

BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Vol. XXIII, No. 4 (Fall 2023)

The following rescue story can be found, at Beals Heritage Center, in the book, “Winter Talk on Summer Pastimes” A Landsman’s Log (1883).

By Joseph W. Smith.

“Leaves from a Diary” In 1878 the active season commenced Set. 1st, and continued eight months. The keeper’s salary at this time was raised to four hundred dollars a year, while that of the crew continued the same. In March 1882 the crew’s pay was raised to forty-five dollars a month, and in June following, by an act of Congress, the pay of the crew was fixed at fifty dollars a month and that of the keeper at seven hundred dollars a year.

The crews of all stations in the district, are chosen, as I have before stated, from shore fishermen and boatmen. Men who are skilled in boating and who are not afraid of danger when the elements are at war. And they are all obliged to undergo a strict examination, physically, by a marine hospital surgeon, before being allowed to sign articles. If they cannot pass the surgeon they cannot enter the service, as it is imperative to have tough, hardy and sound men for this duty. The keepers must be men who are used to command, must have a fair education, as everything connected with the stations is directly under their charge, and they must render a strict account for all that transpires at their respective stations.

That my readers may understand the dangers and hardships that are encountered by the surfmen at different stations, I will give them the account of the loss of the Kate Upham, as taken from Hon. S.I. Kimball’s, the General Superintendent’s report of 1881.

“At 9 o’clock on the morning of October 28, 1880, the weather being rainy, with

occasional heavy hail and snow-squalls from the eastward, the two patrolmen on duty from Stations No.3, (Crumple Island, Mane,) discovered a brig, afterwards found to be the Kate Upham, of St. John, New Brunswick, with eleven men on board in an apparently disabled condition, about three miles south-east from Red Head, the easterly point of the island on which the station stands. One of them immediately reported the fact at the station. Keeper Hall, with his crew, at once hurried out to the point named, and, after watching the vessel for a few moments, became satisfied that she was in trouble. No distress signals were set; the reason, as was afterward learned, being that the cabin was full of water and the flags could not be got at. As soon as possible keeper Hall hoisted a warning signal from the flagstaff on the Head, but received no answer from the vessel. He now saw that the spars and sails were gone, and lumber from her deck-load was floating in the water as she rapidly drifted toward the rock in an apparently unmanageable condition. The keeper and his men, finding their signal unanswered, endeavored to attract attention by waving their hats and coats in such a manner as to give the brig’s crew to understand that they ought to use all possible efforts to head the vessel to the westward, toward the channel between the Crumples and Great Wass island. These signals were soon discovered by the brig’s crew, and they could be seen endeavoring to pay her off in the direction indicated. Satisfied that

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PERSONALIZED BRICKS

Any time is a good time to purchase personalized bricks for either the Veteran’s Monument Park or the Patio. For the 4”x 8” brick, you have three lines each with 21 letters and spaces for \$75. The 8”x8” brick offers four lines with 21 letters and spaces for \$125. The Veteran’s brick information includes the rank, name, branch of service, war and years served. You can be creative with the Patio brick. It can be your favorite Beal’s Island memory, memorialize your loved ones, honor the living, a school memory, etc. It’s your choice with the patio brick. Please find the personalized brick application attached. Thank you!

2023 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL OR NEW

It’s leaf peeping time so before you get too busy, please remember to renew your BHS membership. As you will notice on the attached membership application, the dues have not increased and the fee is very minimal. Annual membership dues are utilized for the general operation costs. We hope you will continue to support BHS as it is a most worthy nonprofit organization! We appreciate your support! Please feel free to share the newsletter with your family and friends! Thank you!

*BHS Heritage Center Hours:
Monday – Friday
9AM to 2PM.*

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he was understood on board the vessel, they keeper directed his men to return to the station and run out the new surf-boat and then wait his further instructions; he remaining meanwhile to watch the movements of the brig. Observing that they had succeeded in heading her for the channel, he ran back to the station and found the boat outside the house in readiness for its perilous voyage. The crew had divested themselves of their heavy clothing and donned cork life-belts, in anticipation of rough work, and thus attired, they stood leaning on their boat, grimly watching the storm and sea, awaiting the order to start, their minds fully made up, as one said, "To save the brig's crew or go with them." The keeper hastily put on his cork-belt, and then giving the word to launch, away they went and pulled for the channel. The wind was blowing with nearly the

force of a hurricane, and although the depth of water in midchannel is full five fathoms, the sea was breaking clear to the bottom. As the life-saving crew cleared the point of the island with the boat, they saw the brig just entering the breakers in the channel, and coming like a racehorse, the seas breaking all over – one, more heavier than the rest, rushing over her stern, as an eye witness said, "Like a wall of water fully ten feet high, and smashing her two decks together." The crew of the brig, eleven in all, two St. John pilots being of the number, with scared and anxious faces, watched the almost superhuman efforts of the surfmen to get their assistance. The boat was gallantly pulled into the breakers and a close watch kept for a chance to approach the brig. Soon the vessel struck on a small sunken ledge and sung around. This gave the keeper an opportunity by watching the seas as

they tumbled in, to pull up and allow the men on the brig to jump onto the boat.

The captain, in the excitement of the moment, missed the boat and fell overboard. He was speedily hauled in, and, after a hard and exciting tussle with the sea and wind the entire number were rescued. It was afterward related that the captain of the brig, when he saw the life-saving crew deliberately pulling out into the whirl of waters, exclaimed, "Good God! What can that little white boat do?" He in good time found out, and when after an hour's hard pull, he and his men were safely landed on the island, they could not find words to express their gratitude to the crew of the station, nor to extol the "little white boat," which under the management of brave men, had been the instrument of their rescue from a watery grave. They were sheltered at the station two days.

A gentleman from Logansport, Indiana, who was visiting on one of the islands and witnessed the rescue, addressed to Capt. J.M. Richardson the district superintendent, the following letter.



Logansport, Ind. November 4, 1880.

Dear Sir;

On the morning of the 23d ultimo, I witnessed an act of heroism on the part of Capt. Hall and his crew, of the Crumples life-saving station, which deserves especial mention. The English brig Kate Upham, was driven into the western bay, between Pond Point and the Crumples, during a fearful storm, and struck on a ledge near Fisherman's Island. She had lost her rudder, her boats, and was otherwise injured. The brave crew of the life-saving station, with more courage than it required to face a battery, launched their surf-boat and went to the rescue. Standing on Beal's Island, looking through my glass I had a good view of the surroundings.

It seemed impossible for a boat to live in such a sea. "Tempest tossed" was no longer an imaginary picture. On every hand the sea was breaking, and the life-boat, with her noble crew, seemed but the sport of the angry waves; one moment hidden in the trough of the sea,

the next borne rapidly on a vast comber toward the ill-fated brig. While I could but admire the spirit that prompted the daring men to risk their lives in the noble service, it seemed a suicidal attempt; for the chances were greatly against them. By almost superhuman efforts they reached the brig and saved the crew—eleven men. In my western home I learned something of the life-saving service, but never dreamed of its importance until I saw it practically demonstrated a few days ago. The service commends itself to every lover of his race, and should receive the cordial support of the people of all sections of the country. When will congress render it more efficient by needed appropriations?

We cannot weigh life in the balance with dollars and cents. What better or easier way to expend a fair proportion of our revenue than in the cause of humanity?

Very respectfully, W.G. Nash

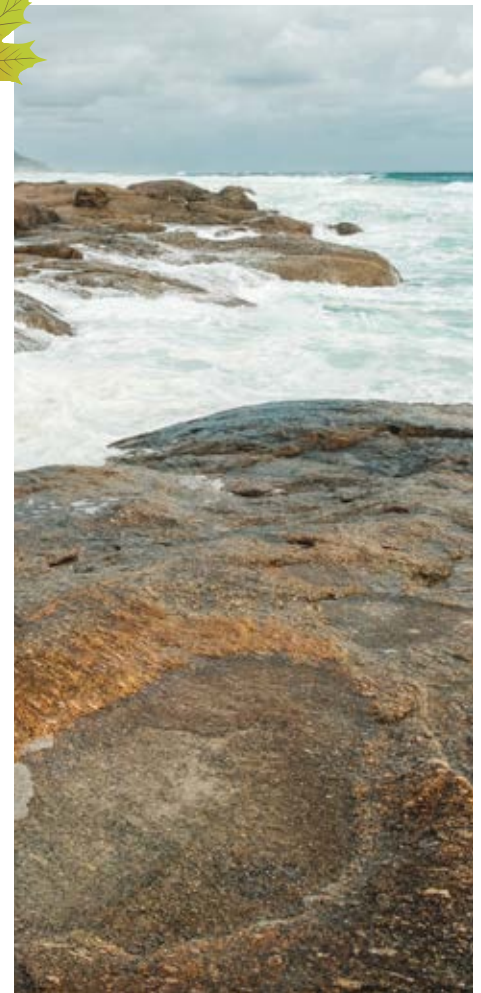


Photo by Lachlan Ross

The following is a current rescue story of the sea, as told by Representative Billy Bob Faulkingham on September 17, 2023

I feel a deep moral responsibility to make this post: GOD. IS. REAL. I can tell you this is absolutely, 100% true.

We had just finished hauling for the day, and were watching the waves break on the ledges of Turtle Island a few hundred feet inside us. Ready to continue towards the harbor we saw a sight I never thought I would see and never want to again. It was a giant rogue wave bearing down towards us. We were in probably 50' of water when the towering wave struck us quarter to on the starboard side. I have a snapshot in my brain of the wall of water towering over us. It's not normal for waves to break in that depth, but this one crested. I just remember the force. It hit like a freight train. I didn't know this in the moment but later realized I had gripped the wheel so tight and was torn off with such force that the calluses on the palm of my hand were torn off when I was ripped from the helm. The water hit me with so much force that my pants and underwear were pulled to my ankles. In a split second an amount of time neither of us can visually remember a 40' by 15.2' vessel was turned upside down landing on top of us. My biggest fear is drowning. I don't know how deep I was but I just remember the sound of rushing water and looking to the light. It was almost like I was pulled or pushed to the surface. I didn't even get a taste of salt water let alone a swallow. How? How was I not crushed or drowned? When I rose out of the water it was surreal. It looked like a battle scene. The boat was turned over keel up, engine was running, the prop was spinning, debris was floating and smoke filled the air. But I had the strangest vivid thought. I thought it in these actual words: "this water is as warm as bathwater". Other people might have scientific or other theories, but that was the presence of God. Another thing. This is not me; this is God too: I had no fear. I was completely at peace. But I had work to do. I swam to the boat. I was probably 12-15' off the port side of the upside-down vessel. I climbed on the stern even with the wheel spinning it was the safest place. I didn't feel the weight of my body. I felt 20 years old again. I can't move like that anymore but somehow, I did. I hollered to Alex. He answered back. I said, "you've got to get on the boat!" He said, "I can't. My arm is broke". As oil ran to the top of the engine the smoke coming out of the exhaust became thick and black. We lost sight of each other. The exhaust burped for a slight second and we saw each other again and grabbed each other by the hand. I helped pull Alex aboard. Finally, the engine stalled and the smoke stopped. We got our boots



off and prepared in case we needed to abandon the ship and swim for shore. Alex has a bad gash on his head. I used my pants to wrap his head and compress his wounds. Alex was in rough shape but by the grace of God alive. Alex is tougher than a bag of hammers. 2 men survive a 40' boat landing on top of them. How? I said, "Alex we are alive, God is with us, you're going to be ok". We got Alex as comfortable as possible for the shape he was in. The boat was floating upside down like she was meant to. I don't see a scientific reason why she would. My boat doesn't even have a stern. There's a 2' wide hole in the bulkhead the mechanic used to get under the floor. Nothing stopped water from filling the whole hull. I began praising God for keeping us alive, for loving us, for being loyal, for his grace and mercy. I asked God to keep us safe and get us help. Other than flagging at a couple planes and one lobster boat that were too far and didn't see us that's how we spent the next hour. The black bottom of the hull warmed and dried in the sun. The boat stayed in safe water, while all the debris from the boat floated towards shore and into the breakers. We remained safe. We didn't even get a wave big enough to lap up onto the hull. We didn't even get wet. Meanwhile my wife had gotten a call from Boston USCG that my epirob beacon was going off and they couldn't reach me. It was 12:20pm when she got the call. After sending many people into action at the Co-op my cousin Mikie got word at 1:11 that my epirob had gone off. The signal was north end of Turtle Island but something in Mikie said no, he's south of the island. I should add here: My boat name is 51. It's named after our cousin Adam that died in a car accident when we were teenagers. I have always felt Adam has been with me and kept me safe. We are family and we have a connection. The boy that died lobstering this summer was Mikie's nephew Tyler. Mikie wasn't letting another tragedy happen on his watch. In

7 minutes by 1:18 he arrived. When I saw that spray flying on the horizon, I knew exactly what boat threw that spray, and I knew he was coming for me. We stepped off the 51 boat and onto Mikie's without even getting wet. The 51 boat never sank an inch for over an hour keel up, upside down. Mikie delivered us to the harbor in minutes and an ambulance showed up immediately. Just moments after we were rescued the 51 boat sank below the sea. How did she stay afloat that long for no apparent reason and moments after we were safe go down? It was a series of miracles. God was with us. God is real, and we aren't special people, but God is special. God is great, and he's not looking for special people. There is power in

faith. It's my hope that someone will read my testimony and seek a relationship with God because he wants you to. Don't

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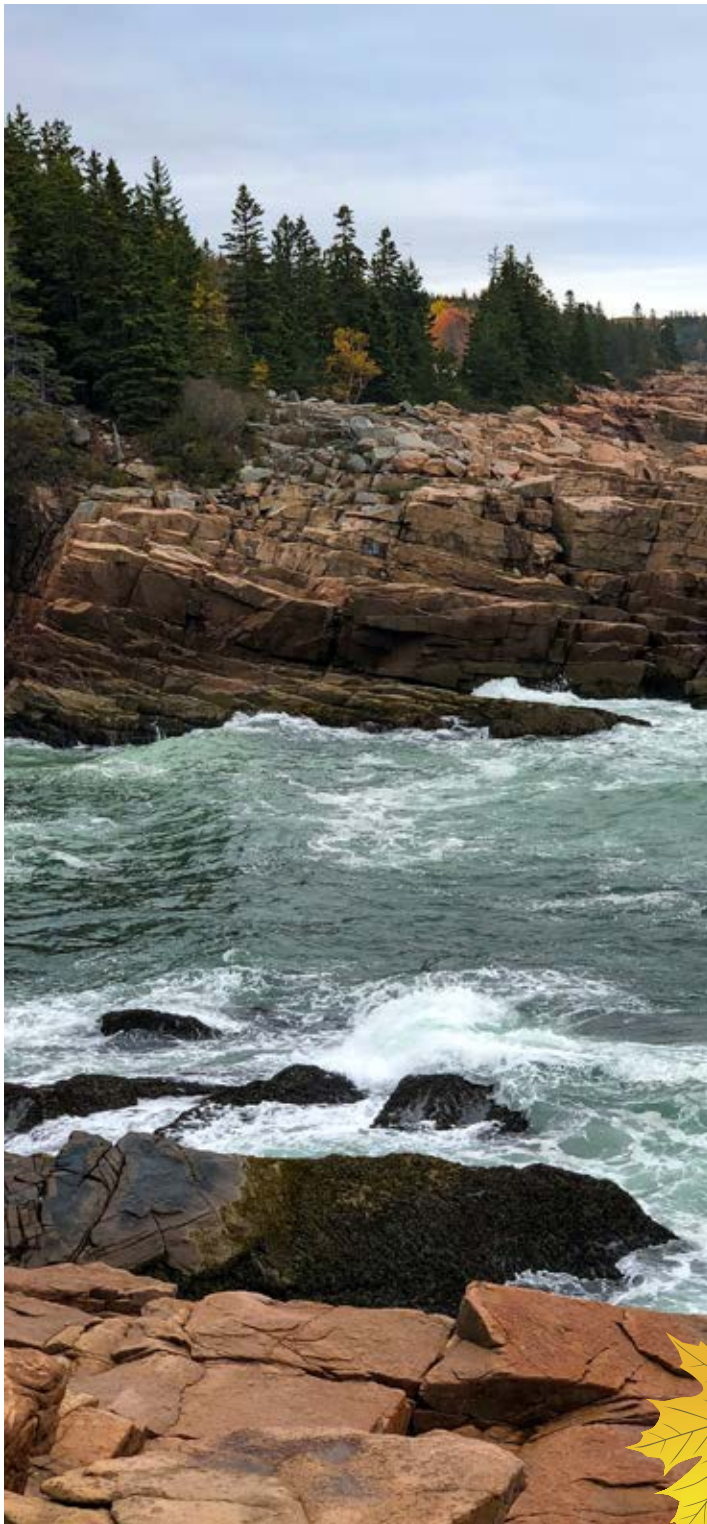


Photo by Blue Arauz

In lieu of the recent hurricane “Lee”, the following is a poem written by Eileen Beal in May of 1961.



THE STORM

Now listen to me, and I will relate
The wildest story I’ve heard to date:
It was the month of May in ‘61
When sheets of rain would cover the sun.
When tiny puddles huge ponds became;
Brooks frothed and babbled and lost their aim;
The rivers swelled until they found
The highways flooded beyond control.
Troopers gave warning, and Highway Patrol.
Enormous washouts, both wide and deep—
Drivers sought Ellsworth, where they could sleep.
But the rain didn’t cease—it kept dumping down.
The rest of my story’s from a neighboring town:
A fellow that day had set out his tub—
He never once dreamed of this hubbub!
Amazing! Astounding! His mind fairly reels—
Seen inches of water and a tub fu of “eels”?
The questions arise of how and where—
Could salt water “eels” come out of thin air?
Did a twister just funnel them out of the sea
And drop them at random? Pure mystery!
With whoppers from Ripley we’re lining our hats;
There’s an old saying too: “It rained dogs and cats!”
And its factual that we did live through such a storm—
But as for the rest? Well—just ask “Honest Tom.”

*(Written for “Mr. Nissen’s
“Tom Campbell of
Cherryfield, Maine)*



THE CURRENT BHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Carol Davis
Vice President: Walter Carver
Secretary: Teresa Carver
Treasurer and Membership Committee: Bettina White
Other board members:
Ray Beal, Eva Faulkingham and Pam Libby

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worry about how, just do. If you need help finding a church to help you, reach out to me. It will be the greatest decision you ever made.

I have so many people to thank and show gratitude to. First responders, fishermen, co-op workers (Susan), and the hundreds of people that prayed for Alex and I, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. You humble me. God bless you all.

Beals Heritage Center



Beals Historical Society Membership Application

Please check one: Renewal New

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

(Please type or print clearly)

Your mailing address: Street or Post Office Box: _____
City: _____ State _____ ZIP: _____

E-mail 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 |

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**

Annual memberships are for the calendar year and expire Dec. 31.