

FRIENDS OF MCNABS ISLAND Society



The Rucksack

Volume 34, Issue 2
Summer 2025

Newsletter of the Friends of McNabs Island Society

The society is a registered charity: CCRA number 88847 4194 RR 0001

DISCOVER MCNABS ISLAND **Heritage & Shoreline Tours**

Sundays in July & August

July 6, 13, 20, 27

August 3, 10, 17, 24

New! Forest Bathing Tour

July 27

Times: 9:30-4:00
Departures from
Eastern Passage

For tickets:

<https://mcnabsisland.ca/events>

\$30-40 members

\$40-50 non-members

\$20-30 children and youth

mcnabsisland.ca

info@mcnabsisland.ca



This issue went to print in July 2025.

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Friends of McNabs Island Society The Rucksack

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We welcome contributions, ideas and feedback.

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McNabs Island Events

**Summer Tours are advertised on the front page.
Volunteer work days are on page 3.**

McNabs Island Fall Foliage Tours

Sun, Oct. 19

(rain date Oct.26). Tickets go on sale in August on
Eventbrite.

McNabs Island Beach Cleanup Cancelled!

By Cathy McCarthy

On June 1st an enthusiastic group of 115 volunteers headed to McNabs Island aboard Ambassatours' Kawartha Spirit for our annual beach clean up. There had been strong winds for several days so we were worried that the event might be cancelled. That morning the winds picked up when we got closer to McNabs Island in the outer Halifax Harbour. The winds were clocking at 45 to 50 km/hour. The captain decided that it wasn't safe to dock at Garrison Pier so we turned around and headed back to port at Cable Wharf in Halifax. We couldn't rebook our cleanup to the rain date because of the repairs happening at Garrison Pier. So the 35th anniversary McNabs Island Cleanup was cancelled.

Hello Friends of McNabs Island Board,

Letter to the Editor

Must say how very much I enjoyed the McNabs Island talk on shipwrecks — just finished watching it all. I'm delighted you are able to put these events online. This Ontario resident appreciates it, very much indeed. The "Friends" do such good work.

Hope to visit the island again, but turning 80 soon, and long drives are somewhat more challenging. I used to visit NS every summer. We shall see. Meanwhile, I hope you will continue to make such wonderful presentations available. Very grateful!

John Tomlinson, Uxbridge ON

Volunteer Work Days on the Island are a Blast **by Brian Phelan**

We have had two hugely successful scheduled volunteer workdays on McNabs Island this season. A great big thank you to the volunteers, our summer staff and special guests who have come along to help.

The DNR Ives Cove Wharf has been used for the drop off and pick up as Garrison Pier is under repairs. Hopefully the work at Garrison will be wrapped up in time for our next scheduled work day.

Some projects that have been worked on include:

The Tree Amigos finished the chainsaw clearing work of the right of way for the Timmins Cove Trail rehab work that is scheduled to start mid June.

A grass whip was used to trim the grass and weeds along Timmins Cove Trail (vegetation that was too fine for the chainsaw).

The summer staff learned to use the battery whips to do trim work around the Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre, deck, benches, terraced lawn area, Perrin-Hugonin foundation and trail edges.

It took the day using the push mower, to mow and cut the path that connects the Teahouse trail to the Jenkins Hill trail. Other trails and trail edges around the Teahouse and Gardens area also got some TLC.

The four Japanese Beetle pheromone traps were installed in similar locations as last year, although one was moved up to near the Kiosk. The Japanese Beetle population is centred near the former gardens so we wanted all four traps near but not in the gardens area.

Despite the extended walking due to Garrison being closed, and several tick encounters by a number of attendees - everyone had fun and enjoyed the work days. I am sure everyone sleeps like a log after all the hard work.

Do you want to help? Scheduled monthly work days are July 19, August 23 and September 20. Contact us if you'd like to get involved.

New 2025 Summer Staff

Article and photo by Mike Winslow

This year Friends of McNabs Island Society are fortunate to be able to employ three university students. This years summer staff are:

- Marina Henley is a 4th year student studying archaeology and heritage studies at Saint Mary's University. Marina has visited the island every year since she was seven. During her course-work she developed a story map website detailing the island residents, military presence and the cultural heritage of the island. She is looking forward to learning more about McNabs Island and sharing with others.

- Courtney Paulick is a recent graduate of Saint Mary's University with a degree in in History (Classics). Courtney has over three years experience as a heritage interpreter with a background in archaeology and a passion for outdoor education. She is excited by the opportunity to share stories of McNabs Island with the public.

- Karema Alarabi is studying Electrical Engineering at Dalhousie University. Karema has many years volunteering, especially with youth, in HRM and at McNabs Island Beach Cleanups. She is looking forward to learning more about McNabs Island and sharing her knowledge on our tours.

We are looking forward to working with these three outstanding young people this summer.



NSCAD Course “Time! Time! Time!” Returns to McNabs Island

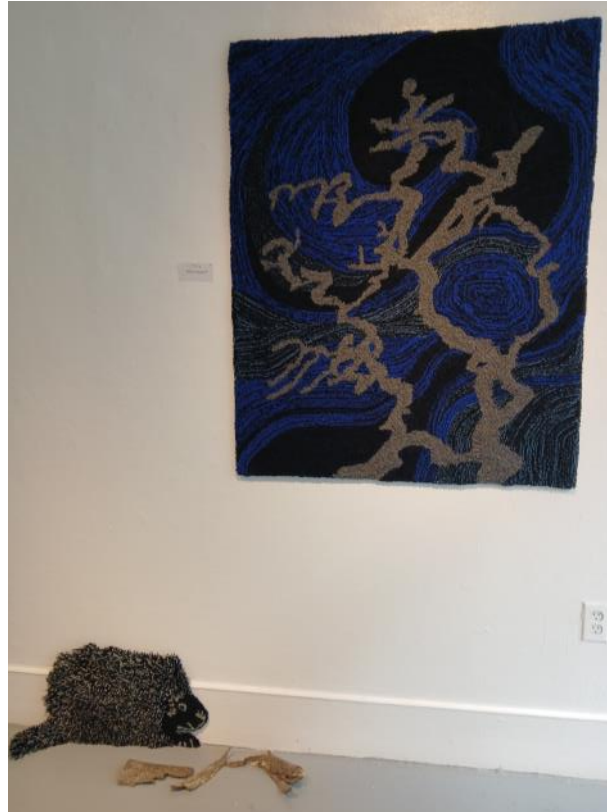
Article and photos by Cathy McCarthy

After a three year absence, the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) brought the course Time! Time! Time! back to McNabs Island in May 2025. Instructor, Ali Nickerson, was eager to bring the course back to the island and was able to apply for some grants to help cover part of the costs. This time to cut down on transportation costs, Ali reduced the time the class was on the island to three trips down from seven trips in 2022.

Friends of McNabs Island volunteers, Don Forbes, Royce Walker and Ian Smith were on the island to provide guided tours and guidance for the students. As they did in 2022, the students had the use of the Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre for their on-island work.



Chenyu Wan's creation called “Melt” captures the island melting into the sea



Allen Comeau's rug hooking tapestry called “Pneuma” tells the story of the porcupine that killed the Camperdown Elm by girdling its bark.

The course finished off with an exhibition of the students' work at the Anna Leonowens Gallery on June 9th. According to Ali Nickerson, “the work reflected a culmination of experiences shaped by McNabs Island. Through walking, making and being together on the land, students explored ideas of community, environmental change and creative resilience.”

I visited the exhibition and spoke with some of the students. They loved being on McNabs Island and created some wonderful projects as a result. Most of their work was donated to worthy causes around the province.

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Maggie Phillips' woven creation called "Fragments" consists of woven fabric and paper including sections of our own Discover McNabs Island map.



Abby Spooner's wall hanging called "Homecoming" tells the story of a gun shell fired from Fort Ives that hit the roof of a home on Lucknow Street in 1915.

Leaving a Legacy By Dachia Joudrey

No matter what time in life, it's never too late or too early to think about leaving a mark on society to ensure that organizations you care so much about continue to thrive and do their good work into the future.

There are many ways to donate, some quite simple, while others need more planning and may even require consultation with your financial advisor or lawyer. We've listed a few ways that you can make an impact and help the Friends of McNabs Island Society continue its important work to protect and preserve McNabs and Lawlor Islands Provincial Park for future generations to enjoy.

Here are ways you can donate:

1. Charitable donations of cash, cheques, PayPal, Canada Helps, e-transfers (EMT);
2. Planned Giving through your estate planning;
3. Bequests through your will;
4. Life Insurance policy beneficiaries can include charitable donations;
5. RRSPs and RRIFs can also state charities as beneficiaries; just to name a few; and
6. "In Memoriam" donations when someone passes.

Contact us, or direct your financial consultant or estate planner for more information on charitable donations. There may be tax incentives available which you can discuss with your tax consultant and financial advisor.

Any donations can help sponsor children's day trips to the island, ongoing trail maintenance, restoration projects, educational supplies and resources for refurbishing the Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre. Substantial donations will be acknowledged on our website and in our newsletter, The Rucksack.

Thank you for considering the Friends of McNabs Island Society as one of your important charities. Our charity number is BN 88847 4194 RR0001.

Environmental Design Research Association Members Visit McNabs Island - May 30, 2025

Article and Photos by Catherine McCarthy



Patricia Manuel and visitors stand on the only visible bedrock outcrop on McNabs Island.

On a typical Nova Scotia spring afternoon with rain in the forecast, Patricia Manuel and I led eighteen visitors from many backgrounds around the world on a McNabs Island field trip. The visitors were attending the Environmental Design Research Association's (EDRA) conference held in Halifax.

EDRA was established in the 1960s to bring environmental design principles into our built environment - encouraging healthier and more democratic human environments. EDRA's 56th conference themed "Designing Communities for Climate Action and Resilience," was hosted by Dalhousie University. The McNabs Island trip was one of their mobile afternoon sessions.

The sun came out as we walked along our tour route which was a pleasant surprise. Most of the visitors on the trip were visiting Nova Scotia for the first time and were delighted to see our favourite island. One delegate told us it was the highlight of the conference.

Of course we had to take them to Fort McNab National Historic Site for its spectacular views of Halifax Harbour. Along the route, we stopped at the only visible bedrock outcrop on the island where Patricia spoke of the island's geological time. We visited the Lighthouse Road breach caused by Hurricane Juan back in 2004 which cut off access to the Maughers Beach Lighthouse and turned McNabs Pond back into a tidal inlet.

On McNabs Island, the climate change impacts of sea level rise and storm surge are visible from year-to-year. The most striking reminder is the old power pole which is now on the beach and used as a sign post by Nova Scotia Natural Resources. When visitors see this pole they know that the ocean is swallowing up more and more of the island's shoreline each year.

The Friends of McNabs are often asked to organize field trips for groups visiting the city. If you know of a group interested in an island field trip, please get in touch with us.



Former Nova Scotia Power pole near Garrison Pier is a reminder of where the power lines used to be. Storms and sea level rise have moved the shoreline overtopping Garrison Road with beach cobble.

Friends of McNabs Island Society's 34th Annual General Meeting

By Mike Winslow

The 34th Friends of McNabs Island Society (FOMIS) AGM was held April 9, 2025 at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History in Halifax with Dachia Joudrey as the master of ceremonies. Sixty eight people were at the meeting and were joined by fifteen people on Zoom.

Cathy McCarthy's President's Report was presented by Denyse Contrasty. It covered many of our 2024 highlights. We started with our successful annual Beach Cleanup in the spring. We had many volunteers working to turn the Teahouse into an Outdoor Education Centre. A project in development is upgrading the Timmins Cove Trail. We hosted 33 tours including a large scale event for an American business, seven Boys and Girls Club tours and a marathon three days of tours for

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home-schooled children. Last year FOMIS was awarded the Halifax Field Naturalist's Colin Stewart Conservation Award for work preserving and protecting McNabs and Lawlor Islands for the past 34 years.

The Special Friend of McNabs Island Award was presented to Tricia Stewart. She has given many tours and organized many events including the 2024 Annual Meeting. The award was a set of two ships' mugs made specially for the Friends of McNabs Island by potter Sally Ravindra.

Eighteen members this year were eligible for their 10 year pins. Some were presented at the meeting. Massive thanks to:

Ken MacInnis

Tricia Stewart

Alison Chabassol

Elizabeth Greenough

Michael MacKinnon

David & Linda McAllister

Wendy McDonald

Joan O'Keefe

Rochelle Owen

Colleen & David Sampson

Janet Stacey

Wendy Forrest

Sarah Emsley

Jackie Halsey

Robert McNeil

Deborah O'Leary

Peter Ross

Ann Marie Gouchie



Historian Dan Conlin recounts stories of the shipwrecks surrounding McNabs Island.
Photo Credit: Ian Smith

We were thrilled to welcome Laura Napke who joined the Board of Directors at the meeting.

The highlight of the night was a virtual walk around the shipwrecks of the island in a presentation by Dan Conlin called "McNabs Island -The Island Ringed by Wrecks". The presentation was followed by an enthusiastic Question and Answer period with many of the questions asked by a very young shipwreck enthusiast.

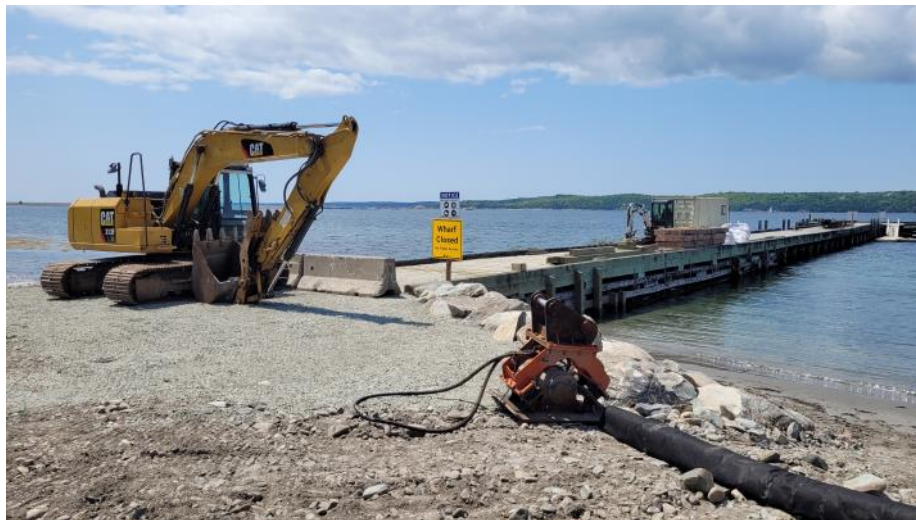
Dan's presentation is available on our YouTube Channel at

<https://youtube/FPkPhHPjI3k?si=YoDOP2jutKGnFGHF>.

Garrison Pier Gets a Makeover!

By Cathy McCarthy,
Photo credit Ian Smith

Garrison Pier, the main access point to McNabs Island, was built in 1898. It hasn't had any repairs since 2004 when it was fixed up after taking a beating from Hurricane Juan. A few years ago, the government wanted to tear down Garrison Pier and build a new wharf in Timmins Cove. That plan



was scrapped and the government decided to fix up the old pier instead. The repairs were supposed to happen last winter but they took place in June 2025. The Pier is expected to be open again in early July.

The Garbage Crew: A Smelly, Smiley Adventure

Article and photo by Laura Napke

Okay, okay, "The Garbage Crew" might not sound like the most glamorous name, but trust me—it's all love here. This scrappy, cheerful bunch thrives on collecting trash, and the more garbage we remove from the Island, the bigger our grins get.

Here's the deal: we're not just about picking up litter like the other amazing volunteers during the Clean-Up. Nope, we take it a step further. Throughout the day, we load up the workboat with all the collected junk and ferry it over to Eastern Passage, where HRM takes it off our hands. Sure, unloading a boat full of trash isn't exactly a spa day—it's messy, smelly, and downright gross—but somehow, this crew keeps the good vibes rolling with plenty of laughs and smiles.

Now, about this year's Clean-Up... let's just say it didn't go quite as planned. We got to the island bright and early, ready to roll. The winds were a bit feisty, but the trusty workboat managed to dock safely (shout out to Captain's Pride and crew for keeping us safe!). Unfortunately, the Ambassatour's boat wasn't so lucky. The wind had other plans, and we had to stand on McNabs Island, waving a sad goodbye as our Clean-Up volunteers headed back to Halifax.

With little trash to haul, we reluctantly made our way back to Eastern Passage, feeling a bit too clean and fresh for a day with the Garbage Crew. But wait—plot twist! Just when we thought the day was a bust, we got to witness a rescue mission! (Got your attention now, didn't I?) Scot's hat decided to take a swim, and Captain's Pride swooped in for the save. The rescue went off without a hitch, the hat was recovered and we all got a little excitement to spice up the day.



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".

**Renew
Your
Member-
ship
and/or
Make a
Donation
Now!**

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

Thank you for your much needed continued support. Renew your membership with e-transfer: 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 or mcnabsisland.ca/contact

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YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_8aqFE1xf12VJR0uJbz9Gg

