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Boston Post Cane given to Southwest Harbor resident

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SOUTHWEST HARBOR — Willard Colson recently received the town's Boston Post Cane, which signifies that he is the oldest resident of Southwest Harbor.

Select Board Chair George Jellison handed 99-year-old Colson the community heirloom in early March.

The Boston Post Cane is a tradition that started in 1909 when the now-defunct Boston Post newspaper gave out canes to 700 towns in New England, which included those on Mount Desert Island.



(From left) Willard Colson and Southwest Harbor Select Board Chair George Jellison.
PHOTO COURTESY OF JULIE FERNALD

Colson, a Maine native who turned 99 on Jan. 20, has been a resident of Southwest Harbor for 68 years. He worked at the former Stinson Canning Company, which was located at Dysart's Great Harbor Marina, for 46 years. Colson's wife passed away roughly 10 years ago. His retired son Peter and daughter-in-law Cindy are Colson's primary caregivers. Colson now has dementia, sometimes has difficulty hearing and gets around in a wheelchair.

"He can have a full-on conversation as long as he can hear you," Peter said.