

# The Colonel's Journal

News From the Swan's Island Historical Society & More

Issue #3

Spring/Summer 2022



Swan's Island: Six miles east of ordinary & preserving life the way it was!

**Dear wesley,** This is an invitation to **MAKE HISTORY** with us. Our goal is to link today's news to...history. In the process, some of you may recognize the same format that Donna Wiegler used in her much loved and missed *Swan's Island News*. We hope you enjoy it & click the **DONATE** button at the end.

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Our namesake, the Colonel

## A Message from Our New President



Greetings all and Happy Spring --- a time of new beginnings. And that was never truer than now as I begin my role as President of Swan's Island Historical Society (SIHS). My name is Karen Dougherty. While originally from Connecticut, my family hails from Aroostook County, Maine. I am a retired Human Resources Operations executive and have served on Boards of several non-profit organizations including the Children's Museum of Niantic, Ct. I have one son and was a widow for over 16 years until I reconnected with an old high school

friend who happened to live on Swan's Island. Two years ago, Gwen May married us right here on the Island. I engaged with several members of SIHS and loved the work they were doing on "Preserving Life the Way It Was." I became active with the SIHS Archive Committee and have learned so much about the rich history of the island. In June 2021, I agreed to serve as the organization's Secretary.

My first order of business is to thank our out-going President, **Dale Joyce**, for working with others to bring the Swan's Island Historical Society back to life. During his tenure, he and his team acquired our new space here at what used to be the Methodist Church, set up our new office, acquired numerous artifacts from generous donors willing to share their pieces of history. Last summer we finally opened the doors to a welcoming public! Thank you, Dale, for your leadership, your commitment, your time and your vision. We wish you all the best in your new adventures.

We're off to a great start but we continue to need your help. We're planning a variety of fun and interesting events, but we can't do them without volunteers...you. If you can give us even a little of your time, please let us know. **Speaking of help, we are excited and grateful that the Island Institute has awarded SIHS an Island Fellow to work with us starting in the Fall.**

In this issue, you'll see an exciting new format for our quarterly newsletter. Let us know what you think by emailing [newsletter@swansislandhistory.org](mailto:newsletter@swansislandhistory.org). We'd love to hear from you!

Karen D

# Updates and Past Dates

## Ferry Ramp Problem

Everyone weathered that storm together, in real Swan's Island style: pitch in and get through it.

Here's a link to what it was like in February:

<https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/local/hundreds-swans-island-residents-face-limited-ferry-service-after-winter-storm-damage/97-7c18870c-d5f8-46f8-a1dc-79cb604a05ab>

For more current updates on schedules, progress on the NEW FERRY BOAT, and other planned projects for Swan's Island (like the \$331k proposed expansion of Crew Quarters) please visit:

<https://www.maine.gov/mdot/ferry/swansisland/> AND

<https://www.maine.gov/mdot/projects/workplan/data/workplan/town/SwansIsland.pdf>



And here's a link to history that will put the winter's ferry problems into perspective:

### The "Sunbeam" as our car ferry.....ca. 1960

Left with no reliable connection to the mainland, Swan's Island responded with resourcefulness, self-sufficiency, and a push towards modernization. Transportation was taken over by individual boat owners, who served as an on-demand ferry system. Pedestrian

transportation was also supplied by the Maine Seacoast Mission, an organization founded in 1905 to help Down East island communities. Their boat, the "Sunbeam," provided periodic transportation as well as teachers, doctors, and preachers when needed. In some of the coldest winters, the Sunbeam was the islander's only option for reaching the mainland over icy waters.

Another form of pedestrian transportation, the "Seawind," was operated by Fred Thomas and George Stanley. On a regular run it departed Swan's Island at 7AM from the Quarry Wharf in Minturn, stopped at nearby Frenchboro and McKinley (now known as Bass Harbor) and returned to Swan's Island in the evening. The Seawind carried passengers and freight, and the Quarry Wharf became a social center at landing time when Islanders gathered to exchange news and goods.

Our Board Member, Nancy Carter, shared some memories about the Seawind, Captain George Stanley, and Deckhand Kenny LeMoine Sr. One Saturday when she was 16, after having stayed off for a ball game, she came down to Sim Davis' dock near today's ferry terminal. "The fog was so thick you could cut it with a knife." There were a few unknown men acting rowdy (more than tipsy) on board. She was uncomfortable but said to George, "I gotta go home." He sensed what she was feeling and said, "Okay, Dear, on one condition. You gotta stay in the pilot house with me." The men got off on Frenchboro. On the way home, between Frenchboro and the Island, she remembers Kenny LeMoine standing on the bow blowing the fog horn, inching along through the fog. Then, bam! They ran into another boat and put a hole in its side. Fortunately it was above the water line so they made it in safely. "George was a very kind, hardworking man," she said, "with three kids at home, Belva, George and Sonny, and Markie came later." Lucky and amazing kids.

## A Blast from the Past

Notes from our Historian, Dexter Lee



### The Body on Dead Man's Beach

One day in October 1904, 24-year-old Horace Dunham was gunning for birds near Red Point. He found a man's body washed ashore on what is now called *Dead Man's Beach*. The man rested face up, was well dressed, wore black patent leather shoes. No identification was found on him. When looking for identification Horace found several gold coins in his pockets. The man was buried in an unmarked grave near the beach, with the gold coins still in his pockets. It has been affirmed by others that Horace would never have robbed a dead man.

Horace Dunham, 1880-1954, was unmarried and lived with his brother Irving, also unmarried, at Joyce's Beach in what we know as the Scofield House or the Appletree House.

Joyce's Beach was named for James Joyce, one of the earliest settlers. He had a grist mill there where the brook from the Stockbridge Pond comes down. There used to be a bridge at this location for the Town road, now discontinued. The beach was a summer landing spot for many of the Atlantic fishermen.

Horace himself lived there until July 19, 1954 when he moved to Rose Hill.

# SIHS Committee News

**Building Committee:** The Building Committee and Fundraising / Grant Committee completed and submitted their application for a grant from the 1772 Foundation for work needed to resolve the building's substantial drainage and foundation issues. They are working to obtain specific proposals from contractors to do this work as well as developing a strategic work plan for the effort.

The Committee is also researching options for replacing the current furnace as well as addressing other immediate general repairs needed. Many thanks to Jerry Goto for agreeing to do minor maintenance on the building as needed. If you are interested in helping us out in any or all of our many building projects, please email Ben Tongue at [BenTongue@verizon.net](mailto:BenTongue@verizon.net).

**Fundraising/Events:** The Committee is in the process of finalizing the 2022 Events Calendar. The possible events include monthly Ice Cream Socials, regular Craft Fairs, a Swan's Island History Series and a fun Evening of Music in mid August. Stay tuned for more details! **As always, if you would like to volunteer to help out at any of these events, or suggest other events, please email Nancy Carter at [carterhouse500@gmail.com](mailto:carterhouse500@gmail.com).**

**Archive Committee:** The Committee continues to accept and record your generous donations of artifacts as they prepare to open the Museum for the 2022 season. **If you have some time to lend a hand, or materials to donate to this effort, contact Gwen May at [GwenM@swansislandhistory.org](mailto:GwenM@swansislandhistory.org).**

**Logo Committee:** Great progress is being made on adopting a logo that best represents the Society and its mission.



## Dear Clyde

Dear Clyde:

*On Sunday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1964, we played baseball against the Frenchboro team at the field in Atlantic right below where Mertic's Restaurant was and across the road from Austin Joyce's house; you know, the one that Mertic Morrison and his family lived in. It's gone now, the house, the restaurant, Austin's blueberry field, the airstrip. All gone except for that field...and the memories!*

*At the end of that game when we were leaving someone said, "Check the telephone pole in front of Austin's house." Do you remember that?*

Your friend,  
Sonny

Dear Sonny:

Oh yes, I remember. I posted that sign on the pole. Used an old Crown Pilot Cracker box to write it on. Proud of you, Sonny! The sign said, "Hootenanny tonight in honor of Sonny Sprague goin' into the army." I guess that started it! A lotta people came to say goodbye. A lotta people. Especially...cause... well, they were nervous, what with your uncle in the last war not coming back. That night at about 8 pm you sauntered over to my hootenanny. Quite a few people there. I was a little, well, a coupla sheets to the wind. Got my accordion out and away we went. We sang for a coupla hours, *Yellow Rose of Texas*, *Blue Skirt Waltz* ... Yes, I remember.

That was Sunday the 16th. You went away on the 18<sup>th</sup> to be in Ellsworth to go into the Army. I met the ferry, too, when you came home from that war. Just like you met the ferry when I came home for the last time. Thank you, Sonny, my dear friend...and remember, between you and me, I DID know what side the toast was buttered on "you fool, you fool, you g..d..m fool..... hydraulics boy, hydraulics!"

Your friend,  
Clyde

## A trip down memory lane:



He was "A little bit different, but just as good as could be, just as good as could be. "

# Passings

These are our newest guardian angels:



Billie Coleman

George Stanley III

Sally Lofving

Mary Colbeth Johnson

Raymond Brown

Mellie Anderson

Brett Smith

George Stanley III

Edward Gilley (husband of Janet Staples)

Florence Knight Hammond Carolyn "Sue" Blake

Ann Easton

Bill Houlden

Marion Turner Stinson

Frances Munsell

Dale Staples

Sally Strawn

## Out & About: Community News

### Comprehensive Planning Committee Report From Sonja Philbrook, Chairwoman



Comprehensive Plans are necessary under Maine law, and our draft has been completed. The Swan's Island Comprehensive Plan is a vision for the Town of Swan's Island based on analysis, strategic thinking, and coordination with the Island community. The Plan will serve as a guide for decision-making over the next decade, and is now in the hands of the Selectmen and will be sent on to the State, after which it will be sent back to the Island for a public meeting where the Residents of Swan's Island will discuss and accept it, probably at the end of the Summer. The Town owes a debt of gratitude to Noel Musson of the *Musson Group*, and to the duly sworn members of the Comprehensive Planning Committee for their exhaustive work formulating it over the past several years. If you have questions or comments please contact the CPC Chair, Sonja Philbrook at [sphilbrook@mdirss.org](mailto:sphilbrook@mdirss.org)

### Mill Pond Health Center Services submitted by Donna Weigle



Just like the rest of the country, and the world, the Covid-19 pandemic became an historic event, and required much time and attention at the Mill Pond Health Center. Working with the Maine Sea Coast Mission and Mount Desert Island Hospital, we hosted five vaccine clinics for residents 18 and over, including a booster vaccine clinic. The Maine CDC and Department of Health and Human Services supplied rapid Covid-19 antigen tests on a regular basis, as needed, to the Mill Pond Health Center. More than 100 residents were able to stay on the island and be tested, rather than go to the mainland.

**Some of the health care services offered at the Mill Pond Health Center, located at 235 Minturn Road, include: Primary Care Medicine, Podiatry, Dentistry, Phlebotomy, Telemedicine, AA and NA meetings, and Social Services.**

I have been providing medical and social services to the Swan's Island community through the Mill Pond Health Center since it opened in 2007. A few years ago, Laurie Farley began working with me. Together we make a great team and bring a vast array of medical experience.

Contact: Health Center Telephone/526-4264 or Fax/526-4038. You can also call Donna at home at 526-4101  
<http://www.swansisland.org/index.php/island-information/island-health-center>

### Swan's Island Yacht Club submitted by Barbara Howard



Keep calm and sail on....The Swan's Island Yacht Club will be launching its 2022 season in June. Members and guests are welcome to sign up for free sailing lessons which will once again be offered on Wednesdays in July and August, rain or shine! We're planning three action-packed Sunday races in August, a Fourth of July celebration at Trafton's Wharf, complete with fireworks and more! Moorings are available to members and guests. Join us!

**"Land was created to provide a place for  
boats to visit" --- Brooks Atkinson**

## Breakfasts at the Hall

June 19  
July 3  
July 10  
July 1  
July 31  
August 14  
October 9

7 to 9 AM - all you can eat!

## Mill Pond Health Center Schedule of Care Provider

6/22---- Melissa Lower Family Nurse Practitioner  
7/14 ---- Dr Gabriel Plourde  
7/27----Melissa Lower Family Nurse Practitioner  
8/24----Melissa Lower Family Nurse Practitioner  
9/8----Dr Gabriel Plourde  
9/28----Melissa Lower Family Nurse Practitioner  
10/26----Melissa Lower Family Nurse Practitioner  
11/10----Dr Gabriel Plourde  
11/23----Melissa Lower Family Nurse Practitioner  
12/28----Melissa Lower Family Nurse Practitioner

AA----Wednesdays at 7pm  
NA----Saturdays at 7PM

**Swan's Island EMS----911**

## Poetry from Atlantic Road

### Wintering

It's early. A gaunt early moon  
is a frozen hole  
in the gray, still sky.

The Captain Henry Lee, our ferry,  
won't be crossing today.

The island, cut off, locked down,  
is without electricity. Or telephone.

Giant and collapsed ice heaves,  
like megaliths,  
clutter Mackerel Cove.

The roads are frozen. Snowdrifts  
are frozen. Deep artesian well  
casings are frozen. Domestic hot water  
pipes are frozen. Septic lines, frozen.  
Gas lines, frozen solid, too,  
and my pickup truck wouldn't start  
last Friday.

Buddy at the dump described oil  
in his Cherokee as slushy.

January doesn't thaw  
until the very first purple crocus bulb  
blooms in May.

by Island poet Gary Rainford  
originally published in *Salty Liquor*.



*Adrift, the Love and Loss of Living with Dementia* , is forthcoming this April by North Country Press.





our Summer Issue.

## Then: The Swan's Island Telephone and Telegraph Company:

In 1896 two store owners, H.W. Joyce in Atlantic and Isaac W. Stinson in Swan's Island Village, had a telephone line between their stores so they could talk to each other. That paved the way for the SITTC. **Lil Smith is pictured. Read about her and Bert in**

## Now: Katelynn's Swan's Island Stray Cat Program

The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."  
(Gandhi)

*Our history will record the compassion of Swan's Islanders toward one another, and because of the heroic efforts of Katelynn LeMoine and others, it will also record compassion toward Island animals. Katelynn's report will be in the next issue of The Colonel's Journal, but for now, if you are interested in helping her you can email her at [knotty.girl@icloud.com](mailto:knotty.girl@icloud.com) for information.*

## The Island Stores: TIMS







Our Archivist, Gwen May, has suggested a retrospective of "Island Stores" ---- Harbor Cash Market, Dunham's, Ethel's, Ranquist's, Newman's, Morse's, Nancy and Jerry's, and others. If you have stories about these or other Island stores in our past, let us know by emailing them to: [newsletter@swansislandhistory.org](mailto:newsletter@swansislandhistory.org)

Let's start with a link to:  
The Grocers at TIMS: Kathy and Brian Krafjack

**Meet the Grocers:** <https://blog.meetmable.com/meet-the-grocers-edition-1-brian-of-tims>

**If you see these creatures, DON'T GET NEAR THEM!! YOU'LL BREAK OUT IN WELTS, AND MAKE HISTORY ITCHING FOR A WEEK OR MORE!!!**

Browntail Moth	Eastern Tent	Forest Tent	Spongy Moth
Look for Overall brown color; White tufts along sides; Red-orange dots on tail-end (other types of caterpillars have similar spots)	Look for White stripe down center of back Blue spots like the "eye" in peacock feather along each side of stripe	Look for White or off-white footprint-shaped marks down the center of the back Blue body coloration in later instars	Look for Prominent knobs with hairs on each side of head capsule. Five pairs of blue- and six pairs of red- spots along back (4 <sup>th</sup> instar and later).
			
<b>Invasive</b> <b>Human &amp; Forest Health Impacts</b>	Native Mostly aesthetic impacts	Native Occasional outbreaks	<b>Invasive</b> Forest Health Impacts Quarantined pest

There are relief salves available at Carroll's Drug, or: in a small Tupperware dish mix half a tube of hydrocortisone cream, and half a tube of Benadryl cream. Add Witch Hazel and calamine lotion until it's the consistency of the calamine lotion. Apply to the areas with a cotton ball. Sweet relief! You can use this four times a day.

## Helpful Links

The Town of Swan's Island  
<http://www.swansisland.org/>

Ferry Schedule and Pricing:  
<http://swansisland.weebly.com/swans-island-ferry-service.html>

Transfer Station aka The North Mall Hours & Info: <http://www.swansisland.org/index.php/island-information/waste-transfer-station>

Sweet Chariot Music Festival:  
<https://www.sweetchariotmusicfestival.com>

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### Note from the Editor

**IF YOU DOWNLOAD THIS NEWSLETTER SET YOUR DOWNLOAD AT 80% TO  
KEEP ARTICLES FROM BEING CUT IN HALF!**

What FUN it's been creating this newsletter. A BIG thank you to all who contributed, and an apology to those whose contributions, due to the newsletter's length, will have to appear in a future issue.

We are hoping that some of you will chip in by sending voluntary subscriptions. We suggest \$20/yr (or more if you will) for the four seasonal issues and the monthly **News Notes** also available online.

**If you have news or announcements or comments for the next "Summer Issue" or want to "Ask Clyde," please let us know by emailing info to [newsletter@swansislandhistory.org](mailto:newsletter@swansislandhistory.org)**

Thanks for making history with us,  
Wesley

**These and future issues will only be available by email or online at [swansislandhistory.org](http://swansislandhistory.org) unless you specifically request a printed copy.**

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