

T H E T H O R O U G H F A R E



News from the Island by Stephanie Gardner and Jay Trayner

During this time of isolation, we feel blessed to be on Roque where everyday life appears unaffected. The farm animals keep us very scheduled which is a great distraction from the outside world. Although we traditionally have four seasons, a farm adds a fifth. Lambing season, where the days roll into nights with watchful eye on each new addition. Lambing represents the beginning of new births for a farm and this year it is a welcome sight.

The old welding shop at the waterfront has a completely new facelift with only a few finishing touches remaining. Many thanks to Ariel and his crew for weathering through the December winds and temperatures.

Winter winds made up for lack of snow switching from South to North on a regular basis. The ice pond finally was thick enough for cutting by mid-February. The lack of snow has made for a deep frost and a terrific winter for the deer population. But now the Robins have arrived along with lambing season.

The new gravel sifter has arrived on the mainland and the roads are looking forward to some freshly sifted gravel.

All in all, the staff is managing well with our quarantine. We all worry for the health of our mainland families. Sending best wishes to all of you at this time of togetherness.

We here have plenty of toilet paper and carrots and onions !!!

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Barnyard Buzz by Rosa Stevens

It seems as though winter has flown by at a remarkable pace! Although we have had some cold weather and snow, it hasn't been much. And all the snow has melted. Green grass is starting to poke out of the brown, and south slopes are already glistening green.

Some beautiful lamb hides have been sent away for tanning. We should see them back here on Roque by mid to late April. The greenhouse is bursting with signs of spring! The bright, welcoming sun is very warming now, so the greenhouse is the "hot" place to be! We have all been enjoying the new green during an otherwise grey part of the year. Everything seems to be off to a great start, so dreams of gardening in the summer sun are dancing in my head.

Lambing started on March 8th with a large single ewe lamb. Some of the ewes are almost as wide as they are tall! It is comical to see them gracefully maneuver themselves around on such skinny little legs.

Both milk cows are also growing bigger by the day! We are expecting the first calf in April, and the second in May. The first delivery of meat chickens is expected the week of March 17th. Everyone is getting baby fever around here.



Mama and two babies

Flotsam

Lots of weddings in the past year!

Hadrian Gardner married Aryn Wheeler, May 11, 2019. They had a baby girl, Claire Madeleine.

Nicholas Papanicolaou married Corina Gugler, June 24, 2019. He writes: "We were married on the island of Milos, Greece in the Church of St. Nicholas. We enjoyed a few days with friends on the islands of Mykonos and Paros immediately after the wedding. And we more recently took a honeymoon to Southeast Asia (Thailand, Laos, Cambodia) and then to the Maldives."

Tatiana P. Smith married Trevor Martin, June 29, 2019.

Susannah and Patrick Lytton's wedding was on Aug 17, 2019. They are expecting a baby.

Remembering Ed Harriman

by Molly Cutler

In September 1997, Maine native Edwin Allan Harriman responded to an advertisement for a farmer at Roque Island. Having recently retired from a career in agricultural education, Ed thought it would be fun to run an island farm for a year with his equally enthusiastic wife Gloria. Only a year later, with the sudden departure of then Island Manager Owen Drumgool, Ed reluctantly but graciously stepped into the Manager's role. This was a stroke of good fortune for the island, resulting in a period of stability and productivity.



Ed Harriman (cont'd)

During his year as farmer, Ed convinced the board to invest in a milking machine, as he said so few of the then staff knew how to milk properly. Though his four-year tenure as Island Manager was relatively short, Ed made good use of those years. Some important accomplishments during this period include:

1998: completion of the kitchen addition and renovation project at the Mansion House, during which Ed brought in a new local carpenter to complete an unfinished job, thus beginning Roque's long and fruitful relationship with Chris McCormick.

1998-1999: construction of the new Manager's House.

1999: purchase of the Bluff's House property.

1999: total renovation of the Red House kitchen.

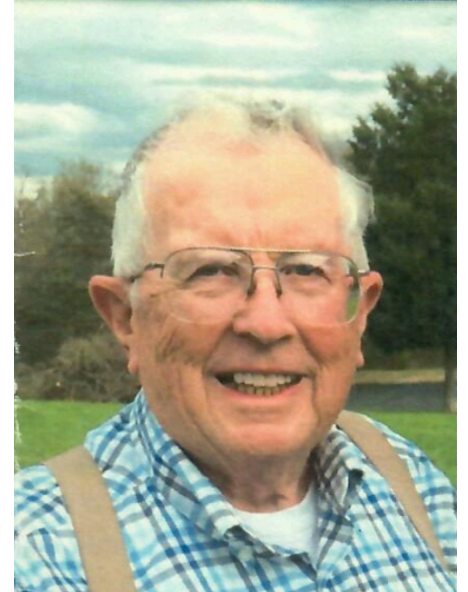
2000: initiation of the first stage of a new concept of individual housing for staff by refinishing the farmhouse 3rd floor.

2000: the purchase of a Wood Mizer for milling lumber on island, and the construction of a shed for it.

2001: construction of the New Burial Ground.

2001-2002: "Harriman's Highway" cut to bypass the cabin at Patten's Cove for a direct logging route to the water; agreements negotiated for Russell Manchester's subsequent 2-year tree harvesting program.

Ed and Gloria departed from Roque in the Fall of 2002, leaving the island in good condition for successors Bruce and Selena Patterson. He died on December 27. He is survived by Gloria, his wife for 65 years.



Work Week 2019

by Nick Papanicolaou

I went up with two friends, Win Brown and Dan Petroff, both of who had been to Roque before but neither under these circumstances. I am not sure they fully understood what they were getting into. We arrived the afternoon of Friday, May 24. As the work day was coming to an end, I took my friends up to St. Roque for a gorgeous evening and some mental preparation for what lay ahead of us.

We spent the next two days working and enjoying meals alongside the staff who were incredibly informative and patient with us. Saturday was a gorgeous day while Sunday was raining and cold. Despite the up-and-down weather, we managed to complete a lot of work. Our chores included:



The Crew



Work Week (cont'd)

- 1) Splitting wood
- 2) Loading 2.5 houses worth of firewood
- 3) Taking down the existing sheep fence
- 4) Putting up the sheep fence in a new area
- 5) Moving the sheep from the old location to new one
- 6) Raking and picking up rocks from the front of the staff house
- 7) Cleaning window panes of the Red House
- 8) Cleaning the grill of the Red House
- 9) Putting up shades in the Red House

It was at times back-breaking work. We left on Memorial Day feeling sore and needing some rest, but satisfied with our efforts and what we had accomplished. We felt we contributed in some small way to leaving Roque in a better place than how it was when we arrived.



Hard at Work!

1933 John Marin Watercolor of Great Beach



John Marin (1870-1953) was an early American modernist artist. He is known for his abstract landscapes and watercolors. Marin spent his first summer in Maine in 1914 and almost immediately the rocky coast there became one of his favorite subjects. Over the rest of his life, Marin became intimately familiar with the many moods of the sea and sky in Maine. He died in Addison, at age 82. (*Wikipedia*)

We want your articles and photographs! To submit an article or photograph for the next *Thoroughfare*, please contact the editor, Nina Herrick.

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



Downeast Dispatch

Barna Norton by Samuel Campbell

Around the summer of 2000, a Roque Island contingent of 20 boarded a souped up lobsterboat from Jonesport to voyage 15 miles due east to rocky and grassy Machias Seal Island, hoping to row ashore and witness the annual nesting visitation of migratory puffins. The contingent included Bob Monks Senior, assorted Gardners and Campbells, and a passel of Monks House kids. On the 90 minute voyage, octogenarian Barna Norton, the trip's organizer and puffin guide, napped below deck. He could be forgiven for his siesta: after all he had been making this voyage for 60 odd years.

In 1940, 25 year old Barna Norton went to a shipwright's shop in Jonesport and ordered a boat. It did not need to be big but it needed to be sturdy. He called her "If". He was planning to take excursions through chop and wind to a 15 acre scrap of stone and grass 20 miles off shore called Machias Seal Island. He brought his father, some tourists from Roque Bluffs and they successfully reached the island. In the ensuing years, Barna would bring hundreds of guests. He would regale then with stories of the old days when neighbors would sleep with potatoes in their beds to ward off the cold; or when he and his father were almost rammed by FDR's sailing yacht; but he always came back to the exploits of his great grandfather and how he came to own this island.

In a real sense this narrative begins at the time of the Civil War. Tall Barney Beal, a lobsterman in Jonesport, was legendary because of his height (6ft 7 ½) and strength; he was also quite ornery – he was said to have killed a horse with a punch. In 1865, at age 30, Tall Barney, wishing to avoid serving in the war, took out to sea and camped on Machias Seal Island. There was a dispute with Canadians who came to roust him off, but Tall Barney "physically threw them off the island." He subsequently gifted "his" island "to the first male

descendant to be named after him." That turned out to be Barna, born in 1915. After service in the Coast Guard in WWII Barna returned to Jonesport and started going back to Machias Seal Island immediately thereafter.

As it developed Barna would end up being the rhetorical centerpiece in the dispute between the Canadian and American governments. The border between the two countries is the longest in the world, 5,525 miles, separating the Yukon from Alaska, Saskatchewan from Montana, Ontario from New York.

For years things have been calm, except in the Northeast where Machias Seal Island still is disputed between the two countries.

The American government traces its claim to Machias Seal Island to 1783, when the Treaty of Paris assigned all islands "within 20 leagues of any part of the shores of the United States" to that country except for those

that were already part of Nova Scotia. The Canadians counter with a 1621 land grant that established Nova Scotia, which included "islands within six leagues of any part" of that province's coast. As you may remember from my previous article "Lobster Wars" (Thoroughfare, Spring 2019), the waters around this scrap of rock have recently become hotly contested by Canadian and American lobstermen.

If you should wish to visit, the island, there is a company called Bold Coast Tours in Cutler, the only American one leading trips to the island. There is a strict quota on the number of visitors, so, for instance, all tours for 2020 are already filled up.

At the Jonesport cemetery, there are two stones for Barna, one with his date of birth and death, the other is inscribed "Barna, defender of Machias Seal Island USA" - a local legend in the tradition of his great grandfather, Tall Barney.





From the Historical Records Elizabeth Hardwick on Roque Island

This passage is taken from an essay of Harwick's on Maine, published in the *New York Review of Books* in October of 1971:

Fantastic love of difficult, awkward islands gripped the heart of rich people at the turn of the century. Grandeur and privation, costliness and discomfort. Some years ago we took a friend from South America to an island quite a distance off Machias, Maine. The launch pulled up to a long, wooden pier to which the owner's sloop was moored. The house was a large yellow frame with two graceful wings and inside there were beautiful dishes, old maps on the wall, fine painted chests, and handsome beds. We lived there in silence and candlelight for a few days, stumbling about with our guttering tapers, coming upon steep back stairways where we had been expecting a closet with our nightgowns in it. "This is madness! No, it is not one bit amusing!" the Brazilian lisped in fury.

From Jason Herrick:

We have all enjoyed a summer day on Roque where we feel so moved by its beauty that perhaps a poetic couplet or two spring to mind and sometimes we remember to jot it down. Imagine if we could entice some of the most talented writers to visit and spend days producing truly great prose inspired by the island.

We of course know that some family members have exhibited significant writing abilities, including Great Aunt Belle Gardner. And she certainly travelled in a gifted circle of fellow writers. So imagine my surprise when I stumbled on Elizabeth Hardwick's essay on Maine and this eerily familiar passage from 1971. Was she visiting Aunt Belle?

You may know how central Hardwick (1916-2007) was to the literary world in her prime. A founder of the *New York Review of Books* in 1962 along with her husband the great poet and distant cousin of ours, Robert Lowell, she was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1996.

Certainly the passage will give you pause as it veers from a precise articulation of the Roque we know. So I dug deeper and sure enough a friend of Hardwick's who was her publisher corroborated my suspicion, remembering that she mentioned a trip from her nearby home in Castine to Roque Island.

We cannot be sure of the year of her visit - a close look in the guest book might reveal that. She mentions carrying tapers, so it was certainly before electricity was put in, which came to the island in 1965. The barn and the Farmhouse were the first to be electrified. The Gardner House was the last, a couple of years later. It is fun to imagine this legendary writer taking stock of every detail during her visit in the same way that we continue to enjoy the island every single visit and wonder how we might write about it.

Snippets - Submitted by George Herrick

The inventor of the Life Preserver was Sir Francis Columbine Daniel in 1806.

According to a recent scientific paper by UMM professors, 7.1 million pounds of clams (*Mya Arenaria*) were landed in 2018 with a dockside value of \$12.8 million. Maine state landings have declined by 75% in the past four decades and by 86% in Washington County. More days of moratoriums on clam digging owing to algae bloom and predation by green crabs are partially to blame.



Snippets, cont'd

Cold Water Swimming

Scientists who study immersion in cold water - typically defined as below 15°C, or 59°F - note different stages in the physiological response. During the first three minutes the skin cools giving the swimmer the sensation of burning or prickling. This can induce anxiety, but the greater risk comes after a while, when the cold begins to feel almost tolerable. Superficial neuromuscular cooling begins, which can cause “cold incapacitation”: your limbs particularly your arms, which have a high surface to mass ratio - feel too weak to move, and your hands are too numb to grasp a dock or a ladder railing. The rule of thumb is to spend only as many minutes in the water as the number of degrees, in Celsius.

From *The Subversive Joy of Cold Water Swimming*, Rebecca Mead, *New Yorker*, January 27, 2020.

Ed.’s note: the water temperature at the Shorey Cove dock has historically been below 60°F ; but in recent seasons it has inched above that on occasion.

The Naturalist’s Column

The White Pine - A Symbol

Submitted by George Herrick

From both a historical and an economic viewpoint, the white pine (*Pinus Strobus*) is without doubt the most famous of all the woody plants of the State of Maine. From the time of the early colonists, it has played an important role in the welfare of her people. The early claim to choice specimens of pine trees in p (the Kings Pines) by the British Crown is well-known. Until after the American Revolution every white pine tree over 2 feet in diameter, growing in any part of the state (except those trees growing in areas previously granted to private persons) was the property of the British Crown, reserved for mass in the Royal Navy.

Maine has long been known as the Pine Tree State, principally because the White Pine was the chief source of lumber in early times. Exports, chiefly in the form of ton timber, were made to England from the early settlements. By the end of the 19th century the most valuable stands of White Pine timber has been exploited, lumbermen having already turned their attention elsewhere to meet the ever increasing needs in this country because of Western expansion.

Poets have immortalized this tree. Thus we read of “the murmuring Pines and Hemlocks” from Longfellow’s *Evangeline*... Certainly this tree merits a place in the heart of every nature lover, especially if he be a

native of Maine, where a White Pine has been appropriately chosen as symbol of her people.

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From the Kitchen Cupboard Roasted Leg of Lamb

by Jill Davis

Lamb has been a traditional springtime food. A part of the traditional Passover meal, roasted lamb is a delicious treat! This is a great anytime recipe that is ideal for a family meal or when you want to impress your most special dinner guests. Try adding a side of rice, couscous, or roasted vegetables to complement.

Roasted Leg of Lamb

"This leg of lamb is marinated overnight with fresh rosemary, garlic, onion, wine, mustard, honey and lemon zest. Be prepared for many requests for seconds!"

Ingredients;

1/4 cup honey
2 tablespoons prepared Dijon-style mustard
fresh rosemary sprigs
freshly ground black pepper
granulated garlic
dried rosemary
Tarragon
Thyme
Oregano
1 cup dry red wine
1/2 lemon
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 large onion
Olive oil

3 cloves garlic, minced
1-large onion chopped

3-5 pounds whole leg of lamb
1 teaspoon coarse sea salt

Directions;

Chop up herbs/seasonings, fresh garlic and onion. In a small bowl, combine the honey, mustard, wine, lemon,

and zest.. add garlic, onion, and herbs add 1/4 Cup olive oil... mix well.

Make incisions in the surface of the meat and rub marinade into meat.. make incisions deep enough to push slivers of garlic and sprigs of herbs into the slits. You can do this right before you begin roasting or a day ahead for more intense flavor.

Mix well and apply to the lamb. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator overnight.

Before roasting lamb, remove it from the refrigerator and allow it to sit at room temperature for at least 30 minutes. A piece of meat at room temperature will roast more evenly... sprinkle roast with salt.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F (230 degrees C). Place lamb on a rack in a roasting pan and sprinkle with salt to taste.

Bake at 450 degrees F (230 degrees C) for 20 minutes, then reduce heat to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C) and roast for 55 to 60 more minutes for medium rare. The internal temperature should be at least 145 degrees F (63 degrees C) when taken with a meat thermometer.

