



*Mary G Maynard launch in 1920 at East Coast Ship Company*

## **A Window to the Past**

*Boothbay Region Historical Society*

**September 2023**

*Researching and preserving our history*

*Your stories will not be forgotten*

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## **From Our Archives**



This west-looking view from what is today the Paul E. Luke boatyard property on Linekin Neck, East Boothbay, shows bookkeeper Jainus Jones counting barrels of oil produced from pogies, the fish also known as menhaden. They are soon to go aboard the three-masted schooner that is tied up. The main elevated wharf that received fish was further south. This photo is said to have been taken in 1881, but the early 1880s were hard times in the pogie fishery. Maybe the 1890s would be a better guess. Courtesy of the Boothbay Region Historical Society.

## The Upper Pogie Factory at Linekin, Part I

By Barbara Rumsey, 2015, Boothbay Region Historical Society

*We thought this two-part article written by Barbara in fall 2015 would be appropriate to re-publish now, especially for those who've seen (or smelled) the pogies around Boothbay Harbor this past month!*

Though I had visited the historical society infrequently at a couple of its locations before 1985, I hadn't been interested in helping out, nor had I the time as a young mother. But in 1985, my eighth-grade son, Keith Hartford, had a "Boothbay Project" assignment which took us there. That project did a lot of good for local history, and the society has many of the school papers, some very well done.

Keith chose as his subject the pogie factory that had been on our property at Linekin, next south from Paul Luke's shipyard; it also occupied the factory site. Any digging on our property brought up bricks, coal ash and clinkers, and occasionally reeking pockets of fish scrap where some had been buried. To satisfy our

to please bring in any info we gathered. During our visit Alden said they always needed volunteers, and I started helping out a few months later.

### **Pogie the fish and the process**

As background, pogies (aka poggy, menhaden) are an oily fish that travel in vast schools; some schools stretched for a mile before man industrialized their killing. The schools traveled from Florida to Nova Scotia, just as the mackerel did along the coast from June to October. Pogies are able to suffocate themselves by exhausting the oxygen in a cove's seawater since they tend to crowd into coves and bays. Many remember the pogies' suffocating in coves here in the 1980s. The fish were prized for mundane reasons: oil extracted for paint manufacture and lighting fuel, and the remains for fertilizer after the oil was pressed out. People do/did eat them but not much; J. C. Poole, who had a fish business on the site of Fisherman's Wharf, bought pogies to ship as food to St. Louis in 1888. So there's one mention. Problems: pogie were oily, bony, and were said to have a "foul" taste.

Mainers were unfamiliar with the process needed to turn a profit from schools of pogies, so they relied on methods developed in Rhode Island to get into the business. The first nearby pogie factory was built at South Bristol in 1864, beating us by two years. Many huge plants opened in Boothbay in 1866 and after, and they did very well. The Churches of Tiverton, Rhode Island were big players here, at least on our property. All factories, mammoth in size, were owned by out-of-town or out-of-state interests since local capital was too limited for the necessary structures and investment.

The first step for a pogie factory was to supply it with fish by sending out its pogie vessels, whether schooners or steamers, and find the schools nearby. In the case of the nearby pogie schools, they ended up at the local factories. A conveyor belt brought them from the vessel wharves to huge factory vats where they were cooked. Steam power was necessary, hence the needs for coal and water. There was always a freshwater pond nearby to supply steam. After cooking, steam pressure pressed the oil out at 100 tons per square inch; next the oil was drained into barrels. Finally, the remaining chum and fish scraps were dried on wooden platforms and used as bait or fertilizer. Some glue could be produced as well.

### **The help**

With the museum of limited help, we went further afield to neighbors at Linekin and East Boothbay. Three local men helped my son: Pete Jones, born 1899, whose father Jainus was the factory bookkeeper; Winfield Dodge, born 1909, who had a long Linekin memory; and Bobby Holbrook, born 1942, who was very knowledgeable about Linekin history. Pete himself had worked for the plant, cleaning barrels for two cents each (boys routinely worked if they could). Winfield explained that our factory was the "upper factory" to Linekin people; the one at Tibbetts Cove was the "lower factory."

pogie factory was a third of a mile above the Upper Elbow. There were more factories elsewhere, such as one at Ocean Point and two on the Wilde land at Linekin, almost all strung from Ocean Point along Linekin to Perch Island Cove. Our factory was built in 1866.

Stay tuned for Part II next month.

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)

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## SUMMER SPEAKER SERIES



### Dottie Yunger: DMR & Maine State Aquarium

**Thursday, September 21, 4:30pm**

Have you been wondering what's going on at the Department of Marine Resources? On Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 4:30 p.m., DMR marine biologist Dottie Yunger will present "Exciting Changes at the Maine State Aquarium, Learning Lab, and Burnt Island" at the society's museum at 72 Oak Street in Boothbay Harbor.

The Maine State Aquarium and Department of Marine Resources' Boothbay lab have a rich history in the area. The Aquarium arose out of early research conducted at the lab and is currently undergoing renovations including a redesign. It is part of DMR's Education Division, which is also undergoing a redesign, allowing audiences access to the research conducted by DMR. Education Division Director

For our guests' comfort, limited seating will be available by reservation. **Please call or email the office to RSVP:** 207.633.0820; [brhs@gwi.net](mailto:brhs@gwi.net) to reserve or for more info. Doors open at 4:15. This program will also be available by Zoom. Email the office to receive the Zoom link.

Admission for the program is free but donations are welcome!

Recordings of the society's entire 2023 speaker series will be available in October and shared in this newsletter.

## WE'RE HIRING!

### Seeking an Executive Director at Boothbay Region Historical Society

**Join our team!** We are a small non-profit museum and research center located in Boothbay Harbor, Maine whose mission is to preserve and make available to the public thousands of artifacts, documents, historical photographs, and family stories related to Boothbay region history. The Society is seeking an Executive Director with excellent leadership skills and experience working in a non-profit organization. Duties include, but are not limited to, developing fundraising and membership programs, supervising staff and daily operations, building community outreach programs, recruiting and training volunteers, and managing society PR and communications. The Executive Director works closely with the board of trustees and its committees and serves as the face of the Society within the community. This is a year-round, 30-hour per week position with potential to grow and requires working on-site at the Society's museum on a regular basis. For more complete job details, visit [boothbayhistorical.org](http://boothbayhistorical.org).

Applicants must submit a cover letter and current resume along with contact info for three references, either by email to [jobs@boothbayhistorical.org](mailto:jobs@boothbayhistorical.org) or by mail to "Executive Director Position", Boothbay Region Historical Society, PO Box 272, Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538 by October 7, 2023.

**If you know someone who might be interested in this job opportunity, please pass this along!**

## SOLD-OUT SUCCESS!

We're indebted to the Harbor Theater for providing the venue, and to the remarkable Bob Krist and Ben Williamson for graciously sharing their time and exceptional photography and filmmaking talents at our unique fundraising event on August 20. Thank you also to sponsors First National Bank, Law Office of Griffin & Harris, Dunton's Doghouse, Gimbel's of Maine, Pinkham's Gourmet Market, Eventide



are deeply thankful for the overwhelming support from everyone who attended. Your presence made this event an unforgettable success.

Photo credit: Bob Crink

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## SINCERE THANKS

We want to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Mildred H. McEvoy Foundation for their generous grant that made it possible for us to breathe new life into our beloved headquarters and museum. Thanks to their support, we were able to embark on a much-needed exterior restoration project of the Elizabeth F. Reed House, bringing the rich history and culture of our community to life through vibrant fresh, white paint and repaired shutters and clapboards. Their contribution has not only preserved our heritage but also created a welcoming and inspiring space. Thank you for helping us make history come alive!

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Exciting news! This beautiful framed print, titled "*Rajput Hunt*", by the renowned Maine artist and children's book author **Dahlov Ipcar** is for sale through [Maine Art Collectors](https://maineartcollectors.com), with net proceeds to directly benefit the Boothbay Region Historical Society. This stunning black and white lithograph was gifted to the society and not only showcases Ipcar's incredible talent but also contributes to preserving and celebrating our community's shared history. Don't miss this chance to have an Ipcar print of your own while supporting our mission – check out the artwork at [maineartcollectors.com/dahlovipcarmaineartist/](https://maineartcollectors.com/dahlovipcarmaineartist/)!

## ANNUAL CHEESE SALE!

**October 7 at the Society**, 72 Oak Street, cheese and treats, 10am-sellout

**October 7+8 at the Boothbay Railway Village** [Fall Foliage Festival](https://www.boothbayregionhistoricalsociety.org/fall-foliage-festival), cheese and history table, all day

This year, Boothbay Region Historical Society will hold its popular cheese fundraiser in two locations! At the society on Saturday, October 7, we'll host a cheese sale along with delicious baked goods from 10am until sellout. We're also returning to the Boothbay Railway Village Fall Foliage

Festival for the first time in years, where we'll host a history table with our cheese for sale. The society is pleased to offer a special Reserve Cheddar cheese from Maine producer Pineland Farms Dairy. This classic cheddar cheese has been aged two years for full flavor. Come say hello and stock up for special occasions!

purchases help support the society's mission to preserve and share Boothbay region history.

## 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!



*Let's celebrate our cultural heritage together*

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Post Office Box 272



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

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