TOWN CRIER

Voting will be held at the West Bath Fire Hall Nov 7, from 8 am to 8 pm. This will be a State referendum election, as well as a local election for West Bath School Board of Directors and Board of Selectmen. Information on the candidates is available on the town website. Absentee ballots are available at Town Hall until the close of business Thursday Nov 2.

2018 Dog Licenses are now available, due by Jan 31st,. Those who don't renew their licenses by then will be charged a $25 late fee in addition to license fees. Licensing and renewal can also be done online, at www.westbath.org under "online services". The Town of West Bath will host the annual Rabies/Registration Clinic (for dogs & cats) Saturday, December 2nd from 9 to 11am at the West Bath Fire Hall.

2018 Snowmobile Registrations are now available, while Boat Registration will begin December 1st. Snowmobile, ATV and Boat re-registrations for West Bath residents may now also be done online at: http://www.maine.gov/ifw/

Please note: Unpaid 2015 property taxes will go to foreclosure in February, 2018.

Meeting Notifications: Residents can stay informed on upcoming meetings and events by subscribing to our weekly email notification. Send your email request to townclerk@westbath.org or call the Town Office at 443-4342. You can also visit the Town of West Bath on Facebook and "follow" to keep up with local events!

THE MIDDLE GROUND

Volume 18, No. 2 *** Fall 2017
Published by the
West Bath Historical Society
PO Box 394, Bath, Maine 04530

Board of Trustees:
Amy Wesson, President
Pam Mayo, Secretary Treasurer
Sally Graves, Recording Secretary
Bob Bittner, Raisa Bittner, Beth Brewer, Ivon Boyer, Leah Zartarian
Pete Guild, Treasurer Emeritus, Avery Hunt, President Emeritus & Editor, Kerry Nelson, Archivist; Betty Fitzjarrald, Littlefield Advisor

Contributors: Bob Bittner, Madelyn Hennessey, Kerry Nelson, Karly Perry
Designer: Ash Kahrl, Bath Printing Co.
Distribution: The WBHS Board

We publish researched historical materials, local news and events that may be of later historical interest. We don't print advertising, gossip or political opinion. To offer news items, historical photos or documents, or FMI, contact Amy (389.4498) or Kerry (443.5118)

THE MIDDLE GROUND
West Bath Historical Society
PO Box 394
Bath, Maine 04530

Photo by Susan Montgomery

RING CEMETERY

Ring Cemetery is located just off the east side of Berry's Mill, not too far from Mill Cove. This small family plot contains the graves of David Ring, Jr. who died in 1856 and his wife, Rachel, who died in 1879. There are four other family members buried there as well as a Bowker and a Malcolm. The original Ring homestead is located across the street near the entrance to Loring Drive.

THE MIDDLE GROUND

Daily Life & History of West Bath, Maine

FALL 2017 • PUBLISHED BY THE WEST BATH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMORIES FROM THE LITTLEFIELD SCHOOL

The late Ruth Brown Hennessey's Stories of Littlefield School: Recollected by her daughter, Madelyn Hennessey

In early 2000, when the preservation and restoration of the Littlefield School became a community concern in West Bath, my mother, Ruth, shared her memories of the School. She was in her early 80's at that time. She began telling us stories about the school, which she had attended only in the early Fall and late Spring, when her parents, Walter and Madelyn (Hunt) Brown and their 7 children migrated *en masse* from staying in the City of Bath in winter for the school year, to living at the farm on Mill Cove for the summer. Her experiences were in the late 1920's and early 1930's. My favorite stories of her "educational experience" were about the boys who were her classmates, but she would never, ever name names! When she was at the Littlefield School, the ceiling had not been completed, apparently, because some of the boys used to climb up on the overhead beams, and walk across them, to the helpless protests of the teacher.

I do not know if that was the same teacher who, according to my mother, was brought to school and picked afterwards by her boyfriend, so she was unwilling to keep any of the boisterous, misbehaving students after school. My mother told this story with a kind of amused indignation, understanding the young woman's desire to spend time with her young man, but understanding that the students were probably not well served by this teacher's unwillingness to impose discipline on the "older boys."

These older boys also provided leadership in other naughty adventures. When they were let out for recess at lunch time, the boys led the other students into minor rebellion by encouraging them to go down to the Mill Bridge to eat their lunches. But then the students would spend the whole afternoon at the bridge, returning to school only when it was time to go home. I always had the feeling that my mother may have joined in the Great Bridge Caper, but she never directly admitted that to me. There was something about the twinkle in her eye when she recounted this story that makes me think that, despite her being a very well behaved little girl, she no doubt joined in that mischief.

While she was telling these stories, I often encouraged her to let us record them, so that we could get them to the Historical Society as part of the record of the school. She steadfastly refused, saying that she thought her memories didn't reflect well on the educational quality of the Littlefield School.

Photo: Small Collection, WBHS archives

Berry's Mill Bridge

Maybe so. But these stories do reflect well on the quality of the childhoods of the children who attended the school. I like to think of those older boys, some of whom undoubtedly were parents of my own schoolmates at the West Bath Elementary School years later, as having the adventurous good sense to challenge inadequate authority, and, with the bridge caper, to be innovators of what we call today "expeditionary" education. ■

PATTEN FREE LIBRARY

TOWN HISTORY TALK FEB 3, 2018

This coming Winter, West Bath will participate in the Town History Series at the Patten Free Library. This will mark more than 10 years in a row West Bath Historical Society has created a topic of interest, not just to West Bath, but to the whole library community.

Our topic will be a history of William Hennessey and the historic Hennessey Family Farm.

The talk will be curated and presented by his daughter, Madelyn Hennessey. It will be held on Saturday Feb 3, 2018 at 10:30 am.

Please mark the date!

WHERE OH WHERE IS WJTO 98.3 ON THE FM DIAL?

In a word, Gone. For good. But never fear, it will be back soon on another dial location, 105.3. Let West Bath's own Bob Bittner, owner, disk jockey and radio guru (dare we say mogul??) tell the story in his own words....
"Greetings to my WJTO listeners. You may have noticed that my FM station, 98.3, is not on the air any more. Gone forever. I'll tell you WHY, but first the good news: I have applied to the FCC for another FM station for WJTO on 105.3, but it will not air until at least December.

Here's what happened: In 2013, I purchased a low-powered FM station with my own personal funds to re-broadcast WJTO, which was located near the Freeport/Brunswick line. This is a special FCC license where this type of low-powered FM station can ONLY re-broadcast another station, but they are movable. The FCC, in 2016, allowed AM stations to apply for FM low-powered stations, but there was a hook: the AM station would have to buy a low-powered station from a willing seller... and that could cost $60K to $100K, some even into the millions! I wasn't about to shell out such big dollars, but I wanted an FM station to re-broadcast my WJIB in Cambridge, a station that has the same type of AM station license as WJTO – strong signal during the day but big power-reduction at sunset.

I had to act immediately, or there would be no more available spots on the FM dial in Boston. So, for a dollar, I sold my Freeport FM station, copying WJTO, to WJIB in Cambridge. My intention was to later apply for a replacement FM station for WJTO in West Bath, hoping that there would be no interruption in FM service of WJTO. Well that didn't work out. The FCC changed the rules.
The details are highly complicated but, essentially, this is a game of "musical chairs" with the government. You can move a low-powered-FM station license but you can't make it split it into 2 separate stations. I believed that the time period from when 98.3 went off air and new FM station would go on would be short. Wrong. It looks like it will be 3 to 4 more months. However, I accomplished what I wanted: to have an FM station for both WJTO and WJIB, and this was the only way to do it. But it will take a bit more time to wade through necessary government paperwork to get WJTO's FM station back up and running, but on 105.3 on the FM dial.
Meanwhile, WJTO, 730 AM, which broadcasts from my studio and tower in West Bath, has had no interruptions. It will be with us for a long, long time. Thanks to my many loyal listeners for your patience." ■

Photo by Kerry Nelson

Crossing the Bar
Continued

Mary Anne Deehan Farnham, 87, of West Bath died June 25 in Brunswick. Mary moved to West Bath with her parents, Francis and Gladys Whitmore Deehan, in 1940 and graduated from Morse High School in 1947. She married her high school sweetheart, **Robert Dean Farnham**, in 1948. After 20 years of travelling with the military while Bob was in the Air Force, they settled in West Bath.
Mary worked for the Sagadahoc Country Registry of Deeds for several years and volunteered at West Bath School. She was predeceased by her husband of 61 years. Her survivors include a daughter, Candyce and her husband Michael Nesbitt of Brunswick; a son, **Richard L. Farnham** and his wife **Cheryl** of West Bath, two grandsons and a great granddaughter.

Walter L. Longley, 88, of Litchfield, passed away Aug 26. He & his late wife, Barbara (Dunton) donated scrapbooks to the WBHS with articles about her father, Judge Arthur J. Dunton and his summer estate on Rich's Mountain and the Pastime Horse Show which he ran in the 1930's in West Bath.

Betty J. Estabrook, 82, of Lisbon, passed away following a long illness on Sept 4. In 1961, she married **Ray Estabrook Jr**. and they spent 56 happy years together raising their family in West Bath, where they built a home on the New Meadows River. Together they ran a successful family business, Estabrook Well Drilling, for 25 years. Betty also had a long nursing career and was one of the founding employees in 1959 at the new Parkview Adventist Hospital in Brunswick, retiring in 1985 after many years as Director of Nursing. In addition to her husband, among her many other survivors is her son, **Perry Estabrook**, his wife **Darlene** & their daughter **Courtney**, of West Bath.

Lloyd E. Durrell, 85, of Woolwich, died Sept 8 at Mid Coast Hospital. Among his survivors are his son **John Stuart** & his wife **Michelle**, of West Bath.

WEST BATH STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Hannah Bonine & **Molly Maurer:** Named to Dean's List for the spring 2017 semester at U Maine, Farmington.

WEST BATH HISTORICAL SOCIETY CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS SERVICE DEC 13

The West Bath Historical Society is pleased to announce that our annual candlelight Christmas Service and Carol Sing will be held at the Old West Bath Meeting House, 680 Berry's Mill Road, at 7 pm on Wednesday, December 13.
This beloved holiday celebration is a free community event, and has been hosted by the Historical Society for over 17 years.

The Rev. Holly Morrison will preside over the service, which is ecumenical and open to all. Carols will be sung and scriptures and poems, including a Native American prayer for peace, will be read by community members. By popular demand, our historic pump organ will be played by Susie Knowles. Home-baked goodies & cider will be served afterwards.

The West Bath Historical Society is happy to welcome Holly once again in leading our holiday celebration. Rev. Morrison serves as full-time pastor of the Phippsburg Congregational Church, UCC. She has previously served congregations in Maine, Colorado, Washington State, and Alaska.
Rev. Morrison shares a farm in Pownal with her bagpiping wife and a judgmental Border collie. ■

CHANNEL BUOYS BIRTHS

Theodore David Streevey, born May 24 to Joshua & Crystal Streevey of West Bath. His grandparents include **Terri Streevey** of West Bath.

Ember Kayla Foster, born June 2 to Keisha Bonita (Miller) & Lawrence Rodney Foster of Dresden. Grandparents include **Roger McNelly** of West Bath.

Olivia Rose Grasso, born July 5, to Jason Grosso & Jennifer Byrnes of Bath. Her grandparents included **Joe** & **Pam Byrnes** of West Bath.

Harper Marie Chubbuck, born Aug 20 to Ryan & Leanne (Keenan) Chubbuck of Woolwich. Great-grandparents include **James & Linda Koehling** of West Bath.

Isabelle Grace Couverette, born Aug 15 to Christopher Michael & Suzanne Louise (Greenman) Couverette of West Gardiner. Grandparents include **Brian Greenman** of West Bath.

Dakota Grace Elwell, born Aug 23 to **Owen Cornelius Zwaan** & **Logan Riley Elwell** of West Bath. Grandparents include **Beau** & **Traycee Elwell** of West Bath.

Makenna Lyn Doughty, born Sept 8 to Chad Bruce Doughty and Misty Kim Smith of Lisbon. Her grandparents include **Steve Schneidewind** of West Bath.

CROSSING THE BAR

Dana W. Small, 86, of New Harbor, died on May 7 at Cove's Edge in Damariscotta. He was born in 1930, a son of **Loring** and **Alice Small** of West Bath.

He served as Postmaster in Chamberlain, Maine for many years. Among his survivors are his wife Helen Cook Small of New Harbor and a daughter **Martha Small** of West Bath.

Evelyn J. Thomas, 62, of Boothbay, passed away on May 13. Among her survivors is her sister, **Judy** & her husband, **Charles Deion**, of West Bath.

Timothy M. McCabe Sr., 57, of West Bath, died on May 22. He was born in 1959, the son of **Willard** and **Mae (Walsh) McCabe**. Tim grew up in Bath and West Bath, and graduated from Morse High in 1978. In his youth, Tim was active in the Boy Scouts, church youth group and the Morse swim team. After graduation he began a 40-year career as a plumber, learning the trade from his father and later sharing that knowledge with his son, **Tim Jr**.

He enjoyed boating from Sabino and fishing the New Meadows River. He also spent many vacations at the family camp at Moosehead Lake and hunting with his brother Jim. He is survived by his wife of 25 years, **Bethany "Betsy" McCabe** and their son **Timothy**; his brother **James** & his wife **Peggy**, also of West Bath; his three sisters, his father-in-law, sister-in-law, two brothers-in-law, five nieces; three nephews, and his dear friend, **Michael Lozier** of West Bath.

Aline Gilley, 96, of State Road, West Bath, passed peacefully on June 1 at Gosnell Hospice House. She and her late husband, **Trude Gilley**, ran Gil's Seafood Grille at the top of Witch Spring hill from the 1950s to the early 1970s. Among her survivors is a son, **William Gilley** of West Bath.

Michael Hernandez, 58, of West Bath, died unexpectedly on June 19 while vacationing in Mexico. Born in 1958 in New York City, Michael's parents had immigrated to American from Puerto Rico. Following his mother's death when he was only 16, he took on multiple jobs to help support his father and sister. He graduated from St. Regis High school in Manhattan, and relocated to Maine, becoming the first year-round chef at Cook's Lobster House after teaching himself to cook. He eventually put himself through nursing school, earning his registered nursing degree. During his tenure at Midcoast Hospital and 24 years as admissions director of two nursing homes, he touched many lives and was a committed advocate for patients. Michael is survived by the love of his life, **Lisa Baker Boyle** of West Bath, his sister Sandra Kane and countless friends who consider him family.

Eleanor Joan Bruce, of West Bath & Abaco, Bahamas, 84, passed away on June 23, surrounded by her family. She was born in 1933 in Lewiston, the daughter of William J. and Louise (Cote) Mynahan. She married **William Bruce** in 1958 and together they raised six children in Brigham's Cove. Eleanor graduated from St. Mary's General Hospital School of Nursing and went on to earn a B.S. at Boston College in 1958, and completed her Master in Education at U Maine in 1976. She had a long nursing and teaching career, ending as Director of Public Health Nursing for the State of Maine, from 1988 until she retired in 1995. Following that, she and her husband spent winters on the island of Abaco for 21 years. Eleanor enjoyed music, swimming with her family and gardening. In addition to her husband, she is survived by her children and many nieces and nephews and grandchildren, including daughters **Mary Wallace** and her family, and **Joanne** & her husband **Timothy Powers**, of West Bath; her sons **Michael Bruce** and his family – **Tyler Bruce** & **Chelsea Robb**, and **William Bruce III**, of West Bath.

Corey T. Jacques, 43, of Wiscasset, died July 9. Among his survivors are three sisters, including **Tonia Hennessey** & her husband, **Justin**, of West Bath.

Norman H. Carlton, 76, of West Bath, died on Aug 13, 2017 at his home. He was a machine operator at BIW for over 30 years. He is survived by a brother and sister-in-law; eight children; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Dalina A. Henrick, 53, of Topsham, died at home on Aug 14, 2017. Among her survivors is a daughter **Becky Johnson** of West Bath.

Dorine C. Rowell, 67, of Brunswick, passed away at home on Aug 18. Among her survivors is her daughter, **Carry Ann Rowell** & **George Moreau** of West Bath.

LITTLEFIELD SCHOOL GETS A SUMMER MAKE-OVER

Since its spectacular restoration, completed in 2010, our historic Littlefield School has started to look a little weather worn around the edges. The creamy trim, window frames and sills were peeling and the grey shingles needs some sprucing up. Enter the trusties from the Two Bridges jail in Wiscasset who spent many hours scraping and re-painting the building.

Photo by Ivon Boyer

From late July to early August - probably the hottest couple of weeks all summer - 2 to 4 trusted inmates were driven to the school on Berry's Mill Road each weekday morning and spent the better part of the day working on this project.

While the Sheriff's department provided plenty of water and snacks, WBHS board member, Ivon Boyer, would faithfully show up every noontime with a brimming bag of Subway sandwiches, courtesy of the Historical Society. To say he was a popular guy on site would be a wicked understatement.

Ivon also helped coordinate the whole process, including purchasing all the paints and equipment and borrowing ladders from various WBHS members. The Trusty program is a way to provide community service to public and non-profit organizations, while helping to shorten the sentences of the non-violent inmates, who are incarcerated for class D & E offenses and have fairly short jail times.

Cont.

"It's a win-win: the community benefits from their efforts, while they get one day off their proscribed sentences for every two days of community service. And they get to be out of jail during the day, doing meaningful jobs", says Carl Fleck, Transport Deputy Sheriff who supervises these projects and stays on site with the trusties.

By definition, A trusty is "a prison inmate granted special privileges as a trustworthy person."

This program from Two Bridges has been running for about 10 years, and more than 25 projects have been completed. As the *Times Record* so aptly put in a story about the Twin Bridges outreach a few years ago, it is "free labor and a step toward freedom". Inmates have worked at a church in Edgecomb, the Old Town House in Bristol, several firehouses, the Georgetown Community Center, and have even built 2 barns and a stage for the Topsham Fair, among others. Seven years ago, a group of trusties also spent more than a week scraping and painting the Old West Bath Meeting House.

We are most grateful for their help in sprucing up our two historical buildings. ■

COOK'S KORNER

Fall in Maine. What better time to visit one of our wonderful local Farmer's Markets, brimming with late summer produce from our local farmers.

There are the bountiful vegetables from Goranson's Farm and Tarbox at the Bath Market on Saturdays; organic chickens from Mainely Poultry, cheeses from Hahn's Farm and Fuzzy Udder; local wines from Fiddler's Reach. Fill up your food basket and prepare a feast. Here's one suggestion:

Roasted Crispy Sesame Chicken Thighs Ingredients:

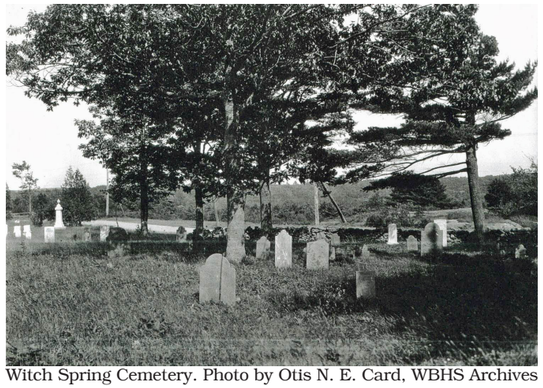
6 skin-on, bone-in organic chicken thighs (about 2 pounds), Kosher Salt, 2 tbs sesame oil, divided

1 pound small carrots, preferably multi-colored, scrubbed, 2 tbs low-salt soy sauce, 2 tablespoons Siracha, 2 tbs unseasoned rice vinegar, 1 tbs local honey, 1 inch piece of ginger, 3 scallions, chopped on angle , Toasted sesame seeds (for serving)

1.Preheat oven to 425°. Heat a large dry skillet, preferably cast iron, over medium-low.

2.Pat chicken thighs dry with paper towels and season all over with salt. Rub skin sides with 1 Tbsp. oil. Place thighs skin side down to skillet and cook for about 5 minutes. Once skin starts to brown, increase heat to medium. Rotate skillet to encourage even browning. Carefully lift thighs to allow hot fat to run underneath.

3.Cook until skin is deep golden brown, 10–12 minutes. Transfer skin side up to a plate. Pour off all but about 2 tbsp. from skillet and heat over medium-high. Add carrots, arranged so all are side by side in a single layer. Cook, undisturbed, until lightly charred on first side, about 5 minutes. Turn carrots, charred sides up, then season lightly with salt. Cook on opposite side until lightly charred, about 2 minutes. Turn off stove and transfer skillet to oven. Roast 8–10 minutes. While carrots are roasting, combine soy, Siracha, 1 Tbsp. rice vinegar, 1 Tbsp. honey, and remaining 1 Tbsp. oil in a small bowl. Scrape peel off of ginger root with a spoon and grate into the bowl. Carefully remove skillet from oven (the handle will be hot!) and place on stove. Arrange thighs over carrots and drizzle sauce over. Return to oven and roast until chicken is cooked through, sauce is caramelized and carrots are tender all the way through, 15 minutes. Remove from oven and let rest 10 minutes. Transfer chicken and carrots to a platter and drizzle with pan juices. Top with scallions and sesame seeds. ■



Witch Spring Cemetery. Photo by Otis N. E. Card, WBHS Archives

Witch Spring Cemetery. Photo, WBHS Archives

OLD CEMETERIES IN WEST BATH

Did you know there are over 9 old cemeteries in West Bath? The town is now caretaking 8 of them, while a private cemetery association cares for the 9th. All have now been plotted with GPS coordinates. Here is a snapshot of all 9, mapped on page 5. .

Witch Spring Cemetery on Berry's Mill Road is the oldest cemetery in West Bath. It is located on land given by Capt. Nathaniel Donnell to the Second Parish of Georgetown. Construction of a meeting house was begun in 1760. The building was in use as a meeting house and for town meetings until 1812. It was vacant until 1822, when it was taken down and moved to Bath to become a storage building for a steam mill on the river. Rev. Francis Winter, who served as pastor for twenty years, is buried here along with his wife, Abigail. Capt. Donnell is buried here, as well. In addition to many well-known West Bath family members, there are also said to be several unmarked graves. Berry's Mill Road. (See back page for details).

Lombard Cemetery is off Berry's Mill Road on the hill opposite the Mitchell/Bates/Small farm. The Lombard homestead, although greatly changed, still stands on the opposite side of the road. Among the graves are the following neighboring family names: Lombard, Bates, Bliss, Brown, Campbell, Clifford, Flanders, Lowell, Malcolm, Mitchell, Rich, Richardson, Williams, and many others. This cemetery is still occasionally used.

Ring Cemetery is off Loring Drive on the east side of Berry's Mill Road. (See back page for details). Works-Lee Cemetery is on a small hill just off the east side of Campbell's Pond Road south of its intersection with Berry's Mill Road. It has a stone wall, built to keep cattle out. Along with members of the Works and Lee families, there are also members of the Clifford, Owen, McManus, and Parsons families. The earliest grave dates to 1846.

The Donnell /Orchard Hill Cemetery lies to the northeast of the intersection of State Road and New Meadows Road. What began as a small family burial plot was later incorporated as a Town Cemetery. Frank A. Donnell donated land adjacent to the existing lot and it was renamed Orchard Hill Cemetery during the 1970s. There are many members of the Donnell family buried here, with the earliest grave dated 1819. Among the other family names represented are Aubins, Brown, Bubier, Coombs, Higgins, Holbrook, Holden, Pennell, and Purington. The West Bath Cemetery Association has maintained the graveyard for years. There are still burials here.

White Cemetery is just off New Meadows Road behind West Bath School. It sits on land formerly owned by Joseph White whose 200 acres originally ran from the New Meadows to the Kennebec River. His son, Joseph White, Jr., settled on the New Meadows side of the property. His first wife, Elizabeth, who died in 1795, is buried in the earliest grave here. Among other families in this cemetery are White, Coombs, Donnell, Foote, Lemont, and Purington.

Lemont Cemetery is located near the corner of Lemont Drive and New Meadows Road. Many members of the Lemont family are buried here, along with the Collamer, Sanford, and Wylie families. This is another very old cemetery with the earliest stone dated 1756.

Holbrook Cemetery is in a field on the right side of Foster's Point Road about three miles from the intersection with State Road. Members of the Higgins, Holbrook, and Wildes family are buried here. The graves of two soldiers are located here; that of Phillip Higgins who died in 1837 and that of John Holbrook who died in 1838. The earliest grave is dated 1830.

Higgins Cemetery is just off the right side Foster's Point Road on a hill south of the Hamilton Audubon Sanctuary. Six members of the Higgins family are buried here, as well as Sylvanus Coombs whose 1818 grave is the earliest. ■