

Isle au Haut Historical Society Newsletter

Spring 2023

Volume 5



Bungi Head Looking Southeast by Mary Fennell

Miss Lizzie by Harold van Doren

Newcomers to the Island usually need to be told that one of the mailboats, the Miss Lizzie, no longer in service, was named after Elizabeth Rich, who was born in 1893, down in Rich's Cove. She served as postmistress for 37 years, from 1926 until 1963, when she reached the mandatory retirement age of 70. By then, she had become an Island institution, of sorts. People wrote to the Post Office Department in an effort to keep her on and it responded by changing her status to "postal clerk" so she could continue to serve the community.

Part of her post office was once John Turner's combination candy shop and photography studio, originally located in Sawyer's Notch. Perhaps for convenience, it was brought down with a team of oxen and set near to Haskell Turner's blacksmith shop. John died in 1921, and after Clarence Turner passed away, it became the Post Office, with Lizzie living in a piece that was built onto the back. Then, when Lizzie died, the building was taken down, but the main portion of it was salvaged by the Town, moved, and rebuilt to become the "Miss Lizzie House," located west of the Town Landing.



Elizabeth M. Rich, Age 20

Photo taken circa 1913.

As a kid, I used to pick raspberries and blueberries for Miss Lizzie. She not only paid me, but usually gave me a chocolate cake or batch of brownies to take home as well. I remember being interested in certain items inside the entryway near the road: huge old lobster claws mixed in with figurines and such like. Mounted on the door casing was a wooden woodpecker that “knocked” when you pulled a string, and a commercially made varnished slice of pine branch having the bark left on the edges, with the Irish poem, “Why Worry” printed on its facing.

In life there are only two things to worry about:
Whether you are well or whether you are sick.
Now if you are well, you have nothing to worry about.
And if you are sick, you have only two things to worry about:
Whether you get better or whether you die.
If you get better, you have nothing to worry about.
And if you die, you have only two things to worry about.
Whether you go to heaven or whether you go to hell.
Now if you go to heaven, you have nothing to worry about.
And if you go to hell, you'll be too busy shaking hands with your friends that you
won't have time to worry.
So why worry?"

I've felt consoled by this simplistic view of life many times, and I wonder if Lizzie felt the same way. I know she was not about to take any chances of going to hell for lack of duty. Everyone that went to Church back when she and her sister, Ava, were alive, can remember the two grim-faced old ladies standing in front of the Church taking note of who came and who didn't come every Sunday morning. When their sister-in-law Clydie was with them, my father used to refer to the trio as “The Three Fates.” But, God rest their souls, they did what they thought was right. Another memory us old timers carry around is of Lizzie standing on a pew with a mouthful of kitchen matches, lighting the double-wicked chandelier lanterns for the evening service.

Once, she complained to me that her refrigerator wasn't working, and I offered to take a look. Apparently, she was in the habit of hurrying up the defrosting process by breaking ice out of the freezer with a sharp pointed knife. The aluminum compartment had literally hundreds of scratches and dents. One of her more vigorous strokes had finally made it through the shell to the Freon tubing, and that spelled the end of that refrigerator. She used to have an old, unvented portable space heater in the front room, and it raised up quite a stink, as it had needed to be cleaned for years. Between that and her old sleeve-burner kerosene stove, it's a wonder she didn't either burn the house down or die of asphyxiation! As it turned out, old age got to her first.

After having her job title changed in 1963, she continued on as postal clerk for another thirteen years, until 1976, when she was 83, and finally had to give it up. By then, she was in pretty bad shape. She had fallen down a couple of times, broken both of her hips, and couldn't get around without a walker. I can still hear the way she sounded, clumping around in her little house, grunting from the effort and the pain to get up and come out from the back whenever she heard anyone in the front room.

When she retired, she was given a party, a “high tea,” it was called, and a hundred and twenty-five people came to honor her. She received \$1,600 in donations and letters of tribute from Governor Longley and Senators Muskie and Hathaway, Representatives Cohen and Bailey, and Postmaster General Bailar. After she left the Island to go to have special care, Maurice and Helen Barter went over and cleaned her house. Among other things, they said they were surprised to find in the post office a couple of undelivered boxes containing urns of cremated ashes!

I took my mother over to visit Lizzie when she was at the Penobscot Nursing Home. They hadn't seen each other for many years and could barely see and recognize each other. As they talked quietly, I overheard Lizzie apologize: "I'm sorry I got so old." That one still stays with me. She passed away in 1988, at 95 years of age. Maybe there is something to not worrying.

Below is a photo which includes Lizzie Rich and Miss Damon.
Miss Damon is mentioned in another article, [Miss Damon's Wall](#), page 13.



*A black and white photograph of a Sunday School picnic on Merchant's Island, 1908-1909. A handwritten list of names to identify the children starts with the back row, from left to right: Mattie Robinson Greenlaw, Everett Robinson, Edna Dyer Dodge, Rev. Balzer [?]. Middle row, left to right: **Miss Damon**, Ralph Chapin, Minneola Bridges Rich, Chas. Collins, Ava Rich, Hattie Turner, Florence Bridges Cousins, Sadie Pettie Griffin, and Miriam Turner. Front row, left to right: John Rich, **Lizzie Rich**, Fitch [Hay?], Walter Rich, Julia Dyer Dodge, Floyd Rich, James Pelter, Steve Bridges, Addie Robinson Rogers, and Esther Holbrook Robinson.
Image courtesy of Special Collections, Raymond H. Fogler Library, DigitalCommons@UMaine, https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/spec_photos/3701*

Miss Lizzie Welcomes Me By Barbara Ternes

In the early 1980's, when my family started coming to Isle au Haut, we learned of a special person, Miss Lizzie.

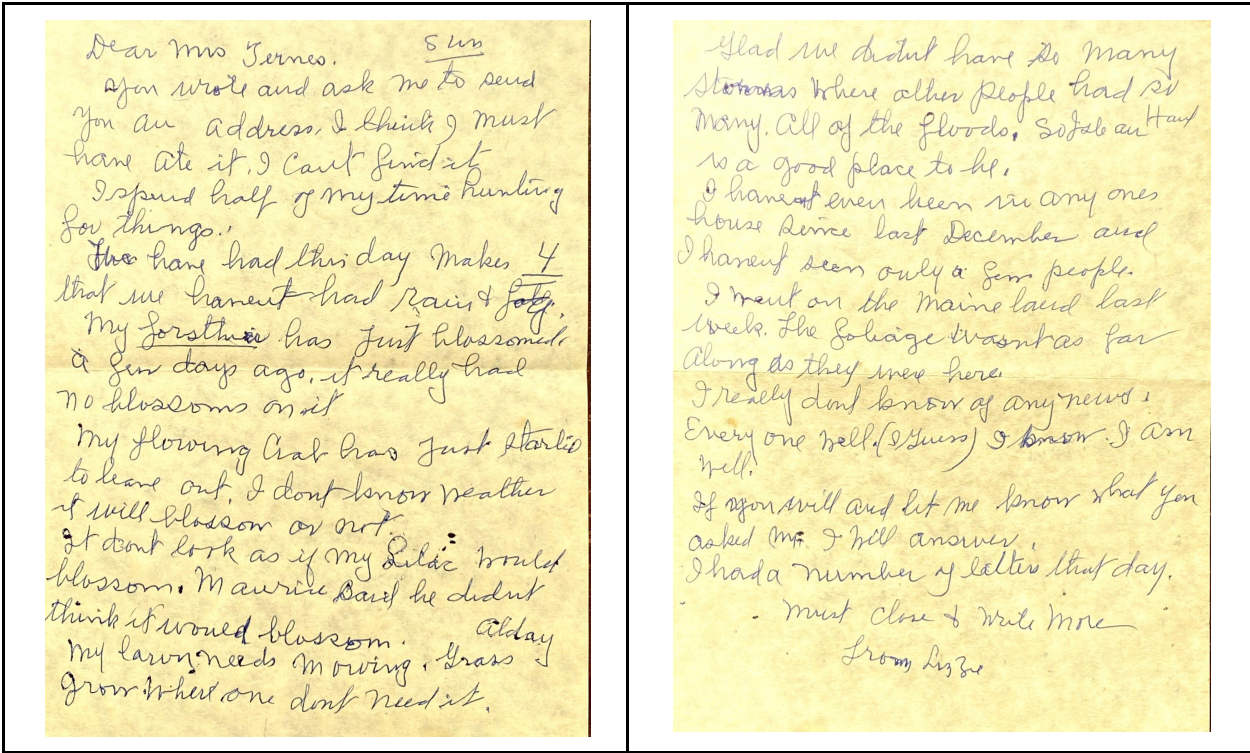
She lived in a small house in the center of town. She had been the postmistress for many years. Maurice Barter (whom I believe was her nephew) brought her a pail of water and a can of kerosene, perhaps daily.

I got up my courage and visited her. She was cordial and welcoming. We corresponded by mail a few times. She addressed me as Mrs. Ternes, and signed her letters, Miss Lizzie or Lizzie. Once, Love, Lizzie.

Recently I came across three of her letters. She writes of the weather, how it rained all of March and April. She tells of lilacs blooming and apple blossoms. In one letter, she says, "I will be 90 yrs old the 8th of Aug...I don't like getting old." She laments that the Breezes are not coming. "I miss not seeing them, I forgot what year they came there at the house."

These letters offer a glimpse into the past and a woman who was honored in her lifetime with a mail boat named for her.

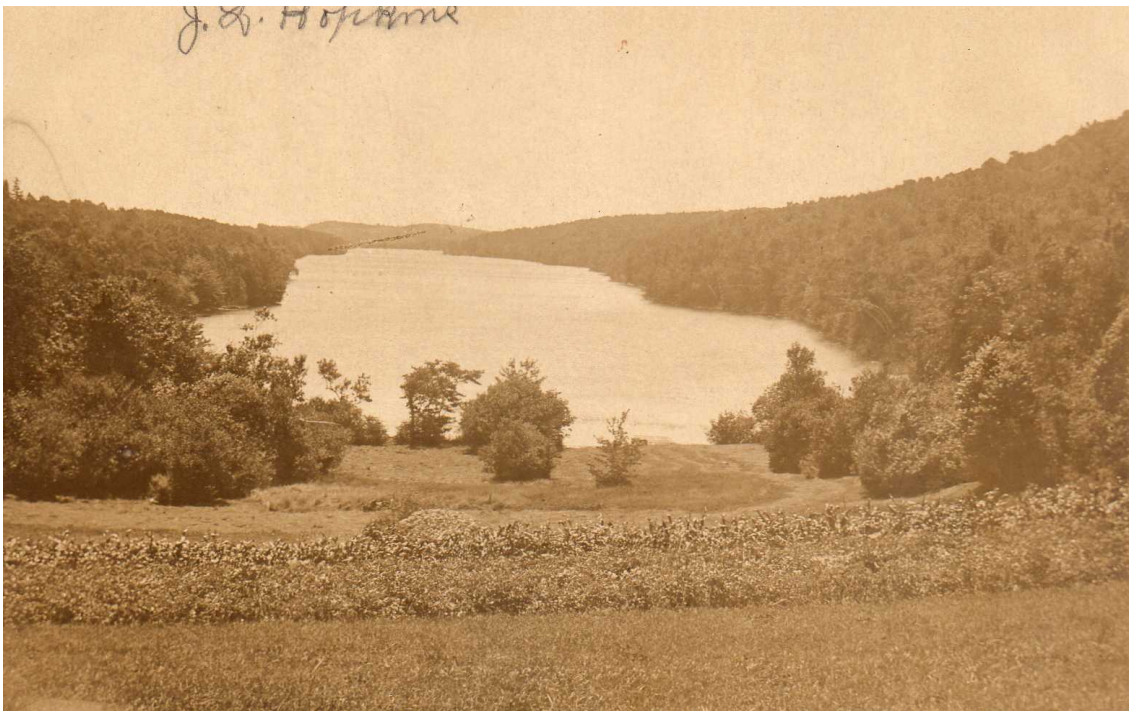
Editor's Note: Below are photos of this one-page double-sided letter. This letter is undated but I suspect it was written on May 8, 1983 but mailed on May 9, which was a Monday.



NOTE: The Historical Society has many of the letters that were sent to Miss Lizzie but very few of her own. If you have any of Miss Lizzie's letters, we would happily enjoy having them and any other artifacts that you would want to donate. Please contact us IsleauHaut History @gmail.com



Miss Lizzie posing in hat, veil, and jewels at Sally and Bob Smith's wedding on Isle au Haut in June 1971. Bob says, "a saucepan from Miss Lizzie was a treasured wedding gift -- a reminder of Isle au Haut in our daily lives when we could not be there."



*Turnips growing in the field below the Turner farmhouse at the north end of the Lake.
Postcard from the collection of Kendra Chubbuck, who believes that the turnips were taken to Bar Harbor to be sold.*

The History of the Turner Farmhouse By James S. Myers

Compiling the history of the Turner Farmhouse at the north end of the lake on Isle au Haut has been a little bit like putting an old jigsaw puzzle together where many of the crucial pieces have been eaten by your children, grandchildren, and the vacuum cleaner. In addition, the cover with the picture of what the jigsaw puzzle is supposed to look like was lost long ago. So, with apologies to the Turner family, their descendants, historians in general, and Isle au Haut historians in particular, here goes.

The farmhouse I am referring to is the one located at the north end of the lake on Lot 22 in the survey by Lothrop Lewis, Esq. dated 1802. Calvin Turner and his family settled there around 1801 according to oral history shared by Lisa Turner. One of Calvin's sons, Asa, married Abigail Smith from Babbidge Island, in what is now North Haven, sometime after 6 August 1809 in Deer Isle (Isle au Haut?); she was 15 and he was 30.

My family was told the farmhouse was built in 1813, but I do not remember by whom or when, so I don't have much evidence to verify that claim. There is, however, genealogical evidence that might support it. By 1813, Asa and Abigail already had 2 children. If Asa had not already started building a house by then, he certainly needed one to house his ever-growing family.

I presume that the farmhouse was not completed in one year. It has a full foundation under half of the house that must have been dug by hand. The foundation is constructed of dry laid stone. It also has massive stones for the foundation of the chimney. These stones must have been winched into place using block and tackle, or rolled into place using animal power. The huge chimney had three fireplaces and two bake ovens on the first floor and one fireplace upstairs. This stonework might have taken most of a year (1813?).

The house was a center chimney Cape with a small front hall, two other rooms downstairs and what was originally the kitchen. It also had a small room off the east end of the kitchen made apparent by the seams in the plaster of the walls and ceiling. My mother thought this might have

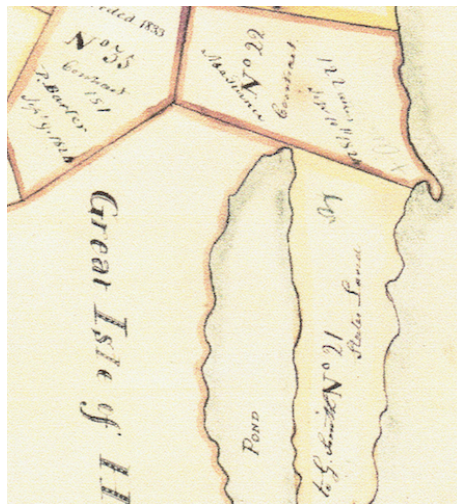
been a birth and death room. Asa and Abigail had ten children in total, all of whom were born on Isle au Haut, so Abigail would have put it to good use!



Another interesting feature of the house is that all the first-floor exterior walls are filled with brick without any mortar. I always wondered what the purpose of all this brick might have been. Brick is a terrible insulator, it does not keep the wind out, and any potential threat from Native American arrows was minimal. One possible reason might have been to keep British musket balls out since the British started to attack Maine in 1814 during the War of 1812. I cannot think of any other reason to go to the time, labor, and expense of filling the walls with brick.

So, my entirely unproven assumption is that the farmhouse may have been started around 1813, the walls fortified with brick in 1814, and the house finished in 1815, perhaps in time for the birth of Asa and Abigail's third child in November. In addition, Asa sold his property in Orland to Thomas Partridge in 1815 thus indicating (to me anyway) that he intended to live on Isle au Haut full time in his newly constructed house.

Unlike my highly speculative history of the house, the history of the property is documented. Calvin, Asa's father, was probably a squatter originally, but he paid taxes in Deer Isle in 1808 (presumably on the farm property). Asa officially bought the property on 2 April 1819 partially paid with a balance due on 2 April 1823. It is unclear if he ever paid the balance due, but the notes on the Lothrop Lewis map show that Lot 22 was contracted to Asa on 10 September 1824. Several years later Asa purchased the property again from the State of Maine on 16 March 1832 for \$92.74. This strange amount may have been the balance that was due in April 1823 (with interest?), or \$0.76 per acre on the 122 acres in the original map.



Lot 22 at the North end of the Pond

If the Turner clan originated at the Farm, why are so many of them buried near the throughfare? Charles F. Turner, in his monograph about the cemeteries of Isle au Haut, speculates (and I agree) that Calvin and his wife, Alice, are probably buried in unmarked graves next to Julia Dodge in our cemetery between the farmhouse and the Lake.

Asa's son, John, however, bought property on the throughfare on 23 January 1836 from Henry Wilson. This parcel must have been near the current Kennedy house because it mentions "(Reserving to myself [Henry Wilson] a certain ground occupied as a burying place as it is now fenced in twenty-five feet square with the privileges of accepting thereto) said John Turner having equal privilege of using the same for his family & none others." In 1853 John sold the property to his father, Asa, with roughly the same language about the burying ground, but with no mention of Henry Wilson's right to be buried there. That deed gave Asa the right to bury his family in that plot. Asa sold it back to John less than a year later, so I have no idea if Henry Wilson, or any of his family, ended up being buried in that cemetery.

Asa died on 23 September 1858 shortly after his 78th birthday. Both he and his wife Abigail are buried in what is now called the Turner Cemetery. I could not find a will for Asa if he had one, so his eight surviving children inherited the farm and buildings on Lot 22 in equal portions. From this point on the history of the property devolves into chaos as the individual shares were sold to various people.

In 1933 Elizabeth Bowditch Eustis started to buy portions of the original property. According to Fred Eustis, his family spent many summers at the Farm during the 1940s even though Fred's mother did not buy the final piece of Lot 22 until 1948 (possibly the 80 acres between the road and Horsemans Point?) The upstairs has two bedrooms with dormers overlooking the lake and a bathroom added by the Eustises. According to George Donnelly, the former caretaker for Point Lookout, when Betsy Eustis was asked what she wanted done with the old outhouse she replied "Burn it!" The Eustises also converted a shed into what is now the kitchen ell, but the kerosene stove used to make domestic hot water made the kitchen too hot. Back then hot water was made in a copper coil wrapped around one of the kerosene burners which burned continuously. The hot water was then gravity fed into a large hot water tank in the kitchen.



*Cedar Ledge Farm, Isle au Haut, Maine.
1943
Christmas Greetings from Augustus + Elizabeth Eustis*

A Christmas Card from Betsy and Gus at The Farm, 1943. Mary Fennell

Fred's father, Gus, came up with a unique solution by rigging up a big sail to catch the southwest wind off the lake and blow it into the kitchen windows to keep the cook cool. Gus also had a well dug directly in front of the kitchen because he wanted it "right out there where I can see it!" After Betsy died, the property was willed to Fred's sister Peggy (Eustis) Richardson.

My parents, Gordon and Nancy Myers, first came to Isle au Haut in 1962 as guests of Dan and Eloise Ellis. They fell in love with the island even though it was foggy their entire visit. The following year they brought their family (including me) and rented the farmhouse with an option to buy. In 1964, they purchased the property and the Myers clan has been living there ever since. About a year later, they built the patio on the east side of the house with granite pieces scrounged from Crotch Island and towed under water behind George Donnelly's boat to reduce their weight during transport.



The Farm House in 1965

In 1973, my parents began the construction of an apartment on the second floor of the barn to give them some privacy from their children and grandchildren. They also rebuilt the crumbling chimney in the farmhouse (there was no Portland cement when it was built originally). It now has three fireplaces on the first floor and two on the second.

This may be a work of historical fiction, or wishful thinking. I am hopeful that over time more information will come to light on the farmhouse and Turner Family that will confirm, or refute, my assumptions. If you have any corrections, questions, or comments, please let me know at jswiftmy@comcast.net. Thanks!

I would like to acknowledge Kristen Carlson-Lewis for her invaluable assistance in researching, adding, and correcting materials for this article, however all errors and omissions are my own. I would also like to thank my wife, Kim, for correcting too many drafts to count!

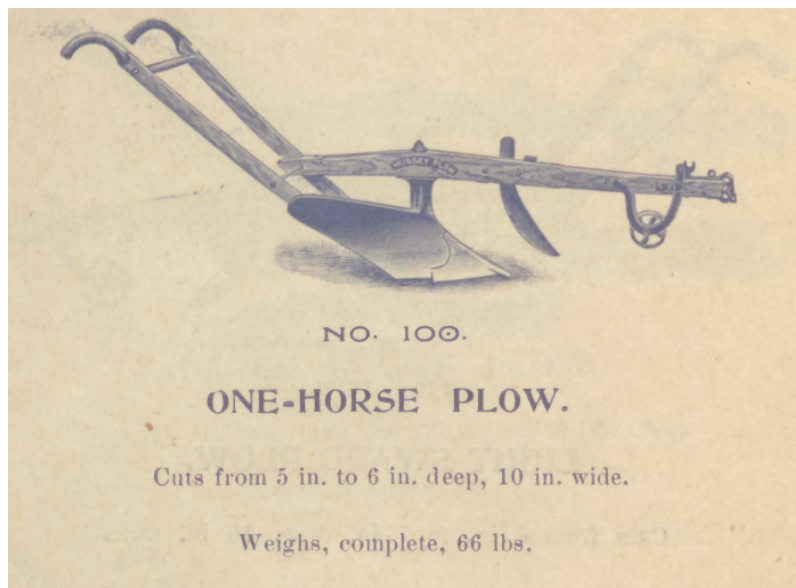
Farmer's Plow Blade by Kristen Carlson-Lewis

One of the aspects I enjoy most about being a member of the Isle au Haut Historical Society is the unexpected treasures that come to light on a regular basis. One day while chatting with Rachel Harris, she enthusiastically mentioned that she had visited The Farm of James and Kim Myers, north of the pond on the east side of Isle au Haut. Rachel noticed an old rusted plow blade on their patio. While researching island history that included this property, I couldn't help but be intrigued.



Plow blade found on the property of James and Kim Myers, Isle au Haut, Maine

Excavation being done on the property within the past five or so years led to the discovery of various items located in a group of trees between the barn and the road. It was only this past summer that James took a closer look at the plow blade and noticed writing on the blade "T.H. HUSSEY N. BERWICK ME 100." Out of curiosity, James researched the company online and found an undated catalog [~1895] for the [Hussey Plow Company of North Berwick, Maine](#). When you contemplate the difficulty of using such a plow given the rocky composition of the island, it must have been quite a challenge. This is when we can surely appreciate modern inventions.



From the [Hussey Plow Co. catalogue](#), page 5, 1895.

Miss Damon's Wall and Gate by Kristen Carlson-Lewis

As one approaches the Isle au Haut town landing on the mail boat, one can gaze up and see a house on the hill with a medley of vehicles of varying make and model lined up in a row below the house along the roadway. At least during the summer season, the overflow from the town landing parking area inevitably ends up here. But off season, a glimpse of the same viewpoint reveals a stunning stone wall. Not quite as visible is a decorative iron gate nestled along the wall allowing entry to the current home. More than a hundred years ago, this wall and gate were built to suit Miss Teresa Damon, owner of the property.



Miss Teresa Damon's seasonal home prior to building of stone wall and gate ([Photo courtesy of U. Maine – Orono Fogler Library Special Collections – Turner Family Papers](#))

Miss Damon purchased this property from John E. Barter in 1901.¹ Part of the original Lot 7, Miss Damon purchased this and many other properties within the town of Isle au Haut. Her largest purchase of Merchant's Island remains in the ownership of her extended family to this day.² Miss Damon's time on the island was fairly limited as she passed away in 1923. But her name remains known most likely due to the enduring presence of the stone wall and iron gate that continue to grace the front of the property today.

The Wall

As can be seen below, the stone wall is in the process of being built by Mr. Lurvey and his crew in the spring of 1905. As determined by a later property owner, the stone wall goes down at least three feet underground, below the frost line. The former owners also discovered a drainage tunnel with flat side stones and flat stones on top of them conducive to long term water flow. This attention to water flow most assuredly contributed to the wall's longevity. In early May, the workmen were about done with the wall. The brick mason arrived that same day.³ In addition to the wall, a set of granite steps and a brick entryway were added.

¹ Hancock County Registry of Deeds

² Hancock County Registry of Deeds

³ 1905 Diary of A.J.H. Turner, blacksmith, Isle au Haut, Maine, 8 May entry (Holding of Isle au Haut Historical Society).



Building of Miss Damon's stone wall – Mr. Lurvey standing on right (Photo courtesy of U. Maine – Orono Fogler Library Special Collections – Turner Family Papers)

The Gate

According to A.J.H. Turner's diary entry of February 2, 1905, he received the news from Mr. Bowditch that he had the go-ahead to build a gate for Miss Damon to complement her stone wall.⁴ It could be that Ernest W. Bowditch was possibly involved in the landscaping of her yard due to his expertise in this arena. Regardless, A.J.H. started work on the gate on the 20th of March 1905 in his workshop, or blacksmith shop.

Turner subsequently worked on the gate between April 6th and the 21st over five days. His April 22nd entry notes that he completed putting the gate together. He commenced to work on it again on April 24th and May 3rd. Finally, on May 22nd, he spent time blackening the gate. Lastly, on June 13th, he hung Miss Damon's gate the morning of her afternoon arrival! It has been noted that A.J.H. Turner signed his initials or his name on the gate. Look carefully next time you are strolling by the gate.

Over the years, the wall and gate have withstood the test of time and remain an island fixture although the Damon residence was torn down in years past. A new home was built by the DeWitt brothers, Rob and John for their parents, Bob and Bobby DeWitt on the property in the 1970s which stands to this day.

⁴ 1905 Diary of A.J.H. Turner, blacksmith, Isle au Haut, Maine (holding of Isle au Haut Historical Society).

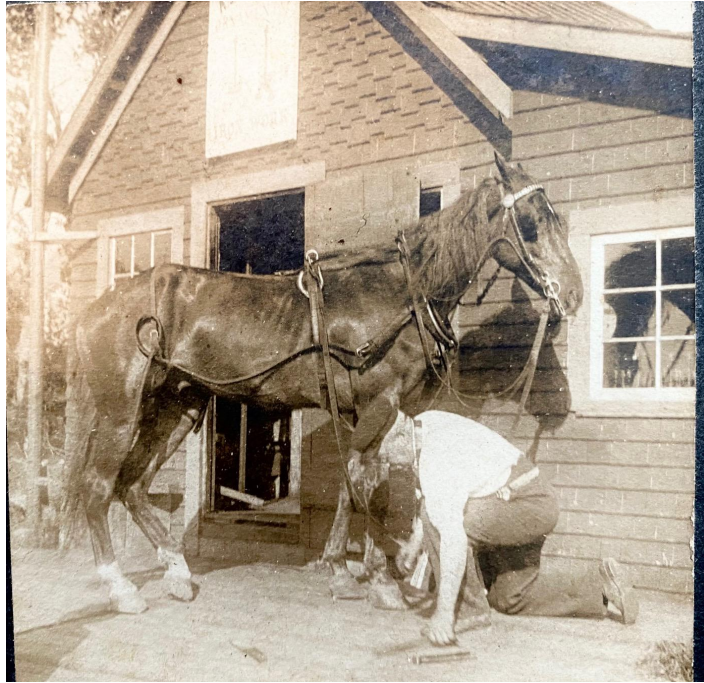


Photo of AJH Turner in front of his Blacksmith Shop from the collections of the Isle au Haut Historical Society.



Billy Barter, [descendant of John E. Barter's brother Joshua] at the gate – Summer 2021, our seasonal residence at the time. Photo by Mary Fennell.

Return of a Pre-1947 Reed Organ to the Church

Photos and story by Allen Myers

In 2012, I surveyed the reed organs of Isle au Haut and found there were 12 or 13 of them. A couple of years later, serving as a visiting pastor, and staying at the parsonage, I discovered a photo album there which included a photograph of the interior of the church prior to the removal of the chimney and the installation of the current reed organ.



Old photo

Blowing up the photo, I was able to see diagnostic features on the organ's case which identified it unequivocally as the Carpenter reed organ I had earlier documented in 'Alice's House', part of the Hoskins' compound in Rich's Cove.



Blow-up

The existing reed organ in the church was an Estey "Modernistic" model from 1946, installed in the church in 1947. The Carpenter, therefore, was its immediate predecessor. In 1946, Elizabeth Eustis sent out a letter on her own stationery:

Dear-----,

*I am writing the letter quoted below to many of the summer visitors of the Island:
Did you know that Mary & Ned Holmes are celebrating their Golden Wedding
Anniversary this summer on July 8th at Burnt Island.*

*They are hoping very much that any of their friends who would wish to give them a
present on this occasion would instead send a contribution towards a fund for repairing
the organ at the church at Isle au Haut.*

*Mary & Ned have asked me to tell their friends of this wish of theirs, and so if you are
interested to join in this, will you send me your donation so that we may have the organ
repaired before their anniversary.*

Sincerely yours,

I hope you and the members of the church will like Mr & Mrs Holmes' wish.

Neither the organ nor the repairs needed were specified, but we now know from the photograph that the organ was the Carpenter in Alice's House.

The response must have been generous, for the benefactors were able to purchase a brand-new reed organ, which has been in service with minor repairs for the last 75 years. [Twelve years later, the Estey Organ Company went out of business. They were the oldest of all American reed manufacturers and the most prolific, producing over 500,000 reed organs in their 100-year existence.]

Anticipating that the Estey would need a rest and refurbishment sometime, I began restoring the Carpenter. John DeWitt turned the missing case pieces on his lathe and I found two missing stop knobs from another Carpenter. The work went on at the parsonage on Isle au Haut and at my shop in Brooklin. Ultimately, the whole organ was moved piecemeal to my shop where I was able to complete the restoration.



The restored Carpenter Reed Organ

Bill and Brenda Clark's pick-up truck was used both to move the organ to my shop from Stonington in 2018 and move it back to Stonington this past September. The PLA crew returned the organ to the church from the town wharf.



The organ on its way to my shop via the Otter



Bill Clark, Matt Barbour and Victor of the PLA crew

Mabel Ellis played the first chords heard in the church from this instrument in over 75 years and Bernardine Barter sang along, as she had to the accompaniment of this very organ as a tennager at choir practice in Alice's house many years ago.



Bernadine Barter sings and Mabel Ellis plays the restored organ

Isle au Haut Ladies Hiking Society by Jean Archibald



Summer 2001 or 2002

Standing from Left to Right: Sue Swaney, Maybel Chapin, Sharen Wilson, Barbara Brown, ?, Willy Cochran, Gerry Wurzburg, Pat Marks, Carol Bergeson, Jean Stanbury.

Kneeling from Left to Right: Winnie Skolnikoff, Ellen Wells, Lucas Woollen, Christine Gorby, Peggi Stevens, Bernadine Barter, Jean Archibald.

The Isle au Haut Ladies Hiking Society, led by Nancy Woollen (Head Harbor), began one summer day in the 1980s when a few intrepid women hiked and chatted their way over the Goat Trail after a satisfying breakfast of bacon and eggs, homemade jams, banana bread, coffee, juice and Nancy's favorite – seaweed "blanc mange".

It was initially a small band, but over the years, it grew. Never exclusive, the institution has always been kind, the talk cheerful, and the feelings grandly beneficent. That is because the group never lost Nancy's spirit.

There was always a bit of a joke when Ted Hoskins announced the upcoming Tuesday gathering from the pulpit. He could not resist quipping, "You mean no men are invited?" Actually one male did attend once: Jenny Archibald Williams' baby son, Noah, came in his backpack.

The brothers Woollen contributed: Malcolm named the group, Ian cleared trails.

One of the most memorable trips happened after careful planning. Divided in half, one group took the Herrick trail north along the west side of the pond, while the other half went up the pond in boats. At a pre planned time they met where the trail comes down to the pond and SWITCHED, all coming back down on legs or water. (Barbara Brown opted to travel in Bobby Turner's rowboat for the entire event.)

The number of women involved over the years probably reached about 50. Some of their names are listed below:

Jean Archibald, Bernadine Barter, Carol Bergeson, Barbara Brown, Mitzi Carleton, Jenny Chamberlin, Willy Cochran, Anne Davies, Brenda Clark, Marjorie Colby, Elizabeth Doerman, Mary Fennell, Kathie Fiveash, Meg Gailey, Marie Hamly, Rachel Harris, Linda Hoskins, Sarah Hotchkiss, Deborah Landers, Mary Lingly, Bel MacDonald, Pat Marks, Jean McBean, Terri Patchen, Margaret Pomeroy, Lee Proctor, Holly Scott, Jessica Skolnikoff, Winnie Skolnikoff, Jean Stanbury, Barbara Ternes, Lisa Tomasi, Martha Tomasi, Gerry Turner, Carla Weemhoff, Ellen Wells, Jenny Williams, Karen Wilson, Lucas Woollen, Christine Gorby (Woollen), Susan Swaney (Woollen), Nancy Woollen, Gerry Wurzburg.



*Nancy Woollen.
Photo by Carla Weemhof 1988.*

Who Needs a Button? By Kendra Chubbuck

When I was helping Nanny (Clarice “Peggy” Bowen Colby) rearrange her back closet (she was looking for some material to make a crazy quilt) we found lots of goodies! Nanny had lots of hidden treasures in her many closets and back rooms so why wouldn't I want to help! While we



Nanny, Peggy Bowen Colby



Kendra at her family plot in Duck Harbor.

were looking for the material, I came across several old tins of buttons. Nanny told me they were her mother's, and her aunt's and grandmother's buttons (Beatrice Hamilton Bowen, Eva Bowen, and Sarah Hamilton). Nanny said back in the late 1800s and early 1900s they saved buttons. In fact, they saved everything, zippers, material, everything they thought they might need to use later. People were very poor back then so everybody saved their pennies and saved everything and took care of all their possessions. We took care of our toys and dolls and our clothes. I was amazed by the story and all the buttons. So many buttons. So many interesting items in the closet!

My Nanny died in April 1990, and I was devastated. My mom received all my grandmother's personal possessions. My mom got everything in my Nanny's closet! My Mom was not as excited as I was. My mom passed in 1997. About a year later my dad started cleaning out the house with my three brothers and my help. We came across the many tins of buttons and my dad decided he was going to take them to the dump. I protested. "NO!" "You can't take them to the dump!" "I want them!" "Kendra, what are you going to do with all of them damn buttons?" I said, "I don't know but they were not going to the dump."



Kendra's Family Button Collection by Mary Fennell

I stored the tins of buttons from 1998 until 2012. In May 2012, I brought them to the Island. I put them in the glass water jug they are in now. They are displayed at Shore Shop Gifts. People are always asking about the jug of buttons and are taking pictures of the jug because they just can't believe how many buttons are in the jug. Statistically, every inch and $\frac{1}{2}$ is about 2,000 buttons. We figure there is about 27,000 buttons. So, to put it in perspective, I have buttons from my Great, Great Grandmother, Great Grandmother, Grandmother, Great Aunt, and Mother. And three of them were born on Isle au Haut and lived here most of their life.

Isle au Haut Folks by Mary Fennell



Alvah MacWilliam



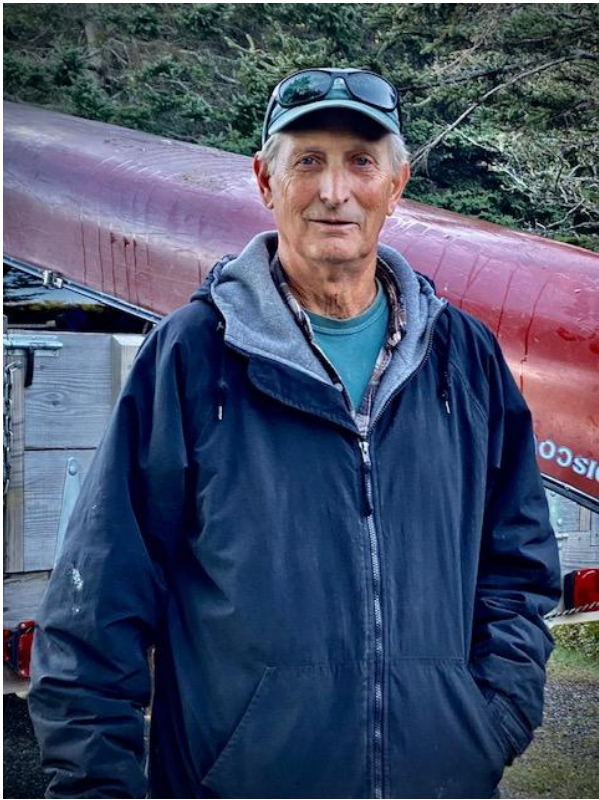
Kim and James Myers



Gerry Wurzburg and Grady Watts



Billy and Bernie Barter



John DeWitt



Harold and Ruth van Doren



Holly Scott



Kanga, Carl, Karen and Sharen Wilson

A Note from your Historical Society

We hope that you have enjoyed this Winter 2023 Newsletter. Copies of previous Newsletters can be found on our website.

The Isle au Haut Historical Society has not been idle during the Winter. We have been busy and productive during the past year despite the limitations imposed by COVID. Hopefully, that's behind us now..

- The Isle au Haut Historical Society may have finally found a home. The Town has suggested that we consider sharing the old Power Company building at the Town Landing with the Broadband Committee.
- Several of us at the end of last summer visited the Great Cranberry Island Historical Society to learn how another Historical Society manages their affairs.
- This summer we will be returning to our usual summer programming. Our tentative schedule for Summer 2023:

July 26: A Couples Night, an evening of personal history of how each couple met. If you, as a couple, would like to share your story, please contact us.

August 23: Harold van Doren reading from his new book.

- Donna Hopkins has become our new secretary.
- Kris Carlson-Lewis, although no longer summering on the Island, continues researching island families and documenting the content of our collections.
- Bob Smith, an active board member, is working with the Town to find us a new home so that we can have more of a presence to display and make our collection more available to the public
- Stew Foelix has maintained our website.
- Tom Guglielmo, acting president, has been producing our Newsletters.

We hope you will support your Isle au Haut Historical Society by becoming a member or renew your membership for 2023. To do so, please send your name, email address, and annual dues payment of \$10 for individual or family membership (check preferred) to The Isle au Haut Historical Society, PO Box 7, Isle au Haut, ME 04645.

Membership dues help preserve our rich Island history and support the programs offered by the Historical Society. We especially welcome your involvement. If you are interested in taking a more active role, please send an email to IsleauHautHistory@gmail.com.

To all of you who joined last year and sent in contributions. Thank You!

Thanks to all who have contributed articles to this year's Newsletter: Jean Archibald, Kristen Carlson-Lewis, Barbara Ternes, Kendra Chubbuck, Allen Myers, James Myers, Harold van Doren. Special thanks to Mary Fennell for her many lovely photos.