



# Boothbay Region Historical Society

Volume 32, Issue 2

Fall 2019

## Harbor Lights Open House Saturday, December 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. *Please join us - all are welcome!*

The holidays will soon be here, and we hope you'll add the society's annual community open house to your busy schedule. The museum will be seasonally dressed in holiday decorations, traditional greens, vintage greeting cards, and historical photographs. Homemade finger foods, hot beverages, and an array of treats will be available for your pleasure.

Wander the museum's two floors and six exhibit rooms. Enjoy the special exhibit focusing on baskets and gift items made by the Ranco family from 1906 to the mid-1990s. From the advent of summer colonies in 1870s coastal Maine, Penobscot Indians came from the reservation in Old Town to make and sell their baskets to local buyers wherever there were summer visitors.

This is your last chance to buy raffle tickets to win the 41"x29" framed photograph "Turbulent Sea at Ocean Point" by Robert Mitchell, donated by Mitchell and Ae Home/Wilde Designs. Tickets are \$1.00 each or six for \$5.00. All proceeds support the society's continuing efforts to preserve and promote interest in the Boothbay region's rich history. The drawing will be held at the open house. The winner will also receive a 20th anniversary edition of Mitchell's 2020 calendar "Around Boothbay Harbor."

A wonderful holiday event ... don't miss it!



## Coming in 2020

### The Museum in the Streets

As defined by their website:

*"The Museum in the Streets© creates heritage discovery trails for the benefit of a community's inhabitants and tourists."* This process begins by determining which sites would merit special recognition for their historical value to a community and how they might be incorporated into an easy walking trail.



Earlier this summer a committee was formed by the Boothbay Harbor selectmen to create a list of possible sites. Barbara Rumsey and her assistant Margaret Tew have since begun the laborious task of gathering photographs and historical data from the society's archives. Eventually, these images and supportive text will describe each view.

By May 2020, the town expects to have more than twenty panels packed with historical images and information erected at sites throughout the east and west sides of the harbor. Future options may include the addition of more panels, as well as a digital application to allow viewers to access more information by scanning with a smartphone.

The historical society enthusiastically supports this project and hopes residents and visitors will appreciate and support this effort. Please follow the Register for ongoing updates from the committee on sites, fundraising, and timetables.

We look forward to having some of the harbor's history readily available to folks strolling the harbor's edge.



For more information visit Maine's official bicentennial website: [www.maine200.org](http://www.maine200.org)

On March 15, 1820, as a result of the Missouri Compromise, Maine became the nation's 23rd state, entering the Union as a free state. To maintain sectional balance, Missouri was allowed to enter as a slave-holding state.

During 2020, communities throughout the state will celebrate this milestone event. The historical society will join in by offering exhibits designed to bring the political arguments and social movements of the times into focus, along with their effects on daily life in the region. We will also be hosting events and activities free to our communities.

Do you have a family journal or photographs from that time? Or perhaps from the centennial in 1920? Was your family a part of the community in the 1820s? Please let us know. We will be sharing our plans through Facebook and our monthly e-news.



The original 23-star US flag

## Message from President Kay Wilder

Dear Friends,



It's hard to believe we're coming to the end of another busy season. Although summer got off to a slow start, office manager Claire Rittershaus reports many visitors came to the museum looking for information on families and properties, simply to browse, or to attend our speaker programs. Earlier in the year, outreach manager Kathy Goldner's educational programs were popular with several local third-grade classes. Kathy is also coordinating visits with high school researchers from as far away as Brunswick. It's exciting to see a whole new generation being introduced to, and appreciating, the value of the historical society.

As noted on page one, we are pleased the town of Boothbay Harbor is undertaking the project called "The Museum in the Streets." When a local resident brought this group to our attention last year, we knew it was a worthy project, but just too big for the historical society to tackle alone. With Barbara Rumsey working with the town committee, we know the information and images at each site chosen by the town will be historically accurate. While our planning is just beginning for Maine's bicentennial, we look forward to being part of the statewide celebration. Look for more information on our website, in our monthly e-news, and on our Facebook page as plans progress. We have also joined the Boothbay Harbor Region Chamber of Commerce and will be sharing plans with other businesses.

As the year winds down, we invite you to attend our annual open house on December 7 so we may thank you for your support. Without donations, membership dues, and our hard-working volunteers, we would not be able to engage in the many projects and programs that benefit our communities and future generations.

Finally, a simple request: when downsizing or clearing out, please consider donating to the museum unwanted books, artifacts, photographs, and documents (such as letters, diaries, and certificates) with a direct connection to the Boothbay region. We depend on such donations to keep our archives growing.

Thank you, *Kay Wilder*

### Boothbay Region Historical Society

*President*  
Kay Wilder

*Vice President*  
Kathy Tibbetts

*Secretary*  
Kay Evans

*Treasurer*  
Sarah Giles

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Jim Botti

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Laurie Simmons  
Ann Sutter  
Kathy Tibbetts  
Kay Wilder

*Trustee Emeritus*  
Bea Walker

*Office Manager*  
Claire Rittershaus

*Local Historian*  
Barbara Rumsey

*Outreach Manager*  
Kathy Goldner

### *Newsletter Contributors*

Debbe Cotter  
Judy Eastwood  
Kathy Goldner  
Claire Rittershaus  
Barbara Rumsey  
Kathy Tibbetts  
Kay Wilder

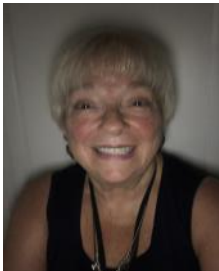
### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Boothbay Region Historical Society is to promote interest in the history of the Boothbay region and to preserve the region's history.

BRHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit org.

**Great Works Internet** (GWI) offers a subsidized service free of charge to non-profit organizations. Thank you to GWI for generously providing BRHS with an email account.

## Welcome New Trustees



### Debbe Cotter

Born and raised in New England, Debbe always planned to retire to Maine. Before that, she earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees, raised three children, taught at a Jesuit boys' school (grades 6-12) for 25 years, and was an adjunct professor at Loyola University in

Baltimore, MD.

Debbe is a certified cyber safety expert, a National Writing Project consultant, and former owner-operator of El-Bo Associates, LLC, a professional clowning agency.

With her long-time partner Lawrence, she vacationed in Boothbay Harbor for over twenty years before they moved here permanently.

Once settled, Debbe became involved with several organizations: the Boothbay Railway Village, the Boothbay Region Land Trust, the Maine Maritime Museum, the Botanical Gardens, and, her special favorite, the Boothbay Region Historical Society. She looks forward to working with the members of the society and to learning more about the history of her house and this fabulous town she now calls home.

We're glad Debbe's interest in community and in Maine history has brought her to the society, where she has been working as a volunteer since 2017 and now brings her talents and enthusiasm to the board.



### John Leonard

John was born in Boothbay Harbor at St. Andrews hospital on October 26, 1961. While he doesn't remember too much about that experience, he does remember going to kindergarten at the Old Town Hall, now located at the Railway Village on the left as you first pass through

the gates. John attended East Boothbay and the Center School, after which the high school seemed huge. He studied Culinary Arts for two years at Southern Maine Vocational Technical Institute while also working at Fisherman's Wharf summers, starting as a freshman washing pots and pans. Soon after his time at S.M.V.T.I., John traveled to Florida. "It's all in who you know," he says, regarding his procuring a job at the Hillsboro Club in Pompano Beach, thanks to Dickie Spofford.

He met his wife Donna and went to work in New Hampshire at the Bernerhoff. When they moved to Richmond, Maine, their children Emma and Jacob, now 21 and 23, were born. Donna, a talented chef, cooked for the Hyde School in Bath for 25 years before retiring to help with John's Lawns, their landscaping business in Boothbay.

With his children leaving the nest and the next chapter of his and Donna's life just beginning, we are delighted that John accepted a position on our board.

## 2019 in Review



### Speaker Series

Our 2019 Speaker Series began in May with the dynamic Liz Evans, who often had us laughing with fascinating stories about the history of the East Boothbay General Store, and how she came to own and run this local landmark.

Also in May, Maine State Historian Earle Shettleworth gave a riveting and beautifully illustrated talk about the early photographers of Monhegan Island. We saw the first photograph of Monhegan which was taken in 1859, and the subsequent stunning images taken in the 1800s by famous American artists and photographers who were captivated by the island.

In August, author Peggy Konitzky presented compelling stories from her book *Midcoast Maine in World War II* of midcoast Maine heroes and their remarkable achievements during the Second World War.



After the talk, the audience shared their own moving stories of life in the Boothbay region during World War II.

Our next speaker, John Anderson, spoke to us in September about the life of his grandfather, Captain Anders Anderson.

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 was a reminder of a way of life which has since disappeared.



Our most recent speaker,

back by popular demand, was award-winning quilt historian Wendy Caton Reed, who generously presented fifty of her quilts and discussed many historic styles of quilting from her popular *History of Quilting Trunk Show*.



## Annual Meeting



The annual meeting took place on May 21, 2019. Following presentation of the society's annual reports, new trustees and officers were elected by the membership. New trustees Debbe Cotter and John Leonard were elected. Returning trustees Jan Reit, Laurie Simmons, Ann Sutter, and Kathy Tibbetts were elected for new terms as well. Elected as officers for the 2019-2020 term were Kay Wilder, president; Kathy Tibbetts, vice president; Kay Evans, secretary; and Sarah Giles, treasurer.

Following the business meeting, the audience enjoyed a lively presentation by Liz Evans, owner of the East Boothbay General Store.

## 2019 Fundraisers

Thanks to our faithful volunteers and bakers for making our summer bake sale a great success. The day was made even better with the addition of a shade tent provided by Hawke Motors. Thank you, Stephanie.

Our annual cheese sale in October was another success. Again this year, we had Grafton Village cheese and more for sale at the Railway Village, and cheese and baked goods at the museum. Thank you, Kay Evans, cheese sale chair.



**2019 Raffles:** The lucky winner of a special party on Charlie Bamberg's classic fire truck is Judy Eastwood! Don't forget to take a chance on the Robert Mitchell print to be drawn at the holiday open house.

*Thank you to all who participated. All proceeds directly support the many projects undertaken by the society to protect and share the region's history.*

## New Office Manager



A perfect match for BRHS, Claire Rittershaus previously worked as the office manager for an open source software company in Boston, where she planned everything from waffle parties to tech conferences. Claire continues to organize an annual holiday sale for Almost Perfect Glass, a studio in Cambridge, Mass. that kicks off with a fundraiser for Women Working for Oceans (W2O). In addition to her duties with the society, Claire works part time for Hodgdon Yachts as a purchasing assistant.

Currently, Claire and her boyfriend Ben are fixing up an old house on Barter's Island that belonged to her grandmother but that had been vacant for 10 years when they moved in last October. Claire is project-oriented and loves making things from cookies to salves to shell garlands and more. Her creativity and attention to detail make her an invaluable asset. Plus, her ready smile is a warm addition to the society.



## In Memoriam



Lorraine Hodgdon, a historical society trustee for five years, is remembered as sweet and soft-spoken, always ready to do what she could to help. As a valued member of the BRHS Speaker Committee for a number of years, she handled tasks quietly and without fanfare but always willingly and reliably.

In addition to her work with the historical society, Lorraine was a Life Member of The Order of the Eastern Star. She was a trustee of the Cemetery District, Barter's Island Community Center, St. Andrew's Hospital Auxiliary, and the original Boothbay Community Association.

Lorraine never failed to step up when help was needed. That mischievous twinkle in her eye, along with her loving ways, will be sorely missed by so many.

## Membership Matters

Presently we have 418 members. We wish to thank all our members for your continued support, vital to the society's day-to-day operation. Membership benefits include two newsletters, e-updates, and a 10% discount in the gift shop.

We are always curious to know why you have joined, whether an interest in a property you own, a love of the region, or a family connection to the area.

### New Members since last newsletter

- Chamaea Edwards.....Reno, Nev.
- Tom and Sara Kerr.....East Boothbay, Me.
- Elaine J. Robinson.....Eliot, Me.
- Peggy Kotin.....Boothbay, Me.
- Bill & Pat Searle.....Sun City West, Ariz.
- Annie Wilder.....Boothbay Harbor, Me.
- Dee Van Donselaar.....Salinas, Calif.
- Erik & Donna Peterson.....Cape Elizabeth, Me.
- Jean L. Gudaitis.....Southport, Me.



## Ranco Basket Exhibit

Penobscot Indians from the Old Town reservation came to the region beginning in the 1870s to sell their baskets and other gift items. This exhibit shows the craftsmanship in items created by the Ranco family, who came to the region to sell their wares into the 1970s. We appreciate these donations from several people who remember the Rancos well.

## What is it?



This item is about 4 inches by 6 inches, made of heavy iron, with a number of interesting parts. Although it looks a bit alien, it once would have been found in many kitchens. It appears to be a combo bottle opener, meat tenderizer, and more, including a long pry bar to lift stovetop burners. Just one of the many interesting items you'll come across while browsing the museum!

## HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS

### Maps:

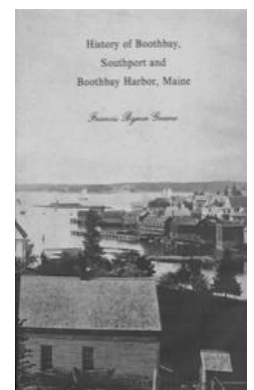
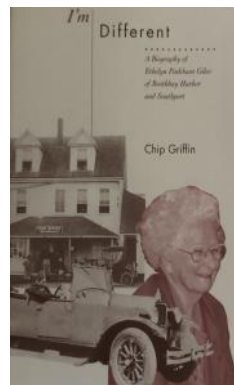
- 1815 Boothbay map with key to owners..... \$6.00
- 1885 Boothbay Harbor.....\$5.00
- 1948 Boothbay region with house sites.....\$12.00

### Our most popular books:

- The Boothbay Region, 1906-1960*; Clifford.....\$12.95
- Boothbay Region Historical Sketches II*; Rumsey...\$15.00
- Boothbay Region Historical Sketches III*; Rumsey...\$16.00
- Colonial Boothbay, mid-1600s to 1775*; Rumsey...\$16.00
- Family History of the Boothbay Region*; Greene....\$25.00
- Hodgdon Shipbuilding and Mills*; Rumsey.....\$15.00
- Shipping Days of Old Boothbay*; Rice.....\$45.00

Shop our gift area for more books and maps, BRHS magnets, commemorative coins, vintage postcards, notepaper, historical photographs, and more.

**Members receive a 10% discount**



## Collections by Barbara Rumsey

Margaret Tew, Jan Reit, Judy Eastwood, Kay Wilder, and Kay Evans have been helping with the nuts and bolts of the core of the society, caring for the artifact and documentary collections by accessioning, cataloging, and labelling artifacts, photos, and documents. Many thanks to all!

### Acquisitions

Below are acquisitions since the last newsletter. The painting of the *Torrent*, mentioned below, was on loan to us for many months in 1996 by its owner Bob Blake; he promised to have his family give it to us after his death. Since being given to us this spring, it has been visited by multiple Montgomery descendants who had only seen a photo of it in George Rice's 1938 book, *The Shipping Days of Old Boothbay*. It is a great addition to our collections. Such donations help to tell the region's story. We are grateful to all our donors who help build our collections.

Debbie McMann: metal ship's papers box of East Boothbay captain, Robert Montgomery, and framed 1856 watercolor by Domenico Gavaronne of the brig *Torrent*, built in East Boothbay, showing her entering Genoa harbor that year under Robert Montgomery



Alfred Pinkham: a pack basket and a wheeled grocery basket made by the Rancos, an Indian family that came here seasonally for many decades to sell their basket wares

Sally Walbridge: a child's shoe found in the wall of the Walbridge-Hodgdon house on Hodgdon Island

Jean Chenoweth: a decorative sewing basket she bought from the Ranco family in the 1940s

Debbie Swan Snyder: framed photo collage of local views

Deanne and David Tibbetts: two pieces of decorative mudcloth from the South Pacific acquired by Max Tibbetts in World War II; also two songbooks—1917 "Songs of the Soldiers and Sailors of the U. S." and 1915 "The One Hundred and One Best Songs"

Rose Marie Kreppein: Hilda Hume's handwritten cookbook

Brenda Blackman: Fisherman's Festival trophy topped with Norman Therrien sculpture of sea life and listing winners of 1978-1998 contests

Skip McPhee: photo of Leavitt's Garage at the Center

Betty Jean Maddocks: 15 high school yearbooks, collection of old documents, brochures, and postcards

Alice Hodgdon Thompson: collection of plans of vessels built by her father Norman Hodgdon

### Articles

Below are articles that have appeared in the column, Out of Our Past, in the Boothbay Register since the last newsletter. Nine were by Barbara Rumsey with one by Jean Chenoweth.

*The Passenger Boat Association and Captain Ross Dickson, Part III*

*Taming the Big Hills*

*The Sinking of the Natalie B. Nickerson, Parts I and II*

*Bob Goodspeed's Memories, Parts I through III*

*The Sea Pier Property, Parts I through III*

## Clark Linekin by Kathy Tibbetts

Linekin Bay located in Boothbay was named for the settlers of the same name. One member of that family was Clark Linekin, born c. 1728 who married Sarah Burnham in Ipswich, Massachusetts in 1758. They purchased land at Linekin in 1761.

In 1766 Clark borrowed money from his uncle Benjamin Linekin. As Clark was unable to repay the loan, he created a promissory note for repayment and forged the name of his uncle and a witness. Ultimately his actions were discovered, and he was arrested. Clark pled guilty and served a month in jail, wearing a paper pinned to his shirt with large capital letters "FORGERY."

In September of 1777 while the British frigate *Rainbow* was anchored near Linekin Bay, Clark was accused of trading with the enemy. As he was unable to pay bail, he served his time in the Pownalborough Jail. In a petition submitted to the General Court of Massachusetts, he stated that he was out in Linekin Bay fishing in his canoe. He saw two Men of War anchored nearby. He claimed one of their boats came and abducted him. While aboard their vessel, he was threatened and kept until he agreed to supply them with vegetables and beef. In December he petitioned the court for release and described the cold conditions he and other prisoners were forced to endure, "little cloths only a shirt and a thin Jaccot to ware and por britches and no Shews and Stockings gave me since I have been in Gaol and no blanckett to cover me...only some hay given me, without any coveren which is too hard for human nature to bare..."

In February 1778, the Massachusetts General Court declared Clark be absolved of his charges and released after spending approximately 5 months in jail. Clark believed a grudge for his previous forgery was the reason for this charge.



Hand drawn map by Clark Linekin



BOOTHBAY REGION HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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 Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538-0272

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### Open Year Round Hours of Operation:

Thursday through Saturday  
 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Local historian Barbara  
 Rumsey is available for  
 research questions on Saturdays  
 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
 or by chance.

Phone: (207) 633-0820  
 Email: [brhs@gwi.net](mailto:brhs@gwi.net)  
[www.boothbayhistorical.org](http://www.boothbayhistorical.org)

*Please advise us of any mailing address, phone number, or email address changes.*

## Give the Gift of Membership

A gift membership may lead to the discovery of family history, to the beginnings of their home or the street they live on, or simply to gain insight into times past. Your support helps us preserve local history for generations to come.



### Robert Mitchell Raffle

The society is grateful to Robert Mitchell Photography and Ae Home/Wilde Designs for their wonderful donation to our 2019 fundraising efforts. The winner will be drawn at our holiday open house on Dec. 7.

For more information on buying tickets, please contact the office at 207-633-0820 or [brhs@gwi.net](mailto:brhs@gwi.net), or visit [www.boothbayhistorical.org](http://www.boothbayhistorical.org).

### Membership Form

Members receive a newsletter or e-news update quarterly and a 10% discount on gift shop items. Memberships run May 1-April 30.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Choose Your Membership Level

- Individual \$ 15.00
- Family \$ 25.00
- Contributing \$ 50.00
- Supporting \$ 100.00
- Leadership (over \$100) \$ \_\_\_\_\_



Please send checks payable to:

**Boothbay Region Historical Society**  
 P.O. Box 272, Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538-0272

The BRHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

### Did you know ...?

*You can receive full-color electronic versions of our newsletters, as well as e-news updates. Simply contact the office with your email information.*