

# The Dash

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## Privy Talk

*Subhead here for teaser to privy story*

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## How to Build a Privateer

*Like a Nineteenth-Century Master Builder*

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WINTER 2021



**BUILDING FUND DRIVE LAUNCHES**

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# BARN, STORMING, BUILDERS!

A fine Maine winter with a polar vortex is a hard time to get much outside construction work done, but with a lot of help from several hearty and skilled contractors, work on our Barn is well on its way! Despite the weather, our contractors were able to pick up the Barn, move it out into the parking lot, pour a new concrete foundation, frame a very robust new floor system, and finally get that Barn back on top! And the Barn was settled on its new foundation before temperatures plummeted dangerously low.

**W**ELL BEFORE THE BUILDING MOVERS and their panzer-like convoy of equipment pulled into the parking lot, our intrepid Collections & Education Manager Audrey Wolfe tackled the task of preparing the thousands of collection items we have stored there for their journey. (For more about this process, see sidebar with photos A & B.)

With the collections items carefully secured, Copp Building Movers of Cumberland took on the heavy lifting - in the truest sense of those words! First, the Garden Shed had to be craned out of the way to make room for Copp's massive moving machines to get into position (see Photo 1). Long puce-colored steel beams were then slid through the building; every vertical post was chained to these beams using robust railroad jacks (see Photos 2 & 3). The center of the building was supported by a pyramid of solid wood beams, or "dunnage," situated on top of the steel beams (see Photo 4).

After Sam Curtis of Durham detached the old floor system that had been patched repeatedly over 190 years due to the



**Photo 1:** Garden Shed

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### WINTER 2021

The Dash is published four times annually by Freeport Historical Society for its members.

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## Headline

**After years of planning, the excitement of experiencing the beginning of our new buildings is palpable.** Until now, all the focus has been on the technical challenges to accomplish the creation of these specific spaces. Spaces that will protect our collections in the safest possible way from fire and mold and insects. Spaces that will be accessible to everyone, regardless of their physical impairments. Simple things like a bathroom on the main floor. Glorious spaces (to a conservator!) of hundreds of feet of new shelving for collections. Specialized spaces to safely store paintings or textiles. It is invigorating.

**The joy comes from now planning the activities these spaces will support.** How this improved facility will allow us to engage a larger portion of the community. We still have a full six months to go before parts of the facility will be serviceable, but we are "arranging the furniture," at least on paper, in the weeks ahead. The dedicated Research Room, adjacent to the vault will be a secure location for individuals to work with primary resources to explore the history of this community, it's people and it's commerce. Being directly adjacent to a large parking lot with five dedicated handicap parking spaces nearby is great. Also being just a short walk from the High School also creates opportunities for learning programs. We look forward to telling you more about these plans as the buildings begin to come out of the ground.

**The Building Fund:** We are off to a great start - but we still have a long way to go. Please con-

sider being a part of this tremendous investment in our downtown, our students of all ages, and the many opportunities to understand our culture so we might use that knowledge to better the lives of our children and their neighbors.

**Annual Meeting & Colin Woodard:** We are thrilled to announce that Colin Woodard will be our speaker for an online Annual Meeting this spring. We do not have a specific date as yet but please keep your eye out the announcement. Colin is a nationally recognized columnist and author whose book, *The Lobster Coast*, is a terrific story that incorporates much of the history of coastal Maine.

**Finances:** I am happy to say that you, our members and supporters, have been very generous through your annual giving, membership dues, and now with gifts to the Building Fund. We cannot thank you enough for your support during this pandemic which has prevented us from running our traditional fundraisers like the GALA or Pettengill Farm Day, etc. We cannot thank you enough! We are also grateful for the government programs to support small businesses which have literally made it possible for us to make payroll each week.

**We should all feel blessed** that we have been able to share millions of great big gulps of fresh clean air out at our Pettengill Farm with the entire community. Make sure you get out there and get your share.

— JIM CRAM, Executive Director

Something for this box?  
Building Fund call for action?  
Or maybe photos to support text above?



The Building Fund will support construction of a new collections storage Vault and renovation of our current space, as depicted by this conceptual diagram.

## Linda and Diana Bean Donations Launch the Building Fund Drive

**R**AISED IN FREEPORT VILLAGE WITH deep community ties that precede even their grandfather L.L. Bean's 1898 arrival in Freeport, Linda & Diana Bean have become dedicated supporters of local history. Each has generously donated \$50,000 to help fund the construction of a secure Vault which will enable the Freeport Historical Society to better protect its archive collections.

It is said that "Charity starts at home." And for Leon Bean it really did. His mother-in-law, Charity Porter, came to live with him and his wife Bertha Davis Porter after her husband Charles U. Porter tragically experienced sunstroke and fell from a barn roof he was building for E. B. Mallet. According to L.L.'s daughter Barbara (Bean) Gorman in a 1980 note to her niece Linda, Charity made an outright gift of \$500 from her late husband's life savings to L.L. to finance his Maine Hunting Shoe venture.

Linda and Diana Bean's Freeport roots go back even further on their mother's side than on their father's Bean/Porter side. June Turner, who married L.L. Bean's son C. Warren "Warnie" Bean, descends from the earliest settler in Freeport, William Royall, through the Griffin family. The sisters now own the 1941 home and land of

their father on both sides of Elm Street, as well as the restaurant Linda established 10 years ago on the old 1790 Holbrook Tavern site at the corner of Main and Bow Streets, purchased in 2010 from George Denney.

With such enduring connections to this community, Linda and Diana both saw the Freeport Historical Society's Building Fund as a worthy investment, just as their great-grandmother Charity saw their grandfather's fledgling business. Their contributions will support other improvements in addition to the Vault, including new handicap access routes: one through the gardens from the parking lot to Main Street, and another from the parking lot to the building's new main entrance. (see related article for more details on the project's progress)

The Bean sisters' generosity was almost immediately matched and exceeded by another 90 donations totaling \$129,726, bringing the Building Fund total to \$229,726 and making excellent progress toward our \$500,000 goal. These funds are added to the extraordinary one-million-dollar gift by George and Joyce Denney in 2016 to allow this project to go forward. The FHS hopes to complete this *First in Thirty Years* capital fund drive by April of 2022. FHS

The FHS thanks Linda Bean for her contributions to this story.

# Barn, Storming, Builders!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ever-present moisture below, the Copp moving machines were able to lift the building free and ever-so-carefully crawl it across the parking lot to its temporary address (see Photo 5).

While the Barn was resting on its perch of steel & dunnage in the parking lot, the excavation team of Freeport's Ricky Harrison's Earthworks dug the foundation hole down to the depth of the water table, then prepared the base with fabric and a heavy layer of crushed stone.

Next up was Billy Hotham of Durham and his Second Generation Construction foundation crew who cheerfully set the footings and ample reinforcing steel, then poured the 5' frost walls. Cheerfully, despite the 15" layer of snow that arrived mid-project! Without missing a beat, they had the forms stripped, the floor poured, and were on their way, leaving behind a solid new concrete base for our Barn (see Photo 6).

Once Second Generation Construction was finished with their portion of the project, Ricky Harrison returned to install perimeter drains and a catch basin before backfilling around the new foundation. Sam Curtis returned to build the new, commercially rated, floor system (see Photo 7). Our staff dutifully tested it out, deeming it impressively sturdy and perfect for cartwheels.

Copp Building Movers returned to bring the Barn back and to find out: would it fit on its new foundation???? We all held our breath as the huge building was slowly lowered into place..... And it fit perfectly! (see Photo 8)

At this moment, we have Rick Gause of North Yarmouth stitching the edges of the Barn back onto the new floor system and preparing to build the new deck on the south end of the Barn. During March we hope to get started on some of the interior upgrades to the Harrington House which include widening several doorways to accommodate wheelchairs and to create a kitchenette on the entry level. FHS



Photo 2: Railroad Jack exterior



Photo 3: Railroad Jack interior



Photo 4: Interior steel & dunnage



Photo 5: Barn moving off the old floor system



Photo 6: Floating the new slab



Photo 7: New wood frame floor system



Photo 8: Barn coming down on new foundation

## In our Fall 2020 edition of *The Dash*, we outlined

the importance of undertaking a complete collections inventory of the Barn before the building was moved. Collections & Education Manager Audrey Wolfe undertook hours of digitizing, transcribing, and reconciling past inventory lists with our collections database to form a central list. Then, several days were spent in the Barn working from this list, noting any changes to placement or condition of objects, confirming or identifying objects we needed to track down, taking detailed photographs, and adding to the list the new objects that now called the Barn home. This also helped identify objects that needed special packing considerations and/or needed to be removed from the Barn entirely before it went on the move.



Photos A & B: Barn collection shelving wrapped, strapped, and secured after every item on every shelf was inventoried.

After reconciling this new data, the next several weeks were spent securing shelves, strapping items in place where we could, securing large and unwieldy objects, packing and re-housing items, and wrapping the dozens of shelves with wrap and tarps. While we were confident in the care and attention we gave to the move, there was always the possibility something unpredictable would happen on the departure and return trips. A few nights of lost sleep and new gray hairs aside, it was a great relief for the team to see the collection in tip-top shape and as we left it once the Barn returned in January 2021.

# PRIVY TALK

Excitement over moving our Barn was almost eclipsed by a rare look into a long shuttered but once, well, necessary *necessity* of Harrington House—the privy. While from the outside, the “bump out” from the Harrington House ell was hard to miss, it has been decades since anyone has stepped into the space, the interior entrance long-since boarded and covered up.

WITH OUR MODERN sensibilities, we are likely to dismiss privies and/or outhouses as simple, one-purpose structures. In reality, they are deceptively complicated. Different perceptions on sanitation, health risks, and acceptable pollution continuously shifted. These shifts led local and state governments to regulate almost all aspects surrounding privies, from building materials and design to location and maintenance schedules. Improperly constructed or managed privies could lead to disastrous, if not deadly, consequences. However, even with regulations, privy design and construction varied by locality and anticipated volume of use. Our privy has two distinctive features of note.

First, it's an attached—meaning an interior entrance—elevated privy. Elevated privies often had wooden or metal-lined wooden boxes underneath them to collect waste. Once full, the box would be emptied, and the waste used in gardens or fields. We knew from archaeological evidence (more on that below) and the structure's physical features that our privy was likely always an elevated privy, but we lacked an understanding of what clues the interior might tell us.

This yielded our second distinctive feature—a “five holer.” Privies often featured more than one hole and holes of various sizes—for instance, you didn't want a child to fall down the hole so



Recent construction work at the Harrington House revealed a five-holer privy that had been boarded over for decades.

variation was critical—but five isn't as common. And, while it's possible that five people *could* use the privy at the same time, multiple holes were practically designed for inhabitants to rotate use so one area of the privy wouldn't become overburdened with waste.

There is work still to be done on narrowing down the timeframe for the

privy's construction. Archaeological evidence suggests that the house likely had a brick ell, not our current wooden ell, when it was built ca. 1830. Whether that brick ell also had an elevated privy is unknown, but our current privy is likely to have been added at the same time the wooden ell was constructed and before a water closet was installed



Fragment of existing wallpaper from the Harrington House privy.

in the house, likely during or immediately after the 1890s when the town's water and sewer system were installed. Eliza F. Harrington and her surviving children sold the property to Lydia Fogg in 1886, so we are still researching whether the privy was constructed in the Harrington or Fogg era.

Leith Smith and Megan Theriault of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission led archaeological digs of the property from June to September 2017. Their efforts—supported by FHS staff, Sue Clukey, and a dedicated group of volunteers—yielded clues as to the privy's continued use after a water closet was installed. They found that the yard under the privy served as a dump for the disposal of household refuse and ash, particularly coal ash. The accumulation of refuse in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was accompanied by the addition of soil fill in the rear of the lot. Some of the items found under the privy during their digs included bottle glass, nails, whiteware

ceramics, shoe last parts, fragments of a porcelain doll head, a tobacco pipe, and miniature bean pot.

Wallpaper fragments present another potential dating element. Accessibility to wallpaper drastically expanded in the mid-1800s as advancements in mechanization, scientific production, and transportation matched the demand of the Industrial Revolution's burgeoning middle class. Economic mobility and aesthetic trends meant that not even a privy was out-of-bounds for decoration. While only small fragments remain, we're able to see that the privy was wallpapered at least twice. The older layer (B) is a small sample, showing a white backing with blue design, although not enough of the wallpaper remains to reveal what the full design might be.

The top wallpaper layer (A) has a pale ecru backing with pearlized ink, featuring a striped and floral border. While more complete, the full pattern is also unknown. This wallpaper was also found within Harrington House while undertaking renovations in the 1980s, although there's no indication where or in which room this wallpaper was found. The fragments appear to show that this is a sidewall wallpaper pattern rather than a frieze, but it's unclear whether the whole privy was wallpapered or only

a section. We can only guess whether the privy was comprised of spare pieces of wallpaper leftover from the main house or purposefully wallpapered as a larger decorative effort.

We're fortunate that one of the remaining fragments in the privy is untrimmed selvedge, which bears the wallpaper design number S226 and the maker, “JANEWAY & CARPENDER. NEW BRUNSWICK, PHIL'A. & CHICAGO.” Janeway & Carpenter were headquartered in New Brunswick, N.J. and were one of the largest wallpaper manufacturers in the United States while the company was in operation from 1844-1914. The company produced wallpaper sample books and a few of these are still in existence within museum collections and archives. These books may hold a clue as to the production year for design S226.

Nothing captures our collective attention quite like these everyday spaces from the past. What was once a hidden, utilitarian space has emerged as remarkable time capsule with a few mysteries still to solve. The FHS staff is pushing to preserve and interpret this space as part of our new building project and we're looking forward to sharing more of our privy plans as they take shape. FHS



The wallpaper company name and pattern design number are visible on this fragment.

# HOW TO BUILD A PRIVATEER LIKE A NINETEENTH-CENTURY MASTER BUILDER

BY DON MORRISON

**T**he story of the Freeport-built *Dash* is legendary. Constructed during the War of 1812 with the necessary speed to evade the British Navy and to capture their vessels, the ship was one of the most successful privateers of the era. Freeport's master shipbuilder James Brewer employed an unusual technique in creating the fast and furious *Dash*: a half model approach that ensured easily made modifications. The type of model he used is called a "Hawk's Nest." The original, rare, Hawk's Nest half model of the *Dash* is in the collection of the FHS.

Model enthusiast Don Morrison became interested in the *Dash* after a visit to the FHS, and he subsequently undertook the significant project of recreating the original model. Don has kept the FHS updated on his impressive project, including process, challenges, and progress. Morrison's work is beautifully executed thanks to his careful attention to detail and the thoughtful adaptations he has made while striving to reimagine the original *Dash*.

It was two years ago when I made my first visit to the Freeport Historical Society and I was introduced to the privateer *Dash*. I was enthralled with her rich history and ties to Freeport. I have been building replicas of various ships for the past 25 years, mostly brigs and schooners, but I had never come across any mention of the *Dash*. I wanted to do a model of her but over the ensuing year I could not find any plans and uncovered extraordinarily little mention on the particulars related to the *Dash*. Last summer, I returned to Maine from my home in Mesa, Arizona and met with FHS Executive Director Jim Cram to get as much information as possible so I could pursue this project.

We started with the Hawk's Nest, a half model of the ship in 1/2" scale. I traced the solid half ribs, bow stem, and sternpost and then marked their positions on a story board. Next, I had to transpose the 1/2" scale dimensions of the Hawk's Nest down to 1/60 scale. Once complete I made a 1/60 scale Hawk's Nest.

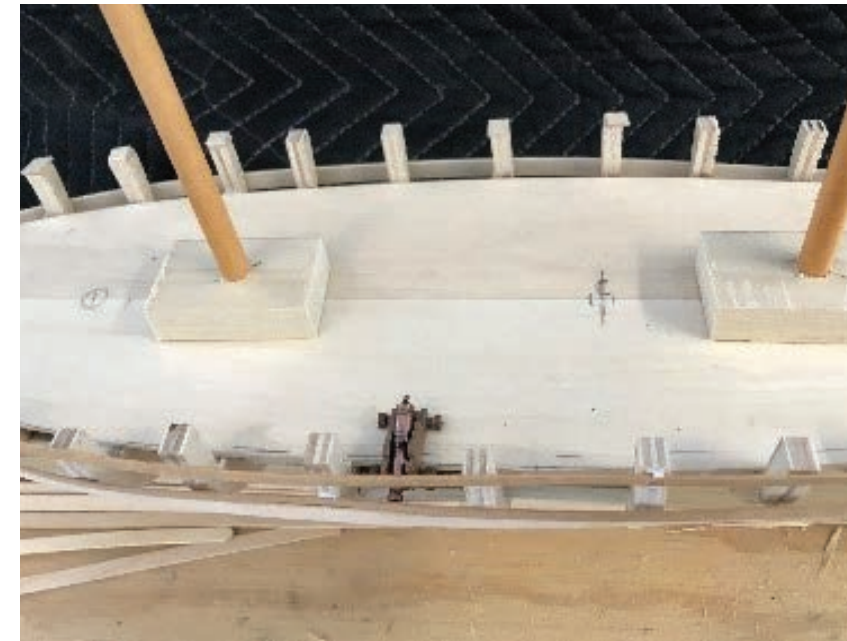
Satisfied with this model, I cut out the bulkhead ribs, sternpost, and bow stem. Then I assembled them on the keel.



Once that was complete, the real challenge began. Although similar style ships look the same, they are as unique as the men who built them and then those who sailed them. Since there are no plans, I had to determine the ship's particulars. I do have a copy of a painting of the *Dash* as well as a copy of a pen and ink sketch depicting the privateer. But these two images do not fully agree. I know there were 16 cannons but not their size nor their placement. There are standard rules to determine these details. Taking the size of the cannonball (in pounds), you get its diameter then multiply the diameter by 25 to get the distance of the gun ports from center to center. Multiply that by 6 and 6 1/2 to get the width and height of the gun ports, respectively. I drew out 4 sketches using different sized cannons to get the proper placement in relation to the painting. I also used similar formulas to determine the proper placement of the masts.



I am in the process of planking the model, but then I need to decide on several other particulars. Was she controlled by tiller steering or did the *Dash* have a wheel? There is also a question regarding the placement of the hatches since the *Dash* was initially built to be a merchant vessel. The rigging will be a challenge because we do know the *Dash* was converted from a



topsail brig to a hermaphrodite rig and a ringtail sail was added to the main mast to increase her canvas coverage by a third. Also, other details like the winches, binnacle, and other deck features need to be considered.

I have taken the advice of other model builders I conferred with and I am referring to plans of period ships of similar construction to come up with a consensus of what the *Dash* may have looked like. Since I will not be able to create an exact replica I hope to achieve as close a replica as possible so the public can get a feel for what it must have been like to sail on such an exceptional ship with close personal ties to Freeport. FHS



Don was born in Portland, Maine, the son of a commercial fisherman. After serving 4 years in the U.S. Coast Guard, Don pastored churches in Maine and New Hampshire. He built his

first ship in a bottle in 1968 while he was in high school. He has been building ship models for over 25 years. Don and his wife Deb now spend their time in semi-retirement in Mesa, Arizona and visit Freeport for the summer months.

## COLLECTIONS CORNER

We continue to receive and accept some wonderful items into the Freeport Historical Society's collections.



"Harraseeket Grange Bank" coin collection box in support of Freeport's Harraseeket Grange No. 9 and belonging to Hilda Gould. This collection box was part of the Grange's effort to raise funds to build a new hall, which was eventually accomplished in 1940 by converting Kilby's cattle barn on Elm Street.



Two items belonging to Ms. Mildred "Millie" Pettengill, courtesy of David Coffin. Ms. Pettengill gave David both the lap desk (with an accompanying wooden, straight-edge ruler and square magnifying glass) and a blue painted, dome-topped pine chest in 1961.

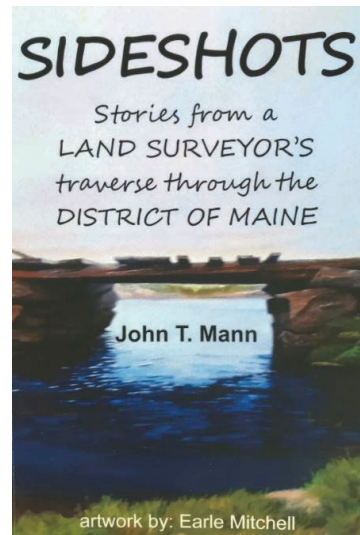


A silk two-piece wedding dress of Sarah Richardson Rogers (1873-1951). According to family history, Sarah's wedding dress was made from fabric Sarah's mother, Clemmie R. Dunning Richardson (1846-1891), brought back from the Philippines. Sarah married Ernest Rogers (1872-1935) on January 1, 1900.

# SIDESHOTS by John T. Mann

BOOK REVIEW BY KATHRYN SCHNEIDER SMITH

**A** NEW BOOK OFFERS A VIEW OF Maine today and in the past, and the connection between them, through the lens of a land surveyor. Anyone who knows the author, John T. Mann, knows he can tell a story. And they may know he can walk through the woods and find not only the cellar holes of dwellings from centuries ago but the overgrown roads that connected them; the differing qualities of old pastures, woodlots, orchards, and cultivated fields; and the animal ways to water and pasture etched in the landscape. He can read the land and connect that land to the stories about people that it holds. This book, *Sideshots: Stories from a Land Surveyor's traverse through the District of Maine*, invites you into his world.



*Sideshots* is available for purchase from the FHS for \$17.00 (plus tax and shipping). Please contact us at (207) 865-3170 to order your copy.

John Mann's ancestors came to the Flying Point area of Freeport with fellow Ulster Scots in the mid-1700s. His first book, *Ulster Scots on the Coast of Maine*, published by the St. Andrews Society of Maine in 2006, outlines the early history of this community, encouraged by English proprietors to come to the New England frontier because they had proved themselves fighters on contested borderlands in Scotland and again in Ireland. They would be on a frontier again, this time between French and Native American interests to the north and east and English interests to the south and west. They did it in return for land they could own and control, the bedrock of new freedoms that had eluded them in the old world. John has been a linchpin in the international research of the Maine Ulster-Scots Project, being carried out in collaboration with the Ulster Scots Agency in Belfast, Northern Ireland, resulting in the 2019 publication of *1718-2018: Reflections on 300 years of the Scots Irish in Maine*. His chapter in this book, "Relationship with the Land," reaffirms his thesis that, for this community,

freedom began with the opportunity to own land of one's own.

For John Mann, this history is intensely personal. It inspired his profession as a land surveyor. And as this book reveals, it made him a unique bridge between old and new ways of defining land ownership after changes he saw as revolutionary came to Freeport and the rest of Maine. For some readers, his critical take on these changes may be off putting; for me they opened a new way of understanding the tensions that opened between the old timers with deep roots in the community and people from away, of which I am one.

For John, the old ways were dying in the summer of 1973. The tradition of the Town Meeting in Freeport was replaced by an elected Town Council that "by-passed the yearly spectacle of neighbors joining neighbors during mud season for pie, coffee, gossip and a vote on the articles necessary to operate the town government for another year." It was also a time when the boundaries of land were determined often only by tradition and the memories and negotiated agreements of neighbors.

That all changed in the 1970s, John writes, when professional planners drew up land use ordinances with arbitrary parcel dimensions and created a regulatory process with permits that sometimes only developers could afford. While intending to "protect the rural nature of our town," in his eyes and those of other long-time residents, they were instead "destroying a harmony created from 300 years of sustainable stewardship of the land by those that relied on the land for their income, for access to the coastal waters and flats, and for the future use of their children and grandchildren." While this point of view may be hard to read for those involved in this change for what they saw as progress, it is enlightening and rare to hear the other side so well told.

John moved his own young family away from the Wolfe's Neck and Flying Point neighborhoods that had been in his family since the mid-1700s, away from the coastal areas under development, to "the back-country," where the old relationships between the land and the people persisted but were under threat from the new ways. There was a gap between the descriptions of land boundaries that were based on unrecorded traditions and the boundaries now being required based on public record and legislative action. John became a bridge between the old and the new ways, and as he tells his stories we hear about and from people whose lives seldom make it into print. We see some of them too in the remarkable drawings of Earle Mitchell, John's good friend since boyhood when the two grew up just one farm apart near the intersection of Wolf Neck and Flying Point Roads. "If we don't tell these stories, who will," Earle writes in the end.

The stories come to us with words spelled out in the Maine accent, and once you get the hang of it, that adds to their authenticity and appeal.



Author John T. Mann

Using the professional lingo of the surveyor, John uses the term sideshots, his book title, to take the reader beyond the immediate land issue at hand to the backstories of those involved. In the process we also learn the complexity of the land surveyors' expertise, and about John's unique approach so helpful to many.

Now retired as a surveyor, John continues his relationship with the land through his research in the history of his people and the places they have occupied and loved. And if you meet him, he will likely tell you a story. **FHS**

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