

# BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



## BEALS HERITAGE CENTER HOURS

Vol. XX, No. 1 (Spring 2020)

Since the doors opened in 2010, having the Heritage Center open for the public has been dependent upon volunteer efforts. Thankfully, Luther and Alice Beal have been two of those volunteers who would “Center Sit” by holding center hours for a few hours per day, plus they left their contact number on a poster by the door, for people to call if they wanted to go inside. Upon receiving a call, they would leave whatever they were doing to meet and greet people, willingly sharing local stories and thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to make new friends.

This season, besides Luther and Alice, BHS is very happy to include Bettina White within its ranks of “Center Sitters”. Bettina has entered a training program called “Vermont Associates for Training & Development,” a program that places people with nonprofit organizations. She has received 20 hours per week for two years to work for BHS. There is much to do at BHS, so this is simply awesome news! More information regarding Center hours will be announced in the March newsletter.

## YOU CAN DONATE TO BHS WITHOUT SPENDING A PENNY

If you order from Amazon, then you can donate to BHS! Amazon donates to a charity of your choice when you make your purchases at <https://smile.amazon.com/>. Just visit this link and choose Beals Historical Society as your charity and Amazon does the rest. It is

just that simple! Also please share this information with your friends as anyone from any country around the world, can donate to our most worthy cause... Preserving the past for the future! Thank you!

## WORDS OF APPRECIATION

As president of BHS, I would like to take this opportunity to send a HUGE thank you to ALL who volunteer on behalf of the society. Everyone does their part, which makes my job much easier. Please accept my sincere appreciation for all you do!

## 2019 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

For 2019, BHS had 63 Life members, 2 new Life members, and 85 renewals for a total membership of 150 compared to 180 in 2018.

BHS depends on its membership dues and donations for general operations such as heat, lights, insurance, and exhibit material.

If you would like to renew your membership or become a new member, you may do so by completing the attached application. We very much appreciate your support!

(Note for Laura: Membership Application needs to be included.)

# Save THE Date

## 2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS—TENTATIVE DATES

### MARCH 20

Annual Business Meeting, 6PM/BES  
student Native American program,  
6:30PM

### MAY 25

Memorial Day Program, 10AM

### JUNE 19

Program to be announced

### JULY 4

Selling lobster & crabmeat rolls  
across from USCG

### AUGUST 21

Program to be announced

### SEPTEMBER 18

Program to be announced

*Please mark your calendars as we  
greatly appreciate your support!*

**On behalf of BHS Executive  
Board, we wish you a Happy,  
Healthy, and Safe New Year!**

## THE FOLLOWING IS AN INTERVIEW OF “LEON “BUD” SMITH THAT WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN “MAINE COASTAL NEWS” BY JON JOHANSEN

It is not very difficult to find interesting people on the Coast of Maine. Three years ago, I was covering the burning of Steve Carver’s BIGGER DIRLS in West Jonesport and while we were talking in the shed on Smith’s wharf, I met Leon ‘Bud’ Smith. He had allowed Steve the use of his lobster boat until he got his new boat overboard, what captured my interest was his memory about the photographs of the old boats he was showing.

Bud was born at a home not far from here he lives today, just across from the family’s wharf in West Jonesport in 1929. His father was Leon and his two brothers were Raymond and Robert. He added, “My father was a fisherman and they lived in the house up here. The old man had a 35-foot boat he fished down Machias Seal Island. She had a torpedo stern in her. I don’t know where they got the name torpedo stern. It used to be called a round stern.”

His father’s boat was built just down the road in West Jonesport and Ralph Smith, a nephew, owns it now. Bud said she would throw the traps off, adding, “They were back in the stern, up on top of it, round coaming and when she would tip ahead and got to it, she would slap them traps. He took it down, brand new boat, had it hauled into the shop that winter and had a square stern put on it with square coamings. That straightened her out.”

There were two shops in West Jonesport owned by two Frank Smiths, known as the white and black Smith and neither were a relation of Bud’s. He added, “One lived up to Indian River and the other one over in Mason’s Bay. I don’t know how come they ever got together. There were five or six families of Smiths when I went to school, not relatives at all. Just had the same last name.”

Bud started fishing in a peapod. He explained, “There was a man I got it from, he didn’t build it, but he was a carpenter, I don’t know who built it. It had a nice sail in it. You would take the sail, roll it

up, tie it up and lay it down on the other side of the boat that you were working on. Had a brand-new pair of 8-foot oars. If there was any wind at all and I was going from one place to another, I set the sail. It was a high-priced outfit. It was \$35 for the whole thing.”

“It used to be there were no outboards,” said Bud. “Right after World War II, my father would go out to haul. He would go down the western bay at that time fall fishing. Lobsters would start probably September shedding so he would be fishing down there. When he would go mornings, he would have seven or eight people out there in square stern boats or whatever towing them down the bay and he would let them off wherever they wanted. Then they would row back home. If they had a sail, which most of them did, usually in the afternoon especially if its flood tide you would have a southwest breeze and you would see them coming, sailing back in. I was still in school at that time. The first boat that I had was built in Frank Smith’s boat shop. Frank Smith’s, black head Frank, his sons Oscar and Donald built that boat.”

“When I started fishing, one of my brothers had been in the Navy, during the War,” continued Bud. “The other one had been in the Army. He got out first because he had asthma real bad. He was down at Fort Bragg in North Carolina

and the flowers were blooming and he could not breathe, so they sent him home.”

They were all fishing out of their wharf in West Jonesport, the wharf the family still owns, which was built by Bud’s father in 1933. “This day my father was hauling down there,” said Bud. “He was starting to buy lobsters over here with one other fellow, wasn’t a very big operator, but there weren’t many of them around then. He had finished up and I was with him. I wasn’t very big but I can remember we came home and the anchor was on the bow with the cross piece hung out over the side. Well, he came into the lobster car, they couldn’t come into the wharf at that time, they hadn’t built them out that far at that time. He came in alongside the lobster car, which had the posts up and dropped her back and put her back in [gear], well he missed it. She was going ahead and that piece on the anchor caught and it came down the side of the boat and cleaned out the exhaust pipe, the gas pipe and the whole...we were shipwrecked.”

Bud’s wife’s name is ANGELENA, which was the name of her father’s lobster boat, which was built by Will Frost. Bud added, “This story that goes with it. When her father got grown up, he went away. He had a brother-in-law that was working up around Lake Erie so

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he went up there and got a job. His father and the four brothers went gunning birds a lot. He went away and his father missed him quite well. So, the next year his father had had a boat similar to that, only larger built and when his son came home, he says if you stay home, you take your pick of those boats. He took that one, which was the newer one, that was made by Frost.”

Bud said that she was probably built in the early 1930s. He also said that she was just over 30 feet but so narrow that you could almost touch each side and thought she might have been powered with an engine out of a wrecked car.

Bud’s wife was born first followed by Harold, Wendell, Ordmond, and Donald, Jr.

The first wharf was flattened when a log floated inside it during a storm and knocked it apart. Just as World War II was coming to an end, several young men coming back helped them build the wharf where it is now. Since then it has been rebuilt two or three times.

One of Bud’s uncles was Lewis Kirby who ran the wet-well lobster smack FRANCIS EVELYN over to Nova Scotia and back before heading to Boston to unload. If he was staying a while, he would every so often go out and run her up and down the reach to circulate the water in the wet well to keep the lobsters alive. Later he would turn FRANCIS EVELYN into a sardine boat, by removing the wet well. Bud added, “He hauled quite a few sardines and when he got done the old man always thought we should have a bigger boat so we bought that one. We put a crew in her and whatever but we didn’t have a factory so we hauled mostly cat and dog food. A few times went to the west’ard.”

Over the years Bud has done a lot of halibut fishing and only quite a few years ago.

The lobster boat built by the Smith’s for Bud was 36 feet long and powered with a straight 8 Chrysler engine. “When I launched that one, I had just graduated. It was a nice boat, they built good boats and it went pretty good. At that time, the

Roadmaster Buick was the best engine. That is what the racers had in them. They seemed to have a little more power and they had to keep them shined right up. If they came across each other they had to race. There were very few mornings that you were going along and you did not see two someone’s having their race, that is the way they went.”

“The first boats that my two brothers had,” said Bud, “was the one with the make-and-break engine in, HERRING. It was a double-ended boat, but I don’t know who built her. They weren’t seaworthy looking, but they had sails in them. Then they would change them over, put a log in them to run the shaft out through and put an engine in them.

Bud’s next boat came out of Harold Gower’s shop on Beals Island in 1946. His father had a Gower boat, which was a 36 footer and his was a 35 footer. He added, “The craftsmanship was excellent, all of them just looked better. I fished down Machias Seal Island for seven years and it was a real good sea boat, but there were times we did not want to be out there. We would haul down there, slack tide, but when the tide started most of the places, we were fishing you could get near the island. You had to tie up in the cove, put the anchor out and we would tie the boats up together. They would swing apart and ‘ka-bang’ into the side. When you got underway the first thing you did, you took the hammer out and pounded the guard back on. We would run down, I think it was 21 miles from here and we would run down one day and then that night we would run into Cutler, 12 miles and maybe the next night. Cutler was a good harbor and nice people. We slept in the boat. We had hammocks and Shipmate stove. Some nights down there it was cold enough the harbor would freeze over. It would be thin ice and it would cut into the sides of the wooden boat. We would come home if it was going to be real cold. When we first went down there the Grand Manan fishermen were fishing there too, we got along good with them. The light keeper was from Grand Manan and anything

he wanted we would get the order for him.”

At this time, there were no Cutler fishermen fishing off Machias Seal Island, they were fishing on the shore.

Bud’s next boat was not well received as he stated, “I got the first fiberglass boat in the Jonesport reach. I went up to East Blue Hill to Webber’s Cove and looked at them. I said, ‘how tough is this stuff?’ He said, ‘do you want to check it?’ He had three or four boats in progress. The top part of them, 10 inches, were cut right off the top to cut them down for a lobsterboat. He took one of them, laid it between two rocks, and there was a maul that had been there for other people and he said, ‘try it, give it a good for.’ I took a good swing at it and if I hadn’t jumped ahead that maul would have struck me in the rear end and there wasn’t a scratch on it.

“There was quite a number of guys building boats on the island,” said Bud. “A lot of times some of us would be over to the island with our boats and go around the boat shop. I could see I wasn’t so welcome. Some of the younger ones went up and worked with them in Blue Hill and some went to Corea. One of my brothers had a Vinal Beal boat, she was 38 feet and 11 feet wide and that was more seaworthy, but I did the same work with mine. You had to be careful, we dragged shrimp in her and we had 10,000 pounds one day in her and we didn’t have a lot of free board. They weren’t really boats to be carrying a big load but they were seaworthy enough and the captain was good enough so they got them home.”

Bud did not remember George Brown, but he did remember Alvin adding “Alvin’s boats were a little bit faster than most of them. I had the Gower boat and I raced this Alvin Beal boat and she could beat me every time.”

When Bud’s father gave up the wharf Bud and his two brothers took over its operation. Bud retired from fishing five years ago and has now given up running the wharf. The wharf is now run by his nephew, but do not be surprised if you find Bud down there too.

# GEORGE O. BEAL

## BUSINESS AND FAMILY MAN OF JONESPORT, MAINE

by Erroll George Woodward

My family is not known for its historical record keeping through diaries, journals, or photos. Therefore, I must do this all from memory and thinking back over my 88 years since 1931. May I interject here and now that it is my opinion that every family should keep the best family records it can as one day someone will want that information.

A recent project of making a model boat for each of my children and grandchildren brought me to searching for a photograph of "The Fly", the ferry boat my grandfather, George O. Beal, operated until the early 1940s. That led me to the Beals Heritage Society and Carol Davis who expressed an interest in having something written about "Pups", as we grandchildren called him.

Pups, was very much a lover and spoiler of the family's children. He and

Grandmother Almeda had six of them and they were all girls. Girls surely ran in the family as their first grandchild

was also a girl. I wonder if I might not have enjoyed a little special attention as

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*Almeda Cummings with husband George O. Beal*

### BEALS HERITAGE CENTER

### BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please check one:    Renewal    New      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name(s) as you wish it to appear on membership card and member roll on website:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please type or print clearly)*

*Your mailing address:*

Street or Post Office Box: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

*(Please review all types and check the one that applies)*

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Annual       | \$10 Annually          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Life         | \$200 one-time payment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple Annual           | \$15 Annually          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple/Life             | \$300 one-time payment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/65 Annual        | \$5 annually           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior couple/65 Annual | \$7.50 annually        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student                 | \$5 annually           |

*Annual memberships are for the calendar year  
and expire December 31st.*

Over and above dues, I wish to donate

\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ operating expenses, \_\_\_\_\_ building fund, or \_\_\_\_\_ endowment fund.

Receipt and membership card will be sent to you.  
**Instructions:** Please print, complete and mail this application, together with tax-deductible check or money order payable to Beals Historical Society to:

*Membership Chairperson,  
Beals Historical Society,  
P.O. Box 280, Beals, ME 04611*



back into the garage and was later sold to make into a firewood sawing machine.

Whenever President Franklin Roosevelt's yacht would arrive in Moosabec Reach, Pups went out to attend to their needs, often times delivering groceries, lobsters, or fresh fish, personally. I assume on those occasions, it was the "Fly" that transported him and the supplies for the president.

Pups was a very human and jovial person. He could not resist a joke or, on occasion, a harmless prank. I cannot resist closing this by relating a couple of my favorites.

Years ago, salesmen, called Drummers, came to businesses to display their products and receive the orders for their company. Pups had one real problem. He

just hated changing into and breaking in a new pair of shoes. He would wear an old comfortable shoe until it disintegrated. One such shoe had a loose sole and Pups had to kind of throw his foot ahead as he stepped making a flap/slap sound with each step. As he and a Drummer were walking together, Pups noticed the Drummer was captivated with the flapping sole and watching as casually as he could without being obvious. Pups took notice and commented off handedly, "I see you noticed my shoe. I really need a new pair but my wife said I had to wear these out first".

When the paper money size was changed from the large size to the smaller, it gave Pups the opportunity for a prank. He delivered some goods to

an anchored yacht. The crewman that received it, passed a bill or bills to pay for the supplies. Pups saw that they were the new smaller sized bills and, wanting to play the part of the unknowing country hick, let them slip through his fingers into the water. The crewman began to thrash about for the boathook while shouting, "Money". Grandfather's reply was, "Money? Oh, I've got to get home quick. I thought they were coupons and I've been giving them to my wife!"

***Pups suffered a stroke in 1946 and at age 67, he passed away over the Christmas season of 1953. In all this, he never lost his sense of humor or love for family.***



*"The Fly" and Pups' father's boat "Lottie" mid 1930's.  
The boat, at the end of the lobster car or float, belonged to Alton Rogers who owned the boat shop.*