

Old Broad Bay Family History Association Newsletter

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The Old Broad Bay Family History Association, P.O. Box 1242, Waldoboro, ME 04572
On the web at: www.rootsweb.com/~meobbfha/ Editorial comments & queries to obbeditor@earthlink.net

Spring is in the air and with it comes the anticipation of summer vacations to Maine to research your Old Broad Bay and Lincoln County families. If you are already in Maine, summer is the opportunity to hide from tourists in your local town hall, courthouse, or historical society. This issue will focus on where to do research in Maine and what resources are available on-line to help prepare for your trip, be it a couple of miles down the road or a thousand miles across the country.

For those of you who might be new to researching Maine families, remember that most records in New England were kept at the town level, not the county, as in other states. Specifically, you should expect to find only probate records, deeds, and court records (including naturalizations) in the county courthouse while births, marriages, and deaths (especially those prior to 1892), tax records, and militia records will be found in the town where the event occurred. Be aware that some towns have transferred their older records to the Maine State Archives; check with town officials to determine the location of the records you want to look at before your visit.

Annual meeting and reunion

The annual meeting of the Old Broad Bay Family History Association will be held Saturday, July 31 at the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Knox and Lincoln Counties Office, 377 Manktown Road in Waldoboro. Services at the Old German Church will be at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, August 1.

Manktown Road is located on the Lincoln/Knox County & Waldoboro/Warren town line and makes a T intersection with Route 1. There is no street sign. When traveling north from Waldoboro, turn left on the first road past the Wooden Screen Door Company (on the left side of the road) and just as you see the large green sign for the county & town line. This is the road on which the Medomak Valley High School is located and there is a blue sign for the school along with a white sign for the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service on the right side of the road about 500 feet before the intersection.

Persons coming from out of town are reminded to make hotel reservations early. While we will not be competing directly with the Rockland Lobster Festival this year (it will be the following weekend), if you plan to stay in town for several days, you may find your hotel is fully booked for later in the week.

Waldoboro days

Waldoboro will celebrate its history and businesses on Saturday, June 19th. The Waldoborough Historical Society is looking for people to help visitors from about 10:00 a.m. to about 5:00 p.m. If you can help for a couple of hours, please contact Randy Gross (PO Box 77, Waldoboro 04572).

On-line resources (for Maine)

There are innumerable resources out there in cyberspace they seem to increase daily. So where should you start? Which sites give you the most information for the least effort and which are worth that extra effort? Below are just a few major sites; most have links to other sites. If your favorite Maine (or other location/topic) site is not here, contact the editor and tell why you think that site is worth letting the membership know about it.

General sites (these cover all states & topics)

1. CyndisList.com the largest collection of links to all kinds of genealogy and history web sites
2. vitalrec.com links to information on how and where to obtain vital records for all states. You can follow the Maine trail to individual town & county offices. Note: this site seems to be tied to Ancestry.com. A significant number of the links lead to membership only Ancestry databases, but you can also sign up for a free trial for Ancestry.
3. mapquest.com get maps of where you want to go in Maine
4. geonames.usgs.gov/gnishome.html the US geological survey's mapping site; it will help you locate cemeteries and other geographic features in rural areas
5. familysearch.org web site for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Be sure to check out their on-line catalog using location to see what records have been microfilmed for various Maine towns and counties
6. usgenweb.com links to state specific web pages and through those pages to county specific web sites

Maine specific sites:

1. Maine government (www.maine.gov) has links to all the state departments as well as other interesting and useful information. For genealogy resources click on Facts & History
2. Maine State Library (www.maine.gov/msl) includes a link Ask a Librarian which is good for more esoteric searches
3. Maine State Archives (www.state.me.us/sos/arc) includes links to their collections and on-line databases
4. Maine Historical Society (www.mainehistory.com) includes links to their collections and links for Ask a Librarian, the Maine Memory Network, and a Genealogy Discussion Forum
5. Waldoboro Public Library (www.waldoborolibrary.org)
6. for individual towns in Maine try town.[name of town].me.us not all towns have web sites

Genealogy resources at the Waldoboro Public Library

copied from the library's informational brochure, with permission of the library director

The Waldoboro Public Library provides many resources for those engaged in genealogical research. They welcome visitors who are looking for family information, and would be pleased to receive copies of information on local families to add to their files.

While the staff will assist patrons by suggesting genealogical resources, they cannot conduct research for patrons, due to time constraints. Also, due to size and budget, the Library does not have some resources found at many larger libraries. There is no archives of local newspapers, no microfilm or microfiche capabilities. They do have town histories for Waldoboro and adjacent towns. They have books, notebooks, and files that may be helpful. They have some copies of town reports, though we recommend visiting the town office to access vital records.

The Library makes a good starting point for local research. Researchers from out of state with genealogy queries are especially urged to contact the library before making the trip to Waldoboro. Summertime can be a convenient time to conduct genealogy research here in town.

Books: Please ask the staff for the latest bibliography of genealogy books in our catalog. Many of the books pertinent to genealogy are found in the reference section, near the circulation desk.

People: Sometimes a helpful resource is outside of the Library, in the form of local people who have access to knowledge and records relevant to Waldoboro history. Please ask the Library staff for assistance in reaching these folks if you feel that a local contact may be able to provide you with genealogy information.

Vertical Files: The Library has a file of family genealogies given by family members who have done their own research. If you donate copies of your results to this collection, you will be helping those who come after you.

Maine Websites: The Library has Public Access Computers available to anyone who visits. Ask at the circulation desk about how to sign in.

The Quest Continues: The Waldoboro Public Library staff will assist you in finding the resources housed in the Library, and with making connections to local organizations and knowledgeable people. Any copies of material you wish to donate to our files will be gratefully received.

Location & hours: The Waldoboro Public Library is located at 908 Main Street, Waldoboro. Phone: (207) 832-4484. Email: wplstaff@waldoboro.lib.me.us; Mailing address: PO Box 768, Waldoboro, ME 04572; web site: www.waldoborolibrary.org

The hours are: Mon. 9:30-8:00; Tues. closed; Weds., Thurs., & Fri. 9:30-4:30; Sat. 9:30-12 noon. It is always recommended that you call ahead to check for holiday closings.

The library is located downtown on Route 220 South. Turn onto 220 South from Route 1 at Moody's Diner (traffic light). The library is about one half mile from the intersection on the right side of the street immediately past the Waldo Theater. The library is a beautiful pale yellow federal brick building with white wrought iron trim and cornice. On-street parking is available.

Resources at the Waldoborough Historical Society

by Steve Cartwright, President, Waldoborough Historical Society

The Waldoborough Historical Society opens its museum complex for the season on Waldoboro Day, June 19 - a town festival - and is then open daily from 1-4:30 p.m. through Labor Day, and on weekends through September.

Eventually, trustees hope to create a year-round museum in the historic village center, calling attention to the town's maritime past, while showcasing the society's celebrated collection of Waldoboro hooked rugs. Waldoboro's other big claim to fame is the era of 5-masted schooners, built on the shores of the Medomak River and sailing to ports around the world.

For those interested in genealogy the museum has a file cabinet full of family data, a significant collection of cemetery lot charts and transcriptions, records of the Waltz Funeral Home (circa 1920 to 1940), as well as published family genealogies, town histories, and some family Bibles. Also, trustee Randy Gross is available for research on area families. His mailing address is PO Box 77, Waldoboro, Maine 04572.

Among books that record some of the town's history is the two-volume History of Old Broad Bay and Waldoboro by Jasper Stahl. It is for sale at the museum, along with a shorter, older history by Samuel Miller. Stahl was founder and first president of what apparently was an earlier Waldoborough Historical Society, according to his own book.

The museum includes a barn full of artifacts, from books and signs to quilts, a 19th century kitchen and bedroom, musical instruments and more. A complete, authentic one-room schoolhouse has been relocated to the property, and is frequently used for school field trips. A brick building houses ship models, old photographs and rare antique fire engines known as hand tubs.

The society features free public programs every summer at 7:00 p.m. at the Historical Society museum. This year's programs are:

May 12: Randy Gross will discuss vital records and their role in the history of Old Broad Bay;

June 9: Charlie Young will discuss John Miller's garage, one of the first Ford dealerships in the state.

July 14: the society's annual meeting and elections; a square & contra dancing will follow with Richard Castner leading the fun.

August 11: a talk about Moody's Diner by Harvey Moody son of the diner's founder.

September 11: Lea Wait will speak on Currier & Ives prints

Located on Main Street (Route 220 South) just off Route 1, a short distance from Moody's Diner, the museum is open free of charge to the public, with donations accepted. It is staffed entirely by volunteers, and gifts are tax-deductible. There are several categories of membership, ranging from \$5 for an individual to \$75 for a benefactor. The mailing address for the Waldoborough Historical Society is Post Office Box 110, Waldoboro, Maine 04572.

Genealogy resources at the Maine State Library

The Maine State Library is located on the lower level of the Cultural Building in the state house complex. The mailing address is: 64 State House Station, Augusta, 04333-0064; (207) 287-5600. There is plenty of free parking in the lots around the state house complex. The hours of the State Library vary according to the season, so check out their web site for the latest information. For those not on-line, hours of operation from mid-June to September are: M, T, W, F, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Th, 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

When you first arrive at the Maine State Library, you must register at the desk. Once you are in the system, you can simply check in when you arrive. The stacks are open and you are free to wander.

The Library has a paid subscription to Ancestry.com and free internet access; sign up for computer time at the reference desk.

Collections of particular interest to genealogists are:

1. Maine newspapers many on microfilm an index to the Kennebec Journal is also available for 1972-1995
2. Maps
3. Maine vertical file and Maine clipping file an index is at the reference desk
4. Maine town reports
5. Published state, county, and town histories are found in the stacks under 974.1t (towns) and under 974.1c (counties)
6. Published genealogies for New England families are found under 929.2
7. Surname index to cemetery records (see the binder on top of the microfilm cabinet). Cemetery information is available on microfilm as well as in book form (929 & other subject numbers). The information does not overlap, so consult a reference librarian to make sure you have found everything.
8. Manuscripts check with the reference librarian
9. Maine vital records index (roughly 1892 to present) same as at the Maine State Archives
10. Census data Maine censuses on microfilm for 1790 to 1850

Genealogy resources at the Maine State Archives

in part from the brochure Genealogical Resources in the Maine State Archives

The Maine State Archives is located on the ground floor of the Cultural Building in the state house complex. The mailing address is: 84 State House Station, Augusta, 04333-0084; (207) 287-5790. Again, there is plenty of free parking in the lots around the state house complex.

The collection of vital records is one of the strengths of the Maine State Archives. State wide registration of vital records began in Maine in 1892. The Archives has these records on microfilm up to 1955; the records are arranged alphabetically by surname and then by year for that surname. In 1927 the state required town clerks to send to the state copies of all vital records prior to 1892; only some 20% of towns did this. These records were copied onto cards which were then filed alphabetically by surname and then by year for that surname. Also on microfilm are town vital records before 1892 copied by the Mormon Church. Some town vital records for 1865-1865 are also available.

The Archives has microfilm copies of federal censuses for Maine for 1790 to 1930, including the non-population schedules for 1850 to 1880. Military records include grave registrations for the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, and World War I. Some muster rolls for the War of 1812 are available as is a card file for Civil War volunteers from Maine. Persons seeking records for the Revolutionary War and War of 1812 should also visit the Massachusetts State Archives. Draft registration cards for World War I, enlistment cards for the Spanish-American War, and an index for militia officers (1820-1850) are available.

Original court records for all courts in Maine except Lincoln County (on microfilm only) are available and cover such topics as land disputes, probate, and divorce. Land records and maps include material from Maine and Massachusetts, land grants to Swedish settlers, and Revolutionary War land bounties.

The hours of the State Archives may vary so check out their web site for the latest information. For those not on-line, hours of operation normally are: M - F, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Call ahead to confirm hours.

Visitors must show ID and register at the main desk. You may only take a pencil and two sheets of paper into the research room. Laptop computers are allowed. Lockers are provided for your personal items; the current cost is \$0.25 which is returned when you vacate the locker. There are microfilm machines which allow you to make copies. Keep track of the number of copies made and pay at the desk.

Genealogy resources at the Lincoln County Courthouse

The county seat of Lincoln County is Wiscasset. The county courthouse is one of the oldest in Maine and is located on Route 1 at the top of the hill overlooking the town. There is a two-level parking lot adjacent to the courthouse and limited on-street parking on surrounding streets. Parking can be very difficult on jury days.

The Registry of Deeds and the Registry of Probate are both located on the main floor of the courthouse. The county archives vault is located in the basement. Sign in for the vault in the Registry of Deeds office. Be sure to turn off the lights and close the door when you finish using the vault.

In the main Probate office there is an alphabetical card index to wills, administrations, and guardianships; most of the original records and dockets are kept in that office, but many older case files are in the vault. There is some question as to whether all the case files in the vault are included in the card index. Unfiled wills and administrations are not included in the card index. Most of the boxes of case files in the vault are not labeled, but most boxes do have a card inside citing the volume and dates of the files contained. These records are very brittle and should be used with care.

The Registry of Deeds contains land records dating back to the county formation in 1760. Indexes combine grantor/grantee listings by date. Many of the deeds have been photocopied and placed in new plastic binders. There is a computer index to recent deeds. On a book shelf under the 1857 county map are several books dealing with York County deeds for towns which became part of Lincoln County.

The climate controlled archival vault in the basement contains the county's oldest records. Records here include general court records and dockets dating to the late 1700s and a collection of area newspapers. Among the exceptional materials found in the vault are original marriage records dating to the county's founding, original county census records, Revolutionary pension applications from 1820, and naturalization papers from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

While there are grooms and brides card indexes for the early marriage records, they are confusing to use. For easiest access see *Marriage Returns of Lincoln County to 1866* by Kelly & Adams (Picton Press, 2002). Please note that there is not a copy of this book at the courthouse.

Original schedules for the 1850, 1860, and 1870 federal censuses are kept in a 10-drawer cabinet in the vault. These include the population schedules as well as the agricultural, industrial, mortality, and social schedules for most towns in the county. The most complete set is for 1850 with lesser coverage in 1870 and the least coverage in 1860. There are also some original 1880 census booklets

which are still being reviewed to determine their purpose. An inventory of the schedules has been completed and a report is being prepared for the county commissioners. See the registrar of deeds for a copy of the inventory.

The courthouse is open weekdays (except federal holidays) 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Photocopies of documents are made by the staff; the current fee is \$1.00 per page. For further information and phone numbers see the county web page at www.co.lincoln.me.us/dep.html. For the Registry of Deeds call 207-882-7431 (or 882-7515); for the Registry of Probate call 207-882-7392.

Genealogy resources at the Maine Historical Society

information from their web site

The Maine Historical Society is located at 489 Congress Street, Portland, 04101; telephone 207-774-1822; e-mail to info@mainehistory.org. The research library is open Tuesday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and is closed on holidays and some holiday weekends. Call ahead to confirm hours especially during severe winter weather. The research library is open to the public for a small fee (\$2 per hour or \$10 for the day; first time visits are free).

The Society's research collection includes published town vital records, delayed returns and vital records from the State Archives, town, city, and county directories, cemetery inscriptions, probate and land record indexes, copies of the Maine censuses from 1790 to 1930, newspapers, maps & atlases, and photographs. There is an extensive manuscript collection focusing on Maine material. There is access to on-line databases as well as several in-house computer databases.

The evolution of Lincoln County

What we now call Lincoln County, Maine began its life as part of York(shire) County in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In June 1760 York County was divided into three counties: Lincoln, Cumberland, and York. In 1820 the state of Maine entered the union as the 23rd state. The county seat for Lincoln County is Wiscasset (formerly Pownalborough).

While most of the early records are kept in the town and county, many records pertaining to Lincoln County (and Maine in general) prior to 1820 exist in the Massachusetts State Archives. Over the years, Lincoln County has given up many of its towns to the formation of new counties and has gained a few towns as well. Genealogists need to know in which county their town of interest was located at the time of interest in order to track court, probate, and land records.

Information for this essay came from *Counties, Cities, Towns and Plantations of Maine: A Handbook of Incorporations, Dissolutions and Boundary Changes*, published by the Maine State Archives, Augusta, 1940. Persons wanting additional information on individual Lincoln County towns and plantations as well as on other Maine counties should seek out this book.

The first division of Lincoln County occurred in June 1789 when Washington and Hancock counties were formed. Washington County took Machias, the only town within the new boundaries, as its county seat. Hancock County took Belfast, Penobscot, Orrington, Sedgwick, Isleborough, Bluehill, Deer Isle, Trenton, Gouldsborough, Sullivan, Mount Desert, Vinalhaven, and Frankfort. Hancock

also took the town of Camden, but that town and two half-townships were returned to Lincoln County in March 1791. In March 1843 Matinicus Island was annexed from Hancock County to Lincoln County and in April 1852 the county gained the islands of Hacketosh, Wooden Ball, Normansland, Two Bush, Ten Pound, and Matinicus Rock from Hancock County.

In February 1799, Kennebec County was formed. The records are not clear on precisely which towns were taken from Lincoln County for the new county. The following is at least a partial list: Pittston, Greene, Harlem (formerly Jones Plantation), and Monmouth (formerly West Plantation). The town of Litchfield was split between Lincoln and Kennebec counties and was fully annexed into Lincoln County in February 1811. However, in March 1835, Litchfield again became part of Kennebec County. Whitefield and Malta were likewise split and when they were incorporated in 1809, Malta went to Kennebec County and Whitefield went to Lincoln County. In March 1840, the town of Wales also became part of Kennebec County. Part of one lot in Greene became part of Lewiston in Lincoln County, in April 1852.

Waldo County was formed in July 1827 taking the Lincoln County towns of Camden (including Rockport), Hope, Liberty, Montville, Palermo, and Appleton Plantation. In 1836 a tiny portion of Warren was annexed to Camden in Waldo County and in April 1854 a tiny portion of the town of Palermo was annexed to the town of Washington in Lincoln County.

In March 1854 the towns of Lewiston, Lisbon, and Webster were taken as part of the new county of Androscoggin. At this same time, the former Lincoln County towns of Greene and Wales in Kennebec County also became part of Androscoggin County.

In April 1854 the city of Bath and the towns of Arrowsic, Bowdoin, Bowdoinham, Georgetown, Perkins, Phippsburg, Richmond, Topsham, West Bath, and Woolwich were taken into the new county of Sagadahoc.

The last division of Lincoln County was in April 1860 when Knox County was formed from Lincoln and Waldo counties. Lincoln County lost the city of Rockland and the towns of Cushing, Friendship, St. George, South Thomaston, Thomaston, Union, Warren, and Washington, and the plantations of Matinicus and Muscle Ridge. Former Lincoln County towns (in Waldo County) which also were placed in Knox County were Appleton, Camden/Rockport, Hope, and Vinalhaven. The latter town had been annexed from Hancock County in March 1838.

The current boundaries of Lincoln County encompass the towns of Alna, Boothbay, Boothbay Harbor, Bremen, Bristol, Damariscotta, Dresden, Edgecomb, Jefferson, Newcastle, Nobleborough, South Bristol, Southport, Waldoboro, Westport, Whitefield, Wiscasset, the plantations of Monhegan and Somerville (formerly Patrick Plantation), and tracts of wild lands known as Hibbert s Gore, Muscongus Island, Bar Island, Indian Island, and Marsh Island.

The following is a summary of Lincoln County s offspring and their county seats:

- Androscoggin (Auburn) 1854
- Hancock (Ellsworth) 1789
- Kennebec (Augusta) 1799
- Knox (Rockland) 1860
- Sagadahoc (Bath) 1854
- Waldo (Belfast) 1827
- Washington (Machias) 1789