

Minutes of the Brookline Town History Committee – September 9, 2013 – 6:30PM
Brookline, NH

Present: Peter Cook (to 7:10), Dan Marcek, Steve Russo, Keith Thompson (Chair)

Absent: Scott Grzyb, Bob Ottavi, Nancy Reinbold

Also Present: Brendan Denehy, Myra Emmons, Mark Fountain, Laura Prescott

MINUTES:

Peter moved to approve the minutes of August 12th; Dan seconded; passed unanimously.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Bob and Keith discussed the *Bicentennial Cookbook* project with members of the Brookline Seniors, who suggested that it be reproduced in 12 or 14 point font. Bob has two cost estimates for printing 100 copies of the *Cookbook*. It could be sold for fundraising.

Keith is updating the Committee's Facebook page regularly with announcements and historical notes. Our Committee's page has more likes than many other town groups that have had pages for a much longer time.

Our table at Old Home Days was a great success. Our display attracted several visitors who wrote items for our timeline, signed signature panels for the quilt, and made donations (total: \$ 58.00). Many expressed their support for the Committee and the memory quilt.

Our present subcommittees are:
Oral History Interview Subcommittee
Style Guide Subcommittee
Published Town Histories Subcommittee
Newspaper Research Subcommittee

Keith will establish a "Harvest Memories" Subcommittee to work on the Seniors' lunch/oral history project.

UPDATES:

History Book Project: Keith thought the Surry town history was very well done; he obtained a lot of ideas for how we should do our history from it. Keith and Nancy will continue surveying town histories for more ideas. Most town histories include "the biggest story" of each decade and interesting anecdotal stories.

Newspaper Research Project: Peter Cook talked about his work looking through back runs of the *Milford Cabinet*. He wants to concentrate on 1900-1940; events since 1940 can probably be elicited through oral history interviews. He feels that Parker may not have thoroughly covered the years immediately preceding publication of his history, which is why he's including 1900-1914 in his investigation. The Milford Library and Amherst Library have several years of the newspaper on microfilm; unfortunately, he has to obtain permission each time he wants to use the newspaper's own back files.

The *Milford Cabinet* had a weekly Brookline column, but he's also finding Brookline news in other articles in the newspaper. Ads for local businesses are important also, to identify what existed when. Peter will contact Ray Kecy's family to see if any of Ray's Brookline memorabilia could be used by the Committee.

Peter will also investigate records of the Fresh Pond Ice Company that are in the Cambridge and Somerville public libraries.

It was suggested that the Nashua *Telegraph* should also be checked for articles about Brookline.

The Library and the Historical Society have back runs of the *Brookliner*, which also needs to be checked.

OTHER PROJECTS:

Myra Emmons, Director of the Brookline Library, talked about a program the library is sponsoring: "Family Stories: How and Why to Remember and Tell Them." The program will be on Tuesday the 24th at 6:30. Jo Radner, experienced oral historian, will be the featured speaker. Myra said that she would like to work with the History Committee on their projects. Keith suggested that we work on conducting oral histories together. Lynn and Myra will collaborate on a "how to conduct an oral history" guide.

George Farwell and Erwin Corey should be contacted for information about fires in Brookline over the years.

Brendan has been working to care for and restore the older cemeteries in town. Laura suggested taking photos of gravestones. The "Find a Grave" website includes some Brookline gravesites. Mark said he thought the Brookline Historical Society has photos of all the older gravestones and a plot plan of the cemeteries.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Mark presented a pictorial representation that he drew showing the way the Meetinghouse Hill area probably looked around 1900.

Mark suggested that the Committee consider working on a pictorial book like the ones in the "Images of America" series. It would be more accessible than a written history, and could be used for funds for the major town history project.

Laura said that the Committee should solicit copies of genealogies compiled by local families, for their insights into Brookline history as well as for their innate historical value.

OTHER:

The Town's Facilities Committee may be recommending that the Annex, built in 1900, be torn down. [Update: The Selectboard has announced a Public Hearing to discuss the fate of the Annex on September 30th at 7:30PM at Town Hall.]

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

Peter will continue working on newspaper research.
Nancy and Keith will resume checking town histories.
Steve will start looking through town reports.
Mark will conduct oral histories of his relatives.
Nancy is still researching the Grange.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

Future meeting of this Committee will be held at 6:30PM on the 3rd Monday of every month at the meeting room in the Safety Complex. Upcoming dates: October 21st, November 18th, December 16th.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no quorum present to vote to adjourn, Keith announced the end of the meeting at 8:10.

Submitted,

Steve Russo, Secretary