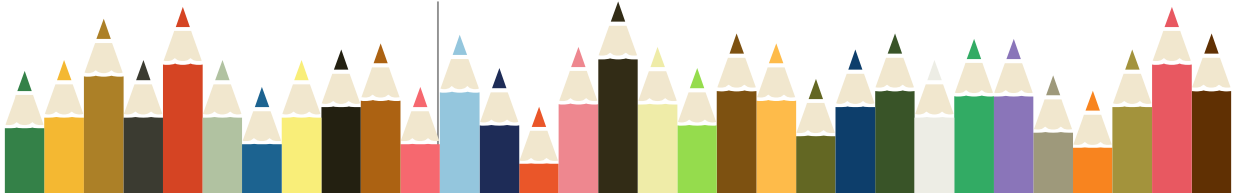


SHS NEWS

New Fire Station Opens | July 4th Ice Cream Social | Sweden Days Schedule



An Historic Day

Sweden dedicated its new Fire Station with fanfare on Saturday, June 13th. Over one hundred residents, firefighters and government officials gathered on the tarmac under a hot sun to celebrate. It was the completion of a plan 47 years in the making, said Fire Chief Tim Cook in an emotional speech. He

thanked all who had worked to make it come to fruition, including the late Fire Chief Wayne Miller, the Building Committee, Select Board, and Sen. Susan Collins, who attended, for helping EMA Director Tommie McKenzie secure a \$1.5 million federal grant to match the Town's savings, making the project possible.

Sen. Collins presented the Town with an American flag that had been flown over the Capital. She also helped uncouple the firehoses in a ceremonial opening of the building.

New Fire Station (top) was dedicated with speeches from State and local officials including Senator Collins and Fire Chief Tim Cook (middle).

Denmark firefighter Bill Dingee opened the ceremony by playing Amazing Grace on the bagpipes as Sweden Town Treasurer Rose McKenzie looks on.

The ceremony and tours of the state-of-the-art facility were followed by lunch and desserts (right) designed to commemorate the historic day.



Sweden Summer Calendar of Events

The Sweden Historical Society is open each Saturday 9 -11 a.m.

June 28th

10 a.m. Summer services begin at the Sweden Community Church

Rev. Anita White preaching with musician Ellen Schwindt playing the organ

July 4th

Ice Cream Social outside the Center Schoolhouse from 1-3 p.m. In the Meeting House in case of rain.

Community Reading of the Declaration Of Independence at 2 p.m.

July 25th

9:30 a.m. Sweden Historical Society Monthly meeting at the Schoolhouse

August 6th -9th Sweden Days - Join the Fun!

Sweden Days will follow its time-honored pattern with a hike, KPEPA potluck and talk, an historic house tour, talent show, village green displays and opportunities for movement and an old-fashioned contradance at the town hall. ***See page 4 for full schedule.***

September 13th

10 a.m. Last summer service at the Sweden Community Church

Rev. Anita White preaching with musician Laurie Turley playing keyboard

September 19th

9:30 a.m. Sweden Historical Society monthly meeting at the Schoolhouse

Sweden Town Office Hours

Tuesday: 9-5 Thursday: 9-noon Friday: 9-4 Sat: 9-noon (2nd and 4th of each month)

Sweden hats, tee shirts, sweatshirts and mugs are available for sale in the office during business hours.



Sweden Fire Trucks on Display

THE SWEDEN FIRE DEPARTMENT'S ORIGINS

by Kay Lyman

In the dedication of the Fire Station, Senator Susan Collins briefly mentioned that the Sweden Fire Department had once been housed in a former nineteenth century store. There is much more to this story.

From the time that Jacob Stevens and Samuel Nevers first began to clear land in Sweden in the 1790s through 1950, Sweden folk had always come to the assistance of their neighbors when a fire started. Most fires were chimney fires and often resulted in the family home and barn burning to the ground. However, each spring before the woods were green, fire danger was high as noted in several diaries. Farmers would watch the hills for signs of fire.

The catalyst for creating a formal organization was the Brownfield Fire of October 1947. That dry fall, fire raged all over the state. On a very windy October 25th, a fire started in Fryeburg. The wind drove flying embers toward Brownfield. Two hundred houses and 21,000 acres in Brownfield burned. By 1950 Sweden citizens were ready to form the Sweden Fire Society. Charlie Bennett, Hunter Chase, Ray Kneeland, Harold Merrill, Ruel O. Moulton, and Guy Tower worked to incorporate the Society and register it with the state of Maine. The Sweden Fire Society was first noted in the Town Warrant for 1950 and received \$100.00 at the March, 1951 Town Meeting.

In 1952, Harold Merrill donated a 79-foot by 130-foot piece of land down the hill from "Halfway House" under the condition that the land would revert back to the Merrill family when it was no longer used by the Fire Society. To create a fire station, Charlie Bennett donated the Nevers and then Bennett building on the corner of Plummer School and Waterford Roads that had been a store in the nineteenth century.

During the winter of 1952/1953, Charlie Bennett, Larry Bishop, Stanley Brown, Hunter Chase, Ray Kneeland and Roger Merrill, together, moved the building down to its new land. The old store was turned ninety degrees so the gable end would face the road and garage doors were cut into the side of building. Later, a tower was built on the back of the building for draining and drying firehoses.

That winter Stanley Brown renovated the interior to turn the store into a fire house. He remembered seeing on the original walls writing, "Bushels of Wheat" and "Bushels of Oats" - evidence of the structure's former use.



Assistant Fire Chief Tommie McKenzie



Sweden's former Firehouse

Trash to Treasure Yard Sale was a Success!

The SHS buildings and grounds manager Doug Porter led a volunteer effort that brought in \$940 in sales, donations and memberships. Thanks for all you do for us, Doug & Kay!



New at the Sweden Center Schoolhouse - A neon sign and a miniature country garden. Look for corn knee high by the Fourth of July!



SWEDEN DAYS 2026

August 6 -9

Thursday, August 6

9:00 a.m. Annual Charlie Bennett Walk from the Town Center to Webber Pond Cemetery, led by Jane Gibbons. Meet at Sweden Historical Society. Kay Lyman and Sexton Mary Darlene "MD" Seeber will be at Webber Cemetery to share stories about those who are buried there. Wear waterproof shoes. For more information, call Jane at 207 647-3987

5:00 p.m. KPEPA POTLUCK SUPPER - Town Meeting Hall

6:00 p.m. Keyes Pond Environmental Protection Association Annual Meeting

After a brief business meeting, Mady Eori, Community Science Manager at Maine Audubon, will speak. Mady coordinates the Annual Loon Count in which volunteers on Stearns Pond and Keyes Pond participate.

Friday, August 7

9:00-11:30 a.m. Historic House Tour

Ticket price \$10.00 (Each ticket enters you into a raffle for a dinner for two at Old Saco Inn in Fryeburg.)

The Flint/Zint Farmhouse at 469 Bridgton Rd. Sweden

7:30 p.m. Annual Sweden Talent Show - Town Meeting Hall

Contact Becky Buyers at 207 256-4444 or rwbuyers@gmail.com to participate!

continued next page

Saturday, August 8

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Sweden Town Fair at town center

Visit the Historical Society at the Center School House, see a Blacksmithing Display, hear author Robert Spencer talk about local history and his historical novels and visit exhibits by local crafters and environmental organizations.

9:30 Ringing of the Church Bell, followed by a tribute to Shirley Crowe and Pam Bastille - School House

10:00 Tai Chi for Health - Beginners welcome - Town Meeting House

11:00 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Tour the Fire Station & have some lunch.

7:00 p.m. Contradance - Town Meeting House, by donation. Caller Kathryn Larson and music by Birds on a Wire

Sunday, August 9

10:00 a.m. Sweden Community Church Anita White preaching, Laurie Turley music

11:00 a.m. Sweden Food Pantry Raffle Drawing for a Side of beef

Support SHS by joining the Society or renewing your membership today. Consider joining the Society's Board of Trustees. We need volunteers to accomplish our goals.



Sweden Historical Society Membership Form & Annual Dues

Date: July 1, 2026

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Payment (enclosed): _____

Dues Categories

\$15 Individual

\$45 Family

\$300 Benefactor

Membership payment is due in July 1 of each year and is renewable every July. Please complete this form and send it with a check, made payable to the Sweden Historical Society to:

Sweden Historical Society
147 Bridgton Road
Sweden, ME 04040-5430

The Sweden Historical Society is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

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