For more detail, see our Five Year Plan on line at [unionmeetinghouse.org](http://unionmeetinghouse.org).

*Imagine how this view from the Readfield Post Office will be improved after restoration of the tower and addition of a 30-foot spire. Photo taken Oct. 2019.*



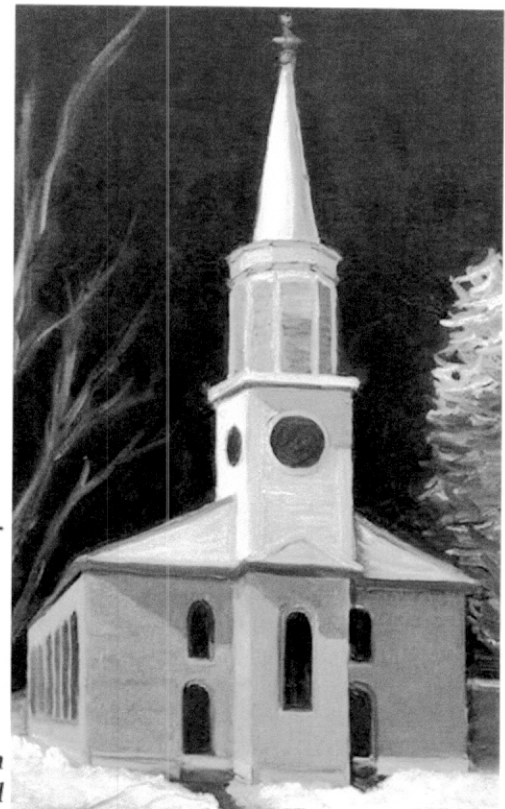
## Fundraising Plans

All of the expenses in the next 3 years will total \$620,000, which we plan to raise by donations, memberships, income from public events, and grants. We count on donations as the main source of funding, and will appeal to individuals and businesses in the local communities. Within the next month, we will make two separate appeals: a Challenge to provide at least \$7,000 to complete the ceiling conservation project, and a \$135,000 Pledge Campaign to meet expenses of the tower restoration. In the next 6 months we will be requesting grant funding of approximately \$100,000. Later this year, we will ask for donations to restore the 1930 clock and dials, and will seek contributions for materials to renovate the Vestry.

The restoration plans are ambitious, and the fundraising plans must keep pace. We hope that you will be as generous as possible in supporting this work. Your help in the last decade has gotten us this far... so let's keep going and PUSH TO THE TOP!

*Instead of writing a check, you can now donate to RUMH through a secure PayPal link at our web site, <https://unionmeetinghouse.org/donate/>*

*Readfield Union Meeting House, with the artist's vision of a rebuilt spire, from a painting by Nancy Holland*

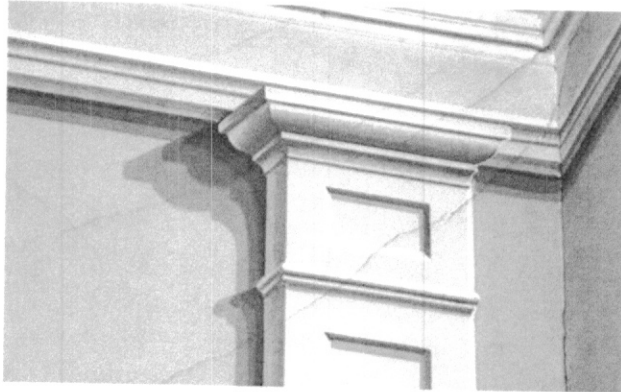


## It's Membership Renewal Time!

The 2020 Membership renewal emails and letters went out in early December 2019. If you have already sent in your 2020 Membership, we thank you. If during the holiday season you misplaced or never received a written or email request, please use the enclosed application form. For us, Memberships show that restoration work is important to you and it shows other donors and granting foundations that we have a reliable base of support. Benefits to you, our members, include event email reminders, an invitation to a members-only function and boasting rights that you helped enable improvements to this Readfield landmark.

We have several Membership levels for individuals and for businesses. Please consider a renewal, a new Membership or a gift in honor of a loved one. We hope you will share your email address with us – it saves the cost of several mailings during the year.

*Trompe l'oeil detail from southeast corner of the sanctuary. The shadowing helps to convince the eye that the column stands out from the flat wall. Cracks in the plaster are continuous across the wall, thus "proving" that there is no 3rd dimension to the column or the frieze above.*



## What's Happening?

The RUMH Events Committee is putting together the community activity schedule for 2020. Events planned so far are:

- March 1 Dinner at the Weathervane
  - April 25 International Dinner
  - June 23 Open Mic Night
  - July 7 Ed Desjardins and Katie Daggett
  - July 11\* Strawberry Festival
  - July 21 Kevin Libby
  - July 25\* Stroll Down Memory Lane
  - Aug. 4 High Spirits
  - Aug. 15 Pat Colwell and the Soul Sensations
  - Aug. 18 to be announced
- ... and more to come!

Details will be announced on our web site and on our Facebook page.

\* tentative dates

*With this newsletter the Meeting House unveils its new logo. It incorporates the arched top of the beautiful and famous stenciled glass windows installed during the 1866-68 renovation of the building. The windows are rare. Made with a series of silk stencils, the art of making such panes is nearly lost. These panes symbolize the many historical and artistic features of the Meeting House.*



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