

That tiny patch of land at the confluence of the Kennebec and Sebasticook Rivers has always been appealing to humans. For centuries prior to European arrival, as Native Americans used the two rivers for transportation highways and fisheries, Winslow became a stopping place and campsite. Nearby Pattee's Pond, and generally level terrain, added value to the land.

Some of the earliest European trading trips in the 1600s came up the Kennebec River, and many of Maine's earliest settlements in the 1700s also began along the Kennebec and Sebasticook. Thus, a wealth of historic and archaeological resources potentially reside in Winslow.

John Winslow, born in England in 1597, came to America in 1621. He married Mary Chilton, daughter of an original Mayflower pilgrim, in 1624 and headed north into the wilderness of what is now Maine. He brought the first English cattle to the Kennebec area, lived in the trading post at Cushnoc (now Augusta), and was one of the four purchasers of the Plymouth Patent (first European settler purchase of land surrounding the confluence of the Kennebec and Sebasticook Rivers, including lands now known as Winslow). It would seem fitting if this man had received the honor of having a town named after him. But that is not the case.

John Winslow's children inherited his land, and passed it on to their offspring. Eventually, another John Winslow, the aforementioned John Winslow's great grandnephew and namesake, received the family land. This John Winslow was born in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1702, but achieved great honor in the north lands by being given command, as a major general, of the expedition to build Fort Halifax. Constructed in 1754 on the northern peninsula where the Kennebec and Sebasticook Rivers meet, Fort Halifax has become the symbol of Winslow. When the town incorporated in 1771, the residents chose (General John) Winslow as an honorable name.

The British army built Fort Halifax as an outpost in the French and Indian War and because there was an increasing desire on the part of area settlers to signify that the land would be permanently occupied. Shortly after the Fort brought a measure of security to the region, the future Winslow experienced its first "subdivision." In 1766, fifty 50-acre lots were sold to men agreeing to clear land and build homes. A subdivision was even planned: 25 lots were restricted to men with families, and 25 lots were sold to single, young men. Politicians hoped that men with families would provide a stabilizing influence, as well as daughters who would naturally marry one of their eligible bachelor neighbors. The intermingling of families began, and a true town grew.

The town of Winslow developed steadily over time, with local grist mills, sawmills and small farmsteads marking the passing of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Prior to bridge construction, ferries and the rare fording at low water were the only means of crossing the Kennebec and Sebasticook

Rivers. This made communication and interaction between “east” and “west” Winslow rather difficult. At the 1801 Town Meeting, residents decided to resolve the issue by voting to separate the town along the Kennebec River. Lands on the east side of the Kennebec became what is today’s Winslow, and those on the west eventually split into the two towns of Oakland and Waterville.

As the 20<sup>th</sup> century arrived, large manufacturing took advantage of the mighty Kennebec River. With manufacturing came a marked increase in population. What had been an agrarian town of no more than 1,800 residents throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century suddenly grew to 2,700 residents in 1910 and 3,300 residents in 1920. The Hollingsworth and Whitney Pulp and Paper Company built a plant in 1892, followed in 1898 by the Proctor and Bowie Company sawmill. Around the turn of the century and through the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a large proportion of Winslow residents worked in manufacturing. To provide suitable housing for this population, small homes on small lots were constructed, and the high-density-grid residential pattern along the Kennebec, north of the Sebec, took shape.

Winslow also expanded its cultural heritage at this time, with many immigrants coming from French-speaking Canada, Scotland, and Poland to work in local factories. In 1969, with the increase in population, a need for more services, and the general complexity of town governance, residents chose a year-round Town Council to replace the Select Board and Town Meeting. During the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as manufacturing jobs diminished, and the big plants eventually closed, Winslow became a suburban town, providing sprawling residential lots for high-skilled employees working in Augusta and Waterville. Today, one can understand the general pattern of development for the entire United States simply by studying the single town of Winslow.

#### *Notable Resources – Prehistoric Archaeological*

Prehistoric archaeology refers to that time period prior to written recordings. Cultural knowledge is only discovered through examination of artifacts and landscape analysis. We can never be certain how people lived, as there is nothing specific to tell us exactly why they used a certain instrument, or how they traveled from place to place. There is no cookbook telling us how a prehistoric culture cooked food. As we discover more artifacts, though, our “picture” of the culture is enhanced. It is doubly important, therefore, to identify and preserve as many prehistoric archaeological resources as possible.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission is aware of 39 prehistoric archaeological resources in Winslow. Of these:

- Two are located at Fort Halifax Park, and
- 20 of the remaining 37 sites are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places

#### *Notable Resources – Historic Archaeological*

Historic archaeology analyzes the settlements and forts of the period from about 1600 on, basically covering early European history in Maine and attempting to expand the historical record. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission knows of 3 historic archaeological resources in Winslow:

- The Teconnet Trading Post, an English trading post from 1653 - 1654
- Fort Halifax, an English military fort from 1754 – c.1780
- Unidentified pottery from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, American industrial period

The Teconnet Trading Post was located on the south side of the Sebec River where it meets the Kennebec River. Its purpose was basically superseded by that of Fort Halifax, a much larger and robust structure, on the opposite (north) side of the Sebec River.

#### *Notable Resources – Historic Buildings/Structures/Objects*

Historic buildings and objects differ from archaeological resources because these items need not be “discovered” through the process of digging and reconstruction. Historic resources are visible, above ground, and date from European settlement through American history, including written records. The following historic buildings and structures are important to the residents of Winslow:

- Fort Halifax
- The Two-Cent Bridge
- The Jonas B. Shurtleff House, on Augusta Road
- The Brick School, on Cushman Road
- Fort Halifax Hydro Station, on the Sebec River
- The Hollingsworth & Whitney/Scott Paper Company mill
- The Winslow Congregational Church

The first four historic structures listed above are on the National Register of Historic Places, and will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. A survey of the Fort Halifax Hydro Station has determined that it meets the criteria and is eligible for listing in the National Register. This station was constructed with the original dam, in 1908, and the red-brick two-story building is a beautiful example of infrastructure engineering at the turn of the century.



**Fort Halifax Hydro Station**



**Former Scott Paper Mill**

Originally built in 1892, the Hollingsworth & Whitney paper mill is located on an island in the Kennebec River, just north of the Waterville-Winslow Bridge. Among its many highlights, this mill was the country's only supplier of tabulating cardstock when World War II began. Due to the war's demands, the mill was forced to quadruple its production for cards to operate tabulating machines. The old mill is no longer operational, and now serves as a warehouse and economic development incubator.

The Winslow Congregational Church is notable not just for being one of the oldest churches in Kennebec County, but also because it was Winslow's first east-side Town Meeting house. In 1796, the town of Winslow voted to erect a Town Meeting house on the east side of the river. Construction was completed, and in 1799 the first town meeting was held in the new meeting house. The Congregational Church, formally organized in August 1828, met in various locations for approximately 50 years. In 1884, the town voted to "relinquish the town's claim to the meeting house situated in Winslow village, to the Congregational Society of Winslow, so long as they shall keep the same in repair and occupy it as a place of public worship." The interior of the structure has been significantly remodeled; nonetheless, the building remains the original meeting house for what is today the municipality of Winslow.



**Winslow Congregational Church**



There is another historic artifact literally across the street from the Congregational Church, between the church and the Kennebec River. In 1775, General Benedict Arnold, leading a group of American revolutionaries, attempted to capture the British stronghold of Quebec. The commander basically followed what is known today as the Kennebec-

Chaudière International Corridor (a river and overland path linking Merrymeeting Bay to Quebec City). Arnold and his troops stopped at various locations on their way north to resupply and camp, and one of those places happened to be in Winslow. The spot is now marked by a large boulder, put in place by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

### **Analysis and Key Issues**

The science of archaeology is always developing, and many in the field believe that preservation of resources is more important than actually conducting a full archaeological dig. Some people believe that the methods now employed during such digs are primitive, resulting in the loss of valuable information. However, if we preserve a site and wait until improved methods are developed, we will be better able to glean the realities of earlier cultures. If a site cannot be preserved, the next best solution is a full archaeological survey, detailing the precise location of all artifacts and relation of artifacts to the surrounding geography.

Initial archaeological surveys have been conducted along the banks of the Kennebec and Sebasticook Rivers due to various hydroelectric relicensing or Maine Department of Transportation projects. Therefore, most known archaeological resources are in these areas. The Pattee's Pond shoreline should be professionally surveyed because it is also a likely source of archaeological material. Future archaeological fieldwork could focus on agricultural, residential, and industrial sites relating to the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town, beginning in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, a comprehensive survey of historic (above-ground) resources should be conducted throughout the town, to determine which properties are worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archaeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission, a state governmental agency, has been designated as the State Historic Preservation Office, and it oversees the administration of the National Register program in the State of Maine.

All properties listed in the National Register must meet the criteria established by the National Park Service. This criteria is applied nationwide, seeking to ensure that all listed properties are both significant, within the areas of architecture, archaeology, engineering, culture,

or history, and that they retain their historic designs, materials, workmanship, and sense of time and place. The effect of a property being listed in the National Register:

- Gives official recognition to the historic and cultural importance of a property as part of the Nation's heritage.
- Affords protection from adverse impact by projects funded, licensed, or executed by the Federal Government, since Federal projects which affect such properties are subject to review by the State Historic Preservation Officer and, if necessary, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C.
- Qualifies properties in the National Register for certified rehabilitation tax credit incentives under the historic preservation provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

Perhaps most importantly,

- Control and authority over the use and disposition of a property listed in the National Register or deemed eligible for such listing remain solely with the owner unless he has applied for and received a matching grant or other Federal funding, or is participating in a rehabilitation tax credit project. Listing in the National Register does not mean that limitations will be placed on the property by the Federal government. Public visitation rights are not required by the owner.

Meeting the criteria and exhibiting the above-mentioned effects, the following five properties in Winslow are listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

#### Fort Halifax – listed in 1968

Until about 20 years ago, Fort Halifax was the oldest extant wooden blockhouse in the United States. The great spring flood of 1987, however, swept away that claim. Restoration efforts following the flood used 30% of the original logs, and reconstructed the Fort to its original configuration, such that many argue it is still the oldest surviving wood blockhouse in the nation. Regardless, it remains a site of significant historic and cultural value.

Though originally built as a fort in 1754, there is no evidence of its having been involved in a direct attack. Muster records indicate the fort was garrisoned until October 1766. The remaining blockhouse seen today was part of the larger Fort Halifax, originally square in shape with blockhouses at the northeast and southwest corners, a sentry box at the southeast corner, barracks along the eastern side, and a large building known as the “fort house” (containing officers' quarters, storerooms, and the armory) at the northwest corner. The entire fort site, not

just the blockhouse, is listed on the Register, and archaeological survey work has documented numerous artifacts.

Fort Halifax is a State Historic Site, owned and operated by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. The Fort property fell into private hands after its military purpose ended in the late 1700s. Over time, all buildings and structures deteriorated and were removed, save for the remaining blockhouse. In 1924, the Fort Halifax Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, acquired and repaired the blockhouse, eventually donating the property to the state in 1966. Fort Halifax is located on the peninsula just north of where the Kennebec and Sebasticook Rivers meet, one mile south of the Winslow-Waterville Bridge on U.S. Route 201, right in the heart of the developed part of town; and has become the symbol of Winslow due to its location and national significance. In fact, Winslow residents have their annual Fourth of July party at the Fort Halifax Park. This party is regional in scope, gathering thousands of people.



**Fort Halifax Blockhouse**

The large Fourth of July party utilizes the beautiful greenspace and park adjacent to the blockhouse. Despite being held at the historic park site, the party is about American Independence, and does not celebrate the distinct historic nature of the blockhouse. There is precious little education on-site, and most people visiting would be unable to understand that the Fort was actually much larger than the blockhouse. The property does not function as a historic location; rather, it acts as a town and regional recreational park. A local volunteer organization, the Friends of Fort Halifax, meets regularly to discuss education and plan outreach efforts. Working with the state of Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, they have designed and written educational signage, and made plans to re-arrange access and parking to allow for better archaeology and educational work. Currently, access and the gravel parking lot lie on top of the original interior of the Fort.

### Two-Cent Bridge – listed in 1973

Originally constructed in 1901, just north of Ticonic Falls on the Kennebec River, this pedestrian structure connected Winslow and Waterville, allowing residents on either side easy access to employment in the various mills in each town. Washed out during its first spring, it was fully reconstructed the following summer, and the existing suspension bridge, constructed entirely of steel, was finished in 1903. Because it was a private footbridge, the Private and Special Laws of the state of Maine were modified to create a two-cent toll. It is unknown

whether the private company who received the original charter, the Ticonic Footbridge Company, attempted to name the structure. Whether it ever had an official name, or the toll nickname simply stuck, the “Two-Cent Bridge” remains a unique historic artifact.

At its height of use, over 500 people traversed the bridge every day. It was even used as an emergency transportation corridor during the 1930s. The largest flood prior to the great flood of 1987 occurred in 1935, and during that year both the railroad and vehicle bridges connecting Waterville and Winslow were washed out. The only way for the two communities to share food and health services was over the pedestrian bridge.

Historically, the Two-Cent Bridge’s suspension design and steel frame are rare. During the end of its life as a toll bridge, in the 1970s, it was reportedly the only remaining toll footbridge in the United States. In 1983, the City of Waterville acquired ownership, and now maintains the structure. As it is owned by the city, there is no longer a toll to cross, and the bridge is now simply a unique connection between Waterville and Winslow, both municipalities owning public parks on either end. However, neither has expended many resources in connecting the two parks or utilizing the footbridge for its original economic function. The Two-Cent Bridge easily links downtown Waterville to the Winslow Town Office and economic development incubator in the old Scott Paper Mill.



**Two-Cent Bridge, from Waterville**

#### Jonas B. Shurtleff House – listed in 1974

This house in Winslow is one of Maine’s finest examples of a carpenter Gothic cottage in a rural area. During the mid 1800s, publications of such renowned architects as Andrew Jackson Downing and William Ranlett popularized the Gothic cottage as the ideal dwelling for the new suburbanites. While some of these cottages were direct copies from pattern books, many more were the handiwork of local carpenter-builders who made their own interpretations of the then-current style. This is probably the case for the Shurtleff House, as research has not produced an exact replica of it in any design book of the period.

The original architect and builders are unknown, but the first owner was Jonas Ball Shurtleff, who purchased his 13 acre lot in 1849. The house was constructed between 1850 and 1853, and though Jonas passed away in 1863, his wife Mariette continued to live there until her

death in 1903. The house has remained in private hands since, although each owner has recognized and preserved its unique qualities.

An account from the Waterville Mail on January 22, 1864, shows that the Shurtleff



**Jonas B. Shurtleff House**

House was as distinct a century ago as it is now: “All travelers know this place on account of the fanciful finish of the house.” That finish, originally brown, led to an early nickname of “The Gingerbread House.” It remains easily seen from the Augusta Road, a main thoroughfare through town, and there is plenty of open, undeveloped land surrounding the property, giving visitors ample opportunity to view it as they approach via vehicle, or if they wish to stop and take photographs from various angles. The property does remain in private hands, and abiding by the rights of property owners on the National Register,

the town must rely on the sentiments of those private owners to preserve this unique historic home.

### The Brick School – listed in 1977

The old brick school, located on the Cushman Road, is approximately 2 centuries old. No town records, dating to 1799, mention its construction. However, a deed from 1820 conveys a large parcel, which includes the following: “Also the ground on which the brick school house on the lot now stands, with the door yard, is hereby reserved for the use and occupation of School District No. 5 as long as said District shall keep the present brick school house in repair suitable to hold a school in and no longer.” The school maintained its function until 1865, when it became storage for the school district. It subsequently passed into disuse until the Winslow Historical Society obtained the property in 1972.

Though it is a plain and unassuming structure, the school house is built on a solid brick and stone foundation, and is a testament to an early desire for education. The sturdy building demonstrates that settlers believed the building would be used for many generations. The location of the structure, on a secondary road in a rural area, is an indication that sprawling homesteads and farms produced sufficient children to warrant construction outside of “downtown” Winslow.

The school house now lies in the midst of a rather dense housing sprawl on the Cushman Road. There are multiple modern homes on both sides of the road leading up to the old building, each driveway separated by approximately 100 feet. Nevertheless, there is a nice stretch of undeveloped land on the north side of the school, on the same side of the street, which would allow for visitor parking and educational opportunities.



**Brick School**

Maine Archaeological Survey Site 53.36 (details restricted to protect site) – listed in 1990

Archaeological testing and data recovery for the new Waterville-Winslow Bridge (Dunbar Road) discovered many intact archaeological sites. One in particular was placed on the National Register. It lies on the east side of the Kennebec River, associated with a small pond at the margins of the floodplain. Survey studies document remnants of the prehistoric Middle Ceramic Period activity, roughly covering 2050 to 1350 B.P. Ceramic vessel remains suggest multiple generations of potters living in the area. This particular site, however, appears to have been lightly occupied. Excavated hearth features suggest that the large fire-cracked rock complexes might represent the site of a sweat bath, meaning it may have been attractive for solitary contemplation away from larger groups nearby.

## **Policies**

- The town should improve its efforts to protect the significant historic and archaeological resources in the community.
- The Winslow Historical Society began meeting in the late 1960s, formally incorporating in 1970. Unfortunately, it does not currently meet due to a lack of sufficient interest. The town should encourage the re-formation of the Historical Society.
- Fort Halifax is the symbol of the town, and should therefore be singled out for individual attention and resources in preservation and education.

## **Strategies**

- ✓ The Town should clearly identify properties on the National Register of Historic Places on official maps, for review by the Planning Board.

The Planning Board and Town Council should incorporate locations of historic properties when updating the town zoning map. Then, when the Town Council and Planning Board review development proposals, they will have a direct reminder of the historic resources of Winslow. The map update should occur in 2009, when the official zoning map is updated following approval of the Comprehensive Plan.

- ✓ The Town should require all development proposals, not just commercial and subdivision applications, to obtain advice from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission on potential construction conflicts.

The Code Enforcement Officer, Planning Board, and Town Council should update the Town Code to contain language requiring that all development proposals be sent to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for review and comment, if the development will occur near a historic property or in a location where historic resources are likely to be found, as identified in the Comprehensive Plan. This code update should occur by 2010.

- ✓ Since many potential prehistoric sites lie along the Sebasticook River, the Town should work with local secondary schools and colleges to document new sites now that the Fort Halifax dam is removed.

The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee should contact school district personnel to determine if there is interest in conducting a survey of the new Sebasticook riverfront. The Implementation Committee can assist teachers with initial design of the study. Once the project is up and running, students can make a presentation to the Planning Board. The Implementation Committee should make initial contact with school personnel in 2009.

- ✓ The Town should appropriate \$5,000 annually into the Capital Improvements Plan for historic and archaeological programs, the funding to be used as a grant program for local historic surveys, and education and interpretation development.

The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee should discuss the design of a potential historic resources grant program. A major first decision is whether to begin granting funds immediately, or to simply place money into a fund for larger projects. Once the Implementation Committee members have a general outline of the grant program, they can present it to the Town Council. The Town Council should begin appropriating money in the next fiscal year. The Implementation Committee should present its outline of the grant program to the Town Council by 2011.

- ✓ In addition to the general historic and archaeological fund, the Town should appropriate \$5,000 annually to the Capital Improvements Plan to assist with development of Fort Halifax as an educational site.

The Implementation Committee should meet with the Friends of Fort Halifax to discuss prioritizing projects and the potential for collaboration for enhancing the site. Together, the two groups can formulate a funding and construction program for the Fort Halifax site. Fort Western in Augusta has a successful education program. Staff at Fort Western should also be consulted in developing the Fort Halifax education program. Once this general project design is complete, the Implementation Committee can address the Town Council. The Town Council should begin appropriating funds in the next fiscal year. The Implementation Committee should meet with the Friends of Fort Halifax by 2010, and present a program to the Town Council by 2011.