

News from the Island by Jay Traynor

It has been a long and eventful winter season here on Roque. Our farmhouse host/cook Ethan has moved on to a life in Chicago with a new job at a distillery. We welcome Jordan Slocum to fill his position who has been treating us to his wonderful culinary expertise. Doug Lines our boatman has also moved on. We recently have brought on a new boatman to our team, John Legere who hails from Islesboro ME and brings years of experience with him. Michael and Virginia have endured the winter and looking forward to the upcoming season. The Ice House is full of very large blocks, the ice on the pond was 24” thick when we cut it, with help from our grandchildren on a cold blustery day in February. The Gardner House kitchen project is moving along nicely and looks great. The Red House is also getting some needed work. with front picture windows first on the list. The inflatable tender has been replaced with an Amesbury Dory. This dory has a classic look and should serve Roque Island well. There is still a wintry feel in the air with snow yesterday and forty knot west winds today. I’m optimistic that spring’s warmth will be here soon, although the Robins looked dismayed in yesterday’s snowstorm.

A Challenge to all Sailors!

Round the Island Sailing record in the Sand Peep II

By C. Bruce Berry (house guest of the Perkins)

Saturday September 1st, 2018. The crew: Thorne Perkin and myself.

To take advantage of the 4:26 high tide we cast off “SAND PEEP” from her mooring in Shorey Cove at 2:10 PM. The skies were clear with -7 knot SW wind. A beautiful afternoon. The following markers were recorded in the boat log: 2:23 PM ROUNDING GREAT HEAD/DEVILS CHASM mature bald eagle in SE flight/ a good omen lifting enthusiasm.

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A Challenge to all Sailors ,cont'd

2:40 PM ROUNDING DECOY POINT Scottish mist in distance off of Bay of Fundy.

3:00 PM ROUNDING SOUTH TIP MARSH ISLAND.

3:05 PM ROUNDING BAR ISLAND. Scottish mist lingering around Brothers Island.

3:15 PM ROUNDING SEAL LEDGE Nostalgia set in with sight of Great Beach.

3:41 PM BROAD REACH THROUGH THOROUGHFARE light wind.

3:50 PM BEAT THROUGH INLAND SIDE OF LITTLE BAR ISLAND risk/reward decision as tide not yet high with minimal water (4 ft. depth/ sandy bottom).

3:55 PM PATTEN COVE IN VIEW light wind.

4:05 PM ROUNDING BONNEY POINT good wind for run with butterflied JIB/MAINSAIL leaving a churning champagne trail behind the "PEEP"/ weight and balance adjustment was made so her hull would plane.

4:25 PM PARKER'S HEAD PASSED with realization we may be breaking records for "round the island" run.

4:30 PM PUMP HOUSE PASSED.

4:35 PM ROUNDED POPPLESTONE POINT/SQUIRES POINT mooring in sight with helm excitement mounting.

4:55 PM BEAT INTO MOORING with mooring fastened.

ELAPSED TIME FOR "ROUND THE ISLAND" IN "SAND PEEP" 2 HOURS 45 MINUTES. A RECORD (we think).

New Member of the Roque Family Genevieve Garson

On September 27, 2018 Sandy P.M. Garson (daughter of William and Susan Monks) legally adopted her step-daughter, Genevieve Ann Garson. Genevieve presided as "judge" in her own adoption and tears of joy flowed from all present as the gavel hit the block. Genevieve was born on May 12, 2003 and was 7 years old when she first visited Roque Island. She has since developed an enduring love and passion as if she were a direct descendant.

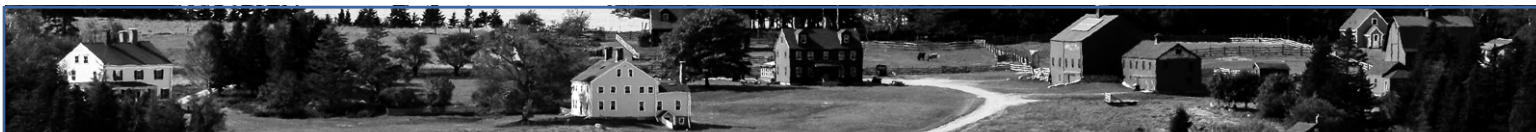
In her words: "Roque to me has always been a happy place where I could get away from everything and everyone and have an amazing time. I love Roque and I count the days till my next visit. One of the best things about being adopted by Smom is that I will get to go to Roque forever."

Genevieve is a sophomore in high school and takes all AP and honors classes. She works part time at a frozen yogurt shop, enjoys playing volleyball, cooking and being with friends. Her primary goal this year is to save enough money to buy a car and get her drivers license. She has been accepted to participate in a youth

leadership conference in London this summer. Her future aspiration is to attend college in NYC with the goal of becoming a naval nurse and/or a first responder.



Genevieve and Sandy Garson.



Barnyard Buzz

by Stephanie Gardner

If April showers bring May flowers, what do April snowstorms bring? More mud!!! Just when we thought we might start to dry up around the island, we have encountered all day snow and a week of rain ahead.

The winter gave us a mixed bag of unusually warm spells complete with rain, ice, very little snow, deep freeze and more ice. With only a few remanences of snow banks, I declare “Spring is in the air and the winds are wicked”.

Our first farm babies arrived on February 23 and March 9. Our dairy cows Ella (born on Roque) delivered a boy and Angie delivered a girl. The calves are growing strong. Today marks the beginning watch for lambs to arrive. We usually have a full month of lambing season. Sheep shearing day was a couple of weeks ago and I can’t thank Alicia Monks enough for all her help.

Our first round of meat birds (chickens) have arrived and the farmhouse is full of the sounds of little peeps from the basement.

The greenhouse is filling with baby plants in anticipation for this upcoming garden season. The farm interns have been lined up along with several volunteers with the WWOOF program. It is always exciting meeting new and interested kids from afar. Last summer proved to be extremely successful with our array of volunteers. We hope you enjoyed meeting some of them.

As with many of you living in the Northeast, I am anxious for warmer days and stripping off the winter layers. Trading in the ice chopper for a garden tool and animals on green pastures



Ella and Norman

Flotsam

Nick (N.H.S.) Higgins celebrated his 60th birthday on April 24.

Susannah Ames, daughter of Becca Campbell and grand-daughter of Jack Gardner is to be married to Patrick Lydon on August 17.

Alexander Constantine Smith, son of Andrea Barry-Smith, will be graduating from high school on June 2 He’s been attending University Prep in Seattle, Washington.

The recipient of the R.I.G.H.C. scholarship, awarded to a graduate of Jonesport-Beal’s High School is Rachel Phillips. She has been attending Kingswood University in New Brunswick, Canada.

PLEASE NOTE: The staff has requested that you send all inquiries directly to Jay or Stephanie. They will then disseminate them to the appropriate person on staff. But please: NO TEXTING; rather call or go to the Farmhouse, as they are unable to consistently look at their texts or emails during the day.

Jay Trayner 207.263.6400
Stephanie Gardner 207.263.7824



Downeast Dispatch

Lobster War by Samuel Campbell

Fifteen miles due east of Roque (last we heard part of the USA), maybe a choppy 90 minute ride in a lobster boat, certainly an experience rough enough to make some youngsters (and maybe some oldsters) lose their lunch, lies Machias Seal Island, a treeless 20 acre rock also 12 or so miles from Grand Manan Island, it of New Brunswick, aka Canada. The island lies in the so-called Gray Zone, 277 square miles, ownership of which has been claimed by both the U.S. and Canada since the Revolutionary War.

For centuries it was not that big an issue. In recent decades the only human visitors (excluding a Canadian lighthouse keeper) were waterborne birders, who came in the season to witness puffins breeding and nesting on the island. A gent from Jonesport, Barna Norton, who had a firm certainty that his family owned the island (his grandfather laid claim to it in 1865), was the first to establish a viable venture taking visitors out to the island on his souped up lobster boat.

Like visits to the Brothers, the lobster boat would anchor offshore, and the enthusiasts would row in. In later years, then octogenarian Barna generally stayed below deck, napping, until his presence was required on the island. Upon his death in 2004, his legend was such that his obituary appeared in the Washington Post.

Bob Monks, senior, made the voyage for years without spotting puffins until the early 2000's, when his persistence was rewarded, and he saw thousands upon thousands. Your faithful correspondent was on that same memorable trip. Bob Monks says, "I want to go back." (Any interested in touring the island should contact Bold Coast Charter company out of Cutler.)

These days in the waters around the island, the times they are a changing –as they say - as in climate change. Since the waters in the Gulf of Maine have been warming faster than nearly any body of water on the planet, the Gray Zone's previously modest lobster

population has surged as the lobsters migrate north in search of colder waters.

Maine's lobster harvesters saw another strong year in 2018, landing 119.6 million pounds, an increase of nearly eight million over 2017. In monetary terms, the value of Maine's lobster fishery climbed by more than \$46 million over 2017

The increase in the lobster population and the surging value of lobster have attracted more Canadian fishermen to the so-called Gray Zone, the disputed area fished mainly by Americans until a decade ago. A Cutler fisherman, Brian Cates, who has been been lobstering off Machias Seal for years, told the documentary film *Lobster War*, "that it is a ticking bomb out there. It is a matter of time before someone gets killed." American and Canadian law enforcement both worry about the potential for violence. "The tensions are mounting," said an officer on the Maine Marine Patrol, as he drifted through the disputed waters.

The conflict over sovereignty of the island began at the end of the Revolutionary War, when the newly independent colonies received all islands within about 70 miles of the US shore. But the 1783 Treaty excluded any island that had been part of Nova Scotia. The two sides emerged from that treaty disputing only one speck of land at the mouth of the Bay of Fundy, Machias Seal Island. The Canadians say a 17th century British land grant proves the island was originally part of Nova Scotia. On the other hand down in Foggy Bottom, a US State Department official recently stated that "our longstanding position is that Machias Seal Island belongs to the United States."

Interlopers have occasionally tried to stoke tensions. The aforementioned Barna Norton, during his visits, used to periodically plant an American flag on the island. But, at present, the Canadian maple leaf flag flies over the lighthouse.



From the Historical Records Joseph Peabody in Hong Kong by Nick Kearns

Sofia, Marco and I were pleased to encounter Joseph Peabody at a recent exhibit at the Hong Kong Maritime Museum (*The Dragon and the Eagle: American Traders in China, A Century of Trade from 1784 to 1900*). As can be seen in the photos below, the exhibit included a brief sketch of Joseph Peabody as one of the leading American merchants as well as a painting of the medium clipper *Joseph Peabody* in Hong Kong Harbour from the mid 1850s.

Asia in order to accumulate goods to trade with the Chinese, before returning with tea and porcelain. Some of this trade included opium, though the Americans were less aggressive in this regard than the British. Peabody actually did far more trading with India and Indonesia than he did with China. One of his ships was famously attacked by pirates in present day Aceh province with a load of pepper.

Joseph Peabody died in 1844 at 86 years old. His namesake ship “*Joseph Peabody*” was launched in 1856 by Curtis and Peabody, one of a new generation of faster “clipper” ships that evolved in part to carry passengers to and gold back from the California gold fields. The ships also still carried out trade with China, though by the 1850’s this trade was often through the newly established Hong Kong, which the British had seized from China in the 1841 Opium War.



Marco Kearns and Joseph Peabody

Joseph Peabody sponsored 17 voyages to Canton (now Guangdong), just up the Pearl River from Hong Kong. Peabody was one of several entrepreneurial American traders who competed with the British East India company for trade with China. Peabody and other American traders often did extensive trading within



As you can see in the painting, the *Joseph Peabody* carries the Curtis & Peabody private signal which still flies on Roque Island’s present day *Jos. Peabody* plying the more placid waters of Englishman’s Bay.



The Naturalist's Column

New Law Protects Rockweed

by George Herrick

On 28 March 2019, the Maine Supreme Judicial Court handed down a 7 to 0 decision (2019 ME 45) on *Kenneth W. Ross et al. v. Acadian Seaplants, Ltd.* (The et al. referred to is the Roque Island Gardner Homestead Corporation, the co-plaintiff, too long a name to include in the title.) The Court concluded in a 22 page decision that, “even according to the public’s common law access rights to the intertidal zone, the public does not have the right to take attached plant life from that property in contradistinction to the fee owner’s wishes...because the taking of attached flora from fee owners was not within reasonable access contemplated when jus publicum was established.” The text of the opinion provides a select bibliography of important legal cases on intertidal zone private property rights.

“As time marches on,” the decision read, “concepts of stare decisis may begin to take root in this critical aspect of Maine law, and Maine landowners, understandably, may begin to rely on the restrictions placed on the public’s access to the intertidal zone.” Thus, this new legal judgment has potential implications for private property rights to the intertidal zone.

The dispute arose when Acadian Seaplants, basing its operations in Roque Bluffs Harbor, began aggressive harvesting of rockweed in our area, including on Roque Island itself. Knowing the great importance of rockweed to the marine environment, some of us began to express concern. Nannette Herrick and Timmy Herrick photographed the offending harvesters at Squire’s Point. EMCI made contact with Cornell

University’s Robin Seeley and funded some of her preparatory research for a legal suit against the company. John Higgins coordinated the legal side with the Rosses and Gordon Smith, our Portland lawyer. We won the initial case in the Machias Court but Acadian Seaplants Ltd. appealed, and brought the case to the Supreme Court. Higgins hired Higgins Higgins Higg

The decision noted inter alia that rockweed provides habitat for marine organisms, that rockweed is biologically dissimilar from fish, lobster and clams, and does not move once attached to the land. It further noted that harvesting rockweed cannot be construed as fishing or navigation, that rockweed involves the use of intertidal land, being attached to the intertidal substrate.

Rockweed, indeed, is a living laboratory of lobsters, clams, mussels, periwinkles, crabs, whelks and minute marine organisms, several dozen altogether. It provides shelter and sustenance for them. Eider duck, sandpipers and other birds depend upon rockweed. *Seaweed Chronicles, A World at the Water’s Edge* (2018) by Susan Hand Shetterly (available in the Roque Library) provides the background.

The Court opinion does not address whether rockweed harvesting is forbidden on public lands or on private properties that do not protest.

The value of the overall rockweed harvest in Maine in 2018 was \$840,000.

The Court decision is a very positive conservation ruling for Roque Island’s rockweed and marine environment, and a feather in our conservation cap.

We want your articles and photographs!

To submit an article or photograph for the next *Thoroughfare*, please contact the editor, Nina Herrick.

Email: ninaherrick@gmail.com

Telephone 202 986-7545 Cell 202 255-5974

Henceforth we will be publishing online. Let her know if you would prefer a paper copy.



More Flotsam
Eastern Maine Conservation Initiative
 by Samuel Campbell

EMCI was founded in the spring of 1996 by George Herrick and Nicholas Higgins, Previous to that Roque had engaged Norm and Marcia Famous as environmental consultants to do a full study of Roque Island and create a management plan for protecting and preserving its ecology. Norm spearheaded our conservation work for 26 years until his death last year. We are proud that EMCI is in the forefront of institutions in our region giving such a high priority to conservation. Early in the 2000s, preservation of history and cultural geography was added to our mission, reflecting a need to support local historical societies, which were developing and expanding in eastern Maine,

EMCI this year bestowed nine grants totaling \$20,000. The two most substantial grants (\$3,000 each) went to the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Network and the Downeast Salmon Federation. For now its 7th year, it continues to fund an annual lecture at the University of Maine in Machias, organized by the Department of Ecology. As the new Chairman, Anastasia Fischer is well suited to this role, being a long time resident of Maine. She says “I hope to continue the good work we have done thus far, carrying on the amazing legacy George Herrick created; and to further increase the visibility of the organization. We need the wide variety of organizations doing good work in the area to know we are here to help support them, and this means getting the word out. We also need to communicate the really interesting results of the work we fund. And it is vitally important that young people know we are here supporting them.”

She adds “EMCI plays a small but important role in supporting work that otherwise might not get funded, in a region that otherwise that does not get a lot of attention. George Herrick was prescient in seeing this need all those years ago, and when he established EMCI he made a firm commitment to supporting those communities.”

Gardner Perkin, the Bridge Builder





Englishman's Bay Trading Company

Alicia Monks

I was recently on the island to assist with the sheep shearing. Every year our sheep produce bags and bags of wool. What to do with the wool is an annual creative challenge.

Are there any particular products that you would like from your wool? For instance:

- Lace Weight single ply yarn. Any interested knitters out there who want to split the minimum order?
- Is there a yarn weight you would prefer?
- Wool (batt) comforters? Wool pillows?

Please let me know if you are interested or have any other ideas. The profits from these wool sales benefit the farm. Email me at: amkm@aol.com.

And check out my web-site! <http://www.englishmanbaytradingco.com>

Additions to the Roque Island Library 2018-2019

Corbett, Gordon. *Keepers of the Light* (2012)

Jonesport Historical Society. *Jonesport America* (2018)

Lockyer, Allan. *Clamdiggers and Downeast Country Stores* (1993)

Vissert, Thomas. *Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings* (1997)

Whitworth, Victoria. *Swimming With Seals* (2017)

Hand, Susan. *Seaweed Chronicles, A World at the Water's Edge* (2018)

Hardy, Keith. *Notes on a Flute, A Field Guide to the Wabanaki* (2009)

Jackson, Carl H. and Swan, Lester. *Better Badminton* (1939)

Shetterly, Susan Hand. *Seaweed Chronicles. A World at the Water's Edge* (2009)

Wessels, Tom. *Reading the Forested Landscape, A Natural History of New England* (1997)

Whitworth, Victoria. *Swimming With Seals* (2017)

Wickman, Thomas. *Snowshoe Country, An Environmental and Cultural History of Winter in the Early American Northeast* (2019).

Sauna on Roque?

John Pat Higgins

Recently, an idea came up with regards to the new Metal Shop that is due to be rebuilt.... That the Roque Island pier would be the perfect environ for a real Finnish Sauna.... A sauna followed by a cold immersion plunge has been shown to reduce inflammation, improve circulation, and reduce vasoconstriction and hypertension. It also improves the body's antioxidant capabilities and increases the number of white blood cells.

A number of family members are looking into this possibility. It's just an idea at the moment, but one we think is worth exploring. Are you interested? Let's all stay in the loop on this! Email johnpathiggins@gmail.com for more info.