



Biography

Franklin Ward Machine Shop Dockside Motel XYZ Restaurant

Address: 48 Shore Road - on foundation of burned Centennial Hall after its move from Route 102.

City: Manset

State: Maine

Map and Lot: MAP 1 - LOT 67

Map: SANBORN 1921 - FRANKLIN WARD MACHINE SHOP; 1921 - "RUINS - WALLS ONLY"

Date Founded:

Owners: Franklin Dolliver Ward (1900=1963), Cora Myrtle (Hamblen) Hancock Ward (1908-2007), Leslie Hamblen Ward (1939-), Lee Spire Wilbur (1943-)

"In 1876 the Mutual Improvement and Benefit Society built a large two-story hall just north of the church, and named it Centennial Hall. The records of the society give the date on which members met to decide upon the dimensions and settled upon 30 by 60 feet...

...For several years the society worked hard to make their investment pay...

...But after a while the interest waned and when the building began to fall into disrepair, it was sold to J. L. Stanley and Sons, who a few years later, sold it to William H. Ward who moved it down to the shore road, put it on a foundation, added to it and had a general store on the first floor with a hall above where moving pictures were shown. The Wards sold to Leslie S. King who carried on the same business for some time. It was in this store that the fire started on December 2, 1918, which destroyed the buildings on the waterfront, swept away the fish wharves, the cold storage plant, a restaurant and several small buildings. J. L. Stanley and Sons were heavy losers in this fire." - "Traditions and Records of Southwest Harbor and Somesville, Mount Desert Island, Maine" by Mrs. Seth S. Thornton, 1938, p. 186-187. The remains of this building became Franklin Ward's Machine Shop.

The burned building was rebuilt and used by the fishing industry. It is described in old deeds as:

"Bounded northerly by the town road, sometimes called the Shore Road, and easterly by the Stanley Line, so-called, being a long established settlers' lot line, and westerly and southerly by the following described line: Beginning in said town road at its intersection with a line running southerly and parallel with the westerly end of the concrete wall on which a store building (known as Ward's Store), formerly stood and a new building now stands..."

This property, across the road from what is now Manset Town Dock, was acquired from Isaac F. Stanley (1870-1953) by Franklin Dolliver Ward's mother, Eldora Flye (Dolliver) Ward (1868-1938) in January 1929.

Eldora conveyed the property to her brother-in-law, George A. Ward (1885-1943) and his wife Thelma D. Ward in September 1929. Franklin Dolliver Ward lived there and used it for his machine shop. Franklin and his wife Cora raised their four children in one end upstairs of the Franklin Ward Machine Shop with the machine shop at the other end. In the winter they moved out of the drafty building and stayed with Franklin's parents in their house next door, the Merrill B. King House. He died in 1963.

By July 1968 the property belonged to Franklin Dolliver Ward's wife, Cora Myrtle (Hamblen) Ward (1908-2007) when she conveyed it to her son, Leslie Hamblen Ward (1939-).

Lee Spire Wilbur (1943-) bought the old Franklin Dolliver Ward Machine Shop building from Leslie Hamblen Ward in November 1984. Lee renovated it to house a restaurant on the first floor with 6 motel rooms on the second floor. Lee and his family operated both the restaurant which they named "The Dockside Restaurant" and lodging part, "The Dockside Motel."

Robert Hoyt and Janet Strong leased the Dockside building in 1994 and opened "XYZ" as a seasonal restaurant and "The Dockside" (dropped Motel) for ten years. From 1994 to 1996 Strong also ran The XYZ Gallery, a room created within the dining room. The gallery showed original art and also was used as a waiting room. When the restaurant gained in popularity and space was needed for tables the gallery closed. The dining room sat 83 people.

"XYZ" gained a large following and grew considerably. In 2003 The Wilburs offered the building to Hoyt and Strong to buy, they declined and instead chose to build a new structure on their land at 80 Seawall Road also known as Hio Hill, in Manset. The new "XYZ" opened there in August 2004.