



Mary G Maynard launch in 1920 at East Coast Ship Company

A Window to the Past

Boothbay Region Historical Society

June 2023

Researching and preserving our history

Your stories will not be forgotten

From Our Archives



Freeman Murray's roller coaster in East Boothbay, circa 1910. Courtesy of Sarah Jones Giles

The Roller Coaster

By Barbara Rumsey, 2022

About 1910 Freeman Murray of East Boothbay built the roller coaster pictured in the accompanying photo. Freeman, a boatbuilder, had a large boat shop behind or west of his three-chimneyed house, seen here. The staging on the extreme left side of the photo probably marks the corner of the shop. Freeman's house is still located just north of the corner store in East Boothbay, and the west side of the store (and its barn) is also apparent in the photo.

Dot Rice Booth, born in 1905, remembered that parts of Freeman's big shop contained other devices the children used for recreation in the 1910s, such as a cable that could be ridden the length of the shop. No doubt it was a chain hoist. We kids loved to play with them in all the yards in the 1950s, but mostly the one inside Hodgdon Brothers. Freeman also had a bowl-shaped "ride" that kids would climb on and ride like a circular teeter-totter—it sounds like a wobbly but sure avenue to seasickness! Perhaps it was a large steel bowl that Freeman used to melt lead for keels or bilge weights. He must have known what delighted children.

When Goudy & Stevens was a young shipyard about 1922, it rented Freeman's shop until the Adams yard became their site in the summer of 1924. That is most recently Lobsterman's Wharf and the western part of Washburn & Doughty in East Boothbay's harbor.

Freeman, born in 1848, built small craft in town; his most famous boat was the 30-foot

yard in the Harbor. His skills in demand, he built in Illinois, on the west coast, and in Florida during World War I. Freeman moved to Massachusetts about 1922, according to his obituary, probably to be near a daughter. He died there in 1935.

“Myra” (identity unknown) sent the photo postcard on Aug. 25, 1910 to Charles Capen of Murray Hill, grandfather of Sonny Hodgdon and Sally Hodgdon Jones. She wrote, “We sampled Mr. Murray's roller coaster at East Boothbay and just then the photographer (Frank McDougall) from Boothbay Harbor came along and took our pictures. It was lots of fun.” Charles Capen's great-granddaughter, Sarah Jones Giles, my old friend and the historical society treasurer, provided the photo.

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

SUMMER SPEAKER SERIES

Harbor Theater History with Hamilton Meserve, 1928 to the Present

Thursday, June 22, 4:30pm

It's Movie Night! On Thursday, June 22, 2023, at 4:30 p.m., Hamilton Meserve, board president of the Harbor Theater, will present a program at the Boothbay Region Historical Society entitled “The History of Harbor Theater, 1928 to the Present.” Follow the community effort to save this once-struggling local business by creating the current successful non-profit organization.

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 BRHS@gwi.net or 207-633-0820. Boothbay Region Historical Society is located at 72 Oak Street in Boothbay Harbor.

**UPCOMING 2023 SPEAKERS:**

July 13, 2023 | 4:30 p.m. | Duane and Dwight Lewis: Memories of the Boothbay Region

September 21, 2023 | 4:30 p.m. | Dottie Yunger: 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 museum 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 a variety of 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 extremely 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 Exhibit 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.

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 conservation of the Society's collections.

Annual Summer Bake Sale Saturday, July 1

Don't be late! Stock up for the holiday weekend at the Boothbay Region Historical Society's annual Fourth of July bake sale on Saturday, July 1 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. or until we're sold out. Come early and bring your friends. Delicious pies, cakes, breads, cookies, and more.

Rain or shine at the museum at 72 Oak Street, Boothbay Harbor.



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 Ben Williamson, 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 Region Historical 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 make Maine such a 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 the only theatrical 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 beautiful place we call home.

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

Ticket information coming soon



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!



Let's celebrate our cultural heritage together

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Boothbay Region Historical Society
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207.633.0820

*We're open year-round,
weather permitting*

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Past Issues

Thursday through Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm.

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