

## **K. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

### **1. Purpose**

A comprehensive plan should identify critical historical and archaeological resources. These resources are important not only for their role in Orland's history, but also for their present-day value. Historic buildings and sites add to the town's quality of life, and their presence helps maintain property values.

Specifically, this section will:

- a. present a brief history of the town;
- b. describe Orland's historical and archaeological resources;
- c. assess threats to these resources; and
- d. assess the effectiveness of existing measures to protect and preserve these resources.

### **2. Key Findings and Issues**

State records list 34 pre-historic sites in Orland. These include Indian burial grounds and shellfish middens. While permanent European settlement of the Orland area started in the 1760s, there are no official state records of any historic sites or buildings. The town may want to consider encouraging a survey to help establish such a record.

### **3. Public Opinion Survey and Community Workshop Results**

The survey asked no specific questions on historical resources.

### **4. Historical Background (Adapted from the 1979 Land Use Data Base)**

#### **a. Pre-history**

The earliest archaeological remains found in this area are attributed to the prehistoric Red Paint People, more recently known as the Moorehead People. They are presumed to have migrated from the Saint Lawrence River Valley and inhabited the area for 1,300 years, between 3,000 B.C. and 1,700 B.C. The name, "Red Paint," is derived from the heavy concentrations of red ochre (iron oxide) found in the burial sites.

A second influx occurred around 1,700 B.C., this time from southern New England. The Algonquins, as this group is known, were of the Susquehanna tradition. They used different tools and exploited different animals than the Mooreheads. From this second migration arose the numerous tribes, known collectively as the Abnaki, that inhabited the Maine coast at the time of European discovery.

These tribes, the Penacooks, Sacos, Androscoggins, Kennebecs, and the Penobscots are responsible for most of the shell heaps and village sites found along the

## **Orland Comprehensive Plan: Inventory and Analysis**

---

Maine coast. They wintered on the coast eating shellfish, and then moved inland during the summer, up navigable waterways, to take advantage of fish runs. The coming of the Europeans drastically changed the old Indian patterns. To accommodate the European fur trade and summer navigation the Indians started wintering inland to obtain furs and summering on the coast to trade with the Europeans.

### **b. European exploration and early settlement**

In 1603 Samuel de Champlain mapped the Penobscot Bay area. Champlain was in the expedition of Pierre du Gaust, to whom King Henry IV of France granted the land known as Acadia, giving du Gaust the title, Sieur de Monts. Champlain was followed in 1605 by Captain Weymouth who explored the area and established a claim for England. Thus began the conflict in the New World between the English and the French that was to preclude major settlement in the area until after 1759 when Wolfe captured Quebec from the French. In 1763 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris, the land was ceded to England and annexed to the Massachusetts Bay Province.

While the early French settlers in this area may have been trappers and Indian fur traders, the first Englishmen were involved in fishing on the Banks. As this was initially carried out from England, temporary summer fishing stations were established on offshore islands and several points. The first English trading post was built in 1623 at Pentagoet, now Castine.

More important than Castine, however, in bringing early settlers into the area was Fort Pownal. Fort Pownal was built by colonial Americans in 1759 on the west side of Penobscot Bay. After their discharge, many men stationed at the fort settled with their families in what is now Hancock County. The first homesteader to arrive in Orland from Fort Pownal was Joseph Gross in 1764.

Another major factor in the settlement of the area was the land grant by the Massachusetts General Court in 1762 to David Marsh and 353 others for six townships, each six miles square, lying between the Union River to the east and Penobscot Bay to the west. The six townships were: (1) Bucksport; (2) Orland; (3) Penobscot; (4) Sedgwick; (5) Blue Hill; and (6) Surry. The grant did not take land from the early settlers, however. By a resolve of the General Court in 1784 the homesteaders were each given 100 acre lots.

In 1762, after having been administered together, Plantations One and Two were separated. However, it was not until 1800 that Orland was incorporated as a town. The name Orland, possibly meaning golden land or land of golden opportunity, is said to have been given to the town by Joseph Lee, one of the early settlers.

### **c. Nineteenth century**

The Embargo Act of 1807, the Non-Intercourse Act of 1809 which replaced it, and the War of 1812 with England severely affected shipping and trade along the Maine coast, creating many hardships for the people along the Penobscot Bay. Several families left the area for the Camden and Kennebec areas, but many later returned. With the withdrawal of the British from Castine in 1815, the economy and population

## Section K: Historical and Archaeological Resources

---

both grew.

Many people came to the area in search of farmland. While families could raise enough to provide for their own needs, farming rarely rose much above the subsistence level. Because farming was not a year-round operation, men were free for other activities, most notably fishing and coasting in the summer and boat building in the winter. Boat building was a major concern in the nineteenth century. Several boats were built in Orland, the first probably being those built by James Ginn at the Upper Falls in the 1790's. The ships were used for coasting, trading with Bangor, Rockland, Portland, and Boston, as well as for world trade, traveling to the West Indies, Europe, and Japan.

Fishing was also a major occupation. Cod was the primary fishery in the early 1800's; it peaked around 1830 and came to a halt with the repeal of the government bounty and the advent of purse seining. In the late 1800's, when the mackerel fishery began to decline, lobstering became an important source of income. Another important, but short-lived, fishery was that of menhaden or porgies. Porgies were caught and pressed for oil, and the remains were used for fertilizer and sheep feed, from 1860 until 1879 when the fish failed to return to Maine waters. In the early 1900's herring, which were caught in weirs, was an important fishery. To process the fish, flaking and packing operations were set up in Orland. However, by the early 1900's these operations were being phased out as they were made obsolete by refrigeration.

Many businesses in Orland have centered around timber. The straightest and tallest pines were originally used for masts, while other trees were either taken to local sawmills to be cut for lumber or used for fuel. The trees could have been taken to any one of several sawmills, the first was built at Lower Falls in 1773, the second at Upper Falls in 1774. By 1870, most of the trees in the once virgin forest of Orland had been cut, leaving only second growth trees for future harvesting.

Bricks were produced in Orland using local deposits of marine clay. There were numerous yards, both large and small, that employed many men. The bricks were used locally as well as shipped south to Boston and New York.

Granite quarrying was also beginning in the late 1800's. Paving blocks and building stones were cut and shipped to the large cities to the south. However, due to a loss of markets for granite and competition from newly accessible inland sources, the granite industry on the coast declined in the early 1900's.

By the late 1860's, however, economic opportunities in the area were beginning to decline due to a new development in transportation, the railroad, which was opening up the interior. The decline in economic opportunity is reflected in the town's population which began to diminish after reaching a peak of 1,787 people in 1860.

The advent of the steamship was another important change in the field of transportation that affected Orland. Because steamships were able to maintain a more reliable schedule, they began to replace sailing vessels. This change affected boat building in Orland because now iron and not timber was needed.

## Orland Comprehensive Plan: Inventory and Analysis

---

The steamboat had another effect as well. They made the area more accessible to summer vacationers. Although the first summer vacationers came to the area as early as 1880, they did not appreciably affect the outmigration that was in progress. They did, however, supply an important, if seasonal, source of employment for many people living in towns on the Blue Hill Peninsula at a time when the economic base of the area was eroding.

### d. Twentieth century

The most recent development in transportation technology to affect Orland has been the automobile. The widespread use of cars and trucks that began in the early 1940's replaced the use of steamboats, changing the direction of trade from over water to Rockland, Camden, and other coastal communities to over land to Bangor, Bucksport, and Ellsworth.

In 1930 the Maine Seaboard Paper Company, now Champion International, began operations at its mill in Bucksport. It is probable that this large employer was responsible for stemming the outmigration that had been occurring since 1860. The mill has without a doubt contributed significantly to the increases in population that have occurred since 1930.

## 5. Archaeological and Historical Resources

This section will first describe those sites recognized by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) and then discuss other known sites. Since the exact locations of some sites must be kept confidential, some of the descriptions are very general. Further information is available from the MHPC.

### a. MHPC recognized sites

MHPC records list 34 pre-historic (those predating European settlement) sites in Orland. These sites are located within the shoreland zone of Craig Pond, Alamoosook Lake, Orland River, and Dead River. It is likely that there are substantial numbers of other sites along these water bodies and along the Narramissic River as well. These sites include Indian burial areas and shellfish middens. Since most site survey work pre-dates World War II, it may need to be updated.

MHPC records list no historic archaeological sites or historic buildings or structures. According to the MHPC, no professional survey for historic archaeological sites has been conducted to date in Orland. Any future fieldwork could focus on sites relating to the earliest European settlement of the town, beginning in the 1760s. The MHPC also suggests that there be an above-ground survey of resources to identify those properties that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

National Register listing offers properties limited protection when federal monies are involved. Consideration must be given to alternatives before federal funds can be used in a project that might alter a property on the Register. There are also certain tax advantages to renovating historical properties. Listing **does not** restrict the decisions

## Section K: Historical and Archaeological Resources

---

of private property owners to do what they wish with their property. Rather, if a property is altered by an owner in a way that destroys its historic character, that property is subject to removal from the Register.

### **b. Locally recognized sites**

The Orland village area has many historic homes. A group of citizens is presently trying to generate interest in having this area designated a National Register Historic District. This designation would allow a group of homes with historic value to be recognized and enhance their property values.

There are also several historic kiln sites, which were charcoal producing sites. Three are located near Oak and Sabrinie hills. Two remain largely intact and the third is now in ruins. The history of these sites deserves further investigation.

## **6. Threats to Orland's Historical and Archaeological Resources**

Since there is so little information available about Orland's historical resources, sites could be destroyed unintentionally. This could occur through new development such as a subdivision or renovation of an existing building without regard to its historic character.

## **7. Assessment of Current Protection Measures**

Orland presently offers minimal protection to its historical resources. As mentioned above, none are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are a number of steps that Orland could take to increase protection of its historical resources. The town subdivision ordinance could be amended to require that an in-depth archaeological survey be performed if it is suspected that the site may be of historical value. It may be possible to negotiate with the developer to change the layout of the site to protect the area of archaeological interest. For example, building footprints could be moved to another portion of the parcel.

Local groups such as the historical society may want to contact the MHPC for information on how to conduct a survey of historic sites and properties. This would be an important step in informing residents about the town's historic resources.