

Chairman’s Notes
by Ariana Fischer

Regardless of world circumstances and the challenges of coping with the pandemic, Roque has experienced a busy and successful year in 2020. Even with the Covid-19 restrictions in place and major staff turnover, the annual operations ran smoothly, the budget was well in line and we had the most on-island usage days in our history! (354 days and still counting). According to Tanya Fischer’s excellent statistics, the annual average since 1993 has been 271. We have all of you to thank for complying with and respecting the constraints of this summer season and to Jay and Stephanie and the on-island summer staff for staying with us to make sure things ran well. We now have the Dodges in residence as our new managers and a full team finishing some major projects, getting things ready for winter and looking ahead to 2021.

On October 17th and 18th the Trustees held their annual retreat via two Zoom sessions. We covered much ground, some of the highlights being:

- Making progress with the deferred capital maintenance program (a big improvement this year is the installation new windows in the Main Barn and Farmhouse – water-tight and looking amazing, replacing all rot where needed). Side note, we have finally landed on the right color red paint, officially named now “Roque Island Red.” We are planning on having the Main Barn proudly display her “new” color next season.

- Many edits – big and small – have been made to the family Policy Book. We will be sending out periodic emails highlighting the various changes as it is very important that you all review them (some relate to membership dues and payments and are time-sensitive).

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Chairman's Notes (cont'd)

Ariana Fischer

-We are in the process of reviewing and trying to simplify many of our “systems” and looking into utilizing online venues – e.g. invoices sent via e-mail, possibility of paying online, etc.

-As the Dodges are re-familiarizing themselves with the infrastructure, they are working on an inventory and annual plan of projects. (A point of note, Doug and new boatman/heavy machinery operator Josh, were not on the island 24 hours before starting to grate gravel and repair the Patten's Cove road.)

-As all committees are ad-hoc in nature (carrying a one-year term), in an effort to increase greater family participation, we went through the list and discussed the mission and purpose of each. A separate letter will be sent out with the details, and we encourage any and all of you to sign up for an area you may be interested in. There are two areas where we are particularly focusing this upcoming year:

-We have created a new “Membership Committee” whose mission is to focus on member engagement with the Island at all levels - family communication, the Policy Book, work week, etc.... all fall under its wing and you are sure to hear from its members.

-Lastly, and most importantly, the Trustees realize that much of our focus needs to be on the natural resources of and around the archipelago. We have several imminent pressures to contend with: a proposed commercial fish farm across the bay in Jonesport, erosion and land management, the need for alternative energy, and other effects of global warming. These issues not only have environmental but social and economic impacts on our community. Roque's well-being depends on our being informed and actively participating in what is going on around us.

Wishing you all the very best in these challenging times, Ari

Squire's Point

The Guillemot

by George Herrick

Guillemot, the Newsletter of the Sorrento Scientific Society, ended its long run with its current and last issue Vo. 50 No. 4. Bill Townsend, its amiable editor from Bar Harbor, called it quits after fifty years. Overtime (he said) his chiefly amateur subscriber base has gotten older and many have passed on. Today, new generations of naturalists are interconnected by computers and cell phones, and reports made to the newsletter have been decreasing steadily. And the daily work of composing the 10 page or so bimonthly report has taken its toll. *Guillemot's* fifty-year record of astronomical sightings, and reports on meteorology, invertebrates, fish, mammals, reptiles and birds has become a minor legend. Car owners proudly sport a *Guillemot* decal. Roque Island must be one of the few subscribers which has a complete bound set of the fifty-year publication including some of our own contributions to be reread at leisure while continuing to keep our own records.

Flotsam

Rose Catherine Gardner – born to Caleb Gardner and Katrina Grant, 11 November 2019.

From Mariah Monks: My fiancé's name is Max Shillalies; we were supposed to get married this year but postponed it to next August. We met at Hamilton College and have been together for 11 years!

Editor's note: Don't forget to send in your family news: graduations. weddings, babies...any significant milestones.



Greetings

From Stephanie Gardner and Jay Trayner

Greetings to All from our yet to be named Island on Meddybemps Lake. The State has requested that we give this island a name, yet we feel that we need time to get to know it better. Our official name of our camp/cabin/cottage is “*Nevah Dun Luggin*” as you all know well, that life on any island is about moving “things” several times to get them on and off.

Jay and I can’t thank you enough for ALL the warm wishes and heartfelt correspondences. The memories of new babies, wedding vows, children with pjs and rubber boots rubbing sleepy eyes for morning chores, funerals, fireworks, cutting ice, sunrises and sunsets (only mention a few) will be in our hearts forever. Our time on Roque was very special and will be missed dearly. You are a special family and it has been a pleasure to be a part of it, if only for a short time. This is not goodbye but see you again. Best wishes to all and we look forward to hearing from you.

Contact Info for Jay and Stephanie.

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Editor’s note: Meddybembs is a Passamaquoddy word signifying plenty of alewives, according to Stephanie.

Barnyard Buzz

In this time of isolation, city folk are staying longer in the country if they can. And many, it appears, have been going back to farming on their properties: planting vegetable gardens and raising livestock. As a result of the extra demand, the pigs this year arrived late (June 16) and were more expensive than usual (\$115 ea.). For similar reasons, Turkey poults were scarce so it was decided not to grow them this year.



The arrival of the pigs!

Photos by Jason Herrick





Work Week 2020

by John P.M. Higgins

"Work Week" this year commenced on May 28th and ended June 4th. In attendance were myself and John Pat, ably supplemented by seasonal resident Jason Herrick, as well as efforts by the Dino Pertzoff family, especially on Marsh Island and the trail connecting Lakeman's with Clam Cove. Weather was seasonably cool. All trails completed (32 miles +/-) - equipment used: power saws and power hedger, and Mule for transport (except on the Head).

We concentrated mostly on trails along the West Shore, Bonney Point, the Thoroughfare and the Head. There was one large tree that had crashed into the Mill Field, that was partially blocking the Paradise Cove trail that took a great deal of effort.

The invigoration was unmatched!



The 2 Johns setting off for the day

Seal Lookout

by Jason, Lindsay, Zach and Nina Herrick

One June day, down at the Patten Cove dock, Zachary Herrick explored around the bend at low tide, hoping to reach South West Bar Island in time. Instead, he realized some bushwhacking would take him over towards Bonney Point. So we spent a couple of days creating a now well-marked trail that takes you over to this wonderful view which Zach and Nina have named "Seal Lookout" where we saw dozens of newborn pups. Because the sunset is quite beautiful from here, we found enough discarded wood around the WoodMizer to create this bench for anyone to rest and enjoy the view. And of course the requisite Goldfish table! As a result, John and John Pat Higgins were motivated to clear out the trail all the way around to Bonney Point. Thank you, both!



Nina and Zach enjoying their handiwork

We want your articles and photographs! For submissions 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.



Trails...

by John Pat Higgins

Every summer, from as long ago as I can remember, my fondest memories of Roque were of the hard days I spent clearing trails during Work Week. My first “work” on the Island occurred when I was about 10 years old with George Herrick and his sons Adam, Jason, and Tim installing a small little spring up on the Head. But nowadays, it’s usually just my dad and myself at the beginning of the summer, to be joined later by Dino Pertzoff, Jason Herrick, and whomever else dares brave the trails with us in the late spring/early summer. My dad would bring his two trusty old Husqvarna chainsaws, and in recent years added a powerful 4-foot hedge trimmer. But to experience this...it’s hard to explain, but I will try...

In late May, I am a pudgy ball of lard, completely out of shape from the winter before. As I always promise myself, this year surely I will get in shape before I go to Roque to clear trails. But every year I find reasons to escape the gym, and my dad just doesn’t let me out of my trail clearing duties. There’s always a mountain of work to do.... And every year presents its own challenges. We arrive at the dock, as we always do, but arriving on Roque to work is just... different when its work week. We feel more like part of the crew. We wake up early, my dad already having been up for an hour by this point, fresh coffee brewed, and we head up to the farm house for breakfast with the staff (this last summer the exception). This is always nice. The sense of community we experience eating with everyone feels like something I’ve been missing since my childhood. Or, honestly, the rare sense of community I feel when there are large family reunions for Thanksgiving, only no one’s dressing up, and we’re all dirty. But hearing all of the activities and ordeals that everyone has to deal with that day makes me feel a very special connection to Roque. It is truly its own world, and one that I’m not sure one can properly experience until you have worked the land for a few days.

But the first day starts out like every first day of work week. Self-pity and questioning my very existence. Why did I sign up for this again? The next few days

will bring pain worse than any work out. I should have done at least a month of gym work. What was I thinking? So we wake, and we sit down for breakfast with the staff, or whomever else has made their home on Roque this season. We eat, we talk... And then my dad and I head out in old red Mule, loaded up with gas and saws, ready to tackle whatever comes our way. And then the trails. It’s become a routine with my dad. He manages the chainsaw, and I manage the hedge trimmer. It feels like we have to stop every 50 feet for a new blow down. Most are small, but sometimes.... “You know what they call that one?” My dad would say when looking at a particularly monstrous leaner....a massive old tree, not quite down, that none of our saws would get through in one cut. “That’s a widow-maker.” He’d say it matter-of-factly, but also like it’s a spooky monster like the boogey man.

And we’d get to cutting. He’d spend a minute analyzing, as if to see how the tree might respond to this cut or that, and then a few turns of the saw.... The tree would be slowly disassembled, in crude but effective surgical fashion. The smell of fresh sawdust would attack my nose, and huge chunks of tree would drop to the ground. I’d grab them and hoist, roll, and curse them off to the side. And rather quickly we’d have cleared a once completely choked path. But this was just the warm-up. We’d pack up our gear, and head down the trail to the next blow down. Rinse, lather and repeat.

By around noon, my arms are thoroughly punctured by the millions of spruce needles that have gotten through my shirt and I look like I have some contagious rash. If I was smart, I would have taken my allergy medicine. If not, I’m sniffing like a four year old without his teddy bear, eyes red and fresh out of Kleenex to blow my nose. But it’s lunch time. And we head back to the Farmhouse for lunch... And as we come through the door, the warmth of the kitchen hits us. Fresh hot food is waiting, piled high on big serving plates, as everyone serves themselves buffet style as seems to always be



Trails (cont'd)

by John Pat Higgins

as seems to always be the tradition. For a moment, we all reconvene, tell a tale or two of some thing or another that we had to deal with... But usually we all just chat away. I can't even tell you what we talk about. Just this and that. The cow's due. The boat needs some paint. So what's the recipe for these scones anyways? And as soon as we're done, we head down to the house for a quick reconvene, load up and head out again.

And it's like this for the next 5-6 days. At first, my muscles ache so badly I can't move in the morning. But by the end, I've forgotten the pain and this just becomes our job. About 31 miles of trails and roads.... That's what Roque has. 31 miles. That's a huge number. And we don't have a clearing crew. It's just us. Sometime the staff helps us out, but they mostly work the roads, the farm and the house areas...the trails belong to us. Without our involvement, they could quickly become overrun and forgotten.

Frankly, working these trails is something that I hope every family member gets to do at least once in their lifetimes. It is one of the few activities that connects me to the island in a way that I don't think you can experience unless you stay on for a long period. It's like discovering a completely different world on Roque.... One that is normally hidden from the rest of us. And sometimes this is the only way you'll ever see some of the more hidden parts of Roque that are rarely if ever walked.

So if you haven't done so, grab a copy of the trail map or download it on your phone. Grab some clippers and go out and get lost in the woods. Bring a lunch if you want. And enjoy. I love doing this, and really hope you enjoy the walks.



John Pat and his hedge trimmer

Circumambulation of the Island

Interview with Mariah Monks

by Jason Herrick

How long did it take you to walk the perimeter perimeter of Roque Island in July?

In July we did it in 5 hrs and 15 minutes

How did you improve your time so significantly over the previous effort earlier this summer?

In June we took a leisurely 30-minute lunch. In July we took a 10-minute lunch. We were also motivated to



Circumambulation of the Island Interview with Mariah Monks (Cont'd)

surpass my grandfather's record of five and half hours.

Which way did you go?

Counter-clockwise. Starting at the Red House.

Does it matter if it's low or high tide?

Yes. We got to North Beach at high tide and had to scramble up the dune area to not get our feet wet.

How old do you think you need to be to do the walk?

Not old. Maybe 8 or 9. If we have kids they'll be out there by 8 yrs old or no dinner!

When did you start getting tired?

I get tired before lunch at mile 5-6. Max never gets tired.

What was the hardest point?

North Beach at high tide and East Shore Trail. I scrapped my leg on the SAME stump both times around on the East Shore Trail. Most people would have enough sense not to do that and Max thinks it's a great path but I now have a grudge against it.

Did you have good snacks?

Yes. Always. Chocolate bars that get melty and soft are my favorite. Max says nuts and apples...

Did you see any wild animals?

Yes. Lots of bald eagles, snakes, big toads, deer, seals and many many enormous spiders. I always lead and walk with a stick waving in front of me to clear the webs.

Is there potential to do it faster?

Oh yes. Stay tuned. I think 2021 will be a big year for us. We are up at Moosehead Lake this week training!

Were you really tired?

Yes. We went to bed at 8:30pm last time.

What was the first thing you did when you returned?
Max jumped in the ocean. I went scavenging through the fridge for more snacks and a beer.

Were there spots where the trails could be better?

They're all awesome and we are grateful to those who help maintain them! Spiders and all.

What advice do you have for others who might want to do the same walk?

Find a relative or hiking buddy who carries the water and lunch/snacks. Also, find a good spider web clearing stick to wave around.

Was there a point in the walk that you thought you might have to turn back?

No. NEVER! There are so many tempting turnoffs throughout the hike but no giving up! We'd like to know who holds the record for best time and welcome any challengers!



Mariah and her fiancé. Max Shillalies



Downeast Dispatch

Machias Flooding Hints at Peril to Roque

by Samuel Campbell

On April 9th of this year the spring tide - the tide just after a full or new moon- on the Machias River measured more than 15 feet , the highest of the month and almost the highest of the year. "That is the kind of scenario we watch for - a spring tide, and heaven forbid, a high tide that corresponds with a storm surge," Tora Johnson, GIS Director at University of Maine, Machias told the *Working Waterfront* newspaper. The result was that State snowplows descended on the road next to the Machias river to remove debris from the river. Much of downtown Machias sits below "base flood elevation," the area expected to flood every 100 years. But Johnson says these flood events are happening ever more frequently."I think there are a couple reasons for it," said Johnson. "One is that in the Gulf of Maine, the sea level is rising faster than in other places, so we are seeing an increase in the height of water. Another factor is the frequency and direction of intense storms. "Statistically, one or two of these in ten years, you'd think bad luck. But five no, we think this is a trend." "An engineer who is very familiar with the infrastructure in downtown Machias told me that we just avoided a monumental failure of the dike and other infrastructure. Another foot of storm surge and that would have been it."

The *Thoroughfare* recently reached Professor Johnson at her home in Machias. "The good news for Roque is that it does not suffer the strength of storm surge that Machias does at the head of the bay, and being a small

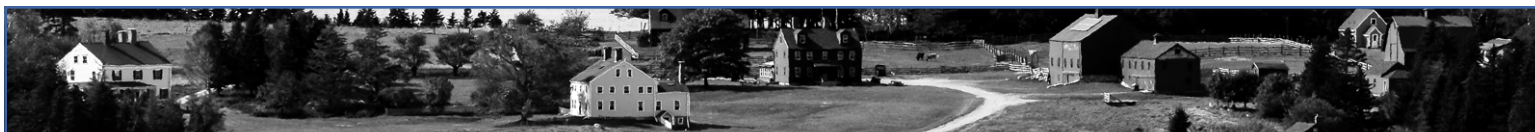
community right at the edge of the harbor...Much more significant for Roque is the threat of erosion, particularly on Great Beach when a category two high tide comes ashore." Professor Johnson also said the marshes in the Patten's Cove area are "highly vulnerable...There are different ways of stabilizing shoreline," she said. "You can stabilize it using a seawall, a berm or just plants. But only certain techniques work in certain places."

On Roque, Manager Doug Dodge took note of the new moon October 18. "We had two astronomically high tides, he said, but we are ok. "I have worked on the water for most of my life, and it seems pretty clear that the tide levels, both high and low, have become more extreme than they were 30 years ago. "A major threat is of course the flooding of the Shorey Cove waterfront. The buildings are being flooded on a more regular basis, and every time the water level breaches the retaining wall on the pier, it erodes the filler material inside its granite foundation."

Roque Island needs to be thinking ahead and pro-actively as the conditions worsen. Already in rebuilding the boathouse on the pier the foundation was raised 18 inches according to Jay. The same will need to be done to the other buildings when they are rebuilt. We also need to think of helping the beaches and salt marshes with plantings which will mitigate the erosion.

A copy of the privately printed *A Natural Resources Inventory of the Roque Island Archipelago*, compiled by ecologist Norman C. Famous, Roque's Senior Naturalist, over 28 years of field work and study before his death in 2018, and edited by his widow, Marcia Spencer Famous, is now printed and available. The 93 page book provides a catalogue of 475 species of vascular plants, 201 species of lichens, 103 species of mosses, found on 1,209 acre Roque, and 310 species of birds observed.

Copies are available for \$40, by contacting JoEllen Clark Tel. 207 775-7200; jclark@atlantictrustmaine.com
% Atlantic Trust, 111 Commercial Street (S 302), Portland, ME 04101



From the Historical Records

‘Ware Mrs. Gardner

by Jessica G. Goldblatt

Soon after the opening of her museum in 1903, Isabella was introduced to the Japanese scholar Okakura Kakuzō and the two developed a life long friendship. Okakura not only advised the Museum of Fine Arts of Boston on its Asian art collection but also consulted with Isabella on her private collection of Asian art. At the age of 65, Isabella was introduced to jiu-jitsu master Uchimura Tengan by Okakura and soon began private lessons. As one can imagine, Boston society and newspapers were once again abuzz about the latest exotic activities of Mrs. Gardner.

Isabella was not alone in her practice of the martial arts of Japan, there was a wave of Japanese martial artists who came to America around the turn of the last century due to the new pro emigration policy of Japan. Other American luminaries and women taking jiu-jitsu at the time included President Theodore Roosevelt, his rebellious daughter Alice Roosevelt and socialite Martha Blow Wadsworth. Wadsworth set up the first women’s jiu-jitsu school in DC which, among many other sporting activities in which she she engaged, was done primarily to spite the machismo of President Theodore Roosevelt.

Unlike many of his peers Uchimura shied away from fame and he has been described as being a bit of an enigma. Uchimura arrived in America either in 1897 or 1901, settled in Boston and began teaching private students and putting on exhibitions of his skills. In 1904, Uchimura set up the first jiu-jitsu gymnasium in America in Cambridge, MA. When Isabella heard Uchimura’s parents believed he had died, she payed his way back to Japan in 1906 where he earned his sixth black belt. As a parting gift, Uchimura gave Isabella a Japanese Hinomaru flag and the newly restored Samurai katana sword that both reside in the Vatchino Gallery at the Gardner Museum.



Kinai Nanadai (Japanese, active Echizen, 19th c.) Katana Sword and Scabbard.

From the Local Press

‘Ware Mrs. Gardner, Now Quite a Jiu-Jitsu Expert Learned Trick of Uchimura

February 13, 1906

Mrs. Gardner has been learning and practicing the oriental art of self-defense. Uchimura was astonished at the aptitude and determination to learn Mrs. Gardner displayed.

She mastered his mystery to such an extent that if she found a burglar in the house, it would be unnecessary to summon the servants. At the terminus of his swift and sudden flight across the room his head would probably strike something with a dull substantial chug.



From the Kitchen Cupboard

Blueberry Sauce

by Jill Davis

"This sauce is a sweet, tangy addition to any dinner. Blueberries are a true flavor of Maine. Enjoy!"

Ingredients

2 teaspoons olive oil
 1 onion, chopped
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1 (1/2 inch) piece fresh ginger, grated
 3 cups blueberries
 1/4 cup maple syrup
 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 1/2 Cup Dry Red Wine
 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

 2 tablespoons molasses
 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon chili powder
 1/2 teaspoon paprika
 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

Directions;

Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat; cook and stir onion, garlic, and ginger until onion is softened, about 8 minutes. Add blueberries, maple syrup, cider vinegar, balsamic vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, molasses, lemon juice, cinnamon, cumin, chili powder, paprika, smoked paprika, salt, and black pepper; stir to combine. Simmer over medium-low heat until sauce is slightly reduced and bubbling, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove skillet from heat; cool slightly. Pour sauce into a blender no more than half full. Cover and hold lid down; pulse a few times before leaving on to blend. Puree in batches until smooth.

Additions to the Library 2020

Submitted and Donated by George G. Herrick

Blake, Sarah, *The Guest Book* (2019)
 Coffin, Robert P. Tristram. Kennebec, *Cradle of America* (1937)
 Dunn, Euan. *Puffins* (2014)
 Dunne, Peter and Karlsen, *Gulls Simplified* (2019)
 Famous, Norman. *A Natural Resource Inventory of the Roque Island Archipelago, Ma*
 Goldfarb, Ben. Eager, *The Surprising Secret Life of the Beaver* (2018)
 Haskell, David George. *The Forrest Unseen* (2012)
 Heinrich, Bernd, *White Feathers, The Nesting Lives of Tree Swallows* (2020)
 MacDougall, Paula M., *Indian Island, Maine (1780-1995)*
 Pasquier, Roger,. *Birds in Winter* (2020)
 Poole, Alan. *Osprey* (2019)
 Roberts, Strother E., *Colonial Ecology, Atlantic Economy, Transforming Nature in Early New England* (2019)