

# BAILEYS HARBOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2014

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## 2014 MEETINGS TOWN HALL

June 18<sup>th</sup>, 7PM  
July 16<sup>th</sup>, 7PM  
August 21<sup>th</sup>, 7PM  
September 17<sup>th</sup>, 7PM



**Lost Baileys Harbor:**  
This car represents the spirited 1936 local election campaign for Baileys Harbor Town Chairman.  
See page 2.

## FALL & WINTER ACTIVITIES

Though we tend to think of fall and winter as quieter times in Door County and Baileys Harbor, there are some who say that you can be as busy as you want to be. That certainly proved to be true for the Baileys Harbor Historical Society this year. The BHHS joined the Community Association in hosting a tree-lighting party on December 6<sup>th</sup> by providing opportunities for young and old alike to make old-fashioned ornaments as well as pinecone bird feeders for the town Christmas tree. On Sunday afternoons during January and February, the Town Hall became the setting for a community quilting bee hosted by the BHHS: the objective being the creation of a community crazy quilt. On February 15<sup>th</sup>, the Historical Society invited party animals to revisit the past and show off their favorite socks at a Valentine's Sock Hop at the Town Hall.

Our mini-museum display cases outside the library informed on several topics, from deer hunting to new historical acquisitions for our archives. Our first fund raiser is in the planning stages. Of course, in addition to the above events, the usual behind-the-scenes activities continue as well. Memberships are added and renewed, reports are completed, and plans are made for future programs. Also, newsletters are written; we hope you enjoy this one!

## 2014 EVENTS SCHEDULE

**June 18, 2014 7PM: General Meeting**-The Baileys Harbor Fire Department: Its Origin and Growth

**July 16, 2014 7PM: General Meeting**-Kiehnau Service Station: Three Generations Keeping You on the Road

**August 21, 2014 7PM: (Annual Nominating Meeting)**- From Boynton's Chapel to Bjorklunden: Birch Forest by the Water

**September 17, 2014 7PM: (Annual Election Meeting)**-Tishler-Built: the Story of a Baileys Harbor House-Building Family.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Baileys Harbor Historical Society currently has 83 memberships, representing well over 100 members, and including 25 Lifetime Memberships. Twelve new memberships were established in 2013. Renewal reminders are sent each month as yearly memberships expire. Our membership levels are: Business \$50, Family \$25, Individual \$15, and Lifetime \$150. Members' dues help to support our continuing research, displays outside the Baileys Harbor Library, our events and presentations, and our newsletters. Please encourage your friends, neighbors, and family members to join the BHHS so they can enjoy supporting the dissemination of our local history, sharing information, and exploring the history of the community. A printable membership form can be found on our website <[baileysharborhistoricalsociety.org](http://baileysharborhistoricalsociety.org)>; just fill it out and mail it in.

## LOST BAILEYS HARBOR

Otto R. Voeks, the candidate supported by this car's banner, owned a general store in Baileys Harbor at 8024 State Hwy 57. In addition to being a local businessman, he had become one of the new directors of the Door County Chamber of Commerce at the beginning of March 1936. One of his duties was to work on a folder showing the points of interest in Door County. It is easy to imagine his segue into local politics.

Of course, we wouldn't be surprised if his 1930s-era sedan was lost by now, but this car with its impressive campaign banner represents more than that. Back in the 1930s, local candidates were chosen at town caucuses rather than by filing nomination papers as is done today. In March of 1936, newspaper ads informed as to the time and date of the caucuses. The Baileys Harbor meeting was held on Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, in the town hall on Bluff Road. According to The Advocate, there were rumors going around about various candidates, but "no one expected the town hall to over-flow with the largest crowd to attend a caucus here in a good many years." "Otto Voeks, Baileys Harbor merchant, received more than twice the votes cast for Chairman Clarence Mann..." The vote was 93 to 41. Voeks looked to be a shoo-in, but Election Day proved disappointing; Chairman Mann won 181 to 160.

In the contest for town clerk, this lively caucus also cast several votes for Sally Rand, the famous fan dancer. It was pointed out that Miss Rand would be unable to leave her fans long enough to keep the town's books, so Erna Viste was unopposed in his race.

*(Photo is from Kriss Schorer's collection)*

.Leann Despotes

### **"Those Who Don't Know History Are Doomed to Repeat It" Department.**

The most populous bird species in North America, the passenger pigeon, disappeared for good 100 years ago. There are various theories as to why this happened. Over-hunting and loss of habitat are almost certainly part of the cause, as was the fact that they were so tasty. Let us learn our history and be mindful of good as well as bad results.



## THANKS SO MUCH!

The Baileys Harbor Historical Society would like to publicly thank the following persons and companies who provided additional support during 2013.

### **Literature & Photo Images Provided for BHHS Use:**

**Bill Becker** – Baseball pictures & information

**Leann Despotes** - Books for the BHHS library

**Karen Sohns Ekberg** – Painting of Emma Toft by Karen's mother

**Lyle Larson and Lori Caskey** – Baileys Harbor memorabilia

**Fred Johnson** – Vintage Baseball Film Footage

**John & Jane Whitney** – Inaugural schedule of DC Destroyers football team

**Kristen Peil** – Book for BHHS library

**Bobby Schultz** -- Baseball pictures & information

**Kim Simonar**- Photos, memorabilia, and a painting of Preuter's Mill

**Randy Zahn** – Albert Zahn memorabilia, pictures, ephemera

### **Donations of Time, Help, & Money:**

**Inga Bacon** – Tax reporting and advice

**Baileys Harbor Community Association** – Mutual assistance projects

**Baileys Harbor Town Board** – Continued financial support and office space, purchase of the Red Geranium

**Suzanne Bauldry** – Hospitality, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Uncle Sam & August Brann scarecrow, Cemetery Database, Christmas Party

**Bill Becker** – Brat frying, Baseball Event

**Michael Brann** – Cash donation

**Laddie Chapman** – Continued technical audio/visual assistance

**Roy and Jo Cole** – Financial contribution, sage advice

**Leann Despotes** – Publicity, membership, newsletters, cash donation

**Ted Despotes** – Cash donation

**Sara & Christopher Fortune** – Cash donation

**Harbor Ridges Assn.** – Cash donation

**Harbor Fishmarket & Grille** – Web page hosting and development

**Steve Hey** – Oral History Workshop

**Leon & Sue Hoffmann** – Completing photos of Baileys Harbor Barns

**Cheryl Iverson** – Editing the Newsletter

**Trygvie Jensen** – Commercial Fishing Event

**Trish & Robert Kubala** – Christmas Party

**Mary Moran** – Keeping the accounts in perfect harmony

**Marianne & John Newton** – Baseball music, Sock Hop, Christmas Party

**Kristen Peil** – Display cases at Town Hall, Coordinating vintage Christmas Ornament making at Christmas Party, Quilting Bee, Albert Zahn Event

**Nancy Rafal** – Moonlight Bay Event, Community Mural

**Carol Schmidt** – DVDs, managing sales at all events

**Bobby Schultz** – Baseball Event

**Ginny Siegel** – Christmas Party

**Doug Smith** – Scheduling, copying, general support

**Richard Terzian** – Cash donation

**Roberta Thelen** – Town Board liaison

**Caleb Whitney** – All around general assistance, Christmas party

**Ida Whitney** – Christmas Party

**Patty Williamson** – Mega-contributions to the newsletter

**Randy Zahn** – Inspiration & artifacts for display cases, Albert Zahn Event

## LONG, COLD WINTER RESULTS IN CRAZY QUILTERS

What better way to spend a long, cold winter than creating art?! Kristen Peil, board member of the Baileys Harbor Historical Society (BHHS), decided that creating a community quilt would be a great way to bring together artistic folks looking for an opportunity to share goodies, gossip, and good work. Every Sunday during January and February, from 10AM to 3PM, folks gathered to do just that. All materials to date have been donated and are 100% recycled in true old-fashioned rural quilting style. The crazy quilt pattern was chosen so folks of all ages with or without previous quilting experience could participate. The great thing about the crazy quilt pattern is that each square-maker has the freedom to create designs that the materials inspire them to produce. Many squares have been hand-sewn, while others mix machine stitching with hand details. Embellishments include ribbon, beads, embroidery, and buttons of all types. For those needing assistance in learning how to quilt, members of the Trillium Quilt Guild have been in attendance every Sunday. Many guild members are contributing completed squares, advice throughout the process, materials, and a mini-quilt project for children to make and take in one session.



Once completed, the quilt will be on display at the Baileys Harbor McArdle Library. As of the sixth Sunday (February 9<sup>th</sup>) there were 17 completed squares and 20 or more squares in the works. Plans for completion tasks and materials are in process, and it looks like the project is becoming a real work of art. On February 9<sup>th</sup> those attending the farmers market were able to get a preview of completed squares as well as participants hard at work creating more. Talk has already started among the contributors about a potential quilt project for next winter.

A big thank you to those who have donated materials and time -- Nathan Nichols, Door County Nature Works, Door County Interiors, Cherri Zahn, Fran Burton, Cyndi Frea, multiple anonymous donors to the bin in the Baileys Harbor Town Hall, the McArdle Library, the Town of Baileys Harbor for the use of the town hall for eight full Sundays, and, of course, the quilters!

Kristen Peil

## BHHS HAS NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

The Baileys Harbor Historical Society has a new email address, [info@baileysharborhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@baileysharborhistoricalsociety.org). We have changed over from our hotmail account in order to match our website domain which provides a more security. The hotmail account was hacked in early 2013, and after paying to have everything put right again, the Board decided to change to this more secure service provider.



## **BARN PROJECT DATA IS IN!**

In 2011, Leon and Sue Hoffmann volunteered to photograph the barns in Baileys Harbor Township for the historical society. They had been taking pictures of barns in Door County for several years for their personal collection, and they thought this volunteer effort would be a good match with their interests. After careful planning, they launched the photography project during the summer of 2012.

The Historical Society provided a letter of introduction and a “Barn Data Sheet” template so we could indicate the type of information we were interested in. Though Leon and Sue were super-organized, they were unable to control the weather, 2012 being one of the hottest summers in memory, and their work took longer than they had planned. We now are blessed with hundreds of beautiful digital pictures of our Baileys Harbor barns as well as information on quite a few of them.

Now that we have the “raw” data, each picture must be properly labeled and electronically and manually catalogued so that the information is accessible and useful. This could be a rewarding volunteer project. Any offers??

## **A CENTURY OF BOOSTING BAILEYS HARBOR** **BAILEYS HARBOR COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION CONTINUES A LONG TRADITION**

Community booster clubs have been around for a long time. They became prolific at the time of U.S. westward expansion; every new town and city was trying to expand by attracting residents, establishing businesses, and selling property. In the 1920s, novelist Sinclair Lewis mocked midwestern “boosterism” in the person of George Babbitt, protagonist of Babbitt, set in the growing city of Zenith. Granted, Babbitt carried boosting to an extreme, but it was important for small towns to advertise their advantages in order to improve their economies. Examining the Door County Newspaper Archives shows us that the same was true for Baileys Harbor. In 1914, the Door County News, in an overview of Baileys Harbor, tells us that there is little, if any, timber cutting anymore, and that due to the modernization of shipping, the harbor sees very little boat traffic. The town begins to look to increasing tourism.

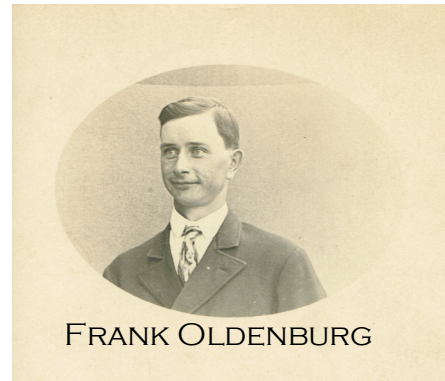
About 100 years ago, in March 1914, Jacksonport and Baileys Harbor formed the Lake Shore Country Club. Its stated objectives were “to advertise all saleable property in the town of Baileys Harbor for fruit farms, dairy farms, and summer resorts.... To bring before the public the beauties of Baileys Harbor as a summer resort town.” “It is each charter member’s duty to do as much boosting as possible....” Membership was open to all upon signing the constitution and bylaws.

Attendance at a club meeting required a fee of ten cents to help raise money for advertising, and fundraising plans included various “entertainments” voted on by the club, to occur frequently to increase advertising funds. The first entertainment was a minstrel show (!) in Baileys Harbor on the first day of May. It was well attended by a large crowd from neighboring towns and the county seat, and a good sum was realized for advertising.

Before the end of May, the Lake Shore Country Club became the Baileys Harbor Country Club, apparently due to the fact that the residents of Baileys Harbor felt they

were the movers and shakers in the organization. They generally referred to themselves as B.H.C.C., and by the end of May were planning a huge 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. Activities included a parade, baseball game, horse race, various contests for prizes, a greased pole climb, motorcycle race, band concert, supper, grand balls in the afternoon and evening, and a grand display of fireworks. This sounds even more ambitious than our twenty-first century celebrations! The Door County Democrat reported that the day was a great success and included a victory for the baseball team.

Following the triumphant 4<sup>th</sup> of July, B.H.C.C. published a twenty-page illustrated booklet that described Baileys Harbor, in part, as “A place that abounds with all the good things of life, where you can spend many happy days in comradeship with nature and your fellow man.” Mrs. M(ike) F. Collins was the first club secretary, and it seems that she may have been responsible for writing many of the club documents. In September there was an election of officers, including President Frank Oldenburg, Vice-president Kathryn Muckian, Secretary Andy Brann, and Treasurer William Oldenburg. Other members included Mary Goss, Alice Wilson, Olga Olsen, and Lucy Eatough. Interestingly, this group included businessmen, town officials, and both young and older people. Everyone was welcome.



As 1914 wore on, the B.H.C.C.'s entertainments included talent shows, a mock trial, a presentation from the Sturgeon Bay Chamber of Commerce, and several card parties (500 was the featured game and first prize was always awarded, as well as a “booby prize,” sometimes known as the leather medal). The jewel of the fall season was a Halloween party, which featured prizes for the most ragged and the funniest costumes; Madame Abijah, an Egyptian soothsayer; and midnight visits from phantoms from Jupiter, Mars, and Hades. Featured also was a game, Liste Viator, in which an aviator provided the opportunity to see scenes of Door County as well as the pyramids of Egypt. Not quite sure how that was managed. The public was always invited to all activities and encouraged to boost Baileys Harbor.

On January 25, 1916, the club changed its name, for advertising purposes, to the Baileys Harbor Commercial Club, according to the Door County Democrat. Officers for 1916 were elected, including Frank Oldenberg, president; Will Brann, vice-president; Mrs. L.D. Burns, secretary; and William Oldenberg, treasurer.

The Commercial Club continued to work for the advancement of Baileys Harbor. Booster meetings were called to plan projects. They issued folders and booklets, sponsored a booth at the county fair, decided to build a bathhouse at the sand beach, purchased a streetlight in front of Wilson's garage, and held a benefit for the Red Cross after the U.S. entered World War I. During the war, we don't read much of the booster clubs. Perhaps the club members and families were more involved in the war effort than in promoting their hometowns.

After this hiatus, Baileys Harbor started a Community Club. In April 1924 a meeting was held to draw up bylaws. A meeting was announced for April 24, 1924, encouraging the citizens to **“Be a booster and come!”** They sponsored social entertainments as well as public service meetings, such as a lecture from the State Board of Health

concerning the prevention of goiter, a common affliction around the Great Lakes. In 1926, the town clubs were encouraged to put their shoulder to the wheel to further Door County's place on the tourist map. This was the last mention I found of the Baileys Harbor Community Club.

The Baileys Harbor Men's Club was formed in 1933 to "work for the interests of Baileys Harbor, aiding the advancement of the village's business and social life." The first officers were Ernald Viste, Frank Blakefield, Eric John, and Frank Scholl, and one of their first projects was to establish a Boy Scout troop. They succeeded, and Fred Traven became scoutmaster, a post he held for decades. They took over sponsoring the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration in 1936; there was no celebration in 1935. Indeed, there was no Independence Day celebration advertised for any Door County town in 1935.

Over the last 100 years, Baileys Harbor has almost always had a "Booster Club." After the Men's Club, there was the Baileys Harbor Advancement Association, the Lion's Club, the Baileys Harbor Business Association, and now the Baileys Harbor Community Association. It's unlikely that we will see any minstrel shows in 2014, but check the list of "entertainments" < <http://www.doorcounty.com/baileysharbor/events/>> the Community Association has planned to enhance our community spirit and entice people to visit Baileys Harbor in 2014.

Leann Despotes

## **VINTAGE ORNAMENT-MAKING RETURNS FOR THE 2013 TOWN CHRISTMAS PARTY AND TREE-LIGHTING EVENT**

From the bling of glitter and garland to the natural beauty of pinecones and evergreen boughs, vintage ornament making was up-



staged only by the arrival of Santa himself at this Baileys Harbor Community Association (BHCA) annual event. With nearly 100 people attending over a two-hour period, six tables of materials were swamped with partygoers eager to make old-fashioned Christmas decorations, and the Baileys Harbor Historical Society (BHHS) was more than ready for them. Wool wreaths, miniature Christmas trees, and pipe cleaner lapel pins are just a few examples of the over eighteen different ornaments available to make and then take. Many people returned this year, eager to make what they missed last year or to create more of their favorites. All materials were supplied by the BHHS except for the peanut butter and bird-

seed provided by the BHCA so that folks young and old could create an ornament for the birds and then hang it on the community tree in front of the town hall!

It was truly a whirlwind of fun and no one left the party empty-handed. In fact we learned from previous years' participation that we needed to also provide "take home" bags for folks to carry home their numerous completed

ornaments. When the party was over and the glitter and glue were cleaned up,



all agreed it was another successful partnership between the BHCA and the BHHS. Whether you are "crafty" or not, please consider helping out next year. Thank the volunteers, and ask them how much fun it was!

Kristen Peil

## **TOWN OF BAILEYS HARBOR PURCHASES HISTORIC BUILDING**

On October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the Baileys Harbor Town Board called a special town meeting seeking approval for the town's purchase of The Red Geranium (8061 Hwy 57). Seventy-eight residents attended the meeting. This building is also known as the Emma Toft house, having been her home in Baileys Harbor for many years. It is one of the oldest, if not *the* oldest, building in Baileys Harbor. The reasons for this proposed purchase included the fact that there will be fewer opportunities to acquire such a historic site, and that because of the Emma Toft connection there is a great tie-in with the coming Ridges Sanctuary interpretive center. It was also suggested that this would provide an appropriate and visible site for the Historical Society to pursue its mission of disseminating the history of Baileys Harbor.

The Town Board presented the reasoning and analysis that led to its decision to purchase The Red Geranium. Statistics and information showing the low level of the town's indebtedness, the condition of the building, and the desirability of having such a historic building were presented by Chairman Don Sitte. Concerns were addressed by other board members, including the loss of property tax revenue and the cost of handicapped accessibility. Many residents spoke for and against the proposition; when the question was called, tabulating the paper ballots resulted in a final tally of 78 aye, 7 nay. The proposal was approved with a greater than 10 to 1 margin.

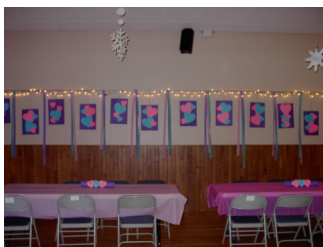


The Red Geranium was built by Miles Carrington after a devastating fire in Baileys Harbor in 1868. After losing his home and business, the saltbox structure was hastily constructed to shelter his family. The Carrington family was one of the earliest families to settle in Baileys Harbor. In 1900, the building was purchased by Thomas Toft for \$550; it was next door to the Toft home on the NW corner of Hwy 57 and Bluff Road. Emma Toft, a Ridges Sanctuary founder, and greatly responsible for establishing the Toft Point natural area, lived in the house for many years.

Leann Despotes

## **VALENTINES DAY SOCK HOP**

Amidst romantic lighting and traditional Valentines Day décor, the Baileys Harbor Town Hall was rocking to the tunes of the 50s and 60s at the Valentine Sock Hop on Saturday, February 15<sup>th</sup>. Many revelers sported valentine hearts on





their finery, and even an iconic 1950s poodle skirt made an appearance! From the twist to the limbo, from Elvis Presley to Connie Francis, endearing memories and laughter were shared. An amazing variety of sweets and treats, brought as admittance to the Sock Hop, adorned the tables and were appreciated by the partygoers.

In addition to the music, dancing, and great refreshments, raffle ticket holders had a chance to win Valentine themed mementos of the event. The consensus of the group was, "Let's do it again!"



Marianne Newton

## **HISTORIC FOLK ART AS A FUNDRAISER!**



For those who love outsider art, this June, the Baileys Harbor Historical Society plans to offer a potentially once in a lifetime opportunity! Marilyn and Orren Bradley's world class collection of folk art, currently featured in the Milwaukee Art Museum (MAM) show, "Uncommon Folk Traditions In American Art," will return to Door County in time for the Bradleys to open the doors to their private home and

share their collection with four small groups of 18. Participants will view works by a wide range of both historical and contemporary outsider artists. Prominent among them is Baileys Harbor's own Albert Zahn. The day will consist of an opportunity to view the artwork as the collectors themselves do, share the ins and outs of the collection with the Bradleys, gain a greater perspective on outsider art through a lecture from Margaret Anderas, curator of the current MAM show, and enjoy tasty treats. All for a good cause!

Watch for the announcement of a date and ticket sales! Send us an email now <[info@baileysharborhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@baileysharborhistoricalsociety.org)> if you want to be contacted personally for ticket purchase.

## **CEMETERY UPDATE**

It has been a long, cold, snowy winter, but a good time for me to sit down and spend some time getting all the Baileys Harbor Town Cemetery records into the computer. The job is nearly complete, but I still need to wait till the snow melts so I can walk the cemetery to get final information from the headstones. As I look out the window, I don't need to rush into putting on my tennis shoes and sunglasses to get the job done.

Basic information (name, lot, section, gravesite, birth date, and death date) will be available as a database. In addition I hope to include the history and interesting facts and stories that I have heard over the years from my dad, Roland Peil, who was the local grave digger for over 60 years. As a child I grew up thinking all cemeteries were a place to play as I waited for my dad to finish his work.

Looking out at all the snow, I am reminded of one of Dad's stories. My job as a Town Board member was to be responsible for the cemetery and would stake out the gravesite when there was a burial. A local woman had died and there were two family



gravesites available, or so I thought. I asked why we were not using the last unused gravesite in the family lot to bury her. There was no headstone and nothing in my records to say it was full. But he said, "I know who is buried in the last gravesite because it took two of us, two days with shovels and pickaxes, to dig that grave! It was in February, and the temperature had been below zero for months. The frost went down six feet. It was hard, hard work, and we were paid \$25.00 for the job."

I will try to add as many stories as I can to give more background history about the cemetery. If you have any stories please share them with me because if we don't write them down, they will be lost.

Suzanne Bauldry

## **WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH – BAILEYS HARBOR BASKETBALLERS**



Competitive women's basketball is relatively new to the history of sports, but if you look at two Baileys Harbor women and their Gibraltar High School basketball career statistics, you would assume these ladies were born with a basketball in their hands. Debbie (Anderson) Kordon (1978-82) and Paula Anschutz (2001-05) have been consistently at the top of the stats charts for the last 35 years of record keeping at Gibraltar. But that is not enough for these highly skilled athletes; they are now coaching the next generation of Gibraltar girls' basketball teams. Debbie guided the 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls and Paula the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, both teams wrapping up a winning season. Coaching appears to also be something at which these Harbor ladies excel.

In doing a little more research it appears Baileys Harbor has been producing winning women basketball players for almost 90 years. Lenora (Brann) John was captain of the 1926 Gibraltar girls' team and their record in the 1926 yearbook, *The Rock*, proclaims them to be "...adjudged the champion team...presented with a silver cup."

How is it that Baileys Harbor is producing such quality women basketball players? Is there something in the water, having older brothers, being born with exceptional ball handling skills? Or, is it hard work and commitment to the team that has produced such talent? It may be any or all of those possibilities, but one thing is for sure, the future looks winning for young women willing to listen to what Debbie and Paula are sharing in their coaching methods.

If you have a sports story or pictures related to Baileys Harbor send it to our email address [info@baileysharborhistoricalsociety.com](mailto:info@baileysharborhistoricalsociety.com).



Kristen Peil