

THOROUGHFARE

Romance on Roque

THOROUGHFARE, ROMANCE ON ROQUE SPRING 2008, VOL. 17

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES *by Randy Goodhue*

I think it's fair to say that Bruce and his staff are elated that the equinox finally arrived. It was a harsh winter on Roque with much snow, and no opportunity to cut ice! Nonetheless, all managed to persevere and mud season is welcomed once again.

Bruce's winter reports to the ops com were short, and primarily dealt with complex weather patterns. The farm animals had a good winter and the horses were worked throughout. Equipment was well maintained, and the staff survived in tact. They are in good spirits and busy getting ready for the upcoming season. Bookings for the Bluffs House are taking place, and members are anxiously waiting to see if they got their "first choice" dates to visit.



Since the Fall Thoroughfare publication (which is posted on the website), we have been very busy. In February, the Trustees met at the Chilton Club in Boston. We traditionally use this meeting to put the final touches on Roque's annual operating budget. This year was no exception. Bruce attended the meeting and along with our Comptroller, Treasurer and fellow Trustees, we were successful in our endeavors. As I explained in my cover letter which accompanied your bill, we raised the dues, in order to keep pace with the increased cost of Roque. We agreed on the importance of continuing our maintenance program. Molly Cutler and Tanya Fischer will provide more details about the 2008 operating budget and Roque's financing needs at the Annual Meeting, scheduled for 10:00 AM, May 4 at The Country Club, Brookline, MA. *Continued on page 2...*

ROMANCE ON ROQUE

We have spotlighted some of the weddings and honeymoons that have taken place at Roque and I'm sure that there are still others that we missed. Honeymoon or not, Roque brings out the romantic in us all. Where, more than at Roque, do we have the time and pleasure of enjoying our partner's company to the exclusion of everyday distractions? Roque Island is about romance, no question about it.

editor's note



NEW ON ROQUE

New staff house



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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES - *Continued*

I apologize, if the invitations went out late this year. We still hope you had been planning on this event, and we look forward to seeing you all there. On behalf of us all, may I extend our gratitude to Tassia for her allowing us to hold this important function at this fantastic venue.

We successfully completed a survey of the membership. Alicia Monks did a great job orchestrating the survey. She had significant input in the questions asked, and was responsible for overseeing the entire process. For those of you that did not complete the survey, a "Fox 5 shame on you". Should you wish to bring your completed forms to the meeting, we will incorporate your responses. Alicia will present the survey results at the Annual Meeting. It was clear from the survey that the membership would like to have the Annual Meeting be more than a lecture, bloody mary and brunch. We agree! We have prepared important presentations by various Trustees, which will hopefully stimulate membership participation. An Agenda and presentation materials will be forwarded to the membership prior to the Annual Meeting, so you can arrive informed. We will send this information package, whether you accept the invitation or not.



The Trustees have worked closely with Bruce in drafting a new formal job description for the Manager of Roque Island. With a proper job description and an agreed upon job review process, Bruce is much more comfortable with his position, what's expected of him and how his performance is measured. It is important to have a good understanding and clarity on this issue, and I think we are there.

We expect to have the ISH completed with Mike and Whitney well established in their new home by mid-May. I reiterate how busy the staff is this time of year. There is always a tremendous amount of work to do to get ready for your arrival. I understand from the house committee chairs that reservations are coming in quickly, so be sure to plan ahead for your summer trip to Roque. I look forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Meeting on May 4 in Brookline.

Please check the website. It is updated and much more information, i.e. complete survey results are already posted.
Cheers, Randy Goodhue

ROMANCE ON ROQUE

Nathaniel Gordon Fellows Goldblatt & Jessica Gardner Kearns - July 17, 2004

After a ten-year engagement and one cancelled Roque Island wedding, we finally decided to tie the knot on Roque in July of 2004. Our decision was quite impulsive, and flying by the seat of our pants we planned our wedding in under a month, with much help from my quite surprised mother. It was fabulous and we couldn't have asked for a more beautiful wedding.

At first there were only going to be four of us, but as the weeks rolled by the party grew to twenty-five. Friends and family flew in from all over for this long awaited event. Since this was all a bit impromptu, the guests took part in preparing for much of the festivities.



We feasted on Roque Island turkey and a Meyer lemon wedding cake. To cap it all off, the whole island gathered to watch fireworks and shoot off Captain Dougie Dodge's infamous canon. All in all, it was wonderfully fun wedding, and when my mother in law discovered that my husband's namesake Gordon Fellows from nearby Fellow's Island had been one of the first guests at Roque, we knew that our love on Roque was meant to be.

PONDERING THE ISLAND'S FUTURE

A letter to the Trustees

You obviously will have a full agenda; I hope you can spare a few moments for the results of my contemplations concerning Roque, present and future.

I am contemplating our perceived direction- it doesn't seem to have a lot of relevance for the future, only pleasure and comfort for the "happy campers". Every year is more expensive, partially because every year we add more amenities and more help to administer same. Believe me, I, too, am a "happy camper", but sitting on the steps, I wonder if that is enough.



Questions: is Roque being guided along a path that will be sustainable in 20 years? Will generational multiples be prepared and/or willing to devote the time, money and thought that has historically been required. Are we, as guardians of a unique body of land and people taking advantage of what we might develop, maintain and share? In 20 years, will we have nurtured our financial and people resources in a way we can be proud of?

Would focus on an island farm, as organic as possible, applying historically proven energy solutions to our electrical needs (windmill and tidal dam) along with newer applications of bio diesel fuel and solar panels provide a feasible focus for a growing budget? I would even be happy if we were to include a new worker's house into this plan (which I'm sure you are going to build anyway) as long as it was perceived as integral to the development of a renewed farm focus.

If we can think along these lines, all kinds of possibilities open up. I have often thought that we could develop a summer (or year-round) farm intern plan in conjunction with the agricultural departments of the Maine Universities. The Red House would become an even more valuable, off-season rental property to the selected few. Possibilities for augmentation to the central thrust of FARM are endless. We just need to rethink and restate our priorities; the younger generation always has been, and undoubtedly always will be the primary supporters of everything at the farm. They will be running the Island; let's make it palatable for them. All that is necessary is the support of the Board and the hiring of a really knowledgeable Farmer to occupy the house that is going to be built. Then a really conscious effort to develop the use of water, sun and wind power so that we really would have a solid place in the world. Otherwise, we might find ourselves anachronisms, left far behind!

By Ellen Higgins

ROMANCE ON ROQUE

Rebecca Barry and Erik Nelson

We got engaged at Roque in July 2006. We had plenty of friends and family in the house that summer; Erik wanted to go on a walk together, just the two of us. We went down the West Shore Road and stopped at a rocky beach--the one below Bonney Field, with perfect round rocks. Erik had hidden a ring in one of his cargo pants pockets. He asked, "Will you accept this ring?" On our hike later we saw a snapping turtle in a pool, and small waxy white plants called "Indian pipes." They were so unusual that we picked two, and to prevent them from being crushed we put them in the empty ring box. We came out of the dark forest onto bright white Great Beach; there we met some of our guests who were riding horses. None of them noticed Rebecca was wearing a new ring. When we got back to the Monks house kitchen, Andrea took one look at my left hand in the kitchen and cried, "Am I the last to know??!!!" Rebecca looked up the number of the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix that very afternoon—thank goodness for internet on the island—and started making arrangements. We were married in the Garden in April 2007, and this story is being written on the day of our first wedding anniversary: April 15, 2008.

FOREST MANAGEMENT *by Teresa Davis*

The regeneration of tree species on Roque Island is a blessing. Red spruce is the main component of the forest stands, by far, followed by white spruce, balsam fir, white birch, yellow birch, Mountain ash, and red maple. Spruce seedlings grow in so thickly they form beautiful green carpets under the mature canopy. As the forest canopy is opened up, through natural causes or harvesting, the seedlings obtain the light and nutrients they need to flourish. There might be well over 15,000 seedlings growing per acre! As small seedlings, these trees are each receiving enough light and nutrients to grow. As they grow larger, to sapling size, they become more demanding, requiring more food, light, and water, and are soon over-crowded for optimum growth conditions. Mother Nature will slowly allow dominant trees to receive more nutrients than the co-dominants. Over a long period of time, as these saplings become pole sized and then larger, the less dominant trees will die out of the stand, having been slowly starved to death. This phenomenon is readily visible as you travel the roads of Roque Island; the mature trees are interspersed with small diameter dead stems.



The thinning and weeding of young stands is called a pre-commercial operation because the trees removed have no merchantable value and are left on the ground. This type of work has been done in the birch stands on Roque Island, and on a very limited number of acres of spruce growth. Tree growth in thinned stands is about tripled when the number of trees is reduced from 15,000 trees/acre, or so, to about 680 trees/acre - a spacing of roughly 8' by 8'. Fewer trees/acre means more nutrients and light per tree. Thinning is time consuming, labor-intensive work. Another very important benefit to thinning, though, is that it leaves the stand more wind-firm. Trees in a group will rely on their

neighbors for strength. Trees with a little elbow-room to sway on their own actually respond by laying down stronger wood and this is fact, not fiction. The entire west coast of Roque Island is extremely vulnerable to blow-downs because of our westerly prevailing winds. These stands would be made more wind-firm by thinning of the natural regeneration that has been growing in on the blow-down areas over the past twenty years, or so. There is a cost to thinning, but there is a cost to constantly cleaning up blow-downs, too.

In this region of the world, natural regeneration is prolific and thinning - by man or more slowly by Mother Nature - is a necessary factor in healthy forest stands. If no pre-commercial thinning takes place, it is even more important to enter the stands with a commercial thinning as early as possible. In a commercial thinning, the trees removed have some merchantable value. The smallest possible pulpwood is taken out of the spruce stands, not with generating income as the goal, but as a timber stand improvement measure in a break even operation - the residual stand is healthier and more vigorous after you remove some of the poorest quality stems. Removing small pulpwood isn't viable on an island at this point in time, but this type of "commercial" operation could be producing firewood and small saw logs for lumber for the Island.

Clear-cutting is the only sane prescription in even-aged, over mature coastal spruce stands. Even-aged stands grow into old fields or previous clear-cuts or burn areas and all trees start growing at roughly the same time. They all become old and die at roughly the same time, also. Uneven-aged management is a goal when clear-cutting is not a favored method of harvesting. *Continued on page 6*

ROMANCE ON ROQUE

Alessa Fischer m. Eliot Angle

Alessa and I were married in the corner of Weir Field on August 31, 1997 in front of 110 of our family and friends. It was a perfect August Roque afternoon - with fog so thick you couldn't see the edge of the meadow and an invigorating breeze coming off the Harbor. The night before we had planned a Great Beach bonfire clam-bake with a display of fireworks, but the rain was coming down with enough industry that we were forced to move the entire event into the barn (which thankfully had been cleaned for the occasion, or rather in spite of it).

The wedding day, as I said, was enveloped in a true pea soup fog, but this made the ceremony all the more tremendous. There was a slight gasp from the congregation as the bridesmaids one by one appeared out of the mist in the middle of the field, only to be followed by Alessa, looking radiant, and Judd, with as wide a grin as I have ever seen on him.

Alessa and I feel blessed to have been able to have such a grand wedding in such a magical location, especially one that carries such deep personal significance to both of us. I think the spirit of the island got to us all, in many ways, and, looking back, there is not a hay bale or rain drop that was a hair out of place.

From Jennifer Higgins Donaldson-

Our wedding was the first since the 1800s I believe. I was married to John Donaldson on May 5th, 1974... It was a spectacular blue sky day, but cool and a bit windy. My grandfather, Rev. Cannon Gardner Monks married us in the Chapel Grove at 11 am, with about 70 guests attending, including Duke, Alfred and Lucy. It was a traditional Episcopal ceremony, with friends playing hymns on fiddle and guitar. The reception followed in and around the Monks house, with clam chowder made by Lucy, and a carrot cake with cream cheese frosting (which I remember was dripping all over the place because we put too much brandy in it!) After the reception everyone else left, as they had arrived, in a convoy of lobster boats, and John and I waved blissfully from the dock. We stayed for a week on the Island afterward, and Alfred played a trick on us on our wedding night by shutting off the electricity about 6 pm... but we know how to cook by woodstove and candlelight, so all was well! (He rang cowbells under our window that night too.) In the night, my husband had a supernatural visit from the ghost of George Augustus Gardner, who came to check out the newest member of the family, or maybe to see if he could scare us out of his bed! I slept through it...

From Ellen Higgins-

Austin and I were married on August 9th, 1947, in Cohasset, Mass. We didn't get to Roque until Sept. 11th and since we got lost on the way, I also remember a certain amount of irritation that we were late for the boat. Austin had never been to Roque before, and had to be assured that mostly the sun shone! After that mini trauma, we spent 4 or 5 wonderful, very Roque-like days; so wonderful that I think we only missed two or three years in the next 50. John Gray, as always, was Roque's ambassador who spread the welcome mat everywhere; Austin left the Island, totally hooked. I have subsequently tried to always be on time at the dock; this has led to various road-sick children and grandchildren. I now leave early!

Other Honeymoons at Roque

- ▶ George P. Gardner, Jr. and Tatiana Stepanova m. 6/21 /47 and spent their honeymoon at Roque
- ▶ G. Peabody Gardner III and Susan Paul m. 9/6/ 69 and spent their honeymoon at Roque

ROQUE RECIPES

Christmas Soup: So-called because of the color.

YOU WILL NEED...

Spinach- chopped
Cabbage- chopped
Potato- diced
Onion- diced
Carrots- chunked
Broccoli- florets; stems
peeled and sliced
Cauliflower- florets
Zucchini- chunked

Start the soup with a couple of tablespoons of olive oil in a large kettle, heated enough to sauté a garlic clove or two and 2 tblsp. of chopped parsley. Once sautéed, add all vegetables, cut up so they will cook at the same rate, toss in the olive oil mix and add enough chicken broth to completely cover the vegetables. Simmer until well-cooked, then either blend in a Cuisinart or use a portable blender to mash up the vegetables all together. The texture depends on individual taste as do the seasonings which are added at the end. Possible choices are salt, ground pepper, herbs, Tabasco or any other favorite to enhance the taste. Reheat and serve.

Croutons -stale bread cubes sautéed to a toasty brown in hot olive oil which may be flavored with a garlic cube – taste really good with this soup.

A sure cure to foggy, damp weather. *Ellen Higgins*

ROMANCE ON ROQUE

Georgia Cutler Goodhue m. Alexander Duer Reath August 2004

Roo and I spent our second honeymoon week on Roque Island, Sept 6-Sept 12, 2004. Bruce picked us up on the mainland- the island staff had set up a table and chairs in the stern of the boat with flowers and champagne (organized by Roo).

Uncle George and Aunt Tania Gardner were in the Gardner house while we were there. Upon coming home from the beach one day, there was a sealed envelop delivered to the kitchen inviting Roo and me up to the Gardner house for drinks. Over cocktails, we chatted about Uncle George's honeymoon and wedding and how Grandma (Rosie Cutler) was Tania's maid of honor. I remarked that my mom and dad spent their honeymoon on Roque 30 years before us.



FOREST MANAGEMENT, CONT.

Converting even-aged stands to uneven-aged stands takes active management, and harvesting is always ugly at first, but the result is that in the future, more selective harvesting can take place and any given acre is not laid bare, but has trees of all age classes growing on it. All the small clear-cuts on Roque Island are five years old now, some are six, and to promote uneven-aged stands, in about ten years, 1/3 of the existing saplings in those areas should be removed. That would be the first step in changing those areas to uneven, rather than even- aged management. The second step would be about 20 years after that, when another 1/3 of the volume should be removed.

Hit or miss harvesting isn't active forest management and the forests owned by RIGHC deserve better. All the old spruce on Marsh Island have died and/or blown over. It is a tangled mess and a huge fire hazard. There are substantial areas of blow-downs on Great and Little Spruce, also. These areas are difficult or impossible to traverse. But regeneration in these areas continue to grow and provide hope. Lakeman's, Great Spruce, and Little Spruce have stands of different ages and areas that would be viable places to harvest. Active forest management is a lot more pleasant to look at than hit or miss harvesting every 50 years, or so. Spruce stands produce about a cord of wood per acre per year. It is a renewable resource that, when properly tended, is continually productive and beautiful to behold.

SQUIRES POINT *The Orchard Picket Fence*

A photograph, dated 1909, of the orchard picket fence next to the Old Farm House survives, but we do not know when it was built. We do know that there was legal requirements for fences, specifying even their stability and height, as early as 1640 in Exeter, NH. Fences played a role in keeping order in the community as settlements grew larger.

Fences reflect influences of environment, culture, economy, technology and geography. They have an interesting story to tell. They are first, an architectural introduction to the house. See-through picket were encouraged for a better view of the front façade. In urban settings, they also supported urn finials and other decorative ornamentation. They marked the boundary, of course, and provided an enclosure to keep out wandering animals, and protect gardens and orchards. Nobody, of course, wanted to see your pigs messing around in public. Saw tooth tops of the pickets discouraged vandalism.



Later generations would understand that fences also served as perches for birds. Cast iron fences came in with the Greek Revival style but picket fences have remained popular. Other styles of wooden fences became known as paling fences, zigzags and worm or Virginia rail fences.

Images of white picket fences in old paintings or photographs are so fixed in our mind that it is hard to imagine a house without one. A lush and bountiful green enclosure is, after all, our image of Eden. Such gardens inspire games, picnics and other happy activities of summer afternoon. They are part of the civilized *ferme orné* and, at Roque, a site where birds and butterflies flock to the lilac bushes and apple trees. They have a special feeling of intimacy, too.

I have drawn liberally from Anne Mankin Masury's 1987 M.A. Thesis on Portsmouth Fence Styles for the University of Connecticut

George Herrick

FLOTSAM

Milestones

- ▶ Lucy Beal, widow of Alfred Beal (former island manager) and mother of Willis and Robert Beal died on November 14, 2007. She was 91.
- ▶ Isabella Gardner Dana will be married to Andrew Hanson Riddall on May 10, 2008 in Nassau Bahamas.
- ▶ Elefe Endicott Angle born August 21, 2007

Engagements

- ▶ Kitty Gonzales to Vincent Montalbano
- ▶ Ben Alexander to Carly Cope
- ▶ Mary Donaldson to Austin Chadd .
- ▶ Josh Gonzalez to Rocio Villeda
- ▶ Tatiana Papanicolaou to Thorne Perkin



TO:

The Thoroughfare
C/O RIGHC
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Portland, ME 04101

ADDITIONS TO ROQUE ISLAND LIBRARY, 2007

Baker, J. A. *The Peregrine* (1967)
Cole, Stephen A. *The Rangely and Its Region* (2007)
Colwell, Miriam. *Contentment Cove* (2006)
Dreyfus, Rebecca. *Stolen, A Documentary* (2006)
Gardner, Robert, *Making Dead Birds* (2007)
Greenlaw, Linda. *Slipknot* (2007)
Hahn, Nathalie White. *A History of Winter Harbor, Maine* (1974)
Heinrich, Berndt. *Mind of the Raven* (1999)
Little, Carl. *Paintings of Maine* (1991, signed)
MacIsaac, Kimberley B. *The Casco Bay Islands, 1850-2000* (2004)
Newell, Carter. *Dissertation on Feeding Behavior of the Blue Mussel* (2005)
Peabody, George Augustus. *South American Journals, 1858-1859* (1937)
Renner, Steven C. M.S. *Dissertation on Seal Haul Out Patterns on Mount Desert Island* (2005)
Sears, Clara Endicott. *The Great Powwow* (1934)
Shreve, Anita. *Body Surfing* (2007)
Skinner, John P. M.S. *Thesis on Nursing Harbor Seal Pups* (2006)
Story, Ronald. *The Forging of an Aristocracy, Harvard and the Boston Upper Class, 1800-1870* (1981)
Thaxter, Celia. *An Island Garden* (1894)
Thoreau, Henry D. *The Maine Woods*

Thorington, Richard W. Jr. and Ferrell, Katie. *Squirrels* (2006)
Vigderman, Patricia. *The Memory Palace of Isabella Stewart Gardner* (2006)
Wass, Philmore R. *Lighthouse In My Life* (1987, inscribed)

To submit an article for the next issue of *The Thoroughfare*, please send to the Editor, Posy Dana at rcdana@mac.com or mail to:

701 Bellevue Avenue
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Electronic submissions whenever possible please!
Deadline is October 15th.