

BRHS News August 2019
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From Our Archives



The John Kelley/Fannie Blake home, circa 1910 in North Boothbay where the Adams reunion was held in 1916. It burned later in the 1910s, and the present house, built by Milton Barter, is the site of Boothbay Mechanics.

Summer 1916

By Barbara Rumsey
(written in 1996)

As summer 1916 approached, the summer colonies, including Squirrel Island, Capitol Island, Juniper Point, and Ocean Point, started their columns in the Register. At the height of the season, even the inns had their own columns—the Oake Grove Hotel, the Spruce Point House, the Squirrel Inn, and the Bayville Inn, as well as others listed their guests and activities. For instance, in late July, the Oake Grove had outings in the boats *Gee Whiz* and the *Get2It* to the islands and an excursion to Oak Point for one of Captain Free McKown's clambake. Manley Reed took special care of the Oake Grove guests, being available for ferrying with the *Avalon*. The inns were resorts in themselves, providing much more than sheets and food.

On July 7 the front page reported that lightning had killed a bull owned by Poole Brothers on Damariscove. Two weeks later they replaced the bull with one bought from Warren Holton of North Boothbay. Arnold Brewer was stationed on the Mexican frontier with the Signal Corps. And summer activities were everywhere: the Commonwealth School of Music was putting on a concert and the steamers were crowded with pleasure-seekers.

Baseball, Seals, Steamer Captain, Racing Shell Builder

Since May the Boothbay baseball team, Nat Grover captain, had provided weekly front page news; and on July 14 they played Brunswick. Movies at the Opera House were another form of regular entertainment. The fish hatchery's Captain George Greenleaf, in his vessel *Gannet*, caught the first seal ever to be exhibited at the hatchery. Captain C. C. Decker of Southport, steamer commander of the palatial *Bunker Hill* on the Boston-New York run, was profiled. William Stevens, the local canoe and shell builder, was building some Spanish cedar sailing canoes for racing on the St. Lawrence. The Stevens business was located on the Harbor's west side waterfront.

By July 28 the Townsend Marine Railway had framed the new hatchery vessel, Steamer *Halcyon*, and they were to start on a 200-foot coasting vessel for Crowell & Thurlow. These World War I years were to be the twilight of the big wooden vessel building years. Squirrel Island's column was given over to whether cats should be taxed to help the songbirds.

Those who remember the chimney on Commercial Street saw a remnant of a cold storage plant whose coming construction was front page news August 4. It was to extend from J. C. Poole's wharf (site of Fisherman's Wharf) to Sherman's Stable (Kaler's). Robie Kelley, the R.F.D. man, was profiled; he used a relay of horses on his 27-mile route, and in July had delivered 11,238 pounds of mail. Evard Dodge was profiled on his birthday; he had lived in Boothbay for 42 years and had run his brickyard on the Damariscotta River until 1910.

A special town meeting was held to consider permanently paving Townsend Avenue and to consider what to do about the high school overflow, according to the August 11 paper. An 18-pound lobster was on exhibit at the hatchery, and the yacht *Sea Dog* was launched from the Irving Reed yard on the east side. Wilder Blake and Cyrus Tupper—Crime Fighters

August 18 the big news was the detective work of Wilder Blake, who "through shrewdness and nerve," caught a check forger who was employed at Sawyer's sardine factory. (According to Lester Barter, "Hod" Sawyer's factory was on or near the site of the east side cold storage.) Things moved a lot faster then—the probable cause hearing being held immediately in Judge Cyrus Tupper's

office in the harbor, and the culprit off to jail. Because of the obvious new popularity of cars, there was a large public meeting about the need for better roads. Running the meeting were Harbor residents Dr. George Gregory, W. H. Reed of the Oake Grove, and Hiram McDougall, a storekeeper. (According to the valuation records in the Boothbay town office, there had been one car in the town in 1901, two in 1911, eight in 1914, and 21 in 1916.)

The week of August 25 the paper reported on a big affair at the Westport Grange that included the granges of Boothbay, Boothbay Harbor, Southport, Edgecomb, and Georgetown. The Adams family reunion was held at Mrs. John Kelley's, later the site of Boothbay Mechanics in North Boothbay. Her daughter Mrs. Frank "Fannie" Blake was elected president of the Adams family reunion organization. J. P. Perkins, Chandler Reed, Cyrus Tupper, H. W. Bishop, and Luther Maddocks all chose to serve on the Good Roads Committee whose main purpose was to gain a good road between Wiscasset and Boothbay Harbor. Oscar Poor's obituary was printed. He had been the oldest man in town, and listed were the number of times he'd been shipwrecked. The oldest woman in town was Harriet Bryer who lived with her daughter Mrs. James Pinkham at Trevett. The Neptune and Sawyer sardine plants on the east side were humming along.

On September 1, worries about a railroad strike and the trouble they would cause summer visitors returning home were front-page news. There were political rallies at the Opera House. Judge John Brackett led the Republican rally which suffered from poor weather—the parade was cancelled. Two nights later the Democrats' rally was attended by 400 people, complete with good weather. Both parties took credit for all favorable conditions and accused the opposing party of unfairly taking credit for those conditions. The business of Pierce & Brewer was dissolved, Newbert Pierce to continue the furniture, hardware, and paint business; while Ralph Brewer was to build boats. Roy Buxton was to stay on with Pierce to carry on the undertaking business. A versatile business—paint, furniture, bolts, and funerals! The Good Roads League met again and the summer ended with the last recital of the Commonwealth School of Music.

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

EVENTS

Thursday, September 5, 4:30 pm

The Life of Capt. Anders Anderson



John Anderson grew up listening to family stories about his beloved grandfather, Capt. Anders Anderson. When John inherited his grandfather's ship logs, he embarked on a journey to learn as much as he could about Capt. Anderson's fascinating life. From leaving his family farm in Sweden as a teenager, to becoming a ship captain in Maine and falling in love with a lighthouse keeper's daughter, the story of Capt. Anderson is a moving reminder of a way of life which has since disappeared. *Borne On the Wind* is John Anderson's biography of his grandfather.

For more information on upcoming events, please check our website's [Events Calendar](#).

CURRENT EXHIBITS



Ranco Basketmakers

The Boothbay Region Historical Society is currently exhibiting baskets and gift items made by the

Ranco family from 1906 to the mid-1900s. From the advent of summer colonies in 1870s coastal Maine, Penobscot Indians seasonally came from the reservation in Old Town to make and sell their baskets to local buyers where there were summer visitors.

Read Barbara Rumsey's article in the Boothbay Register about the exhibit [here](#).
To check our website for exhibits [click here](#).

RAFFLE



What could be more fun than a fire engine ride?

Not much.

So you will want to buy LOTS of raffle tickets so that you, and up to seven companions, can enjoy a private ride on Charlie Bamberg's beautiful 1957 International Pumper next summer! Your unforgettable two-hour tour may be scheduled on a date convenient for both you and Charlie between the end of May and September 10, 2020. [Click here](#) for more information.

Raffle tickets are \$1.00 per ticket or 6 for \$5.00 and may be purchased at the society's museum at 72 Oak Street, Boothbay Harbor or by sending a check and a self-addressed stamped envelope to BRHS, PO Box 272, Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538. Be sure to include a return address. The drawing will be October 12, 2019.

Your purchase of raffle tickets supports BRHS. Thank you!

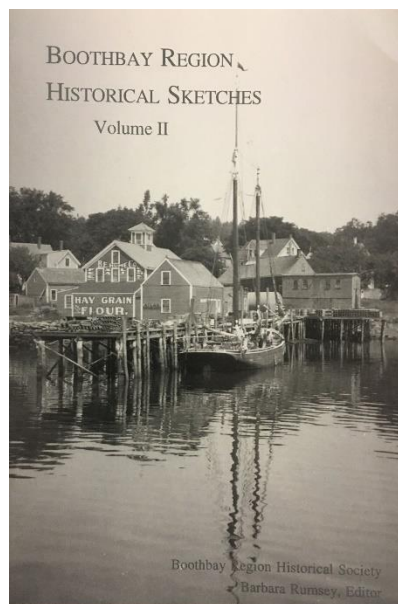
GENEALOGICAL & HISTORICAL RESEARCH



Who are those guys, anyway?

Come visit us and let us help you with your research. Our archives are extensive. For more information, including a list of family names, [click here](#) to check our website's Family Files page.

MUSEUM STORE



Boothbay Region Historical Sketches, Volume II

Barbara Rumsey, Editor

\$15.00

Call us for your copy!

The subject matter ranges from: the creation of Boothbay and Boothbay Harbor, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the region brickyards, vanished features, Linekin Neck, the region in the 1840s and in the 1910s, profiles of some of our residents, and more. Barbara Rumsey wrote most of the articles, while Asa Tupper Sr., Jim Stevens, and Alden Stickney provided four of them.

[Click here](#) for more information on this title.

[Click here](#) for the BRHS Museum Store.

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Boothbay Region Historical Society

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*Come visit! We're open year-round,
Thursday through Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm.*

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