



OLD BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

An Occasional Newsletter of the Society – Fall 2016

Dear Members and Friends,

As 2016 draws to a close, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members for helping to make it a great year for the Old Bristol Historical Society. We truly appreciate the financial support you've given us through membership fees and special contributions, and also your donations of yard sale items which helped make our sale this year such a huge success. We also want to thank those who donated items to our archival and artifact collections and who shared images with our growing Digital Images Archive. Our ability to carry out the society's mission to collect, preserve and share Bristol's unique history is made possible only with help from you.

And sharing Bristol's history is what makes this work so meaningful! This year we enjoyed an incredibly successful day-long tour of Bristol's historical sites with our local 5th graders and enjoyed seeing so many of you at our summer presentations. If you happened to miss any of our talks, we're pleased to announce that you and others can now see them online via LCTV.org, an outlet that has dramatically increased our ability to reach a broader audience. We're also happy to be interacting with a growing community of Facebook followers and virtual visitors to our website.

Once again, thank you to all our members for your interest and support. We hope to see you again soon at our upcoming winter event which will showcase images from our Digital Images Archive. Till then, enjoy the holidays and have a great winter!

Cordially yours,

Belinda Osier & Chuck Rand
Co-Presidents, OBHS



Belinda Osier, teacher Hilary Gallione, and Bristol Consolidated 5th graders at the Rock Schoolhouse, Bristol Mills on their local history tour (June, 2016).

Support of the Bristol Poor

Our Constitution in 1788 set up a government that was by, for and of white male property owners. Owning property was a key to getting ahead as it had been since Bristol incorporated in 1765. There were many poor with or without property in 1765.

Old town records indicate the concern voters had with a poor person who might become a town “charge.” The town either supported them or “warned” them out of town. For example in 1769: “In his Majesty’s name you (Abraham Pettengill, the town constable) are required forthwith to warn them out of town according to law...” At different times during the 18th Century individuals or families were warned out of town.

Town charges had to be supported by the town. In 1770: “At present Elizabeth Trow is a charge to the town by having a black child.” Three years later: “...Elizabeth Trow’s molato(sic) child to him that shall take it the cheapest.” Joseph Eaton was paid 18 shillings a week “...until it was seven years.” Into the 19th Century the town’s poor were put out to auction and went to the low bidder, who provided room, board and other essentials.

Several times after the Revolution the idea of building an alms house was brought up, once in conjunction with Newcastle and Nobleboro. This never happened. In 1813 the town voted to build an alms house. In 1816 Henry Arskins (Erskine) was authorized to “...take such paupers as come to him and employ them as the overseers (the selectmen) see fit.” This may have been the alms house although it had been Arskin’s house for some time. He lived on the Benner road in the cape just beyond the Partridge Bridge. I’m glad to see there was a work requirement.

In 1828 *the town once again* voted to support the poor in a work house. This ultimately led to the first town poor farm. In 1833 town father, Aaron Blaney, reported to the town to “buy farm, stock and tools capable of supporting the probable number of paupers to be supported by the town.” In 1837 the town voted to dismiss an article to “spend not over \$2000 for a farm.” At some point later the town did buy a farm and in 1842 voted to rebuild the shed, barn and house belonging to the town and rent it to the highest bidder. The farm had tools, a cow and swine. The person running the farm was required to provide



“good and wholesome victuals and drink, comfort, clothing, lodging, medical advice and medicine, bury in a decent manner.” Paul Aldrich emailed me that he found that Harrat Fitch had this farm in the Walpole area. The 1850 census lists seven people in his household who were not Fitches. The farm was operating in 1854 when the town appropriated \$175 for the “indoor poor” and \$100.70 for the “outdoor poor.” Tom Kellerher of Old Sturbridge Village emailed me that the indoor poor were completely supported by the town either by auctioning them off or placing them at a poor farm. The outdoor poor were partially supported by the town. In 1860 the town spent \$246.25 “by contract for the indoor poor and the 1860 census listed eight people at the Fitch farm with poor farm in brackets. Fitch died a year later and that was the end of the town’s first poor farm.

Town records in 1887 provide a look at some of the expenses the town incurred for support of the poor. A. J. Dodge, who had a general store in Pemaquid Falls, was paid \$3.39 for supplying goods to the family of Richard McCleary, a black man. Albert Huston was paid \$2.00 for supplying Jane West with firewood. The town of Richmond was paid \$35 for “the expense of Fannie Ford.” Alexander Poland was paid \$3.00 for digging a grave and J. E. Nichols got \$2.30 for supplying Henry Morton’s children with school books. In 1891 Dr. Walter Brainerd received \$6.50 for his care of the sick and Albert Hatch was paid \$19 for a coffin.

The idea of getting another poor farm came up in an 1899 town report. The town voted to appropriate \$1250 but once again it took some time to find and buy a farm. In 1914 \$2000 was appropriated and it was put out to bid. Bill Benner said that his grandfather, Mathias, whose farm was at the corner of the Benner and Fogler roads, put in a bid. Finally, in 1916 the town bought John A. Hanley’s farm for \$2500. It was 115 acres on both sides of the road that we now call Poor Farm Road north of the village. The house is second down on the right. It was the original homestead of Patrick Hanley, built sometime after the Revolution. John A. Hanley had bought the farm in 1871 for \$1500 from the estate of Patrick, Jr.

In 1933, the worst year of the depression, Maine passed the Old Age Assistance Act and from that time on the farm was used less and less. Around 1951 was the last time the farm operated and the town sold it, with all the original acreage, in 1955 to Ernest Washburn for \$2500. He sold off a lot of the land and in 1975 Donald

and Genevieve Littlefield bought the house, barn, shed and 45 acres. Today, Donna Grieves-Littlefield and her husband, Peter, own the property and about 15-18 acres. Her three siblings each own 10 acres.

Unfortunately, I could find little first-hand information on the poor farm. Gordon Fossett did tell me one funny story. Years ago Lawrence Poland told Gordon about two old gents who shared a room at the farm. They both had long, shaggy, white beards. One day they were both lying, stretched out on their beds. One died and the undertaker, Elmer Elliot, was summoned to bring the deceased to his funeral home in Pemaquid Falls (the Riverview Market). Elmer grabbed one by the beard to pull him off the bed. He grabbed the wrong guy!

The town continues to appropriate money every town meeting to help those having difficulty getting by. In 2016 the town has allocated \$15,000 for general assistance. Last year the town spent \$7864.65 to help 19 people.

Over the years various charities in town have generously helped neighbors in need. Today the New Harbor Methodist Church heads an ecumenical project to support the church's food pantry. This is supported by the Scouts, many other groups, and private donations. The church and the Bristol Lions give food baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas. In addition, Jenny Pendleton heads a program, now in its 7th year, that provides healthy snacks to 65 children in low income families. The budget is \$15k derived from donations, the church's thrift shop run by Jenny and helpers, rented from and sponsored by the Bristol Congregational Church in Bristol Mills, and bottle collection there. Jenny also heads a long-running Christmas gift-giving project in town whereby 60-80 children and teens annually receive gifts of winter wear, books, toys, and other necessities. C.H.I.P., a wonderful helping organization in town, raises money for fuel assistance and volunteers and paid carpenters with insurance do some small house projects to keep residents "warm, safe and dry."

Current photo of the homestead on Poor Farm Road for Bristol's disadvantaged owned by the town from 1916 till 1951. It was one of several successive farms operated by the town from 1813 to 1951.

This article was written by Pete Hope while researching information for his upcoming book about the village of Bristol Mills and surrounding area, his 4th about the town of Bristol.

Digital Image Archive

Do you have photographs, slides, or postcards that help tell the story of Bristol's past? Images that show old landscapes, harbor scenes, buildings, town events, former inhabitants at work, or multigenerational portraits? If so, please consider sharing them with OBHS's Digital Image Archive.

Since the beginning of this project in 2015, OBHS has scanned close to 2000 images to preserve in its archive. Approximately 750 images are from items that have been donated to our physical collections. However, the majority, a little more than 1200 images, have been "shared" by individuals who have allowed us to scan them and include them in our archive, but who retain the originals in their own personal collections. If you have images to share and would like to become a contributor, please contact Chuck Rand (207-553-0034) or Belinda Osier (207-653-6685) for more information. With your help, this archive has the potential to grow into a comprehensive and historically important record of our town's visual history.



New Harbor, July 24, 1949. Digitized image from the OBHS Ivan Flye Collection.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to those who have donated or shared images with our Digital Image Archive thus far.

Contributors:

Jonathan Berkey - 10 items	Mollie Perley - 726
Jack Brackett - 50	Pamela Rice - 116
Suzanne Collins (Millard Richmond) - 119	Donald Vigue - 91
Christopher Coombs - 43	Nelson Webber - 56
Larry Hayter - 2	Total - 1,215 digital images

Digital archives items from OBHS collections:

David Andrews - 51 items	Loud's Island album - 158
Dr. Lindley Leggett Collection - 239	Monhegan Island album - 120
Ivan Flye - 178	Total - 746 digital images

Our collection is growing! Thank you to the gift donors in calendar year 2016:

Marjorie Aldrich- Milton W. Russell papers, photos; Lesley W. Andersen- Bristol post office photos; David Andrews- 45 Negatives and prints; Jack Brackett- Ice cutting tools; Gerry Brookes- Ruth Brookes / Willing Workers Society records; Joyce Ball Brown- Booklet & photograph; Maggie Downham- Dr. Lindley Leggett collection; Barbara Farrin- School Promotion certificate & photograph; Margo Pinkham Huntley- School medal (badge) & autograph book; Pamela Rice- Print items, Pemaquid Beach Street Light Society & Pemaquid Beach Community Club; D. Wayne Russell- 1857 Lincoln County map; Laura Sproul Stubbs- Map

Wish List: Laptop (for the Digital Images Archive & future PastPerfect usage) - Dell Inspiron 5000 series - \$600; Microsoft office - \$190; Adobe Photoshop Elements - \$80 **Total - \$870.00**

Old Bristol Historical Society Officers and Directors

Officers and Directors of the Old Bristol Historical Society, July, 2016 - July 2017

Osier, Belinda--*OBHS Co-President; School Outreach Chair, Preserv. & Access Com.s*

Belinda grew up New Harbor, grad. Lincoln Acad.; History & Classics Bates and Boston Colleges; Latin & Greek instructor. Resides New Harbor & Falmouth; owns Harborside Cottages. Daughter of the late Leonard Osier & descendent of Old Bristol early settlers.

Rand, Charles--*OBHS Co-President; Collections, Preserv. & Soc. Media Committees*

Chuck grew up in Damariscotta. Grad. Lincoln Acad; studied archeol. at Colonial Pemaquid 70's-80's; anthrop. & hist. archeol. UMaine; library sci. & archives mgt. at U of MD; positions at ME Historical Soc. & Smithsonian Instit. Currently Librar./Archiv. at Sabbathday Lake Shaker Community. Resides New Harbor & Falmouth.

Purdy, Daniel--*OBHS Vice President; Past Secretary, Building Com. Chairperson*

Dan is a native of Pennsdale, PA, with B.A. & J.D. degrees from Southern Methodist U. Attorney living and practicing in Waldoboro. Roots in Round Pond date back to the original settlers in 1743.

Lee, Alison Hanley--*New to the OBHS Board, Secretary-To-Be*

Alison grew up in Bristol. Grad. of Lincoln Academy, Boyd College and Casco Bay College, Business Associates Degree, Travel Degree. Manager of Brambles 5 yrs., currently of Carolyn's Cottage at Parker Interiors. Member of St. Patrick's Church Historical Soc., genealogy enthusiast. Roots in Lincoln Co. dating to early 1700's.

Means, Donald--*OBHS Treasurer; Website Committee*

Don is a grad. of Melrose H.S. & UMaine (Educ.); retired banker of The First National Banks of Boston and Damariscotta; served Bristol on the Appeals Board until the current year and committees for Budget, School, & Town Planning. Currently Town Meeting Moderator of Bristol and 4 other towns; Treasurer of Skidompha Library.

Hannah, K. Sawyer--*OBHS Past-Pres.; Newsletter Edit., Sch. Outreach, Geneal.Com.s*

Kay grew up New Harbor, grad. Bristol High, UMaine (Educ.) & U of VT. Retired teacher & VT Speech-Language Pathologist; Treas. UCP of VT; Past-P. & member of Pemaquid Group of Artists; paternal and maternal ancestors were early Bristol settlers.

Hannah, Peter--*OBHS Past-President; Building Committee*

Pete was born in Montreal, Canada, moved to VT & FL in youth, naturalized U. S. citizen; U Maine, Yale U. & U. of MI; Bur. LM, OR; U.S. Forest Serv., IN; prof. of forestry U of VT; PWA Past-Pres. & Lands Com.; forest mgt. consultant; resides New Harbor.

Hayter, Margaret--*OBHS Membership Chairperson*

Margaret was born in Portland, ME and grew up in MA. MPA, New York U.; BS, Bloomfield College; retired healthcare administrator; secretary Heron Cove Assoc. Founder of Midcoast Modern Quilt Group. Resides Pemaquid Beach and Nutley, NJ.

Hayter, Lawrence--*OBHS Publicity Chair, School Outreach & Collections Committees*

Larry grew up in Bloomfield, NJ; Grad. Dartmouth (English) & Bloomfield College (Business, Economics); retired business writer/editor, inventory manager; Pemaquid Hist. Assn. treasurer. Resides Pemaquid Beach & Nutley, NJ. Enjoys traveling.

Ives, Robert--*OBHS Chair of Programs, Nominations & Building Committees*

Bobby grew up in CT; Bowdoin C. & U. of Edinburgh grad; pastor of New Harbor, Round Pond churches, Monhegan & Muscongus Islands; co-founder & dir. of the Carpenters Boat Shop; Bowdoin College Dir. of Religious & Spiritual Life. Resides Pemaquid Hbr.

Lewis, Anne--*Elected to OBHS Board 7/16, School Outreach Committee*

Anne was born in Clarksville, TN, grew up in Selma, Ala. Grad. of Randolph Macon Women's College, M.S. Educ. Counseling; M.S. Divinity, Theol. Semin. Lives Scranton, PA, and has spent summers at Pemaquid Pt. 53 yrs. Historian of Pemaquid Pt. Assoc.

Perley, Mollie Hanna--*OBHS Past Sec.; Fund Raising, Nominating, Membership Coms.* Mollie grew up in Round Pond, graduated Bristol High. Previously owned and operated Perley Realty & later River View Market. Co-designed/renovated/built homes in the area with her husband. Has lived in New Harbor in ancestral Poland family home 35 years.

Rice, Pamela Tarr--*Elected to OBHS Board 7/16*

Pam, born in Damariscotta, grew up on Pemaquid Point Rd. Grad. of Bristol High, had 48-year career as a Medical Technologist before retiring in 2015. Spends summers at her camp on Biscay Pond and enjoys traveling and spending time with family & friends.

Winter Meeting – Digital Image Archive Project

Please join us at the Bristol Mills Congregational Church on Sunday Feb. 26, 2 p.m. for a talk highlighting OBHS's Digital Image Archive Project. Co-Presidents Belinda Osier and Chuck Rand will talk about the beginnings of the project in 2014 and will detail the progress made since then. The talk will include a demonstration of the scanning process and a slideshow of many of the images now included in the archive. The Congregational Church of Bristol is located at 1261 Bristol Road in Bristol Mills. Parking is available in the upper parking lot behind the church off of Longfellow Lane.

**Membership Renewal Forms will now be mailed out in January.
Please look for yours then and remember to renew for 2017!**

Newsletter edited and formatted by Kay Hannah and Debbie Mikulak

**Old Bristol Historical Society
P. O. Box 87
Bristol, ME 04539**