

BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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WHAT IS KINETIC SCULPTURING?

BHS will host local Artisan, John McMurray, to speak about his amazing artwork involving the kinetic process. John explains that it is all about artwork that reacts to the forces of nature with movement. John worked as an art teacher for 33 years in a private school in MA and is now retired on the coast of Maine where he enjoys what he deems “his” version of heaven. The program will

include visual aids through a laptop presentation and a challenge for the audience to think about what “art” is all about.

Please join us for this most interesting presentation at Beals gym on March 20th at 6:30PM. BHS Annual Business meeting will be held prior to this at 6PM. Light refreshments will be served.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 2, 2015

Talent/Variety Show at Beals Gym.

May 25th, 2015

Memorial Day Program

June 13, 2015

@ 6:30PM

Talent/Variety show at Beals Gym.

June 19, 2015

TBD

September 4, 2015

TBD

October 17, 2015

Gospel Concert

*Please mark your calendars
as we greatly appreciate
seeing your happy faces!*

CLIFFORD R. ALLEY

by Jon Johansen

BEALS – Clifford R. Alley Jr., 83, died Aug. 2, 2014 at a Bangor hospital.

Alley was born up near the Mill Pond on upper Beals Island to Clifford Sr. and Clara (Beal) Peabody on 1 August 1931. He never made it to high school. Instead he learned to cut wood, worked for the town for a time and went lobstering and clamming. He did what needed to be done to get by just like everyone else on the island. For lobstering he used a 16-foot outboard boat that was over 25 years old when he bought it. He then sold that to a fisherman from the island and built himself a boat at the age of 16. He owned her about two weeks and sold her and built himself another one. He used her for a while and then he sold that one and Lester Beal built him another. Throughout his life Alley never fished from an inboard lobsterboat.

Just after World War II, Riley and Adrian Beal returned to Beals Island from building boats at Stonington. Alley went to work with them and when they moved their shop to Jonesport he went with them.

He also worked for Harold Gower on Beals Island. He said, “Harold was a good teacher, but he was a fussy teacher too”. He would tell you what to do and he would stand there and see that you were doing it right. If you didn’t, he would show you what to do. He was the fussiest man that I ever worked for in my life. Riley Beal taught us how to draft and stuff like that but Harold wouldn’t do that because he didn’t know how. Riley was the only man that showed me how to draft a boat.”

Alley worked with Gower about a year and a half before he left and began repairing houses. He and Richard Alley later built a shop together and for about twenty years they built boats. Every one of the boats they built was wooden. When they went to make their model a friend had cut down a big pine tree and they went in the woods and sawed a piece off of it and made a half model. The two started right out building a 30-footer and then they built a 28-foot cruiser for a minister on Swan’s Island. After that they never built anything smaller than 30

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Condolences

*We wish to extend our deepest
sympathy to the family of
Ruth L. Carver.*

Ruth was a founding member of BHS and served on the executive board until present day. Ruth was both proud and honored to relay the story of when Velton Peabody first returned to Beals with the idea of forming the historical society. She said that her house was the first place he visited for support and she wholeheartedly accepted and has been dedicated to the cause ever since. Ruth will remain forever in our hearts. She will be sadly missed by BHS and the community at large.

feet. Their boats went all over the coast of Maine and some as far as Massachusetts and Rhode Island. They were also not limited to lobster boats, they turned out a sportfisherman and a couple of pleasure boats. Most times they put out five boats a year. After twenty years Richard left and began building boats at his house on the island in the late 1970s. Clifford continued on building wooden boats for a time and he would turn out two or so a year. He then switched to finishing off fiberglass hulls. For the last two or three of these his youngest son, Raymond, helped.

One of the fiberglass hulls, a Young Brothers 40, was DORIS MARGARET for John Faulkingham of Beals Island. He said that they built her in five weeks.

Another remembered by many of the islanders is MOXIE, done on a Young Brothers hull. When she was going out the shop a gust of wind caught her stern and she came off the ways tipping part way over. Fortunately she fetched up on

her propeller and her bow. The Young Brothers came down and looked the hull over and said she had no damage. The only damage was to her propeller, which had bent blades. Alley also put in a new stainless steel shaft. He then had a crane brought in and the boat was picked up and moved onto the beach.

The last boat out of his shop came two years ago when he built a 25-footer with and for his son Raymond. She is the only all fiberglass boat he ever built from keel up.

Over the years he built over 100 wooden boats, many with Richard Alley, and he finished off about 20 fiberglass hulls. He said, 'I knew that was going to kill me so I got out.' In the late 1980s he left his boat shop and began working on houses.

Alley would like to build at least one more boat. He said that he has all his moulds and would love to do one about 30 feet in length. He said, 'I would like to build one more at least. Build it the way I would like to build it. There are a lot of

things I would do different.

Many builders of the area left boatbuilding and began building play boats, such as Alvin Beal. Alley said he started one and later on he would build a number of them.

For those familiar with the boats turned out by Clifford Alley they know that they were some of the most beautiful ever built. Many of them can be found in harbors up and down the coast still working, which is a testament to the quality of workmanship put into them and why in 2001 he was inducted into the Maine Boatbuilder's Hall of Fame.

He is survived by his loving wife, Patricia "Ethelyn" Alley of Beals; children, Maurice and wife Emily, Raymond and wife Benita, Sherry and husband, Everett, Patty and husband, Sulayman, all of Beals, and Ronald and wife, Wanda of Jonesport; Ten grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, and a brother, Warren Peabody.

RICHARD C. ALLEY

by Jon Johansen

BEALS - Richard C. Alley died peacefully with his family by his side on February 17, 2015. Richard was born June 11, 1933, on Beals. He was the son of Joseph Shirley Alley and Eulala (Alley) Alley.

If you asked Richard Alley how long he has been building boats he would reply, "I've been building boats forever." That was his answer in 1984 when Brenda Dodge last interviewed him for an article on boatbuilding, and that was still his answer in 1994 when she interviewed him again. Even though problems with his health have kept him out of his boat shop for the past three years, Alley spends hours on the construction of wooden and fiberglass boat models in the living room of his home.

"Even back when I was a kid my mother knew I would be a boatbuilder

because I turned every piece of wood I picked up into a boat," Alley said with a smile. Alley's keen interest in boats led him to the area boat shops to observe the construction of wooden boats. "I probably spent more time in Lovie (Mariner) Beal's shop than anywhere else," he said.

When he was 14 Alley built a 7½ foot speed boat out of plywood for himself. It was powered by 5-hp. Elto outboard motor and Alley used it to get to various places around the island to go clamming. "I started a 16-foot outboard for myself two years later," he said, "I made the keel, stern and a few other parts in my mother's kitchen." The boat was then put together outside.

Alley began working as a fisherman. He went herring seining, dug a few clams and helped his father, Joseph, and another fellow in a weir for a while. His main work was digging clams. Alley

said, "I used to love to dig clams. Now there are none to dig so you have to do something else."

Alley spent time in the Army during 1953-55. Fortunately, he did not make the Korean conflict, which ended before he got done with basic training.

By age 22 he was back at Beals once again doing what he loved best at the boat shop of Riley Beal and his son Elihu. Alley remembers helping to build three boats there in the shop at Perio Point. The first one was a 35 by 10-foot boat built for Hiram Alley of Beals around 1956. This was followed by a 28 by 9-foot boat for Millard Kelley of Jonesport and a 32 by 9-foot boat for Frank Dobbins also of Jonesport.

Alley added that Riley and Elihu Beal later moved their business to Jonesport buying a shop near the present-day location of Elihu's son Ben Beal's

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Condolences

*We wish to extend heartfelt sympathy to the family of
BHS member Earl Peabody.*

Being a founding member, Earl played an important role in the organization of BHS by serving as its first vice president and as its second president.

Having been born and raised on Beals, school photos of Earl participating in school events and activities can be found in BHS yearbook collection and on the "school" wall exhibit. He will be sadly missed and always remembered for his dedication to BHS and by his schoolboy island way of life.

wharf and lobster business. A large crew of men, including Riley, Elihu and Ben Beal, Adrian Beal and his son Lester, Ewart Lenfestey, Fred Lenfestey, Clifford Alley and Richard Alley, were kept busy turning out wooden boats.

Alley worked at Riley's shop during a four-year period alternating his time between that shop and Alvin Beal's shop on Beals. He also worked for Harold Gower assisting on the construction of at least five boats during one period of employment all the while honing his boatbuilding skills by working with some of the master craftsman of the day. Alley gives credit to those men saying that he learned how to design and work from a half model from Riley Beal, "but I learned how to build from Harold Gower," he concluded.

By 1961 Richard and Clifford Alley built a shop at Alley's Bay and went into business for themselves. "We work together for seven years," Richard said. "I designed the boats and we turned out five or six boats a year from that shop."

During the summer of 1968 Richard began to build his own shop where he would continue his boatbuilding career on his own. "The first boat I built there was a 39 by 12-foot lobster boat for Hartford Cook of Tenants Harbor," Alley said. The largest boat built inside Alley's new shop was a 40 by 13-foot, 9-inch lobster boat for Jeff Alley of Prospect Harbor.

When Alley began to get orders for boats that were too large to build inside his shop, he didn't let that stop him. He just set them up in the yard between his house and the road and built them there. At one time a 58 by 18-foot boat filled the space between his front yard and the road. "If I built them any longer I'd have had to build a bridge over them for people to drive over," he joked.

The 58-foot boat was built as an offshore scallop dragger for Robert

Tracy of Gouldsboro. She was stripped planked in spruce and then fiberglass inside and out.

The last boat that Alley built outside was a 46 by 14-foot burned out fiberglass hull brought to him by Robert Johnson of Jonesport. Johnson bought the hull from an insurance company and presented Alley with the massive task of turning it back into a working fishing boat. "The boat had been through a fire and was gutted," Alley said. "Holes were burned completely through the hull, and the cabin and decks were gone." Alley put his boatbuilding skills to work, put a keel on her and began to build her over. The finished boat included a completely outfitted galley and was powered by a Volvo diesel. While building Johnsons boat, Alley also rebuilt a "Novie" boat inside of his shop for Ira Guptill.

Alley also got into designing for the fiberglass boat industry. A 31 by 10-foot, 8 inch model was designed by Alley for production by Jimmy Beal of Milbridge. The mould was later sold to Paul West of Steuben and is currently produced by West Bay Boats.

When Guptill's boat was finished Alley was forced to quit building boats. Problems with his knees forced surgery and Alley was no longer able to go into his shop and work.

It was clear that Alley missed working on full-size boats. "Sometimes I just go out into the shop and sit in a chair and dream," he says. "Boatbuilding has been my life's work since I got out of the

Army in 1955."

Alley was honored at the Maine Boatbuilder's Show in Portland by induction into the Maine Boatbuilder's Hall of Fame in 1994.

He is survived by his wife Ina (Woodward)(Barnes) Alley, son Bryon Alley, son Broderick Alley and Wife Dwina (Beal) Alley, a very special granddaughter Jennifer Alley and her dog (Bigfoot) AKA Gramps Boy, all of Beals, Step daughters Leanne and husband John Beal Jr. of Jonesport, Laurel and husband Nathan Beal of Marshfield, Lynda and husband Thad Dolley of Machias, Laureen Libby of Frankfort, brother-in-law John Alley Sr. of Augusta, sister-in-law Adele (Lenfestey) Alley of Addison, brother-in-law William Alley and wife Jessie (Crowley) Alley of Addison. Several step grandchildren and great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews and cousins and a nephew Charles Merchant Jr. who was more like a son.

Richard was predeceased by his parents, his wife of 39 years Evelyn M. (Alley) Alley, his sister Arlena (Alley) Alley, brother Eben Alley, sister-in-law Francis (Alley) Alley, brother Joseph Alley Jr., step-father Isaac Seavey, father-in-law Levi Alley, mother-in-law Adeline (Alley) Alley, sister-in-law Annie (Alley) Merchant, and Bryon's friend Rhonda Leighton.

As requested by the family, visiting hours and funeral services was private. A graveside committal service will be held in the spring.

PROGRESS OF BHS PHASE III COLD STORAGE AREA

Beals Historical Society is currently on a mission to complete a cold-storage building to house its two lobster-fishing boats. Thanks to a \$15,000 grant given by the Davis Family Foundation in 2014, we were able to complete the groundwork and have a 36' x 40' cement slab poured. Size of the slab was based on the length of BHS boats. At this point, we need \$40,000 to raise a structure complete with roof and walls. The inside will remain in its rustic state, as it does not require finish work for items that do not require heat or an environmental safe atmosphere. Besides the two boats, there will be much needed room to add other cold-storage items; e.g., boat building tools, fishing gear, or any items pertaining to the Island's past and present unique way of life. The following is a description pertaining to each of BHS unique fishing boat.

According to research, well-known builder Maurice Dow built BHS's oldest treasure in 1902 for Beals Island fisherman Lowell Beal. The boat is the only one of its kind known to exist. In that era of boat building, there was an evolution occurring in lobster boat design, combined with the introduction of the internal combustion engine. The era of oar-powered lobster boats, such as rowboats, dories, pea pods, and sail powered boats, including the Friendship sloop, was giving way to boats of a different design, or boats that could be rowed, sailed, or power driven, called "reach boats".

The reach boat hull was somewhat of a schooner design, with a rounded stem

and a slanted schooner-type transom stern, and rounded bilge. Reach boats could have been of different dimensions, but possibly a length of 20-25 feet would have been typical. It is possible that the Dow boat would have been referred to as a reach boat.

It is intended that the Dow boat will be displayed along with BHS's Harold Gower Jonesport Model (square stern and other characteristic design features) originally built for Beals fisherman Kenneth Beal. BHS has a copy of the expense record of all boats (including the Kenneth Beal boat) built by Harold Gower. The provenance for this lobster boat includes all owners since launching. Besides the boat, expense record, and provenance, the Heritage Center also displays a 19-page set of 16" x 20" posters depicting and describing Harold Gower building a cedar-planked boat. Fortunately, BHS has a wonderful wooden boatbuilding collection, which includes the final product. Time and weather have taken a heavy toll on these unique boats, so it is imperative to move this project along as quickly as possible.

Phase III will provide the opportunity for BHS visitors, which frequently include school children, to view the progression of the lobster boat, as they step back in time from one of the earliest local boat builders to one of more recent years.

At this point, we need funding in order to complete this worthwhile project. A few months ago, Patricia Hubbard, a grant consultant from Thomaston, ME, contacted BHS in regards to genealogy.

Upon learning about BHS and its need for assistance in finding grant opportunities, Patricia graciously offered her services, pro bono, to search for possible grants for BHS Phase III capital campaign project. But since she does not do the actual grant work, she suggested a grant writer from Portland by the name of Keely Felton. While living on Vinalhaven for several years, Keely worked for a couple of non-profit groups, during which time she fine-tuned her grant writing skills with good success. She was also asked to sit on the Maine Arts Commission committee for the SmArt grant for two years, and so has a good sense of what reviewers find compelling in grant applications. BHS has hired Keely to look into two prospective grants, suggested by Patricia. Applications for both are not due until fall.

We are hoping to begin construction work by this summer, but will need funding to do so. Thus far, BHS has not used state or local tax dollars to complete any of its capital campaign projects. We are hoping to complete this much-needed project with private donations and grants. We would ask that you please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to BHS 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Please remember that all donations, whether small or large, will be much appreciated and will assist us in the further development of the BHS Heritage Center's unique cultural experience.

BHS has a "Memorial Roll" on its' website. This roll is for BHS deceased members. You can email your photo and info to cfdavis44@yahoo.com. Please check the website for more details.