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827-3230

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827-5586
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827-2953

Membership Drive

This year the Old Town Museum Board has held an extensive membership drive. Starting with a list of Old Town property owners, the Board has made an effort to invite new membership in the Museum.

Under the leadership of Membership Drive Chair, Bill Osborne, an invitation to join was prepared. It was decided to include a copy of the Sunday Program schedule with the invitation as a way of informing residents of this activity. Nearly every Board Member has participated in at least one of the "work sessions" necessary to fold, stuff envelopes, seal, and then stamp this mailing.

This Membership Drive has been successful as it has resulted in over 50 new memberships in the Museum. However, the Annual Membership Drive is continuing as the Museum is always looking for new members. If you received a membership invitation and have not sent it in, there is still time. Also the last page of this Newsletter contains a Membership Form

Sunday Programs are a HIT

Harriet Woodsum and Joyce Harris have done a fantastic job of creating Summer Sunday Programs. There have been interesting programs for all age groups and these have attracted a large number of people to the Old Town Museum on Sunday afternoons.

If you have not attended one of these programs, there is still time before the season ends. If you have attended one or more, you already know the quality of the Sunday afternoon activities. In addition to seeing an entertaining program, you also have the opportunity to view the Museum exhibits which are worth the visit by themselves.

The remainder of the Summer Program includes:

August 26, 2001 - Bingo the Clown - Featured at the Ground Round.

September 9, 2001 - Friends of Alice Kennedy, A real musical treat. This program is a part of the Museums "Fund Raising" activities with the proceeds to go towards the repairs to the Museum Roof.

Both programs are scheduled for 2:00 pm but come early.

A Moment in our History - Old Town and Railroads

How many of our readers are familiar with the following railroads: Old Town Railway Company, Bangor and Piscataquis Canal and Railroad Company, Bangor, Old Town and Milford Railroad, "Veazie" Railroad, European and North American Railroad, Bangor and Orono Railroad, Penobscot Railroad, Bangor and Piscataquis Railroad, Old Town and Lincoln Railroad, Aroostook Railroad, Maine Central Railroad, and Bangor & Aroostook Railroad. All twelve of railroads have a place in Old Town's history between 1832 and 1893. Some of these railroads existed only as franchises to be sold or to vanish but they all existed at one time.

To set the stage, we need to remember in the 1800's, Bangor was a major Atlantic Ocean port with lumber and wood products as major items to be shipped. At the same time, Old Town and Milford were the location of many lumber and wood products mills. Thus the need to get product to port became a topic of major interest.

The Old Town Railroad Company was incorporated in 1832 as the first railroad in New England and the second railroad in the US. This railroad was to connect Bangor and Old Town. One of the original incorporators was a man whose name is still recognized, Ira Wadleigh. Construction was started in

1832 with part of the roadbed graded and work started on piers for bridges.

The following year, a competing line, the Bangor and Piscataquis Canal and Railroad Company was chartered. This line was intended to connect Bangor with the slate quarries in Piscataquis County with the route passing through Old Town. Construction was slow on this line but in 1835, this railroad purchased the franchise held by the Old Town Railroad Company for \$50,000. This eliminated the competition and consolidated work on a single route. Construction on the portion of the route from Bangor to Old Town was completed with the first train arriving in Old Town in November 1836.

The Bangor and Piscataquis Canal and Railroad Company acquired two engines for their initial service. These were built in England and brought by sailing ship to Bangor. The cost of these was approximately \$6,000 each. These engines had wooden wheels and the original rails were also of wood topped by a 3/4 inch iron rail. Three passenger cars were acquired initially and these were built in Massachusetts, at a cost about \$1,200 each.

This railroad continued to operate between Bangor and Old Town but little progress was made on extending the line to Piscataquis County. There are conflicting reports on the date but sometime between 1849 and 1855, the name of the railroad was changed to Bangor, Old Town and Milford Railroad, a

name more representative of the route.

In 1854, General Samuel Veazie purchased the Bangor, Old Town and Milford Railroad and continued to operate it until his death in March 1869. Although the railroad retained its name after the purchase by General Veazie, the railroad was commonly known as the Veazie Railroad. In 1856, the cost to ride the train from Bangor to Old Town was \$0.25.

Following General Veazie's death, his heirs sold "his" railroad for \$500,000 to the European and North American Railroad (E&NA RR), a line that had been incorporated in 1850 with the intent of connecting Bangor to St. John, N.B. At about this same time, the E&NA RR acquired the franchise to the Penobscot Railroad (originally incorporated as the Bangor and Orono Railroad in 1847). The E&NA RR also acquired the franchise to the Old Town and Lincoln Railroad (with an intended route from Old Town to Mattawamkeag). At some point, the E&NA RR also acquired the Old Town to Mattawamkeag portion of the route of the Aroostook Railroad, a line that had been incorporated in 1858 to go from Old Town or Milford to some point in Aroostook County.

The E&NA RR completed construction of their line to Old Town with the first train arriving in August 1868. This line followed a different route than

Continued on next page

the old Veazie Railroad. The reason the E&NA RR had purchased the Veazie Railroad was to eliminate any competition. The last run of the Veazie Railroad occurred less than two years after the completion of the E&NA RR line into Old Town.

The E&NA RR was extended to Vanceboro and then on to St. John. However the line suffered a financial failure in the "Panic of 1873".

The E&NA RR assets were eventually acquired by the Maine Central Railroad in 1882 with the right-of-way leased to the Maine Central for 999 years. Much more recently, this lease was converted to ownership. Several years ago, the Maine Central was purchased but it continues to operate serving Old Town.

While all of this was going on, the Bangor and Piscataquis Railroad was franchised in 1864 to go from Old Town to Moosehead Lake. By December 1869, it was completed to Dover. This line had been designed with the same gauge as the E&NA RR so that it could have a smooth connection in Old Town.

In 1893, the Bangor and Arroostook Railroad (Chartered in 1891) acquired the Bangor and Piscataquis Railroad. The B&A RR continued to operate the line from Bangor to South Llangrge via Old Town until June 1933. At that time the line was abandoned for economic reasons, trucks had begun to replace the railroad as the primary means for transporting cargo.

Raffle and Yard Sale

The Museum has two fundraising activities that are connected to this years RIVERFEST which will be held on Saturday, September 15, 2001. The first of these is a RAFFLE. This year the First Prize is an Old Town Kayak complete with paddle and lifejacket. The Second Prize is an original painting by Old Town Artist and Museum Board Member, Florence Wheeler. The Third Prize is an Old Town "Historic Afghan".

Raffle Tickets are available at the Museum and from Museum Board Members for \$2.00 per ticket or 6 for \$10.00. The Drawing will be held at 2:00 pm on the day of RIVERFEST.

The second RIVERFEST activity is the Museum's Yard Sale which will be held at the Museum. Charlie Stevens, Yard Sale Chair is promising a much bigger than usual Yard Sale with some excellent bargains. The sale starts Saturday Morning at 8:00 am.

If anyone has items to donate to the Museum Yard Sale they can contact Charlie Stevens at 827-3582, Joe Ayotte at 827-5667 or call the Museum at 827-7256. No white goods, clothing, tires or encyclopedias are being excepted for this sale.

At the same time as the Yard Sale, the Museum will be holding a Food Sale under the direction of Peggy Manzer. The Museum will also have a table at the RIVERFEST for the sale of t-shirts, afghans and other items normally sold in the Museum Gift Shop

Something old and something new

If you have not visited the Old Town Museum for some time you might be surprised at some of the items that are currently on exhibit. There is a major new exhibit this year covering the history of the Museum. This year is the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Museum so it is only appropriate to look back on the changes that have occurred at the Museum.

The Museum has also added to its exhibit relating to the old Covered Bridge that spanned the Stillwater River. A wonderful painting of the old bridge is now on display. Do you know what a "trunnel" is, or perhaps you have not heard of a "treenail". Both of these terms refer to the hard wood pegs that were used to hold together the main wood members of these earlier bridges. The Museum recently received a number of the old trunnels that were removed from the Stillwater bridge when it was removed.

Old histories report that not only was the Stillwater Covered Bridge, a major improvement in transportation when it was constructed, it also served as a meeting place for Town Meetings or other similiar activities. It is reported that at Town Meeting, when a vote was required, the Moderator often would ask those who wished to vote "yes" to move to one end of the bridge and those voting "no", to move to the other end. This made it easy to count as well as verify voter eligibility.

Membership Drive

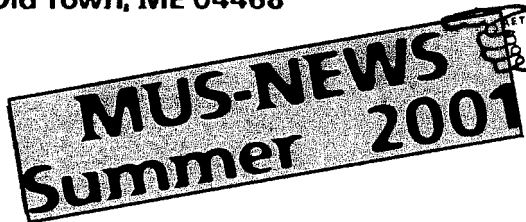
Membership in the Old Town Museum is ~~one way~~ which anyone can help in preserving the history of the Old Town area. ~~Our~~ donations are a substantial help in the funding of the Museum operations. Remember, the Museum does not charge an admissions fee. Your Membership payment or your donation is greatly appreciated.

We hope the readers of this issue of Mus-News will continue their support of the Old Town Museum. This is the place where the history of the area is displayed for your viewing. A place to visit to bring back old memories and a place to show your children (or grandchildren) how things were in earlier times.

Remember, donations of any amount to the Museum may qualify for a tax-deduction in accord with IRS Regulations. Donations should be sent to the same address as dues.

If you would like to donate to the Museum or become a member of the Museum, please complete and mail the form at the bottom of this page.

The Old Town Museum
PO Box 375
Old Town, ME 04468



0446

Old Town Museum; PO Box 375; Old Town, ME 04468
Membership/Donations

Date: _____

SuNL

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State ____ Zip _____

Type of Membership or Donation

(Circle appropriate item and if Donation, fill in amount)

Individual	\$20	Senior	\$10
Family	\$30	Life	\$250
Group or Business	\$100	Donation: \$	_____

1976-2001
25 Years of Service
to Old Town and it's
Surrounding
Communities



138 South Main St

Membership entitles you voting rights at the Annual Meeting and free admission to the Museum and it's Sunday Programs (Special ticketed events excluded). Donations are "tax-deductible" but Memberships are not.

___ Yes, I would like to be a Museum volunteer, please call me - Telephone no. _____