

# THE OGUNQUIT BREEZE

A MONTHLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER FOR THE COMMUNITY  
FROM THE OGUNQUIT RESIDENTS ALLIANCE



## Town News

Thanks to the efforts of the members of the Marginal Way Committee, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission has unanimously nominated the **Marginal Way** as a National Historic Trail!



## Funding for the School District

### *Why Does Ogunquit Pay So Much?*

**The History:** After long standing disputes over Wells not agreeing to pay for services in Ogunquit, we became a Town on July 1, 1979 after a vote of 480 to 94 by its voting residents. As part of the agreement approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, Ogunquit agreed to share equally **100%** of the Wells-Ogunquit District School costs based upon each town's state valuation.

In 1999, the School District's funding formula was changed: **66.7%** was based on state valuation and **33.3%** on average student enrollment. An attempt to again alter the funding formula was presented to the State Legislature in 2010 and included an option for Ogunquit to separate from the Wells School District. It **failed** in the Senate Committee 17-14 and was tabled in the House.

**The Current Sharing** according to the [Annual Report for the Wells-Ogunquit School District:](#)

Calendar Year Pupil Count:	Cost Apportionment of \$ 26.7million:
• Wells: 1304 pupils (96.74%)	• Wells pays \$ 21 million(79%)
• Ogunquit : 44 pupils ( <b>3.26%</b> )	• Ogunquit pays \$ 5.7 million ( <b>21%</b> )
Tuition payments per student:	<b>Ogunquit pays 8 times</b> as much in tuition as Wells does despite the large discrepancy in enrollment numbers.
• Wells pays \$16,149	
• Ogunquit pays <b>\$129,580</b>	

Attempts have been made in the past to alter this flawed agreement. **Maybe it's time for the Town to try again.**

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## \$ Budget Corner \$

“ My basic concern about this overall budget is it's going to increase the amount to be raised by property taxes to over a million dollars and, at the same time, it's going to increase the town's authority to borrow by 2 million dollars which will make it triple our current level of borrowing.

I think both of these things together are concerning and should be taken a look at.”  
Tom Sellers, Budget Review Committee

What's the Town's capacity to pay back debt?  
How much debt do we want for the future?



## Town Calendar

- Feb 9 at 6 PM Ideas & Restrictions for use of \$100K funding from American Rescue Plan
- Feb 10 at 11am Legal review on proposed Charter
- Feb 23 at 5PM Comprehensive Plan on Zoom  
See Town Website for changes and links

# Faces & Places

## The Original Playhouse

As is often the case, historic structures go through many changes of use throughout the years and 15 Shore Road is no exception.



Old Elm Garage, 1908

Originally built in the early 1900's, the Old Elm Garage operated successfully until the depression. Walter Hartwig, a well known Broadway showman, believed in bringing high quality theater to everyone by establishing community theaters in small towns. He arrived in Ogunquit in 1931 from New York looking for a closed building to house a summer theater, as many at that time were held in open spaces and at the mercy of weather conditions.



Maud Adams on the Marquee, 1934

After looking at a few locations, Hartwig signed a rental contract with Grover Perkins who owned the garage space after he agreed to rebuild it into a theater for him. In the winter of 1932-33, Grover, with the help of his friend Raymond Brewster, completed the Ogunquit Playhouse on the Square with a flytower in the rear of the building to house the scenery. Opening in the summer of 1933, it was wildly successful and attracted well known actors and actresses from Broadway to perform in Ogunquit.

*"After the opening of the Ogunquit Playhouse on the Square and the real glamour of New York stage came to our town, New York theater suffered a depression along with the rest of the country. But up here where the wealthy cottage people came through relatively unhurt, the great and near great of the American Theater graced the stage at The Little Theater on the Square..."*

- Maude Adams came with her exacting requirements...
- Helen Hayes gave a grand performance and in turn received cheers and admiration from a standing room only audience
- Ruth St. Denis and her graceful dance group charmed this little seaside resort. Her dance was enhanced by her lovely costumes which in turn were complimented by the Theater decor - the lush apricot velvet curtain against the azure blue walls...
- Handsome John Barrymore was here in a play...the resonance of a Barrymore voice rings through the timbers of the theater"

-Rena W. Perkins' memories



15 Shore Road today

The final season of the Ogunquit Theater on the Square was the summer of 1936. Hartwig had purchased a parcel of land that was part of the old Weare farm on Route One where he built the Ogunquit Playhouse with a seating capacity of 688 and opened in July of 1937.

The use of 15 Shore Road changed again in 1939 when it became the Ogunquit Square Theater, a movie house. Eventually it closed and a variety of retail business have occupied the space since. The original theater still exists, and in the winter, the fly tower can be clearly seen if you stand on Beach Street across from Veterans Park and look up.



View of fly tower today



Ruth St. Denis & Daniel Frohman, producer



Daniel Frohman



Walter Hartwig

# Food Rescue: Part I

## ReUse

According to the Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions at the University of Maine,\* MIT, the State Department of Environmental Protection (EPA) and others, **40% of all food produced in the United States is wasted!** The food either remains where it is grown and plowed under and never reaches the supply chain (1/3 of that grown); is not sold; or is not eaten after being purchased at a grocery store or a restaurant.

This waste takes up 22-28% of solid waste disposal. That is an enormous amount of organic matter that could be kept out of the solid waste, saving thousands of dollars and putting these leftovers to greater use.

Since food that is never eaten (estimated at 54 million tons and growing) requires resources to grow, harvest, transport, cool, package, cook, or otherwise prepare, the impacts of surplus food and waste on our climate and environment are significant. If all of the country's food were grown in one place, it would consume 80 million acres (3/4 of California) and use all of the water used yearly in both California and Idaho.

According to the United Nations, if food waste were a country, it would be the third largest producer of greenhouse gases in the world behind China and the US. One in six Americans is food insecure. More than 75% of food surplus comes from perishables including fruits and vegetables, meats, prepared fresh deli items, seafood, milk and dairy, and bread and bakery items.

In Maine 97-99% of food waste is being landfilled. Vermont, on the other hand, completely banned organic waste in 2020. This tough stance has resulted in a 40% increase in food donations to those in need. By reducing the use of water resources, lowering transportation costs, limiting fossil fuels, changing hauling costs, and preventing methane gas production at landfills, the resultant benefits are feeding more people, forestalling climate change, and saving money that can be used for much better purposes.



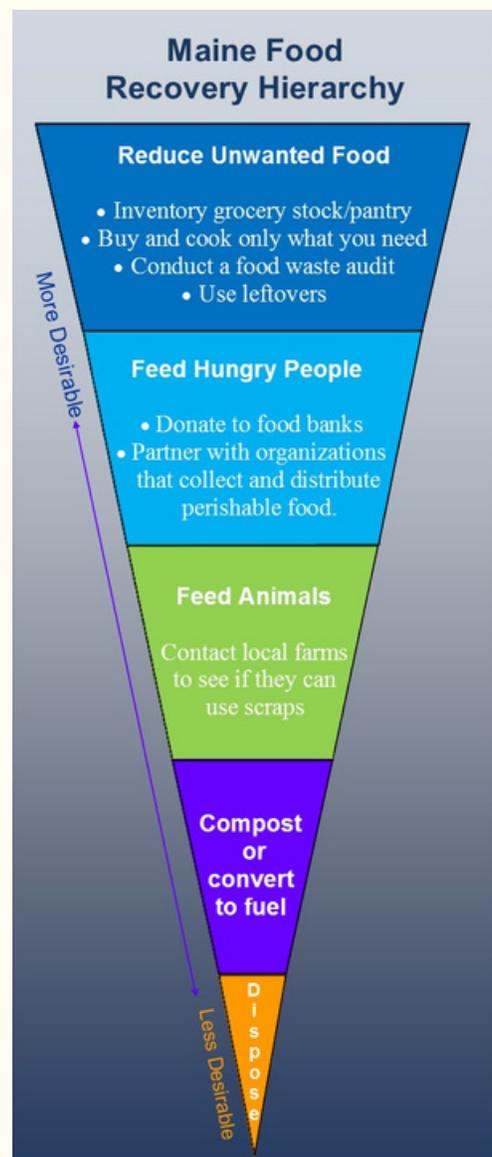
### Uneaten food makes up:

- 4% of greenhouse gas emissions
- 14% of all fresh water use
- 18% of all cropland use
- 24% of landfill inputs (#1 material by EPA)

Watch for an upcoming announcement regarding Ogunquit's Planned Food Waste Recycling Program



Maine Statute 38 §2101-B states, "It is the priority of the state to support the solid waste management hierarchy in section 2101 by preventing and diverting surplus food and food scraps from land disposal or incineration." The goal is to reduce Maine's food waste by 50% by 2030. According to the state's "Food Recovery Hierarchy," by reducing food waste, donating extra food, and implementing separation and recovery programs, organic materials can be captured. Through composting programs, soil enriching materials are produced and money can be raised for the community.



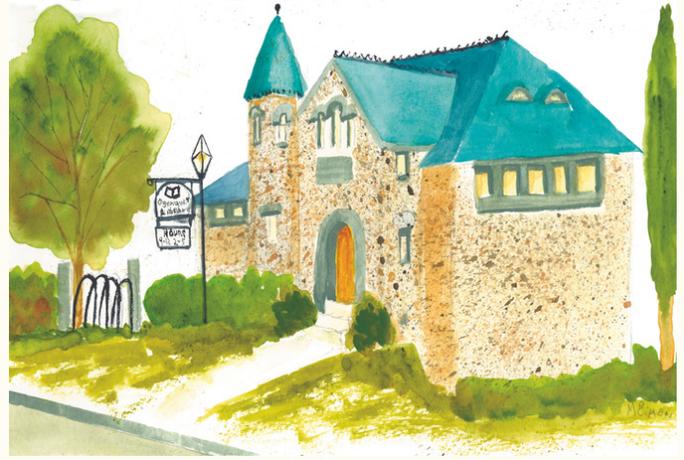
\*For more info, watch their in depth video: [Beyond the Bin](#)

# A Library Tale

The Ogunquit Memorial Library, built in 1898 and listed on The National Registry of Historical Places in 1983, was built by Nannie Conarroe as a tribute to her late husband George, a successful lawyer.

Residing in Philadelphia, their summer experiences in the Ogunquit area began in 1889 when they built their home “Cragmere” on top of Baldhead Cliff. Although the length of their marriage was only 28 years, it was a great love story. As a lasting recognition of her affection for George, Mrs. Conarroe began the library construction shortly after his death in 1897. Fashioning the building in local fieldstone as “Cragmere” was, she chose to build it in the Romanesque Revival Style.

As stated in her will, Mrs. Conarroe wanted the library to continue to be used by both residents and visitors. To this day the Library, with its collection of books and paintings amid its historic backdrop, charms both the local people as well as the travelers who marvel at its grandeur and inspiration.



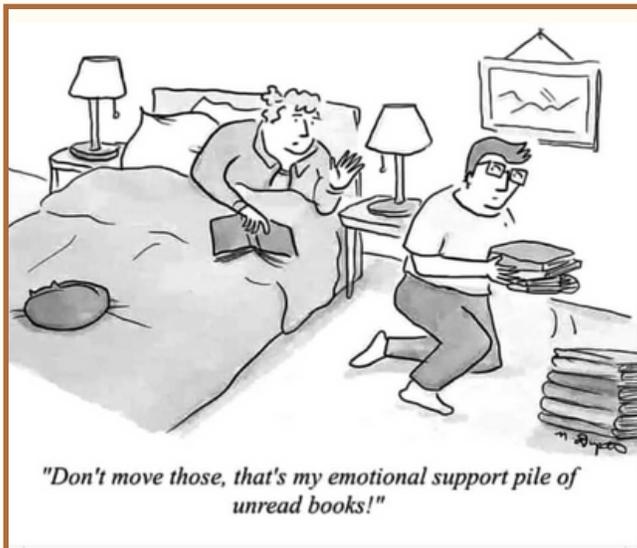
Watercolor by Marilyn Eimon

## A Not-for-Profit Library

The Ogunquit Memorial Library, along with Kennebunk and York, is one of 150 incorporated not-for-profit libraries in Maine. The other 110 public libraries, including Wells, are financed by their towns. As is the case with Ogunquit’s not-for-profit library, a public library is also guided by identical regulations under State laws, to serve the community and at a minimum provide:

- An organized collection of printed or other library materials
- Paid staff
- An established schedule in which the services of the staff are available to the public
- Facilities necessary to support such a collection staff and schedule
- Supported in whole or in part with public funds

Ongoing work to provide and expand access and services for the community keep the library staff busy, and the eight volunteer Board members strive to repair and maintain the iconic building. Check out the [Library website](#) for new books, Gabby Gatherings, Storytime and other engaging programs.



### Town Support for Not-for-Profit Libraries

- Kennebunk: \$576,000  
\$41 per full time resident
  - York: \$598,000  
\$45 per full time resident
  - Ogunquit: \$5,000  
**less than \$4** per full time resident
- June Ballot option: \$20,000**  
less than \$15 per full time resident

*The quality of a Town is often judged by the quality of its Library*

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