

Mussel Ridge News

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

Summer 2022 ~ Issue 55 www.musselridge.org



Remembering the Coffeys

Neighbors sometimes have a big influence in your childhood. Andy & Claire Coffey come to mind for me. Growing up in the 1950s and 60s in Ash Point, was by all means as fun and perfect as one could ever experience as a child. Andy & Claire helped form these memories along with their boys; Pete and Dick.

Wintertime memories, meant fun skating on their pond. I did not know at the time that Andy flooded it in the winter so we could skate. Also, I learned that his Dad did the same for my Mom and her cousins growing up in the 1930s. We played games on ice such as *red rover*, *crack the whip* and of course *ice hockey*. Hockey back then, was pretty basic, I think we had a puck, not many had hockey sticks. We made our own from oak trap lathes and it worked fine. Only the boys had hockey skates. Also, it was always easier to put my skates on in the warmth of my home and



walk down the hill with them on. We skated after school and probably til dark or supper! If we fell through the ice it was not deep so no worries other than walking home soaked.

Spring memories, baseball!! Everyone in the neighborhood played, boys and girls of all ages. I remember these families; Stones, Kallochs, Willis', Curtis', Willeys, Nichols, Marriners, McMahans, After school this is where we would be as well as weekends. Out back of their home up in the field it was dry for

this spring sport. We divided up into teams and we were there for hours of fun. I am sure we argued on who was on our team and if they were "safe or out" but we kept going! About everyone had a glove of some sort. Memories of only one "lefty" who was Pete.

Fall meant football in the field next to their home or basketball. Basketball was fun there as they had the only hot topped driveway in the neighborhood! Due to a streetlight and other lighting we could play after dark. Fun there ended in 1969 when the airport seized their property.

They were married for almost 70 years, a marriage made in heaven! Claire passed away in 2021 and Andy in 2019. Both represent what community is all about. Claire and Andy were from one of the greatest generations. They both were always willing to help their neighbors! They moved to the "Head of the Bay", I continued to visit them. Claire taught me to braid rugs (which I need to attempt) and always had a story to tell. She loved history and she remembered so much as she grew up in Rockland and her family ran Brickleys Store on Union St. Andy was a kind and soft spoken man, who grew up in that home in Ash Point, his mother Helen Crockett Coffey did too and possibly his grandfather, Captain Oscar Crockett. Speaking on behalf of all the neighborhood children, a heartfelt thanks for opening up your home to us.



Claire and Andy were predeceased by their son Pete and survived by their son Richard "Dick" and family. The Mussel Ridge Historical Society is extremely grateful to be the recipients of their photos and memorabilia. We also were gifted the partial contents of their home, and the proceeds from the sale went to our Mussel Ridge Learning Center Building Fund. Many thanks to Dick & family.

Carolyn Meserve Philbrook

Mussel Ridge Speaker for October
October 18th @ 6:30 (Tuesday) - Owls Head Community Building
“Coming from Away”
Brief History of Tourism and Vacationing in Maine
by Jayne Gordon

Jayne lived in Concord, MA for close to a half century before moving to Damariscotta four years ago. She retired as Director of Education and Public Programs of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and before that was Director of the Thoreau Society and of Alcotts’ Orchard House, and Director of Education at the Concord Museum. Since 2010, she has led ten weeklong National Endowment for the Humanities workshops for teachers from across the country on both the American Revolution and the world of Henry Thoreau.



Jayne Gordon is now Vice President of Coastal Senior College, focused on learning in retirement in Lincoln and Knox Counties, where she is a member of the Curriculum and Activities Committees. She has taught multiple courses on both the Concord writers, and various aspects of Maine history.

Her focus - in her career as a museum educator, administrator, and consultant, and now teaching courses in Maine - has consistently been the intersection of landscape, literature, and local history.

Thank You

A special thanks to our August speaker, Charles “Chip” Lagerbom. A great turnout to hear about the history of the Muscle Ridge Channel. I think we all went away with a great appreciation of the dangers in years past of ships that traveled through the channel.

Also a big thank you to the Cemetery Committee for taking the time to explain all that is involved in preserving the cemeteries in town. *(See article on page 8.)* We all appreciate your hard work. Our September outing was very informative.

THE Little Buoy
- COASTAL GIFTS -

Winter Hours : Sat: 10 - 5

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

By: Rodney B. Weeks

Veteran's Picture Project

Last Memorial Day I wrote an article for the Newsletter about how I hope that once the Mussel Ridge Historical Society's Local History Building is built that we can have a permanent display to honor all of our friends and neighbors who have served our country in the time of war and peace. To date, I am happy to say that a number of you have responded favorably to my request and I thought I would share two more pictures with you to encourage all of you to send me your picture as well.

Guess who?

#1

#2

Answers on page 8.





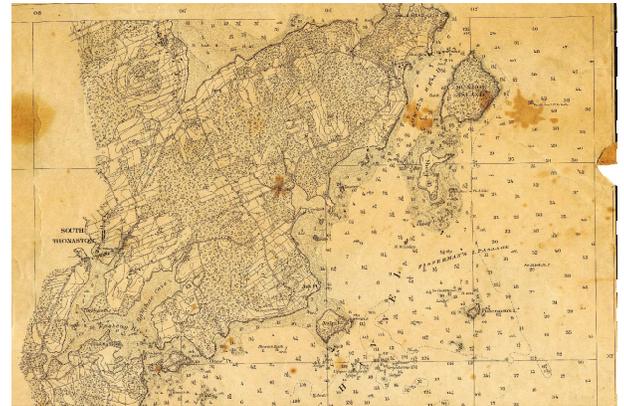
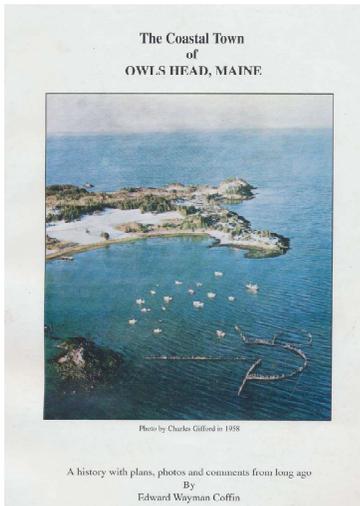
Jason Philbrook
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Information Technology for
Midcoast Maine

Upcoming Dates to Remember

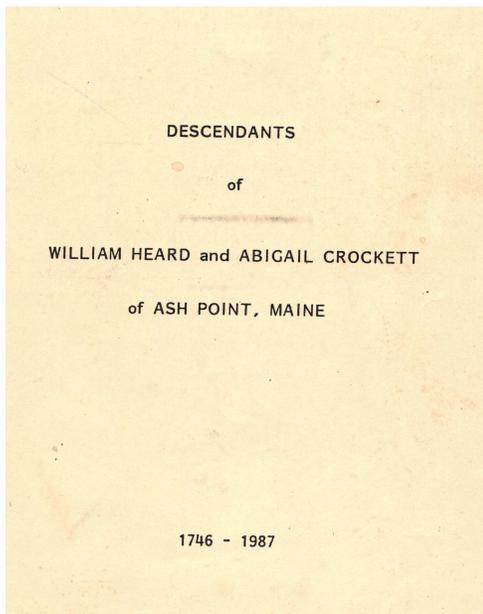
Owls Head Community Building
Voting Day Bake Sale November 8th
The Old Homestead is open
Wed. 2-4 pm from July thru Sept
Fall History Talk - October 18th

Products for sale

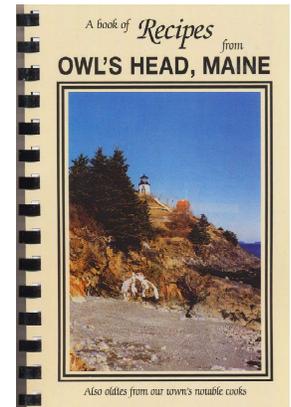


**\$36 - The Coastal Town of Owls Head, ME
by Edward Coffin (limited quantities)**

\$56- 1873 of Owls Head canvas chart 16" x 20"



**NEW!!!
Ash Point, ME 1930s
Home Movies by
J. Rodney Weeks
DVD - \$15**



**\$15 - Recipes
of Owls Head, Maine**

**NEW Item!!
Reprint with over 300 pages \$41**

**Descendants of
William Heard and Abigail Crockett
of Ash Point, Maine**

by Charles Candage

Prices do not include shipping if needed

Prices include ME state sales tax

We deliver locally or ship

email us at history@musselridge.org, call or text 207-593-2667

We take paypal/checks/cash

Our Paypal link is: https://paypal.me/MRHS1921?locale.x=en_US

Garden Snippets

I'm sure I say this every year, but I think this is the weirdest growing season I've experienced in a long time. Maybe since last year.

Of course the water was a problem—mostly the lack thereof. I did water things, but there is no way I could give all my plants all the water they needed. So how much is enough? Just enough to keep them from getting crispy? If we had town water, it might be different, but if our well went dry because I watered too many perennials, that would not be a good thing!

But it wasn't just the water problem that made things weird here. Some things that should have grown, didn't. Things like marigolds and calendulas that ALWAYS grow and are dependable, didn't grow this year. They got to be about two inches tall and just sat there for the rest of the summer. I don't know what that was all about.

The deer had a new trick, too. I could always find something that deer had nibbled on, but in the flower beds it was never too bad. We have a fence around the veggies. The deer decided that ALL of our roses would taste good—so they ate them all. Buds, leaves, thorns—the whole thing. So we were left with small rose bushes with bare twigs and branches that stuck out all over. It looked most peculiar. And was very frustrating.

It wasn't a total loss, thank goodness. But the good things that happened were also weird. A redbud tree—very small and young, that I had thought was dead last year, took off this year and is doing beautifully. Likewise the spicebushes. And the swamp milkweed.

Of course, the swamp milkweed should have been covered with Monarch caterpillars. It wasn't. We didn't see any Monarch butterflies till very late in the season—then saw butterflies but hardly any caterpillars. That was not just weird, but worrisome.

I can spend the winter thinking of reasons for why things happened and what to do about it. And next year everything will be different!

Marty Shaw



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MUSSEL RIDGE LEARNING CENTER



We are actively collecting, storing and organizing for the proposed Learning Center. We rent a room at this time at the Methodist Church in South Thomaston. It is filling up! Space is limited. We have been very excited to have access to some of the Reed family photos, thanks to Mike Gustin. Wanda Iott has shared her family photos as her family has lived at Crescent Beach for many years. The MRHS was privileged to acquire the photos of Andrew and Claire Coffey. Andy's Crockett family goes back to the first settlers in Ash Point, late 1700s.

These photos provide an insight into life in Owls Head of generations past. When we look closely at photos there is always something new we learn!

Photos are not the only collectible we are interested in. Journals, diaries, ledgers all help piece together the past. Objects are always of interest to us, whether it is a sign of a business past, old bottles from a town bottling company, pieces gathered from an old shipwreck, an old painting, cannonball, and even uniforms and medals from our men that have served our country.

We do appreciate all those that have so generously donated. Our fundraising campaign is ongoing. The pandemic has made it difficult to organize and plan fundraisers, but we are actively planning on future events. So stay tuned.

Castle Comfort Candy



Box top of Castle Comfort Candy

This candy was manufactured in the unique home called "Castle Comfort" in Owls Head. Located on what is now Shell Street in the "Village". The delicious nut, cherry and vanilla creams were manufactured here for several seasons until 1914.

No boxes have been found and the recipe seems to have been lost. It is possible that the man who bought the equipment acquired it. John Hatch, proprietor is said to have not made any money on this candy venture. The main reason being a compliment to the honesty of the couple for they would not lower the standard of the product by ever using less expensive ingredients, as well as failing to develop an adequate volume of business.



Castle Comfort @1910

Hatch also sold cottage lots: bringing in several fine Baptist families: the Shaws of Caribou. The Sopers of Waterville, Samuel Russell of Boston. Russell's daughter married the granddaughter of Captain Bradford Emery of Owls Head.

In 1925 Hatch sold the Castle Comfort to Ann Burrows of Buffalo, NY, then it was willed to Mrs. Jennie VandeCoy, then the Collins family.

The "Song of Owls Head" using the poem by Ernest C. Marriner was penned here in 1915. The Mussel Ridge Historical Society sells this sheet music if anyone is interested.

Info – Courier Gazette

Preservation of Holiday Beach Cemetery

This Labor Day weekend the Cemetery Committee of Owls Head along with conservator, Joe Ferannini of Grave Stone Matters, and some hardy volunteers, completed a 4-day preservation project at the Holiday Beach Cemetery. A total of 32 gravestones were worked on and 5 footstones were reset. Even with 2 extra days of cleaning headstones in July, this preservation will be a multiple year event. Our Facebook page (Owls Head Cemetery Committee) is chock full of pictures taken each day.



Some interesting things came out of our efforts: A very large pile of concrete rubble and stones was found under one headstone—the reason it was no longer seated properly. Because of the Facebook posting of the Dyer headstone, James Dyer and a relative are now in contact; James Ring of Harpswell came by to see his relatives' headstones (Hooper) and give us some history about them; and a resident of the town, Joelle Bart-Davis, who makes signs, has contacted us and her husband, Aaron, came by the cemetery to talk with us.

There is no documentation on Holiday Beach Cemetery, except what is being done now. We have discovered a few burials on the other side of the fence along Hendrickson Point Road. It is surmised that the road, long ago,

was very narrow and when it was widened and the fence put in, those unmarked burials were not known to be part of the cemetery. The Committee was also stunned to find out that there are also over 100 unmarked graves in the cemetery, each of which have now been given a GPS location and will be noted in the cemetery map. How did we find this out? Through a process called dowsing (or divining). The process is similar to what people have done to find water using copper rods, and when the rods cross each other, that indicates there is a body buried just below. Yes, it sounds a little woo-woo, but this technique, proven over time, has a high degree of success. Perhaps more so than ground penetrating radar. If anyone knows of someone buried in one of our cemeteries in an unmarked grave, please contact us through the Town or on Facebook.

Why aren't we calling these projects "restoration" projects? Restoration implies putting things back to their original condition. It isn't possible to reverse the effects of time and weather on gravestones. We can clean and repair, however what we are doing is preserving, as best as possible, the gravestones for as long as possible even though time and weather will ultimately win out. Therefore, part of the preservation process is documentation, which not only preserves the information in the cemetery at that point in time, but also preserves the town's history.

None of this preservation would be possible without the town's funding, individual donations, and the expertise and hard work of our Cemetery Committee, our conservator, and volunteers. Please keep this in mind as you visit Holiday Beach Cemetery, or any other cemetery we have worked so hard to preserve.

Owls Head Cemetery Committee

Owls Head Places

T X M M D T C I B S C T P Y Y B Y B R I K K D H R J J S B K
 I I H F Y P Y M A C Z B X O Q Q D I X B Z H V Y M Z V Z N E
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Dynamite Beach	Head of the Bay	Old Homestead
Dodges Point	Sheep Island	Lucia Beach
Timber Hill	Lighthouse	fire station
Trails End	Ash Island	Borgerson
Owls Head	Ballyhac	Crockett
Ash Point	Ingraham	Village
Heard	Newsboy	Reed

**How is your memory?
Name the Counties**

