Downeast Dispatch
Eastport for Pride

Quarterly Newsletter Winter 2005

Quarterly Highlights

Nominate your favorite volunteers at the fourth annual "**I Love Easport**" dinner. Each of your nominees will receive a dinner ticket. Our dinner will be held at the new location of the Eastport Arts Center on Washington Street, Monday, **February 14**, 2005, 5:30 p.m. where your nominees will be presented with a certificate and flower. Help celebrate our volunteer community and how they make a difference! Dinner tickets are available for a $6 donation through the EFP office. 853-2400.

We are proud of our volunteers at EFP and will be profiling them monthly. Watch our office windows!

And speaking of volunteers… Did/do you own a business or work in the hospitality industry? If yes, you are perfect for our economic restructuring committee. Like to make a party happen? Promotions is your cake in the making. Love a good downtown planter, a beautiful window display, or architecture, call our design committee. Or are you the "behind-the-scenes" type? Our organization committee has many different projects that promote EFP, including this newsletter. Give us a call at 853-2400!

New and Noteworthy Downtown

Eastport Antiques, 66 Water St., features 13 vendors and 7 artists. "We feature an eclectic mix of antiques, collectibles, art and interesting 'junque' selling anywhere from a dime to $3000," says Will Bradbury, co-owner with wife Lisa. After doing a brisk business in the summer and fall, the pace has slowed for the winter but "fills a niche for the locals," says Will. To make things even more interesting, **every Saturday is indoor yard sale day**. Bring in those boxes packed away in the cellar. If you love browsing yard sales, this is the place to be on Saturday mornings.

Rose Garden Antiques, 9 Dana St. has **added a coffee shop** to their antiques business. From 8 am to 6 pm customers can sit at the counter or relax at a table and have coffee, tea, muffins or biscotti and enjoy entertainment on Friday nights from 7 pm to 9 pm. Owners Al and Linda Salerolli continue the renovation of the 12,000 sq. foot building, including handicapped accessible restrooms. The Salerolli's plans for the future include "Rose Garden Shoppes," an indoor mall of stores and services. They would also like to expand their refreshments to include beer, wine and bistro food. "Come in and give us your opinion" says Al."

Two downtown businesses have new owners. Frank and Mary DiMarco sold Frank's Pizza to Marilu Scott. Renamed **Bank Square Pizza,** it features old favorites and "our 'Mexcetera' section of the menu with authentic Mexican-style food," says Marilu. While having been in the United State for over thirty years, Marilu was born in San Miguel, and raised in Mexico City. **La Sardina Loca** was purchased by long-time employee Dorothy Perkins from Chuck and Val Maggiani. Featuring an extensive menu, recent specials featured scallops, showing how "Tex-Mex" can meet Maine.

93 Water St., home to Eastport for Pride, was purchased by Cynthia and Michael Morse of southern Maine. The Morse's immediate plans include repairing the upstairs apartment for summer rental. Cynthia and Michael are both involved in the arts. "We are excited about becoming part of the Eastport arts community," Cynthia says, "and plan to move permanently to Eastport in four years."

Building Profile: The Eastport Customs and Post Office

Downtown Eastport is on the National Register of Historic Places for good reason. The majority of buildings were designed in 1887 by architect Mr. H. A. Black. "Downtown Eastport is close to being unique in the uniformity of its downtown buildings," comments Lora Whelan, director of Eastport for Pride. Because of the harmonious design lines of the brick buildings, the granite construction of the Eastport Customs and Post Office building stands out as the gateway building to the Washington Street entrance to the downtown. "It's an imposing building, elegant and serious," Whelan says, "but at the same time, it welcomes us to the heart of the city."

The current structure, owned by USPS, was built in 1890-91 to replace the spacious and substantial government building constructed in 1849 and destroyed in the great fire of 1886. Over the years the building has suffered from the maritime climate, and restoration is now in full swing. Workers from Atlantic Builders of Surry began work in September. According to Postmaster Jon Cook, the project includes replacing all the windows, removing mold, mildew and asbestos, re-pointing the exterior and replacing two cracked steps at the street entrance. Since the building leaked in the tower, new wallboard is being hung. The work is expected to be completed in August, 2005. "It's not a complete fix, but it's a good start," Cook comments.

Fond memories of the post office are held by many. Former Postmaster J. Roland Mitchell remembers that he could see the post office from the kitchen window of the house he was born in. "We could see the flags raised by the weather bureau on the roof of the post office. Flags designated the bad storms expected, warnings to the fishermen off town that they had better seek shelter from high winds." Mr. Mitchell recalls the granite stairs to the 2nd floor, the iron stairs to the 3rd floor and the wooden steps to the roof to raise the flags. The best memories, however, "were the men and women I worked with and for, and the people you befriend as a mailman."

Eastport City Manager Opens EFP Speaker Series on Revitalization

City Manager Bud Finch took the lead as the first speaker in a series of talks by community leaders and contributors to Eastport's revitalization at Eastport for Pride's January Board meeting.

" Eastport is in the greatest transition since the fire of 1886," Finch said, citing dependency on outside investors and single-focus projects for "many false starts to the city's economic development from the 1960s on."

"Now people are saying, we have to do it ourselves, and there's a sense of ownership in the development process," Finch said. "There's also a healthy diversity ranging from aquaculture to tourism."

Finch credited Eastport for Pride with "playing a big role in revitalization" and also cited local investments in downtown buildings and businesses as instrumental in restoring a sense of vibrancy to the historic city center.

City government also is taking a key leadership role, Finch noted, adding that the current level of city involvement in economic recovery is a crucial element that was missing from past efforts.

Downtown, the city has purchased the old A&P building. Building rehabilitation will be conducted by Wright-Pierce Engineering and Orcutt Associates, the same engineering/design firms that are handling streetscape improvements. The rehabilitation goal is a building that offers marketable space and is visually consonant with the surrounding historic structures.

"The A&P will be a real anchor to the downtown for this end of Water Street," Finch said. "And by blending it with surrounding architecture, it will make an eye-pleasing entry to the downtown."

The public is encouraged to attend future talks on revitalization at EFP's monthly Board meetings. Watch for announcements regarding who and when at the EFP Office, 93 Water St., and in the Quoddy Tides.

"City Manager Bud Finch was the perfect speaker to kick-off our 2005 discussion series," said Lora Whelan, director of Eastport for Pride. "He set the stage with a comprehensive look at the economic status of Eastport and the range of projects taking place now and planned for the future. For the rest of the series we will have speakers who will share their area of expertise and their individual projects."