

Bayside Historical Preservation Society

Spring 2026 Newsletter



Park Row from the top of the row at Broadway and Griffin. The first house across Broadway on the Park Row side is no longer there. Photo taken by Belfast/Northport photographer W.C. Tuttle around 1880.

Officers:

President: Joe Reilly
Vice President: Beverly Crofoot
Treasurer: Helen Pelletier
Secretary: Robyn Tamura

Board of Directors:

Marjorie Crowley
Fred Lincoln
Harry Rosenblum
Joy Sherman
Bob Stetser
Lisa Webster
Vicki Nelson

A note from Joe Reilly, president of BHPS

After a long winter (we actually had a good amount of snow this year) Bayside is ready to come alive with year rounders and summer folks enjoying their time by Penobscot Bay.

BHPS has four main activities planned beside the opening of our Museum on Pleasant St. in July and Beverly Crofoot's display of cottage moving – the notion of picking cottages up and moving them either for construction or to a different location – held in the meeting room at the Community Hall.

First, Vicki Nelson has volunteered to organize the 8th annual “Collector’s Day” to be held upstairs at the Community Hall on August 4. Friends and neighbors bring their various personal collections to share with each other. It’s a really fun and interesting time. Call Vicki (617-359-5876) if you’d like to participate or just stop by on the 4th!

Megan Pinette, President of the Belfast Historical Society will present two talks for our 2nd and 3rd BHPS sponsored activities.

The first will be on July 22 and will be about the “bold stand taken by the people of Belfast to support liberty” during the American Revolution. A great topic considering that this is our nation’s 250 anniversary! The second will be on August 4 (after collector’s day) and will explore the many and varied items made in Belfast during the last 250 years! The list is very diverse! Both talks will begin at 7 PM downstairs in the meeting room of the Community Hall.

The last event has been organized by Sharon McCullough and it’s the Bayside Dance. Once again, BHPS and BAYSIDE ARTS are co-sponsoring this popular event. It will be held on the basketball court on August 5 from 7-10pm. Please refer to the excellent calendar of Bayside Arts events created by Emily Stetser.

BHPS was given a wonderful photograph by Don Taylor this winter. It’s shown on the first page of this newsletter and will be featured in Beverly’s house moving exhibit. Don is from the Scarborough Maine Historical Society. The photo was found among their collections. He reached out to Helen Pelletier and donated it to the BHPS. This is something that all the historical societies regularly do for each other. Thank you to Don.

This past winter, I read in the NYT about the death of Charles Norman Shay. I remembered that David Crofoot had gone to meet him and asked David to write up his visit and his connection to Mr. Shay. David’s important story appears in this newsletter. Charles Shay was a D-Day decorated WW2 Combat Medic and member of the Penobscot Nation. The connection was that David’s father was a doctor at D-Day. In this 250th year of our Democracy, David’s account is a wonderful way to celebrate those who fought, lived and died in support of all of our freedoms.

This summer, our museum at Shady Grove on Pleasant St. will have a special display of photographs of our Bayside Dock from the 1870s until now. Featured with the display will be one of Dick Brockway's amazing models. Dick's widow, Marge, gave the model to the BHPS – it even has the initials carved into the structure!!



Bayside News



Bayside from the end of the dock, taken around 1910. This panorama view was found by John Dykstra and then enhanced for BHPS by Steve Nelson. Notice the old Northport Hotel (burned in 1919) and the auditorium, on the far right, that was taken down in the 1930s. This spectacular view of Bayside can be purchased from the BHPS for \$30.



The BHPS sign keeper, Art Hall, not only puts up and takes down the seasonal historical markers around town, but he has started to create new markers. This one arrived this spring and describes the winch housing that was once on this concrete slab down by the waterfront. People have wondered about it for years! Thanks to Bob Stetser, Gordon Fuller, Fred Lincoln and Ed Lord who helped gather the information! Tremendous thanks to Art Hall!!

Bayside Historical Preservation Society

Treasurer's Report

January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025

Income	2024	2025
Memberships and Donations ¹	\$4,911.22	\$4,167.98
Books Sales (direct)	\$472.50	\$330.75
Book Sales (wholesale)	\$148.00	\$227.00
Sales Tax Income	\$27.50	\$19.25
Interest Income (Savings account)	\$4.26	\$9.65
Total Income	\$5,563.48	\$4,754.63

Expenses	2024	2025
BHPS summer events ²	\$226.07	\$367.40
NVC Community Hall annual support	--	\$200.00
Insurance	\$500.00	\$500.00
Maintenance and supplies	\$517.44	\$746.13
Membership fees ³	\$35.00	\$35.00
Museum acquisitions	\$561.68	--
PayPal transaction fees	\$38.83	\$30.25
Postage and PO Box Rental	\$247.10	\$249.25
Printing ⁴	\$5,131.27	\$180.55
Speaker/presenter fees	\$200.00	--
State of Maine Filing Fee	\$35.00	\$60.00
State of Maine Sales Tax	\$8.25	\$27.50
Utilities ⁵	\$1,398.31	\$1,555.42
Website ⁶	\$79.00	\$79.00
Total Expenses	\$8,977.55	\$4,030.50

¹ Total of all donations and memberships.

² BHPS annual meeting, Sherman Bench dedication, Dancing Under the Stars

³ Maine Archives & Museums membership

⁴ BHPS newsletter

⁵ Central Maine Power: Shady Grove and Community Hall share

⁶ Give WP Donation plug-in

Assets

Working Capital 12/31/2025

	2024	2025
Camden National Checking	\$6,120.41	\$6,840.68
Camden National Savings	\$14,205.74	\$14,209.60
PayPal	\$0	\$0
Petty Cash	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND BALANCE	\$20,326.15	\$21,050.28

BHPS continues to be in strong financial shape. Although income from memberships and donations was down somewhat in 2025, revenues nevertheless exceeded expenses by \$724.13.

Membership in the organization totaled 106 individuals (down slightly from 114 in 2024) representing 55 households.

We continue to be grateful to Amro and Nadim El-Jaroudi for their willingness to serve as our volunteer IT team. Efforts to ensure that the website and on-line payment system (www.baysidehps.org) are as user-friendly and secure as possible require their good-natured support and attention throughout the year.

As always, we are grateful to all of you who support the work of BHPS through your membership fees, donations, and contributions of time and talent. Together, your efforts are keeping alive the history of this special community.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Pelletier, Treasurer

January 2026

On Omaha Beach

By David Crofoot

Charles Norman Shay, a hero of D-Day in World War II, died December 3 2025 at the age of 101. A Penobscot Indian from Indian Island near Old Town whose ancestry traces back through Molly Molasses, John Neptune and Joseph Orono to the Baron de Castin (for whom Castine is named). He was a 19-year-old combat medic in the 16th regiment of the 1st Army division (Big Red One) that landed on Omaha Beach in Normandy France on June 6, 1944.

The initial waves of landings occurred at low tide when beach obstacles and mines were exposed. Succeeding waves arrived on the rising tide. But heavy equipment such as amphibious tanks sank before reaching the beach and the lightly-armed soldiers were met by overwhelming fire from machine guns, mortars, and .88 cannons that enfiladed the beach. The carnage was terrible and the attacks stalled at the water's edge.

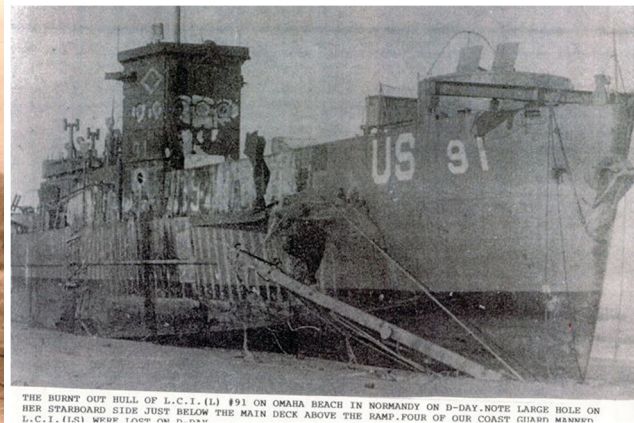
Medics carried no weapons. Their only protection was a red cross on an arm brassard and painted on their helmets. These proved little protection from the hail of fire. As the attack stalled on the beachhead, the incoming tide enveloped the dead and wounded tangled in the wreckage of beach obstacles or sheltering behind them.

Charles Norman Shay, after tending to a fellow medic with a fatal abdominal wound, braved the hail of fire again and again to cross the beach and rescue drowning soldiers. He eventually brought 25 to safety. For this, he was awarded the Silver Star for bravery. But his war was not over and he served with the Big Red One as they fought their way across France, Belgium, and into Germany.



On his return to Maine after the war, there was no work for an Indian from Indian Island and little recognition. He re-entered the army and served again as a combat medic in Korea.

I first learned about Shay from an article in the summer 2018 edition of the Magazine of the National Museum of the American Indian*. I have always taken a special interest in D-Day because my father was also on Omaha Beach in the first hours, in a similar role as a naval doctor in the 7th Beach Battalion. This unit, which comprised demolition experts, signallers, and medical teams, arrived at the beach 70 minutes after H-hour in a larger LCI landing craft. These 160-foot beachable ships carried over 200 soldiers, but they were prominent targets for German gunners. The bow of the ship was filled with combat engineers while the medical units were at the stern. LCI 91 made it to shore but was hit by cannon fire and set ablaze while disembarking men from the two bow ramps. Many of the engineers in the bow were killed. Those who could abandoned ship over the stern into the cold channel waters. My father was seen to go under and not resurface and was presumed drowned. But an assault landing craft returning from the beach, scooped him in over its lowered bow ramp, poured rum down his throat, and evacuated him back to England. It took several days before he could get back to his unit treating the wounded on the beach.



THE BURNT OUT HULL OF L.C.I. (L) #91 ON OMAHA BEACH IN NORMANDY ON D-DAY. NOTE LARGE HOLE ON HER STARBOARD SIDE JUST BELOW THE MAIN DECK ABOVE THE RAMP. FOUR OF OUR COAST GUARD MANNED L.C.I. (L) WERE TAKEN DOWN.

Michael Crofoot, MD, USNR (2nd from left in rear) LCI 91 holed and burnt on the beach

My mother, at home in Damariscotta with my three brothers (aged 3, 2, and two months) received a telegram announcing him “missing in action”; his letters were delayed for weeks. Despite a letter from a school friend whose husband had seen my father alive on the beach a few days after D-day, she had no certainty that he was alive until mid-August. My birth in January 1946 was proof indeed that he had survived.



My family has never celebrated Father's Day or Mother's Day, but we always celebrated D-Day. My father rarely talked about the experience, but my mother saved all his letters home, which I got to read after his death and which shed intimate light on that time. I have visited the invasion beaches many times and always awed by the enormous distance from low tide to high tide and the overlooking bluffs and seemingly indestructible concrete pillboxes that dot the landscape.

In 2018, Shay was living in France near Omaha Beach at the home of a French woman who had participated in D-Day celebrations and commemorations for many years and who offered him hospitality and care. I wrote to him in 2018 and arranged to meet him when he revisited his home in Maine on Indian Island. We talked about the experiences of non-combatant caregivers caught up in the violence of war.



Shay at his tipi museum on Indian Island.

In June 2019, I took a driving trip with my younger brother through Brittany and Normandy where we assisted at celebrations of the 75th anniversary of D-Day. The few remaining survivors were very old—Charles was 96. I witnessed the moving ceremonies of remembrance and healing offered by Charles in honor of the native Americans who had participated in the D-Day landings.



Charles, escorted by General Nakasone to the ceremony with his French hostess, Marie-Pascale Legrand.

Baysiders of a certain age will remember the tent that stood at Lincolnville Beach every summer (at the site of the Post Office) where Native American baskets were sold. These artisans were Charles's parents and there is a wonderful photo of them in full regalia with Charles as a young boy in the first row. They may also remember that the Penobscot Indians used to come and camp at the shore in the summer to fish, dig clams, and to escape the heat and black flies of inland Maine. The northern point of Kelley's Cove was one such camping site and has always been called Molly Molasses Point.



The Shay family at Lincolnville Beach. Charles is in the center back row.



Molly Molasses in an 1860s CDV

Indian Camp Basket Shop on Route 1 in Lincolnville, Maine around the 1950s.



The shop is where the USPS office is now.

Charles Norman Shay was a native Mainer, a true hero, and he helped me to bring the heroism of so many others into focus.

Omaha Beach by Georges Bernage, Editions Heimdal ISBN 2 84048 154 5

D-DAY JUNE 6, 1944 by Stephen Ambrose, Simon & Schuster 1994 ISBN 0 671 67334 3

The Far Shore An American at D-Day by Edward Ellsberg, Dodd, Mead & Co. 1960

<https://www.americanindianmagazine.org/story/humble-heroism-charles-norman-shay>

<https://www.penobscotnation.org/departments/cultural-historic-preservation/historic-preservation/charles-shay/>

<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/about-us/notes-museum/native-american-d-day-veteran-charles-norman-shay-dies-101>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Norman_Shay

<https://www.facebook.com/1stInfantryDivision/posts/honoring-the-life-and-legacy-of-charles-norman-shaythe-big-red-one-family-mourns/1255936856579259/>

BHPS Hunting for Members!



BAYSIDE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Membership Application/Payment of Annual Dues/member sign up also on our website at www.baysidehps.org.

2026-2027

Name: _____
Winter Address: _____
Telephone: _____
E-mail Address: _____
Summer Address: _____
Summer Telephone: _____

Dues and donations – All dues and donations are tax deductible.

First member of household – Still only \$10 _____
Other household members – \$5 Each _____
Children under 18 – Free _____
Donation _____
TOTAL _____

Please make check payable to BHPS and mail with this form to (NOTE NEW ADDRESS):

Bayside Historical Preservation Society
PO Box 48
Belfast, ME 04915

Or visit www.baysidehps.org.