

Jonathan Fisher Memorial, Inc.

The Month of July, in
This Year of Our Lord
Two Thousand

The Jonathan Fisher
Memorial, Inc.

Most Humbly
Prepared by The
Board of Trustees

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A Journal of Events from the Home of Jonathan Fisher

A BUSY SUMMER

With the support of our new Education Director Sandy Linnell, and Head Docent Gary Vencill we are prepared for one of the busiest summers in many years. Here are the major events on our calendar for this year.

First Annual Arts and Crafts Fair

On Saturday July 1 & Sunday July 2, we held our first Annual Arts & Crafts Fair from 9 AM to 4 PM. This event, planned by Sandy Linnell with the help of many volunteers, featured a dozen Arts and Crafts people from the Peninsula and beyond. Our grounds were cleared of much accumulated brush and excess tree growth, and we received many compliments on our house and grounds. We had over 120 people tour the house and all exhibitors were pleased with their sales. We also sold many of our books, cards and prints. Our Docents were very busy, yet they made every guest feel special. We consider this event a great success, and look forward to repeating it next year. We made many new friends for Jonathan Fisher, and he smiled on us by giving us two days of perfect weather.

Season Opens for House and Museum

Saturday, July 1, to Sep. 15. Our Head Docent, Gary Vencil, has inaugurated several new features for this year. A special training session was held for all Docents to help familiarize them with Jonathan Fisher, his house, his times, and his works. All Docents are in costume this year, and each visitor is greeted outside of the house with a brief description of the grounds and the "Fisher Farm." Improved records are being kept of each visitor, and their interests.

Family Summer Festival Days

Friday, July 21, Sunday, Aug. 6, Friday, Aug. 18. These Festival Days, which have been very popular events for the last several years, will be held from 1 PM to 4 PM, and this year have been expanded to three days with the addition of a Sunday afternoon. We will have visual artists and painters, music on flute, fiddle and guitar, basket making,

spinning and weaving, and as usual our petting zoo of typical small farm animals. We also will have a blacksmith demonstrating his craft each day. Help spread the word about these free fun family days.

School Visit Days

September 26, 27, and 28. This event has become so popular we needed to expand to 3 full days this year. This year we will be hosting the Blue Hill Consolidated School, The Bay School, The Surry Elementary and Penobscot Elementary Schools. We have used feedback from previous years to improve our presentations, and as usual will feature arts and crafts activities in which each student can participate. Volunteers are needed for this presentation since we will no longer have our student Docents.

Lumber House Workshops

As you can see from reading the above it is going to be a very busy summer. For this reason we have delayed the program of Lumber House Workshops, and now plan to schedule them in the Fall, and next Winter. The workshops that we plan will provide hands-on experience with planning, designing and building a replica of the original building. Look for more information on these workshops later in the Summer.

OUR PURPOSE

THE CORPORATION SHALL HAVE THE FOLLOWING CHARITABLE, HISTORICAL, AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES:

"To perpetuate the memory, spirit, works and teachings of Reverend Jonathan Fisher and to preserve at Blue Hill and elsewhere his home, relics and other things of his, (and of) his descendants and the period in which he lived, in order that his life may serve as an inspiration to others."

FUND RAISING

It has been many years since the Jonathan Fisher Memorial conducted an active fund raising campaign. With our new level of educational activities and the need for

Jonathan Fisher's Journals

Our project to publish as many of the Daily Journals of Jonathan Fisher as we can locate is moving along well. This project is supported by the generosity of Esther Wood, and is the fulfillment of a long held desire on her part. Our office computer has been an invaluable tool in the re-formatting and editing these documents. Dr. Raul Smith recently retired from Northeastern University will be reviewing all copy against the coded originals to assure accuracy. Dr. Smith has worked with us previously and has decoded several of Fisher's writings. We are hoping for publication of these writings sometime next year.

There are still some of the original Jonathan Fisher journals missing. At least two which were in our possession at one time cannot be located. These were listed by Bill Hinckley and he provided translations. If anyone knows of the whereabouts of any Jonathan Fisher Memorabilia, please let us know. If you wish to retain ownership that is fine with us, but we would like to know where these items are for future generations of researchers.

As we work on these journals we are constantly surprised and fascinated by the details of life in the late 1700's and early 1800's, and of the incredible interest that this man took in the world around him. We will be developing an index that will make it easier to locate specific information in this wealth of data recorded over a span of 40 plus years.

Busy Business

Our Office is a busy place these days, with someone working there almost every weekday. A donated carpet, a new computer desk and a used copy machine give us both a "homey" look and a new functionality. With our new e-mail address (parsonfisher@acadia.net) we send and receive information very quickly to many of our trustees and other organizations. We will be sending all members who have provided an e-mail address a special bulletin later this summer.

Special Tours

continued restoration and repair (see more on this below) the Board feels it is necessary to reach out to the greater community for additional financial support to help us carry out these goals and our overall mission.

Several special tours have been scheduled for interested groups this summer. On June 22 we had a visit from The Maine Maritime Heritage Press, which included 6 writers from prominent national magazines. They were fascinated by our House and our Parson, and took many notes and pictures. On July 14 we host a group from the Bangor Theological Seminary, and will give them a full tour and refreshment.

THIS OLD HOUSE

As many of you may remember we started a restoration project on the 1814 portion of the house back in 1993. At the time significant work was done to stabilize the cellar wall between the 1814 house and the original 1795 section, and the cellar stairway was strengthened. In addition the main post in the center of the house between these buildings (we call it "The South Post") was strengthened from the basement up to the second floor. Temporary supports were placed in the attic to stabilize roof problems, but worked stopped at this point due to the exhaustion of available funds. Although many additional problems were recognized, the expenditure of over \$27,000 drained resources available at that time. We now realize that we must undertake at least some of the remaining tasks before additional deterioration takes place.

This needed work includes completion of the "South Post Project" in the second floor and attic, stabilization of some of the roof supports, improved ventilation in basement and attic areas, and support for some of the weakened floor areas in the Parson's Study.

Over the past several years there has been growing evidence that the septic system needed attention, and when we saw a backup into the cellar this spring we knew action was required. The first step was to open the tank and have it pumped out. This revealed that the old steel tank, of uncertain age but probably 30 to 40 years, was badly deteriorated. We fear that our dug well may have been contaminated, and we also know that the leach field is totally inadequate. The only answer is a completely new septic system, and we will be starting on the necessary surveys and the permitting process soon. We also plan to continue with our grounds work to make the area more visible and useable for

our increased educational activities. We plan to clear the old barn area so that people can see the location and view some of the enormous beams that are still there.

The Fisher Kitchen Garden

This year the Blue Hill Girl Scouts have “adopted” our kitchen garden and have already planted some heritage seeds and plants that Rev. Fisher would have grown. We are very pleased to have them with us this summer. The Blue Hill Garden Club also continues to care for our flower beds next to the house. We are most grateful for all the volunteers that help us continue the work of Rev. Fisher.

IN CASE YOU DIDN'T HEAR WE WERE FEATURED IN THE JUNE ISSUE OF EARLY AMERICAN HOMES. IF YOU WOULD LIKE A COPY LET US KNOW.