

# BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. XVI, No. 3 (Summer 2016)

## BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY SUMMER PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

The Beals Historical Society annual summer program meeting will be held on Monday, June 20th at Beals Heritage Center. The program will begin, at 6:30PM, with the presentation of BHS most recent model boat gift. The owner, Donna Miller, of Lubec, will give a brief presentation about the how and why the late craftsman Clifford Norton, of Jonesport Maine, decided to construct the model.

why it stands out as a Maine natural gem. He'll also be presenting some of his personal photography (non-work related) including some imagery from a recent art residency at the Schoodic Institute.

Dan is a Rumford, Maine native and has been working for TNC for 12 years. He holds a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Maine at Farmington and a master's in science from the University of Quebec at Montreal. His

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**June 20 @6:30PM**  
Program Meeting

**July 2-4**  
4th Of July Events at Moosabec  
Ambulance Service, Jonesport.  
Serving Seafood Chowdah!

**August 19 @6:30PM**  
Doug Dodge Boat Building  
Presentation to be held at Beals  
Heritage Center

**September 16 @6:30PM**  
Daniel Davis

**October 21 @6:30PM**  
Gospel Concert

*Please mark your calendars as we  
greatly appreciate your support!*



*Clifford Norton Model Boat*

Following this, Dan Grenier, a land manager for the Great Wass Island Nature's Conservancy, will talk about what it's like to manage conservation lands in Maine and will share some insight on the rare nature of Great Wass Island and

introduction to science and conservation occurred as a student visiting Great Wass Island, Beals, Maine.

We invite the general public to attend free of charge. Light refreshments will be served.



*End View Of Clifford Norton Model Boat*

## WOODEN BOAT BUILDING HISTORY REQUEST

Bernard (Bennie) Pratt is working with Jon Johansen to gather information related to the history of wooden boat building on Beals Island and Jonesport. While Jon has done a considerable amount of research on this subject, he would like for it to be a complete and

accurate listing of all of the craftsmen that built wooden boats. One of the first steps will be to make contact with those who have first hand knowledge of the folks involved in this craft and would like to contribute information to the project. Any documents or photographs

will be copied and the originals returned to the owner.

If you have any boatbuilding or builders information you would like to share, please feel free to contact Bennie at 207-491-6764 or by mail at 456 Town Farm Road, Farmington, ME 04938.



## 2016 BHS MEMORIAL DAY IN REVIEW

Beals Historical Society's Memorial Day commemoration program was held on Monday, May 30, 2016 at the Heritage Center with Beals Selectman and BHS historian Daniel F. Davis officiating. The ceremonies began with the raising of the flag by Robert Grant and the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence followed in remembrance of those from the Moosabec area who gave their "time, talents, and even their lives in military service throughout our nation's history, that we might live in the blessed light of freedom today." Following the moment of silence, Elizabeth Nichols-Goodliff, music and band teacher at Beals Elementary School, rendered "TAPS".

The prayer of invocation alluded to the theme for this year's presentation as Mr. Davis prayed, "...we are thankful for [God's] guiding hand that has led this nation in the past; that [He] has

preserved it, even when threatened with division from within."

Davis then led those assembled in an appropriate carol adapted from a poem written on Christmas Day in 1864 by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, entitled "Christmas Bells." Written during the war years, it reflects the despair of the day as Longfellow reflected on the adversity of the conflict and ending with hope that Lincoln's reelection might bring a possible end to the resulting suffering. Three of Longfellow's original verses directly relate to the war. The poem, "A Soldier's Grave," was also shared.

This year's Memorial Day address looked back upon the "darkest days in American history, when the War Between the States raged throughout the land," a war that would last five years and result in the loss of some 620,000 soldiers, with half of them wasted by disease. In addition, hundreds of thousands more

would return with loss of limbs and other serious injuries---both mental and physical.

A roll call of local veterans was read, citing more than fifty of more than one hundred men from area who answered the call to serve their nation. Cincinnati, Ohio resident Shaun Smith, son of Jonesport native Philmore Smith, Jr., delivered a slide presentation of Company D 22nd Maine Infantry that worked to take possession of the Mississippi River and thereby gain access to the heart of Confederate strongholds inland from the Gulf Coast. He followed the military service of his ancestor, George Farnsworth from his enlistment to his deployment at the Louisiana battlefield and back home again.

The program concluded with an invitation to browse the exhibits and talk further with Shaun and others present.

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## PART TWO: MEMORIES OF LIFE ON BEALS ISLAND

by *Erroll G. "Sonny" Woodward*

### *The War Years*

World War Two began officially for we Islanders December 7, 1941. My family had been living in the Barney Cove house for only a few months. With the war came a tremendous surge of patriotism and activity. Rationing of food, gasoline, tires, and clothing was put in place with its red and blue stamps and tokens. There was also a system of price controls put into effect. Prices in the Sears catalog were often listed as the "ceiling price". The majority of necessities went into the war effort. We scavenged the town for scrap metal and

rubber, There were piles of it on Uncle Vernal's wharf. Housewives and cooks saved cooking grease to be used in manufacturing explosives. Household cans were cleaned, flattened, and saved for scrap. Recycling is not new and it was well done during the war years.

Blackouts were instituted during which no glint of light was to be seen from any house or building and at times the streetlights were turned off. Wardens were appointed to patrol the town looking for any light that was showing so that the problem could be corrected.

A volunteer organization was begun called the Ground Observer Corps. Volunteers familiarized themselves

with the silhouettes of different types of aircraft and were to report any that were questionable. A special lookout building was built north of the school on the outskirts of the playground.

Closson Alley, Jr. was drafted into the army before finishing high school. He returned to finish after the war ended. In fact he returned just in time to rejoin the basketball team on a night we played our arch rivals, the Jonesport Seahawks.

Another veteran came and addressed the high school. He said 13 was not an unlucky number for him and he recounted several good things happening to him which included those of Friday

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the 13th.

The Korean War called “conflict” for what is supposedly to have been political reasons, soon erupted after the close of WWII. Again the lives of many were disrupted. More young men gave up their daily lives, work, and businesses, to enter the military. Among them were my cousin, Edgar Drisko, another classmate, Franklin “Frankie” Faulkingham, and myself. We were all navy men. A little later my cousin Arthur Woodward served in the Army. My apologies go to anyone else serving and not mentioned here but I lost track after enlisting in 1951. Frankie and Edgar got back to lobstering but Arthur and I ended up in education.

### **Boats**

The main feature of The Island’s boats was the large number and the variety of them. Many of them were locally built and by the late 1950s there were several builders in town. There were several anchorages and seeing the boats at their moorings was impressive. Every boat had its own distinctive engine exhaust sound. Couple the sound with the fact that most fishermen had their own cruising speed, it was quite easy to determine which boat was coming before it came into view.

JP Alley’s boat is one that stands out in my memory as being picturesque. His boat was named Franklin D. Roosevelt and the name was painted in bold letters across the stern. The boat was quite an inspiring sight with an American flag fluttering above the president’s name at the stern. I would guess J.P. was a patriotic American democrat.

The smallest boat of special interest to me was Jed Alley’s pea pod. He did all his lobster fishing from it. I remember of hearing in the latter years of WWII that Jed had struck some explosive device (it was referred to locally as a pencil mine) and he had been thrown overboard by the blast. This might not have been Jed but I leave this incident recorded to note that the waters around the town could be dangerous at that time. I do recall the windows of our house rattling from the percussions of guns being fired off shore.

Uriah Beal ran the local ferry until the

time the Jonesport/Beals bridge was opened to traffic. The procedure was simple. Telephone Uriah and he came to get you. A twist on that was to stop by the telephone exchange office in Jonesport, tap on the office window, tell Laura Lenfestey, or whoever happened to be at the switchboard, that you needed Uriah to come to a certain wharf, and she made the call. Often the ferry would be waiting when we got there. What a system! Speaking of that, if you needed the correct time, just call the operator and be told.

I must sidetrack for the memory of a telephone legend. I heard this when I was a teenager. The name escapes me and perhaps it’s just as well. It seems there was a man of Beals who enjoyed alcoholic beverage. When telephones first came to Beals, he wanted to see what they were all about. Because of his being hindered by not understanding the system and having a little drink within, the call didn’t go too well. After being instructed, he cranked the handle, put the receiver to his ear, and heard the voice of the operator say, “Number please.” Having no particular number to call, he replied, “ O, Dear, any number convenient to you’s convenient for me.” Anyway, that’s the story. For any non-downeast Mainers who might be reading this, please note the word “Dear” used as a pronoun.

Telling the telephone story reminds me that both the telephone and electrical services reached Beals by way of underwater cable. There were times The Island was without service because the cable had been damaged. If the electricity was out for too long a time, there was free ice cream given from the stores. The service cables are now suspended from the bridge. The free ice cream is gone along with The Island’s little local stores.

Before the bridge was built and as the Islanders came to want a closer relationship with their autos, it was decided to build a ferry capable of carrying vehicles. The result was a large decked over scow with a ramp that could be raised and lowered. Since it did not have a self contained engine

it was powered by a lobster type boat secured to it. Though familiar with the ferry, I have only heard rumors of some interesting experiences related to it. I will have to leave the telling of those stories to someone who has the facts or maybe were involved. My cousin, Arthur Woodward, has written an article, “Towing the Beals Bridge”, which gives insight into the construction of the bridge in the mid 1950s.

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## **BHS SUMMER PROGRAM FEATURING, DOUG DODGE BOAT BUILDING**

BHS first ever Summer program meeting will be conducted by Beals Island Boatbuilder, Doug Dodge. The presentation will include information about one of Beal’s finest boatbuilders, Harold Gower. Plus Doug will narrate a video of himself building a 30’ wooden lobster boat. The program will be held on Friday, August 19th at 6:30PM at the Heritage Center. The general public is invited to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

*Rada Cutlery Fundraiser is still available to order. Please contact Carol Davis or Patti Kelley if you are interested.*

## **BHS CAPITAL CAMPAIGN GRANT AWARD**

On behalf of the Beals Historical Society, the Executive Board wishes to express sincere appreciation for the generous grant award of \$2,000 from Eastern Maine Conservation Initiative. BHS Capital Campaign effort to raise \$40,000 has now reached a grand total of \$29,000. BHS is very thankful for all of the grant support to date! If you would like to make a tax-free donation to help us reach our goal, please send your check or money order to: BHS, PO Box 280, Beals ME 04611. Thank you!



# BEALS HERITAGE CENTER

## BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please check one:  Renewal  New      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name(s) as you wish it to appear on membership card and member roll on website:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please type or print clearly)*

Your mailing address:

Street or Post Office Box: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

*(Please review all types and check the one that applies)*

- |  |                        |  |                 |
|--|------------------------|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Annual | \$10 Annually          | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/65 Annual        | \$5 annually    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Life   | \$200 one-time payment | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior couple/65 Annual | \$7.50 annually |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple Annual     | \$15 Annually          | <input type="checkbox"/> Student                 | \$5 annually    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple/Life       | \$300 one-time payment |  |                 |

Over and above dues, I wish to donate \_\_\_\_\_

for \_\_\_\_\_ operating expenses, \_\_\_\_\_ building fund, or \_\_\_\_\_ endowment fund.

Receipt and membership card will be sent to you.

**Instructions:** Please print, complete and mail this application, together with tax-deductible check or money order payable to Beals Historical Society to:

*Membership Chairperson,  
Beals Historical Society,  
P.O. Box 280, Beals, ME 04611*

*Annual memberships are for the calendar year and expire December 31st.*