

THE VIEW DOWNEAST

by Ruth Leubecker

Marketing and Books, Regional History Focus of Downeast Creative Services

Anne Hahn's enthusiasm is infectious. At the helm of one of the newest businesses in town, she sees a wealth of potential and positive possibilities in Down East Maine.

"Marketing and books are what we're about," she says. "I'd like to do some local marketing, and I'll be promoting nonprofits. The first book I'm doing is a journal for children who've lost a parent, or someone close to them. There are contributions in the book from children who've lost a parent."

Hahn, a native New Englander, is happy to be back in a rural environment, "I've wanted to come back and live in a rural community ever since I left it," she says. "I hope I can contribute to the regional history of this area. I'm working with Tilsbury Books to sell books. This summer I'll have regional authors, tour books and maps of Down East, and children's literature. There'll be an 'open' sign out front so people will know when to stop."

Hahn, husband Philip, and three children moved to Machias a scant nine months ago, but have already made an imprint on the community. Lighthouse Communications, Inc, their four-division company, is strictly a family affair. Husband and wife businesses, Computer' Outpost and Downeast Creative Services, operate from adjacent offices on the dike.

Lightkeepers' Press will eventually be located in Machiasport. And the fourth segment of the company is the Broadway Inn, which will be established as the Broadway Inn Bed & Breakfast on Broadway in Machias in June. The former home of Bob and Nancy

Hayward, and before that, Norman and Josephine Smith, ironically operated as the Broadway Inn in the 1920s.

As publisher of the Lightkeepers' Press and creative director of Downeast Creative Services, Hahn plans on being plenty busy as the months roll by, and so will be hiring support staff for the B&B when it opens.

Marketing and books will remain the twofold focus of her company, however. "Some of my business will be web-generated. But I would welcome submissions from here and I'd like to develop regional publishing," she says, with thoughts on doing a history book. "I think this area has a lot to offer, especially in its history."

Hahn was most recently director of publications and marketing for the Bert Rodgers Schools of Continuing Education in Sarasota, Florida. As such, she redesigned and expanded healthcare and real estate course books and developed online learning systems for Internet course delivery. She is an experienced copy editor with a major focus of her career spent on subscription promotions and direct mail.

"I decided I didn't want to do direct mail anymore, it was time to move on. We brought our children here because we wanted to get away from the 'Disney syndrome'. I want them to be self-reliant, independent, and able to enjoy the out-of-doors."

Considering life in Down East Maine, she adds reflectively, "I'm encouraged by the level of honesty and directness here. And we're learning to economize, which is good."

Excerpted from the *Machias Valley News Observer*, June, 2003