

August 2019 News

Greetings! The hot summer days that some of us long for all winter are upon us, and our buildings are open and being cared for! The Old Town Hall has new red cedar shingles,



and the Southermost School door has been repaired and restored, thanks to board member Dave Duggan and especially volunteer Dave Goetzinger, an excellent woodworker! If you haven't been to the museum this season, please stop by and check it out! Our old school bells are refurbished and can now be rung by visitors-fun for kids and adults too!



Did you know? The Southermost School was once located across the street from PHS at the corner of Union St and East Path, now East Main Rd. In 1746 at a Portsmouth town meeting widow Sarah Strange, who decided to reside in the schoolhouse when her husband died, was ordered out so that the school could be used to teach students again. The widow of the first schoolmaster moved into the schoolhouse when her husband died as well!

Found Treasure: We recently found an antique mail sorting table when we unpacked our shed. To read more about this unique piece of Portsmouth history, go to: <https://portsmouthhistorynotes.com/>, with credit to Portsmouth History Notes blogger Gloria Schmidt.



Past Month's events:

We celebrated some "cool" Portsmouth women on a hot day at the museum on July 21st.



Thank you to all who attended, we loved hearing your stories! Part of our 3rd "Portsmouth Women" presentation is on display at the Portsmouth Free Public Library in the two cases by the book sale room. Suggestions welcome to research for 2020!

Barton's Raid route re-enacted on July 25th - A group from East Bay Sea Kayakers retraced the daring route of Continental Army troops under the command of Lt. Col. William Barton in July 1777 from Warwick Neck to Weaver's Cove that caught British troops by surprise. Barton's raiders managed to capture British commander, Brig. Gen. Richard Prescott. The kayakers were greeted by members of the PHS, and Jim Garman treated the group to short lecture that provided detailed information on the raid. More information on the re-enactment included a map of their

[rg/notable-past-events/](http://www.pwhs.org/notable-past-events/)



Prescott Farm: On July 14th the PHS collaborated with The Newport Restoration Foundation when they opened the Sherman Mill to visitors at Prescott Farm. We contributed presentations on Farm Life, Gardening and Barton's Raid. PHS has in our collection the Diary of David Durfee Shearman. In one of his entries he describes how the Sherman Mill was transported to Aquidneck Island and reassembled: "August 19, 1858: We took up the

Millstone and picket it with the small picks, shaving 25 or 30 of them together, making the surface of the stone much finer than the old way of picking with a single pick and not taking a quarter of the time to do it."

Upcoming events:

Spies? On Wednesday **August 21st** we are co-hosting a lecture with the Common Fence Point Association by Christian McBurney on Spies in the Revolutionary War. The lecture is free of charge and will be held at 6 PM at the newly refurbished Common Fence Point Hall.



The Portsmouth Murder! On Sunday **September 8th** at 3:30 PM The Portsmouth Community Theater will present a new version of “Ghostly Witness” at the museum. This is one of Portsmouth’s most infamous true stories about the Rebecca Cornell murder trial, presented in play format. Come see it and find out all about it!

On Thursday **September 19th** the PHS book club will follow up with a book about Rebecca Cornell, *Killed Strangely: The Death of Rebecca Cornell*, by Elaine Forman Crane. The book tells the compelling story her death and its aftermath, vividly depicting the world in which she lived. Gloria Schmidt, PHS member, author and noted expert on Portsmouth history, will host a group discussion. Copies of the book will be available at the Portsmouth Free Public Library, where the book club will be held from 6 to 7:30 PM.

Save the Date: **Our Annual Harvest Social** will be held on Thursday **October 17th** at Greenvale Vineyards, more information to follow. We hope to see you there!

**Yours truly,
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President**

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