

MILBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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milbridgehistoricalsociety.org 207-546-4471

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A Successful Season

“Well done.” “Fabulous!” Comments such as these were invariably overheard following each program in our Night at the Museum speaker series. In addition to organizing the superb lineup of speakers, the Programs Committee produced “Old Schools of Milbridge Maine” for the September program. The attendees were delighted and animated discussion followed, but the most poignant moment was the impromptu sing-a-long to an early 1900s recording of “School Days” at the program’s end.

You may do a double-take next time you drive by the museum (see photo below). Buildings and Grounds has erected a crisp new sign and freshened up the building trim in coordinating shades of blue; repainted parking lot stripes; and pressure-washed the buildings, among other maintenance tasks. Our gardener’s efforts ensured flower blossoms from spring into fall.

Perhaps you picked up a bargain-priced treasure during our annual yard sale or stopped by our sales table during the Milbridge Days parade. If so, thank you for supporting those fundraising efforts.

How many commemorative plaques have you seen around town? While not performing her myriad responsibilities such as cataloguing and organizing artifacts, our curator has researched the origins of many old Milbridge dwellings, seeking their age and original owner or purpose. So far 10 plaques have been distributed to pay homage to these Milbridge landmarks (see photo at right).



Of course, it would take more space than we have here to list the accomplishments of the many Historical Society and Museum volunteers, without whom the Museum could not exist. If you have a talent you’d like to share or would be willing to spend some time as a museum guide or help in some other way, please see page 3.



A Page from The Milbridge Register, 1905

Continued from the spring newsletter.

About this same time, a settlement was made on Pond Island, at the mouth of the Narraguagus Bay, by Daniel Stanwood. Mr. Stanwood erected a house on that Island, and lived there with his family. We do not know where he came from, or how long he remained.

The first person to establish a home on the banks of our river, Narraguagus, was Joseph Wallace, known as Major Wallace. Some give Mr. Wallace the distinction of being the first settler in town. There are many facts to sanction that assertion. Mr. Wallace came to this town from Beverly, Massachusetts, and settled on the east bank of the Narraguagus River, on the road to Fickett's Point, near the site of the home of H. H. Enfield, known as the Deacon Wallace homestead. Mr. Wallace was a man of energy and wealth who carried on ship-building at a very early date, and was also the owner of a large fleet of mercantile vessels. (*Editor's Note: Marjorie Wallace Hand, a descendent of Joseph Wallace, writes that her ancestor "settled on the East Side in 1763. He, with others, had established mills on the river prior to 1760. (See "Maine Place Names" by Ana Harriet Chadburne, 1955). Margaret Kelley Colton also wrote of the Wallace brothers in her genealogy(ies) of several Downeast families."*)

Another early settler, here, about the same time as Mr. Wallace, was a person whose surname was "Whaugh." We do not know who he was, or where he came from. He settled on the west bank of the river a half-mile below Wallace's Creek. As late as 1835 his house was standing, and known as the "Whaugh" Place. It is said that, during the Revolutionary War, an English brig came up the river one evening, but seeing a light on each bank of the river, she retreated, thinking it was from two forts. The two lights were from the homes of Major Wallace and Mr. Whaugh.

About 1762 John Small came here from Cape Elizabeth, and settled on a lot on the west bank of the river, near the "Whaugh" homestead. Jonathan Small, a half brother of his, took out a lot near him. The Browns, whose descendants are now living in town, were early settlers. Two brothers, Jesse and David, came here from Falmouth, now Portland, and settled on the east side, near Fickett's Wharf. Josiah Sawyer, an early settler, came to this town from Cape Elizabeth, and settled in the extreme southern part of the town, near Petit-Manan's Point. His wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Jesse Brown.

James and John Foster, two brothers, settled in town soon after the close of the Revolutionary War. Just before the Embargo Act, they began the building of a large brig. Their yard was situated up the river above the bridge. This vessel was never completed, for the above mentioned Act, and the war of 1812, made the project a failure. This craft, without spars, was embanked and covered over with brush, where it was left to decay.

Another early settler on the river was Samuel Leighton, who came in about 1760 from Falmouth, now Portland, to this town, and settled on the east bank of the river. His brother, Thomas took out a lot at the same time near Pigeon Hill, in the town of Steuben.

In most cases as soon as one member of a family settled here, others of the same stock followed, it was the same with the above: Wallaces, Smalls, Browns, Fosters, Leightons, Sawyers. A mention of their names will be made later. The following are representative surnames of families who were among the early settlers, not here-to-fore mentioned: Jordan, Ray, Upton, Nickles, Smith, Turner, Shaw, Godfrey, Fickett, Leavitt. Cain, Corthell, and Dyer. Some, if not all of these, will be taken up later.

The plantation grew in numbers very slowly, at first. The thinly settled regions in the Narraguagus Valley were not found very attractive. At the close of the 1812 War, there, probably were not more than twelve families within a radius of three miles of our present village post-office.

In 1835, twenty-three years later, we have the following description of the site of our present village and its vicinity.

On the west bank of the river beginning at Wyman Cove and extending a mile above the center of the village, were the following early settlers and their homes: Solon Turner, William Ray, Thomas Strout, Daniel L. Corthell, "Cain's" log house, James Wallace. James Hay, "Jordan's" homestead, Jonathan Upton, "Whaugh's" place, William Godfrey, Joseph Ray, Asa Leighton, Eli Foster, Nathan Hinckley, Patrick Campbell, Benjamin Leavitt, Solomon Strout, Nathaniel Strout, twenty in all. Of these houses the following are still standing: Thomas Strout's, the residence of Leonard Rowe; Daniel L. Corthell's, now occupied by A. C. Leighton; James Wallace's, late residence of Mrs. James Wallace; James Ray's, now the home of Raymond Gay; William Godfrey's, now occupied by Charles Farnsworth; Patrick Campbell's, the residence of Fletcher Campbell; and Nathan Hinckley's, the home of Mrs. Hannah Hinckley. The following lived on the east bank of the river: Major Joseph

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Wallace, Simeon Brown, James Brown, John Brown, Rufus Fickett, Albion Fickett, Thomas Leighton, Benjamin Wallace, James Otis, Samuel Rich, and Deacon Wallace. Deacon Wallace's residence is the only one of these houses now standing, and is occupied by Henry H. Enfield.

Curator's Report

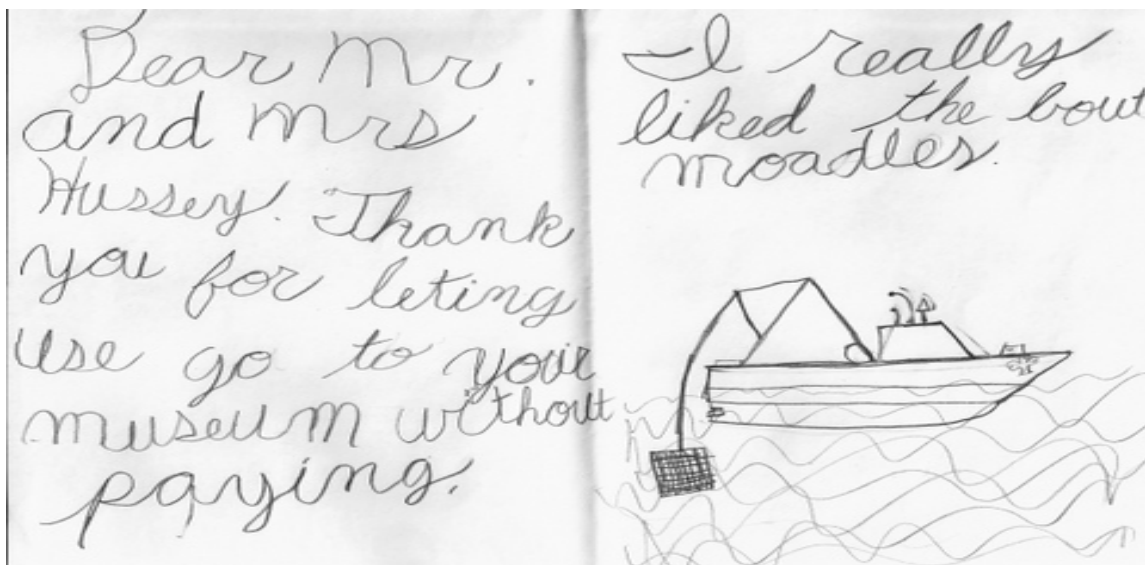
The Milbridge Historical Society documents, records and preserves the history of the people, places and events of our town. New people have been drawn here since the early 1700s, and will continue to come long after we're gone. If we can leave our town a little better off than when we arrived, we will all benefit. The Historical Society and its volunteers enrich Milbridge as they care for its history and artifacts. Please consider giving some time to the Historical Society. There are tasks available for summer-only people as well as those who are here year 'round. Thank you for caring about Milbridge.

Lee-Lee Schlegel, Curator
546-3764

In Their Own Words...

We came across some notes Milbridge school children wrote to Dick and Terry Hussey to thank them for the invitation to visit the museum. Here's what they had to say:

- I really liked the school place. The questions were kind of hard, but mostly easy.
- What I liked the most was just about everything! Except the saw that the doctor used to cut off peoples body parts.
- I enjoyed all of it. It was all awesome. The thing I liked the most was the chairs.
- My favorite parts was the school room and the doctors office. Even though I hate going to the doctors, but it looked cool anyway.
- I really liked the boat information and I wish I could make the stuff that you can.
- I have an old barn that burned down in my front yard in the woods that my sister, her friend and I have been digging up.



In Memoriam

James Ebbitt

To Frank Brown Esq., a committee chosen by the Town of Milbridge to build a bridge across Narraguagus River on the site of the present Draw Bridge and to the selectmen of said Milbridge.

Take notice that I forbid you, or the Town of Milbridge taking away, or disturbing in any way the Piers upon which said bridge is built, or building new piers or making erections of any kind upon the site of said bridge without my consent. I sold the town simply the covering of said Bridge.

The town utterly refused to purchase, or take the piers and other privileges I owned therein, but they would not buy them, and it was expressly understood that the town was unwilling, and would not take, or purchase anything but the bare covering, and what they did buy was inserted in the Deed from me to the Town.

I give this notice to save my rights. I do not desire to unjustly throw any obstacle in the way to prevent improvements being made for the benefit of the town, and will here offer to sell to the town all the rights and property I have on the site of said Bridge (which the town refused to buy) at a fair price and if we cannot agree upon the sum, I will agree to submit the matter in dispute to competent and disinterested men.

Milbridge, May 5, 1892.

James B. Mansfield

Membership Renewal & Special Limited Time Offer

Your dues help keep the museum running and the programs ongoing. If your address label or email doesn't say 2010 or Life, please catch up and send in your dues. And don't forget to let us know if you move!

Limited Time Offer: For new lifetime members (still just \$100), we are offering a complimentary copy of *Cemeteries of Milbridge* as a special thank you.. Please indicate below if you wish to receive this book. Offer expires 12/31/2010.

Name _____

Summer Address _____

Other Address _____

Phone number(s) _____ Email Address* _____

**Thank you for allowing us to email your newsletter. You will receive notification when it is available for viewing.*

Annual dues is \$10/year. Enclosed is \$ _____ for 2010 2011 2012 2013 Extra Donation \$ _____

_____ I choose Lifetime Membership and am enclosing \$100. Please do / do not (circle one) send complimentary thank-you copy of *Cemeteries of Milbridge* book.

Please forward dues to Laurie Hall at PO 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.

Was there some dissention over the proposal by the Berlin Iron Bridge Co. to erect a wrought iron truss bridge in Millbridge in April 1892? See letter to the Bridge Committee from James B. Mansfield from May 5, 1892, on page 4.



Special Offer

Are you thinking about becoming a lifetime member of the Milbridge Historical Society?
See page 4 for details.

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