



Whitefield News

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Smooth Bedstraw: an invasive plant that loves Maine fields

by Dan Joslyn

Smooth Bedstraw (*Galium mullugo* L.) is one of approximately 700 non-native plants growing in Maine. Of this number, a few are considered "Invasive". Bedstraw is one of the few.

According to Nancy Olmsted (nancyolmstead@maine.gov), an Invasive Plant Biologist with the Maine Natural Area Program, Smooth Bedstraw has not been tracked until very recently, primarily because it has not been considered as significant a threat as other invasive plants. Nancy monitors a GPS invasive species mapping system for Maine (www.imapinvasives.org/meimi).

Smooth Bedstraw is, however, a weed that hay growers and livestock owners of all sizes might want to become familiar with.

Richard Kersbergen, Extension Professor, University of Maine Cooperative Extension (Richard.kersbergen@maine.edu) has dealt with Maine bedstraw for decades. Around the third week of June many land owners call to inquire what that pretty white tint to their hay fields is coming **Continued Pg. 2**

Arlington Grange celebrates 100 years with an Open House/Farming Appreciation Day on June 7th

by Debbie Rogers

Arlington Grange #528 is at the top of Grand Army Hill on Rt. 126 in Whitefield. In February 1884, the members of Erskine Post #24 G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) began raising funds to build a memorial hall. The purpose of the hall would be a meeting place for the GAR, a free high school, and "contain a hall for a public library, public lectures, and other such amusements, which will be for their own intellectual advantage as well as the community at large".

On Sept. 1, 1914 the first meeting of the Arlington Grange was held in the GAR building. It was decided at that time to name it the Arlington Grange in recognition of Fred Arlington Naray.

It has been an honor to work with the grange these past two years, and we have new members joining regularly. In preparation for the events we will be hosting this summer, we have been busy cleaning and sorting items in the Grange.



Arlington Grange #528 Photo by Tony Marple

During a cleaning day, we discovered a box of "stuff" under the stairs. In the bottom, we found several old books (roll books and notes). To our utter surprise, one was the original minutes of the very first Grange meeting at the hall.

Mary Jo Higgins (Tobin) was working as well. She was overjoyed to discover that her grandmother, Lizzy Tobin, was one of the very first officers of the Arlington Grange. The roll book was very enlightening with lists of members and their occupations. Barber, railroad employee, housekeepers, students, and milkmaid were some of the listed occupations.

Charlie Miller has been a member of the Arlington Grange for over sixty years. He and his wife, Fran, who recently passed away, have been tireless workers for the Grange. When it came to a Grange supper, you could always be sure there would be one **Continued on Pg. 2**

A Farmer's Update

by Cheryle Joslyn (as reported by Ben:=-)

Don't you ever wonder what is growing in that big white hoop house behind Sheepscoot General Store? I am always curious about what Ben Marcus has growing in the rich soil that was once fertilized by many grazing head of cattle. When I've had a chance, I've interrupted Ben's routines with a question about "what's in, what's up, and what are you picking". I know he always will intrigue me with his reply. He is (as well as is becoming) a farmer that we can gauge our seasons on. As spring turns to summer, ask him yourself. You'll discover that he is in synch with the rhythm.

This is Ben's reply to my multi-layered question, "What do you have growing in that hoop house, coming up in those outdoor beds, and planted in those beautifully seeded fields?" I got my answer once again, and now I can't wait to sample the fruits and vegetables so carefully tended by this young farmer.

Ben: I tilled in the last of the fall-planted spinach a couple weeks ago as it began to bolt, and the spring planted spinach proved worthy of harvest. I also have a couple successions of arugula and radishes coming on; alongside some early mesclun greens (a bed of mustard and a bed of lettuce). The tilled spinach beds made way for some early cucumbers and basil and will soon make room for a full house of tomatoes, peppers and eggplant under plastic.

The soil-less greenhouse (i.e. the seedling house) is chock full of peppers, tomatoes, lettuce, cole crops, flowers, some herbs and soon-to-be cucurbits.



Ben Marcus Photo by Cheryle Joslyn

Everything is timed around the first frost free date, the average being the third week of May.

Despite many people's cynicism about an early start, we have had a good dry, windy spell allowing me to work a lot of ground in a timely manner. These newly tilled fields are now home to early transplants of kale, broccoli, swiss chard, onions, lettuce heads; along with direct seeded peas, carrots, beets, greens and radish.

Garlic is up; some of it 8" tall by now, and side dressed (fertilized) to give it a little boost. Last year's strawberries have been raked free of their winter mulch and are putting on new growth. Now it's time to start fertilizing

and keeping ahead of pests and disease to give them the best conditions for a good fruit set at the end of June.

Strawberry crowns will be arriving via UPS from Massachusetts and will promptly be planted in a field that was prepared all of last year. These plants will be cared for and established this year in order to be picked next year.

That's about it for now, Benjamin J Marcus

Grange Continued from Pg. 1 of Fran's pies, if not more. Charlie remembers attending the meetings at the age of 5 or 6 with his parents, who would arrive in their Model T Ford, and he recalls falling asleep on the benches which are still there. "Behind the building was a covered shed for the horses. During the Second World War, the Civil defense came out and built a tower where volunteers came to spot for planes in case of an air raid.

During our meeting on May 13th, Charlie told us that the walls on the main floor have blackboards under the paneling from the school that was there in the late 1800's. He is such a wealth of information, and we so appreciate his presence at the Grange. Charlie remembered watching his father put down the hardwood floor in the upstairs meeting area. His father did much of the carpentry work around the building. That work continued with Charlie, who not only installed the fire escape and the lift chair on the stairs in the hall, but he regularly maintained the building.

The current members of the Grange, including Charlie and longtime members Gladys and Leo Glidden, invite you to join us for a celebration of 100 years of community service and fellowship. We are also celebrating "Farming" in our area. The Grange is, after all, an agricultural-based group with deep roots in the farming community.

On Sunday, June 7th, from 1-4 pm, we will be having an Open House celebration. During that time, we will have local farmers and organizations there with products, information, and demonstrations. Flintlock Forge will be there with Jeff Miller demonstrating Black Smithing. Also in attendance will be Sheepscot General, Narrow Gauge Farm (which will be bringing 3 baby lambs), Crooked Door Farm, Thirty Acre Farm, Tim's Sugar Shack, Hidden Valley Farm, Treble Ridge Farm, Whitefield Trails, MOFGA, Sheepscot Valley Conservation Assoc., Whitefield Historical Society, and many others. We will be conducting tours of the Grange and serving free refreshments. There will also be a white elephant table in support of the Grange.

So, come visit the historic Grange and our wonderful farmers and organizations in our local area!! We are so lucky that 100 years later we can celebrate an ongoing success story of the agricultural community of Whitefield and its neighbors!



Charlie & Fran Miller
Contributed Photo



Theresa Kates, Mary Grady, Gladys Glidden, Debbie Rogers & Maddie Frinco
Contributed Photo

Bedstraw Cont. from pg. 1 from. Bedstraw generally blossoms the third and fourth week of June. It is here in Whitefield.

Bedstraw dates back thousands of years and lives in much of the world in various forms. At least four types are native to Maine: Marsh Bedstraw, Boreal Bedstraw, Scratch Bedstraw, Northern Bog Bedstraw. Their country



Bedstraw Photo by Dan Joslyn

cousin, Lady's Bedstraw, was used in parts of Europe by ladies of rank to stuff mattresses during King Henry VIII's reign; thus the name "bedstraw". Women used its yellow blossoms to produce blond hair and if steeped in water first, it helped to curdle milk for making cheese; giving a beautiful and much sought after tint to the goat and sheep cheeses produced at the time.

Smooth Bedstraw, an invasive and opportunistic weed, lives primarily in fields; both those poorly maintained as well as fields treated with lime and fertilizers. Originally farmers were told that lime would decrease the volume of bedstraw in their fields, but over time this proved to be untrue. "Galium Mollugo L." loved lime, fertilizer, and any other nutrient used to increase hay quantity.

Smooth Bedstraw arrived here from contaminated fields elsewhere and continued its expansion from seed rain, contaminated farm equipment, and rapid growth of its root system. The plant produces rhizomes (mass of roots) that move along the sub-surface of the soil; spreading somewhat like strawberry plants.

Bedstraw decreases the quality of hay for Maine's domestic animals. Many will not eat it. Although this plant has great nutritional value when green - 18% protein (one of the highest percentages of all forages), its leaves dry and fall off during harvest; thus leaving only a vine with an unsavory taste. It overtakes clover and other nutritionally rich plants endemic to quality feed. Hay from fields heavily infected become less desirable and thus less profitable.

The University of Maine conducted trials in 2004-2005 in Northport, Maine to determine the best control techniques. The report written by Kersbergen may be found through the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service Bulletin, "Controlling Smooth Bedstraw in Hayfields and Pastures" #2278. Four treatments were studied. **In all four, keeping bedstraw from going to seed for one year before attempting to kill it is key.**

-Tillage Treatment: Tilling the soil and following with a cover crop of buckwheat and then a fallow period in the summer works well, but may not eradicate the plant. This treatment may work best for organic farmers.

-Nitrogen Fertilizer: Large amounts of nitrogen were applied in the second test area. It was hoped that the other grasses would flourish and shade out the bedstraw. The bedstraw liked the nitrogen as much as the grasses did.

-Systemic Herbicide: The herbicide was applied; killing the bedstraw and grasses. The land was then reseeded with a no-till drill. Fields where tilling could not be used would be the best choice to treat in this manner.

-Late Summer Crossbow Application: During late August a Crossbow application provided near total elimination of the bedstraw.

-Training Your Animals (a different approach): Kathy Voth of Loveland, Colorado has developed a technique that trains cows, sheep, and goats to eat unsavory weeds. She has worked with the Madison Valley Ranchlands Group Weed Committee in Ennis, Montana. 320 cows were taught to eat Canada Thistle. She states that this training has been used to teach animals to eat smooth bedstraw.

Voth has produced a DVD that outlines the training process:
<http://www.livestockforlandscape.com>

Farmers in Whitefield have faced weather, weeds, insects, and diseases for over two hundred years. Bedstraw will in the end be managed. Information is key and given access to copious amounts of data and research, our young people will make the right choices. Why wouldn't they? They are Maine country farmers.

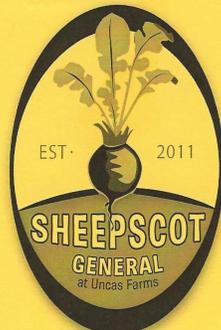


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Whitefield Historical Society "Just Yesterday"

Lineage and lore

by Charlie Tobin

There are so many cool words in the English language; such as luncheon or participant. They have a resonance that seems to almost make you smile just because you've got to use them in a sentence. Now the word begat is similarly rewarding, yet seldom does it get mentioned. Used many times in the Bible (Genesis and 1 Chronicles) the word begat somehow fell out of popularity, so to you, dear reader, Charles M. Tobin (grandpa) begat Charles H. (Uncle Bert) and Joseph (dad). Joseph begat Charles H. (me). Now wasn't that simple? All that "begatting" gives me kin through the families McCormick, Morin, Chase, Olsen and Stultz; my lineage. Staying true to the title, my family passed on to me stories of family members, interspersed anecdotes blended with reality for the time and maybe hardships that were endured. This, by default, becomes family lore.

Some stories were meant to be unbelievable; like "When I walked to school, it was uphill both ways", or "If you stand on top of that horse manure pile for twenty minutes each day, you'll grow an inch in just one week!" (Alas, I have to admit to falling for this one; hook, line, and sinker. Morris Harrington was tending work horses tied up in our barn, and he told me if I wanted to get taller, all I had to do was hang out on top of a manure pile. I thought Mom was going to come unglued when she caught me on top of that pile. I think it was the third day, but I'm not sure. I had just gotten a new pair of Red Ball Jets sneakers from Vigue's General Store. They were never white again). Some stories can be hard to wrap your head around. Speaking of trying to wrap your head around something, imagine being six or seven years old and finding out that your father killed a bull with a rock!

This coming August will mark the seventy-fourth year since the passing of a ten month old bull which happened to escape from its owner, Maurice Brown. Two young male teens and one young male bull by chance did come face to face. Classic example of too much male in one area, and the young bull, I guess, wanted to assert his presence. It would be many years later that Dad and I would speak a little more in depth about the encounter that took place when he was only seventeen. He told me that he wished the rock had grazed the bull and scared it off. Dad knew the value of the bull to Mr. Brown. He told me that although he was happy and thankful to not be hurt or even killed, that he felt badly for Mr. Brown's loss of livestock. It wasn't long after that incident that Dad became a livestock owner himself, acquiring his first team of draft horses.

Some family stories get to be recreated by different family members at later times, emulating a past achievement or event, thereby insuring that the event stays current in the present and for the future lineage of that family. I would be hard pressed to reenact my father's "Whitefield Youth Slays Bull With a Single Stone" byline from the Kennebec Journal, 8/29/1941. Farming has come forward in profound ways since 1941, yet livestock is just as important now to today's farmer as it was in the past. Give thanks to a farmer if you know one and



—Kennebec Journal Photo.

DAVID SLEW GOLIATH with a stone but he used a slingshot. Seventeen-year old Joseph Tobin of North Whitefield, shown in the photo above, killed a half grown bull, that charged him, with the rock he holds in his hand.

try to buy local when you can, it makes it more personal. Who knows, you might even hear some lore.

What follows is the article from the Kennebec Journal, 8/29/1941:

"Whitefield Youth Slays Bull With a Single Stone- "Lucky Shot" Says Joseph Tobin

Joseph Tobin and George Talbot were walking along the Benner road in North Whitefield, Wednesday afternoon, on their way to the Chisholm farm. About a mile from the center of town they noticed a young bull in a field at the edge of the road. Neither one gave the animal any thought, and they continued on their way.

A few minutes later they heard a rustling in the alders ahead and out stepped the young bull. The animal came down the bank and stopped in the center of the road in front of the boys. From this point Joe Tobin's memory suffered a lapse, but he does remember the big moments of the incident.



The bull began to walk toward them and then charged. The boys turned and ran. Joe looked over his shoulder – the bull was gaining. Seconds flashed by, the bull was within 20 feet of the boys. A short distance ahead Joe saw a large stone in the road. In his stride he picked it up, swung around, hurled it at the bull and sped on his way. Seconds later Joe looked back – the bull was sprawled in the middle of the road, dead.

After the boys had gotten over their excitement they found that the rock had struck the animal in the head, killing him instantly.

The bull was a ten-month-old Holstein and belonged to Maurice Brown of North Whitefield. Brown had missed the animal since early morning, but thought he was on the farm.

Joe summed up the situation in a few words. "It sure was a lucky shot for me."

Whitefield Athletic Association Spring Sports

By Kit Pfeiffer

It's been a busy and fun spring for the Whitefield Athletic Association, according to President and coach Chris Delisle. In addition to his leadership duties, he's been coaching both Little League and T-ball this spring. "I'm out five nights a week and often Saturday," he says, and it's a "family affair", with all three of his children (11, 8, and 5) playing a sport. He says the Association is now fairly stable financially, and they were able to purchase almost \$2,000 worth of new equipment this year. Students pay a modest fee to play for each sport; between \$20 and \$40/season.



WAA runs athletic programs from September 1 to the end of June; using the school's facilities. The fall sport is soccer, in winter it's basketball, and for spring, there are three sports offered: baseball, softball and T-ball. The baseball program is affiliated with a 5-town Little League. WAA pays a considerable fee to be associated, but Delisle thinks it's ultimately worth it for the opportunity to send a team to Williamsport, Pennsylvania for the nationals. "It happened 30 years ago, and it could happen again," he anticipates.

The numbers of students involved in WAA teams is down from 4-5 years ago. He hopes to turn that around. "I know how important it is to learn to be a team member and a competitor. It's ok to be a winner and ok to be a loser, if you always try your best. I try to keep it fun, and strive to be competitive as well." And he says he does it all for the kids. "If I can change one kid, I know I've done my job."

WAA serves as the "farm program" for the Whitefield School teams. He is supportive of Athletic Director Tim Jordan's efforts at the school. "Kids need to be allowed to find their way" and try out different sports. The more opportunities there are, the better!

WAA holds monthly meetings on the second Sunday of the month at 6 PM at the Whitefield School. Delisle encourages anyone interested to come and get involved on behalf of the kids. You can find the Whitefield Athletic Association on Facebook.

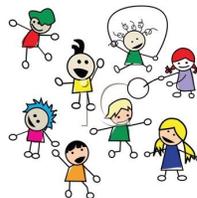
JUNE 2015 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

- 1st **Coopers Mills Fire Dept.**, All are welcome. No obligation. 7 pm
Kings Mills Fire Dept., 7 pm
- 2nd **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. 6:30 pm
Kings Mills Union Hall Board Meeting, Public welcome, 7 pm
- 3rd **Whitefield Historical Society, 6:30 pm**
- 4th **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 5th **Palermo Preserve**: new steps by river and trail clearing by SVCA 1:00 pm
Whitefield Food Pantry, St. Denis Hall, 1-3 pm
The New Milenium Jelly Rollers - Live Music, Sheepscot General 7 pm
- 7th **Arlington Grange 100th Anniversary Open House/Farming Appreciation Day**- tours and refreshments. We have many members of the Farming community attending with info. about their products and services. 1-4 pm Hope you can join us!
Fuzzy Udder Creamery Open House, There will be cheese tastings, farm tours, lamb and goat kids 10-3 pm
- 8th **Whitefield Municipal Fire Dept.**, Fire Station, 7 pm
- 9th **Women of Whitefield**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Select Board, Fire Station, 6 pm
"Threatened and Endangered: An Artist's Books" by Rebecca Goodale, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
River Arts Gallery, Damariscotta
School Budget Validation Referendum, Whitefield Fire Station, 8 am — 8 pm
- 10th **Arlington Grange**: 6 pm Pot Luck Supper, 7 pm Meeting All are welcome.
- 11th **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
RSU School Board Meeting, Chelsea School, 6:30-9 pm
- 12th **Forest Trails join HVNC for a workshop called "Forest Trails"** www.hvnc.org/registration/, or 207-200-8840 9-2 pm
Salt Marsh Exploration Marsh River Preserve, Newcastle
Naturalist Lynne Flaccus will lead a guided walk to explore the wonders of a salt marsh. 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
"The Complete History of Whitefield" will be featured as the second of the series of musical plays by Art Mayers as a video reprise at the Sheepscot General Store in Whitefield on Friday, June 12 as part of pizza night at 7 PM.
- 14th **Whitefield Athletic Association (WAA)**, Whitefield School, 6 pm
- 16th **Select Board**, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 17th **Planning Board**, Fire Station, 6-8 pm
- 18th **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 19th **Whitefield Salmon Preserve: invasive plants removal, 9:00 am**
Open-Mic Night, Sheepscot General, 7-9 pm
- 20th **DRUMMING CIRCLE**, Sheepscot General, 6:30 pm, Open to the public, all ages welcome
- 23rd **Women of Whitefield**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Select Board, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 24th **Arlington Grange**, 6 pm Pot Luck Supper, 7 pm Meeting All are welcome.
- 25th **Little Dyer Adventure Club. Session 1— Ages 10-14** Trail Mountain Biking June 25, 26 & 27 contact HVNC 207-200-8840
- Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Kid's Printmaking Workshop with Keith Rendall, Keith Rendall Gallery, 65 Main Street, Wiscasset 1-4 pm
- 30th **Select Board**, Fire Station, 6 pm

Do you have an event? Contact whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com

We'll add you to the town calendar website and newsletter.

Whitefield Head Start/Pre-K Program at Whitefield School!



This is a new program starting in the 2015-16 school year for Whitefield children who will be 4 years old by October 15th. Transportation to and from school will be provided on Whitefield buses. All parents, regardless of income, are encouraged to apply. Families can visit or call Whitefield School (549-7691) or call Case Manager, Michaela Stone (882-7613) for registration application and questions.

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

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