



Happy Spring

Whitefield News

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April 2015

Last Issue of the Whitefield Newsletter

We are sorry to say that this is the last issue of the newsletter. We appreciate the opportunity to share this publication with you and hope you enjoyed it.

Sadly, we have found that our busy lives make the time we put into the newsletter a real chore, and we (being such popular and often called upon individuals) feel we need to work on other projects; such as world peace and the extinction of rare species. So, thanks for picking up a copy of the newsletter and farewell.

(APRIL FOOLS)

FAMILY FUN DAY
BENEFIT CONCERT FOR WHITEFIELD
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FOOD PANTRY

"Double Jinx"
Whitefield's own
Milo & Connor

SATURDAY APRIL 11th 3-7pm
Whitefield Elementary Gymnasium
164 Grand Army Rd. Whitefield

Donations at the door - Live Local Music - Refreshments
50/50 Raffle - Activities for the Kids!

**MUSIC BY: Chris & Crosby, Spare Parts,
The Whitefields and Double Jinx**

A DAY OF FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

The story of Whitefield's Happy Farm

by David Chase

(By now, most everyone has driven by and sadly seen the "collapsed"

Happy Farm. With appreciation to David, we would like to share with you a time when it was a very productive Whitefield farm.)

The farm that I grew up on is popularly known today as "**Happy Farm**", and was probably built shortly before the Civil War - in the 1840's-50's on the eastern edge of the Irish section of Whitefield. The land was originally part of large holdings of Fr. Denis Ryan, the first ordained Catholic priest who also built and named St. Denis church. Clearing land, building barns, and creating homesteads was booming in the Sheepscot River valley.

For the next hundred years the farm with its setting along the river, its hilly fields and modest woodlands, provided a complete living for several families in succession - with a dream to make a living "off the land", start a family, and contribute to the vibrant community of Turner's Corner (later called North Whitefield).

By the time the newly married Norman and Lydia Chase (my parents) bought the 40 acre, fully furnished farm from the Jodins in 1940 for \$1800.00, the WW&F narrow gauge railroad had come and gone. Despite a post-depression economy, the dream of making a living on a farm was still alive. Dad and Mom populated the farm with a cow, a few chickens, and us four children (Steve, Peter, Mamie, and me).



Photo Submitted by David Chase

It was a modest farm. The house had a dirt floor cellar with a stream of water trickling over the clay - when the drain had frozen mid-winter and after a rain, I've seen water two feet deep. There were three bedrooms on the second floor. The main floor had a bedroom, a living room, a dining room (that we NEVER used), a door to the attic over the living room, and a bathroom. In the el before the shed, with its

iron sink. The shed contained the woodshed and a "two-holer" that we used up until the 50's. There was a full second floor; although, removal of much supports over the years rendered it VERY shaky, despite the metal rod holding the sides together.

In the early 50's, dad decided to provide opportunities for his growing boys by expanding the milk herd. An addition to Dad's wooden barn was designed and built. It was all concrete with a low metal roof supported by a multitude of trusses - new farm-building techniques for the time. It seemed that teams of masons and cement contractors were at work all summer. An electric powered vacuum system was piped to each stall (all 40) so that the new milking "machine" could be used. Automatic nose-activated watering bowls were also at each stall. This was modern stuff!

There was a nice milkroom addition where we had a small four-place-milk-bottling machine and deep stainless steel sinks where the returned milk bottles could be cleaned with a power brush mounted on a 1/3 hp motor. There was a chilled water tank where the racks of newly bottled warm milk were submerged **Continued on Pg. 2**

Whitefield Town Meeting

By Tony Marple

About seventy-five residents of Whitefield attended Town Meeting on March 21st. In the morning's uncontested voting for town officials, 106 voters cast ballots. David Boynton received 94 votes for Road Commissioner, Lester Schaeffer 95 votes for Selectman while Planning Board candidates Marianne Marple, Carl Ribeiro and Glenn Angel received 93, 88 and 88 votes respectively. There were no official candidates for RSU 12 School Board but the Town will investigate to see if write-in candidates are interested in serving.

The open meeting, moderated by Jeff Frankel, began at 2:00 with a Select Board summary of the overall budget proposal. The proposal would increase the municipal budget by \$107,667, with most of the increase due to winter and summer road maintenance. Town officials have not yet been informed of the County Tax, roughly 7% of the budget. Whitefield's share of the RSU 12 Budget, the largest share of Town spending (more than 60%), will increase by an estimated 2.9% according to RSU 12 Superintendent Howard Tuttle, largely as a result of a 7%



Photo contributed by Lincoln County News

health insurance premium increase. Voting on the RSU 12 budget will take place in May.

The Select Board informed citizens of the upcoming personal property survey and encouraged business owners, including farmers, to complete the form promptly and accurately. The Town is updating antiquated property records to improve the accuracy of our personal **Continued on Page 3**

Happy Farm Continued from Pg. 1 to cool. There were 30 to 40 milking cows at different times.

During these times, my brother Steve and I (smack in the middle of our teens) both attended Cony. There were very little extra curricular activities available to us given the obligations at the farm. One day Steve would milk the cows, and I would bottle the milk, then run the "milk route" from Jefferson to Chelsea and Gardiner. The next day, we would swap duties.

However, our social lives were not crippled. We delivered milk in an old blue dodge pickup crowded with our buddies – sometimes taking time in the evening to "illuminate herds of deer" off Vigue Rd. Other times, purposely careening off snowbanks and doing 360's on the secluded Piper Lane. We would also deliver milk in the Jeepster convertible; often with a pretty girl to assist.

There was a basketball hoop in the big barn. We focused on feeding out the bales from that area first, so the court would expand daily as the winter continued.

There were many many basketball games played in that old barn. Earlier on, we had pogo sticks, and with the sloping concrete walkways around the cows, we would speedily jump around the course; much to the entertainment of the cows!

Come spring there was an outdoor game with the neighbors. The trick of the game was to "take your turn" to race back to the barn in order to move the milker on to the next cow in time! This was a challenge I often failed.

When pasture time came (about mid May), the cows were "put out". On that first day, they were literally crazed with joy. After a full half year chained to a stall there was little wonder.

Fencing with the insects, mud, and heavy tools was no ones favorite chore. It was reduced to a quick visual check and some staples. We paid for that! As the grass on the other side of the fence grew taller, the wire stretched to breaking because of the leaning cows. We were constantly on edge. When the phone rang, we knew we were in for a bad time. We had to round up the wandering cows from neighbor's gardens and lawns, and they often crossed the river to visit their friends who were captive behind better fences. Dad would sometimes use a bull for field-breeding, and that "dude" was accused more than once for starting a family with a neighboring herd. Soon, AI (artificial insemination) seemed a very wise idea.

Dad always grew corn for silage for winter feed supplement. There was a series of wooden and metal silos at Happy Farm. At least one collapsed. Many sported strings of Christmas tree lights around the top. There is an old shallow rocked-up dug well next to the silo. When the open-top silo was full, water would drain down the 50 feet of ground corn, through the soil, and into that well. There were those who claimed that by mid- winter that water was 30 proof!

When my brother and I headed off to college, it was impossible for Dad to continue the milk route. Shipping bulk milk had become the practice among most dairy farmers, so Dad made the move. He continued to supply raw milk by the jug to only a few locals who were "brought up" on it.

Mom would experiment with an English style B&B which had several very interesting and dear people who boarded at Happy Farm. There were school teachers, doctors from Togus, and many people visiting in town who needed a place. Maria Patfoort came from the Congo to Whitefield and spent years at Happy Farm becoming a dear family member.

By the mid 60's, Dad had retreated from politics and was working his way out of the farm equipment business. The farm became his sole income. He raised and thrashed dry beans. He grew sweet corn.

In July 1981, on Dad's birthday, there was a devastating fire in the farmhouse at Happy Farm. It was nearly a total loss, but with the help of the entire community, the place was made comfortable again. The spirit of Happy Farm survived.

No one is certain when Dad named his farm, "Happy Farm", but it was probably in the mid 80's because a traveling photographer for the Boston Globe took a picture showing Mitch Cooper on a ladder painting the peak doors while Dad held the ladder. That picture in the Sunday, October 30, 1988 issue had the byline, "Don't worry", and the "Happy Farm" lettering looks new.

In 1976 the North Whitefield Volunteer Fire Dept. (which Dad had organized in the late 40's) sponsored what would eventually be a series of five very popular Annual Bluegrass Festivals in the back fields of Happy Farm; near the river - the crowds were large and the music wonderful. Dad was in his glory - live music, young people having fun, dancing in his backfield!

As he neared his 80's, milking cows and the obligations tied with shipping milk, forced Dad into selling the herd.

In 1990 he received recognition for his 25 years of service to the Lincoln County agricultural community. By the 90's, he was slowing down and his separation from farming activities bothered him. His health deteriorated, and in 1995 he died.

In 2002, recognizing the importance of Happy Farm and its location on the Sheepscot, SVCA, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and Farms for Maine's Future brought easements and guarantees that Happy Farm would forever be a farm. The farm was sold to Dad's nephew, Pat Chase and his wife Robin, with life tenancy for Mom.

(A more detailed and illustrated history may be found on the Happy Farm webpage: www.mainething.com/happyfarm/)



Photo Submitted by David Chase

Coopers Mills Dam Committee

By Tony Marple

The Select Board has appointed a citizen committee to review options for the Town owned Coopers Mills dam. The committee members are Leslie McCormack, Chuck Vaughn, Herb Hartman, Louie Sell, Jane Chase, Barry Tibbetts, Scott Higgins representing the Fire Department and Tony Marple representing the Board.



Photo by Tony Marple

The committee was formed to respond to the interest of and potential funding from the Atlantic Salmon Federation (AFS) and the Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association (SVCA) for a plan that would remove the dam or provide enhanced fish passage. Any solution must retain or enhance access to water for the firemen, historical recognition of the dam and former mill and a long term maintenance plan. While AFS and SVCA have a particular interest in enhancing the passage of anadromous fish, the committee will review all potential options including dam repair and hydropower.

Our goal is to have a recommendation for the Town to vote on at the March 2016 Town Meeting. Committee meetings will take place at least monthly on the fourth Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM in the Fire Station. The public is welcome. After a number of educational sessions from biologists, engineers, and historical representatives, the committee will begin considering options this summer. Public forums will take place no later than next fall to explain the options and to receive input.



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To the left is the Ford Mill in Kings Mills during the flood of March 1936. That flood also took out (never to be replaced) the Carlton bridge which spanned the river from East River Rd. to

Philbrick Lane as is noted in Emma Chase's diary. The large brick house down right was known as the "Ford Place" at the time. Tom Wellman and Ann Twombly have lived there for many years and have just recently sold it. Previous owners were John and Tatiana Sitchenko.

Town Meeting Continued from Pg. 1

property taxes. The Town is required to levy personal property taxes under State law and wishes to do so as fairly as possible.

The discussion and voting on warrant

articles proceeded quickly. The voters approved a \$69,250 increase in the road maintenance budget under a ten year plan recommended by the citizen Road Committee. The road plan includes an emphasis on preventive maintenance such as ditching and a more scientific approach to road paving and reconstruction.

After some discussion, the voters approved the construction of a gravel parking lot between the Town Office and the Fire Station, to improve parking safety during emergencies, elections or other events such as Whitefield Day.

There was considerable discussion regarding the Select Board's recommendation to accept Moosehead Lane as a Town road. The measure was voted down a year ago due primarily to the lack of a road acceptance policy which the Select Board developed last fall. Ultimately, the acceptance of the road was approved.

Citizens also requested that the Board provide more details regarding charitable programs in the Town budget.



Photo contributed by Lincoln County News

School and community come together in Whitefield

By Niki Mathews

Kindness, perseverance, and teamwork are themes that have been circulating around Whitefield Elementary School this winter. On January 26th, middle school students from Whitefield and Chelsea joined together to participate in the PBIS Bully Prevention Program. (Keep reading for a little more information about PBIS). The Friends of Rachel Club from Erskine Academy opened the event with a presentation about kindness and its positive effect on people. The group had students and staff laughing and cheering during role plays outlining various social scenarios encountered at school. Scenarios that are sometimes about fun, but can often become hurtful. Students reflected on how they may have changed each situation for a more positive outcome. Brave students who spoke up were happy recipients of t-shirts and water bottles, from the F.O.R. Club.

All students were then challenged as a group, to pass through a moving jump rope. After a few attempts, students came together to form a team plan and succeeded just before time was up. During the last hour, students rolled up their sleeves and got to work, learning the school's new bully prevention program. The program teaches the "stop, walk, talk" method to handle a bullying situation. The steps are easy: ask the bully to stop. Next, walk away. Lastly, talk to an adult if needed. To many students it seemed too simple, but the key is consistency. Students are taught what is expected of them and how to react to a situation, rather than guessing what to do.

Excitement continued at Whitefield Elementary School on February 12th, when Bob Holmes, the "One Man Volleyball Team" visited the school. Bob hosted two assemblies (for grades K-5 and 6-8) as well as an evening program for the community. Throughout the day, Bob played volleyball against teams of students, staff, police officers, and other community members. Bob has won over 16,000 volleyball games, his list of victories includes the Miami Dolphins, Toronto Blue jays, Pittsburgh Steelers, and now the Town of Whitefield. But it wasn't volleyball that made the biggest impact on the crowd. Bob left students with a powerful message to dream, look ahead, and beat the odds by never giving up.

The students of Whitefield and surrounding schools, as well as the community, have enjoyed these unique learning opportunities. Whitefield School will continue to build kindness, perseverance, and teamwork through daily activities and the school is in the planning stages of more distinct learning events.

Notes: The bully prevention program is part of PBIS, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. PBIS is being implemented within the school district. Whitefield is in its second year. The goal of the program is to create a school climate that offers a continuum of positive support to all students. Expectations are clear and lay a foundation for students and staff to build on. Whitefield School has seen great improvement in school climate since the program was introduced. PBIS information and updates can be found in the school's newsletter, the Wildcat Weekly.



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The Whitefield PTA would like your Box Tops! This is a great way to help support the school with no additional cost to you! If you purchase General Mills items or other items that have box tops on them, please drop them off at the Whitefield School. The school collects them and gets 10 cents per box top. Any questions, please contact Lisa Kalloch 660-7583 or Cari Jewitt 441-8942

APRIL 2015 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

- 1st **Whitefield Historical Society**, 6:30 pm
- 2nd **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 3rd **Whitefield Food Pantry**, St. Denis Hall, 1-3 pm
- 6th **Coopers Mills Fire Dept.**, All are welcome. No obligation. 7 pm
Kings Mills Fire Dept., 7 pm
- 7th **Laughing Yoga with Karen Stultz** Join us and discover the fast and easy way to reduce stress, and have fun doing it. 6:30 pm
Select Board, Fire Station, 6 pm
Kings Mills Union Hall Board Meeting, Public welcome, 7 pm
- 8th **Arlington Grange**: 6 pm Pot Luck Supper, 7 pm Meeting All are welcome.
Grow Your Own Organic Garden presented by Crooked Door Farm an evening long work shop on how to grow your own organic garden. Please call or email the store to sign-up. 6:00 pm
- 9th **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
RSU School Board Meeting, Chelsea School, 6:30-9 pm
- 10th **Mes Amis Concert** performed as a duo, trio or quartet depending on which friends (on bass, violin, sax or clarinet) join in to play the music they love, a mix of Gypsy, Latin, and American jazz 7 pm
- 11th **Benefit Concert Event** for Whitefield School's Food Pantry, 3-7 pm. Music and crafts for the kids. FMI, contact Sarah Crosby, 458-7905
- 12th **Whitefield Athletic Association (WAA)**, Whitefield School, 6 pm
- 13th **Whitefield Municipal Fire Dept.**, Fire Station, 7 pm
- 14th **Women of Whitefield**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Select Board, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 15th **Planning Board**, Fire Station, 6-8 pm
"Fairytale Network" dramatic production, Whitefield Elementary School, 10 am and 6 pm. Donations welcome.
- 16th **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 17th **Open-Mic Night**, Sheepscot General, 7-9 pm
- 18th **Chainsaw Safety for Women, HVNC, 8 am to 4 pm**: Hands-on workshop will cover safety gear, chainsaw maintenance, safe cutting, directional tree felling. Saws and safety gear provided. Register at hvnc.org \$150 for non-members, \$130 for HVNC/MOFGA
Vernal Pool Ecology Field Tour, HVNC, 2-4 pm: Learn importance of vernal pools to Maine's native frogs, salamanders, and other wildlife. Dress appropriately. Free
DRUMMING CIRCLE, Sheepscot General, 6:30 pm, Open to the public, all ages welcome
- 19th **Chainsaw Safety for Women, HVNC, 8 am to 4 pm**, (see April 18 details)
- 21st **Select Board**, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 22nd **Earth Day Nature Journaling Walk**, SVCA's Bass Falls Preserve, Alna, 10 am-noon. Become a keen observer of the natural world by drawing and writing about plants and animals in the field. Bring a journal.
Earth Day Bog Walk, HVNC, 10-11:30 am with Hildy Ellis, Knox-Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District. All ages welcome. Members free. \$5 suggested donation for non-members.
Kennebec and Lincoln Local Working Group Meetings NRCS Augusta Service Center, 21 Enterprise Drive, Augusta 1-3:30 pm
Arlington Grange, 6 pm Pot Luck Supper, 7 pm Meeting All are welcome.
- 23rd **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Timber Frame Construction, four-day workshop, April 23-26: Students will build an entire timber framed shed from stump to finished frame. Tools provided. No experience necessary, \$450 HVNC/MOFGA members, \$500 for non-members. Register at hvnc.org
- 24th **Vernal Pool Field Trip**, SVCA's Stetser Preserve, Jefferson, 10 am – noon. (rain date May 1) Register at sheepscot.org.
Solar Energy Lecture by Revision Energy Friday Sheepscot General 7pm
- 25th **Essential Oil wellness day** by Bethany Rackliff will be giving essential oil wellness consulting. Come find out how to balance naturally. 4 pm
- 26th **Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Training, SVCA**, 1-3 pm. New water quality volunteers needed to be trained and do weekly water sampling from May to Sept. Register at hvnc.org.
- 28th **Women of Whitefield**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Select Board, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 30th **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am



*Do you have an event? Contact whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com
 We'll add you to the town calendar website and newsletter.*

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