

# Mus—News

Volume 6 Number 2

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827-5667

Winter 2004

## Have a Happy Holiday Season From the Old Town Museum Board

The Museum Board is always looking for suggestions for new exhibits or for donation of items that have a historical significance for the area. In addition, the Board is interested in hearing from anyone who would be willing to volunteer some time to help on arranging new exhibits or staffing the Museum during the hours that it is open in the summer months. Please help us present our history .

## Video History Project

Watch for the next issue of Mus-News for an exciting announcement about the Old Town Museum's video history project. This project, under the leadership of Virginia Fortier, has taken longer than originally expected but it appears the results may be well worth the wait. What started as a series of video taped interviews with several long-time residents of Old Town is becoming something that will be a great benefit to those interested in activities in Old Town during the early part of the 20th century.

## Looking for an Unusual Gift

Harold Lacadie, a member of the Museum Board has class photos of most everyone in the Old Town High School classes of 1917, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1923, 1924, 1925, and 1926 in a computer file. He is willing to make 1-8x10 or 2-5x7 photos for \$6.00 of anyone in his file. All money in excess of the actual cost will go to the Museum.

This is your opportunity to get the high school graduation picture of one of your relatives. If you are interested, you can contact Harold at 207-827-4691 or by e-mail at [dlacadie@maine.edu](mailto:dlacadie@maine.edu) .

# **A Moment in Our History**

## **- Do you long for the "Good Old Days"**

Sometime we think earlier days were better but we forget that we did not have many of today's conveniences. Yes, the "Good old days" may have been less hectic and quieter but they also lacked a lot. Depending upon how far back you consider the "Good old days", they certainly were before computers, cell phones, television, radio, air planes and possibly before electricity and automobiles.

To get some ideas of the "Good old days", we checked the December 8 and 15, 1888 issues of the Old Town Enterprise to see what was occurring. With "live" TV today, it is hard to imagine that less than 125 years go, Old Town residents depended on a weekly newspaper for their national and international news. Here are a few quotes from "Front Page" items in December 1888:

Sam Phifer and Adolphus Wheeler were executed in Yorkville, S.C. for murder. Both confessed on the gallows.

The boating committee at Yale College has sent a cablegram declining to row a race with Cambridge University in 1889.

The official vote of the state of Nevada is as follows: Harrison 50,766; Cleveland 37,542; prohibition 2,500; labor 1,265. The total vote is an increase of 25,000 over 1884.

Bernard Greenwald arrived in Caste Garden, N.Y. on the steamship Wieland, from Hamburg, in search of his wife. She had eloped to America, the previous month with Julius Rosenberg, a neighbor in Hamburg, Germany. Greenwald is a well-to-do barber who is anxious to regain his 6 yr. old daughter who accompanied her mother. He says he doesn't care much about getting Mrs. Greenwald back.

An electric railway will be constructed by the Westinghouse Electric Co. at its works in Pittsburg, Penn for the purpose of testing its new alternating current motor.

On December 10, 1888 - Mr. Lawler, a congressman from Illinois introduces a bill granting a pension of \$12 per month to honorably discharged soldiers and sailors who are 60 years of age. On this same date, Mr. McAdoo of New Jersey proposed a Constitutional Amendment providing uniformity as to the date of choosing Presidential Electors.

Under "Labor News" - Georgia cotton pickers are paid \$0.40 per day and field hands in Mississippi are paid \$10 per month plus board.

News on a more local front - J.H. Hayes, opposite Cousin's Hotel on Water Street is advertising "Wonderful, Wonderful Bargains" for the next 10 days—Bargains as good as can be found in Bangor.

Although they didn't make the "Front Page", the following were newsworthy:

Miss Josie Byther is home for a short visit.

G.W. Coombs has finished building his woodshed.

The Spiritualistic Society held a sociable at the residence of Mrs. Frank Crane on Wednesday evening.

Some of the advertising that appeared in these December 1888 issues were equally interesting, especially the fact that few advertisements for local establishments included anything about the price of the items being advertised. Where mail-order was required for distant establishments, prices were included.

Books were advertised in 1888 with a couple of the ads as follows:

You ought to know all about a horse—Illustrated 100 page "Horse Book" only \$0.25 in silver or stamps from Book Publishing House—New York City.

Cheapest and best German Dictionary 624 pages - Postpaid \$1.00 English to German German to English includes pronunciation.

As this was before the time of automobiles, railroads were one of the major transportation methods. The "Bangor & Piscataquis Railroad had a relatively large ad giving train schedules and related information but nothing about the price of a ticket. This ad showed the schedule for a passenger train:

Leave Old Town at 8:00 am for Greenville

Dover and Foxcroft - 9:50 am

Katadin Iron Works - 10:20 am

Greenville - 11:40 am

Return trip - Leave Greenville 1:50 pm

Dover & Foxcroft - 3:25 pm

Arrive Old Town - 5:28 pm for connection in Old Town to the Maine Central for Portland or Boston.

The ad also noted that in Greenville you could connect with the steamer for Kineo and other points on the lake.

These old weekly newspapers provided our ancestors with a wide variety of news and information. They provided the "eyes" to the outside world as well as the information about close-to-home activities. In reading the material, one wonders if the newspaper staff were selective in what they printed or did they print nearly everything that was available.

## The Old Town Museum participated in community activities

This year, the Old Town Museum took an active part in two community-wide activities, the Canoe Hullabaloo and Riverfest. During the Hullabaloo activities, the museum offered some afternoon programs for children, one of which was presented by Charles Buck covering Maine gemstones and other interesting rock formations. A major feature of the Hullabaloo was the decoration of a number of small canoes that were constructed specifically for the event. Joe Hemple, one of the people who have presented "Sunday Afternoon Programs" at the museum, was one of the artists that decorated these small canoes. Following the event, Mr. Hemple donated the canoe that he had decorated to the museum for display.

The activities during Riverfest were more in the area of fund-raising. In addition to opening the museum early for Riverfest, the Museum had a booth at the primary Riverfest site where material from the Museum Gift Shop were sold.

## Some Highlights from the year

At the Museum Board's Meeting in February 2004, the Board elected the following officers: Ken Sirois, President; Barbara Csavinszky, Vice President; Bill Osborne, Treasurer; and Barbara Connors, Secretary. At the Museum's Annual Meeting held just prior to the Board Meeting, the Museum Members in attendance had selected Carol May to fill the balance of the term of Joyce Harris.

During the summer, the Museum continued to present "Sunday Afternoon Programs" that were well attended. Several of these programs were musical events while others covered a variety of interests. Although the Museum would like to include some programs covering the history of the area, it has had poor success in finding people willing to present this type of program.

Mark Limahka, a senior at Old Town High School was hired late in the season to help provide staffing of the Museum, especially on week-ends when less people were willing to volunteer their time. Mark did an excellent job and his help was greatly appreciated by the Museum Board. We do hope that in the process, he learned a little more about the history of Old Town and the surrounding area.

Harold Lacadie set up a new exhibit this year displaying some of the hand-sewing tools and equipment that were used when Old Town was the home of several shoe making firms. This exhibit was only one

of several that were specifically devoted to the area's history. Without the exposure to displays such as the logging exhibits or the hand-sewing exhibit, much of our history may be lost. With each passing year, those that remember how things were done in earlier times become fewer and fewer. We all need to be periodically reminded of our past.

One of the ongoing themes at several Board Meeting was how to attract more local people to visit the Museum. Some of the visitors to the Museum were very complimentary about the extent of the exhibits, especially those related to local history. During the coming year, the Board hopes to increase to number of visitors and is interested in hearing any suggestions to increase the number of visitors.

During the year, there were two regional meetings of the small volunteer-operated museums and historical societies, the first, in April, hosted by the Hampden Historical Society and the second, in October, hosted by the Orono Historical Society. Harold Lacadie and Dick Eustis represented the Old Town Museum at both Meetings. Although the number of local groups participating in these meetings are small, they do provide an excellent opportunity for the sharing of ideas as well as discussions of possible cooperative activities.

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Would you like to obtain an item from the Old Town Museum Gift Shop? The following items may be ordered by sending an order with a payment check made out to the Old Town Museum. The order and check should be sent to the Museum % B. Csavinszky, 84 Sewell Drive, Old Town, ME 04468. In the local area, you may avoid the Shipping & Handling by picking up the items. Call B.Czavinszky (827-7685) or B. Clarke (827-2650) if you wish to pick up an item.

Item	Price inc. Tax	Ship & Handle
Historical Photos of Old Town on a CD	\$11.03	\$1.22
Old Town Sweat Shirts sizes M, L, & XL	\$26.25	\$5.00
Plaque of St. Mary's Church (Now OT Museum)	\$21.00	\$2.75
Afghans - tapestry	\$55.00	\$7.00

# Membership Drive - 2004

Membership in the Old Town Museum is one way which anyone can help in preserving the history of the Old Town area. Dues and donations are a substantial help in the funding of the Museum operations. Remember, the Museum does not charge an admissions fee nor is it supported by tax dollars. 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. We especially hope you will be generous in any donations to the Museum's "Repair Fund". The Museum 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. Please visit the Museum even if you are not a financial supporter. A visit may bring back old memories.

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 your donation dedicated to the Museum "Repair Fund", please indicate on the Donation Form.

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**



TO:

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

Membership or Donations

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ WinNL

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:	\$ _____

1976-2004  
 28 years of Service  
 to Old Town and it's  
 Surrounding  
 Communities

353 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 at (Telephone No.) \_\_\_\_\_