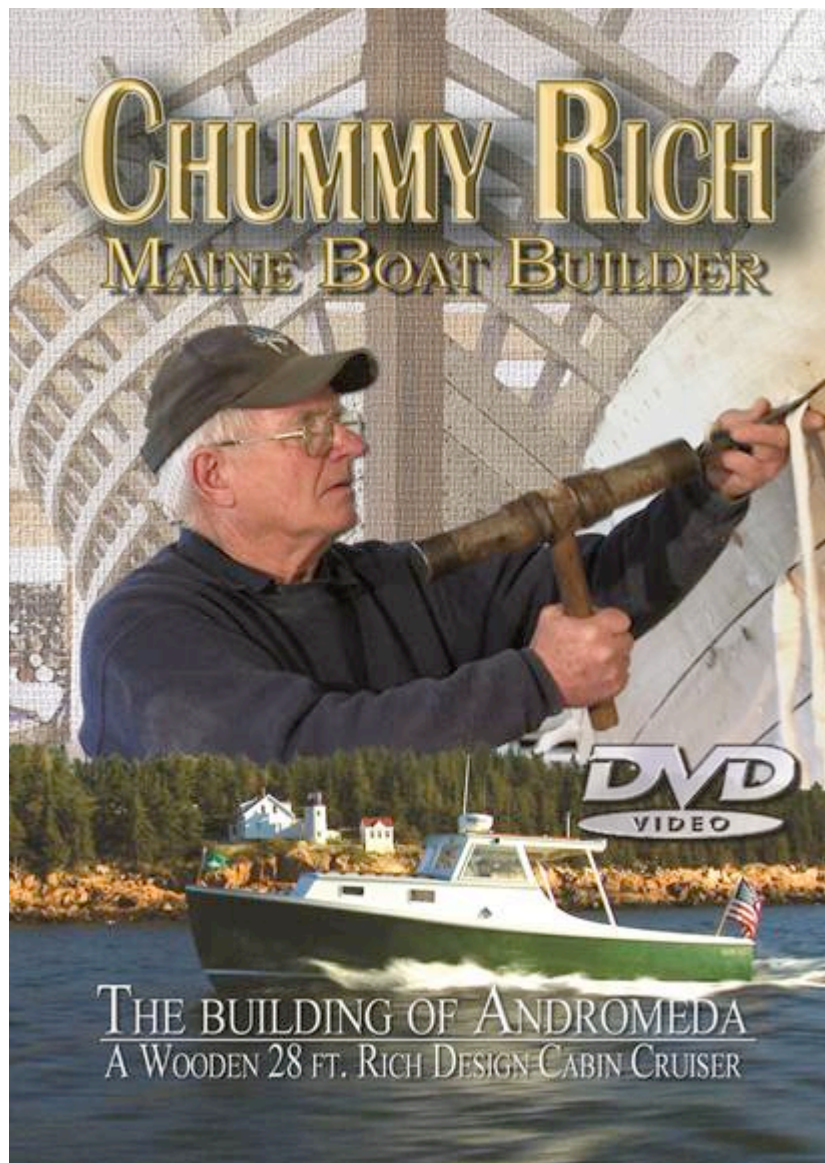


The Newsletter of the Tremont Historical Society

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Winter 2010

Published periodically at Bass Harbor, Maine. The Society is a non-profit organization whose officers are: Muriel Davisson, President; Charles Liebow, Vice President; John MacDuffie, Secretary; and Michael Smith, Treasurer. The Newsletter is mailed to members and contributors. Extra copies are available. Newsletter Editor is John MacDuffie.



The most exciting news of this notable year is that the DVD of the building of the first wooden boat in 25 years to materialize at the Bernard Corner shop of Robert C. "Chummy" Rich will be premiered at the Criterion Theater in Bar Harbor on Friday, Dec. 17 at 7:00 p.m. Chummy will be there to autograph the DVDs sold that evening. DVDs will sell for \$19.95, with a 25% discount for THS members--\$14.95. Shipping charge when mailed will be \$3.05 to make the members' price \$18, non-members \$23.

The President's Page

By Muriel Davisson Fahey

Growing up in Bernard

Going into Chummy's shop last spring to talk with him about the boat building project and film brought back memories of his Dad's boat shop in Bernard. Chummy's dad and mine were cousins. My paternal grandmother was Cliff Rich's sister. My parents, Orville and Esther Moore Trask, had five children: me, George "Bud", Brian, Emily "Emmy" and Philip in that order. Chummy's parents, Robert (Bobby to most everyone) and Mildred Walls Rich, had three: Karen, Robert "Chummy" and Walter.

We older ones at least went to school in the two-room schoolhouse in Bernard across from the Crockett Point Road. We frequently ranged into the woods during recess and spent many afternoons after school making up for getting back from recess late. I don't recall if Chummy was one of us "guilty" ones but he must have been since we were a small school and did things like that in groups.

My first memories of Bobby and Mildred are the warmth of their entry and kitchen. We children went to Sunday School at the Tremont Congregational church. Our parents took turns driving us. On the days Chummy's parents took us, we five Trasks would walk the half mile from our house near Tryhouse Point to the Rich's house and troop in through the entry into the kitchen. It was a big square house that sat on the hill above the boat shop.

But back to Bobby's boat shop. As kids we spent many happy hours playing on the shores of Bass Harbor. My best friend Theolyn Mitchell lived next door to the boat shop, so we spent a lot of time on the beach beside and under the wharf, where shavings and small pieces of wood would sometimes drift down. We often borrowed a punt and rowed out to John's Island in front of the shop to play in the old ship's hull that was pulled up on its shore. I remember Chummy being around the shop and on the wharf helping his dad as he grew older. He always seemed right at home around the shop.

The first Rich boat built for someone in my family was designed and built by Chummy's grandfather Cliff Rich in his small shop on the site of Chummy's present shop. He built a skiff for my Aunt Ruth Moore and her companion Eleanor Mayo. I don't recall the building of the skiff itself but I do remember visiting Uncle Cliff's shop and the wonderful smell of new wood and shavings. I also remember rowing that skiff and how easily it slid through the water. Ruth and Eleanor spent many happy hours in it in outer Bass Harbor fishing for mackerel.

In the early 1950's, Bobby built the lobster boat that my dad fished in for the rest of his life. It was built off the molds Sim Davis of McKinley made in the 1940s from a half-model Daddy carved for his first boat *Esther*. But Bobby put his own personal touch on the molds as well and Daddy's boat had the lines to be recognized as a Rich-built boat when my brother Bud started tracking her down a few years ago (see "The Search for *Esther II*," *The Newsletter of the Tremont Historical Society*, Vol. 11, issues 2 and 3). I remember going to Bobby's shop with Daddy to watch progress. I loved watching the boat take shape. Bobby's workmen would be climbing over and inside her, sawing, fitting, and nailing as she seemed to grow up out of the floor and tower above us. Chummy was often around the shop during these visits. In 1952 our aunt Ruth Moore christened *Esther II* and, with the Trask kids watching proudly, she slid down the ways beside Bobby's shop. I don't recall watching how she was moved from the shop to the ways beside it, perhaps towed by truck on a cradle, but photos of the launch show she was launched from outside the shop. *Esther II* is still afloat, homeport Portland, ME, nearly 60 years later. It is a fitting tribute to his father that Chummy has just finished a wooden boat built from one of Bobby's designs. +

In our next issue, Muriel's year-end summary of Society activities will be shared; also a story or two to support or explain what she has written above. Ed.

RALPH'S PAGE

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

Have you noticed how much newspaper space nowadays is given to the records of crime, arrest, trials and sentencing? Would it surprise you to be reminded that the same was true in the 19th century? Ed.

Bar Harbor Record
Oct. 18, 1883

The Bangor papers state that Mr. Andrew Lopaus, postmaster at West Tremont, came to that city and announced to the authorities that depredations had been recently committed in his vicinity, and the thief was thought to be in or about Bangor. The police took the matter in hand and about 2 o'clock Tuesday afternoon Officer Dougherty arrested Frank G. Ober of West Tremont, who acknowledged his guilt soon after being taken to the station house. Ober is about 27 years of age and worked during the summer at The Tremont House. When arrested he showed signs of having drunk freely and said that the depredations with which he was charged were committed while he was under the influence of liquor.

He says he bought a quart of gin, drank it all within 2 or 3 hours, and while in that condition he broke into the Post Office at West Tremont and also entered the store of Mrs. Heath, at Seal Cove, taking money and various articles from both places. He went to Bangor by steamer and made a short visit to relatives a few miles to the eastward. While in the city he drank more or less. It is understood that before reaching maturity he passed several years in the State Reform School. When taken into custody he had in his possession a small portion of the money stolen and also some of the goods taken.

Cranberry Island
Nov. 16, 1904

Last Friday shortly before 2 o'clock a man at the Life Saving Station while spying, observed a sloop boat about 3 miles off shore, appearing not to be under control of anyone. He called the attention of others at the station with the result that at 2:30 o'clock the station boat put off in order to learn the trouble, but another lobster boat, noticing how strangely the boat was acting reached her shortly before the station boat. She proved to be the boat belonging to Edward A. Stanley, and many things went to prove that he must have fallen overboard shortly before, but no trace of him could be seen. The boat was brought in and the sad news broken to the relatives. It is hoped that the body may yet be found.

Bartlett's Island
April 17, 1905

Wesley Bartlett went to Bass Harbor last week and brought home his new gasoline boat which has been built by Jonathan Rich.

Could this be a heretofore unknown ancestor of Cliff, Bobby, and Chummy? Ed.

Cranberry Isles
Nov. 10, 1892

Edwin Spurling in the schooner *Margaret* recently made a trip to Boston and discharged a cargo of fish, and back home in 10 days, which I think is as quick a trip as has ever been made from here (at least quicker than any I remember.) As the schooner *Margaret* has the reputation to be the dullest sailer of the whole Cranberry Island fleet, either the reputation of the vessel must be refuted, or else it must be admitted that Edwin is the smartest captain.

Bar Harbor Record
May 25, 1893

Sunday morning, May 13th about 9:00 a.m. the crew of the Whitehead Life Saving Station near Rockland discovered the schooner *Alice M. Leland* of Somesville, ashore on Otter Island with all sail set. A close investigation revealed to the astonished crew the fact that there was no one aboard, and that there was about a foot of water in the hold. They found the side lights and the lamp in the binnacle still burning, but the compass was gone. The davit tackles were swinging loose but no boat could be found either by the vessel or in the vicinity of the wreck.

The *Alice M. Leland* hailed from and was owned in Somesville, Mt. Desert. She was loaded with stone for New York, shipped by T.M. Blaisdell of Franklin, and was commanded by Capt. Isaac Somes of Mt. Desert, who was part owner. The crew consisted of two men also from the Island.

A few days after, Capt. Somes and crew arrived at Rockland. The schooner had struck on a rock and was supposed to be sinking, and the crew took to the boat and landed on an island where rough weather kept them prisoners for several days.

This is printed to remind us that not all shipwrecks result in loss of life! Ed.

Cranberry Isles
July 5, 1894

Last Wednesday morning, while Fred Spurling was engaged in hauling his lobster traps off Baker's Island during a thick fog he heard cries of distress and once proceeded to learn the cause. Upon reaching a dangerous reef known as the Old Thumper he saw a vessel submerged on the reef with 16 men clinging on the booms. The vessel proved to be the *Ellie T. Kemp* of Gloucester, just fitted out for a fishing trip, having struck there at 3 o'clock that morning. The sea being so rough that he could not get near enough to take the men off, he immediately proceeded to Little Cranberry Island to inform the captain of the lifesaving station. After doing this he went to Capt. G.T. Hadlock of the steamer *Islesford* and told him of the accident. Capt. Hadlock immediately proceeded to the vessel and rescued all the men though with great difficulty, they going out on the end of the main boom and dropping into a boat and then Capt. Hadlock taking them aboard the steamer, the act being accomplished ere the Station boat arrived on the scene. Fifteen minutes later the vessel slid into deep water and only a portion of her masts remain above the water. The crew saved nothing but what they stood in. But for the timely assistance of the one who discovered their perilous position, and Capt. G.T. Hadlock in the steamer, no doubt many of them if not all would have met a watery grave. The vessel was sold last Saturday at auction for \$150, Charles and Warren Gilley and Edward and William Stanley being the purchasers.

Our Board of Directors for the Historical Society is blessed with the hospitality of the Bass Harbor Memorial Library where we hold monthly Board meetings and public programs. Here is a small part of its history. Ed.

May 29, 1895

Tremont Public Library is again indebted to Mrs. Albert Meadows of New York for a nice box of books, 40 or more in number, among them being Carlyle's Essays and a set of Bancroft's Histories of the United States.

The Library Association has made the necessary arrangements for the commencement of the new building. A sketch and plans have been kindly contributed by Prof. E.B. Homer of Boston Technology Institute [sic] which, it is believed prove satisfying to all who are interested in the enterprise. The trustees of the Library Association will assume charge of the building movement, place contracts, etc.

Oct. 16, 1895

The pretty little library for which the Owl Club has been working so hard has at last materialized. The building is according to plans drawn by Prof. Homer of the Massachusetts Technological Institute [sic] who is a summer resident of this place. Mr. J.M. Norwood has completed the building of which the citizens may well be proud. The building is 24 x 32 feet with a side entrance through a pagoda, the roof of which is sustained by three pillars. As you enter the building, the fireplace at the left, with a settee nearby, presents an inviting corner. The bookshelves are at the right, and this part of the room is separated by a neat rail against which, near the center of the room, is the librarian's desk. The room is finished in cypress wood. The building is a credit to the village and the people feel very grateful to the summer visitors who have kindly assisted them in raising the funds, so that now there is only the small amount of \$300 unpaid. The lot and building cost about \$1000.

Could this perhaps be the predecessor to the present building? Was it on another lot or the current one? We know there are Library trustees who will know! Ed.

Bar Harbor Times

Date unknown

The family of the late William Lurvey, who was lost when the *Marie Saunders* went down last month, has moved into the new home bought for them by a number of Bar Harbor summer residents and are very comfortably situated for the coming cold months. The fair given by the Ladies' Aid Society of Bar Harbor cleared \$194. This with the \$54.27 turned over to the Ladies' Aid by the management of the Chauffeurs' Farewell Ball assures the family of many comforts during the winter. The house has been paid for in addition to this fund of nearly \$250.

Notes by Ralph: William L. Lurvey was married to Adelia Reed, daughter of A.H. Reed and Lillian M. Norwood Reed. They had five children: Hazel D., who married Ralph Young; Francis, who married Elizabeth L. Candage; Letitia, who married Roy Weaver; Stanley E. who married Marcella Jean St. Marie; and John Phippen, a half-brother.

Exciting Announcement!

A tape-recorded talk by Ralph Stanley, given on Nov. 26, 2007 at our monthly meeting, has made its appearance! Topic: Steamboats! Some portion of this talk will be transcribed in our next issue, early in 2011—I promise! Ed.



Here is another of the postcards from our collection. It carries no date or other information except the hand-written reference to the point at the left where the try-house stands. To its right, the Fernald house, the Trask house, the Harding- Silverman house , and the Van Houten house; further right, apparently, are the Black house and the present home of Bob and Arlene Bartlett. The red building in the center is, of course, Daniel Benson's store and wharf. Notice the Friendship sloops and dories which were clearly popular in the fishing fleet of the time.

Captain Fred's Witness

By Malcolm MacDuffie, Sr.

In the last issue, we shared what appeared to be the first page of a small story by the above title, penned by my Dad many years ago. I said I'd carry on with the rest of it if I could find it. Failing that, I am now of the opinion that he never did complete it. So it now becomes my task to see if I can do it for him. Ed.

You might remember that the setting was the store at the head of the lobster buyer's wharf, where a motley crowd of men had gathered on a blowy day. My own recollection would be of the "pool room" on Thurston's Wharf in Bernard, a much more roomy space where lots of heads and pockets were knit, lots of buoys painted, and lots of tobacco chewed whilst others, not so industrious, told stories and enjoyed many a laugh at somebody else's expense.

The scene is set when the minister leaves with his usual parting shot, "Well, I'll see all you boys at Prayer Meeting," and Capt. Fred remarks in wicked provocation: "Wouldn't the Reverend be surprised if you all showed up on Wednesday night? But he'll be spared."

Silence descended once again on the assembled fishers, as when the minister had made his pointed remark. These fellows were seldom at a loss for a rejoinder, except when the topic was strange if not fearsome to them. Capt. Fred waited for a moment; then continued. "You know, prayer meeting is not all that painful. I'll tell you a little bit about it. First off, you go in the church—you know, that place with the pointy thing on the roof? The place where you had to walk your little girl down the aisle to get hitched, so you wouldn't have to support her no more? The place where you had to go when the old man kicked the bucket? Oh, you do know where it is, do you?"

Faces had not exactly brightened, but just about every head had nodded, mostly with expressions sour enough to curdle milk. They knew where it was alright. It was just that they had no intention of entering the place except under the most severe duress. Capt. Fred went on. "Well, when you go in, there'll be a little group of women there, but you know them—your old lady might be one of 'em. Nothing much to be afraid of. Now they'll maybe start out with singing a hymn or two—pretty sad caterwaulin', but it ain't long before that'll be done."

Faces got even more glum by this point. No one wanted to join the conversation, but it didn't take a ten-dollar psychiatrist to tell that the guys were getting less interested in the proposition by leaps and bounds.

"Now comes the best part," said Capt. Fred. "D'you know what they do at prayer meetin'? I s'pose you'll tell me they pray—and so they do. But do you know what they pray about? It's the sins that need forgiving they pray about, that's what! And how do they know what sins those are? Well, you can bet that names need naming and sins need mentioning, right?"

Now he had their attention. Every eye was on him as he went into his peroration: "Now you're gettin' the idea! The minister asks 'em what they want to pray about. That's when them women folks start in tellin' about all the bad things people in town are doin'. They've got it all down, chapter an' verse—who's drinkin', who's carousin', who's stealin', who's lyin', who's carryin' on with whose wife—I tell you, it's the best fun you can get except for

the County Fair! You don't have to join in the prayin', just keep quiet and take it all in! And then, afterwards, you know what you can do with all that spicy news about your neighbors!"

That's more than enough to tell you, and explains why the minister nearly fainted the next Wednesday night when an eager but nervous crowd of guys he'd never seen except on the wharf sidled through the church doors and joined the usual congregation in the pews. Capt. Fred was not among them, but you can be sure he was at the wharf the next blowy day to get their report of the experience which was a landmark for them, most surely for the minister, and the regular prayer meeting attenders as well. +

The Restoration of the Kellam Dory--I

By John MacDuffie

When Art and Nan Kellam first came to Placentia Island on June 8, 1949, as recorded in the book recently completed by Peter Blanchard, *We Were an Island*, this was how it all started:

"There they were, husband and wife, both thirty-eight years of age and high up on the shingle beach of their new found land. Having been ferried ashore with their belongings and supplies, Art and Nan Kellam entered a shared state of amazement and gratitude as they surveyed Placentia for the first time as island owners. The 552-acre island lay before them, resplendent in the Gulf of Maine, two miles out to sea. The Kellams had voyaged out to Placentia in a brand new wooden dory, towed by Cliff Rich, the dory's builder. After relaying his good wishes to the couple at the very edge of their adventure, Cliff turned his workboat toward McKinley on Mt. Desert Island. As Cliff's skiff receded from view, the din of his outboard engine gave way to more subtle and natural sounds. These sounds had prevailed along the Maine coast since prehistoric time—the rush and clatter of beach stones as waves advanced and retreated and the strident cries of gulls, wheeling over the Bar at the island's northeastern tip."

The dory was named "BLB" which being translated was the acronym for "Bear Loves Beum" with further elucidation to explain that in their journal writings and other communications, Bear was Art and Beum was Nan. So this little boat, which was so essential to them for their periodic trips to the mainland for supplies, from the very beginning was christened with the declaration of their love for each other. And, the beach where they landed and ever after kept the dory was, naturally enough, named Dory Beach.

My own memories from an early part of the Kellams' time on the island include these: Only occasionally seeing them afloat under oars, but much more often hearing my Dad say, "I noticed the Kellams were in this morning, so I kept an eye out and when they started back I made it a point to be out there and just happened along to offer them a tow...." Especially in the early days, they were so independent they would never accept if they thought it would put you out of your way.

All of this is just a prelude to the current story which we want all our readers to know: the Kellam dory is now back in the shop where she was built over 60 years ago, now operated by Cliff Rich's grandson Chummy, where this winter she will get some much-needed repair of her top planking and neighboring parts. Chummy has offered to do this work in memory of Cliff and the Kellams, so that BLB can be preserved for generations to come. She will be on display at the Country Store Museum in the summer seasons beginning July 2011.

It is our thought to include further information about this boat, further excerpts from *We Were an Island*, and memories or reflections which may come from some of those still in our community who remember the Kellams and their watery adventures. Thus, we solicit such contributions as readers may be moved to offer them. +



The Cliff Rich dory "BLB" with Nan and Art Kellam at the oars. At first Art did all the rowing, but in time he devised special oars which Nan could manage, as she was so much smaller of stature than he, yet was required to match his rowing stroke and tempo. Photo from the Kellam Family Archives

Photo Credit: Edward N. Kenway; Text from Peter Blanchard III, *We Were An Island*, publ. University of New England Press, www.upne.com , 2010

BOOKS FOR SALE!

As visitors to the Country Store Museum are aware, the Historical Society carries a number of books which we think might be of interest to folks near and far. Some are historical in nature; others are of various sorts, with Tremont authors. The Directors have decided to offer these books by mail to readers of the Newsletter. The following list will serve as your catalog.

Books Available from the Tremont Historical Society

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Plus 5% Tax</u>
(NEW)			
Peter B. Blanchard III Photos by David Graham	We Were an Island <i>The Maine Life of Art & Nan Kellam</i>	27.95	29.35
Raymond C.S. Finney	Summers with Percy <i>A Biography of Percy Reed</i>	15.00	15.75
Dean Lunt	Hauling by Hand <i>History of Frenchboro</i>	25.00	26.25
Christina Gillis	Writing on Stone	24.95	26.20
Ruth Grierson (text) Richard Johnson (photos)	A is for Acadia	15.95	16.75
Wayne Libhart	The Jury is Out The Jury is Excused	10.00 14.95	10.50 15.70
Virginia Libhart	The Enchanted Land Carrie's Dream (ages 12-15) Carrie Makes Waves (ages 12-15) Makin' Do (ages 12-15)	8.95 8.95 8.95 8.95	9.40 9.40 9.40 9.40
Ruth Moore	The Weir Spoonhandle The Fire Balloon Candlemas Bay Speak to the Winds A Walk Down Main Street	14.95 13.95 15.00 10.95 10.95 10.95	15.70 14.65 15.75 11.50 11.50 11.50
	(NEW) Time's Web (<i>poems</i>)	13.95	14.65
<p><i>Native of Gott's Island, whose novels received the following plaudit from the New York Times: "It is doubtful if any American writer has ever done a better job of communicating a people, their talk, their thoughts, their geography and their way of life."</i></p>			
Sven Davisson, Ed.	Foley Craddock <i>Stories by Ruth Moore and Eleanor Mayo</i>	14.95	15.70
Sandy Phippen, Ed.	High Clouds <i>Letters of Ruth Moore</i>	16.95	17.80
Paul S. Richardson	The Creation and Growth of Acadia National Park	29.95	31.45

Wendell Seavey	Working the Sea <i>Autobiographical</i>	15.95	16.75
Sheldon "Smitty" Smith	Memories of a Lifetime (poems)	10.00	10.50
Craig Milner & Ralph Stanley	Ralph Stanley: Tales of a Maine Boat Builder	24.95	26.20
Tremont Women's Club Muriel Trask Davisson, Ed.	Two Tall Tales	9.95	10.45

Serially written by 24 members of the Tremont Women's Club, 1940's and '50's

Book Orders should be sent to Tremont Historical Society, P.O. Box 215, Bass Harbor ME 04653. Please add shipping costs of \$3.00 per book, and 50 cents for each additional book in the same order.

We also have many copies of a booklet published in 1998, "The Historic Homes of the Town of Tremont," with photos and historical facts on 85 structures in the Town of Tremont. These booklets are available free on request. If mailed, we ask for a donation of \$1 to cover mailing costs.

The following Response Form gives readers of the Newsletter an opportunity to show support for our work in recording Tremont history and making various artifacts and materials available to the public through the Country Store Museum. Membership by payment of dues is only one way of doing this. Another is by responding to our Annual Appeal each year in late summer or early fall. For those who live in the area, we invite your offer of time and effort to help by staffing the Museum or work in other areas of interest to you. Please let us know of your interest in contributing to the fulfillment of our Mission.

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RESPONSE FORM

Please clip and mail to Tremont Historical Society, P.O. Box 215, Bass Harbor ME 04653

Yes I/we wish to begin membership in the Tremont Historical Society

Yes I/we wish to renew membership for another year.

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$10.00 per person for annual dues.

Please make checks payable to Tremont Historical Society

Dues, or contributions to the Annual Fund in any amount, provide membership through the next June.

Please list names of all persons for whom dues are paid, or all donors of contributions.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Check if this is a summer address If different, please enter winter address below:

Address _____

E-mail address for meeting notices or this Newsletter (please check which)

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.

WINTER 2010 NEWSLETTE

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