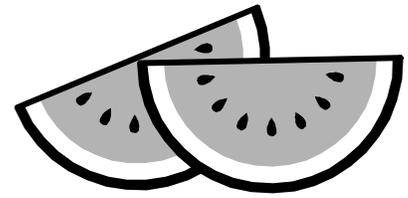


Mussel Ridge News

A Free Publication of the Mussel Ridge Historical Society
Owls Head, Maine
Summer 2015~ Issue 27



MEMORIES OF A GREAT PLACE IN A GREAT ERA

by Gary Havener



As a young lad growing up on Crescent Beach during the 1950's, I remember Bertha Thurston as my only school teacher at Owl's Head Central School for the first 4 years of my primary education. In my book, she could do no wrong; she was the best. She probably let me get away with much more than my parents ever would. When I finally arrived at 4th grade, things weren't so great and then with Clara Kelsey, my 5th grade teacher things got even worse. She gave me my first "C" and it was in conduct, no less. What on earth was she thinking? Wasn't I the perfect student for Mrs. Thurston? Why not all the others? One day when I told her that she was not on my "A list", I got the paddle and when I got home, I got the belt; my posterior hurt but my feelings were unchanged. This occurred on more than one occasion usually resulting in my tour of duty at the bottling works or on the soda truck on Saturdays; not one of my favorite pastimes although Batesy and Buzzy were really my "early education" from girls to cars.

From the time I started riding the school bus with Buddy Wood as the driver (the only bus driver I ever had), I distinctly remember walking back towards Hendrickson's Point in order to get a longer bus ride with Buddy as he was always cracking me up. Even during snow storms, this was the case. One day Edwin Edwards was coming down the street and hollered for me to "get out of the road before you get hit" to which I stupidly ignored. The plows had made the snow so high that I couldn't get out of the road. One day on the way up by Beans Hill's house heading to Mary Lou Moore's for her pickup, the gear shifter in the bus physically broke off down near the floor. It was during a blizzard and Buddy asked me to pull what was left of the shift lever down when he said to do so as he couldn't drive and reach the floor at the same time. That was probably my first knowledge of manual transmissions. We finally made it up the icy road, picked up Mary Lou and went on to school.

In early spring, my father would have me going out to the garage and scrape the bottom of his 20 foot fiberglass boat. It was hard work and stunk. I'd rather have gone to the bottling works and bagged beer which was my father's way of marketing multiple bottles before six packs arrived on the scene. On numerous occasions while parents were out or away, I'd swim out to the boat not far from Harland Heard's Island and go pulling traps; enough for a few lobsters, not knowing whose they were, and head back home and steam 'em for Jeff Fales and myself. Soda pop was a bonus. Surely, he didn't think I was going to spend hours on end cleaning the boat with no reward whatsoever.

Occasionally, when my grandfather, Fred Knight, came home on weekends from working in New York, we would walk out to Heard's Island and he would put coins in mason jars and bury them. There are probably to this day, 10 or so mason jars buried out there with money in them. He was trying to teach me survival techniques as well; out in the wilderness of the island. After numerous trips out to the island with Gramp, I came home from school one day and found him and my brother Dwight out on the island looking for the money

Gramp and I had planted. Dwight had stayed home from school with a mild (fake) illness but I caught them red handed.

Richard Cross and I would occasionally go down to the Crescent Beach Inn (Tiltin Hilton) owned by George Sleeper just for something to do. If it were a warm day, we'd go into the ocean. Or we would stop by the home of George Curtis and get a sculpting education. Richard and I would make a path from Crescent Beach Rd. (now Belleview St.) up to North Shore Dr. and would transit the path quite often, just for something to do. 50 years later, Ed Sleeper, George's nephew, would provide me with my taildragger endorsement for my flying privileges. He was a retired U.S. Air Force Col. having flown many missions in C-130 cargo aircraft. He was a superior pilot as well as a superior instructor, God rest his soul.

My father refused to buy me anything except a junk bicycle in the late '50's so I decided to try my luck at salesmanship selling quality greeting cards in Owl's Head, hoping to sell enough to get a nice bike, walking the whole distance of course. Finally, with the sale of my 60th box required to receive my Schwinn single speed, I was done. I don't remember the family name but the last box went to the home which was the first one to the west once reaching the top of the hill, near Ted Ross residence. I was begging people to buy them because I was desperate. I was ready for that bike and it came about a month later. I was in 7th heaven.

My first powered toy boat I would take over to the pond across from the Owl's Head General Store. It was one like none of my friends had; just superb. I named it Judy E. Judy Entwistle was a class mate who I was impressed with during my grade school years.

These memories, not in chronological order but as they came to mind, are of a great era that kids today will never know. For better or for worse, technology has changed the way we grow up now. I'm glad that I'm as old as I am.

HOW TO REACH US

The Mussel Ridge Historical Society (often seen as M.R.H.S.), heartily invites its readership to submit bios poems, recipes, jokes, stories or anecdotes and pictures for inclusion in the NEWS. Cash donations are tax deductible and we will gladly issue a receipt. We also have people who can help with researching a subject.

To donate or loan artifacts, documents, pictures, etc., or for questions about the M.R.H.S contact:

President, Kay Dodge, 207-596-6879 or kayed38@myfairpoint.net

To receive the NEWS in your inbox– Bonnie Post, 207-594-9263 or bonniepost@earthlink.net

For Nautical research– Gene Barron, ginob@twc.com

For Advertising in the NEWS or general research– Tom Christie, 207-594-2438

To send items for inclusion in the NEWS– Carolyn Philbrook, cmphome@midcoast.com

or mail your items to: M. R. H. S. P.O. Box 133 Owl's Head, Me 04854-0133



OWLS HEAD VILLAGE LIBRARY

31 South Shore Drive
Owls Head, ME 04854
Hours: Sat. 9 am - 5 ish

Internet Access, DVD's, Children's Room,
Large Print

Large Marine Books Selection

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT - STOP BY!

Bill and Jeanne Johnson
Proprietors

(207) 594-1721

Breakwater
VINEYARDS

Breakwater Vineyards and Farm, LLC
35 Ash Point Drive, P.O. Box 404, Owls Head, ME 04854

FROM THE DUSTY GARDENER'S NOTEBOOK

According to several authorities, the Monarch Butterfly's future is precarious at best. Their population has been reduced to less than 20% of what it was in the mid-1990's due to a multitude of factors; namely heat waves, drought, or cold, wet Spring days that have delayed the Monarch's reproductive cycles. And too, the Monarch's primary migratory fly zone between the U. S. and Mexico is across America's corn belt where farmers plant their crops right to the edge of the field, a practice that has nearly eradicated the Monarchs' chief food source, Milkweed .



But, there is hope. Any backyard or apartment balcony can become a Monarch's haven simply by planting Blackeyed Susans, Purple Coneflowers, Bee Balm, or your local Milkweed. An old practice of planting every available square inch of a residential plot with local trees, wild flowers and natural grasses in lieu of a lawn is being re-introduced. Lush, wide open lawns were a feature of the post World War II housing boom, proven to be costly to maintain and detrimental to the environment.

Here's an item I found in a seed catalog I thought was appropriate to this discussion. "Weeds are merely flowers that haven't been discovered, yet." —anonymous

OUR FALL SCHEDULE

October 10,11, 12 —Last chance to visit Owl's Head Light and keepers cottage, (weather permitting)

November- Mussel Ridge NEWS will be on the streets the first ten days Nov. Copies can be picked up at Owl's Head Post Office, O.H. General Store, Community Building, Cape Air lobby, Primrose Framing

November 10, (8am- 6 pm) —a baked food sale at the election polls, downstairs in the Owl's Head Community Building. Anyone wishing to donate food can drop it off on election day after 8 a.m.

Smiths' Swiss Village

Housekeeping Cottages

Irving & Marilyn Smith
152 North Shore Drive
Owls Head, ME 04854

Computerized Services

Bookkeeping, Payroll, Taxes, Spreadsheets

Linda Post

40 Hendrickson Point Rd
Owls Head, ME 04854

Phone 207-594-7203

Cell 207-441-7203

linpost@midcoast.com



MURRAY BUILDERS INC.

- General Contracting
- Remodeling
- Lawn Care
- General Property Maintenance
- Snow Plowing
- New Homes

Les Murray, Owner
2 Knowlton Place, Owls Head, ME 04854

Ph: 207-557-4315
Fax: 207-594-2856

Owls Head General Store



Rob & Sherree Craig
Owners

207-596-6038

info@owlsheadgeneralstore.com

2 South Shore Drive
Owls Head, ME 04854

Crescent Beach Memories

by Richard Cross



Growing up in Crescent Beach in Owls Head in the 1950 and 1960, we lived right next to the old Crescent Beach Inn. There were two large, two story, rambling buildings that made up the place.

The one closest to the ocean was called “The Pavilion” and the one set a little further back we referred to as “The Inn”. The pavilion included a large sitting room and library and it was the residence of the proprietors, George and Margaret Sleeper. The Inn held the dining room, lobby and kitchen on the ground floor and the guest rooms were on the upper floor. By any measure, in those days, the pavilion was the nicer of the two buildings. For one thing, its structure was actually visibly level throughout. By contrast, the Inn didn’t seem to have one square foot that was on the level.

Over the years, the whole place began tilting noticeably forward toward the ocean and, when viewed at an angle down its length looked more like a carnival fun house with a couple of obvious deep sways down the entire structure. By today’s standards, it would have been declared unfit for business and condemned. But not back then! The Sleepers made some attempts to level it up, but they never seemed to do much real good. Still, that didn’t seem to stop the flow of business throughout the summer months. People came in from all over the country and many stayed part or all of the summer. It wasn’t the quality of the accommodations that drew them in. I’m convinced that the great ocean views, the beauty of the area and, most importantly, the gregarious personalities of the Sleepers – particularly George – drew in many of the customers, some of whom returned year after year!

For us local kids, those customers were our window to the larger world. Most of them spoke with different accents and a few were of different skin colors and different nationalities. But we learned they were all pretty much like us locals in many ways. Many knew us kids by our first names and were very friendly, particularly those who stayed for longer times and over the years. That was our introduction to other cultures.

The place was known all around the area for its “shore dinners”, which had been started by the Inn’s original owner, Fred Smith. Included were lobster, clams, fish and other accompanying foods available locally. The Sleepers continued the tradition and often hosted some larger banquets.

One such notable event happened in the mid-1950s. Following the local filming of the movie, Peyton Place, the Sleepers hosted the film’s cast and crew party. Of course, everyone knew about it well in advance. On the evening of the party, one of my friend’s older sisters and her friend decided to get as close as they could to the crowd, hoping to get some autographs. They had even bought little autograph booklets beforehand so they would be well prepared. Needless to say, they weren’t permitted to mingle inside where there was a lot of alcoholic drinking going on, so they hung around on the grounds hoping to catch someone for an autograph. About dark, the two returned home to my friend’s parents’ house and were asked how many autographs they got. To my knowledge, the little booklets included only one name, and that name was Otis Lewis. Otis “Ote” Lewis was a local man who had been asked by the Sleepers to provide and cook the lobsters for the event. Ote was as friendly and as out-going as the Sleepers, and so he likely got a real kick out of providing the girls with his “celebrity” autograph. Those girls were pretty disappointed when they were told that old Ote was no Hollywood movie personality!

The old Crescent Beach Inn is long gone. There are condos where it once stood. No doubt, they’re a whole lot nicer looking than the Inn ever was in the 50s and 60s. But that place, in its day, was the center of summer activity, with its eclectic, worldly guests, its charming hosts and the hub-bub of activity that occurred almost constantly there during the summer months. A piece of local “charm” and history that only lives on in a few old photos and news articles...and in the memory of a Crescent Beach kid growing up in the 1950s.

MYSTERY QUESTION

A reader would like to know if anyone has ever seen any adult eat by holding their dinner fork upside down and pile the food on the back of the fork with a knife. Our reader's Grandfather did this and likely acquired the habit while residing in Liverpool, England, in the 1890's. We'd like to know if it's of ethnic origin or simply a personal bad habit. To comment on this contact Tom Christie 207-594-2438 or mail to: P.O. Box 133, Owl's Head, Me. 0485

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A NEWS CONTRIBUTOR?

We're putting together three articles for future issues of the NEWS. The first one asks you to finish the phrase, "**You Know You're in a Small Town When _____**" with events and words that are indicative of a small town. Jon Lowe says, "when you get a letter with just your name and zip code for the address."

In our piece, "**Mamma Said, _____**" we're looking for those bits of wisdom and wise cracks Moms or Grandmas dished out that were so unique they actually became family lore. When Mrs. Christie sealed her mandate with, "...no ifs, ands, buts, or maybes about it!", the discussion was over. Don't waste her time or your breath trying to negotiate.

Lastly, we're hoping our readers will come through with plenty of memories about, "**Our Homemade Holiday Decorations**". Everything from carving pumpkins to making Easter baskets or Independence Day bunting will be welcomed. Please keep your written entries to about one paragraph.

We also accept stories on almost any topic if it can be related to the history of Owl's Head, or Knox County or the State of Maine. Please keep written manuscripts to about one page (8½ x 11) in length. Your items will be printed exactly as submitted and be sure to include how we can reach you.

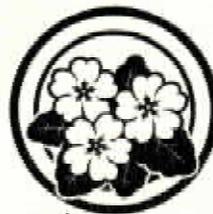
Contact us at 207-594-2438 or cmphome@midcoast.com or mail to:

M.R.H.S. P.O. Box 133, Owl's Head, ME. 04854-0133



234 Park St • Rockland
www.maritimeenergy.com

Heating Oils • LP Gas • Gasoline • Diesel
24 Hour Service
Heating Equipment Sales • *since 1939*



**primrose
FRAMING**

Elaine J. McNelly, CPF

156 SOUTH MAIN STREET
ROCKLAND, MAINE 04841
TELEPHONE: 207 596-7476
FAX: 207 594-7244
www.primroseframing.com

Norman Assurance Associates

Richard J. Norman, CPCU, ARM, AMIM, CRIS
Licensed Insurance Consultant & Agent

4 Bartlett Lane
P.O. Box 339
So. Thomaston, ME 04858

207-596-6400
Fax: 207-596-6444
Email: rnorman@normanassurance.com
Emergency Pager: 207-580-4548

RESURGENCE

ENGINEERING AND PRESERVATION, INC.
Assessments, Feasibility Studies & Structural Design

Alfred H. Hodson III, P.E.

e-mail: al@resurgenceengineering.com
www.resurgenceengineering.com
(207) 773-4880

Preserving and restoring Maine buildings and structures.

OWL'S HEAD HARBOR IN THE EARLY 1900s – With mainsails up waiting for a wind are, left to right, the schooners Mary Brewer, Nautilus and either the Charity or the Chase.

The article about the schooner *Polly* (DOWN EAST, January) brought back memories of my boyhood days at Owl's Head, because I earned my first dollar as a cook on the *Polly* when I was fifteen years old. At that time the *Polly* was owned by my Uncle Lewis Arey. My first trip was to Boston with a load of lime. It took us three weeks, and my pay was \$5.

I sailed on a number of schooners afterward, but that was my only trip as cook. My father, Captain Herbert Tolman, owned one-quarter interest in the three-masted schooner *Brigadier*. I made one trip with him when I was seventeen. We took a load of lime to New York, then a load of jetty stone down to May Port, Florida, at the mouth of the St. John River, where a breakwater was being built.

From May Port we came up the coast to Darien, Georgia and loaded hard pine for the Cobb, Butler & Co. shipyard in Rockland. After loading we went off into Gulf Stream and let the 2 ½-knot current carry us northeast while we tacked off and on. I was seasick for an entire week, and my dad stood my watch for me.

Merryconeag that ran from Rockland to Portland. Then I went with Captain Oscar Crockett on the *Catherine* on the run from Rockland to Bar Harbor. I was finding out all the time that I would never make a seafaring man, but I kept trying.

In 1898 I borrowed money from Captain Norwood, the lightkeeper at Owl's Head, and bought a half interest with Captain Isaac Post in the old lumber coaster *Charity*. Our first oad was to Beverly, Massachusetts; the next, to Plymouth. Our third load went to Quincy, and we were there the night of the November gale of 1898 when the *City of Portland* and freighter *Pentagoet* was lost. After the storm we unloaded the *Charity*, went to Boston and took the steamboat home. I sold my half interest and paid off Captain Norwood.

That time I was sure that I was going to sea. I still feel the same way about it today at 91. I got work ashore and for thirty-five years, until our retirement four years ago, my wife and I operated a poultry farm at the head of Duck Cove in West Tremont on Mt. Desert Island.

- OSCAR A. TOLMAN

Ship to Shore Lobster Company, LLC
“Live Lobster at the Wharf”

Rodney & Anna Mason
7 Wharf Street

Owls Head, ME 04854

207-594-4606 Wharf
207-542-4245 Rodney's Cell
207-542-8490 Anna Cell
207-594-0621 Home

www.shiptoshorelobster.com



Cape Air
NANTUCKET
AIRLINES

Reservations 800-352-0714
www.flycapeair.com

rocky.stenger@capeair.com

Rocky Stenger
RKD Station Manager

Cape Air
23 Terminal Lane
Owls Head, ME 04854

207-596-7604 Office
207-701-7189 Cell
207-596-7601 Fax

CORN CASSEROLE

This dish was brought to the Mussel Ridge picnic by Vivien Kelly and was a hit with everyone. Out of a long list of adjectives to describe how good it was, we think “Yummy Corn Casserole” works well. It seems to be quick and easy to make, too.

2 eggs

1 cup sour cream

½ cup melted butter

1 can kernel corn (drained)

1 can creamed corn

1 pkg. Jiffy Corn Bread mix

9"x9" greased pan or equivalent

Bake @ 350° for 50-60 mins.

AN APPLE A DAY DOESN'T ... BUT A GOOD SWITCHEL MIGHT

Last Spring a well known News anchor reported that some doctors are not in agreement with that old adage, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away”. Their doubt is based on a recent survey that reveals men and women who eat apples, or apple products, every day have the same number of doctor visits and the same prescription medications as everyone else.

On the other hand, two New York fellows are making a nice living with a line of bottled switchel. “What’s switchel?”, you ask. It’s a very old haymaker’s punch that farmers mixed up and carried into the fields for refreshment. Although we can find several variations of the recipe, (dating all the way back to early Colonial days), the most common one consists of water, cider vinegar, and ginger sweetened with either molasses, honey or Maple syrup.

Those New York guys seem to have found just the right concoction to please everyone. The sweet, yet spicy flavor for your palate; a centuries old heritage to connect with your ancestors; and medicinal qualities to appeal to the health conscious. Their Switchel is refreshing while the four basic ingredients provide an anti-inflammatory, a probiotic, a detoxifier, and several minerals. The recipe below is not the one discussed in this article, but it is an old family hand-me-down and proven to be quite refreshing.

Mix 1 quart water, ½ cup of molasses, 1 tsp. powdered ginger, & approx. ¼ cup cider vinegar. Heat until solids are dissolved and well mixed, then add another quart of water. Adjust the vinegar or substitute the juice of a lemon to suit your taste. Honey or Maple syrup can be added for sweetness.

Serve well chilled (not frozen) in the shade of an old tree.

Memories of Owls Head Folks

NELLIE REED

For years the people of Owls Head, Maine have said that the best pie crust they have ever eaten is made by Nellie Reed. Then they add that the best filling between two crusts on the entire coast of Maine is Nellie's chicken pie. Her pies raised nearly \$15,000 to start the fire department, and they have also benefited churches and civic organizations.

"The first time we put on a chicken pie supper for the fire department we made 100 pies, thinking that would be plenty. After that we always had to make at least 200. Each pie serves five people ... I like to go outside and see how many people are waiting. They ask, 'Is there enough chicken?' I say, 'I guess so, but if not, we have beans.' Oh, they don't like that. Some people buy two dinners just to have another piece of pie. We never worry about leftover pie. They barter what's left." Nellie says she has lost count of how many chicken pies she has baked, but "it must be at least 3,000."

CHICKEN PIE

"My father never allowed us to have spices. In my chicken pie there are no spices, only the salt in the water that the chicken stews in."

3-pound roasting chicken, giblets removed
2 teaspoons salt
Water
1 can onion soup
Flour dissolved in water
1 teaspoon Gravymaster (optional)
Pastry for double-crust pie (recipe follows)
2 tablespoons butter



Stew chicken in salt and water to cover for about 1 ½ hours. When done, pull meat off bones and cut into bite-sized chunks. Refrigerate until following day.

Skim most of the fat off top of the chicken broth, leaving just enough for flavor. Add soup to broth and bring to a boil. Thicken with a paste made from flour and water, using as much as necessary for desired consistency. Add Gravymaster for coloring if desired. Strain grave to remove onions. Put bottom crust in pie plate, fill with chicken, and cover with 1 ¾ cups gravy. Cover with top crust, spread with butter, and bake at 400 degrees for 30 minutes. Serve hot with extra gravy. *Serves 6.*

PIE CRUST

"The pie crust recipe I use is my mother's. It's as easy as rolling off a log. The secrets are using lard for flavor and plenty of water. Most pie crust is like cardboard because the dough lacked water."

1 pound lard
1 tablespoon salt
5 ¼ cups flour
1 cup water

Soften lard until it is pliable and put in mixing bowl. Add 1 tablespoon salt and the flour, and mix thoroughly with your hands until mixture is like soft putty. Add water and mix well. Section off dough for 4 double-crusts. Freeze 3 sections in separate plastic bags. Roll dough thin for 1 double-crust pie.
Enough for 4 double-crust pies.

Taken from the cookbook "Great New England Recipes", Published by Yankee Magazine 1983