Downeast Dispatch
Eastport for Pride

Quarterly Newsletter Summer 2004

Quarterly Highlights

July 18, 2004: EFP 3rd Birthday, Annual Meeting. Volunteers were honored for their work on the following committees: Design, Roberta Thompson; Economic Restructuring, Skylar Richardson; Organization, Don Dunbar; Promotions, Neil and Susan Teachout; Honorary, David Addison.

August 21, 2004: Planned Estate Giving, a discussion presented by Sidney S. Whelan Jr to area nonprofits on the importance of estate giving to a long-term fundraising plan and the potential role of a community foundation.

August 30, 2004: Architectural Tourism Trail talk by Roxanne Eflin and Judy Barrington, of Maine Preservation. Eflin and Barrington related their experiences in working with downtowns to attract visitors who enjoy historic architecture. Along with a slide show of architectural attractions, Eflin described the new Maine Architectural Trail map and guide. Eastport is one of the features in the Downeast Tour.

October 27, 2004: 4th Annual Maine Downtown Meeting. Auburn. 622-6345.

Tides Institute Embarks on "Model" Restoration Project

The Tides Institute hopes to serve as a model project for historic preservation, based on restoring its Bank Square building with oversight from Maine Preservation and reliance on restoration specialists.

Likening the project to the "preservation of a work of art," Tides Institute Director Hugh French notes, "The original architecture and details are what make the building historically valuable. You can't stray too far from what was originally there and remain an historic property."

Concepts and details for reconstruction are being submitted to Maine Preservation for its "seal of approval" and upcoming masonry work will be handled by Gerry Drake Masonry, a small company specializing in historic brick work. "Drake usually doesn't work outside Bangor, so we had to talk them into coming here," French says.

Masonry repairs and restoration are slated for January to March 2005, beginning on the building's north wall, with all work supported by engineering studies that will be completed this fall. Ultimately, the same meticulous approach will govern interior restoration to retain historic quality inside and out. Windows, wall surfaces and tin ceilings need work, French says, but are not yet on the restoration schedule. "Being true to the original intent is critical," he says. "We knew from the start that this would be a long-term project."

The Tides Institute & Museum of Art is committed to exploring and connecting the art and culture of the international Passamaquoddy region, an area rich in borderland

history. The institute's focus includes art, photography, architecture, and history and is shared with the community and beyond through exhibitions, workshops, publications, and website. To become a member, participate in workshops or contribute to acquisitions or funding, phone 207/853-4047. The building fund especially invites donors to "buy a brick" for $5 or more. www.tidesinstitute.org.

"Past and Present" Exhibit Contrasts Eastport Scenes

Hundreds have been warmed and informed by the "Past and Present" photo exhibit, created by local photographer Don Dunbar, which opened during July 4th Old Home Week and ran through Sept. 12 at Eastport for Pride's downtown office.

The exhibit featured historic photographs of Eastport scenes juxtaposed against pictures taken this past summer. "I took the old photographs and walked around town to locate the exact same scene," Don said, describing how he achieved the past to present contrast. Sometimes finding the location wasn't easy and took some detective work, proving even the most familiar scene, dressed up with different signs, colors, and people, can be a whole new experience.

The photographs were presented on remnants of an old weir, symbolizing the history of Eastport's sardine industry. Don, an EFP Organization Committee member, created both the photographic and presentation themes and also constructed the weir display himself. In preparing for the exhibit, he obtained historic photographs from The Tides Institute, the Barracks Museum, and Ruth McInnis of The Todd House, and then digitally re-mastered those too fragile to display.

"This was a wonderful exhibit to have for Old Home Week," said EFP Director Lora Whelan. "So many people came in who have long ties to Eastport. Grandparents would point out to their grandchildren where they used to work and live." Visitors new to Eastport marveled at the changes that have happened over the years, from the havoc wrought by the 1886 fire to the rise and decline of the sardine industry.

Exhibit photographs also are on Don's website (www.easternmaineimages.com) and in the EFP Design Resource Book.

Down Town Real Estate Opportunities

Eastport's historic downtown has undergone many positive changes recently. Building owners have taken advantage of the façade program. The results are evident in the bright paint and newly pointed masonry. Six new stores have opened, with owners of new and existing businesses reporting a very satisfactory summer. While the weather was gloomy, the visitors to our area have not been put off. Here at our Eastport for Pride office, we've been enjoying the flow of residents and visitors, telling them about the historic district, the city as a whole, and the beauty of the surrounding area. As the popular quote goes: "We came to visit Eastport and never left." Many visitors feel the same draw. Residents certainly do.

Owning an historic building has its challenges and rewards. Our Economic Restructuring committee is here to help. We can provide you with rent and utility averages, contact information for insurance companies, banks, and contractors, and the retail "wish list" tabulated in our 2003 Common Ground Survey. The rewards are all

around us. Visit our downtown building and business owners on site to find out about their experiences.

Important components of owning an historic building are the building codes and ordinances that guide your use and renovation decisions. Eastport's code enforcement officer and historic review board are valuable resources. In fact, there are a multitude of resources available to anyone interested in the downtown buildings and the City as a whole. They include our office, the City office, The Tides Institute and Art Museum, the Historical Society and Barracks Museum, the Maine Downtown Center, Maine Preservation, the Maine State Preservation Office, National Main Street Center and National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Leavitt, Trefry buildings. $85,000 per unit. Contact any area realtor.
74-80 Water St. $219,000. Due East. 207-853-2626.
WaCo Diner. $350,000. Spinnaker Realty. 207-853-2777.
Beckett building. Due East.
Blue Iris, 31 Water St. $325,000. Due East.
American Can Company building. $505,000. Bold Coast Realty, 207-733-4344.

Volunteer Profile

Soon after arriving in Eastport in mid-April of 2004, Leasa Garvin saw an appeal for volunteers on the Eastport for Pride website. "Both my husband Mike and I were drawn to Eastport's historic downtown," she explained, "and I always do volunteer work."

For thirteen years, Leasa taught graphic arts and printing at the Oxford Hills Technical School in Norway, Maine. Since joining EFP she has used her experience to work on the layout of the newsletter and brochure.

What's her favorite place in Eastport? Raye's Mustard Mill, where she works full time. "It's filled with history," she says with great enthusiasm.