

# THOROUGHFARE

THOROUGHFARE, FALL 2009

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Dear Members,

October on Roque! There is no reason why you need to be a Trustee to enjoy it. In the spirit of extending the "season" at Roque, I encourage you to pay a visit during this spectacular time of year. Including guests and spouses, we had twenty plus people come to the island to participate in the annual Trustees meeting on Roque. Almost as good as the turnout for the 200th!

Bruce presented a very upbeat report on the state of the island. He and his staff, including our team of off-island help, are running a very smooth operation. We have had the same staff for nearly two years, which has not been the case for many years. I hope you agree the place looks fantastic, and that the new P&E upgrades and maintenance policies have been adopted by all and have paid off. Thanks again to Bruce and his staff. Keep up the good work!



During the recent past, we have focused on three initiatives: staff, infrastructure and form of governance (i.e. committees). Although we still have some work to assure that some Committees are working as such, and less of a one person show, many are extremely efficient, productive, as well as inclusive. It was agreed that sufficient progress has been made such that we could afford to shift our near term priorities to: the farm, alternative energy and capital.

At the last minute, we challenged ourselves and abandoned the meeting's agenda. We agreed to use what little time we had together to think more creatively about broader and longer term issues:

### FARM

We had an invigorating discussion about the farm becoming more in touch with the times. We covered topics such as an internship program. We have reached out to Dr. Marianne Sarrantonio, the Director of the University of Maine's Sustainable Agricultural Program (SAG). She is very excited about putting Roque on the approved list, and has many potential candidates. As we want to be more active with island farm institutions and coalitions, Amy and Bruce plan to attend next month's Island Institute's Sustainable Island Living Seminar 2009. We are looking into the viability of joining local CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture), as well as, providing more produce for the family (Roque's CSA). Finally, we are examining the possibility of a cash crop on Roque, whether it be Rambouillet sheep's wool, meat, dairy, lumber or other niche product. *Continued on page 2...*

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*SPRUCE III & ROQUE  
Where are they now?*

Be sure to visit  
**RoqueIsland.com**  
for island updates, the  
latest committee reports  
& seasonal photos. Our  
Web site is updated  
continuously.

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES - *Continued*

Since our "Tree Growth" status is so important to us in numerous ways, not the least being financial, we invited our Forester, Teresa Davis, to present to the group. We agreed that we would pursue a long term contract to continue harvesting on Roque and the outer islands. This is vital to ensure execution of our forestry plan, but also serves as the most effective way to establish a healthy multi-aged forest, and battle the bark beetle, which has been sighted in certain locations on the islands. We also discussed securing an easement on Long Bar in perpetuity as a site to float/unload island lumber.



### ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

Dr. Mick Peterson, the Libra Foundation Professor of Engineering in the Mechanical Engineering Department of the University of Maine, gave a tidal power presentation to the Board. We followed up with a walk around Paradise Cove to inspect the Old Mill Dam. Roque was invited to be represented on the Board of Maine's Coalition for Energy and Environment (MCEE). In doing so, we would hope to establish a network of interesting people with expertise in renewal energy sources. Roque might also be approved as a model site for a pilot project ( we could receive grant financing, if interested). We discussed other renewables, including solar and wind. We agreed to examine the possibility of taking the ISH and farm off the grid through the use of solar power.

### CAPITAL

Finally, we focused on Roque's capital adequacy long term. Although Roque is financially healthy, and we anticipate operating under budget this year, it was not immune to the negative impact of the markets' decline. The Board, in conjunction with the Finance Committee, has determined to maintain a tight budget with no increase in the operating cost of Roque next year. Nevertheless, we are considering whether or not to pursue a capital campaign to properly capitalize Roque for future generations. We did agree to initiate an effort to encourage members to become members of the Joseph Peabody Society by amending their estate plans to bequeath funds to RIGHC.

The Thoroughfare has become very popular, and is inundated with articles. This is terrific news, and unfortunately I promised Posy to keep my Notes short to make room. Remember to visit the website, where we have posted all the latest Committee Reports. I will also try and post a more detailed "to do" list that the Trustees agreed to. I can assure you we are all very busy with many exciting and productive projects ahead of us.

*Cheers,*  
**Randy Goodhue**



*Dino Pertzoff surfing the waves of  
Hurricane Bill at Great Beach*

## BARNYARD BUZZ

by Nanette C. Herrick

During the week of 20-26 September Doug, Amy and Sonya prepared close to 75 roasters for the island freezers. The task took six hours or so. The island-designed dressing station, just beyond the equipment shed, is neat, efficient and worth a look.

Fifteen sheep were culled from the flock and sent to the mainland butcher. Island lamb will be available soon again.

For the first time in several years Dave Watts completely bush-hogged the meadows in front of the Red House, below the croquet court and around Mansion House. It took two and a half days and sounded like a war, as the blades bumped over all the hidden rocks, gullies and logs. The Bush Hog survived as did Dave... barely. Lupine grows nicely in the area below the croquet court but other attempts to promote other wildflowers have not succeeded in the past. Perhaps we might try again with the newly mown meadow.. The alder bushes along the shoreline were left standing as they serve as a landing point for migrating birds.



The Museum/Family Room/ Library was dedicated on 24 September with History committee Co-Chair GGH doing the honors. There will be more books and artifacts next summer.

On 28 September the lame and aging Reebok was put down, ending a life of service to the island. The closest large animal vet drove 50 miles from near Lubec and came ashore at 9 P.M. to administer last rites. He was buried in a driving rain near Barney's final resting place beyond the fire pond.

## ISLAND HORSES 2009

by Sonya Carver

**Parker:** This big, debonair dude has no shoes. He swears he put them where he could find them; alas, they are gone. This means that he shouldn't trot on ground that will make his feet ouch-y. And although this old guy is semi-retired, he is still able to canter on the beach and do all of the fun things that horses and people like to do. He just doesn't have the steam to do it every day. My Mama raised me to respect the elderly, and this case is no exception.

**Judy:** Holy macaroni! She's four legs looking for the exit. If you can stay with her she'll take you places you never thought you could get to on horse back; which is why her rider needs to be the brains of the outfit. If you're relaxed she will be, too. Otherwise, your ride will be a little more work than what you had in mind. In spite of her sensitive streak, we know her to be kind at heart and very willing to please. Take care of her, and she'll return the favor.

**George:** The Governor will be obliged to shake your hand and kiss your babies, provided he can get something out of it. Sadly for him, his itinerary requires him to actually do some work. He is great on trails if he's following the backside of another horse, and he does give pony rides while being lead around. Image is everything to a statesman, and no self-respecting gentleman wants to be referred to as "wicked cute." Such is this pony's lot.

**Lilly Rose:** It's Hammertime! This gi-normous girl pulls the carriage or cart with pride, plus she can be the perfect strolling companion out on the trails and the beaches, as long as you are more inclined toward the quieter and more relaxing side of horseback riding. However, she's not Miss Demure on the beach if you don't want her to be. This steed can strut her stuff, so you'd better have the muscles or the stamina to hang on to her.. She'll respect a firm, yet forgiving hand, and even acknowledges words like "Whoa" and "Trot".



## RELATIVELY SPEAKING

*By Ellen Berger*

Nano Chatfield's work in developing the Tanzanian Children's Fund and the Rift Valley Children's Village with her former schoolmate, India Howell, is an inspiring endeavor to say the least.

The Tanzanian Children's Fund is the engine for programs that support marginalized children in Tanzania. The organization currently provides a home, education and health care to 69 children. Additionally, it has established a successful microfinance program and partnerships with local primary schools, providing supplies, renovations, health care, a hot lunch program, teacher training and much more.

The Rift Valley Children's Village is located in Oldeani Village in the northern highlands of Tanzania. The children taken in have been marginalized in some way, many because they have lost both parents to AIDS. In order to get to the Village from Arusha (the closest city) you drive 3.5 hours west on paved roads and then turn onto a long and meandering dirt road riddled with potholes. It takes you past vegetable fields and up into 15,000 acres of coffee plantations. At 5800 feet of elevation you will find yourself at the Village and on the flanks of the Ngorongoro crater. The crater is a conservation area and habitat to some of Africa's most amazing animals, among them rhinos, lions, servals, hippos and elephants. The occasional elephant is known to find its way out of the crater and wreak havoc down below, in Oldeani Village. Upon arrival at the Children's Village you don't encounter sad children in need. Rather, they are lively, smiling and zany and greet you with curiosity, grins and hugs.



It all began when Nano found her best friend, India, at one of life's crossroads. After a trip to Tanzania to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro, India returned home with a new love of that country. Since India had prior experience managing inns, Nano encouraged her to contact the safari company she had climbed with to see if they had any openings for a manager. There was an opening. So, rather than moving to Vermont as planned, India moved to Tanzania. While over there she couldn't help but notice the plight of so many children in the midst of AIDS and other epidemics. India ultimately left work in the lodge business to pursue a dream. An Indian coffee plantation owner provided an old German-made house that was abandoned on the estate for her to start an orphanage. In 2003, when she decided to set up a foundation, she turned to Nano for thoughts and ideas. Nano went over as India's first "volunteer", and the concept took root. She immediately fell in love with the children, as well as the country. The following year, the local village donated seven acres of land to build the Children's Village. The result being that this duo has paved the way in creating programs in Tanzania that have had immense local impact, particularly on children. They have also found their life's passion.

Nano is the kind of leader who will roll up her sleeves and get right into the trenches with you. In fact, she expects you to roll up your sleeves and get involved in anything important that might be happening in front of you. She is driven, grounded, modest and passionate. Every January, she travels to Tanzania and stays with the children for three months. Back in the US, in her capacity as Chairman of the Board of Directors, Nano manages the operations for such work as fundraising and outreach, writing newsletters, managing the website, doing appeals, and organizing the board. She networks to raise funds for the organization, vigilantly following up on every possible lead. If you are simply inquiring about traveling in Tanzania, she will talk to you about that. Perhaps you will have some important idea, thought or lead to share. Or maybe you simply want to chat about the country she loves and knows well.

*Ed. Note: Nano is married to John Higgins. To read more about this organization go to [www.tanzanianchildrensfund.org/founder.htm](http://www.tanzanianchildrensfund.org/founder.htm)*

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

By Charlie Dana

About twenty years ago Roque Island replaced its wooden lobster boats, **ROQUE** (1967) and **SPRUCE III** (1974), with the present day fiberglass, **JOSEPH PEABODY**. As confirmed boat nuts, our family got sentimental about these two aging ladies and bought them from RIGHC. Next stop was Newport where we added to each a galley, a head, bunks, and fixed them up while trying to figure out what their future might hold. At the time, we definitely lacked a plan other than to save them.

ROQUE we had for about five years when we sold her to a knowledgeable marine surveyor. He owned her a few years and, happy to report, she is still going strong as **NANCY M** in Boothbay at 42 years old. Stop by and see her; you can even take a ride with Boothbay Harbor Cruises. <http://www.boothbaycruises.com/>



Former ROQUE, now NANCY M

SPRUCE III is also going strong. In fact, this is the third time (by extension) that the family would buy the same boat! RIGHC commissioned her in 1974 from Willis Beal and she served the island well until her trip to Newport for a pit stop before we took her to the Bahamas in 1991, homeported in Spanish Wells which lies about 250 miles off Florida. We had many good times on her, and our kids remember her fondly in the tropics. Of note while in the Bahamas, she survived Hurricane Andrew when a roof of the in-water boat shed she was under collapsed and sunk almost all the boats underneath. But... there was a lucky I-beam that bent just right over SPRUCE cradling the impact. We got out the torches, cut the I-beam, and out she came a little bruised but still breathing (the abridged version!).

Next stop was Camp Kieve in Nobleboro, Maine, where SPRUCE III was re-Christened **PIP CUTLER**, after my father-in-law Pip, who had once headed the camp's board. There were happy days aboard carrying kids for 14 years. Now, she is about to enter her fourth life with our son, Nick Dana, who will employ his considerable boat skills, acquired during the Volvo Ocean Race, to put her right as they say. Must confess it gave me goose bumps when she arrived in Newport a few weeks ago. She is now 35 years old and I fully expect someday she will drop anchor off Roque Island.

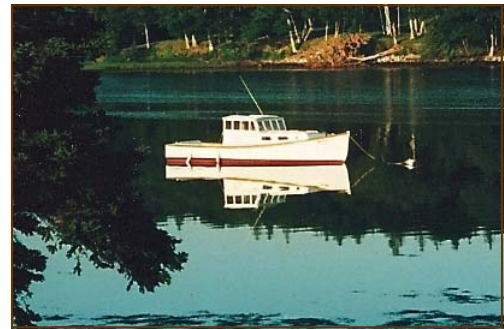
*Willis Beal built four Leta Feyes for Earlon Beal.... This, the last (right), slides down the ways at his shop near the bridge on Beals. She is a near sister ship to SPRUCE III.*



*The Torpedo stern Redwing (below) designed and built by Will Frost in the 1920's, in a 1930 photo. The boat is considered the origin of the modern Maine lobster boat. It was the boat to beat and ahead of it's time below the waterline*



Photos taken from **Fisherman's Voice**. Check out an article: <http://www.fishermensvoice.com/archives/woodenboatbldg.html>



Former SPRUCE III/Pip Cutler

## SQUIRE'S POINT

### CLAMBAKE

By *George G. Herrick*

The first feast in America to incorporate clam-eating in a symbolic context dates to the founding of The Old Colony Club at Plymouth in 1769. But clam baking as a tradition, all but invisible in the early 1800s, did not become an institution until the middle 1900s. "The same forces that transformed American society as a whole in the nineteenth century - industrialization, urbanization, immigration, the explosion of transportation technology, the accumulation of greater wealth and the growth of the middle class, and the Civil War - also produced a new framework for leisure and recreation in the country," writes Kathy Neustadt, an ethnographer, in the "Clambake, A History and Celebration of An American Tradition" (1992).



Whereas the picnic had begun as a convenience or pastime in the 1830s for the few, the clambake developed in the decades ahead in Southeastern New England as a commercial enterprise for the many.

The first mention of a clambake appeared in "The Boston Cookbook" (1891) from the pen of Mrs. D.A. Lincoln, who referred to it as "A Rhode Island Clambake." The Depression, a series of hurricanes and the second World War ended the era of the commercial clambake for hundreds of people.

Today, the clambake lives on as a kind of glorified revival of a timeless custom symbolized by Winslow Homer's 1873 woodcut titled "Sea-side Sketches - A Clam Bake." Better than anyone, Homer captured in accessible form the simplicity, nostalgia and pastoral poetry of American rural life that we can still idealize. There is symbolism enough to go around: the annual clambake partakes of the traditions of the annual harvest celebration and of religious commemoration of special occasions. What can be simpler and more succulent than a feast of clams, lobsters, sausage, potatoes and corn, baked for three hours under a canvas tarpaulin in sea-wet rockweed on fire-hot rocks in a sand or gravel pit at a summer beach? There is always something liberating and joyful about bringing the civilization of hampers and thermoses to the untouched nature of the shore and being able to eat lying down. Enjoyment can be reflect the extraordinary effort of preparing the feast. Which is best? To imagine it better and better every year or to believe that some wonderful memory of a perfect clambake can never be surpassed?

What about the origin of the clambake? Native Americans believe that clambaking is part of their heritage, just as Yankee clambakers like to affirm the myth of transference of the rite from native to newcomer to extend its history. After all, there are clamshell heaps (or middens) all along the Atlantic coast from Maine to Connecticut. But archaeological evidence, Neustadt concludes, provides no proof for the Native American origin and heritage of the clambakes as we know it. It seems rather that Native Americans dried and smoked shellfish in summer, for winter use, as witnessed by early immigrants.

The colonialists themselves spurned the clam, as they ignored the lobster. They fed clams to their hogs as "the meanest of God's blessings," resisted foreign foods and were unwilling to change their eating habits, methods of food preparation or technology. Besides, there were plenty of fish, except in the early years of dire need. Any inclination to celebrate Native American heritage would not appear until the native culture had been all but eradicated. Then there was the conflict in American culture between the ethics of work and the ethics of play. From the first stage of settlement, the country's founders had exhibited a consistently negative attitude toward leisure and play, the very context in which the bounteous clambake feast might have flourished, explains Neustadt. It was not until 1747 that a cookbook in the American colonies included the clam in the edible and enjoyable category. The rest, as they say, is history, and an interesting one at that.

## ROUNDING ROQUE

By Andy Ridall

On my first visit to Roque Island, more than six years ago, I remember being impressed when my girlfriend sailed the *Sandpeep* around the island. She left in the morning with an inexperienced friend on board as crew, and returned sometime in the afternoon with stories of the seals in Englishman's Bay, the lull in the Thoroughfare that almost necessitated a swim to keep the boat off the rocks, and the final run down Chandler Bay with a fresh breeze and bottle of rose. I've been to Roque many times since with the intention to sail around the island, but never seemed to get around to it until this August.



My girlfriend, Isabella Dana, is now my wife. It was our first time back to the island since our honeymoon a year earlier. This trip was also notable as the first visit of our son, Charlie, who surprised us in May by arriving six weeks early as we drove to a resort to celebrate our first anniversary. The accommodations at Doctor's Hospital in downtown Nassau hardly compare to the Ocean Club on Paradise Island, but at least the insurance company picked up the tab for our anniversary weekend. We didn't much care anyway. Isabella was safe and now we had Charlie - a tiny and bewildered, but alas, perfectly healthy, baby boy - and that was all that mattered.

We found out about a month later that premature babies are prone to colic, an inscrutable hobgoblin that possesses the souls of innocent little children, and a medical phenomenon which no doctor to this day has been able to satisfactorily explain to me. Descriptions of poor Charlie's colic ranged from "severe" to "the worst case I have ever seen" depending on the exasperated doctor we thrust him upon on any given day. He didn't seem to like nights either; a night nurse actually told us she thought he "turned into a demon" after dark.

Anyway, we had booked our week at Roque Island well before we'd ever heard of this infantile affliction. Even in the days leading up to the trip, as Charlie's composure unraveled and the sleepless nights ran together in a sort of atemporal zombie procession, we decided we were going stick to our plan. Spiritually, it seemed like the right thing to do, and we were determined to have our lives back, so the devil be damned, we were going anyway.

The Peabody chugged along through Englishman's Bay toward Shorey Cove and Roque Island. We slipped past brightly colored lobster pots as new shades of purple and red welled up on Charlie's face, but the lobster boat's diesel engine drowned out his protestations. He looked like a painting, screaming silently, and I remember thinking that Edvard Munch must have had a colicky baby.

I love old houses, but they aren't ideal for "light sleepers", of which my dear son is certainly one. Wooden floors creak, door hinges squeak and door knobs loosen over time so that when pulled or turned they give a moment's play before clicking into a firmer position. The classic Catch-22 in this scenario is that the more doors you put between your child and the ambient noise, the more hazards you face as you try to escape down to the dinner table or the fireplace or the cabinet with all the hard liquor.

These were the challenges we faced at Roque Island this August, and I'm happy to say we survived them. Charlie saw the farm animals, visited the little outdoor chapel and was carried along Great Beach in a baby straight-jacket contraption. We did the things we love to do and ended most days with peaceful, drawn-out dinners. Still, there were some close calls. Like the day my brother-and-law and I decided to sail the *Sandpeep* around the island. I got permission from Isabella only after floridly praising the feat of her own voyage years earlier. Perhaps more importantly, though with notably less sincerity, I insisted that the whole thing would take no more than three hours, trusting that time might have dulled the details of her own recollection. *Continued on page 10...*



## REEBOK'S END

An email correspondence

**From:** Amy Dodge

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 21, 2009 9:58 AM

**To:** Betsy Mikes

Hi Betsy,

Thank you for your concern and I'm sorry we haven't let everyone know sooner. We lost a friend and a teacher and there will never be another like him.

Reebok had a really hard winter--we couldn't get any weight on him and he developed a cough, and then summer came and he still didn't put on weight. He was lying down a lot and it appeared that the issues with his back and front shoulder were worse than ever, not to mention that he just wasn't his mischievous, attention-seeking self. We had decided in late summer that it would probably be best if he didn't have to endure another winter since he just seemed to be going downhill. We had planned to have him euthanized in November after

there was no one on the island, but then a couple of weeks ago he went off his feed completely and then colicked. I gave him a medicine called Banamine, which will help if the colic is only caused from gases, and proceeded to take his vitals and otherwise monitor him. His heart rate was exceptionally high which did not bode well--if the heart rate stays elevated they can die from that alone. He seemed to improve after the first dose and ate some hay, stopped biting at his sides, his heart rate slowed some, but no where close to normal. I spoke to the vet and he said that it was good that he showed improvement from the banamine because in that case it was probably just gas ( not a



(He said later that it sounded like he may have had a stomach tumor).

I will tell you from what I have seen that the other horses definitely miss their pal and leader. Reebok was always the one who decided whether the herd should move and no one would move without him giving consent. I don't know how to explain the horses' demeanors the first few days afterwards ( and even now) except to say that they seemed lost, not really sure what to do with themselves. George kept going to the barn door and staring in. I don't want to seem dramatic, but there is no doubt in my mind that they are aware of the loss.

Much love,

Amy, Lilly, Parker, Judy, and George



*First Great Egret sighting since  
1994 was made by Nanette  
Herrick on August 11, 2009*



## INDIAN PETROGLYPHS

by George G. Herrick

Mark Hedden, retired archaeologist from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC), and Professor Ray Gerber from St. Joseph's College, visited the island on 1 October to inspect a report of Native American (Micmac) petroglyphs at Shipyard Cove on Great Spruce in the Thoroughfare. They were discovered in 1972 by the late Avery Kelley of nearby Beal's Island who informed his nephew Darrell Kelley, who in turn recently informed the MHPC about them. About twenty thumb-sized petroglyphs, dating from perhaps 1600, are incised on a flat slate rock in the middle of the small field there. These include images of a lobster, a seal and an oared boat. Apparently an enormous spruce tree, fallen to the ground in 1972, would have obscured the rock carvings for a hundred years and more. Many such petroglyphs have been found on islands in Machias Bay and EMCI funded a study a few years ago for Dr. Gerber to make a narrative film of them MHPC will send us a report later this fall when their analysis and assessment are complete. They were asked to specify the use(s) they anticipated for the information they obtained and to request RIGHC's consent.



## FLOTSAM

### *Births*

- ▶ Daisy Gardner Ryan, b. March 9, 2009
- ▶ Charles Hanson Ridall, b. May 9, 2009
- ▶ Aiden Patrick Knowles Berger, b. May 24, 2009
- ▶ Philip Reath, b. June 15, 2009
- ▶ Zachary Gardner Brett Herrick, b. June 16, 2009
- ▶ Felix Brett Myers Herrick, b. June 16, 2009, died June 16, 2009
- ▶ Penelope Jane Donaldson, b. August 14, 2009



*June arrivals Pip Reath & Zach Herrick at Roque Island*



*Painting by John Lowell Gardner given by the artist to Island Manager, Herbert Long's daughter, Bertha, as a wedding present.*

Coming in the Spring 2010 issue of *Thoroughfare* **The Seventh Generation at Roque.**

## ROUNDING ROQUE - *Continued*

The Sandpeep is a fiberglass replica of the one-design Herreshoff 12½ class. The 12½ is an extraordinary boat, a 15-ft sailing dinghy that goes like a little ship. I do not own or otherwise have access to one of these boats, so sailing on Sandpeep is always one of the highlights of my visit to Roque.

While my wife's brother appreciated the 12½ as a practical matter, he wasn't quite as turned on by it. Nick had just returned from a stint as shore crew for the Puma Ocean Racing Team in the latest edition of the Volvo Ocean Race. Having spent the last 18 months traveling the globe, outfitting, repairing, maintaining, and occasionally even sailing Puma's *il mostro* – a state-of-the-art carbon fiber rocket-ship built for extreme offshore racing – the humble little Sandpeep did little to arouse his animal spirits. I brought a bottle of rum along to make sure he didn't lose interest.

We decided to "circumnavigate" – as we grandly termed it – in a clockwise direction, figuring that either way around would put us roughly head-to-the SSE wind that was blowing, and that the beat along Englishman's Bay was the shorter stretch. Further review of charts has led me to question this contention, as the western shore appears slightly diminutive, but at the time the only chart we had was the logo emblazoned on the Roque Island hoodie I happened to be wearing.



The beat up Englishman's Bay was a series of short tacks that pointed us alternately towards Roque Bluffs and the Shorey Cove headlands. Forward progress was scarce, and I could almost feel the minutes ticking away towards the dreaded three-hour mark. Nick, meanwhile, was sure we were going to set some sort of speed record, and was keeping track of our progress on a stop-

watch for posterity. It was an unwelcome reminder during that first stretch of the sail.

Finally, after making one long, driving tack across the bay towards Cow Point on the mainland, we again crossed the wind, pointing high towards Halifax Island and ready to fall off for a nice little reach across Roque Harbor. The wind built as we crossed the mouth of Englishman's Bay and heavy fog banks loomed beyond Anguilla and Double Shot. For a good half hour it was exhilarating. Heeled over at 30 degrees with spray flying everywhere we skipped across the bay, occasionally easing the main to dump the overpowering wind. The mercurial weather, so typical of Downeast Maine, was a blessing and a reward for the frustrated effort spent tacking up the coast in light wind.

But by the time we had Great Beach on our beam over two hours had passed and the wind was dying. Even worse, we still had to face the Thoroughfare, the crux of any circumnavigation. The Thoroughfare's excellent protection and serenity make it one of the finest anchorages anywhere in the world, but as a *thoroughfare* it is tricky business for a sailing vessel. The wind collapses from nearly all directions. If it gets funneled in from the west and is on your bow, it means a series of excruciating short-tacks with little or no forward progress, especially if you happen to be beating against the current. If it blows from north or south it is blocked by the formidable land barriers of Roque and Great Spruce. You need it to come from some easterly quadrant to push you through. Even then, as soon as you pass the scenic little island in the middle of the Thoroughfare, you find yourself in another wind shadow, this one further complicated by the tidal eddy that swirls around the western edge of the Thoroughfare basin.

This was exactly where we managed to place the good *Sandpeep* when Nick checked his watch and informed me with a sly grin that we had just hit the three-hour mark. Now I had a situation. We were completely becalmed and at the mercy of the tides, in what turned out to be the exact same spot my wife had considered swimming for it so many years earlier. I was at the furthest geographic point on Roque Island from Shorey Cove and the red house, where ostensibly Charlie was howling at the moon and Isabella had collapsed from an overwhelming combination of matrimonial rage and sheer exhaustion. I surmised the worst. *Continued on page 11...*

## ROUNDING ROQUE - *Continued*

I weighed my options. I could dive off the boat, swim to shore, and run to the house. This was the first plan that popped into my head, but it reeked of desperation. The swim from the tidal rip in the Thoroughfare to the little pier in Bunker Cove is further than it seems, particularly with the water temperature in the low 50s. And even if I did make land, I doubted I would have the energy to run nearly three miles back to the Red House. Furthermore, I had no shoes. Three years of living in the Bahamas has done little to convince me of the merits of footwear; and anyway, you don't wear shoes on a boat. Swimming for it was a physically daunting prospect that would take forever. Death or divorce might realistically precede my arrival.

There was one oar in the bilge of the *Sandpeep*. I tried to convince Nick to paddle the boat into the pier. He thought better of it. "It'll take an hour to paddle there and back," he contested. But more importantly, we'd made good time since rounding the head off Bar Island and he thought a speed record might still be within reach. Apparently he wasn't too concerned about losing me overboard, but he sure as hell wasn't going to disqualify us by putting *Sandpeep* under manual propulsion. I was beginning to realize that Nick, though sympathetic, found my situation considerably amusing.

Finally, we struck a bargain. Nick would paddle us out of the eddy and into Chandler Bay, where, by the looks of things outside the Thoroughfare, we would catch a ride on the Downwind Express and fly along the western shore of the island. When parallel to the farmhouse we'd bring her in to shore. I would abandon ship in the shallows and run up past the cow pasture and the farmhouse, down the hill to whatever fate awaited me. I liked the idea because I thought it would get me home quickly, and with the least risk to life and limb. Nick liked it because he reckoned that as far as sportsmanship was concerned, the time deduction he would take dropping me on the shore was ample penalty for the paddle peccadillo.

Nick paddled us out of the whirlpool while I steadied the tiller. We caught a zephyr and slipped away from the current. The wind finally gathered as we exited the Thoroughfare, and next thing I knew we were screaming down the western shore. It was a clip that I could perhaps match on foot, but not one that I could sustain over three miles. I relaxed somewhat as we ran down the coast, knowing at least that we had made the right decision.

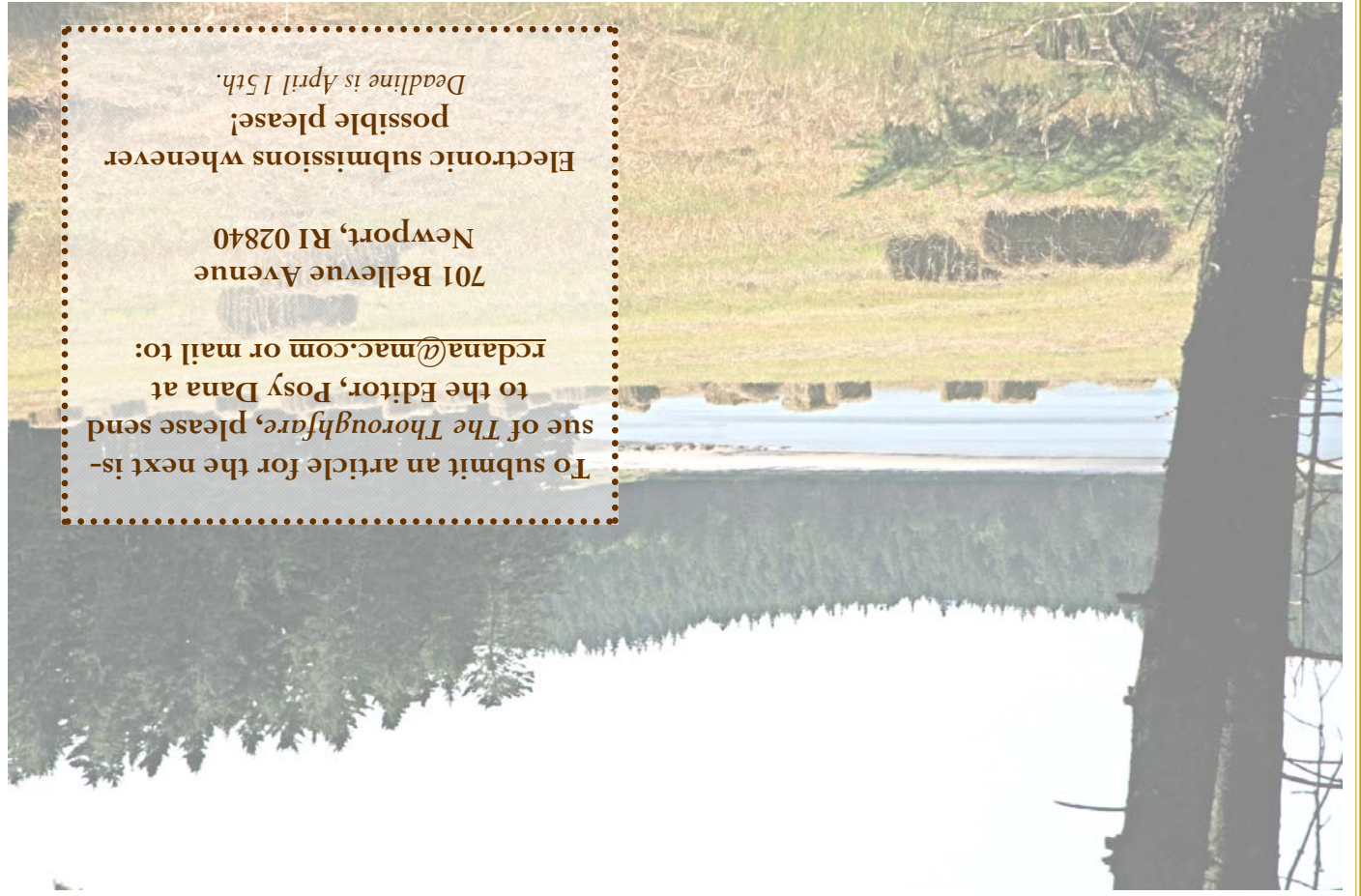
In a mere twenty minutes we had reached the point on the western shore where the coastal forest ends abruptly and flaxen fields rise to the farmhouse. We steered on a collision course with the shore. As we approached the rocky ledge, Nick brought *Sandpeep* into the wind. Either he over-steered or was victim to a rogue windshift, for the bow went all the way through the wind, and we coasted over to a kelp forest, where we were ensnared in the shallows of the Sea of Medusa. I jumped overboard into the marine jungle and thrashed my way ashore. As I ran across the rocky beach and up the steep hill, I heard Nick in the distance. "What the hell, man!?! You're just leaving me stranded?" I didn't look back.

I raced over the hill and down the long front drive, arriving on the doorstep panting. As I stopped on the stoop, hands on my knees trying to regain composure, the door swung open. I startled, bolting upright. And there was the loveliest vision of them all. With a weary, lilting smile, Isabella peered through the screen door. In her arms was sweet Charlie, fast asleep, finally overcome by some angelic calm. The storm had passed.

I opened the door silently, shut it carefully. Though I wanted to, I dare not touch little Charlie. "I'm sorry," I mouthed. She smiled a cathartic little smile and took him carefully up the stairs, stepping on the outermost planks above the support beams.

I walked into the den and gazed out the big bay window overlooking Shorey Cove. Much sooner than I expected, Nick rounded the head and pointed *Sandpeep* towards her mooring. I've always enjoyed sitting safely on some shore, watching boats. Clarity of thought is a virtue that strikes me in these moments. As I watched Nick skillfully bring *Sandpeep* to her mooring, I thought lucidly of life, marriage, and a kind of happiness.





To submit an article for the next issue of *The Thoroughfare*, please send to the Editor, Posy Dana at [rcdana@mac.com](mailto:rcdana@mac.com) or mail to:  
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 Electronic submissions whenever possible please!  
 Deadline is April 15th.



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