

Bar Harbor Historical Society NEWSLETTER



March 2018 Volume 29 Issue 1

www.barharborhistorical.org

Annual Gingerbread House Contest



The Second Annual Bar Harbor Historical Society Gingerbread House contest was held on December 9, 2017 and was a huge success. Despite being only the second year of the contest, we were thrilled with how many repeat visitors attended who already consider the gingerbread house tour as a Bar Harbor holiday tradition. Over 90 community members attended and enjoyed touring the beautiful houses and holiday refreshments.

The 2017 Grand Prize sponsor was John Wert, formerly of EPI's back in the huge gingerbread village days. John and Laurel Butler - the architect and builder of the EPI villages - were this year's judges. Laurel also generously built a beautiful gingerbread house which was the door prize for attendees.

There were some hard decisions for both the judges to decide on a Grand Prize winner and a Children's winner and the visitors to choose a community favorite but in the end the winners were:

Grand Prize:
Stacey Gatcomb/Joe Knowles

Children's Prize:
Scarlett Squires

Community Prize:
Scarlett Squires

We are already looking forward to next year with promises from many of the 2017 entrants to return.

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From Curator

We remain busy assisting the new documentary film named, *Consolidation—50 years of MDI High School*, to be available this fall.

We are also working on a updating our website that will be available soon.

DVDs of the '47 Fire Film are still available, mailed for \$25.00 each.

Board of Directors

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Vice Pres. *Richard Cough*
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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

Donations Received

Beverly & Peter Bono
Bill Ruger
Betsy Mills
Robert Graham
Geneva & Will Thorndike

Deborah Dyer
Ruth & Tris Colket
John Reeves
Dick Collier
Bill Newman

Ann & Steve Cough
Charlotte T. Bordeaux
Kathy MacLeod
Nancy Lombardi
Martha Higgins

New Members

Mary & Paul McArdle
Tammy & Josh Bloom

Brian Lowitt
David Lewis

Barbara Hennigan

Acquisitions received since November 2017

- 1). 1 scrapbook with many clippings, certificate for Rebekah Lodge #107 1962; A copy of 1903Salisbury Cove school students; Book—Memoirs of a Dance Band by Charlie Bennett autograph book of 1887 & 1939; Letter written by Mae McFarland re: '47 fire; Book—The Geology of Mount Desert by Wood; St. Saviour's cookbook 1914; Girls Reserve song book 1939; Canton reception 1950; Rebekah officers x4 1940 and book & by-laws 1961; Brewer Electric ruler; Lloyd Palfrey WWII Good Conduct Medal; Bayside Grange certificate. Bayview Grange #267 Salisbury Cove medal; Eastern Star certificate; Palmer Method book; ration books; 4H club booklet & photo 1925; Book—Future of MDI by Eliot 2nd 1928; Book— Poems Somesville; many newspaper articles of "cottages"; Common prayer book & hymnal BHHS 1938; Grammar school photo 1933; Salisbury Cove school photo 1901; Photo Canteen Ladies; 47 fire, book—Story of BH by Hale x2; Path & Trails of NEH & Seal Hbr.1954; BH Choral Society Program 1934; Book—Northeast Harbor & Seal Harbor; Photo book, book—Bar Harbor in Its Heydays by Woodward; Diploma 1937 & 8th grade 1933; Book—Descendants of Thomas Brewer 1682-1996; G.B. Dorr book—Origin & Background ANP 1942; 1909-1910 MDI Register; given from estate of Linda McFarland Palfrey.
- 2). DVD A Place Called Eden, 1991 DVD of Dottie Cooke re: "47 fire, given by Abbie Savage.
- 3). Two photos of the '47 fire from Hancock Point; Green Mountain Railway timetable; Poem by John Friend "Where You'll Meet the Tourists of Every Land", photo of SS Washington; Easter sunrise program 1935; Ranger Naturalist program 1932; article of Jordan Pond 1978, Poe, of Mt. Desert Bridge opening 1908, given by Hancock Historical Society.
- 4). Letter of Gladys Smith Richardson re: '47 fire, given by Gail Richardson Gee.
- 5). Letter of James Grant-to Doris Grant re: '47 fire, given by Kathy Grant.
- 6). 30 antique post cards, framed photo of Gateway Lobster Pound where KOA is now, given by Lynn Desrochers.
- 7). BHHS Islanders 1921,46,48,55,68x3, Geo. Berry Memorial. Cup Junior Speaking 1967, High Seas Rest. Plate, BHHS pendant and patch, Malvern Hotel large plate, given from estate of Brad Gray.
- 8). DVD 1947 Me. Fires Chronicle WCVB Boston 1998, given by Art Donahue..
- 9). 2 8th grade journals, given from estate of Barbara Lambert.
- 10). 1922 BHHS, 1910 MDI Register, post cards & cottage photos, given from estate of Virginia W. McFarland.
- 11). BHHS Islanders 1965 & 1966, diplomas of grammar school 1929 &1936, 50th anniversary program of Salisbury Cove Mother's Club 1930-80, given by Barbara Moore Kelly.
- 12). Victorian doll carriage, given by Avary Bryer.
- 13). Man's suit with long coat & white vest, man's blue Pants & vest, ladies long blue skirt, wedding dress, Warren Shaw's military uniform & medals (Army/Navy game 1913, Navy Athletic Association 1912, boxing light weight champ 1909, Welter Weight Championship 1910, 2 WW1 medals 1911-1917; 41st annual report Commerce Dept. of Maine; VFW & Ladies Auxiliary, Navy buttons given by Gail Caruso.
- 14). 3 interior photos of Daney's Market—showing Vint Daney and his father Joseph Daney, given by Debbie Dyer.
- 15). Book—S. Collier Mt. Desert 1952, badge: local union 142 Painters & Paper Hangers Union, business cards from Grant Brothers Yacht Supplies, R.H. Kittredge Store, Frank Pray & Sam Clement music store; store receipts from T.L. Roberts groceries, W.A. Milliken coal & wood, St. Saviour's church desk photo. Given by Darlene Springer.



Dreamwood *(part 1)*

By Brian Armstrong

A quick overview of Maine's history of prohibiting alcohol is necessary as background information for Dreamwood and Dan H. Herlihy. Although most of the country considers prohibition lasted from 1921 to 1933, Maine's experience with prohibiting the sale and usage of alcohol goes back many more years to 1851 when the first state prohibition occurred from the "Napoleon of Temperance" and the "Father of Prohibition," mayor of Portland, Maine, Neal Dow. In fact, the concept of prohibition was often called the "Maine Law" as a model that the Women's Christian Temperance Union and other prohibition groups used as their goal for national prohibition. The "Maine Law" of May 26, 1851, which prohibited the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, was repealed in 1858. After the repeal several legislative fights continued until the law was put "beyond legislative reach" in 1885 when it became a part of the state constitution in Amendment XXVI.

Most of the liquor law violations in the late 1880s and early 1890s focused on those transporting the liquor into Maine and then transporting the liquor elsewhere. Later in the 1890s, towns started temperance raids and aggressive pursuit by law enforcement against mostly Irish owned saloons which was influenced by the growing confidence of the prohibition movement in Maine. This new fervor of enforcement was driven by temperance organizations such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the Anti-Saloon League.

After the death of Neal Dow in 1897, Justice John Andrews Peters of Bangor, Justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court (1873–1883) and Chief Justice from 1883 until January 1, 1900, developed the plan to enable cities and towns to regulate liquor dealers rather than completely eliminate them which was unrealistic. The Bangor Plan, also known as the Peters Plan, was implemented by several Maine counties allowing the towns to charge every liquor dealer once or twice a year with a nuisance charge of a \$100 fine with court costs of \$10. The authorities encouraged local liquor establishments to be located on second floors and other more hidden places to limit the exposure to the public. The police would occasionally round up the "usual suspects" and seize a few gallons of booze when political conditions were ripe. This plan continued for about 10 years and then after that enforcement continued to be lax.

The Bangor Gang was described in one article in 1923 as consisting of Dan Herlihy, his brothers John and Patrick; Tom Landers; and one or two other Bangor residents including his brother-in-law, John J. Coney, that came down to Bar Harbor "back in the day when the Bangor or Peters Plan was in vogue throughout this

part of Maine." The article continued by recalling that "at first they did not bother with anything but the rum game" but later "controlled the boxers and like games." "They had a grip on politics of both parties in town" and "they said who should win and shouldn't and in the end the full control passed to Dan Herlihy." The article continued stating that "sometimes they raided him (Herlihy) and they caught him, and he paid a fine but he never went to jail. A "hint that Danny Herlihy was going to land in jail for violating the liquor law was one of the best jokes Bar Harbor could hear." "He's too strong; they don't dare touch him was the universal answer to such suggestions."

When National Prohibition was enacted in 1920, Dan Herlihy soon became the key supplier for alcohol in the Maine and New England with a great liquor distribution infrastructure in place and was the king of the rum ring for a few years. Everything changed in 1923 when a new prohibition governor was elected, Percival Baxter. Baxter stated that "Our sheriffs, county attorneys, local judges, and municipal police, if their hearts are in their work, can drive or imprison the whole brood of liquor offenders."

Inspired by Baxter's new mandate, Howe Higgins was the 26-year-old warrior in liquor violation enforcement that brought Dan Herlihy down. As Customs officer, he took enforcement and raids as his own personal crusade against liquor sellers and lack of enforcement by the authorities. When the whole thing was over he had brought down the King of the Rum ring and some of his associates. He had also messed with the third rail in Bar Harbor, the wealthy cottagers which ended his efforts.

Howe was born in 1894 when Dan Herlihy was receiving his first charges for liquor violations. By the time, Herlihy had settled into his comfortable situation in the 1900s and 1910s under the Bangor Plan, Howe Higgins was a chief/mechanic in a jitney business. After his wedding in 1917, he changed his career and worked for US Customs and moved to Southwest Harbor.

It all started with a raid on George McKay Garage on Main Street where Higgins found 52 cases of assorted liquor (570 bottles) and one keg of rum smuggled into the county from the Danish West Indies via Barbados. This raid was followed with a raid of Malvern Gardener, John Stalford which yielded 250 cases of high-grade Scotch whisky, rye, and gin.

The build up to the trial and the case was well covered in the book, Bar Harbor in the Roaring Twenties by Luann Yetter. Yetter provided a detailed account of the raids by Howe Higgins and others that lead to the sensational trial. Several local people testified about their participation in Dan Herlihy alcohol distribution network and the inadequate local enforcement of the



law.

It is quite ironic that the judge that would finally put an end to Danial Hamilton Herlihy's liquor career had the same name as the judge helped build it in the first place, John Andrew Peters. The first Judge Peters, born in 1822, had begun the enforcement of the liquor law in Bar Harbor with the 1893 convictions of restaurant owners and then by creating the Bangor Plan (Peters Plan) which fined rather than jailed offenders prolonging their careers. This first Judge Peters died in 1904. The second Judge Peters was born in 1864, the son of William Bourne Peters who was the brother of Chief Justice Peters. He started working in the legal field in 1887 in Ellsworth. He served as judge of the municipal court of Ellsworth from 1896 to 1908. He served as member of the state house of representatives in 1909, 1911, and 1913, serving as speaker in 1913.

President Harding appointed John Andrew Peters to the District Court on November 14, 1922. A graduate of Bowdoin College, he studied law at the office of his cousin, Andrew Wiswell, who would later become chief justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court. A former Speaker of the Maine House of Representatives, Judge Peters served five terms in Congress prior to his appointment to the Court. He retired in 1947 after 25 years of service.

In August 1923, Judge Peters U.S. District Court fined Stanley and Stalford \$1500 each, however, McKay got a year in Bangor jail and Herlihy was sentenced for one year in prison at the United States Prison in Atlanta Georgia. The newspaper reported that Herlihy had "less than a dozen people left to do his bidding by snapping his fingers and everyone else deserted him" by the end of the trial. They felt that he would "find it difficult to build an organization and those that know him best incline that to the belief that when he goes from here to Atlanta next month Bar Harbor will never see him again." The newspapers believed that Herlihy was a "broken man" at the end of the trial would "go elsewhere and live the rest of his life" since he had "money enough to do it".

After the sensational Herlihy case, the locals and the legal establishment had no appetite for the next phase of Howe Higgins' crusade. Higgins upped the ante by going after the sacred cow, the wealthy summer residents of the town. He seized liquor connected to diplomat Robert H. McCormick, Mary Cole, Mrs. Joseph Pulitzer, and William S. Moore, the husband of Edith Pulitzer. The courts of Justice Peters eventually brought an end to Howe's efforts by ruling that Moore and others were not guilty since he did not have the intent of selling the alcohol. Herlihy and McKay were the sacrifice to the Prohibition gods and the destruction of the rum king was the end of the crusade.

Dan Herlihy was released from prison sometime in second half of 1924 or early 1925. A March 1924 newspaper notice said that Mrs. D. H. Herlihy and Mrs. E. Graham (the Bears sisters) were back from spending the winter away and that "her friends are happy to know she (Ada) is somewhat improved in health." In November of that year, Mrs. Herlihy placed an advertisement in the Bar Harbor Times concerning a gold watch lost on a Friday night at the Casino or between Casino and Livingston Road by Susie Neptune to be returned to Livingston Road c/o Ada Herlihy. Ada was mentioned wintering in Atlantic City in 1925 but Dan was not mentioned. He either kept a very low profile or lived outside of Bar Harbor in 1924 and 1925 since no newspaper or other records show him being active in the town in any capacity. The first mention of his name in the newspapers comes in December 1925 when he and his wife left for their 120-day cruise around the world.

After the Herlihys returned from their cruise, there is also another long period of time where Dan Herlihy's name was not mentioned in the newspapers until the summer of 1926 when Miss Maher of Boston was a guest on Livingston Road of D.H. Herlihy.

Dan Herlihy Returns

F. Scott Fitzgerald said there are "there are no second acts in American lives" but Dan Herlihy proved him wrong. When he returned to his Livingston Road house, he and Ada designed their dream club which they name "Dreamwood." To avoid the issues of a club located in Bar Harbor, they chose Ireson Hill on a remote part of what today is known as Route 3. The property was designed to contain both a club with its amazing dancefloor and stage for top tier bands to play and a sporting venue for boxing, wrestling, and other competitions.

It must have taken them the rest of 1926 and early 1927 to finance, plan, and build the dancehall. They successfully created a special place in Bar Harbor that was a modern facility with a great dancefloor which could be transformed into a convention center and even a car show space. Unlike downtown facilities such as the Casino, the Dreamwood had parking to handle the crowd. Herlihy was able to attract many top tier New England musicians to perform at the hall. Apparently, it was a cash business and Ada was in charge of holding all the money. The thing that is very striking is how most news about the Dreamwood was always on page one of the Bar Harbor Times and sometimes with multiple stories about multiple events. All the coverage was positive since Bar Harbor liked Dreamwood and the Herlihys and they wanted it to succeed.

Dan or his wife received no alcohol violations during this post incarceration period. To assume that no alcohol



Dreamwood

was ever present at Dreamwood or these boxing and wrestling matches at the Casino and other venues is naive. A more likely situation was that Herlihy had finally decided to act like many of the rich folks on the island and to be less obvious about his activities. He also was making a lot of money and I am sure he diverted some of it to the right people to ensure he had no more problems with the prohibition folks. He was no longer interested in running the alcohol distribution network. Instead he let others do that while he profited from more legitimate businesses that most likely had a connection to the product.

The Grand Opening

The club opened on June 14, 1927 with 2,000 patrons. The fourth of July in 1927 was their big event with a big dance from 12:01 a.m. to 4 a.m. on July 4. A flag raising ceremony was held at sunrise and then more dancing from 2-6 and 8-12 the rest of the holiday. The big event on July 5, 1927 was a salute to veterans and the American Legion which soon melted the hearts of any of the old “dry’s” from the pre-1923 days. All news coverage in the newspapers about the club continued to be positive and people were happy to have a world class venue for the summer colony.

The Openings

Each year there would be two openings. The first opening occurred in April and was usually a May Day Ball for the local community and with about 1,000-1,500 attending. This would begin the dances and the availability of the venue for local rentals. The second opening was in late June in this was to begin the summer season. The fourth of July was always the first big event which would usually last several days.

The Decorations

On May 1, 1929, the Rose Ball opened the 1929 season with John Fogg and his Doctors of Rhythm, a singing trio with new novelties playing in the newly decorated ballroom. 1,300 patrons enjoyed a floral wonderland which included a stage with decorations of trees and grasses that added to the outdoor effect.

Ada Herlihy was said to take “great pride in the beauty” of the Dreamwood and assisted Herlihy in “wise counsel” concerning the decorations each year.” Besides the amazing dancefloor, the decorations of the hall provided by Ada added to the experience of the Dreamwood. She decorated the hall in yellow and gold and used flowers throughout the building. The 1930 decorations of the Dreamwood included a “gorgeous amber and gold yellow scheme with the deep rose of American beauties used in the outer rooms.” The stage had the decorations of trees and grasses added to the outdoor effect and 1300 patrons enjoyed a “floral wonderland.” Each year the newspapers always commented on the how the “establishment has been

put in first class condition,” and “many improvements” and new decorations were installed each year. The hall was advertised as having “magnificent decorations, a perfect floor, and wonderful music.”

The Host

Herlihy developed a great reputation because of the “manner in which the ballroom was conducted” and “there was scarcely a patron who did not consider himself or herself a friend of Mr. Herlihy.” He ran the Dreamwood “as if he were a host in a big and beautiful home where everyone was welcome to enjoy dancing to good music in a place as clean and it was orderly as it was attractive.” The Herlihy factor was a key asset for the new entertainment business which had to survive the changing economic climate of late 1920s.

Dancing

The Dreamwood was called the “Ireson hill temple of dance” with the “excellence of the floor” and “the way the entire affair was managed.” After an opening in late April, dances were held every Saturday night until the June opening then they were hosted every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday during the summer with admission of \$1 for Gentlemen, and 35 cents for Ladies. The price for Gentlemen was reduced after a few years to 65 cents due to the economy.

The bands tended to be groups and orchestras from Maine and New England during the Herlihy management of the Dreamwood. The Herlihy acts included: Ted Wright and his Orchestra, Al Morrison and his Recording Orchestra (1928), John Fogg and his Doctors of Rhythm (1929), Leo Doucette and his Musicians (1929), Puss Ingalis and his Footwarmers (1930), Boston University Buccaneers (1930), Perley Reynolds and his Commanders (1930)(1931)(1933), Ray Whittaker and his Incomparable Orchestra (1931), Clyde Lougee and his Orchestra, Larry Miller and the Bears from the University of Maine (1931), and Ray D. Carlos and his Orchestra. Although discussions of the musical acts at the Dreamwood always mention Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Ozzie Nelson, and Rudy Valle these were all acts that were booked after the new management change in 1934.

The Dreamwood also provided dancing lessons in 1931. Jack Leary, “straight from Broadway New York City,” provided dancing instruction at the Dreamwood Ballroom during the 1931 summer season with all the “new dances.” He was a specialist in tap dancing, ballroom, musical comedy, ballet, precision, and acrobatic and he also offered private lessons.





Deb Dyer and Children's Prize and Community Prize winner, Scarlett Squires

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