

# The Newsletter of the Tremont Historical Society

Vol. 8 No. 2

Winter 2004

Published occasionally at Bass Harbor, Maine. The Society is a non-profit organization, whose officers are: Arlene Bartlett, President; Charles Liebow, Vice President; John MacDuffie, Secretary; and Michael Smith, Treasurer. The Newsletter is ordinarily mailed to members and contributors.

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## From the President's Desk

The Tremont Historical Society's Country Store Museum was busy this year with a number of occasions. We had 295 visitors at the Museum, some from other parts of the world. It was a pleasure to meet and talk with them.

We thank all the volunteers who kept the doors open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 1:00 to 4:00 p. m and sometimes beyond. We have had our best year so far because of volunteer help. Thanks again, guys and gals!

Our Rummage Sale in July was a success due to the fact that we had help from up-state, down-state, and out-of-state. Many thanks for a job well done. Another sale in July 2005.

The 5<sup>th</sup> grade from Tremont Consolidated School, under the direction of teachers Terry Stanley and Tammy Lunt, made a visit to the Museum in October. It was our pleasure to show them around and talk with them. They are invited to come back next summer with family and friends, and hopefully next year's fifth graders will make a visit also.

In July of 2004 the Historical Society of Tremont received a grant from the Belvedere Fund of the Maine Community Foundation. The support they provided is for our project of preserving in archival, acid free boxes and tissue, textiles received from the Willis Watson collection. This collection includes 18 dresses of the early 1900's, a wedding suit, a pair of spats, a beaver hat, and robe and other small items.

We appreciate the work of the Maine Community Foundation and the Belvedere Fund, And thank them for their support. We expect to complete the project this winter.

Our Annual Appeal is ongoing, and the total so far is \$2,755. Thanks to all for your donations.

We wish you all a safe and happy Holiday Season.

Arlene Bartlett, President

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**Answer to Spring Trivia Question:** *In Ralph's Page there is a reference to someone who had worked at Tremont House.*

*Do you know what and where Tremont House was?*

*(continued on page 7)*

# RALPH'S PAGE

Being a reproduction of articles of historical interest, selected by Ralph Stanley

Bar Harbor Record  
Cranberry Island  
1915

Last Tuesday morning Mrs. Leslie R. Bunker, Mrs. W.A. Rice and Harry, youngest son of Mr. & Mrs. Bunker, met with a frightful accident on their arrival from Sutton to the island. Lawrence, oldest son of Mr. & Mrs. Bunker, brought them across in a launch and tied it to one of the motor boats in the cove, and getting into the skiff to row ashore they upset the skiff and three of them, Mrs. Rice, Mrs. Bunker and Harry were in the water, while Ethel Bunker and Lawrence were still in the launch. Mr. Lewis Ladd and Mr. Benjamin Bunker very fortunately were on the bank where they heard the screams for help. They launched a boat and heroically saved their lives. Lawrence got Harry out of the water into the launch just before he went under the skiff and saved his life. Mrs. Bunker and Mrs. Rice were clinging to the launch, Mrs. Bunker about to give up when someone says "A boat coming!" and she took courage and they found it best to rescue her first after which they had to tow Mrs. Rice ashore, she being so heavy that they couldn't get her into the boat. She was about exhausted when they reached shore and was taken to the home of Millard Spurling and wife where she was properly taken care of and is doing nicely. Mrs. Bunker was taken back to her house at Sutton and was very sick the rest of the day, but has nearly recovered. If the two men had not been at the shore this would have been one of the worst drowning accidents for years.

Card of Thanks

Mrs. Wilbert Rice and Mrs. Leslie R. Bunker wish to thank Mr. Lewis E. Ladd and Mr. Benjamin Bunker for their lives, which they saved in Tuesday morning's accident at Cranberry Isles. These men did noble work and were very careful and we can never thank them enough for their assistance.

[Signed]

Mr. And Mrs. Wilbert A. Rice  
Mr. And Mrs. Leslie R. Bunker  
Sutton, Me.

Mt. Desert Herald  
October 18, 1883  
Seal Cove

Capt. Charles Norwood and wife, of Calais, after visiting their relatives at this place started for their home in an open yawl boat, making the trip of more than 100 miles in five days. Their boat being small they were obliged to follow the shore along and make a harbor at night. They caught fish and made chowders and cooked and ate them in old Indian style. The trip was a very pleasant one.

*continued next page*

Mt. Desert Herald  
When I Was a Boy--H.M. Eaton  
March 1, 1889

I was a boy eight years old, when I first went to Mount Desert, in 1821. At that time there was a meeting-house at Southwest Harbor, the only one in town, that was two-story, and finished on the outside, but not painted. The inside was unfinished. It was seated by rough planks held up by blocks of wood. There were no means of heating the house. Some of the old ladies had foot stoves, that they filled with coals, and that made them quite comfortable in cold weather. There was a cheap pine pulpit—a sort of box—for the minister. After the house had been occupied for many years, it was taken down and a more modern church erected on the same foundation, finished thoroughly and painted.

At the time the Rev. Ebenezer Eaton was pastor of the Congregational Church, and preached in that house most of the time. Services commenced quite early in the day and usually closed before four o'clock in the afternoon. Every exercise was greatly protracted. He generally read two long chapters from the Bible, one from the Old Testament and the other from the New. The morning prayer was usually thirty minutes in length, and in some instances, forty minutes.

The congregation were required to stand during prayer and there was no release from that duty. It was very tiresome standing so long in one position, and we boys were glad when he said "Amen." Occupying as we did, a standing position, we were obliged to keep awake and when we were on our seats, if we failed to keep awake we would fall off, for there were no backs to the seats, for us to lean against.

We paid but little attention to the preaching, for we knew nothing of the Divine doctrines—neither did the pastor. They were in his creed and had to be preached! He was a devoted man, and thoroughly honest; but greatly mistaken and did not know it. The sermon in the morning occupied about two hours, in the afternoon about an hour and a half.

Parson Eaton was called very "orthodox," for he held and taught the "ironclad" theology of Jonathan Edwards. In his creed were the doctrines of fore-ordination, unconditional election, reprobation, etc. This kind of preaching seemed to satisfy the most of the people, and if a man believed a different doctrine, he was a semi-infidel. The Methodists were regarded as a dangerous sect, and all the Universalists would go to hell, though they did not believe there was a place of literal fire and brimstone.

We boys thought the minister understood the Bible, for that was his business. Some of us did not do any thinking for ourselves on religious subjects, till we became men and then we went counter to our early teaching. The most of the people on that island have thrown away their old musty creeds, and are believers in the Bible, with the former creeds left out.

Near the old church—say eighty rods away—was a rum-shop kept by Mr. A. Rafnell. During the hour of intermission the most of the congregation visited Mr. Rafnell's shop and drank quite freely of some kind of liquor. Some drank rum, some brandy or gin; but they treated the ladies on wine—some of them took gin.

In those days, liquor was freely used at funerals. The "bearers" always had two glasses—one before going to the grave and another after their return to the house. There were always enough ready to act as "bearers." The officiating clergyman was not passed by, and a glass of liquor was about all he received for his services. Sometimes the mourners drowned their sorrows in a bowl of "Old Medford."

There are people now who think that those days were far better than the present. They don't think the world has improved, or ever will improve! They are in the "old ruts," with one eye closed and the other nearly blind, and they propose to remain there.

True, the present "times" are far from being angelic, but they are far in advance of what they were in my boyhood days. There are many battles yet to be fought, but right is right, and in the end the right will win the day. God and the Christ are more powerful than all evil, and if men who are called Christians will do right seven days in the week, their light will yet illuminate the dark "corners" of the earth. +

## **Correspondence from Barbara Thurston Stevens**

John Thurston, the first lightkeeper at Bass Harbor Head Light, was my great great great grandfather. Family stories say his son, Solomon Thurston and his wife (Mary Webster) were visiting his father at the lighthouse when she went into labor (or “it happened” as the notes from an elderly aunt state.) Their son, Charles Dix Thurston, was born in the lighthouse on June 20, 1855.

The other story is that when Charles Dix Thurston was about age 3, he fell out of the window in the lighthouse. Fortunately, someone grabbed him by the long dress he was wearing, which was normal dress for boys of that age in that time frame, and he was saved from almost certain death on the rocks below. When I toured the lighthouse on the first Historic House Tour in Tremont, I mentioned the window to the Coast Guard commandant living there. He pointed out the probable window from which he would have fallen—which is now bricked up.

A few years ago I visited the National Archives to read their microfilm #M1373—Lighthouse Keepers 1845-1912. I was able to find some notes on John, that showed his salary etc.

If anyone has questions which I might answer, my email address as [rasteven@snet.net](mailto:rasteven@snet.net) or [rasteven@aol.com](mailto:rasteven@aol.com). My phone is 1-800-569-3097 (evenings.)

## **Correspondence from Meredith Hutchins In response to articles in past Newsletters**

In the Fall 2003 Newsletter there was an article about [Rev.] Oscar Olsen and the Olsen Memorial Chapel. Shortly after the article appeared I spoke to you by telephone and said that my grandfather, Clifton M. Rich (1881-1970) built the Chapel. He had a contract for the job and returned some of the money to the church. According to my brother, Philip, [Cliff's] sons (Roger, Ronald and Robert) urged him to keep this money and buy himself some power tools, but he would have none of it. I was also told that there were some pieces of wood left over from building the church that my father and his brothers used for their own building projects.

My father was born in 1913 and the impression I got from these stories was that he was a boy or a young teenager at the time, although I still haven't tracked down the date the Chapel was built. I did attend Sunday School at the Olsen Chapel where Albra Stanley was my teacher. The year I was five I recited “The Night Before Christmas” there for the 1944 Sunday School Christmas concert and repeated the poem shortly afterwards at the post office. (*See separate article reprinted from Down East Magazine.*) I gave the postmistress, Charlotte Robbins, the pseudonym “Aunt Florence,” but I think she would not mind if you identified her.

In the Winter/Spring Newsletter of 2004 the article “Recollections of School Days in Bernard” speaks of the death of my uncle Cecil M. Rich, 1926-41, at the age of 15. Cecil did not die in the spring, but in the Fall on October 3, 1941 and he died of leukemia, not scarlet fever. I was two and a half years old at the time and can remember seeing him shortly before his death lying in a hammock on the porch at my grandparents' house with a basket of Fall apples nearby.

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I enclose a photograph of the house  
Taken at about that time showing  
the porch with me in the foreground.  
My grandmother, Elizabeth  
(Farnsworth) Rich, 1887-1969  
always called the porch the  
“verandah,” a lovely word, I thought.

The two other photographs [I enclose]  
show my father’s filling station that  
sat on the corner below my grandparents’  
house. I believe the correct name for that  
corner is “Baldwin Corner.” I don’t know  
why my father named his station “Capitol  
Corner.” The road has been rebuilt and  
now covers much of the area where the  
station sat. The man in the photograph with  
the car is my father, Roger Clifton Rich,  
1913-1996. These filling station photographs  
were taken ca. 1937-1940. (There is a  
“compliments of” ad for the station in the  
1938 Pemetic High School yearbook.)

My mother and father and I lived in a small apartment connected to the back of the station where my mother said that everything was new and clean and “built-in” the way it would be on a boat. In 1941, they bought a house on McMullen Ave. in McKinley from Stan Reed’s sister, Eunice Harris and her husband, Wallace. (The house burned ca. 1966 and was replaced by the one currently on the site.) My brother, Philip, was born in the McKinley house in May 1941. My parents had only recently moved in and Dr. Raymond Coffin, who was encouraging home births before moving his practice to Alaska, arrived later than expected because he first went to Bernard. My parents had forgotten to tell him they had moved.

By the time my brother was born my father had either gone to work for his uncle, Hollis Reed, or to the Hinckley Co. where he worked during World War II. He left Hinckley’s and went into the boat building business himself in Southwest Harbor in the Fall of 1947.

The “Capitol Corner” gas station business had not been financially successful. When I asked my father why not, he said that it was probably because he accepted too many bushels of apples as payment for gas, a practice that couldn’t have helped his cash flow, especially during the depression. Everybody did his best though, including my mother who made fudge to sell there, and Mr. Roscoe Ingalls, Tremont summer resident who liked to use high test gasoline in his automobile and would buy an entire tankful at the beginning of the season, so it would be available whenever he wanted it.

The building that housed the station was later moved and placed in front of Lewis and Charlotte (Kelley) Norwood’s house in Bernard, where “Aunt Lottie” ran a store. Charlotte (Kelley) Norwood, 1888-1970, was a cousin to my grandfather, Clifton Rich. His mother, Charlotte (Kelley) Rich, 1856-1925, was a sister to Lottie’s father, James K. Kelley, 1859-1939.

I hope some of the foregoing may be of interest and some use.

Sincerely yours,  
Meredith (Rich) Hutchins

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*Many thanks to Meredith for the wealth of information she has shared here. We especially appreciate the photos she provided.*

*See the article she furnished on her "Command Performance" at the Post Office.*

*It would be interesting if some of our readers might be able to furnish the following information:*

*The date of the building of the Olsen Chapel.*

*The reason for naming the corner "Baldwin Corner."*

*Call the Editor at 207-24-0259 or e-mail at [redhousemaine@adelphia.net](mailto:redhousemaine@adelphia.net).*

*The Editor has many happy memories of going to Aunt Lottie's Store for items needed at home, and also for candy when pennies were provided. She always welcomed children. Ed.*

*Answer to Trivia Question, from page 1*

The large white house on the corner of Bernard Road and Steamboat Wharf Road in Bernard, behind the Old Red Store antique shop owned and operated by the late Paul Hinton, was once even larger than it is today and was operated as a hotel called Tremont House. It was originally a Benson property, then through marriage passed to the Jackson family. In the 1940's it was the home of Clarence and Hazel Harding, then by Clarence's son Bill and his wife Martha. It is presently owned by Caroline Kelley Gothard. *(A more detailed story on this home will appear in a later issue. Ed.)*

## **ACQUISITIONS SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER**

1. Beaver Top Hat, 1 pair of spats, 18 dresses, 1 wedding suit (men's), 1 robe, 2 ladies' combs. (Pam Watson)
2. Book Marriage Records, prior to 1892, Hancock County (Alice Long)
3. Picture of Allen Black, Jr. , 4 Knitting needles, 3 Spacers, Scales (green), American Family Scale, World War One Hat, picture of Base Hospital at Fort Devens, Picture of 34<sup>th</sup>, 35<sup>th</sup>, 36<sup>th</sup> Plymouth 12<sup>th</sup> Division Dec. 3, 1918; Picture of Company K, 74<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 12<sup>th</sup> Division.
4. Framed pictures of ships, 4 plates, 2 pitchers, 2 cups.
5. Plaque from Methodist Church in West Tremont:  
"In grateful memory of Eunice Reed Lopaus 1877-1936."
6. Piece of new type of sail material now being used on *USS Constitution*.
7. Newspaper clipping from 1937 on Captain Wallace, Dr. Tapley obituary, 2 medication bottles of Dr. Tapley's, Town Reports 1922-1948, Packing Apron from Wm. Underwood factory, article "Unusual Underwood's" from 1959, William Underwood letter to Harry Leighton, 1966.
8. Millay Study Club Programs 1934-35, The Island of Mount Desert – Register by Lawton Jordan 1909-1910, William Underwood letter to Genevieve Leighton, 1958, Presentation Achievement A Award to Men and Women of McKinley, Maine Plant of Wm. Underwood Co., 1945, Invitation to Genevieve Leighton.

Contributions of artifacts and documents are welcome. Proper documentation provided. We are committed to archival storage of all donated items according to currently approved practices. Contact the President or any Board member.

## PROGRAMS FOR 2005 MEETINGS

We hold regular meetings for members and others who are interested, on the fourth Monday of each month except December. These meetings do not involve business, though there are likely to be some announcements or promotions of whatever is going on or needed. The main reason for our gathering is to present programs which we think will be of interest to people. The *Bar Harbor Times, Islander, and Ellsworth American* always carry announcements the particulars of the upcoming meeting.

Jan. 24 – Film: “Britain, the Garden Kingdom.” 58 minutes

Feb. 28 – Prof. William Baker: “Neptune Theater.”

March 28 – Peter Lord: “Astronomy Throughout History.”

April 25 – Debbie Dyer: “Lost Gardens of Eden.” Slides

May 23 – Ralph Stanley: “Battle of Machias.”

June 27 – Connie Jellison: “Women Pioneers to the Islands.”

July 25 – Jaylene Roths: Topic to be announced

Aug. 22 – Raymond Robbins: “Dawes Family.”

Sept. 26 – Wayne Libhart: “The Algerian Coast: Facts and Fantasies of Seal Cove from Reed’s Point to Dodge Point with Stops Between.”

Oct. 24 – Chuck Liebow: Topic to be announced

Nov. 28 – Open

### **Correspondence from Hugh Dwelley President of Islesford Historical Society**

Sept. 9, 2004

Last evening, at a celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Champlain’s visit to Mount Desert, we had the pleasure to sit with two couples from Bass Harbor who were very interested in the story of Capt. Samuel Hadlock, Jr. of the Cranberry Isles as told to Rachel Field in her 1934 book *GOD’S POCKET* and as expanded upon in our recent publication *BEYOND GOD’S POCKET*. Some of your readers may be interested to know that both of these publications are available from the Islesford Historical Society or at Sherman’s in Bar Harbor. *GOD’S POCKET* is also available at Port-in-a-Storm and at the Northeast Harbor Library.

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It is interesting to note that Sam Hadlock's first wife, Amah Richardson, was from Bass Harbor. We don't know what became of Amah when Sam took off in 1821 to tour Europe for five years with a show featuring a pair of Eskimos whom he had obtained in Labrador. We have three dates for Amah's death but none confirmed as we have been unable to find a record of death or a tombstone in the Cranberry Isles. We have found her two youngest children buried in the Brackett Cemetery on Peaks Island, but there too we have found no record of death or a stone for Amah. Her eldest son, also named Samuel Hadlock, was in his father's crew when the schooner *Minerva* was lost in the ice in Greenland in 1829.

Hugh L. Dwelley

## **From Sea and Shore Gleanings** **By Edward Rowe Snow**

In 1760 and 1761 many New England families emigrated to the Maine coast and land was given to them. Francis Bernard, governor of Massachusetts, who came here in 1760, showed a great interest in the movement. He was interested not only in the lands as an investment, but wished to hold the province of Maine for his state.

Bernard was not well off, for he had many expenses at that time in the service of the government. He petitioned the Massachusetts legislature for some of the lands of Maine to cover expenses.

In 1762 he was granted one-half of the island of Mt. Desert for "his extraordinary services." This suited his desires as it gave him part of the lands which he wanted to unite into a new township east of the Penobscot.

In September of the same year, the governor visited his new possessions, with the idea of trying to promote the settlement of the island. He set sail with a large suite, sending ahead his two surveyors, Nathan Jones and Borachias Mason, whose maps and date are still in existence.

Governor Bernard's diary gives an exact record of his trip and describes exactly how he first saw the mountains of Mt. Desert as he sailed past Fox Island. They anchored in South West Harbor.

He describes also how they discovered Somes's log house at the head of the Sound by the same name. Somes was one of the pioneer settlers of Mt. Desert, coming from Gloucester.

On his return voyage Bernard mentions passing Isle au Haut and Matinicus. He landed at Portsmouth. His papers in the Harvard College Library give a detailed description of Mt. Desert.

He tried to encourage settlements in every way and laid out plots of land in South West Harbor, which he offered for sale. Here Bernard also made his quarters, built some houses, and started a mill.

He had not yet received a confirmation of his grant by the authorities in England, and he therefore resolved in 1764 to appeal to the king in a very complete document.

Receiving a favorable reply, Bernard immediately sent his agent, Joseph Chadwich, who mapped the island and gave accurate descriptions, all but the map having been saved.

Bernard's plans were, however, interrupted by the Stamp Act riots just before the Revolution. His recall came the following year, and he departed amid the pealing of bells and the roar of artillery. The Liberty Tree was also decked with flags, and midnight bonfires were kindled on Fort Hill. On his return to England he was knighted. Bernard was a benefactor of Harvard College and a country gentleman. Although he lived opposite Jamaica Pond it is said he attended services in Brookline because they were shorter than at Roxbury.

In his will he bequeathed his property in Mt. Desert to trustees for his son John, who after a long contest, owing to the fact that his father's property had been confiscated, finally obtained title to it.





**MISSION STATEMENT**  
**Adopted June 24, 2002**  
**By the Membership**  
**Tremont Historical Society**

The Tremont Historical Society shall be dedicated to preservation of the history of the towns of Tremont and Southwest Harbor and adjacent islands. It will achieve this mission by gathering, cataloging, preserving, and making available to the public historical materials, such as genealogies and information showing the growth and development of the towns, as well as artifacts.

Tremont Historical Society  
P.O. Box 215  
Bass Harbor ME 04653

**Address Correction Requested**

Non-Profit Organization Postage Paid Bass Harbor ME 04653 Permit No. 7
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***WINTER 2004 NEWSLETTER***

Prepared especially for