



Mary G Maynard launch in 1920 at East Coast Ship Company

## A Window to the Past

*Boothbay Region Historical Society*

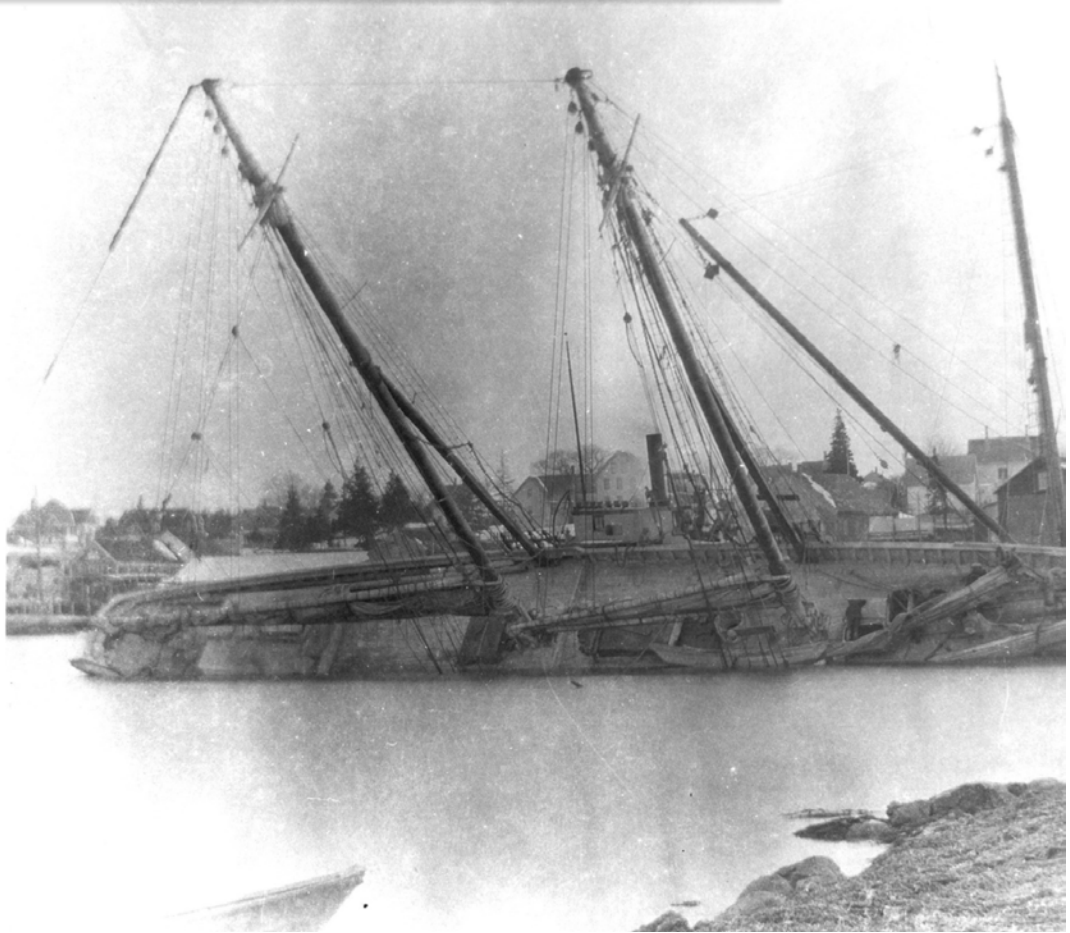
**July 2023**

*Researching and preserving our history*

*Your stories will not be forgotten*

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## From Our Archives



*The two-masted schooner Elizabeth Howard awash in the Damariscotta River at East Boothbay in January 1919.*

## *The Elizabeth Howard*

By Barbara Rumsey, 2023

I wrote this article back in 2004. I figure now enough years have elapsed for people to enjoy reading it again, or perhaps the population has changed enough in about 20 years to seem as though the article hadn't seen the light of day.

On December 9, 1916 the 119-foot schooner *Elizabeth Howard* was launched from Frank Adams's shipyard in East Boothbay's little harbor. The Adams Shipyard then occupied the site bought by Goudy & Stevens in 1924, which Goudy's continued to own for many decades. The *Howard's* owner was William Willard Howard of Gloucester; she was intended to be a mackerel fisherman. Upon having an engine installed in her, she became an auxiliary schooner. She was fitted out at dockside until early February 1919. Boothbay captain, Sammy Murray, took her to Gloucester. Soon thereafter her owner offered her as a patrol boat during the World War I war effort. It was more advantageous for the owner to have it taken with or without permission. A little bargaining could happen to the owner's advantage, such as squeezing in one more profit before being handed over to the government.

According to the January 24, 1919 Boothbay Register, she was back fishing, chiefly buying fish off Newfoundland and carrying the cargo to buyers. No doubt she depended on fish for bait and men and far-off southern states as much as it did vessels and guns. By then the *Elizabeth Howard* acquired the nickname, the White Ghost. The *Howard* made a delivery to New York and was run into by another vessel, but was seemingly barely damaged. With orders to head back to Newfoundland to get another load of fish, and then sail to Greece, she decided to put in to East Boothbay on her way to check for any repairs.

In early January 1919 she arrived at East Boothbay's harbor. She either sank from hidden damage or went aground on a ledge--either way she was on the bottom from her launching ways. Seen here, the view from the river is looking west to: on the left, the present site of Lobsterman's Wharf; center, the Hodgdon tidemill, its break (the million-dollar bridge during minesweeper days for the amount of money said to be wasted by men walking back and forth between the yards) and the Hodgdon stable; and the Hodgdon Brothers wharf and its shipyard boatshops, with the present post office building behind.

Pumped out by January 17, the *Howard* headed for the railway (now Sample's) to be checked for damage. While in the harbor, her cargo of over 400,000 pounds of fish was taken out, stacked in cords, and resalted. The first cord weighed 8,700 pounds--it must have been quite a sight to see about 46 cords of fish laid out on the Pinney wharf, now the Wharf area.

The *Elizabeth Howland* continued fishing until 1923 when she was caught in a storm off Nova Scotia and sank with all hands. The shallow fishing grounds a Newfoundland, and Labrador in Bay Chaleur were principal killing grounds for fish and for fishermen. Most years from the 1830s to the 1870s and beyond a few Boothbay not return from there. Gone with the lost vessels were their crews. Occasionally later visiting vessels got eyewitness reports of their fellow fishing companions being remains, wreckage, and belongings washing ashore. Fishing in the maritimes was a dangerous, fraught way to make a living.

For more articles by Barbara Rumsey about the Boothbay region check our website  
[www.boothbayhistorical.org/out-of-our-past](http://www.boothbayhistorical.org/out-of-our-past)

## SUMMER SPEAKER SERIES

### Dwight and Duane Lewis: The Bridge Tenders

**Thursday, July 13, 4:30pm**

Twin brothers Dwight and Duane Lewis tended the Southport Bridge for a combined ninety years, their father Norman tended the bridge for 42 years, and their sister The brothers also tended the South Bristol and Trevett bridges.

In their talk, “The Bridge Tenders,” on Thursday, July 13, at the Boothbay Region Historical Society museum, Dwight and Duane will reminisce about their fascinating experiences on some or all of these bridges.

The Southport Bridge is one of the few remaining moveable bridges in Maine, and it still swings. This type of bridge, once common, is now rare. When the bridge was hand-operated, but it has since been automated. From 1940 until Duane retired in 2013, there was always a Lewis tending the bridge; Dwight retired in 2012 Southport Bridge for 45 years. In their job as tenders, Dwight and Duane knew all the local fishermen, but they also met people from all over the world, and even traveled by boat. In the winter, bridge traffic was slow, but during the summer the bridge might be opened 1500 times a month.

Admission for the program is free. Doors open at 4:15. Seating is limited and is first-come, first-served. Sorry, no reservations. For more information, contact us at 207-633-0820. Boothbay Region Historical Society is located at 72 Oak Street in Boothbay Harbor.



#### UPCOMING 2023 SPEAKER:

September 21, 2023 | 4:30 p.m. | Dottie Yunker: Exciting Changes at Maine State Aquarium

Video recordings will be available on our website following the series.

## YOUR GIFT WILL BE MATCHED!

Matching Gift Challenge through July 31 to improve archival storage

Join the challenge! Thanks to a generous donor, Boothbay Region Historical Society is pleased to announce a \$500 Matching Gift Challenge to encourage our communities to participate in a special project. Each year, the trustees and staff create a wish list of much-needed items that fall outside the annual budget. This year, funds raised in response to this challenge will enable the society to purchase items to help improve the museum’s permanent and rotating exhibits, as well as specialty archival storage supplies for fragile textiles, documents, maps, and photographs. Archival products are an expensive but crucial to protecting museum assets for the future.

The society is indebted to our challenge donor and appreciates all gifts to the fund. Please consider a donation to this project between now and July 31, payable to the Boothbay Region Historical Society Fund, P.O. Box 272, Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538. For more information or to donate by credit card, please contact the office at 207-633-0820 or [brhs@gwi.net](mailto:brhs@gwi.net).

**Thank you for investing in the society’s mission to preserve and make available the history of the Boothbay region.** This project is part of our ongoing efforts to allow better access to and



## SAVE THE DATE!

On the evening of August 20, plan to join *National Geographic* photographer/filmmaker and Boothbay Harbor resident Bob Krist and his friend, *DownEast* photographer for an evening featuring Krist's short documentary films about life along coastal Maine. This ticketed event at the Harbor Theater is a fundraiser for the Boothbay Society.

Using the eye and storytelling techniques he developed during a 40-year career working for *National Geographic*, Krist shows us the people, places, and traditions that n special place. This eclectic collection of short films was commissioned by *The Great Courses* as part of their online program, "Off the Beaten Path." [This will be showing of these films!](#)

Even if you think you know your own backyard like the back of your hand, we guarantee you'll come away with a new appreciation—and new facts—about this beau home.

Sunday, August 20, 2023 | 5:30 p.m. doors open | 6:15 p.m. program

Ticket information coming soon

## What can we do for you?



Boothbay Region Historical Society is a [museum open free of charge](#), year-round. We are an [archive](#) serving researchers worldwide.

We provide a free [third grade history](#) program, a free [speaker series](#), and present [special exhibits](#).

We work on special projects: funding a college scholarship for a Boothbay Region High School student, digitizing our collections, writing an exhibition catalog, and more.



We maintain the 1874 [historic house](#) which is our museum and offices, and a [museum store](#). We do it with three part-time staff and our dedicated trustees and volunteers.

Let us know what more we can do!

Volunteers welcome!



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

*We're open year-round,  
weather permitting  
Thursday through Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm.*

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