

BRINGING the PRESENCE of the PAST into the PRESENT

NHS Students Petition for Music in the School Program... 195 Years Ago!

As we approach the 200th Birthday of New Hampton School (1821-2021), it is natural to feature some exciting pieces from the school's long history. In 1824, the fourth year of "New Hampton Academy's" existence, about two dozen students, "desirous of improving our selves in the Art or Science of Musick," submitted a petition to establish a singing school at the Academy. They were successful, as can be seen from the catalogue for the following year when the school hired, "Mr. Jeremiah Putney, Teacher of Vocal Musick."

Below is a transcript of the petition, followed by its image. Note the many familiar names from the town's history – Dolloff, Kelley, Hannaford, Sanborn *et al* – as townspeople eagerly sent their children to an academy that was already drawing students from as far away as Boston and Vermont.

Musical

We the subscribers being desirous of improving our selves in the Art or Science of Musick do agree for our selves and with each other to house a singing school at the New Hampton Academy the ensuing winter, at least three months – two evenings in a week – to commence on Monday evening the Sixth day of Dec next at Six o'clock and end at Nine. And we further agree to have it one month longer if two thirds of the Scholars should be in favor of it. And we further agree to pay severally our equal proportions and defraying the expenses of the same. We also appoint Ira Gordon and Thomas Sanborn our Agents to agree with some suitable person to instruct the School and see him paid. Any Scholar may be dismissed by making a request the first night of the School.

Nov 19th 1824

Men's Names: William Mallon, Nathaniel R. Mallon, James G. Flanders, Abraham Harper, Noah W [?], Joseph Dolloff, Daniel Fifield [?], Joshua L. Woodman, Simeon D. Kelley, Willis T. Chase, [?] Hannaford

Ladies Names: Hannah H. Sanborn, Lavinia Sanborn, Hannah Smith, Sophronia Harper, Lydia Ward, Mary Smith, Charlotte Smith, Abigail Dolloff, Elizabeth Kimball, Nancy Webster, Sally Hannaford, Betsy Harper

