



NEWSLETTER

OF THE TREMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY & COUNTRY STORE MUSEUM

TremontMaineHistory.us

207.244.9753 • tremonthistory@gmail.com • 4 Granville Road, PO Box 215, Bass Harbor, Maine 04653

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

A NEW, NEW LOOK!

As you see, above, we have a new logo to identify us to the world! From henceforth all mailings, publicity and even a business card will be thus adorned. Our Secretary, Pattie Tierney, describes the new logo as follows:

"Our new logo reflects our maritime heritage by portraying a traditional fishing boat, the dory, and a silhouette of the three mountains that preside above our town. Tremont was settled in 1762. Incorporated as Mansell in 1848, the name was soon changed to Tremont, which in French means "three mountains" an obvious reference to the peaks of Beech, Mansell, and Bernard mountains which rise predominantly on either side of Long Pond. Why Beech since it is now in SWH? Well, we must remember that up until 1905 Southwest Harbor and Tremont were one town. "

In our logo you can see that we are proud of our maritime heritage. In the 19th century there was more fish landed here and shipped from here than at any other harbor on MDI. So the dory with her intrepid crew at the oars, heeled fairly steeply to suggest an active seaway to challenge seamanship and courage; so the rope enclosure with the most useful seagoing knot, the bowline, to secure it. And, to remind us of the source of our name, Tremont, the "three mountains" behind Bass Harbor as you enter.

Further, we are the Tremont Historical Society and we operate the Country Store Museum. Each entity is real but they are distinct. We collect and preserve artifacts, we gather and digitize genealogical information, we share the knowledge of our history which is of such interest and importance for us all; and for the three and a half warmer months, during nine hours each week, we welcome visitors to our museum.

We are thankful to Z Studio of Bar Harbor who helped us choose the elements of our new logo and arrive at the formulation you will soon see more and more frequently. All members of our Board participated in this process, so we can now announce to the world that this is our symbol, and we are proud of it!

And --Please notice our new web site on the masthead--well worth your looking in on!

From Board Member Nan Lincoln

Why a dory?

Tremont Historical Society chooses a new logo

One of the best-known marine paintings is Winslow Homer's "Fog Warning." It depicts a fisherman rowing his boatload of halibut on a choppy sea toward a distant schooner. The fisherman is gazing with concern over his left shoulder at the looming fog bank.



Chances are Homer's fisherman made it safely back to the mother ship with his catch, because the boat he's rowing is a dory.

The dory was the traditional vessel Tremont fishermen employed for more than a hundred years of harvesting the sea with weirs, longlines, handlines, seines and trawls. These sturdy, buoyant, flat-bottomed vessels with tapered bow and stern and flared hulls, made what is arguably the most dangerous profession in the world, a little less so, safely bearing its passengers and catch through uncertain seas and weather.

In Bass Harbor when the herring and the Underwood Sardine factory were still running, these dories would be filled to their flared gunnels with fish dipped from the outer island weirs and seined at night in moonlit coves. Elsewhere they were stacked like mixing bowls on the decks of schooners built in the local boat yards for months-long excursions to the Grand or George's banks fishing grounds.

This long-standing tradition with the fishing and boat-building industries of Tremont is why, after some debate, the Historical Society board chose the image of a working dory and the three mountains that give Tremont its name, as the centerpiece of its new logo.

While the Bass Harbor Light might have been a more obvious choice— a handsome beacon perched on the steep granite shore at the mouth of the harbor, and still on duty warning sailors away from treacherous shoals — it was felt that the humble dory better represented the traditional working class nature of this town, its busy harbor, villages and working people.

Those who would like to see one of these sturdy, stable vessels, now retired after decades of service, are welcome to visit the Bass Harbor Country Store Museum during the summer months where a fine (though smaller) example of a dory is on display, along with the tools and implements of the fishing trade as well as items from the everyday life of the men who traditionally manned the boats and the women and children who awaited their safe return.



TWO HISTORIC BUILDINGS --



ON THE AGENDA OF TREMONT SELECTBOARD THE SAME NIGHT!

On Tuesday, Sept. 3, 2019 the SelectBoard of Tremont held its regular meeting at 5:00 p.m. at the Harvey Kelley Room in the Town Office. In attendance for this special occasion was Marty Lyons, who serves as steward of the Old Red Store and other properties left by Paul Hinton, which will ultimately benefit the Bass Harbor Memorial Library according to Mr. Hinton's will. Mr. Lyons made a power point presentation to illustrate the historic values embodied in the store building, pictured above on left. This was in support of his request for a Town application for acceptance of the building on the National Register of Historic Places. It was built in the mid 1800's, and functioned as a grocery store, meat market with ice house, hosting a pool hall, barbershop and dental office upstairs, and as Bernard Post Office for several decades into the mid 1900's. In recent times it has served as an antique or gift shop. (*See following story by Harvey Kelley.*) The SelectBoard voted to show its support for the listing of the Old Red Store as an historic landmark.

The West Tremont Methodist Episcopal Church on Route 102 in West Tremont was first a previously built meeting hall on the present site, purchased by the congregation in 1892. In 1900 this hall, in poor condition and with "associations unfavorable to religious influences" was torn down, and the main section now in existence was built. It is reported that the pastor, Rev. Arthur Thompson, augmented his \$500 yearly salary by working at the E.T. Russell Sardine Factory on Dix Point. Also, in order to raise funds for the new structure, he walked to Bangor and back on several occasions to solicit donations. In 1940, when the denomination became the Methodist Church, members raised funds to renovate the building for its rededication. In 1956, the construction of an addition for education and fellowship purposes was initiated by a gift of \$5,000 from Dr. George Dix in memory of his parents, and named the Dix Memorial Vestry. Again, additional funds were raised locally to complete the project. The congregation continued in this building until it was dissolved. A summer resident, W. Morgan Churchman, wishing to preserve the sole remaining landmark of the village of West Tremont, bought it in 2007 making various repairs and improvements so that he could designate it as a center for community events and gatherings. The name,

Pacific Hall, was chosen to commemorate the meeting place originally on the site. Mr. Churchman had recently offered Pacific Hall to the Town to fulfil the same purpose for the benefit of the public. At the Sept. 3 meeting, the SelectBoard voted to ask the town lawyer to develop an agreement by which this transfer of ownership will occur.

..... *from our Newsletter archives -- 2002*

THE OLD RED STORE

By Harvey Kelley

Located at the junction of the Bernard Road, Rice Road and Steamboat Wharf Road, this small building has been an important part of Bernard social and economic life for nearly a century and a half. It has served as a meat market, a general store, a post office, a radio shop, a pool hall, a barber shop and is currently a popular antique shop. Of interest from an historical viewpoint is the fact that through its many changes the store has been owned and operated by four generations of the founding family.

The Market, as it is still called by a few of the older generation—including the writer--was started by T.W. Jackson in approximately 1855 and named the T.W. Jackson Market. Mr. Jackson and his wife Ella, who was a member of the Benson family, lived in the white house next to the store occupied in recent decades by Clarence and Hazel Harding, then Bill and Martha Harding. The home, which was much larger than it is today, in earlier times was operated as a small hotel and named The Tremont House.

Very early in its existence The Market became the location of the Bernard Post Office, with second and third generation members of the family serving as postmasters.

An interesting feature of the building was that the rear section was constructed as an ice house to provide refrigeration for the meats which were a specialty of the business. February was ice-cutting time as giant cakes were cut from Dave's Pond and hauled up the hill to supply both the store and the icehouse for the fishwharf which is now the site of the Town Dock. Dave's Pond is the alder swamp along the south side of the Leffingwell Road, which was then cleared and a favorite skating place for both young and old. This writer remembers the mixed emotions of delight at watching the ice cutting and hauling, and the regret that the skating pond was not available during and for some time after the harvest.

Eventually Richard Jackson, T.W.'s son, opened the T.W. Jackson Market in Southwest Harbor, which is remembered by many as one of that town's most popular stores. Operation of the Bernard store and Post Office was taken over by Mabel Jackson Condon and her husband Herbert. During this period the upper floor with its outside stairway was used as a barber shop and pool hall which was operated by Harry Albee. The pool table was eventually moved to the F.W. Thurston wharf.

Still another change in operation of the store occurred when the Condons' daughter, Harriet, married William Hinton. William had been a radio technician at the Seawall Naval Radio Station during World War II, and radio sales and service were added to the offerings of The Market. Eventually, when Harriet Hinton gave up the position of postmistress, The Market once again changed its service to the town and became a successful antique shop under the guidance and ownership of Paul Hinton, son of Harriet and William Hinton—the fourth generation to make The Market an active part of the Bernard community.

MORE TREMONT HAPPENINGS WITH HISTORICAL ADDENDA



Here is the Clark Bridge, so called because the home across from the Kittredge house (shown here) was owned by Eben Clark. That house was on the site where the Tremont Community Building and School are located today. The Clark Bridge has very recently been replaced by a new structure of concrete and steel. Here in its earliest days, built much like a wharf on wooden pilings, it carried folks across in wagons and sleighs, on horseback or bicycle as the lady here is using.

However, the dam which is very prominent in the background (along with the Head of the Harbor Church steeple in the background) has its own story. By shutting off the salt water from flowing into the tidal marsh, according to the season two benefits could be obtained. In the late summer, abundant salt hay which grew across a wide area could be cut, dried, and harvested for cattle feed and bedding. The ground which was so soggy when inundated by salt water as well as fresh, could dry to a degree and make that resource accessible. Then, later in the Fall, the fresh water that lay on top of what salt was left would accumulate, and in winter would freeze so that ice could be cut and stored for refrigerating meats and other foods in the nearby communities. Then, through the warm months the dam was opened so that salt water could again renew the vital ecosystems of the marsh.

In many parts of New England in early times, this ingenious procedure brought great benefits to the communities near extensive salt marshes. In many areas the hay harvest was so abundant that large scows were brought into the waters before the dams were closed, so that they could be loaded with hay. The dams were then opened and as water levels rose, the scows were floated out and taken to various wharves where they could be unloaded near the barns where the hay was stored for winter use.

AND HARKING BACK A FEW ISSUES --



Here we have before and after photos of the famous Ruth Moore Peapod-which-became-a-Skiff that you may have read about in an earlier Newsletter. Chummy Rich, Cliff's grandson, repaired her so we can display her at the Museum someday, when we have a sheltered place to keep her out of weather.

She was built by Cliff Rich in 1945 for Ruth Moore, who had ordered a peapod. Cliff felt he knew better than Ruth what she wanted, so built the skiff and promised her she would thank him someday. She did, in fact, come to love the skiff and enjoy her a lot. Here is an excerpt from a letter she wrote to her friend, the folk-singer Gordon Bok, in 1974.

RUTH MOORE'S 1974 LETTER TO GORDON BOK

We're without a boat this year, because when we went to put ours in the water, the man who was helping us said, "For godsake, don't step off the floorboards or you'll go right through the side of her."

Well, she's old. You can't expect too much. We had her built in 1945 by Cliff Rich, now dead, who was famous for his skiffs and punts and who put his--what--essence? into her because he liked us. She's the smoothest-rowing boat I ever saw, lovely in the water--not much good with an outboard because she wasn't built for one. Actually, she hates outboards and tries to drive her stern under and let the ocean come in on to the stern seat. The only one she's ever tolerated was a Seagull, 3 horse-power. But that's all right with us. We'd

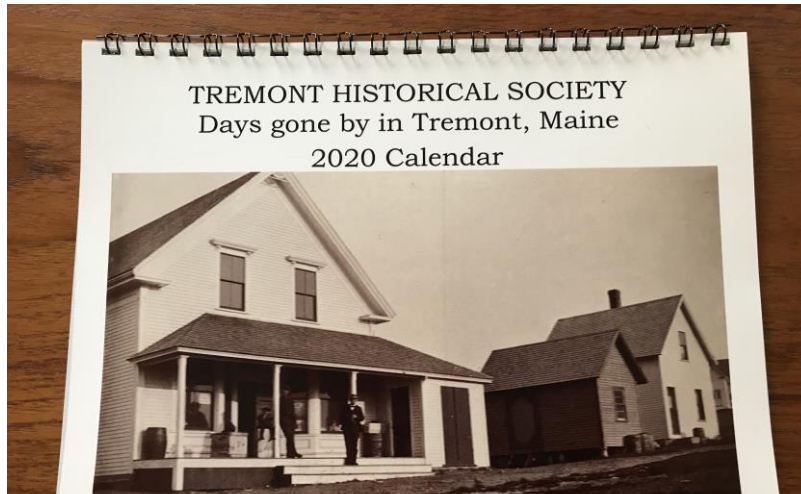
rather row or sail, and she sails something beautiful with a spritsail. Cliff, just before he died, (he was in his 90's) reinforced the stern-board for us and wouldn't take any money for his work: "Because," he said, "anybody that'll take as good care of a boat as you girls have, don't deserve to pay for repairs on her." He also gave us his mast and spritsail, he being too old to sail his own skiff any longer.

We had her overhauled last year, but the fellow who did it only caulked a few seams and painted her, charged us \$105 and didn't trouble to tell us that the timbers were rotten. Cliff's grandson, now, wants \$800 for retimbering her and other boatyards are only interested in selling us a fiberglass job. Which we spit on. While reflecting that times have changed.

This Editor, who so enjoyed telling you the story of how Cliff talked to Ruth, arguing that a peapod would not support an outboard motor properly, and how a skiff would give great performance under power, got a great chuckle out of reading Ruth's words above, about how the skiff hates outboards and wants to bury her stern except with the tiniest-powered size represented by that British Seagull. Yet, as family members have assured me in more than one conversation, Ruth truly did love that boat as she so eloquently expressed in her letter. See the wonderful picture of her nephew Bud Trask and his youngsters, dog, spritsail and Seagull ready for fun!



OUR LATEST (AND VERY SUCCESSFUL) VENTURE!



One of our sister historical societies, in far-off Goffstown, NH had published a wonderful calendar with historic pictures of their community's past. Our Board thought it would be ideal for us, since we also have many great pictures to share. Board members Callie Gothard, Kathie Pratt and Suzanne Madeira made choices, and Anne Haynes put them into a calendar format. Printing was done by our faithful friends at Downeast Graphics and Printing in Ellsworth. The first 100 were nearly all sold by the time Fall came upon us, so we ventured boldly out to order a second batch. These will be on sale in a few local outlets where folks will be doing their Christmas shopping. Also we will gladly mail them as well for an additional charge of \$2 to our base price of \$12.

Our new batch of 2020 calendars have 14 pictures inside the covers which show the Country Store Museum then and now. Many pictures are from the Viola Benson Watson Collection, and show scenes of the harbor and villages of Bernard and (formerly) McKinley.

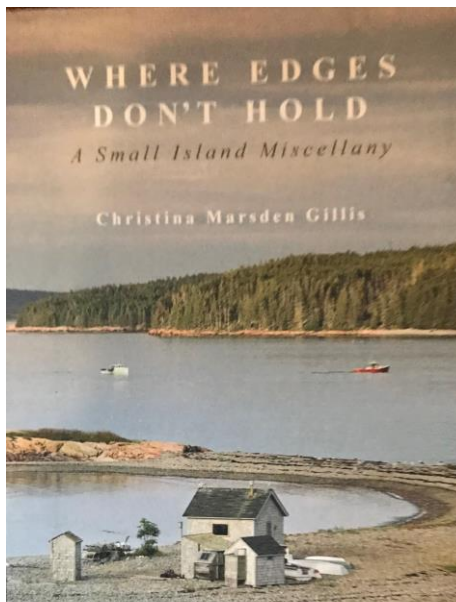
Having received many questions since the calendars have been in people's hands, we promise that next year's calendars will carry as much information as possible to enable viewers to know the locations in the Tremont of today where those images were photographed. We are working on an insert for the 2020 calendars which will provide some of the same information for scenes found therein.

So if you are local, check in at Carroll's Drug Store, Bass Harbor Memorial Library at Pacific Hall, Hansen's Outpost, Gott's Store, H.G. Reed Plumbing & Heating or other outlets nearby for your copy. Or write to us at P.O. Box 215, Bass Hbr. ME 04653, or email

the Editor at redhousemaine@gmail.com. \$12 if purchased locally; add \$2 for shipping if from a distance. Checks or credit cards accepted.

CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED NOW!

This year for the first time we have been able to accept credit cards for book, calendar, notecard and tee shirt purchases at the Museum. We are using the Square system which many small businesses find simple and convenient. For mail orders we can make use of card numbers for anyone who prefers that method of payment.



Where Edges Don't Hold: A Small Island Miscellany

by Christina Marsden Gillis, 2017

Book Review by Kathie Pratt

Christina Gillis' essays on island life have appeared in various publications, and she has wrangled them up into this one small volume. The phrase “tied up with a ribbon” comes to mind here, with the beautiful cover photo by Peter Ralston showing a ribbon of sand bar curling gracefully around the Gotts Island pool. It is convenient and satisfying to have her works so neatly collected, and in reading them, one better understands not only her subject, but the author as well.

Ms. Gillis has spent over 40 summers on Gotts Island. She and her husband John, both writers, own the house which was author Ruth Moore's family home. How fitting. No couple could have more respect and sensitivity for their predecessors. I was fortunate to learn that firsthand, when they graciously hosted a house tour for the Bass Harbor Memorial Library's Ruth Moore Days. Many original features and artifacts from generations of Moores are still there, including a framed 1812 deed to the house. Tina and John showed and told us all about them with reverence and enthusiasm.

The same reverence carries over in her writing; she cites Moore's works throughout this volume, and seems to share her sensibilities. An essay titled “Good and Lawful Deeds” is about the transfer of the house to Tina's relatives, the Strausses. Quoting from Ruth Moore's poems and letters, Gillis cuts through the red tape of real estate to the more meaningful core--what's really happening is a transfer of history, heritage, and place. She writes, “Ruth was planning to give this [1812] deed to the new buyers, and she seemingly wanted them to understand that because it recognizes, even pays homage, to the ghosts that still inhabit the island; its value exceeds that of the actual legal document at hand.” Citing from and referring to Moore's poems she writes, “Within the long perspective, the land is always larger than any footprint, or boundary, that human settlement – or ownership – may place upon it.” She ends, saying of the deeds and letters, “These

documents are my inheritance also. The lessons are still there to be learned, the ghosts recognized, the silences heard, and the mystery woven into the fabric of our own lives.”

In her acknowledgments at the start of the book, Gillis also mentions works by several other writers, and some artists, too, that have “informed [her] thinking in the pieces that appear here, mostly cited directly in the text but some sitting more obtrusively in my imagination, their contributions not specifically identifiable.” Those cited in the text exemplify her ideas, as in a dissertation. One is reminded of interconnectedness, how exposure to ideas and experiences make us who we are. It's always reassuring to know there are others who see as we do, or open us to a new vision.

The new vision is the idea that all things are in motion, and edges, however we perceive them, are in flux. In “Unfinished Land” she writes, “land-based knowledge is framed in linear time. But on the small island...other stories present themselves, stories we experience less in linear trajectory than in the repeated motion of the tides...Historical, archeological, or even narrative, knowledge is challenged by its meeting with the sea that offers up its own kind of knowing. We need to stretch, even confound, our usual frames to take account of such knowledge.”

At times, (most times, in fact) Gillis is a profound philosopher. At others, she is more pragmatic, as when she writes of how tide determines travel -- it must be high when by boat and low when on foot to cross the mussel bar. She is an explorer, a neighbor, a mother, a mourner. She carefully observes and deftly describes everything around her, what she sees, feels, and knows -- everything the island has taught her.

Books Available - 2019

We continue to stock books by local and regional Maine authors, especially those whose fictional works are based on nearby landscapes and communities which are part of our history. Non-fiction works tend to cover local wildlife, industry, community life, crafts, and special features such as homes and cemeteries. We encourage readers to peruse the following list of offerings which are often not found elsewhere. There are no better gifts for the holidays, birthdays, etc. than books!

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>5.5% tax</u>	<u>Total</u>
Peter Blanchard III	We Were an Island	\$27.95	1.59	\$29.54
Sven Davisson, Editor	Foley Craddock-Moore short stories	14.95	0.82	15.77
Christina Marsden Gillis	Writing on Stone	24.95	1.38	26.33
Christina Marsden Gillis	Where Edges Don't Hold	8.95	0.49	9.44
Ruth Gortner Grierson (text) & Richard Johnson (photos)	A is for Acadia	15.95	0.88	16.83
Ruth Gortner Grierson	Nature Diary of MDI	15.17	0.83	16.00
Ruth Gortner Grierson	Wildlife Watcher's Guide	15.17	0.83	16.00
Ruth Gortner Grierson	Wonderful Wildflowers	15.17	0.83	16.00
Ruth Grierson & Tom Vining	Living on the Edge	26.00	1.43	27.43
Sharon Joyce	Culinary History of Downeast ME	21.99	1.21	23.2
Nan Lincoln	The Summer of Cecily	18.95	1.05	20.00
Nan Lincoln	Cecily's Summer	19.95	1.10	21.05
Eleanor Mayo	Turn Home	16.95	0.93	17.88

Eleanor Mayo	October Fire	16.95	0.93	17.88
Eleanor Mayo	Loom of the Land	18.95	1.05	20.00
Eleanor Mayo	Swan's Harbor	16.95	0.93	17.88
Ruth Moore	The Weir	14.95	0.82	15.77
Ruth Moore	Spoonhandle	13.95	0.77	14.72
Ruth Moore	Fire Balloon	15.00	0.83	15.83
Ruth Moore	Candlemas Bay	10.95	0.61	11.56
Ruth Moore	Speak to the Winds	15.00	0.83	15.83
Ruth Moore	Walk Down Main Street	8.95	0.49	9.44
Ruth Moore	Times Web	13.95	0.77	14.72
Sandy Phippen	High Clouds Soaring, Clouds...	16.95	0.93	17.88
	<i>Letters of Ruth Moore</i>			
Laurie Schreiber	Boat Building on MDI	21.99	1.21	23.20
Wendell Seavey	Working the Sea	16.95	0.93	17.88
Weslea Sidon	The Fool Sings (<i>poetry</i>)	15.17	0.83	16.00
Irving Silverman	Aging Wisely	29.98	1.65	31.63
Sheldon "Smitty" Smith	Memories of a Lifetime (<i>poetry</i>)	10.00	0.55	10.55
Craig Milner & Ralph Stanley	Ralph Stanley: Tales of a Maine Boat Builder	24.95	1.38	26.33
Tremont School	Cookbook	9.48	0.52	10.00
Tremont Women's Club	Two Tall Tales	9.95	0.55	10.50
Thomas Vining	Cemeteries of Cranberry Isles and The Towns of Mount Desert Is.	33.18	1.82	35.00
Capt. Ray Williamson	Maine Windjammer Cruises Keeping the Tradition Alive	48.00	2.64	50.64
Luann Yetter	Bar Harbor in the Roaring Twenties	21.99	1.21	23.20
DVD	Chummy Rich Maine Boat Builder	14.95	0.82	15.77

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 Appeal in any amount, provide membership for the ensuing year..

Name(s) _____

Address _____

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

Address _____

Email address _____

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.

FALL 2019 NEWSLETTER

Non-Profit
Organization
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Tremont Historical Society
P.O. Box 215
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