



Researching and preserving our history

March 2018 BRHS News

From Our Collections



Shamrock Stranded

By Barbara Rumsey

This photo shows the fishing schooner *Shamrock* ashore on the ledges just south of Boothbay Harbor's Spruce Point. A fisherman out of Gloucester, she piled up on the Spruce Point Ledges on Wednesday, July 18, 1924. She'd been fishing on the Banks and came into

Boothbay Harbor to replenish her bait at the Boothbay Harbor Cold Storage, which was established by J. C. Poole in 1893 and located on the harbor's west side near the present parking lot for Pier 8. The *Shamrock* had left the cold storage for Linekin that Wednesday to take on ice over there when she went ashore. The captain and crew had been watching for the black buoy that marked the ledges and were blameless in the accident since the buoy had broken off and its top was under water.

The stranded *Shamrock* was a popular destination that Wednesday, with many boaters coming out to view the static excitement. Lester Barter (born 1906) told me he was working at the Squirrel Inn that summer and walked up to the north end of the island to see the vessel heeled over and nearly high and dry. Gawking was limited to one day, since the tug *Seguin* hauled the *Shamrock* off that night and towed her back to the cold storage where she was examined and declared sound with no leaks at all. Having lost some bait and gear, she took on more bait, overhauled her fishing gear, and headed back to the Banks late the next day.

Banks-fishing vessels of the late 1800s and early 1900s were very proud of their speed, and the *Shamrock* was well known for her role in the International Fishermen's Races conducted in the 1920s. In 1923 she competed with two others: the *Elizabeth Howard*, built in East Boothbay at the Adams yard (she also either sank or piled up on a ledge in East Boothbay's harbor in 1919 while in for repairs), and the Thomas McManus-designed *Henry Ford* (she ended her life wrecked on a ledge between Labrador and Newfoundland). The *Shamrock* came in a dismal third in the 1923 race, well behind the *Henry Ford*, which won just two minutes ahead of the *Howard*. As Wesley Pierce put it in *Goin' Fishin'*, the *Shamrock* was revealed to be "only an ordinary sailor." But those Banks fishermen were eternally handsome and admired for their looks and handling ability.

For more articles by Barbara Rumsey check our website www.boothbayhistorical.org/out-of-our-past

BRHS Events

Save the date

May 10

SPEAKER SERIES: The Tenders of Southport Bridge. Program starts at 4:30 p.m.

May 15

ANNUAL MEETING Boothbay Region Historical Society. Meeting starts at 4:00 p.m. BRHS members and the public are invited. Illustrated talk.

July 18-21 and 25-28

Silent Auction at BRHS.

July 26

SPEAKER SERIES: The Evolution of Washburn & Doughty Associates. Program starts at 4:30 p.m.

July 28

Bake Sale at BRHS and Silent Auction winners announced.

August 23 SPEAKER SERIES: 1950s Vaudeville Shows Rise

Once More! Program starts at 4:30 p.m.

September 6 SPEAKER SERIES: History of Quilting Trunk Show

Program starts at 4:30 p.m.

All events are free and open to the public.

For more information please check our [Events Page](#) and the upcoming **Spring 2018 Newsletter.**

www.boothbayhistorical.org

BRHS News



Have you seen this on TV? We own the glass plate negative of the *Shamrock* in the article above. The photograph is a part of [Maine Historical Society's Maine Memory Network](#) This winter Maine Historical Society sold a digital right to the photograph for use by the DIY Network for their show "[Building Off the Grid](#)".

To see all 67 of our photographs on Maine Memory Net work [click here](#).

Sign-up for our enews!

Do you have friends who would like to receive this enewsletter?

They can now sign-up on our [website](#).

Our Volunteers



Margaret Tew enjoys working in the BRHS archives, and has been volunteering at BRHS since 2011. Margaret grew up in Georgia but has deep roots in the Boothbay region. Her mother, Margaret Orne Kelly, grew up in West Boothbay Harbor, and Margaret summered here as a child. Margaret's great-great- grandparents, Thomas and Margaret Campbell Orne, built a house on Orne's Hill in 1837 in which Margaret and her husband Dave now live.

Would you like to join us in researching and preserving Boothbay's fascinating history?

[Click here](#) to call or email BRHS for information on volunteering.

Members' Corner

Welcome!

new BRHS members

Ira and Constance Machon of Charleston, South Carolina.

Your membership makes a difference.

Shop BRHS

Boothbay Region Historical Sketches, Volume III, editor Barbara Rumsey, published in 2007, \$16.00

The sketches in this third anthology highlight facets of our unique, historic region. Subjects range from the ever-fascinating islands and lighthouses to the reality behind local legends, from early nineteenth rascals to characters from the 1950s, from fishing stories to profiles of shipyards and beloved local vessels. Some of Boothbay's more memorable and colorful citizens, from both the remote and the recent past, are profiled in this third anthology. The dreaded Horn-Decker gang of the early 1800s, a teller of tall tales, several Boothbay Harbor eccentrics of the early 1900s, and memorable characters of East Boothbay and Ocean Point—all come to life.

For information on purchasing this book please [click here](#) to call or email us.

And remember your member discount.

**Boothbay Region Historical Society is open all year,
Thursday through Saturday, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.**

For more information

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[Boothbay Region Historical Society](#)

72 Oak Street

Post Office Box 272

Boothbay Harbor, Maine 04538

207.633.0820

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