

MILBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO Box 194, Main Street, Milbridge, ME 04658
Milbridgehistoricalsociety.org 207 546-4471

Volume 16, #1
Spring 2012

"THE PAST IS NOT A PACKAGE ONE CAN LAY AWAY" – EMILY DICKINSON

THE ORIGINAL HOMELAND SECURITY

An excerpt from a response to a request for information about the life of a lighthouse keeper, by Leo Allen

"My next station was Petit Manan. I arrived here February first, 1917. This is a small island of 5 acres, very low-has two dwellings and school house, tower 127 feet high and a 2nd order Vapor light flashing every two minutes, a fog signal run by crude oil engines, the whistle sounding three times a minute. The island is connected to Green Island by a bar. These two islands form a beautiful harbor, a great help in landing. This station is situated at the mouth of Pigeon Hill and Dyers Bay. It is very pretty here in summer but very bleak in winter. The winter of 1917 was a terrible experience for the three keepers. The nearest village is twelve miles away, making it bad to get



supplies. With 5 naval persons and 20 men, women, and children and the government only allowing a small amount of supplies at a time, we had to leave quite often for the main. For three months the island was surrounded with fields of ice for miles and three times the keepers were very near losing their lives. If it had not been for the Patrol boats someone would have gone hungry a lot of times. The 2nd keeper on watch sighted a German submarine 1 ½ miles east of Tower, making quite a lot of excitement. News came over phone the German sub was coming east at a speed of 12 miles an hour. It was sun down. The keeper on watch saw a four-masted schooner four miles south of station, took launch and went out to warn them they had better make a harbor, arrived back at eleven pm. The keeper on watch saw a vessel December 7 making for the island with sails all torn and a flag in rigging, union down. It was blowing a heavy gale N.W. and zero. They tried to make their anchor hold in the lee of the island. It did not and they blowed to sea. I telephoned everywhere for a tug boat to save their lives. At last we got S.P. 265 at Manset. Capt. Hadlock found the vessel nearly full of water, sails all gone, and towed them to the nearest harbor.

We have a nice home, hot water, heat, electric lights and telephone, a new launch, an 88 note player piano with one hundred dollars worth music, a good library and four daily papers."

The Petit Manan Lighthouse was automated in 1972.



FROM THE CURATOR'S CORNER

The winter is a quiet time at the museum. There is work to be done dealing with the artifacts, organizing, cleaning and planning. We are now looking forward to the many interesting programs planned for over the summer as well as the new Indian artifacts display.

We are always accepting new items for the museum from donors who are interested in preserving Milbridge history. A gift can be a single item – a family piece or an item made in Maine – or can be a collection of objects. It's always necessary to ask, before accepting a gift, "How does this item relate to Milbridge? Or, how does it relate to Maine?" We also need to be able to care for it. We deeply appreciate the generosity of families and individuals who share an interest in preserving our history.

A huge thank you goes to Paula Gillen who has given so much time and energy in managing the museum gift shop and creating the newsletter for several years. We will miss Paula terribly. At the same time we warmly welcome Maggi Kovacs who has spent many hours this winter (as a new volunteer) working on curator projects and will be taking over the newsletter. As always we welcome volunteer help year round. We also appreciate your input regarding the museum and its activities.

In the Fall newsletter I told you about the project to move the Fickett cape and use it as a living museum. Sadly this probably won't happen due to a lack of interest. Currently the project is on hold.

We're looking forward to another successful year at the museum, adding more historic house signs (currently there are fourteen signs marking buildings throughout town) and adding to the number of volunteers, patrons, supporters and friends.

Lee-Lee Schlegel, Curator

HALL RENTAL

Remember that our function room is available for rent at a basic charge of \$45.00 for a four hour period. Additional costs can be discussed with anyone interested. The room can accommodate approximately 50 people, has a small yet fully appointed kitchen and the use of the museum rest room. As an example in 2011 the room was rented by the Washington Hancock Community Agency, the Narraguagus Art Group and for a Medical Insurance Seminar. It is important to note that smoking and alcohol are prohibited.



MHS 2012 PROGRAMS

- June 12: Allan Lockyer, "Downeast Country Stores as Economic and Social Institutions"
July 10: Tim Harrison, "Lighthouses and Their Role in American History"
Aug. 14: Rod Harrington, "Downeast Humor"
Sept. 11: Todd Little-Siebold, "The Search for Downeast Heirloom Apples"
Oct. 9: Bob Marshall, "The Art of Bird Carving"

This year, thanks again to the generosity of Donnie Bayrd, we expect to have an exhibit of Indian artifacts from Milbridge as well as other parts of the world. This project is a work in progress and hopefully it will be available for visitors this summer.

TREASURER'S REPORT



Following a very unseasonably warm 'winter' here in Milbridge, it's time to look ahead and focus on our new 2012 'season' at the Historical Society. That said, in order to do effective planning, we really need to review 2011 to determine where we've been successful financially and how difficult it is to try to develop a meaningful budget projection. The year 2011, as I'll describe below, was noteworthy for its absolute unpredictability!

There seems to be little doubt that the national (and, for that matter, international) economic slowdown continues to impact our budget. From 2010, our receipt of annual membership dues has fallen by 33%, from \$1,590 to \$1,050 in 2011. For donations, the same trend continues – in 2009 we received \$2,211, but that figure dropped to \$786 in 2011, or a decline of 66%. While these sources of income dropped significantly, we also had a least one major unexpected expense. Late in 2011, the Society agreed to pay for the shipping of the ship model, donated by Merle Fickett, from California to Milbridge. Our other usual expenses, for utilities, heat, insurance, etc. remained relatively constant.

In looking at our income, after expenses, our revenue from our Gift Shop sales in 2011 was \$2,148. At the same time, our income from renting out the meeting room to outside groups increased over the past year, from \$179 to \$436 – an increase of 243%. Perhaps the biggest surprise came with the outstanding fundraising success of the summer yard sale – in 2011 we received an amazing \$4,028, an increase of 242% over the \$1,663 we received in 2010!

Surprisingly, after the above noted unforeseen spikes in both income and expenses, at the end of 2011 our financial shortfall was only \$69! At the same time, we still have a cash reserve of \$68,367 consisting of our checking account balance and several Certificates of Deposit including our Endowment and Memorial Funds. With banks paying less than 1% interest on most CDs, it was agreed at the 15 November 2011 Board meeting that the Society would place \$21,000 into a Market-linked CD for six years. This CD should pay a minimum of 7.5%, and is FDIC insured, so our funds are not at risk.

As you can see, 2011 was an interesting, if volatile, financial year for the Society! Now, as we're planning our 2012 activities/programs, we hope you can continue to support the Society financially as well as volunteering your time. Remember that, as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, your donations to the Society are still tax-deductible!

MEMBERSHIP

Once again it is time for those who are not lifetime members to send in their dues along with the membership renewal form. The board, officers, staff and membership body thank you for supporting MHS and for making possible a look at the history of our town. Please visit the Museum and make yourself known to the volunteer there, check out the new Indian artifact display and consider the items available in the gift shop.

Name _____
Summer Address _____
Other Address _____
Phone Number(s) _____ Email Address_* _____

*Thank you for allowing us to email your newsletter.

Annual dues are \$10/year. Enclosed is \$_____ for 2011 2012 2013 2014 Extra donation \$_____
_____ I choose Lifetime Membership and am enclosing \$100.

Please forward dues, along with the above form, or a facsimile, to Laurie Hall at P. O. Box 194, Milbridge, Me 04658. If there are questions, you may call Laurie at 546-2055, leave a message at 546-4471 or email info@milbridgehistoricalsociety.org. Thank you for your continued support.

Milbridge Historical Society
P. O. Box 194
Milbridge, ME. 04658