

BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Vol. IX, No. 2 (Spring 2009)

BHS TO HONOR VETS AT MARCH 16 MEETING

The 2009 annual meeting of the Beals Historical Society will be devoted to recognizing the living and deceased veterans of its island town, and to inviting those from surrounding communities to join the celebration. The meeting will be held Monday, March 16 in the Beals Elementary School gymnasium. The business section of the meeting begins at 6:30PM and the program starts at 7PM.

Local Veterans Robert Alley, Alvin Beal, Anthony Beal, Stanley Beal and Esten Drisko will share some of their experiences. Plus all Veterans will be given the opportunity to share stories of their war days at home and overseas. Selectman Daniel Davis will, once again, host the program, which is expected to begin with a color guard from the Jonesport United States Coast Guard station. During the program, the school band and chorus, lead by music teacher Jerry York, will present patriotic selections.

The meeting is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. Please note this date has been changed since the last newsletter.

Time and Tide Project: The Elusive *Abbie C. Stubbs* – Part II By Daniel F. Davis

Our efforts to research the story of the *Abbie C. Stubbs* have certainly reaffirmed the premise that the origins and history of this little-known coastal schooner are “elusive” from the start. This may be due, in part, to the fact that our primary source (the Muriel Kelley photo), purported to be the *Stubbs* on the mud banks of Alley’s Bay, may have shown, in actuality, another schooner. Records show that the four-master, *Valdare*, ran aground on Petit Manan Bar at about the same time the *Stubbs* was beached at Hicks’ Head in the 1930’s. Further complicating the task of reconstructing this vessel’s past is that we find several variations on the name *Stubbs* (*Abbie C. Stubbs*, *Abby C. Stubbs*, *Abby Stubbs*, *Abbie Stubbs*, and *Abby G. Stubbs*) that obviously increase the likelihood for research error.

Despite the limited information available to us, we are able to confirm with confidence many details relating to the life of the *Abbie C. Stubbs*, citing additional information on her origins, giving attention to possible discrepancies in both written and verbal accounts, and concluding with first- and second-hand accounts of facts relating to her eventual demise on a rocky beach at Hicks’ Head in Alley’s Bay.

Let us begin with an examination of the written record and photographic artifacts that shed some light (albeit limited) on the *Stubbs*’ origins and history.

The 1884 Record of American and Foreign Shipping (American Shipmasters’ Association, New York, January 1, 1884), lists a “tern” (three master), single-deck schooner by the name *Abbie C. Stubbs*, built in 1882 by H. H. Hanscom at Fairhaven, Connecticut, a part of the seaport city of New Haven. Her official number was 106060, with signal letters “J.V.W.F.” She was under American registry, her hailing port being Boston, Massachusetts. The square-sterned *Stubbs* (345.36 gross tons; 328.09 net tons) had a length of 130 feet, width of 32.2 feet, a hold depth of hold of 12 feet, and carried a crew of seven. Without doubt, these statistics and pertinent data can be attributed to the *Abbie C. Stubbs* of local lore.

Of further enlightenment are references to Captain Stephen Peabody and the Washington County towns of

Machias and Jonesport (*Abstracts and Enrollments*, page 16), which offer a direct link between a schooner named *Abbie C. Stubbs* and the waters of Moosabec Reach that extends itself into the inlets and coves of the Alley’s Bay shoreline. In following her line of registry over a period of years, we find the *Stubbs* was initially owned by Horace Crowell & Company of Boston, but was temporarily registered in July of 1920, April of 1921, and March of 1922 at Machias, Maine, with master during this period being Stephen E. Peabody of Jonesport, Maine. (No other listings were available from our source.) In all likelihood, this coastal schooner frequented this portion of the Maine coast during its many voyages from the Maritimes to the seaport cities of Boston and New York.

The American Neptune, A Quarterly Journal of Maritime History (Volume V, Copyright 1945: American Neptune, Inc., Salem, Massachusetts), offers some additional information on a schooner named *Abbie C. Stubbs* in a chapter entitled, “Notes on Some New England Three-Masters”, by Robert H. I. Goddard, Jr. (pp. 286-287). Reflecting on his research, Goddard speaks of the *Stubbs* as the “oldest of the vessels under discussion.” He states that she was built of oak, chestnut and yellow pine with iron and copper fastenings. It was reported that she might have carried a centerboard, a movable, keel-like board or metal plate lowered through a slot in the floor of a craft to prevent drifting. If so, this device was removed early in her career. Goddard states that she was one of many similar vessels used in coastwise trade, and had a “busy and uneventful existence.” In the early 1900’s, she was operated out of New Haven, Connecticut, and from 1917 to the time of her loss “in 1933” was owned by William C. Reid of New York.

Goddard goes on to say, “In July 1933, she [*Abbie C. Stubbs*] was beached for caulking near Jonesport, Maine, after springing a leak while bound from Machiasport to Nova Scotia. Being light at the time, she struck harder than was intended, sustaining damage to her hull and breaking her keel. Efforts to pull her free proved unavailing and she was abandoned. In August, she was sold for scrap and raised for use as a breakwater, probably at the Passamaquoddy Tidal Dam.”

(continued on attached sheet)

BHS PRESENTS PROGRAM ON SARDINE INDUSTRY By Nancy Beal

The first Beals Historical Society program of 2009 was devoted to the nearly bygone business of catching sardines. On January 23, Bill Plaskon brought the Jonesport Historical Society's equipment to the Beals Elementary School gymnasium to show a 1949 film, "It's the Maine Sardine. Created by the U.S. Department of Interior, the Maine Sea and Shore Fisheries (now the Dept of Marine Resources) and the Maine Sardine Packers, the grainy black-and-white film shows fishermen in search of the protein-powerful future herring with weirs, stop seines and purse seines.

Shots of sardine carriers and the pre-modern methods of hoisting the captured fish into their holds were followed by a photographic tour of the canning process. Much of that filming took place in the former Underwood's factory that once stood in Jonesport where the Coast Guard base is now. Every step of the process—from cooking, canning, sealing and labeling—was depicted.

Old photos and artifacts from the collections of Diana Kelley, Ronald Gray and Holly Davis were spread out on tables around the gym for patrons' perusal. (Examples of the machinery used in the sardine industry are on display at Ronnie and Mary Peabody's sardine museum in Jonesport.)

Following the sardine portion of the program, Addison photographer Henry Hosley demonstrated how old photos could be restored using modern digital technology. The audience had been encouraged to bring old photos to be scanned and restored.

BHS president Carol Davis opened the meeting by reading a description of Underwood's factory that appeared in an early 20th-century census, in which the plant was described as the most modern in the world.

This article was originally submitted to the DCP.

BHS WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER

BHS Executive Board is pleased to welcome Chris Crowley to its seven-member board. The son of Leon and Bonnie Crowley, Chris is a native Beals Islander and is Acting Principal for the Beals Elementary School.

The board position was recently vacated by Brian Smith. Brian has done a wonderful job of being chairman for both the model boat show and the model boat race. He still plans to assist with these events when possible but his move from the Island makes it difficult to serve on the board. We appreciate his dedication and service to the society.

DOWNEAST BOAT RACING MOVIE NIGHT

BHS will host its first lobster boat race movie night Friday, April 24th at 7PM at the Beals Elementary School. Lobster boat racing will be the primary focus of the evening but other lobster boat events will be presented as well. Chairman Robert Alley says that he will be showing boat race videos from 1980 to present day. Also, President of the Maine Lobster Boat Association, Jon Johanssen, will be giving a presentation. There will be a slide show presentation of pictures from the '50's through the 60's boat launchings and possibly old 8mm and super 8 films of boat trips, races, ice breaking, etc. Photographer Sam Murfitt will display a photo exhibit of local boat builders and boats.

This will be an evening to remember and one you won't want to miss! We look forward to seeing you there!

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE

A Memorial Day Observance will be held, on Beals Island, Monday May 25th. Selectman Daniel Davis will lead the program as we place a wreath on the grave of Beals first settler Manwarren Beal and then proceed to the Beals-Jonesport Bridge to memorialize those lost at sea. There will be more details to be announced in the DCP.

A BRICK FUNDRAISER REMINDER

Currently we have 17 memorial brick orders. We need 25 to place our first order. We hope you are considering honoring or memorializing your loved ones. Also you may wish to purchase a brick to commemorate your school and year of graduation. Thank you!

2009 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

BHS would like to welcome new members Peter Chatman, of Newburyport MA, Angela Mooney, of Middleton MA, Henry Hosley of Addison ME, Stephen Alley of Portsmouth VA and Jeanna Woodward of Beals. Thank you for joining!

At this time, BHS has 61 current members. Please remember to submit your membership renewal application today. In order for this important endeavor to survive, BHS needs your support!!!

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

A DVD of the Apollo 9, part of which contains the rescue mission performed by the US Navy, in which Anthony Beal, of Beals, participated. This DVD will be shown, in part, at the Veteran's Program.

RECENT GIFTS

An 1879 engraved nautical chart of Moos-A-Bec Reach given by Velton Peabody.

A history book entitled, "Indian River Village and Its People", by Ronald Gray, given by Ruth Carver.

The family of Martha Fagonde donated a collection of newspaper clippings, town reports and basketball memorabilia.

A CD of 2008 model boat race pictures given by photographer Sam Murfitt.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 16/Annual Business Meeting @ 6:30PM and Veterans Program @ 7PM/BES

April 24/Downeast Boat racing Movie Night/7PM/BES

May 2/Talent/Variety Show/7PM/BES

May 25/Memorial Day Observance/TBA

June 15/Program mtg/7PM/BES

July 11/Model Boat Race/NOON

September 18/Program mtg/7PM/BES

October/Genealogy Fair/BES/Date and Time TBA

Please mark your calendars. We appreciate your attendance!

OFFICERS

President: Carol Davis

Vice President: Kenton Feeney

Secretary: Melinda Woodward

Treasurer: Almena Alley

Other Directors: Ruth Carver, Ray Beal & Chris Crowley

Membership Chairman: Pamela Davis & Assistant Daniel F. Davis

Acquisitions Chairman:

Newsletter editor: Carol Davis

Lobster Boat Racing Movie Night Chairman: Robert Alley

Mailing address: Beals Historical Society, PO Box 280, Beals ME 04611

Website address: www.moosabec.org

The Alley “Family” Coat of Arms By Stephen H. Alley

In my previous article about Bishop William Alley and his connection to the King James Bible I included a picture of William’s coat of arms (at right). Nothing seems to motivate people more than the discovery that they have an ancestor with a coat of arms and typically they want to know more about it. I am writing this article to answer a few of those basic questions. Before I begin pontificating about the arms, allow me to tell a story... I enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1982. My first assignment was to the USS Ranger an aircraft carrier stationed in San Diego, California. While on liberty one weekend, I ventured up to Long Beach to see the sights and happened upon the Queen Mary I, a retired passenger liner. Being a life-long lover of the sea and any manmade objects, which float it, I felt compelled to immediately buy a ticket. The tour ended in the main saloon, which at that time had shops hawking souvenirs and such to the tourists. One shop, however, piqued my interest, a shop of heraldry. I gave the shopkeeper my sir-name and after several minutes of searching through what appeared to be ancient volumes he announced his findings. There were two Alley coats of arms; one English and one Irish; and the English arms were the older of the two. He made it very clear that just because I was an Alley did not mean that I was descended from the persons who were granted the arms. He also pointed out that slim as the odds were the older of the two arms had a better chance to be the arms of my ancestor. Not being one to let a little thing like genealogy stand in my way, I had soon contracted to have a copy of the English arms made for me. It was not until 2007, while serving in Afghanistan, that I discovered in Gene Alley’s book *Alley Ancestors* the fact that all Beal’s Island Alleys are descended from Bishop William Alley. Imagine my surprise and delight when I discovered in Gene’s book a picture of William’s coat of arms; a picture, which matched perfectly the coat of arms I had purchased in San Diego so long ago!



For 24 years I had been proudly telling what I thought were “slightly stretched truths” about my family’s coat of arms. Funny how things turn out; all those years of fibs were in fact the truth. One element of those stories continues to be a fib even today. It is incorrect to call an ancestor’s coat of arms a “family” coat of arms. In truth, there is no such thing as a coat of arms, which belongs to a “family”! A coat of arms belongs to an individual and identifies that individual in the same way that a person’s name does. During medieval times, a knight wore his coat of arms on his shield in order to be identified on the battlefield. This tradition became so well established that it is still practiced today long after the last knight fought in armor. How is it then that people mistakenly call them “family” coats of arms? In the case of hereditary titles, when the titleholder dies the heir inherits the title and may then assume the arms of the former. The title is inherited, not the arms. The heir is not required to assume the parent’s arms; they may create an entirely new one if they choose. This tradition of the heir assuming the arms of the former is the basis of the infamous “family” coat of arms. Of course, no matter what arms the heir selects the Crown via the College of Arms must still grant them. Does this mean I’ll stop bragging about my “family” coat of arms...?

The Cathedral of Exeter’s web page lists every Bishop, which has served as well as each Bishop’s coat of arms. All Bishops of the Church of England are authorized by title and rank to bear arms and I have no doubt William used the arms shown on these pages. He may have designed them himself since we have no proof that an earlier Alley bore them. The title of “Bishop” is an Ecclesiastical title and as such is granted for life. This means that upon the Bishop’s death the title expires. It also means that his descendants have no right to the title or to bear arms.

In viewing the coat of arms the reader will notice many features. The most prominent of course is the arms themselves, that is to say the shield. When a coat of arms possesses all of the correct elements, as William's does (below), then the College of Arms defines it as having "full armorial achievement." A complete coat of arms has the following components: The Arms (shield), Supporters, Motto, Helm, Mantling, Wreath and Crest. The small pictures below right, demonstrate the individual components.



The official name for the description of a coat of arms is *Blazon of Arms* and it must include a definition of the shield, crest, motto and perhaps the supporters. William's is stated this way: **Blazon of Arms:** "Azure, a Pale ermine, between two lions rampant of the second, ducally crowned or." **Crest:** "A lion's head cabossed or, between two wings proper." **Motto:** "Non Sibi"

Each tincture (color) and charge (animal, object) has meaning. Standard coats of arms possess no more than four tinctures and four charges. Tinctures include the three "metals:" gold, silver and white. Interpreting William's Blazon of Arms, we get the following: "Azure" (blue) means fidelity and indicates the base color of the arms. "A Pale" is a vertical stripe down the center of the shield. "Ermine," a fur associated with Kings, fills the pale. Two lions "rampant of the second" indicate the form and stance of the lions, and in particular the fact that they are reared up upon their hind legs. A very important element is "ducally crowned," which refers to the type of crown on the heads of the lions and indicates William's high rank. Bishop Alley may have been equivalent to a Duke or just one rung below the Queen. An indicator of that rank is the fact that senior English Bishop's are members of the House of Lords, a very prestigious position. The word "Or" means gold. The gold lion's head in the crest probably signifies royal service and the wings religious service. The motto, Non Sibi, means "not for himself." So the next time you have visitors from away and you decide to dust off the ancestors I hope this will help you show off the "family" crest!

Sources: website, Fleur-de-lis Designs at <http://fleurdelis.com>; "Remarkable ANTIQUITIES of the City of Exeter" by Samuel Izacke Esq. Third Edition, London, 1724 viewed at Google books; Rev. George Oliver. *Lives of the Bishops of Exeter* Broadgate, England: William Roberts, 1861

Goddard's inclusion of these and other pertinent facts relating to the *Stubbs* leaves no doubt that our research has led us to a valid conclusion: The *Abbie C. Stubbs* of our research is the same vessel that was lost at Hicks' Head. We know from our investigation that she was an old sailing vessel at the time of her loss, that Goddard's reference to the ownership and place of construction concur with our own findings, that she met her demise at Jonesport, Maine while beached for caulking, and that she was eventually sold for scrap. Since Goddard's *Abbie C. Stubbs* is included in a chapter about "three-masters" (and the point that she was three masted is substantiated by the recollections of the locals), it is logical to conclude that the *Stubbs* was not a four-masted schooner as first thought based on the Kelley photo. However, we must take exception to Goddard's use of the term "uneventful" when referring to the *Stubbs*' legacy, since it precludes the incident reported in Part I of this article, when a ship by that name is reported to have collided with the 243-foot *Perkiomen* off Monomoy [Island] Beach, sending the steam collier to the bottom.

Furthermore, our research has found no evidence to support Goddard's contention that the *Stubbs* was "raised for use as a breakwater" anywhere on the Downeast coast, let alone at Passamaquoddy, which lies some 40 miles to the east. The suggestion that she "[sprung] a leak while bound from Machiasport to Nova Scotia" is possible, but unlikely when we consider the fact that Jonesport lies west of Machiasport and would likely not be traversed by a ship on a course from Machiasport to Nova Scotia. Additionally, the eyewitnesses that confirm the *Stubbs* wintered in the Reach just prior to her being beached on Hicks' Head, give no indication that she was previously sailed further up the coast for a crossing into Canada by way of the Bay of Fundy.

Nevertheless, many of Goddard's statements are substantiated by what we know to be true concerning the *Stubbs*, as related to us by local residents of Beals and Alley's Bay, some of which were witnesses to the events of her grounding. At a round-table discussion held at the Beals Town Office, sponsored by the Beals Historical Society in July of 2008, Alvin Leon "Tarty" Beal, of Beals recalls that he was a young boy of seven or eight years (some 78 years ago in the 1930's) when the *Stubbs* was brought ashore at Hicks' Head. He agrees with Goddard's date of 1933, associating the event with the beginning of Franklin Roosevelt's first term as President of the United States. The *Stubbs* had lain moored all winter in Moosabec Reach, off the Horse Rock near Kelly's Point, on the southern side of the channel toward the settlement of Alley's Bay.

It was quite common at that time to "winter" empty vessels in the Reach, where saltwater ice would freeze so thick that remaining crewmembers could easily walk ashore for supplies as needed. The drawing action of ice on the hull would likely have pulled some of the caulking out of the already leaky seams, making it necessary, as Goddard contends, to ground (beach) the vessel on a full-run tide, as soon as she broke free of the ice in the spring. After caulking was completed, it was customary practice to let the vessel lay on the mud banks, allowing the silt to be absorbed into the oakum caulking, a loose, stringy, hemp fiber made from old ropes. When mixed with mud, a "compound" resulted that would harden after setting up, thus tightening the seams and averting leakage. This seems to be the most plausible reason that the *Stubbs* was run ashore on the rocky beach at Hicks' Head. (Local speculation at the time of the incident was that she was deliberately wrecked for insurance purposes, but this allegation has never been substantiated.) In any event, based on eyewitness accounts, the captain, who may have been Fred Ward at the time, ran the vessel onto the shore, despite warnings from bystanders (including my father, Ralph Davis, Sr., a young boy of 8 years at the time) that the vessel was about to pass over a large blue rock directly in its path.

Upon striking, the *Stubbs* was hard aground, her own weight exerting increasing pressure on her hull as the tide receded, bearing directly on the rock on her right side and causing damage to the planking. This, indeed, may have caused the aged and weakened vessel great damage, especially to the hull and keel, as mentioned in Goddard's account. At some point, Tarty Beal recalls, an effort was made to employ a Coast Guard cutter to tow her off with the oncoming tide, meeting with no success. The salvage attempt resulted in additional damage to the schooner's cabin and hull, as huge hawsers were attached at strategic locations, including around the aft cabin and masts, in an attempt to move the massive craft. The great strain caused as the cutter's lines tightened reportedly tore the cabin off the vessel. As the weeks passed, with no further progress toward her removal, she was abandoned, to what might have been her *final* resting place. This, however, was not to be the case.

The *Stubbs* was not to remain intact for long, as attempted salvage undertakings would see her remains scattered from Hicks' Head to Jonesport. According to a brief article entitled "Abbie Stubbs Nameplate Donated" (Beals Historical Society Newsletter, Vol. V, No. 4, Winter 2005), a local by the name of "Red Lowell" Beal salvaged much of the *Stubbs* to be used as smoke wood for herring smoking and curing facilities (owned by Ruben Stevens) at Cross Cove in Jonesport.

The masts and superstructure, along with much of the hull, were removed. (Calvin recalls that portions of the masts were used locally as chopping blocks, one of which was in my great-grandfather Eben Walter Alley's woodshed for years.) Due

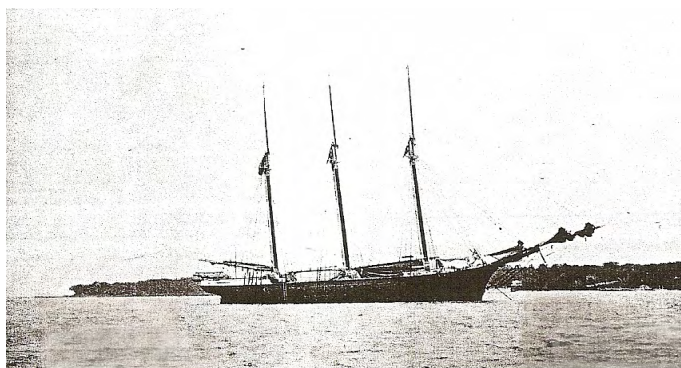
to a possible overload or load shift during one of the Reach crossings, “Red” Lowell lost a substantial section of the salvage overboard, which became a familiar landmark on the Alley’s Bay mud banks. Locals, my father and his brother, Carl Davis included, retrieved much of the remaining wood and useable materials from the wreck site. (A few pieces of wood and metal still remain adjacent to the big blue rock, reminders of the *Stubbs*’ fate and confirming that she was never removed, intact, from the beach.)

Calvin Beal, Jr., a local boat builder (relating the event as told to him by his wife’s maternal uncle, Tommy Peabody), recounts that after the schooner was run aground and abandoned, one of her former captains, Stephen Peabody of Beals, and his son, Tommy, rowed out and removed the stern nameplate. The darkly-painted board, bearing the name *Abbie C. Stubbs* in white letters, was proudly displayed on Tommy’s shed for many years, until it came into Calvin’s possession and was subsequently donated to the Society, where it is now stored among the archives, awaiting an appropriate venue for display in the Society’s new facilities. The “eye” of the ship (the hawse pipe, or hawsehole, through which the chain or mooring cable runs), recently retrieved from the site of the wreck by Isaac Beal of Beals, also will become a part of the archive collection. Eventually, other privately held items may also be made available to the Society for public display.

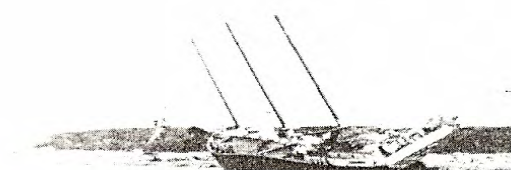
All this being said, we bring our research to an acceptable conclusion based on what we know to be the facts relating to the grounding of the *Abbie C. Stubbs*. We have attempted to share with the reader a small portion of her rich history, garnered from research and input from those who know “the rest of the story”, if not the intricacies that led to this end. It is gratifying to know that the *Stubbs*’ last days as a sailing vessel are accounted for, and that this once-proud coastal schooner that plied the waters of the east coast from Nova Scotia to New York and beyond, made its final resting place in the little fishing community of Alley’s Bay.

We would like to recognize and thank those individuals who contributed in any way to this project. We extend our thanks to the following: John Zittel and David Dearborn, Research Assistants at Maine Maritime Museum in Bath, Maine; Ben Fuller and the Penobscot Marine Museum; Janet Cooper, New Haven, Connecticut for putting us in touch with resources in the New Haven area; Barbara Austen and The Connecticut Historical Society; Jim Cambell and The New Haven Colony Historical Society; Ernest Libby, Jr., Calvin Beal, Jr., and Diana Kelley, of Beals; Paula MacCormack, Isaac Beal, Eva Beal, and Alvin Leon Beal (round-table participants), all of Beals.

We would invite our readers to respond with any additional information by contacting us at the following: Daniel F. Davis, PO Box 22, Beals, Maine 04611, or Carol Davis at cfdavis44@yahoo.com.



Abbie C. Stubbs at New London, Connecticut, July 1932
(Photo by Robert H. I. Goddard, Jr.)



Abbie C. Stubbs Aground at Hicks’ Head, 1933

