

# The Dash

Published by Freeport Historical Society | *Keeping the past present since 1969.*



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at Portland Science Center  
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FALL 2017

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# Vaughndella Curtis: *One of Freeport's Living Treasures\*\**

BY JIM CRAM WITH REBECCA HOTELLING

**I**T WAS BECKY HOTELLING'S idea that we should interview Vaughndella. We wanted some interesting stories for *The Dash* and knew Vaughndella would probably have some of those up her sleeve.

OMG! Buckle UP.... After over four hours of tapes and notes we are not half done. The challenge is not finding stories it is picking a few that can fit into this article. Topics range from a house by house tour of South Freeport in the 1940's detailing all the residents, their occupations, fame and foibles. Learning that the 'Stone Post' was the center of 'Clam Corner' because the majority of residents at the time were clammers. Anecdotes about life in Freeport during the blackouts in WWII. We had to pick just a few. And, we promise to return....

Conditions were not stable in Vaughndella's household when she was young, so from age three months until she entered high school she lived in a foster situation nearby on South Street with Mummy Sadie and Daddy Mel Wilson in a very caring home. There was no running water, electricity or



**“One of the things my faith has taught me  
Is to reach out to others,  
To try to understand their experience,  
Often so different from my own.  
What I have come to know  
Is that the essential happiness in life  
Is an open hand and a joyous heart.”**  
– Vaughndella Curtis (2002)

central heat. Midway through the war the electricity came. Then a pump inside the kitchen. “It was years before we had a bathroom.” Or an icebox. “I got one of them the first year I moved into my house on Pine Street in 1953.” (Age 21, one month after the birth of her daughter Janet). Vaughndella was able to visit with her parents regularly and then when she entered grammar school she was able to visit regularly with her two sisters, Betty Jean and Laura each day at school as they were at separate houses.

### WWII: Age 9-12

The Red Oak Barges were built for the Navy in the Soule shipyard during WWII. Vaughndella remembers there was a

guard house one had to go through to enter. She tells of going down to the yard at the end of the day with her foster brother to ride the work horses back up to the pole barn where they were kept on Pine Street near her home. Ralph Prout would hold the reigns while the youngsters rode on their backs.

“During the war, the children had to wear a whistle around their necks in case there was an air raid and they needed to be found. The butter looked more like lard and there was a packet of orange coloring to mix into it. Leather was rationed, so my saddle shoes were made of pigskin. Flour and gas and all those things were rationed. There were books of stamps for the gas, farmers got more. All the

### FALL 2017

The Dash is published four times annually by Freeport Historical Society for its members.

Freeport Historical Society  
Harrington House  
45 Main Street  
Freeport, ME 04032  
(207) 865-3170

[www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org](http://www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org)

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May to October 12  
Monday to Friday, 9 am – 5 pm

October 13 to May  
Tuesday to Friday, 10 am – 4 pm

Appointments may also be made for a weekend visit.

We encourage a phone call prior to any visit, to verify that the office is open.

Research and visits involving the collections require an appointment in advance. Call 207-865-3170 to speak with Holly Hurd or email [library@freeporthistoricalsociety.org](mailto:library@freeporthistoricalsociety.org)

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## Engagement = Energy

**W**HAT A WONDERFUL MAINE summer we have had! The weather has been particularly great and along with that have come many Freeport Historical Society activities that have given our members and friends opportunities to engage with our community and all parties have enjoyed the shared energy created.

Summer started with the Harborside GALA produced by Jay Flowers' youthful and energetic committee. Everyone had fun planning and executing the plan and the party was terrific! AND, we created income to support our many other activities. Many local companies participated and we are most grateful.

We hosted a wonderful band concert by Freeport's own 'Coastal Winds' in our courtyard on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. Enjoyed by locals and visitors alike.

Becky Hotelling's terrific garden crew has been hard at it since the snows melted and hardly a day goes by that I don't get a compliment from a visitor on how lovely our gardens are. It is a real pleasure to see the many happy faces in the garden every Wednesday morning as they fan out to

plant, trim, prune, pinch, mulch, divide and remove the plants that don't meet their demanding standards. Then Bob Fussellman is there to mow and trim the lawns.

Throughout the summer the renovation of all the windows in the brick portion of the Harrington House have been thoroughly reconditioned and new appropriately low profile storm windows have been fitted to save energy and protect those original primary sashes. Finishing up now, on time and on budget!

Next up is a very interesting archaeology project right here at the Harrington House. There will be demonstrations, lectures and classes for students, adults and the Boy and Girl Scouts taking place so be sure to look in on us to see what we might 'dig up'!

But first, be sure to come to Pettengill Farm Day on Sunday October 1st.

We have old time base ball, games for the kids, horse drawn wagon rides and wandering minstrels.

A great family and community day on our own special Salt Water Farm.

See you there!

– JIM CRAM

## The Event Light Pros *Generous supporters of FHS*

**"This Place Looks Great!" was the first comment from every guest arriving at this summers "Harraseeket Harborside Gala".**

The big open spaces of the Strouts Point's boat barn had been transformed by a creative and extravagant lighting display designed and installed by Freeport residents Josie and John Griffin and their company "The Event Light Pros".

The nautical theme, large lobster buoy light fixtures they made themselves, up-lighting, downlighting and specialty fixtures at the bars

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Josie and John Griffin

## Who We Are: Jim Matson, President

### Tell us about your background?

My wife and I grew up in a town in North Western Pennsylvania. It's a rural town not unlike Freeport in its size and community. Tight knit town that's 200 plus years old, my forefathers lived there most of their lives. So, I come from a town that is similar to Freeport. People have stories and have lived here a long time. My family was in the hardwood lumber business. I worked in the woods and sawmills.

### What brought you to Freeport?

I relocated to Pittsburgh in my 30s and lived there for a number of years. In 1994-95, I was getting ready to leave Pittsburgh. My wife and I bought a book by Rand McNally, *Places to Live in the United States*, and took a test. When we were done it told us the "New England Coast" was where we should be.

We made it a project over the next three years, taking vacations to New England. We started in Rhode Island and

worked our way up. Luckily, we found Freeport. My wife and I immediately loved the community, the beauty and especially the people. We met people at Thomas Means Club, Wolfes Neck Farm and Freeport Community Services. We decided we not only wanted to live here but also to become part of the community. The Freeport Historical Society has given me the opportunity to become involved.

### How have you seen Freeport change over the years?

I have seen Freeport grow, more homes, more people. However, what I've learned in my year and half with the Historical Society is that it hasn't really changed. Freeport people who have been here for many generations, and newcomers alike have a certain character. An affinity for the town and sense of community. A willingness to work and give to make our town stronger and better.



### What drew you to the Freeport Historical Society?

I was on many committees at Wolfe's Neck Farm, and got involved in many things. I also volunteered in Maine Adaptive Skiing program. I had just finished up with Maine Adaptive Skiing but I wanted to stay involved – I wanted to contribute back to the community. I thought about what do I want to give back, what do I have to offer? I'd been to FHS a couple of times. When I was approached to be on the board, I thought it would be a good opportunity to get involved – I'd never really been into history, but always respected and knew it was important.

### What would you like to see for the organization?

The town of Freeport has a certain character, not necessarily the architecture. It's rich in community participation, there are many organizations raising money. FHS wants to be part of that, there is such a sense of community that is here, and continuing that and striking to that. So many resources around town at what I call "Destination Freeport", which is all the cultural assets of Freeport. If we can bring them together and make them an even stronger part of the town.

### What do you see as FHS's role in the community?

The role of the Historical Society plays in the stewardship of the town's past, our educational programs passing that history and sense of community to our children, our social functions that strengthen community bonds, our facilities that provide a cultural oasis for locals and visitors alike, make the Freeport Historical Society is a significant contributor to this community building. **FHS**

## Who We Are: Brad Snow, Trustee

### Tell us about your background?

I am a native of Freeport. I graduated from Freeport High in 1969, and went on to Orono and graduated with a BA in French and Minor in Spanish. I became a Spanish teacher for 38 years, finishing up at Westbrook High School, as Department Chair. I retired six years ago.

### How have you seen Freeport change over the years?

From Mallett Drive to the overpass that goes over the railroad tracks it has changed almost completely to tell the truth. Earlier on was when we lost all the Elm Trees, and then from about 1981 when the outside chain stores started coming in to town, the downtown district has changed dramatically.

I grew up on Royal Avenue which is the house that Mainley Hair is in. Everywhere I look there is something missing or something has transformed.

### What's it like to see your families'



### houses as a retail establishment?

It's kind of weird. It just so happens that many of the houses that belonged to my family changed into businesses or moved out of town – five to six were moved. I had a great uncle, Linus Jellison, who had a house that was right between Thomas Moser's and MacDonalds. There is a gap there, because his house was moved to North Yarmouth. My grandmother, Delia Snow was born in the white brick house that is now Abacus. I lived in a house on Nathan Nye Street

that I bought from my grandparents that I sold to LL Bean in 1993 and that got moved. My other grandparents' home is now a B & B on Main Street.

### What are your fondest Freeport memories?

The fondest memory I have is working with my grandfather, Burton Snow. He had a clothing and shoe store called Gould-Curtis Company. I worked there from 12 ½ years old. I felt like I knew everyone in town. Many people who worked in the shoe factories came in on Fridays paid some of their bills, bought a little more. It was right on the square and I had a birds-eye view of the town. I liked that. It gave me a lot of confidence at a young age.

### How long have you been involved with FHS and what drew you to FHS?

About a year and a half. I had been retired for 6 years and I was looking for something to fill in some hours. It's turned out that I have enjoyed it. I really enjoy the garden group we have on Wednesdays. I've gotten to know new people, and, also, people I knew of or did know 50 years ago, I've gotten

to reconnect with them it has been really fun.

### What would you like to see for the organization?

I think it's important to educate the public a little more about what we do here. Even I wasn't aware of ALL that was going on. I suspect that's the case for many people in town as to what we offer. I REALLY like *The Dash*, it looks better and better and I find it interesting, and a great thing I hope will continue.

### What do you see as FHS's role in the community?

It should stay where it is in the middle of town, in combination with the garden and updating the building. Just pulling more people in to see what we have to offer, keeping the focus on the history of Freeport is very important. Freeport has an exceptionally interesting past. We need to keep a spotlight on the history while also maintaining a voice for the present. I do like the phrase that has been coined: "Cultural Oasis" let's keep it vibrant, while melding together the old and new. **FHS**



Section of the old road around the edge of the Harraseeket River to the Dennison Mill.

# MAST LANDING

BY DAVID COFFIN

**M**AST LANDING WAS ONE OF THE early settled sections of Freeport. Used first for the landing of the huge masts cut for the King of England. The pine masts were hauled by oxen to the landing, floated and towed to Falmouth to be hewn, sixteen sided, and shipped to England.

In 1747 George Dennison of Gloucester Province of Massachusetts left 500 acres of the Mast Landing area to his children. Abner and David Dennison, two of George's sons settled here in 1757-58 and built a sawmill, a vessel and a house. This was probably some of the earliest commercial activities in the area.

Mast Landing comprised an area of about a half mile square. This section of town still has sixteen of the original houses located on their original sites with few new houses located in this section. There are other lots with foundations of former early homes. An early granite quarry at upper Mast Landing could have been used for some of the large top stones that have been dressed off, somewhat more than the lower layers, of the stone of the dam. The lower layers of stone appear to have been taken out of the area of the falls.

It's easy to trace the layout of most of the early industries. The industrial footprint includes a 160-foot stone dam that created the water power for a sawmill, an upper and a lower grist mill, a fulling mill and dye house along with a turning mill. Some of the stone foundations can still be seen at the Mast Landing Bird Sanctuary.

Multiple wharves, two brickyards, a small shipyard, shoe shop, blacksmith shop, coopers shop, school house and a tavern/boarding house also populated the site during its long history. Many broken and misshapen bricks are easily seen at the edge of the river. An ell addition added to the tavern was



**Northeast end of foundation next to Grist Mill, Fulling Mill and the Dye House.**

the first Masonic Hall in Freeport. If one spends a little time walking the area, he will see most of the early roadways, three of which went to the mill site. Most of the old roads are no longer used and others have been changed with modern times and uses.

The early settlers can still be traced through many of the local families, cemeteries, registry of deeds and other records, day books of local businesses and town vital records.

In the 1950s and early 1960s James E. (Ned) Coffin and Mr. L.M.C. Smith of Penn and Wolfe's Neck, Freeport, ME



**The bridge to the Townsend House, washed out in 1954 by Hurricane Edna.**

researched and made plans to reconstruct the mill site and lower village area by the old shipyard. Mr. Smith had purchased most of the lots for the project, when the early passing of Ned Coffin in 1963 ended the project as planned. **FHS**

Today, Freeport Historical Society is in the process of recording the complex history of Mast Landing with maps, photos and extensive research, tracing the history and businesses from 1760 to 1860. This will be a complete history of Mast Landing before its demise from the coming of the railroad.

## *The Eel Skinner*

**Originally published in *The Notes*, this piece was written by James E. (Ned) Coffin in the late 1950s when he and L.M.C. Smith were planning to recreate the Mast Landing site.**

*At the headwaters of the Harraseeket  
Where the salt and fresh waters meet  
Are the remains of an ancient foundation  
Now in ruins; still defying defeat.  
Most of its walls have tumbled  
Having succumbed to the rushing stream  
Ballywrecked, broken and humbled  
Where once it stood, supreme.  
Further back, in the reaches beyond  
Are remnants of an old stone dam  
Holding secrets of the old mill pond  
Deep in the crevices, of its diaphragm.  
Standing Straight and rigid as a sentinel  
And buttressed with ledges everywhere,  
Huge stone with grain-like knurl  
Laid with the greatest of care.*

*A tremendous task for those days  
Back two hundred years or more  
A work that deserves only praise  
To those who have gone on before.  
As one stands here thinking deeply  
Your mind goes back to when  
This was a going business  
And you turn the tide to then.  
Here you see the massive wheel  
Turning slowly, with its shaft.  
Overcome by its appeal  
You marvel at its handicraft.  
It's ALWAYS WET AND DRIPPING  
AS IT ROTATES, ROUND AND ROUND;  
Always and forever sipping;  
Its fullness is never found.  
There isn't a tone in any tongue  
Quite like its squeals and creaks;  
It fascinates the old and young,  
As they listen while it speaks.  
The great shaft turns quietly  
As the clogs mesh in gear,*

*Smear'd with mutton tallow;  
There's nary a sound to the ear.  
The short shaft runs vertically  
Through the floor to the stones  
Where they turn majestically  
Sending out their moans and groans.  
Here lies the secret  
In the grinding of the grist.  
Pouring slowly through the center  
Not a particle to be missed.  
The stone revolves crunching,  
Every kernel of the corn  
Forever and Ever munching,  
As the meal is being born.  
Your mind comes back in focus  
And behold you are alone.  
'Tis only a dream to most of us,  
So little of this is known.  
Nature soon will reach her goal,  
As she usually has her say  
The wind and rain will take its toll  
And wash man's work away.*

# FHS teams up with “REAL Pirates”!

BY HOLLY HURD

**A** FEW MONTHS BACK, Trustee Guy Blanchard asked the Portland Science Center to donate tickets for their new exhibit “Real Pirates” to the Gala auction. Guy mentioned that the Sales & Marketing front man Matt Stone would love to work with FHS on a project. Enter the amazing pirate collaboration!

Freeport has a pirate history through our privateer the *Dash*, commissioned by President James Madison to “subdue, seize and take” British vessels during the War of 1812. *Dash* was adept at doing just that. One of the war’s most successful legal pirating vessels, she holds the record for capturing six prizes in just 3 weeks!

*Dash* was built at Porter’s Landing in Freeport by Master Builder James Brewer for Seward, Samuel and William Porter in 1812. A fast topsail schooner, later modified to a hermaphrodite brig with a special ringtail sail, *Dash* made several runs to the West Indies exchanging lumber and other local products for profitable cargoes, in addition to her pirating ventures.

Freeport Historical Society cares for and displays a set of British Naval issue cutlasses and their scabbards captured by *Dash*. The privateer discovered the dismantled British vessel *Thinks I To Myself*



**Matt Stone of Portland Science Center and Holly Hurd with *Dash* display at “Real Pirates”.**

in a cove near Wiscasset when the fog lifted. Some of *Dash*’s gunports were outfitted with logs painted black to fool the British into believing the brigantine was more heavily armed than it was. Consequently, *Thinks I To Myself* quickly surrendered, and *Dash* carried its prize and the sloop’s crew to Portland in October of 1814.

Owner of the cutlasses and scabbards Philip C. Means, inherited them from his great, great grandfather Joseph Porter, and has graciously loaned them for display near our unique Hawk’s Nest model of the famous privateer since 2004. Phil is now living in Arkansas, and when I contacted him to ask permission to display

his family heirlooms at the Science Center as part of their “Real Pirates” exhibit, he happily agreed. Not only that, he enthusiastically plans to attend the exhibit in late September when he visits the area, and mentioned that he is “ready to officially gift them to FHS.” A treasure for our growing collections to be sure!

Meanwhile, the precious booty is on display at the Portland Science Center through October 29, proudly telling the story of legal pirating, amongst the treasure found in the shipwreck of the slave ship turned pirate the *Whydah*. The exhibit is fantastic, and FHS is honored to share in the interpretive history of this era of plunder on the high seas. **FHS**



DASH PEN AND INK BY JAMES BERKELEY

## “Real Pirates”

Portland Science Center  
68 Commercial St., Portland  
through October 29, 2017

## Event Light Pros

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

were installed during a long day of climbing tall ladders (again and again). John and his crew deliver all this hard work and exquisite attention to detail with an amazing air of calmness — and get this — they did all of this as a contribution to their community and the mission of the Freeport Historical Society.

Community matters to this young family who also contribute their talent to Freeport Community Services, Wolfes Neck Farm and many other area non-profits.

The energy they bring to their business is fueled by personal relationships with the extremely talented professionals they work

with day in and day out. “If we could not work with our creative partners our jobs would just not be the same.” In the peak of the summer season the days start early and can extend late into the night. “We work long hours but it is very rewarding to see the results.” And they work everywhere. “Our venues vary from private residences, corporate locations, barns, waterfronts and lots of tents!”

John grew up in Cape Elizabeth and Josie grew up in New Zealand, they met skiing while in college at UMass Amherst. After graduating they chose the Portland area and found a need for a specialized Event Lighting company – and started one! They currently work throughout New England and beyond. The pace of activity

is extremely hectic through the warmest seven months of the year with a blast of activity around the holidays with their other company The Christmas Light Pros of Maine. That giant Christmas light display at LL Bean is their work. The short hibernation period gives them a chance to recharge and focus on their family which includes daughters Poppy (8) and Coco (6). And also to enjoy the comfort of the greater Freeport Community Spirit they give to so generously.

“The Freeport Community is such an embracing supportive community! We have lived here for about six years and have developed many terrific friendships and partnerships. It is wonderful to support such a great community.” **FHS**

# Our Significant Story, Through the Eyes of Historical Collections

BY HOLLY HURD, Collections Manger & Curator

*The Freeport Historical Society is charged with collecting artifacts of the past, caring for them over time, and using them to educate the public about the history of our town. It sounds simple, but in truth it is a tall order.*

**H**ISTORICAL ARTIFACTS INCLUDE the obvious—objects, photographs, papers, account books. But stewards of the past also seek information—both written and oral—about people, houses, landscapes, family histories, industry, and anything else associated with what once was and is no more.

For nearly 50 years, FHS has been collecting, preserving, and interpreting individual, family, and institutional collections, and caring for and providing access to the town's historical records. But that's not all we do...

Perhaps our most important role in the community is historical education. We work hard to raise awareness about the history of Freeport, and we do this in many different ways hoping to speak to the variety of people and interests in our town. From historical lectures to exhibits to village, cemetery, and farm tours to poetry readings to musical productions to art shows to farm festivals to historic baseball games to barn and quilt tours to classes on stonewall building and apple pruning to harborside galas... anything we can think of to encourage the community to think about history. And that's not all...

We are first and foremost **ADVOCATES** and **CARETAKERS** of the past.

Although the objects cared for by FHS are extensive and require professional care and curation, many important historical artifacts—photographs, paintings, and diaries—are cared for by community members, especially those with deep roots in town. Our goal is to connect these “keepers of history” with the historical society so that artifacts that represent our past will be more likely to be preserved over time, either by donation to FHS or by being passed along to family members

who value and cherish their importance. This effort is directly in line with our mission to preserve and interpret, as well as to educate the public about, the history of Freeport.

Historical artifacts tell stories about the past, and although having professionally-trained archivists care for these objects is ideal, anyone who cares about historical objects cares for them. Thus, another model for historical preservation that extends beyond the walls of FHS involves our support of community members who want to do the same thing. Our job is to value history, and the objects that hold it, and whenever we can get that message out we have succeeded. When I speak

to visitors with enthusiasm about their family photographs or family history they often say “I'm just glad that someone cares about these items and the information that I cherish.” Even historical stories, without any associated objects, are valuable contributions to our history.

Some people say they don't care about history or about the past—it's gone, done and over, let's look to the present and future. But understanding how the past connects to the present is hugely satisfying, because it helps our modern world make sense. We hope to convince more people that **EVERYONE** should care about our historical objects and stories—they represent our collective past! If our community makes no effort to preserve our history, it will go

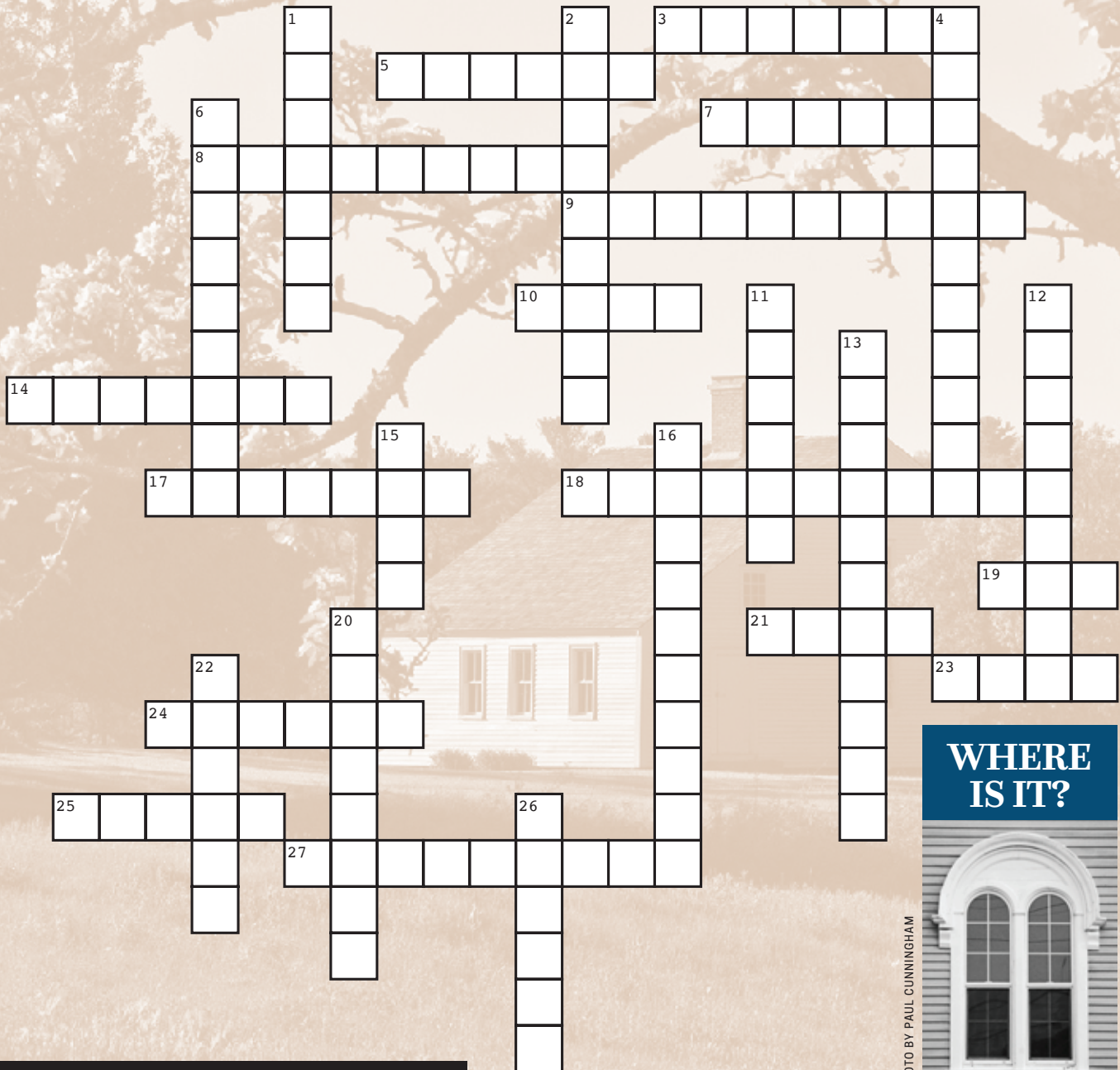
the way of fading memories and eventual dust, and we will lose the roots that explain how we got where we are.

Within recent years the following are some of the people who have shared their precious family collections with the historical society by allowing us to borrow, display, and take photographs of the personal and family artifacts they care for: Lani Graham, Mary Eliza and Ted Wengren, Linda Swanson, Donna Coffin, Linda Sayles, Jane Grant, Ruth Gruninger, John Davis, Frank Copp, Jr., John and Val Mann, David Coffin, John and Brenda Skillin, and Bob Fusselman. Thank you to these caretakers of history, and also to the many, many others who have donated their family collections to the care of the society—you have helped to keep us connected. **FHS**



**Asa Bailey Account Book cared for by Lani Graham.**

# FREEPORT PLACES AND PEOPLE



**WHERE IS IT?**

PHOTO BY PAUL CUNNINGHAM

Visit [freeporthistoricalsociety.org](http://freeporthistoricalsociety.org) for the answers

## ACROSS

3. Famous Freeport first initials (3 sets)
5. Early settler, "makes ale"
7. Shipbuilders
8. Feathered tall guy
9. The King's brand
10. Early settlers, "pea soup"
14. Claims not to be smart

17. "Keeping it Together" – \_\_\_\_\_ Point

18. Path of learning
19. Pound O' \_\_\_\_\_
21. Early settler, "Isle of \_\_\_\_\_"
23. Quick ship
24. Early settler, "last resting place"
25. 1756 raid
27. Salty house across the bay

## DOWN

1. Catalog printer
2. Gummy pair
4. A bit of the Medieval in Freeport
6. Entrepreneur with wood hammer
11. Cole Hahn guy
12. 9 across is found here
13. The first village
15. Wolfe's \_\_\_\_\_
16. Roller skate for Paul Bunyan
20. Sinker of ship building
22. Captain Mitchell's ship
26. Early settler, "dark ale"



# Thank you to all who joined us at our 6th Annual Harborside Gala on June 24, 2017. *The evening was delightful and fun, filled with delicious food and drink, great live music, and a magical atmosphere.*



**T**HIS YEAR we held the gala in new venue at the boat hangar at **Strouts Point Wharf Company**. The crew at Strouts was fantastic in clearing out the hangar which was no easy task so early in the boating season. The entire atmosphere was transformed with fun nautical themed lighting created especially for us by **The Event Light Pros**, and the historical society volunteers and gala committee who spent the entire day hauling tables and chairs, building a stage and decorating the hangar. It was a true Cinderella moment, from utilitarian boat hangar to glamorous event venue!

As the primary fundraising event we hold each year, it is also a favorite for both staff, volunteers and members. This event has also become a fun filled evening for neighbors to meet neighbors, and friends to connect at the beginning of summer vacation. So much more than a fundraiser it is truly a friend-raiser and we enjoy meeting new friends at the Freeport Historical Society all of the time.

**THANK YOU TO OUR GALA COMMITTEE:** lead by Jay Flower (also the evening's auctioneer), Guy Blanchard, McKay Biggar, Ben



Hamilton, Meghan Palmer, Christine Sullivan, Eric C. Smith and Nina Weyl, without whom this event would not have been as, as much fun or successful. Their energy and dedication to making the gala, the "go-to-event" of the summer truly paid off. Thank you!

**THANKS TO OUR STEWARDS:** Ken Altschuler, Bridget and Michael Healy, Jane and Ed Bradley, Jim DeGrandpre, Todd and Cindy Doolan, David and Rebecca Hotelling, Patrick and Betsey Ducas, Jay and Julie Flower, Jan and Ed Gerry, Peter and Mabel Gerquest, Anne and Jim Cram, Jim and Pam Matson, Ken Murphy,

Jon and Leanna Nichols, Ford and Karen Reiche, Caroline Southall, Rand and Susan Stowell, Charles and Linda Swanson, Alan and Sarah Tracy, Susan Tananbaum, Joe Frazer, Lonny Winrich, Sandra Donaldson, Barbara Cottrell and Lee Schepps.

**THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:** HM Payson, Wright Ryan Homes and Buildings, Strouts Point Wharf Company, Harraseeket Lunch and Lobster, Maine Shore Lobster Bakes, The Event Light Pros, Allagash Brewing, Ben & Jerry's, Kamasouptra, Freeport Flower Company, New England Distributors, Rising Tide, and Tito's Handmade Vodka. **FHS**



**Johnson's Drug Store.**

## Vaughndella Curtis

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

windows and doors were 'blacked out' after dark so that enemy planes could not see any lights to know where the houses were. Even car headlights had the top half painted black."

Vaughndella married Roland Curtis in 1951 a few months before her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. Roland had been drafted into the Korean War and they had just a few days when he returned home from basic training before being shipped out to Japan and Korea. Roland died just three years ago in Oct 2014. The majority of Roland's career was spent at the Dingley Press in Freeport. The bulk of their work was printing the LL Bean catalog before it got too big to do locally. They raised one daughter Janet, and three sons, Abe, Elwyn and Will.

### Volunteerism

Vaughndella was quick to sign up to help her community. Her first volunteer job was with the Mother's Club at the Soule School in 1958 when she was 26 yrs old. Janet had just entered the school and there were projects to be done. That was almost 60 years ago and she has yet to slow down.

When her daughter made it to Junior High. Vaughndella joined the PTA and became Chairman. Molly White was chair of the School Board and together they accomplished a great deal including raising money to send the High School Band (including son Abe) to march in the inauguration parade for Richard Nixon.

Over the years Vaughndella has served the South Freeport Church in almost every office including; Deacon, Trustee, President and chair of many committees.

She worked on the committee to study other forms of government for Freeport. They chose the Town Council format and Vaughndella became the first woman counsellor in the second year. Others in those first two years were; Edgar



**Vaughndella Curtis's mother & family.**

Leighton, Ed Bonney, Bob Furtney, Phil & Bob Davenport, Ed Hindley. Vaughndella stayed for three full terms and several years as Chair or Vice Chairman.

Fred Palmer told me that he would often come to your house for coffee and to work on town business. "Yes he did, Fred and Dale Olmstead (town manager) and I don't know who else. Fred and I were Chairman and Vice Chair for several years. We would work on the Town Council agenda in my dining room." "Speaking of Ed Bonney. He came to Freeport when he was in the seventh grade. I liked to tease him that he needed a 'Green Card' to get in." (70 years later Ed is himself one of our Local Living Treasures!)

These meetings were in her dining room because Vaughndella ran a very busy Day Care center for decades. Vaughndella provided Day Care so that; "women that had to work, could afford to work".

A big reason Vaughndella is in so much demand on boards is that she is jamb packed with experience, facts and a straightforward presentation style. I think it was Dale Olmstead who said; "If you don't want to hear the truth, don't be asking her!"

Vaughndella served as Chairman of the building committees for the new Public Safety Building, the new Mast Landing School and also Chair of the new Public Works facility on Hunter Road and the new YMCA building. Did I mention that she also was one of the founding mothers of Freeport Community Services with Carol Southall, Sherry

Smith, Betsey Ruff and Janice Fogg?

When asked what she thinks is the best thing about Freeport:

"When there is a real need; Everybody always comes together. With time or money, as best they can."

"If I see something that needs to be done, I do it."

More than a Energizer Bunny which can make noise and go in circles, I think of Vaughndella as a Super-Human Ant. Lifting 100 times her body weight, working with purpose and making a difference every day. **FHS**

**\*\*EDITOR'S NOTE:** During the 1990's Jim Cram made 27 trips to Japan. Among the many, many cultural niceties observed and admired was their tradition of honoring exceptional artisans as being a 'National Living Treasure'. Freeport is blessed with several who have crafted and sustained our community over time.

## DIGGING HISTORY

This fall the Freeport Historical Society will be directing an archaeological dig at Harrington House with the Maine State Archaeologist Leith Smith. Its purpose is to discover the artifacts and history hidden in the ground of our Main Street property before our upcoming construction project. We plan to engage as many community members as possible in this project, from school children to adults!

**Archaeology Course: September 26–October 5.** 4 sessions / 12 hours. Open to



members of the public. Cost is \$50 for FHS members and \$70 for non-members. Class size is limited to 8 people, ages 12 and up. Exact dates and times to be announced.

**Archaeology Camp for Boy and Girl Scouts: tentatively planned for October 15.**

**Dig Day: Sunday, October 22 from 12–4 pm.** Come and dig, sift, observe, and learn about what we are finding on site.

**Archaeology Lab:** The front parlors of Harrington House will be our designated work space for viewing, cleaning, processing and interpreting artifacts. Come by during open hours **beginning September 26** to view the tools and process. Archaeological education for all is the goal!

*This archaeological dig is funded in part by a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.*

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## FALL 2017 PROGRAMS AND EVENTS



### Archaeology Dig at FHS

*You can be part of finding history too!*

#### Archaeology Course:

**September 26 - October 5**

4 sessions / 12 hours / Open to members of the public

**Cost:** \$50 FHS members; \$70 non-members

Class size is limited to 8 people, ages 12 and up

**Dig Day: Sunday, October 22, 12-4 pm**

Come and dig, sift, observe, and learn about what we are finding on site.

### Archaeology Lab

**Opens Tuesday, September 26**

The exhibit space at the Freeport Historical Society will be transformed into a work space for viewing, cleaning, processing and interpreting artifacts found during our "big dig". Come during open hours to experience the tools and process of an archaeological dig.

### 42nd Annual Pettengill Farm Day



**Sunday, October 1**

Pettengill Farm

31 Pettengill Road, Freeport

All of your favorite activities plus enjoy an old time base ball game and kids instructional session.

Base ball game starts at 12:00 pm.

Lunch will be available for purchase all day.

**Parking:** Pettengill Farm – drive down through the gates you will be directed where to park when you arrive at the fields.

**Admission:** \$5 adults; \$2 children

### Ghosts of Freeport's Past



**Thursday, October 26:**

6:30 pm at the First Parish Church, 40 Main Street; 7:30 pm at the Old Parish Burying Ground on Meeting House Road

**Friday, October 27:**

6:30 and 7:15 pm at the Old Parish Burying Ground on Meeting House Road

**Saturday, October 28:**

6:30, 7:15 & 8:00 pm at the Old Parish Burying Ground on Meeting House Road

**Tickets:** \$10 FHS members; \$12 non-members; \$5 ages 12 and under

For more information: [www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org](http://www.freeporthistoricalsociety.org) or 207-865-3170