



# The Rucksack

Newsletter of the Friends of McNabs Island Society  
The Society is a Registered Charity  
CCRA number 88847 4194 RR 0001

Volume 33 Issue 1

Spring 2024

## Erosion at Hugonin Point, McNabs Island

October, 2015



October, 2018



November, 2021



August, 2023



May, 2024



Photos from 2015 to 2023 by Rochelle Owen and 2024 by Cathy McCarthy show that the old cable warning sign has fallen into the ocean.

Friends of McNabs Island Society  
The Rucksack

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We welcome contributions,  
ideas and feedback.

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**Friends of McNabs Island Board**  
**2023 - 2024**

President

- Cathy McCarthy

Vice President

- Brian Phelan

2nd Vice President

- Dachia Joudrey

Secretary

- Vacant

Treasurer

- Cathy Phelan

Membership Coordinator

- Cathy McKenzie

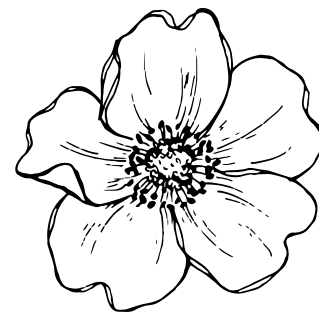
Rucksack Editor

- Theresa Rollet

Board Members at Large

- Faye Power
- Jacqueline Halsey
- Ian Smith
- Iain Crowell
- Mike Winslow -Tour Guide  
Coordinator

- Saida Gazie
- Camilo Botero



**Recent erosion on Garrison Road makes it impassible along Findlays Cove. Use Lynch Road or Old Military Road to access the North End of the Island.**

**Photo credit: Bernie Morrissey, April 2024**

## 2023 Volunteer Appreciation Event

On November 18th, 2023, the Friends of McNabs Island Society took the time to thank the many volunteers for all their hard work. A volunteer appreciation event was held in the program room of the Natural History Museum in Halifax, NS. Friends president Cathy McCarthy welcomed and thanked all the volunteers. In her opening remarks, she emphasized that the Society is a totally volunteer organization and nothing would be accomplished without the hard work of volunteers.

Tineke Weld emceed the day. She asked participants to introduce themselves and talk about their connections to the island. The stories were interesting, amusing, and joyful. Everyone was so engaged that this segment of the proceedings went on much longer than was originally planned.

Tineke, on Royce Walker's behalf, then presented a slide show and update on the work volunteers have done on the Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre.

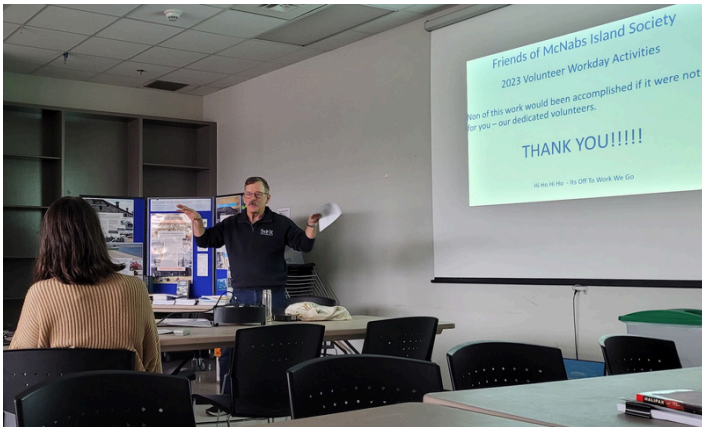


**Tineke Weld addressing the volunteers Photo by Ian Smith**

Brian Phalen reported on the progress of the English Gardens, with slides showing the positive impact the work crews have had on the trails.

Mike Winslow gave the tour guide report. This past summer's challenging weather caused multiple cancellations and postponements. Twenty six tours did make it to the island, including the Fall Foliage Event and the popular Beach Clean-up. 116 volunteer tour guide days ensured that 570 guests enjoyed heritage, nature, Hangman's Beach & military themed tours. There were three sponsored Boys and Girls Club trips, too.

Lunch was a delicious array of sandwiches, fruit, vegetable trays and chocolate cookies. The event was also a chance to socialize and look at the display of recently purchased interpretive materials for tour guides. These were bought with money from the ACOA Tourism Relief Fund



**Mike Winslow saying thank you. Photo by Ian Smith**

Grant. Along with books and field guides, there were binoculars, magnifying glasses, bug catching nets and 3 AED machines. After lunch four tour guides shared their personal resources. The day had flown by and there was little time for group activities. Cathy McCarthy ended with a quick summary of the ongoing and worrying Garrison Pier issue. A huge thank you to all the volunteers and sponsors. See you next year.

by Jacqueline Halsey



## The Friends Receive the Colin Stewart Conservation Award!



by Denyse Contrasty

On April 16 2024, Janet Dalton, Vice President of the Halifax Field Naturalists (HFN), presented the Colin Stewart Conservation Award to the Friends of McNabs Island Society. Cathy McCarthy, President of the Friends of McNabs accepted the award on behalf of the Society. The award was established in memory of Colin Stewart in 2004 and is given to an individual or group that has made significant conservation efforts in Nova Scotia.

Janet was impressed by the efforts of the Friends over the past 33 years to keep the shorelines of McNabs and Lawlor Islands clear of garbage by holding a beach cleanup every June. To date 16,750 bags of garbage have been removed from these islands. Cathy noted that while the amount of garbage remains the same from year to year with most of the garbage being fishing-related “ghost gear” which includes tangled fishing lines, lost lobster traps and motor oil containers.

Janet informed the audience that the Friends were responsible for the maintenance of trails on McNabs Island by removing brush and fallen limbs. Cathy spoke of the efforts by the Friends to manage invasive species such as the Japanese knotweed by mowing it, and the Japanese beetle by installing pheromone traps.

Cathy mentioned that this year’s summer tours on McNabs will include a new Shoreline Tour that will show the changes caused by sea level rise and storm damage. The Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre is now open for use when the Friends of McNabs Island volunteers are on the island. It’s available to other groups interested in using the building for their own programming as well.

In closing, Cathy thanked HFN for giving the Friends this award and invited all to participate McNabs Island guided tours this summer.



Photo credit: Cathy McCarthy

### 34th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of McNabs Island Society

On the evening of the April 8th eclipse, the Friends of McNabs Island hosted their 34th Annual General Meeting at the Natural History Museum in Halifax, NS. Perhaps it was the celestial excitement that affected the set-up of the Zoom portion of the meeting and the electronic slides. Mike Winslow was incredibly dogged in getting things running, albeit with a bit of a delay.

Tricia Stewart organized and hosted the evening with confidence and grace. The auditorium held 38 in person audience members. Zoom online meeting hosting allowed 14 people off-site to attend the AGM, with some attendees as far away as Alberta.

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President Cathy McCarthy gave a summary of the Annual Report highlighting the environmental work, tours and maintenance the Society has done over the past year. In addition she presented the Financial Report which had been compiled by Cathy Phelan.

She later presented the Special Friend of McNabs Island award to Bernie Morrissey - Forestry Technician for the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables. His friendly assistance over the years, in particular hauling materials has been essential for cleanup operations as well as Teahouse Outdoor Education Center renovations.

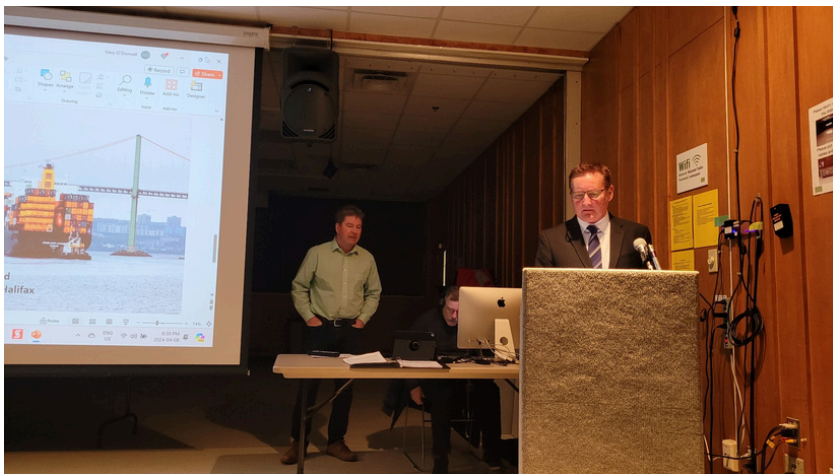


**Cathy McCarthy presents Bernie Morrissey with the Special Friend Award. Photo Credit: Ian Smith**

Membership Coordinator Cathy McKenzie gave her report and presented Dachia Joudrey with her 10 year pin. The Society appreciates all that Dachia does as a board member and tour guide.

A vote was held to elect the new board for 2024. Camilo Botero was added as a Member-at-Large. A call was made for a new Secretary but so far the role remains open.

The meeting was adjourned and again the technology gods were playing games. It took a bit of time to get the slide show going but Mike was able to make things work.



**Royce Walker watches as Captain Gary O'Donnell gives his talk. Photo credit: Ian Smith**

Captain Gary O'Donnell gave an excellent presentation on the role of marine pilots in the past and present. The history and day-to-day workings of pilotage were fascinating. His comprehensive talk went overtime, but most of the audience remained to the end.

by Theresa Rollet



## DISCOVER MCNABS ISLAND ON A GUIDED HERITAGE OR COASTAL TOUR THIS SUMMER!

McNabs Island Guided Tours will be held on **Sundays in July and August in 2024**. Tours begin with a 30-minute boat ride aboard A&M Sea Charters' Captain's Pride out of Fisherman's Cove Eastern Passage and docking at Garrison Pier on McNabs Island.

Tickets are on sale via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/friends-of-mcnabs-island-society-10724104906>

### Hike through Canadian history on a **McNabs Island Heritage Tour!**

- Learn why the Island was important to the Mi'kmaw First Nations, the early French settlers, and the British, who built several forts on the island to protect the Port of Halifax.
- Admire the panoramic view from Fort McNab National Historic Site and learn more about the endangered barn swallows that live in the fort.
- Discover where Midway King, Bill Lynch, got his start in the fairground business.
- Learn the tragic story of the SS England, quarantined with cholera off McNabs Island in 1866.
- Visit the English Gardens, the ruins of the A. J. Davis Bottling Plant, and stop by the Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre to learn more about McNabs Island.
- At the end of the day, stroll along Maughers Beach and watch the tide roll in.

### Hike along the changing coastline of **McNabs Island on a Shoreline Tour!**

- Visit the newly restored Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre for an island orientation.
- Learn about the changing shape of the island as beaches and coves come and go.
- As sea levels rise, and more storms batter the coastline, more changes to the island are in store.
- Stroll along sandy Maughers Beach, which didn't exist 80 years ago.
- Walk around peaceful McNabs Pond, which has changed from a cove to a tidal inlet, then to a freshwater pond and now back to a tidal inlet again.
- Visit Fort McNab and learn how this historic hilltop with its panoramic view was created.
- Turn to the south and the Atlantic Ocean and see if you can spot disappearing Little Thrumcap.
- At the end of the day, dip your toes in the cool waters of Halifax Harbour.

**Guided Tours** are scheduled for July 7, 14, 21, 28, and August 11, 18 and 25.

Departure for our Summer Tours is with A&M Sea Charters, 87 Government Wharf Rd in Fisherman's Cove, Eastern Passage. Space is limited to 25 people per trip so get your tickets early!



Maughers Beach June 2023

Photo credit: Cathy McCarthy

## Garrison Pier Update by Catherine McCarthy

Nova Scotia Natural Resources and Renewables has decided to upgrade Garrison Pier instead of tearing it down. Last year the government announced that a new pier would be built in Timmonds Cove on the Shearwater – Eastern Passage side of the island. There was public opposition to this idea so the government commissioned an engineering coastal study and a study to gauge public opinion about relocating the main access pier to McNabs Island.

This 125-year old pier has withstood hurricanes, storm surges and rising sea level. It needs major repairs. Unfortunately, the government won't tell us much about what type of repairs are needed and won't share the engineering reports or the plans for the upgraded pier. All we know is that Build Nova Scotia has been contracted to prepare the tender for the planning work and repair of the pier. We have no update on what the new, restored Garrison Pier might look like. Work is expected to begin this fall. We hope that the government will consider that the pier needs to be accessible to larger vessels. There also needs to be plenty of access for private boaters as well as guaranteed access for the few water taxis and charter boat operators that take visitors to McNabs Island.

### Membership Appreciation for 2024

Submitted by Cathy McKenzie  
Friends of McNabs Island Society truly appreciates the support of our members. We are especially grateful for those members that continue to support us over time. Since 2015, we have been acknowledging our loyal supporters by awarding a lovely 10 Year pin to show our gratitude.

Wearing of the pin reflects the pride in, and concern for, the harbour gem we call McNabs Island.



**Dachia Joudrey receiving her 10 year pin from Cathy McKenzie .**

**Photo Credit: Ian Smith**



## McNabs Island Beach Cleanup!



McNabs Island Provincial Park on **Sunday June 9th, 2024 (rain date June 16th)**

Registration for the Beach Cleanup is **FULL!**

However, add your name to the waiting list on Eventbrite as there are often cancellations!

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/867673975217?aff=oddtcreator>

Departure from **Ambassatours (formerly Murphy's on the Water), Cable Wharf in Halifax at 9:30**

Over the past 34 years, volunteers have collected more than 16,750 bags of garbage and recyclables from the beaches of McNabs and Lawlor Islands Provincial Park.

Note that we do NOT have funding for this expensive cleanup. If you can make a donation to the Friends of McNabs Island to help cover our costs, we would really appreciate it!

## McNabs Island 2024 Events

**Beach Cleanup** – Sunday June 9th

(rain date June 16th)

Registration is FULL!

Add your name to the wait list on Eventbrite.

### Summer Sunday Guided Tours

July 7 - NORTH END HERITAGE TOUR

July 14 - SOUTH END HERITAGE TOUR

July 21 - SHORELINE TOUR.

July 28 - NORTH END HERITAGE TOUR

August 11 - SOUTH END HERITAGE TOUR

August 18 - SHORELINE TOUR

August 25 - NORTH END HERITAGE TOUR

Tickets on sale via Eventbrite

**Fall Foliage Tours** Sunday October 20th



**Trail maintenance volunteers start the hike on Garrison Pier, November 2023.**

**Photo credit: Ian Smith**

Annual membership to the Friends of McNabs Island Society runs on the calendar year. Your membership includes a year's subscription to the Rucksack newsletter and discount fares to our island events. Members support the ongoing care and development of the Jewel in Halifax Harbour

The Friends advocate for funding to maintain the environment on the Island and participate in planning for the present and future wellbeing of the Island.



**Renew Your Membership and/or Make a Donation Now!**

Thank you for your much needed continued support.

Renew your membership with  
e-transfer: [info@mcnabsisland.ca](mailto:info@mcnabsisland.ca)  
directly via our website:

<http://mcnabsisland.ca/join-friends-mcnabs-island-society>

send a cheque payable to:

The Friends of McNabs Island Society  
PO Box 31240, Gladstone RPO  
Halifax, NS B3K 5Y1

The Society is a registered charity:  
CCRA Number 88 474 194 RR0001

Email: [info@mcnabsisland.ca](mailto:info@mcnabsisland.ca) or [mcnabsisland.ca/contact](http://mcnabsisland.ca/contact)

Phone contact: Cathy (902) 434-2254

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Twitter [@mcnabsisland](https://twitter.com/mcnabsisland) and Instagram [@friendsofmcnabsisland](https://www.instagram.com/friendsofmcnabsisland)  
Already a member?

Invite your friends & coworkers to join.

As more people become aware of and support McNabs Island, the better we will be able to take care of it

This issue went to print in May 2024.