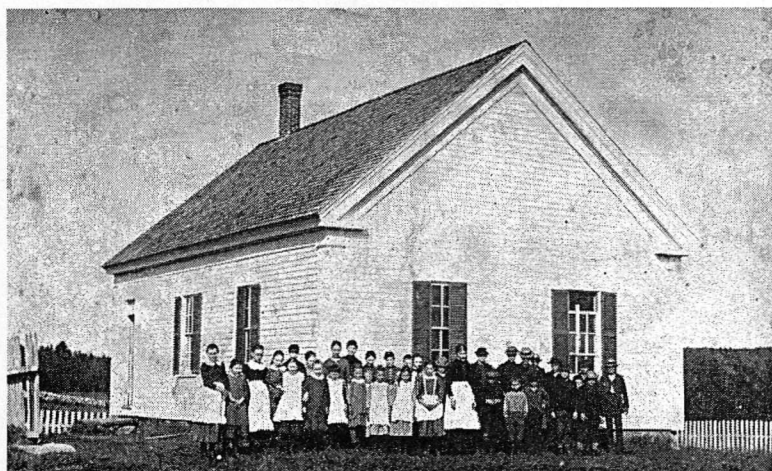


Woodstoves & Backhouses



Schoolhouses of Bristol, Maine 1800-2000

by
Philip H. Averill

- 1) Bristol, Maine --
History Schools
- 2) Schools -- History --

Woodstoves & Backhouses Maine

Schoolhouses of Bristol, Maine

1800 to 2000

by Philip H. Averill

with help from Mimi Aldrich

and based on an idea and original research by Erica Averill

August 2001

Acknowledgements

There is no such thing as a small project and this supposedly quick and easy listing of schools proves that adage well. Many people have been generous with their information, photographs and recollections. Erica's original project would not have succeeded without the considerable time given by Gordon Fossett. His historical information as well as personal recollections allowed both Erica's school project and this booklet to come into being.

The morning crew at Shaw's Wharf provided much information and great anecdotes. Don Benner, Jimmy Poland, Kenny Fossett, Dan Thompson and especially Kendall Fossett were all a great help. Jean Rottner, Ann Baty, Leonard Osier, Bill Benner and Howard Bryant all shared recollections and lent valuable advice. The South Bristol Historical Society folks were most gracious and open to this interloper from away (Bristol). Margaret House, Ellen Shew, Yvonne Chapman, Doug Thompson and many others whose names I never got filled in many gaps. Of course, Ellen Vincent keeps turning up nuggets of pure gold about South Bristol history.

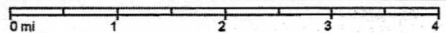
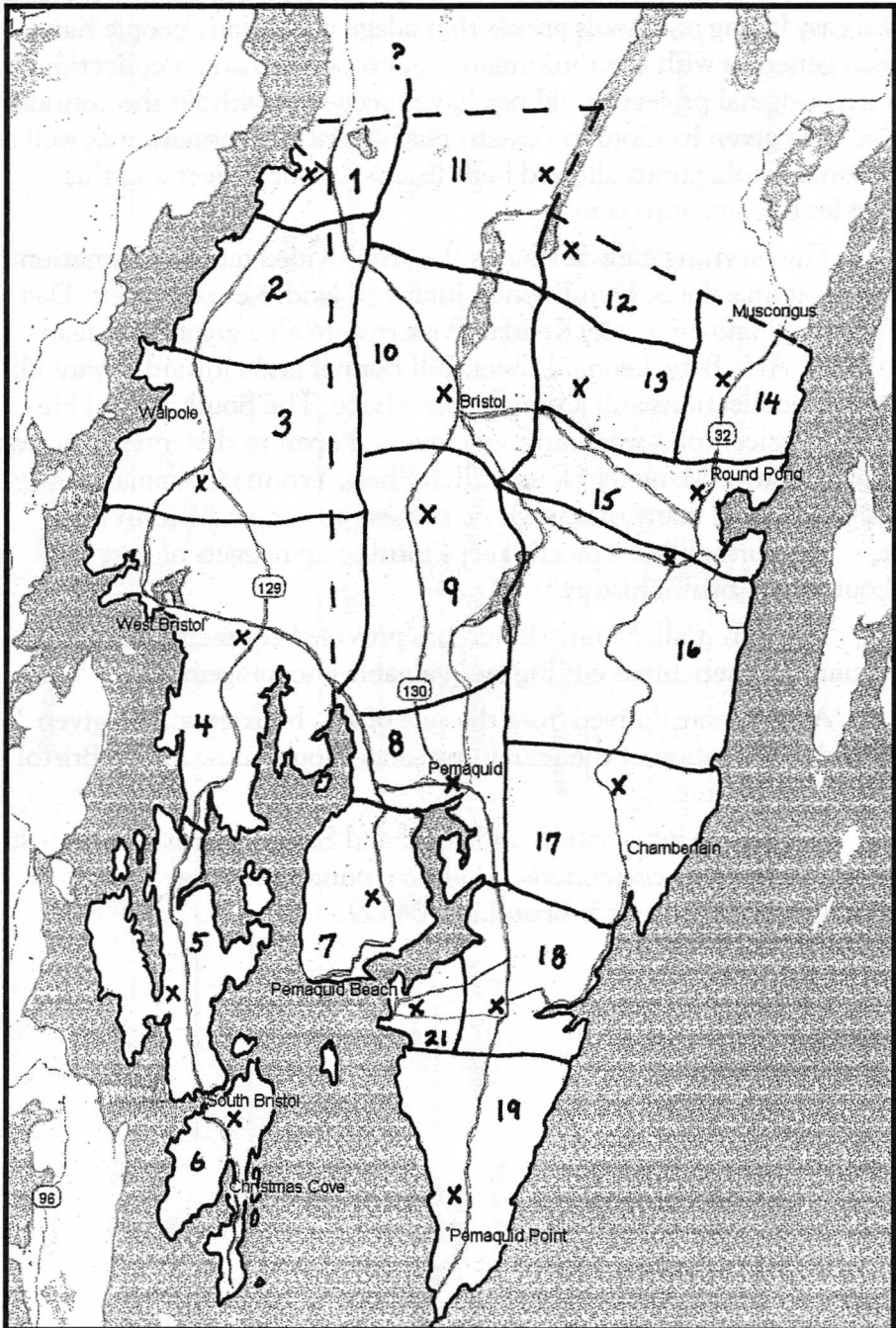
Through it all, Mimi Aldrich has provided contacts, obscure documents, meticulous editing and valuable encouragement.

Any income derived from the sale of this booklet will be given toward preservation of the remaining schoolhouse museums in Bristol and South Bristol.

Additional information on Bristol and South Bristol schools is still being sought. Any corrections, additions, photos, etc. may be sent to Phil Averill, P.O. Box 65, Bristol, ME 04539.

Bristol School Districts in 1894

District lines are approximate, dashed lines are
Town lines after 1915, x's are original locations of schools



Introduction

The impetus for this project began with Erica Averill and her 8th grade research project at Bristol Consolidated School in 2000. Since she lived near the Old Rock Schoolhouse, her curiosity about old school buildings was aroused. She chose to locate all the old schoolhouses in Bristol, photograph them and then compare the photos to those taken years ago when the schools were in use. It was interesting to note that there were 21 schools in Bristol, of which 16 still exist. Six are parts of houses, 3 are full houses, 2 are businesses, 2 are used by community organizations, 2 are museums and 1 is a storage shed. Of the five no longer in existence, two were burned in the mid 1990's as a fire training exercise, one has disappeared and two are mysteries in that no one recalls that they ever existed. The interest in town generated by Erica's report encouraged us to continue the project to document as much as we could about these old buildings.

Our area of concern is 1800 to the present. This covers both Bristol and South Bristol since the two towns did not separate until 1915, in large part due to school issues. South Bristol's petition for separation had a long list of concerns including general difficulty in participating in town affairs so far from Bristol Mills and a lack of services from the town. However, they were very specific about the failings in the administration of the schools in their part of town and this appears to have been the main reason for splitting off from Bristol (1) (See reference page for numbered references). Bremen separated from Bristol in 1828 and is not included in this study. When Bremen separated, they had four school districts and added two more soon after. Three schools were in use in Bremen as recently as the 1950's (2).

Our information from 1800 to 1857 and from 1862 to 1894 is quite weak due to a lack of source materials. The primary source materials were: annual Supervisor of Schools reports from 1857-1861 (3), the Lee and Marsh map of Bristol of 1857 (4), Johnston's map of 1873 (5) (found to have a number of errors) and annual town reports from 1895 to the present (6). Town records from 1765 to 1895 were also consulted but did not contain the wealth of information on schools that we had hoped. Other historical material and recollections of local residents are noted in the reference section. Obviously, large gaps in information exist, especially when it comes to the construction dates of most of the

schoolhouses. These were significant events for the school districts, not the town, so are not recorded in town records before the time when the town took over for the district agents.

This booklet is laid out with sections on how the schools were administered, issues covering all the schools and general historical perspectives. A map and timeline follow to point out the location and brief history of each building. Then, narratives of each school are given plus pictures of the school, if available. While many folks have requested it, we will not be listing teachers or students from each school. This information is available, however, for most years after 1895 but would result in a much more voluminous tome than this small pamphlet.

The closing of the one-room schoolhouses in the 1950's was a big event for the students as well as the teachers. The students who moved from Gladstone School to Sarah Emery School in 1953 remember clearly the wonder they felt as they walked into a school with TWO rooms AND indoor plumbing (7)!

Administration

Town reports in the late 1700's show funds appropriated for schooling in town at each town meeting. These funds were distributed to the various school districts. The town was divided into school districts at some point before 1810. Dispute over the boundaries of school districts was virtually continuous throughout the 1800's. In 1851, a committee was appointed to define the school districts, so district numbers before and after that date do not necessarily agree. Nineteen districts were laid out in great detail using property lines as well as natural features. By 1857, a twentieth district had been added at a location still unknown (3). District #20 had its southern line moved in 1865 but disappeared from the records after that. District #21 was added after 1873. This new district was the result of an effort by James Partridge that spanned at least the years from 1858 to 1873 (see Mavooshan, School District #18).

The town was divided into numerous school districts since, at that time, kids walked to school. If the school was too far away, the student did not go to school. This simple fact resulted in the institution of the one-room schoolhouse with all grades being taught together. Talking to folks who have gone to a one-room schoolhouse, as well as seeing the results of that educational style, shows it to have been an excellent form of teaching, given a dedicated teacher. This system produced what many have called the "greatest generation." Even folks in their 90's remember their teacher's name and all her idiosyncrasies (8).

Each district built and managed its own school under the oversight of a district committee, mostly made up of the parents of the students. This resulted in varying quality of education among the various districts. The parents in each district hired an agent to run the school. This person hired the teachers and handled the money provided by the town and the parents. Agents tended to be town leaders from that part of town or parents who had lots of children in that school. Before the 1820's, most students were educated in private homes offered for the purpose. The district/agent system was in place (since before 1790) but parents in some districts either chose not to or could not afford to build a schoolhouse. When a schoolhouse was built, it was often simply a one-room shack made of green lumber donated by the families in that district. After 1830, better schoolhouses were built and these are many of the ones still in existence.

In many cases, schools were built on leased land, even years later when they were built by the town. Often, the building had to be moved once it was no longer used as a school since the lease specified its use as a schoolhouse. Most schools were set up according to a basic floor plan. Two front doors entered into separate boys' and girls' cloakrooms. These areas opened into a large room with a woodstove in the middle and either benches around the sides or rows of desks bolted to the floor. Many, but not all, schools had a privy out back nicknamed the "ice cream parlor" since using it in the cold months was so memorable. It is not surprising most memories of the one-room schoolhouse center around the woodstove and the backhouse.

After 1887, towns were allowed by the state to move away from the district system and use a town-wide type of organization. In 1894, a state law abolished the district system altogether (8).

The number of schools and number of students per school varied wildly along with Bristol's population. Booming industries such as quarrying, fishmeal, canning, shipbuilding and fishing led to high populations in the 1850 – 1880 period. Loss of all these except fishing resulted in population declines in the period 1900-1950. Also, temporary businesses, such as portable sawmills, caused student populations to vary from year to year (9). A report from 1825 shows Bristol with a population of 3000 with 1172 children between 4 and 21 and 824 of them attending school (10). The 1860 school report gives a potential student population of 1326 with a 75% attendance rate meaning about 1000 students in school. Compare this to a student population of about 350 in 1930 and 450 in 2000. Many of the 20 schools were closed in the 1895 – 1915 period due to this population decline plus a decrease in the number of children per household.

The Boston Daily Globe of Sept. 12, 1890 ran a story about the Longfellow School in Bristol Mills. The issue was about hiring a teacher who was from town or one who was "from away." The district voters hired an agent they thought would hire a local girl to teach their kids. He instead hired someone from away. They waited until the next year when they hired a different agent who did hire a local girl but they forgot to fire the previous agent first. The result was two teachers in one classroom, one teacher telling the other teacher's students to be quiet while telling his own to make as much noise as they wanted. Textbooks were stolen and each teacher accused the other. Before long, both teachers and the agent were arrested for disturbing the peace. The article does not give the final outcome of the squabble (11).

The School Year

In the 1860's, two school terms were held. A 10 to 16 week summer term was followed by an 8 to 12 week winter term. Summer terms were always taught by a woman while winter terms were usually taught by a man. It was felt that men were better able to control the older boys who were working on the water or the farm in the summer but attended school in the winter. The female teachers almost always came from Bristol but about half the male teachers came from out of town. Some of these male teachers were students at Colby and Bowdoin. Female teachers were paid around \$25 a term (no matter which term they taught) while male teachers were paid closer to \$60. More students registered for the winter term (60% of those eligible) than the summer term (50%), due to the better attendance of the boys as noted above (3).

By the 1890's, three terms were held. A fall term of 14 weeks began in September and a winter term of 10 weeks began in January. A spring term of 12 weeks followed in March. A state law requiring children up to 15 years old to attend at least 16 weeks of school a year was passed in 1887 (8). Attendance varied a little among terms but nowhere near as much as in the 1860's. By the 1920's, attendance figures were given for the school year, not by term, indicating more regular attendance (6).

In the 1860's, teachers not from the immediate vicinity of the school were boarded by families with the most students in school or by the school agent. The parents also provided the firewood for the school. By the 1890's, improved roads meant fewer teachers had to board nearby. Wood still had to be hauled as did the water. A state law in 1922 mandated that all schools have flush toilets or approved privies. This expense caused some schools to close (see Jefferson S.D. #7 and Tennyson S.D.#16) but by 1930, all schools except Long Cove S.D.#17 had approved facilities. All schools had electricity by 1930.

The issue of getting students to school has had its twists and turns over the years. The main reason for having so many small schools was to be sure most, if not all, students could actually get to school. This policy was reiterated as late as 1930. By 1894, the town was paying contractors to transport a few students from home to school or, more commonly, from a closed school to an open one (6). Otherwise, parents had to get their own kids to school any way they could. In 1926 (when there were

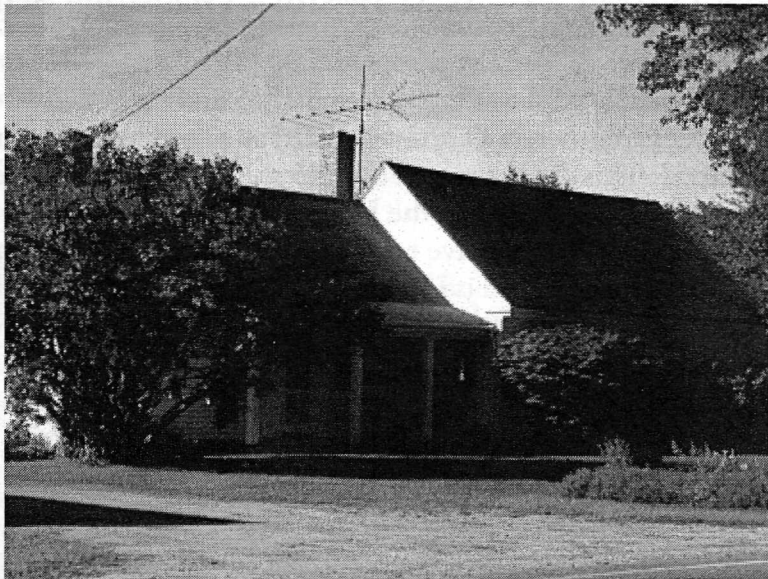
only 9 schools left), it was voted that the town should convey students to school. This was not the end of the issue, however. In 1933, a state law passed requiring towns to convey students to school. But, in the same year, the selectmen of Bristol stated "It is not good public policy to commit the town to conveyance of all pupils" (6). A new policy was established that had parents transport their children to school from May through November. From December through April, the town would convey only those students deemed too far away to walk. This was not a certain distance away from the school but decided on a case by case basis depending on road conditions between the house and the school. South Bristol also discussed conveyance of elementary students in 1935 and provided some service soon after. It could not be determined when all students were provided with a bus ride to school but as late as 1960, South Bristol students were transported to and from school in Anthony Eugley's "almost always new" Ford station wagon (12).

Of course, boys will be boys. Many schools only had a backhouse, each having a boys side and a girls side. (Examples of these treasured structures can still be seen behind Ervine S.D.#9 and McKinley S.D.#8). In the cold winter, the contest on the boys side was to see who could build up the thickest layer of yellow ice on the backhouse wall. No one has yet told me what the winner won (13).

Bristol was not without its celebrity visitors. People are still talking about the time Isabelle Miles brought her summer visitor to Lincoln School S.D.#6. How many kids on the Maine coast in the 1930's could say they got to meet Babe Ruth (14)!

School District #1 – Hunter School

This district was located in both Bristol and Damariscotta. A schoolhouse was built around 1815 (15). In 1857, the building was referred to as a “good house” that was “warm and convenient.” It is found on both the 1857 and 1873 maps. With about 25 students in 1860, the number fell to 12 and it was closed in 1897. The students were sent to District #2. Hunter School was reopened in 1901 for 5 students for a 2-week term only. In 1906, the building was sold to a man named Cotton for \$75 (6). The school was located across from Hanley’s Market at the Route 129/130 split and is now part of a residence further south on Route 129.



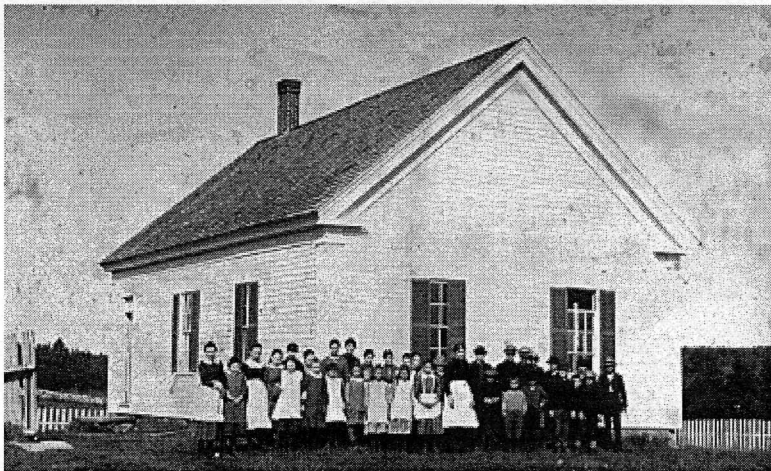
Old school is right half of building

School District #2 – Walpole School

In 1857, this school was in a private home and in 1860 was “in an unfinished house hastily made into a schoolroom.” Even so, it had 23 students. A schoolhouse was built later. We do not know when or where this was but based on the 1894 valuation (Appendix 1), it wasn’t much of a building. District #2 ran along Route #129 approximately from the Walpole Meeting House to Fitch Point so the building had to be in there somewhere. The school was closed in 1899 with only 7 students attending.

School District #3 – West Bristol – Gladstone School

The original school was built around 1815 and burned in 1849 (15). It was apparently rebuilt and was listed as a “comfortable schoolhouse” in 1857. This district served over 45 students in 1860. Attendance leveled off around 25 and the building was used as a school until consolidation in 1953. Extensive renovations took place in 1918 and 1919. It is on both maps and is located on the corner of Route 129 and Clark’s Cove Road. After years of use as a storage building for an apple orchard, it is now a residence. One story has this school closing during the Civil War, as the teacher had to go off to fight, as did many of the older boys (16).



This school has not changed much at all (picture from around 1900)

School District #4 – Four Corners School

This building may have been built around 1815 (15) and was described as an old, small and poor schoolhouse in both 1857 and 1860. This school had 26 students in 1860 but was down to 11 in 1897. It was closed in 1901 but reopened from 1910 to 1915. It was located to the south and west of the present Four Corners (junction of Rt. #129 and Harrington Road) on a little knoll. The road at that time was to the west of the present road. The schoolhouse was moved in 1926 to the hill just south of Meadowbrook Farm on Rt. #129 and used as a house (7). The building was added on to at the front and back so the school is now the middle section of the structure. (The building remembered at the Four Corners in the 1930's as the Jacobs house was apparently the building that was next to the school, not the school itself, and was later moved to New Harbor (17).)



Old school is the middle third of this house

Sarah Emery School

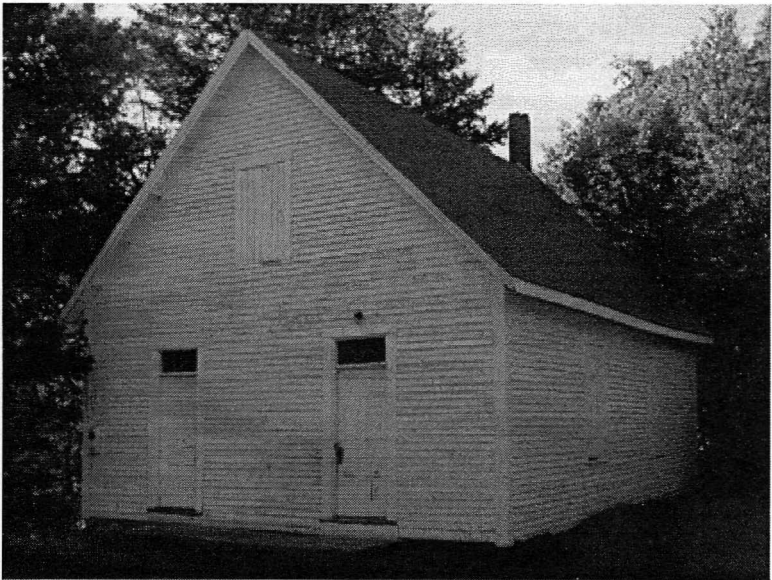
While not part of the old district system, this school was near Four Corners so is included here. In 1953, the year Sarah Emery retired after a 45 year teaching career, students from the Walpole section of town were sent to school at the town hall. This school was named Sarah Emery School. Town offices continued operation in the building upstairs while the school was held in two rooms downstairs (12). This continued here until 1961 when the new elementary school opened.



The old South Bristol Town Hall

School District #5 – Neck or Roosevelt School

This school was also called the Main School since it was up on the mainland (as opposed to down on Rutherford Island). Referred to as a “poor schoolhouse” in 1857, a new building was built in 1860 for \$600, apparently at the location of the original school on the McFarland Cove Road. 36 students attended that year. At some point the school was moved to the east side of Rt. #129 across from the end of the S Road and then later moved to its present location on the northwest corner of the S Road and Rt. #129 (16). By 1895, enrollment was about 16 but rose to the mid-twenties after other schools closed in the early 1900’s. The place was fixed up in 1901 and again in 1918. Upon the death of the teacher in 1943, the school was closed due to lack of a replacement and never reopened. The students went to Lincoln School S.D.#6. The building was used to house a fire truck in the 1960’s. It was extensively renovated in 1976 with many original items returned for display but has been closed for years.



The hope is to reopen this school as a museum

School District #6 – Island or Lincoln School

This school was also called Village School after 1945. A rather fancy schoolhouse was built on Rutherford Island in 1848 to replace an old one. It was so well done townspeople complained that too much money was being spent on the school (18). It was also used for town meetings, church services, etc. For some reason, no reference to it was found in the 1857 school report. In 1860, #6 was on the list of “built or repaired recently.” The 1857 map shows the original school on the corner of West Side Road and Rt. #129. This building was later moved to a spot just behind and to the right of Lincoln School and is referred to as Clugston’s barn. Lincoln School was built in 1899 at a cost of \$2,000. It was added to in 1912 and a top floor was added sometime before 1927 to later accommodate a full four-year high school (14). This is one of the larger schools in town with a school population of between 45 and 65 over all the years surveyed. After the new building was occupied in 1900, this was a graded school with primary and grammar school sections. It also hosted a high school from time to time (see High School section below) and was used as an elementary school until consolidation in 1961 and a high school until 1963. It was later an art studio and is now used for apartments.



The former school, now Clugston's Barn



Lincoln School today as an apartment house

School District #7 Pemaquid Harbor – Jefferson School

This district had a “poor school room” in 1857 built at an unknown date. A schoolhouse is shown on the 1857 map but not on the 1873 map (one of many errors on that map). A new schoolhouse was built in 1896 for \$1028 to replace the old building (6). This school was used until 1929 when it closed due to low enrollment and inadequate sanitary facilities. From a high of over 40 in the 1860’s, enrollment plateaued at around 25 in 1900 and then leveled off again at 9 in the teens, finally closing with 5. Both the old and new schoolhouses were converted to residences on Pemaquid Harbor Road and are across the street from each other. The more recent school has been turned 90 degrees and the old backhouse moved up beside the house and (ironically) is used as a downstairs bathroom and laundry room.



This picture of the first school here appears to be mid to late 1800's but the school looks like it is already closed. The picture was taken from behind the school looking toward the road.



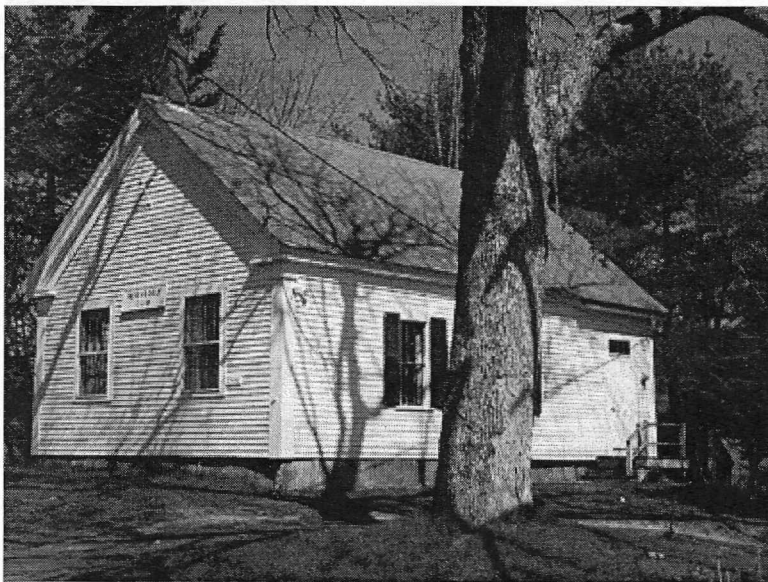
The old school as it looks today (while another addition was being built).



The school built in 1896 and now used for a house.

School District #8 – Pemaquid Falls – McKinley School

In 1857, the school was described as a “pretty good house” and in 1860 was on the list of schools “built or repaired recently.” It is on both maps and was used right up to consolidation in 1953. The Neighborly Club now meets there. With a population of around 60 in the late 1850’s, enrollment fell to the 20’s at the turn of the century. It rose to 30 in the 1920’s as other schools closed. From 1921 to 1924, it split into primary and grammar grades. The primary students stayed at McKinley and the older students went to another building, possibly the Messenger Building just around the corner (see High School section). By the 1930’s, enrollment fell to 17 and was at 24 when it closed in 1953. It did receive a new privy in 1927 due to a new state law, a structure that is still standing.



Now the Neighborly Club, the building has changed little from the 1800's.

School District #9 – Ervine or Wardsworth School

Described as “old and uncomfortable” in 1857, we are not sure when the present structure was built. In 1860, it was a schoolhouse “not worthy of the name.” Given that the present building is in quite good shape, it is obvious it was either rebuilt or is now a different building. It is on the 1857 map but not on the 1873 map. With an enrollment of around 30 in the 1860’s, numbers fell to 10 by 1895 and stayed there until it closed in 1903. The town did make repairs to the building in 1915. It is currently used by the Samoset Fish & Game Club and is on Kelly Road just off Sproul Hill Road. The name Wardsworth was only used in 1901 when the School Improvement League tried to name all the schools after famous Americans as a means of boosting school spirit (6). This name did not stick. The Ervines (pronounced Erving) were the family living in that area running the Ervine Tannery and whose children populated that school.



Now the Samoset Fish and Game Club, this building has also changed little from years ago.

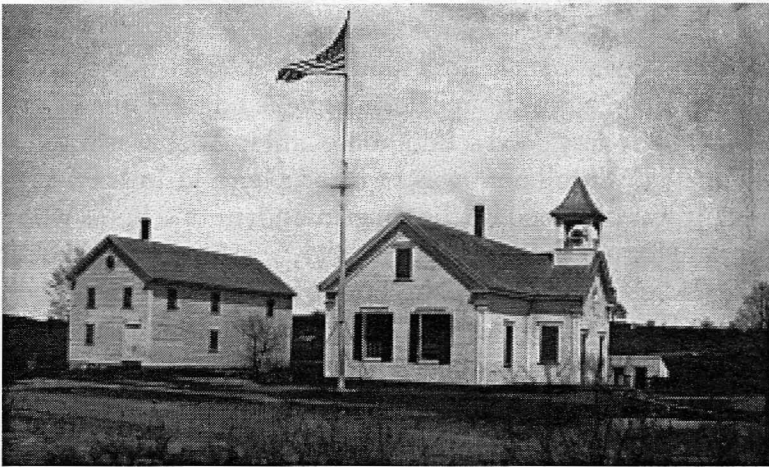
School District #10 – Bristol Mills – Longfellow School

In both 1857 and 1860, this district was one “needing a new schoolhouse.” When the building burned in 1945, it was reported the building was “built around the Civil War” (6). It is on the 1857 map but not on the 1873 map (another error?). The building was enlarged and remodeled around 1901 at a cost of \$1000. It was located next to the Masons’ Washington Hall where the fire station is now. Enrollment was steady between 45 and 55 throughout the years surveyed. In most years, it had both primary and grammar grades split but became ungraded in the few years that student numbers fell below 30.

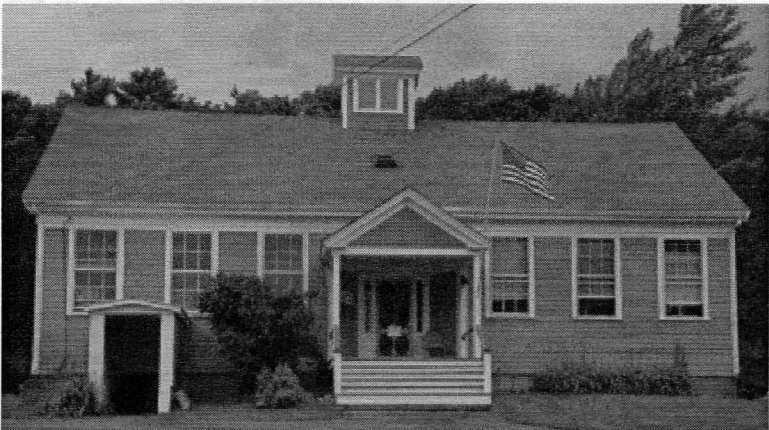
On February 2, 1945, the janitor was cleaning soot out of the flue pipe of the coal stove. This being wartime, soft coal was being used and soot build-up was a constant problem. He built a hot fire to burn out the soot but, unfortunately, did not check the stove at the end of the day. After midnight, the flue pipe overheated and the place burned flat (13) (19). Thanks to the generosity of S.F. Prentice and Son plumbing, school was held for the rest of the year in the basement of the plumbing company, still located just behind the Town Hall. A new building was built that summer behind the present Bristol Diner and continued as a school until 1979. After consolidation in 1953, Longfellow was used as extra classroom space until 1969. That year, the High School at Pemaquid closed thus opening up more classroom space for the adjoining Bristol Consolidated School. Longfellow was then used as a special education center for Union #74. Students in need of services not available in the elementary school were taught here by teachers with the training and materials needed for this type of work. Union towns paid Bristol tuition to send their special needs students there. This program was often referred to as the best in the state but low enrollment due to the long distances traveled by out-of-town students forced the program’s end in 1978. Kindergarten classes were held there in 1979 after which the school was closed for good. The building was sold in the 1980’s and is now a screen door company.



Longfellow as it looked in the late 1800's.



The school as it looked after the addition in 1901.



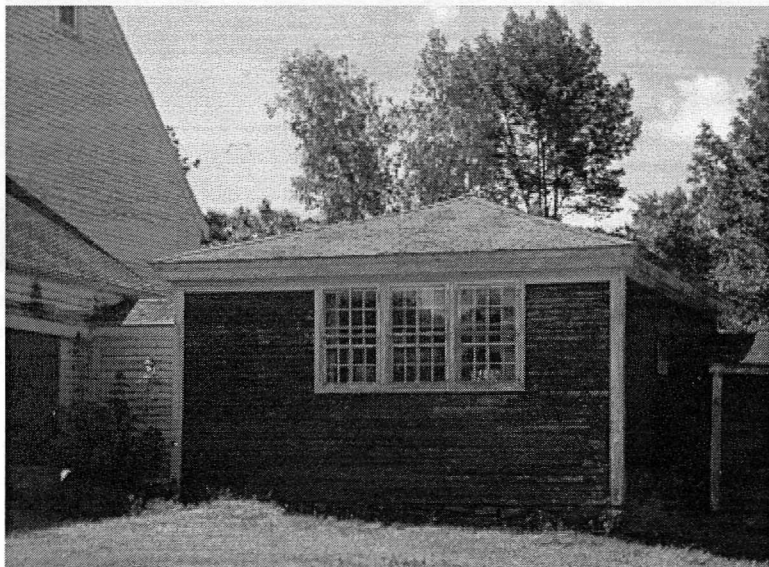
The new school that was built in 1945.

School District #11 – Crooker School

This small school was located on the Lessner Road, just across from the end of what was the Poor Farm Road (originally called the Crooker Road). It had 10 to 15 students. In 1857 and 1860, it was a room in someone's house. An actual schoolhouse was built in 1879 for \$350 (6). That building was used off and on until 1905 when it was closed for good, though the town did pay to have it cleaned in 1912. Some foundation stones are all that remain. It is not known what happened to the building.

School District #12 – Erskine School

This school was named after families in the area and was located on the Fogler Road across from Tilson Eugley's house. Built in 1840, by 1857 it was "not a very good schoolhouse and in 1860 was listed as "needing repairs." Enrollment was 24 in 1860 and 11 in 1896 when it was closed. It was obtained by the superintendent of schools who moved it to his house for use as a barn. By the 1950's, artist Gene Klebe lived in that house and used the school building as his studio. It is still behind the house on Route #130 and is in very good condition. Parts of a foundation can be seen today back at the original site.



This old building is still in great shape after being used for many purposes.

School District #13 – Rock Schoolhouse

Before 1836, school was held on the porch of David Bryant's house (now Weislogel, formerly Clough and before that Weeks). In 1836, it was voted by the district board to build a school of stone (20). This was a logical choice due to the many quarries in that area of Round Pond. Classes were held in this building until 1899 with anywhere from 10 to 26 students attending. It was reopened for two terms in 1912. It is on both maps and is currently a museum. Apparently, this school never had a name other than "Rock". The date of 1835 over the door is a mystery and was likely added in error many years after the place was built. The date is not in a photo of the building taken in 1912. The building was used briefly as a residence in the winter of 1934 (21).

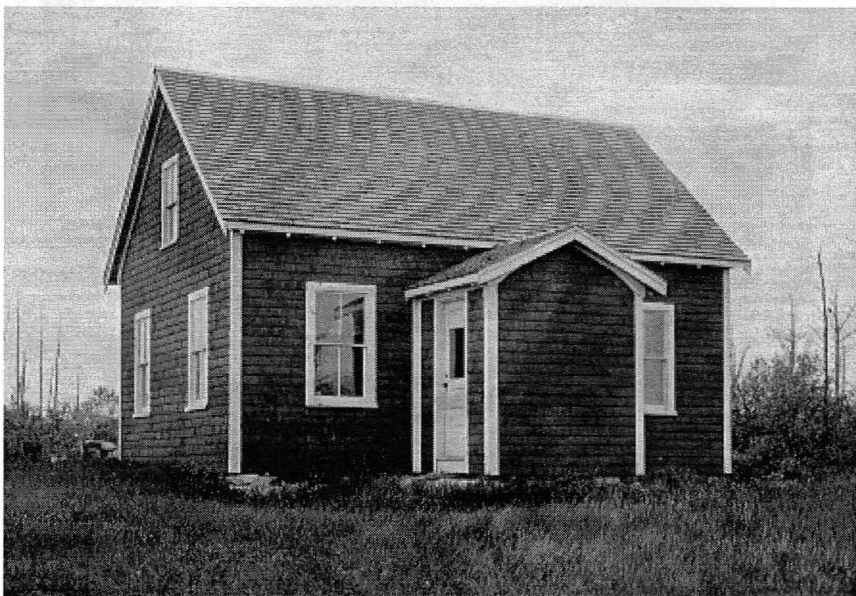


The school has not changed much but the number of trees out behind certainly has.

School District #14 – Little Red Schoolhouse

Another school without a fancy name, this is one of the town's older schools. It was reportedly built in 1824 (based on a date on a postcard of the school) and is on the 1857 map. It was listed as "in need of repair" in 1860. It is not on the 1873 map. The school was located just south of where the Coggins Road meets Route 32, north of Round Pond (22). With over 40 students in 1860, attendance fell to 15 by 1894 and it closed the following year. Students then went to Washington School S.D.#15 just down the road.

Various groups, primarily the Muscongus Burial Society (a cemetery association), then used the building for meetings. The Round Pond fire of June, 1923 leveled the place but it was rebuilt by the cemetery association, with help from Lon Lewis, whose wife, Estelle, had taught there. The building continued to be used for cemetery, Boy Scout and other meetings into the 1950's when it was sold to a man named Doering who moved it to the Back Shore Road (23). It is now part of a house.



This postcard gives a build date of 1824 but we believe this is actually a picture of the rebuilt building from 1924 since the trees behind the school appear to be burned.

School District #15 Round Pond – Washington School

This school was always one of the town's largest with enrollment sometimes over 100, rarely below 50. It was the only school that was always a graded school and often included high school classes. Prior to building a school building, classes were held in various places in Round Pond, including the basement of the Little Brown Church. A village map of 1857 shows a school right on the road across from the Brown church and, in 1860, the building was listed as "needing repairs." This school was later moved across the street and used as a residence. It was replaced by the present Washington School that was reportedly built in 1885 or 1887(22). In 1894, its valuation was the highest of any school in town at \$2400 (see Appendix 1).

The current structure is a two-story affair. Primary school was downstairs and grammar school up. Each floor had two classrooms with the boys in one and the girls in the other. A high school was located off and on here after 1874. In response to the state law, bathrooms were added up and down in 1926. The school closed with consolidation in 1953. In 1957, it became the site of the new Masters Machine Co., now Bristol's largest employer. The structure is now a storage building for Masters Machine.



It is hard to tell when pictures of this building were taken since it has changed so little and no one remembers when the few changes that were made to the front porch were done.

School District #16 Lower Round Pond – Tennyson School

This school was located less than a mile south of #15 near the end of the Lower Round Pond Road, next to Ball Road. In 1860, it was on the “built or repaired recently” list and is on the 1857 map (though it is not on the 1873 map). A photo from 1886 shows a new shingle roof and fresh paint job, but we assume that is repair and not new construction. Enrollment ran from 60 in 1860 to about 25 in later years. The school closed in 1925 due to lack of sanitary facilities. Since it was built on a ledge, it was easier to move the students to Washington School S.D.#15 than to build privies. The town used the building for a town garage for many years. A concrete floor was poured but the maple wainscoting was left in place. Another town garage was moved next to the school from the corner of Upper Round Pond Road and Rt. 32 for the storage of more town equipment. Both buildings were burned as a fire training exercise in 1995 (22).



This picture was taken in 1886, apparently right after the place got a new roof and paint job.

School District #17 – Long Cove School

Another school without a fancy name, Long Cove School had a long history. It is on the 1857 map but not the 1873 map. Described as needing repairs in 1860 and “small and inconvenient” in 1861, it actually handled over 40 students in that early period. By 1895, 15 attended and then 11 for many years. By 1918, enrollment had dropped to 5. At that level, the state mandated that the school must be closed unless the town voted every year to keep it open. The town did just that until 1933 when it finally closed and students were sent to McKinley S.D.#8. After 1922, the town even received a special exemption from the state to use the school without sanitary facilities.

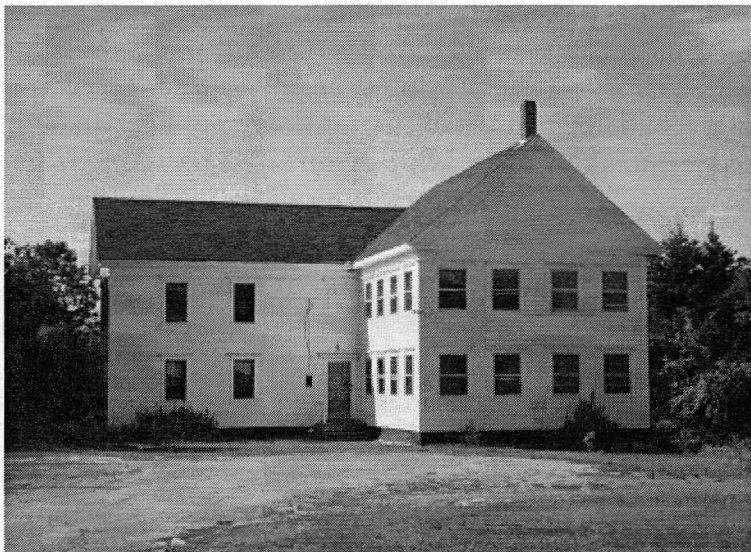
Located on Route 32 across from the end of the Foster Road, the school was used as a storage building for many years. In 1996, the owners of the land announced the end of a 99-year lease held by the town that had allowed the building to be on that site. The current owner of the building had it moved next door onto his own land and converted it into a residence. Little of the original structure is visible.



The school as it looks today.

School District #18 – New Harbor – Mavooshan School

Another of the three large schools in town, the 1860 report noted the building being small and in need of repair. It is on the 1857 map but not on the 1873 one. Enrollment held steady at 60 over all the years. Primary and grammar grades were taught separately and high school classes were held from time to time. The school was greatly expanded in 1912. Vault-type toilets were added in 1926 and an annex added in 1937. The school ran until consolidation in 1953. After that, the building was used as the VFW hall, for Beano and other gatherings. To make room for a new fire station, it was burned as a fire training exercise in 1996. The bell was saved and is now on display in front of the new station.



The school just before being burned down. The annex of ¹⁹¹²~~1937~~ is the part extending out the front towards the camera.

Fort School

In 1860, the families on the western side of District #18 (Pemaquid Beach) felt they were too far from New Harbor and wanted their own school. They had their portion of the school money returned to them and they formed Fort School. It involved about 20 students and was held at the Cartland's and Partridge's houses in at least 1859 and 1860 (3). No other records have been found, though the sentiment for their own school did later result in Hawthorne School (see S.D.#21).

School District #19 – Pemaquid Point School

This school, like Red S.D.#14 and Long Cove S.D.#17, never seemed to get its own distinctive name. With 35 students in 1860, attendance fell to 10-15 in later years until it was closed in 1915. It was reportedly built in 1874 (24) but is on the 1857 map as well as the 1873 map (though on the wrong side of the road) so could be a replacement for an older building. It was sold in 1936 to Prof. H.C. Libby who promptly remodeled it. In the period of the 1930's to 1950's it was used as the "Chapel of the Ragged Beggar." Ecumenical services were held in the summer by itinerant supply preachers. It is currently a summer rental property owned by (coincidentally) Prof. Libby's grandson.



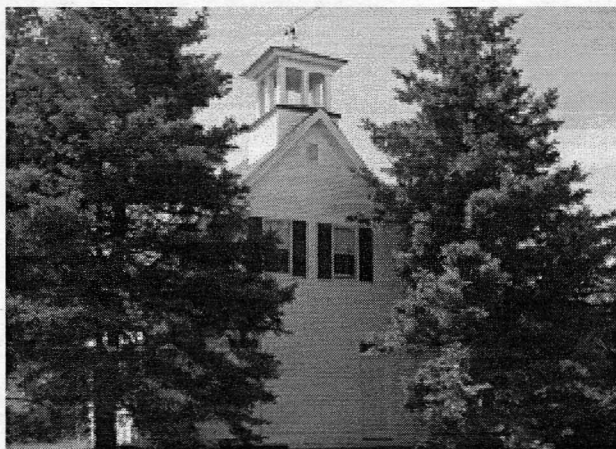
The old school as it looks today as a rental cottage.

School District #20 – Fossett School (?)

The 1851 effort to form new school districts resulted in 19 districts. By 1857, a 20th district had been formed. The location and history of this school is unknown and the name was found in only one record in 1857, the year it was apparently built. About 30 students attended in 1860 plus advanced scholars from district #8. Also, several teachers attended an advanced class on Grammar and Parsing here (3). No mention is made of District #20 after that.

School District #21 Pemaquid Beach – Hawthorne School

As noted in the section on Mavooshan S.D. #18, the families around Pemaquid Beach started their own school in their homes in 1859. From at least 1858 to 1873, James Partridge annually petitioned the town meeting to divide District #18 so the beach area could have its own school. These petitions apparently ceased in 1874 since, at some point (the present owner guesses around 1875), James Partridge offered the use of a piece of land and the materials to build a school if the town would supply the labor. A fine building was built. School population remained steady at around 25, dropping to 16 in the 1930's and back up to 18 when the school closed in 1945. The school has been lovingly preserved and has a new residence attached to the rear. It is located near the western end of the Huddle Road.



Thanks to the current owner, the school is still in original condition inside with a residence having been added to the rear.

Bristol and South Bristol High Schools

Classes beyond 8th grade were held in the larger schools off and on from the 1860's to 1897. Usually Longfellow S.D.#10 and Mavooshan S.D.#18 hosted the older students but occasionally it was at Washington S.D.#15, Four Corners S.D.#4 and Lincoln S.D.#6. Of course, from 1801 on, students with means could attend Lincoln Academy in Newcastle or other academies and business colleges. In 1896, it was voted to have a town high school and one was held at the town hall in Bristol Mills the following year with 42 students. The next year, the high school was moved to Pemaquid somewhere and enrollment dropped to 18 but rebounded to 28 by 1899. From 1900 to 1904, students were tuitioned out of town to Lincoln Academy or were back in the grammar schools. In 1905, the town was offered the use of the Messenger Building in Pemaquid Falls for free by its owner, Captain Yates. This was where the Pemaquid Messenger newspaper was published from 1878 to 1889. It was located on what is now Fir Hollow Road where it joins the Harrington Road (22) (23). Attendance held at around 30 for 5 years. In 1910, the new High school was built in Pemaquid where the present Bristol Consolidated School is now. 45 Students attended that first year. By 1913, the school was crowded with 85 students. The building was doubled in size and 13 students from what was soon to become South Bristol went to classes at Lincoln School S.D.#6.

South Bristol High School lasted until 1915 when enrollment dropped to 9 and it was closed. The South Bristol students returned to Bristol High School or went to Lincoln Academy. South Bristol High School soon reopened at Lincoln School S.D.#6 in 1917 and became an accredited Class A four-year school in 1929. Due to a lack of teachers in 1943, it closed again but reopened in 1947. It closed for good in 1963 with 24 students going to Bristol High School and 20 to Lincoln Academy.

By 1930, Bristol High School was termed "antiquated" by the state and a number of improvements were made. In 1950, the industrial arts classes built on a new kitchen. When the Bristol elementary schools were consolidated in 1953, the new school was built as a wing onto the High School. The present gym was built soon after with funds raised by the townspeople and through Bristol Footlighters shows (which still continue in support of the school).

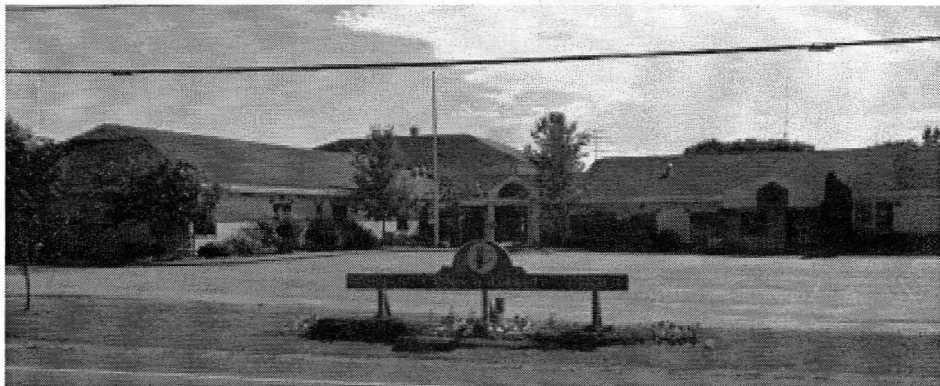
The High School population was stable at around 65 but started to drop off in the 1960's as more students chose the Lincoln Academy option. In 1963, the idea of closing the High School and sending everyone to Lincoln Academy was proposed. In 1964, the state closed down the industrial arts program as being inadequate. Students interested in the trades left Bristol to go to Lincoln Academy or elsewhere. By 1966, the state required the town to vote annually to keep the High School open. At that point, there were 56 students at Bristol High School (9 of them from South Bristol) at a cost of \$850 per student. 51 Bristol students were going to Lincoln Academy at a cost of \$620 per student. The High School was closed in 1969. The old high school building was torn down in 1987 to make room for the current BCS library/office area.



Bristol High School right after construction in 1910

Bristol Consolidated School

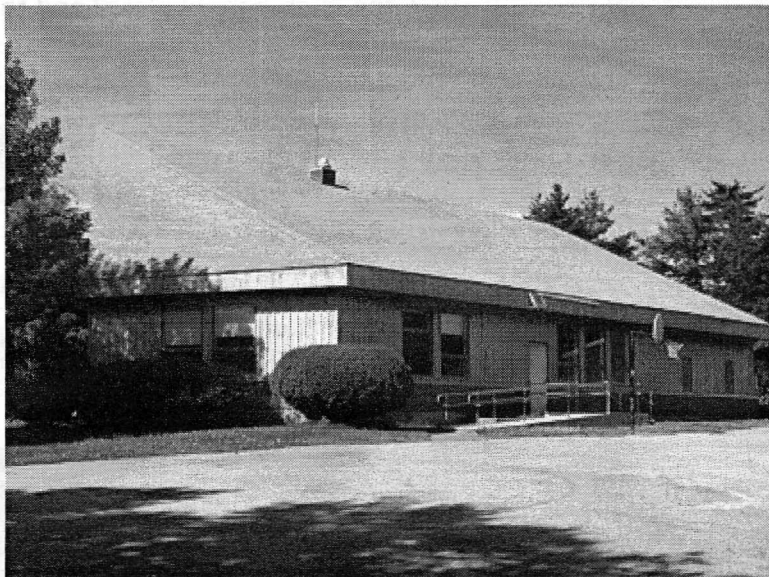
BCS came into being in 1953 when all Bristol schools except Longfellow S.D.#10 were closed. A wing was added onto the High School and is now used as the Grade 1 – 4 wing. Longfellow was used for extra classroom space. In 1969, the High School closed and the junior high moved into the high school space. In 1987, a major renovation took place. The old high school building was demolished and the library, office, music room and current junior high wing added. The final addition, the present Grade 5 – 6 wing, was added in 1993. In 1953, 183 students were in grades K – 8; in 2000, 257 students attended BCS. An unusually large class of kindergartners is expected in 2001 so a portable classroom has been placed in front of the school.



The BCS campus today

South Bristol Elementary School

This school was built in 1961 when Sarah Emery and Lincoln School S.D.#6 were closed. An addition was added in 1986. It is a K through 8 school with about 70 students.



With so many beautiful trees around it, it was hard to get a good picture of the front of the school.

Appendix 1

Property Valuations in 1894

District #	Name	Value (\$)
1	Hunter	400
2	Walpole	150
3	Gladstone	475
4	Four Corners	200
5	Main	385
6	Island	450
7	Pemaquid Harbor	175
8	McKinley	490
9	Ervine	800
10	Longfellow	625
11	Crooker	225
12	Erskine	25
13	Rock	60
14	Red	165
15	Washington	2400
16	Lower Round Pond	350
17	Long Cove	375
18	Mavooshan	1350
19	Pemaquid Point	375
21	Hawthorne	490

Schoolhouses of Bristol 1800 - 2000

	1820	1840	1860	1880	1900	1920	1940	1960	1980	2000
South Bristol #1 Hunter	ca. 1815				1897 1902	sold 1906				residence
#2 Walpole			x		1899					unknown
#3 West Bristol or Gladstone	ca. 1815		1849 burned and rebuilt				1952		storage shed	residence
#4 Four Corners	1815?				1901 1910 1915	1926 - moved	Sarah Emery School			residence
#5 Neck or Main or Roosevelt		present bldg. 1860			1915		fire station	restored 1976		museum?
#6 Island or Village or Lincoln		former bldg 1848		present bldg. 1900	1912 added to			1961		apartments
Bristol #7 Pemaquid Harbor or Jefferson			x	present bldg. 1896		1929				residence
#8 Pemaquid Falls or McKinley			x					1953		Neighborhood Club
#9 Ervine or Wardsworth			x		1903					Samoset Fish & Game Club
#10 Bristol Mills or Longfellow			x	Added to 1901		burned and rebuilt 1945			1979	screen door co.
#11 Crooker		in private homes 1879			1905					foundation
#12 Erskine		1840			1896 then moved to Rt. 130					foundation

	1820	1840	1860	1880	1900	1920	1940	1960	1980	2000
#13 Rock		1836			1899	1912				museum
#14 Red	1824?			1895		burned and rebuilt	1924		moved	residence
#15 Round Pond or Washington					1887 present building		1953	Masters Machine Co.		storage
#16 Lower Round Pond or Tennyson						1925	town equipment	storage		burned
#17 Long Cove						1933				residence
#18 New Harbor or Mavooshan						1937 annex	1953		VFW hall	burned
#19 Pemaquid Point					1915	1936 sold		Chapel of the Ragged Beggar		residence
#20 Fossett (?)					?					
#21 Pemaquid Beach or Hawthorne			1875				1945			residence
Bristol High School				# # # #	T M	1910		1969		1969 torn down
Bristol Consolidated School								1953		>>>
South Bristol High School			# # # #	# # # #	# #	1913	1943 1947	1963		
South Bristol Elementary School								1961		>>>

Legend
 x - existed in 1857 report, not known how long before that _____ time when building was used as a school
 # - High School classes at grammar schools T - High School at Town Hall
 o - known date when building destroyed M - High School at Messenger Building

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- (22) Gordon Fossett, Round Pond, ME. Pers. Comm.
- (23) Kendall Fossett, New Harbor, ME. Pers. Comm.
- (24) Inside Bristol, Gladys Lewis et al. 1953, reprinted in 1992 by Lincoln County Publishing, Damariscotta, ME.