
The Thoroughfare

March 2003

Volume 11, Issue 1

Chairmen's Notes/ News From the Island

This fall has been devoted to maintenance and tying up loose ends. The skeleton crew of three – Tom Nelson, Jesse Babonis and Lynne Smith – has done a commendable job bridging the gap between managers. With new manager Bruce Patterson and wife Selena now on the island, life should return to normal. We are all full of anticipation as this new chapter in the island's history begins.

News of note:

Loggers Manchester and Huckins are on the island and in full operating mode. They have made clear cuts to the north and the south of Bonney Field. They have also cut on and around the ledges going out to Bonney Point. At this writing, they have 400-500 cords on the ground, which represents approximately half of this year's harvest. Forester Teresa Davis, who has been monitoring the harvest, reports that the lumber quality in some areas has not been up to expectation. Because of this, she expects to go into areas not originally designated for this year's harvest. She recom-

mends clear cutting in most areas as the best method for preventing blow downs and for the long-term health of the forest.

We have some good news on the **aquaculture** front. Jon Vord, who filed an application for a salmon pen between Halifax and Lakerman's, has sold his house in Maine and moved back to Norway. He has not filed for an alternate site, without which there can be no hearing on his original application. It is the opinion of the Trustees that we should continue our efforts to protect the waters around Roque. We owe our thanks to John Higgins for leading the charge in this effort.

Concern about the remaining life of the **mainland dock** has come to the forefront. A recent survey shows extensive damage due to rot, wear and tear, and age, and the Trustees have decided to start receiving bids for its replacement as soon as possible.

The **FY2003 budget** was approved at the Boston Trustees Meeting in January. Due to current economic woes, the goal of the meeting was to pare down. We were successful in bringing it to the level discussed

at the Annual Meeting. The costs to replace the mainland dock will come out of our capital reserve fund.

Finally, there has been a change to the **Trustee meeting schedule**. There will now be three meetings a year: the October weekend retreat at Roque, the annual budget meeting in January, and the annual membership meeting in May. This change should make it easier for Trustees with travel considerations and should alleviate holiday season stress by eliminating the December meeting. The next meeting will be the annual membership meeting on **May 4th**, at **The Country Club in Brookline**.

-Chris Cutler & Ari Gregg

Norm Famous

Consultants, Norman Famous and Marcia Spencer Famous, are both native Philadelphians, who moved to Maine in the 1970's and did their graduate studies at the University of Maine in Orono. They have been associated with Roque Island's conservation program since 1989.

As Roque Island's Senior Naturalist, Norm Famous, works in conjunction with the Natural Resources Committee by conducting research and reviewing matters of environmental concern for the archipelago. He has been a liaison with state and federal permitting agencies, both to ensure the island's compliance with their regulations, and to represent the concerns of R.I.G.H.C. at environment-related meetings in Maine.

On the island, Norm conducts environmental baseline and monitoring surveys. These have included various bird surveys, conducted in all seasons; identification of wetlands; and an inventory of flora, which he undertook with his wife and partner, Marcia Spencer, who is specialized in botany. Having finished much of this work on the main island, Norm is now setting his sights on Great Spruce, where he will be doing similar research, initially concentrating on areas which are proposed for wood harvesting.

Along with the Natural Resources Committee and EMCI, Norm has interfaced with other specialists in conducting field research that may be mutually beneficial and add to our greater understanding of the area's resources. As examples, just this past year, Christy L. Finlayson, a graduate student at the University of Maine, came to identify aquatic insects; Carter Newell, a marine biologist undertook a study of the intertidal and subtidal ecology of Roque Harbor; and, a bird banding team, led by John Brokaw, visited several times in June, as they have been doing every year since 1996.

At times we utilize Norm's expertise and seek his opinion on projects that may affect the various ecosystems on the island and in the area. Most recently he looked at the subject of wood harvesting; and, very much at the forefront now, he is reviewing the potential impact of the various aquaculture proposals being put forth in our area. These past six months, he has been collecting and presenting material to the D.M.R. in an effort to have the waters around Roque reclassified so as to provide a higher level of

conservation protection.

He and Marcia have produced a number of attractive and informative brochures for the use of visitors which you will find in the family room. If he should be on the island during your visit, be sure to tag along: it makes for a very interesting outing!

Generally, studies conducted by the Famouses are supported by either the Natural Resources Committee or EMCI. Your contribution to either furthers these valuable programs. Please contribute.

- George and Nina Herrick



January snow on Patten Cove Road

SQUIRE'S POINT—Ownership of the Beach

George G. Herrick

In a landmark decision on 14 September 1987, Justice William S. Brodrick ruled that shoreline private property extends to the low tide mark. In *Edward B. Bell v. Inhabitants of the Town of Wells* (Superior Court Civil Action, Docket No. CV 84-125), Justice Brodrick overturned conventional opinion that the public had access up to the high water mark and established a new law that was upheld by the Superior Court of Maine in a 4 - 3 in 1989. The decision was based on a colonial ordinance of 1648, the principal source of Maine's common law on the intertidal zone. Some extracts from the fifty-two page opinion convey the flavor of the case:

There is insufficient evidence to justify a finding that there was any public custom of regular general recreation on

the beaches in 17th century Massachusetts and no evidence whatsoever to justify a finding of regular general recreation on privately owned beaches.

Excessive recreation, like excessive anything else, was anathema to the Puritans. Given the Puritans disapproval of tanned skin (or at least their admiration of white skin) and given the infrequent bathing habits of the English, it seems highly unlikely that there was any consistent usage of public beaches, let alone private beaches, for sunbathing or swimming.

The type of intense beach usage sought by the Attorney General for the public in this case (including beach towels, umbrellas, coolers, and the slathering of bodies with various oils in search of the perfect suntan) would have been repugnant to the Puritan.

The 1648 ordinance provided public access to the beach for fishing, fowling and navigation. Clearly there can be no issue of navigation by the public on a privately owned island. There can be no fowling except during the hunting season in fall and winter - and the ducks that one hunts do not come to Great Beach. Fishing off Great Beach would be an unproductive exercise, though there are some clams to be dug at the southern end, but only at low tide. Nevertheless, one could anticipate people arriving at the beach with a clam hoe or some fishing line as a prop to justify their presence. It should not be difficult to persuade them of the futility of their exercise.

Roque Island's present policy of sanctioning reasonable access at the northern end of the beach and patient explanation of the law and our conservation policies seems adequate at this time.

Barnyard Tales



A murder of crows has taken to visiting the barnyard everyday to get a snack of dog food. One of them is a veteran from last year. He is easily recognizable as he has a lame foot.

Wood Harvest



The arborist, Matt (Twig) Largess, who visited the island in late November, taking a core sample from one of the trees in the Beech grove.

The Kitchen Cupboard - A Roque Island Birthday Celebration

Every year we ask that our guests team up with each other and cook at least one dinner for the group. This gets everybody involved and some of our most enthusiastic guests will plan months in advance and bring in formal attire and specialty foods from New York and Los Angeles. The evening usually begins with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres on the

front porch if the weather is fair or by the fire in the living room if it is not. We then proceed to a celebratory dinner in the dining room.

Last July, two of our guest chefs outdid themselves by producing a birthday banquet in honor of my husband, Eliot, and our friend Saana Baker. The menu was inspired by 19th century New England fare; however, the method of obtaining the foods was

definitely 21st century: our guests were unfamiliar with the vagaries of provisioning in Washington County, so they arranged for the venison and foie gras to be flown in from overseas to New York, then sent by Fed-Ex to Bangor, where the packages were picked up by a taxi and delivered to the Roque Bluffs dock!

-Alessa Angle

Banquet for Eliot and Saana

chef: Trevor Kaufman

Peabody Soup

Roque Island broccoli soup layered with pea soup and thyme oil
Perlage Riva Moretta Prosecco di Valdobbiadene

Roasted Vegetable Terrine with Roque Island basil and basil oil

2001 Sancerre Loire Valley

Lobster for Saana

Maine lobster poached in Roque Island butter served on artichoke agnolotti with a leek nage
2001 Sancerre Loire Valley

Duck a l'Orange

Foie gras de canard on cornbread
with grilled Muscovy duck breast, red onion jam, and orange verjus
1997 Leroy Bourgogne

Game for Eliot

Venison chop with morel mushrooms, roasted red grapes, and pommes "Maxim"
1996 Domaine des Gartieux, Paulillac

Roque Island Garden Salad with lemon cider vinaigrette

Strawberry Champagne Terrine
served with strawberry coulis and ginger mint
Louis Roederer Demi-Sec Champagne

Maine Blueberry Souffle
with vanilla sauce, blueberry coulis, fresh blueberries, and sweet cream ice cream
Champagne

1985 Taylor Fladgate Vintage Port

Flotsam

- George Herrick arranged for two facsimile copies of the old guest book to be very handsomely bound, and they are now on the island. This way the original will be preserved from further wear and tear.
- The night before the Roque Island Annual meeting, the juniors got together for their second annual gathering. We met at *Blu Martini* in the new Ritz on Boston Common. Those present included Tatiana, Nicholas, and Alexandra Papanicolaou, Ellen, and Joe Higgins, and Ben and Sarah Alexander. Believe most of us had met before, except it was the first time Nicholas and Alexandra met Joe and the first time that Sarah met the Papanicolaous. We had a nice time catching up over a variety of flavorful martinis and sharing stories of Roque.
- Gretchen Smith was married to Nicholas A. Covino on Friday, January 17. The ceremony took place at the DeCordova museum and Sculpture Park in Lincoln, Massachusetts. They will be living in Arlington outside of Boston.
- Project weekend set for June 19—22. Please contact Rebecca Barry with questions.
- Apologies to Lelya Gregg and Kitty Gonzales for errors on names in the last issue.

From The Archives

The Ancestors and Descendants of the Immigrant, William Longfellow of Newbury, Massachusetts, (2001), compiled by Russell Clare Farnham, contains the following information on Gilbert Longfellow, former owner of Roque Island: Gilbert Longfellow, a seventh generation descendant of William, was born in Machias on March 21st, 1824. He was married in 1858 to his first cousin Hannah Stetson Longfellow, who was born in 1828. They had seven children.

The Longfellows lived in Machias for ten years until Gilbert moved his family to Roque Island in 1868, having formed a partnership with John Shorey. After Longfellow's sale of Roque Island back to the Gardners in 1882, he apparently moved his family to Jonesport, although he owned several parcels of land around Machias. No date for Longfellow's death has been found.

This book also contains the deed numbers of the transactions about Roque Island, between John Shorey, Gilbert Longfellow, and the Gardners in 1870, 1872 and 1882.

- G.G.H.

THE LIBRARY CORNER

Twenty-seven books were added to the library collection last year, thanks to the efforts of George Herrick. They include:

The In Between Days, illustrated by Alexander Pertzoff

First resorts by Jan Sterngrass

Corea Heath by Marcia Spencer

Lobsters Great and Small by Philip and Hayden Conkling

Estimates of Shorebird Populations in North America by R.I.G. Morrison

New England Early Printed Maps, (1503-1800) by Barbara B. McCorkle

...and two books on the history of lumbering in Maine.

Family Connections

The seventh annual gathering of trustees on Roque Island began with a splendid dinner served in the Old Farm House on Friday, October 18, 2002. That evening, there were fifteen surrounding the table: Chris Cutler, Tanya Fischer, Randy Goodhue, Ari Gregg, Jason Herrick, Ellen M. Higgins, Cauley Lukens, and Randy Mikes, along with trustee observers Ben Alexander, Ellen J. Higgins, and Gretchen Smith, Georgia Goodhue and guests Leyla Gregg (age 4 weeks), Macauley Mikes (age 8 years), and John Lukens.

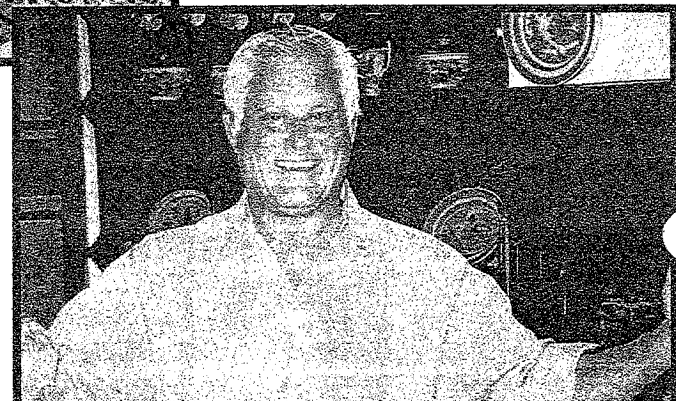
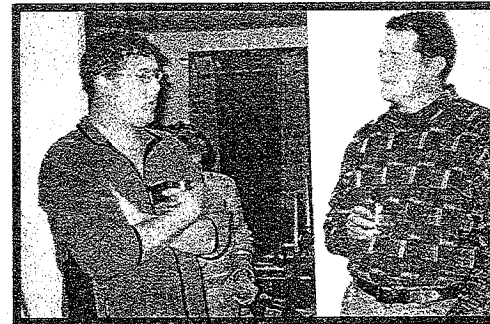
At each place was a card on which Cauley had noted the relationships of each guest to the others at the table.

The relationships included first cousins, first cousins once and twice removed, second cousins, second cousins once and twice removed, third cousins once removed, and fourth cousins. In fact, there were six of the younger set who shared the occasion with fourth cousins: Jason Herrick and Georgia Goodhue (who are second cousins) are both fourth cousins to Ben Alexander, Leyla Gregg, Ellen J. Higgins and Macauley Mikes (who are third cousins). Also represented were several closer relationships: parent/child (4), grandparent/grandchild (4), aunt/niece and uncle/niece. Non-blood relationships included mother-in-law/son-in-law, father-in-law/son-in-law, and brothers-in-law.

Randy Goodhue, John Lukens, and Randy Mikes (all non-members) took the booby prize for having the fewest family relations present. Macauley Mikes took first prize, having a blood relationship with 14 of the 15 sharing the table with her. She was heard to say when asked if she knew her relationship with her partner in a board game, Ah I know - everyone here is my cousin!

George Augustus Gardner's delight in the occasion was palpable. His vision of a pleasant retreat for future generations of his family is fulfilled many times over.

- John N. Lukens



Work Weekend 2003 - June 19-23

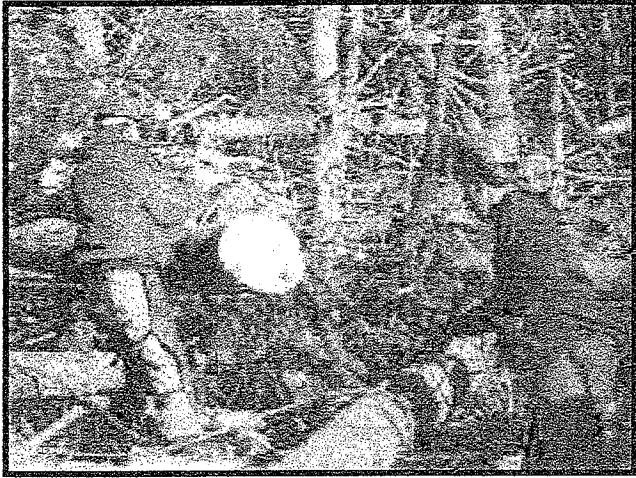
Work Weekend will be held this year from Thursday, June 19, to Monday, June 23. All members, especially new ones, are invited and heartily encouraged to attend. The benefits are numerous. First, you get to make friends with cousins you haven't met. We are lucky to have an extended family with such a widespread net of interesting people. It's nice to have friends who are also family. Second, you get an inside view of how the island works and just what it takes to keep it going. Greater understanding can lead to greater love. Finally, you get to help out in an organized and productive way. You contribute something meaningful, see visible results, and end up feeling more a part of the island than ever before.

Members have supplied many good ideas for projects, ranging from domestic to adventurous, and from "capital" projects to maintenance. Work weekend participants will be able to choose what they would like to work on. It is not necessary to know ahead of time how to use a tree saw or manage a bonfire—all projects will have proper instruction and supervision. Projects to choose among this year include:

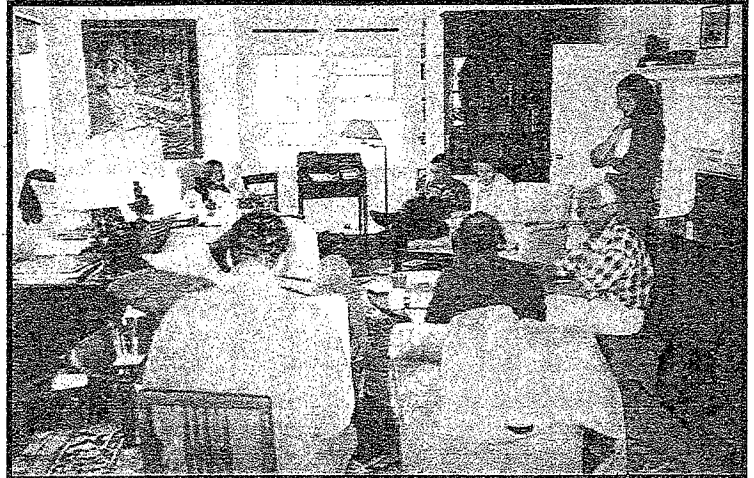
PROJECT	EQUIPMENT
Trails --Trim existing trails on Great Spruce --Plan and cut new trails on Great Spruce --Build small bridge by Mill Pond (it's the third one in) --Start clearing Head Field—need a weed whacker or three --Re-trim high limbs along Beach Field Road—need tree saws --Eric Smith, forest clearer extraordinaire, will be available Sunday.	Clippers, weed whackers, tree saws, lumber, hammer & nails, sharp & conditioned chain saw(s)
Farm Stuff --Clean and condition tack --Finish painting the white fence which Ed started last year. --Repair/reposition stiles in big pasture	Saddle soap, neatsfoot oil, clean rags, brushes, white paint, paint-brushes
House Stuff --Plant an herb pot for each House --I would like to hear from the head of each House committee about specific projects we could do for them --Collect birch bark for house fires on Clam Cove trail	Pots, potting soil, herb seeds or seedlings, baskets for birch bark
Beach Stuff --Clear seaweed from corner of North Beach (an easy hour's task with a hay fork) --Bonfire at low tide on Squire's Point to burn trees on beach and inside woods on path. Need lots of people to watch it.	Hay fork, marshmallows

The Red House has been reserved, and you are welcome to start arriving on Thursday the 19th as early as you like (please check the ferry schedule). Friday, Saturday, and Sunday will be project days, and we will adjourn on Monday the 23rd. Food will be provided all weekend long! To learn more or to reserve a spot for this exciting weekend, please contact Rebecca Barry, e-mail Rebecca.Barry@asu.edu; home phone (480) 283-8838; work phone (480)

On Ownership, Forestry and Family Connections...



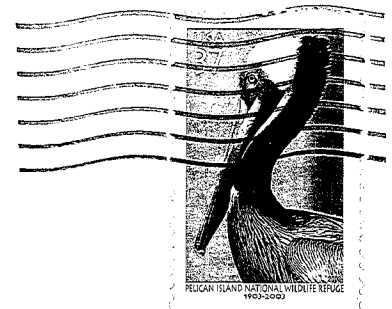
Arborists hard at work



Meeting in progress

The Thoroughfare

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**Deadline for next issue: June 15, 2003.
Please contact Nina Herrick with any questions or ideas for contributions.**

