

BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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RECOLLECTIONS OF THE BEAL'S SCHOOLS

PERSONALIZED BRICKS – A GREAT WAY TO SUPPORT BHS!

By Erroll G. Woodward

As I recall, Alley's Bay had a school for the Elementary grades. The High School students attended at the Beals School. The Bay School I believe was located across the road from the "Chapel" of the Baptist Church and the store known as the Co-op. This being 2023, the building is now used as a home.

The Beals School, with which I am more familiar, was an attractive building, sitting where the Beals Historical Society is now located. There were two entrances. Both were located on the east side making Ami Beal's store easily accessible at recess times. One of the enclosed entrances led into the cellar that I believe housed two furnaces. The main furnace was in the south section and the other (if there really was another) was on the north beneath the gym. The other enclosed entrance, located near but north of the cellar entrance, opened into the first floor. The building itself had a bell in an enclosed belfry on the roof and a fire escape on the south side. Its many windows made the classrooms well lighted and pleasant. Of course, there were also hanging ceiling lights.

The school grounds were large on all four sides and on the south side was a set of swings. Vaguely, I picture a teeter totter near the swings. Big Pond near and southwest of the school was one of our skating places in the winter with frog watching and capturing in the summer. West of the high school end of the building was a cement pad with a short piece of supposedly vent pipe in it. I have no idea what it might

have been unless there had been carbide lighting originally. Part of the grounds on the north were grassy but southeast and south around the swings was gravel and cinders. A short road with no other buildings on it connected the school to the main road near the Advent Christian Parsonage.

A personal note: I graduated in 1948 and soon Dad and I opened a take-out directly across from Big Pond. Many students, on their way to school, stopped to place an order for noon lunch which was ready for them to get at noon. The good, honest, and trustworthy parents came at week's end and paid the weekly account. In March of 1951, I entered the Navy and the business was sold to my cousin Vinton Beal. He had encouraged me to join the Navy rather than wait to be drafted. I still appreciate his good advice.

Upon entering the school on the main floor, to the left and east from the main passageway was the primary room for 1,2 & 3rd grades. There was a door at each end of that room accessing this main passageway. Next on the left, were separate boy's and girl's rest rooms. Straight ahead and facing west in the hall, was the door leading to the cellar, and beside it on the right, were the stairs leading to the second floor. This section of the hallway beside the primary room also doubled as a stage for entertainment performances. Primarily these were school plays, speaking programs, and in later years school band performances. However, this little stage was also used for "Cowboy Shows", movies, and the

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It's 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 or maybe a school memory. It's your choice with the patio brick. Hopefully the bricks will be set in time for the Memorial Day program. Orders must be received by April 13, 2023. Thank you!

2023 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL OR NEW

Please remember to renew your BHS membership or to become a new member. 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 general operation costs. Life memberships go into a savings account where the interest is all that is used, which these days is very little. We hope you will continue to support BHS as it is a most worthy nonprofit organization! We very much appreciate your continued support! Please feel free to share the newsletter with your family and friends! Thank you!

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local musical group, "The Islanders" performed there on at least one occasion that I can remember.

Before going upstairs let's check out what might have been the busiest room in the building. It was referred to as the Auditorium or Gymnasium. This room was to the right of the 1st floor hallway. It was entered through a door on the immediate right from the main outside entrance. A couple steps brought us down to the gym floor which was lower than the main 1st floor. Here championship basketball teams practiced and played their games. The overhead ceiling was a bit low to the baskets but of ample height to develop shooting skills. Town and other special meetings were held there. This small gym was basically the heart of the town where everyone gathered for special occasions. Along the north wall were two sets of seats and bleachers separated by an enclosed chimney that reached the painted outside line of the basketball court. I attest that the chimney enclosure could be hard on a fingernail when making a blazing long court pass to the opposite corner.

Now we go upstairs and we find a large open landing with hangers for outside clothing for two classrooms. On the north (left) side of the landing, were the doors of the Intermediate School room for the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades, and the Grammar (Junior High) School room for 7th and 8th grades. On the right (south) side of the landing was the door to the High School main room. The two rooms on the left had auxiliary heating stoves on their north side. The high school room had a big hot air floor register directly above the furnace in the cellar.

The high school itself was divided into a "main room", a utility "Cloak", typing, and mimeographing room in the northeast corner, and on the west side of the high school main room was a separate room known as "the classroom". It was generally used for

science or other teaching needs. All rooms had one teacher except that the high school had two. The fire escape was accessed through one of the high school main room windows.

A janitor supervised the operation of heating and cleaning the building. High school students were often enlisted to sweep the beautiful hardwood floors. A clean smelling compound that looked like green sawdust called Dust Bane (I think) was sprinkled on the floor and the floor swept. On Arbor Day, The whole school pitched in to clean windows and do other chores inside and out to spruce up the school. One could feel the sense of pride for a job well done.

The teaching staff must have been of high quality because many Beals High School graduates went on to become college graduate professionals. That is not to say that a fisherman or other tradesman is of less importance and they certainly are professionals in their own rights.

There were rules to be followed. When entering the school after recess students lined up in separate lines for boys and girls and I believe by grade levels. Ladies (girls) entered first. No talking or other distracting or disruptive behavior in the lines was allowed. Generally, in classrooms, permission was to be obtained for speaking to another student, moving about the room to sharpen pencils, get materials, books, or to do anything that might distract another student.

The opening of the classroom day was a time for the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag/country, hearing some Bible verses read, repeating The Lord's Prayer, and reciting an assigned scripture verse or Psalm such as the 23rd. The day was orderly except for childish misbehavior. That was usually squelched quickly by whatever degree of action was needed. The usually was anything from a disapproving glance from the teacher, stand or sit in a corner,

head down on desk and hidden by one's arms, the dreaded spanking of the hands with a wooden ruler, or loss of recess privileges for whatever times deemed needed for a cure for the bad behavior. Beyond that, a note summoned parents to discuss any more serious situation.

The teachers I remember from the time I transferred to the Beals schools are Mr. Clayton Alley, and Mrs. Hannah Kelley, who taught at the Intermediate level. Grammar school teachers were Mrs. Louise Carver and Mrs. Lucy Beal. During the WWII years teachers were hard to find, but I remember Mrs. Sylvina Alley, Mr. Tom Bourjesson, and Mrs. McArthur. At one time, my aunt Miss Blanche Beal, taught in the primary grades and traveled daily to and from Jonesport and by ferry. The school day started at 8 and ended at 4. Those who lived near enough walked home to dinner during the one-hour break from 12 to 1.

I must mention the High School's yearbook, "Ocean Breeze". The title seems to be very fitting as ocean breezes are an outstanding feature of the location from which it was published. The publishing itself was a masterpiece of production. It contained samples of writing done by the students. They ranged from the serious to the witty and took in the silly along the way. It's material to be printed was typed by the typing students on masters for the mimeograph. The pages were printed off, assembled and stapled in house. The front cover was graced by a beautiful drawing of a full rigged sailing ship and was created by a student by the name of Bert Frost. The Frost name went on to become well known in the world of ship and boat building.



“Tournament Fever”

A poem written by the late Eileen Beal

February, 1959

We eat it in the morning,
To our work and back,
Again for dinner and supper,
And for a bedtime snack.

Our house ain't normal anymore,
The work is never done-
There're dirty dishes in the sink
While the family's on the run.

There're clothes hanging on the chair backs,
The hamper's running o'er;
There're baskets of ironing waiting
That're left from weeks before.

The furniture needs dusting,
The floors are such a mess!
We've been eating “store boughten” cooking
For weeks and weeks, I guess.

We're so upset our beds aren't made,
And we just hope and pray
That no salesman or relatives
Decide to visit today.

The sickness attacks us once a year,
It spreads from town to town;
it's known as Tournament Fever-
no cure has yet been found.

Our hands are red from clapping,
We're so hoarse we can hardly speak;
Our eyes are red and swollen,
All from the lack of sleep.

But as long as the car is running,
And we have a little extra loot,
We're tournament bound – our housework can wait-
And we don't give a hoot!



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