



Mystery #10

Eastern Steamship Landing

Steamboats are endearing vessels invoking images of children's playthings. It's easy to imagine a young child's excitement for a trip on a steamboat, to visit relatives in a neighboring town, or to make his way to a summer cottage on Squirrel, Capitol or Mouse Island. Chances are, he knows his steamboat captain and crew by name. There was a personalized element to steamboat travel, and steamboat captains were respected and admired.

Fishermen weren't the only ones to dream of a life on the sea. Young men were "crazy to learn steamboating." A steamboat captain "knew the meaning of all the navigational aids, and he could put his hands on the very pulse of the machine. He had mysterious knowledge; his eyes, even his ears, were better than those of other mortals." One such captain was Nahum Brewer, born in Southport, he held a Master Mariner license for 55 years and worked for the Eastern Steamship Company from 1900 to 1932. Captain Nahum started out on a banker at age 11. He

piloted the Island Belle, the City of Bangor, the City of Rockland, the Governor Dingley and many others and was the pilot for the steamboat Southport for nine years. Harold Clifford describes him as, "professionally competent and personally popular."

Imagine Captain Brewer, weaving his way in and out of coves and inlets, pausing at various landings on his route. Imagine the wharf crowded with excited people when the 200-foot steamer Brandon gently settles into the dock at The Eastern Steamship Landing to pick up passengers and to deliver and take on cargo. Listen for the whistle that gives the signal that she is leaving again, one for going ahead, two for going astern, and then full speed ahead. Oh, to be a steamboat captain!

Resources:

The Boothbay Harbor Region by Harold B. Clifford

Kennebec Boothbay Harbor Steamboat Album by Constance Rowe Lang, Daughter and granddaughter of steamboat captains.

Picture Requirements: The Steamboat Landing is now occupied by several businesses including several restaurants. Take your selfie in front of the carved birds that are at the entrance to one of the restaurants.

MAP CLUE