

# THE MIDDLE GROUND

## *Daily Life & History of West Bath, Maine*

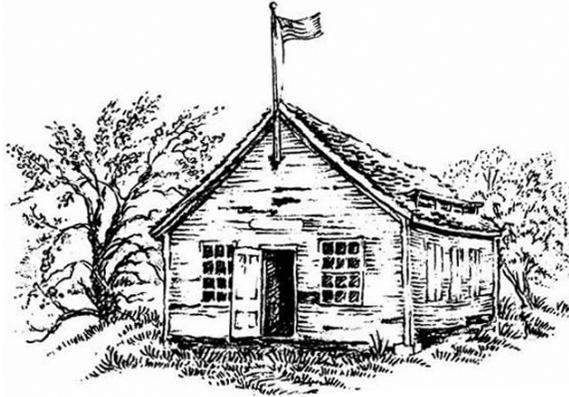
FALL 2007 • PUBLISHED BY THE WEST BATH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE LITTLEFIELD SCHOOL?

Maine's one-room schoolhouses are fast disappearing. West Bath's historic treasure – our last remaining schoolhouse (formerly Mill Cove School) – is literally on its last legs unless we can all pull together to help save her.

The structure is currently unsafe and in danger of collapse. Thanks to a generous bequest by the late Bruce Burden (whose mother Evelyn Redlon attended the school), and a Senter Fund grant of \$5000, The West Bath Historical Society has a modest endowment to begin restoration, as we've reported in a previous issue of *The Middle Ground*. However, before we do anything, we also need the commitment and direct involvement of our community at large to help make this happen.

Here are some details on the Littlefield School's current status: It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and on Maine Preservation's Most Endangered Historic Properties. The original school was established in 1772 and was replaced by the existing building in 1853, serving students until



1947. It is a classic one-story Greek Revival timber-framed building, 24 x 28', and though precarious today, still has an intact interior, with floor boards on which old "up and down" saw marks can be seen, original wainscoting, real slate blackboards, a pot-bellied stove, and (barely) attached boys and girls outhouses.

Sadly, its granite foundation is shifting and collapsing, in part because of runoff from the up-graded Berry's Mill Road. All sills are structurally unsound; many of the quarter-sawn clapboards need replacing. The south corner of the building is propped up with an I-

beam and the north wall has separated from the floor. The roof rafters need reinforcing. In short, the school, which is owned by the town, needs immediate attention.

The WBHS is in the process of nailing down the scope of work and exact cost of a restoration. Because the foundation is a major problem, one option is to move it

back into the field, to the west, away from the road. Dr. Wendy Love, who now owns that property, is possibly interested in letting us make this move – but there are many details to work out. We are already working on lining up bids from professionals to move the structure, create a new foundation and put the original granite blocks back in place, install new beams and structural elements, fix the chimney, hew historically accurate quarter-sawn clapboards using a mill in Maine; and other repair details.

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**We need expertise and volunteers to help restore the Littlefield School, which is in danger of collapse.**

### Lecture on Local Early Native Americans to be Held Saturday, Nov. 3

Who was Sabino? And why did he matter?

You'll find out at the Old West Bath Meeting House on Saturday morning, November 3 at 10:30. Noted West Bath scholar, Tim Buckley, has planned a talk you won't want to miss. He will offer insights on the Native people of West Bath and Phippsburg in 1607, when the first English settlers arrived at Popham, placing these people in the wider frame of North Atlantic history.

By 1550, northern Algonquian Indian culture had already been

deeply affected by Europe. However, Midcoast Maine remained largely isolated until the late 1500s. Sabino, then the regional leader (sachem) on the Phippsburg peninsula, tried to manage this new encounter but was soon outmaneuvered by stronger leaders, from Georgetown to Madison to Bangor.

Buckley (a former WBHS Board member) is a cultural anthropologist who specializes in American Indian studies. The lecture is sponsored by the West Bath Historical Society. Light refreshments will be offered. ▲

## Maine Preservation Award Accepted by the Hansens

Robin and Erik Hansen traveled to Bangor in May to accept the prestigious Maine Preservation 2007 Statewide Historic Preservation Award for “Excellence in Reha-

bilitation of the Old West Bath Meeting House.” They accepted the plaque on behalf of the West Bath Historical Society, of which Robin is founding president, and the Town of West Bath.

There were 18 honors given to various organizations for preservation efforts around the state. We are in prestigious company. Among the others were the Little Red Schoolhouse in Alfred, rescued by local champion Almon Williams, and the Shaker Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village in New Gloucester. Presenting the award is Maine Preservation Trustee Deb Anderson (left).



## Clean-up at the Meeting House

Each spring, over 240 freshmen spend a day helping local non-profit organizations.

Thanks to the students and the chain saw skills of Morse history teacher Chet Main, who came as chaperone but also did yeoman’s work, we got a whole lot of kindling and firewood to stoke the woodstove. Chet is the son of Archie Main, long-time resident of Birch Point. See photo on the back page.



## Littlefield School

Continued from page 1

We would like to help shepherd this important restoration effort, as we did with the Old West Bath Meeting House in '05 (thanks to a dedicated group of people and generous donations of time and money from many people).

However, fixing the structure is not the only mission – critical though that is. We will also need a strong vision for how the Littlefield School should be used. Perhaps it can be a “living” schoolroom experience for Maine school children, or a small museum? And/or headquarters for the WBHS. Such efforts will need dedicated stewards and a clear curriculum.

There are many who believe that the rootlessness of our current generation stems in part from their complete lack of understanding of their past. We all must

recognize the value of our own history, before we lose such precious reminders of the past as the Littlefield School.

The WBHS – and others in the community – have struggled for the past 7 years to save the school from total neglect, or worse – destruction. In 1999, there was a move



Littlefield School window.

afoot to burn the building as a fire exercise. Public outcry, triggered in part by Frank Roberts, a Phippsburg restoration architect, stopped that in its tracks! Then, thanks to a small dedicated group including Lydia (Smith) Parker and Marilyn Bruce, some stopgap measures were taken (like putting on a new roof and shoring up the building with a steel beam – ugly but effective!) to keep the structure intact.

But today we are reaching a tip-

ping point where a complete restoration is necessary to save the school.

The Town selectmen, as well as the WBHS, are interested in moving forward with a solution to the fate of the Littlefield School. But we can’t do it alone. We need community input and direct involvement. Can you help? Do you know others who have skills and commitment? Is the School worth saving? And if so, what should we use the building for? We need your thoughts. Quickly.

Most specifically, we need:

- Someone to step up, soon, who has the passion and ability to lead, in directing the restoration effort for the WBHS,
- Other folks who are willing to assist the restoration director with time, money, and/or the many special talents that will be needed.

Please contact any Board member with your thoughts, or call or e-mail Avery Meyers (averyhunt@suscom-maine.net #443-4449) or Pete Guild (wnguild@aol.com #443-6056).

– The Board of WBHS



## COOK'S KORNER

**M**arjorie Standish may be a name that some of us remember from her popular food column which ran in *The Maine Sunday Telegram* for over 20 years. Or from her standard text on favorite Maine recipes, *Cooking Down East*, first published by Down East Books in 1969.

Whether or not you remember her, Marjorie's storehouse of knowledge of local recipes is worth checking out. Her standards range from fish dishes like scallop casserole and stuffed haddock to sweets like Baked Indian pudding, venison mincemeat or raw apple cake.

She spent summers as a little girl on the New Meadows River. Her family had a farm on the Brunswick side. She shares memories of those days as asides in her cookbook. Here's one of

them: *"I would like another ride down the New Meadows, down past Bombazeen Island where we often landed. We liked to stop, too, on the West Bath side of the river at Lon Fisher's store. This was a summer-time store right at the water's edge. It was where we bought our gasoline. We usually stopped on the return trip for an ice cream cone or a bottle of soda which were real treats then ..."* [Editor's note: We will try to track down the Fisher store for a future issue of *The Middle Ground*.]

We thought autumn would be the time to share her special blueberry cake for those of you who have put up pints of fresh Maine wild blueberries in your freezer. Marjorie claims this is "undoubtedly the most popular recipe ever used in my column" and admits it was first taken from one of Maine's church cookbooks.

### Melt-In-Your-Mouth Blueberry Cake

2 eggs, separated  
1 cup sugar  
pinch salt  
1/2 cup shortening  
1 tsp vanilla  
1-1/2 cups sifted flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
1/3 cup milk  
1-1/2 cups fresh blueberries

Beat egg whites til stiff. Add about 1/4 cup sugar to keep them stiff.

Cream shortening, add salt & vanilla. Add remaining sugar gradually. Add unbeaten egg yolks and beat until light and creamy. Add sifted dry ingredients alternately with the milk. Fold in beaten whites and then the blueberries. (Take a bit of the flour called for in the recipe and gently shake berries in it so they won't settle.)

Turn into greased 8 X 8" pan. Sprinkle top of batter with granulated sugar. Bake at 350 degrees for 50-60 minutes. Serves eight. ▲

## Big Winds Push Boats to Limit in August Race Off Brigham's Cove



**T**he 27th annual Casco Bay race was held on Saturday, August 20 and challenged every sailor to the max. Forecasts called for Northwest winds of 10-20 with gusts to 30. Mostly you can count on 2/3rds of that, but not this day.

The race, primarily for catboats, was organized as usual by West Bath's John VanOrden and Anne Bridgman. 11 contenders jockeyed for position just outside Brigham's Cove, as the starting gun went off at 1 pm. Everyone had at least one, if not two, reefs in their sails. (If there's enough wind to tie in a double reef, it's blowing pretty hard!)

Here is VanOrden's graphic description of the race: "*Molly Waldo*, *Lily*, and *Surprise* got over the line first at the start in 12-15 knot winds followed by [my boat] *Priscilla*.

The fleet stayed in that order as they headed around the point into the New Meadows River, where the wind and waves had a more unobstructed fetch and things really got snotty. It was blowing like stink, with constant two foot seas. One boat recorded a gust of 34 knots. ... By the time *Priscilla* had tacked again on to starboard she was in the lead. All the way up wind, many boats had one person on the helm and another working the sheet full time. It was constant intense hard work.

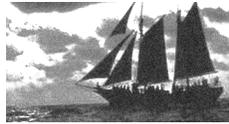
"The second leg was dead downwind. Interestingly [one boat], *Codfish*, had the cahones to sail more downwind (occasionally close to by-the-lee) than the rest of us and moved from fifth to second and definitely winning that leg. A jibe in that wind however would likely mean dismasting.

"After the thrash of the first race most of the helmsmen and sheet handlers were pretty tuckered out (particularly skippers like Anne who DID IT ALL herself on *Rosamond*). Those with only one reef quickly tucked in a second, and everyone agreed to an abbreviated second (handicapped) race. Prudently, several boats elected to sit out that round! *Rosamond* started with the lead and never relinquished it.

"Very few of us, even those with well over three decades of catboat sailing, have sailed with that much wind and sail up. *Surprise* had the foresight to set up her GPS and was averaging 4.8 to 5.5 knots over the bottom upwind against the tide, and 6 to 6.5, occasionally 7, knots downwind. We were definitely pushing the envelope, but other than the occasional broken batten we had no real problems. Great seamanship by all – particularly the smaller boats! It was truly an amazing and memorable day that we will talk about for years to come."

– John VanOrden

# CROSSING THE BAR



**Laura F. Racine**, 85, died April 25 at Mid Coast Senior Health Center. She was born in Brunswick in 1922, the daughter of Michael and Lea Guertin Racine. Surviving are five sisters, including **Lorraine L. Johnson** of West Bath.

**J. Boyd Bollinger**, 60, died April 28 at his home in Brunswick. He managed the New Meadows Inn in West Bath for a time and owned and operated “Dairy Frost” on Bath Road. He is survived by his wife Kathryn, and many relatives in the Bath area.

**Lillian Gowen**, 86, of Preble Point, Arrowsic, died April 28 at a Brunswick hospital. Among her survivors: her daughter **Gladys F. Coffin** and husband **Al** of West Bath.

**Everett M. Quimby**, 79, of Woolwich, died April 29 at Winship Green following a brief battle with cancer. He was born in Bath in 1927, a son of Everett Sr. and Katherine Golder Quimby. He was educated at Bath schools and enlisted and served in the U.S. Navy from 1945-47 in the South Pacific. In 1948 he married Lucille Glidden and they made their home in Bath. Among his survivors are his wife of 58 years, several children and siblings, including his sister **Carol A. London** and her husband **Bruce** of West Bath; several nieces and nephews and eight grandchildren.

**Capt. James K. Farnham, Jr.**, 82, of New Meadows Road, died May 6 at Mid Coast Hospital. He was born in Bath in 1925, the son of James and Rachel Smith Farnham. He graduated from Morse High, class of '43, and immediately joined the U.S. Merchant Marine, serving during WW II. In 1947 he married Janis Foster in New York City. He was in the Merchant Marine until 1950 and then worked for the Bath Iron Works as a ship fitter. He returned to

the Merchant Marine in 1966 and served as master on 700-foot bulk carriers hauling cargo around the world, retiring with rank of Captain. He returned to the Yard in 1986 as a site validator until his retirement in 2000. Capt. Farnham had been a licensed Kennebec River Pilot since 1957. He is predeceased by his wife, and a son. Survivors include a son, a daughter and her husband, and two grandsons.

**Pamela D. St. Hilaire**, 53, of Durham, died May 8. She was born in Bath in 1954, a daughter of Philip and Marion (Thompson) Libby. Among her survivors are her brother **Donald Libby** and his wife **Dora** of West Bath.

**Sharon L. Hird**, 58, of Woolwich, died May 17 at Maine Medical Center. She was born in Bath in 1949, a daughter of Everett and Ruth (Henderson) Baker. Survivors include her daughter, **Angi Hird Van Der Werf** and her husband **Matthew**, of West Bath.

**Fred J. Stewart**, 102, died June 13 in his home at Hill House Assisted Living in Bath. He was born in Jersey City, N.J. in 1905, son of Anna Lillie and Fred Stewart. He attended Colby College but spent all his working years in New Jersey. In 1931 he married Doris Bartlett. The Stewarts moved to Brunswick in 1988 to be closer to family. Surviving are his wife of 75 years, two daughters and a daughter-in-law; seven grandchildren – including **Steven** and **Fred Schneidewind** of West Bath, with whom he had a special relationship; nine great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandson.

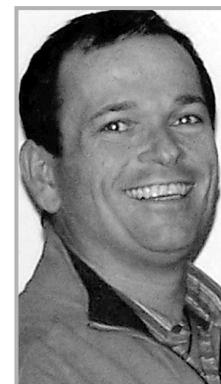
**Christopher Hunt Rawlings**, 43, of Kennebunk, died unexpectedly on July 14, at Maine Medical Center. He was the son of Arlene Hunt Rawlings and the late William Rawlings. In 1995, Chris was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis and became an active volunteer with the Nation-

al MS Society to offer support to newly diagnosed patients. Among his survivors is an aunt, **Avery Hunt Meyers** and her husband **Donald**, of West Bath.

**M. Evelyn “Nan” Henrikson**, 98, of Bath died July 18 at her granddaughter’s home. She was born in Rockport in 1908, a daughter of Fred and Emma (Kent) Morse. She married Joseph H.E. Henrikson, who predeceased her in 1990. Among her survivors is her daughter **L. Marie Snowdon** of West Bath.

**Betty E. “Betty Boop” Coffin**, 79, died July 24 at a Brunswick hospital. She was born in Ellsworth in 1928, the daughter of Charles and Bertha Green Emerson. She was predeceased by her first husband, Norris Havey. In 1956 she married Robert Coffin who died in January, 2007. She was also predeceased by a son, Larry Coffin. Among her survivors is one of her five sons, **Wayne Havey** of West Bath.

**Lorraine E. Smith**, 73, of Old Brunswick Road, Bath, died Thursday July 26 at her residence with her family by her side. She was born in Boothbay Harbor, the daughter of Henry and Barbara Nickerson Williams. She attended Edgecomb schools and worked at several restaurants in the Bath area. Among her many survivors, who include her husband, three sons and three daughters, is her daughter **Terri Gomes** and her companion **Joe Tardiff** of West Bath.



**Robert D. Renaud**

**Robert D. Renaud**, 40, formerly of West Bath, died August 1 in Fairfax, VA, after a long and courageous battle with cancer. He was born in Bath on Nov. 13, 1966, a son of **Lawrence A.** and **Diane (Morris) Reno**. He attend-

ed school in West Bath and graduated from Morse High in '85. He made his home in Falls Church, VA, with his life partner Gregory "Joe" Grimm. He was employed by a non-profit agency in Washington, D.C., and was an active volunteer to help the homeless and less fortunate.

He was predeceased by a brother, Richard Allen Reno-Renaud, and a sister, Peggy Ann. Surviving are his life partner, his parents, of West Bath, a daughter, Nicole, of Edgecomb, and many family members also in West Bath, including: his two sisters, **Kathy Lavallee** and her husband, **Daniel**; **Debbie Vigue** and her husband, **Tim**; his two brothers, **Lawrence "Buddy" Renaud** and his wife, **Maria**, and **Stephen Renaud** and his wife **Annie**, as well as his paternal grandmother, Demorise Swain of Bath and many nieces and nephews. He is buried in Orchard Hill Cemetery in West Bath.

**Grace E. Young**, 76, of Bath died August 15 at Maine Medical Center with her family by her side. She was born in Bath in 1931, a daughter of Walter Thayer Sr. and Flora Crosby Thayer. She attended Bath schools and graduated from Morse High in 1948. She is survived by her husband of 57 years, James "Chuck" Young; a daughter, a son, three sisters, and many grandchildren and nieces and nephews. Young enjoyed gardening and hosting gatherings at the family cottage on the New Meadows River in West Bath.

**Vona A. Bowers**, 87, of Berry's Mill Road, died Sept 1 at Maine Medical Center. She was born in 1920 in Pennfield, New Brunswick, a daughter of Maurice and Myrtle (Campbell) Trynor. She spent much of her childhood aboard ship with her family; her father was a sea captain. In 1937 she married Arthur D. Brown and they moved to Bath. She was employed at the former W.T. Grant Store in Bath and then at Sears & Roebuck, retiring in 1983. In 1963, she married Manuel E. Bowers. She was a member of the United Church of Christ, a member of the Bath

Area Senior Citizens and active with the Red Cross Blood Bank.

She was predeceased by her first husband in 1961 and her second husband in 1993. Survivors include her son, **Roger Brown** and his wife, **Carmen**, of West Bath; two step-daughters; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

**Joyce Audrey Stover Freeman**, 72, formerly of Bath, died September 24 at Southern Maine Medical Center, after a long courageous battle with dementia. She was born in 1935, the daughter of Courtney and Ida Stover. She attended West Bath and Bath schools, graduating from Morse High in 1953. Joyce graduated from Gorham State Teachers College in 1957 and spent her teaching career in Brunswick. She earned two masters degrees years later, and was a principal in SAD #6 for 10 years, retiring in 1997. She was then adjunct professor at the University of New England for a few years. She married Wendall Freeman in 1958. She was predeceased by her parents and her foster brother Allen McAllister. She is survived by her husband of 49 years; a daughter, two sons, 3 grandsons and 3 granddaughters, as well as a brother, **Jerrold Stover** and his wife **Elaine** of West Bath, and many nieces, nephews and cousins.



**Joyce Audrey Stover Freeman**

**June O'Leary**, 78, of Arrowsic, died September 25 at home surrounded by her family. A career nurse, she married Robert O'Leary in Bath in 1981. She was predeceased by two brothers, a sister, and her first husband, Robert Ater. Survivors include a son, **John Ater** and his wife **Susan** of West Bath.



## TOWN CRIER

### Taxes

The "T" word is upon us. As everyone knows by now, West Bath tax bills were mailed on September 11, 2007. Please contact the Town Office if you have not received yours. The due date to avoid any interest penalty is November 9, 2007.

Copies of your property card(s) are available at the Town Office.

45-day foreclosure notices on unpaid 2005 taxes will be mailed November 30th. Foreclosure date will be January 14, 2008.

### Dog Licenses

2008 stickers will be available beginning October 15, 2007. Your dog's license expires on December 31st each year. We are planning to hold a Rabies Clinic in either December or January. Watch the Town of West Bath website [www.westbath.org](http://www.westbath.org) for updates.

### Voting

There will be a Special Town Meeting Election on November 6, 2007, to vote on the school consolidation referendum question. Here it is, exactly as it will appear on the ballot:

"Do you favor joining with other schools in the lower Kennebec River area to form a regional school unit? (L.D. 910 is a locally created law that would allow for the creation of a new school unit comprised of Arrowsic, Bath, Georgetown, Phippsburg, West Bath and Woolwich and would meet the requirements for consolidation set forth by recent state legislation.)"

Polls will be open from 9am to 8pm. Voting, which will include several statewide referendums and bond issues, will be in the downstairs meeting room of the Town Office. The Office itself will remain open during regular hours. ▲

# CHANNEL BUOYS



## Births

**Zoe Kathleen Avery**, born April 30 to **Derek** and **Jessica Rogers Avery** of Bath. Grandparents include **Nancy & Craig Rogers**, West Bath.

**Lucas Gregory Pinkham**, born April 30 to Gregory and Elizabeth McNally Pinkham of Bowdoinham. Elizabeth is a teacher at the West Bath School.

**Camdyn Paul Landel**, born June 14 to Andrew Donald Landel and Misty Jean Labbe of Harpswell. Grandparents include **Katy Vigue**, West Bath.

**Jeff R. Huelsbeck**, born June 14 to **Gail** and **Ryan Huelsbeck** of West Bath.

**Matthew Stephen Hinds**, born June 19 to **Jillian Elizabeth (Beal)** and **Eric Mathew Hinds** of West Bath. Grandparents include **Stephen & Sandra Hinds**, West Bath.

**Quinten Les Preston**, born June 21 to **Laura (McKay)** and **Keith Preston** of West Bath.

**Niesa Emilee Wallace**, born June 30 to **Blaine** and **Mary K. Wallace** of West Bath. Grandparents include **Blaine & Debbie Wallace**, West Bath.

**Paige Nicole Botts**, born July 9 to C. Philip and Nicole Annette Botts of Bath. Grandparents include **Sandra Adams**, West Bath.

**Henry Eben Arsenault**, born July 13 to Jessica and Joseph Frank Arsenault II of Phippsburg. Grandparents include **Jeannette & Joseph Arsenault**, West Bath.

**Chandler Jacob McGinnis Robichaud**, born July 27 to Shane McGinnis and Amanda Lee Robichaud of Bath. Grandparents include **Richard McGinnis**, West Bath.

**Ava Marie Dionne**, born July 30 to Jeff and Bridget Dionne of Lewiston. Grandparents include **Bridget Taylor** of West Bath.

**Hunter Wyatt Johnson**, born August 9 to **Kelly (Sheen)** and **Erik "Buzz" Johnson** of West Bath.

**Adam Ernest Gamache, Jr.**, born August 23 to **Alicia** and **Adam Gamache, Sr.** of West Bath.

**Paxton James Fogg**, born September 2 to Matthew Fogg and Rachel Hunter, Portland. Grandparents include **Sally Hennessey**, and great-grandmother, **Ruth Hennessey**, both of West Bath.

Mayson Tucker Glatz, born September 10 to Benjamin Glatz and Elyeria Michelle Havener of Brunswick. Grandparents include **Liz** and **Ken Pecci**, West Bath.

Emma Leigh Kennedy, born September 17, to **Shannon Greenleaf** and **Gerald "Jay" Kennedy** of West Bath.

David Parker Mitchell, born September 26, to **Jennifer** and **Gerald Mitchell** of West Bath

## Nuptials

**Misti T. Utecht**, daughter of **Arthur & Sharon Utecht** of West Bath and Brenda Utecht of Lisbon, was married to Matthew J. Perkins on June 30 at the First Parish Church in Brunswick. The bride is a graduate of Mt. Ararat High School and is currently employed by BAE Systems. The groom, a graduate of Prescott (Arizona) High School, is currently employed by the U.S. Navy.

**Elisabeth Kathryn Hewitt**, daughter of Stephen & Lisa Hewitt, and Michael David Grenier, were married on September 29 before 80



**Elisabeth Kathryn Hewitt and Michael David Grenier**

family and friends at the Old West Bath Meeting House.

The bride's family has lived in West Bath for years. The ceremony

was conducted by Mark Wilson, pastor of the Phippsburg Congregational Church and the organist was Bill Gilman of Phippsburg.

The matron of honor was Prudence White, sister of the bride; the best man was Reginald Grenier, Jr., the groom's brother. Following the ceremony the wedding party was escorted by limousine for pictures at the bride's home on Sabino Cove. After a honeymoon in the White Mountains, the couple will reside in Fairfield, Maine.

## West Bath Student Notes

The Midcoast Center for Higher Education Student Association hosted its third annual graduation dinner and awards ceremony for graduates of both the U Maine System and Southern Maine Community College who attended a number of their classes at the Center in Bath. The celebration was held on May 5 at the Sky-Hy Conference Center in Topsham was attended by 21 graduates and their families and friends. Among those were **Joshua Underwood** and **Joyce Matthews**, both of West Bath.

**Bethel E. Keith** was named to dean's list for the Spring '07 semester at Dean College in Franklin, Mass.

**Arlee M Woodworth** graduated in June from Bates College in Lewiston.

**Eric Matthew Stailing** was graduated from the U Maine at Farmington in May.

Dean's List students include: **Jesse Pilgrim** (U of Southern Maine); **Jillian Callan, Jenise Lucas** (Southern Maine Community College); **Ashley Rogers** (St. Joseph's College); **Scott Horey, Michael Lemont, Chelsey Renaud** (U Maine, Orono).

**Brittany Hardin**, daughter of **Loren & Connie Hardin**, received the Excellence Award in ancient history during her freshman year at the Hyde School in Bath.

## United Methodists at the Old West Bath Meeting House

Bath United Methodist Church members recently had a chance to congregate at an old familiar spot. The UMC was in the process of building a new church at 340 Oak Grove Avenue in Bath. Their former building, at 1184 Washington Street, was sold earlier this year to the Elim Assembly of God. When it came time to vacate the premises, the new church was not quite ready.



**United Methodists congregated at the Old West Bath Meeting House in June of 2007.**

Photo courtesy of Ralph Lewis.

Three West Bath students were among the Morse High School Class of 2007 Top 10:

**Mary Freeman**, daughter of **Lois & Barrie Freeman**, attends Williams College, and plans to major in English, history or art history. She was a member of the National Honor Society, and won several honors, including the Scholastic Art Award. She was active in several civic activities including student rep on the Bath School Board and a West Bath school volunteer.

**Brittany Lee**, daughter of **John & Dawn Lee**, garnered numerous honors, including National Honor Society, Wellesley Book Award, Youth of the Year, *Portland Press Herald* Outstanding Teenager, Most Valuable Player cross country, Ocean Bowl Marine Science Scholastic Team New England. She was active in Student government, founder of the Girl's Point of View book club, played in the jazz band, and participated in the Trigorin playwriting project and was a Japan exchange student, among other activities. She is attending College of Wooster in Ohio.



**Kelly Davis**

**Kelly Davis**, daughter of **Sally & Scott Davis**, earned many honors including Girl's State rep, Phi Beta Kappa Book Award, Maine Youth Leadership rep. She played saxophone,

and was in the jazz and concert bands, as well as All State band and was active in tennis and track. She is attending University of Michigan, to study broadcast journalism and music.

Kelly was also awarded a \$2,000 scholarship by the New England Regional Office of The Humane Society for her advocacy on behalf of bullet-proof vests for law enforcement dogs in Maine, for which she has gained a national reputation. [See *The Middle Ground*, April-June 2005 issue.] This past spring she was honored statewide by WCHS, Channel 6-TV as one of Maine's "teens who care."

West Bath Historical Society stepped in and offered the Old West Bath Meeting House, free of charge, to the church members in the interim. It was a fitting gesture since the Meeting House, built in 1839, was organized as a Methodist Episcopal Church in 1890. The Methodist Church Conference deeded the building to the Town of West Bath in 1991.

The Bath UMC members so enjoyed the beautiful restoration and their ability to use the historic structure that

they made a donation to WBHS for the Meeting House fund. There were church members who remembered attending West Bath Church services years ago, some of whom still attend the Christmas Service each year. But there were others who had never been inside the building. One gentleman realized that he was sitting next to a 1902 memorial window that was dedicated to a member of his own family. Our archivist, Kerry Nelson, was able to provide him with information related to the window and the family.

The group met at the Meeting House for two weeks in June. They are now holding services in their beautiful new building. ▲

## Patten Free Library

Save the date!

Once again, the Friends are sponsoring “Early Eve” – an elegant evening of dining and dancing on December 31 from 7 to 10 pm at Patten Free Library. All proceeds will benefit the library. Guests will be treated to gourmet dishes by Chef Michael Gagne of the famed Robinhood Meeting House and to the upbeat music of local jazz great, Tracey MacLean, and her group. Tickets are \$75 per person and go on sale at the library on Monday, November 26. Reserve your tickets early: last year’s Early Eve event was a sell-out. What a great way to spend New Year’s Eve! FMI contact Irene Gardner at 443-5537 or irenegardner@earthlink.net. ▲



## Christmas at the Meeting House December 20!

The Old West Bath Meeting House will be the site of our traditional candlelight Christmas service and carol sing. Thursday, Dec. 20 at 7 pm. Refreshments afterwards. Come one; come all! FMI, check local newspapers in early December or call 443.4449. ▲

## THE MIDDLE GROUND

Vol. 8, No. 2 • FALL 2007

Published by the

**West Bath Historical Society**

PO Box 394, Bath, Maine 04530

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We publish researched historical materials, local news and events that may be of later historical interest.

We do not print gossip, ads or political opinion.

To provide news items, historical photos or documents, or FMI, contact Avery (443.4449) or Kerry (443.3300).

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West Bath Historical Society

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Bath, Maine 04530



## Morse Kids and Chain Saw Wielding Teacher!

**Energetic 9th graders gathered brush and fallen trees around the Old West Bath Meeting House on May 17 as part of Morse High School’s Community Service Day.**

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