



# Artifacts and Anchors

*A quarterly newsletter for Members, Volunteers, and Friends of the Kittery Historical & Naval Society*



## Shipyard Souvenirs in New Display

One of our newest exhibits in 2019 is “Souvenirs from the Shipyard,” an amazing collection of items that, in one way or another, came from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

Fifty years ago area children would go back to school with the iconic black ballpoint pens emblazed with “Skilcraft–US Government.” Surplus scotch tape dispensers and staplers could be found in classrooms as well as homes. Long retired, some of these can probably be found in desk drawers, attics, or basements today.



*Launching tags.*

But a variety of other items have come from PNSY. Many have historical meanings: the launching tags, first day covers, and souvenir ribbons were sold to benefit the Navy Relief Fund. Our shipyard was the only one in the United States to produce the launching tags, which identified the submarines built at Portsmouth. Often, at the decommissioning of

a ship, salvage would be made into mementos of its service. Some of these would eventually make their way into our collection.



*Ashtray made from the salvage of the USS Halfbeak, SS352.*

Along with ships and submarines, many smaller interesting items were also manufactured on the shipyard: tiny submarine models on display stands (presented to dignitaries at the launching of vessels), christening bottles, and souvenir booklets for guests to take home to remember auspicious occasions are only a few of the items on display. Delicate items such as commemorative plates, mugs, and dishware contrast with the weighty head of a sledge hammer used to lay down the keel of the submarine V-2 in 1921!

Pieces from more recent history came from the efforts to “Save Our Shipyard” when the BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) Commission threatened to close down the shipyard in 2005. The image of a sea of yellow T-shirts lining the road to the yard is etched into this town’s memory,

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and we honor the 5000 people who wore those shirts in this exhibit.

This display holds much of our Naval history; it is a must see. We hope it serves as a reminder of our past and the connection that Kittery



has with the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.



*“Save Our Shipyard” demonstration, 2005.*



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## From the PRESIDENT

I hope you enjoy this new format for our expanded newsletter. My name is Bob Gray. I'm a lifelong resident of Kittery, graduated from Traip Academy, and have been married to my high school sweetheart, Shea, for almost 46 years. I've had the honor and pleasure of serving as the president of the Board of Trustees of the Kittery Historical and Naval Society since April of 2018.

Expanding the newsletter is one of several actions that the Board of Trustees is working on, in order to better engage with the Society's members. We are also rearranging our quarterly members' meetings and the Society's public historical lectures. We realized that having the members' meetings immediately before the public lectures did not lend itself well to hearing from the membership.

So, starting on September 10, the historical lectures will be open to the public for three dollars, but will be free to members. The membership meeting will be combined with the Board of Trustees meeting on September 24. Please plan on attending both events!

On September 10, come and enjoy Neil Novello's presentation entitled "The Survivor's Story" about Gerald McLees, one of the last survivors of the sinking of the *U.S.S. Squalus*. See the Calendar of Events for all the details.

Then please plan on coming to the combined members' and Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday September 24. We look forward to hearing your ideas about how we can make the Society and the Museum even better.

Sincerely,

*Bob*

Bob Gray, President

From our library:



by Richard A. Wells, A.M.,  
King, Richardson & Co., Publishers,  
1890

THE BEST KIND OF CONVERSATION.

That conversation is the best which furnishes the most entertainment to the person conferred with, and calls upon him for the least exercise of mind. It is for this reason that argument and difference are studiously avoided by well-bred people; they tax and tire. It should be the aim of every one to utter his remarks in such a form that the expression of assent or opposition need not follow from him he speaks with.

# News and Events

## Museum Acquires Armsden Photo Collection

The Museum has been the recipient of a treasure trove of mid-20th century photographs of Kittery and environs from the family of local photographer Douglas Armsden. To care for these photographs and disseminate the images, the Museum applied for and received a grant from the Rosamond Thaxter Foundation for preservation and digitization. With these funds, we have purchased a high-resolution scanner and museum-quality storage for the original prints. Over the next year the plan is to scan and document these photographs, make the images available, and securely store the originals.

## Bus Tours Prove Popular

The Museum has been sponsoring our popular “Two Museum Bus Tour” once a month through the summer months, thanks to the generous help and cooperation of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Historian and Museum Director Joe

Gluckert. These tours have been full to capacity throughout the summer, and two more are on the schedule for September and October.

## Garrison Room gets HVAC

The new HVAC system for the Mitchell Garrison room has been a great success, both in making that space more comfortable for guests and providing a better environment for the renewed exhibits. Many thanks to Kennebunk Savings Bank, Altus Engineering, and the Rosamond Thaxter Foundation for their gifts in support of the new HVAC.

## Gift of Painting Honors Milton Hall

A painting by artist Russell Cheney (1881-1945) was given to the Museum by the Richard Hyde family to honor the memory of Milton Hall, a long-time Trustee and dedicated volunteer at the KHNM. The painting is of Christian Shore in Portsmouth, NH. Russell Cheney had his home and studio in

Kittery Point on Bowen Road, not far from where Milton raised his family.

## Talks Highlight Kittery's Darker History

Bob Gray (President of the Kittery Historical and Naval Society) gave a lecture about “Murders in Kittery” at the Lions Club on June 11, which was very well attended. There seems to be some enthusiasm for gruesome local affairs! In partnership with Kittery Adult Education, Museum Director Kim Sanborn will be telling “Stories from the Cemeteries” on October 10. Bob will lecture again about “Murders in Kittery” on October 29. Please register through Adult Education ([kittery.maineadult-ed.org/classes/categories/lectures-and-history](http://kittery.maineadult-ed.org/classes/categories/lectures-and-history)) for these presentations, to take place at the Kittery Historical and Naval Museum.

## Planning for Maine's Bicentennial Celebration

Maine was part of Massachusetts until 1820, when it became a separate free state in the U.S. under the Missouri Compromise. In 2020 the town of Kittery will be celebrating the bicentennial of Maine's statehood. We are looking for ideas and volunteers to plan this celebration. If you would like to participate, contact Bob Gray at [kitterymuseum@netzero.net](mailto:kitterymuseum@netzero.net).



*View of Christian Shore neighborhood, Portsmouth, NH, painting by Russell Cheney. Gift of the Richard Hyde family in memory of Milton Hall, long-time Trustee of the KHNM.*



## Spotlight on Collections

### What is it?

This photograph from our collection shows a vessel tied up at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. For those of us who associate the yard exclusively with building submarines, it seems a bit out of character.

Sharp eyes will notice the old bridge to Gate 1 still exists, and the Traip house has not yet been moved.

Do you have an idea what type of vessel this is and when the picture was taken?

*Answer at bottom of page 5.*



## The Brig *Hattie Eaton*: Victim of the Great Gale of 1876

Wandering through the seaside cemetery across the street from the Kittery Point First Congregational Church, one comes across some very interesting gravestones. One such stone, shown here, bears a carving of a sailing vessel tossed in a stormy sea, and is a monument to one of Kittery's most dramatic shipwrecks in the late winter of 1876. It marks the final resting place of five crew members and one stowaway of the

Brig *Hattie Eaton* of Boston, driven ashore on Gerrish Island in the Great Gale of 1876 and wrecked with the loss of all aboard save one crew member.

That powerful storm in March 1876 was noted by Celia Thaxter on Appledore Island, who wrote that had the storm "continued another twenty-four hours, it would not have left stick or stone on the islands....

Everything that could move in the house shook, and rattled and jingled, and the roar in the sky was perfectly deafening and the sea was really 'mountainous high'.... I dread to hear of the disasters that must have happened."

The *Hattie Eaton* had set sail in February 1876 from Cuba with a load of molasses, sugar, and rum, and was headed for Portland, Maine. The ship was commanded by James F. Cook of Boston, and had a crew of six, and a stowaway who was discovered after the ship left port in Cuba. The voyage was uneventful until the ship rounded the tip of Cape Cod, where it encountered a furious storm with hurricane force winds, rain, sleet, and snow. Ice coated the rigging of the ship, three members of the crew suffered frostbite, two crew were injured while trying to hold the wheel, and everything movable on the decks was washed into the sea.

Captain Cook was likely trying to reach Portsmouth Harbor, but visibility was nil, and the ship was driven into shore at low tide on Gerrish Island at 3:00 in the afternoon. A Kittery man who lived nearby, Lorenzo B. Mitchell, saw

Continued on page 5



*Monument to the crew of the Brig Hattie Eaton in the First Congregational Church of Kittery Point, Maine cemetery.*

# From the DIRECTOR

Hello Friends,

I am pleased to report that the Kittery Historical and Naval Museum continues to grow, change, and prosper. Every year we set new goals and we are constantly working towards those. This year has seen an increase in our visitors, with many of them using the internet to find us.

Over the past two years, our mission has been to invite the community into our Museum by making our archives more accessible to the public. We are accomplishing this by digitizing our collections with the help of our dedicated volunteers. Here in the Museum we have also introduced the Kittery History Portal, an extensive database of Kittery's past which visitors can explore with the touch of a screen.

We recently acquired a large format scanner, thanks to a grant from the Rosamond Thaxter Foundation, to scan the photographs and documents in our collection. These ephemera will eventually be added to the Kittery History Portal so more of our history will be available for general viewing.

We strive to have something new and interesting in the Museum with each season opening. This year we have introduced a new Celia Thaxter's Island exhibit, as well as updating the Kittery Souvenir Porcelain display. Completely new this year is the Shipyard Souvenir Display.

Finally, I would like to thank our volunteers for the determination and dedication that they provide the Museum. These wonderful people help us continue to preserve and promote Kittery's amazing history.

Sincerely,

*Kim*

Kim Sanborn, Director



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Answer to What is It?: Built as a wood-hulled steam cutter by the Portsmouth Navy Yard in 1902, it was placed in service as Steam Cutter No. 423 at Naval Training Station, Newport, RI, the same year. It was known as the *Despatch* from 1908 until 1918, when it was renamed *Hustle*. It was designated Yard Ferryboat (YFB-6) in 1920, then placed out of service in 1921. Final disposition is unknown. (*NavSource Naval History archives.*)

*Hattie Eaton*—Continued from page 4

the ship coming ashore. “She came for the beach like a racehorse, under lower topsail, reefed spanker, and fore-topmast staysail with the wind well aft and not swerving an inch from her direct course.” Mitchell ran to the shore and attempted to reach the ship, which was impaled on rocks, and was almost able to reach Captain Cook, who was clinging to some of the upper rigging, but could not. Captain Cook, realizing that the situation was hopeless, called out the name of his ship and the names of the men on board, and asked Mitchell to send a last message to his wife. Captain Cook disappeared under the waves.

William W. Williams and Jack Witham of Kittery Point joined Lorenzo Mitchell and watched on shore in horror as the brig was dashed to pieces on the rocks. A lull in the force of the storm allowed them to make one last attempt to reach the ship and they found the First Mate, William O. LeBarron, crawling out of the galley and they were able to carry him ashore before the storm lashed up again. Captain Cook, the rest of the crew and the stowaway were all lost in the violent storm. William LeBarron was brought to Lorenzo Mitchell's home and was treated by Dr. Wentworth and recovered from his injuries.

Eventually the sea returned the bodies of the captain and crew of the *Hattie Eaton*. Captain Cook and the Second Mate, William Fitzpatrick, were buried in Boston, but five of the crew and the stowaway were buried in the cemetery of the Kittery Point First Congregational Church. They were William Berens (Dublin), Peter Botars (Grenada), William Brevenar (Tobago), Henry Hartmeyer (East Boston), Jeremiah Stevens (St. Kitts), and stowaway Joseph Alban (Cayenne),

[adapted from “Wreck of the Brig *Hattie Eaton*” by Brian Phelan and Wendy Coffin, *Down East* magazine, October 1978, plus contemporary newspaper accounts]

# Old News from the Archives

From: The Kittery Press, May 14, 1937

## CHIEF'S CAR STOLEN

It was reported recently that not long ago the green and white prowler car of Kittery's Chief of Police George C. Smart was stolen from where it was parked on Wallingford Square. Ernest search located it, after some time, in the yard at Wurm's Marine Station near the entrance to the Navy Yard. No finger prints were discovered on the vehicle, and the Police Department are inclined to believe that it wandered down there itself to talk with the outboard motors.

From: The Portsmouth Chronicle and Herald, 1908

KITTERY POINT—Since the opening of the electric road in our town about ten years ago, we have heard conductors announce as the car approaches the Wentworth block near the end of the navy yard bridge these words, "Kittery Foreside and navy yard," and while they are probably obeying orders from their superiors, we have often wondered what that word "Foreside" meant and if it is located on the navy yard and what kind of an animal, building, or battleship it really is. The inquiry has been made many times and no one seems to know whether "Foreside" was some great man who formerly lived in Kittery, or who he was. For our part we profess ignorance and hope someone will answer this, that the public may know the next time they hear "Kittery Foreside and the navy yard" just what the word means or where the same had its origin. The lovers of historic Kittery hope the matter will be settled.

From: The Portsmouth Chronicle and Herald, November 1, 1907

KITTERY POINT—The Autobiography of Mark Twain now appearing in a magazine connected with a Boston Sunday newspaper, is very interesting to our residents, many of whom have never had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Clemens when he has been here as a guest of his old time friend, William Dean Howells. In the opening chapter of his autobiography, he has jokingly and pleasantly referred to Mr. Howells in the following words: "I told Howells that this autobiography of mine would live a couple of thousand years without any effort, and would then take a fresh start and live the rest of the time. Howells applauded and was full of praise and endorsement, which was wise of him, and judicious. If he had manifested a different spirit, I would have thrown him out of the window. I like criticism, but it must be my way."

**HOTEL**  
**CHAMPERNOWNE**

—♦♦♦—  
KITTERY POINT,  
MAINE.  
—♦♦♦—  
HORACE MITCHELL,  
Proprietor

Advertisements from issues of *The Island and Harbor Echo*, 1881, 1886, and 1895.

**Oh! Listen!** All ye Summer visitors to the jingle of the bells on the Bakers' cart from the

**KITTERY BAKERY,**

GOVERNMENT STREET, KITTERY, MAINE.  
*LUTTS BROS., Proprietors.*

**C. H. MANSON,**  
*Kittery Point and Portsmouth Express.*

Jobbing and errands of all kinds, promptly attended to.  
Satisfaction guaranteed.

Please give me a call.

**C. W. COTTLE & SON,**  
— LIVERY AND BOARDING STABLE. —  
— DEALERS IN —  
**Wood, Coal and Pressed Hay.**

GOVERNMENT STREET, KITTERY, ME.

**H. M. SEAWARDS'**  
**FISH MARKET,**

KITTERY POINT, MAINE.

Fresh Cod, Haddock, Halibut and Salmon,  
Smoked Halibut and Salt Salmon,  
Tongues and Sounds, Halibut Heads  
and Fins, Dry Fish of all Kinds.



# VOLUNTEER Spotlight

Nancy Ames, a 23-year resident of Kittery Point (the 1700 Deering Tavern is her home), continues to be fascinated by Kittery's long and varied history and feels that she still has much to learn. Her volunteer work at the Kittery Museum has been both educating and invigorating.

Recruited to the Museum by Bonnie Pierce and Claire Foye, Nancy (a long-time and talented crafter) initially supported the Museum with crafted decorations and gifts for the annual Holiday Open House. Her neighbor Ron Ames encouraged her to volunteer in 2013 to work in the Museum, helping visitors navigate the exhibits, running the gift shop, and making the Museum a positive experience for guests.

Nancy says that since she worked for many years in a non-profit organization, she knows the value of volunteers and was glad to lend a hand at the Museum. Nancy now has six seasons at the Museum under her belt. She especially enjoys the interaction with Museum visitors, and also enjoys working with the other volunteers and Trustees. Nancy believes that the Museum is a community treasure and that more of her fellow citizens should take advantage of the opportunity to explore its history and artifacts.

Museum exhibits change annually, and Nancy's current favorite is a display of artifacts and souvenirs of Kittery's grand hotels (the Champernowne, Parkfield, Pepperrell, and Pocahontas), an era about which she knew little and finds fascinat-

ing. She says it makes history so much more immediate and human to see a plate or glass from the hotel and imagine who might have dined off the plate or drunk from the glass. Nancy has (bravely) participated in three of the annual visits of Kittery's third grade classes to the Museum, where 100+ youngsters are immersed in the history of their community.

Nancy says that she benefits as much as the Museum does when she volunteers — meeting interesting guests, learning new things about

the history of Kittery, and working each time with a team of enthusiastic volunteers and Trustees. She says she always looks forward to her time at the Museum.



Nancy Ames, volunteer.

## Volunteer Opportunities

**CURATORIAL VOLUNTEER:** Working with a team of volunteers and the Director of the Museum, to help receive and record new acquisitions to the Museum's collection of historical/naval artifacts. Will be trained to use PastPerfect software and will enter information about each new collection item into the Museum's database. Position would require a minimum commitment of two hours per week at the Museum.

**CURATORIAL VOLUNTEER:** Working with a team of volunteers, and with the President of the Society, to enter data from paper accession logs into PastPerfect software program. Will be trained to use software. Position would require a commitment of three hours per week, but the work may be done either at home or at the Museum.

**MUSEUM DOCENTS:** To greet visitors, collect entrance fees, answer questions about the Museum's exhibits, help maintain exhibits and displays, make sales from the Museum's gift/book shop, and help make each visitor's Museum experience a positive one. Minimum commitment of two hours per week at the Museum during the season (March – November).

If you have an interest in any of these opportunities, contact Kim Sanborn at [kitterymuseum@netzero.net](mailto:kitterymuseum@netzero.net).



Kittery Historical and Naval Museum  
140 Rogers Road  
Kittery, ME 03904

## Calendar

### September 7, Saturday, 10am–4pm at the Museum

VETERAN'S SALUTE—the Society and the Museum honor those who serve / have served. Displays, re-enactors, more...

### September 10, Tuesday, 7–8:30pm at the KCC Star Theater

“A SURVIVOR’S STORY” presented by Neil Novello. A filmed interview with Gerald C. McLees, a survivor of the sinking of the submarine *Squalus*. Admission free to members. Non-members \$3.



*Gerald C. McLees in 1940*

### September 14, Saturday

“NAVY DAY” at the USS Albacore—A celebration of all things U.S. Navy, and especially submarines.

### September 18, Wednesday

TWO MUSEUM BUS TOUR—KHNM and Portsmouth Shipyard bus tour. Call or visit the Museum to register by Sept. 11 (207.439.3080).

### September 24, Tuesday, 6:30pm

Kittery Historical and Naval Society membership meeting at the Kittery Community Center. The Trustees invite all members to join them to talk about what we do and what we can do better.

### October 10, Thursday

#### Lecture by Kim Sanborn, Museum Director

“STORIES FROM THE CEMETERIES”—Register through Kittery Adult Education.

### October 17, Thursday

TWO MUSEUM BUS TOUR—KHNM and Portsmouth Shipyard bus tour. Register by Oct. 10.

### October 29, Tuesday

#### Lecture by Bob Gray, President, KH&NS

“MURDERS IN KITTEERY”—Register through Kittery Adult Education.

### November 16, Saturday

Last regular open day of the Museum’s 2019 season.

### December 12, 13, and 14, Thurs– Sat, 10am–4pm

Holiday Open House—a festive celebration of the season in a decorated Museum, featuring a selection of unique gifts, baked goods, a raffle, and a silent auction.

