

OBHS Spring 2009 Newsletter



229 Harrington Rd.
Pemaquid ME 04558
207-677-2848

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The OBHS is very grateful for several recent donations. Edith Hary has given us a year's worth of Pemaquid Messengers. This was published weekly in Pemaquid Falls for about ten years in the 1880's and '90's. Jack Lane has put these issues on a DVD, and they will be available for research.

Hazel Genthner has been making Bristol scrapbooks since 1960, and has given these to the Society. We have also been given a scrapbook of the 1940's and '50's. These will be invaluable for genealogists and others interested in local history.

We now have quite an interesting collection and in June will work to organize all this information and make it accessible; it will be available for perusing at our open house in July. We are always looking for new donations, as well.

By this summer we will finish the architectural resource survey of Bristol Mills. We will be needing volunteers to help us with the rest of town. Ken Coombs and Rose Marie Ballard are in charge of the project. Call me to volunteer.

I would like to welcome Wayne Chadwick to the Board of Directors. He replaces Rose Marie, who moved to Newcastle.

Please enjoy our new roster of programs later in this issue.

Pete Hope

GENEALOGY GROUP

The genealogy group meets once a month. They continue to gather information on the first families of Bristol. Meetings are always informative and sometimes entertaining, being laced with stories of "the old days". Call Jeanne Rottner: 677-2095 to join.

MEMBERSHIP

A membership application is enclosed in this newsletter for your convenience, and dues for 2009 are due now. With your continued support we can continue to present the programs free of charge for all.

Officers

Pete Hope, President
Pat Landry, Vice-President
Suzy Collins, Secretary
Jean Andersen, Treasurer

Board of Directors

Marilyn Chadwick
Judy Hope
Carol Brightman
Bob McLaughlin
Kathleen Gustafson
Jeanne Rottner
Ken Coombs
Kay Hannah
Wayne Chadwick

Newsletter

Suzy Collins
Jeanne Rottner
Pete Hope

William Sproul was born in 1726, probably on the ship bringing his Scots-Irish family to Boston. In 1729, the family was with the first Scots-Irish pioneers that Colonel David Dunbar brought to the new Maine settlement he called *Harrington*. They were driven out with the other settlers during the Indian war of 1744-1748.

In 1747, Lt. John North was hired by the Kennebec Proprietors to survey the mid-coast area. A map of the area was published in 1751. It is very interesting, because it locates and names some of the settlers. William Sproul is shown on the East Branch of John's Bay, on the Harrington Road, where the Hope farm is now.

He started an inn there (there was no road yet) and made some money. In 1761, with his older brother, Robert, and two Boyd brothers, he bought 900 acres around Boyd's Pond. It included a stone bridge over the Pemaquid River to Star Meadow.

Bristol was incorporated as a town in 1765 and the first town meeting was held at Sproul's inn. Several subsequent meetings were held there. Resident, Ilonka Fertig, believed that the "meeting house" across from the Hope farmhouse was this inn.

The big issue at town meetings for years was whether to have one meeting house centrally located or three in three different sections of town (which then included South Bristol and Bremen). The votes went back and forth until it was finally resolved to have one meeting house in Bristol Mills.

The frame was erected, but there was yet another vote and then the frame was torn apart and moved by the Hay Road down Little Falls Brook to William Sproul's land on the Harrington Road. This was the first town road, voted on in 1776.

Just before his death, due to "his love and affection for the part of town known as Harrington", William gave 1-and $\frac{3}{4}$ acres to the town. This is where the Harrington Meeting House and the old graveyard is now located.

Town meeting records show that, in 1768, for the first of many times, William was appointed Pound Keeper for Harrington. Pounds were necessary for the rounding up of stray animals. There is no evidence of the pound today. It may have been used by the WPA, when they rebuilt a section of the road past the Cheney house, in 1935.

Professor Johnson, in his history of Bristol, says that Sproul was very enterprising and hardworking, and was one of the first boat builders after the revolution. These boats were probably sloops and/or small schooners, built on his property, on the East Branch of John's Bay.

History of William Sproul cont'd.



The "meeting house" on the Hope Farm - William Sproul's inn?

William married Mary Clark in 1756. The 1790 census of Lincoln County shows William and his wife, living with three sons under 16, and one daughter. Many descendants still live in the area.

William died in 1804, a key player in building our town of Bristol.

MEMBERSHIP 2009 RENEWAL/NEW APPLICATION

Name.....Date.....

Dues.....\$10 single membership.....\$15 for family membership

This is a renewal.....or new application.....

(The following information is required for a new application only or if address changed)

Address (local)..... Seasonal.....

Phone..... E-mail.....

Please give to or mail to Jean Anderson, 1298 Bristol Road, Bristol, ME 04539

OBHS PROGRAMS FOR 2009

All programs held free of charge in the McKinley Schoolhouse on Harrington Road in Pemaquid Falls

Call 677-2646 for further information

Sat. June 13, 9-12: Work session to organize our collection.

Sat. July 19, 6:30: Open House to view all collections.

Sun. June 14, 6:30: Huston Dodge on Old Hand Tools

Sun. July 18, 6:30: Don Loprieno on Military Life at the Fort

Thurs. Aug. 6, 9-12: Open House with Gordon Fossett and Craig Elliott sharing their old Bristol post cards

Sun. Aug. 9, 6:30: Merle Thompson, Claire Little, Dave DeLong and Mary Jane Small on Early New Harbor Businesses

Sun. Sept. 13, 6:39: Ken Coombs on The Evolution of the Fort House