
The Thoroughfare

November 2004

Volume 12, Issue II

News from Roque

With the fast approaching winter months the staff is busy finishing up projects and getting ready for the weather to come. On the waterfront, Hoddie is hoping to have the barge finished in a couple of weeks. We have pulled all the other boats and are in the process of putting them to bed for the winter. The float and ramp are out of the water, the moorings are on the shore for servicing in the spring. We hope to have the Peabody pulled and some work done on her in the next few weeks. When we get a couple of calm days in a row we will be stocking up on fuel oil and propane.

The farm is making good strides in preparing for the winter and upcoming spring. Jesse has found a buyer for our excess lambs and sheep and they should be off the island by mid-November. We had 39 lambs this year but hope to only have about 25 next. This should help in keeping them fenced in for the next family season. We will be taking 18 lambs and our 2 beef cows in for processing in December. Liz has been utilizing as much of the remaining garden items as possible by making relish and sauces. She has also been stocking up on staples for the winter to cut down on shopping excursions.

We allowed the sheep in the garden this past week to have a feast which they seemed to enjoy. Selena has been putting the houses in order for the winter and doing extra items to help with the openings in the spring. As a group we have been gathering firewood and generally straightening up the compound and putting things where they belong.

Teresa Davis, our forester was on Double Shot with her partner Billy Dow a couple of weeks ago looking over the trees when she slipped and fell about 12 feet down a ledge, breaking her left wrist, 3 ribs, fracturing her skull and bruising her kidney. Hoddie was on the skiff at Double Shot waiting for them when Billy called him and then they called me. I notified the Coast Guard. It took about 3 hours from the initial call, due to the location of where she was at, to get her to the hospital. I have spoken with her a couple of times since and it is hoped that she will be making a full recovery. I think what happened with Teresa is a reminder for all of us to let someone know where you are going and when to expect you back. Trying to locate someone on an island the size of Roque is very difficult to say the least. Selena and I will be going home for Thanksgiving and the rest of the staff will be taking off over the Christmas and New Year's Holidays.

Best to all, Bruce



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

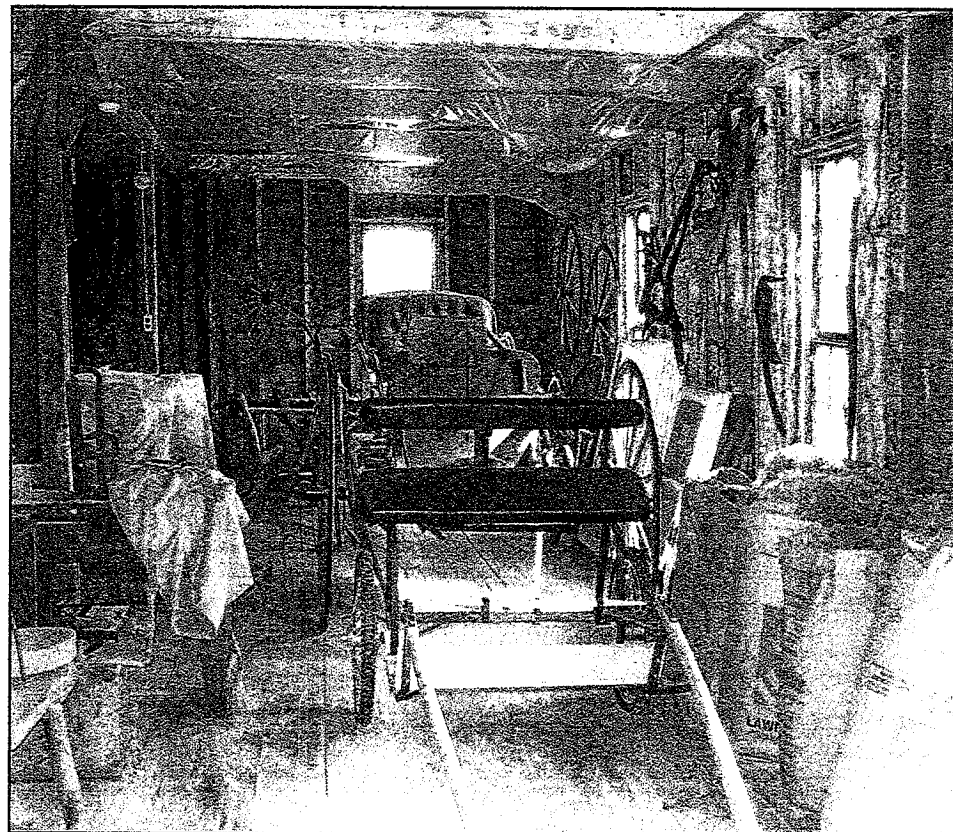
The Board held its annual Trustees Weekend on Roque in October. Trustees Georgia Goodhue, Tassia Smith, Tanya Fischer, Nick Higgins, Jason Herrick and Randy Mikes, Trustee Observers Ellen J. Higgins and Hilary McDonald, and Treasurer Randy Goodhue conducted two days of meetings regarding various Island issues. The weekend was capped by a vigorous skins game on the Roque Island Links between course designer Randy Goodhue, his wife Lyn, Jason Herrick and your Chairman. The event was highlighted by the grand opening of four new holes on the previously nine hole course, the most challenging of which being on Popplestone Beach.

Some highlights of the weekend discussion as well as current news and issues:

Our insurance costs have significantly increased this year. There are two reasons for this. First, our prior carrier for boat insurance declined to renew coverage given recent claims experience. The cost of obtaining new coverage doubled the annual premium. Also, given use restrictions under the new policy, we have purchased recreational policies for the Loon, Buzz Boat and Sand Peep. Second, our property insurance premium increased significantly due to a reassessment of the value/replacement cost of the houses and buildings on the island.

An Alternative Energy committee has been formed to explore the types and costs of alternative sources of energy. The hope is that someday Roque will be "off the grid" and able to utilize naturally generated energy, whether it be wind, sun, tide or other. The committee will also assess the Island need for back-up or supplemental energy - e.g. generators. Please contact co-chairpersons Tassia Smith and Judd Fischer if you are interested in serving on the committee.

RIGHC and the town of Roque Bluffs have had discussions regarding a planned breakwater which apparently will enter RIGHC property on the mainland (somewhere below the high water mark). The Board sees this as an opportunity to acquire the strip of land presently owned by the town between the Bluffs House and the garage. John Higgins has been asked to lead the negotiations.



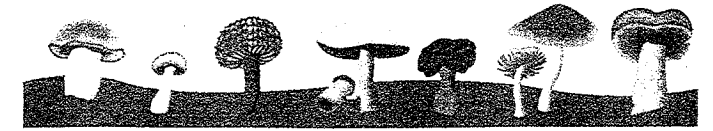
At the suggestion of Randy Goodhue, the Board agreed that a Bicentennial Celebration should be held on the Island the weekend of July 4th, 2006. A committee is being formed with Randy Goodhue as chair. Those interested in serving should contact Randy at randy.goodhue@ubs.com if they would like to be involved on the planning committee..

On October 21, Forester, Teresa Davis, sustained injuries from a fall on Double Shot. She was conducting a tree survey on the outer islands at the time and was accompanied by Billy Dow, brother of our boatman, Hoddy. Apparently, Teresa lost a handhold and fell 10 to 12 feet into a crevice. The Coast Guard was summoned to transport her to emergency medical care. Teresa's injuries were significant but should not prevent a complete recovery.

The annual meeting traditionally is held at The Country Club in Brookline, MA. The Club has, as most do, a dress code. This fact is conveyed on the yearly invitations to the meeting. In recent years there have been isolated incidences of non-compliance with the dress code that have placed our ability to have the meeting at this wonderful facility in jeopardy. It is vitally important that everyone adhere to the Club's dress code.

Cheers, Randy Mikes

Squire's Point



MUSHROOMS BY GEORGE C. HERRICK Delectable in themselves, mushrooms also enrich and enhance many other foods. Mushrooms are important if you are seriously interested in sensations of the palate. Indispensable to fine cooking, they give a distinctive flavor to sauces, soups, omelets, pasta and stuffings. They make delicious hors d'oeuvres and first courses. Serious cultivation of mushrooms goes back to the time of Louis XIV, but the eating of wild mushrooms dates from earlier times. There were Chaldee words for edible mushrooms and Talmudic treatises refer to them. Herodotus mentions the various implements used for eating them and Pliny referred to mushroom eaters as "dainty voluptuaries". Many devotees follow the mushroom season on Roque Island. A warming trend in spring brings out many fungi, but the number drops in late spring. A cool spell in August with some rain will bring out puff-balls and chanterelles. The largest number and variety come with the first cooling in September. The season ends when temperatures dip below freezing in October.

A Humboldt Field Research Institute mycological class identified 76 species during a visit in September 1997, but there are many more. Gastronomes concentrate on the edible ones. By late August, the buttery orange, flute shaped chanterelles are ready for picking and they proliferate until late September. The far side of Great Head is a good place to look for them and hundreds have been reported on Great Spruce. As with all mushrooms, use a knife to cut it off and to leave its base in the ground. This will encourage its proliferation another season and will make the cleaning process a lot easier when you get it back to the kitchen. Towards the end of September the Canpestris mushrooms, sometimes eight inches in diameter, offer abundant food right from the lawns around the houses.

Serious mycologists also search for the Edible Boletus (a.k.a. "porcini") with its hamburger bun like appearance, to be found on roads or ditches after a rain storm. The newest addition to the Roque Island table is the Coprinus Comatus, or "Shaggy Mane", to be found in the equipments shed in late September. Delectable when stewed in cream or served on buttered toast, this fungus is an unsightly object, looking as though it were excreting black ink. The English poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley gruesomely described its last phase:

*Their mass rotted off them flake by flake,
Till the thick stalk stuck like a murderer's stake,
Where rags flesh yet tremble on high,
Infecting the winds that wander by.*



A calf was born on July 7th to Gracie; he was named Gorgeous George.

Aurora Borealis

*Oh, roar a roar for Nora
Nora-Alice in the night
For she has seen Aurora
Borealis burning bright*

*A furor for our Nora!
And applaud Aurora seen!
Where, throughout the Summer, has
Our Borealis been?*

Pogo (Walt Kelly)

Book Review

The Secret Life of Lobsters by Trevor Corson

For those who only think of lobsters steaming red with a side cup of melted butter, or grilled at Trader Vics, author Trevor Corson presents another treat in his detailed examination of the crustacean culture.

Corson, an Atlantic Monthly writer who, among other adventures, worked as sternman for lobsterman Bruce Fernald at Little Cranberry Island for a number of years, writes an entertaining account of lobsters, the lobstermen who catch them, and the scientists who have examined lobsters in their most intimate activities.

Corson describes the history of the lobster industry and its characters on Little Cranberry from a personal perspective. Generations of the Fernald family and others hunt seasonally for lobsters, mate and reproduce, buy larger boats, and apparently live a hard and isolated island life which can also appear to be idyllic. Simultaneously, Corson delineates the growth of scientific interest in *homarus americanus*, beginning with an essay in 1895 by one Francis Herrick, "The American Lobster: Its Habits and Developments".

In a series of chapters Corson combines his accurate descriptions of lobster fishing and island living with the increasing interest of the scientific community in the sex life of the lobster. While an academic presentation of such arcane knowledge might produce drowsiness for some readers, Corson lightens the entire business with subtle anthropomorphic hints and parallels to the lives of his lobstermen and their women.

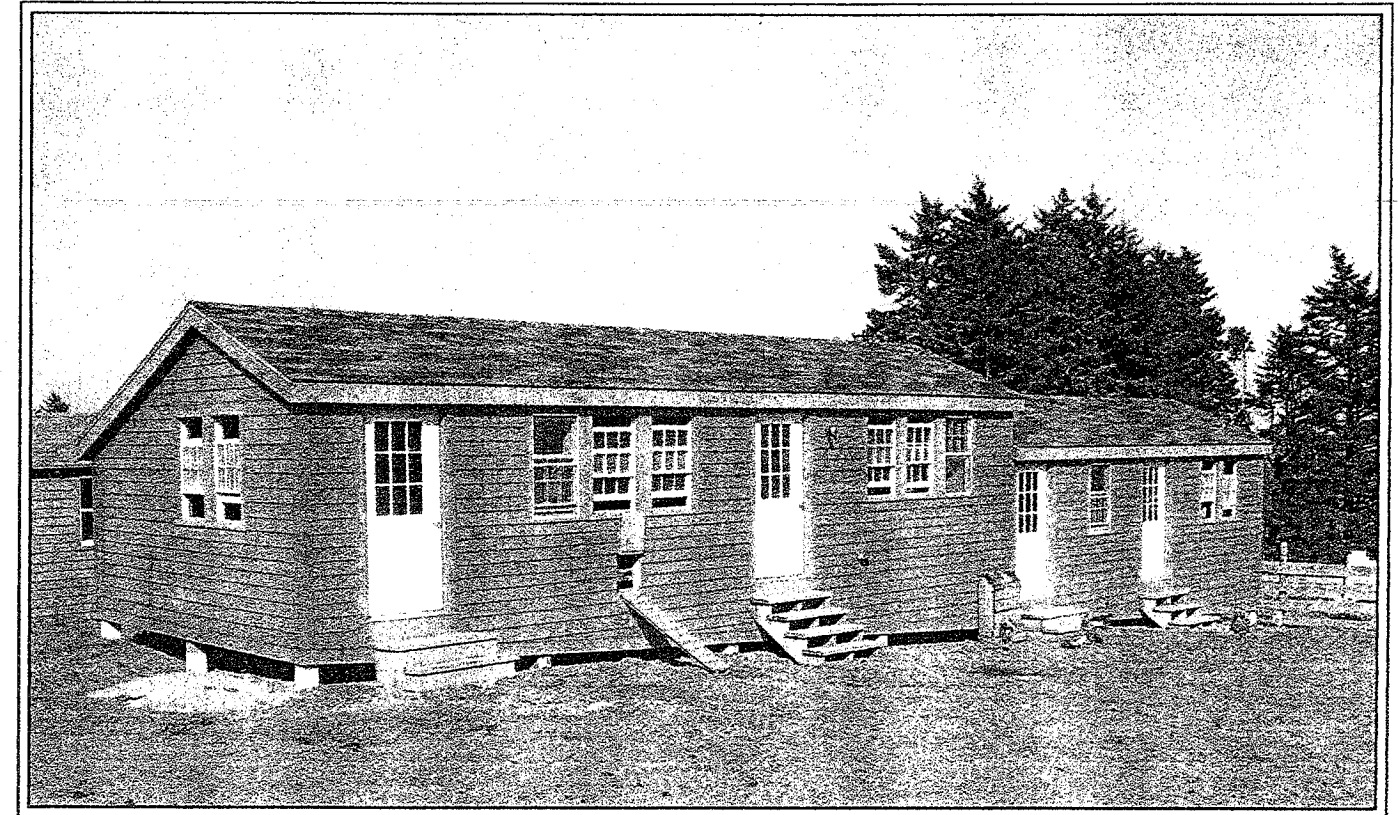
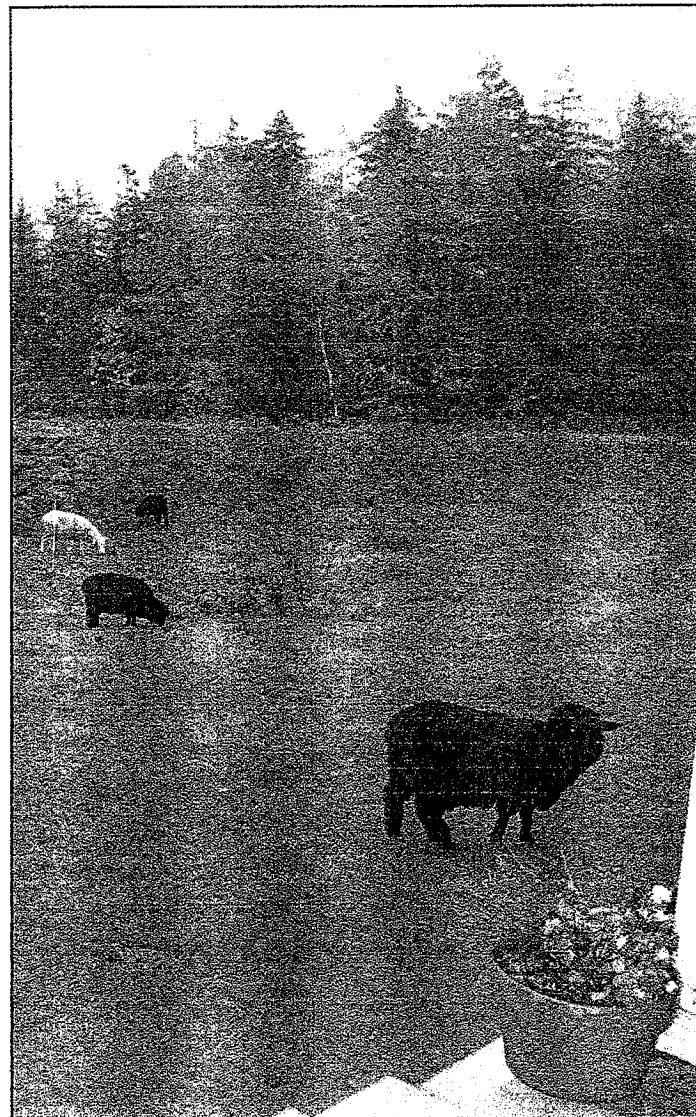
By the late 1970s, however clouds began to darken the lobstering panorama. As Corson writes, "Put simply, lobstermen appeared to be having too much sex, while lobsters weren't having enough." The coastal lobstering population had doubled, there were 10 times as many traps in the water, and catches had started to decline.

The majority of the interested scientific community forecast doom for the lobster industry. Fishermen in Maine, who had established conservation methods in the 1950s, with the measuring gauge, the v-notch and a prohibition for taking egged females, disagreed with the scientists.

This conflict and resentment of the scientists by the fishermen partially evaporated with time. Compromise legislation increased the minimum size of the gauge, thus allowing breeding lobsters an extra year or two before they could be landed. Dissident scientists, such as Bob Steneck, with the aid of underwater cameras and submersible vehicles reinforced the intuitive knowledge of the fishermen. Lobster catches increased through the 1990s. Life continues with new generations of fishermen on Little Cranberry Island. Research continues with new technology and evolving interests, and the lobster continues to enhance our cuisine and our interest.

Trevor Corson has written perhaps the most comprehensive essay of the lobster culture as it exists today on the Maine coast. Like the style of writer John McPhee in many of his extended essays, Corson juxtaposes his personal involvement in the lives of the Cranberry Island fisherman with detailed and esoteric research from the primary scientific sources to produce a volume both entertaining and informative. Highly recommended.

Judd Fischer



New poultry houses built in Spring of 2004

Milestones

- **Tatiana Cosima Geddes Gregg** was born on September 8th, 2004 at 8 lbs., 14 oz., 21 inches.
- **Robert "Bobby" Haydock Cutler** graduated from Broomfield School in June 2004. He will attend Johnson State College in Vermont.
- **Joseph Peabody Monks Higgins** graduated from Roanoke College in May 2004.
- **Katharine "Kitty" Margarita Gonzalez** graduated from Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts in June 2004.
- **Ellen Johann Higgins** was engaged to Keith Andrew Berger on July 10th, 2004 on Roque Island and will get married on August 6th, 2005 in Cape Elizabeth, Maine.
- **Patrick Apolonio Gonzalez** was engaged to Kyle Popkave on July 28, 2004, also on Roque Island, and will get married during the summer of 2005.
- **Bryan Scott Monks** was engaged to Nena Trujillo on August 4th on Roque Island [3 engagements on Roque this year!]
- **Jason Nicholas Roque Herrick** was engaged to Lindsay Smith of Charlotte, North Carolina in Teotihuacan, Mexico on May 30th, 2004 and will get married on April 9th, 2005 in Charlotte.
- **Georgia Goodhue** and **Alexander Duer Reath** were married on August 28th, 2004 in Marion, Massachusetts.
- **Jessica Gardner Kearns** and **Nathaniel Gordon Fellows Goldblatt** were married on July 17th, 2004 on Roque Island.

Forestry Report.....Chris Cutler

A two year harvest program has been completed as a part of Roque's Ten Year Tree Growth Plan. The two harvests in the winters of 2003 and 2004 took place on Roque exclusively with no activity on any of the outer islands.

The 2003 harvest was concentrated along the West Shore Road from just south of Bonney Field to Patten's Cove. This area was chosen because it was prone to blow-downs and the Spruce Bark Beetle infestation, and it was relatively close to the only offloading point on that part of the island (that being the beach west of the fisherman shack). With this harvest, we were able to clean up some major blow-downs and areas with the greatest evidence of the Spruce Bark Beetle. Regeneration after only a year and a half is already apparent, and with proper management this will become more resistant to the strong prevailing winds of this side of the island.

The 2004 harvest was along the Beach Road and in behind North Beach. This area was chosen for its access to the offloading site on North Beach and with the goal of diversifying age growth in a largely same age forest. Due to better soils in these sections the quality of trees were superior and subsequently we had a greater yield with fewer acres cleared than the previous year. The work was done by two local men Russell Manchester and Dallas Huckins. They did an excellent job considering the many things that can and do go wrong with a job this size taking place on a island. They were responsive to our requirements in ecologically sensitive areas and worked well with our forester, Teresa Davis, when plans were changed. Credit must also be given to Island staff who without their help this would not have been possible. Overall, there were approximately 2,600 cords taken, 45+ acres cleared, and around \$25,000 payed to R.I.G.H.C.

Though some may find the sites a bit scary and unfamiliar they will soon regenerate and be green once again. With ongoing management, they have the potential to be healthier and more diverse as well as a valuable natural resource. The forestry committee's next order of business will be to consider the viability of future harvests and insuring that our existing harvest sites are well managed during their regrowth.

On a personal note the forestry committee would like to take this opportunity to send our wishes for a quick and full recovery to Teresa Davis, the Island's forester. Teresa was injured recently while gathering information on one of the outer islands.

The Thoroughfare

EJ Higgins/J Donaldson

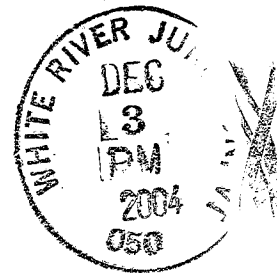
Suite 400

47 Exchange Street

Portland, Maine 04101

To:

Tatiana P. Fischer
P.O. Box 38
Johnny's Wharf Road
Port Clyde, ME 04855



Deadline for the winter issue: January 31, 2005

Send us your articles, news, opinions, photos, artwork, poetry, recipes, etc.

All contributions gratefully accepted!

