MEMORIES OF MAINE

THE MAGAZINE FOR MAINE HISTORY AND NOSTALGIA





Photos courtesy of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry.
See story on page 8.

INSIDE

THE HALLS OF HISTORY FLOW NORTH

SMUGGLING LA BAGOSSE: FRENCHVILLE'S MOONSHINE MOVERS

THE GHOSTS OF THE EAGLE LAKE AND WEST BRANCH RAILROAD

PRESQUE ISLE'S BOXING BUNNY

THE OLD MAN OF THE 103RD

B & A RAILROAD WAS ALSO IN THE HOTEL BUSINESS

AROOSTOOK COUNTY
WINTER 2026

Inside

3
THE HALLS OF HISTORY FLOW NORTH
Aimée N. Lanteigne

5
SMUGGLING LA BAGOSSE
FRENCHVILLE'S MOONSHINE MOVERS
Camille Smalley

8
THE GHOSTS OF THE EAGLE LAKE AND WEST BRANCH RAILROAD
RICH LOGGING HISTORY TO EXPLORE IN THE WATERWAY
Sheila Grant

12
PRESQUE ISLE'S BOXING BUNNY
Kim Smith

20
THE OLD MAN OF THE 103RD
Clair G. Wood

24
B & A RAILROAD WAS ALSO IN THE HOTEL BUSINESS
Sheila D. Grant

MAINE
The Magazine for Maine History and Nostalgia

Aroostook County edition
Winter 2026

207-747-4596
www.memoriesofmainemagazine.com
Memories of Maine
110 Marginal Way, Suite 123, Portland, ME 04101

Publisher & Editor
David Branch, info@memoriesofmaine.net

Advertising Sales
Greg Thornton, 207-747-4596

Layout & Design
Dependable Layout & Design
Joline Violette Edwards, jolinevedwards@gmail.com

Writers
Sheila Grant
Aimée Lanteigne
Camille Smalley
Kim Smith
Clair G. Wood

Contributors
Jim Britt
Alice Carpenter
Arthur Collier
Mark DeRoche
Randi Jandreau
Roger Morneault
Reginald Nadeau
Lauren Paradis
Sofia Yalouris

Contributing Organizations
Allagash Wilderness Waterway
Faye, O'Leary, Hafford Library
Frenchville Historical Society
Long Lake Public Library
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry
Maine Historical Society
Oakfield Railroad Museum
Presque Isle Historical Society
Société historique de Saint-Hilaire

In collaboration with hundreds of local historical societies, preservation groups, museums, and countless enthusiasts of Maine's history and nostalgia, our goal is to provide our readers with interesting articles about the people and places that built and preserve that history.

Memories of Maine Magazine publishes 6 regional issues a year. Each issue is distributed widely throughout its area in restaurants, diners, banks, credit unions, historical societies, libraries, variety and grocery stores, and to each of our advertisers. We encourage you to share our magazine with your family, friends and acquaintances and to support the faithful advertisers who help us to keep your Memories of Maine alive.

A one-year subscription (six issues) costs $35. Two years costs $60. Mail check to 110 Marginal Way, Suite 123 Portland, ME 04101 or order online at memoriesofmainemagazine.com

We also welcome your comments.

©2026 *Memories of Maine Magazine*

No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from the publishers of *Memories of Maine Magazine.*
©2026 *Memories of Maine Magazine*

THE HALLS OF HISTORY FLOW NORTH

by Aimée N. Lanteigne



1969 boys basketball team, from left to right: Wesley Pelletier, Gary Hafford, Colby Hafford, Sherwin Kelly, Gary Gardner, Wayne McBreairty, Micky McBreairty, Gene McBreairty, Loomis Jackson.

When I think of Allagash, two things come to mind: the brew and the wilderness waterway. Allagash is in fact the largest town in Maine by land area. It is known colloquially as "Moosetown." According to the 2020 census, it is home to some 237 people.

At one time, the population of Allagash was enough to sustain a high school with formidable basketball teams. The old school building housed some 300 students in grades K-8 alone. Over the years, due to economic and demographic factors, enrollment at the high school in Allagash dwindled to 17 students, hardly enough to fill a single modern classroom in a public school. Allagash kids now graduate from Fort Kent High some 30 miles away, but the community has turned the downtrodden and forsaken old school into a community gem today.

After World War II, 21 local veterans decided to open their very own high school in the wilderness, dubbed the "GI School." These young men, aged 21-32, were veterans of the late great war and were convinced that only an education would give them a chance to move beyond a life of challenging work in the northern Maine woods. For distinct reasons, such as a lack of facilities, no busing, and the call to duty, these young men had not finished high school. Eighteen of those 21 students were married and perhaps influenced to go back to school by their wives. They established their little school in a shed. Their teacher was 34-year-old University of Maine graduate, Arthur Kelly. The little school was open five nights a week and on Saturday mornings. Those young men must have been exhausted working days, going to school at night, and spending half their weekend doing homework.

The school was only open for a couple of years and when it closed, some of the men were still invested enough to want to complete their degree. John "Bud" Gibson was one of those men. He and two other Allagash natives drove 70 miles round trip each day to Fort Kent to finish their education at Fort Kent High School.

A consolidated school serving students in the Allagash region used to publish the minutes of the PTA meetings in the *Bangor Daily News.* A January 1954 article noted that 32 parents and eight teachers attended the monthly meeting. Mrs. Gardner's classroom won the banner for most parents in attendance. Some of the topics discussed included buying new records for the school, sponsoring a community supper for the polio fund, and watching movies provided by Mr. Brown's 4-H Club.

In 1960, Leonard Kelley, chairman of the Allagash school board, cut the tape on a new Allagash Consolidated



1969 girls basketball team, from left to right: Anita Jackson, Norma McBreairty, Cathie Pelletier, Vicki McBreairty, Susan Walker, Beatrice O'Leary, Lois Gardner.

School building. Ralph Niemi was the principal of the new school, and Andrew Frechette was the superintendent. The new addition had two classrooms, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, a kitchen, and shower rooms. A dance for the nearly 300 community members that attended the ribbon cutting was held in the new gymnasium with music provided by the Silvertones of Fort Kent.

Allagash proudly sported two undefeated basketball teams in1962. The boys were coached by John Whitten, and Mrs. Lincoln Ouellette coached the girls. Note that the boys' coach was listed by his first and last name in the *Bangor Daily News*, but the girls' coach was listed by her husband's first and last name. For two years during the 1970s, the Allagash girls were unstoppable. Entering the tourney at the Bangor Auditorium as the top seed, the Lady Bobcats brought home back-to-back state championships. They won the Eastern Maine Class D title in '76, beating East Grand 46-41, and the following year, they defeated Greenville 49-35. In both seasons, the Allagash squad went on to win States against Buckfield. Bear in mind Maine girls' basketball playoffs had only begun in 1975, so the Lady Bobcats really made their mark in schoolgirl history. Some of the standout players from those teams were Kadi O'Leary, Starr McBreairty, Darlene Kelly, and Betty Gardner.

In 1989, state inspectors deemed Allagash High School was out of date in its curriculum, and if not brought up to compliance, the school would lose state approval and funding. The education commissioner at the time stated, "There is an emotional issue of people trying to save their

ALLAGASH continued on page 13

CHAMBERLAIN'S MARKET
Preston McBreairty, Proprietor
Groceries, Ice
Lottery Tickets
Beer, Wine
2114 Main Street, St. Francis
(207) 398-3259

TD WELDING & REPAIR LLC
Heavy Truck Specialists
•
711 St. John Road
Fort Kent
•
(207) 554-7551
•
Tyson Dubay, Owner

SMUGGLING LA BAGOSSE

FRENCHVILLE'S MOONSHINE MOVERS

by Camille Smalley

Nestled along the St. John River at the Canadian border, Frenchville, Maine became a focal point of prohibition-era smuggling thanks to a unique alliance of geography, culture, and opportunity. Maine led the nation in prohibiting alcohol consumption, having passed the first dry law in 1851 (repealing it in 1856) and later, adding an amendment to the Maine State Constitution that banned the manufacture and sale of alcohol. The passing of prohibition did not discourage drinking in Maine, instead, it encouraged illegal consumption. By 1919, the United States passed the Volstead Act, which prohibited the consumption of alcohol nationwide. For Mainers in Frenchville, and Canadians in towns like Saint-Hilaire, the remote border fostered strong social and familial ties. It was not uncommon for people to traverse the border with goods like sugar and margarine, or to meet up with family on a winter afternoon. This familiarity allowed for many smugglers to cross under the radar, equipped with moonshine, referred to as "bagosse" in the Frenchville area. Known smugglers like Maxime Albert, Fred Levesque, and others kept the Saint John Valley "wet." By 1933, the nationwide prohibition was repealed, and bagosse production moved back to the cellar.



Royal Hotel of St Hilaire, main office of Maxime. Courtesy Société historique de Saint-Hilaire.

While many are familiar with "Rum Row," the notorious stretch of coastline from Maine to Florida packed with rum runners funneling booze from Europe to the United States, most are not aware of Frenchville's illicit activities. For Maine, moonshine production was easy, as the ingredients grew right in the backyard or, perhaps, in the dooryard. As Mainers experienced prohibition prior to the rest of the country, the residents of Frenchville and other areas already knew how to make their own home-

ROB'S AUTO REPAIRS & SALVAGE
We Pick Up All Old Cars and All Metal
Total Auto & Body Repairs
Real Estate & Foreclosure Clean Outs
Open Mon – Fri 8am to 5pm
Sat by Appointment • Closed Sun
Robert Dionne
House 316-1081 • Cell 436-9412
605 Main St.
Madawaska, ME 04756

VBH
VAN BUREN HARDWARE
207-868-2254
vanburenhardware@yahoo.com
525 Main Street, Van Buren, Maine



Maxime showing cars used for imports/exports. Courtesy Société historique de Saint-Hilaire.

brew alcohol. To make bagosse, or "hand brand," Mainers used potatoes, sugar (or molasses), apples, raisins, and yeast (preferably Fleischmann's). The ingredients were added to a wooden barrel covered with a cloth and left to ferment for seven days. After the fermentation process, the liquid was poured into a boiling barrel. A copper pipe connects the boiling barrel to a water barrel which collects the booze and drops it into a glass jug. This "caribou" or "flacatuone" probably could clean chrome in addition to giving one a splitting hangover after consumption. An unregulated product, moonshine walked a fine line between intoxicating ethyl alcohol and methyl alcohol, which when ingested can cause blindness or kill the drinker. Despite the risks, the demand was high. Smugglers hauled the jugs across the border, likely in one of the rings run by Maxime Albert or Alfred Levesque.

Born in 1871 in Saint-Hilaire, Maxime Albert became one of the area's most notorious smugglers; rumor has it, with ties to Chicago's Al Capone. A prosperous merchant, Maxime also owned dairy and farmland as well as a hotel in Saint-Hilaire. A generous man, Maxime donated money and land for the development of the village church. Although, there may have been bottles of bagosse hidden among the bricks that were ferried to the church construction site. As the church received large donations from Maxime, priests often were of the mind "smuggling was not a sin." The Saint-Hilaire Historical Society records Maxime Albert was a notable figure who "played an important role in shaping Saint-Hilaire's golden age."

NORTHERN MAINE SURVEYORS
Michael P. Cyr – P.L.S. # 1255 | RTK GPS – Precise Point Positioning
Spencer N. Caron – PLS#2593 with Northern ME Enterprises
728-6028 | MikeCyrNMS@gmail.com | northernmainesurveyors.com

Babin Construction, Inc.
Excavation • Septic Installations
Trucking • Snow Removal • Ditching
Road Grading • Retaining Walls
Rip Rap • Bulldozing • Water Diverson
DEP Certified
Joshua Babin, President
179 Bouchard Road, St. Agatha, ME 04772
BabinConstructionInc@gmail.com • 207-436-0178

Despite his illicit activities, Maxime still gave back to his local community in Saint-Hilaire.

Seen as a successful businessman, Maxime lived a double life and ran one of the largest smuggling rings on the east coast, moving la bagosse from Canada down the east coast of the United States. Maxime and his wife, Modeste, had ten children: three sons and seven daughters. In 1924, Maxime's sons, Antione (29) and Lionel (15), died in an explosion at an illicit distillery in Saint-Hilaire. Although arrested numerous times, Maxime never received a conviction. Law enforcement upped the ante and continued to harass Maxime. To continue his enterprise and lower his legal risk, Maxime relocated across the border to Frenchville. An avid sportsman, Maxime spent plenty of time in Maine before his exile, having previously enjoyed the bountiful fishing and hunting. Maxime even opened the Long Lake Sporting Club in Saint Agatha.

Maxime had many bootlegger friends, including Fred Levesque, another well-connected smuggler. Alfred 'Fred' Levesque was born on January 22, 1893, in Frenchville. His father, Damase, was a local baker known for his keen business sense. A handsome and rugged man, Fred became one of the leaders of Maxime's smuggling empire. Father David Cure, one of Fred's largest opponents, wrote in his personal journals that Fred was a man that "knows how to make others obey him, as much if not more, by brute force and a sharp angry voice, as by persuasion." Cure wrote that Fred was dangerous, "at the approach of danger, when he is hunted, pursued and backed into such a tight corner that anyone else would think impossible to escape, then his face comes alive, his eyes sparkle, his mind awakens and he overcomes the obstacles without too much trouble." Cure's description of Levesque is reminiscent of fictional rumrunners, except Fred Levesque was real and

SMUGGLING continued on page 30

Roberts Jewelry
Fine Jewelers Since 1955
• Watch Batteries & Engraving
• Free Jewelry Cleaning & Inspection
• We Buy Gold, Diamonds & Coins
Follow Us on Facebook
YOUR PREMIER SOURCE FOR EARTH GROWN & LAB-GROWN DIAMONDS
LARGEST COLLECTION OF ESTATE JEWELRY IN NORTHERN MAINE
312 Main Street, Madawaska, Me 207-728-4301

TARDIF MACHINING
& Welding
EST. 1947
Specializing in Hydraulic Cylinders and Line Boring
FOR ALL YOUR MACHINING AND WELDING NEEDS
Alvin Tardif, Owner • 207-543-7399 • cell 207-316-6820
tardifmachine@gmail.com • tardifmachining.com
262 C Cleveland Siding, Frenchville, ME

Martin's General Store
Fresh Meat & Produce
Groceries • Gas
Daily Specials • Diner
State Liquor Agency
Mon-Sat 8am to 8pm
Sun 8am to 6pm
207-543-6422
247 Sinclair Road, Sinclair, ME

Sylvio Paradis & Son
AUTO PARTS
Engine Machine Shop • Auto & Truck Repair
24-Hr. Wrecker Service
Axalta Automotive
Refinish Products
Gates Hydraulic Hose & Fittings
Gary Paradis, Owner
207-543-7722 or 543-7828
288 US Rte. 1, Main St., Frenchville, ME 04745
AERA
Auto Value Parts Stores.

H & S Garage, Inc.
Full Service Auto & Truck Repairs and Used Car Dealer
Engines • Transmissions
Oil Changes • Brakes • Alignments
(207) 728-3556 / 3557 • Eves: (207) 728-6390
255-11th Ave., Madawaska, ME 04756

Hebert Rexall Pharmacy
(207) 868-2242
hebertsrx@gmail.com
"Where Patients Come First"
Professional Pharmacy Services
Dispill Adherence Packaging delivered to your door.
Ph: 207-868-2242
Fax: 207-868-2156
31 Main Street
Van Buren, ME 04785

THE GHOSTS OF THE EAGLE LAKE AND WEST BRANCH RAILROAD

RICH LOGGING HISTORY TO EXPLORE IN THE WATERWAY

by Sheila D. Grant



Eagle Lake and West Branch Railroad locomotives, abandoned. Photo by Will Leavitt, 2013.

Folks hiking or snowmobiling through the wilderness along the shores of Eagle Lake are sometimes surprised to come across two ghostly remnants of the region's storied log-drive history, and sometimes seeing those ghosts is why they came in the first place.

The two 100-ton locomotives, along with 60 railroad cars, all the necessary track and a 1,500-foot trestle, were Edouard "King" Lacroix's answer to the challenges of moving timber.

AROOSTOOK
FOAM INSULATION
Fred Hafford
207-554-0804
1007 Garfield Rd., Masardis, ME 04732
Interior Foam Specialists
Home • Roofing • Quansets
Tanks • Vessels
Specializing in Polyurea Lining
Silicone Remodified Roof Coating
FREE ESTIMATES!
30 YEARS EXPERIENCE!

COFFIN'S
GENERAL STORE
A "Total Convenience Store"
Agency Liquor Store
Pizza • Sandwiches • Salads • Beer
Groceries • Ice • Gas • Kerosene • Propane
Redemption Center
2084 Portage Rd., Portage Lake, ME 207.435.2811



Roger Morneault at the tramway rebuild/replica/exhibit located on the north end of Chamberlain Lake. Courtesy of Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

The Eagle Lake and West Branch Railroad, which began operations in 1927, ran from Eagle Lake 13 miles to Umbasooksus Lake, which connects to the West Branch of the Penobscot River via Chesuncook Lake. The railroad replaced the 1902 Eagle Lake Tramway. When the railroad, in turn, became obsolete, it was more cost effective to leave all of the equipment behind than to remove it.

Built in June, 1897, at Schenectady Locomotive Works, Locomotive Number One was originally a coal burning steam locomotive but later converted to burn oil to eliminate the forest fire threat caused by cinders. Number One was purchased by Great Northern in 1926 and used to haul pulpwood in the Allagash area from 1927–1933.

Locomotive Number 2 and its tender were built in December, 1901, at Brooks Locomotive Works, in Buffalo, New York. Number 2 was also used as a coal-burning steam locomotive and later converted to burn oil. It was purchased by Great Northern in 1928 and used as the main engine for hauling pulp cars from 1928–1933.

The two locomotives were housed in a shed until a fire destroyed that structure in 1968. In 1969, the Maine Parks and Recreation Commission painted the trains to prevent further rusting.

BOUCHARD FAMILY FARMS *French Acadian Buckwheat*



PLOYES

No Eggs • No Milk
No Sugar • No Oil
Fat Free &
Cholesterol Free

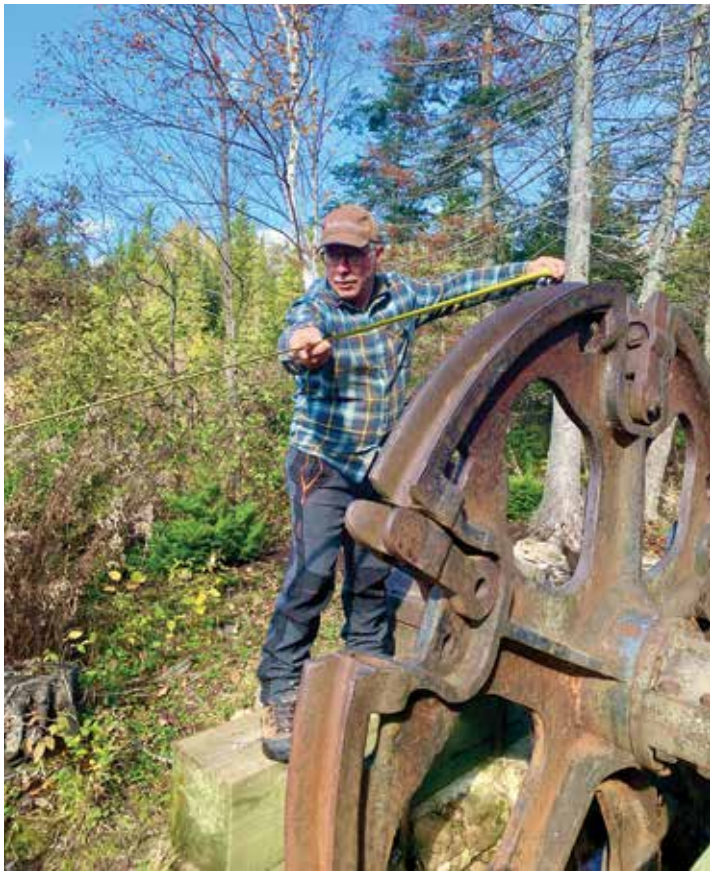
Like us on facebook Bouchard's Country Store 834-3237

www.ployes.com

NORTHERN DOOR INN
LA PORTE DU NORD

- Opposite International Bridge
- Haven for Snowmobilers
- Plug-Ins for Trucks Available
- Direct Access to Trails
- Free Wireless Internet
- Pets Allowed
- Clean, Comfortable Rooms
- Cable TV with Remote
- Continental Breakfast Included

CALL NOW
TO RESERVE EARLY
24-HOUR SERVICE
356 West Main St., PO Box 327
Fort Kent, ME 04743
207.834.3133
northerndoorinn@gmail.com
www.northerndoorinn.com



Roger Morneault taking measurements for the Chamberlain Lake log discharge system for the tramway. Courtesy of Allagash Wilderness Waterway.



Westinghouse compound engine next to the two Hodge boilers that provided the steam pressure to power the engine for the tramway. Courtesy of Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

"We have a lot of people from May to October who come to canoe and stop in to see the tramway and the trains," said Mark Deroche, superintendent of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. "It's sort of a highlight for a lot of people. Even if they've seen it once or twice, they want to see it again. It's a cool place because it's got so much of that early logging history there — not only the trains, but parts of engines and fly wheels and old machinery. The old box cars are there. I think for a lot of people, the trains are pretty impressive."

Located about 3,000 feet from the locomotives, the Tramway Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. The 1902 Eagle Lake Tramway was the first automated mechanical system to assist in the region's historic log drives. Essentially, the tramway was a small railroad pulled by a 6,000-foot cable loop. Deroche likened it to a ski lift, with each "chair" carrying logs rather than people.

ROZCO REMODELING
Certified Weatherization | Carpentry
Camp & Log Cabin Maintenance
20 Cemetery Hill Road, New Canada, ME 04743 | (207) 834-2633 (207) 316-6403
FRANK ROSSIGNOL

Only parts of the tramway still exist, including the large sprocket wheel, boilers, and scattered pieces of trucks, clamps, and track.

For the past decade, volunteer Roger Morneault, of St. Agatha, and his friends have been unearthing those parts and building displays to help visitors see how the original tramway operated.

Morneault and his friends saw the site for the first time about 20 years ago. "Another team had righted and straightened out the trains and it looked wonderful, cared for, like it was not junk anymore. At the other end, the tramway was junk lying in heaps."

Morneault eventually contacted the Allagash Wilderness Waterway to see if there was a plan for the tramway. Former Waterway Superintendent Matthew LaRoche shared that a five-year plan was in the works. Morneault, a plumber by trade, gathered volunteers and went to work, first collaborating with LaRoche, and later, with Deroche when he took over as superintendent.

Working without any machinery, Morneault's group removed trees and cleared stumps. It took one day just to move all the tools in and set up camp. The crew spent five days digging stumps.

"One big tree took an entire day to cut down and get the stump out," Morneault said. "The gear works were heavy — many tons — and the wood they were set up on had long since rotted away. That was my first rebuild project during the winter after we cleared those logs."

The waterway brought in several hundred pounds of concrete and 12'x12' pressure-treated beams. Morneault's crew jacked up each large gear, one at a time and repaired the masonry it used to set on.

The waterway's five-year plan turned into about an eight-year plan, but everything was accomplished. Small, static displays of the tramway have been constructed. All of the boiler pipes have been repaired and reassembled. Huge rollers once used to dump logs into the lake have been unearthed from the mud.

The waterway keeps the area weed-whacked, Morneault said, because "the bushes don't take a break."

"Roger has a real love for the North Maine Woods, and for the Allagash Wilderness Waterway," Deroche said.

"The key was not to lose this history. We've got people like Roger who have an understanding of how it all worked, so they would be able to show people. He really brought the tramway back to life. Before, people guessed what it must have looked like. He did the bulk of the work. We provided a lot of the materials."

The Allagash Wilderness Waterway has an interest in preserving the trains, as well as the tramway, Deroche said.

"In the late 1980s, early 1990s, the trains were actually on their sides," he said. "The asbestos was removed in 1995, and in the mid-90s, volunteers came in to jack those trains off the ground. They brought in gravel and laid tracks and set the locomotives on the tracks. That was a big exercise in preservation for the waterway and the volunteers working together, which is how it's always been in that district — people working together."

There are no plans for new exhibits at this time, but the waterway is speaking with historic preservation experts to see what might be done to prevent the trains from rusting and protect them from the weather. Still, the trains have been out in the elements since the 1968 shed fire, he said, and survived fairly well.

The wooden portions of the boxcars, not so much. "It's always really interesting for people to walk the trail along the boxcars with trees coming up through the middle of them through the tracks," said Deroche. "They see how quickly nature takes over. There are remnants of the wooden sides of the boxcars, but mostly it's just the metal that's left. They sit on the tracks, still right where they were the last time they hauled logs."

Deroche said the increase in visitors does present challenges. The artifacts are being defaced with graffiti, or parts being taken as souvenirs, perhaps by people who don't understand the historic significance of the area.

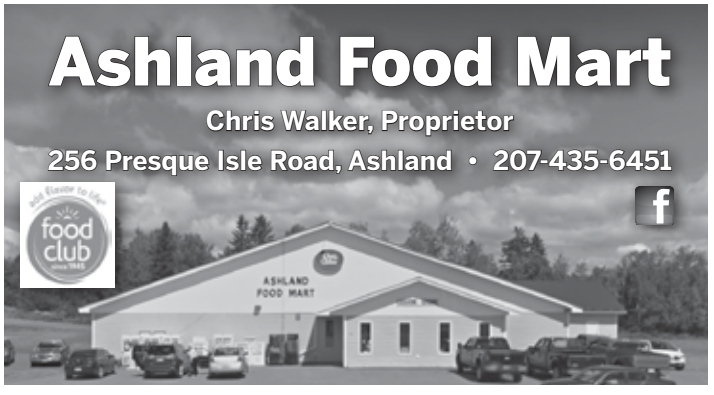
There's not a lot of signage in the area, Deroche said, in order to protect the character of the wilderness. The waterway has created pocket companions in recent years, however, and is looking into how QR code technology might be used to provide a more interpretive experience and more guidance for visitors.

Jeff Robertson, who operates Beaulieu's Garage in Caribou, takes youth from the Caribou United Baptist Church on outings to see the tramway and trains.

"The first time I went up in there I had Roger go as a guide and he explained stuff to us," said Robertson. "Before, there was just a little trail. Since they made a roadway down in there, there's a cul-de-sac and a place to use the restroom. It's quite a little ride down in there now — saved us an hour, hour-and-a-half, easily. It's still about a 40-minute walk, but it used to be two hours."

Robertson suggested that anyone wanting to visit should first read up on the history so that they can better understand the exhibits once they arrive.

"I think they should take the time to go up and visit and see it, but read about it and understand what it was and then go see it," he said, calling the experience a bucket-list item. "You want to go do it at least once."



B&C Pit Stop, Inc.
Beer, Non-Ethanol, Diesel, Oil,
Hot Food & Grocery
3323 Aroostook Road, Eagle Lake, Maine
(207) 444-5289

PRESQUE ISLE'S BOXING BUNNY

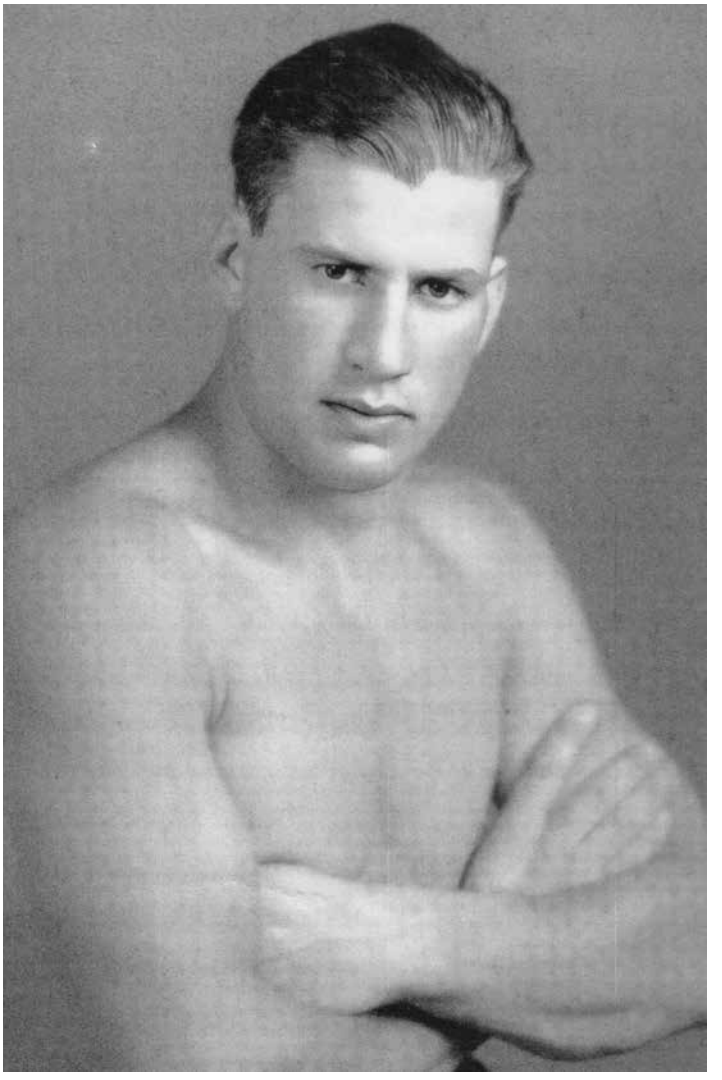
by Kim Smith

Boxing was extremely popular in the U.S. during the 1940s and 1950s. During that era, considered boxing's "Golden Age," it was second only to baseball as the most popular sport in the country.

This was no different in the State of Maine, especially in northern Maine, with local fighters drawing large crowds. One Presque Isle fighter gained statewide and even New England prominence. By 1941, the name Gil Williams was well known by every boxing fan in the state. "Bunny" Williams, as he was called, was a large man, standing, according to U.S. Army records, 5' 11" and weighing in at 204 pounds.

Gilbert Williams was born in Presque Isle to Loren and Lula (Calhoun) Williams on July 30, 1919. He was one of three children, being the middle child and only son. Gil graduated from Presque Isle High School in 1936.

BOXING BUNNY continued on page 16



Gil Williams

STAR CITY SANITATION, INC.

Andy LeBlanc, Manager

Curbside Pickup • Dumpsters
Recycling • Roll-Off Compactors

– Satisfaction Guaranteed or Double Your Rubbish Back –

Serving The County! Call 764-1692

218 Parsons Road, Presque Isle

Find us on facebook.

Mockler FUNERAL HOME

Since 1920

Three Generations of Funeral Service

492-9385

24 Reservoir Street, Caribou, ME



mocklerfuneralhome.com

GJ AUTOBODY



Vince Anderson II, Owner

tel 498-2097
fax 492-1412
gjab182@hotmail.com

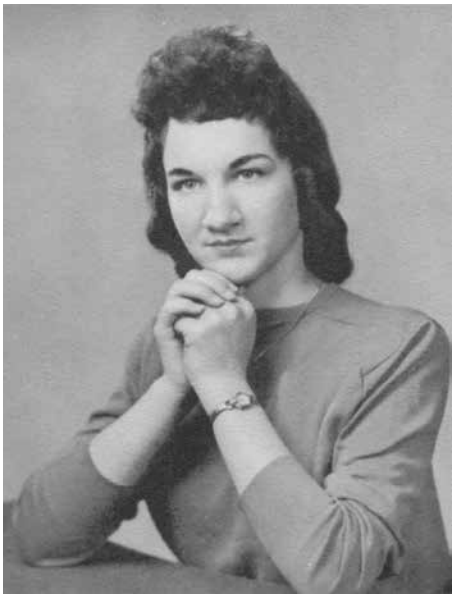
454 Main Street, Caribou, ME

Find us on facebook.

ALLAGASH continued from page 4

school, but with fewer and fewer students, it becomes more costly." The state cited issues such as lack of leadership, lack of staff development, improper guidance services, teachers instructing classes they were not trained for, improper procedures for special education students, discipline issues, and inadequate course offerings as some of its big

CLASS OF 1960



HELEN
KELLY
Comm. Secretarial

Junior English Club 3
Highlander Staff 4
Office Staff 4
Rod and Gun 4
Magazine Campaign 4
4-H Club 4
Librarian 4
Drill Team 4
Baseball 4
Basketball 4
Cheerleading 4



THOMAS
HENDERSON
General Course

President, Senior Class
Basketball 4
Baseball 4



BEVERLEY
GARDNER
Comm. Secretarial

Junior English Club 3
Glee Club 4
4-H Club 4
Debate 4
Drill Team 4
Rod and Gun 4
President Student Council 4
Magazine Campaign 4
Librarian 4
Office Staff 4
Highlander Staff 4
Basketball 4
Baseball 4
Cheerleading 4



SAMMY
MICHAUD
General Course

Basketball 4
Baseball 4

Since 1945
ROCK'S DINER
378 West Main Street,
Fort Kent
(207) 834-2888

WEEKDAY SPECIALS

OPEN
Tuesday through Saturday 6am to 7pm,
Sunday 6am to 3pm,
Closed Monday

John's
Tom & Jess Audibert
Fresh Cut Meats, Produce, Groceries
Subs, Pizza, Fried Chicken
Lotto, Agency Liquor Store
Mon–Sat 6am–8pm and Sun 7am–8pm
207-834-5181 | 207-834-6566 | johnsfoodstore@yahoo.com
182 Market Street, Fort Kent, ME | www.johnsshurfine.com
MEATS • PRODUCE • GROCERIES • LOTTO



1969 basketball team captains and coach: Wayne McBreairty, Coach Gilpatrick, Cathie Pelletier.



1977 State Champion Lady Bobcats hoisting the Gold Ball Trophy.

concerns. For example, Automotive Mechanics, which would normally be an elective at any other Maine public high school, was a regular class on par with math, science, ELA, or history. The school's part time superintendent, Paul Kelly, only spent one day a week in town. The Allagash school principal only spent one period a day doing administrative duties, and the rest of the day as a teacher. The townspeople had rejected a budget proposal increase of $82,600 to continue to support the high school but then reversed their decision and agreed to try to come up with the money to comply with the state's standards. In 1989, Allagash was paying $6000 per pupil per year, which was more than twice the state average and the highest per pupil cost in the entire state at the time.

The last graduating class walked out of the halls of Allagash High in 1995. Inevitably, it is hard for any town to say goodbye to its teachers and school buildings. The old high school building needed a new furnace and a new roof, and the paint was peeling. But that old school was the heart of the community, and they were not ready to see it stop beating. Retired teacher Faye Hafford ran the town library out of the old school with books the school was giving away after its closure. Though the educational facility was no longer in existence, she was determined to save the building itself. The community began fundraising. Stephen King donated $25,000 for a new furnace. The town office moved into the old school, down the hall from

Vintage Maine Images

Discover 21,000+ historical images
from 600+ towns in Maine & New England



www.VintageMaineImages.com

Vintage Maine Images is a website of the Maine Historical Society. www.MaineHistory.org



Makes a GREAT GIFT!

Maine has an almost endless library of unique stories about the people and places that have shaped who and what we are as a state.

For only $30, *Memories of Maine Magazine* can bring these stories to your doorstep six times a year ... stories covering the entire state of Maine, from Kittery to Fort Kent to Mexico to Machias.

To start your subscription, send your check or money order to *Memories of Maine Magazine*, 110 Marginal Way, Ste123, Portland, ME 04101 (Be sure to provide your name, mailing address and phone number.)

Or subscribe online at **www.memoriesofmainemagazine.com**



the library, and bays were etched out for the local fire truck and ambulance.

An old school friend of Town Manager Patty Pelletier moved back to town. Barbara McBreairty, Allagash class of 1964, had recently retired and was looking to give back to her hometown. Barbara offered her time and services to paint the new health center that moved into the old school building. And she just kept moving down the hall, going from room to room, adding fresh coats of paint in shades of the old red, white, and black. Townspeople had begun using the old gym to walk on rainy or snowy days, the old banners staring down from the rafters. Soon there was an antiques room, a quilting room, a florist, impromptu ball games, and a myriad of other small clubs who met weekly or monthly in the old Allagash school. The building is dog friendly, and is decorated with old school artwork and athletic memorabilia from days of yore. The newest addition of art work is a mural of Allagash Falls painted by Darren Connors.

If you've ever visited the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and taken a canoe trip down the river, you know that the Allagash flows north. Much like the water, the good old days of the old Allagash schools flow north down its halls of history.



DESJARDINS LOGGING

General Trucking
Wood Contractor

James Desjardins **207-834-5189** *Soldier Pond, ME*

GROUND TEK INC.

EXCAVATION – CONCRETE FOUNDATIONS/SLABS

RETAINER WALLS – SEPTIC SYSTEMS

ICF FOUNDATIONS – LOWBED SERVICES

(207) 316-3006

Forget Me Not Diner

Dine In or Take Out

Open Sun–Thurs 5am to 7pm, Fri & Sat 5am to 7:30pm

Daily Specials • Delicious Pizza • Homemade Desserts

Patti Henderson, owner
207.398.2921
1029 Main Street
St. Francis, ME

Chez Helen

GREAT FOOD, GREAT GATHERING PLACE

Helen Fortin, Proprietor

American Cuisine • Homemade Pies & Desserts
Beer & Wine Available • In-house Private Parties & Gatherings

Open Sun, Tue, Wed & Thurs 7:30am–1pm
Fri & Sat 7:30am–1pm and 4pm–7pm • Sunday 7:30am–1pm
Closed Monday

109 12th Ave., Madawaska, ME 04756 • (207) 728-3397
www.chezhelen.com

M.L. PELLETIER TRUCKING, INC.

Est. 2010



On/Off Highway Trucking
Specializing in the Transportation of Logs
1530 St. John Road, St. John, ME • 207-436-5171

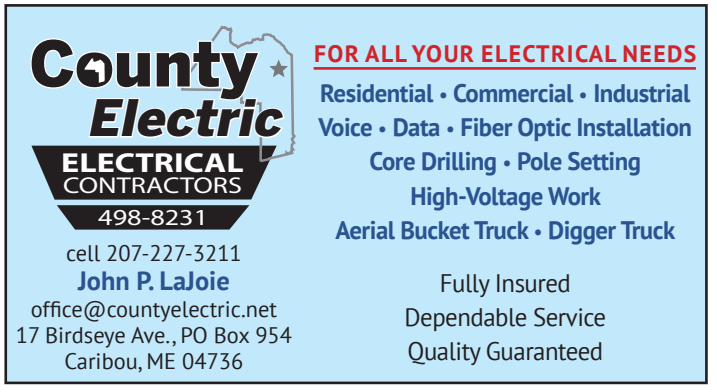
BOXING BUNNY continued from page 12

Austin Goodwin, who served as the Sports Editor for the *Portland Sunday Telegram* in the 1940s, once stated in an article about Williams that he "has all the natural assets to make him a top notch heavyweight, according to experts who have watched him in action. The 200-pound youngster is perfectly built with broad shoulders, fine chest, small waist and racehorse legs, and best of all, he has guts."

Williams was trained by Lloyd Poole and focused on hard, short jabs similar to the legendary Jack Dempsey. During his fighting career, Williams gained a reputation as a powerful puncher. He won his heavyweight debut, stopping Al Sargent of Ellsworth in round two. After a third-round knockout of Bangor's Al Robertson, and a five-round win over Waterville's Sailem Tomas, interest in Williams throughout boxing circles began to











grow. The "Pride of Aroostook" won his fourth straight fight, a rematch with Thomas, sending the Waterville fighter to the canvas with a left hook in the third

Year-round climatized storage for snowmobiles, ATVs/side-by-sides, boats, RVs, motorcycles and antique cars

Plus outdoor mini storage.

CARIBOU CLIMATE STORAGE

241 Limestone Street
Caribou, ME

Find us on: facebook

207-227-7483
www.caribouclimatestorage.com

C&J Service Center

24-Hour Towing • Major & Minor Repairs
Gas & Groceries • Cold Beer
328-7645 • 800-564-5724
Corner of Sawyer Rd. & Access Highway, Caribou

SHAUN R. BAGLEY CONSTRUCTION
BUILDING & REMODELING

All Types of Finish Work
Kitchens
Baths
Decks
Garages
Additions
Carpentry
Driveway Plowing

227-5486 • Presque Isle, Maine

Gervais Fence

COUNTY STRIPING

TEL 207-325-4723 • FAX 325-3482 • CELL 227-5676
51 Access Hwy, Limestone, Maine

countyqwikprint
Serving Aroostook County for over 30 years
CQP Office Solutions

EMBROIDERY
BUSINESS FORMS
ENVELOPES
LETTERHEAD
SCREENPRINTING
OFFICE SUPPLIES
PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

56 Sweden Street, P.O. Box 621, Caribou, ME 04736
(207) 498-3093 | 1-800-201-3632 | Fax: (207) 498-6385 | www.countyqwikprint.com

WHITED
TRUCK & AUTO CENTER

Your Headquarters for
Ford Car & Light Truck Parts and Service

17 Houlton Rd., Presque Isle, ME
1-800-764-4150 | 207-764-7300
207-227-7300 | whitedtruck.com

FOR ALL YOUR HEAVY DUTY, LIGHT DUTY, TRUCK & PASSENGER VEHICLE NEEDS

WE SERVICE ALL MAKES & MODELS

9 HOLE, PAR 3 GOLF COURSE
AQUA DRIVING RANGE

207-227-0463
tracksidegolf.com

1022 Mapleton Road
Mapleton, ME

round. In December of 1941, Rocks Young, Maine's Boxing Commissioner, declared Williams to be Maine's Heavyweight Champion. However, because of his reputation as a hard puncher, he began having difficulty finding opponents in Maine.

In January of 1942, Williams knocked out Louie Flowers, a promising young fighter from New York, in the third round at the Portland Expo. He went on to defeat the New Hampshire Heavyweight Champion, Armand Roy. In that fight, Williams broke his right hand in the second round but fought on to gain the decision.

In August of 1942, Williams fought Danny Needham of Bath. The fight, held outdoors at the Northern Maine Fairgrounds, saw Williams win in a ten-round decision in front of 1,500 spectators.

Many young fighters had joined the war effort. Williams himself enlisted in the Army in December of 1942, serving from 1943 to 1946.

When the war ended, the former Maine state heavyweight staged a comeback with a fight in June of 1947 at the Presque Isle Fairgrounds. He knocked out Patsy Devine of Boston, a former New England heavyweight titleholder. He fought three more times

NORTHEAST Packaging Company
Manufacturer and Distributor of Potato Bags
Presque Isle, Maine | 207-764-6271

THE BUNKER INN
Located at the former Loring Air Force Base
$99. + tax / Night • Room for Trailers
Conveniently Located — Off ITS Trails 89 and 100A
Private Rooms — All Equipped with Fridge & Microwave
17 Virginia Place, Limestone, ME 04750 • 207-325-6072
thebunkerrinn2@gmail.com • @thebunkerinn

Graves Super Markets
Since 1935
Aroostook's Finest Supermarket
797 Main Street, Presque Isle, ME 04769 • 207-769-2181

McCluskey's RV Center
Northern Maine's Largest, Oldest, and Only Full Line RV Dealer
Sierra | Cruise Lite | Coachmen | Salem | Cardinal | Sabre | Vibe | Impression
207-762-1721 www.McCluskeys.com 29 Houlton Road, Presque Isle

GREAT FOOD • GAS • TRAIL SUPPLIES
FULL DINER EAT IN OR TAKE OUT
CONVENIENCE STORE
WASHBURN TRAILSIDE 455-8200
NON-ETHANOL GAS
AVAILABLE 24/7
1094 Washburn Road
Washburn, ME

LEVESQUE business solutions
Bangor • Caribou • Madawaska
Serving Maine Since 1963
1-800-439-3382
~ Leasing Available ~
www.levesquesupply.com
RICOH Copiers, Printers & Imaging Solutions

BEAULIEU'S GARAGE & BODY SHOP
Complete Body Shop and Mechanical Repairs
490 Main Street, Caribou
492-2471
beaulieus@ne.twcbc.com
Find us on facebook

M. RAFFORD
Construction and Trucking
P.O. Box 526, Ashland, Maine 04732
Garage: (207) 435-2024
Cell: (207) 540-4048
Covering Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont
BUILDERS OF THE BEST PRECAST BRIDGES IN THE STATE
ROAD CONSTRUCTION OF NEW AND EXISTING WOODS ROADS — ALL ASPECTS
SEPTIC SYSTEMS, DRIVEWAYS, FOUNDATIONS, CULVERTS, ETC.



Gil Williams in military uniform

before ending his comeback. Gil felt he had lost strength in his legs and retired from boxing.

Gil married Elizabeth "Betty" Marie Adams on September 2, 1946 and together the couple had five children. Betty died of cancer in 1981.

In 1950, Gil worked as a furniture salesman for R.W. Wight & Sons. As a member of the Reserves, he returned to active duty in November. He retired from the Air Force in 1974. Gil remarried in 1983, to Lorraine Sollecito and relocated to North Carolina. He and Lorraine had one child. Gil "Bunny" Williams passed away at age 96. He is buried at Fairmount Cemetery in Presque Isle.

MONICA'S SCANDINAVIAN IMPORTS CO.
176 Sweden Street, Caribou, Maine 04736 • 207-493-4600
Bringing you
Quality. Beauty. Simplicity.
Since 1964
MONICA'S SCANDINAVIAN IMPORTS

UNDERWOOD ELECTRIC, INC.
Locally Owned & Operated
Established 1981 • Fully Insured
Residential • Commercial • Industrial Wiring
764-0040 • uei@underwoodelectric.co • 655 Mapleton Rd., Mapleton, ME

Bates Dental Inc.
Established 1971
Kurt Bates, LD
Specializing in
Dentures & Partials
(207) 764-5675
165 Academy Street
Presque Isle

Giberson-Dorsey
FUNERAL HOME
Aaron M. Giberson, Director
Funeral Planning & Pre-Planning
Burial Services
Cremation Services
Grief & Healing Help
Step-by-Step Guidance
144 Main Street, Fort Fairfield, ME
472-4731
gibersondorseyfuneralhome.com

McGillan, Inc.
EARTHWORK CONTRACTOR
5 McGillan Drive, Fort Fairfield
T: 473-4097 F: 473-4091
mcgillaninc.com

GENERAL BUCK CONSTRUCTION INC. CONTRACTORS
K-SPAN of Maine
VARCO-PRUDEN metal building system
DESIGN BUILD SYSTEMS
Industrial • Commercial • Agricultural
207-764-1857
645 Mapleton Road, Mapleton, ME • www.buckcon.com

support LOCAL business

COL. FRANK M. HUME

"THE OLD MAN OF THE 103RD"

by Clair G. Wood

Frank M. Hume, who was born in Bridgewater, Maine on January 7, 1867, knew as a child that he wanted to be a soldier. Neighbors recalled that, from an early age, he organized the boys in his rural school into an 'army' and required them to address him as 'Captain Hume.' However, a capricious twist of fate in the guise of extremely poor eyesight seemed destined to deny Hume the one career that he desired. In 1889, Hume applied to West Point but was rejected because of his eyesight and settled for attending Riverview Military Academy in New York, and then Harvard College. Most men would have accepted the hand fate had dealt them and settled for a civilian career but not Hume. Harriette Ebbett, who married Hume in 1893, said that he warned her when he proposed that, "his career as a soldier came first and his wife second." But how was he to pursue a military career when his eyesight rendered him unfit for service? This is where the ingenuity that was a hallmark of Hume's life came into play.



Col. Frank M. Hume

Upon returning to Houlton, Hume immediately set about forming Company L, 2nd Infantry of the Maine National Guard with himself named as its Captain. Hume first saw active duty however as Captain of Battery B, 1st Maine Heavy Artillery when it was deployed to Cuba during the Spanish-American War in 1898. Battery B guarded the port of Havana until its return to Maine in 1899. Hume was mustered out of active service and returned to Houlton where he served as postmaster and continued to ready Company L for active duty. Hume was noted for his 'colorful' language and some postal patrons complained. In response, Hume hung the following sign prominently in the post office lobby.

SCOVIL
Building Supply, Inc.
"See Us First or We Both Lose Money"
Complete Line of Hardware Supplies
425-3192 ext. 201 • 5 Libby Road, Blaine, Maine

SCOVIL APARTMENTS
Presque Isle, Mars Hill & Blaine
P.O. Box 220, Blaine, Maine 04734
Phone the office for information
425-3192 ext. 207



Horten Building Supplies, Inc.
All of Your Building Needs
Free Local Delivery
Kevin McGary, Owner
15 Military Street, Houlton
(207) 532-2311

"NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES
Please do not swear,
Not that we give a damn, but it sounds like hell
to the customers."

One summer, when on maneuvers outside of Augusta, Georgia, one of many humorous incidents took place because of Hume's poor eyesight. Hume had bought a costly and fine-appearing mount of which he was very proud. One afternoon, a lame and moth-eaten old mule happened to wander by the flap of Hume's tent and he mistook it for his horse. The company was treated to the sight of Hume chasing the old mule around camp while shouting for them to help catch his horse! The 2nd Maine Infantry, and Hume's beloved Company L, got a taste of active service in 1916 when it was called to the Mexican border around Laredo and Zapata, Texas to guard against raids by Pancho Villa across the border. Hume had, in 1910, been promoted to Colonel and was in charge of the 2nd Maine Infantry. Hume's beloved Company L then consisted of 68 men and three officers. It might have been during the Mexican expedition that Hume picked up the nickname "The Old Man." When one soldier was asked if that was a proper way to refer to their commanding officer, he replied, "Anyone can be a Colonel but there'll never be another one like "The Old Man."

Most men might have been content with serving in two campaigns, the Spanish-American War and Mexican Expedition, and having built a combat-ready company from raw civilians, but Frank Hume was not most men. When World War I came along, Hume's eyesight was so poor that he was allowed to accompany his troops overseas only by signing a document absolving the government from responsibility for any injuries he might receive. Undeterred, Hume participated in five major engagements, and had a shell explode so close to him that he was thrown from the trenches and he lost the hearing in one ear. Under Hume's leadership, the 103rd Infantry spent more time in the front lines under fire than any other American unit and captured more German prisoners than any other unit at the front. One German captured by the 103rd complained, "The Yankees are crazy! They sing as they use the bayonet and follow us right into our own wire!" In fact, as far as is known, a patrol led by Lt. A.E. Holden of Houlton was the first totally American unit to 'go over the top' and charge the German lines. Such heroics were bound to take a toll and Hume returned from World War I with

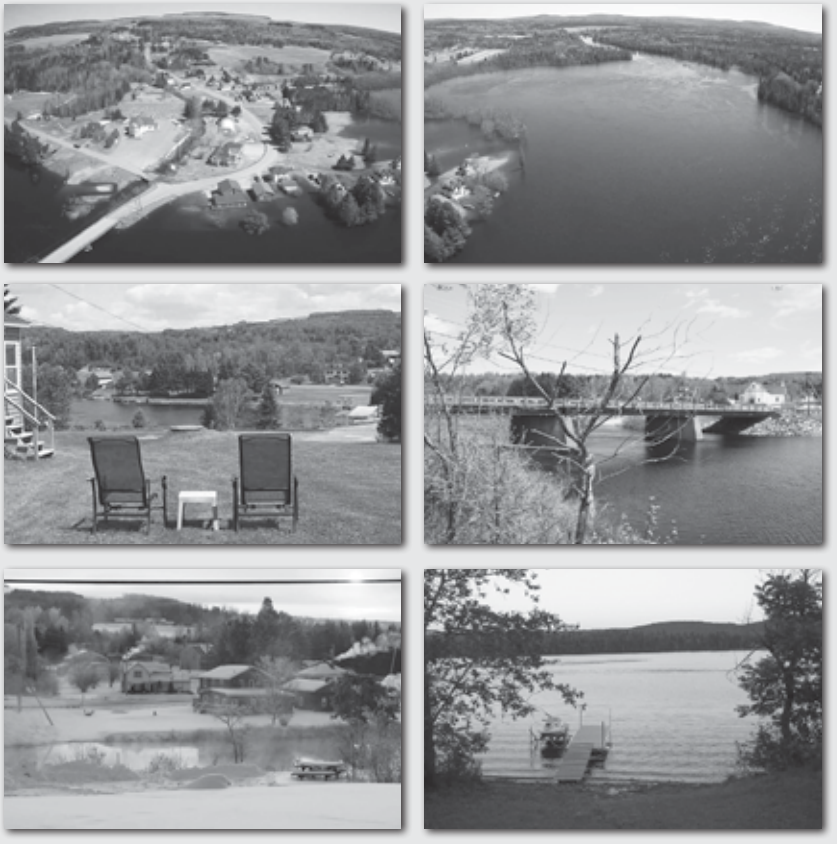
Soldier Pond Wallagrass Revitalization Committee

Sponsor of the Annual
- Town Pond Fest
- Purchase of Town Flags

Co-Sponsor of Soldier Pond–New Canada–Cross Lake
- Tri-Community Veterans Memorial Project

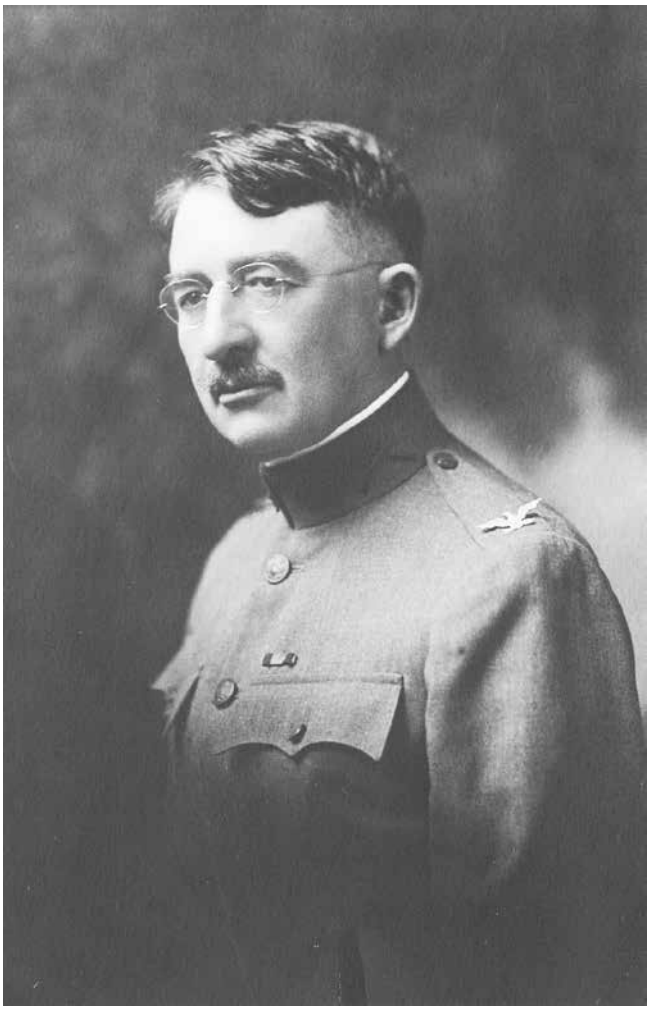
Memorium Pavers / Stones / Donations

Contact Melford Pelletier 207-444-5577 or Elaine Desjardins 207-834-5189.
Or contact Lana Voisine, Town Office Manager, 45 Church St. in Soldier Pond



only 1181 of the original 3700 members of the 103rd that went overseas with him. This weighed heavily on Hume who once paraphrased Sherman's famous quote, "War is Hell" by remarking that "Hell is a rest camp compared to war."

Hume was never one to send his men anywhere where he did not go himself and earned the French Croix de Guerre and the U.S. Distinguished Service Medal "for exceptionally meritorious and distinguished service while in command of the 103rd Infantry during the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne operations."


Col. Frank M. Hume

One incident that illustrates why his men loved and respected him occurred during a heavy barrage when a sergeant of the 103rd got wounded in 'no man's land' between the opposing lines. The colonel was the first out to the wounded man and carried him back to safety. At the battle of Belleau Wood, Hume insisted on leading his "Maine boys" even though his hearing was bad, his eyes worse, and he had been suffering for days from a severe intestinal disorder. His officers pleaded with him to seek treatment but Hume replied, "When I go to the rear, it will be on a stretcher." His boys needed him. Indeed, when an inspection team was making the rounds of the trenches, they asked one young officer exhausted by days of unrelenting combat where his commanding officer could be found expecting him to be safe in the most fortified of the trenches. The lieutenant simply pointed towards the point of fiercest combat and replied, "Out there."

Imagine then the outrage when Hume was abruptly removed from his command only five days before the armistice was signed on charges that he allowed his men "to fraternize with the enemy." This ludicrous charge stemmed from two Germans approaching the 103rd lines under a flag of truce and suggesting no one fire at anyone anymore since the war was obviously over. Hume demanded a hearing and was reinstated to his command two months later. Similar incidents happened to other officers and it was widely believed to be an attempt to place regular army officers, who had never seen a day of combat, in the commands of National Guard officers in order to have the glory of the war's end fall to regular army officers. They had picked the wrong man however when they tried to pull that trick on Hume!

Hume became the Treasurer of Aroostook County upon his discharge in 1919 and then was appointed to be the Collector of Customs for the port of Portland, a

Aroostook Milling Co.
"Serving Aroostook County For Over 75 Years"
Your local dealer of Harman Pellet Stoves
FEED GRAIN SEED
BLUE SEAL
15 Hillview Ave., Houlton, Maine • (207) 532-6130
aroostookmilling.com

Fitzpatrick & Peabody Farms
POTATO GROWERS
3 Sugarloaf Street, Houlton, Maine
(207) 532-0065 • (207) 551-5031

position he held until 1933. He retired from the Maine National Guard in 1927 with the rank of Brigadier General but to the end of his days wanted to be known simply as Colonel, the rank he earned in the field of combat. Among the many honors that came to Hume was the hanging of his portrait in the State House in 1938. Hume died in Houlton on June 6, 1939 and words of tribute flowed in from around the state and nation. But the following anecdote would have pleased Hume most. As Hume's funeral cortege passed through Houlton on the way to the cemetery a townsperson remarked, "Well, there goes the Colonel. He's getting a great sendoff here but I wonder how he'll be greeted on the other side." A burly farmer who had served with Hume whirled on the man and, with tears streaming down his face, replied, "Don't you worry about the Old Man. God ain't going to be too rough on anyone who took as good care of his men as the Colonel took of us. Don't make no cracks about him again!"

That this would have pleased Hume was certain for "his boys" came first with "The Old Man of the 103rd."

McIntyre, Colby L., "The Old Man of the 103rd: The Biography of Frank M. Hume, Aroostook Print Shop, 1940.

Note: Clair Wood's father served with Col. Hume both during the Mexican Expedition and World War I.

TULSA ONE STOP
Pizza • Subs • Sandwiches
Daily Specials
Mon-Sat 5am to 8pm
207-488-6100 • 378 Station Road, Easton, ME

Celebrating over 50 years of business
Est. 1971
34 Main St. Van Buren
TULSA INC
Convenience Store
Quality Gasoline and Heating Fuels
868-5702
www.tulsainc.com

J. McLAUGHLIN Construction, LLC
EXCAVATING CONTRACTORS
24 Years Experience
Excellence at the Ground Level
174 Bangor Street, Houlton, Maine
www.jmclaughlinconstruction.com
207-532-6335 cell 207-694-2546

Since 1923 Ward CEDAR LOG HOMES
Log, Hybrid & Timber Homes
Our past. Your future.
Over a Century of Excellence Providing Northern White Cedar Log Homes and Cabins
Customize any plan or design from scratch
www.wardcedarloghomes.com
207-532-6531 | 800-341-1566
37 Bangor Street, P.O. Box 72, Houlton, ME 04730

North Country Auto
www.ncountryauto.com
Offering you one of the BEST used vehicle selections in the county!
Specializing in quality late model vehicles
Up to 150 vehicles in 3 locations
Special credit available • Good credit, bad credit, no problem!
You Have A Friend In The Car Business!
792 Main St. Presque Isle, ME 04769 (207) 762-6222
519 North St. Houlton, ME 04730 (207) 521-0295
176 West Broadway Lincoln, ME 04757 (207) 794-2202

ATTENTION all Mainers and history buffs...

Memories of Maine Magazine is the magazine for you!

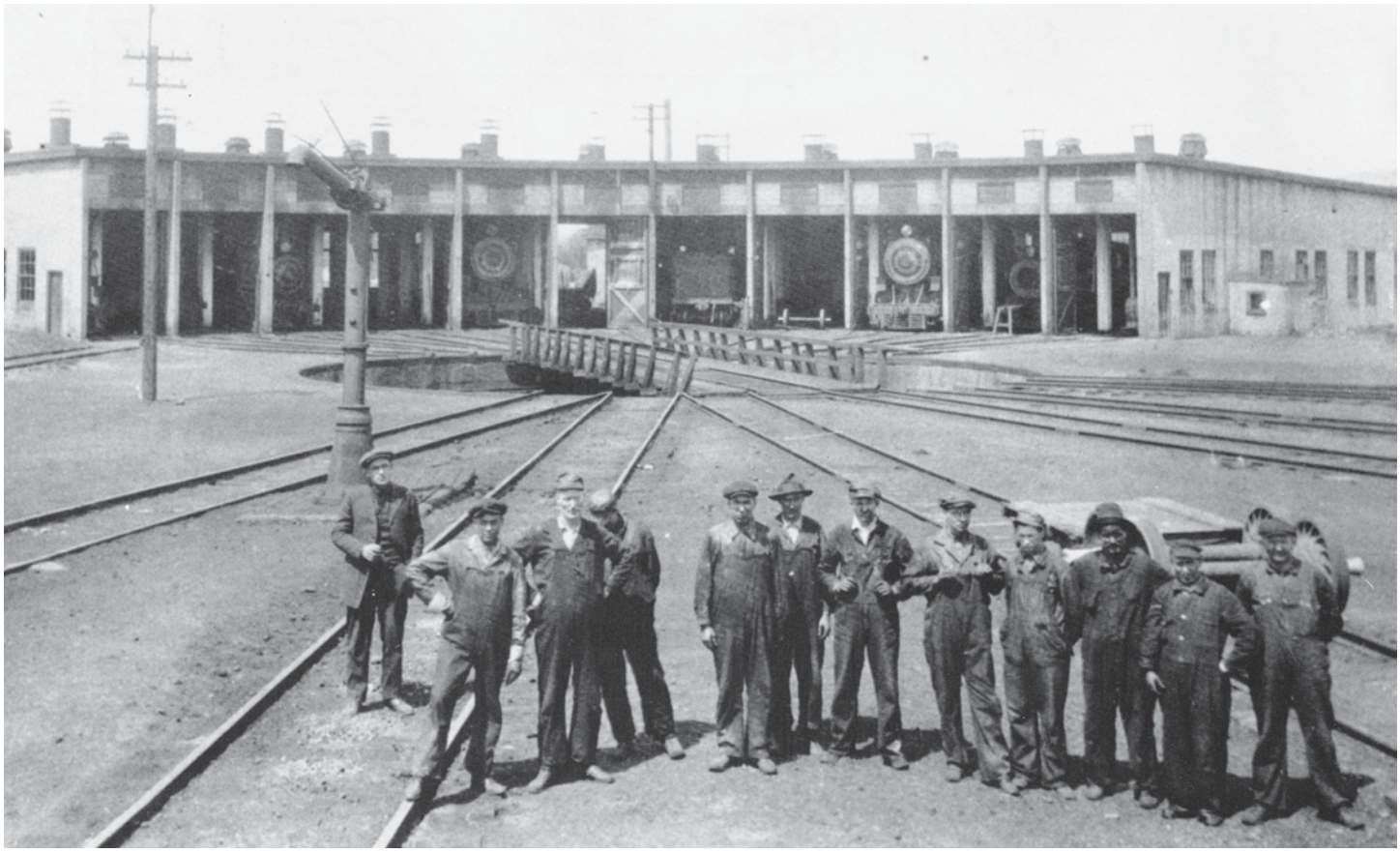
Published 6 times a year, each issue covers a different region of the great State of Maine. Full of stories about Maine people and Maine places, and written by Maine people.

For only $30, you can have it mailed to your home or office... 6 times throughout the year!

B & A RAILROAD WAS ALSO IN THE HOTEL BUSINESS

by Sheila D. Grant

Photos collections Oakfield Historical Society, courtesy *www.VintageMaineImages.com*



Roundhouse crew posing in front of engine house, 1922.

During its heyday, Oakfield Station, built in 1910, was a key division point for the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Company.

According to a history of the town published online by Mooers Realty of Houlton, the railroad line from Brownville to Oakfield was completed in 1893. A few years later, another vital track system was laid from Oakfield to Ashland. From 1912 to 1961, passenger train service was available, with as many as 16 daily passenger trains by the 1930s.

Bowers Funeral Home
Established 1900
Traditional Funerals, Cremations and Celebrations of Life
Anthony V. Bowers, LFD, CFSP
10 Water St., Houlton, ME • 207-532-3333
238 Main St., Presque Isle, ME • 207-760-8088
7 Lee Street, Lincoln ME • 207-409-9333
RIP Museum: 54 Sherman St., Island Falls, ME • 207-532-3333

Hopkins Sawmill LLC
Kiln Dried Hardwood
Live Edge Table Tops
Softwood (Boards to Beams)
Burls & Lathe Turning Wood
Custom Sawing
Caleb Hopkins • 207-538-1714 • calebhopkins85@gmail.com
155 South McIntyre Road, Hodgdon, ME 04730



Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Station, 1942.



Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Station, circa 1970.

In the early 1900s, accommodations were lacking for not only train yard employees, but for passengers as well, in the Oakfield area.

The July 22, 1914 issue of the *Bangor Daily News* revealed the railroad company's solution to the shortage. A contract had been signed with Samuel Ames for construction of a hotel at Oakfield Junction that would cost between $20,000 and $25,000, and be ready for occupancy by December.

The new hotel would be a three-story, flat-roofed building containing 41 rooms. The main building would measure 85x35 feet, and the ell, 40x28 feet. The frame building situated on a concrete foundation would house an office, dining room, kitchen and serving area, card room, and reading room on the first floor.

"In the basement, each man will have an individual locker and there will be pool and billiard rooms," said the

THE SALVATION ARMY®
Family Store
Clothing
Housewares
Brick-a-Brac
Almost Everything and Anything
SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICES!
Sunday School at 9:45am and Worship at 11am
12 Court St., Houlton
532-2322
Mon-Fri 8am-4pm
65 Main Street, Houlton • 521-0230

TIMBERLAND OWNERS WANTED
Looking for Long-Term Lot Improvement?
Cunningham Brothers, Inc.
Over 40 Years Experience in Wood Lots
If you own timberland, call for a FREE CONSULTATION
James Cunningham
(207) 365-4028 / cell (207) 631-7683
PO Box 59, Benedicta, ME 04733
Certified Logging Professional

D&D PAVING INC.
Serving Aroostook & Penobscot Counties
(207) 463-2325 • 800-464-9125
Island Falls, Maine
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL
Paved Driveways • Parking Lots • Asphalt Grinding & Reclaiming
Fully Insured

"Built to order, Built to last."
STURDI-BILT SB STORAGE BUILDINGS LLC
2836 U.S. Route 2, Smyrna, Maine 04780
207-757-7877
"Built to order, Built to last."
207-757-7877
2836 U.S. Route 2
Smyrna, ME 04780
Portable Sheds, Garages & Camps













Oakfield Community High School and B&A Yard in 1936.

report. "Two stories will be devoted entirely to sleeping rooms and baths. The house will be steam heated and electric lighted."

On November 14, 1914, the *Bangor Daily News* provided an update on the project, reporting it was nearing completion. F.A. Patterson of Bangor was the architect "and the structure will be a handsome one and finely equipped," said the report. "The arrangement of office, reading room, billiard room, and others is most excellent, and the exterior will be much admired."

Plans for a December opening seem to have gotten

LP®
BUILDING SOLUTIONS
BUILD WITH US.®

Please visit www.lpcorp.com or call 532-7361
P.O. Box 396, Houlton, ME 04730
240 Station Road, New Limerick, ME

Rockwell
PROPERTIES
EXPERIENCED • PROFESSIONAL • INVOLVED
KAREN T. ROCKWELL
Broker/Owner
Office: 207-463-2444 • Cell: 207-267-0767
P.O. Box 555 • Island Falls, ME 04747 • rockwellpropertiesmaine.com

RESTAURANT • MOTEL Open 6 Days a Week, Closed Monday
HOME COOKED FOOD
BROOKSIDE
THE WAY FOOD SHOULD BE Est. 1993
Tuesday: Free Cake Day
Friday Night: All-You-Can-Eat Haddock Fish Fry
Saturday Night: All-You-Can-Eat Prime Rib

2277 US Rte 2, Smyrna, ME — Just Off ITS 83 / Junction Rte 2 & I95 (Exit 291)
(207) 757-8456 • thebrooksideinn.com

Jerry's
Shur Fine Food Store
Route 2, Island Falls, Maine 463-2828
Full line of Groceries • Produce • In-Store Bakery • Cold Beverages
Beer & Wine • Frozen Foods • Ice • Ice Cream • Film
Fresh Meat & Fish • Live Lobsters (seasonal) • Live Bait • Fishing Supplies
Agency Liquor Store • Hardware Supplies
~ Check Our Weekly Flyer for Great Buys Throughout the Store ~
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK: Mon-Wed 7am-6pm • Thurs-Sat 7am-7pm • Sun 9am-5pm

CARY BROWN
Trucking & Excavating
■ Sand ■ Gravel
■ Loam ■ Septic Systems
■ Sitework

207-592-1018 cell 207-448-7752 home
Danforth, Maine

slightly off track, as on February 27, 1915 the *Bangor Daily News* covered the meetings and travels of Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Company directors in the region and noted that during their return journey, the railroad officials "inspected the company's new hotel at Oakfield which was opened about 10 days ago."

On January 25, 2017, the Maine Historical Society announced the launch of *My Maine Stories*, an online storytelling portal for individuals. Those stories would then be added to the Maine Memory Network, a digital museum hosting more than 70,000 records.

An author named Rodney Duplisea summarized details published in the *Bangor Daily News* in his article, "The Oakfield Inn."

The cost of the hotel ended up being $30,000, Duplisea wrote.

"The new hotel is beautifully located on a knoll about 1,000 feet from the Oakfield station," he wrote. "It is painted the standard color adopted by the B & A, a dark green body with very dark brown trim. It is set off by a background of evergreen trees and presents a most attractive appearance. From the building itself, is a view of several miles up and down the valley of the Mattawamkeag Stream which runs nearby."

The inn provided home-like comforts and all the

DERINGER®
Managing Logistics • Maximizing Opportunity
A.N. Deringer, Inc.
48 Customs Loop • Houlton, Maine 04730
U.S. Customs Brokers
Warehouse & Distribution • Freight Forwarding
207-532-9431 • 1-800-448-8108 • www.anderinger.com

G.R. PORTER & SONS
and
PORTERS
Family Restaurant
Full-Service Garage • Used Car Sales & Service
24 Hour Towing, call (207) 521-4589 AAA
Open 6 days a Week • Restaurant Open 7am–2pm
GARAGE (207) 463-2255 • RESTAURANT (207) 463-2014
porters@fairpoint.net • 1149 Crystal Rd., Island Falls, ME

Elwood Downs Incorporated
We now have CRUSHED ROCK

Daniel E. Downs
President
207-794-2914
Dakota Downs
Vice President
Cell 207-290-0620
ehdowns@ne.twcbc.com
618 Main Street
Lincoln, ME 04457

Groceries • Pizza • Beverages • Subs
T&S VARIETY
209 Hodgdon Mills Road
Hodgdon
(207) 532-6672
Pizza • Beer • Soda
Snacks • Grocery Items
Fresh Cut Meats
Lottery Tickets
Open
Mon–Sat 5am–9pm
Sun 6am–9pm

NICKERSON CONSTRUCTION INC.
Excavation • Septic Systems • Road Repair
Grading • Trucking • Gravel • Stone • Loam
Serving Aroostook County since 1965
207-532-9391
1381 County Road, New Limerick, ME

Dunn Funeral Home
Our Family Serving Yours Since 1908
11 Park Street, Houlton, Maine
(207) 532-7403
dunnfuneral.com



The Oakfield Inn was built in 1915, became Oakfield High School in 1934, and burned on November 9, 1973

necessary conveniences, Duplisea wrote. While the inn was built primarily to house B&A employees, it was also open to the public.

"Traveling men appreciate it as much as others," he wrote. According to the author, at that time, 60 to 70 men arrived daily on the trains and another 50 or so of the B&A employees worked in Oakfield.

The new hotel was under the supervision of W.C. Creamer, who had charge of the company's dining car service and was also in charge of the "Piscataquis House" built by the railroad in Derby. The hotel's resident manager in Oakfield was H.P. Hunt.

Duplisea detailed the accommodations as listed above but noted that a woman's parlor had been added to the first floor, and that the dining hall was a spacious 60x40 feet.

"The culinary department is especially well equipped," he wrote. "The kitchen is well arranged with a large pantry and scullery. A competent chef has been engaged to reside over this part of the house. The floors are of hardwood. Throughout the house is steam heat with a radiator in each room. There are electric lights throughout. The company generates its own electricity at the Oakfield shops. It's then transmitted to the inn.

"Upstairs, there are two floors devoted entirely to sleeping rooms. There are forty-eight rooms in all. They are as neat, clean, attractive and well-furnished as one could wish. Rigid rules apply to the occupants of the house. Large baths have been provided in the basement. Men coming off their work either by train or in the shops must first bathe before going to their rooms.

"The walls are plastered with a smooth surface and all the woodwork in the rooms is of a pleasing gray shade. Metal bed stands, a bureau, and a chair complete the furniture in each room. The rooms are cleaned by a vacuum system installed in the house and connected to each room.

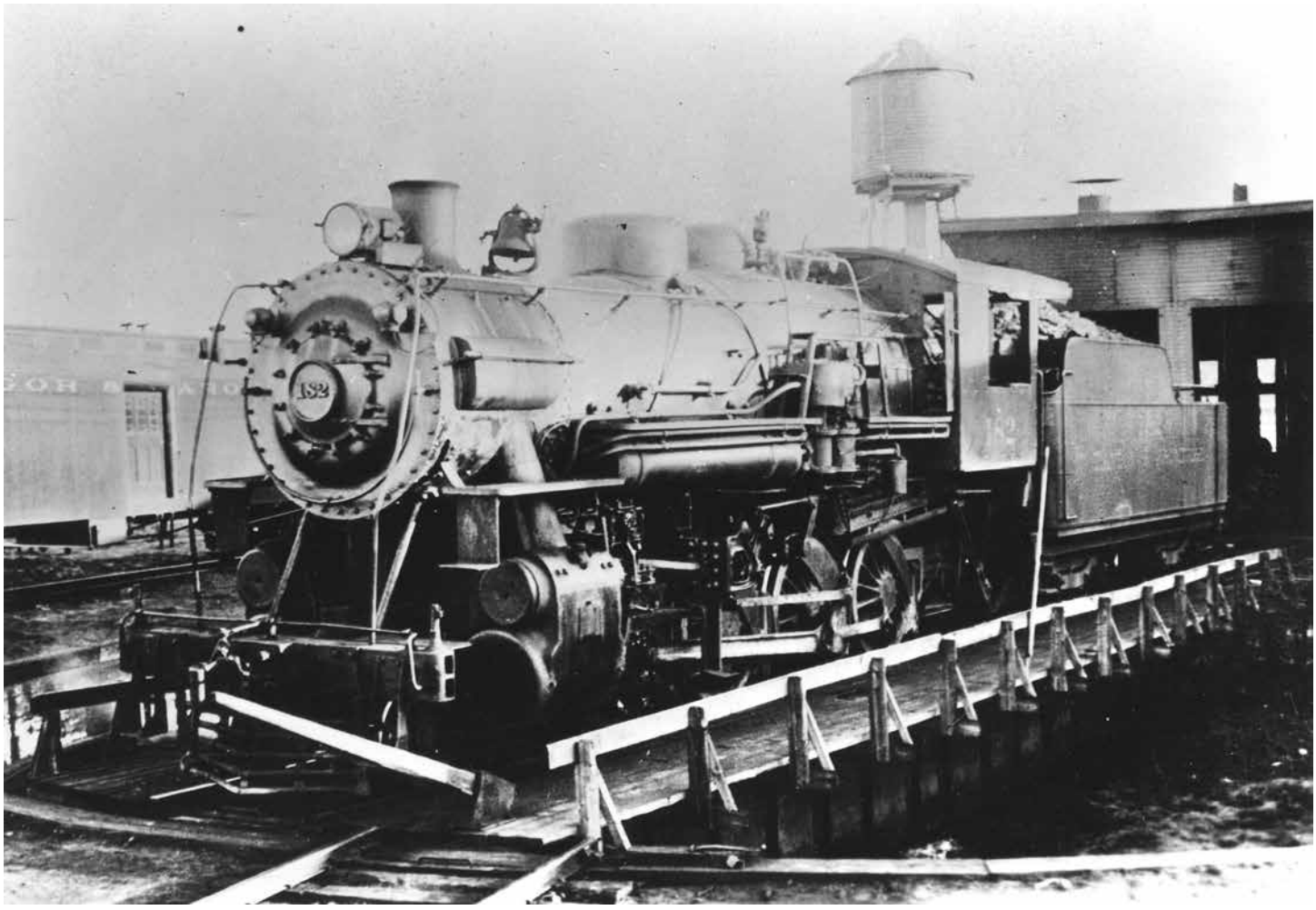
"The basement contains a large heating boiler and a separate boiler for hot water. There is a laundry room of generous dimensions and a drying room. There is also a vegetable storeroom and a refrigerator for meat and perishable foods. The refrigerator was built by an expert in that line of work. A deep artesian well striking a vein of the purest water furnishes the supply. It is forced to each floor through an air pressure system. Provisions are made in the basement for a billiard room for the men. It will undoubtedly be much appreciated when it is put in. It will aid in whiling away the time when off duty," wrote Duplisea.

The author wrote that "convenient and well-arranged" quarters were provided for the resident manager and his family in the section of the building over the culinary department and that the help were also quartered in that area.

"The sanitary arrangements of the house are particularly good," he wrote. "On each floor there are two baths for general use. Besides private baths, two showers are installed in the basement. Each room is equipped with a fire escape. Provisions have been made for preventing danger from fire."

York's of Houlton
• New cars and trucks from Toyota & Ford
• Quality used cars and trucks – all makes & models
• Guaranteed in-house financing through Fresh Start Finance Co.
• Full-service Tire & Auto Center
• Modern Auto Body Repair Shop
1-800-427-9675
315 North St., Houlton
www.YorksofHoulton.com
"You Deserve The Best!"
It's all right here in The County

Maine Cedar Specialty Products
Quality Log Homes
Log Home Sales
(207) 532-4034
Lumber Sales (207) 532-4293
1938 Ludlow Road, Ludlow, Maine
PO Box 39, Oakfield, Maine 04763
MAINECEDAR.COM



Engine 182, Oakfield Yard turntable, 1925.

While F.A. Patterson of Bangor was the architect, the general contractor for the building was A.I. Ames of Houlton. C.H. Babb and Company of Bangor did the heating, plumbing and wiring, while installation of the fixtures and lights was accomplished by B&A employees from the Oakfield shops.

The public apparently embraced the new facility. On June 19, 1915, the *Bangor Daily News* reported that "A large number of bookings have already been made for the new and elegant hotel at Oakfield for the summer months."

According to the vintagemaineimages.com website, the inn was sold to the town of Oakfield in 1934 for $11,000 and served as the high school until it burned.

The Oakfield Community High School fire took place on November 9, 1973. According to a November 11 report in the *Bangor Daily News*, fire spread so rapidly in the large, wooden landmark building that it was completely destroyed within two hours.

Car Insurance Too High?
For your FREE quote, call
Lincoln Agency
Veteran Owned and Operated
Farm, Auto, Home & Recreation
532-2016 • 24 North St., Houlton
lincolnagencyllc.com Find us on facebook

HATCH'S CUSTOM MEAT CUTTING LLC
CRYSTAL, MAINE SINCE 2015
Processing Beef, Pork, Lamb, Goat and Moose
Mon–Fri 7:30am–4pm,
Saturday by Appointment
23 Prescott Road
Crystal, Maine 04747
(207) 463-2645
cell (207) 441-4023
hatchscustommeatcutting.com

SMUGGLING continued from page 7

not one to double-cross.

Fred Levesque married Albertine Collin of Saint-Hilaire, and it's likely, through his wife, Fred became acquainted with Maxime Albert. Family legend mentions that Albertine's father became involved in the smuggling trade after the couple's marriage. After his brother's fatal accident in 1916, Fred inherited a home in Rivière-Bleue. Here, Fred ran several businesses as a cover for his illegal alcohol regime, including a storefront, restaurant, and a soft drink bottling company. The property featured numerous false wells that Fred used to store alcohol prior to shipping it out. The house also contained various trap doors to allow alcohol to be hidden and moved.



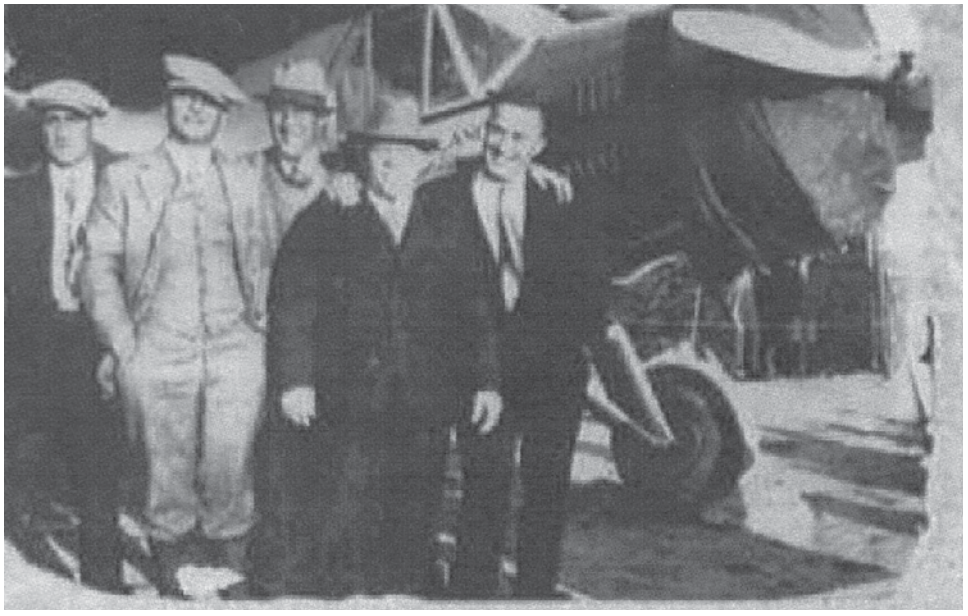
Wylie House, the current home of the Frenchville Historical Society. The house is the former home of George Bouchard who would hang a lantern in the attic window to signal it was all clear for smugglers to cross the border.

Levesque smuggled his moonshine across the border to Maine. By the later 1920s, Levesque purchased a schooner and ran champagne, rum, and whiskey from traders in the French-controlled islands of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon off the southern coast of Newfoundland. In 1932, Levesque shipped over 5,000 gallons of booze into the United States, funneled through ports in Maine on its way southward. According to a 1934 article, Fred even stole a train, drove three wagons of liquor by rail to Maine, and then returned the train. Quebec City journalist Georges Mars described how Fred set up his organization with "a secret association of 2,000 small time bootleggers. About 500 stolen cars. 800 employees. An army of nearly a thousand workmen carrying rifles, revolvers and knives." Mars also noted that Fred paid off police and politicians — and yet, he was one of the most likeable men in the booze trade.

Akin to Maxime Albert, Fred Levesque stood tall as a pillar of his community. Known for his generous spirit, many local newspapers referred to Fred as a "simple, generous, charitable and social man." The local parish priest, Father Thériault, wrote in his journals that Fred Levesque rarely missed Sunday mass, and if he did miss it, he confessed his sins to a priest. When he was present, Father Thériault said, Fred was the first to say "on your knees, boys" to begin reciting the Lord's Prayer. Thériault recalled an evening when someone made fun of this religious practice, "Levesque grabbed a pool cue and knocked him out, telling him not to come and make fun of our religion." Levesque also stressed spending Sundays at home with family.

A pious man, Levesque also inherited his father's business acumen. He conducted his smuggling ring with a head for administration and organization. Fred relied heavily on a large population of people to make his smuggling ring successful — and to remain secret. Employees of Levesque were well compensated, earning as much as $12 a day for driving wagons full of hooch. At the same time, people only earned $4 per day at the local sawmill. The high reward of illicit activities had a meaningful impact on Frenchville and New Brunswick, as folks were able to spend more money in their communities. Employees of the Levesque Empire participated in many local activities including church activities, bazaars, charity events and sporting activities.

Although Levesque organized many of his activities across the river in New Brunswick, residents in Frenchville also worked in the smuggling operation. George Bouchard, an employee of the B&A Railroad, assisted the local smuggling ring. George and his wife, Catherine, were the original occupants of the Wylie House, the current home of the Frenchville Historical Society. The home features a circular attic window. As a railroad worker, Bouchard was aware when people came in and left town. On evenings when the police presence had waned, Bouchard would hang a lantern in the attic window to signal it was all clear for smugglers to cross the border. The attic window faced the river and could be seen from quite a distance. Other Frenchville locals also participated in this well-compensated, albeit illicit, activity. Local Frenchville



Bootleggers (circa 1920) George Albert, Fred Levesque, Gilbert Bourgouin, Maxime Albert, Albérie Albert



Fortunat Pelletier and Maxime Albert

history mentions smugglers, often dressed in costume, in one event as a priest, and used bearskins to cover their cargo. In one case, the smugglers used caskets to hide their cargo, nestled amongst hay, apples, and other goods to throw police off track.

For nearly fourteen years, heavy amounts of hooch traveled between Maine and New Brunswick. On December 5, 1933, the United States ratified the Twenty-First Amendment, repealing prohibition. The experiment in radical temperance resulted in an increase of alcohol-related deaths, organized crime, and widespread corruption. Maxime Albert never saw jailtime. Fred Levesque had been arrested many times over his long career, but he was generally released for lack of evidence. If any of his employees were arrested, Fred typically paid their fines and got back to business. In 1933, Fred and his associate, Antionio Gravine, were charged with three counts of conspiracy — conspiring to violate excise laws, conspiring to violate customs laws and conspiring to defraud the federal government, the provincial government and the public of the province of Quebec. The two men were found guilty of fraud for selling over $5 million of illegal alcohol. Levesque only served 15 months of his four-year sentence, likely due to his paid relationships with officials. He moved to Edmonton upon his release, and died of a heart attack in 1951.

Frenchville saw and participated in smuggling la bagosse during national prohibition in 1920. Although most people think of Al Capone, or the HBO's fictional Nucky Thompson from *Boardwalk Empire*, Maine had its own version of both men in Maxime Albert and Alfred Levesque. The smuggling rings created by both men covered a high percentage of the upper Northeast. La bagosse is still made at the La Bagosse Festival in Saint-Hilaire at the Maxime Albert House. At the museum, visitors can see the home of Maxime Albert as well as how to make bagosse. Festival attendees can sample bagosse without the risk of blindness.

LONG LAKE EXCAVATION
■ Snow Removal
■ Excavation ■ Landscaping
■ Gravel ■ Sand ■ Loam
■ Crushed Rock ■ Rock Walls
Residential
—Over 20 years experience—
728-6175
Devin Morin, cell 316-3197
Dustin Morin, cell 316-3198
Lake Shore Road, St. David

KMD DEVELOPMENT LLC
SPRAY FOAM INSULATION
Serving all Aroostook County
Kaden Daigle, manager & spray foam technician
207-436-1000 • 207-288-7878
kadend@autotronics.net
125 US Route 1, Frenchville, ME 04745

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

MAINE HISTORY

delivered to YOUR mailbox



MEMORIES OF MAINE

The Magazine for Maine History and Nostalgia

Published 6 times a year

SUBSCRIPTION COST:
$35 for one year
$60 for two years

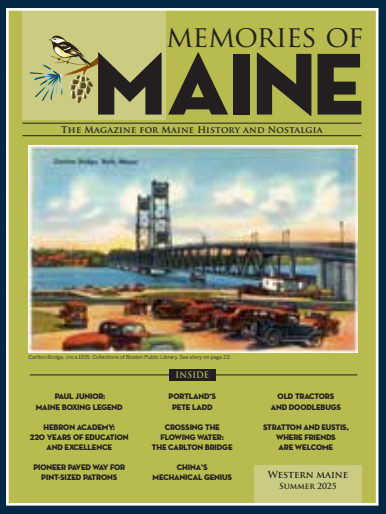
MAIL CHECK TO:
Memories of Maine Magazine
110 Marginal Way, Suite 123
Portland, ME 04101

or **SUBSCRIBE ONLINE** at
memoriesofmainemagazine.com









MAKES A GREAT GIFT!