



The Weathervane

Fall

A Quarterly for and from West Gardiner

2019

The Cambridge Gun and Rod Club by Debra Couture

*Information for the article was taken from articles written by Virginia Curtis (8/1953), The Portland Monthly Magazine– Leigh Donaldson (2011) and Maine's Visible Black History Talbot/Price

History states that Clive Miller was working on a logging crew around 1893 in West Gardiner when he first visited Lake Cobbosseecontee. He thought it would be a great place to stay with his hunting and fishing friends in the summer. Clive, who hailed from Massachusetts, set about to get his friends together. It was here, in 1894, that a tradition started where educated, affluent, and accomplished black leaders from all walks of life - doctors, lawyers, religious leaders, professors, and businessmen vacationed together for a few weeks in August each year to relax and discuss world affairs or just fish, hunt, or play golf (nowadays). There were 14 men in that first Cambridge Gun and Rod Club. Eight of those first 14 members were white and 6 were black. In 1930, the last of the white members died and the Club became exclusively black. They initially leased the Frank Wakefield camp on the Goodwin property.

The Wakefield camp was replaced by the current building that was built by Bert and Harold Goodwin in 1933. It has 16 sleeping rooms. The main room has a huge fieldstone fireplace.

The Cambridge Gun and Rod Club property was leased by the Club members from the Goodwin family for the first 100+ years. It was and still is an exclusive male Club. The men vacation there for 2 weeks in August each year. The rest of the time, their families stay and vacation, too. Approximately 4 years ago, the Club purchased the property from 2 of Harold Goodwin's grandchildren.

There are many stories about members of the Club and their struggles over the century+ that it has existed. Some great stories include one of their infamous members, William Edward Burghardt (W.E.B.) Dubois. The FBI tailed him for decades (1930 – 1960), but they always seemed to lose him for several weeks each summer when he traveled to Maine to relax in West Gardiner. Mr. Dubois was the first African-American to receive a PhD from Harvard University, was a founding member of the NAACP, and wrote and edited for the NAACP "Crisis" magazine. Another member, Percy Steele, tried to enroll in officer training at the beginning of WWI. He was refused. The Secretary of War stated that he would have to get Congressional approval to get what he wanted. He did just that and the 92nd Division, led by black officers, was created and trained in Des Moines, Iowa. They served in France during WWI. Dr. Peter Marshall was one of the first black doctors allowed to practice at Harlem Hospital. The Reverend Gardner Calvin Taylor worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. to establish the Progressive National Baptist Convention. There are many stories about many great men who were members of this Club.

Each year, the Club held a shore dinner and invited members and friends from around the lake. Our family camp was next door to the Cambridge Gun and Rod Club. My uncles used to attend the dinner. My cousins used to catch frogs and crawfish and sell them to the Club members for bait. Forest Wakefield used to drop a truckload of sand in the water in front of the Club every summer and my cousins and uncles would spread it on the shoreline. They also helped to clean the building and varnish the floors. My cousins were also friends with and played with the children of the Club members.



Modern day picture of the Cambridge Gun and Rod Club



Pictured above~ 1950's President Irwin Dorch asked youngsters to sing; (l to r) Ronald Dodge, Victor Goodwin, Steve Goodwin, and Tom Goodwin.

"The members of the Cambridge Gun and Rod Club have been, and continue to be, a remarkable group of men. Their individual accomplishments must be overshadowed by their collective achievement: created in a spirit of racial equality and camaraderie, it has survived for over 100 years because of its member's hard work, pride, and sincere affection for each other. It persists into the 21st century as a model of brotherhood in the best sense of the word."

Welcome to Helen Thompson School new Staff members! You are all a wonderful addition, have a great year!

By Debra Couture & Sabrina Costell



Ashley Morency– Librarian
 Mrs. Morency grew up in Burnham, Maine and graduated from Maine Central Institute (MCI) in Pittsfield, Maine. She attended St. Joseph's College and then transferred to the University of Maine, where she received her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and Child Development & Family Relations. After graduation, Ashley moved to Kansas City, Missouri with her husband. While in Kansas City, Ashley worked various jobs in the education field. She and her husband moved back to Maine in 2012 and moved to West Gardiner in 2017. She says she was very fortunate to be able to stay home for 6 years with her 2 daughters. Ashley worked this past year at Laura E. Richard's School in

Phil Ferguson - Ed. Tech III

Mr. Ferguson grew up in Whitefield, Maine. He graduated from Erskine Academy. Phil received his Associate's Degree in Education from KVCC and went on to Grand Canyon University, where he received his Bachelor's degree in Special Education and Elementary Education. After graduation, he worked in the Special Education field for 3 years at RSU 12 and 10 years at RSU 4. This is Phil's 5th year at MSAD 11. He was an Ed. Tech. III at GAHS for 4 years before coming to Helen Thompson School this year. Phil's Dad was illiterate and Phil was determined to graduate from college and be able to teach others how to read. He is the first in his family to graduate from college. Phil has lived in West Gardiner for 14 years. He is a proud member of this community and thanks the community for all the support that they give to the schools in this



Ellie Luken - Kindergarten Teacher
 Ms. Luken grew up in West Gardiner and attended Helen Thompson School. Ellie is a 2015 graduate of GAHS. After graduation, she attended UMF, where she majored in Early Childhood Education with a minor in Special Education. This is Ellie's first year of teaching. Ellie currently teaches in the same classroom that was her 2nd grade classroom when she was a student at HTS.

Deidre Cochran – Art Teacher

Ms. Cochran grew up in Dixfield, Maine. She attended Dixfield schools and graduated from Dirigo High School. After high school, she attended the New Hampshire Institute of Art (NHIA) in Manchester, NH. Deidre transferred from NHIA to the University of Maine and graduated from UMaine with her Bachelor of Arts in Art Education. After graduation, she worked in a long-term substitute position in the Bangor area and then moved to the Gardiner Area. For the next 3 years, she worked for Spurwink in Chelsea. Deidre is very excited to join the MSAD #11 staff as one of our Elementary Art teachers and teaches art at Helen Thompson and Laura E. Richards Elementary



A Mission with a Purpose Sabrina Costell and Susan Emmet

We ventured forth to Pilgrim Lodge to find out about a mission project this past summer.

The United Church of Christ owns and operates Pilgrim Lodge (PL) and focuses on experiential learning for campers of all ages. They offer camps for children and adults, as well as intergenerational gatherings and retreats. Each summer they choose a group to which campers donate. This summer The Friends of Cobbossee Watershed (FCW) were the beneficiaries of a check for \$3100 given by campers aged 8-18. FCW provided five interns to increase engagement with the environment and ecosystem and provide a host of hands-on activities like Tadpole Patrol and Nature Day Camps. FCW operates the DASH and courtesy boat inspection programs, too.



Pictured are: Tamara Whitmore (FCW Executive Director)
Karen Steelhammer (PL Registrar/Office Manager)
Cami Wilbert (FCW Education/Outreach Director)

Can We Communicate? Valerie Kenney and Susan Emmet

What follows is a series of text messages between Pippa, the oldest granddaughter of YeYe, who live a half-mile from each other.

Dear Pippa,

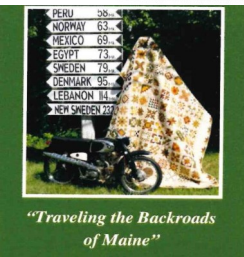
I finally bought a cell phone. It has an Android OS, but I don't know what that means yet. I thought an android was a robot that appears human. Anyway, I wondered what you're up to on Sunday.

I'm amazed at all the stuff on my phone. Things called "apps?" I thought an application was something you filled out to get a job or credit card or financial aid for college. Guess not! I see there are apps for maps, dictionaries, photos, movies and tv, YouTube, sports, news and games like Candy Crush, Bubble Witch 3, Solitaire, Texas Hold 'Em, and something called "Mixed Reality Portal." I'm afraid of that one because it might take me into outer space? At my age I already get confused about what planet I'm on. But I do know I'm in West Gardiner!

Do write back and let me know about this Sunday. I made some ginger snaps and apple crisp. Love, YeYe

Backroad Quilter's Show

October 26&27, 2019



At the West Gardiner Fire Station Sat 9-4 Sun 9-3

Admission \$3 ~ Kids Free~ Vendors include Annie's Teeny Tiny Quilt Shop, Calico Basket, Mainely Sewing, Sew Orchid

Approx. 100 Quilts on display, Demonstrations, Quilters Walk, Food Court, Members Sales Table, Plenty of Free & Handicap Parking. Backroad Raffle Quilt Drawing-Tickets Available. For more information contact Deb McCullough dmacvender@gmail.com

Dr YY,

LOL! U R so 😊
RU making 🍪 2?
Have loads 2 do Sunday but what if I snap you? ❤️

Snap your fingers? Love, YY

📷! Sends U 📷 n selfies!

What's a selfie?

😊😊

WHAT?

LOL! I'm crying 😭

Wait! Are you upset?

Noooooo! 😄 Laughing! 😊

You want some cookies 🍪 to make you feel better?

Snaps or 🍪?

Whatever you'd like, dear.

I can probs hang w/U !

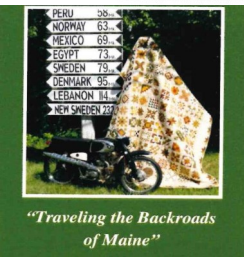
OK. 📷 n cooks 🍪 it is. (I'm trying!)

U R! I 😊 you!

📷 U 2!

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From the Porch

"Shutter Shudder" by Mike Wing

When you reach up to take that broken shutter off the house for a repair and you hear a scratching behind the old wooden slats, a chill runs up your spine. Bats! Gruesome visions of biting, rabid, hair-snarling, creepy vampires fill your imagination. Hold on before you leap off the ladder, hit and roll. Bats might be your friends.

True, they can bite when threatened, as will any toothy critter. But a case of bat rabies is rare, one in twenty thousand. In Maine, thankfully, not one of the five species feeds on blood and they do not want to be tangled in your hair anymore than you want them to. The most common bats in Maine are the little brown bats, and they are one of this town's best insect predators, right up there with possums on ticks. One hungry bat will eat over 100 black flies in one night. Thank you.

Being the only mammals that can truly fly, bats swoop and dart through the night to devour bugs. Their echolocation zooms in on an insect, and chomp. Before dawn, they find a cozy nook and sleep 'til the next sunset. By late fall, their winter hibernation means a much longer siesta, so we build bat boxes where they can snuggle up for four or five months. I can relate to that. Only a few caves ("hibernacula"-rhymes with Dracula) harbor bats in Maine. The rest find attics, hollow trees, and our shaky shutters.

Our boxes are going up to see if we can help them through the winter. What bat would spend five months in a drafty cave when he can hang out in a West Gardiner condo? No, Susan and I don't want to sponsor a bat sanctuary, nor do we want to fear Nature's black fly predator. We just won't hang shutters.

Snakes and Heroes by Mert Hickey

When I was about 9 or 10, I brought a 16 inch garter snake to school in my pocket. I kept it in my desk for a little while. My teacher was Mrs. Hamlin and all of us kids thought she was afraid of nothing, not even King Kong.

Of course the snake got away and was crawling across the aisles and all the girls began screaming and standing in their chairs. Mrs. Hamlin hollered, "Get that snake!" I grabbed it and took it outdoors. When I came back inside, Mrs. Hamlin hugged me and told me what a brave boy I was. I didn't have the guts to tell her I was the one who brought the snake to school. Imagine what would happen if I did that today. I'd probably need counseling. But overall, I was a pretty good boy.





Parker Smith Earns Eagle Scout by Colene O'Neill

Parker Smith, son of Vaughn and Cynthia Smith of West Gardiner, has achieved Boy Scouts' highest rank, that of Eagle Scout. Parker is a member of Boy Scout Troop #613 where he began his scouting career as a Tiger Cub. Only 3 to 4% ever earn this prestigious honor. Parker, 18, a senior at Gardiner High School, achieved the 21 merit badges required to receive the Eagle Scout Award. For his final project he built picnic tables and benches for the West Gardiner Boat Landing off the Collins Mills Road on Cobbossee Stream for all to enjoy. Congratulations, Parker, on this outstanding accomplishment!

****Election Day is Tuesday, November 5**** Polls will be open at the town fire station 8 am to 8 pm. There are two ballot questions in this election: 1 Bond Issue and 1 Constitutional Resolution

“Do you favor a \$105,000,000 bond issue to build or improve roads, bridges, railroads, airports, transit and ports and make other transportation investments, to be used to match an estimated \$137,000,000 in federal and other funds?”

“Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to allow persons with disabilities to sign petitions in an alternative manner as authorized by the Legislature?”

Anyone may request an absentee ballot up to the deadline of Thursday October 31. Completed ballots must be received at the town office no later than 8:00 p.m. EDT on Election Day. There are three ways to obtain an absentee ballot. 1. In person stop by the town office. 2. Call the town office at 207 724 3945. 3. By internet at <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absent.html>. This is also for uniformed services and overseas voters and gives some special circumstance exceptions to the rules.

****Announcements & Reminders **** *Kim Greenleaf & Phil Davis*

- Applications for Animal Control Officer will be accepted at the Town Office. Stop by or call for more information
- On November 17th at 2:00 pm there will be a dedication of the new town garage to Chet Thompson. Snacks and drinks will be provided.
- Correction to Summer 2019 issue: In "The Wakefield Wildlife Sanctuary" article, Kendra Shaw's parents were Milan and Thelma (not Eugene and Helen) Wakefield. It was the writer's error
- The Weathervane would like to welcome Valarie Kenny to our staff. Valerie is a Junior at GAHS. We look forward to her insights on our community.



WEST GARDINER NEWSLETTER

The Weathervane

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The Weathervane is a non-profit quarterly informational newsletter intended to be unbiased, non-denominational, non-partisan, accurate, and enjoyable.

Schedules of town events, organizations and activities as well as local businesses will be listed in the spring issues.

The Weathervane welcomes story ideas from our readers.

Call 441-9752 or write coleneoneill1@gmail.com