

South Bristol Historical Society

Est. 1998

Newsletter

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Volume 19 Number 2

Fall 2016

New Photograph Collection

While it is no secret that the Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport has an amazing photography archive, it is one of its newest additions that will be sure to grab the attention of SBHS members! This summer the museum acquired more than 300 large format film negatives of Gamage Shipyard launches taken between the 1950's-1970's. Also in the collection are a number of images of Hook's lobster pound on Rutherford Island.

These remarkable images were most likely taken by Damariscotta photographer Ivan Flye. The negatives became available through an antique photo dealer and Penobscot Maine Museum received generous donations from Gamage Shipyard, David & Betsy Andrews, as well as SBHS to secure the negatives. This winter the negatives will be scanned and added to the museum's online database where they will be available for research, publication, fine art prints and the simple pleasure of just viewing them. For more information, contact museum photo archivist Kevin Johnson: Email Kjohnson@pmm-maine.org or call 207-548-2529 ext. 210. www.PenobscotMarineMuseum.org



Hook's lobster pound was located in the narrow passage between Rutherford and Birch Islands at the end of the road of the same name. The pound was reportedly owned by the famous Boston waterfront firm of the same name.



Jennie Gamage, Harvey Gamage's widow, about to christen the Friendship Sloop Lady on Harvey's birthday, April 17, 1978. This boat was the last built by Harvey himself but was finished after his death.



Harvey Gamage overseeing moving what may be the keel timber of another of his famous schooners into the boat shed in the mid 1970s.

SBHS News Notes

Annual Meeting July 2016

The 2016 SBHS Annual Meeting saw the election of exciting new leadership for the Society. President Sue Edwards is joined by Vice President Wayne Eugley; both have been Trustees for several years and are ready to move the organization vigorously toward its 20th anniversary in 2018, and beyond! Officers re-elected are Betsy Graves, Treasurer; Deb Storch, Secretary; and Dave Andrews, Historian.



New SBHS officers: Wayne Eugley, Vice President and Sue Edwards, President.

Historical Society Members also elected Esther Norwood a Trustee and re-elected Genie Cole and Bob Emmons, all to serve three year terms. Continuing as Trustees with two years remaining in their terms are Cynthia Garrels, Carol Kelsey, Scott Farrin, and Mike Naylor. Trustees Carolyn McKeon, Donna Plummer, Nathaniel Hammond, and Warren Storch each have one year remaining on their terms. Sue Edwards presented Ellen with a parting gift of a Susan Bartlett Rice painting of the swing bridge at the conclusion of the elections.



Ellen Wells

At the time of the Annual Meeting, Ellen had served as president of the Historical Society for 15 years. Under her leadership, the society was transformed. When she became president, SBHS had boxes of artifacts and documents that people had donated, but few of them were on display so people could come and see what the society held. Today, as many of you know, the society has a very interesting museum just south of the bridge, showcasing the wonderful donations people have entrusted to the Society to capture and promote South Bristol history.

Ellen was also instrumental in writing grants and obtaining funding for the restoration of the S Road School House and for two publications, Ellen Vincent's *Down on the Island, Up on the Main* and Lanny Warner's *The Families of South Bristol and Their Houses*. The School House welcomes students from the South Bristol school to experience what learning was like in a one-room schoolhouse and is open every Friday afternoon in the summer.

The Society's accomplishments under Ellen's guidance are numerous. The Society worked with the fifth and sixth grade students at the South Bristol school to develop an online exhibit, "A Town is Born," which was a wonderful opportunity to involve the town's youth in preserving its history.

Last year, the town celebrated its centennial, and the SBHS participated by entering a float in the town parade, holding exhibits, and collecting the names of all the veterans in South Bristol so that a plaque could be made and dedicated during the week's festivities.

Ellen coordinated the society's efforts to present a monthly program each season, starting each year with a Cemetery Walk of one of the towns numerous cemeteries after which participants would work to clean up the grounds. She catalogued accessions, attended workshops, lined up speakers, coordinated logistics, prepared the society's newsletters, and ensured that all details of running the society were addressed.

Ellen's energy and enthusiasm were tireless. She will be greatly missed.

Winter Wednesdays – Same Day, New Time, 10am to 1pm

Once again Wednesday will be winter work-day at SBHS, but please take note of a change in the hours. Anyone who can spare an hour or two is most welcome to come to the SBHS museum between the hours of 10am and 1pm to help with copying and filing of news clippings, cataloguing and storing artifacts, reviewing movies donated over the years with an eye to digitizing them, transcribing oral history tapes, and whatever else needs to be done! No prior experience required! Keep in mind that work-day 'holidays' will be observed on Nov. 23, Dec. 21, and Dec. 28.

Walpole Union Chapel

This summer the trustees of the Union Chapel in Walpole announced that significant repairs were needed to the roof of the historic building, as well as interior painting. The SBHS Board voted to join the effort to raise the funds necessary to preserve the 1880's building with a contribution of \$500.00. Good news - enough money has been received and the work to save this important South Bristol building has begun!

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WWII Veterans Memorial

SBHS Trustee Scott Farrin has embarked on quite a mission – to bring back the World War II memorial plaque that once sat in front of the old South Bristol Library. It had disappeared without a trace except for a few undated photographs of its dedication, found in a photo album about World War put together by Scott’s father Albert Drummond Farrin, Jr. First Scott enhanced the old photo so that he could make out and list all the names that were on the plaque when it was dedicated. He searched the Town Reports, hoping to find some reference to the plaque, perhaps in a Town Meeting warrant or a budget, but nothing could be found.

Next he headed to the archives at Lincoln County News to do a search of their records. It took several trips, each lasting at least three hours, before he hit pay dirt – an article describing the dedication of the South Bristol memorial on May 25, 1944. Then he found another article listing all the names appearing on the plaque – they matched up with what he had deciphered from the photograph.

Conversations with several long-time residents of the village yielded the information that the plaque itself was made of wood and deteriorated badly after only a few years. Though no one knew for sure, it seems that it simply got into such bad shape that at some point, perhaps in the early 1950’s, it was removed.

Since the design of the plaque had left room for many more names, including as it did only those who were in the service at the time, Scott decided to complete the list of veterans. With help from Trustee Carol Kelsey, using the lists that she had gathered for the memorial dedicated during the Centennial, the list of South Bristol residents who served in World War II is now complete.

The next step will be to re-create the memorial plaque itself, to look the same but with the names of all the veterans displayed. Just how that will be accomplished and where it will be placed have not yet been decided, but it is a certainty that Scott will see this project through. In the meantime, any photos or other information that will help with this project will be most welcome.

Please contact Scott or the South Bristol Historical Society.



The WW II Veterans Memorial in front of the old library as it looked on Memorial Day, 1944.

News Notes continued

SBHS Scholarships

Our first Lincoln Academy scholarship recipient, Holly Stegna, daughter of Julie and Larry Stegna, graduated in 2014 and is continuing the study of Japanese at Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA. Exciting news is that Holly has been accepted at Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan and will study there during the spring term.

In 2015, Cassie Leeman received the SBHS Scholarship award and attends Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Florida, where she is working toward a liberal arts degree with a concentration in marine-related studies. Cassie’s parents are Michelle and Brian Leeman.

This year’s recipient, Elizabeth Gilbert, daughter of Jane and Clay Gilbert, began her studies this fall at Bentley University in Waltham, MA, where the business curriculum is combined with rigorous liberal arts studies.



*Holly Stegna,
2014 recipient.*



*Elizabeth Gilbert,
2016 recipient*

*Cassie Leeman,
2015 recipient*

Goodbye Swing Bridge, Welcome New Bridge

The Gut Bridge replacement construction project that slowed traffic through the village and gave passers-by an ever changing, sometimes mysterious scene to check out, began in early May 2015.

The Maine Department of Transportation (MEDOT) had included replacement of the South Bristol Gut Bridge in its long range plan as early as 2000, and began talks with the Town administration sometime in 2008. An early conceptual plan to construct a bascule bridge was presented at a public meeting in Town office during June, 2009. More public meetings took place in August 2009 and in 2010, 2011, and 2012. In January 2012, MEDOT announced they were pushing back the completion date from 2015 to 2016. From late 2011 through 2012 a group of local citizens dissatisfied with the MEDOT design was actively working with MEDOT to redesign the bridge. MEDOT presented the final design at the last public meeting in August 2013.

The bridge construction contract was put out to bid and by September, 2014, work had begun on both sides of the Gut, sometime requiring alternating one-lane traffic over the old bridge.

Work stopped during the summer of 2015, resuming in the fall. On October 21, the channel was closed to marine traffic and remained closed for 213 days. A temporary bridge was constructed to route traffic around the bridge site itself and demolition of the old bridge began in November, followed by months of work on the bridge abutments, installing rebar and forms to prepare for pouring concrete, putting up a temporary work surface over the channel, and a myriad of other complex tasks. Meanwhile, the bridge itself was being fabricated off site, parts being delivered as construction progressed at the site.

By May 27, 2016, the temporary bridge was gone, and the new bridge opened to traffic – boats through the channel and cars over the bridge.



Aerial view with temporary bridge



Swing bridge is opened for the last time, 10/7/15



Demolition of the swing bridge begins, 11/2/13/15



Demolition continues, 11/6/15



Demolition continues, 11/6/15



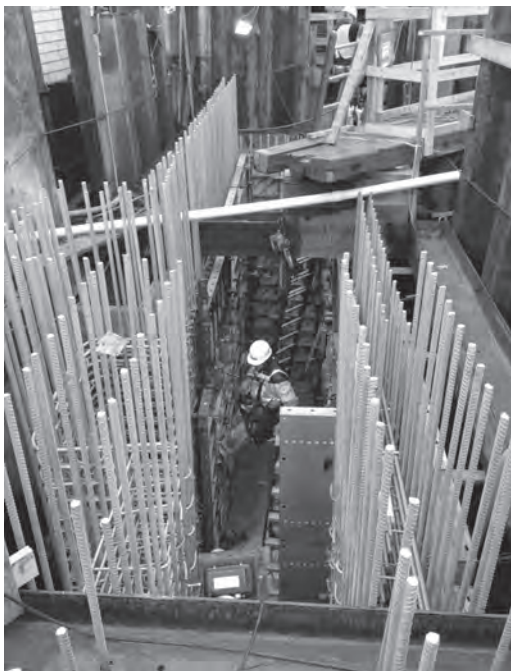
Grinding out ledge, 1/20/15



Looking southwest across the waterway, 12/4/15



One of many pieces of specialized equipment, 2/25/16



Installing re-bar and forms for concrete, 3/31/16



Second story of control house is lowered into place, 5/20/16

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Goodbye Swing Bridge, Welcome New Bridge

See story and more photos inside



*Above: Coast Guard photo taken after removal of temporary bridge.
Upper right: New bridge span is raised for marine traffic, 5/27/16
Lower right: First boat goes through the passage, 5/27/16*

