

The Coastal Journal

SERVING MAINE'S MIDCOAST COMMUNITY SINCE 1966



Regulars say good-bye to The Bounty

by Chris Chase
Coastal Journal staff

BATH — On Tuesday, The Bounty Restaurant & Tavern at the Bath Shipyard Inn will serve customers for the last time, bringing to a close more than 40 years of community gathering, socializing and camaraderie.

The restaurant and bar named for the H.M.S. *Bounty* (a replica of the ship met its end during Hurricane Sandy) has been a lot of things to a lot of people

Historic Midcoast site to reopen by end of May...

by Kathleen McLaughlin
Coastal Journal contributor



Photo by Kathleen McLaughlin

Workers put finishing touches on the newly renovated Winnegance General Store in Bath. The store is scheduled to reopen shortly after Memorial Day.

BATH — Since purchasing the historic Winnegance General Store at 36 High St. last year, Jennifer Greene has been a woman on a mission to save the 112-year-old landmark from literal extinction and reinvent it for a new era.

Her passion for the project is apparent as she rattles off a list of what the store will offer: Beer, wine, good coffee, healthy food and some seasonal tourist and beach items.

What about candy?

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"Heck, yeah," she says, laughing.

After months of renovations both major and minor – the structure had to be entirely moved off its foundation so the foundation could be repaired, for example – the store is set to reopen the weekend of May 30-31. And visitors familiar with the previous incarnation may be in for a surprise.

While the store's exterior will look largely as it always

antique pastry case from Island Candy Co. in Harpswell, and a vintage cash register similar to the one the store had for many years.

While Greene wanted the store to have as many mementos from the original store as possible, she was left with precious few, including the big wooden sign that was on the side of the building. But she's happy she can recreate the interior in her own style.

"I want it to feel very 1902, kind of like going home in a very old-fashioned way," she said.



Photo courtesy Bath Historical Society – S. Day Collection

The Winnegance General Store as it looked in the 1940s and '50s.



Photo by Kathleen McLaughlin

Jennifer Greene, the new owner of the Winnegance General Store, stands next to the upstairs window overlooking Lake Winnegance. Greene purchased the property for \$65,000.

has (except for a new covered porch where customers will be able to sit and eat), the interior has undergone a total makeover that includes a new roof, basement, heating and plumbing systems, and wood clapboard siding.

Finishing touches are under way and include an antique wood front door, large restored antique windows, exposed beadboard walls showing the many layers of paint over the years, a walk-in cooler and two solid wood columns in the center.

To add historical flavor to the new Winnegance, Greene has scoured antique shops and stores across the Midcoast region. She has secured an old ice chest, an

Beloved but worn icon

Greene, 60, is an attorney with a family law practice in Santa Cruz, Calif., and one of those people locals call "summer residents." But

because she represents the fourth generation of her family to summer in the Bath area, she feels a strong connection to the people, the region and especially the store, at which she stopped many times as a child on her way to Popham Beach.

Greene purchased the building last summer shortly after the statewide organization Maine Preservation put it on its annual "Maine's Most Endangered Historical Buildings" list. After making an offer on the \$35,000 sale price, Greene found herself in a mini-bidding war over the property, and ended up purchasing it for nearly \$65,000. She's since invested thousands more in renovations.

Almost as soon as Green purchased it, the store became one of the most talked about – and supported – renovation projects in the Midcoast. It seems everyone has a story about going to the store or an opinion about what should be done with the building.

"I realized that the store didn't belong to me," Greene said. "It really belonged to the community."

Until it closed in 2009, the Winnegance had been the oldest continuously running store in Bath, with some 15 different owners during its century-plus-long history.

Along with serving locals as a community gathering site and a place to buy necessities, the store was a beacon

for tourists and summer visitors because it's situated just before the bridge where Route 209 turns off toward Phippsburg and Popham Beach, said Kerry E. Nelson, archivist for the Bath and West Bath historical societies.

"It was a gateway to Popham Beach for thousands and thousands of people for many, many years," said Nelson, who grew up on High Street not far from the store.

Thus, locals and summer visitors alike have had their eye on the store since it closed. But no one wanted to take on the immense task of restoring it. The building was in extremely bad shape, and

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deteriorating steadily from lack of use.

“We all were watching and wondering if it was going to fall down,” said Nelson.

Neighbors happy

Nelson said it’s evident the city supports Greene’s project because it has moved swiftly on zoning and licensing issues. Recently, the city granted Greene a liquor consumption license that gives her the option of serving beer and wine on the premises, which Greene said will be done on a very limited basis.

The Bath Trolley will make stops between the store and downtown when the store reopens.

Nelson is very pleased with the progress on the Winnegance, as is neighbor Andrea Tebben, who runs an in-home daycare center next door. Tebben’s family once ran the store, and she remembers seeing older men playing checkers around the woodstove when she bought candy there as a child. When the foundation was being repaired, the electricity had to be shut off, so Tebben allowed the work crew to run electricity from her house for months. (She received com-

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pensation from Greene for doing so.)

While she is relieved the store is not being taken down, Tebben and others are waiting anxiously to find out who will operate it when it reopens. “Much depends on the tenant,” Tebben said.

Greene is close to securing a tenant to run the store and live in the immaculately restored three-bedroom apartment upstairs.

In the meantime, Greene looks forward to opening by the end of May.

“We *will* open, even if it is in a limited way,” she said.