



OLD BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

An Occasional Newsletter of the Society – Spring 2018

Dear Members and Friends,

Winter's a pretty quiet time for the OBHS, but somehow we still manage to keep busy! In February, it was nice to see so many of you at our winter presentation. This is the third year that we've presented a winter talk and we hope to be able to expand our winter offerings in the future. Also in February, with the assistance of the town, we completed the framing of our 1857 map and installed it at the Town Hall where it will remain on permanent loan. The next time you stop in, please take a minute to enjoy this wonderful map. Finally, in March, we had the pleasure of visiting with and presenting Bristol's Boston Post Cane to 98-year-old Carroll Voss, Bristol's Oldest Citizen.

Now that spring is finally here, we're once again looking forward to our busy spring/summer season. On May 16th and 31st, we'll be taking our 5th graders on two separate fieldtrips: first, a morning spent at Colonial Pemaquid, followed by a day long tour of Bristol's other historical sites. We feel so fortunate to have the enthusiastic support of Bristol's 5th grade teacher as well as the participation of several local organizations, businesses, and individuals who greet the students at the various stops. It's truly a memorable day for the kids! Once the summer begins, we have an interesting line-up of Sunday night talks planned. This year we'll be focusing solely on Bristol topics presented by local speakers. You'll find a copy of our summer schedule enclosed, but please remember you can always find upcoming events posted on our Facebook page and on our official website: OldBristolHistoricalSociety.org (please make sure you are on the ".org" site). Finally, in August we're looking forward, as always, to participating in Olde Bristol Days. The OBHS plans to kick off the celebration on Wednesday August 8 with a slideshow featuring images of Old Bristol from our archives. On Saturday, we'll be participating in this year's parade, as well as manning our informational booth at Colonial Pemaquid.

We also have a very important, new project to announce. Since the formation of the Society in 2003, the OBHS has been challenged in finding proper storage for the OBHS collections. As our collections continue to grow, the OBHS Board of Directors now feel that this need has reached a critical point. Therefore, we're initiating plans to transform the old kitchen space at the McKinley school into a well-secured, well-insulated and heated storage room, equipped with proper shelving that can house our collections year-round. As this will be quite a costly project for our small organization, we are now seeking ways to fund the project. We would gratefully accept any support you could give, whether by making a specially earmarked donation or by volunteering your labor or services. Of course, we would also welcome any special benefactors that would like to step forward.

One last thing before signing off...if you haven't done so already, it's time to renew your membership for 2018! You'll find a renewal form enclosed or you may download one from our website.

Thank you for your continuous support and we'll be seeing you soon!

Cordially yours,

Belinda Osier & Chuck Rand
Co-presidents, OBHS

Officers and Directors of the Old Bristol Historical Society, July, 2017 - July 2018

*Co-Presidents: Belinda Osier, Chuck Rand
Vice Presiden & Treasurer: Donald Means
Secretary: Jay Crooker*

*Directors: Kay Hannah, Pete Hannah, Larry Hayter,
Margaret Hayter, Bobby Ives, Mollie Perley
Anne Lewis, Pamela Rice, Joyce Prior Thompson*

2018 Old Bristol Historical Society Summer Lecture Series *

1. Old Bristol History Talk and Slides -

Down Memory Lane

Speaker: Belinda Osier

Date: June 24 (Sun.) 7 pm

Venue: Congregational Church Parish Hall, Bristol Mills

2. Bristol's History in Caring for the Poor

Speakers: Peter Hope and Lisa Peters

Date: July 8 (Sun.) 7 pm

Venue: Pemaquid Lighthouse Park Learning Center

3. Old Bristol and the Civil War

Speaker: David Andrews

Date: July 22 (Sun.) 7 pm

Venue: Congregational Church Parish Hall, Bristol Mills

4. History of the Bristol Foot Lighters

Speakers: Paul Yates, Phil Averill, Belinda Osier, & Sandra Lane.

Date: August 5 (Sun.) 7 pm

Venue: Congregational Church Parish Hall, Bristol Mills

5. Old Bristol Days Special: Down Memory Lane with Slides of Old Bristol

Speaker: Belinda Osier

Date: August 8 (Wed.) 7 pm

Venue: McKinley School - Harrington Rd., Pemaquid Falls

6. History of the Bristol Fire Department & Bristol's Major Fires

Speakers: Paul Leeman, Jack Brackett, Ron Pendleton

Date: August 19 (Sun.) 7 pm

Venue: Pemaquid Lighthouse Park Learning Center

7. The History of Fishing in Bristol - Slide Program

Speakers: Jack Brackett, Brian Sawyer & Dale Moore

Date: September 2 (Sun.) 7p.m.

Venue: Pemaquid Lighthouse Park Learning Center

Extra: Long Cove Point - Chamberlain (Film)

Speakers: Phil Cameron & Dewey Chase or Walter Wales

*Preliminary List

Other OBHS Summer Events

May 16 - Morning at Colonial Pemaquid with Bristol's 5th grade

May 31 - Day-long tour of Bristol's historical sites with Bristol's 5th grade

June 2 - McKinley School Spring Clean-up Day; 9-11 am

July 8 - Scanning Sunday, bring your photos to McKinley School 9-10 am

Aug. 11- Olde Bristol Days parade & informational booth at Colonial Pemaquid



The Digital Images Archive (DIA) report by Chuck Rand

Our Digital Images Archive project is off to a great start this year. So far, the OBHS has accessioned six donations of materials from Susan Emanuel, Jeanne Lane, Julie Crooker, and Marilyn Harvie. These materials include photographs, lithographic prints, picture postcards, photographic postcards, and a book. We especially would like to mention that Jeanne Lane's donation includes the entire professional photography collection of her husband, Jack Lane, an awesome amount of materials including indices to the hundreds of film negatives, contact



prints, slides and binders of his famous aerial photographs. We received this collection of mid-20th century images in early March and have created a general inventory of the contents, but we are a long way from completing the processing, digitizing and cataloging of this magnificent collection.

In addition, five people have generously loaned photographs to the OBHS for scanning and incorporation into the DIA. Believing in the mission of the OBHS and wanting to share their photos through the DIA, Christopher Hall, Belinda Osier, Jack Brackett, Carla Chadwick, and Merle Thompson have been wonderfully forthcoming. Of special note, Jack Brackett lent us 60 photographs depicting fishing scenes and 19th century family ancestors; Carla Chadwick lent 12 rare card photographs of Round Pond dating to around 1890 that belonged to her grandfather Leon Plummer Munro; and Merle Thompson currently has loaned more than 200 photographs including photographic albums containing 19th century cabinet photographs and carte de visites depicting his family ancestors, and, perhaps yours.

In sum, the rate of incoming loans and gifts is far out-pacing the rate of scanning and cataloging them. It's a wonderful problem to have and we continually seek to add to this "problem." If you have any interesting images that you're willing to share, whether small or large in number, please contact Chuck Rand 553-0034 or speak to any one of our current directors. Also, please watch for announcements of our upcoming "Scanning Sundays" at the McKinley School. Bring up to 15 photographs (and a flash drive, if you like), and we'll scan them on the spot and send you home with your photos and a digital copy of our high-quality scans.

Announcements

- Please join us for our annual spring clean-up day at McKinley School Saturday June 2, 9-11 am. All tools and cleaning products provided.
- Photographers wanted: the OBHS would like to start documenting Bristol's old fish houses and barns before they disappear, but we need photographers. If you have a camera that is able to shoot high resolution images (8M; 3264x2448 or higher) and would like to help, please call Belinda at 677-2996 or speak with any one of our directors.
- The OBHS will be holding several "Scanning Sundays" at the McKinley School this summer. If you have up to 15 photographs that you would like to share with our Digital Images Archive, please bring them (and a flash drive, if you like). We'll scan them on the spot and send you home with your photos and a copy of our high-quality scans. Our first "Scanning Sunday" will be July 8, 9-10 am (longer if needed!).

A Brief History of Bristol Alewives and Fishways by Phil Averill

With the recent efforts to decide the future of the dam in Bristol Mills and its associated fishway, there is increased public interest in our significant alewife run on the Pemaquid River. This article provides some biological and historical perspective.

Alewives live in salt water but spawn in fresh water. After four years at sea they return to the stream where they were born, change into freshwater fish and usually about the first week in May start their three week migration upstream. The fish seek to get to the ponds above Bristol Mills such as Biscay, Pemaquid and Duckpuddle. The young stay in the ponds for about four months and then head downstream to get to the ocean at Pemaquid Harbor. Huge numbers of fish are produced and are fed upon by many predators while in the ponds but more significantly while in the ocean.

Alewives were easy to catch and a major source of food in the springtime for both Native Americans and colonists. Today, they are a highly valued source of lobster bait at a time of year when bait is hard to secure. The production of alewives in the Pemaquid River could be in the millions of fish but has been reduced by the inability for the adults to ascend freely to the ponds due to the dams of the past and the single dam today. All dams had fishways around them, as does the present dam, but they haven't been 100% effective in passing fish. Following is a brief time line:

- 10,000 BC (end of the ice age) to about 1830 – Huge runs of alewives run upriver, including the Pemaquid River, to ponds above. Only beaver dams hinder their way.
- 1700's to 1900's – Settlers build dams on the Pemaquid River in Bristol Mills, which had as many as 7 dams over time used for milling grain, lumber & shingles.
- 1765 – Bristol becomes a town and at the first town meeting takes on the job of managing alewives.
- Mid-1800's – Alewife numbers drop statewide due to "mismanagement, greed and selfishness." Inshore cod populations (that feed on alewives) drop significantly.
- 1895 – State legislature steps in and limits fishery in the Pemaquid to 4 days a week.
- 1919 – Present dam is built for electric power generation. Includes a fishway; provides fire-fighting access and a swimming hole used by townspeople to the current day.
- 1920 to mid-1940's – Power is generated. Operation is shut down in favor of other sources of power.
- 1974 – Present fishway is built to replace old one that had fallen into disrepair. Fish Committee begins to meet annually to set up leader, clear beaver dams, etc.
- 1978 – Town builds fish trap at the head of the tide to catch anticipated run produced by new fishway.
- 1978 – 1982 – Fish trap is used, generating funds for the town, but this was a time of low alewife returns statewide so use of trap was discontinued. Fishermen still gill-netted alewives for bait.
- 1981 – Town starts putting a leader fence across the stream below the dam to guide fish to the fishway entrance, replacing an old wooden fence that did the same thing.
- 1985 – Added bottom step to the fishway helps raise the level of entry pool.
- 1987 to 2012 – Dept. of Marine Resources annually stocks alewives in Pemaquid.
- 1994 – Top of dam is rebuilt for safety and leakage reasons.
- 2009 – Town closes all commercial harvesting.
- 2005 – Fishway is examined by experts who document design flaws.
- 2012 – DMR ends stocking program and effort begins to finally improve the fishway.
- 2013 to Present – Counts of alewives making it to the top of the fishway take place.
- 2013 – Town receives grant to design new fishway; design completed in 2015.



- 2016 – Funding sought for new fishway but granting agencies now interested in dam removals rather than fishway replacements.
- 2017, 2018 - Bristol Dam Advisory Committee, formed by the selectmen to study the fishway, suggests 3 options; town provides informational meetings.
- July 12, 2018 - Bristol Select Board to offer 2 options to voters at a Special Town Meeting:
- A - Repair the dam, and construct a new pool-and-weir fishway similar in design to that at Damariscotta Mills.
- B - Replace the dam with water control structures that act as a nature-like fishway, build new fire protection hydrants as needed, and provide a new swimming area upstream.
- The photo above was provided by Wendy Arzate of New Harbor. It was published by Coastal Photo Scenics, Bar Harbor, from a photo by Ed Elvidge entitled “A Summer Tradition.” No date was provided.

Our newsletter Editor is Kay Hannah and is formatted by Debbie Mikulak.

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

OBHS MEMBERSHIP FORM FOR 2018



Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Summer Address: _____

Winter Address (if different): _____

Please Circle:

One year Single \$15

Two years Single \$30 (2018/2019)

One year Family \$20

Two years Family \$40 (2018/2019)

Lifetime: \$200

Additional Donation (amount) _____

We always need help! Please check if you'd be willing to help in any of the following areas:

- Spring clean-up
 Maintenance Projects at McKinley School
 Help at Talks (refreshments, membership table, sale table, etc.)
 Help at Fundraising events (ex.: yard sales, bakes sales, etc.)
 Help during Old Bristol Days (booth, talks, open houses, etc.)
 Share photos with our Digital Images Archive

Thank you!

The Old Bristol Historical Society is a non-profit organization under section 501(c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code. All donations to OBHS are tax deductible.



5th graders from Bristol Consolidated School attend a lecture at Hotel Pemaquid as part of their Bristol History Tour.

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