



THE BOWDOINHAM NEWS

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November - December 2022

At Bowdoinham:

Flames Devastated Village 120 years ago!

by Frank Connors

Gale-driven winds drove a massive fire of questionable origin through the very heart of Bowdoinham Village on Saturday/Sunday, December 13/14, 1902. For more than five hellish hours, flames ripped unchecked through the defenseless, downtown business district, and when it was finally over, fifteen major buildings were leveled, some 30 people were left homeless, and property losses were expected to exceed \$35,000. Most fire victims reportedly had little or no insurance.

In this one terrible night, Bowdoinham village lost four of its six grocery stores, the Town's only hotel, its funeral parlor, municipal offices, a hardware store, drug store, two barber shops, a blacksmith's shop, a carriage shop, several fraternal organizations, at least ten private residences and several business offices.

Theo Lang, a youthful resident in our Town in 1902, reported walking past the downtown Purington-Hinkley block about 12:10 am, Sunday morning. He later affirmed that all was quiet and "seemed right," when he passed the stores at that late hour, but he admitted his "head was low" against the driving wind and wet snow, and that he was walking near the center of the deserted street, trying to dart around the steadily drifting snow.

Most agree the inferno started in a downstairs corner of that wood-framed, three-story Purington-Hinkley block, located at the corner of Main & Bridge streets, (where Bowdoinham's Masonic Lodge stands today.) In 1902, two small stores occupied the block's ground floor, with William Gould renting both fronts. He sold hardware from one, general provisions from the other. The floor above Gould's businesses held the meeting rooms of the T.T. Rideout Post, GAR, (Grand Army of the Republic) another hall rented by the



Lower Main Street, prior to 1902 fire

Merrymeeting Grange, and a smaller room retained by the local chapter of Gospel Missions. Bowdoinham's venerable Masonic Order, one of the State's oldest, held its meetings on the third floor of the block.

Ira Williams was night-watchman that night at the Kindling Wood Factory, which was located just east of the Village between the railroad tracks and the Cathance River. He later reported he was marking his rounds of the sawmill when he paused at a door, probably to relight his pipe. When he glanced through the snow-filled darkness towards the village, the ominous, orange-yellow glow he spotted must have nearly

stopped his heart! He remembers chucking his pipe into the snow, and running to the plant's steam whistle, which he tied open, hoping the shrill, constantly screaming signal might awaken his sleeping village.

Flames had broken through the roof of the doomed Purington-Hinkley block before Williams had slipped and slid his way down the tracks to the railroad's Main Street gate house, which he remembers was empty. About the same time Williams rounded Main Street, the bell in the Second Baptist Church started to ring. William Salie had spotted the blaze from atop Main

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At Bowdoinham:

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Street hill, had burst into the church and was repeating the alarm.

H.G. Schoff was one of the first residents to reach the fire scene. The day after the fire, while stunned neighbors walked among the smoldering ashes, Schoff described his terrifying night to a reporter from the Lewiston-Journal. "I was started awake by the mill whistle," he said, "I jumped out of bed and looked at my watch, it was exactly ten minutes past one!" Reflections of flames were ominously dancing on the walls of his School Street home. He woke his family, pulled on his pants, his boots and a great coat. He grabbed two pails and ran down the ice-shrouded street toward the now billowing flames. "Gould's store was wrapped in flames when I arrived," he reported, "it was through the roof and beginning to spread. Rideout's house and store was the second place to go!"

William Rideout told his own story. "I was awakened by the mill whistle," he said, "at first, I guessed the alarm might be for a fire at the mill...those steam-driven saws are always starting little fires," he added. But Rideout stood there in the dark and, to his horror, realized that he could hear the unmistakable roar of flames! Wherever the fire was, he knew it was closer than the sawmill.

The storeowner dressed quickly, called out to others in the house, and climbed through the pitch dark attic to place his ear to his chimney. He heard nothing in the attic, and may have enjoyed a moment's relief when he touched the brick and felt no heat. He stumbled back to his bedroom a floor below, and opened a window to peer out. At about the same moment Rideout raised his sash, flames first burst through the sidewall of Gould's store, and started lapping hungrily at the side of Rideout's building. The two places were less than ten feet apart.

"I didn't know what to do," Rideout remembered, "I felt like a lost soul! I could think of nothing upstairs I wanted to save, so I went downstairs to the store, there, I didn't know where to begin." By the time Rideout entered the store, a fiendish, yellow glow illuminated the entire first floor. "It was light as daylight in the store," his voice

became unsteady, "I was getting scared!"

Rideout sent his family to the relative safety of the street, and returned to his store to open the safe, expecting to retrieve some cash and his business ledgers. "I must have been more nervous than I remember," he said later, "each time I got the combination around right, it would slip past and I'd have to start over again." he said he worked unsuccessfully on the tumblers for maybe 15 minutes, until he was driven away by the flames. Too late, Rideout remembered he had \$400 cash in a bag under his mattress! He ran upstairs to save it, but the room was a mass of flames when he got to the landing. "I knew I was too late... no use," he said. He fled helplessly to the street, saving nothing.

The Lewiston Journal reported, "It was a terrible night for a fire. The gale was blowing from the northeast, snow was falling, and the temperature was near zero."

There was a volunteer fire brigade in Bowdoinham, but it was sadly lacking in hose and other basic equipment. The Town did have two fire pumpers, the Phenix and the Water Witch, but aside from these horse-drawn relics, the firemen's only remaining tool was the ageless, if inefficient, bucket brigade.

In his History of Bowdoinham, Silas Adams writes, "the Water Witch is a large machine and in good shape, and the Phenix, a smaller one, had already been in Town over a half century." The Lewiston Evening Journal reported "the Phenix is an ancient affair" and added, "for years it had been unused, but was taken out as a last resort. It proved useless."

Volunteers gamely rolled the hand pumpers up Bridge Street (no horses being available) Fire Chief (and local barber) Charles Henry McEwen was barking orders. (The village fire house was maybe 100 yards from the Purington-Hinkley Block, on the corner of Sampson's Creek and Bridge Street.) But fate would soon work against McEwen and his volunteers this frigid and terrible night.

Newspaper accounts said an early cold snap had the midnight temperature below zero, and the Phenix had frozen solid before her old hoses could bear on the flames. In fact, local traditions suggest water left in the old wooden pumper was frozen solid before the men rolled her to the street.



Charles Henry McEwen

The Water Witch pumped bravely into the morning, but crews couldn't keep her filled with water. The Witch lost pressure again and again, and was finally abandoned in disgust. Several of the downtown wells and cisterns were frozen solid, so the only water left to use against the blaze had to be carried by pail and barrel from the ice-rimmed Cathance and Sampson's Creek.

The Kennebec Journal reported, "Two women escaped from their burning homes in their modest night clothing, and many people were frost bitten while trying to save their personal effects." The KJ added, "the fierce gale took up the burning embers, and before the fire had been burning ten minutes, a dozen buildings were ablaze," in the village center. The up-river paper summarized, "the fire was like a fiend, trying a multitude of ways to defeat the brave but futile efforts of the inhabitants who would stop the spreading holocaust... the wind howled across the tops of buildings, carrying the sparks from the top of one to the roof or another. As men on one side of the street opened doors to carry out possessions, sparks would follow them through the open doors like dogs, kindling new fires everywhere. There was no escaping the flames."

END. Part one,
more to come...

Merrymeeting Arts Center

There is exciting activity at Merrymeeting Arts Center, strengthening our community connections! Our studio space is a resource for the community to utilize for groups, projects, and fundraisers, and we are excited to be hosting a private pottery series for a local homeschooling group as well as the Bowdoinham Public Library wreath making workshop in December. It is still our hope to host artist-led classes and workshop opportunities, but we are so pleased to start seeing more activity in the studio in connection with these two local groups!



The studio will continue to host Open Pottery Studio hours on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 6-8:00 with Melissa and Saturday mornings from 9-11:00 with Catherine. \$10 covers clay, kiln, and glazes. Art Lab will be held on Sundays and is an opportunity to use the studio to experiment with projects and materials by donation in an open studio format. The Heron Fund is always available by request to cover fees for artistic opportunities in the studio to ensure Art for Everyone!

Merrymeeting Arts Center is a volunteer-run non-profit. In order to continue building studio programs and gallery exhibits, we need to also build our volunteer base. If you would like to be part of MAC's creative momentum, we would love to count you in! We are looking for a team to support Open Studio times, gallery assistance, help in the garden, and anyone interested in lending a hand or paintbrush as needed. Email merrymeetingartscenter@gmail.com with the subject VOLUNTEER to let us know you would like to be added to our volunteer list and what activities interest you most.

Visit www.merrymeetingartscenter.org to view our calendar for events, exhibits, and classes, and see our Facebook page for updates!

News from the Bowdoinham Guild of Artisans

We are pleased to announce that for the seventeenth year, we will be in the Bowdoinham Town Hall for our annual Holiday Show and Sale. Over the years, we have grown from the original five members to twenty three members. Artists' work includes fine art painting, photography, encaustic, and collage, fiber arts (coiled basketry, felting, botanical printing, batik), woodworking, pottery, metal work, stained glass and leather work. And, of course, our show would not be complete without the fabulous book art from the library volunteers.

We have always been so thankful for the community support for this show and our other endeavors. We hope that you will join us again this year.

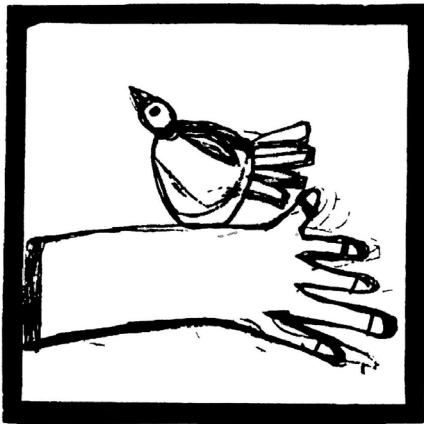
Dates and times of the show are as follows:

- Friday Dec. 2nd from 6-8
- Saturday Dec. 3rd from 10-3
- Sunday Dec. 4th from 10-3
- Wednesday Dec. 7th from 2-6
- Friday Dec. 9th from 6-8
- Saturday Dec. 10th from 10-3

Some of the guild artisans have also been showing their work at the Cathance River Gallery. The gallery is open Friday and Saturday 10-4 and Sunday 10-2.

Although the vendor spaces for this show 2022 Holiday show are full, if you have questions about membership or the Guild, please feel free to visit our website bowdoinhamartisans.com and complete the contact form.

We look forward to seeing you!



Spindleworks artists have created a wall-to-wall under the sea experience using everyday materials to transform the gallery in Andrew Elijah Edward's newest Mystery House exhibit, running through November. "Spindleworks is a non profit art center for adults with disabilities and a program of the Independence Association of Brunswick Maine, whose mission is to help children and adults with disabilities achieve full and inclusive lives in their chosen community." We hope to build our relationship with this amazing organization to offer a studio space and an opportunity for their artists to share their talents with our community. Visit our Facebook page and website for gallery hours for this exhibit. Our gallery is free to the public, but donations are always welcome to support our programs.

The MAC Gallery will have local art for sale during the first weekend of December, a lovely compliment to the Guild of Artisans Holiday Sale at Town Hall and the library wreath workshop in our studio. Bowdoinham does a bustling weekend so well and we are so fortunate to have a little something for everyone to feel involved in our community.



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Schedule of Events

Santa Comes to Town and Tree Lighting

Friday, December 2nd, 5:30pm at Bowdoinham Fire Station, 57 Post Rd
After a short ride around the village, the Fire Department will bring Santa to the Fire Station at 6pm to light the Christmas Tree, sing favorite holiday carols, and enjoy light refreshments

Bowdoinham Guild of Artisans Show & Sale

December 2nd, 6-8pm, Saturday, December 3rd, 10am-3pm, and Sunday December 4th, 10am-3pm,
Wednesday December 7th from 2-6pm, Friday December 9th from 6-8pm and Saturday, December 10th from 10-3pm at Town Hall
Top quality fine arts including painting, photography, encaustic, collage, fiber arts, wood-working, pottery, metal-work, stained glass, leather work, and book art from library volunteers.

Holiday Wreath Workshop

Saturday, December 3rd, 9am-4pm at Merrymeeting Arts Center, 9 Main St
Come and make your own Balsam wreath, \$20 for small, -\$25 for a large, supplies and instruction included. Proceeds will go to the Public Library.

Pony Parade

Saturday, December 3rd, 11:30am - 12:30pm
The parade will stop at Town Hall, the Town Landing, and the School.

Merrymeeting Arts Center Holiday Art Fair

Saturday, December 3rd, 10am-3pm, and Sunday December 4th, 10am-3pm, at the Gallery, 9 Main St
A variety of art will be on display and for sale from local artists.

Cookie Decorating Party

Saturday, December 3rd, 10am-2pm at Bowdoinham Food Pantry, 9 Main St
Join the Bowdoinham Food Pantry at a FREE cookie decorating party! Bring holiday spirit and they will provide the cookies, frosting, bobbles, and a festive place to decorate.

Bowdoinham Community School Craft Fair

Saturday, December 10th, 10am-3pm
Something for everyone on your list; local crafts, a bookfair, and baked items, food, and crafts made by the children to benefit the school. Donations for the Food Pantry will be collected as well.

Cathance River Gallery & Creative Endeavors Gallery Open on Lower Main St Same Hours as Guild show & sale.

News from Merrymeeting Hall

At Merrymeeting Hall, regular use is increasing as we enter fall. Most of the activities you enjoyed last year are back, though some times have changed. Feel free to come and check out any of the below events. Here is the schedule so far:

SUNDAY

ARRT (Artist Rapid Response Team) with *Natasha Meyers*

Usually 2nd Sunday of the month, 10 - 5

Singing Bowl Meditation with *Ailish Kress*
2nd & 4th Sundays 4:00 - 5:30

MONDAY

Singing Bowl Meditation with *Ailish Kress*
1st & 3rd Mondays 7:00 - 8:00

TUESDAY

Line Dancing : Tuesdays 5:30 - 7:30 with *George Oliver*

THURSDAY

Yoga : 7:15 am - 9:15am with *Peggy Christian*

Yoga : 5:00 - 6:00 pm with *Sarah Matari*

Merrymeeting Hall is also happy to host private parties. From May through October, the fee is \$100. From November 1 to April 1, we charge \$125 because of the need to use heat. We charge a \$50 deposit which is returned if the hall is left clean and ready for the next use. Contact Betsy Steen. bayviewess@comcast.net.

BHS is slowly putting to rights its **Rideout Library and Archive** on the MMH Lower Level. We hope to have weekly hours soon.

Merrymeeting Books, The Library's used bookstore shares the lower level with BHS. Will try to coordinate our hours with Merrymeeting Books.

A Busy Place is Merrymeeting Hall!

DOG LICENSES

Start Date: Oct. 15, 2022

Late Fee: Jan. 31, 2023



All dogs are to be registered with the Town Office. Please have new updated proof of immunization against Rabies in accordance with the rules adopted by the Commissioner of Health and Human Services. There is a \$6.00 fee for registering your dog with the Town of Bowdoinham. Failure to Register will result in late fees, and fines.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee Hears from Age Friendly Bowdoinham

Most if not all of us have heard that Maine is considered to be the oldest state in the country. The population of Bowdoinham reflects that fact. The information about the population of our town, based on the 2020 census, shows numbers of people of various ages, gender, races, etc. of community members. In this article, the focus is on community members age 60 and over and ways to integrate their emerging needs into the 2024 Comprehensive Plan which covers a ten-year time period through 2034.

The committee will turn their attention to children and their families in our planning process at a later point. Hopefully we have heard from some of those families at the Housing Forum in October, as well as received information about preschool and school-age children, and other young families.

Back to considerations for people over age 60. Of a population estimated at 3,016 people, 1,256 are age 60 and over. In 10 years the 739 people now in their early 60s will be in their early 70s and the 65-74 year olds will be 75-84 and so on.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee must consider what the needs of these people potentially will be, and ways that the 2024 Comprehensive Plan can guide community decisions into the future. We know that

Nazarene News

By Marilyn Davis

Isn't it wonderful, after almost three years, to be able to sit down to a meal with family and friends. We wish each of you in Bowdoinham a wonderful and blessed Thanksgiving.

If you know of a person or a family who could use a lift by getting a warm home cooked meal, please contact the church through the Feed the LoT program at FeedtheLoT@gmail.com.

Looking for a joyful thing to do in December?

Watch for the Victorian Christmas open house at the church. Everyone is welcome, and it is our gift to the area to enjoy how beautiful this 1890 church can be at this time of year.

We are here to serve our community. Church of the Nazarene, 7 School St, Pastor Christina Couch 207-351-0289

Age Range	Number of years in age range	Number of people
60-64 years old	5	739
65-74 years old	10	397
75-84 years old	10	84
85 years old & over		36
	TOTAL	1,256

not all of the same over-age-60 people will be here in Bowdoinham, some will leave, others will move here, but there will be a large percentage of community members age 70 and over. The table below shows the estimated current numbers of people over 60 in Bowdoinham. The source is data.census.gov | Measuring America's People, Places, and Economy for the town of Bowdoinham.

At the September CPC meeting, Maureen Booth and Peggy Muir of the Age Friendly Bowdoinham Committee offered their committee's thoughts on ways to integrate older people into the Comprehensive Plan. Prior to the meeting they had also provided a written background and discussion document. Lots of questions and answers, and many options were discussed. Topics covered housing, transportation, socialization (isolation), safety, health-related services and more. They made many good points, and as of this writing, the CPC members are planning for the Comprehensive Plan to integrate some points throughout the Comprehensive Plan as well as to add a section dedicated to needs of older people in Bowdoinham.

The CPC really appreciates hearing from other town committees and community members that have a deeper and broader understanding of specific issues. One

future invitation will be to the Cemetery Committee to share their emerging map of all our cemeteries – and much more. Feel free to contact Jennifer Curtis at planning@bowdoinham.com if you or your group would like some time on our agenda. And remember all meetings are open to the public.

We continue our shameless pitch for more members! This is a great time to join the Comprehensive Planning Committee. You can sit in on a couple of meetings without making a long-term commitment. We want to include more perspectives and voices.

Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month, 6:30-8:15pm. We may be meeting in person or online, a quick check of the www.bowdoinham.com website will provide more information. Jennifer Curtis, Director of Planning and Development, staffs this process; her email is planning@bowdoinham.com. We can have up to 17 members and more perspectives are always welcome.

Committee Members: Joanne Joy, Chair; David Asmussen, Co-Chair; Allen Acker, Laura Arnold, Kimberly Bedard, Peggy Christian, PJ O'Hanlon, Jan Marks, Robert Schott, William Stanton

Learn more, share more, and add your voice to the Comprehensive Plan.

Joanne Joy, Chair

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Cathance Fitness News

U pdate: Cathance Fitness Center in Bowdoin reopened in May!

Create your memberships and handle payment information right on this website: CathanceFitness.com

The **main entrance** is open Mon-Fri 8-5pm to pick up your access card or if you need help creating your account on our office computer.

Paper copies are no longer used and most questions can be answered within the website.

A **“Contact Us”** link, address & phone number is on the bottom of the website page.

Currently, we are holding morning Silver Sneaker classes & evening Zumba classes. Along the top of the page, click **“About Us”** then **“classes”**.



Here, you will notice a Silver Sneakers “eligibility tool” along with instructor contact information. If you have class questions, you may contact the instructor directly. If you’re

insurance does not cover Silver Sneakers, the cost per class is only \$2.

If you would like to independently look around first, you are welcome to come in the main entrance during office hours to check out the facility!

We have 3 rooms! The rower has been updated & we added a new stationary bike, flat bench & curl bar to name a few of the repairs & upgrades.

FHC, Inc., Cathance Children’s Center & the Cathance Fitness Center is located at 1201 Main St. Bowdoin, Maine. This route

125 address is the old Bowdoin elementary school.

Thank you for your patience and welcome back!

Healing Rivers Acupuncture

F or Abigail Lopez, her acupuncture practice is all about healing. “I feel so fortunate to do what I love and to be a part of people’s healing process,” she says. The types of needs she addresses range from physical ailments like chronic Lyme disease or headaches to stress, sleep difficulties, and anxiety. She takes a holistic approach to creating well-being and often finds that by addressing an underlying issue in a client’s body, her treatments will clear multiple health challenges for them.

Abigail has laid a strong foundation for her practice. After serving an apprenticeship, she obtained a 3 year Master’s Degree which meets both State and Federal requirements for certification. Over the last 13 years, she has served clients in Falmouth and Oakland, and now has offices in Waterville and Bowdoinham.

People unacquainted with acupuncture often have a lot of questions about how a course of treatments work and what is included in a session. It all starts with a conversation. “I treat each person as an individual,” Abigail says, “and I start with an in-depth intake interview.” Through the intake process, Abigail learns about the health issues her client wants to address,



takes the person’s pulse, and does some preliminary assessment. This helps her to focus on the parts of the body that need attention. The treatment involves a needle protocol with needles that are so thin, some patients don’t even feel them when they are applied. While the client lies still, the needles remain for 20 minutes. Abigail is present while the treatment happens. If a client has an aversion to needles, Abigail will introduce other techniques such as herbal treatments, massage and magnets.

Usually, a course of treatments lasts for 8 weeks for an hour at a time. Abigail charges \$75 per treatment. Sometimes a condition like tennis elbow can be healed in less than 8

sessions while other conditions like fertility issues can take longer. If a client’s insurance covers acupuncture (and many policies are now adding this option), then they can submit a claim for reimbursement.

Abigail appreciates that her practice is flexible and fits in with her family responsibilities. “My goal is to increase my number of patients while keeping a balance with my family demands,” Abigail says. Even with three young children, she can work with her clients to find hours that will fit for both of them.

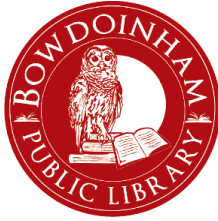
Up to now, Abigail’s client base has grown through word of mouth from people who are grateful for her effective work. She has a strong practice in the Waterville area, and more people are learning about her Bowdoinham practice located at The Alcove, 43 Main Street.

“I am always wanting to learn more,” Abigail says. She loves to apply all her experience and knowledge and new insights to relieve suffering and distress

You can reach Abigail by calling 207-400-0684 or emailing her at healingriversacupuncturemaine@gmail.com. You can also read more about her services at her website [Home\(healingriversacupuncturemaine.com\)](http://Home(healingriversacupuncturemaine.com)).

Bowdoinham Library

Our big new project should be unveiled the same week this newsletter comes out...



The library is opening a used book store called “Merryreading Books”. The kind and generous folks of Merrymeeting Hall have allowed the library to move in to the lower level of the hall at 27 Main Street (accessible at ground level in the back of the building) to sell used books as a fundraiser for the library. “Merryreading Books” will be open three days a week starting in November, and may add more hours if the customers and the volunteers are in good supply! Like many other libraries, Bowdoinham has a good supply of used books, (for both adults and children) and constantly needs to find new fundraising ventures. Thank you to Tom DeForest and

Brett Thompson who completed much of the interior work to ready the space for the store. Come and see the space and grab a bargain book. Have books to donate? Please wait until the new year and watch for notices regarding book drop offs.

We also enlisted the school children to move a few books, reenacting the “Book Brigade of 1984”. Many adults remember when the 190 school kids of that year passed 900 books hand to hand from the former location of the library on Main Street up the hill to the Coombs Municipal building where the library is today. We enjoyed recreating the brigade with almost the same number of students in 2022, and moved books from our storage to the new book store space. The afternoon was very hot but the students were great and were rewarded with a popsicle and a coupon for a free book. What a scene we created, stopping traffic and with a Sagadahoc Sheriff jumping in to the line!

Look for another way to support your library during the Holiday Weekend in December- making your own wreath! Come to the Merrymeeting Art Studio on Saturday December 3 from 9am to 4pm and we will offer supplies, decorations, fresh greens and instruction on how to construct your holiday wreath. \$20 for a small (using 10” and 12” wires) and \$25 for a large (15” wires).

We’ll again be offering hand crafted items made from discarded books- “Treasures from the Library Attic” for sale at the Guild of Artisans Show and Sale, Dec. 2, 3rd, 4th, 7th, 9th and 10th.

After a lively summer of Storytime outdoors at the Farmer’s Market we have moved back inside- Tuesday mornings at 10. Preschoolers and toddlers are welcomed. Anyone interested in volunteering at the book store please contact Kate at the library. Check the library Facebook page or the website for store hours.

Light Decorating Contest

Join us in decorating for our Holiday Lights Contest! It’s a perfect year to go look at holiday lights. This year, there will be \$250 prizes each for two categories: best decorations, and Facebook favorite.

To register to join, please email your name, address, and a photo of your lights to Jenn Curtis at planning@bowdoinham.com by December 1st.

Voting will take place during December; winners will be announced in January. To vote, you can: get a “ballot” online, or pick one up at the Town Office or Library, or you can vote on Facebook.

We hope you will join the fun and help us light up Bowdoinham!

For more information, visit www.bowdoinham.com or contact Jenn Curtis at planning@bowdoinham.com.

New Locally-Made Benches at Cathance Meadow Trails



Photo: Hilary Olson of Forge in the Ferns with one of the benches she made for the Cathance Meadow Trails, and her pup, Dill.

If you’re out for a stroll on the Cathance Meadow Trails, you may notice the addition of two beautiful new benches in Bowdoinham (dark) green. They are located to encourage trail-users to take some time out to appreciate particularly nice views. One is under the shade of a large pine tree overlooking the back corner of the upland meadow, and the other is tucked in at the edge of the treeline at the river overlook – both ideal spots for bird watching and cloud gazing.

The benches are 6 feet long, remarkably comfortable for having been made out of metal, and powder-coat painted to be able to withstand outdoor use. They were expertly

constructed by local Guild artisan Hilary Olson at her Forge in the Ferns workshop in Bowdoinham and taken offsite to be painted. The Town Public Works crew installed them on-site with anchoring devices in late August.

The benches were purchased by the Town with funds dedicated to Village Beautification and trail improvements. It’s a nice additional feature of the benches that they were able to be sourced locally – speaking to the character of Bowdoinham as a town of talented makers. The Town is very fortunate to have Hilary here in the mix. When she was first contacted about the idea, she was busy working on some local farm equipment! Look for more examples of her work at the upcoming Guild Artisan’s Holiday Show and Sale.

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Bowdoinham Receives National Grant

The American Library Association recently announced twelve artists and library staff teams selected for the pilot cohort for ALA's "Civic Imagination Stations", supported by The Estée Lauder Companies WRITING CHANGE initiative. Twelve libraries across the country were chosen each to partner with local artists to implement arts programming that builds literacy and digital skills. Teams were selected from a national application process conducted in June 2022.

Bowdoinham Public Library Director Kate Cutko teamed with local theater artist Dana Legawiec and proposed a storytelling project titled "StoryBridges" aimed at preserving Bowdoinham's historic voices and collecting new ones as well.

Grant funding will support the digital archiving of a dozen audio interviews made by middle school students in the 1980's - taped interviews with people including Linwood Rideout, Molly Nealy, Dot Dickenson, Arthur Frizzle and others. Dana Legawiec hopes to use material from these interviews as the basis for an original theater project at the community school.



"We are thrilled to be chosen for this opportunity, and excited to participate in a national pilot in the work of increasing library usership and literacy. Dana and I have so many ideas about collecting and preserving Bowdoinham's stories over the next year."

The Bowdoinham team launched the project at Celebrate Bowdoinham, posting signs around the village with QR codes and the "Story Bridges" project logo. Each QR code led to a snippet of a 1982 recording describing some aspect of life in Bowdoinham. Pictured here is a sample QR code which leads to Linwood Rideout telling about the history of fishing on Merry Meeting Bay.

The library website will soon have a collection of these stories for everyone to hear. Please keep checking Bowdoinhamlibrary.org.

If you are on Instagram, make sure to follow @storybridgesbhm.

Happy Thanksgiving from the Bowdoinham Food Pantry!

Director, Jenn Stonebreaker

I recently read an article published in Food Bank News, written by Ambreen Ali that underscores the benefits of pantries that do not require income verification. The article highlighted a Minnesota based grocery-store style food pantry, Open Cupboard. Their Executive Director, Jessica Francis describes the shift which occurred when their organization changed the way they approached access: "when you put the gate up first, that psychologically changes the whole conversation." I cannot agree with her more and believe that now, more than ever, breaking down those gates is crucial.

Stigma and income verifications are two of the biggest barriers that we see. The Bowdoinham Food Pantry DOES NOT (and never will) require any income verifications - we are open to ALL residents of Bowdoinham and Bowdoinham regardless of their financial status. When a new client walks through our doors we ask only for a name and address (which is kept completely confidential). The way in which our volunteers interact with clients is also integral to setting a tone of respect, dignity and openness. I am so proud of the interactions I observe each week. Our goal is high access, low barrier.

The Food Pantry has seen a significant increase in need recently. This August, we signed up 17 new families to shop with us. In that same month, we surpassed all visits and deliveries in 2021 with four months left

in the year. Currently 43 children are signed up for our Backpack Program. Food costs are UP, WAY UP and donations are down. We need your help. Please consider making a donation through our website or by mail: 9 Main Street, suite C, Bowdoinham, ME 04008.

As always, we are open for in-person shopping each Wednesday from 4-6PM. Come shop with us!

We are so grateful for all of our neighbors who make what we do possible. Here are some volunteer opportunities if you'd like to get involved:

Thanksgiving Pie Bakers - visit bowdoinhamfoodpantry.org for more info

WEDNESDAY - Pack Deliveries/Deliver

WEDNESDAY - Distribution Prep, Donation Processing & Distribution

THURSDAY - Backpack Shopper and Packers

THURSDAY or SATURDAY - Recycling Help

WISH LIST

Gluten free snacks/meals

Kid friendly snacks

Cooking oil

Pasta

Pasta Sauce

Eggs



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Morning Jo

Ready Or Not, Here They Come.

The holidays. Holy-days for most of us. But for some of us, especially if we are grieving, and even if we're just stressed out from the cumulative effects of our own life challenges, they can be hellish days. You might be surprised how many people are feeling this way right now.

Ho, Ho, Ho! Harrumph.

This season of celebration, so fraught with memories (whether from long ago or just last week), can catapult us into an undesired re-experiencing of painful past events. To make matters worse, most people who struggle at this time of year carry the added burden of believing they're supposed to feel some other way. Thus they tend to suffer in silence, which only adds to their feelings of sadness and isolation.

"Just Say No to Forced Jolly-ness."

Whatever holidays you grew up with, however your family celebrated them, and whether your memories are happy or not, this is the season of "forced jolly-ness." Images of happiness, togetherness, joy, and peace are projected, larger than life, everywhere you

go. Still, despite expectations to the contrary, it really is okay if you're not feeling it.

Presence is the Best Present.

Whether you're struggling in this season or wanting to support someone else who is, it's all about how to "be there..." for yourself, for another person, or both. Your presence is the best gift you can give. The more present you are, the more you give permission to others to do the same.

Honor All Of Your Feelings.

You have a right to all of your feelings. The trick is to balance the hard ones with the here-and-now pleasant ones that might surprise you if you're not trying so hard to push the other ones away.

Be There... For Yourself and for Others.

Let your family and friends know how you're doing. Reach out to anyone you think may be struggling. As always, remember to breathe.

Comments? Something you'd like me to address next time? Email me at jowtherlcs@gmail.com.

Happy Holidays!

Holiday Shopping at the Town Office



Are you wondering what to give those loved ones from away or your favorite hometown enthusiast? Look no further than your own Town Office.

We have a variety of Bowdoinham merchandise on sale: collector plates, cookbooks, totes, hats, tees and more.

Come visit us during regular business hours and view our display.

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Counterpoint Bread

For those who know Reeve Wood and his training as a lawyer, you might think that he came up with the name for his business out of the dynamics of a lawyer's interactions. In fact, it is the meaning of counterpoint as used in musical composition that inspired the name. In music, counterpoint is the interweaving of two or more musical themes where each theme is independent and yet in harmony with all the others.

Reeve's bread and pastry creations are like that. There is the bread starter, the rising, the folding, the supplementary ingredients, the perfect temperature, and the final harmonious result—a delightful, tasty treat. The complicated step-by-step process for bread making can take 3 days! And because each step needs careful attention, those days can stretch to 18 hours each. The counterpoint aspect of this process is complex, but oh, so satisfying!

Reeve started baking bread about 10 years ago. He noticed how much artisan bread was a part of daily life in France, where his wife Hannah's sister lives, and he was inspired to experiment. After he contributed some bread to the Ice and Smelt Festival soup supper, Luke MacFayden encouraged him to sell some at the Farmer's Market. This started Reeve's journey of experimentation, trying out different market outlets, and refining the production process.

By 2021, Reeve had saved up enough money to leave his work as a lawyer and to build a wood fired oven facility at his home which allows him to do 24 loaves at a time. His markets have now expanded to the Six Rivers Farm Stand, the Yarmouth Farmer's Market, some cafés in Brunswick, and the Bowdoinham Farmer's Market. Reeve just received the very exciting news that they have been accepted into the Brunswick Winter Farmers Market in Fort Andross starting on Nov. 12. Hours will be on Saturdays from 9:00-12:30.

At this point, Reeve is able to offer a broad array of delicious breads—miche, country white, 5 grain levain, cranberry pumpkin, olive, oat sunflower with golden raisin, Danish rye, walnut raisin, and baguettes. In addition, his pastries now include chocolate, almond, or plain croissants and kouign amann which is a rolled, sweet pastry. A guiding principle for his choices is to find simple, healthful and rustic options.



Reeve Wood

The growth of the business has been primarily sparked through word of mouth. "The product itself does the marketing," Reeve says. His best communication with customers is through a weekly email that he sends out to let them know which breads are on the menu for the weekend markets.

Handling this expansion has been a challenge. Hannah has stepped in to help with managing the sales operation as well as other management details. Their two sons have contributed by staffing the booth at the farmer's market. While right now the business is contributing a significant amount to the family budget, further expansion will demand careful consideration about the type of help they need and how it will free Reeve up to concentrate on production. "We are keeping our eye open for ways to keep the business sustainable," Reeve says. "It doesn't need to be a lot bigger than this," he adds. "I would, however, like to get some more sleep and see my kids!"



Hannah Burroughs

Creating this business has been very satisfying for Reeve. "There is a total moment of magic when I open the oven door. It doesn't stop being mind-blowing." He also enjoys seeing how much his customers love his product. "I feel really lucky to have started in Bowdoinham. People have understood what I'm doing and have been so supportive."

You can reach Reeve and Hannah at counterpointbread.com or reeve@counterpointbread.com. They have a business page on Facebook and Instagram. You can also call at 620-0362.

ELECTION DAY

November 8, 2022

Voting Place Name: BOWDOINHAM COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Voting Place Location: 23 Cemetery Rd

Polls Open at 8:00 a.m.

Polls Close at 8:00 p.m.

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New Recreation Director and Older Adult Services Coordinator



Bowdoinham has a new Recreations Director and Older Adult Services Coordinator: Jason Lamoreau, a 5th generation resident of Bowdoinham,

family man, coach, and business owner. Jason's family history with Bowdoinham gives him a unique insight into what it means to be part of a small Maine town and the importance of community. He is very excited to get started working with Age-Friendly Bowdoinham assisting our older residents and starting new programs beyond just athletics for our youth, to also include older adults.

Jason hopes to help develop programs that will cross generational boundaries, sharing the experiences and knowledge of older residents with our younger ones all while building a sense of community and pride in our town.

Jason has dedicated office hours from Noon to 4pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He is also available via email at recreation@bowdoinham.com or age-friendly@bowdoinham.com. If you are interested in volunteering or have ideas please drop him a line and let him know.

Holiday Giving Tree

The giving season is quickly approaching, and we will be starting preparations here at the Town Office.

If you would like to help bring some holiday cheer to our fellow residents all you need to do is choose a gift tag from the giving tree go starting November 28th. The gift tags will have all the pertinent information that is needed. We ask that you bring the unwrapped gift (along with the gift tag attached) back to the Town Office by Monday, December 19th.

The purpose of this tree is to help any Bowdoinham Family member who may be in need this time of year. Please know that the name(s) are kept strictly confidential. If you have any questions or know someone who may need help this season, please call Tina at the Town Office at 666-5531.

PLEASE NOTE: This holiday season we would like to help out some of our elderly residents. We will be collecting hats, mittens, scarves, gloves, blankets, puzzles, books, cards, and printed word games. If you know anyone in need, please let us know.

A message from the Public Works Department

As we get into the Fall please keep your culverts in mind! Clogged culverts can result in flooding or even a road collapse! Please do not shovel snow or deposit yard trimmings and other debris that would disrupt the flow of water or otherwise obstruct the way.

When culverts are clogged water gets redirected, eroding the surrounding structures, like roads or driveways, eventually causing a collapse.

Ensuring culverts are clear of snow and debris will prevent flooding and enable Public Works to direct resources to the clearing of roadways and other priority maintenance activities during weather related operations.

If a drain is still clogged after clearing surface debris or if you have questions or concerns about a culvert near your property, please contact Public Works at (207) 666-3503 or pworks@bowdoinham.com



A road washout in Ellsworth caused by a clogged culvert left residents stranded for several hours. (Photo by Steve Fuller, 2015, The Ellsworth American)



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THE BOWDOINHAM NEWS

Community Calendar

November

1st *First Half of Property Taxes Due*

8th *Election Day*

11th *Veteran's Day*
(Town Office Closed)

19th *Thanksgiving Farmers' Market*

23rd *Town Office Closes at Noon*

24th - 25th *Thanksgiving*
(Town Office Closed)

December

2nd - 10th *Holiday Festival Events*

12th *BCDI Annual Meeting - 6pm*

17th *Winter Solstice Farmers' Market*
(at Town Hall)

23rd - 26th *Christmas*
(Town Office Closed)

Town Board and Committee Meetings

*All meetings are open to the public.
For more information please visit:
www.bowdoinham.com/calendar*

Select Board

2nd & 4th Tuesdays of Month at 6:30pm

Planning Board

4th Thursday of Month at 6:00pm
(November will be on the 3rd Thursday)

Advisory Committee on Age Friendly Bowdoinham

2nd Monday of Month at 1:30pm

Community Development Advisory Committee

1st Tuesday of Month at 6:30pm

Comprehensive Planning Committee

2nd Tuesday of Month at 6:30pm

Cemetery Advisory Committee

1st Thursday of Month at 6:00pm

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