



Hodge School Reunion

An enthusiastic group attended the Hodge School Reunion sponsored by WHS last year. Guests arrived at the tiny school building with boisterous greetings and hugs and soon filled the space with lively conversations. Everyone enjoyed seeing familiar items and reviewing the signage added by the museum. The Hodge students contact list was put together by WHS members, with help from Henry and Dorothy Sainio and Ford Powell and about thirty-five resulted in contacts. Hodge School was built in Washington in 1864 and served the community for one-hundred years, closing in 1954. The structure was donated to Matthews Museum by Harlan and Evelyn Sidelinger and moved to Union Fairgrounds in 1978 to protect it from deterioration. Harlan, his father Burtelle, and all his children attended Hodge school.



Back row, sitting, Henry Sainio, standing: Dorothy Ripley Sainio, Harlean Sidelinger Jordan, Ford Powell, Dale Powell Brann, Kathrine Weaver Hutchins, Scott Sidelinger. Sitting at desks: Don Grinnell, David Sidelinger, Terry Kirkpatrick, Douglas Sidelinger.

Following the schoolhouse tour, visitors enjoyed refreshments in the main museum building. We thank Irene Hawes and George Gross of Matthews Museum and everyone who helped make this a truly enjoyable and memorable event.

Third Annual Open House – Save the Date

We're inviting everyone to come to our Third Annual Open House at Razorville Hall on Saturday, September 10, from 1 – 3 p.m. Meanwhile, put the date on your calendar so you don't miss the pie contest or the very popular antique appraisals by Larry Trueman. Exhibits, demonstrations, and more. Be sure to put September 10 on your calendar and watch for updates for open house at our museum.

WHS Ramp Project Completed



Shelley Eaton nods her approval of the ramp at WHS Open House

During the summer of 2015, the Historical Society built a ramp to make Razorville Hall, accessible.

The project was funded with a \$2000 grant from the Saxifrage Opportunity Grants Fund of the Maine Community Foundation at the recommendation of the Knox County Community advisors. The ramp was designed and constructed by All Aspects Builders owner Duane Vigue and meets all ADA criteria. Volunteer labor and materials were used as part of the in-kind requirement which included tree and brush removal and ground work. Many thanks Merton Moore for donating the fill and gravel, to Kendall and Michelle Jones, Jud Butterman, and Frank Campbell for their labor, and Don Grinnell for use of his tractor in site preparation.

Community Auction – first meeting April 12

Some ideas just ring the bell. To raise funds to continue improving Razorville Hall, our creative board came up with the idea of a community wide auction. After considerable thought and preparation, the First Annual Washington Community Auction took place August 8 at the Fire Station with Tom Johnston as auctioneer. Eleven local non-profit organizations presented ten items each for the auction along with a few silent auction items and articles for sale at individual tables. Each retained proceeds from the things they presented. Our webmaster and resident techie, Sandra Grinnell, compiled and publicized an auction preview of the outstanding offerings, which boosted interest.

WHS earned \$1640 on the live auction and \$222 on the silent auction. All the participating organizations did well and agreed to make this an annual affair. Want to be informed about the 2016 event? Or get involved? Please attend the early planning meeting Tuesday, April 12 at 7 p.m. Gibbs Library.



Youngsters on their decorated bikes listen ceremony last year.

Memorial Day Program

WHS will host a Memorial Day program Monday, May 30, 2016, starting with a coffee-and-muffins hour at 9 a.m. at the Bryant

Room. Every-one is invited to join in. At 9:45 a.m. children with bikes (decorated if you want to), veterans, and all will assemble at the Town Office parking lot and parade to the Village Monument. A fire truck will lead us and park at the monument to manage traffic during the ceremony. At 10 a.m. there will be a benediction, laying of a wreath, a musical selection, and more. Dave Martucci will read the Gettysburg Address, a tradition requested by Dr. Locero Gibbs (Gibbs Library benefactor) and carried out by Dave for 20 years or more. Please come share this holiday with us on May 30 !

Calendar Project

Washington theme calendars have sold out each year they've been offered. The idea came from brainstorming a couple of years ago and is proving to be a modest money-maker and a terrific public relations tool for WHS and our town. Each calendar page features a historic scene and a few ads from supporters along with local event notations. The original photos from the society's collection are not in color, so calendar photos are done in black and white or sepia which looks similar to them. Profits from the calendar have helped fund the roofing on Razorville Hall, the society's museum. The calendar team chooses a theme and carefully considers design, layout, cost, sponsorship, and distribution. Members work on soliciting ads and delivering them to sale venues. Members of the calendar team include Frank Campbell, Wendy Carr, Hazel Kopishke, Dale Brann, Liz Grinnell, Don Grinnell, Sandra Grinnell, Jud Buttermann, Rhoda Gamage, and Cheryl McKeary.



Wanted: Photos and Info Schools

WHS is researching Washington Schools. Send photos or stories about Branch, Mountain, McDowell, Ledge, West Washington, Razorville, Village, Hodge, Callamore Ridge, Hopkins, and Light to washingtonhistorical@gmail.com .

Razorville Hall Summer Events

Our board of directors has set the second Saturdays of June, July, August, and September to open Razorville Hall to visitors. The activities for each date are not confirmed yet, but plans include (June 11) a farm display with vintage tractors and animal-powered implements, (July 9) stone mason and blacksmith demonstrations, (August 13) home crafts such as spinning, hooking, braiding, knitting, butter churning, and (September 10) our annual Open House with antique appraisals, pie contest, and exhibits. Would you like to participate? have a skill to demonstrate? an antique machine to exhibit? Please contact Hazel at 845-2760 or Liz at 845-2377 to learn more about taking part. Everyone is urged to come by our museum on these open dates and see parts of our town's past on display. Check our website www.washingtonhistorical.org for updates.

Historical Society Meetings

Washington Historical Society meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Mt. Olivet Masonic Hall. Everyone is welcome to sit in, learn and share your questions and knowledge about Washington and its history. Membership is \$5 a year.



The venerable Hope Historical Society gave us generous approval and congratulations during their visit to our museum. Thank you!!

A Hero and Very Good Sport from Washington

Written by Victor Oboyski and Charlotte Henderson

Clyde Sukeforth is probably the most widely known name of any Washingtonite in our town's history. The man played Major League baseball. More importantly to his legacy, he was a baseball scout, and, as such, was instrumental in breaking the color barrier in the Major Leagues. A very big deal at the time.

Clyde Leroy Sukeforth was born here in Washington on November 30, 1901 to Pearl and Sarah (Grinnell) Sukeforth. His interest in baseball started at an early age. Clyde once said, "Oh, growing up in [the country] . . . there was nothin' else to do. I mean, there were two things you could do, you could take your ball and glove and play pass with the neighbor's kids, or you could dig a can of worms and go fishin'. No radio, no TV, so . . . we played and threw the ball seven days a week."

Clyde attended the Hodge School and Washington High (a two year school at the time), graduating in a class of four. He was tuitioned to Coburn Classical Institute in Oakland where he finished high school and, of course, played baseball.

After Coburn, Clyde signed on with the Great Northern Paper team in Millinocket. From there, he was offered an academic scholarship at Georgetown University and while there played baseball as a catcher and left fielder. In 1926, Clyde went to spring training with the Cincinnati Reds, was signed by them and farmed out briefly to the Nashua Millionaires of the Class B New England League.

Cincinnati recalled Clyde to the Reds and he had his best year in 1929 when, throwing right and batting left, he had a .354 batting average. Unfortunately, while hunting two years later, Clyde was accidentally shot in the face severely impairing his eyesight in one eye.

In 1932 Clyde was traded to the Brooklyn Dodgers as a backup catcher and, in 1935 he was assigned to manage a number of minor league teams including the Dodgers farm team, the Montreal Royals. In 1943, Dodgers president and general manager, Branch Rickey, hired Clyde as a coach. However, World War II had created a shortage of ball players so in 1945 Clyde played in eighteen games, batting a .294 in fifty-one at bats. He was 43 years old.



Rickey had heard about Jackie Robinson, a player in the Negro League. In August, 1945, Rickey instructed Clyde to bring Robinson in for an interview "if he looked good." In September, Robinson and Sukeforth met with Branch Rickey in his office.

Robinson signed with the Dodgers organization and began a two-year term with the Montreal Royals in the International League. Two years later Robinson was brought up to the Brooklyn Dodgers.

In 1947, Dodger manager, Leo Durocher, was suspended by Baseball Commissioner Happy Chandler. Rickey asked Clyde if he would fill in. Clyde agreed in order to get the season started. On opening day at Ebbets Field, April 15, 1947, interim Dodger manager Clyde Sukeforth put Jackie Robinson in the lineup to play the Boston Braves. When Robinson took the field that day as the first African-American ballplayer in the major leagues history was made. Later, Clyde was also instrumental in bringing Roy Campanella and Don Newcombe into the major leagues.

"Sukey," as he was sometimes called, later followed Branch Rickey to the Pittsburgh Pirates organization as a coach and scout. During this time, he recommended Roberto Clemente be drafted from the Dodgers farm team. Clemente went on to win 12 consecutive Gold Glove Awards for fielding excellence.

Clyde Sukeforth had a passion for baseball but eschewed a management career. Off-seasons and after his retirement in 1966 he returned to his farm in Waldoboro to tend his blueberries and grow trees. At home, he advocated for local youth baseball and freely gave time and talent in both Washington and Waldoboro.

While in Ohio back in 1934, Clyde met and later married Helen Porter Miller. Four years later, Clyde's wife passed away just two weeks after the birth of their daughter, Nancy. In 1951, he married Grethel Pitcher Winchenbach of Waldoboro who shared his life until just two years before he died. Clyde passed away on September 3, 2000 at age 99 and is buried in Waldoboro. Clyde was inducted into the Maine Baseball Hall of Fame, Sports Hall of Fame, and was a 75-year member of Mt Olivet Masonic Lodge here in Washington. A worth hero for any town!



l to r: Betty Grinnell, Clyde Sukeforth, Dorothy Sainio, Robert "Bo" Marks

Historic items donated

Many items with Washington provenance were donated this year. Washington Historical Society is very grateful to Bill Kahrman, Evelyn Brann, Betty Grinnell, Scott Sidelinger, the Hibbert Family (Dan, Rick, Eugene, Martha) and everyone who is helping make our museum authentic.

Washington Historical Society is a membership organization. Our focus is the gathering and preserving the history of Washington, Maine. Our membership dues are \$5 a year.

Please join us.

www.washingtonhistorical.org
washingtonhistorical@gmail.org

Washington Historical Society
P.O. Box 333
Washington, ME 04574-0333

Washington Village building lot for sale.

Nine-tenths of an acre close to the Town Office, Library and General Store, yet quiet and private. Mixture of woods and old pasture adjacent to large non-buildable lot. Test pit shows soils are suitable for a typical 3 bedroom home.

Contact: CATES REAL ESTATE UNION

Phone 207.701.5600 Rockland - 207.785.2000

info@catesre.com

Many thanks to:

*Debbie Anderson, Damariscotta Bank & Trust
Judith Brogden, Machias Savings Bank
David Flanagan, Viking Lumber
David Bryant, Hammond Tractor
Ken Keiran, Union Farm Equipment
The First, NA, Angie Powell*

*for generous donations to our
Razorville Hall roofing appeal.*

The “Come Fall” Annual Meeting will be held here in Washington on October 1, 2016. Come Fall is the name given to a joint meeting for members from all the historical societies in the midcoast area. A special time to share news, information, discoveries, and make friends. Details will be announced.



The 2015 Come Fall joint meeting of midcoast historical societies.

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Matt and Noah Curtis put the finishing touches on the roof of Razorville Hall last summer.

An accessibility ramp has been added to the structure where the window is in this photo. See story on Page 1.