

BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. XXI, No. 1 (Winter 2021)

2021 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

With 2020 thankfully in our rear-view mirrors, we press onward and forward to a new and hopefully improved year of 2021. Our first order of business will be to announce that it is once again time to update the membership list. A membership with BHS is current from the first day of the year to the last day or January 1st through December 31st. For 2020, we had 94 members who renewed their membership, 8 new members, and

70 life members. For a total of 172 members. If your 2021 dues have already been paid, you would have received a membership card for the new year. If not, we would ask you to please activate your 2021 membership at your earliest convenience. Please find the membership application within this newsletter. Thank you so much for your continued support!

UPDATE ON BEALS HERITAGE CENTER HOURS

Covid19 hours for the Heritage Center are Tuesday – Thursday, 9:30AM – 1PM. We hope you are able to stop by for a visit. Due to new State guidelines, please wear a mask, but if you forget, we offer masks and hand sanitizer at the door. We hope to see you soon!

AMAZON SMILE

Just a reminder that you can support BHS through AmazonSmile. Just go to AmazonSmile.com and chose Beals Historical Society for your charity. Each time you place an order Amazon will make a donation to BHS. It's that simple! We thank you in advance for your support of BHS!

CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES OF OUR DECEASED MEMBERS IN 2020.

We wish to offer heartfelt sympathy and prayers to the families of Arthur Woodward, Dana Smith, Lewis Beal, and Richard Carver. We, at BHS, are very saddened to lose these good men and all they represented to the community throughout their lives. With the exception of Dana Smith, who, for several years, faithfully mowed BHS lawn and plowed the driveway, the Beals Island legacy of Richard, Arthur and Lewis will live on through BHS collection of yearbooks, photos, newspaper articles, and memories and stories shared by family and friends who peruse them while visiting the Heritage Center for years to come. They will be sadly missed but lovingly remembered by all.

Save THE Date

2021 CALENDAR
OF EVENTS ARE
DEPENDENT ON
COVID 19
RESTRICTIONS

MARCH 19TH @ 6:30PM:
Annual Business Meeting including
Election of Officers to be held at
Beals Heritage Center

JUNE 18TH @ 6:30PM:
Movie night at Beals Heritage Center

JULY 4TH
Moosabec Boat Races will find us
selling crabmeat and lobster rolls
across from USCG unless it is held
on Sunday.

SEPTEMBER 17TH
@ 6:30PM:
To be announced

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

The following is the Dedicatory speech of the new Beals Bridge with photos of the dedication and several of construction. If you have access to Facebook, please find Beals Historical Society wall and search for the new Beals bridge opening where you will be able to listen to a live feed of Daniel F. Davis's beautifully written and articulated speech.

DEDICATORY ADDRESS & PRAYER FOR THE NEW BEALS BRIDGE AUGUST 16, 2020 • 2:00 P.M.

*As Delivered by Daniel F. Davis
Former Selectman, Town of Beals
Local Historian, Beals Historical Society
Pastor, Harrington Baptist Church*

GREETING: I consider it a great honor to be asked to speak at the grand opening and dedication of the new Beals Island Bridge, also known as the Jonesport-Beals Bridge. I want to extend my thanks to the Municipal Officers of the towns of Beals and Jonesport for the invitation to participate. But most of all, I want to welcome each of you here today and those joining by way of video streaming, thanks to Carol Davis, President of Beals Historical Society. It is unfortunate that current conditions with Covid-19 have greatly impacted our free assembly. We would ask you to observe social distancing and to feel free to wear a mask for your own safety and that of others. I believe the local historical societies plan to have video copies of the ceremony available upon request.

POEM by Eileen Beal: "Our Bridge"

I would like to begin by sharing the first two stanzas of a poem written by the late Eileen L. Beal, lifelong resident of Beals, entitled "Our Bridge". It was written on the occasion of the opening of the old Beals Island Bridge and was printed on the back of the program for its grand opening on August 9, 1958, a special day in the life of our community and, as many of us here recall, a day of great joy and celebration:

Today our bridge is completed,
We are an island no more,
For the span that stretches across the Reach
Connects us with the Jonesport shore.

There will be many changes,
Many adjustments made;
So with the awakening of a brighter dawn,
We turn another page.

Yes, once again we stand over the waters of Moosabec Reach, turning another page in the history of our communities. Many changes and adjustments have been made over the past 62 years, and once more we look to brighter and better days to come, thanks in part to the accomplishments made in providing us a new and safer access to and from the mainland. May all who pass this way feel a warm welcome to the Moosabec Community.

DEDICATION ADDRESS: The late Lawrence B. Norton, lifelong resident of Jonesport, retired educator, local historian, and man of great wisdom, once reminded me that everything has a beginning, middle, and end. Such is the case with the two bridges before us today that now span Moosabec Reach. The Old Bridge had its beginnings in 1953 when the Beals Board of Selectmen successfully initiated a plan to petition the State of Maine for a bridge connecting Beal's Island to the mainland. Construction began in 1956 and culminated with its dedication on August 9, 1958. The Beals "Million-Dollar Bridge" has served the residents of Beals Island and the general public for just over 62 years. During its time of service it has adequately met the needs and enhanced the lives of thousands of individuals personally, commercially, and aesthetically. It has lived beyond its anticipated life expectancy, and has served us well. In the coming days and weeks it will undergo its slow and systematic demise. Hopefully, it will not be the end of service for the bridge, as its strong steel framework will likely be recycled and it will live on as part of some other worthy undertaking.



Today, we dedicate a new bridge that will continue to maintain our connection with the mainland for generations to come. We have watched its progress from the planning stages nearly a decade ago to its eventual construction over the past three years, beginning in the fall of 2017 to its opening to the public this 16th day of August, 2020. I would like to share with you several excerpts from the letter requesting financial support to help defray the 21.98 million dollar anticipated cost of the project. That letter was submitted by the Municipal Officers of the Town of Beals (Daniel F. Davis, Clara E. Smith, and Mariner N. Bunker) dated May 12, 2015 and addressed to The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx, Secretary of the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Washington, D.C. The fruition of that

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ambitious goal is in evidence before us today.

Referring to the old bridge, that letter stated in part: “Connecting Beals Island with Jonesport on the mainland, the existing bridge has well served the citizens of the Moosabec region and the general public since its construction in 1957. For a small community, the record reveals significant use during its existence, with 127,566 people using the bridge in its first full year of service, and a current average daily traffic count of more than 2,000 today (8% percent of which is heavy trucks). The increased traffic on this only roadway access to Beals Island, along with time, has taken its toll on this aging structure, which reached its 50-year lifespan seven years ago. Adequate at the time of its construction, the bridge’s narrow deck width is currently inadequate for today’s mix of large truck traffic, busses, passenger vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrian passage.”

In support of the new bridge the letter continues: “With the construction of a new bridge, the flow of traffic would be further benefited with proposed safety improvements and widening of the acute intersection at the Beals end of the bridge, which traditionally has caused great difficulty for the maneuverability of larger vehicles.

“The benefits of a new bridge to our island community and the public would be immeasurable, including increased confidence in traveling to and from Beals over a wider and safer structure, with an incentive toward increased tourism, especially as it relates to Nature Conservancy lands on adjoining Great Wass Island and the town’s Backfield Park. Local trucking and commercial businesses will benefit greatly with wider travel lanes and unimpeded access to the island’s roadways at the intersection of Bridge Street and Bay View Drive. In addition, the local citizens’ concerns regarding student transportation to and from the island will be greatly diminished.”

The Selectmen included in their closing remarks, “Due to its present condition, it is imperative that replacement be accomplished as soon as possible.” The Federal Government responded favorably and awarded the State of Maine the necessary funds to make this project, along with its many benefits, a reality. The product of the concerted efforts of numerous individuals and agencies lies before us today.



DEDICATION PRAYER: Let us join our hearts in a prayer of dedication and blessing for this impressive structure as the new Beals Island (Jonesport-Beals) Bridge nears its completion.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your bountiful blessings upon us; that you have provided us safe passage to and from the mainland throughout our history as a community by way of passenger ferries, a car ferry, and as of 1958 a new bridge that has enhanced and made more convenient our transport. And now that that bridge has outlived its usefulness, you have blessed us with its replacement—a new and even greater span that will grace the sunrise and sunset skies of Moosabec Reach for many years to come.

We thank you for all who have worked to make this project possible and to bring it to its completion. We thank you for each mind and hand that has played a part, from the engineers that designed it to those who have supervised its construction, but especially for the dedicated workers who have labored through sunshine and rain, wind and cold, and every weather adversity that seemingly nature could throw at them over the past three years—and to do so safely. We thank you for your hand of protection.

And now we pray that you will bless this bridge to the service of this community. May it become a gateway to new beginnings—to increased prosperity, better health care, more recreational opportunities, and an asset to our every endeavor and enhancement of life throughout its longevity.

Bless, O Lord, all who pass over and under this bridge, and keep them safe from harm, in Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

Thank you.



*Photos Courtesy of
Patrician Art*

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.

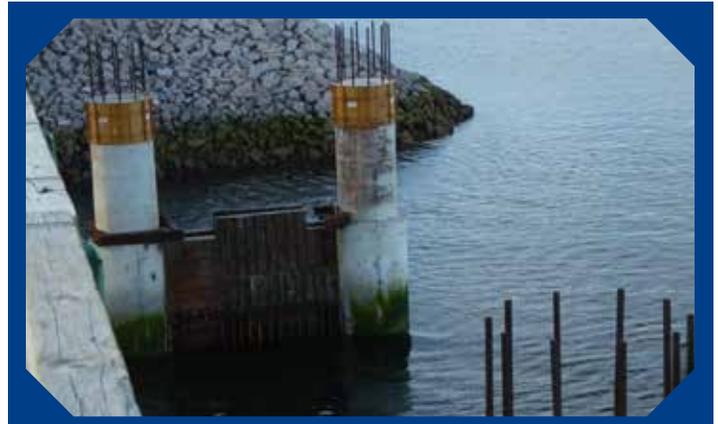
CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW BEALS BRIDGE



Beginning the removal process of the old bridge rails.



Steel tube forms for new bridge cement pilings.



*Photos Above and Right Courtesy of
Daniel F. Davis*

*Photos Below Line Courtesy of
Nichole Ireland*



Blast resulted in the removal of the old bridge cement pilings

