

Bayside Historical Preservation Society
Newsletter Spring 2015



Song-Island 1848.

The preachers and tract
masters met in the school Thursday
2^d Mo. Sept. 7.

N. D. George in the Chair.

H. C. Dillon was appointed Sec.

It was moved that a Camp Meeting
be held on this ground next year.

After some discussion the motion
was laid on the table.

Resolved That N. D. George, W. R. Pillsbury,
and A. Moore appoint a Committee
of six to consider the subject of a
Camp Meeting locality, and report
at their earliest convenience.

Resolved That a collection be taken
from the congregation and tract
to defray the expenses of the present
meeting.

Resolved To adjourn to meet at
the call of the President.

(Account page)

Another February morning at below 0 degrees and I'm thinking about this coming summer in Bayside. I'm also remembering this past year. The BHPS has had a very good year. We mounted two exhibits in 2014, one celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Northport Yacht Club and the second celebrating the history of Bayside through photographs in our Museum on Pleasant St. In 2014, the BHPS was supported by gifts from many individuals and Wendy Huntoon and Amro El Jaroudi and their son, Nadim El Jaroudi set up a website for the BHPS that will be opening for business in the summer of 2015- see her write up in this issue. Rob Sherman recounts our guest speaker Charlene Knox Ferris on Rum Running on the Penobscot. Her wonderful talk was followed by delicious treats including Rum Balls! Our donation of glass negatives to the Penobscot Marine Museum and our continued work with photography curator Kevin Johnson have benefitted a few aspects of the BHPS especially regarding the upcoming 100th celebration.

Most of this newsletter will be devoted to information regarding the 100th Anniversary of the Northport Village Corp. Many members of the BHPS have worked with the 100th Committee on organizing a variety of events for the Bayside community. The Committee is chaired by Denis Wang and includes John Woolsey, John Spritz and Emily Stetser. Please read on for schedules, ways to participate and information about activities including Patti Wright's history of "Illumination Nights"! There will be historical talks by Maine State Historian Earle Shettleworth Jr. and the Penobscot Marine Museum Photo Curator Kevin Johnson. There will be an art show as well as Wednesday night performances held in the Community Hall organized by John Woolsey. Commemorative bricks to be laid down at the Library have been organized by Cynthia Stuen. Lisa Webster is organizing another Bayside House Tour for this summer. Steve and Laurie Kazilionis have organized a web page and Face Book page for the Centennial- contact Joe Reilly for how to include information. Dan Webster continues to be an excellent source of information for Bayside residents with Bayside.Com.

Perhaps the most exciting donation is the two meeting books for the camp meeting association - from Long Island September 7, 1848 until Wesleyan Grove August 27, 1886. The book, shown on the cover, also contains the minutes from the 'Bucksport Meeting of Delegates, June 21, 1849'. Stuck in between the pages is the 'Wesleyan Grove Camp Meeting Association' booklet published 1901 with a summary of the origin and 1873 incorporation and legislative charter.

"It still gives me chills to hold and read from it!" Says Beverly Crofoot.

It was found by Amos Kimball, BHPS Director Emeritus.

The BHPS continues to support community wide activities including the annual summer concert, the Northport Yacht Club and the Northport Food Pantry. Our work with these organizations and the Northport Village Corporation continues to be a vital part of our mission.

As always, the events of this summer will succeed because of the volunteer work supplied by members of the Bayside community. Please contact Denis Wang or Joe Reilly for more information or to volunteer. The BHPS continues to be strong thanks to all of the members and our wonderful board of directors. The members of the board are Joy Sherman, Carlton Smith, Sue Ellen Fleming, Beverly Crofoot, Joe Reilly, Jane Strauss, Harry Rosenblum our Secretary Pam Williams and Heidi von Bergen. Heidi continues to do a superb job as our treasurer. Please notice the membership dues/sign up form at the end of this newsletter. I am looking forward to seeing you all in the warmth of the summer!

Joe Reilly

BHPS ANNUAL MEETING

By Rob Sherman

The annual meeting of BHPS was held on Wednesday evening, July 20. The president, Joe Reilly, promised we would have a stimulating talk from a guest and then adjourn for our second annual focus on good eating.

Before that, though, Joe welcomed the members and guests, introduced the officers, and reviewed what the society has accomplished in the year since the last meeting. He noted the displays in the cottage Museum, the times the Museum was open and the visitors to the Museum, and improvements in the Museum itself— painting and landscaping. Joe ended this part of the meeting by conducting, with Pam Williams' help, an election of officers and directors for the coming year. Those officers and directors are listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Now came the “fun part” of the meeting. The speaker for the evening was Charlene Knox Farris, who in 2010 was given the honor of “Official Historian” by the town of Searsport. Ms. Farris, a native of Searsport, is a former school teacher and in later years has devoted herself to researching and presenting programs about Searsport history (and the larger area of Waldo County and the Penobscot Bay region).

Ms. Farris' topic for our program was “The Rum Runners of Penobscot Bay.” She had presented this talk earlier at the Belfast Historical Society. An advertisement for the talk said she would “take us back in time to ‘the Roaring Twenties: the jazz, the flappers, federal prohibition, and the daring, dangerous and oh, so illegal game called “Rum Running” played for real in our own Penobscot Bay.’” “Fast boats and secluded coves made for an active illegal trade in this Caribbean commodity.”

Ms. Farris showed that her research into history, and her presentation of its stories, is as well developed as any professional historian. She was not content simply to cite facts and follow chronology. As the advertisement noted above makes plain, she demonstrated that the significance of history is shown through context and as an on-going story. Thus, the rum running that took place around Penobscot Bay is understood best not only in the context of federal prohibition (Maine was one of the leaders in the movement) but also in a new freedom represented by jazz and the flappers that resulted after the first World War, as well as improvements in marine technology—streamlined boats and high powered engines.

After her talk, Ms. Farris responded to comments and questions. Some persons in the audience could remember the time and the places and events around Penobscot Bay that were involved in rum running. Not everything

involved in the activity was the result of bad morals or motives. One member in the audience noted that many Maine farmers produced home liquor (“moonshine”), not to drink it themselves or to add to illegal trade, but as a desperate way to pay their taxes. Ironically, what was thought to be bad (illegal trade) was urged on by a good intention (pay your taxes).

Then, as a respite from and a reward for this serious, but entertaining, talk, the members and guests adjourned to sample delicious dessert delights and punch (without rum or other liquor, though Pam Williams did bring rum balls for dessert!). This was BHPS’s second annual meeting with a food component: last year’s meeting was a barbecue social and this year there was dessert. What will it be next year—appetizers? If so, will we eat them before the meeting gets underway? A sure way to tell is to attend the meeting—next summer, sometime near the end of July.

Treasurer's Report 1/1/2014-12/31/2014

2014 saw an increase in members from 135 the previous year to 141 this past year. Our income was less by \$754 but our expenses were \$2,785 less despite our generous donations to the Band Concert, Northport Food Bank and the upcoming Centennial Celebration. Dick Brockway refurbished our signs and Beverly Crofoot created some special framed “thank you” pictures to donors.

I suffered a computer and back-up total crash during a summer storm and lost all my Quicken BHPS data and had to complete half the year manually. Needless to say, this was the worst report I ever had to compile and had only a small cash adjustment of \$19.66 to make in Petty Cash.

Respectfully submitted, Heidi von Bergen, Treasurer

TREASURER'S REPORT 1/1/14-12/31/14

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| General Fund Balance 1/1/14 | \$21,751.52 |
| Income | |
| 2014 Donations | 1,990.00 |
| 2014 Dues | 1,110.00 |
| Book Sales/Posters | 1,010.88 |
| Interest Income | 15.98 |
| Misc. Income | 68.06 |
| Sales Tax Income | 19.12 |
| Shipping Income | 20.00 |
| Total Income | \$4,234.01 |
| Expenses | |
| Centennial Celebration | \$2,000.00 |
| Honorarium Searsport HS | 25.00 |
| Insurance | 500.00 |
| Maine Filing Fee | 35.00 |
| Membership Maine Archives & Museums | 25.00 |
| Misc. Expenses | 280.23 |
| Mission | 270.39 |
| Newsletter(printing & postage) | 584.99 |
| Northport Food Pantry | 300.00 |
| NYC Band Concert 1/3 | 234.00 |
| Rent PO Box | 58.00 |
| Sales Tax Paid (Oct.-Dec.2013) | 10.43 |
| Utilities | 459.98 |
| Total Expenses | \$4783.02 |
| Dif. | - 549.01 |
| WORKING CAPITAL | |
| Assets 12/31/14 | |
| Bank Accounts | |
| Camden National Checking | \$5,124.92 |
| Camden National Savings | 15,989.87 |
| Total Bank Accounts | \$ 21,114.79 |
| Petty Cash (cash adjustment \$19.66) | 87.72 |
| Total Assets | \$ 21,182.85 |
| General Fund Balance 12/31/14 | \$ 21,202.51 |

Some Thoughts on the NVC Centennial

One hundred years ago this June 17th, a hamlet of small cottages that had grown out of a Wesleyan campground on the western shore of Penobscot Bay became an incorporated village. For the next hundred years the village of Bayside became an almost hidden special place, even a place out of time for generations of families, friends, guests, and visitors. And so this summer we'll be celebrating our Centennial with ceremonies, special events, performances, and parties. There'll be something for everyone, from antique 4th of July games for children and village scavenger hunts for families to music, dances, concerts, performances, lectures, historical tours and displays, story-telling, boat parades, and yes, even a grand picnic and lobster bake – something for folks of any age.

But hopefully, our Centennial will be more than just a celebration. We hope that this will also be a summer in which the bonds and connections of our community will be renewed and strengthened. We hope that villagers not only attend and enjoy our many planned activities but also become more active community members. So when you're strolling through the village on one of the Illumination Nights perhaps you'll take the time to meet or greet folks you haven't met before or get reacquainted with villagers you haven't seen in a while. Perhaps you'll be inspired to join one of our community groups such as the historical society, the yacht club, or the garden club, or maybe even start a new organization within the village. Perhaps you'll volunteer or do even more for one of the charitable fund-raising efforts that occur every summer. Perhaps you might even have a great idea this summer for a new social event tradition to add to the many wonderful ones we now have. For every villager, whether a generational who grew up in Bayside, a newcomer, a visitor or guest, we hope that this will be a summer of celebrating community, as it has been every summer for one hundred years.

Finally, we have much for which to be thankful on our Centennial – our beautiful village and setting on Penobscot Bay, our families, friends, and neighbors within the village, and our village democracy. But most importantly, we should also be thankful to all those who came before us, so many of whom are now gone from us. Let's take time this summer to especially remember and give thanks to those whose presence through memory still exists on every road, in every park, and in every cottage.

Have a great summer!

Denis Wang NVC. President and Centennial Chairperson

Centennial Wednesdays

By John Woolsey

An important part of the centennial celebrations of the Northport Village Corporation will be a series of programs on Wednesday nights throughout the summer in the Bayside Community Hall, **Centennial Wednesdays**. These weekly events start June 10 and conclude August 26.

Perhaps you will recall that the Community Hall was originally a movie theater, built in 1914 and operational until 1934 and movies as well as other performances have taken place in the Hall over the years since then.

Centennial Wednesdays will include two lectures on the history of Bayside and the tourist industry in Maine, movies of Charlie Chaplin and the Marx Brothers, two shows by the Belfast Maskers (with a dinner theater option being explored), an evening of photos and reminiscences by three of Bayside's photographers, a piano recital by Baysider Heidi von Bergen, an evening of dance with the Robinson Ballet and friends, a delightful *Gambol Through 100 Summers at Bayside* with a cast many of you know, and performances by a fabulous blues band and a juggler/new vaudevillian.

Maybe this will turn into a regular revival of the Hall as a performance venue?



Cottage bedecked for Illumination, Oak Bluffs. (Dukes County Historical Society/Edith Blake)

The Glow of Hospitality by Patti Wright

Throughout centuries and across cultures, light has been both an important element unto itself– and a symbol. In religion, literature, music, theater, film, art, meditation, and prayer, light is used to signify hope, enlightenment, purity, spirituality, God(s), warmth, and welcome. Indeed, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, the creation of light appears in the very first sentences of the Book of Genesis: “And God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.” It is no surprise, then, that when the Methodist Camp-Meeting Associations took hold in the early 1800s; festive, community-wide lighting was used to signal the importance of the annual gatherings.

The camp-meeting tradition spawned in the early 19th century coincided with the growth of the country and provided a way to build community in rural and less densely settled areas by bringing worshippers, often numbering in the thousands, together into a one or two week festival of shared celebration. Grand Illuminations, the lighting of lanterns throughout the community, became a tradition in campgrounds signaling either the beginning or the ending of formal camp activities. Decorative lighting was symbolic of the religious and moral awakenings camp-meeting organizers hoped to inspire and fuel with the summer meetings. The illuminations signified the shared sense of community and celebration and were often accompanied by small parades or public strolls that encouraged socializing.

Beverly Crofoot writes in *If These Cottages Could Talk* that “The Bayside community roots stretch back to 1849 when the Methodists established a camp-meeting on the shores of Penobscot Bay.” We know from her diligent reading of the archives of *The Republican Journal* that “Lanterns are hung among the trees...and make a grand illumination” (p. 24) for a typical evening service in 1861. We also discover that the habit in the 1880 Wesleyan Grove Campground was for weekly Saturday night illuminations. As early as 1877, however, there was a tension between those who came to the campground for religious refreshment and those who came to experience summertime pleasures in a beautiful setting. Campers pursuing religious commitment wanted to keep outside influences at bay while others saw economic opportunity and summer indulgences in a resort style summer retreat. This dynamic is also revealed in the newspaper records and we see that some of the habits initially indicating religious celebration spilled over into personal entertainment also. Thus, a newspaper account of the decorations for a private North Shore lawn party in 1881 for 150 merry party-goers described “Two hundred Japanese lanterns [that] threw their variegated colors upon the scene...” (p. 87). In both instances, the lights signified an invitation to shared experience.

The confluence of these forces is the spirit of shared community and hospitality that we hope to capture during our Centennial Illumination Nights on Saturday evenings from July 18, 2015 throughout the summer. We hope that all of the cottages will participate and we welcome all manner of decorative expressions to mark our illumination celebrations. The traditional lanterns used in the campground’s early days were Japanese-style lanterns typically made of paper or silk. They were large decorative pieces that made a festive statement when hung from cottage porches and between cottages. Today there are many options available and some residents already have their cottages strung with some form of decorative lighting. We hope you will choose a style that most suits your fancy and that you will join us for these Saturday night Illuminations through the summer. It is the perfect way to celebrate “the glow of hospitality” grounded in 19th century traditions that still have symbolic meaning in our community today.

And while we want to celebrate the symbolism of light with these decorative illuminations, we do not want to cause any harm. Please, no candles.

References:

Bayside Historical Preservation Society. *If These Cottages Could Talk*.

Corsiglia, Betsy and Miner, Mary-Jean. *Unbroken Circles: The Campground of Martha's Vineyard*. David R. Godine, Boston, 2000.

Weiss, Ellen. *City in the Woods: The Life and Design of an American Camp Meeting on Martha's Vineyard*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1987

www.biblioboard.com/curation/featured/methodist-camp-meetings-a-historical-collection

Resources for Lighting Supplies

String lights and Japanese-style lanterns are widely available at specialty, discount, retail, party supply, and hardware stores, as well as a variety of online sites. There are a wide range of choices available – traditional electric string lights, battery operated lights, and solar-powered options. If you are looking for Japanese-style lanterns, a Google search will give you many options both for string sets and individual lanterns. (Suggested search terms: Japanese lanterns, string lights, party lights, wedding lights.) You will also find paper or nylon options for Japanese lantern styles. The Green Store in Belfast usually sells individual paper lanterns that can be paired with a light source or hung unlit. Several online sources include:

www.batteryoperatedcandles.com

www.amazon.com

www.japanesestyle.com

www.partylights.com

www.lightsforalloccasions.com

Feeling creative? If you are a member of a social media site such as www.pinterest.com you can search for ideas including some Do-It-Yourself options.

Need more help? Please contact Patti Wright at pjw.sow.wright@gmail.com