

Bar Harbor Historical Society

NEWSLETTER



June 2019 Volume 30 Issue 2

www.barharborhistorical.org

Bar Harbor Designer Showhouse at La Rochelle



The Bar Harbor Historical Society is delighted to announce that the 2019 Bar Harbor Designer Showhouse will take place at our new property, La Rochelle. The Historical Society was the beneficiary of the 2014 Showhouse at the Vanderbilt Carriage House and it is exciting to see that now, five years later, the BHDS is back and working their magic on La Rochelle.

In order to make the museum transition to West Street, we want to take our time and make everything just right. Therefore, we will have another year at our 33 Ledge lawn building for the Museum and have the Showhouse Fundraiser at La Rochelle.

Next year we will open the Bar Harbor Historical Society Museum in our new home. - *Debbie Dyer*

Down East Magazine and Swan Hospitality Group are this year's presenting sponsors with Designers including Betsy Stires, Terri + Gregg Scott, Brett Johnson, Candace Karu + Tyler Karu, Annie Kiladjian + Larry Stoddard, Loi Thai, Leah Lippman, Augusto + Kay Rosa and Mike Rogers + Rob Krieg. The Showhouse VIP Preview Party will be held the evening of July 12th and the opening day for Showhouse tours will be July 13th and continue through October 20th. On Friday evening, July 12th, La Rochelle will have the Preview Party Gala from 6:00p.m. to 8:00p.m. Tickets will be \$100.00 per person and will be available at the Museum at 33 Ledge lawn Ave., B.H., and at 127 West Street, B.H. Also tickets can be reserved by our email BHHistorical@gwi.net and paid for when they may be picked up at La Rochelle.

We will need lots of volunteers to help with covering the Showhouse, selling tickets, answering guest questions. Anyone interested in assisting should contact Kim Swan at kim@swanagency.com to be put on the list of docents and helpers.

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Curator Corner

Museum opens June 17th at 33 Ledge lawn Ave., 1-4 Monday thru Friday, closed on Holidays. We need volunteers to complete the days we are open.

Call 288-0000 if you are interested.

Board of Directors

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Newsletter edited by:

Deborah Dyer & Estelle Megquier

Web site and Facebook

overseen by Kim Swan

Location & Museum Hours

Location:

33 LedgeLawn 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

Tara Redenius

Kerri Dowdell

Donna Brignull

Acquisitions received since February 2019

- 1). 6 photographs from 1895—views of Bar Harbor, Cathedral Rock, Thunder Rock and Anemone Cave, given by M. Sweet.
- 2). Microfilm of Mount Desert Islander Jan.-Dec.2018 given by the paper.
- 3). Souvenir dish from the German ship Kronprinzessin Cecilie, given by Donna M. Brignull.
- 4). Early Hamor photos, given by G. Klauskey.
- 5). Ana Maddock's robe, sandbag from the Air Balloon in '70's; several letterheads; book by Max Woodward "Bar Harbor in its Heyday", given by Ray Turner.
- 6). Wooden trunk of David O. Rodick and a call bell from his home, given by Peter Bono.
- 7). 1940's class photos, given by Jane Harden.
- 8). 1970 MDIHS yearbook, given by Sarah Cleaves.
- 9). 1900 Chamber of Commerce booklet, given by S.R. Irsch.
- 10). Book—Selected papers of Jane Adams—edited by Mary Lynn Bryann.
- 11). Lg. Framed photos—given anon.
- 12). 2 gilded mirrors (one with Vanderbilt shipping labels); 2 original statues; many framed photographs; many assorted items; given by North Country Assoc. (Sonogee).
- 13). History of Bar Harbor Lodge #185 1910-2018, given by Earl Brechlin.
- 14). Sm. Statue of Longfellow made by W.O. Partridge, (thought to be used as prototype of Longfellow statue in Portland); old fire extinguisher; given by Sheldon Goldthwait.



Society Closes on Sale of Historic Estate

BAR HARBOR — The Bar Harbor Historical Society has taken ownership of La Rochelle, a former summer cottage on West Street, currently used as headquarters by the Maine Seacoast Mission. The Society's long-range plans include using the property as a museum and headquarters.

The closing on the sale of the property, which had been listed for \$4.5 million, took place on Tuesday, April 2. The selling price was undisclosed.

"Although we had other plans for the future of our growing collection, when La Rochelle came on the market last year we felt the opportunity to preserve not just the town's history, but also the incredible historic and community resource that building represents, could not be passed up," said Society spokesperson Earl Brechlin. "We want to thank all the incredible donors and others who stepped up to make this purchase possible," Brechlin said. "specifically, a major leadership gift from summer resident Karol Foss made this purchase possible," he added.

He continued that the Society has been overwhelmed with the outpouring of support from every corner of the greater island community. "We will continue to fund raise to cover the purchase and our future plans," Brechlin added.

The exact timing and nature of those plans will be determined by many factors, including conformity to local land use ordinances. The Society is not planning to move its museum until 2020 at the earliest.

Meanwhile, the Mission will continue to operate from offices on the second floor of the building as its new headquarters is being built in Northeast Harbor. The annual summer concerts held by the Bar Harbor Festival will continue as well.

The Mission has operated from La Rochelle since 1972 when the building, now known as the Colket Center, was donated by that family. In 2017, the Mission announced plans to relocate to Northeast Harbor and use the proceeds of the sale of the 41-room mansion to further its programing and services. The Mission and

its vessel, the Sunbeam, have been a fixture in coastal communities and offshore islands, for more than 110 years.

The Society is currently headquartered in the former St. Edward's Convent at 33 Ledgeawn Avenue. That building, which in the past has been a private residence, lawyers office and Buddhist place of worship, has been listed for sale.

A video about La Rochelle's importance to preserving the history and heritage of Bar Harbor, Acadia and Mount Desert Island can be found on YouTube.

For more information email bhhistorical@gwi.net or message the society on its Facebook Page.

Call 288-0000.

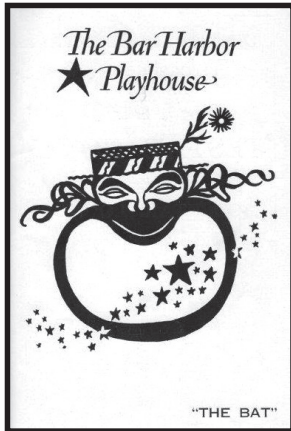


La Rochelle Donors

Representatives of the Bar Harbor Historical Society, Kay Theede, left, and Steve Theede, a member of the Society's Finance Committee, center, are joined at the closing on the purchase of La Rochelle on West Street by Karol Foss, a summer resident of Bar Harbor and long-time society supporter who provided a major leadership gift for the acquisition.



Bar Harbor Playhouse *By Debbie Dyer*



"The Bat" Playbill, written by Mary Roberts Rhinehart

One would never expect such a wonderful building to be standing on the lot of land that is now occupied by a parking lot on the corner of Cottage and Bridge Streets, that many remember as "The Casino." It was here that *The Bar Harbor Playhouse* was very well-known during the summers. In the winter it transformed to a community center for high school basketball games, school plays, concerts and graduations. Way Bak balls was among many other functions took place there.

Recently Estelle Megquier and I attended the Ogunquit Playhouse, which is celebrating its 87th anniversary, to see "The Jersey Boys". Sitting in the Playhouse there I realized what Bar Harbor had at one time. I proceeded to look through numerous old programs that The Bar Harbor Historical Society has of the many plays that were produced here in Bar Harbor; one can see what a wonderful playhouse we used to have right here! So many names such as Lillian Gish, Josephine Brown, Theodore Leavitt, Edward Everett Horton, to name just a few of the names. In August 1948, Mary Roberts Rhinehart's play "The

Bat" was performed at the Bar Harbor Playhouse. The Playhouse was supported by most businesses in town and the list reads like a Who's Who of Bar Harbor History, like F.E. Sherman, Testa's Restaurant, Lymburner Electric Co., Cunningham Antique Shop and Malvern Florists and many more.

What a wonderful time that must have been!! The building was torn down in the 1970's.

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