



Whitefield News

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Town Meeting

By Dennis Merrill

Whitefield's annual Town Meeting will be held on March 21, 2015 at Whitefield School. Voting for one Selectman, one School Board member and three Planning Board members will be from 8:00 am to noon. The open Town Meeting will begin at 2:00 pm.

Much of the Town Meeting will apply to the usual business of the Town. The most significant issue this year is an increased budget for summer road maintenance and improvement. This is based on the recommendations of the citizens' Roads Committee. Over the past year, the committee developed an initial long-range plan to return all town roads to at least "good" condition and to reduce the need for costly rehabilitation over time. The plan stresses both capital improvements and a strong routine preventive maintenance program.

There is also a proposal to add a new part-time assistant in the Town Office two days per week. This would restore hours that were in place several years ago and will help ensure tighter financial procedures and cross checks.

The meeting warrant includes a proposal to build a town parking area between the Fire and Rescue Station and the Town Office. Currently, voting or meetings quickly fill the existing parking, and people have to park on Townhouse Road; creating dangerous conditions. The new parking area would provide space for about 30 cars with access from the Town Office.

Voters will consider an amendment to the Development Ordinance that would allow the Select Board to set fees for processing or applications under that ordinance. The fees in the present ordinance are old and do not reflect current costs.

Perhaps the most important thing is that the Town Meeting is the opportunity for every voter to have a meaningful say in the town's activities and direction for the next year. Don't miss your opportunity to participate in the purest form of democracy, Town Meeting.

St. Patrick's Day down on the farm

By Chris Colpitt

Growing up in a large family in a small town in the 50's and 60's was not uncommon. Growing up in a strict Catholic family of Irish descent on a small farm in Whitefield that had been in the family for five generations was, to my mind, special.

I'm not sure when my siblings and I started learning the story of our Irish heritage, but the lessons were subtle and not grandiose; almost inaudible. This history was spoken with quiet pride by our dad over the years, but it had left many gaps and lingering questions. As the genealogy bug spread in the 70's, my mother and brother, Mike, took an interest and started filling in some of the branches on both sides of our family tree. It was soon ol' Patrick of County Meath, Ireland whose name was revered as the pioneer of our Whitefield farm.

When we were young, our social events revolved around our family, church, and school...in that order. St. Patrick's Day seemed custom-fitted to the Mooney family. It provided us with a



The Mooney Clan Photo by Chris Colpitt

chance to just get together, eat, drink, and be merry. These were mostly civilized family affairs, thanks to 'marm' (our mother), whom of mostly proper English descent, kept the occasions tempered, but not dampened. There were no bawdy Irish ditties sung, as dad preferred the more Americanized 'When Irish Eyes Are Smiling' or 'My Wild Irish Rose', but just lots of food and fun.

Somewhere along the line, 'marm' discovered a recipe for 'whoopie pies', and they soon became our traditional holiday dessert; but only for holidays. St. Paddy's Day to us was a holiday! So over the years, the next generations perfected the making of this delectable treat, and for St. Patrick's Day, the filling was to be tinted a delicate green.

After our mother died in the early 80's, my siblings and I circled the wagons **Continued on page 2**

Plowing with David Spicer

By Tony Marple

It's Saturday afternoon in late January, and David Spicer is pulling his "wheeler" away from the Whitefield sand and salt shed. The prediction is for a coastal storm of four to eight inches.

David is the owner of Spicer Tree and Spicer's Bees. He thought that plowing and tree work might be a good mix, given the overlap in equipment and the somewhat complimentary seasonal workload. He won the Whitefield contract in 2012 and is currently paid \$175,000 for plowing and sanding 59 miles of road; a price that compares very favorably with that of neighboring towns. When he won the contract, he invested in three large "wheelers" (owing to the trucks' double wheels), the related plowing and sanding gear, a pair of two-ton trucks and two one-ton trucks which were also fitted out. He hired six crew members and has a back-up as well. "I always try to



David Spicer Photo by Tony Marple

hire the right people with the right experience," he explained.

Before the snow started, the men laid down a coat of sand and salt. This technique helps keep the roads clean and ice-free after plowing, but doesn't work when the temperature falls below 20 degrees.

David remarked, "I love plowing my hometown", as his "wheeler" lumbered **Continued on Pg. 2**

Mooney's continued from Pg. 1 around dad. We knew his love for his family would have to sustain him during this wrenching time, and we protectively gathered on any occasion we could. Birthdays, Christmas, Easter, and christenings were all fine, but come March 17, the closest weekend to that date was religiously reserved for our St. Patrick's Day gathering. Dad's kitchen table groaned with its burden



Mooney Farm Photo submitted by Chris Colpitt

of food. The counter was well-stocked with Jamesons and other libations and a tray mounded with whoopie pies waited its turn to satisfy family and friends assembled. Dressed in our various outfits, we were a virtual sea of green that would rival that of any on the Emerald Isle, and poor dad endured wearing whatever silly hat we had presented him for the celebration. As grandkids and then great-grandkids came along, dad embraced his role as 'Gramps' and loved being surrounded by them and the rest of the family; especially on St. Patrick's Day!

At one of these gatherings, a friend asked, "You 'kids (meaning my fifty-plus year old siblings and me) sing, but you don't sing any Irish songs! What's with that?" We had no answer, but soon after, we all learned to sing an Irish Blessing together, and it became our way of blessing many family occasions. I leave you here with the words to that lovely song, and wish you all a very happy St. Patrick's Day.

"May the road rise to meet you; May the wind be always at your back; May the sun shine warm upon your face; May the rain fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again; May you be held in the palm of His hand."



MAPLE SUGARING marks the warming of early spring, a job that helps piece together a year of work. On his farm in Whitefield, Austin Moore, along with Mark Fenderson, has been tapping sugar maples for over 20 years. They produce nearly 100 gallons of maple syrup each year.

Spicer continued from Pg. 1 down the road. The truck shook as the plow blades struck uneven road surfaces, and the noise was deafening. Proceeding down the Cooper Road, David explained that though the trucks are rear-wheel-drive, the studded tires make them "track like a Billy goat". Going down some of the steep hills on the Cooper Road, he uses the engine like a brake which gives the truck more stability. At each intersection, he backs up several times to give each direction of the intersection an extra layer of sand. With the 365 HP engine straining up and down the hills (fully loaded with sand), the cab was stifling; even with the windows open, and the open windows amplified the noise even more. "The Cooper Road is our hardest road to plow due to the high crown." In one of the many ironies in Town/State relationships, the State is responsible for the physical maintenance (such as paving on the Cooper Road), but the Town is responsible for plowing.

Looking out the passenger window as David plowed the Hunts Meadow Road, I watched the snow fly off the wing plows as the wing barely cleared the mailboxes. It seemed like a superhuman feat to plow that close without hitting them. "You're most apt to hit a mailbox on a narrow road", David said, "like on the Hunts Meadow Road when there is an oncoming car that isn't pulling over in his lane".

After plowing the Cooper, Hunts Meadow, and Devine Roads and heavily sanding all intersections along the way, David headed to the sand and salt shed to load up. "The trucks don't track as well without a full load", he pointed out. This "blizzard" was producing less snow than predicted, but he still expected to be working ten hours. "The longest winter storm event, primarily an ice storm, required four days of work; while the worst snowstorm I've experienced was when we were out 36 hours with only a few four hour breaks".



Photo by Tony Marple

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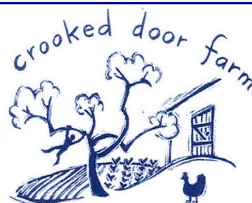


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Pictures of people at the 1952 Whitefield Town Meeting from a film taken by Chester Chase
 Can you help us identify these people?
 Email us at whitefieldhistoricalsociety@gmail.com
 or call Jane Chase at 549-7613



The Wilderness and Robert Perry

By Charlie Tobin

When I was growing up the last telephone pole on our road was right in front of our house. The road continued on past our place, but the absence of poles said to this wild-eyed boy that what was beyond just had to be "Wilderness".

What was beyond? Where did the road go? As a child you can imagine all kinds

of magical, beautiful, scary, dark, and mystical possibilities. It was anything and everything my mind wanted it to be. It became the Wild West with buffalos and Indians in the summer and the North Pole with Santa's workshop just over the hill in the winter.

Using the internet of the day (Encyclopedia Britannica) Daniel Boone or Davey Crockett and a host of others beckoned to me to come explore what lay beyond the limit of how far I was able to wander from my front step. Not being the perfect child, I sneaked further past the allowable distance and returned at dusk as if I'd been close by all the time. Yet each venture was like an elixir, calling me to go further and faster than the time before. One such occasion follows:

While researching the North Pole, I read that a man named Robert Peary is credited for discovering the place. Not Santa! I was mad about that, but glad to see this Peary fella standing on a pair of snowshoes in a photo alongside the article. Immediately, thoughts of polar exploration filled my head. I found some snowshoes which had been dropped off at our house on the Benner Road (where Sam and Alice Hutchinson now live). The Hutchinsons might concur that the tree line looking north from the back stoop is about 1/4 mile in distance. That was my goal. Tree line = The North Pole!

Now typically, kids know everything. Take snow, for instance..."don't walk where you have to shovel", "do learn to cut blocks if the snow is sticky enough", and "keep your shovel the same temperature as the snow". I didn't know that also meant "glossy-varnished snowshoes being left outside", as well. Another thing was "just because the snow isn't real deep in your yard, doesn't mean that the whole field is the same depth as your yard".

Bear Paws! They were Bear Paws, and for short-legged kids, they make you step with this hideous outward swing of your legs in a forward circular motion. Being nice and warm from the house, they quickly gathered mass by not letting go of the snow they touched. Within 50 feet of the great expedition, my hips were on fire! By the halfway point, I was fisting snow into my mouth for moisture and sweating like a coal tender on a locomotive. About 200 feet from the North Pole, I was exhausted, played out, spent, and a failure. Nothing left to do, but get out of those snowshoes and head for the house.

My first step without those Bear Paws on let me know the snow was even with my pants pockets. I tried tucking the snowshoes under my arms. That didn't work. I tried balancing them on my head. That didn't work, either. I ended up dragging them. I'm sure it would have been easier to push a wheelbarrow full of stones from my house to the State House steps and back again. That was an adventure I'll always remember...going to the North Pole.



Joe, Mary, Maryjo, Ann and Charlie Tobin (Terry Tobin born after photo) Submitted photo

MARCH 2015 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

- 2nd **Coopers Mills Fire Dept.** Anyone interested in supporting or learning more about CMVFD is welcome. We won't rope you into anything right off. 7 pm
Kings Mills Fire Dept. 7pm
- 3rd **Select Board** Fire Station, 6pm
- 4th **Yoga**, Sheepscot General, 6 am
Whitefield Historical Society, 6:30 pm
- 5th **Senior Men's Group** Sheepscot General. 10 am
- 6th **Whitefield Food Pantry**, St. Denis Hall, 1-3 pm
- 7th **Fire Recovery Dinner/Dance Benefit for the Rideout Family, American Legion 46**, Griffin St., Gardiner 3pm—11 pm ish **Dinner, Music, Raffles, Cash Bar**
Build a Pack Basket HVNC is offering an opportunity to learn to build a traditional pack basket. The cost of the class is \$75 for HVNC, PWA, SVCA, DLWA and SWLA members, and \$85 for non-members. Registration information are available online at hvnc.org/registration/. 8am – 4pm
- 8th **Whitefield Athletic Association (WAA)** Whitefield School 6 pm
- 9th **Fire Department Appreciation Gathering** express support and appreciation to our local Fire Fighters, Whitefield Fire Station 6:30 pm (presented by the Women of Whitefield)
Whitefield Municipal Fire Department Mgt., Fire Station 7 pm,
- 10th **Women of Whitefield**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Select Board Fire Station, 6pm
- 11th **Yoga**, Sheepscot General, 6 am
Arlington Grange 30: pm Meeting All are welcome. At Dana & Debbie Rogers
- 12th **Senior Men's Group** Sheepscot General. 10 am
RSU School Board Meeting, Chelsea School, 6:30 pm to 9 pm
- 13th **Honey and the honey bee talk Ralph Lyden** brings 30 years of beekeeping. His experience with beekeeping started as a market gardener, using a few colonies for crop pollination. Sheepscot General. 6:30 pm
- 17th **Select Board** Fire Station, 6pm
- 18th **Yoga**, Sheepscot General, 6 am
Invasive Forest Insect Outreach Training, Knox-Lincoln Cooperative Extension Office 377 Manktown Rd, Waldoboro 9 am—1 pm
Planning Board Fire Station, 6-8 pm
- 19th **Senior Men's Group** Sheepscot General. 10 am
- 20th **Open-Mic Night**, Sheepscot General, 7-9 pm
- 21st **Town Meeting, Whitefield School, Voting 8 am—12 noon Meeting 2:00 pm**
Annual Corned Beef & Cabbage Benefit Dinner Serving beginning at 5 pm
 At The St. Denis Parish Hall, Route 126 in North Whitefield Good Will Donations
 Only - Proceeds to Benefit Local Charities
DRUMMING CIRCLE: Open to the public, all ages welcome.
 Sheepscot General, 6:30 pm
- 24th **Women of Whitefield**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Select Board Fire Station, 6pm
- 25th **Yoga**, Sheepscot General, 6 am
- 26th **Senior Men's Group** Sheepscot General. 10 am
- 29th **Whitefield Historical Society** - Joint program with the Jefferson Historical Society at 2PM on Sunday March 29th at the townhouse. There will be a slide show and presentation by Marie Sacks on the artistic colony that settled and lived around Clary lake in the early 1900's.
- 31st **Select Board** Fire Station, 6pm



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

Donations for Families who lost their home to Fire.



Rideout Family Fire
<http://www.gofundme.com/WhitefieldFire>

Fenderson Family Fire
<http://www.gofundme.com/lbgc8>

A benefit supper is being planned by Erskine Students for the end of March. We will put the date on the Town Calendar when the date is finalized.

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

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