



Happy July 4th

Whitefield News

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Come celebrate the 4th in Kings Mills

by Michelle Duncan Shaw

Search your memories of the Kings Mills 4th of July parade and celebration. What did it mean to you as a kid and now, as an adult? Are you excited to share it with your own family? Are you "from away" and make it a point to come home for the parade? I hope this will encourage all "Whitefielders" to participate in the Kings Mills celebration by being in the parade, organizing floats with your friends and family, and taking part in all the activities after the parade.

Did You Know:

-There is evidence at the Whitefield Historical Society suggesting that the Kings Mills parade dates back to 1911 and 1912:

Inhabitants of the Kings Mills Village have always been ready to support an Independence Day celebration; bunting draped the stores, Union Hall, and churches, with the parade and water sports on the nearby Sheepscot River."

-For many years there was a dance in the evening to bring the day's festivities to an end. From the Jewett Journal, July 4, 1911: *They had a celebration at the Mills. Fantastic boat races, grease pole, 3-legged race, good dinner, fireworks, and a dance."*

-Kings Mills Fire Department (organized in 1947) immediately instituted the "4th of July Celebration" which included a parade, bands, games, dances, and a cake walk. There are even pictures



Photo by Tony Marple

showing that there was once a "Miss Whitefield Contest" as part of these festivities.

The money raised by the Kings Mills Fire Auxiliary (the wives of the firemen) went to fund the Volunteer Fire Department's needs before they were included in the town budget.

-During Whitefield's 175th Anniversary year, a newspaper advertisement read: *"...there will be a rousing band..., and after the parade, more fun in store with canoe races, beano, board games, a fireman's dunk tank, and the annual country auction."* Other promotions/ advertisements promised "pig scramble, firemen's run, and lumberman's contest." Some of these activities (the white elephant sale, cake walk, games, ice cream, hot dogs with homemade fries, and the country auction) are still staples of the celebration today. The Kings Mills Volunteer Fire Department still organizes the event.

-Perhaps due to its patriotic nature, this annual event has always attracted a lot of community support. Originally it was a salute to the Veterans of the Armed Services, and parade organizers selected a resident veteran to be the marshal of the parade. Bob Gilman, the volunteer fire department chief, was one of these honorary parade marshals. For many years, he drove his lawnmower at the head of the parade. His unique ride was decked out in American flags, and he always wore his Uncle Sam uniform. His son, Robert Jr., has paid **Continued on Pg. 3**



Uncle Sam Leads the Parade

The River

by Lynne Flaccus

The Sheepscot River flows from its headwaters in Montville to the ocean in Southport a total of 58 miles, connecting natural and human communities along the way.

When the glaciers receded from Maine 12,000 years ago and ocean levels receded, the Sheepscot River and its tributaries carved through soils and glacial till shaping the land. The Sheepscot watershed includes 320 square miles of land with 55 miles of tributaries draining to the sea, over 30 lakes and ponds, and more than 5 miles of tidal waters. Native Americans, and later Europeans, found resources they needed along the fresh and salt water reaches, shaping the river and land along with the natural processes.

Though these numbers relay facts, they don't really help us know the river and its many qualities, or its natural and human history. Whether exploring this ribbon of water by boat, hiking,



Remains of Kings Mills Dam

fishing, hunting, or working the land, there are unique qualities of the river and its systems that we often overlook.

The seasons of the river change dramatically over the year, and even from year to year from the headwaters to coastal sections. In some years you can paddle a canoe every month of the year, while in others, the ice is thick enough to snowshoe or ski long stretches. In winter this ribbon of ice provides a glimpse into the lives of the animals that stay active throughout the year. Mink, otter, fox, coyote, deer, and of course, the industrious beaver all make tracks that provide a window into their year. Snow-

shoeing along the banks, you may find otter tracks and slides from one small opening in the ice to the next, and

spots where beaver come out to nibble fresh branches. Beneath the ice, freshwater mussels (including the endangered Brook Floater) remain buried in the mud along with insects, turtles, and amphibians which will stay hidden until spring thaws.

Spring paddling allows us to take in the glory of blooming ephemeral wildflowers, returning songbirds, and waterfowl. Trout lilies and Blood-root carpet forest floors along the river. Jack-in-the-**Continued on Pg. 2**



Summer Fun: How to Enjoy the Outdoors Close to Home

by Kit Pfeiffer

We have finally made it to summer, so it's time to get outside! Here are a few ideas for you and the family to do for little or no cost. And they're not very far from home.

Take a Hike

Why not check out the two trails developed by the Whitefield Trails Committee? Marr's Ridge Trail is on the center Hunt's Meadow Road, featuring a granite tower that overlooks the coastal plains out to the Camden Hills. The Happy Farm River Trail starts right behind the recycling center and goes across fields and down along the river to a refreshing swimming hole. The Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association also has some wonderful preserves in our area with hiking trails and natural history information. The one right here in town is the Salmon Preserve on the Howe Road. Check www.sheepscot.org for trail maps and special events at the preserves. It's all free.

Enjoy Nature

On the Egypt Road in Jefferson is the thousand-acre Hidden Valley Nature Center, with 25 miles of multi-use trails, a kettle bog with boardwalk, and over a mile of frontage on Little Dyer Pond. A \$5 donation is requested for day use of HVNC, and you can rent a canoe for \$10 additional a day. Check details, trail map and special activities at www.hvnc.org

Learn a Lifelong Sport

Anthony Anderson, Whitefield resident and director of wellness programs for Bath Iron Works, is a big fan of lifelong sports. "This is the type of activity we need to be doing more of," he says, "since very few of us can continue to play team sports after high school." So he has coordinated with George Hall at Sheepscot Links on the Townhouse Road to offer a low-cost summer golf program for ages 8-16 called the Youth Scramble. Every Sunday in July and August from 4 to 6 PM, groups of 4 youth compete as a team on the Sheepscot Links course. There is a \$25 flat fee to participate for the summer. Contact George Hall at 446-8511 or Anthony Anderson at 441-9738 to sign up.

Free Basketball Clinic

The youth basketball clinic will be held again this year for 4 days in August, Thursday through Sunday, for ages K-8th grade. It's free, and details will be posted on the Whitefield Elementary School Facebook site.

A happy outdoors summer to you!

River Cont. From Pg. 1 Pulpits and Ostrich Fern come a bit later to crowd the shores along with alder and other shrubs. Turtles crawl onto the banks in early spring to finally soak in the warming sun and begin another year, then venturing farther afield in June to lay eggs.

The spring paddling season is usually short from April to May with levels running from 1,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) that wash out the rocks, to 180 cfs that leave expectant paddlers dragging boats more than paddling.



Quiet paddle downriver Photo by Lynne Flaccus

The spring also brings runs of 7 species of migratory fish, including

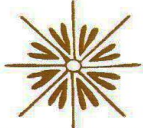
American and Lamprey eels, Shad, Alewives and Smelt. Each species working its way against the current to spawn in the upper reaches of the river. These runs intricately tie the river to the ocean. The Atlantic salmon spawn in the fall, but the young 2-3 year old smolts make their way to the ocean in the spring, mixing with schools of incoming fish. Exploring the river on a day in June you might discover the nest building activities of lamprey eels. Intertwined in courtship, the male and female carefully pull rocks together with their mouths to build a u-shaped stone wall in the gravel where the female lays her eggs. During their runs, they don't eat, and shortly after spawning they will die, their carcasses providing fertilizer for the creatures they share the river with.

The estuaries and salt marshes of the lower Sheepscot, provide habitats for a diversity of plants and animals. Many species are rare or little known. The Marsh River is home to a distinct population of wild oysters (the farthest north they are found), as well as Sharp-tailed Salt Marsh sparrows (a species of special concern in Maine). Salt marshes and the plants that grow there act as sponges, nurseries, filters and food factories as sediments and nutrients flow into them from upstream, exchanging with tidal waters. In Alna and Newcasttle there are populations of rare plants with funny names like Parkers Pipewort and Pygmyweed growing in the tidal marshes.

In addition to the role of the Sheepscot and its habitats providing a migratory corridor for fish, and other wildlife, the Sheepscot has, and continues to be, a migratory corridor for people. Providing a "highway" to move goods, deep waters for boatyards, and fertile lands for farming and timber, rural communities followed the flow of the river. Forty-four mills and associated dams were found along the Sheepscot at one time, beginning in the 1700's. The earliest dam was at Kings Mills or "great falls". Grist, lumber, barrel mills, and dams generating electricity all had their place on the river supporting communities throughout the watershed. A quarry and limestone mine were found near Weary Pond in the 1700's, and brickyards developed in the lower reaches of the River.

At one time 80% of the land in Maine was cleared of forests for agriculture, until the late 1800's when much of the farm lands were abandoned. Farming still continues to be one of the main economies in the watershed; small farms taking advantage of niche markets and tied to communities where they're found. The signs of past land uses are found in the fields and forests of the watershed; stone walls, cellar holes, and hidden family cemeteries tell stories of the past. Exploring the river and its landscapes lead to discoveries that are expanded on when talking to residents, many who have been in the valley for generations. The river ties human and natural communities together.

The best way to learn about the river and its many human and natural connections is to get out and explore; look, listen and ask questions. There is much to learn and share!

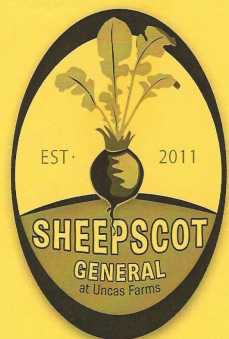


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Whitefield Historical Society "Just Yesterday"

The Whitefield Parade—a long standing tradition



*Kings Mills 4th of July float in front of Union Hall with a band in the wagon (circa 1910)
(Photo courtesy of the Glendon Jackson Collection)*

Parade Cont. From Pg. 1 tribute to his dad by opening the parade the same way since his dad's passing in 2011.

-One of the things that makes the parade so special is that you can count on "the same old same old" every year. You can look forward to the same old cars, noisy fire trucks, and shiny emergency vehicles. You can count on the vintage tractors and farm equipment that may or may not make it through the whole parade route "down and back" (this may be one of the only parades that goes by twice). You can count on the same amount of cheering as the floats go by. Routinely, Natasha Mayers organizes marchers to creatively protest and demonstrate their latest political grievances and environmental concerns. Children can always count on candy and popsicles being tossed into the crowds, and if they are lucky, there are a few water guns being squirted from floats to kindly relieve spectators from the heat of the day. These are the staples of the Kings Mills parade that I look forward to each year.

-What also keeps this parade exciting each year is the creative expression chosen for floats. A few themes from the past have included: "Freedom,"

"Maine: The Way Life Should Be," and once there was a "Whoville" style Dr. Seuss float. In the 2011 parade Ben Harmon was in a water tub representing his old swimming hole!

-All of this is so generational. We have watched our friends and neighbors drive by us on the parade route for years. Now they are sharing this experience with their children and grandchildren. Isn't this the true measure of success and wealth in a community; we are able to pass on our traditions and values to the next generation, and they pick them up and make them their own?

How Can You Participate?

Get your family and friends together to make a float, or at least come "home" and attend the parade. Do your part to make the day a huge extended family reunion. One of the best parts of going to the Kings Mills parade is seeing old friends, reconnecting with them, catching up on current happenings, and reminiscing about old times. Even if you are not from Kings Mills, come and be a part of this all-American small town celebration. See what it is all about and make it your new family tradition. Come celebrate the 4th with us!



Ben Harmon in his favorite swimming hole

Special Thanks!!!

As we begin our 3rd year of the Whitefield Newsletter, we would like to thank all the volunteers who make this possible: our advertisers, writers, photographers, contributors and especially the folks who work on the committee that puts the newsletter together every month!!!

Remember

Lt. David Mason (1988-2015) followed in his father's footsteps as a member of the Coopers Volunteer Fire Dept. David, on countless occasions, answered the call to aid his neighbors in need. Please honor his memory by volunteering in our community.



"Headtide" in memory of Julian Sacks (1930-2015), one of Whitefield's remarkable citizens and treasured artists.

Roger Majorowicz (1931-2014) Besides his many sculptures as seen here at Whitefield School, Roger brought passion to everything he did; such as building floats for the annual 4th of July parade. He believed that art captured the meaning of life and made the world a better place.



Kenneth Marden (1928-2015) known to many in Whitefield as the "Flag Man" served his adopted community well. One of the contributions that we will remember him for was hanging the American flags around town each July and diligently unfurling them as the wind wrapped them around the poles.

JULY 2015 Community EVENTS CALENDAR

- 1st **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
 2nd **Whitefield Food Pantry**, St. Denis Hall, 1-3 pm
- 4th **Whitefield Parade, Kings Mills 10:00 am**
White Elephant Sale, Cake all, games, ice cream, hot dogs, homemade fries & the country auction,
 After the Parade
- 6th **Coopers Mills Fire Dept.**, All are welcome. No obligation. 7 pm
Kings Mills Fire Dept., 7 pm
- 7th **Select Board**, Fire Station, 6 pm
Laughing Yoga with Karen Stultz Join us and discover the fast and easy way to reduce stress, and have fun doing it. Sheepscot General, 6:30 pm
- 9th **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
RSU School Board Meeting, Chelsea School, 6:30-9 pm
- 12th **Whitefield Athletic Association (WAA)**, Whitefield School, 6 pm
 13th **Little Dyer Adventure Club Session 2**, HVNC, Mon., Tues, & Wed. 9 am—2 pm
Whitefield Municipal Fire Dept., Fire Station, 7 pm
- 14th **Women of Whitefield**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Select Board, Fire Station, 6 pm
Kings Mills Union Hall Board Meeting, Public welcome, 7 pm
- 15th **Planning Board**, Fire Station, 6-8 pm
 16th **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
 17th **Open-Mic Night**, Sheepscot General, 7-9 pm
Farmers Market/Flea Market, Arlington Grange, \$10 per table, call 549-3491 for more information 9 am—1 pm
- 18th **DRUMMING CIRCLE**, Sheepscot General, 6:30 pm, Open to the public, all ages welcome
 21st **Select Board**, Fire Station, 6 pm
 23rd **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
 23rd-26th **Timber Frame Construction Workshop** at HVNC, call 207-200-8840.
SVCA Annual Barbeque, 6:00—8:00 p.m. SVCA Office Sheepscot Road in Newcastle
- 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.*



Above—Music teacher, Scott Morgan, leads the entire school body in singing *This Trail Is Your Trail* at the ribbon-cutting ceremony to open Happy Farm River Trail.
 Photo by Libbey Seigars



Left—Proud 4th graders try out the new bench they installed by the Sheepscot on the Happy Farm River Trail

On a hot and sunny Thursday in late May, class groups of Whitefield School students completed a long list of community chores to give back to the town. Picking up litter, leaf-raking, planting flowers and trees, and clearing of Whitefield's new hiking trails were among the many activities. The day culminated in a barbecue and a walk over to the Happy Farm River Trail kiosk for a grand-opening ceremony. Hooray for all their hard work!
 Photo by Tony Marple

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Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 15th of the month. Email whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com