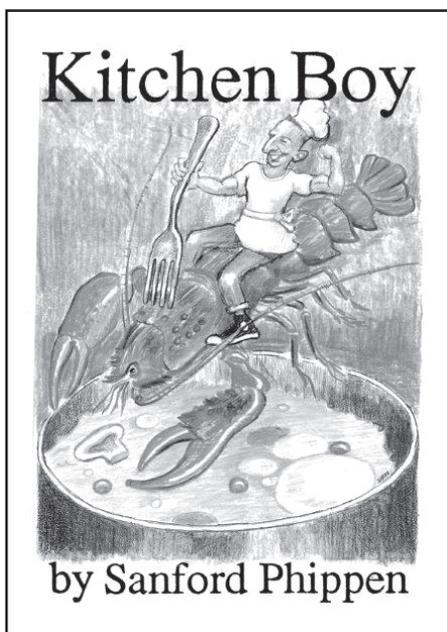


Bar Harbor Historical Society NEWSLETTER



October 2019 Volume 30 Issue 3

www.barharborhistorical.org



Annual Meeting

The Bar Harbor Historical Society will hold their Annual Meeting on October 27, 2019, at 2pm in our new home, La Rochelle, 127 West St., B.H. The program will feature author Sanford (Sandy) Phippen.

He founded the Hancock Historical Society in the Hancock Point Library when he was the summer librarian in 1979; and for most of the last forty years, he has served as President. A history minor in college, he received his B.A. in English from the University of Maine; and his M.A. from Syracuse University. Sandy has published twenty books, including the Sesquicentennial Hancock History (1978), the two-volume *THE SUN NEVER SETS ON HANCOCK POINT* (2000); and produced the film *A CENTURY OF SUMMERS* (1987) about the relationship between the summer people and Maine natives. An English teacher, at both the high school and college levels, Phippen has just retired after 53 years of teaching in both Maine and New York. His best-selling books include *KITCHEN BOY*, *THE POLICE KNOW EVERYTHING*, *PEOPLE TRYING TO BE GOOD*, and *THE*

BEST MAINE STORIES. For six years at the University of Maine, he edited the literary magazine *THE PUCKERBRUSH REVIEW*. For several seasons on MPBN-TV, Sandy hosted the series *A GOOD READ* in which he interviewed other Maine authors. He did another TV series called *RFD MAINE*, for which he was nominated for an Emmy Award. For Maine Public Radio he produced a series called *THE MAINE THAT'S MISSING* based on his own controversial article that appeared in several Maine publications. His Syracuse philosophy professor, Joe Green, after reading one of Phippen's papers, declared, "Mr. Phippen, you are not a philosopher! You're a storyteller!"

BHHS membership day will be on Friday, October 11th at LaRochelle. Members will be able to visit The Showhouse for a suggested rate of \$10.00 per person.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

New Members/Recent Donors	2
New Acquisitions	2
Antique Timepiece Celebrates a Century	3-5
In Memoriam	6

Curator Corner

Museum closes on October 18th. We will be moving to 127 West Street at La Rochelle during November. On December 07 we will have our 4th Gingerbread House Contest at La Rochelle.

Board of Directors

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Treas. Deborah Dyer
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Newsletter edited by:

Deborah Dyer & Estelle Megquier

Web site and Facebook

overseen by Kim Swan

Location & Museum Hours

Location:

33 Ledge lawn Avenue
Bar Harbor, Maine 04609
(207) 288-0000

Summer Hours:

Mid-June to October
Monday-Friday
1:00pm – 4:00pm

Winter Hours:

Open by appointment
Please call 288-3807 or 288-0000

Closed Weekends and Holidays

ADMISSION IS FREE

*We wish to thank one and all who have donated funds
for the Society to acquire La Rochelle and who
continue to contribute to our Museum.*

New Members

Marilyn Runner Nannette & David Shoeder Carole Hersey
Dixie Hathaway Michele Shea
Serena & Paul Kusserow Cynthia Sullivan

Acquisitions received since June 2019

- 1). Old fashioned ice skates, radio 1948 from Flye's store Northeast Harbor, given by Sharon Kelly.
- 2). Shrine pins: 2 -2015, 2 -2005, 1-1992, given by Geddes Simpson.
- 3). Large Ornate mirror, given by Sally & Bill Arata.
- 4). 3-piece child's wicker 100+years old, (highchair, rocker & potty chair), given by Ray Turner.
- 5). 2 calendars 1937—1 from BH Bank & Trust, 1 from Nason's Store, given by Southwest Harbor Historical Society.
- 6). Lg. Hanging State of Maine map 1930, from estate of Larry Sargent.
- 7). Scrapbook & photos of building triple arch bridge Ca 1952, Emerson school photos of class of '69 taken in 1961,62,63 & 64,book—Vin, by J. Weinberger 1984 re: Jax Lab, 2 Legion hats (1 Northeast Harbor past commander 1990-91, VFW #4917) that belonged to Ralph Wright, given by Priscilla (Wright) & Tim Smith.
- 8) 6 dinner plates (green trim with pink flowers) & 4 dessert plates & 6 saucers; 3 clear glass refrigerator containers; 2 hand mirrors; 1 pink footed cake stand; light blue teapot, small school bell, assorted cookie cutters, 2 cement planters, pickle crock, old wooden silverware holder, wicker basket, above items from Seacoast Mission house on Cottage St. given by Sandy & Phil Norton.



Antique Timepiece Celebrates A Century *By Philip Cunningham*

Bar Harbor's Town Clock was presented in time for the Town of Eden's first (century) anniversary of its incorporation in July 1896. The matter of a village clock was first recorded in the minutes of the Village Improvement Association. At the Association's 1892 July meeting it was announced by President Parke Godwin that \$800 had been received for the purchase of a village clock, from the sons of the late Mrs. William Tucker of Boston, summer resident and a member of the Association. At the same meeting, a special committee on the Village Clock was appointed to secure a location for the proposed clock, not yet purchased. At a meeting in the summer of 1893, the committee reported to the association that the clock would be suitable for a proposed tower extension on the Congregational Church. However, more funds would be needed for the placement of the clock in the church steeple, so the association continued to receive funds for that purpose. But grumbling and controversy soon followed this proposal.

At the association's 1894 annual meeting, Judge L.B. Deasy, first vice-president, stated that the association had not yet revolutionized society, but has led the way to certain improvements, and had accomplished everything it had undertaken, except one: it has not been able to find a location for the proposed town clock. "Committees have been engaged in frantic but futile efforts to secure a location for that clock. Funds for a clock movement were received by this association and were invested temporarily in a bond, and a clock maker was consulted; but as years rolled on the bond had its vicissitudes, and the clock maker went into the

hands of the undertaker, and the problem is still unresolved. It is measurably true of this problem as was said of Jarndyce vs. Jarndyce, that "old men have died out of it and young women have married into it", and I am moved to say that heaven and earth shall pass away but the town clock question shall not pass away." Judge Deasy concluded that a possible solution presents itself, and if the direction of recent town meeting moves forward on the building of a new town hall, with a tower, within which the clock may repose and be at Rest. Deasy comments further that the movement in favor of a town hall may have been simply to provide a place for the town clock.

However, Eden voters rejected the proposal for the building of a town hall at a special town meeting the next year.

Finally, by March of 1896, in time for Eden's first commemorative anniversary celebration, it was decided to provide the clock with an ornamental street tower for an additional cost of \$750. At that Eden Town meeting in March, a resolution introduced by Mr. Fred C. Lyman, on behalf of the Village Improvement Association, passed and provided for some location in public way on Main Street in the Town of Eden, for a town clock. One stipulation was a provider for written consent of the owner. Consent of the town was obtained from the Board of Selectmen and the abutting property owner, Mr. Albert Bee, for a clock to be erected on the sidewalk in front of Bee's store (now the Blue



Antique Timepiece Celebrates A Century *continued*

Heron Shop). Bar Harbor Light & Power co. would supply the electricity to light the clock in summer free of charge.

Talk was, and rumors persisted in other Maine journals that the Connecticut clockmaker, Seth Thomas, had been commissioned to design a special clock for a ladies-committee of a Bar Harbor civic league. But, the V.I.A. committee comprised of L.B. Deasy, Fred C. Lynam, and Mrs. Robert B. Potter, had selected the E. Howard Clockmaker Co. of Boston, equally renowned clockmakers of New England. The clock was a large handsome, weight-driven 8-day clock, with two dials and large numbers, mounted atop a cast iron street tower with filigree. The Town of Eden in July of 1896 had a great deal of pride in its new town clock and its first century celebration. But again, controversy soon developed about the clock's location on the narrow sidewalk, which now seemed to impede pedestrian traffic during busy July and August evenings.

Later in 1904, the V.I.A. officers approached the town about leasing the so-called "town lot" on Main Street, which remained undeveloped with only cellar walls as a reminder of the former one popular hotel (The Grand Central) which stood there, and the defeated town hall issue. The association obtained a ten-year lease from Eden's selectmen for the purpose of constructing and landscaping a village green. The project sparked usefulness and perhaps an example of what "improvement" the association could endeavor to

do for the unsightly town lot. Before the work on yards of fill and grading for the new village park had begun, the selectmen of Eden suggested that the lease include a provision for the town clock to be moved. And that since the association owned the clock, it would be moved at the expense of the association to a suggested location in the center of the proposed park.



Antique Timepiece Celebrates A Century *continued*

Originally, the Town of Eden, as stated in 1896 Town Meeting resolution, accepted ownership and upkeep expense of the clock. But luckily for the Town, and the association's new interest in a village green and proposed re-location of the clock, the selectmen claimed that ownership of the clock was that of the association, which would be responsible for the moving expense.

A V.I.A. special committee for the Village Green had been appointed by the association naming George B. Dorr as the chairman. The committee reported in the association's annual report in September, 1905, that the question of the relocation of the clock had been studied for some time by many; a wider walkway had been specially provided, and the eight page Report of the Village Green, stated the many reasons for the clock's present day location facing north/south.

The V.I.A. opted for two more leases of the Village Green until the mid-1920's when it was declared that the maintenance and upkeep tended to limit the association's purpose in further improvement of the green and chose not to negotiate a new lease. However, the V.I.A. continued its upkeep of the clock. The town clock required winding once a week for which the V.I.A. secured the services of Mr. William Graham, Sr. and later, his son, William Graham, Jr. By the 1970's the clock did not keep accurate time and finally stopped. The association decided that the clock movement could be modernized and electrified, which was done in time for America's bi-centennial, July 1976.

In 1989 the clock developed a leak in which the electric-powered movement froze. It was necessary for the clock movement to be refitted and the V.I.A. consulted a clock restorer of reputation in antique clocks. At that time, estimates on its antique value was placed at \$25,000 - \$30,000.

And yet again in recent years, a plan was suggested to a V.I.A. Village Green Committee to relocate the clock on the northeast corner of the green. In August 1994, the association, now under direction of Mr. Leslie Brewer, the V.I.A.'s longest serving president once again took up the question of the location of the clock before the members at the V.I.A. 103rd Annual Meeting, at which it was finally resolved that the clock should remain in its present location and the matter of re-locating the town clock was put to rest.

Philip Cunningham was Secretary of the Village Improvement Association as well as Vice-President of the Bar Harbor Historical Society at the time he wrote this article.



In Memoriam

Our Board of Directors remember with sadness Philip Cunningham who joined the Society in 1985, served as Vice President and remained on the Board until his death in late 2018.

It is with sadness that the Directors note the death of Les Brewer. A past President of our Society, He served as Co-President from 1964 -74 and 1974-77 as President.

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Bar Harbor Historical Society
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Bar Harbor, Maine 04609