OLD BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

An Occasional Newsletter of the Society - Fall 2013

Presidents' Remarks to the Membership of the Old Bristol Historical Society

Our 10th season has been one of both old and new. We've worked on improvements to our old McKinley School (1855), enjoyed viewing again the old photos and postcards of Gordon Fossett and Craig Elliott and also of the Penobscot Marine Museum. We listened to fascinating speakers from home and away talk about memories from their own and their parents' experiences, while others have delved back centuries to put us in touch with the past.

We've heard stories about old stores in New Harbor, old days in Pemaquid Harbor, adventures on islands of Muscongus Bay, old mills on the upper Pemaquid River and old sites along its lower waters, and even about the naval battle fought off our shores in the War of 1812. The local speakers at our Sunday evening programs at McKinley School and the 200th Anniversary Battle Celebration sponsored with the Town have attracted larger audiences than ever.

New aspects foremost in mind are that we now have a new access ramp for McKinley School. We participated in Old Bristol Days by having an information booth which was new. For the first time we designed T-shirts to sell to Boxer and Enterprise Battle enthusiasts. We helped bring the historical event to students at Bristol Consolidated School and helped organize, and participated in, its meaningful commemoration at Lighthouse Park.

We heartily welcome our new members of this year, boosting our count to 69 households and 90 members (4 of these are new Lifetime Members). We hope members and friends will take an active part in the society by sharing ideas for projects, programs, and events, and helping to bring them to fruition. Like every successful organization, we need you!

Pete and Kay Hannah

McKinley School, Harrington Rd., Pemaquid Falls

Old Bristol Historical Society Officers and Directors July 2013 - July 2014

1,2 Co-Presidents	**Pete and Kay Hannah**	7 - Director	**Lawrence Hayter**
3 - Vice President	**Wayne Chadwick**	8 - Director	**David Kolodin**
4 - Secretary	**Daniel C. Purdy, Esq.**	9 - Director	**A. J. Lockhart**
5 - Treasurer	**Rev. Robert Ives**	10 - Director	**Mollie Perley**
6 - Past President	**Peter Hope**		

Boxer-Enterprise Sea Battle Commemorated at Pemaquid Point

by Larry Hayter

James Nelson

On September 5th at Lighthouse Park nearly 200 people attended the 200-year anniversary of the 1813 sea battle fought off Pemaquid Point. The audience heard details of the battle that was watched by hundreds of area residents, explanations of what led to it, and about the lives of the two young captains who were fatally wounded and buried side by side with great ceremony in Portland, where the victorious American brig, the *U.S.S. Enterprise*, towed the captured British brig, the *H.M.S. Boxer*, after the battle. Poems and songs about the battle and War of 1812 were also heard.

William Benner, chairman of the Bristol Board of Selectmen, welcomed attendees to the event sponsored by the Town of Bristol, the Old Bristol Historical Society, and the Pemaquid Peninsula Heritage Group. The event was organized by Jack Tingley of Pemaquid Point, a volunteer at the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath, and Kay Hannah, co-president of the Old Bristol Historical Society.

The program opened with Kay Hannah's reading from part of the poem, "*My Lost Youth*," Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's recollection of the battle and the funeral of the captains. Main speakers were James L. Nelson, maritime historian and education coordinator at Maine Maritime Museum, and David Hanna, author of *Knights of the Sea,* a book about the two captains and the battle, published in 2012 and recently re-issued in paperback.

Local poet Sally Woolf-Wade read the 30-line poem "*Deadly Conflict*" that she wrote specifically for the occasion. Her reaction to the total event was that it was "fascinating" because it presented "so many diverse voices, so many different viewpoints."

Fred Gosbee of Castlebay, the Round Pond-based folk duo, sang a historical ballad, "*Boxer and Enterprise*," which he adapted and expanded for the event. He and musical partner Julia Lane also sang "*The Capture of the Crown*," their original ballad about a heroic group of citizens from Bremen – then part of Bristol, who in April of 1813 borrowed a ship named the *Increase*, brought 67-year-old Revolutionary War naval hero, Commodore Samuel Tucker, out of retirement to command it, and captured the British privateer, the *Crown*, which had been attacking local merchant ships. Castlebay also played instrumental music of the period before and after the program.

David Hanna

Handed-down family stories from those who watched the sea fight 200 years ago were read by Rev. Robert Ives of OBHS, David Andrews of the South Bristol Historical Society, and Bristol resident Craig Elliott.

"It is wonderful to hear stories of ancestors who actually witnessed the battle", commented Ives. "The differences among them revealed a reality of life that we often see and perceive from our own perspective."

The Old Bristol Historical Society helped sponsor Nelson to also speak about the battle to fifth through eighth grade students at Bristol Consolidated School earlier in the afternoon. He remained dressed like a seaman on the *Enterprise* for his talk at Lighthouse Park which focused on events leading up to the battle and the encounter itself. Nelson later called the program "a terrific memorial to those men who fought on those waters so long ago."

David Hanna, who had just arrived from bicentennial ceremonies at the Eastern Cemetery on Munjoy Hill in Portland and the previous evening had moderated a panel of War of 1812 experts discussing the battle at the Maine Historical Society in Portland, spoke to the audience about the lives of the two captains.

"I think the people of Bristol did right by the memory of the dead captains, Samuel Blyth and William Burrows," David Hanna remarked after the event. He is a former Bristol resident and graduate of Lincoln Academy.

"It was a very meaningful event in recognition of a part of the rich history of Bristol," commented co-organizer Kay Hannah of OBHS. "We were delighted that so many people showed up to enjoy it."

Commemoration audience Front row [L to R]:
Rev. Robert Ives, David Andrews, James Nelson, Stan Wade,
Sally Woolf-Wade, Kay Hannah, Pat and William Benner

Building Improvements

Much progress was made on improving our McKinley School meeting house this past season. With the help of Ken Perley and his knowledge and skills in working on old buildings we raised the rear of the building enough to improve its level, installed some support posts for the back wall, remounted the wall boards, and did some mortar work on the corners. The rear of the building is now quite secure.

We also now have an access ramp on the west side of the building with the able help of Walter Johansson[pictured at left], who designed the ramp, pre-cut all the components at his home shop, and brought them to the site. He and I assembled the ramp in a few hours with materials obtained from donations to the society. Wayne Chadwick then painted the platform and steps at the front entrance white. The next step is to mount lights to brighten both.

Future plans are to have a crew from the Sheriff's Department paint the building. We will also mount rain gutters on the schoolhouse as well as level and paint the outhouse and repair its roof. Come spring we'll be hoping for volunteers to help with some of these projects. Any who would like to join the building committee to help with decisions would be most welcome. There always seems to be plenty to do to restore and maintain this historic school. We're grateful for the good work done this year and the donors who made it possible.

Pete Hannah, Acting Chair of the Building Committee

Steamboats of the Pemaquids by Peter Hope

The Pemaquids, with fresh ocean air, peace and quiet, outdoor activities and natural beauty, were "discovered" by people from away in the late 19th century. Hotels, boarding houses and summer cottages were built at Pemaquid Point, Pemaquid Beach and Pemaquid Harbor.

The Pemaquid Land Company was formed and the eastern side of Pemaquid Point was bought up. The Company built the Hotel Pemaquid, sold cottage lots and built a steamboat wharf on the bay shore. Due to rough seas a regular steamboat run to Pemaquid Point was never established.

Regular steamboat runs were established for Pemaquid Beach and Pemaquid Harbor. The Eastern Steamboat Line's steamboat, the *Enterprise* under Captain Alfred Race, began service in the 1880's connecting the Pemaquids to Boston via Portland and Bath. The original Pemaquid Beach Land Company built a wharf at the mouth of Pemaquid Harbor. This wharf, known as the Partridge Wharf, is still there by Fort William Henry. Before the wharf was built the Enterprise docked at the cannery wharf in front of what is now the Contented Sole Restaurant. Passengers for Pemaquid Beach, Pemaquid Point, New Harbor and Chamberlain got off at Pemaquid Beach and traveled on by horse and buggy. In Pemaquid Harbor C. P. Tibbetts established the Bay View House (Fenton House) and built a warehouse and a 240-foot wharf on the shore. Passengers and freight for the Penney Cottages at the southern end of the Peninsula, the Edgemere House, Bay View House, Baker's Windemere Hotel, Ranger Cottage and Pemaquid Falls got off there.

The *Enterprise* and other steamboats were not just for summer visitors. They handled freight and Pemaquiders leaving town. A round-trip to Boston was $2.50 in the 1890's. The *Enterprise* and other steamboats were also chartered for special occasions; for instance, the Pemaquid Band boys went on a midnight cruise on August 14, 1887.

Other steamboats serviced the Pemaquids. Ed Archibald who "did more than anyone else to open up the mid-coast for steamboat business," opened up the Portland to Pemaquid to Rockland line with the 95.8 foot *Merriconeag.* In 1903 he built the bigger and better known *Monhegan*. He was bought out by the Eastern Steamboat Line. In the summer of 1912 there was one steamboat or another coming into Pemaquid Harbor daily.

Smaller steamboats also brought passengers, mail, and freight from Damariscotta via the Maine Central Railroad's stop at Newcastle. The Damariscotta line was set up with the 36 foot *Anodyne* beginning a route in 1901 that ended in Pemaquid. She carried a billboard advertising Johnson's Anodyne liniment and was said to be "a snug little craft that was a credit to the company." She was replaced by the larger *Tourist,* built in East Boothbay.

The advent of the auto brought competition that eventually led to the demise of steamboats. The Damariscotta Line went out of business in 1917. Round Pond entrepreneur, Foss Etheridge bought the *Tourist* and ran her for a year. In 1918 he crashed it into the Damariscotta Bridge. The wreck was bought and rebuilt as the *Sabino*. It served on Casco Bay for a number of years and in 1971 was bought by the Mystic Seaport Museum and restored. In 1974 she began taking museum visitors on Mystic River trips which are still being done.

In 1907 Captain Warren Fossett of Round Pond, the brave skipper who saved the three-masted schooner, *H.H. Chamberlain* in the famous Thanksgiving Gale of 1898, bought and ran the small steamer, *Jule.* In 1926 Sunday trips to Monhegan on the *Jule* were advertised for $1.50. The *Jule* may have been the last steamboat serving the Pemaquids. The famous *Enterprise* and *Monhegan* were long gone and a colorful era of history for the Pemaquids had died.

Membership

Please note: the Early Bird Special for those wishing to send their 2014 dues before Jan.1 may do so for $7 Single, $10 Family; otherwise, please pay the standard fee of $10 Single or $15 Family. Please date form. Last year the Board decided to add a Lifetime Membership category.

Your ideas for potential speakers, events, or fundraisers, are most welcome and may be written on the back of your returned membership slip. Thank you sincerely for your support of the Old Bristol Historical Society!

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2014 OLD BRISTOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New_____   Renewal_____   **Date:_____**

Name_____   (*Fill in following info. only if new member or changes.*)

Address_____Seasonal Address_____

_____   _____
(dates leave and return) _____   _____

E-mail _____   Phone_____

Thank you for sending annual dues of $10 Single or $15 Family made out to: Old Bristol Historical Society
            Lifetime Membership: $200 Single or Family   P. O. Box 87
                                                                                                          Bristol, ME 04539

Tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
Please remember that our continued efforts depend upon your generous support.

Special Thanks

Special thanks go to the following contributors to the general life and spirit of OBHS (certainly you are appreciated even if your name is inadvertently omitted):

~ Presenters of the season's outstanding programs and events: Jack Brackett, David DeLong, Craig Elliott, Gordon Fossett, Russ Guibord, Madeline Hobbs, Robert Ives, Walt Johansson, Kevin Johnson, Carl Reilly, Kent Wilkinson

~Spring cleanup and building & grounds helpers: Wayne Chadwick, Larry Hayter, Kay & Pete Hannah, Robert Ives, Ken & Mollie Perley, Walt Johansson, Dan Purdy, Laura Sproul-Stubbs, Alexandra Wilson

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~Organization supporters: Bristol Area Lions Club, Bristol Parks & Recreation & Town Office

~Refreshment providers: Madeline Hobbs, Margaret Hayter, Kay Hannah

~T-shirt creator: Mary Herndon; Distributors: Larry & Margaret Hayter, Sarah Herndon, Robert Ives, Mollie Perley, Jack Tingley, Friends of Colonial Pemaquid Giftshop.

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