

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

[View this email in your browser](#)



Boothbay Region Historical Society News

May 2020

Researching and preserving our history

It will not be forgotten

Photograph: Barbers Island class in the 1950s

From Our Archives

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

Chester Farmer opened a clam canning factory at Back Narrows in 1914, moving a building across the Damariscotta River from Bristol to house it. Farmer's factory was located at the bottom of Camps Hill across from Fort Island. It operated seasonally, in the fall and summer, until 1942, with as many as 50 men digging and processing clams. A crew of Chester's clammers (above), all Back Narrows men, check over their hods in the 1930s. Left to right: Will Hutchins, Carl Doughty, Darrell Bryer, Gordon Bryer, and Harold Bryer. The man among the barrels in the stake truck is Shirley Cunningham.

Photo courtesy of Doris Bryer Smith.

Spring 1916

By Barbara Rumsey

(first published in the Boothbay Register)

The front page stories of old *Boothbay Registers* reveal what was of immediate interest to the region townspeople—in this case, 104 years ago.

Every front page story on March 31, 1916 was maritime-related. A report on the Cold Storage Plant stated that it had its most successful year, taking in 6,870 barrels of fish (520,000 pounds). One third was bait fish, and two-thirds consisted of food fish shipped to New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. The Townsend Marine Railway (now Sample's) was building a new vessel, the *Halcyon*, for the fish hatchery: "Naval Architect Stevens [One of the founders of the Goudy & Stevens shipyard] was here in regard to the plans. The oak planks for the *Halcyon* are cut and on the Newcastle shore awaiting scows." A vessel could still, at least partially, be built locally by going into the woods nearby and cutting the desired trees. 1916's modern twist was that a portable mill could roughcut the planking in the woods instead of rafting the timber to a permanent mill. A third story was that

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

Thompson had gone to Augusta to try to shake loose some action on rebuilding the Southport bridge.

Dogfish, Vessels, and Baseball

April 7, 1916 the top story was an attempt to quell rumors that dogfish attacked humans. Some reservations had been canceled at the Oake Grove Hotel because a Boston paper misquoted Luther Maddocks concerning dogfish. The Boothbay region was, as always, politicking to get more business in town, with some farmers and merchants trying to persuade the Turner Center Creamery to build a Boothbay facility. And the steamers, such as *Wiwurna*, were being readied for summer service at their Southport winter quarters near what is now Robinson's Wharf.

April 14 the doings at the Townsend Marine Railway were profiled: steamer *Islander* was on the ways for work, while a fishing schooner and a 100-foot yacht awaited their turns. Baseball was always front page news, with Boothbay—not the school, but grown men—fielding a team every year. In 1916 Nat Grover was captain and Erald Sawyer was manager of the Samoset Club baseball team. An 1813 letter, sent by Amasa Piper of Boothbay to William King of Bath, was printed giving his eyewitness account of the *Boxer* and *Enterprise's* battle. April 21 the top story was Cyrus Tupper's nomination as judge by Gov. Curtis.

Summer was coming and April 28 the steamer schedule was announced, with the *Wiwurna* and *Nahanada* having trips from Bath every day; and the Boston, Portland, and Rockland boats were profiled. Harrie Smith was named superintendent of schools, and Myra Sherman (Mrs. Daniel) Dodge was proclaimed the oldest lady in town. A long obituary was devoted to Dr. Merrill, Squirrel Island's "Gray Squirrel," who had written the summer colony's column for so long.

The Famous Chicken Case and a Dead Whale

A popular form of entertainment was the mock trial, a comic play depending on ludicrous circumstances. May 5, 1916 the paper reported on the performance of "The Famous Chicken Case." Appearing were L. A. Moore as judge, Leslie Blake as clerk, W. O. Dunton as sheriff, Dick Hallett and Sherb Stevens as defense attorneys, Roy Buxton as prosecutor, and Chester Miller as prisoner. Female witnesses were Dutchy Auld and Roy Rowe, while male witnesses were Carl Pennell, Donald Blossom, and Nat Grover. Also described May 5 were the sea trials of the U.S.'s greatest warship, the new super dreadnought *Pennsylvania*. Two region men were involved—John A. Thompson was captaining the ship and Harry Giles was engineer.

Grange matters were always big news. May 12 the Southport Grange welcomed nine other Lincoln

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

out in kettles on the shore. Another front page story was a report on the senior class's trip to Washington by steamer and train. May 19 the great amount of vessel construction expected at the Townsend Marine Railway was listed: a three-masted schooner, a 90-foot steamer, a 110-foot steamer, and five 165-foot barges. The summer steamers were getting under way, the *Islander* already on her route from Boothbay to Gardiner and Augusta. Though our entrance into the war was about a year away, it was rippling into Boothbay; Hite Thurston was contributing by making dies for ammunition shells in his machine shop.

Baseball—a perennially favorite topic—had front page coverage again May 26, with the paper reporting that the "crowd goes nearly frantic" when Boothbay upset Bath. Memorial Day was much more elaborate than it is now, an all-day affair, and the lengthy program was printed May 26. Some of the summer colonies had started their columns for the season, Squirrel, Ocean Point, and Murray Hill among them. June 2 the baseball team defeated Bowdoin's Delta Upsilon team, and the graduation exercises for the nine seniors were covered, as well as the eleventh alumni banquet. The passenger boats, *Nellie G.* and the *Richard T.*, started their summer routes.

Samosets Swamp Shipping City's Sanguine Citizens Saturday

War was brought again to the town's attention with six destroyers in the Harbor June 9. The intent was to promote preparedness, to familiarize their crews with the shoreline. Most of the front page consisted of a report on the Harbor's schools: the high school, center primary [Oak Street], west side, east side, #8 [Lakeside Drive], and #17 [Lakeview Drive]. The baseball team did it again: "Samosets Swamp Shipping City's Sanguine Citizens Saturday," defeating Bath. Lastly, the Board of Health was requested to remove the dead whale on Southport.

The Oake Grove Hotel, owned by W. Herbert and Chandler Reed, opened June 16. Also announced that day was the publication, mostly handled by Chandler Reed, of 10,000 descriptive booklets about Boothbay, a promotional item from the Board of Trade. The historical society has about three of the booklets and there are probably many others in town. It can be identified by the centerfold panorama of the Harbor from high on the east side. June 23 the Bayville Inn and the Lawnmere opened. Summer was upon the region.

For more articles by Barbara Rumsey check our website

www.boothbayhistorical.org/out-of-our-past

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

Boothbay Center World War II Memorial, September 17, 1944

Announcement

Dear Friends,

We're sorry to confirm that due to restrictions on gatherings, this year's annual meeting in May has been cancelled. We will attempt to reschedule Nat Wilson's talk for the fall. Normally, at this meeting members would vote for trustees for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. This year the current board of trustees will handle this vote by email.

As you may know, Windjammer Days has also been cancelled for this year, therefore we will not be enjoying the fundraising cruise scheduled aboard the schooner *Ardelle*. Hopefully, we can try again next year. Our bake sale and Nellie G II cruise are still on the calendar for August.

Fred Kaplan's talk on June 4 has been cancelled. Our bicentennial plans are also in limbo. Hopefully, we can create a small exhibit by August.

The museum remains closed to the public, with local historian Barbara Rumsey and office manager Claire Rittershaus working from home or singly at the museum. Outreach manager Kathy Goldner continues keeping our website, Facebook page, and e-news on track.

For research inquiries, please contact Barbara Rumsey at bsr@zwi.net.

For all other inquiries, contact Claire at brhs@zwi.net or 207-633-0820.

Please follow our website, e-news, or Facebook page for updated information.

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

East Boothbay School graduates c. 1915. In front: Birdene Shackleton. Seated: Carlos McKown, Thelma Barlow, Margaret Rice, Audrey McDougal, Malcolm Brewer. Standing: Grace Boyd, Irma Reed, teacher F.M. Malcolm, Doris Murray, Christopher Fernald.

And now for something completely different.

Membership!

You will be receiving your membership renewal letter in the mail
with a handy renewal form and envelope.

Thank you so much for sending in your renewal.

If you are not yet a member, please call our office at 207.633.0820,
leave a message and we will call you back.

We send all of you an especially grateful
thank you
from all of us at BRHS
for your support during this difficult time.

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

family trees, account books, ledgers, logs, maps, historical charts, vessel plans, and over 15,000 photographs, and allows us to share it all of you, and with third grade students at Boothbay Region Elementary School.



Let's celebrate our cultural heritage together

[Follow us on Facebook](#)
[or click here for our website.](#)

Boothbay Region Historical Society
72 Oak Street
Post Office Box 272
Boothbay Harbor, Maine 04538
207.633.0820

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

Copyright © 2018 Boothbay Region Historical Society, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Boothbay Region Historical Society · P.O. Box 272 · Boothbay Harbor, Me 04538 · USA

