

BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Vol. XVIII, No. 1 (Winter 2018)

BHS MOVIE NIGHT

The general public is invited to attend “movie” night at Beals Heritage Center on January 16th at 6:30PM. The evening’s movies will consist of interviews of Isaac and Eva Beal and Tecky and Etta Drisko. Please join us as we listen to stories about how to handline for fish, how to find good fishing ground, how to smoke pollack, the who and how

to’s of boatbuilding, plus lots of interesting stories regarding the way life used to be on Beal’s Island. Admittance is free but donations would be appreciated but not necessary. During this event, BHS will offer, for purchase, copies of any cd and dvd interviews in the collection for \$10. Light refreshments will be served.

BHS RECEIVED GRANT AWARD FROM DAVIS FAMILY FOUNDATIONS

BHS Executive board is happy to announce receiving a grant award from the Davis Family Foundation. The grant funds will be used to complete the electrical work at the new “Cold Storage Area” building. DFF is the society’s largest contributor and we much appreciate their continued support and trust in our most worthy cause. The people of Beal’s Island should be very proud of the fact that the Beals Heritage Center complex has been built by using none of their tax dollars. We are proud to be “Keeper’s of the Past” where children of today as well as future generations will be able to catch a glimpse of the way life used to be for people who lived on the island from the late seventeen hundreds to the 1960’s.

We are most anxious to begin building exhibits that exemplify the rich culture and heritage once present on our beloved Beal’s Island. Currently, we are accepting any type of artifacts or memorabilia that does not require heat. One exhibit

will be to hang trap buoys from local fisherman on the southern, shingled wall that connects the Heritage Center to the CSA. Included in this exhibit will be a list of the buoy’s owner and color. Another exhibit will include a set of swings with chains and wooden seats that were rescued from the old Beals Elementary School. These will be hung from the rafters where children can once again enjoy swinging on them. We will also be displaying artifacts from a dairy farm that once supplied the island with milk. We would love to create displays of fishing equipment, tools, anything to do with boat building, sports, pieces of history from any type of the island’s industry, etc., or whatever you might find in your attic or basement that is a part of island history. Please let us know if you have anything you would like to contribute to our new exhibit area. You may contact any of the board members to do so.

2018 MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Once again, it is time membership renewal time. For 2017, the membership reached which is comprised of 63 life members, 11 new and 106 renewals. We are in hopes that BHS memberships will

reach the 200 mark this year and would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for your continued support of this most worthy cause.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 16th @ 6:30PM –
Movie night at the Heritage Center

March 16th @ 6:30PM–
Annual Business Meeting/BES
Student Wyeth and Middle Ages
Projects

May 5th @ 6:30PM – BHS
Talent/Variety Show

May 28th @ 10AM –
Memorial Day Program

June or July – TBA
Arnie Smith Program
Early 19th Century Hay Creek Tide
Mill Project

July 7th for the 4th – TBA

August 18th –TBA

October 20th –
Gospel Concert

Please mark your calendars as we greatly appreciate your support!



BEALS HERITAGE CENTER ADDITION FINISHED, 1901 MAURICE DOW-BUILT GAS-POWERED LOBSTER SLOOP UNVEILED

by Nancy Beal

The Beals Historical Society took a significant step forward last summer, when carpenters completed an addition to its Heritage Center, a 38-by-40-foot area destined to be what BHS President Carol Davis calls a cold storage building. The barn-like structure is built over a cement slab attached to the display hall, and will house “anything that doesn’t need heat,” says Davis. It cost \$34,415 and was funded with a \$28,000 grant, a few smaller donations, and BHS fundraising.

The new structure provides a shelter for two lobster boats that heretofore have been subject to the weather. One is a Jonesport model lobster boat built by Beals boatbuilder Harold Gower for Beals fisherman Kenneth Beal in 1939 and, several owners later, donated to the BHS by Capt. John Williams of Addison. The other is much older.

Across Moosabec Reach from Beals Island, an out-of-stater named Rosario Gianetti bought a little house at the end of Jonesport’s Old House Point Road over a decade ago. Most of the end of that point was taken up by a seafood plant and one could be forgiven for not noticing Gianetti’s bungalow. When he began revealing the little structure by cleaning up the tall weeds in the dooryard, however, he found a marine treasure: the hull of what looked like a Friendship sloop. He gave it to the BHS and it remained under a tarp until last July, when the BHS’ cold storage building was finished.

The fact that the old vessel had no home did not stop Davis from researching its background. She learned that it had been built by an early but well-known

Moosabec area boat builder, Maurice Dow, perhaps in the area that is now the Jonesport Campground. It sported the renowned Friendship sloop style: an elliptical stern and a clipper bow.

Because all islanders are family, word of the little boat spread quickly and elicited information about its origin. The craft, named “Little Ray,” had been built in 1901 for Beals lobsterman Lowell E. Beal and his son, Alton. Documents that Davis unearthed indicated that Alton sold his share to his father, who then sold a half-interest to A. M. Ingersoll of Machias. The bills of sale indicate that the Little Ray is 35 feet long and 10 feet wide, and identify its design as that of an eight-ton “gas sloop.”

Betty Roberts, who has written a brief history of the Friendship Sloop, explains that it did not originate as a class boat where every hull is the same

rigged mainsail, was supposed to equal the overall length of the boat plus half its draft.

By the turn of the century, the boats became popular in the Muscongus Bay area. Many builders and buyers took to the woods to cut the lumber for their draft, Roberts writes, while their wives got the task of sewing the sails on their treadle machines. Some fishermen built a boat a winter, fished it spring and summer, and sold it in the fall, she writes, giving them a boat to fish from and work in the winter.

The invention of the internal combustion engine introduced a new way to make a boat move through the water and, as Davis noted in one grant application, the “gas sloop” Little Ray reflects the transition from rowboats and sail-powered boats to what became known as “reach boats”: boats that could use both wind and engine to move the hull.

The BHS’ two historic lobster boats are under cover, but there it still much work to be done. “Little Ray” still has most of its ribs and planks, but they are desiccated and, in one place, broken. Rather than rebuild, Davis wants to restore it to its 1901 appearance. She is hoping that area boat builders and carpenters will come forward and volunteer their time and expertise. And she hopes to eventually collect lobster trap buoys from every Beals lobsterman, past or present, and display them on the wall that the cold storage building now shares with the

Heritage Center.



George and Carol Davis are pictured here removing the tarp from the 1901 gas sloop “Little Ray”.

size. The style emerged around 1880 in Maine’s midcoast area where fishermen, perhaps influenced by Gloucester fishing sailboats, designed their own crafts according to their individual needs. Their length ranged from 21 to 50 feet, with the average lying between 30 to 40. The mast, which supported a gaff-

BHS BOARD MEMBERS

President: Carol Davis
Vice President: Walter Carver
Treasurer: Eva Faulkingham
Secretary: Patti Kelley
Director: Teresa Beal,
Tammy Tibbets & Ray Beal

RECENT GIFTS

When doing the groundwork for the new building at the Downeast Institute, an old sled runner was found and excavated from the ground. DEI promptly contact BHS to ask if it was something they would be interested in. Given the fact that Charles H. Beal used to own the property and that he hauled wood out on a sled, the response was a huge yes we most certainly would love to have it! We much appreciate those involved in unearthing, excavating and delivering the artifact to Beals Heritage Center where it will be proudly displayed in the new "Cold Storage Area".

Also a book case that once was located in Hannah Kelley's classroom at Beals High School, two swings with chains and board seats and a wooden lobster trap buoy that once belonged to Lawrence Kelley. All were received from an anonymous donor to whom we are most appreciative!

Condolences

We would like to express heartfelt sympathy, to the family of Herky Wilcox. We are deeply saddened to lose yet another of this generation and one of Beal's Islands finest. Herky's generation all had fond memories of being raised on the island. I've heard them all (including Herky) speak of going to the Lenfestey farm during haying season to help jump the hay down for storage in the barn. According to them it was a fun time had by all! They also grew up during a time of war when they had to pull the window shades at night in order to prevent the light from being seen by the German's flying over. They climbed into the school bell tower to watch for the planes and used the telephone to report if one was seen. This generation knew how to have fun playing and shared memories of great times doing so. Yes they were hard times but they were good times. Herky will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him. (For more history on Herky, please visit www.moosabec.org, membership, and see the "memorial roll" at the bottom of the page.

PERSONALIZED BRICK ANNOUNCEMENT

For 2018, BHS will be offering the to be received by April 4th in order to have them in time to set for BHS Memorial Day program. For formatting suggestions, please contact Carol at 497-2675 or email cfDavis44@yahoo.com. Thank you!

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

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.