

Martha Moore Ballard

Martha Moore Ballard, born in Oxford, MA, on February 20, 1735, was a woman of remarkable resilience. She married Ephraim Ballard of Billerica, MA, in Oxford on December 19, 1754. From 1756 to 1769, she brought seven children into the world: Cyrus, Lucy, Martha, Jonathan, Tryphena, Dorothy, and Hannah. Tragically, a diphtheria epidemic struck Oxford, claiming the lives of three of their children: Martha, Tryphena, and Dorothy. Undeterred, they welcomed another daughter, Dorothy, into their lives, affectionately known as Dolly.

Ephraim came to Maine in 1775 to work as a surveyor. He rented a part of the decommissioned Fort Halifax in Winslow until the Committee of Safety ran him out for suspicion of loyalist sympathies. Over the next few years, he managed and operated several mills in "Hallowell."

In 1777, Martha and the family joined Ephraim and resided in Hallowell. The family moved to the Jones Mill at Bowman's Brook (Bond Brook) in 1778. During that year, she became a midwife for the first time. Martha gave birth to their ninth and last child, Ephraim Jr., in 1779. She began her diary in 1785 and kept it for 27 years until her death in the Spring of 1812. Not only did she midwife the births of 816 babies, but she also administered aid when needed and nursed the sick in the community. Ephraim became one of the principal surveyors for the Kennebec Proprietors and held many posts in the town of Hallowell, from selectman to tax collector.

Martha's diary reveals a multifaceted woman. She was a dedicated wife, a loving mother, and a shrewd businesswoman. While she may not have had a fondness for housework, often delegating it to her daughters or hiring young women in town, she found solace and joy in her garden.

Afternoon Tea

At 3 p.m. there will be an 18th-century tea in the south parlor of the garrison where Martha came and often partook of tea with Susanna Cony Howard (Judge James Howard's second wife). We encourage you to bring your own teacups and saucers. During the tea you can roam the grounds around the fort and the rooms on the bottom floor of the garrison and revisit those areas that interested you most and ask questions of the Historic Interpreters stationed there.



Fort Western Living History Museum

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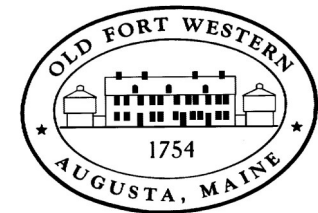
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Martha Ballard's World

May 18, 2024

1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Come join us for an afternoon immersion into the world of Martha Ballard. Using her diary, you will participate in activities she wrote about day to day. You will spend half an hour at four different stations which include:

Garden and Kitchen Hearth

In the garden you will learn about herbs and plants used in the 18th-century for consumption and healing. While in the garden you will pick savory herbs for use in the kitchen. At the kitchen hearth experience the common activity of making butter which Martha often did for home use and trade. You will season it with either herbs you picked from the garden or cinnamon sugar for the scones served at the afternoon tea. Discover the journey of cinnamon and sugar from their origins to colonial kitchens.



Age of Homespun

Another important activity of Martha and her daughters was working with textiles. You will learn about the different fibers of the



18th century and how they were processed, and the use of natural dyes as you work different types of looms, and card and spin wool.

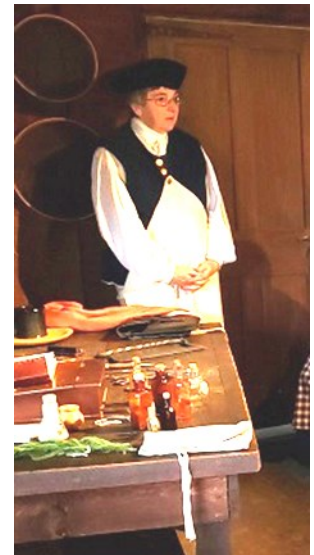
Martha the Healer

Embark on a historical journey guided by Martha Ballard's Diary. Visit the actual room in the Howard home where Martha practiced her healing skills and get a glimpse into the past. First you will visit William Howard's bedchamber and then the bedchamber of James Jr.



Dr. Samuel Coleman

You will then visit with Dr. Samuel Coleman in the S & W Howard Store. He will share with you information about those herbs, and medicines that could not be obtained or grown locally. Martha often visited Dr. Coleman for those medicines she could not grow herself.



Martha Ballard Fact or Fiction

In this station we will explore Martha Ballard in literature. Using "The Diary of Martha Ballard 1785-1812" by McCausland & McCausland as the basis of comparison we will explore Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's Martha as she is described in "A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812" and Ariel Lawhon's Martha as depicted in "The Frozen River."

