

City of Ships

Issue 6

City of Bath Newsletter

Winter 2010

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Municipal Meetings:

For holiday changes and additional meetings, please see the calendar on www.cityofbath.com

- City Council—1st Wednesdays, 6:00 pm, City Hall, Council Chambers
- Planning Board—1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 6:00 pm, City Hall, Council Chambers
- Community Forestry—1st Wednesdays, 6:00 pm, City Hall, Basement Conference Room
- Community Development Committee—2nd Thursdays, 4:00 pm, City Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room
- Zoning Board of Appeals—1st Mondays as needed, 7:00 pm, City Hall Basement Conference Room

Did you know? The City Treasurer's Office has two drop boxes for customers who do not want to wait in line, or cannot make office hours. One is located inside City Hall on the first floor, and the other is outside on the north side entrance of the building. We hope this will help customers pay their property taxes or other City bills with ease.

City of Bath & RSU1 Join Forces for Morse High School Mentor Program

Morse High School recently launched a mentor program with students and City staff. The initial idea came from *Project 95*, a committee made up of school and community members that works to keep students in school. The name of the group, *Project 95*, refers to the goal of a 95 percent graduation rate.

Mr. William Shuttleworth, Superintendent of RSU1, suggested developing a program for high school students using mentors from organizations in the City and the committee agreed that the first partnership in this program could be City of Bath employees. Two City of Bath employees serve on the *Project 95* committee: Police Chief Michael Field and Assistant Recreation Director Peter Bingham.

"Positive adult role models are essential to the lives of our kids," says Shuttleworth. "The opportunity of getting to know police officers, fire fighters, and other city workers as real people engages our students in meaningful relationships that can only help them better define their futures. I am so proud that the employees in this great city see the power of mentoring."

This past November, Chief Field and Mr. Ross Berkowitz, Assistant Principal, met with City Manager William Giroux about the program. The City Manager was very supportive and gave the go ahead to develop it.

City employees have responded well, with 15 employees signed up. They represent nearly every department in the City including the Manager's office, Public Works, Police, Fire, Wastewater, Recreation, and Finance. "We are really excited to collaborate with the school department on such a worthwhile program and look forward to making a positive impact on the lives of our community's youth," says Bingham.

Mentors will receive training and guidance from Program Coordinator and Guidance Counselor, Mark Carignan, and then will be matched with a Morse High School student.

The individual matches will meet weekly for lunch and activities and the program may expand to include group activities.

The Mentoring Program with Morse High School and the City of Bath will give the students a chance to get to know their community and see how important education is to their futures.



(Top) Steve Balboni, Juli Millett, Chief Michael Field, Ross Berkowitz, (Bottom) Peter Owen, Erika Benson, Carolyn Lockwood, Susan Hunt, and Chris Wallace.

City of Bath Commonly Called Numbers:

| | |
|---|----------|
| Animal Control. | 443-5563 |
| Assessor's Office. | 443-8336 |
| Bath Area Family YMCA. | 443-4112 |
| Bath Community TV. | 443-8387 |
| Bath Skatepark. | 443-8900 |
| Bath Train Station. | 442-7371 |
| Bath Water District. | 443-2391 |
| Cemeteries | 443-8345 |
| Southern Midcoast Chamber of Commerce. | 725-8797 |
| City Clerk's Office. | 443-8332 |
| City Manager's Office. | 443-8330 |
| City Planner's Office. | 443-8363 |
| Codes Office. | 443-8334 |
| Community Development Office. | 443-8372 |
| Finance Dept. | 443-8338 |
| Fire Dept. | 443-5034 |
| General Assistance. | 443-8335 |
| Landfill. | 443-8356 |
| Main Street Bath. | 442-7291 |
| Maintenance Dept. | 443-8365 |
| Parks and Recreation Dept. | 443-8360 |
| Police Dept. | 443-5563 |
| Public Works Dept. | 443-8357 |
| Sagadahoc County Courthouse. | 443-8200 |
| Treasurer's Office. | 443-8340 |
| U.S. Post Office, Bath. | 443-9778 |
| West Bath District Courthouse. | 442-0200 |

Information about municipal happenings such as meetings, new construction projects, changes at the landfill, or clean up days, are published in the local newspapers and advertised on Bath Community Television. You can also find up-to-date information on the City of Bath's website at www.cityofbath.com or by calling the appropriate department.



Bath's Cemeteries & Parks staff: (left to right) Joyce Collins, Paul Breton, Corey Wallace, Corey Coutu, Josh Rollins, Cecil Gilliam, Tenlee Delano, Colt Carter, Edward Doyle II, Darren Delano, Lincoln Adams, Letha Bennett, Marc DelMastro, Tom Hoerth, Kevin Karbonek, Craig Cunningham, Michael Harvey, Thomas Valentine

Department Spotlight:

Cemeteries & Parks Division

Bath's cemeteries and parks have long been noted for their beauty. The City continues to support maintenance and improvements to beautify these landscapes.

Trufant Burial Ground, on the corner of Spring and Middle Sts., is the oldest burial ground within the city limits. The oldest headstone bears the date November 12, 1795. It covers less than an acre and has not been used for at least a half century. A slate head-stone marks the grave of David Trufant, a naval officer on the Kennebec River during the Revolutionary War, who died December 14, 1813. The second oldest cemetery is at the corner of Dummer and Beacon Sts., known as the Dummer Sewall Burial Ground where the remains of Col. Dummer Sewall, who died at the age of 94, are marked by a granite shaft ten feet in height.

In 1800, Bath purchased the estate of Hetherly Foster, to be used as burial grounds. The estate of Joshua Philbrook, was also purchased by the City and Bath's first municipal cemetery was established. In 1839 and 1849, additional land was purchased from William D. Sewall. These nine acres are known as Maple Grove and is filled with beautiful maple and ornamental trees, carriageways, and footpaths. Many prominent men are buried here, such as Maine's first Governor, William King; and the Davenport, Houghton, McLellan, and Patten.

Further north, located on upper High St., is Calvary Cemetery, opened by St. Mary's Catholic Church and given over to the Cemetery Department in 1983.

Bath's largest cemetery, Oak Grove, on Oak Grove Avenue, was purchased from Charles Sewall by the City in 1872. It is a garden cemetery with ponds, pathways, ornamental trees, and a notable collection of memorial art. John H. Ramsay was the superintendent from 1883 to 1897 and was responsible for the garden design.

Some of the notable monuments located in Bath's cemeteries include the Soldier's Monument and Cannon; the Drake, Hyde, Morse and Kimball-Shaw Mausoleums; and the Firemen's Monument. The tomb of Madame Emma Eames, the famous opera singer, can be found in Oak Grove Cemetery.

The Cemeteries & Parks Division, of the Bath Parks and Recreation Division, under the direction of Steve Balboni, has four year-round employees and approximately fourteen seasonal employees who work very hard maintaining the historic grounds. The Cemeteries & Parks Division is responsible for all burials and maintenance within city cemeteries (approximately one hundred fourteen acres) as well as maintenance of the City Park, Waterfront Park, South End Park, Water Street Park, Train Station Park, two boat launch facilities, several monument parks and

continued on page 5



April 1 Deadline for Tax Reduction Programs

You may be eligible for exemptions that can save you money on your property taxes! But keep in mind, the deadline to apply is April 1. An exemption reduces the taxable value of your property by the stated amount; the amount of reduction in taxes depends upon the annual mill rate (tax per \$1,000 of value).

Homestead Exemption: The homestead exemption reduces your taxable valuation by up to \$10,000 in 2010. To be eligible, you must be a Maine resident, your Bath home must be your primary residence, and you must have owned a home in Maine for at least one year. In recent years, the homestead exemption has been \$13,000. *The State Legislature reduced the exemption to \$10,000 this year, which will mean those with existing homestead exemptions are likely to see a tax increase of about \$50-\$60 this year.*

Veteran's and Veteran's Family Exemptions: Veterans who are over age 62, and spouses or parents of deceased veterans, are eligible for a reduction of up to \$6,000 in the taxable value of their property. To be eligible, the veteran must have served during a "federally recognized war period" or one of the Gulf Wars, or have become totally disabled during active service. Paraplegic veterans or their spouses are eligible for a larger exemption. Applications must include documentation of military service dates, such as a DD214 form.

Blind Exemption: Blind residents are eligible for an exemption of up to \$4,000. The application must be accompanied by a doctor's statement.

For more information and applications for these programs, you may contact the Assessor's Office (443-8336), or go to www.cityofbath.com/bath_assessor.html or www.maine.gov/revenue/forms/homepage.html (Property Taxes section).

"Current Use" programs conserve undeveloped lands, save on taxes: The State of Maine offers several incentive programs for landowners with woodlands, farms, working waterfronts and undeveloped lands. These programs reduce your tax liability by valuing your land based on its current use rather than on market value. It is important to remember that each program has specific requirements, limitations, and penalties for withdrawal that should be carefully considered before applying. Each year, the deadline for application to these programs is April 1.

Tree Growth: The Tree Growth program requires a minimum of 10 acres, and a written management plan designed by a licensed forester. Areas of hardwood, softwood, and mixed wood are identified and the value of these acres is set annually by the state. Current acreage rates range from \$276-\$370. There are penalties if land is withdrawn from the Tree Growth program. For more information, contact the Maine Forest Service's Be Woods Wise program (800-367-0223, or <http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/woodswise/growth.html>).

Farmland: Land in the Farmland program is valued based on its use for agricultural purposes. Enrollment in the Farmland program requires a minimum of 5 acres, and the farmland so

protected must contribute annual income (including value of products consumed by the owner) of \$2,000 in at least one of the 2 or 3 of the 5 years preceding an application. There is a penalty if land is withdrawn from the Farmland program. For more information, call Stephanie Gilbert at the Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources at (207) 287-7520.

Working Waterfront: "Working waterfront land" means a parcel or portion of a parcel of land abutting tidal waters or located between the

high and low water mark the use of which is more than 50% related to *providing access* to or in support of the conduct of commercial fishing activities. The taxable valuation of land enrolled in the program is reduced by 10% to 50%. There is a penalty for withdrawing land from the program.

Open Space: To be eligible for the Open Space program, land must be preserved or restricted in use to provide a public benefit, such as conserving scenic resources, preserving wildlife or wildlife habitat, or enhancing public recreation opportunities. Generally, the value reduction in the program ranges from 20% to 95% of market value, depending on the extent of protection from future development and on whether or not the land owner allows reasonable (daytime, non-motorized and non-destructive) public access to the Open Space property. There is a penalty for withdrawing land from the program.

Maine Revenue Services has provided guidance on the requirements for each of these programs. The Assessor's office provides links to these applications and information on our website: http://www.cityofbath.com/bath_assessor.html ("Current Use" Land Valuation).

2009 Tax Reduction Statistics

| Exemption Statistics | Number |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Homestead exemptions | 2012 |
| Veterans related exemptions | 294 |
| Blind exemptions | 7 |
| Parsonage exemptions | 6 |
| Current Use Properties | Acreage |
| Open Space | 25.82 |
| Farmland | 204.50 |
| Tree Growth | 188.13 |

Citizen Involvement Day Awards for 2009



The **Lifetime Spirit Award** was presented to **Martha Farrington Huotari Mayo** for her dedication to education, preservation, music and celebration of the community. Her good humor and enthusiasm are infectious and have caused countless people to become involved in many local projects.

Evelyn "Evie" Smith was the recipient of this year's **Citizen of the Year Award** for her dedication to the Bath community. She is a fixture at the Soup Kitchen, helps elders with physical therapy, knits mittens for schoolchildren, and many, many other deeds which she does without any need for recognition. She's Bath's quiet angel.



The **Community Project Award** was given to the **Help-A-Kid** program, founded by Superintendent William Shuttleworth. The program provides after-

school activities for more than 250 RSU1 students who would otherwise go home to empty houses or are not able to afford the many opportunities that are offered.



Robert Jordan was presented with the **Community Spirit Award** for his numerous contributions to The Park—the Teen Center, the Theater, and the Skate Park—and for his extraordinary dedication to his students at Morse High School.

The **Youth Award** was given to **Kean McDermott**, a senior at Morse High School. A student member or both the Bath Planning Board and RSU1 Board of Directors, as well as many other local activities, Kean exemplifies citizen involvement leading by example.



Photography by Heather Perry ©2009

Don't Forget to Shovel Your Sidewalk

With winter here, the City of Bath reminds owners and occupants of properties in the downtown of the ordinance that requires them to clear the sidewalks in front of their properties following a storm. The ordinance requires that sidewalks be cleared of snow within 4 hours of the end of a storm during the day Monday through Saturday, or by 10 a.m. the following morning if a storm ends during the night. The ordinance specifies that sidewalk clearing need not be done on Sunday. The ordinance also requires that ice be removed from sidewalks, or treated with salt and/or sand "to render the sidewalk a safe and convenient place for foot travelers," and that any large icicles hanging over the sidewalk be removed from buildings. The ordinance is available online at: www.cityofbath.com/clerk_documents_area40.html, (click on "Streets" and then scroll down to snow removal), or at the Codes Office, where a map is located showing the area covered by the ordinance. People with questions are encouraged to call the City Codes Enforcement Officer, Scott Davis at 443-8334.

TRIAD has Sand for Seniors

Merrymeeting Bay TRIAD has started a new program this year to provide senior and disabled citizens in Brunswick, Harpswell and Sagadahoc County with five-gallon buckets of sand at no charge. Lowe's and Home Depot have donated the buckets. In Bath, those in need should call Bath Police Officer, Jason Aucoin at 443-5563, extension 212, and he will deliver the sand.

If you are able to haul your own sand, Bath residents of any age can fill one 5-gallon bucket per storm at no charge. Pick up the sand at the south entrance to the Public Works building at 450 Oak Grove Avenue. It's in an outdoor bunker and is accessible 24/7.

Merrymeeting TRIAD is a coalition of police, fire, rescue departments, the Attorney General's office, senior services and seniors in the community to reduce criminal risks to the senior population.



Washington Street Bump-outs



What is that doorway doing along Washington Street next to Bath Iron Works' large, green Assembly Building? It is intended to represent architectural elements that would have been found on buildings that were in this area in the mid-1800s.

According to Historic Consultant and Planning Board member Robin Haynes: "The Greek-

Revival style, a major element in the historic landscape of Bath, inspired this replica doorway. The mid-19th century style for grand and modest homes, using strong geometric lines, wide trim, and bold moldings, thrived in the expanding community during the boom years of wooden shipbuilding in the mid-19th century. By crossing over its threshold to the past, a very different shoreline for the Kennebec River would appear, one dotted with many shipyards, wharves, and houses with Greek Revival doorways."

Another bump-out contains a large anchor similar to the ones used on the ships that are built at BIW. One last bump-out will have a cannon, dredged from the Kennebec River, mounted on it.

The idea for these features is included in the City's 2002 *South End Urban Design Plan*. The plan recommends: "install a series of focal points at the end of the streets leading into the green building. These could take the form of arcs, traditional shed roofed buildings, or other structures. They should be designed to establish a visual relationship with both the green building and the scale of the pedestrian." All of the bump-outs will be finished by the Public Works Department and landscaped by the Parks and Recreation Department in the spring.

HISTORY LESSON (continued from page 8)

as the business district reached out into the river where many wharves had jutted out into the water, and finally, the downtown we know today. Crisscrossed with bridges, Front Street was a very different great street two hundred years ago. And it is just one of the great stories of the City of Bath.

Want to know more? Consider reading Henry Owen's *History of Bath* or P. L. Pert's *Summary History of Bath, Maine 1850 to 1990*.

Contributed by Robin A.S. Haynes, Bath resident and historian.

CEMETERIES (continued from page 2)

other city-owned properties (approximately thirty acres).

In the winter months when the cemeteries are closed, deceased are interred in the cemetery receiving vault to be held until weather permits burial in the spring.

Seasonal employees leave in November and two permanent field personnel help with servicing and repairing department equipment and for the Public Works Department on an as needed basis, assisting with sanding, plowing and snow removal. The foreman, Craig Cunningham, divides his time between entombments, budget preparation, map updates and other subsidiary duties and planning for the Cemeteries & Parks Division.

The Cemeteries & Parks Division generates substantial revenue for the city with the sale of lots, burials, foundations, work orders, park rental fees, liner sales, entombments, genealogy, sale of wood, etc.

2009 Cemeteries & Parks Improvements

- A new bridge dedicated to John C. "Jack" Hart, Jr., was installed over the railroad tracks of Oak Grove Cemetery connecting the "Southside."
- Improved waterline in Southside Cemetery.
- The Library Park Gazebo had renovations, including cobblestone around walkways and spraying of the roof.
- A new 80' aluminum flagpole donated by the Veterans of Foreign Wars and installed at the City Library Park.
- The City Park pond was drained, dredged and refilled.
- The Waterfront Park bathrooms had complete renovations, i.e. new walls, floors, ceilings, toilets, sinks and dispensers.
- South End Park has a new pier & new benches.
- The seasonal crew reset 90 monuments in Oak Grove.
- Doorway for Washington St bump-outs was completed.

The Cemeteries & Parks Division hopes to restore the ponds and bridge (now gone) in Oak Grove as soon as funding is available.

Contributed by Letha Bennett, Administrative Assistant for the Bath Cemeteries and Parks department.



Send us your snaps! Help Main Street Bath show off Bath at it's best by showing us what you love about winter. 1st place will receive a \$25 Gift of Bath gift certificate. Judges will consider the following

while reviewing entries: Photo must be taken in Bath; shots that include people and downtown are desired; must be seasonal/holiday themed. Artistic Quality: Beauty is in the eye of the beholder...or in this case, the judges. Email submission to: Main Street Bath (kurtfrost@visitbath.com) with the subject of WINTER PHOTO CONTEST. Deadline is February 28th.

Send file as JPEG that is 1 – 4MBs. Max. 2 photos.

All entries are subject for use by the City of Bath or Main Street Bath.

Main Street Bath to Welcome Visitors

In early 2010, Main Street Bath will take on management of the Bath Visitors' Information Center at the Bath Railroad Station. For the past two years, the visitors' center was run by the Southern Midcoast Maine Chamber of Commerce (SMMC), but with the Main Street Bath office located at the Station, it is now possible to keep the visitor's center open for longer hours year-round. SMMC helped immensely during the establishment of the visitors' center, and counted 13,000 visitors between Memorial Day and October 25th, 2009. With the increase in hours and greater visibility of the new flag poles and signage, we anticipate over 20,000 visitors to the center in 2010.

So You Think You Know Bath IV

Bath's own quiz show returns for it's fourth year on March 26 from 6-9pm at the Winter Street Center, 880 Washington St. Join the audience as we challenge the experts and stump the unready with questions about Bath's history, recent and not so recent...but no calling out the answers! Local cuisine and cash bar. Proceeds benefit Main Street Bath. Advance tickets will be available in February at the Main Street Bath office and other downtown locations. FMI call 442-7291 or www.visitbath.com.

Winter Farmers' Market

Every first and third Saturday January through April from 9am - 12 noon.

Located indoors at the UCC (United Church of Christ) at 150 Congress St., not far from Roger's Hardware, but on the opposite side of the road. Market products will include cow and goat cheese, eggs, poultry, goat and beef products, apples and cranberries, baked yummys, fresh bread and fresh organic milk.

FMI visit www.bathfarmersmarket.com.

Bath in the News

During the summer, the Bath Tourism Committee, Main Street Bath and the Maine Maritime Museum collaborated on the creation of a press kit and FAM (familiarization) tour to entice travel writers to the city. In late September, five travel writers from publications including *The Boston Globe*, *Portland, Yankee* and *DownEast Magazines* were hosted in Bath's gracious inns, treated by Bath restaurants, and taken on tours of the Maine Maritime Museum, the Kennebec River Lighthouses, BIW, Oak Grove Cemetery, downtown artists' studios, and Washington Street's historic homes.

To date, at least four articles have been published as a result of this outreach effort—in *The Boston Globe*, *Maine Sunday Telegram*, *Portland Magazine*, and *The Times-Record*—and others are in the works for the winter and spring of 2010, when *Maine* magazine will do a "48 hours" feature in March and *DownEast Magazine* will publish a special section in the May "Vacation Planner" issue about Bath.

Bath has also been featured on television several times as a result of the American Planning Association's designation of Front Street as a Great Street in America. These videos and the above-mentioned articles can be viewed on the Main Street Bath website: www.visitbath.com.

Main Street Bath's 2010 Downtown Events Calendar

March 11-17—Bath Blarney Days

March 26—So You Think You Know Bath IV

May 1—Mayfair

June-September 5-8pm—Third Friday Art Walks
visit www.fiveriversartsalliance.org

July 2-5—Bath Heritage Days

October 9—Autumnfest

Nov 6—Bath Early Bird Sale 6-9am

Nov 27—Jingle Bell Walk and Visit with Santa

Throughout December

Old Fashioned Christmas in Bath

Dec 18—Downtown Holiday Open House

Dec 31—noon Paul Revere Bell Ringing

FMI 442-7291 or www.visitbath.com



Community Focus: *Maine's First Ship*

Following a decree by King James I, 100 English men landed at the mouth of the Kennebec River in August of 1607 and built a small settlement. They were unsuccessful in their hopes of finding profitable trade with the natives for timber, furs and valuable minerals, and could not endure the long, cold Maine winter. Half of the colonists left a few months later, but remaining men struggled to survive until spring. This small colony constructed the *Virginia*, a small 30-ton pinnace—the first English ship built in North America.

In 1997, a group of local residents created the non-profit Maine's First Ship organization to reconstruct the vessel, to demonstrate the birth of Maine's shipbuilding industry and to promote greater understanding of early European exploration and settlement of Maine.

The primary goal of Maine's First Ship is to educate. In partnership with the Maine Maritime Museum, hundreds of children from local schools are learning about the area's maritime traditions in a hands-on way via a curriculum aligned with the Maine Learning Results. All grade levels will benefit from lesson plans during con-

struction and planning of the ship. Much of the student work will be integrated into the Expeditionary Learning Program at the Bath Middle School, the Seniors Project program at Morse High School and in the Bath Regional

Vocational program.

Once construction is completed students will take part in a program that teaches skills associated with operating a traditionally-rigged sailing vessel, such as practical seamanship, sail theory, navigation and communication.

In a recent editorial in *The Times-Record*, Fred Hill writes, "We believe the ship would galvanize maritime studies within our schools and community and be a noble link to the great work at Bath Iron Works as it builds the mighty ships that protect the country."

To get involved with Maine's First Ship please visit their website at www.mainesfirstship.org or call Sharon Drake at 751-0581.

Community Focus will feature an area non-profit in each issue. If you would like to share information about your group please contact Carolyn Lockwood at 443-8330 or clockwood@cityofbath.com.



The model of the pinnace, Virginia, is currently on exhibit in the auditorium in City Hall.

Bath Blarney Days

March 11 – 17



The City of Ships will become the City of the Irish for one week in March. Celebrate the Green!

Thursday, March 11th

- Lecture on the history of the Irish in Bath by Robin A. S. Haynes at the Winter Street Center at 7pm.

Friday, March 12th

- Banners over Bath will be

unveiled and a reception with Irish music will be held at City Hall starting at 5pm.

- Merchants will stay open until 9pm for a Moonlight Madness sale (the later you shop the better the discounts).

Saturday, March 13th

- Fun Run (1 mile) and Shamrock Sprint (5k) benefiting Morse High School's Project Graduation.
- The 2nd Annual St Patrick's Day Parade
- Tug-o-War Blarney Challenge

Sunday, March 14th

- Irish Family Sing-along, Byrnes Irish Pub, 5-7pm

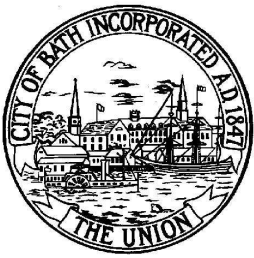
Monday, March 15th

- Irish Seisiun, Musicians Welcome, Byrnes Irish Pub, 7-9pm

Tuesday, March 16th

- Classic Irish-themed movie at the Winter Street Center.

Other events will include Bath Trolley and antique fire engine rides, Irish music downtown, free admission to the Bath YMCA during the weekend to anyone wearing green, a coloring contest, bagpipers, and an all day celebration on **Wednesday, March 17th** with food, drink, and Irish music at Byrnes' Irish Pub. More activities are being planned so mark your calendars now for Bath Blarney Days! FMI call Main Street Bath at 442-7291 or www.visitbath.com.



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Bath, ME 04530

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Detail of 1858 map, City of Bath, Courtesy of Sagadahoc History and Genealogy Room, Patten Free Library

Bath's Original Central Business District

Shaw's Point—site of today's City Hall

Haynes' History Lesson: Bath's First Great Street

Although Front Street has been named a "Great Street" by the American Planning Association, it was not developed as Bath's main street initially. The first central business district in the community clustered around the intersection of South and Water Streets. South Street, once known as Davis's Lane for the wharf, store and property of Jonathan Davis, was probably established in the early 1760s. It was here that Bath's first downtown began. But another canny businessman changed all that.

Joshua Shaw owned a substantial piece of land on an elevated bluff of land substantially north of Davis's Lane and offered land there for development at more competi-

tive prices in the late 1700s. On the Kennebec River, Shaw's Point was a peninsula, only narrowly connected to the mainland and bounded to the south by Philbrook's Cove. On the north and west a creek encircled the rest of the point. Yet commercial expansion shifted to this unlikely spot.

While Shaw's reasonable prices encouraged the creation of a new central business district, the terrain required the development of a substantial new infrastructure. The major point of access to the point was where Vine Street now lies. The construction of Centre Street required two bridges to cross the creek. Another wooden bridge was needed on Washington Street. According to Bath historian Henry Owen's February 25, 1949 article in *The Bath Daily Times*, the establishment of Front Street in 1802 meant the construction of a bridge from approximately Brick Store Antiques south. As Owen's article noted, when Elm Street was "laid out in 1805, it ran from Washington Street to the great bridge on Front Street." Elm Street itself required a bridge to cross the creek. For the extension of Water Street north of Centre Street to Elm Street, another lengthy bridge was constructed, reportedly at the expense of William King.

Time would bring the filling of low places, the rerouting of creeks and drainage, the reshaping of the shoreline

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Photo Credits: Page 1 (top) Lynn Koenig

The City of Ships newsletter

For questions, comments and other inquiries
about the newsletter, please contact Carolyn
Lockwood at 443-8330 x223 or by email at
clockwood@cityofbath.com.

