

Mussel Ridge News

*A Free Publication of the Mussel Ridge Historical Society
Owls Head, Maine*

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Happy 100th Owls Head 1921-2021



Owls Head, which had been a part of South Thomaston, became a town on July 9, 1921. Included in this section were the areas of Ash Point, Ingraham's Hill, Crescent Beach, Holiday Beach, Ballyhac, and of course the section where the Owls Head lighthouse is located.

People in this Owls Head area had been concerned about problems involving the one room schools over the years. They felt that the five schools here had been neglected, and that the schools in the South Thomaston Village area (the Keag) were receiving all the benefits. So this was one reason for the separation. The dividing line between Owls Head and South Thomaston begins on the Dublin Road (off the Ash Point Road) at the bridge, with the Town's area extending completely around the shore to the Rockland City line (at Ingraham's Hill).

The first town meeting following incorporation was held on August 29, 1921, at 6:30 PM at the Owls Head School house situated across from the present fire station. The meeting was called to order by Rodney E. Feyler, Justice of the Peace. During the balloting for Moderator, 192 votes were cast with C. Vey Holman elected over Charles Crowley.

Other officers elected were James A. Collins, Town Clerk; Carl Libby, 1st Selectman; Arthur C. Robbins, 2nd Selectman; Perley Fiske, 3rd Selectman; Charles Livingston, Tax Collector and Treasurer; Henry Closson road Commissioner. Elected to the school board were Mrs. Lura Whalen, Mrs. Belle Collins and Mrs. Edith Young. Harold W. Philbrook, John F. Whalen and John Garnett were appointed constables; Albert Guptill, truant officer and Arthur A. Bain, health officer. The meeting was adjourned to September 26, 1921 for action on various appropriations.

The first regular Town meeting of 1922 was held on March 20 at 10 AM at the Pavillion (part of the Crescent Beach Inn), Crescent beach, with action on 37 articles. Allan B. Borgerson served as moderator. James A. Collins was re-elected as Town Clerk and Carl Libby was re-elected as 1st Selectman. However, following the election of John Whalen as 2nd Selectmen and Maynard Curtis as 3rd Selectman, Carl Libby resigned at the meeting and Harold W. Philbrook was elected in his place. Mrs. Abbie Heard was chosen for the school board for three years. Also re-elected were Charles Livingston, Tax Collector and Treasurer and Henry Closson, Road Commissioner. Walter L. Snowman was appointed constable.

Volunteers needed

The Town of Owls Head needs volunteers to serve on a committee to plan the 100th Anniversary celebration of our town. Due to COVID and the restrictions just being lifted, time is short. A celebration will take place at the new town wharf later this summer, Commemorative Coins will be sold marking 100 years as a town.

If you would like to help us please call or email Eleanor at secretary@owlshead.maine.gov.

Bliss 101

Gray-green spruce, already scraggly in their top-heavy defensive huddles,
Were dripping and swaying in that April's foggy first light,
The swirling wind a presence on waking made known by the rain-rattled window,
Yet no school Saturday was all the more reason beyond habit
For a lad to rise early in anticipation of another day on the coast of Maine.

But he'd also heard the hesitant tap-tapping of a knock at the driveway-side door
Which, opened guardedly, functioned protectively
Against the storm now felt and the admission of a stranger,
Though when Fred was recognized, bundled as he was in his slicker,
Symbolically perhaps as the measure of difference between man and boy.

Even then not invited in, gentle Fred the lobsterman down the street,
Who'd kindly delivered a haddock when the family'd been most in need, apologized,
"Sorray to botha," and with captured initiative, "We'ah lookin' forra fishaman.
He cahn't swim, an' just wond'ed if you'd seen him this mawnin'."
A blank face and simple, "No," response and Fred was on his way.

Mid-century, rural U.S. used to immediately existential, hardscrabble recuperations
That antedated mere recovery from a second world-wide war, so here likewise
An event with implications well beyond childhood comprehension, and only later
A cause for consternation when casually described to a burdened mother
With full hands managing a worrisome household.

It was actually Aunt Carroll's retirement ark on fifty acres stretching half-a-mile
Down to the ocean, her niece that virtual single parent of three and
Primary caregiver of a demented senior, real estate poor. The dad,
With building warplanes no longer an option--nor peaceplanes quite yet--
Successful only out on the road marketing his inevitable divorce.

"But what else did he say? What's going on? Why didn't you ask?" her frantic questions
Finally answered when a call could be made on the equally busy party line.
Then, "He's found! Safe and sound! Though his boat's on The Rocks at Ash Point!"--
Aunt Carroll's shoreline known for picnics, having drawn the wreck, soon enough became
A lodestone again attracting every able body in the neighborhood.

Past the house they trooped, trampling the wet blueberry scrub that succeeded the field
Where back in the day the mom'd learned to drive, on down into
The rickety, dwindling old growth forest momentarily saved from human destruction
By the ledgy precipice bordering The Rocks, all now under relentless attack
From the elements at large so apparent this cruelest month.

There, literally stranded, a small white lobster boat perched, abandoned,
Beachtoy-like but for the rain-gear-throng, and its carnival hubbub, and the boy,
Among sisters and mom and spruce, a witness, imagining the terror and skipper's escape,
Entranced by the spectacle of the vessel's salvage by Fred and his ilk as the tide came on:
The reboarding, ropework, seamanship, and dragging safely afloat.
"What an adventure, this rescue today! Way better excitement," he thought
Than the night-glow/smoke-smell the great Bar Harbor fire'd been forty miles down east.
The boy became a man at last with WasteLand questions and matured appreciation,
If not quite always understanding, of history, responsibility, and metaphor . . .
Of ignorance and innocence and what it is to be a second-grader.

Now it may be supposed The Rocks are The Rocks as they are wont and meant to be,
 And truly so in the world depicted of changing perception and impermanence,
 But a worthy footnote is the legacy of Aunt Carroll's successors decades hence
 In declaring these symbols a public trust for all to enjoy, come see,
 With inspirations Nature's there to promise in perpetuity.

Phelps Bristol
 November 2019

Thanks for sharing this look back at life in Ash Point (Now the ledges and rocks mentioned are enjoyed by many in the Ash Point Preserve)

Many Thanks to the Family of Ellena Fredette's for their Donation of her Scrapbooks

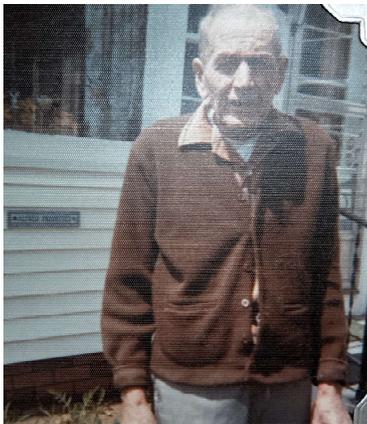
Ellena Fredette of Ash Point had many scrapbooks that were passed on to family. She was very dilligent in saving newspaper clippings, photos, cards and other memorabilia, We are ever so grateful. We will be sharing some of our finds with you in upcoming newsletters. She was a lifelong resident of Ash Point and served her community in many ways. (Another time for a biography!) They will have a special place in our Mussel Ridge Learning Center!



Ellena & Fred Fredette



At Owls Head, Town Clerk Ellena Fredette administers the oath of office to two new town officials. From left to right are: Mrs. Fredette, Mrs. Elizabeth Walker, school committeeewoman, and Lloyd Palater, Town Council member. Photo by Cullen





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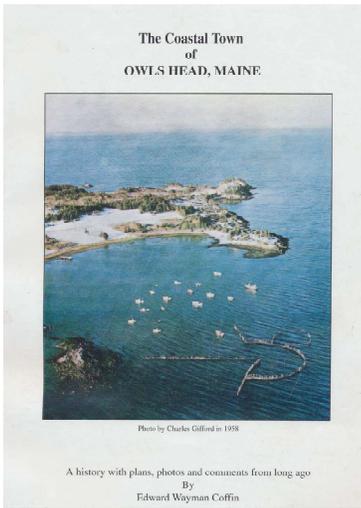
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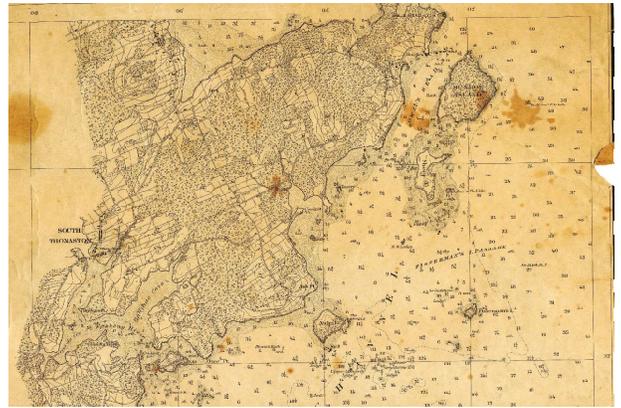
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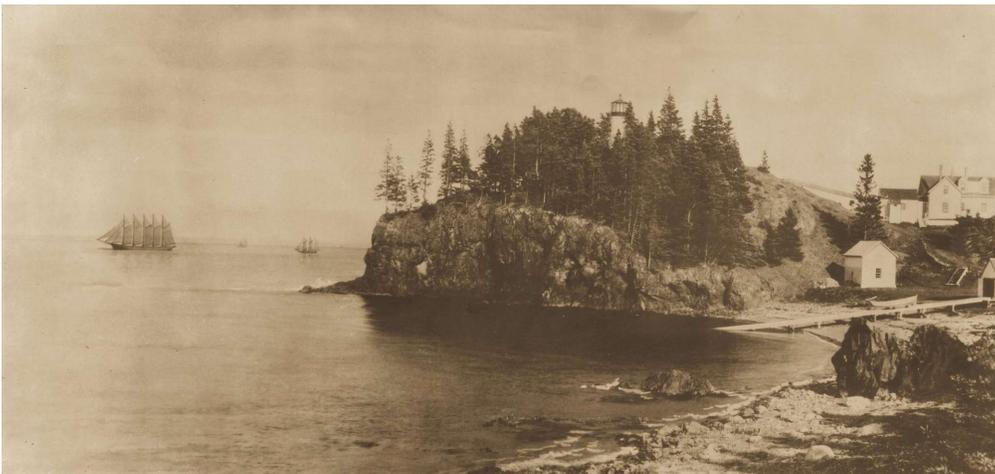
Some of our products...



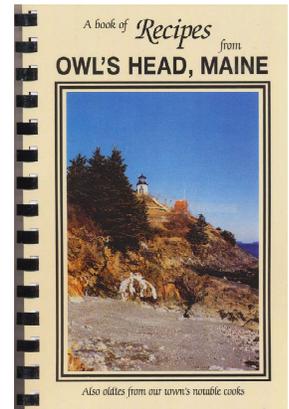
\$32 - The Coastal Town of Owls Head, ME by Edward Coffin



\$40 - 1873 of Owls Head canvas chart 16" x 20"



\$100 - 1800s photo of Owls Head Light professionally printed 18" x 38"



\$15 - Recipes of Owls Head, Maine

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Garden Snippets

It's just as I was afraid it would be. And of course, it's my own fault. No one made me order all those plants. And when everything is in the ground, I'll be glad I did order them all! Until then, it can be overwhelming.

I've been thinking a lot about trees that I love and wondering how much space I have to put in any new ones. (none) But I look forward to this year's publication by Wild Seed Project, which is a guide to Native trees for Northeast Landscapes. Wild Seed Project was created to educate people in the importance of growing native plants from seed, to show folks many different ways to use native plants, and to make seeds available to the public. Heather McCargo is the founder and the project has grown to become much greater than one person can manage alone. So there is a staff now, but also many volunteers. Since the project began, there has been a publication every year. To date, it has been theme based and contained articles by knowledgeable and insightful writers. So this year's publication will be different—but no less interesting or helpful I am sure. I encourage you to check out Wild Seed Project if you aren't already familiar with it.

And maybe I will find a way to squeeze yet another tree onto this bulging acre.

Marty Shaw



Mussel Ridge Learning Center Update

The Campaign Committee has been busy this spring, working quietly behind the scenes. Tayler Philbrook designed a beautiful brochure for the MRLC. It is now ready to be printed. The committee has also created campaign update and membership letters, & is now working on launching a redesigned website. We are considering fun-related activities to both aid & publicize the project. As always, we would welcome new members to help out with our ambitious project!

JAKE BARBOUR
PRESIDENT

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Recollections of a Summer Kid growing up on Ash Point in the 1950s and 1960s

For the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Merchants & Airmen of Owls Head I was born in 1950 and even though WWII had ended 5 years earlier, America was still recovering from the huge loss of war production jobs and the large influx of servicemen returning home looking for work. The 1950s was the decade of economic prosperity and the return to normalcy. Young men and women were getting married in record numbers and starting families resulting in the largest baby boom in US history. Since our heroes were these same men who went off to war, we baby-boomers imitated them in the way we acted and played. Our movies, even our comic books were filled with the exploits of our military heroes and that got me thinking about the men I knew who went off to WWII and all of the subsequent wars we have been involved since then.

It is my fervent hope that when the Mussel Ridge Historical Society's Local History Center is built that we can have a permanent display of 8 x 10 pictures/portraits of all those from Ingraham Hill, Owls Head and Ash Point who answered the call of duty and served in the armed forces. This exhibit is intended to honor all of our veterans, not just those who had to serve in the time of war. Here is a list of just those friends of mine who I would like to have a picture of:

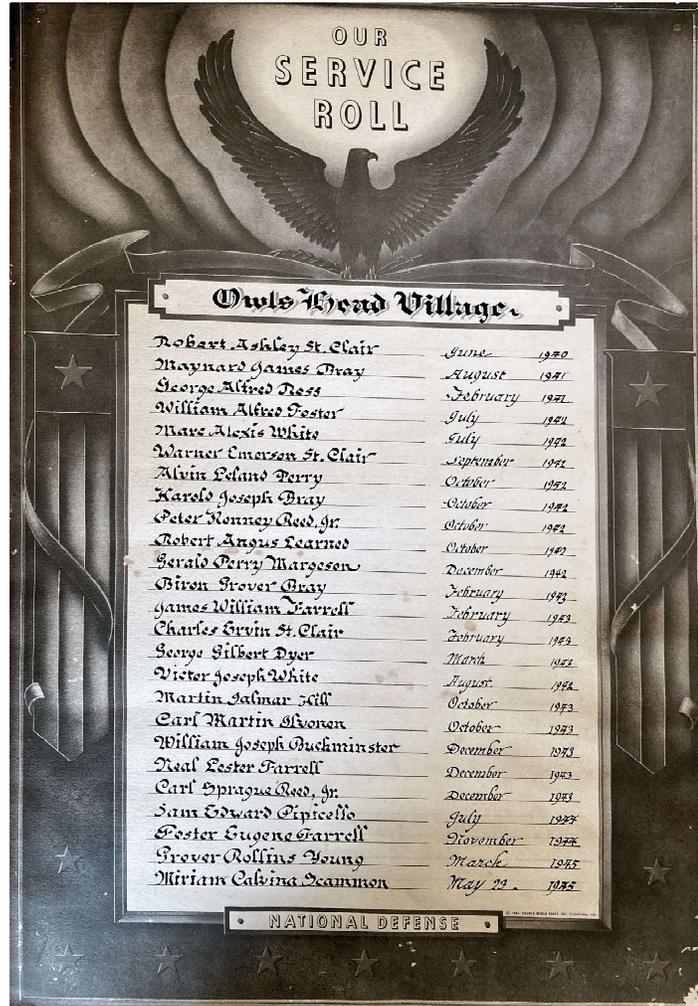
- Alfred "Fred" Fredettee – U.S. Army - WWI
 Ote Lewis – Chief Boatswain's Mate – U.S. Navy - WWII
 Donald L. Lewis - Sergeant US Army - Combat Engineers - WWII
 Maurice "Morris" Harvey – U.S. Army - WWII
 Alvin McNeilly – Lt. U.S. Army Air Force (Navigator) - WWII
 Francis Dyer – U.S. Army - WWII
 James H. Weeks – Lt. (Jg) – U.S. Merchant Marines/U.S. Navy - WWII
 Edward W. Coffin – U.S. Merchant Marine/U.S. Navy - WWII
 Irving "Mike" McConchie – U.S. Army - WWII
 Arnold McConchie, Sr. – U.S. Army - WWII
 Dick Sheppe – Colonel - U.S. Marine Corp (Air) – WWII, Korea, Vietnam
 Louis Mathieson – Seaman 2nd Class – U.S. Navy - WWII
 Donald O. Lewis – Sgt. U.S. Air Force – Special Services
 Richard W. Lewis – U. S. Coast Guard
 John Ware – U.S. Army
 Wayne Meserve – U.S. Navy – Vietnam
 Russ Wolfertz – U.S. Army – Vietnam

If you know of someone who should be on this list, please send me their picture, with name, rank, branch of service, and a short bio of where and when they served. The picture does not have to be in an 8 x 10 format. We can reproduce those for you. Please send all information to:

Rodney B. Weeks
 ledgemerel@gmail.com
 Thank you.



Guess Who?? Answers on page 8



Recipe from The Owls Head Cookbook

RHUBARB COCONUT PIE

3 c. rhubarb
4 eggs, beaten
2 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 stick butter, melted

1 c. shredded coconut
2 c. sugar
¼ tsp. salt
10 inch unbaked pie shell

Beat eggs; add sugar, butter, lemon juice, and salt. Stir in cut up rhubarb and coconut. Pour into unbaked crust and bake 40 to 45 minutes in 425° oven.

Helen Ilvonen

Where rhubarb originated from ?

We can trace back to China, in the cold climates of Mongolia, and the Himalayas' and Siberia. The roots of this plant survive the frozen grounds. Records show that the root was used for medicinal purposes.

Rhubarb was used only as a medicine for centuries. Like potatoes and tomatoes the leaves are poisonous so it was probably not chanced that the stems could be eaten as food.

Does it have any Health Benefits?

Rhubarb is now classified as a superfood for its ratio of health benefits to calories – only 7 calories per 100 grams. Savvy slimmers have also realized it actually speeds up the metabolism. High levels of calcium mean it is a fat-free alternative to dairy products which lowers cholesterol.



Page 7 Answers: Mike McConchie & John Ware



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