

Introduction

Records - journals, diaries, chronicles - matter. They explain and preserve history. For an institution or a private property like Roque Island, Maine they provide a key thread of continuity while recording evolution over time. They remind us of the human effort in trying to bring something seen as important forward in time. They send a message across generations. Not to leave a record of human endeavor, some might say, would be to have labored in vain.

These Roque Island Jottings are centered on an archipelago of seven islands, of which Roque Island with 1,300 acres is the largest, lying on the northerly edge of the Gulf of Maine, near the mouth of the Bay of Fundy. They have been owned by the writer's family for many years, having first been acquired by Joseph Peabody in 1806 and later, after an interregnum of 12 years, by George A. Gardner and John L. Gardner, Jr. in 1882. The Jottings, themselves, were started by G. Peabody Gardner, Jr. in 1936 and continued until his death in 1976. Thereafter they lapsed for a dozen years until they were resumed in 1988.

When I retired in 1988 it seemed like a useful idea to start them up again. I wanted to devote a decade of my life to Roque Island affairs with gratitude for those who had gone before and with the purpose of helping to prepare Roque Island for the coming century. I had been interested in Roque Island records since I was a boy. Indeed they undoubtedly stimulated what became a lifelong interest in literary ephemera like diaries, journals and commonplace books as the basic stuff of history. These Jottings seemed an ideal form for chronicling the history of Roque Island and for recording the development of my own thoughts about how best Roque Island could relate to its past and its future, its membership and its community.

The Jottings are not and cannot be encyclopedic. Much of the history of the past decade, relating especially to governance and finances and the specifics of farm management, will be found in the records of the Roque Island Gardner Homestead Corporation (RIGHC), the corporation with 70 family voting members, which owns and manages the islands. Rather an attempt was made to achieve a readable narrative form with enough material to interest the present and succeeding generations of family members.

The Jottings are first and foremost a chronicle, in the classical tradition, of the seasons on a rural farm in Maine. Secondly they operate as a diary of how one Bostonian family spends a summer vacation on the coast of Maine. Except in chapters of biographies, there are almost no published records of summer vacations. The Jottings also reflect a concerted effort by the family, in keeping with the times, to develop a conservation plan and become relevant in the local community. Finally, there has been an effort to connect Roque Island with the history and literature of coastal Maine, the better to understand and enrich our own purpose and traditions.

George Gardner Herrick

February 1998

1993

January

General maintenance, cutting wood.

Six inches of snow at mid-month. Eagles fed at Bonney Field on 5th, 13th, 18th and 25th.

A poor pine cone crop meant that there were few crossbills about.

A hen, wounded by pecking in the layer yard, was installed in the barn where she insisted on staying after she healed. Adaptive behavior included perching on the cows during milking and laying her daily egg in Rainy Star's feed bin, complaining if there was insufficient hay.

February

Average temperature for the month a thought-numbing 16.8 degrees. Iced in for a week at mid-month, the ice extending all the way from dock to dock, although thinner 200 yards off Great Head. Wind chill factor of minus 50 degrees for several days. The Jos. Peabody spent most of the month at Patten Cove. Fuel and supplies picked up at Jonesport.

Eagles were hunting duck aggressively. Bonney Field feeding station resupplied six times.

More woodcutting. But no ice was cut because it was brown with mud and branches. There was a certain romance to the black ice of one's youth but there can be no nostalgia for muddy ice. The Mill Pond needs dredging.

March

The ice that choked Shorey Cove broke up and sailed out of the harbor on the tide with a southwest wind. But on the 13th a blizzard struck with winds to 65 mph and seas of 16 to 20 feet, the snow drifting to six feet deep in places. Three scallop draggers from Deer Isle rode it out in the Thoroughfare.

The Steeple People resumed work on the Old Farm House. New water heaters and pumps were installed in all houses.

New radar and fathometer for the Jos. Peabody.

No lambs this year following the culling of the sheep flock.

2.

Maple syrup on the 25th.

Killdeer everywhere in the pasture by month's end and the first flock of Canadian geese, numbering 60 or 70, flew over the farmhouse.

Local press concern about Maine's sea urchin industry, now after six years the state's third most valuable fishery at \$14.8 million from a catch of 25.5 million pounds from over 800 divers and some 220 draggers. Fear of overexploitation of the resource and the potential for job creation if processing can be done locally were the subjects of debate.

April

More snow and ice at the beginning of the month. A deer from Patten's Cove floated out to sea on an ice cake, attracting the attention of a Coast Guard cutter and a helicopter in a rescue effort. After several hours the deer swam over to Jonesport.

To resolve the barging problem, a 30' by 9' Canadian military surplus LST landing craft was purchased for \$26,000. To see it is to imagine all manner of undreamt of useful and recreational purposes.

The Roque Bluffs dock took a beating when the ice broke up and had to be closed to vehicular traffic. It was decided to tear it down and build a new one by summer, a \$73,000 project.

All sides of the Red House were re-clapboarded by Joseph Mawhinnie. It has not looked snugger in years.

George and Peabo Gardner, Randy Goodhue and Charles Dana, not content with waiting for the arrival of spring, made a visite éclairée to the island on 24 April to garner fresh observations for the semi-annual meeting. Even Boston trustee's meetings can aspire to perfection but none, surely, can aspire to the irony of the September 1944 meeting of the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture at the Rogers farm in Danvers, recorded by Charles Lyman:

"After lunch our host had chairs placed on the edge of a field a few yards below the house. In the field were eighty-three milking cows feeding in alfalfa up to their knees. They were slowly driven by, so that the trustees had a good look at all of them. It was a grand sight, long to be remembered."

A dead seal washed onto Great Beach and a dead adult eagle, possibly from Roque, was found at Roque Bluffs.

Visual inspection of the beach confirmed some rather severe erosion of the dunes from winter storms. Measurement being

difficult, perhaps a systematic photographic record would enable us to monitor this.

The Petit Manan National Wildlife Refuge has stiffened its position against demands for greater public access. They see a threat to wildlife from the burgeoning periwinkle industry. Last year 6 million pounds of periwinkles were shipped out of Jonesport for the oriental market in Boston and New York. Up to 100 fishermen are now harvesting the edible gastropod from the coastline.

May

The ring of the hammer and the whine of the saw announced a busy month of preparation for summer visitors.

Work on the Red House was completed. The south side of the barn was resingled and a new support structure put in place; crossbucks were added to the doors as well. Inside the barn, Gus and Gertrude, the domestic geese, made their nest alongside the manure pile, oblivious of the work in progress.

Woodcutters completed the clearing of Head Field - back to the 1909 photographs of it, cleared a birch grove at the corner of Stump Field and worked on some other projects.

Dr. Harold Nilsson, a consultant geologist, spent two days inspecting spring sites on the island for his evaluation of our water resources. In the absence of reliable data on the deep island aquifer, he concluded that it is prudent to plan development conservatively, institute cost-effective measures which can protect groundwater from contamination, reduce water use and maximize water recharge. His report contains a number of recommendations for follow-up action.

The "Four of Em" out of Jonesport, with two to four men aboard, spent most of the month dragging for mussels in the main harbor, just where the Great Eastern experimental seed bed was put down three years ago. They took over 150 bags a day. They also caught a number of sea cucumbers which might be accessible to us at extreme low tides. The second Jonesport mussel boat has been grounded for a year, having been twice caught dragging over our electric cable.

The farmhouse staff netted 18 nine-inch smelt which come to the freshwater outlet in Paradise Cove to spawn in May before a full moon.

Birdwatching yielded several new additions to the Roque Island list, now numbering 210: Blue grosbeak, Pine grosbeak, Sedge wren, Green heron and Arctic three-toed woodpecker. The main wave of

4.

warblers came through on 21 May offering bunches of Blackpolls and Chestnut-sided warblers and a full symphony of birdsong on a glorious spring morning.

On an expedition to Great Spruce, G.G. Herrick and party discovered the rare Bird's Eye Primrose (*Primula laurientiana*) on the bar island on the north shore. This plant, which is on the threatened species list, flourishes only between Great Wass Island and Machias Bay. Four abandoned deer carcasses were found at the two freshwater holes on the south side of the island.

It was found that one day's trash collection on the beaches greatly surpassed the yield from one household, a measure of our overall trash disposal problem. Havoline Supreme 10 w-40 Motor Oil seems to have replaced the Clorox bottle as the jetsam of choice.

The mahogany coamings on the newly "restored" Sandpeep split over the winter and had to be replaced by our own staff, the final disappointment of our contract with the Jonesport boat builder. Still, Sandpeep is entering her 49th summer with new attire, gladdening us all with her appearance.

36 tons of lime and 4 1/2 tons of fertilizer were brought on to the island for use on the fields, this year and next.

A group of 50 loons was spotted on 21 May.

There was much talk and a lot of debate about salmon pens in the Jonesport area. Arguments being used against them are water pollution, interference with lobster and scallop boat lanes and devaluation of scenic values. On the other side of the coin an \$8 million salmon operation is said to provide 15-20 mainland jobs.

June

The outlet for our egg sales in Machias, a health food store, went out of business. About 100 dozen eggs accumulated before another buyer was found in Harrington but they stopped buying in the fall and the eggs in their dozens were again being stacked from floor to ceiling as winter approached.

Three pairs of Bald eagles were accounted for but the Great Head and Double Shot pairs were not breeding and the Raven's Head nest failed, probably owing to the late April snowfall during incubation. Altogether 150 nesting pairs in Maine produced 115 eaglets this year.

JLG (and SKG) once again planted the flower garden which others were to enjoy later in the summer. Four badly needed lilac bushes were introduced to fill gaps along the picket fence but unhappily they appealed to the appetite of the deer as the season

progressed. As we leave JLG posed alongside the wheelbarrow, spade in hand, secateurs at the ready, an embodiment of Tamara Thornton's Cultivating Gentlemen, The Meaning of Country Life Among the Boston Elite, 1785-1860, we can appreciate the long continuum of family horticulturalists starting with Samuel Pickering Gardner, whose gardens were so often mentioned in the period memoirs.

There appeared to be four nesting pairs of duck on the island.

At Great Wass Island a \$1 million lobster (cryogenic) freezing plant was poised to go into production. They expect to market 130,000 pounds a year for a gross revenue of \$2 million. Average lobster prices, at \$2.50 per pound in May, have been declining on average for four years.

Clam landings in Eastern Maine have also declined - 84% since 1983 when 2,200 licensed clambers harvested 232,000 bushels. By 1992 only 410 licensed clambers in Washington and Hancock counties were landing just 37,000 bushels.

July

There were two weeks without rain at the beginning of the month. Haying began on 1 July and proceeded almost uninterrupted until 18 July, quite an early date for bringing in the entire crop, which filled half of the barn.

On a perfect downeast coastal summer day (7 July) Constantin Alexander ("Dino") Pertzoff married Maureen Pasquale Mata, both from Honolulu, Hawaii, in the Chapel Grove at a ceremony officiated by their aunt, Tatiana Pertzoff Fischer. A large family gathering, joined by the island staff, celebrated the nuptials. After a champagne and strawberry toast on the Mansion House porch, and photo opportunities galore, the bride and groom proceeded to Great Beach in a 19th century carriage with Barney in harness for a New England clambake and bonfire. The island staff excelled themselves in the preparations for the feast and Mrs. Moffet of Jonesport created the traditional wedding cake. The marriage of Jennifer Higgins to John Donaldson in May 1972 was the only previous family wedding on record.

-Lime was spread on Rye Field and, throughout the summer and fall, on the other fields. Several tons of lime were used.

With the aid of a scallop dragger lashed to one side, and the launch lashed to the other, the barge brought over the new 7 ton backhoe. There were some nervous moments but the operation was successfully accomplished. The barge was also deployed to bring over pilings for the Patten's Cove dock and a load of pickets to replace the picket fence next spring.

Eighteen young Black ducks were spotted in Paradise Cove on 24 July.

A dozen or so large trash bags of garbage and jetsam were collected on Great Beach and even from St. Roque.

After a day of cleaning out the kitchen in the Old Farm House, Nina Herrick held Roque Island's first ever yard sale. They came and looked but did not buy - a comment on the antiquity and condition of pots and pans which have lingered into another age. The total receipts of \$1.25 were added to the House Committee budget.

One of the staff, Bob Wall, attempted the "around the island" rowing record in his three-foot beam Nantucket Rowing Sleigh with a spoon oar. High winds held him back but he nevertheless recorded a commendable time of 3 1/2 hours. Indigenous frontier sport, according to Michael Oriard (Sporting With The Gods, The Rhetoric Of Play And Game In American Culture - 1991), is more than a pastime, it confers status, makes play of essential skills and ritualizes the relationship of individuals to a physically demanding and risky existence.

Bonnie, the cat, lent assistance to the wildlife studies program by collecting a Star Nosed Vole and several shrews which were tagged, frozen and sent away for measurement and study.

August

The horseshoe pits were cleaned up and the equipment painted. Wire grills were put on the chimney tops to prevent starlings from nesting in them.

New clotheslines with impressively large posts were built nearby the three houses. The poultry pens were overhauled and one side of the sheep barn painted.

Luncheon offered to a visiting U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delegation on 4 August.

A small but serviceable drinking water spring was put in just below Head Field and four gooseberry bushes were planted in the flower garden by the Herricks and their children.

42 loads of gravel hauled and spread on the roads. The new backhoe worked 20 hours or more on the Patten Cove road. Barge used to bring over propane, gasoline, diesel and dock material. Behold the new equipment at work.

East end of big barn scraped, refitted and painted. Same kind of work on the sheep barn.

Fred Weiniger of Monumental Works, Milbridge came over with equipment for a day to restore the cemetery and did a superb job (\$875). The cemetery is once again the showcase that it used to be and the gravemarkers, visible from the road in their gleaming, marmoreal splendor, beckon the visitor to one of the loveliest spots on the island.

On 11 August Eve Gardner and party, in a cosmic mood after consuming a full day's harvest of chanterelles, gathered on the rocks in front of the Red House to observe the best night of shooting stars in this century. The 1993 Persid shower (the fresh trail of icy fragments -the very stuff of falling stars) from the first passage of the meteor, Swift Tuttle, since 1862 displayed nature's finest fireworks for about thirty minutes in a magical vault of cloudless night sky. Drawing comfort from the fire on the beach and amazement from the spectacle, Higginses, Herricks, Gardners and guests considered a close encounter with eternity as scientific commentary merged with metaphysical wonder, and the erratic pulsations of the firmament were fixed on the film of memory.

Work was moving ahead on the new Patten's Cove dock, our third new dock in a year of "pier group pressure"

Water temperature at the dock on the Eve of St. Roque was, in this sunny summer, 58 degrees.

John Higgins took his axe and chainsaw to the West Shore Road and liberated the small trail to the Raven's Cleft from a tangle of blowdowns and overgrowth. Nick Higgins specialized this time in searching for fossils and arrowheads in inaccessible places. And, later in the month, Lynn Goodhue deconstructed bridges and built two much-needed new ones with her family on the Paradise Cove trail. If the large bonfire on the beach that followed reflected the incentive to tear down the old bridges, then there is a promising future for bridge construction on the island's trails. Goodhue bonfires are said to be the best.

Destruction of another kind appeared in the form of some tempting cans of Touch'n Foam Expanding Hole Filler in the Old Farm House woodshed which some (unidentified) youth let loose around and about causing large and ugly splotches of hardened foam to stick to the walls and even to the apple tree outside the door. The spree adds to a long list down the years of youthful antics, occasionally amusing but more usually tiresome, regretted at the moment but recounted with glee in later years, that seem to form a part of growing up in the summer on Roque. Sometimes the punishment fits the crime as one still young pre-member recalls when he spent the better part of a cloudless July day moving an odiferous manure pile from one end the of barn to the other.

Monarch butterflies, absent last year, were widely reported across the state and returned as well to the island.

September

Water levels dropped to the lowest level since the 1950's in Washington and Hancock counties and the island well level was down 72 inches from the top. It was a summer of lower than average rainfall and higher than average temperatures. The drought index, which measures moisture deep in the soil, was at 550 as compared to a figure of 250 for normal conditions. The new rain gauge measured over 8 inches of rain in this month and by December the well was again full.

The Herrick party cleared a picnic area on the point before Bonney Point near a blowhole in the rocks which gives forth a most impressive sound of the sea as the waves recede. The natural noises of creaking snow, booming ice, whispering trees and singing sand are other wonders to enjoy on the island or even to record. (Singing sands were first given musical notation at Singing Beach, Manchester, Mass. in the summer of 1894.)

Heron roosting sites, complete with painted decoys, were built at Patten Cove and on the edge of the marsh near the bar to Marsh Island.

A huge tide completely flooded Squire's Point, offering some good photographic opportunities. Eight migrating hawks were seen on one day of northwest wind. The campestris mushrooms emerged on the lawns on 16 September, enough to provide for an ample breakfast.

Rambler, the ram, took time off from his ovine pursuits to pose in a senior statesman-like manner with Megan Marshall but wouldn't stand still with any adult.

Without any trace of shame, the deer - 4 or 5 at a time - once again came into the gardens to feast on windfall apples, potatoes, string beans and assorted shrubs from the more expensive local nurseries.

-Eider ducks were rafting, as they do in autumn, riding the gray swells in huge flocks, sometimes extending a mile in length, sometimes seeming to form a grand design or even a letter of the alphabet. This year there appeared to be an enormous M.

It was a busy summer for the island's faeries, who were building again along the sides of the road to the Barn Field. Nineteen faerie houses, representing the most varied and ingenious

styles of construction were documented. Nannette Herrick is preparing a small book on this mysterious, rich and fascinating addition to Roque Island mythology.

The Land Use Regulation Commission approved an easement for the Maine Conservation Rights Institute, introducing a new approach to the concept of conservation easements in the state by recognizing an organization oriented to the wishes of landowners as opposed to government-oriented organizations which have held almost exclusive sway in recent times. The decision was unsuccessfully opposed by Maine Audubon, the Nature Conservancy and the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, the usual suspects.

G.G. Herrick, joined by Tanya Fischer, gave a presentation to the annual conference of the Island Institute on Hurricane Island on the subject of private property conservation in coastal Maine.

The first frost occurred on the 20th.

The cistern building was cleaned up, rotten boards replaced, everything repainted. Cupola on the big barn painted and weather vane straightened. Concrete work on Patten Cove dock completed. More fields limed. Jos. Peabody hauled and cleaned. Mainland garage roof repaired, and garage gate fixed. More firewood cut and hauled.

Windy conditions at month's end caused cancellation of several barge and boat trips.

Very good crop of potatoes from the garden.

A disastrous blueberry season on the mainland, with a 20% fall in production, caused some economic hardship. In the Roque Island Economic Index, the Consumption Index fell to 85.40 (1991=100) and the Production Index dropped over 11% to 101.33 (1991=100). Overall it was not a good year in Washington County and the long run signs are not good. Times were tighter for mythical Roque Island economic man.

October

More fertilizer spread on hay fields.

A ram from the mainland was brought over to service the ewes.

The backhoe was busy, ditching, digging out the ice pond, digging a hydrant and drainage ditch and on several other projects around the farm.

And the new barge was busy hauling material to the Patten Cove dock and bringing over heating oil, diesel fuel and gasoline.

On 16 October a sea urchin diver on board Last Chance off Little Spruce met a tragic death. A month later there was another accident involving a sea urchin diver off Libby Island but he survived after a harrowing experience.

The houses were put to bed for the winter.

Much rain and wind during what can often be one of the more beautiful months in Maine.

November

Sandpeep and buzz boat hauled out for the winter and put under a lean-to shelter built for them off the boat house.

Twenty turkeys butchered and put into the freezer. Only three of them were ordered by family members this year for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Two beef steers slaughtered and barged to the mainland for butchering. They yielded 1,000 pounds of meat.

The county ASCS director reported that many wells went dry this summer, including some for the first time in over 100 years.

Firewood from the West Shore road split, hauled and stacked. Cutting begun on the "gap" by the birch grove on the Patten's Cove road.

Some members of the Penobscot Valley chapter of the Maine Audubon Society joined in a sea bird count on 13 November. Sixty loons were counted. The visitors contributed over \$300 to Roque's Neotropical Migrant Survey Fund

On 26 November seven or eight fires started carelessly by deer hunters destroyed 150 acres of woods near Jonesport.

Capital expenditures for the last three years were tallied up as follows:

1991	\$201,000	
1992	\$236,000	
1993	\$249,000	Total : \$686,000

This massive commitment to the infrastructure of the island reflects a vote of confidence in the future as well as a failure to anticipate replacement and expansion needs in the past. Many members worked effectively and hard to plan projects, study estimates and supervise work in progress and the island is greatly in their debt. Somehow we found the energy and the skills to do the job from amongst the ranks of our talented membership.

December

Deer hunters were not so much in evidence this fall but an invited sportsman shot a five point buck with a muzzle loaded Kentucky long rifle, lending a colonial touch to the season.

Record high temperatures for the first two weeks of the month, while the last six days restored the balance with some of the coldest temperatures on record, with a wind chill factor of minus 48 degrees for two days. Heavy rains and high seas at mid-month left the jog under water for three days. Christmas Eve brought two inches of snow for a white Christmas.

A Mallard drake was found dead at the firepond, the suspect being an owl seen in the area at the end of the lane for several days.

Cutting firewood and ditching with the backhoe intensified as if in response to the onset of winter.

A new birdlist has been prepared for distribution to the membership. Additions to the list since May have been: Red-shouldered hawk, Sora rail, White-rumped sandpiper, Pectoral sandpiper, Golden plover, Brown thrasher, Saw-whet owl and Long-eared owl.

The year also brought the addition of a Roque Island newsletter, The Thoroughfare, ably prepared by Ariana Fischer. Furniture, field equipment and books were donated to the new family room. Amongst the latter were three bound volumes of "The Maine Naturalist", 1921-1930 and Douglas Byers' The Nevin Shellheap (at Blue Hill, Maine) : Burials and Observations.

As we leave the island in the grip of winter's icy embrace, let Sarah Orne Jewett's description of a Maine picnic from Country of the Pointed Firs (1896) help us to recall the many blessings over so many summers of our large family :

"We were no more a New England family celebrating its own existence and simple progress; we carried the tokens and inheritance of all such households from which this had descended, and we were only the latest of our line. We possessed the instincts of a far forgotten childhood;...So we came to the thick shaded grove still silent, and were set in our place by the straight trees that swayed together and let sunshine through here and there like a single golden leaf that flickered down, vanishing in the cool shade."

1994

January

On New Year's Day the steel barge was hauled out, as if in anticipation of the winter ahead, and naturalist Norman Famous conducted the Audubon Christmas bird count. The "big bird" of the winter season was the Common redpoll, large numbers being reported everywhere along the coast. Evening grosbeaks, however, were in short supply for the second winter running.

The first big storm, with 50 knot gusts and five inch snow drifts, arrived on 4 January. More was to follow. There would be 14 storms in all, the most since 1947-1948, with over seven feet of snow.

On 13 January the staff spotted a Red-tailed hawk on the sheep barn roof, a timely apparition for the third winter bird count, which yielded two sightings reported to the Sorrento Scientific Society Newsletter, "The Guillemot", namely the Harlequin duck and the Red-throated loon. Efforts to work with the Audubon Society and other organizations to produce "standardized monitoring procedures" for bird counts continue.

By mid-month the ice clamped its unforgiving grip on the harbor. The staff raced at red-alert speed to liberate the boat and tender, escaping to Patten's Cove amidst the ice floes. Wind chills of minus 50 degrees hit the Moosabec area, maritime activity came to a standstill and the landscape was loud with the silence of winter. Being out there in the Great Freeze of 1994 was like being in some sort of a cold chamber laboratory. Nothing distracted the senses, or the scenery, from a pure response to the cold, which seemed to tighten its embrace not so much by degree but by breaking through successive barriers which permitted the ice to achieve a new transformation. At first the tree branches seemed to suffer horribly, protesting as it were the onset of colder indignities. But, later, encased in claddings of protective ice, they seemed perfectly in repose. Whole tree trunks, as though in alliance with nature, borrowed a circumferential sheathing of ice as one dons another layer of clothing. There was hardly a whisper of complaint in the silence as life waited for a reprieve. Every chore around the farm became an adventure. Only the animals accepted their lot with resignation.

Clear days offered some of the best views in many years of Arctic smoke, or sea smoke, the ocean vapors caused by winter air that is colder than the water, as noted rhapsodically by R.A.G. Monks as far up the coast as Cape Elizabeth. But boats in such conditions can take on a coating of ice extreme enough to capsize them unless it is chopped away. As a result of the new Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regulations on lower sulphur content of diesel fuel, boat engines did not operate well in very

cold weather, even with fuel additives, and there was some legitimate concern about safety on board the Jos. Peabody.

Water leaks in the Farm House and the Old Farm House required a full day's work mopping, shovelling, ditching and even plowing.

"The buzz saw snarled and rattled in the yard / And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood / Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it", as Robert Frost (" Out, Out - ") would have it. All hands joined the crusade against the cold. "The farm is a form - not like a set of rules but like the symmetry of winter and summer, or like the balance of day and night over the year", recalled another New Hampshire poet, Donald Hall, in his memoir, String Too Short To Be Saved, Recollections of Summers on a New England Farm (1960).

February

Ice, ice, ice, all the way to Roque Bluffs by 11 February. The Jos. Peabody at Patten's Cove the whole month. Even Patten's Cove froze over with shell ice for the first time in living memory. It took two men over an hour to get the tender out to the launch, alternately sliding it over the ice and breaking through the ice with oars to proceed another length.

Bird feeders well attended. Eagles and ravens were fed at Bonney Field seven times since the new year, once with a large selection of pork and beef parts from the butcher in Machias.

Ice saws, tongs, chippers and axes were sharpened and oiled. Cutting began on 23 February. The blocks measured 20" by 22" by 24" and weighed about 325 pounds each, six to the ton. Altogether 4 tons of ice, at the rate of about one ton for four hours work by a two-man crew, were stacked in the Mill House and packed with shavings, a mighty but satisfying task. But, as a local old timer said, "You don't brag about your ice until June comes and there's 50% left." As if in salute to the tired cutters, a fire-red moon rose over Great Head as they returned to the farm.

Getchell Bros. of Brewer quoted a 22" cube of ice at \$21. At its peak in 1880-1900 the Maine ice harvest reached as high as 1.4 million tons of which ninety percent was shipped to other states. There was much discussion in olden days, even in George Washington's correspondence, of the proper methods of constructing an ice house. Saw dust or salt hay was used for insulation. Some insisted on a gravel bed for drainage and others on a raised wooden platform at the bottom of the house. Joseph C. Jones' America's Icemen (1984), in the library, contains the history. Roque Island's ice saws (Disston, Co., Philadelphia) are five feet long and flourish 33 teeth. They need cleaning and oiling.

There was also a check in the mail from the State of Maine in the amount of \$5,276 representing the award of 50% payment on the forestry plan under our application for a Stewardship Incentive Plan. Be it noted that the language in our application, now signed by the state, contains a clear expression of RIGHC's policy of restricting public access.

The average daily high temperature for the month was 22 degrees.

March

An all out blizzard on 3 March - sleet, hail, 14 inches of snow, 40 knot winds from E/NE. The launch could not return from Patten's Cove until 13 March.

Mary Donaldson bravely paid a five day visit to the Farm House at mid-month.

The State Planning Office announced the figures for the annual trash cleanup last fall. 2,500 volunteers picked up 8.8 tons of trash over 132 miles of shoreline. Fifty-two percent of the haul was plastic, nineteen percent glass, nine percent metal. Exotica included a moose hide, a kitchen sink, a live snake in a soda can, a mattress and much more. It is estimated that as many as 100,000 sea mammals and countless fish die annually as a result of entanglement in plastic debris. The national statistic for trash is 4.3 pounds per man day. Environmental restrictions are tightening.

Figures for the 1993 soft shell clam harvest showed a 15 percent decline from the previous year at 130,000 bushels, the lowest since 1959.

The eagles were fed on 4, 15, 21 and 29 March. Early overflights showed eggs in all three eagle nests. The first Robin was seen on 19 March, the first Killdeer arrived on the 24th, just days after the break up of the ice.

The mud season began with a vengeance on about 21 March, recalling the Hippopotomus Song:

- Mud, mud, glorious mud
There's nothing quite like it
For cooling the blood...

A nest building crow was spotted on the back of one of the sheep, pulling out wool from an obliging source.

Acquisition at a recent auction of two mid-nineteenth century visitors' books permitted comparison with Roque Island's book dating from 1882. The custom of keeping visitors' books must have

a long historical reach but it seems likely that it grew out of the German custom of keeping an album amicorum or Book of Friends, the earliest dating to 1548. By the 18th century in England the custom of writing one's name or some epigrammatic verses in a guest book or inn register was well established. The custom would have spread naturally to America but early examples are hard to find. The two books in question, from Prout's Neck and Libby's Neck in Scarborough, Maine date from 1848-1852, undoubtedly an early period for summer vacationing in the area. The consistency of entries in the two books suggest that there may have been an accepted convention for the visitor registering his name. The same hand seems to write all of the entries for each party, ladies and children are noted but their names not given, formal signatures in ink are used and there are almost no departures from form except for a few verses typical of friendship books or sentiment albums of the period. The few attempts at freedom of expression seem out of place. Is there an agreeable compromise between a rigid listing of names and an album open to commentary? Such a book is a convenient place to record events worthy of notice or allow space for visiting artistic or literary guests. By the end of the century the New England guest book had evolved to embrace commentary in prose or verse. Still one must obey the form. As the Duc de Gramont once said to the novelist hovering over his livre d'or, "No sentiments please, Monsieur Proust."

April

A new fence, all 1,248 pickets, was installed around the garden and apple orchard.

Rain most of the month, roads unusable.

A good deal of work accomplished on houses, barns and boats.

All three eagle nests were active.

Lambing started on 17 April. There would be 15 lambs altogether, five of them black.

The barn yielded its last bale of hay as the grass began to grow. Fifty-five additional bales had to be bought to get through the winter.

Maine Naturalist published the first ever record of a Common Loon eating a lobster - in West Boothbay Harbor in March 1993.

Summerhouse time loomed just beyond the horizon, the annual voyage into the calendar of a more natural being, the continuum, as Amy Willard Cross wrote in The Summer House (1992), of days blurring one into another, a necklace of Sundays strung together.

5.

At the Spring Meeting of the Corporation, the decision was reached to change the two family system of corporate governance, with five seats each on the board for the Gardner and Monks families, and adopt a unified government for all members.

Three quarts of maple syrup were harvested.

May

All hands watched the 10 May eclipse of the sun through a variety of homemade devices.

Canada geese came to the firepond every day for about a week. Ducks were nesting in most of the ponds. Old squaw, Bufflehead and coot lingered in the harbor until 16 May. There were snow flurries on 13 May and sleet on the 20th. Not even the aspen was in leaf until the 20th. It was a cold and damp prelude to spring, almost as though winter and spring were on a collision course.

Grazing around the garden and houses, the flock of sheep made a charming moveable landscape. The lambs imitated each other by leaping, off all four feet, into the air.

A half-dozen or more periwinkle fishermen were spotted around the island, denuding various areas of the edible gastropod.

A young landscaper from Machias came out to work in the garden. He and Nannette Herrick did a prodigious job of weeding and rejuvenating the raspberry and peony beds and replanting the flower bed. Many loads of manure and wood chips were needed to restore the gardens.

On 20 May, a doctoral student from the University of Maine visited the island as part of her study of island biodiversity. She noted the importance of areas around Squire's Point and into Paradise Cove as nurseries or creches for young eider ducks in summer.

A seal expert came out the next day for field observation of the seals on the ledge off Anguilla. She noted that there is a complex and interrelated system of seal ledges stretching from Anguilla and Double Shot, around Great and Little Spruce to Bonney Point. The aim is to accumulate observation data on their movements from ledge to ledge at different times of year so as to study finally why the characteristics of each ledge are suitable for the purpose for which the seals use it. Thus the playful seal is a happy link between the islands of our archipelago, offering another source of delight, an intellectual challenge and something significant to protect.

Professor Dean Bennett of the University of Maine, who is writing a book on the landscape of New England in 1600, arrived on 22 May to study the 300 plus year-old stand of red spruce along the farm side of the mill pond and stream.

On 23 May it was the turn of Barney Thompson, the eagle nest builder, to come and build a nest on Great Spruce far from the madding crowd lest our expanding eagle population seek to house hunt in an area inconvenient to us. Teresa Davis, the forester, visited the following day to deliver the final version of her impressive forestry study. And on the 25th, three representatives of the Maine Island Trail Association showed up to plead for landing rights for sea kayakers. The argument that kayakers are anathema to harbor seals proved decisive and it was suggested that they route their kayak trail one mile outside Anguilla rather than through the Thoroughfare. Meanwhile a pair of woodcutters spent three days clearing Carlton Field - atop the sandbank on North Beach - back to the 1909 photograph of it. This should be a wonderful recreation area in future.

G.G. Herrick participated in the national Audubon bird count on a cold and blustery 14 May, an ideal date for birders further south but too far in advance of our migration season. Nevertheless two sightings were added to Roque Island's all time list, the Grasshopper sparrow and the Common gallinule. The big migration wave did not occur until the 23rd of the month, two days later than last year. The trees, as yet unleaved, revealed a Tiffany of feathered jewels, pulsating with energy and simply bursting into song. And then they were there, more and more, now this, now that, whole trees full of them. Home at last, happy themselves and giving happiness too. One pointed and exclaimed and almost jumped off the ground as though some burden like gravity had been released. The music tuned, the party had begun and, as with so many parties, it seemed as though the more elegant and better dressed warblers arrived fashionably late.

An unusually early migration was that of the Sandpeep to her mooring on 26 May, a credit to the boatman in a rainy spring.

An eternal migration seems to be that of a sheep, spotted on Little Spruce, who summered there four or five years ago and was left behind.

Amidst all of the visitors and conservation activity there was a concerted effort over several days to burn the dump. As the nonagenarian publisher of the Ellsworth American, J. Russell Wiggins wrote:

"They used to find the finest fare
In village dump grounds everywhere
The very best of meals and cake
That Downeast cooks knew how to make.
The DEP has made life hard

For birds without a credit card;
They've made the country very neat;
But what are seagulls going to eat ?"

June

Tractor shed repair completed: new door and track, window frame, cedar shingles. One-half of main barn roof stripped of old shingles and replaced with new ones. Ditto pig barn roof. Work on barn cupola completed. Major work on the barn extension: four new doors with tracks, new concrete sill, new support post, re-shingling.

Billy, the ram, became something of a menace. He knocked down two people and butted others. At any rate his breeding time to this flock of sheep was over. He was exiled to the mainland and sold.

New hay trailer arrived. It was designed, with removable sides, so as to function also as a moveable picnic table for the beach, where it was to enter on duty, in splendid fashion, on 4 July. It was modeled after one used on a South Carolina plantation for oyster roasts.

Three families of Spruce grouse spotted in different areas of the island.

Trees, plants and bushes planted in the Farm House garden. Six tame mallards added to the firepond.

A series of tests for measuring the capacity of the spring well were conducted.

June 21 saw the glorious arrival of four Belted Galloways, a bull (Harvey), a three year-old cow, an eight month old steer and a heifer calf, from Aldermere Farm, Rockport, the gift of Nano Higgins. After a few days of adjusting to new surroundings, they settled in comfortably and now parade in the pastures with aplomb.

Continual rain later in the month dampened hopes for an early harvest of hay.

Steve Cirone and Barbie Bubar, now in their third year in the Farm House, have been made "General and Plant Facilities Manager and Housing and Family Liaison Manager", respectively.

A baby lamb, Little Guy, abandoned by his mother, was brought up in the Farm House and became a member of the family for several weeks. No one would admit to imitating his bleats but just about everyone was heard conversing with him in sheep language.

July

The sound of lawnmowers was a prelude to the symphony of summer. As Gerald Warner Brace wrote of Rogue in Between Wind and Water (1966):

"...how idyllic (it seems) on a summer day with (its) clapboard houses and green mowings. You must have reached an ideal balance of serenity or labor and natural felicity."

Recycling containers were assigned to each house to promote more efficient disposal of garbage and trash. Deer fencing put around the Farm House garden. White picket fence spray painted. New porches for the Farm House.

Bonfire and picnic on Great Beach right at high tide for all hands on 4 July, the new picnic table a great addition. No more sand in one's food. It was also the first day of haying. The scene was worthy of the brush of Winslow Homer.

Nina Herrick conducted an eel grass mapping exercise in the outboard with the looking glass box which is modelled after one seen in the Hebrides. Eel grass (*Zostera marina*) meadows, which support high animal densities and abundances as well as reducing wave intensity, are a natural resource to protect. They also serve as creches for eider duck after the nesting season. Over 300 eider were using the Squire's Point nursery during the month. One group of about 70 ducks was observed under harassment by a young eagle. Instead of dispersing, they grouped together for survival and emitted loud cackling alarm cries heard all the way across the cove.

The edges of Stump and Beach fields were trimmed and a woodland garden opened near the Beach Field spring. More work on the croquet lawn and by Nannette Herrick in the flower garden. The gooseberry bushes, planted last year, yielded their first fruit and were a stunning addition to that simplest and yet most refined of all desserts, the summer pudding.

Welcome signs of vigor in the younger generation. Mary Donaldson, on staff again this summer, completed the around-island walk in nine hours. At a waif-like 100 pounds, she also disproved the thesis that tolerance for swimming at Rogue is a function of body weight by remaining asea for fully twenty five minutes. Perhaps we owe that, as so much else, to the family's genetic affinity with these waters. Jason Herrick and friends took several days of energetic effort to complete a 15 event "decathlon". No records were posted. A few weeks later the Nicholas Higgins "nine and unders" were being tutored in the arts of saw and axe while pushing a new trail through just behind the Great Beach lagoon.

The sheep were sheared on 15 July. Their 56 pounds of wool will be sold at \$1.30 per pound in Harmony, Maine.

Two Outward Bound boats stopped at the beach on 15 July. Their exhausted crews stretched out on the beach like fallen soldiers of Napoleon's army left to die in Egypt.

Heat, heat, heat at mid-month. Under a burning copper sky people threw off their clothes and streamed into the ocean. The thermometer registered an unheard of 60 degrees.

A pair of Sharp-shinned hawks took up residence behind the bifurcation of the road at Rye Field. Efforts to locate the nest were frustrated by the diversionary tactics of the birds.

Fifty chicks (eating capons) were bought for \$50, seemingly a high price.

A bumper year for butterflies and all bugs after a punishing winter and cool spring. Monarchs everywhere, surging in powerful flight. Mourning Cloaks, Meadow Fritillaries and Red and White Admirals skimmed in the spangled air. Three or four nets were working at a time. As Vladimir Nabokov, the lepidopterist and writer put it in Speak Memory :

"And the highest enjoyment of timelessness....is when I stand among rare butterflies and their food plants. This is ecstasy, and behind the ecstasy is something else, which is hard to explain. It is like a momentary vacuum into which rushes all that I love. A sense of oneness with sun and stone. A thrill of gratitude to whom it may concern - to the contrapuntal genius of human fate or to the tender ghosts humoring a lucky mortal."

Stargazing by John Donaldson with powerful telescopes extended the recreational spectrum into the night. And indeed, no stars seem so bright as those that shine down on Roque Island out of our own sapphire velvet sky. Other nocturnal activities include gathering blueberries, collecting mollusks, listening for whippoorwills and owls and no doubt many others. In times past, hunting foxes attracted a number of amateurs.

Cleaning out the woodshed on a summer's afternoon is rather like restocking one's mind. Out go the old ideas and in come the new ones. Several items of antiquated gardening gear were excommunicated and the place was tidied up. If two people are performing the task, it is well that they have the same idea of how it should look and what purpose it should serve. In this instance the vision of a useable potting shed contended with that of a repository for trail gear and hunting equipment.

Nicholas Kearns brought in the first batch of chanterelles on 24 July along the Clam Cove trail. Favorite patches of the

mushrooms in the woods had been inspected, catalogued, measured and criticized for several days before the strike.

On 25 July the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service presented RIGHC with a Special Commendation Award for initiating, organizing and contributing funds to a Neotropical Migrant Landbird Monitoring program in Eastern Maine, a cooperative effort involving nine other conservation organizations and 25 monitoring locations on the coast. G.G. Herrick received the award on behalf of the corporation at a brief ceremony after luncheon.

A hundred or more mounted botanical specimens have been placed in the herbarium. Ultimately the collection will have 300 or more specimens. Several nature pamphlets have been prepared by the island's naturalists for use by the membership. There is a harbor seal survey report form for data collection. A rug for the family room was bought at an antique store in Jonesport.

Several days of fog bestowed a wonderful and ghostly air of unreality to the spruce forest. Fog on the Maine coast does not "creep in on tiny cats' feet" as Carl Sandburg wrote, but moves in solidly and with a great show of authority, as Caskie Stinnett observes in One Man's Island (1984). Just as the Eskimo distinguish many different kinds of snow, each with its own word, so there are different qualities of fog in Maine, fog which rolls in quickly from the sea, fog which clings wetly to one's clothing, fog which hovers in a band over the ocean, fog which turns the landscape into a Japanese painting.

The new measuring staff at the well recorded "full" at 98 inches even after some extensive watering of the garden.

Alicia Monks kept the horses exercised and took the buggy for its first outing of the season.

The Nicholas Higginses arrived with a truckload of field gear which compared favorably to the Himalayan impedimenta that announce another Goodhue safari and set immediately about an agenda of fossil hunting, trail work and fishing. Quite a number of mackerel were caught, the same fish which must sustain the Ospreys, whose average catch is reported to be 150-300 grams and 10-14 inches long. The boys released a baby sparrow which they had nurtured at home since the spring.

An outlet for the farm's eggs has been found in Cherryfield. Our chickens, it was observed, seem to lay more if golf balls are spread around the coop for encouragement.

The houses began to fill up, as various members came and went, the former making remembered gestures of arrival, the latter undergoing the rituals of disengagement.

August

Great Eastern Mussel Farms began a new mussel project in Shorey Cove in some 30 acres about 700 feet from the low tide mark, about 2,000 feet from the dock. Back in 1985 some mussel seed was put out in a test plot east of the moorings but, owing to slow growth, that project was discontinued. Improvements in seed spreading, with the use of a computer model, now allow farming at such sites if there is an abundance of mussel seed nearby. About 25,000 bushels of seed was moved to the site. After about 1.5 to 2 years growth, the mussels will be ready for market and harvested in the winter months. A mini-farm was also started, at Nina Herrick's request, when 150 bushels of seed were spread near Point Olga in shallow water.

Meanwhile, a new seafood processing plant in Jonesport, capable of employing 60 workers year-around, was beginning a pilot operation to prepare sea cucumbers for the Asian market, where there is an oriental passion for the slimy creature's muscular essence. A tote of sea cukes weighing about 120 pounds brings \$7 or \$8 at the plant where eight pounds of meat and 40 pounds of skin are extracted. The rise and fall of seafood fortunes would seem almost to be in rhythm with the tides. Last year's fashion, the European periwinkle, which first turned up in Halifax in 1857 and Portland in 1870, seemed scarce around the shores of the island.

Further down the coast a 54 foot Finback whale washed up in Lubec and was buried on 3 August in a huge hole excavated on the beach.

Luckily, the clams continue to flourish, as does the clambake on hot summer days at the beach, as recalled by Kathy Neustadt's book, Clambake, A History and Celebration of an American Tradition (1994):

"For the most part, the meaning...is embedded in the event, in the doing, in the enactment. It also exists in their memory of past performances and in the power of the bake's sensory experiences to evoke these memories...The success of the bake depends on their experience and knowledge and skill - the right amounts, the right movements, the right timing, even the right attitude. Within this system, the knowledge of the fire is closely connected to the ordering of the universe, just as the combination of heat and moisture that transmutes the food into a meal by cooking becomes a kind of allegory for the special alchemy of the place."

The deer destroyed the kitchen garden but the flower garden bloomed and bloomed with "The Poppy's red effrontery / Till autumn spoils its fleering quite with rain," as Robert Browning wrote. The slugs succumbed to a heavy dosage of beer whereas Celia Thaxter (An Island Garden, 1894) had to resort to lime, salt, paris green,

kerosene emulsion and whale oil soap at Appledore Island.

Jennifer Donaldson, after digging through various old files, produced an impressive booklet on the island's archaeological history. As Ruth Moore, author of the poem, "The Indian Shell Heap" wrote:

"This field was hayfield once.
This turf, ten inches thick, grew grass
as high as man,
From roots deep down in lime.
So they said."

Much trailing, boating, mushrooming and picnicking by various family members during the month as the haying continued, to end on the 24th with a bumper crop.

The barn witnessed an unusual form of cooperative behavior when Bonnie, that most industrious cat, captured a small shrew and left it for the barn hen to pounce on and carry outside in her beak.

All three eagle nests were successful, with one eaglet each. There were 173 nesting pairs in Maine with 140 young birds. The nest on Great Head is becoming top heavy for its tree and the aerie near Parker's Head appears to have sustained some damage. A lower platform was added to the tree by the eagles.

The Hubbard Rake Company in Jonesport is producing a lighter weight aluminum blueberry rake said to be more productive than any other. A local picker from Machias harvested 120 half-bushels in a day. Four thousand rakes are sold in Washington County every year.

The Sandpeep once more sailed and bobbed around and across the bay, its champagne of foam swirling away into the wake of another August memory.

September

Gale force winds gusting to 70 knots with pouring rain lashed the island on 5 September. The launch had trouble getting back from the mainland and had to ground out in the jog. All boats were listing hard and taking water on board. The fiberglass dinghy on the float rocked so hard a hole burst open in its bottom. A skiff slipped its painter and was swept away into Paradise Cove. The staff watched over the boats all night as the storm raged. Waves crashed two feet over the granite jog. The steel mounting plate on the ramp to the float was twisted. Large limbs broken off maple trees in the lane, a tree uprooted next to the Red House and another blown down behind the Mansion House while the top of the maple by the front door of the Old Farm House was blown right off.

At one o'clock on 10 September in the Grove of St. Roque, Landyn Barto Bowers (GAG, OGM, GGM, WFKM, SPMB) was christened with waters from Roque Island Harbor by the Rev. Gary Hunter of Jonesport. In loving attendance were parents, grandparents, godparents, island staff and many friends. At the end of the ceremony a lone doe leapt up from the beach and quickly passed through the grove. All present took this as a wonderful sign. Following the service, a clam and lobster dinner was served for all at the rear of the Mansion house, the new wagon used as the table for a feast which lasted throughout the afternoon, even Landyn at nine months joining in the fray.

A lot of work clearing blowdowns from the storm, recovering scattered equipment and remounting torn down signs.

Amos, the new ram from Nash Island, arrived on 13 September and is being held in a private stall in the barn until the proper moment for releasing him into the flock.

Several weeks of outside work on a cement addition, one foot higher all around the jog, something that probably should have been thought of many years ago. The idea seems to force itself into creation once you have picked up several times after a flooded boathouse.

Amongst various houseguests the well known essayist, Ted Hoagland, was out, not so much "Walking the Dead Diamond River" as mapping the songlines of Roque, and Theo Holcomb, a national amateur croquet champion, achieved a new mastery of our croquet court.

R.A.G. Monks took 5 1/2 hours to perform his annual circumambulation of the island. A small trail system was opened on the Head above North Beach, in the couloirs between moss-covered rocks leading to a new lookout point. Work began on clearing the rockface overlooking the nook at Patten's Cove, with the objective of creating a high lookout point and a good rock climbing place.

Nasturtiums, Rubrum Lilies, Lavatera, Nicotiana, Asters, Delphinium, Veronica and other flowers still bloomed in the flower garden, colorfully filling vases in all the houses. Vivid fall colors also brightened the landscape. In red; glasswort, swamp and sugar maples, mountain ash and the berry patches. In yellow and orange; sugar maples again, ferns, chanterelles, various grasses which turn a bright lemon color and birch leaves so bright (Munsell 2.5 Y/ 8/6) when wet that they almost illumine a dark forest.

Seven quarts of bog cranberries were gathered at the end of the nook in Patten's Cove, enough to inspire a gamut of culinary techniques and recipes, sufficient to laden the Thanksgiving and Christmas tables with cranberry relish and jam and jelly.

There were new roofs for the chicken coops and metal shop even as the yearly push for firewood got under weigh.

A visiting houseguest heard the vernacular term roque (roke ?) applied to a clam at a mid-coast restaurant on the way down.

October

In the Roque Island Economic Index, the Consumption Index rose to 94.95 while the Production Index dropped to 97.50, meaning that the consumption to production index ratio increased above 1 for the first time in four years of calculation. It was the worst year, then, for the mythical Roque Island resident since the index began. Higher interest rates and gasoline prices drove the consumption index up, while a disastrous year in the marine sector drove the production index down. The index reflects the economic challenge facing Washington County.

Ideal conditions for hawk watching on 1 October. About ten hawks of three different species were observed from the farm house area, some rising high aloft to circle on thermals, others flying low and fast on a compass course to the southeast.

Lovely Indian summer weather greeted the Goodhue party who were able to swim at the beach and enjoy the out of doors, pausing to rebuild a bridge just past the end of Shorey Cove. One of their guests found at Squire's Point what appears to be an Indian mortar bowl, 2 1/2 " in diameter with a shallow bowl indented with chip marks, an excellent find.

The maples offered another season of enchantment. From his study in A Year in the Maine Woods (1994) the scientist, Bernd Heinrich, noted some aspects of uniformity and variety in the progression of autumn foliage. Although individual maple trees appear to turn the same general color each year, they do so at different rates within each tree and from year to year. The crowns and tips of branches turn first, a gradual blush enveloping the tree from the extremities toward the trunk. But the overall pattern is not immutable, because a broken or damaged branch turns a different shade of color than the rest - the later the break, the less the difference in hue. And some leaves are uniformly colored, whilst others are marked by bold blotches of color or finely speckled. Although a number of interesting experiments may be performed, the mystery of autumn foliage is the better for resisting new scientific inquiry.

More asphalt roofing for the farm's outbuildings. Thirty more feet of the Patten's Cove dock completed. Eight cords of firewood brought inside. Dock material and boards for the extended fence barged over.

A Certificate of Appreciation was received from the New Brunswick Fish and Wildlife Service for sending in the bird band from a black duck shot in Patten's Cove.

The island was again invaded by bow hunters and, on the 23rd, the District Game Warden and Marine Patrol Officer visited to inspect for deer with arrows left in them and to observe the garden area laid waste by the deer this summer. As a result of our démarche we now have permission to shoot any nuisance deer in the garden or orchard areas after a telephone call to the warden. The Farm House lost no time in setting up a hunt for early November. Eleven deer were then taken from the Squire's Point herd and altogether an estimated 35-40 deer were culled from the island population, relieving a problem for farm operations that has been growing steadily worse for several years.

What is needed is more education in the surrounding area about the laws of trespass, wildlife conservation and refuge etiquette to prevent scores of uninvited people roaming over the island with assorted weaponry. Dr. Kathleen Blanchard of the Quebec Labrador Foundation has written about a novel way of educating poachers on the remote coast of Canada :

"In one village, where the local attitudes to conservation were most hostile, project staff produced a play for children in which the actors, who in real life were the sons and daughters of local poachers, played the major role of seabirds. By practicing their parts at home, these children taught their parents about the biology and conservation of seabirds and won their support for management strategies following sell-out performances of the play."

November

Two parties came down this month. Nicholas Kearns and friends cleared a trail on Little Spruce to get him in shape for the Philadelphia Marathon which he ran later in the month in the commendable time of 3 hours 9 Minutes. The Nicholas Higginnes were back once again for Thanksgiving.

Fierce wind and rain early in the month. It rained so hard the pigs got clean and the people dirty as the German aphorist, Georg Lichtenberg, once put it. Fourteen inches of water in the metal shop, despite the new addition to the jog. Forty knot winds and seven foot seas.

The butcher came out in his own boat for the fall slaughter -

six lambs and four pigs. The bacon will be smoked the old-fashioned way in his own smokehouse. Remains fed to the eagles.

Norman Famous conducted the first winter seabird count with help from a small group from Maine Audubon Society.

Five hundred gallons of fuel, 54 bags of cement and 50 bags of feed barged over.

Amos, the new ram, after weeks of solitary confinement, was released into an expectant pasture of seven ewes.

With the use of a planimeter, our shoreline was measured for the first time. The perimeter of all the islands measures 26.7 miles and that of Roque and Marsh Islands comes to 14.7 miles.

Brian Beal, a Jonesport resident and neighbor, noted that an unnatural predator had been a major contributing cause in the decline of the clam industry. The green crab, a native of the British Isles, was first noticed on Long Island (N.Y.) in 1850 and gradually made its way down to Maine by the 1940's. The clam fishery in Washington County has declined 90% since 1982.

December

Rather warm weather for the month permitted quite a bit of outdoor painting. Not until the 29th did winter set in with a vengeance, 50 knot winds and windchill readings of minus 40 to 70 degrees.

For most of the month there were 400-600 sea ducks in Shorey Cove, often feeding over the new mussels beds. The temptation was great and the fruit of a few cold and wet gunning expeditions was two evenings of hearty duck stew at the Farm House. As Jake Page wrote in Songs to Birds (1993) :

"For now, we can stand beside John Hay at night in "the oldest place on earth", the zone where sea meets land, the place where the rhythmicity of life almost certainly first took place and biological time - the only important kind of time - was invented. "On the fringe of these teeming worlds, hearing the cold currents of the tide run by and its waters trickling through the rockweed, lifted by the exalted cover of uncountable stars, I have felt an inclusion that I have never experienced anywhere else. If God is dead, or missing in action, this might be the place to recover him again."

At the annual meeting in Boston, a comprehensive long term plan, painstakingly developed over a five year period, and a credit to the island, was submitted and approved. J.P.M. Higgins stepped down after a three year term of office characterized by inspired leadership, innovative management and rare devotion to the needs of the island and its membership. G.G. Herrick was elected to succeed him as Chairman.

But now the summer has flown, the year is done, the houses are closed and the hay is in. As we all look forward, let us take a glimpse at the scene, perhaps again with Donald Hall, String Too Short To Be Saved, Recollections of Summers on a New England Farm (1960) :

" I look into the fir and granite that four generations of family eyes have looked at. Sitting on the porch in my great-grandfather's captain's chair, I feel as if our eyes' gazing has braided ribbons of sight that reach from the this farm to the slopes five miles away, invisible strands holding generations together, the living and the dead and unborn braided together..."

1995

January

The first blizzard of winter, with 14 inches of snow, announced the new year on 2 January. Snow and ice yielded to fog and rain later in the month. There were 14 gloomy days without sunshine.

During a 40 knot blow on 7 January the three man crew of the fishing vessel Patience, after making VHF radio contact, tied up at the spare mooring and came ashore to ride it out over a large Farm House lunch and many games of cribbage.

A Snowy Owl spent most of the month on the island in the Patten's Cove area, favoring even the housing compound with a visit.

Great Eastern Mussel Farms continued its monthly inspections of the aquaculture site in the harbor and found that the eider ducks were taking a toll on the mussel seed.

Eagles and ravens fed on 2 and 10 January.

In the Special Collections of the University of Maine at Orono was found a "Photograph Album-Views of Roque Island, Washington County, Me." by William Underwood (1866-1929) of Belmont, Mass., a pioneer in the photography of wild animals, an amateur photographer of distinction and a naturalist who made frequent trips in pursuit of his hobbies to Maine, where he stayed in the early 1900's with the Charles S. Hinkley family of Jonesport. The album contains 17 photographs. There are four portraits of the Ingalls brothers, the hermits of Little Spruce. Three correspond to the (unattributed) photographs of the brothers in Roque Island, A History (1964), the fourth is new. There are also photographs of the potato patch on Little Spruce and of a curious mechanical contraption there. One photograph shows marine and dock activity at a site which needs to be identified. Lastly there are some wildlife shots which attest to the Underwood oeuvre.

February

Bitter cold from 5-13 February, ice floes sailing in and out of the harbor, sometimes with a seal on board. The Jos. Peabody made her annual migration to Patten's Cove for a few days during the worst of it.

The first of three lambs born on 20 February ahead of schedule. Amos, the new ram, could not have been responsible. Something sheepish going on. Seven more such lambs were to follow in March and April.

Norman Famous found at last the text of the letter from Gilbert Longfellow, owner of the island at the time, on 22 April 1876 to Forest and Stream (which had begun publication in 1873). This is an interesting document in Roque Island history. It represents one of the first accounts of the Bald Eagle published in a scientific journal in Maine. It documents Roque Island's efforts to protect wildlife at an early date. It gives historical precedent for prohibition of hunting on the island. It adds the Passenger Pigeon, already rare then and extinct a few years later, to Roque's bird list. And the writing offers some clues about Longfellow himself.

Ice house refilled. Heavy rains had cleared off the twigs and mud on the pond, which then froze again. It is seldom that clear ice is secured without a mixture of some snow ice which indeed is regarded as a preservative for the clear ice. Snow ice is formed by "sinking the pond" - cutting holes in the ice several feet apart and admitting water from the pond to submerge the snow and form snow ice.

Mid-winter staff turnover in the Farm House again. Is February the cruelest month? Certainly it can seem a long and bleak stretch of time.

March

A low rumbling noise at 5:19 A.M. on 7 March announced an earth quake measuring 2.7 on the Richter scale with an epicenter 12 miles northwest of Machias. Quakes measuring 5.8 on the scale were recorded in 1869 and 1904.

Rainy Star, the horse, lost the will to go on and took five days to die. He was buried behind the dump.

The small annual harvest of maple syrup was tapped in later March.

Naturalist Norm Famous surveyed the waters for wintering Harlequin duck as part of our participation in an international monitoring program including several organizations stretching down the coast into Canada.

Several days devoted to burning the dump, a sometimes tedious but most necessary exercise in getting our new recycling effort launched.

Eagles fed for the last time this winter and they began nesting, all three aeries active by late April.

On 26 March Barbie Bubar suffered burns in a kitchen stove accident in the Farm House. The Coast Guard, summoned by our bells, responded magnificently, arriving at the dock in 10 minutes with medical care on board to take her to hospital. How reassuring to learn we have that resource in medical emergencies. Fulsome congratulations were dispatched to the Jonesport commander who should by now have received a promotion to Admiral for effectiveness and gallantry in action. Barbie survived the scare and was back on island in a few days.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has acquired neighboring Halifax Island which perhaps we could have bought. They have a plan to erect some unobtrusive display panels providing educational information on Maine islands and the etiquette of "not" visiting them. How did Halifax get its name? In February 1775, with the port of Boston closed by the British, smuggling of munitions was active along the coast. Admiral Graves sent Lieutenant Nunn in the schooner Halifax to make random and unscheduled cruises in Eastern Maine to search out the offenders. Halifax left Cranberry Island early on 15 February bound east for Machias. About noon, running before a brisk southwest breeze at 7 1/2 knots, she struck the rock off the island which came to bear her name and was a total loss.

April

Extensive foundation and drainage work began on the Old Farm House. Much work by plumbers and painters in all houses.

Heavy winds at the middle of the month sank three local boats at their moorings. Ours survived, under the vigilant eye of the Farm House.

The Mill Pond was dredged, yielding a large pile of muck which will be useful in some way.

A female calf (Patty) was born to the milk cow, the assisted birth requiring the ministrations of all hands and frequent consultation of the manual. A fortnight later, Alhambra, the Belted Galloway cow, gave birth without assistance to a heifer (Sunday), our first pure Roque Island Belted Galloway stock.

With prices rising above \$300 a pound from the Far East market for larval common eels, or Glass Eels, conical meshed nets were competitively thrown out into every promising stretch of local rivers. At several thousand tiny eels, or elvers, to the pound, one cannot help but speculate about the still unknown effect of this raid on part of the food cycle of coastal Maine. The effect might be seen 15 years out (in 2010) when the eels taken this year would have matured.

Several days after the arrival of the first killdeer, N.H.S. Higgins, succumbing to his annual zugunruhe, or restlessness before migration, paid the first visit of the year to the island with his sons, as faithfully as a bird with some ingrained sense of place to which it must return. His vocation of studying the prehistorical sites knows no seasonal preference, although most of us would insist on an associational clambake at a midden in mid-summer, dwelling perhaps on Sagamore, the old Indian of French's Island who was represented as saying :

"Search here and there the shelly beds,
You'll find the Jasper arrow heads
With which I used to pick my teeth;
And buried further underneath
You'll find the bones of those who tried
To eat as much as I - and died."

Herbert G. Jones, The Isles of Casco Bay (1946)

The Jos. Peabody needed two weeks of costly repairs.

May

On 3 May a Coast Guard cutter, Point Hannon, ran aground on the Boundary Ledges between Roque and Schoppe islands, damaging both propellers and cracking her steel keel. After the incoming tide floated her off, she went in for repairs.

A local newspaper, suggesting that cows and pigs find country music soothing, the strains of Lucky 99 radio station were echoing in the barn as visitors, catching the spirit, broke into remembered square dance figures whilst fetching a pitchfork or feeding the four new piglets (\$50 each).

Down on the shore the sweet, pleading courtship song, a sort of yodel, magical and melodious (and so rarely heard), of the migrating Greater yellowlegs inspired dance steps of another kind for a day or two. "Its triple descending spiral notes," wrote Henry Marion Hall in A Gathering of Shorebirds (1960), "sound as free and natural as voices of the air. It is impossible to hear them without seeing brown sea meadows, green saltings and tidal creeks twisting toward the broad blue buckler of the sea."

A young member drove the truck on a long journey - of 1,000 years or more - to the beach before the roads were open, making ruts so deep they exposed ancient clam shells far beyond the previously known range of the clam midden there.

Two huge boxes of truly ugly old kitchen pots and pans, deaccessioned by Nina Herrick in an orgy of spring cleaning, found a welcome home at the Bag o' Rags Thrift Shop in Machias.

A four board fence embraced by 7,000 feet of electrical wire, the whole somewhat resembling Stalag 17, was built around the kitchen garden and orchard in about five days of steady work. The fencing was also extended around the animal pens behind the barn. Especially sturdy bulwarks were reserved for the bull pen through which Harvey, the bull, twice battered his way in vain attempts to reach the objects of his desire in the pasture. Later he tried even to climb over the fence.

There was a strike of marine sandworm diggers along the coast, protesting for higher earnings because of depletion of supply from overharvesting, mussel dragging and lack of conservation. The live bait is used by rod and reel fishermen in the New England market. The diggers want ten cents a worm.

On 24 May G.G. Herrick gave, by invitation, a presentation on private property conservation on coastal islands at a seminar sponsored by the Island Institute and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the University of Maine at Machias. Representatives from the Pond Island group off the coast of Milbridge, founded in the 1870's by four families from Cherryfield and now under the ownership of 56 individual family stockholders (holding 96 shares), were also present. Children dressed as seabirds animated the proceedings.

The harbor seals pupped as usual toward the end of the month and in their first days the pups and their mothers were to be found in the protected area between Bonney Point and Little Spruce, near the entrance of the Thoroughfare, where they provided delightful opportunities for observation. It is fitting perhaps to recall that the family's most avid seal watcher, Isabella Stewart Gardner, thrilled to their sight 100 years ago. Corresponding with Bernard Berenson, she wrote :

14 August 1896

My great amusement is Indian canoeing on visits to seals. They have to be sly visits not to frighten the seals.

18 August 1896

We have been more than a fortnight in the wilderness; ie. at our island of Roque - off the Maine coast between Bar Harbor and Campobello. I lived in a canoe and saw only seals.

There was a planned, collective effort to prepare and to plant the kitchen garden. Tanya, Alessa and Ari Fischer, John and Nano Higgins, Adam Herrick and George and Nannette Herrick joined forces with the Farm House staff to make the garden of all gardens. Eighteen boxed and raised vegetable and flower beds were laid in. Ten new fruit trees, apple and peach and plum, were planted. Enthusiasm infectious, the work went more lightly for it. Let us hope the beds "will stand so thick with corn that they shall laugh and cry" (Psalm 45). Down the lane, seven 12 foot Green Mountain

Sugar Maples were planted to begin replacement of the aging and dying allée of maple trees. The Old Farm House flower garden was also prepared for a glorious summer through the industry and skill of Nannette Herrick.

The cubic volume of the restored barn cistern was measured by the Fischer girls' energetic house party and a handy measuring gauge painted on a supporting column where it is visible from the trap door entrance. The volume of 1,445 cubic feet would hold 10,808 gallons at full capacity if the 260 feet of drainpipe feeding it from the roof top could ever supply that amount. There would be a potential concern about leaving water in it during winter for fear a freeze might crack the newly recemented walls.

The spring bird migration again peaked around 20/21 May, as the alphabet of feathered wonder displayed its annual profusion of gifts. GGH noted 93 species altogether, including three new sightings for Roque Island, the Black-backed woodpecker, the Worm-eating warbler (both near Wharton's Point) and the Mourning warbler. Hawks were prominent (Red-tailed, Sharp-shinned, Merlin and Goshawk). Thrushes were absent, Common yellowthroats were way down in number and there was no Brown creeper to be seen. Along with the thrill of rediscovery, there was a numbing sense of loss, the silence of the woodlands a telling omen.

On 31 May Professor Alan Lewis and two colleagues from the University of Maine at Machias visited for the day to discuss exploratory plans for establishing a non-profit organization to serve the cause of conservation in the Roque Island/Machias Bay region from Petit Manan Island to West Quoddy Light.

There were those who said it was the coldest spring since 1872, as measured by the few number of days when the temperature reached 70 degrees. The wild cherry was in bloom, but the aspens did not leaf until 25 May. The ocean water, chilly at 47 degrees for early swimmers, rose to over 50 degrees by the end of the month when the sun came out, beach and picnic excursions at last able to claim priority over trail and garden work.

June

On 3 June Alessa Fischer, while walking past Devil's Chasm, encountered an armed man in camouflage gear who declined to explain his presence. When she returned to the Farm House, understandably concerned, an appeal for help was made to the Coast Guard, which was obliged to inform us that she had come upon a military training exercise. Further inquiries yielded information that a three-man unit of the U.S. Army 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) reporting to Fort Carson, Colorado, not being aware that Roque Island was private property (despite the multiplicity of signs on the shoreline) was conducting a week-end naval reconnaissance exercise. Reached by telephone, the commanding

officer, who had been in liaison with the Coast Guard, apologized for his blunder, and our inconvenience, promising to exfiltrate the not so inconspicuous team as soon as possible. A formal letter of explanation was requested, but never received.

Twenty or more earth mounds in the long pasture betrayed a growing population of moles. Bonnie, the cat, helpfully brought one in, an ugly, little, black specimen. Unfortunately she also accounted for a Woodcock and several Common yellowthroats.

On 8 June a dead 51 foot male Finback Whale washed up on the Marsh Island shore. The carcass of this endangered species had previously been spotted off Machias Seal Island and must have floated all the way down to Roque. An impressive sight and a more impressive smell every day. The College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor removed a five foot section of baleen for its collection.

A few days later a female seal pup was stranded on the shore near the main dock and was not able to swim off with the high tide. An expert from the New England Aquarium was summoned and the seal pup was flown to the aquarium in Boston, where it is doing nicely.

The road bed from Mill Field to North Beach was improved to permit access to the beach for the truck to collect stones to fill in the foundation of the Old Farm House. There has been a four to six foot-deep moat around the house since April. The gaping, unsightly trench had been dug to divert drainage and to build a solid cement foundation in replacement of the preexisting, unstable assortment of boulders which had outlived their usefulness.

The John L. Gardners continued work in the flower garden and planted three lilacs in the northwest corner. JLG made his annual inspection of Sandpeep, noting irregularities in rigging and imperfections with varnish which will require adjustment to meet his naval standards.

Some Bob white quail were bought, courtesy of George Gardner, to be raised in the barn for release in the fall.

A new horse, the eight year-old Reebok Rebel, was bought in East Machias for \$1,350. He soon became a favorite mount for the riding set, having all the speed of the quarter horse he is.

July

There were new blinds, sofa cushions and kitchen ware for the Old Farm House and a new window seat for the Mansion House sitting room.

It was found that on foggy nights, the condensation of dew on the television satellite dish yielded five gallons of water.

The meadow at Bonney Point was awash with a drift of purple iris.

The summer boatman marched in the Jonesport Fourth of July parade, playing his bagpipes. There had been no formal presence on the mainland since an island farm hand pulled for the Machias tug of war team in the 1980's.

Back on the island, bake master and bonfire impresario, Jason Herrick, was preparing the site for a large clam and lobster bake on Great Beach for all hands, the new hay wagon picnic table once again proving its worth. The clambake is an education system for communicating traditional knowledge, an art form signalling significant structural and symbolic complexity. The fuel, the food, the preparation, the process itself, each having individual, physical, traditional, aesthetic and narrative dimensions, according to Kathy Neustadt's Clambake, A History and Celebration of an American Tradition (1992). The choicest seafood, baking between the hot and cold halves of a natural sandwich of rock and rockweed, create "a taste you will remember all the days of your life, a taste that will haunt you down the years" in the words of Robert P. Tristram Coffin's classic, Mainstays of Maine (1944). Although shellfish exploitation on the Maine coast goes back 2,000 years or more, as witness the clam middens at Roque, the widespread belief that the clambake was an uninterrupted American tradition that changed hands early in the colonial period appears to be flawed: there is no archaeological evidence, according to Neustadt, for the native American origins of the clambake as we know it. The early settlers did not indulge, nor did the Indians of the time. The first American cook book to describe a clam dish did not appear until 1747. The spiritual, if not the actual, genesis of the clambake, was in the 1769 founding of the Old Colony Club at Plymouth, Mass. The term "clambake" became established around 1830 and by the end of the 19th century that ritual was well integrated into New England tradition. All this and much more to reflect upon as a gorgeous summer afternoon yielded to a patriotic twilight and the bake master deemed it time at last to remove the tarpaulin, part the steaming rockweed and expose the juicy morsels for eager hands.

Swin golf, a portable nine hole golf game with three-faced clubs, the current craze amongst the French chateau crowd, was being played on the lawns. Dana Mitchell, the former boatman, delivered a custom made, small scallop dragging net for use in collecting sea shells from a small boat.

First mowing on 16 July, followed unfortunately by torrential rains and one storm with 90 mile per hour winds registered at Milbridge. The new hay baler (\$15,000), too wide by a few inches for the landing craft, had to come over on the scow, always a tricky operation with heavy equipment.

J.P.M. Higgins, with a new shoulder bag for carrying his chain saw, ranged far and wide on the trails, clearing all obstacles, widening pathways, reopening vistas. The Herrick party cleared the birch grove behind the sand dunes at Stump Field and the birch/maple grove behind Squire's Point while Justin Kreizel (GGH stepson) and friend built two badly needed foot bridges behind the icehouse. Ann Barry was reopening an old trail on Great Head while daughter, Rebecca, was surveying rock climbing sites.

First vegetables (squashes) were picked in the garden on 18 July. The garden looked more lush and better tended than at any time in recent memory.

Full moon high tides shifted the whale from beach to beach at Marsh Island. Canny lobstermen laid a ring of pots next to the leviathan. Greater Black-backed gulls were the first to be able to pry away at the by now yellowing carcass.

Prof. David Brooks, the oceanographic authority on the Maine coast, on a visit to the island, laid to rest any notions that the waters of Englishman's Bay are saltier than elsewhere. He explained that the salinity of the Gulf of Maine is 32 parts per thousand as compared with 35 parts per thousand for the Atlantic Ocean. He also explained that one can best understand how tidal resonance causes the world's highest tides in the Bay of Fundy by making waves in one's bathtub.

Summer was in full swing. In the words of Georgia Shreve's poem, "Allen's Point" (1995):

Who would not fall in love,
 In the air that tasted of ocean,
 Caught between summer and fall,
 Land and island ?
 They were serving punch in the dining room,
 Reading poetry in the library,
 Playing croquet on the lawn.
 We were freed from our era,
 Adrift, out of time...

- Discussion of the mundane matter of trash removal occupied much time but there were as yet few signs of a concerted effort to solve the problem. One adventurous family removed some of its trash in the hope of finding a suitable resting place on the mainland. The dumpster of choice proved to be the one behind Dunkin' Donuts in Ellsworth.

Ann Barry salvaged an impressive forty-inch section of baleen from the whale and had it brought back to the farm.

August

Boat trips seemed to dominate activities. Barge trips for gasoline, fuel and building materials. Ferrying innumerable guests and visitors back and forth. Picnics to outer islands. Around the island tours. More often than not a boat was not there when one was needed. To keep up with recreational demand, we will need more boats. A difficult decision inasmuch as members use them for so many different purposes.

The hay baler was a great success. It saved hours and days of labor and, since it was so efficient, changed the decision on the timing of a cut. Altogether 744 bales of hay were stacked in the barn, taking up much less space than unbaled hay.

A complete collection of the island's 100 identified species of moss from 35 different families was added to the herbarium. Our collections of Indian arrow heads and botanical specimens, old farm implements and sea shells, photographs and scientific records, are coming together in a pleasing way to document our history and educate the next generation. Creating a natural history museum at Roque for the preservation and display of archaeological, cultural and natural history objects would follow a long tradition. The collecting of antiquities and the passion for natural history originated in Italy with the Renaissance humanists, according to Paula Findlen's Possessing Nature; Museums, Collecting and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy (1994). Discovery and collection deepen one's sense of history; accumulating knowledge leads to better understanding.

The Double Shot eagle's nest failed, but the Parker's Head aerie produced two eaglets and the Great Head nest, one. Overall 192 eagle pairs in Maine produced 176 eaglets. The Goodhues observed an eagle catch a fish and bring it to a stone beach to feed its young.

The Goodhues were again active on the trails, this time building another bridge on the Paradise Cove trail. Two Goodhue picnics and a bonfire on the Great Beach made a dent in the large brush pile there but did not eliminate it altogether. They reported that smoke from a forest fire in Canada engulfed the island on 23 August.

The drought this summer set new records for lack of rainfall in Maine. There was a statewide fire ban most of the month, the first "red" alert since 1947. The gardens required watering almost all day. Yet the well level never went below 76 inches (one day only) and stayed pretty much between 85 and 95 inches. Full capacity for the well is 98 inches.

The Sandpeep sailed once more around the bay, the gurgling foam of her wake sounding like "beautiful girls swishing their silk dresses across the burnished floor" as Clinton Trowbridge described the effect in The Crow Island Journal (1970).

Hurricane Felix, the curious hurricane which never quite arrived, drove huge waves against the New England coast for several days.

Roque in August is suspended in time. Every trail, every beach, every field seem to have a name and a history which recall remembered people, pleasures and pastimes. Past, present and future coexist on a green island in a timeless blue sea.

September

Bryan Monks and party built an impressive forty foot bridge, using 110 logs, over the six foot gully on the Patten's Cove trail. They also discovered that the whale, dragged off the Marsh Island beach in the big storm, had floated around to the Bonney Field beach where its remains, now cleaned of blubber, lay in skeletal splendor. They brought the bones up into the field.

George Gardner and party got in some good skeet shooting and boat trips. The quail, however, did not cooperate and display themselves for them. They observed some exceptionally vibrant rainbows.

John Higgins, our one-man army, again did prodigious work on the trails, permitting others to work on off trail projects such as trimming Bonney Field and clearing Squire's Point.

On 11 September the corporation was notified that it had been awarded the 1995 Richard H. Pough Award by Operation Stronghold for our extensive conservation work, our natural resources study and for our role in the Neo-Tropical Migrant Landbird Monitoring Program. Richard Pough authored one of the earliest field guides to North American birds and was one of the founders of the Nature Conservancy. The award itself is a hand-carved Kingfisher.

The G. G. Herricks sea-tested the new dragging net. An assortment of crabs, whelks, mussels, sea cucumbers and small scallops were netted, yielding a few specimens for the collections. More mapping needs to be done to determine the most productive areas for dredging.

Nina Herrick, one of the more semi-palmated members of the family, was still bathing in late September.

Two professors from the College of the Atlantic visited to assess the possibility of an intertidal zone study of Roque. A

graduate student from the University of Maine came to take a core sample from the Upper Heath for a climatological study of the distribution of spruce and fir over the last 1000 years. The mucky 24" core will be subjected to the most delicate and microscopic analysis in physical gradations that know no name.

A poor crop of bog cranberries, perhaps owing to the dry summer.

The Ravens were accused of making off with 18 chickens. A badminton racquet was found to be the best means for clearing starlings out of the chicken coops. The red squirrel population around (and in) the houses was reduced, several of the bodies preserved for a scientist who studies variations in island squirrels.

The pigs were unusually fat, their pink coats glistening like spun sugar. One morning's trough revealed the richness of their lives: risotto, chocolate cake, cantaloupe, lobster, assorted vegetables and the inevitable crême brûlée. The garden yielded a bumper crop for those lucky enough to be on island.

Ellen Higgins arranged for Bruce Buxton, an auctioneer from Portland, to conduct a fine arts appraisal of the contents of the three houses for insurance purposes. Kenneth Clark once said that you never know the value of a painting until you have paid too much for one. Reciprocally, some of our chairs and mirrors, taken for granted for 100 years, now gleam with appraised value and proclaim the arcane vocabulary of style.

Two days of northwest wind brought in the peak of the fall migration on 27/28 September. It was like a party to which all of one's friends have been invited for a day, with the frustration of not being able to get around and see them all. Waves of warblers came right up through the garden, lingered for an hour, and moved on. Bunches of vireos and Ruby-crowned Kinglets danced in the trees. Sparrows everywhere, scores of them, the rare mingling with the ordinary ones. Down at the point the sandpipers, feeding in the shallows, scampering across the stones or bursting into semaphore flight "like a puff of smoke or a burst of confetti against a blue sky" (Peter Matthiessen), explained the perfection of a scene which had lain in wait for their animation. Their twittering notes, wrote W.H. Hudson in Nature in Downland, are "like the vibrating crystal chiming sounds of a handful of pebbles thrown upon and bounding and glissading musically over a wide sheet of ice." Five new birds for the Roque Island list and ten reported to the national Audubon bird alert.

September on Roque is very heaven, "like the wood to whose edge (she) came so often in the country of her autumn imagination," as Sylvia Townsend Warner wrote. The pinnacle of the season, the fruit of the yearly renewal of earth. The natural world seems to

answer to a higher order, creating a harmonious and beautiful way of life. Even the animals collaborate in creating the tableau, the sheep grouping themselves professionally, as though masters of pictorial composition.

October

Rogue Island's economic index for 1995, now in its fifth year, revealed a deteriorating Downeast economy marked by rising costs of living and declining output value. The consumption index now stands at 107.69 (1991 100) and the production index at 84.83 (1991 100).

Houses and wood furnaces cleaned. Eight cords of wood cut and stacked. Two barge trips for fuel. Ice house cleaned out and readied for ice.

Twenty-two capons and seven turkeys slaughtered.

More than a dozen Canada geese were around the fire pond for three days. One of them honked and flapped so wildly that Winston, the dog, ran away and jumped through the open window of the black truck.

The Chris Cutlers enjoyed a few days at the beginning of the month while Chris developed plans for getting the dump under control.

Eight new sheep, Romneys and Romney-Leicesters, arrived from Tanya Fischer's farm in Vermont to regenerate our flock.

November

Heavy rains throughout the month.

Deer hunters were again invited out to hunt in specified areas although there were poachers as well. An estimated 30 deer were taken. The history of poaching is documented in Edward Ives' George Magoon and The Downeast Game War : History, Folklore and the Law (1993). The first game wardens in Washington County were appointed in 1852. The post-Civil War years saw the emergence of the out of state, gentleman hunter. Sportsmen's organizations were formed, special magazines appeared, "Forest and Stream" (1873), "Field and Stream" (1874). But even as the sportsman was praised as the true friend of game, ready to acknowledge and obey the laws, the rise of the market hunter threatened the extinction of game. A Washington County Game Association was formed in 1876 to appeal for cooperation. More wardens with extended power were appointed. Yet out of state market demand increased. Two-thousand deer were shipped out of state in 1883, exceeding all bounds of law and

"decency". Now there were seven fish and game commissioners in Washington County. They were called upon to enforce laws "that may be termed war measures". A warden's house near Machias was burned to the ground. Operating outside the law, George Magoon, Wilbur Day and Calvin Graves became almost mythical as poachers. But the sands were running out. By 1920 the will of the law had been imposed and the countryside was secured, except for some sporadic guerilla activity. The Maine wilderness belonged to the sportsman but the hearts and minds of the citizenry of Washington County have never entirely been won. The growth of the conservation movement since 1954, however, has tilted the scales against the poacher, no longer regarded as a Robin Hood, but branded today as an ignorant miscreant out of tune with the times.

The float and ramp from the dock were hauled out for the winter.

The butcher came out to slaughter four pigs, a steer and fourteen lambs. The remains were put out for the eagles and ravens who came in great numbers to feed, all but blackening the sky.

It took three days work to install and make operational the new oil-fired boiler and tanks in the Farm House.

John Higgins and family, the ultimate visitors of the year, came for Thanksgiving and had dinner with all the fixin's in the Farm House.

December

The farrier came out to trim the horses' feet.

Eagles and ravens fed four times. A Snowy owl was seen three times at the end of the lane.

Snow amounts totalled 16 inches above normal for December. Temperatures were 10-15 degrees colder than the norm.

100 bags of shavings for ice house and barns.

The Farm House population increased with the birth of Brianna Marie Cirone on 15 December.

On the 28th an astronomical high tide. Sixteen inches of water in the metal shop at the dock.

Snow shovelled from the ice pond. The ice was eight inches thick.

Maine's annual coastal clean up yielded 16.3 tons of trash on 213 miles of shoreline. This works out at 153 pounds per mile or something over two tons for the periphery of the Roque Island

archipelago, more than what the average household of four produces in a year.

A Marshfield businessman has formed a new "Washington County First" group which believes that area residents can implement common sense conservation without federal regulation. The group is responding to efforts to list the Atlantic salmon on five downeast rivers under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Very cold weather in Mexico is said to have killed up to 15 % of our wintering monarch butterfly population.

And so another year draws to its close. So many people have contributed to what gave this year its historical identity. It is the sum of all of our efforts, indeed the sum of all of our pasts, generation after generation, which form the narrative of Roque Island annals and extend the legend, creating the future out of the past, as the turning of the seasons or a new chapter in a good book.

Rogue Island Jottings 1996

January

The noble profile of Great Head, its familiar outline, shaped by the hand of our collective memory, surveyed a cold New Year. The first week of the year brought near record low temperatures and much ice to Shorey Cove.

The Jonesport/Machias Bay area annual bird count listed 5,000 Black Duck, 1,600 Common Eider, 24 Bald Eagles and 160 Ravens. Black Ducks in Maine respond behaviorally to low temperatures by seeking shelter in the lee of landforms, form denser flocks and rest near foraging areas. Feeder birds were low in number because of the failure of the seed and berry crop last summer.

Severity of weather must have proved difficult for a deer herd already reduced by the autumn hunt, Maine being near the Northernmost limit of the white-tailed deer's range. Losses reached 35% in the prolonged winter of 1970-1971. Severe cold and snow over 12 inches in depth for up to ten weeks lead to progressive malnutrition. Deer seek shelter in mature conifer woods where the evergreen canopy helps to intercept snow and wind. Their winter forage is usually in clearings and hardwood forest. There are several wintering deer yards on Roque.

Barney, the draft horse, suffering from old age and justifiable laments, got tangled in wire and went down. The crew helped him to his feet, dried him off and helped him to his stall.

When the wind shifted to the southeast on 12 January, the Shorey Cove ice pack sailed out, taking with it all six buoys marking the mussel farm in the harbor. Temperatures rose by the middle of the month and snow and ice were gone by 18 January, allowing the horses to get out to pasture for a spell.

The eagles and ravens were fed four times in the month, consuming everything left out for them - ravenously perhaps.

A reading of Philip Conkling's Islands in Time (1981) revealed that the gravel bar from Mason's Bay was connected to Roque Island until 1805. Blunt's "American Coast Pilot" (1812 and 1867) both assert that: "there is a muddy bar between Roque's (sic) Island and the main land, but water enough on it at two hour's flood. "The Coast pilot for the Atlantic Sea-Board, Gulf of Maine, U.S. Coast Survey 1875 still says the bar was bare at low water. The connection to the mainland could account for the easy access, first by native American Indians and later by the first settlers. It could account for the scramble to sell shares in the island between 1803 and 1806. It might explain why Roque Island does not always appear as an island on early charts and maps. The mainland link means that predators such as raccoons could have had access to the

island and that would have made it unlikely for puffins to have nested there, as some have suggested. There is no other way, for example to explain the presence of salamanders on Roque Island. Confirmation of the mainland link provides much food for thought as we continue to learn more about our history.

February

Our forester came out with a Champion Paper Co. representative to inspect potential timber cutting areas.

Deep freeze temperatures again for several days early in the month. A southwest wind took the ice out of Shorey Cove again on 7 February with all the six newly placed mussels marker buoys.

Capt. John Norton started work on the Patten's Cove dock.

Island hay in short supply, there was a need to import several hundred bales from the mainland. Certainly we should be self-sufficient in hay.

On 19 February eighteen 22 inch cubic blocks of ice were cut, stacked and packed in the Ice House.

Eagles and ravens fed three times in the month.

February again a cruel month with the loss of two staff employees. We must do more to make Roque a comfortable environment in winter.

March

Heavy snow early in the month created a winter wonderland.

The greenhouse was now full of starter plants for the kitchen garden.

Nine lambs and one calf were born.

More hay bales from the mainland were needed for a hungry barn.

On 30 March the time was judged right to tap the maple trees in the lane.

Eagles and ravens fed two more times this month.

April

Work on the Patten Cove dock continued. The Vista was cut for the first time in about five years. The apple trees were pruned.

A concerted effort was made to burn down the dump.

Barney succumbed at last. He was buried near the Fire Pond. His life time of service will be remembered by all. The barn will contain something of his presence forever.

The final yield of maple syrup came to about one gallon.

Day by day the greenhouse flourished as seeds germinated and pushed their way to the light, gardening seemingly one of the last deferred gratifications in the era of the 1990's.

Attention now focussed again on readying the houses for summer. Lists of things to be repaired, polished, cleaned, replaced. Each year some new priority for maintenance. Are the ship clocks working, have the hooked rugs been repaired? What about the loose frame on grandfather's portrait or the sofa cushions that need to be re-stuffed? Will the supply of beach towels last another year?

The kitchen counters in the Old Farm house, thought to be of mahogany, were sanded and polished to gleaming perfection.

Twenty-two more lambs were born, more than anticipated. May they fatten in the meadows bordering the sea, so rich in aromatic pasture which lends great delicacy to their flesh and earns them the culinary term pré-salé.

Already the robins and the killdeer have returned and hundreds of geese flew overhead in aerodynamically perfect vees.

May

More burning of the dump. Cutting and stacking firewood was begun late, resulting in cords of damp wood.

Blue truck not functioning at all and the black one operating only in forward gear, a severe limitation on movement around the island for weeks and months to follow.

A full boat load of recyclable bottles and tin cans taken to the mainland. Three vans of a Cherryfield redemption firm removed them. It took about two hours all told to carry out the disposal mission. Not as onerous a job as expected.

Work on the Old Farm House began and would last for five weeks. Shingles were stripped off the woodshed and kitchen area, rotten wooden sides were replaced. One-half inch plywood, a covering of Typar wrap and red cedar clapboards to conform with the rest of the house were put in place. New kitchen windows and new doors for the woodshed were added. The much needed improvements

will make the kitchen more liveable and much less cold in spring and fall.

Apple wood prunings from the dump, old cedar shingles, and some driftwood, together with a mixture of birch and beech logs, lit by birch bark and aromatisé with some sage and thyme dried from last year, made for some lovely fires and laid an impressive bank of the always prized white ash in the Old Farm House fireplace. As late as 1912 Rose Gardner could still receive as a wedding present a sack of apple ash for the family hearth. To this day some Bostonian families move their ash banks, as they move their fireplace mantles, from house to house. Certain members of the family arrange their ash banks in geometrical forms and even comb them with scallop shell designs. There is no aspect of the examined life which art cannot inform.

Many hours were spent clearing the maple/beech forest behind the barn pasture and the maple/birch forest behind Squire's Point. Grass seed was extensively planted in many cleared out areas and took within a few weeks. The edge of the pasture by the blueberry plot was cleared, continuing the eight year program of clearing edges of fields.

The Eastern Maine Conservation Initiative (EMCI), the new non-profit organization, founded by G.G. Herrick, Jennifer Donaldson, Nick Higgins and Ari Fischer for the conservation of natural communities in the Machias Bay area, took to the field. EMCI arose from a desire to expand the natural resources planning and practices of Roque Island to wider area in our coastal region. About \$40,000 of projects have been approved for the first year. The University of Maine at Machias marine biologist, Dr. Brian Beal, is conducting a study in nearby Mason's Bay of the predation of nursery hatched clam seedlings. Two students from the College of the Atlantic (COA) at Bar Harbor will be doing an intertidal zone survey of the Roque Island archipelago. And under the ongoing Neo-Tropical Migratory Bird Survey project, John Brokaw (GGH's stepson) and a naturalist colleague, have set up a bird netting operation with mist nets at ten stations around the Vista area.

Over 100 bird species were identified during another glorious migration season. Over 20 warblers were spotted. Orioles and Rose-breasted grosbeaks were abundant, more hawks than usual were seen. Additions to the Roque Island list were the Blue-winged warbler, Least bittern, Cattle egret, Cooper's hawk and Willow flycatcher. The bird nets captured some difficult to record birds such as the Willow and Yellow-bellied flycatchers, the Lincoln sparrow and Northern waterthrush. Throughout spring and summer the bird nets in early morning were visited by young and old alike.

A drinking cistern was put in at the spring behind North Beach where JLG had a drink on 29 July 1898.

On 27 May Sandpeep 11, the new fiberglass 12 1/2 foot Hereshoff sailboat, was towed over on a breakfast high tide and rigged by James Gregg and Ari Fischer who took the inaugural sail. Her predecessor, sold this spring, had served well for 51 years but was requiring too much upkeep to maintain. At the end of the day, Nina Herrick christened Sandpeep 11 at the dock, all hands present for the ceremony. Toast to Poseidon, champagne offering to the sea, splash of salt water on the deck.

Two wood cutters came to begin the thinning/enhancement project in the birch forest behind North Beach toward Great Head. The six acre stand is choked with perhaps 20,000 stems per acre which will be selectively cut to about 1,500 stems per acre leaving each tree three feet of space on every side for future growth to maturity. (It would take them two weeks to complete the job, for \$2,400.) Thus the first planned step in our forestry plan. The result should be a beautiful birch forest in 10-20 years, an enhanced wildlife habitat and a source of hardwood near a road.

A cold, wet month. The grass grew almost two feet high.

None of our three Bald eagle nests produced young this year, although the Great Head and Parker's Head nests had breeding pairs. Cold weather in April was to blame. Fifteen dead mature eagles were found in Eastern Maine, one of them from the Double Shot nest. Altogether there were 203 breeding pairs in Maine this spring but only 141 young were produced as compared with 175 last year.

June

After some considerable discussion about the weather and the moon, it was decided that the kitchen garden could be planted on 1 June. Preparation and planting by our landscaper took several days, but the task was made easier by great effort in laying it out last year. An impressive job.

By 6 June all the fruit trees were in extravagant blossom and full of feasting Cedar waxwings and Northern orioles. The lilacs, pruned and fed last fall, bloomed as never before in recent memory. Clusters of lilac blossoms, trimmed of their leaves to make them last, filled the houses. There is a Maine tradition, it seems, of tossing lilac blossoms into the sea on Memorial Day in memory of sailors lost at sea. The lilacs in the garden are full of birds in spring and fall migration. Our lilacs lasted until about 19 June this year.

More maple trees were planted along the lane and an apple sapling in one of the chicken coops, after an illustration of a 19th century Ohio farm in an 1896 library book on farm buildings. The idea may have originated, according to the book, with similar sorts of garden architecture in Paris at that time. The theory is that the chickens will fertilize the tree in return for its shade

and protection from hawks even as the chicken wire keeps out the deer. The scheme appealed to a visiting Island Institute staffer, who wrote an article about it in the August issue of Inter-Island News.

Unfortunately, there were no fresh eggs this season. The old chickens had stopped laying and were slaughtered. New chicks were not bought in time.

A fire alarm system was installed in all of the houses at a cost of \$13,500 following a detailed proposal by Sandy Bowers and buckets of sand were put around all of the fireplaces by Nina Herrick as part of our new fire prevention system. An old file of Constantin Pertzoff's dating to the 1940's revealed a fire prevention plan of exquisite complexity.

Most of the whale bones from Bonney Field were moved, and placed under the main dock for cleaning by marine organisms. The process may take up to one year. In the meantime, visitors have a convenient place to view them.

A hardware store in Machias was found to have issued brochures advertising sea kayak trips to Roque Island and visits inland. Apologies were made and the staff handled the problem quietly. Two unsuspecting sea kayakers were spotted climbing the cliff face at the end of North Beach. A splendid chase ensued and they were nailed in a pincer movement worthy of Gen. MacArthur, the four-wheeler gunning down the beach, the new boatman catching them in the buzz boat as they tried to escape from the harbor, splitting them in two with resounding waves. A wonderful view of the sortie through field glasses from the croquet lawn.

Nannette Herrick again labored long and hard getting the flower garden ready, often in cold and wet conditions. The raspberry bushes had to be weeded three times over a five week period.

The COA team arrived and set up base camp in Mill Field with a large amount of equipment, including computer and communications gear. Day by day they pushed further around the coast line, accumulating data for their study. Some boat support was required later to get them to the outer islands. They would complete the summer phase of their study by mid-July.

An old gramophone emerged from a rigorous purge of the games closet in the Old Farm House. Some 1940's Eddy Duchin records evoked the entertainment of an earlier day. For younger observers who had never seen, much less heard, a gramophone, the 50 years gap from today's compact disks seemed more eerie than miraculous.

Great was everyone's grief when Solly, the boatman's young Labrador retriever, was accidentally run over by a truck. In his short few weeks on the island, Solly became a friend to all and a leader in his own right. Never once did Solly miss a boat trip of any kind.

G.G. Herrick's stepsons built an impressive bridge behind the ice pond, using 6" x 6" fourteen foot pressurized beams and heavy planking. Almost as impressive as the engineering feat itself was the effort required to carry the materials through the woods to the site. The new bridge replaced a rotten one which had been in place for at least fifty years.

Twenty-six new windows were installed in the Red House and twenty-eight new ones in the Farm House at a cost of \$22,000. Maintenance never takes a vacation.

The sheep were sheared on 22 June, producing over 100 pounds of wool which will be sold to our regular buyer in New Harmony.

Ellen Higgins took with a vengeance to cleaning out the Mansion House cellar. The result of her labors changed the architecture of the dump while revealing that of the cellar.

Cold and wet weather continued for most of the month. Not as bad as 1816, when there was a frost in July and a blizzard in August, but bad enough. The sun came out in time for the J.L. Gardner's visit at the end of the month. While the Gardners were boating to the outer islands or walking to the beach, their two Ames grandchildren, as so many youngsters every summer, devoted themselves to the animals and the barn, which is always a main activity center for the under ten age group. Every night they blessed each animal by name in their prayers. The barn, if not the Menagerie at Versailles or the Laiterie at Rambouillet, is yet a pleasure dairy and still a veritable dialogue of the farming arts.

July

By now the lupine is in purple bloom in the meadow and it seems to be expanding its reach. More plants were put in just above the shoreline near the boat house where the soil is as rich as a Black Forest cake - presumably from the former sewage line.

Our new boat, the Loon, acquired from Alex Pertzoff's estate for \$12,000 arrived. She is a 22 foot lobster boat, built in 1983, with an 85 horse power engine. Being able to come right up on a beach, she is an ideal boat in many respects and handles like a dream in fair weather. In high seas, she seems to slide off the waves and is difficult to manage.

Ann Barry spent nearly a fortnight. She was busy weeding the

kitchen garden, pushing her new trail from Clam Cove deeper into the trackless forest and making maps of the Mansion House gutter system.

The Fourth of July picnic and bonfire were postponed for two days by bad weather but finally took place on the beach next to the dock in a perfect twilight. An unusually high tide required the construction of a large pit fortified with wooden beam revetements, the ensemble resembling a crater on the moon. By keeping Jason Herrick's crew busy for several hours, the preparations sharpened appetites for the ritual feast on the hay wagon picnic table. Which is best? To imagine it better and better every year or to believe that some wonderful memory of a perfect clambake can never again be equalled?

Festivities on the mainland included The Great Greased Codfish Race at Milbridge, The Frog Jumping Contest at Lubec, water games at Cutler and the traditional Jonesport lobster boat race.

A visiting crew of Camp Chewonki volunteers on 11 July weeded the potato patch and cleared brush at Squire's Point. The Adam Smith principle works. The combined effort saved about five days work.

Now the lawns, cut to perfection in huge ribbons of Edenic green, accommodated every sort of game. During the few good days, croquet, stick ball, golf and roof ball became constant attractions. Indoors, Scrabble and Charades predominated in the evenings, the latter today having reverted to something more like Dumbo-Crambo, a 19th century game played in Newport as early as the 1840's, which consisted more of sign language than genuine acting. Down the years, the parlor games at Roque Island have known cycles of fashion. George A. Gardner played solitaire endlessly. George Howard Monks invented the game of Halma (Chinese Checkers) and was painted by Anders Zorn holding the first red piece. Bridge followed and lasted for fifty years or more. In the 1930's, the George Peabody Gardner's celebrated Grand Galas featured a good deal of acting and tableaux vivants of various kinds. Jigsaw puzzles came in, of course, in the 1930's along with Monopoly, and the treacherous game of Diplomacy had its day in the 1960's. Grandmother's Trunk, a verbal game to challenge the memory, occupied time on the long boat rides to the fishing grounds in the 1950's. The Dictionary Game has been popular for quite a few years.

The peonies were at their peak on 11 July, waving their voluptuous blossoms over the white picket fence, their thirty foot section of the garden providing enough for all, if not so splendid as the one-half mile bed at Penshurst Castle in Sussex.

The John Donaldson's spent a good deal of their time this year

collecting mushrooms, finding 35 varieties on one excursion. The Family Room library and equipment aided them in reading up on mushrooms, cross-referencing and spore printing them. Once again, they devoted themselves to star gazing on clear nights from the Mansion House porch, the only difference this year being the rather extraordinary size and complexity of the instruments imported for the task. They also welcomed a group of Maine Audubon birdwatchers for a day's outing.

The first butterflies seemed to appear about 14 July. There were fewer Monarch butterflies than usual, owing to the severe winter in Mexico which killed off many millions of them. There was an unsuccessful attempt to follow Vladimir Nabokov's advice to attract moths at night by applying a mixture of beer, molasses and rum to the apple tree outside the Old Farm House. Too much rum perhaps. All of the Tree Swallow nesting boxes failed this year because of the cold and damp weather which must have reduced the supply of insects they need for survival. Roque Island without the beautiful, skimming swallows seemed different. The first fly in the Old Farm House did not appear until 14 July. Some would agree with Alice, who explained that, "I don't rejoice in insects at all."

Fish chowders will never be the same again. In deciding to eliminate Pilot Crackers, because they are distributed in only one region of the country, the National Biscuit Company has caused an integral element of New England culture to become extinct. Chowders will now be quite naked without their covering of the crumbled cracker beloved by so many on the Maine coast. It was particularly callous that the company did not announce its decision in advance and give us all a chance to hoard a supply for the future. When S.S. Pierce decommissioned the Queen Olive in about 1965, G.P. Gardner hoarded the remaining supplies like a pirate. When Frank Cooper's announced the demise of Oxford Vintage coarse cut marmalade in 1995, the J.L. Gardner's and the G.G. Herrick's filled their sock drawers with every jar they could find.

Bad weather was still holding off the haying at the middle of the month. A forecast of three consecutive good days just never happened. The Gentry Bardens came all the way up from Tennessee to enjoy the fog, but yet managed to pack in a full week of every kind of activity.

Popplestone Point proved a good spot to look for sea shells after a rough storm and to observe the effect of "upwelling". As the Island Institute has written this year:

"As the Gulf's water circulates among them, each island helps to mix, oxygenate, and enrich the water. The islands also cause local upwelling of deeper, colder, nutrient-rich water. Tide-induced vertical water currents around islands being an astonishing abundance of nutrients and marine life up from the sea floor. Tide

driven currents also surge through passages between islands, creating a funnel effect that increases the volume of nutrients available to filter feeders, as well as those species which prey on feeders."

August

The Joseph Peabody was overheating and operating only at 1,800 R.P.M. Repairs restored the engine to 2,800 R.P.M. and she was again able to cruise at 26 knots.

Posie Dana and family billowed into the harbor on their new yacht, Saint Roque, giving everyone a splendid view and a glimpse into the past, present, future and pluperfect of sailing craft.

Lyn Goodhue laid siege to the Old Farm House cellar in a cleaning spree, whilst Randy (in camouflage gear) led their troops on a camping trip. Eve and Stewart Gardner set forth on their annual mushroom quest. Young Thomas Gardner devoted his abundant energies to observing every last aspect of the farming operation. John Higgins took to the woods again. As Lord Randolph Churchill said of Prime Minister William Gladstone: "The forest laments, that he may perspire." Picnicking, hiking and sailing were in full swing as the sun came out at last. Tanya Smith and family were primed for a week on Roque after a visit to the Greek islands.

Nearby Shoppee Island exchanged hands for the large sum of \$150,000. Anthony Shoppee was a Hessian soldier (born 1761) who served (under General Burgoyne) before his capture at Saratoga and subsequent service in the Continental Army. He came to Maine in about 1785 and may have lived first on Roque Island before settling on the mainland at Shoppee Point, overlooking the small island which inherited his name. He died in 1816, leaving a large family in the area. There were some discussions with the seller as to whether EMCI might acquire the property for conservation purposes.

First it was Maine's sea cucumbers, then periwinkles and sea urchins which seduced the state's fisheries industry in the last five years. While mainland palates never took to "trash fish", the Japanese have long considered such seafood a delicacy, preferring it even to lobster. Now it is the Koreans who are offering a market for the little harvested whelk around our shores. Like lobsters attracted to bait inside a trap, whelks are encouraged to enter smooth-surfaced plastic jugs to feed on bait placed within them. Up to three jugs are attached to a single trawl line and they are usually pulled daily.

The late harvest, following a wet spring and early summer, yielded 1,080 bales of hay, a 31% increase over last year. Barn Field yielded 44 bales, Rye Field 61, Weir Field 223 and Stump Field 422.

Can there be anything so good as August on a Maine island ?

September

More house repair. New downspouts for the Old Farm House and Farm House. Reshingling of the north side of the Red House behind the deck. Extensive work has been accomplished again this year.

The George Gardner's had their usual Labor Day house party.

There were no blueberries at the market in town. Last year's drought, a windy winter (which blew the insulating snow cover off the dormant plants) and quite a bit of rain during June's flower set (preventing effective pollination by bees) contributed to the poor harvest.

Hurricane rains for five days stripped most of the apples off the trees.

The Roque Island Index for 1996 revealed a status quo economy. The consumption index rose 5,24%, led by increases in newspapers and blueberries. Property taxes increased 10-15% but are not included in our index. Production values rose 3.89 % with every sector posting modest increases. Strong prices are buoying industry but increased regulatory costs and controls coupled with decreasing stocks constrain the fishing industry while declining overall wood stocks threaten the long term potential of the forestry industry. Environmental policy issues are creating uncertainty in the Downeast economy. No significant capital investments are likely to be made until forest policy, fisheries management and wetland development issues are resolved.

Mary Macauley Mikes (2 years, 3 days) walked on her own two legs from Stump Field, along the trails, and up the footpath to St. Roque, while her brother John (4 years) made it all the way from the houses up to St. Roque unassisted and down to Great Beach where he had a swim. When not around the barn, the young Mikes' were to be seen skipping stones at Squire's Point. An impressive début.

Days of southwest wind postponed the bird migration until the end of the month. Then, all of a sudden, there was a huge wave of birds one afternoon. The lilacs were thick with warblers and vireos, sparrows were all over the roofs of the houses. There was a whole day of Yellow-bellied sapsuckers in the garden. All of the hawks appeared on cue. And the sandpiper migration continued day by day down at the point. The bird banding team continued their work and, on one day, handled 73 birds of 19 different species. New birds for the Roque Island list were the American bittern and the Ipswich sparrow.

More trail clearing along the edges of the fields and behind Squire's Point.

The boat house, that asylum of old oar locks, saw blades, clam rollers, fishing line, varnish cans, engine parts and decoys, was undergoing yet another reorganization.

October

With the help of the state and the lure of increasing demand, several cranberry operations have started up in Cherryfield and Jonesport. They are using a wet-harvesting technique, recycling water into man-made bogs. Prices have risen from \$20 a barrel for wet-processed berries in the 1960's to \$65 per barrel today. A one acre bog, which might cost \$20,000 to build, could yield \$12,000 per acre when it reaches its full potential in seven years. Hand-picked berries (used in recipes rather than juice) get up to \$85 per barrel. Frosts in Maine, however, threaten long before the fruit is ready to harvest.

For our cranberries, this was a bad year in the Paradise Cove nook (too wet) and in the Beach Field (overgrown), but a bumper year in Mill Field where several gallons were harvested and converted into cranberry sauce for the holidays. Mill Field also was the site for the annual harvest of juniper berries for those with a special interest in Juniperus communis, whose small cones, a quarter of an inch in diameter, turn blue-black in their third year. Picking them is always an aromatic experience.

The kitchen garden by now was an autumn cornucopia of huge melons, yellow squashes, cucumbers, Kennebec potatoes, the sweetest smelling carrots, and onions and beets galore for those who missed the garden peas, tomatoes and corn of August. Several days were spent in industrious preparation and storage of the bounty for winter. Competing formulae for pickling cucumbers or making cranberry relish were shared and discussed, then traded and sampled.

Food and the turn of the seasons are intimately connected with the farming rituals of the past. Corn tastes like summer, summer like corn, just as apples remind you of fall, and fall of apples. Barbara Holland's book, Endangered Pleasures (1996), coins a good term for what we risk missing in a world where it is becoming spring and summer all year long in the global super market.

On 4 October the directors began arriving for RIGHC's first ever Board meeting on Roque. Seventeen for dinner at the Old Farm House: chanterelles on toast, island lamb, herb roasted potatoes, parsleyed carrots and a most delicious summer - fall pudding. Thirty-six hours of meetings ensued, including tours around the buildings and various projects. With everyone present, fully

prepared and excited to be on site together, it was a most productive session. Never have the sheep barn, the fence posts, the trail projects, the kitchen garden and the houses been subjected to such collective scrutiny. The Mansion House produced a glittering dinner of island turkey with all the fixings and strawberry trifle for the overworked but exhilarated directors and accompanying family on Saturday night. The bell was rung to announce the meeting itself on Sunday morning, following the ancient custom of marking transitions in the day (e.g. gallicinium (cock's crow), intempestum (cessation of all activities)). Once again, a beautifully clear day greeted the proceedings.

Nina Herrick summoned a caterer to discuss plans for the wedding of her daughter (Jessica) next year. Her plan to put a tent on the croquet lawn had to be scotched. It seems that a tent over a septic tank would create vapor block, stopping all of the toilets on the island and causing a malodorous stench in the event of rain. Knowledge is power.

A baby bull, "Joe Blow", was born in the pasture at night during a furious gale.

The G.G. Herrick's continued their stay for another ten days. Croquet continued and picnics and trail work, as well as some unsuccessful duck hunting. The maple trees peaked about 11 October in a blaze of color that answered so many other reds and yellows in the landscape. Summer seems to last longer into the fall on Maine islands where wild flowers bloom and gardens produce long after those on the mainland.

The broken down boat of a game warden, who had been visiting the island to bow hunt for deer, had to be rescued and towed to the mainland.

At last the island crew could move into fire wood production. Day by day the piles of wood increased even as the cold began to settle in and demand more use of it.

Putting the house away for winter can be more complex than reopening it for summer, for seven months will intervene. How to protect the nautical clocks from condensation in winter or nurture the oil painting canvasses to survive the cold? It is always useful to try something new - or old. From an 1827 book on household management came a method for cleaning mirrors: clean the mirror with a soft rag dipped in gin; finish off with a silk handkerchief.

On 19 October a youth group, eighteen in all, from Jonesport, Beal's Island and Deer Isle visited the island and were given a general tour.

November

Visiting deer hunters had little success this year but they were so numerous that wood cutting had to be curtailed.

There was another sea rescue, this time of the butcher, who was taking away four pigs in the gathering darkness. He used flares to alert the crew, which went out and towed him in. The next morning he was towed to the mainland along with 30 lambs for market in the Joseph Peabody. Our boatman sustained injuries in an accident at the boat house and the Coast Guard, responding to an appeal for help, arrived swiftly and took him to a waiting ambulance on the mainland.

The buzz boat, the Loon and Sandpeep II were hauled out for the winter. New pilings were driven into place near the metal shop. The flag pole snapped in a strong wind. The Jos. Peabody again out of commission for a few days.

There were many boat trips for feed and supplies. Woodcutting continued day by day. Two downstairs rooms in the Farm House were painted and redecorated. Twenty-one turkeys were put away in the freezer.

There was a hint of winter in the air but Nina Herrick managed to come with a house party for Thanksgiving, the traditional feast tasting all that much better in the traditional setting. Her stay at the Red House brought the total of days the three houses were occupied to 310 for the year.

December

At last the staff could batten down for winter. Supplies of fuel, wood, feed, butcher's meat were laid in. Boats were secured. The last of 93 dozen eggs for the year were shipped to market. Water pipes were drained and closed.

It turned out to be one of the warmest Decembers on record. But there was a massive storm early in the month. Waves crashed over the dock, pounded the beach and flung sea weed into the trees behind Squire's Point. It is a wonder how the beach recomposes itself after one of those beatings. One takes its punishment almost personally.

For Roque is our own world now, created by ourselves out of 100 years and more of quite individual efforts and experiences which have informed the history of our place with appreciation for continuity and respect for the future, with the miracle of life and the wonder of nature, while giving us a collective memory to serve as a nutrient-rich upwelling of tradition to better the purpose of our green island in the blue sea.

Roque Island Jottings 1997

January

The island lay in the grip of winter, cold and silent, keeping to its own calendar, storing its own secrets, awaiting the potentiality of another year.

The dark season often presents a new challenge as if to remind us of the harsh reality of existence in such a remote place. The late dawn of 9 January revealed an incoming tide so great that it was to flood the dock with water enough to row a boat around on it. Contingencies of winter rule the day. Even the animals know best where to seek shelter or when to summon help. The warmth of the Farm House becomes the core of the island reactor.

Good news can spread some cheer. The Nabisco company reversed its decision of last year to drop the 5 by 2 1/2 by 3/16 inches Crown Pilot cracker from its product line. In a textbook example of Down East determination, irate loyalists up and down the coast refused to take "No" for an answer. They harried the corporate giant into giving Maine's biscuit a second life. Beloved by sailors as "hardtack", the cracker was created in 1792 by John Pearson, a baker in Newburyport, Mass., using - as a key ingredient - the malted barley which lends it a special flavor. Several of the 3,500 angry messages received by the company could have been traced to the island telephone. In a gesture of atonement, Nabisco donated funds to several New England historical societies.

Winter can be a time to read in front of the fireplace. A new addition to the library, the Jordan Marsh Catalogue for 1881, the one George A. Gardner might have consulted before outfitting the Old Farm House the following year, provided some insight into the products and prices available at the time. Mink carriage robes (\$75), Ulsters (\$12), Saratoga trunks (\$5), English Merino underwear (\$2.75), Silk/velvet furniture coverings (\$2 per yard), Walking skirts (\$1), Linen napkins (\$1 a dozen), Turkish towels (\$.25), Ladies cotton hose (\$.25).

February

Staff turnover continues to plague smooth operation. The loss of three staff was a major (and regrettable) blow. Ariana Fischer and her fiancé, James Gregg, bravely shouldered the burden, moved to the Farm House for the better part of three months and restored order. It was a long winter for everyone. But out of the shambles emerged a redefined mission, a streamlined operation, an up to date definition of individual responsibilities, a restored sense of team work and a cleaner, more productive working environment. James Gregg, reinventing himself as chef, buoyed morale by reestablishing the traditional custom of collegial Farm House meals of the kind everyone remembers and no one forgets. Knowing at first hand the operational environment we do not want is the

first step toward creating the one we do want.

Several weeks of clean-up, only to be described as a Labor of Hercules, was the first order of business. The greenhouse, the walk-in refrigerator, the dining room and the cellars were cleaned, rearranged and stripped of the residue of five years of neglect. So much "stuff" was removed that it was hard to believe it could ever have been there. Then the office and file system were patiently rearranged, reviewed and put into working order. Record keeping, inventory control, scheduling and budgetary procedures were reviewed and clarified. The Farm House seemed to breathe a sigh of relief, to gather a second wind as a sailboat coming about onto a new and more promising tack.

As weather permitted, activity spilt out of the house. Manure was spread on the fields. The barns, too, were in need of the magic wand for a new look. There were barge runs for oil and grain. One truck was sold, another repaired on the mainland. The Jos. Peabody got a new \$20,000 engine with a 2000 hour warranty for \$4,500 because the manufacturer conceded the original had been defective and the cause of a serious smoking problem. The new engine will be fuel efficient and drive the boat faster than before. More and more firewood was cut.

The first lambs, twin black ones, were born on Valentine's Day.

Former island manager Ken Rich, in a vintage return to his stage of yesteryear, answered one last encore and came on board for almost three months to plug the management gap and impart his invaluable knowledge of island systems and farm machinery. His familiar stride, a step or two slower now, was to be seen walking the grooves of memory, from sheep barn to water cistern, from dock to pasture, giving a word of encouragement to the staff, a handclasp for visitors or praise for the horses.

March

Cold and crisp most of the month. Some maple syrup tapped and 20 cakes of ice 10" thick were cut as late as 31 March.

Four sets of triplets among 32 lambs, one of whom (Stanley), was bottle fed and became a member of the family for several months. Except when he got into the peony bed, Stanley was welcome everywhere and even paid a visit or two to the living room of the Old Farm House where he was much at ease but unimpressed by the surroundings.

The animals were still needing 10 bales of hay a day and 700 bales had to be imported from Nova Scotia to cover the shortfall in last year's harvest. Ten Roque Bluffs neighbors gathered to assist in the all day job of bringing the hay over into the barn, incentive enough not to want to repeat the exercise another year. The sheep were wormed, their tails docked.

Ten months of recyclables were barged over for the redemption center. Preparation for more work on the dump was begun.

On Easter Sunday there was a three-hour egg hunt around the farm.

April

The blizzard of '97 blew in on April Fool's Day, bringing with it a foot of snow.

On 2 April the Jos. Peabody's line came undone at the Roque Bluff's dock in a 40 knot wind. She sailed off in reverse toward Little Ram Island. The Coast Guard dispatched a boat but our boatman, with some local help in a skiff and wet suits, saved the day.

The "cabin" on the Loon, thought to contribute to her instability, was removed and reassembled on the barge, a change which improves both vessels. Plans were being made to restore the fuel hauling capability of the barge which has underwater tanks for that purpose. A skiff salvaged from a beach last fall has been restored and put to effective use.

Improvements in the barn : a new floor for the pig pen; stables redesigned.

On the week-end of 12/13 April four members of the Operations Committee interviewed four candidates, four hours each, on island for the position of Island Manager. The four semi-finalists had been whittled down from 120 respondents to advertisements in the local press and a succession of telephone interviews. It was an intensive two-day session, arduous but interesting and productive, finally, of a firm set of principles for managing the island at the approach of the 21st century.

May

New hands hired for the staff. Training and preparation under weigh for the summer. Much activity in the boat house as usual at this time of year.

A brand new, bright red Kawasaki Mule baby truck arrived on the island for use on trailing and land management projects.

Captain Owen Drumgool, Jr., the new Island Manager, entered on duty on 18 May.

A scallop dredger twice dredged a deeper channel out from the dock.

Work began on a new equipment shed along the road to the dump, the first new construction in over 60 years. Paul Iossa of Jonesport was the contractor. Cost : \$ 13,500.

A dead moose was found on Great Beach. The tractor dragged up the bloated carcass and planted it in Stump Field.

The 21st of May saw the first long twilight of the season and brought in the first big migration wave. Several wondrous days of birdwatching followed but the full chorus was not there until about the 28th of the month. Divine lessons seemed to be hidden, like jewels, in each new flight. The migration was uneven this year and the bird banders reported shortfalls in many species owing to cold and wet weather this May and last. A few swallows came through but none nested for the second year running. Yellow warblers abounded in the garden as the lilacs began to bud. New birds for the Roque Island list spotted by the Herrick's were the Yellow-throated warbler and the unforgivingly difficult King Rail, in the lagoon behind Great Beach. The first Bluebird in many years was also seen.

On 24 May a most successful Eastern Maine Conservation Initiative (EMCI) Conference was held at the University of Maine at Machias and amply covered by favorable press. The presentations of their research by the EMCI grantees were well received by an audience of natural scientists and neighbors with environmental interests.

A late frost on 26 May unfortunately killed off what had been planted in the kitchen garden a few days before so replacement plants had to be bought. Nannette Herrick once again prepared the flower garden, often in inclement conditions.

A doctoral student from the University of Maine came for a visit to our salt marshes. There is no surviving evidence that the Squire's Point salt marsh was ever used or could have produced enough salt hay to make a difference in the early years of settlement before the land was cleared. Cuttings from it could nevertheless have been useful for thatching or for insulation.

The sheep were (somewhat reluctantly) sheared.

There were advertisements in the local press for sale of firewood at \$115 a cord. After discounting for profit, this provides a measure of sorts for the value of staff labor in providing our firewood. Wood is favored over oil for future furnaces because it maintains a traditional practice, helps to clear the woods, proves valuable in land management projects and puts money directly into the local economy.

A picture perfect day on 28 May provided an opportunity for a boat trip around the entire archipelago, out to The Brothers and back. About 350 harbor seals, including 54 pups, were seen, an all time record. Many of the mothers had not yet pupped. Newspapers report a burgeoning seal population including the southward migration of the Grey Seal. Also observed was a beautiful temperature inversion, Machias Seal Island appearing upside down in a white fog bank, its lighthouse pointing down into the sea.

Three additional sugar maple trees were planted in the lane.

Cold weather slowed the development of Washington County's wild blueberries, which are expected to blossom between 20-30 May. Only about 10 percent were open on 22 May. Temperatures of at least 50 degrees are necessary to inspire the bees to begin their work of pollination, their inactivity always a barometer of weather conditions here.

A Washington County Superior Court found a mussels dragger guilty of dragging in the off-limits area around Roque Island's electricity cable. The defendant showed no remorse.

The tractor grunted and growled as it ground its way through the dump, digging, moving, filling and levelling what had been an unsightly mess. A major piece of work accomplished.

Rockweed was in its April-May reproductive phase along the strandline of the beach, hopping with every manner of seaweed flies. No other plant or animal species seems to play such a multi-faceted role in the coastal marine environment - protection for other species, nutrients for the marine ecosystem, food for birds over the four distinct phases of its annual life cycle.

The EMCI report of University of Maine climatologist and doctoral student Molly Schaufler concludes that spruce stands on Roque Island and other coastal sites persisted through the warm spell of between 7,000 and 2,000 years ago. Understanding where the spruce thrived during that period may have important implications for forest stewardship if the present trend in global warming continues. Ms. Schaufler's core sample from the Upper Heath also yielded a walnut seed from several thousand years ago.

June

James and Ariana Gregg (newly married) led a Junior Work Week involving eight younger members and friends. There was a good deal of enthusiasm, not to say competitive spirit, amongst the group. Trail clearing and brush removal were the featured activities.

Georgia Goodhue and party had an unfortunate accident with the buzz boat and had to be brought in from Marsh island at midnight. A more serious accident was averted and all hands showed patience and fortitude. Security and communications procedures for boating have been revamped as a result.

The College of the Atlantic delivered through EMCI its 30 page Roque Island Intertidal Survey. It provides complete electronic maps using Geographic Information Systems, identifies 54 intertidal species and notes the importance to the marine environment of the eel grass, harbor seals and kelp surrounding Roque Island.

The John L. Gardners enjoyed a visit at the end of the month.

New staff was hired and the island manager had a busy month learning the farm systems and getting ready for summer visitors.

Work on the new equipment shed neared completion. A new furnace was installed in the Red House.

July

The John Higginses, George Herricks and David Cutler joined together to celebrate another Fourth of July with a picnic feast and bonfire on the beach next to the dock. There being several songsters, the night was filled with camp fire songs not heard for many a year. One was reminded of John Quincy Adams' Oration in Boston on 4 July 1793, his first publication at the age of 25 :

"It has been a custom, sanctioned by the universal practice of civilized nations, to celebrate with anniversary solemnities, the return of days which have been distinguished by events the most important to the happiness of the people."

John Brokaw (GGH's step son) led a rock climbing expedition to Great Head. There were five or six climbs of a 65 foot vertical, Class 5 ascent of medium difficulty.

The new draft horse, Ike, entered on service and immediately began a training program.

Four dozen quail were put out in a chicken coop. Once again the experiment was to fail. Some were taken by a mysterious predator. Others succumbed, probably because of their proximity to the chickens. A separate coop will have to be built another year.

The Gentry Bardens had a full house of children who were to be seen wandering far and wide on a scavenger hunt.

There were several fishing expeditions for striped bass in nearby waters on outgoing tides in the evening. Indeed it was to become a summer when there seemed to be an abundance of small fish. The ospreys, terns, kingfishers, Bonaparte gulls and eagles were much in view as they repeatedly dove for their prey.

GGH's step son, Justin Kreizel and a friend worked for three weeks on the farm. They built another impressive bridge on a trail to Patten's Cove, re-built chicken coops, worked on roads and fenced in the beech forest. They also built six rustic - looking stiles over the wire fencing in the pasture and planted a number of trees.

Everyone on the island pitched in to weed the kitchen garden and were rewarded with a copious Farm House luncheon. The collective effort saved several days of laborious work.

Reebok rebel, the horse, stood quietly behind Mary Donaldson for 45 minutes whilst observing her painting of the pasture.

Jennifer Donaldson contributed, in two framed displays, 48 pre-historical artifacts to the Family Room collections. The Drumgools found a very large artifact at Squire's point.

A large cranberry patch was noted on the Brothers about 50 yards to the right of the shack and another on Halifax Island. The raspberries in the garden came out on 23 July, early in this dry, hot summer. (The water temperature at the dock was 60 degrees.)

The pink morning glories on the road to Squire's Point bloomed on the same day as the arrival of the first returning sandpipers.

An aquaculturalist was quoted as saying that Anguilla is one of the few islands on the coast free of red tide because of traces of copper in the rocks.

Elwell H. Perry, the grandson of Hebert Long, the island care taker from 1880-1903, came for a visit to the island. Long was a graduate of the University of Maine in 1876 and active in Christian work all his life. he was instrumental in having a church built at Roque Bluffs. Mr. Perry, who has been studying the genealogy of his family, gave the island a colored photograph of an oil painting of Roque by John L. Gardner, given to Long's daughter, Bertha Hanscom, in 1898. He also donated a copy of "Roque Island Ramblings", her reminiscences of growing up on the island.

Haying began on 17 July and continued for several days. The crop was small (only 615 bales), owing to the poor condition of the fields. Over 700 more bales would have to be bought (\$1,300) later in the summer.

August

The summer drought continued through the month. There were the lowest water levels in years in Eastern Maine. The Great Beach lagoon dried out. But the island water supply held up well despite great demands for watering the garden.

Except for a few days the Old Farm House was empty in August for the first time in 25 years. Plenty of other visitors, however, enjoyed another classic Maine summer. "Days of bone white splendor, a slow surf filleting the blue", as Amy Clampitt wrote in "The Beach Pea."

Ann and Rebecca Barry pushed their new trail further into the gloomy forest from

Clam Cove. They were also active in sea kayaking around the island, their 20 foot inflatable craft arriving by mail from Idaho. In their walks along the beach they found a dead yearling moose (later washed out to sea again) and the prize trash of the year : a WalMart bag bearing the legend "Environment: Our Mission. Leave each community a little greener than we found it."

Much of the month was devoted to preparations for the wedding on 31 August of Alessa Fischer and Eliot Angle. The Fischer family hosted 40 friends and family members during the Labor day week-end, using all three houses. There was a formal rehearsal dinner in the Old Farm House and a clambake, including an additional 80 guests, the following day. All 120 members of the wedding party reassembled the next day for the marriage ceremony in Weir Field and five course luncheon in a tent in Stump Field. A capture the flag game, croquet and other activities entertained the guests. A Roque Island March, composed by Francis Judd Cooke, a visitor to the island in the 1950's, was played.

September

Fifty gannets were seen off Double Shot, the first coot arrived on 17 September, 200 cormorants were observed massing off Roque Bluffs and herding fish into shallow water with their wings.

There were a greater than usual number of yellow jackets around and they found a number of targets to sting.

The high equinoctial tide was on 18 September and it brought heavy drift wood into the Great Beach. It also refilled the Squire's Point pond.

Our eagle nests produced only one eaglet, at the Parker's Head aerie. The overall figures for Maine this year were 175 nesting pairs (down 28 from 1996) and 178 eaglets fledged (up 35 from 1996). several pellets cast by eagles at a roost on Paradise Cove were sent to the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for analysis. There was one pellet of strictly avian remains (cormorant and gulls), one pellet of mixed bird and mammal remains (gull and snowshoe hare) and one pellet of strictly mammalian remains (white-tailed deer fur.)

A Humboldt Field Research Institute mycological class came to the island for a mushroom foray on 19 September. They identified 76 different species of mushrooms and produced also a supply of chanterelles and edible Boletus for the table. A copy of their report will be bound for the library. They also gathered some "blue wood", wood on the forest floor colored by fungi, something highly prized in Renaissance Italy and used to decorate special rooms. A warming trend in spring brings out many fungi but the number drops to its lowest point in late spring. A cool spell in August with some rain will bring out puff balls, chanterelles and the first of the boletus. The largest number come with the first

cooling in September and for the first time mushrooms on wood appear. The season ends when temperatures dip below freezing in October.

A researcher from the Maine Medical Center Research Institute in Portland visited to inspect for Lyme tick disease. In 1996 a record number of cases (46) were found in Maine. The adult ticks are most active in the fall. They meet and mate on a mammal host (deer, squirrels or perhaps a visiting dog), drop off and crawl down into the leaf litter and emerge the next spring, laying 2,000 eggs. Seventy-five small mammal traps were put out and several areas were "flagged". No evidence of ticks was found. To use the technical term, Roque Island was "naive". He advised that the best recipe for baiting a mammal trap is a mixture of peanut butter and tuna fish.

Some Canton china platters from the Old Farm House were sold at auction by Rebecca Campbell for \$3,200 to raise money for repairs and reduce the collection to manageable size.

The wind stayed in the southwest most of the month and there was a continuation of good weather. The bird migration was delayed but a wind shift on 24 September produced the finest day of hawk watching with 13 hawks of five different species observed.

Trimming of the road to the Beach Field was completed, a task which required about twenty work sessions since last year.

The harbor seals were already at the fall ledges off Great and Little Spruce, the "seals dozing sleek on sliddery ledges", as Herman Melville put it.

The kitchen garden yielded bountiful produce, rewarding all of the work to make it succeed. Can there be anything better than the carrots, beets, onions, potatoes and squash of late September.

The lawns were mowed for the last time. The chicken coops were cleaned and disinfected. A fencing project in the lower back pasture was begun. Manure was spread on the pastures. More work on the equipment shed. Much firewood was cut and stacked. A new bull calf was born. A busy month for the farm.

October

Three adult and two immature raccoons, the first recorded on Roque, were caught in the mammal trap at the dump and taken to the mainland for release. This must solve several mysterious crimes at the chicken coops but not the mystery of how they came to be there. All credit to peanut butter and tuna fish.

The fall sparrow migration occurred at the beginning of the month when the wind changed again to the northwest and sent a pent up flood of birds en route. On and on they

came in a relentless infiltration. It was useful to observe, and to remember for another season, all of the habitat niches that they favored. The lilacs again were filled with warblers, vireos, flycatchers, orioles and, even, a Blue-gray gnatcatcher. John Brokaw, this time assisted by sister, Christina, finished up the successful bird banding season and closed down for the year. Over two full seasons the team banded 711 birds of 54 different species. They started up and expanded the bird banding program for all of Eastern Maine.

On 4 and 5 October, for the second year running, a Trustees Meeting was convened on the island. Decisions ripened like apples in the orchard and the juiciest ones were picked with care. Good spirit prevailed all around and the staff gave three fine presentations. At the Old Farm House Nannette Herrick authored a feast of Clear consommé, Roque Island Roast Chicken, Parslied carrots, Roast potatoes and Apple crisp. Approval was granted for the making of a documentary film about a year on Roque Island. Go ahead was granted to explore the commercial possibility of using some mature Red spruce to make instrument grade matched wood pieces for guitars and violins, a conception that sprang full blown from the fertile brain of John Donaldson. Can it be that a commercial product, low in volume and high in value, has been growing all these years before our eyes. There were productive discussions, too, on the new building program, farming operations, the boat yard and controlling costs for members.

Teresa Davis, our forester, came for a visit and outlined the forestry plan for the new staff. She pronounced the island innocent of the spruce bark beetle, an insect blamed for destroying large stands of trees on some Maine islands. She was very satisfied with the forest enhancement projects completed in the last two years.

The reds in the maple trees seemed redder than ever this year and red huckleberry from the Beach Field filled the houses with color. A fine Aurora borealis was witnessed by star gazers on 11 October. The cider press produced six quarts of cider on 14 October after the first frosts.

Video pictures from submarine dives in Eastern Maine yielded data making it possible to characterize lobster populations along the Maine coast. Lobsters in Eastern Maine are significantly larger than those to the west and densities in the Jonesport area, at about 1,500 lobsters per acre in shallow areas, 10 per acre in deeper water, are lower than in some other areas.

John Lukens, camera in hand was again working his way back into the photographic history of Roque Island, now kneeling on the third floor of the Mansion house to recapture a precise angle, now measuring distance from a rock in a old photograph.

The final croquet match of the season yielded a narrow win for G. G. Herrick (9) and John Brokaw (10) over Nannette Herrick (13) and houseguest Theo Holcomb (2.5). The croquet things were put away just as the coot season opened. Captain Dodge, the

boatman, ably handled the decoys and a few birds were shot as they came in over tollers. There were some lovely hours on the water.

There were several trips to Lakeman's to feed the sheep and make preparations for their eventual recapture and return to Roque. Another year there will need to be corrals to simplify the task. The Sandpeep was hauled out for the winter. Ike, the new Belgian draft horse was being trained. Amos the ram was put down. A heifer calf was born. A new ramp was built for the barn. More manure for the fields, more firewood cut, more trash burned, more equipment repairs before winter. The green house ventilation system was redesigned and there was a new wood stove for the Farm House. Four hundred bales of hay (7.7 tons) at \$110 a ton needed to be purchased.

The first snow flurries appeared on 23 October in 25 degree weather. Three days later a northeast gale called for removal of the Jos. Peabody to Patten's Cove for the first time of the season. Fall was tightening its hold on the land, giving urgency to some remaining tasks at hand.

November

A winter paddock was built for the animals and a new divider for the sheep barn. Boathouse cleaned and rearranged. A new piling for the dock. Two trucks overhauled and repaired. More and more fire wood cut. A busy month. Project after project was completed in readiness for winter. Estimates obtained for several improvements in the houses.

Mary Donaldson spent ten days in the Red House, walking the far reaches of the island, recording her impressions in a journal and gathering inspiration for her painting. She completed five new canvases. The cold November island proved invigorating and full of incident and color. Each day she choreographed her walks to end at twilight on a West Shore Road "smeared in hot coal orange" from a divine palette.

The sheep were recovered at last from Lakeman's. The plans for the landing, recapture and exfiltration exercise will be sent to the Pentagon. As veterans of such operations know, such exploits never occur without the unexpected comic incident.

Nina Herrick and family braved a gale to arrive for the Thanksgiving holiday. A good time was had by all. Several coot shooting expeditions provided the sporting element. An island turkey, in a coulis of cranberry sauce, fulfilled God's expectations for its race.

A Belted Galloway heifer was born. Two coon cats were acquired for patrol of the barns.

Deer hunters at times seemed more abundant than their prey. Six or more deer appear to have been taken.

December

By now the cold season was settling in. The night sky twinkled with iciness. As John Updike described such a New England sight in Toward the End of Time (1997) :

"This new moon, visible at night as a faintly luminous lariat slowly moving across the paralyzed sprinkle of stars, by daytime is imprinted on oxygen's overarching blue like the trace of a cocktail glass, a sometimes silvery ring of pallor."

Once again a carpet of snow transformed the landscape with its "frolic architecture", imposing its peculiar challenges on life at the farm. The natural heritage of winter is richer the further north one goes and the accommodations of wildlife are the more heroic. A thaw before Christmas washed away the road for the fifth time since May.

Ten lambs and a pig were butchered. More and more firewood was cut. Much work in the houses and barns was under weigh.

When rain or cold weather restrained outdoor activity, there was much to be done in the barns. As Virgil wrote of the farmer in his First Georgic, "Then let him mark the sheep, or whet the shining share,/ Or hollow trees for boats, or number o'er/ His sacks, or measure his increasing store,/ Or sharpen stakes, or head the forks...".

Prof. David Sanger, the University of Maine archaeologist, confirmed that bones of the Great auk have been identified from materials recovered from the Great Spruce and Indian Landing digs. The Great auk, which became extinct in 1844, can now be added to the Roque Island bird list with an "E" to share prominence with the Passenger pigeon observed by Gilbert Longfellow. Bones have also been recorded on Mount Desert Island and several islands in Casco Bay as well as at Winter Harbor, Sorrento and a few sites in Massachusetts. It may be noted that the island's bird list has grown, in the past ten years from about 170 to 266.

For the library there were new books from two family members : The Enchanted Nightingale by R.A.G. Monks and A Season on Roque and Winter Rules by G.G. Herrick. Approximately 140 selected books have been acquired for the library in the past six years. It may be worth recording here an unusual observation by family poetess Isabella Gardner (1915-1981) discovered by one reader in an Edward Dahlberg letter to William Carlos Williams on 17 March 1958:

"She wrote two very fine poems in her first book where she employed with much inly skill Linnaeus and Thoreau. I have been urging her to go to natural history for her symbols and ritual. I have this day a good epistle from her, and surely there is much fine judgment in the following remark: 'I cannot feel that a reference (no matter how deeply felt) to Linnaeus or Bartram or the Minotaur redeems a poem or makes it a poem any more than I feel the absence of any such root or preference makes a poem not a poem.' "

Based on records kept at Bar Harbor dating back to 1929, the year 1997 averaged 46.3 degrees, which was 1.2 degrees above a 67 year average. Precipitation was 35.25 inches, only 75% of average, and snowfall totalled 59 inches.

The 1997 Roque Island Economic Index showed consumption at 112.62 and production at 101.10 as compared with the 1991 index year. The index reveals a fragile, undiversified and vulnerable natural resource economy with stagnant incomes, high unemployment and the future of the marine and forestry base in doubt.

And, so, another year on Roque Island drew to a close. As the twilight deepened over the pastures and meadows, and the lamps were lit in the Farm House, there was much to look back on and much to anticipate. Once again Roque Island proved to be a cultural acquirer feeding the springs of hard work and agreeable leisure, of renewal and progress, of historical imagination and vision for a productive and meaningful future.