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BOOTHBAY REGION  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

**FEBRUARY 2024**

*Researching and preserving our history, so your stories will not be forgotten.*



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*The Meadow, flooded in 1953.*

*To learn more about the Meadow, read Barbara Rumsey's December 6, 2023 "Out of Our Past"*

article, [The Meadow in the Boothbay Register](#).

(Boothbay Region Historical Society Collections BHFA006d)



History really is a community affair. If you need proof, just take a look at our Mystery Monday posts on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). We have several images in our collections with very little information. Posting these to social media gives us a chance to crowdsource answers.

A few weeks ago, we posted the photo above, labeled "Crew—Jan. 4, 1978. Gamage-Stevens Yard, East Boothbay, ME." with a plea to help us identify the men in the photo. And, wow, did you come through! We were able to name 25 of the 30 people: **1.** Gus Schopper, **2.** Roy Nelson, **3.** Gordon Bryer, **4.** Jim Bryer, **5.** Eddie Abbott, **6.** Jim Stevens, **7.** Herbie Brewer, **8.** Unidentified, **9.** Kimmy Pearce, **10.** Tommy Campbell, **11.** Unidentified, **12.** Eugene Lewis, **13.** Unidentified, **14.** Ivan Philbrook, **15.** Unidentified, **16.** Merle Matthews, **17.** Ernest Giles, **18.** Ralph McKnight, **19.** Bruce Arsenault, **20.** Jake Stevens, **21.** George Marr, **22.** Gordon Hyson, **23.** Jimmy Emerson, **24.** Jim McCusker, **25.** Joel Stevens, **26.** Harvey Blake, **27.** Unidentified, **28.** Carl Prentice, **29.** Ross Connors, **30.** Buster Gamage.

If you recognize any of the unidentified figures above, email us at [brhs@gwi.net](mailto:brhs@gwi.net). And keep following us on social media for more Mystery Mondays.



### Sticks and Stones...

*Image above: Pownalborough Courthouse, Dresden, in winter. Photo courtesy Korinne Tanzer.*

The Boothbay Region Historical Society is housed in the former home of local historian Elizabeth F. Reed (1874-1953). In honor of the 150th anniversary of Elizabeth's birth, we'll be sharing some of her research and writings over the coming months.

Among papers on Elizabeth's stationary are the transcriptions of witness statements from a 1792 court case between John Murray and William McCobb (*History Files F002C19*). Murray, alleging assault, sued McCobb for £50. Although not an exact science, this is roughly the equivalent of \$11,760 today. And while this was a very serious charge, when reading the details from a modern perspective, it's easy to see a similar drama played out today, not in the courtroom, but on social media.

According to the primary witness Jonathan Sawyer, a clerk in McCobb's shop, Murray entered the store one day in November 1792 and apparently unprovoked, started hurling insults about McCobb. Murray's creativity is worthy of a Dickens novel: calling McCobb, "a rouge [rogue], cheat, long-faced, bighead". When McCobb, who was working just outside the store, didn't respond, Murray stood in the doorway and called out that he was sure McCobb "stayed at home [on] Sundays in order to learn how to cheat him."

Well, that did it for McCobb, who marched into the shop, told Murray to stop disrupting his business, and ordered him to leave peaceably. Murray tauntingly "told him that he would stay as long as he pleased." McCobb's patience had been tested enough. He grabbed the white walnut cane of nearby Ichabod Pinkham and gave Murray a thrashing until he left. Dr. Creamer attested that he did observe "several stripes on [Murray's] back" with "wraps on his arm proceeded from a blow" the day after the event.

When Murray and McCobb went before Judge Timothy Langdon in 1793 at the Pownalborough Courthouse (now owned and operated as a museum by [Lincoln County Historical Association](#)), the outcome proves the adage, “sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” While Murray’s body and ego were bruised by McCobb’s “stick”, McCobb himself was fined a mere £1 (\$228 in current currency) for retaliation against Murray’s words.

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Interested in your parents’ or grandparents’ school days? We have an extensive yearbook collection. And thanks to the donation of some missing years from Boothbay Region High School principal, Trish Campbell, our collection is even more complete! With issues from 1928 to the present, this collection is an important resource for family historians.

We’re still missing 1929, 1933, 1978, 1995, 2000, 2014, 2015, and 2019. So please remember the Historical Society next time you’re cleaning out closets. As always, thanks to everyone who takes the time to donate locally significant historical items and documents for our collections.

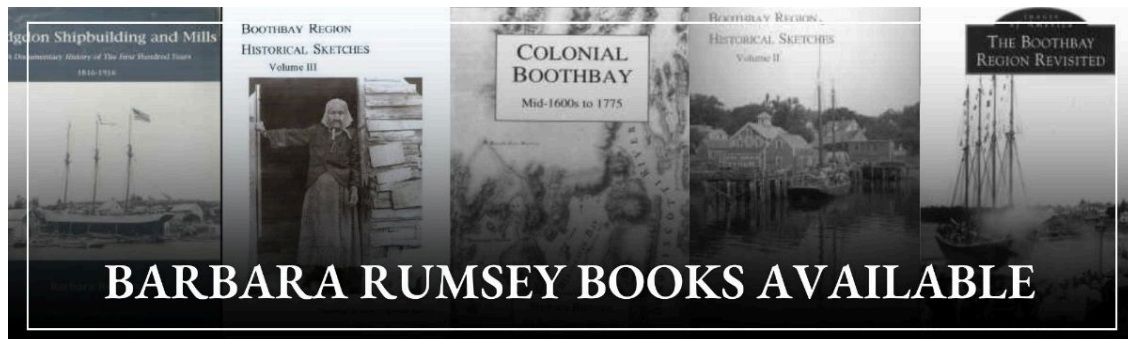
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The days are short, and the nights are long, but we’ve officially made it through the darkest 10 weeks of the year. There is plenty of time until the world bursts



into bloom, though. If you find yourself snowed in and craving a little history, why not check out our [YouTube channel](#)? You can view recordings of last year's programs from the comfort of your own home. We'll be adding even more to our channel this year, so be sure to subscribe to get notifications of new content.



Most of you are familiar with the prolific work of local historian, Barbara Rumsey. From fishing to families, boats to buildings, she has meticulously researched most aspects of the area's history. Her "Out of Our Past" article in the Boothbay Register remains popular, and we've enjoyed being able to share some of her past research articles here in the enews lately. If you want to read more of Barbara's work, we sell many of her books in our shop. Purchase at the museum next time you stop in, or [online](#) and we can ship to your home.

## SHOP ONLINE



*Open all year  
Thursday through Saturday  
10 a. m. to 2 p. m.  
Local historian available:  
Wednesdays by appointment only*

*Saturdays 10 a. m. – 2 p. m.*

ADMISSION IS FREE

