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RESTORATION OF EASTHAM SCHOOLHOUSE MUSEUM WILL BRING AREA HISTORY TO LIFE

An iconic Eastham landmark is being restored to its original historic footprint to bring Eastham stories to life. On October 1, 2024, the Eastham Historical Society broke ground to restore the third wing of its Schoolhouse Museum and to update the museum's interaction with visitors in telling Eastham's stories.

"We are excited to have the support of our members and the town as we update the Schoolhouse Museum, one of the treasured places in our community," said Eileen Seiboldt, President of the Eastham Historical Society. "Eastham has a uniquely rural feel that holds generations of stories. We want to provide more access to and interaction with these histories, tell the tales of the treasures in our archives, and partner with the community to share events that build our sense of place."

When the Eastham Historical Society was being formed in 1963 and met in the basement of the Town Hall, it moved to rescue the only remaining wing of the three-wing schoolhouse that had served the Eastham community from 1869 through 1936. Early members took an unsecured loan of nearly \$8,000 to purchase the Schoolhouse and turn it into a museum. They were able to pay back the loan in a few short years.

Each wing had once been the "one room" school for generations of children in different areas of Eastham. In the early 1900s, the buildings from the north and south districts were moved and joined to the central schoolhouse near Salt Pond. When the school was decommissioned in 1936 and the buildings sold, the added two wings were removed. The remaining wing eventually fell into disrepair until the Society salvaged it in 1965, restoring it as an historic schoolroom with period and original furnishings.

"In 2007, we restored the second historic wing to the building to create display and meeting space," continued Eileen Seiboldt. "Since then, our ambition has been to complete the job by recreating the final third wing. This groundbreaking follows years of planning and, by updating our museum, we're inviting the community to take a fresh look at our long history and share their own stories."

Actual construction is expected to start in the next few weeks and take 8-10 months. Local Eastham Architect Peter McDonald is responsible for the Architectural design with Doug Seiboldt of Precis Engineering, Ambler PA as the Structural Engineer. Construction is by local Orleans Contractor, JC Donald Company, Inc.

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The Eastham Historical Society is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization founded in 1963. The members work to preserve Eastham's past for Eastham's future and to bring the community's history to life. Their 1869 Schoolhouse Museum and Society Archives are located at 25 Schoolhouse Road; the Swift-Daley complex at 2375 State Highway/Route 6.