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12-22-06 Knights of Pythias Hall



The Order of Knights of Pythias is a fraternal order, originally organized in 1864 in Washington DC. The Knights of Pythias established the Bayard Lodge No. 44 here in South Portland (then Cape Elizabeth) on January 25, 1884. The members raised enough money to build a hall in Ferry Village at 53 Preble Street in 1887, at the corner of Preble and High Streets.

South Portland natives, Henrietta Larou and Belle Graney, spoke to me recently about the hall. Their father was a member of the Knights of Pythias and attended meetings there. The meetings were held upstairs on the second floor, and there were also dances held in the upstairs room on occasion. The first floor of the building was sometimes used by the City for classroom space. Henrietta's 5th grade class, shown in the accompanying photo circa 1930, was one of two 5th grade classes

located there that year. According to Henrietta, the first floor space was separated simply by a curtain hung across the room as a divider.

Sometime after 1935, the Knights of Pythias chapter ceased meeting at the hall (can anyone tell me when?). During World War II, as many stores and food service establishments were set up to feed the thousands of workers at the shipyards, the building was turned into a restaurant known as the Ship Galley, shown in the photo (at right). There is no building any longer; the site is now part of someone's yard.



If you have any further information to share, please write to the Society or email Kathy at Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com.

12-15-06 Monuments and Markers in South Portland: World War II Marker



By Craig Skelton, Board Member
South Portland Historical Society

A request came in to the Historical Society shortly after Veterans Day questioning whether South Portland had a monument for World War II.

Many of you perhaps drive by the memorial to WWII Veterans every day and haven't even realized it. Sitting at the point where Hill Street intersects with Broadway, right across from Campbell's Market, is an egg-shaped stone. Humble must best describe the folks who arranged for this memorial to be placed at its current location. If you had a chance to read "The Many Villages of South Portland, Maine," you would know that this is the area of South Portland known as Pleasantdale that like many areas of our fair City was yet one of many communities that made up the whole city.

Many inhabitants have come and gone from Pleasantdale over the years since World War II and yet I was able to find a few folks who remember that location to be where a bulletin board stood during the war on which the names of South Portland sons and daughters who went off to serve were proudly displayed. One

resident, Isabelle Williams, was able to provide the photos shown here that were taken by her step-father during the dedication ceremony on May 30, 1951. The board, shown covered in one photo, was taken down not long after the dedication.



This location has seen many changes since that celebration and in more recent years, Terry St. John and Dana Campbell noticed the American Flag flying proudly above the memorial was in need of replacement. Many thanks to them for providing a new flag to fly in this place of honor.

In the coming year, I intend to search throughout our City to discover more markers and monuments and will pass along those discoveries to you as an occasional contributor to this weekly column. I hope you will join me in my tour of South Portland and get out there to see some of these great discoveries up close. Please contact me at craigskelton@yahoo.com or 799-8589 if you are interested in contributing any photographs or have information you may like to share about markers and monuments throughout South Portland.

12-08-06 Season of Giving

It's that wonderful time of year again, the time to decorate our homes, maybe enjoy a holiday concert, attend a party or two, and hopefully get the chance to spend some time with our loved ones. When it comes to gift giving, some people head to the Mall (or their locally-owned store!), some click away online, and others create their own gifts by making, baking, or otherwise putting their personal mark on their gift.

When it comes to the South Portland Historical Society, there are also many ways to give, and what better time to consider giving your support to your local society than at this time of year? Here are some great ways to lend your support:

The gift that gives twice: Why not buy a book for your loved one? Giving a copy of *The Many Villages of South Portland, Maine* to a friend or family member would not only be a great gift idea, but your purchase would also represent an additional gift: proceeds from the book go to the historical society. You can purchase books at City Hall, Nonesuch Books, Uncle Andy's, Soma or Drillen Hardware. Just \$13.95 plus tax.

Gifts of your time: We need volunteers to help us accomplish our goals. We have identified several projects that we would like to undertake, but need some volunteers to assist us. Would you consider becoming a Society photographer or videographer? We need to document events of today to preserve for the future. If you are at an event in South Portland, please consider taking some photos and sending them on to us. Would you be willing to be part of our speaker's bureau? How about assisting with oral history interviews of long-time residents? Or helping to bring local history into the schools? Wherever your interest lies, we would appreciate your help, and we will provide any needed training.

Gifts of historical items: Although we love to receive very old historical items, perhaps you might even have more recent photos or artifacts that are worthy of preservation. We also collect ephemera and other items of more recent history. Perhaps you have an item with a logo from a store or business in South Portland that no longer exists? A photograph from the 1980s that shows your neighborhood as it was? If we were to have photographs of one location from every decade over the last 50 years, the photographs would undoubtedly show tremendous change in that time period.

The gift that we count on: Your membership. A membership in the South Portland Historical Society, (for yourself, or why not give a gift membership to someone on your list?), is a great way to financially support our efforts. Membership donations are our primary source of funding. Your donation of any dollar amount will be greatly appreciated and used to help us with our mission of preserving South Portland's history.

Yes, I would like to support the South Portland Historical Society by making a membership donation!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____

Telephone _____ Donation amount _____

Email _____

Mail with your check payable to South Portland Historical Society. Thank you!! Questions? Call 767-7299.

12-01-06 Can you identify this building?



The accompanying photograph was recently donated to the South Portland Historical Society. We know where the building is, but do you? (We'll reveal the location in an upcoming column.) What we are hoping is that someone out there might have more information or stories about the building and/or the people and businesses which have occupied it over the years. How about the building to the left with the distinctively-shaped roof? Can you tell us when this photograph was taken? We welcome any and all information. Please email your comments to Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com, or call Kathy at 767-7299.

11-24-06 Teach Our Children Well...

Last month, I met with some fourth grade classes in South Portland for a little introduction to South Portland history. As part of the talk, I thought it would be fun to see how much history kids at this age level are aware of. When asked if the kids could tell me what war we were in back in 1776, the hands immediately flew up. "World War II" was the answer each time. After a little explaining that "no, World War II took place not all that long ago, in the 1940s....I'm talking much further back, 1776...anyone?" The hands again flew up, "World War II!"

We at the South Portland Historical Society have started discussions with the school system about introducing local history to the elementary schools, and we hope to find the funding to be able to assist with that. We feel that teaching local history can help to personalize history for students – so they can imagine what life would have been like if they had grown up in South Portland in an earlier time, and how events in American history would have affected the people living here in our community.

Residents can help us with that goal by financially supporting our organization with a membership donation. We are offering a free copy of *History of South Portland, Maine* with a minimum \$10 donation. The book originally came out about 15 years ago, and has some interesting historical trivia about South Portland, and even some information about the people for whom our schools have been named...a great way of talking about history with your kids!

We also would welcome volunteers to get involved in this exciting project. Our vision is to have resident historians available to visit school classrooms and we welcome your enthusiasm for this project and would provide training, if needed. For more information about the historical society and our Resident Historian Program, call Kathy at 767-7299.

11-17-06 Loveitt's Field



An enchanting image of an earlier time in Loveitt's Field, the gently-sloping dirt road making its way towards the ocean.

It's hard to imagine the densely-populated Loveitt's Field of today as a quiet pasture, and yet that is how it was in 1836, when Enoch Loveitt purchased a 29-acre tract of land from the Town of Cape Elizabeth. The building of summer cottages burgeoned in 1896, around the time that the Willard Casino was built and the trolley line extended to this section of town. At the turn of the century, the homes were all summer cottages, boarded up at the end of the season. For those wanting to check up on their homes during the winter, they would have to make their way in through deep snow, as the roads were not cleared back then.

If you have any early photographs of Loveitt's Field, or if you have memories or oral history to share about the area, we encourage you to contact us! Call Kathy at 767-7299, or Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com.

11-10-06 Spanish-American War Memorial



By Craig Skelton
South Portland Historical Society

This Veteran's Day take a look around our fair city and set your sights on some forgotten memorials that you may be surprised to find are in plain sight. A recent call to the South Portland Historical Society with a request for information from Pam Beal on what had happened to the cannon sitting next to Mahoney Middle School, brings the memorial for the Spanish-American War to mind.

As it turns out, Pam was concerned about what had happened to the cannon because her great-uncle, George Ernest Beal, had been involved in procuring the cannon from the U.S. Navy many many years ago for such a memorial. (For anyone who doesn't already know, George Beal had served in the Navy during World War I. He came to South Portland in 1919 as sub-master for South Portland High School, then around 1925 became principal at the high school, until 1940 when he became Superintendent of Schools for South Portland, a position he held for 15 years. Beal Gymnasium is named in his honor.)

The cannon was originally mounted on a foundation next to a bandstand that had been behind the then-South Portland High School on Ocean Street (the Superintendent's office was in the high school at that time). The cannon was placed there as a memorial to the Spanish-American War in conjunction with members of the Stewart P. Morrill Post #35 American Legion. In recent years, some veterans from the Legion petitioned the City to relocate the cannon to the front lawn of the Legion Post building because the condition of the cannon had deteriorated and the focus of why it was placed in that location is a distant memory for yet a few citizens who may remember the bandstand.

Roger Sabourin, the commander of the local Sea Cadet program, enlisted some of his members to sand down the rust and restore the cannon to the condition you will find it in today if you stop by to see it.

11-03-06 Pleasantdale Improvement Company shares



By Timothy Carr
Guest columnist and South Portland Historical Society treasurer

Have you seen or do you possess one of the certificates of stock pictured here? In an October 2005 article in the Sentry, the closing of the Pleasantdale Hose Company #3 fire house on Robinson Street was featured. The article told of raising funds to build the fire house through sale of stock in the Pleasantdale Improvement Company. Over four hundred shares were originally sold, at ten dollars per share, to finance the construction of the hose house. The majority of

those shares were either transferred by the original owner to the Pleasantdale Hose Company #3 or

purchased outright by the hose company or by the Pleasantdale Hose Company #3 Ladies Auxiliary. The Pleasantdale Improvement Company went inactive around 1960.

Today the hose company Captain, Richard Cotton, has the task of locating as many of those shares as possible. In order to clear the title to the assets of the hose company, the Pleasantdale Improvement Company will be reactivated. The clear purpose of the improvement company was to benefit the hose company and the village. If you know the present whereabouts of Pleasantdale Improvement Company shares, please contact Richard Cotton at 799-4166.

10-27-06 Buzzell's Hill and the Scamman family



We are running these three photos in the hopes that someone in the community might recognize the people. The photos were all taken outside of 143 Scamman Street and based on the period clothing, we believe that Harry and Lillian Dyer were living in the house at the time. Lillian Dyer was the granddaughter of Ezra Scamman.

Scamman Street was formerly known as Buzzell Street, and the hill toward the top of Scamman and Anthoine Streets has historically been known as Buzzell's Hill. An 1871 atlas shows Dr. J.D. Buzzell living in a substantial home on Highland Avenue between Scamman and Anthoine Streets. Dr. Buzzell was also known for donating \$100 toward the establishment of a library in the town high school in 1881; the library was known as the Buzzell Library.



The house in these photos (143 Scamman) is believed to have been built in 1859 and had originally been the residence of Ezra Scamman and his family. In 1871, Ezra also owned much of the land on the other side of Highland Avenue, where Hinckley Park now lies.

Buzzell

Street was later renamed for the Scamman family; indeed, the extended family owned several houses towards the top of the street for many generations, including Ezra's brother, Stephen, who lived next door at 137 Scamman, and across the street, 124 Scamman was also owned by a Scamman.

If you have more information to share, we encourage you to contact us! You can reach Kathy at Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com



10-20-06 The Old North Church



The South Portland Historical Society recently acquired an interesting piece of history - a program from the dedication of the Broadway School building (later known as the Henley School). The dedication occurred on March 10, 1910 and featured students from several schools (Willard School, Pleasant Street School, Elm Street Intermediate School, Elm Street Primary School, Summer Street School and the high school) along with many local dignitaries.

Included in the program is a listing of facts about the Broadway School. The complete cost, including the land, building and furniture, was about \$55,000. The 6,853 square feet of floor space included 12 class rooms, a teacher's room, and a principal's office.

The list of dignitaries provides an interesting look at some of the history of our school system. The "acceptance of the keys and delivery to the school board" segment was undertaken in part by then-school board member, Dr. Frank I. Brown (for whom our current Brown School is named). George F. Henley spoke on "Our Schools" (Henley had been principal at the Pleasant Street Grammar School, then became principal of the Broadway School when it opened - the school was later renamed in his honor). Two other dignitaries also addressed the assembly: the Honorable Edward C. Reynolds (the Summer Street School was later renamed in his honor), and James Otis Kaler (for whom Kaler School is named - he was superintendent of schools at the time of this event).

There's not much time left. If you've been meaning to visit our office and just haven't gotten around to it, please come soon! Our regular season runs from May to October each year, so we have just four Saturdays left (1-3pm at City Hall) until October 28th. We can open by appointment, but we encourage residents to take advantage of our open hours when volunteers are at the office ready to help! If you have any questions, you can reach us at 799-3937.

09-29-06 The E Street School in Knightville



This photo was taken circa 1890 at the E Street School in Knightville, (then) Cape Elizabeth. After the school closed (students later attended the Knightville School in Legion Square), the building was used by the city for storage, by the Engine 8 Call Company as a meeting place, and for a period of time, the South Portland Historical Society was allowed to occupy the first floor. Rather than investing in extensive renovations, the city had the building razed.

Notice from the South Portland Historical Society: at the board of directors' meeting of September 20, 2006, it was voted to change the day of the monthly meeting. Our board will now meet on the second Wednesday of each month, at 5:45pm in the downstairs conference room of City Hall.

09-22-06 View of Legion Square, Knightville



In this interestingly-angled photo, we can see a wonderful glimpse of how Legion Square used to look. On the left is the old Knightville School, that once stood at the intersection of Cottage Road and Ocean Street (roughly in the area of the present-day post office parking lot). Behind the trolley, you can see the Masonic Building that still exists today, and to the left of that is the old Nano's Variety Store (now Barb's Breakfast & Lunch).

Do you remember? Do you have any information to share on a building in the vicinity of the present-day Brickhill that was formerly used to quarantine and care for people with infectious diseases? Please email Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com or call 767-3268.

09-15-06 Willard Beach Casino



South Portland Historical Society, Rosella Loveitt Collection

The accompanying photo shows one of the open trolley cars in front of the Willard Beach Casino in the late 1890's. The \$30,000 two-story casino at the end of Willard Street was built by the Cape Elizabeth Shore Railroad Company to stimulate usage of its trolleys. After the casino opened in the summer of 1896, it became a popular destination and the site of many dances and other functions. The Willard Beach Casino's existence was short-lived, however, as a fire destroyed the building in January 1898. The fire created much speculation at the time, as it came just prior to the opening of the trolley company's new Cape Cottage Casino in Cape Elizabeth - the construction of the Cape Cottage Casino was completed in May 1898, with its official opening that June.

09-08-06 Andrew Sawyer, Market Gardener



The house when it was occupied by Andrew Sawyer

An early record in our collection tells the story of Andrew Sawyer, a long time resident and market gardener in (then Cape Elizabeth). In today's age of supermarkets and agricultural behemoths like ConAgra, many people haven't the vaguest idea what a "market gardener" even means. Around 1850, when Andrew Sawyer first came to this area with his brother to scout out a site, the market gardener occupation was hardly known at that time either. Prior to that, most people had their own small gardens to grow the produce that they would need for their own family. Andrew Sawyer is one of the earliest Mainers to go into the "business" of market gardening.

What that meant, for Mr. Sawyer, was purchasing approximately nine acres of land at the corner of Sawyer Street and Mitchell Road, and growing as much produce as possible on those nine acres, to make a profitable business. The growing started early in the year, under glass, and continued all season-long. After purchasing the land, Andrew Sawyer went on to build himself a house on that corner, and the house still exists today.

The gardens were run by Andrew and his brother, Ellis, until the Civil War, at which time Ellis Sawyer formed a regiment and left to fight in the war; he was killed at the Battle of the Wilderness. Andrew Sawyer continued running the market garden after his brother's death.

To grow the lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, carrots, celery and other vegetables in acre plots, the Sawyers used all of the manure from the Portland horse car railroad stable on Spring Street in Portland; with about 150 horses in that stable, it was certainly a very large amount of compost that was used to fertilize the soil and grow very high-quality vegetables. (I wonder if residents of that neighborhood still have good soil?)

Mr. Sawyer was smart when it came to marketing his business. He kept a very tidy, attractive operation, with good roadside appeal – a park-like appearance – which encouraged area residents to come out for a drive (horse-drawn, of course) to view his gardens. His reputation for a quality operation certainly must have helped promote the sale of his produce. In total, Sawyer's market garden was in existence for about 50 years.

Note to residents: Our Society office is currently located in City Hall and will be open on Saturdays from 1-3pm through October. Please feel free to stop in during our open hours, or you may call us at either 799-3937 (Linda) or 767-3268 (Kathy). You can also find information on our web site – go to the City's site at www.southportland.org and look for our link down the left side of the home page.

09-01-06 Summertime on Willard Beach



As the summer is winding down, I thought residents would enjoy these glimpses of people enjoying Willard Beach about 100 years ago. Although the clothing has changed, hanging out and relaxing on the beach sure hasn't. In the picture (at left), the long building on the right is the old Willard homestead at the end of Deake Street; the house was later converted by Charles J. Willard to an inn known as the Willard Haven. The picture (below) shows Fisherman's Point on the southern end of Willard Beach, back when there were many more fishing shacks. Off in the distance is the Ottawa House, a

grand hotel that was once located on Cushing Island.

I'd

like to take a moment to extend my thanks to Sam Chatto, Tim Carr, Craig Skelton, and David Mishkin, all of whom wrote very interesting and informative columns on behalf of the Society this summer. Their columns also allowed me to spend more of the summer with my family; we truly appreciated it!

I hope you all have had a wonderful summer, too. The kids head back to school on Tuesday; please watch out for them and drive safely!



08-25-06 Clark's Pond

Across from Pape Chevrolet on Westbrook Street lies Clark's Pond, a pond which, in hindsight, is a clear example of the ill effects of development. Before the Maine Mall area was developed, Clark's Pond was surrounded by farmlands and the "Pollywonk" (Pollywonk was the name given by locals to the swampy land that existed between western Broadway and the old Payne Road). When the Maine Mall was developed, most of the ground area became covered with impervious paving material; rainfall over the decades has washed pollutants from cars and other sources into the creek that feeds Clark's Pond, resulting essentially in the death of Clark's Pond.

Many locals still remember the way Clark's Pond used to be. If you were looking at the pond from Westbrook Street, on the right side (where the Irving station now exists), Frank Brown had a farm there for decades, with work horses and a herd of dairy cows. Childhood friends Bob Dyke and David Merrithew both remember swinging on the rope swing behind Frank Brown's barn and swimming over to the island. Indeed, the pond was a favorite for the neighborhood kids. According to Elford Messer, the pond was used for "swimming, fishing, skating, hunting, trapping, gathering of ice and just plain enjoying."

Although the pond had a muddy bottom, and Mr. Brown's cows would swim over to the island during the summer, the water was clean enough to be used for gathering ice during the winter. The Portland Sebago Ice Company had an ice house on the Broadway side of the pond; a long "slip" extended from the water up to the ice house, upon which the huge blocks of ice would be hauled up from the pond to be stored. Elford Messer remembers "it was the end of the slip that served as a jumping off place for 'boys only' swimming in the summer."

Portland Sebago had a fleet of trucks that would be used in the summer to haul ice from the storage location at Clark's Pond to their Commercial Street facility. The ice had to be of a certain size to be hauled, so if a piece broke, it was considered waste. There was a chute off to the side and these big chunks of "waste" ice would be sent down the chute into the pond. Waverly Hammond remembers that he and his friends would climb aboard a big piece and "paddle it around like a boat. It was refreshing to say the least."

Those certainly were the glory days for Clark's Pond. On a promising note, the South Portland Land Trust and the City of SP are currently working with the DEP to reclaim Clark's Pond. The SPLT is also undertaking an exciting project in conjunction with the West End Trails Committee: they are currently working with the City and the DEP to assure sidewalk access to the southern side of the pond so that a

trail can be built around the pond, to connect with the trail behind Home Depot. Anyone interested in helping build the trail, via equipment, supplies, or time, can contact Tom Blake at 799-5723 or Teblake@aol.com.

Do you have any photos of Clark's Pond, surrounding-area ice houses (there was also Phinney's ice house close by on Phinney's Pond and many other ice houses in South Portland), or area farms? We'd also love to hear from current or former residents who have information to share on the "other Clark's Pond" in South Portland, home to Clark's Ice House; that pond was fed by Barberry Creek. Please contact Kathy at 767-3268 or Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com if you can help.

08-18-06 Preserving Digital Files & Images – Part Four

By David Mishkin

Guest columnist and South Portland Historical Society board member

PAPERS

Have you ever seen a newspaper or any printed article from the 19th century? Chances are that you will find that the paper it was printed on has turned yellow and the paper is getting brittle. However, if you consider that this paper is well over 150 to 200 years old, the degree of deterioration is quite minimal. If you take a newspaper that was printed recently and leave it near a window that receives lots of sunlight, you will find that the newspaper gets very yellow and brittle after only three to four months of exposure to the sunlight. When paper is manufactured, the wood is pulverized and chemically treated to remove wood-based impurities such as lignin. Lignin is an organic material found in wood fibers. The acidic properties of lignin is a large factor in the deterioration of papers. Cotton, linen and other fibrous materials are added to papers to give them different qualities such as strength, durability and texture. Back in the 19th century more cotton and linen was used in manufacturing to provide those qualities, hence the term "rag" content. Today it is too expensive to use cotton and linen on all but premium papers. That is part of the reason why today's papers will not last as long as those manufactured in other centuries.

INKS

While there are special papers that can be purchased that will be last far longer than conventional printer papers, another area of concern is the ink that is used to produce the image on the paper. Remember the problems that were addressed with color photography regarding dyes and pigments? Those problems are just as significant to your output printer as it is with color photographs. Most printer inks are made from dyes that are susceptible to fading. In addition, these inks also contain acids that are equally harmful to the preservation of these outputs. One of the major reasons for the manufacturer's use of dyes is because the dyes dry rapidly while pigments take much longer to dry. Another problem with pigments is that they are usually too thick to dispense easily through the ink jet nozzles. There are output printers that can use pigments but these are usually very expensive and used mostly by commercial businesses.

THE FUTURE

Preserving digital text and images is a very serious dilemma that faces not just genealogists, but the entire world. Every year more and more information is being relegated to digital files. There are world-wide organizations that are currently trying to resolve digital preservation issues to enable us to utilize this information in the future. However, there are many individuals that are not interested in preserving digital text files or digital images for centuries to come. If that is your motive then there would be no restrictions in using these technologies for your current pleasure and information. We need to remember that what we do today with the storage of our information, may have significant ramifications about retrieving that data in the future. Perhaps the best thing we can do for the time being is to recognize that digital files and digital imaging does have some obstacles.

With all the new technology that we have at our disposal, the best methods available to us for preserving text is still high-grade, acid-free, lignin free paper and a lead pencil. We can still read letters and documents that are over 200 years old made from these simple materials. Similarly, the best way to preserve photographic images still remains an archivally processed black and white negative. Even

today, we can make prints from negatives that were made over 150 years ago. That is the reason we know that they will endure.

Let's not leave our future generations with the oxymoron of "extinct preservation." Since we have processes that are proven; let us not commit ourselves solely to current technology, but making sure we "back-up" irreplaceable documents or images with tried and true storage systems and methods.

08-11-06 Preserving Digital Files & Images – Part Three

By David Mishkin

Guest columnist and South Portland Historical Society board member

CD-ROMs

If I have convinced you of the dangers connected to some of the new technologies, let me take this one step further. There is some hardware that we use almost every day and a great number of people think will last forever. I have talked to many people that are unshakably convinced that CD-ROMs are the best things to use today for storage of data and images.

"Unfortunately, CD-ROM's and other digital storage mediums have only a five to ten year life expectancy. Further complicating the issue is that signs of deterioration do not appear until it is too late to counteract them." ⁽³⁾

While many experts thought that CD's and the data they stored were permanent, they now recognize that all storage materials are more susceptible to heat and humidity, stray magnetic fields and oxidation than anyone (including the experts) could have imagined. Therefore, we now recognize that both data corruption and technological obsolescence limit the use of CD-ROM's for storage. The future of technological obsolescence of CD-ROM's is inevitable because computer formats change. All computer data have formats written in certain languages that computers can read. When today's digital format changes, it can be very difficult to convert the data. The problem is not exclusively limited to finding a computer that will read the data but to compatibility with future formats.

"Data conversion is not a trivial matter and becomes trickier as the data become more complex. Think back to times when you have had to convert a document from one word processing program to another. Did all the formatting convert correctly? Chances are that some of the formatting was lost-a tab here, a margin change there. The same is true for databases and other types of data." ⁽⁴⁾

While CD-ROM's, ZIP Drives, etc. serve an important purpose in the way we retain the information we are gathering today, we need to be aware of the limitations of these formats as storage methods. These systems are worth their weight in gold when used for cataloging and indexing purposes but should not be used exclusively for long-term storage.

DIGITAL CAMERAS AND OUTPUTS

Remember the instant gratification we had when using the Polaroid camera? You take the picture and in 60 seconds you had a perfectly developed print. As wonderful as this system was it still had some limitations. It was difficult to get extra copies made and if you did not coat the print with a special lacquer, it would fade away. We can still get the same gratification from digital cameras because of the instant results you get from this medium. However, with each new technology there comes inherent problems. To make the digital camera practical you need to have a large storage capacity and this costs money. If you have lots of money and don't mind spending it on the memory for the camera, you need to have a way to process the data. Now we have additional technological problems that users of conventional photography never had to consider. We have the same storage problems that we have with any storage method such as the CD-ROM's or the ZIP Drives. How are you going to store those images that you took with your camera? Will you store them on your hard drive? Risky at best. Will you store them on your memory card that you get with your camera? That is not only expensive but how will you recover these files in 15 years? There is always the option of transferring the image data to your computer and then printing those files out on your printer. While this is a very practical method for viewing your prints, do not expect those prints to last very long.

Remember the problems we had with conventional color prints? Those problems are just as bad and perhaps even worse when you output your digital imaging files from your printer. When you print out your imaging files from your camera to your printer you are creating two new problems in preservation. The first problem is that of the paper itself will not endure for long periods of time and the second problem is that of the ink that gets applied to the paper.

“You Going Digital?” David Rencher, AG, FUGA FGS Forum Vol. 11 Number 2 Summer 1999

4. “The life Span of Compact Disks” Amy Johnson Crow, CG Genealogical Computing Winter 2000 Vol 19.3

08-04-06 Preserving Digital Files & Images – Part Two

By David Mishkin

Guest columnist and South Portland Historical Society board member

VARIOUS MEDIA SOURCES

Have you ever noticed what is happening to our color family photographs that were taken in the 1960's or 1970's? Chances are that they have not only started to deteriorate but many of them have changed (shifted) colors due to the instability of the dyes inherent in color photographs. While pigments are very stable in retaining their original colors, dyes are very unstable. *

*Dyes are chemical compounds that are primarily organic and can be broken down from external sources such as sunlight. Pigments are chemical molecules that reflect or transmit visible light, or both. The color of the pigment depends on its selective absorption of certain wavelengths of light and its reflection of other wavelengths. Hence, pigments can't be broken down by the sunlight.

It really doesn't matter what substrate your dyes are on. For example, home draperies that cover a sunny living room window will exhibit a significant amount of fading. Just turn around the side that faces the sunny window and compare it to the other side of the drapery. You will see how much it has faded from the ultraviolet rays of the sun. The same happens to the dyes in your color photographs because they are made from dyes and not pigments. In many museums we have wonderful samples of paintings that are over 300 years old and have very little fading because the paint was made from pigments. Regardless of whether we are talking about color prints, color slides or even color movies...if it is color, it will fade. It really doesn't matter how careful the photographic processor was, they are unable to stabilize the dyes regardless of what they do. If your color photographs were processed properly and stored properly, the best that you could hope for is to have those color photographs last 50 to 60 years. This life span would be shortened significantly if the photograph was facing an open window or exposed to constant fluorescent lights. Take a look at the outside of any box of Kodak color film. You will notice this disclaimer from Kodak that states: “Since color dyes may change over time, this product will not be replaced for, or warranted against any change in color.” In other words, Kodak is telling us that color will fade and there is NOTHING that anyone can do to stop this. They have printed a disclaimer on every roll of color film to protect themselves from lawsuits. In fact, most manufacturers of color film have the same or similar disclaimers. The proper way to store color photographs is in a dark freezer that is kept at zero degrees Fahrenheit or lower. Obviously this is not a very practical way to display color prints but we really have little choice. Of course there are things that can be done to retard the fading of color prints. Never display a color print facing a window. Keep the illumination where the color photo is displayed to a minimum especially if the room is illuminated by fluorescent lights. One of the best ways to have color in your photographs is to take them in black & white and have the print hand colored with pigments. While this is an expensive process, it is the only way that a color photograph will last for 100 years or more. On the other hand, black and white photographs that are properly processed and stored can last 100 to 300 years. More information about this important process will be discussed further in this article.

VIDEOS

While magnetic tape videos were used extensively several years ago, they are now being slowly phased out by digital videos. Video tapes suffer from many of the same problems as any medium using magnetic

tapes. In fact, video tape will start deteriorating after only 10 to 15 years. One form of visual deterioration in magnetic video tape can be seen as static that can not be removed by adjusting the tracking. Some of the problems related to magnetic tapes are material decay from the polyester base of the tape and the oxidation of the coating on the tapes. In addition, stray alpha and gamma rays and magnetic fields can quickly deteriorate the tapes. Magnetic fields can be found in common places such as radios, televisions or any appliance that has speakers. However, the most destructive cause of magnetic video tape deterioration is higher temperatures and humidity. Ironically, video tapes replaced home movies because it was more convenient to view the video tapes than to use a projector and screen. Now magnetic video tapes are being replaced by digital videos because they, in turn, are easier to use....technical obsolescence. The question remains, when and how will digital videos be replaced?

07-28-06 Preserving Digital Files & Images – Part One

By David Mishkin

Guest columnist and South Portland Historical Society board member

Have you ever heard comedian George Carlin joke about an oxymoron? An oxymoron is a figure of speech with contradictory expressions such as “Jumbo Shrimp” or “Pretty Ugly.” Today, genealogists are relying heavily on digital information and storage. If we are not careful, digital preservation will soon become the newest oxymoron expression.

DIGITAL FILES...TEXT / IMAGING

It is amazing how many people refuse to believe that digital files can be corrupted. They seem to think that just because it is digital (or electronic) it will last forever.

“Already about 20 percent of the data collected for NASA’s 1976 Viking Mars landing is completely unreadable and lost forever. The 1960 U.S. Census was stored on now obsolete computer tape. Only one machine in the U.S. can read those tapes, and that machine is in the Smithsonian Institute. Almost all government agencies have similar data horror stories. So do most big businesses, libraries, museums, and other organizations that need to preserve words, images and sounds.” ⁽¹⁾

While there are other concerns that are even more critical than the corruption of digital files, it is a fact that information can be permanently lost or degraded.

“For years, computer scientists said the ones and zeros of digital data would stick around forever. They were wrong. Tests by the National Media Lab, a Minnesota-based government and industry consortium, found that magnetic tapes might last only a decade depending on storage conditions. The fate of floppy disks, videotape and hard drives is just as bleak. Even the CD-ROM, once touted as indestructible, is proving vulnerable to stray magnetic fields, oxidation, humidity and material decay.” ⁽²⁾

Regardless of the problems associated with the corruption of text files, a more serious obstacle is the degradation of imaging files. Text files can be read by several different word processing programs as long as the file is saved in a common format. ASCII files are generic text files that most word processors are able to read. Therefore, if you are working with a word processing software program such as “Word-perfect” and save it in an ASCII file, most other word processing systems would be able to read this file. Because there is no imaging equivalent to the ASCII code, you need to save your images to an imaging file. Image files take lots of space and unless you have a computer with a mega hard drive, you usually need to compress your image files and save them on a storage device. Each time you compress and decompress these files you are risking the loss of some of the information in the file.

Further concerns for the longevity of digital files (both text and imaging) and perhaps the most serious dilemma is technological obsolescence. This is a fairly new problem to the computer field because new discoveries and advances occur every day. This causes today’s computer systems to become obsolete well before they break down and become unusable. Citing several examples of this predicament would be the 78 RPM record, the 8 track audio tape, Beta Max Videos, the Brownie Hawkeye camera (using 127 size roll film) and finally the 5¼” floppy disk. The most shocking thought is that the 5¼” floppy disk was popular not very long ago. For those of us that still have some 5¼” floppy disks, how many of us still have the hardware or software to drive or run those disks...and that was only ten years ago. Technological

obsolescence is the main reason why experts today urge us not to rely on digital technology for permanent storage.

1. "The Legacy Data Disaster" Mike Elgin. [Winmag.com](#) October 8, 1999
2. "History: We're losing it" Arlyn Tobias Gajilan. [Newsweek](#) July 12, 1999

07-21-06 Remember the Armory



By Craig Skelton
Guest columnist and South Portland Historical Society board member

As you descend from a drive across the new 'Hundred Million Dollar Bridge' into South Portland, you are greeted by an empty hulk of a building that once housed the local unit of the Maine Army National Guard. I urge you to turn out on the side street next to the building and take a closer look at its architecture.

There is a lot of detail put into the lintels above the windows and doors that you won't notice while speeding by the building on Broadway. *See accompanying photos.*



A product of the build-up to WWII, the roots are based in October of 1940 when property on Broadway was taken by the State Military Defense Commission stating "...that public exigency requires the taking, for the purpose of construction and maintenance thereon of an armory and other military facilities for military purposes..." The rear portion of the property not initially occupied by the National Guard was deeded from the City of South Portland in 1955. The Maine National Guard occupied the building until the late 1990's. During those years, the Armory was host to many a craft fair attended by perhaps thousands of locals.

Plans



changed over time and as we approached the new millennium the State began consolidating area Guard units and a committee was formed to determine what should be done with the property. Local commercial real estate brokers seized upon an opportunity to sell the property, primarily because of the high traffic experienced at the gateway to South Portland. Proposals from a dot.com operation to fast food establishments were put forward to redevelop the property. The South Portland Comprehensive Plan and zoning stood in the way of commercial development and the building continued to sit empty.

Appraisals done for the State of Maine and the City of South Portland indicated a wide range of value from close to a million dollars for commercial use to just a couple hundred thousand dollars for municipal purposes. The City showed interest in purchasing the property yet it remained in the hands of the State until the Museum of Glass and Ceramics offered an amount satisfactory to the State. Several years of fund raising efforts by the Museum failed to result in enough interest to amass enough money to convert the old building for their purposes. Difficult days fell upon the Museum and the organization filed for bankruptcy in recent months. The City again expressed interest in purchasing the building and is now the new owner of this prime location.



Other landmarks in South Portland have come and gone over the years. Gone is the Knightville School that once stood at what is now

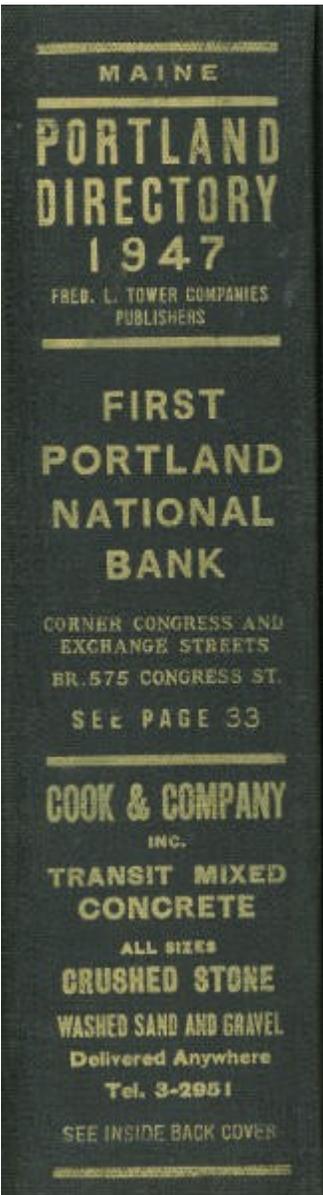
Legion Square Park.



Gone too are the tall smoke stacks that stood on the South Portland side of the original Million Dollar Bridge; local nautical charts pointed to their location, and boaters in and around the harbor used them for years as a landmark.

A committee is to be appointed by the City Council that will decide on the ultimate fate of the Armory building. Will the Armory remain on the South Portland landscape? It'll be interesting to see what the future holds and whether any or all of the former South Portland Armory will continue to greet those who cross the bridge to visit our shores.

07-14-06 Trash or Treasure?



I think the average person would be surprised at how many extremely valuable historical collections were literally saved from the trash truck. One notable glass plate negative collection was found at a local dump. The 1,200+ photograph collection that was donated to our Society this winter was headed for the trash decades ago when our donor happened to rescue them. Conversely, it's scary to think of how many treasures have actually been lost to "weeding," "down-sizing," and just the lack of understanding of the item's value beyond individual ownership, but to a whole community.

A man I spoke with last fall had "finally thrown away grandfather's papers that were in his old desk" and the grandfather turned out to be one of our city's first mayors. Another woman I spoke with had thrown away all of her father's items that he had saved from a lifetime of work, and not to be too specific, but items that would have proven dear to many residents who have grown up here. Just this past month, a Portland Directory was discarded at a local dump; thankfully, my observant husband rescued the volume and it now will be put to good use. These occasions raise the issue of how to communicate the idea of what might be considered valuable to a local historical society.

It is easy to see how someone might see just one volume of a Portland Directory or Maine Register from years past and think "what would I need that old book for?" Historical societies find them very valuable for assisting visitors with their history and genealogy research. As a start, I have scanned the spine of a Portland Directory, in the hopes that residents might check their shelves for them, and at a minimum, not throw them away. Hopefully, they would be considered for donation to the Society.

Much trickier is how to go about deciding what other pieces of memorabilia are worthy of keeping and/or donating. The best method is to not throw it out, and give your local historical society a call to come and take a look through any old unwanted items (and "old" could be ten years ago, it doesn't have to be 100 years old). Let's say you are downsizing to a smaller home and are trying to decide what you can keep and what must go...you have a pile of items that your kids aren't interested in – a perfect time to call us. Or, perhaps your aunt or other relative has died and she left behind photo albums, scrapbooks or other items and the family doesn't know what to do with them – please do not throw them away, call us!

Please do not assume that we would not want them, we are a phone call away and would gladly discuss by phone and even come take a look at any questionable items.

There are many reasons why what someone might view as ordinary, might be considered valuable to

others. Perhaps the photograph of your cousin in the 1950s has some neighborhood image in the background that has not been photographed elsewhere. Maybe your uncle was a school teacher, doctor, business owner, or city councilor, and his life touched many lives beyond that of his family. Maybe your grandmother was an organist for a local church for decades. Maybe a scrapbook has an invitation to a public event of the past, or an advertisement from a business long gone. There are limitless reasons why someone's belongings might have tremendous value beyond the family, and be a piece of history from the community's past. When in doubt, please give us a call! The Society's contact information is on a link from the city's website, www.southportland.org or call Kathy at 767-3268 Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com or Linda at 799-3937 meastma2@maine.rr.com.

07-07-06 Bay View Cemetery



Bay View Cemetery is located between Parrott and Sawyer Streets, behind the old Hamlin School on Ocean Street. The resting place of many prominent South Portland and Cape Elizabeth families, a walk through the burial ground is reflective of the two communities; there are many Dyer, Fickett, Hannaford, Higgins, Jordan, Parrott, and Sawyer families, among others.

Originally a Quaker cemetery, the land was deeded by Henry Dyer in the early 1800s to the Society of Friends. The original Quaker section of the cemetery is located on the side furthest from Ocean Street. On December 17, 1881, the first meeting of the Bay View Cemetery Association took place at the old Town Hall, where the group voted to adopt a constitution and by-laws for governing the association. Nathaniel Dyer was chosen as president, Frank W. Dyer as vice president, Mary E. Dyer as treasurer, and three trustees were named: Nathaniel Dyer, Hiram Libby and John S. Hannaford. A separate committee, consisting of Nathaniel Dyer, James S. Hannaford and Greeley Dyer, was formed to draft the constitution and by-laws. At the second meeting of the Association, on December 31, 1881, in addition to adopting the constitution and by-laws, the group also voted to change the name of the cemetery from the "Friends Burying Ground" to the "Bay View Cemetery."

We would love to learn more about the Quakers in South Portland and any other interesting pieces of Bay View's history. For example, an early plot plan shows the cemetery and area referred to as Laural [sic] Hill, but we have found no other reference to that name. If you have any information to share, maybe oral history from your family or neighbors, please call me at 767-3268 or email Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com.

Announcement: On Saturday, July 8th, I will be leading a tour of several South Portland cemeteries, including Mount Pleasant, Bay View, Wescott, and if we have time, portions of Calvary. The tour is part of the South Portland Land Trust's summer tour series; anyone interested, please join us at 8:30am at Bug Light Park. Hope to see you there!

06-30-06 Knightville Volunteer Hose Company No. 4 (Part Two)



An 1894 photo of the Knightville Hose House on Thomas Street.

By Timothy Carr

Guest columnist and South Portland Historical Society treasurer

The Knightville Volunteer Hose Company No. 4's records help to identify the evolution that occurred in the fire service in South Portland. Prior to the establishment of fire companies in South Portland, the citizens relied on the dispatch of a steam pumper from the City of Portland as their only organized effort to protect their property from fire. The time necessary to get the pumper from Portland most often resulted in the total loss of the property. With the addition of piped Sebago Lake to South Portland, it became possible to organize hose companies to attack the fires more quickly. The early records of the Knightville Company are an indication of all that went into establishing a functioning company. The company needed to raise the funds to acquire all the hose, ladders, tools, and apparatus necessary to perform its vital function. Early apparatus include horse-drawn hose and ladder carriages with the first motorized apparatus coming in 1916. Member dues, special member assessments, fairs, socials, and dances were all utilized to build the necessary funding. Individuals and local businessmen

were often mentioned in the company minutes for making in-kind contributions to the company. The expenses for the company equipping in 1894 alone was \$ 589.05.

In 1894, the company was able to build the shell for its new hose house on Church Street (the present Thomas Street across from City Hall). Construction continued until the funds ran out and the company would raise more funds to continue the project. It took three years to complete the hose house with the final phase being the addition of a hose tower for drying canvas fire hose after it was used at fires. One of the unusual construction costs was the payment of two dollars to a local farmer for damage to his potato crop. On the site for the hose house was the old jail which had to be moved for the new construction, causing the potato crop damage.

Company membership was highly regarded and there was an early waiting list to be admitted. The first by-laws allowed for a maximum membership of thirty members which was later increased to thirty-six. New members were admitted by a majority vote to fill a vacancy at a company meeting. To remain in good standing a member needed to live in the district, attend the company functions, pay dues and follow the company rules. One rule that some members were officially admonished for at a regular meeting was the presence at the hose house on Sunday without permission or business. The minutes obviously reflect a time in our history when "Blue Laws" were enforced in most American communities. Members were often removed from the company for not meeting its guidelines.

On October 7, 1902 the company incorporated with its new name becoming the "Knightville Hose Company No. 4 ". The discontinuance of the word "volunteer" in the name was an indication of minor compensation for services the company received from the City of South Portland. The City was now paying for building rent, utilities, and call out. Individual company members were paid by the City, through the company, fifty cents per hour for their work at fire scenes. (The sum was raised to one dollar per hour in 1910!)

In 1921, the City lost the High School to a major fire. As a result of that fire, a move was afoot to establish a paid full-time fire company in the business district. In February, 1925 the first full-time fire company was opened at the Knightville Company No. 4 Hose House. The City and the Company negotiated an agreement for purchase of the hose company's assets for a sum of \$1,800 to be paid in three installments. Hose No. 4 apparatus continued to run on calls with the City's new 1924 Ahrens-Fox 1000 gallon per minute pumper. The City utilized Knightville Hose Company No. 4's members to subsidize the full-time crews on fire calls. The last record of Knightville Hose Company No. 4, January 23, 1934 is the notation of \$48.17 dividends received from a closed bank account which were dispersed to the remaining members. Members of the company were later folded into a new Engine Eight Call Company operating out of Central Station.

06-23-06 Knightville Volunteer Hose Company No. 4 (Part One)



Hose 4's Company posing in front of the electric car barn at Ocean & "A" Sts., circa 1900. Note the old Portland-South Portland Bridge (pre Million Dollar Bridge) with street car crossing.

By Timothy Carr

Guest columnist and South Portland Historical Society treasurer

Recently, the South Portland Historical Society was the recipient of a donation of valuable original records of the Knightville Volunteer Hose Company No. 4. Our sincere thanks go to South Portland career Fire Captain Dan Roberts who had the foresight to protect these records until a suitable placement was made with the Society.

Knightville Volunteer Hose Company No. 4 was one of the village-based citizen's groups that formed to provide fire protection for the community of South Portland. The Knightville group, as the number designation indicates, was the fourth individual fire company

established in South Portland. It was preceded by similar companies established in Ferry Village, Willard, and Pleasantdale. Subsequent to the forming of the Knightville Company, volunteer companies were formed in Cash Corner, Thornton Heights and in association with Central Fire Station. The records for Hose No. 4 start on May 3, 1894 and continue until 1934 when the last entry was made.

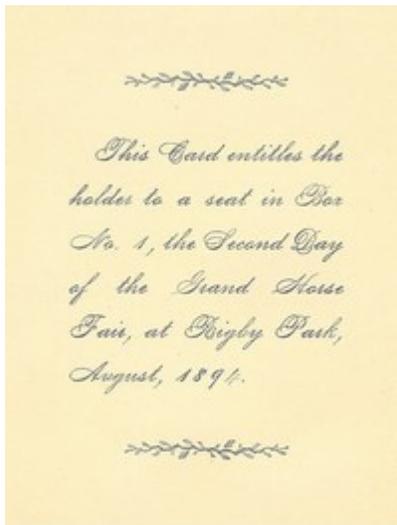
Volunteer fire companies have been part of the fabric of America since Benjamin Franklin formed the first American volunteer fire company in Philadelphia in 1732. Most communities in Maine, with the exception of a few larger cities, still rely on these companies to provide part or all of the fire protection and related emergency services for the communities. However, the face of the fire services has evolved over the years and South Portland's fire protection experience has paralleled the experience in other American communities in the development of its fire department.

The original fire companies were simply made up of volunteers who gave of their time with no form of compensation except pride. Membership in these companies was considered a privilege and often applicants were placed on waiting lists before being accepted into the company. Members of the companies were required to live within the fire district (or village) and the companies were often headed by the village leaders. In time, the free fire protection service provided by the volunteer companies transitioned to the companies providing service to the communities to which they received basic financial support. The taxpayer support did not begin to provide for the costs of operating the companies.

All the companies utilized numerous forms of fundraising including assessing company members to cover the expenses of the companies. Later the responsibility for fire protection fell directly on the community government and the volunteer firefighters were employed by the community. Volunteers became "On-Call" firefighters and were called to service on a call basis. Today, the communities provide the firefighters with minimal compensation that does not fully recognize their valuable contribution. Many communities have added career fire positions that are analogous to the regular army with the call firefighters filling the role of the army reserve units. With the increase in service needs and the level of commitment necessary for the call fire fighters, it has become a much more challenging task to maintain a call force.

Check back next week for more about the history of the Knightville Volunteer Hose Company No. 4!

06-16-06 Rigby Park and Rigby Yard



A ticket to the "Grand Horse Fair" at Rigby Park in 1894.

Off Main Street, on the border between the Cash Corner neighborhood and Thornton Heights, sits the current day Rigby Yard, previously home to Rigby Park in the 1890s. The official opening of Rigby Park, the professional trotting race track, occurred in August of 1893. One of the famous events of Rigby Park's time was the New England Fair, which took place there in 1896. The track closed in 1899 due to financial difficulties.

The accompanying photograph shows Rigby Park in its heyday. The ticket to the Grand Horse Fair in 1894 was recently acquired by the Society. Do you have any photographs, tickets or other artifacts from Rigby Park that you'd be willing to donate? Please call Kathy at 767-3268 or email Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com.

Rigby

Yard was constructed in 1923 by Maine Central Railroad. Maine Central's subsidiary, Portland Terminal Railroad, operated the yard for many

years; the yard served as the interchange for Maine Central and the Boston & Maine. Pan Am Railways (formerly Guilford Rail System) still operates from the yard today. (It is interesting that it was a former yard conductor, Clarence Smith, who started Caboose Lunch on Main Street above the yard; although the diner has changed hands over the years, it also is still in operation – now known as Rudy's All Star Diner.)



We would love to hear from a model railroad enthusiast who might be interested in recreating a model of Rigby Yard and the surrounding area. What a wonderful way that would be to bring history to life for

residents young and old!

Note to readers for Father's Day: Don't forget that our new book *The Many Villages of South Portland, Maine* is on sale now. Proceeds go to the SP Historical Society. You can buy a copy at City Hall. Our office is open on Saturdays, 1-3pm, in the basement of City Hall. Thank you!

06-09-06 The Civil War Comes to Maine

Guest columnist: Sam Chatto, member

At 10 o'clock on June 27th 1863, a group of people filed on board the steamer *Forest City*, in Portland Harbor, looking forward to a pleasurable harbor cruise. But their hopes were soon turned to nightmares, as they found themselves in a war zone.

On June 25th, a Confederate raider called the *Tacony*, captured a fishing schooner called the *Archer*, off Portland. The Union navy received word of this, and sent a few ships out to hunt the raider down. When the captain of the *Tacony*, C.W Reed, learned of approaching enemy ships, he ordered the *Tacony* to be burned, and he and his men slipped into Portland Harbor on the *Archer*. Early on the morning of the 27th, they captured the revenue cutter the *Caleb Cushing* (named after the Massachusetts Congressman.) With two ships under his command, Reed planned to slip out of Portland Harbor, past the formidable harbor defenses. But word had gotten out and troops from Fort Preble in Cape Elizabeth (now South Portland) had been sent out to hunt and destroy the Confederates and their captured ships.

28 soldiers along with 10 men to man two artillery pieces (referred to as a "permanent party"), were dispatched to commandeer a friendly ship, and pursue the Confederates. The soldiers found the steamer *Forest City*, and soon the civilian cruise boat became a gunboat. Also 40 muskets were given to the civilians onboard, for their defense. The *Forest City* soon found the *Caleb Cushing*. At 2 miles, the 36-pounder field piece onboard the *Caleb Cushing* began firing at the approaching *Forest City*. The now frightened steamer captain stopped his boat, and refused to continue his pursuit of the enemy, for fear of endangering his passengers. So the permanent party sent word for help, which arrived in the form of another steamer, the *Chesapeake*.

While changing ships, the permanent party noticed the *Caleb Cushing* go up in flames, and its lifeboats floating away. Without any imminent danger, the *Chesapeake* went after the lifeboats, quickly capturing C.W Reed and 23 other sailors. From one of the recent prisoners of war, the permanent party learned that the *Archer* was close by. They immediately started in pursuit, but the *Archer* was quickly sunk by cannon fire. The prisoners were then brought to Fort Preble for search and detainment. Upon search of the prisoners, it was discovered that C.W Reed had kept a journal of all the bonds the *Tacony* had received. These bonds totaled \$92,500, all payable thirty days after "the ratification of a treaty of peace between the United States and the Confederate States of America."

When the citizens of the surrounding areas learned of the incident, bells were rung in excitement and "men, women, and children soon filled the streets, and were rushing hither and thither in aimless fright." The commanding officer at Fort Preble was so concerned for the lives of the prisoners, that he stationed half of his force on guard duty. He even sent a letter to the Secretary of War Edward Stanton, requesting additional troops.

This event is only a small blip during the Civil War, but for residents of Portland, Maine and the surrounding areas, it was a cause of concern and excitement.

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Official Record of the War of the Rebellion ("O.R.") Series I, Volume XXVII; June 27th, 1863 report by Capt. Prime

Official Record of the War of the Rebellion ("O.R.") Series I, Volume XXVII; June 29th, 1863 report by Maj. Andrews

(Note to readers: We thank Society member Sam Chatto for this well-researched contribution to our weekly column. Sam is just finishing up his freshman year at South Portland High School. Kathy DiPhilippo)

06-02-06 South Portland Historical Society book now available



If you are or were a resident of Cash Corner, the accompanying photo offers a precious glimpse of the intersection of Main Street and Broadway sometime in the 1930s or early '40s. The Amoco station stood where the vacant Capitol Cash Register building now stands, and the Gulf station (is that Fred Stubbs' garage?) on the right is roughly where the Pleasant Hill Auto business now lies. On the left in the photo, you can see the house occupied for many years by Edwin and Leslia Cash, and the Calvary Cemetery just beyond.

The uniqueness of each of South Portland's neighborhoods, such as Cash Corner, is one of the reasons we are excited to bring you *The Many Villages of South Portland, Maine*, just published by the South Portland Historical Society. The book is a fundraiser for the Society and contains many historic photographs of South Portland. Just in time for Father's Day! You can support the Society by purchasing the book at our office in the basement of City Hall. Saturday, June 3rd, will be our first day open for the season. We will be open on Saturdays from 1-3pm; enter from the rear entrance to the building. For more information on the book, please contact Linda at 799-3937, meastma2@maine.rr.com or Kathy at 767-3268, kathy@barrenhillbooks.com.

05-26-06 Cape Theatre



Now home to the Portland Players, the original Cape Theatre on Cottage Road was built in the mid-1930's. The single screen movie theater opened on September 16, 1937 and except for a period of time during World War II, ran continuously through 1958. The theater opened only on occasion in the years that followed, with its final showing around 1965. After the building had been left vacant for nearly two years, the Portland Players purchased it and moved to the site in 1967.

Many residents have fond memories of the Cape Theatre. In her years growing up in the Willard neighborhood, Lenora Bangert remembers well when the Cape Theatre opened. "We used to go over to Portland to the movies," she says. "We would go to the Strand, the Empire, or the State Theatre. We were all very happy to have the Cape Theatre open in our neighborhood." It was definitely a popular spot for the neighborhood, as it was very common for there to be standing room only in the theater. Unlike movie theaters of today, the theatre would run the movie reel on a continuous loop back then; you could stay all day at the theatre if you wanted.

Lenora remembers the years when she was working at Fort Williams in the early 1940's. Sometimes she would get out of work at 4:30pm and head for the theater. "My mom would meet me and bring me my bag supper...I would be munching my sandwich, watching the movie." What a nice way to finish the day!

05-19-06 New Photograph Collection



A view of 122 Elm Street in 1932

The South Portland Historical Society received a tremendous donation over the winter and we are excited to be able to make the collection available for public viewing when we open in a few weeks. Nearly 1,300 real estate appraisal photographs were donated to the Society; these images of houses and businesses cover a period from roughly the 1930s to the 1960s. Since we frequently have calls and visitors who are looking for early photos of their home, we are hopeful that we will be able to help a lot more people find what they are looking for.

bit expensive,

to say the least. Our sincere thanks and gratitude goes out to Saco Biddeford Savings Institution who, upon hearing of our need, generously agreed to provide the funds needed to preserve the photograph collection.

Have you been looking for an early photograph of your home? The entire collection has been indexed and you can simply call or email to see if your home address is part of the collection. Email is preferred - send to Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com or you may call Kathy at 767-3268. The collection will be available for public viewing when our office opens for the season, June 3. The Society office is located in the basement of City Hall. We plan to be open this summer on Saturdays from 1-3pm.

05-12-06 Cash Corner, circa 1960



Here's a vintage photo of Cash Corner, circa 1960; Frank's Streamline Diner on the right is packed with cars. The diner was moved to this site in 1942 from its former location in the shipyard area of South Portland. Jimmy Lano operated it in Cash Corner for many years - first as Jimmy's Diner and later as Lano's Diner. When this photo was taken, Lano had already built a new restaurant building, which he was operating directly across the street from Frank's.

On the left in the photo, you can catch a glimpse of the side of the Engine 5 Hose House. Closer to the center of the photo, off in the distance, is an early version of Dairy Queen. It is hard to make out the building, but certainly the sign is different from what we are familiar with today. Does anyone out there have other photos of Cash Corner that they could share with us? There have indeed been many changes to this intersection over the years! You can reach Kathy at Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com or 767-3268.

05-05-06 Then and Now... Corner Angell Avenue and Preble Street



The first photo shows a trolley operating on Preble Street, near the foot of Angell Avenue, circa 1923; Angell Avenue enters onto Preble from the left in the photo. The second photo was just taken in April 2006. The house shown in both photos sits on Preble Street between Angell



183 Elm Street in 1933

and Elsmere Avenues. The house is a relatively old house in South Portland, having been built around 1857. On an 1871 atlas, the house is occupied by Caleb Willard, and at that time, there was no Elsmere Avenue and there were only four houses on Angell Avenue. In later years, the Gavetts owned the home; some residents still remember when the Gavetts used to run it as a boardinghouse.



04-28-06 Remember when... 385 Main Street



This photo was taken in 1940 of the Eastern Tractor & Equipment Company, located at 385 Main Street. According to the Portland Directories, the Lewis Bernstein car dealership was first located at this site in the mid 1930s, then moved to its location next door at 395 Main Street, where many residents may remember it. Today, 385 Main Street is home to several businesses, including Irving Oil, Harris Oil, Tom's Small Engine Repair/Bait & Tackle, Team Masonry, and Auto Air.

We are moving! Do you enjoy the history column that we write each week for publication in the Sentry? Now would be a great time to show your support of the South Portland Historical Society by becoming a member. The Society is in the process of moving its collections to a new location in City Hall and we will be announcing our new open hours within a few weeks. There are many costs associated with moving and we would very much appreciate your financial support. If you can help, please fill in and clip out the form below and mail with your check payable to South Portland Historical Society. Thanks for your help!

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____
 Amount of donation _____

04-21-06 Then and Now – Willard Square



The first photo shows Willard Square in 1923, with a trolley car in front of Leroy York's drug store and the old A&P next door. On the left in the photo, the fountain sitting in the middle of the square was a watering trough for horses.

I just took the second picture last week. The bakery/café, One Fifty Ate at Willard Square, is now in a portion of that big

building, at 416-420 Preble Street. From the many times that I attempted to photo the building without cars in front, I can tell you that One Fifty Ate is a popular eatery. The smaller white building to the left of it was home to Bathras Market for 35 years.



04-14-06 Historical Research



Whether you are a historical writer, a genealogist, a homeowner interested in your home's past, or just a history nut, trying to dig up information on a past person, place or event can leave one feeling a little like Sherlock Holmes. Where is it?!?...that next piece of information that can lead to a breakthrough in our research. The

answer is: it could be anywhere!

Now if you have not done this type of research, you might think that sounds frustrating. Au contraire! This is just where the fun begins. You've already done your search of Ancestry.com, looked through the Portland Directories, maybe you've even met and befriended Bill Barry over at Maine Historical Society. In order to continue your research, yes, you need to be patient, methodical and thorough, but equally important, you need to be creative and think "outside the box."

Take one project that I am working on. I have been researching the origins of the street names of South Portland. One of the first streets that kindled my interest is Elizabeth Taylor Lane. No, the street is not named for the actress. Elizabeth Taylor was a teacher in South Portland schools, a writer for the *Portland Evening Express*, and her childhood home was located at 13 Evans Street (in the vicinity of J.P. Thornton's). Because our procedure for naming streets has not included a requirement for documenting the origin of the name, it makes this a difficult project. One method that I have used is to try to locate developers (or their families) who are still around, since they are most often the originators of a street name. Another good source of information on this can be long-time city employees. A visit to Public Works resulted in my learning that Waterman Drive was so named for the former Director of Public Works in South Portland – "Colonel" Waterman. Another source could be friends or family members of someone who has been honored with a street naming (please contact me at 767-3268 if you can help!).

These are just a few examples of thinking through one project. How about yours? Did you have ancestors who lived locally? Did they participate in local government? Attend schools? Check out your local historical society to see what information they might have. Don't forget to check out newspapers and other old artifacts. I was able to gather a lot of information on local stores by reading local advertisements that were placed in newsletters, newspapers, even in church cookbooks! Check out the top of the letterhead from Marine Hardware-Equipment Co. – not only a listing of the items that they manufactured but even a sketch of the building.

So, put on your thinking cap, pick up your spy glass and enjoy your investigation!

04-07-06 Then and Now – 585 Broadway



I thought residents might enjoy some Then-and-Now pictures. How about this interesting set of photos taken at 585 Broadway? The first image is a photo of the Broadway Auto Sales - Amoco building, taken in February of 1950. Within a few years, the South Portland Filling Station, run by the Prout family, moved its business to this site (from its previous location at 161 Ocean Street). The Prouts ran the business

here for several decades.

The second photo was just taken last week, showing the C-It-Sell business now located at the site. Notice the wonderful tree in the background and how much it has grown in 56 years!



03-31-06 History of Willard School



A few weeks ago, we ran a photo of a classroom inside the old Willard School; the Willard School was located on the triangle of land between Pillsbury, Cottage and Davis Streets. Due to the many calls we received in response to the photo, we thought readers would enjoy some more background on the school. One caller had previously attended Willard School, as well as served as a teacher there, and didn't recognize the windows in the photograph. Most residents would not recognize those windows, as the photo was from the previous Willard School, a large, two-story wooden structure that was built in 1867. When the school first opened, 236 students were enrolled, and Mr. David Moulton and Miss Margaret Pillsbury served as the school's first teachers.

The accompanying photo was taken in the 1890s and shows the exterior of this early Willard School. On January 19, 1904, a fire destroyed the building and it was replaced by a school with a brick facade that many residents still fondly remember. For seven decades, children in the neighborhood attended school in the brick Willard School building.

Willard School closed on June 15, 1978, and the building was demolished that August.

03-24-06 Can you identify this photo



Corner of Cottage and Broadway 8-4-1937

The documentation on this South Portland photograph indicates that it was taken in August of 1937 on "Cottage, corner Broadway." Can you identify the business and on which corner it stood? The sign on the front is mostly unreadable, but it does appear to have "Firestone" written on it.

Trefethen's Garage was already in existence in 1937 (the former Trefethen's Garage is now the site of Pratt-Abbott Cleaners on Broadway). There was once a gas station across from Holy Cross Church, on land now occupied by our library. Could this be that gas station?

We would love to hear from anyone who can remember it. Please call Kathy at 767-3268 or email

Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com.

03-17-06 The Cloyster House



In this view, the Cloyster House is the building on the right with the long covered porch facing the water. Photos courtesy of Kathryn DiPhilippo.

The Cloyster House was a summer hotel located at 24 Cloyster Road, in the Loveitt's Field neighborhood of South Portland, in the early 1900's. The Cloyster, or "Cloyester" as it also was called, was occupied in its early years in large part by Canadians, many of whom would come to stay for the summer, year after year. Loveitt's Field itself was a seasonal neighborhood in the early 1900's; the summer cottages would be boarded up for the winter.

By the 1950's and early 1960's, the Cloyster's proprietor was listed as Samuel Boyd. The hotel changed hands in the 1960's to Barbara Lucey, but the hotel would not last much longer. The building was razed around 1966. Note

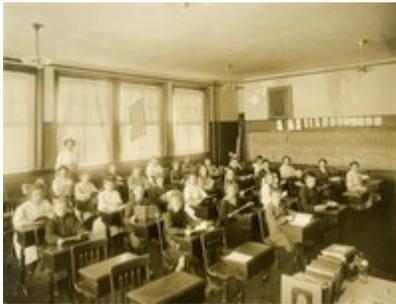
to readers: if you can provide more information, or if you have any brochures or other Cloyster-related items, we'd love to hear from you as very little has been documented.

Some other early lodging places in the area included the Gr and View Cottage (aka Grand View Hotel) on Preble Street, the Hasting's (a summer boarding house) also in Loveitt's Field, the Willard Haven Inn at the foot of Deake Street, and the Willard Inn at the foot of Willard Street.



A great view from a different angle, the Cloyster roughly in the middle, showing the long porch that wrapped around the building. We can only imagine what a nice place that would have been to sit on a hot, breezy summer day!

03-10-06 The Willard School



Willard School Interior

This lovely photograph was recently acquired by the South Portland Historical Society and is identified as the interior of one of the classrooms in the old Willard School. It must have been time for music class; the chalkboard in back is covered with musical notes. If you can identify anyone in the photo, we'd love to hear from you! Please contact Kathy at 767-3268 or kathy@barrenhillbooks.com

03-03-06 The Beginnings of the Rolling Mills



Portland Rolling Mills, circa 1890. From the collections of the South Portland Historical Society.

Guest columnist: Steven Palmer
Member - South Portland Historical Society

Our story begins in a little town on the banks of the Fore River. The river runs between what was then known as Cape Elizabeth and Portland, Maine, into Casco Bay. The year was 1865, the Civil War was over, and it was time for the area to start getting back to normal. The Portland Board of Trade was looking for a way to help its local economy grow. To do so, it thought about manufacturing and selling product throughout the United States of America. John Bundy Brown, an industrialist businessman, and some investors in the Portland Board of Trade decided to build a rolling mill. A rolling mill was used in making bar stock iron; railroads around the country were growing rapidly and the rails were in short supply. The group of investors purchased approximately 85 acres of land in then Cape

Elizabeth from the government; the land had been used as a training ground for Civil War soldiers. Then they contacted a man named Edward Brooks who was well-known in the field of building and running rolling mills. Brooks was hired and one year later, on June the 6th of 1866, the first bar of iron rolled through the mill.

By the mid-1880s, the Milliken family purchased the mill and added the production of horse shoes to the product line. The Milliken family holdings included the well-known Milliken Tomlinson wholesale grocery distributors (IGA). The Millikens continued to operate the mill under its name of the Portland Rolling Mills Co., a name which had been well established since its beginning. The name was changed around 1900 to the Portland Iron and Steel Co., at which time it was owned by a group of investors from Hopedale, MA, mainly the Draper family. The mill remained Portland Iron and Steel until 1912, when the mill's general manager and its treasurer, Seth Martin and Joseph Bancroft, formed a partnership, took over the business, and renamed it Bancroft & Martin Rolling Mills. The business carried that name until 1962 when its corporate name was changed to just Bancroft & Martin Inc. The company ceased operation in 1989.

(Note to readers: we thank Society member Steven Palmer for this contribution to our weekly column. If you have more information on the Portland Rolling Mills, we'd love to hear from you. Do you have a favorite history topic that has not been covered? Please contact me about sharing your passion for history by acting as our "Guest Columnist" for an upcoming column...Kathy DiPhilippo, 767-3268.)

02-24-06 Pleasantdale Memories



864-870 Broadway 7/15/35

This photo was taken in 1935 and shows the buildings at the corner of Broadway and Elm Street. The buildings look remarkably similar today. On the left is the Broadway Barber Shop at 864 Broadway, in the middle is the A&P store at 866 Broadway, and on the right is Ward's Drug Store. At the time this photo was taken, Millard Emery was running the A&P and the barber shop was run by Hapet Takvorian.

I received a delightful letter recently from John Chetley; John and his brother Murray grew up in the old house on the left, where the barber shop was located. John confirms the moving of that house. "That building originally was on the corner of Broadway and Elm. Clifford Ward had the building moved...to its present location and then built the building that housed stores and apartments upstairs, and the drug store. I worked in the drug store long before it expanded into the grocery store after Carl Graffam bought the business."

John goes on to write, "Also during the late '40s and '50s, both my brother and myself worked for a man named Clem Morse. He started out hauling groceries to all the stores in South Portland. In my time, he didn't drive so he hired people to drive his truck and we delivered all kinds of groceries from Hannaford's on Commercial Street in Portland..." to the stores in South Portland.

He further remembers, "On Broadway, just before Whitehall, Frank Bernard (a South Portland policeman) ran a hamburger shack. This was around 1940-1945." John wrote of many other memories of Pleasantdale; I'll share more of his memories in upcoming columns.

Do you have memories of growing up in South Portland? Please write down your memories and send to me at 646 Highland Avenue, South Portland, ME 04106, or email Kathy@barrenhillbooks.com. We will archive residents' memoirs at the South Portland Historical Society for future generations to enjoy. My advice about writing down your memories? Don't worry about grammar, punctuation, or trying to write great literature. Just write as if you were talking to a friend - use your own voice. It's a treasure!

02-17-06 Cushing's Point Memorial



"These people lost their homes...it was the supreme sacrifice," says Henrietta LaRou, speaking of the South Portland residents who lived in the Cushing's Point neighborhood prior to World War II. As South Portland began its journey into ship production for the war, the construction of the shipyards required the removal of much of the neighborhood. The Cushing's Point neighbors were notified that their homes were being taken by eminent domain. Homes were either moved or razed.

Of course, making a sacrifice for your country is a noble and patriotic act. And at that time, as the United States was entering the war,

LaRou points out that most homeowners never questioned the need for the homes to be removed from the area. They just packed up their belongings and moved elsewhere.

LaRou, along with other long-time residents Belle Gran ey, Carol Campbell and Cora Simpson, would like to ensure that the sacrifice made by those homeowners is not forgotten. Although the Bug Light area is now widely recognized as the former home of the shipyards, they point out that the shipyards were there for a short time, and the area had previously been home to generations of homeowners. They have come together for a common cause: to erect a marker in the Bug Light area to recognize the sacrifice of Cushing's Point residents.

The accompanying photo was taken at Cushing's Point in the 1890's and shows the type of quiet, waterfront neighborhood that the area once was. Former residents of the area can scarcely recognize it now; many of the former streets disappeared and the old cove was filled in.

The South Portland Historical Society is collecting funds on behalf of the Cushing's Point Memorial. If you would like to make a contribution to this effort, please make your checks payable to the South Portland Historical Society and write "Cushing's Point Memorial" on the memo line.

02-10-06 Seeking Info



A.C. Fernald florist, Royal Hasty produce, and Murland Ward fish dealer

At about the halfway point on Broadway, between Evans and Lincoln Street, Megquier & Jones has been a long-running business with a sizeable property (at 1156 Broadway). Although most of us probably have not lived here long enough, there are sure to be a few residents who can remember the homes and businesses which used to be located along that southern side of Broadway. Are you one of them?

This 1933 photo shows the house formerly located at 1170 Broadway. A sign on the house reads "A.C. Fernald, Flower Grower..." and the rest of the writing is covered over by the foundation plantings. The Portland Directory from that year lists Mrs. Harriett C. Fernald, a florist, living in the home. In 1925, the Directory listed Alfred C. Fernald at the house, although that was when that section of Broadway was known as Brown Street.

Next door to Fernald's, the home at 1168 Broadway was occupied by Royal W. Hasty, produce dealer, in the 1920s through at least the 1950s. There was also a fish dealer, Murland G. Ward, originally listed at 1142 Broadway in the 1930s to '50s, although by the 1950s, he was the president of his own company in Portland, Ward's Sea Foods.

We hope that residents will help us to document information about some of the houses, people and businesses that used to be located along that stretch. If you can help us with any information or oral history, please contact Kathy at kathy@barrenhillbooks.com

01-27-06 Follow-up



Will Dyer's Store – 909 Broadway and Our upcoming book: The Many Villages of South Portland, Maine

In response to our column in January on the Will Dyer store, this wonderful 1925 photograph was donated to the South Portland Historical Society. The photo shows Dyer's store at 909 Broadway, with its wide steps along the front and a priceless view of the sign proclaiming "William E. Dyer – Groceries – Provisions." We hope you enjoy this view of South Portland's past!

The South Portland Historical Society will be publishing a book this spring, *The Many Villages of South Portland, Maine*. In order to help us raise funds to produce the book, we encourage residents to consider becoming a book sponsor. For a \$50 sponsorship, you will receive a copy of the book, an invitation to our book publication event, as well as membership in the Society. Please make your check payable to South Portland Historical Society. For more information, call Linda at 767-7299, meastma2@maine.rr.com or Kathy kathy@barrenhillbooks.com.

01-20-06 T-Ledge Stables – Follow Up #2



The former T-Ledge Stables on Highland Avenue has been a popular topic for readers of this column. This is also a wonderful success story for the South Portland Historical Society and the residents of South Portland. When I first wrote about the stables that were run by Nell Barnes Knorr (known fondly as “N.B.” to locals), there was very little information documented about the riding stables. Due to the outpouring of support from Sentry readers, we have received wonderful oral history from current and former residents, some great photographs, and even a donation of a 28-page brochure for the T-Ledge Camp that N.B. ran on Orr’s Island in the summers. The brochure is

delightful, full of photographs of the horses and camp-goers, and even a glimpse of N.B. herself!

Thank you so much to everyone who has assisted us in gathering this information, and also many thanks to the people who, in an effort to locate photographs and info, went the extra mile to contact their friends and former neighbors who have moved away. We really appreciate the community’s support! I hope those of you who remember the stables will enjoy these two photos that capture the image of the house and barn at T-Ledge in 1941.



01-13-06 The South Portland Shipyards



This 1941 photograph is a wonderful documentation of the early stages of the development of the Todd-Bath Shipyard, as South Portland began its journey to become one of the nation’s leading communities in ship production for World War II. A 1,500 foot cofferdam, constructed of steel and dirt, needed to be put in place to keep the water out while work was being done on the ship basins.

South Portland Historical Society’s 2006 Exhibit topic:

The South Portland Historical Society is excited to begin preparation for its 2006 exhibit that will be covering the South Portland shipyards. We need your help! Do you have any artifacts left over from the shipyard days of World War II? Papers, worker badges, photographs, anything at all that relates to a shipyard that was located in South Portland; donations would be very much appreciated and will be put on exhibit and preserved for future generations of South Portlanders to learn from and enjoy. Don’t forget other shipyards from other time periods, like Turner and Cahoon, Benjamin W. Pickett, Davidson, Cumberland etc. More to come on this topic in the spring...

If you have items to donate or put on loan, please contact either Kathy at 767-3268 (kathy@barrenhillbooks.com) or Linda at 799-3937. Thanks for your help!!

01-06-06 Young’s Farm Market



Casco Bay Montessori School is now located at 440 Ocean Street. The building section in the middle of the photo was added later to connect the main house to the garage/former farm stand. Please let me know if you have

any photos of the old Young's Farm Market. Although there are few traces of the business today, Young's Farm Market was a great fruit and vegetable stand on Ocean Street for many years. I have many fond memories of the place, as my first summer job during my high school years was spent working for the Youngs at their farm stand. Located at 440 Ocean Street, Young's Farm Market was run out of a detached garage on the property. The Casco Bay Montessori School is now operating from the site, and the garage, although still there, has been attached to the main house and converted to a preschool.

Anyhow, when I worked at Young's in the mid-1980s, Mr. and Mrs. Young lived in their farm house, out where Fickett Street meets Sawyer Street, and Mr. Young's mother lived in the house on Ocean Street. My most vivid memories of the place are the smell of dirt and vegetables, using the old cash register that required you to figure out the change yourself, and the elder Mrs. Young who would come out of the main house and into the farm stand to help out. I remember that she would always grab the broom and as she was sweeping, she would be either humming or singing "Mr. Sandman". To this day, I always think of her when I hear that song.

You couldn't get produce much fresher than you'd find at Young's. I remember when we would open the stand, Mr. Young would come up with his truck, loaded with baskets of vegetables that he had just picked from the farm. As the day wore on, if we started running low on something, we would call Mr. Young on a walkie-talkie: "Hello, Mr. Young? We're low on beet greens and sweet corn." There were often gladiolas sitting in a bucket out front. The peaches were shipped in from somewhere, but oh, what a wonderful smell they had as we would keep replenishing the display. The peaches, fresh corn and strawberries were always very big sellers.