



Newsletter

Maine's First Ship

January 2012
Quarterly

Bath Freight Shed Alliance



27 Commercial St., Bath ME

Courtesy of Jennifer Geiger

The Bath Freight Shed Alliance officially incorporated a year ago with the goal of preserving the freight shed for Bath while providing educational opportunities. With two successful seasons of Maine's First Ship boat building programs there in summer we are poised to bring the building to life as the Bath Farmers' Market, winter home this November, thereby making it a vital community hub year round. Last October we tested out the space for the winter market and the results were overwhelming positive -equally clear however was the list of basic improvements that would have to be made before it can become a reality.

We received a matching grant for planning from Maine Preservation for \$1,000 and earlier this month the Bath Regional Technical Center - Electrical Technology students started re-wiring the Freight Shed to bring it up to code. This will be a two month process and will require us to raise \$7,000 in materials. The Engineering Graphics Students are also participating in the design work for the two new entries that are needed for the winter market. Their facade studies will help them to get real life experience with architecture and connect with the Freight Shed in depth. Our young electricians will also have an intimate knowledge of this place that they are helping to preserve. Together with a Morse High School student representative, we met with the City Planning and Development office to start the process of coordinating the sidewalk reconstruction along Commercial Street and discussed applying for a CBDG grant for improvements to the facade.

Work on VIRGINIA continues...



Work on *Virginia* continues. Shipwright Rob Stevens has been working with a small group of volunteers at his Hermit Island boat shop in Small Point, usually on Saturdays. Currently they are lofting and now cutting out patterns for the frames. If interested in volunteering, please contact Rob at robcstevens@hotmail.com. All are welcome!

You can read the story of *Virginia* in the winter edition of *Memories of Maine* magazine available locally in banks, stores, credit unions, restaurants etc. for free.

John Scollay Coffey Jr.

Maine First's Ship has a group of very dedicated volunteers. One of these volunteers is Jay Coffey, who retired at age 49 and has devoted his non-paid life to being a volunteer. Jay comes from a family of sailors and spent much of his early life sailing on Long Island Sound. His interest in Maine's First Ship is a natural connection to his life on the water and owner of many boats.

Jay moved to Maine in 1996. He read a newspaper article about MFS in 1997 and continued to follow the progress towards building *Virginia*. He came to the keel laying for *Virginia* on July 3, 2011 with his tools in his car. After a conversation with Shipwright Will West, Jay signed on to help out. On July 5th when the Morse High School students arrived for their first day of work on *Virginia*, Jay was there with his tools and Chebacca who became our shop dog. Every day, Jay was at the Freight Shed, leaving only to attend to his duties at the Bath Soup Kitchen which is his first priority. He has continued to work this fall and winter on the lofting that is being done in Rob Stevens' boat shop on Hermit Island. For many of the weeks since July Jay has worked 7 day weeks for Maine's First Ship. Jay has recently moved into a new MFS position - as our resident grant writer.

Jay is an avid reader, meditates and reads the Bible every day. In a previous life, Jay received a BS degree in business with graduate work at the University of Maryland. He was in the Merchant Marine and worked many years in food processing for companies such as Oscar Meyer, Blue Bird, Perdue, Borden's and American Home Foods.

We are all so fortunate that Jay has joined us in building *Virginia*. He is such a positive influence, with a ready smile and time for each of our students as well as always being willing to help out with the many aspects of Maine's First Ship.

Maine Boatbuilder's Show 2012

Join us at our booth, complete with the shallop *Jane Stevens*, at the 2012 Maine Boatbuilder's Show in Portland March 16th & 17th 10am - 6pm, 18th 10a m - 4pm. Portland Yacht Services, 58 Fore Street, Portland Maine.

FMI: <http://www.portlandcompany.com/boatShow/>

Virginia Model

Carolyn Stanley sent us this picture of the model *Virginia* built by her husband Adrian who graduated from Morse High School in 1963. He built the model for a U.S. History project back then. While searching the internet for information on the Popham Colony, Adrian came across our website and was excited to learn that students from Morse High School are engaged in making a full-size reproduction of the *Virginia*. Carolyn is a computer technology integration specialist at a middle school in Connecticut, and so was equally excited by our use of 21st Century technology tools to document the whole process. We hope to meet the Stanleys' next time they travel to Maine and visit us at the freight shed.



Here is Adrian's account of how he came to build the model:

Your Maine's First Ship _ Blog has a write up on the US Postal Stamp, Virginia of Sagadahock. My first introduction to the story of the *Virginia*, was through that commemorative stamp issued, August 15, 1957, in Bath, Maine. When it was issued, I was about 12 years of age, and one of my hobbies was stamp collecting. Somewhere, I have a first day of issue and a block of four, of the *Virginia of Sagadahock*, as part of my stamp collection.

The following year, 1958, my father, who worked at Bath Iron Works, received a copy of Cradle of Ships: A History of the Bath Iron Works. By Garnett Laidlaw Eskew. (Introduction by Samuel Eliot Morison.) New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1958. Pp. 279. Cradle of Ship: A History of the Bath Iron Works. I have lost that copy, but believe it contains the story of the building of *Virginia*

In 1963 the new U.S. History teacher, Miss Baranowski, required we do a US History project, but said it did not have to be a written report. I came up with an idea to make a wooden model in Wood Shop, and Miss. Baranowski approved it. Then I was off to see if my shop teacher would allow me to do the actual work in my shop class. If my memory is correct, Miss. Baranowski was the daughter of "Capt. Walter E. Baranowski, U.S. Navy, supervisor of shipbuilding, Bath, representing the commandant of the 1st Naval District."

[http://abacus.bates.edu/muskie-archives/ajcr/1963/BIW% 20Launch.shtml](http://abacus.bates.edu/muskie-archives/ajcr/1963/BIW%20Launch.shtml)

The shop instructor, Mr. Friend, also a new teacher at Morse High, thought I would be better of doing a half model. Thinking back, at that time I do not think I had even heard of half models. Given the short amount of time before the history projects were due for grading, I am forever thankful for my woodworking instructor's knowledge and skills that he shared with his student.

My half model of *Virginia*, as it is now [January 2012-mounted on an oval plaque], is not what I submitted in 1963. Originally I mounted the half model on a [approximate size] 16"x 20" plywood scrap. I then glued two shaped dowels to the plywood, for the masts, and painted sails and rigging on the plywood. Over the years, the plywood became damaged, so I removed the half model, and it stayed on a shelf in the garage, for several more years. A few weeks ago, I thought I would try to do something with it before it became more damaged. So I mounted it on the oval plaque and placed it on the living room wall. I wished to write the year the ship, *Virginia* was built on the back of the plaque. When I went searching for the date, I found the web site for Maine's First Ship. I clicked on the link and was delighted with what I found there.

We are currently accepting matching pledges for the \$5,000.00 "Jane Stevens" Memorial Challenge. Please send your contributions to MFS, PO Box 231, Bath ME 04530.

The coming months promise to be a very busy and productive period for us as we plan for next summer. Don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions, need any information, or wish to make a further donation to the campaign.

*Regards,
Merry Chapin
Sharon Drake*

*Co-Presidents
Maine's First Ship*

Eric J. Varney

Staff

Marsha Conover
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Advisory Committee

John W. Bradford
Chuck Frohmiller
Patti Irish
Jim Nelson

Gil Ross

Wm. Shuttleworth
Rob Stevens

Andrew Vavolotis
William West

David B. Wyman

Quick Links

Pepsi Grant



Maine's First Ship would like to thank everyone who supported us in last year's Pepsi Refresh Project. Most of you are probably aware that the Pepsi corporation ran monthly grant "contests" for nonprofit organizations that had submitted project proposals. Maine's First Ship was selected twice to compete for a grant, and we ran two strong campaigns in May and November. People voted daily for us on line, and we quickly learned how to use social networking to strengthen our base of support. An unexpected benefit of this voting campaign was connecting with other nonprofit organizations trying to get funding for their projects. We were able to help each other out in our respective quests for financial support. A special thanks goes to three big supporters of Maine's First Ship: Nicholson Heritage Association in Pennsylvania, Make.Shift Art and Music Cooperative, and Squalicum High School music department, both of Washington state. Their votes, as well as the votes of all the other groups and individuals we connected with, brought us up high in the polls. Unfortunately, we did not rank high enough to get a Pepsi grant. However, we did spread information about our mission and accomplishments to all parts of the country, and we received several requests for more information about Maine's First Ship! Once again, thanks to all for your support and your votes!

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*Regards,
Merry Chapin
Sharon Drake*

*Co-Presidents
Maine's First Ship*

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