

Winter Harbor Historical Society

P.O. Box 93, Winter Harbor, ME 04693

August 2022

NEWSLETTER



**Grace Hanson's Store
190 Main Street**

In 1820, Stephen Rand was among the earliest mariners to establish a year round home in Winter Harbor. His granddaughter, Emma (1845-1926) continued the maritime tradition, when she married James Stevens and they constructed their home on this site in 1876. As the daughter of Captain James Stevens, Grace Hanson grew up in an atmosphere of ships and sailing. Although subject to extreme seasickness, Grace felt compelled at age 13 to join the maiden voyage of her father's new schooner, the *Grace E. Stevens*. Between Portland and Buzzard's Bay the schooner encountered severe weather, which pushed the *Grace E. Stevens* into a shoal and sent the topmast to the deck. Grace was sent home by train, never to sail again. In 1895, Grace and her husband, Hoel Hanson opened a fine dry goods and millinery store in her father's home. They offered ladies hats, described as startling creations with swooping feathers and welcomed many fine carriages with summer shoppers. The Hansons raised two children here and celebrated their 50th anniversary in 1947. Grace served as organist for the Winter Harbor Baptist Church for 56 years and hosted choir rehearsals in their home for decades.



The property was transferred to Colby and Marilyn Coombs in 1951. As grandson of Ella Rand Coombs, cousin to Emma Rand Stevens, this purchase continued the presence of Rand descendants in the home. The Coombs family were, also one of Winter Harbor's original 1820 settlers and Colby's grandfather, William Coombs had secured a special agreement with John Moore to maintain fish houses and bait shacks on Little Moose Island decades after the island transferred to the National Park Service. The Peninsula Gazette, a local newspaper in the 1950's shares a story of William Coombs' walk to Mark Island on the ice on February 21, 1923. He was joined by 30-40 others, before the ice began to break away.

Colby's parents, Dennis and Madge lived beside his Main Street home and Marilyn's parents; Clarence and Avis Buckley owned the former seven gabled house on the corner of Main Street and Newman Street. Colby and Marilyn raised their two children with the watchful eye of both sets of grandparents.

Colby Coombs purchased Morrison's Garage on Main Street in Winter Harbor in 1955. When asked by the writer of the Peninsula Gazette to describe his training as a mechanic, Colby replied, "I drove a truck." He had actually attended the National Administration School in Kingston, Rhode Island and served in the 3rd Armored Division of the Army in France, England and Germany from 1943-46.

Marilyn Buckley Coombs attended nursing school in Worcester, but transferred to the University of Maine to complete a degree in Home Economics. Her father shared his experience as a bookkeeper and town manager to provide her with the training to manage Winter Harbor's Liberty National Bank, Housing Development, Food Service and work for years as Town Clerk. Marilyn did attend night school for bookkeeping at Sumner Memorial High School. She was active in the Acadia Women's Club and the Parent Teacher Club.



Thank you to Colby and Marilyn's daughter, Carol Coombs Michaud and her husband, Ray for continuing the family presence in this home.

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Museum

The Board of Directors for the Winter Harbor Historical Society wish to share our planning for the future of our museum and we sincerely seek support with major fundraising needs. Please email us at winterharborhistory@gmail.com with ideas or willingness to lead a major fundraising effort. The museum will be open for visits on Saturdays from 1-4pm in August.

We have several books including: [A Summering Place](#) by Alan Smallidge for sale at the museum. Browse through the Winter Harbor High School yearbook: Pythia from 1913 through 1952. Town reports from 1895 to 2021 can be reviewed and the transcription of Dr. Nathaniel Pendleton's diary is on display. Many visitors enjoy looking at class photos from the Winter Harbor Grammar School collection. Clippings of Jonas Crane articles from several newspapers are organized in a notebook for viewing.

Rick and Joanne Brown have created a display on the local ice harvesting industry and they have developed dioramas of the area lighthouses.

Winter Harbor Historical Society

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Annual Membership Renewals are due every July. Lifetime memberships and Donations are welcome anytime!