

Winter Harbor Historical Society

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

July 2023

NEWSLETTER

Winter Harbor Historical Society Museum



The Winter Harbor Common School was built on Main Street in 1877 and moved by oxen ten years later to its site on Hammond Lane. It required some skilled ox driving to steer the cumbersome building and make a quarter turn on the new foundation to have door face south. The first seats were crude affairs made from heavy planks. In 1896, the superintendent recommended adjustable seats that could be raised or lowered and in 1898 out buildings were constructed and the yard was fenced. A truant officer was funded, as the superintendent reported that "Idle children, who run about the streets, rarely make good citizens." The older boys would soon get restless and a teacher might require both brawn and brain to maintain order in Winter Harbor. An 1869 court action was brought against certain boys for disrupting school with fist fights between teacher and student. By 1912 over 80 scholars were enrolled. Sewers connected the school to the Henry Cove outflow and 'sanitary rooms' were located in our current office space. Students enjoyed swings behind the Smallidge (O'Brien) house and a basketball hoop on the back of the Blanche (Coombs) barn. Hot lunch was served across the street at the Globe Hall for several years. Fifth through eighth grade pupils were served in two rooms on the second floor and primary grades shared the first floor. Local reporter, Jonas Crane wrote in 1953 that students were moved to the former Winter Harbor High School building on Harbor Road and the school was purchased by Schoodic Grange, ending its 76 year history in education.

The school traditionally hosted town events and was the official meeting place of the Ironbound Good Templars

Lodge. Several large trees were placed in the lodge meeting room at Christmas and trimming the trees was a community event. Most presents were unwrapped practical wearing a

apparel and the trees had a sort of clothesline look with strings of mittens, scarves and handkerchiefs. The school hosted an annual masquerade ball after town meeting and other traveling shows. Upon dissolution of the grange, the building was used by the Chamber of Commerce, as a youth center and later rented to a local contractor for storage and workspace. In 1976 the Winter Harbor Historical Society was founded and the building was transferred to our ownership. The building was renovated and supported by weekly bingo games with countless egg salad and tuna sandwiches sold..

The Historical Society has collected memorabilia of our collective history and provided a community space for visitors to enjoy the artifacts each summer.

Time has left the building with severe structural problems that require extensive repair. The building is one of the few remaining intact one room schools in Maine and we feel it is well worth the effort to save it. Please consider a donation!! Please help us plan future fundraisers to **SAVE OUR SCHOOLHOUSE..**

Museum

Visit our museum Saturdays 1-4 PM and view the new diorama of the Whitehouse General Store. Find out what townsfolk did before the era of the local 5 & 10 store.

Historic Walking Tour

July 6, 13 & 27 Historic Walk with **Annabelle Myrick Weston**, (1873-1943), granddaughter of Schoodic Point's first settler through Winter Harbor's past at 1:30pm for \$15 donation. Registration required at winterharborhistory@gmail.com

Program at the Museum

July 19 at 6:30pm Annual Meeting **Philippa Libby** of Norris Island will share her memories and research of the Pendleton family. Her transcriptions of the original Dr. Pendleton diaries and thirty years of fisherman, Maurice Pendleton's diaries are available at the museum. Philippa will, also share her newly published novel: **Morgan Harbor**, which features her significant knowledge of place in this fictional account of a Downeast Maine family. We will all recognize this 'fictional' place and its geography.

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Please consider joining our Board of Directors!

Museum Volunteers

Thank you to Diana Young, past president of the Winter Harbor Historical Society for her willingness to provide an orientation for new volunteers as museum hosts. We are able to open the museum on Saturday afternoons through September 16 with the help of board members and the following volunteers: Jon Dwyer, Kathleen Colwell, Kathleen Russell, Aletha Pung and Kathy Murphy. Please email winterharborhistory@gmail.com to volunteer.

Winter Harbor Historical Society

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Treasurer: Cathy Carruthers

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Program at the Museum

August 23 at 6:30pm Chris Byers will offer his observations of the history of the fishing industry and the challenges facing their future. Chris has been able to build an international business and use his understanding of the industry to provide employment for dozens of workers. Chris carries on a family legacy, as chairman of the Lobster Boat Races for Winter Harbor; a position his paternal grandfather, Ralph E. Byers, Sr. held beginning in 1969. Ralph Byers, Sr. drowned in 1973 off Turtle Island while pulling lobster traps with his son, Kenneth (Danny) Byers, who was also lost. At the time of their deaths, Mr. Byers was a town selectman, fire chief, past harbormaster, officer in the Winter Harbor Lobster Co-op and president of the Coastal Seiners and Weirman's Association. He piloted the H. G. Bennett Fish Company plane for 17 years to search for schools of fish.

Chris's maternal grandmother, Beatrice Rand Bowling's great grandfather, Stephen Rand was one of the first families to purchase property in Winter Harbor in 1820.

Thank You

We extend sincere thanks to all, who have contributed to our building fund. Each dollar gets us closer to preserving **Our Old Schoolhouse!** We, also thank the many donors of personal memorabilia; including Allen

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Johnson, Marge Gerrish, Paul Tracey and Barbara
Bragdon.