



The Rucksack

Newsletter of the Friends of McNabs Island Society

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The McNabs Island Range Lighthouse

by Jackie Halsey with Faye (Cleveland) Power

The Range lighthouse was built in 1903, on top Battery Point Hill on the west side of the island. Board member Faye Power's father, Colin Cleveland, was the lighthouse keeper from 1932 – 1957, taking over the job after Matthew Lynch, retired. Faye, the youngest of seven children, grew up in this lighthouse. The following is her wonderful description of the inside of the building and a glimpse of what family life in the lighthouse must have been like.



“In the basement there was a cistern for water that fed a hand pump in the kitchen, and we had a coal furnace and room for the coal.

Faye showing a photo of her lighthouse

Photo credit: Dachia Joudrey

There was a big square grate on the first floor to allow the heat from the furnace to rise. The first floor had a long, large kitchen with a wood/coal stove and a water tank on the right side. Dad would spread it with newspaper and stand me on in the morning 'til I got warm. We had a pantry too. On the other side of the house, was a large living room with a potbellied stove. The floor above had a grate to allow the heat from this stove to rise.

We had a daybed beside the stove and a large table. I presume, we also had a chesterfield. I can't remember. The other room, probably used as a dining room when my six brothers and sisters were living at home, was a rarely used room. On the 2nd floor, we had four large bedrooms. The third floor was the light room and there was a large table with a hole in
(cont. page 2)

Friends of McNabs Island Society

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(cont. from page 1)

the middle. Dad would bring the large reflector down from the light room and drop it in the hole and polish it with Jeweler's Rouge. The fourth floor was the actual small light room, housing the kerosene light and reflector. It was in line with the Maugers Beach Lighthouse. There was a small door that if we got on our hands and knees could access the 360-degree balcony with rails. What a view!"

We had no electricity; we used Aladdin kerosene lamps. We had no indoor plumbing other than the pump for cold water. We had an outhouse that in the winter I would take newspaper, fold in half, cut a hole, lay on the stove to get hot and then run like the dickens to the outhouse, and plump down so I had a warm seat to sit on – ingenious! We used the "thunder jug" (or poe) at night in the winter. We did have a radio. We went to church by radio. The last two years on the island we had a telephone."

The Range lighthouse was fully automated in 1969, replaced by a skeleton tower in 1973 and eventually torn down in 1976. The foundations of the building are still visible on McNabs island. More information about the Range Light can be found on our web site.

Fall Foliage Tours – October 24th, 2021

by Jackie Halsey

With white caps on the harbour and the wind whipping up the waves around the Maugers Beach Lighthouse, one hundred warmly dressed guests made the splashy journey to McNabs Island for this year's Fall Foliage Tours. The event was planned for the week before, but high winds prevented us from sailing that day, so we rescheduled for October 24th. Visitors came from all over Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. One guest was from St. Lucia.

In the lee of the chilly south-west wind, Royce Walker, welcomed participants to the island and outlined this year's choices of small group tours. They included: the classic Heritage tours to Fort McNab or Fort Ives, nature tours, an adventure tour to Thrumcap, a blustery 8 km coastal hike to Culliton Point and a leisurely-paced, storied tour to the old houses via the Range lighthouse site. Each tour was led by experienced guides.



Lighthouse at Maugers Beach Photo Credit: Cathy McCarthy

The stationery presentation given by Brian and Cathy Phelan at the site of the Victorian English gardens on the former Hugonin-Perrin Estate was hugely popular. Guests also got the chance to look inside the old Teahouse to see the nearly completed work, which with an immense amount of fundraising, and the dedicated hard work of numerous volunteers, is being turned into an Outdoor Education Centre.

Another popular stop was at the 6-inch gun in Fort McNab National Historic Site where WW1 enactors, Liam and Angus, dressed in period costume, related the history of the fort. Despite the cold, windy weather, probably the coldest Fall Foliage event in years, most of the participants came away having had a wonderful day. Many first-time visitors said they would like to come back.

The Fall Foliage event, apart from showing off the Island in all its Fall finery, is a fundraiser for the various projects that the "Friends" undertake on McNabs Island. This year, approximately \$750 dollars was raised from ticket sales, donations, and merchandising. All money raised will go towards the Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre.

What people had to say about the Fall Foliage Tour 2021

“Faye Power shared stories of her childhood, when we stopped at her former home, the Range Lighthouse. Eileen Power, a long-time member who is 85 years old, was on this tour and raved about how much she enjoyed the day.”

“Our tour was to the searchlights and Culliton Point. On our way there we found a soprano recorder and an artist's paint brush. Obviously, an earlier visitor was moved by the beauty of the view!”

“The group was captivated with all the stories from both of our GREAT storytellers. As everyone has stated, the wind was brisk until we found cover along the trail.”

“The presentation at the Victorian Gardens and Teahouse was more interesting than I could have imagined,” said one guest.

“We had a small but very engaged group, with lots of questions about both natural and historical assets. Each of the six members of our tour was a first-time visitor and they all expressed an interest in returning for another visit.”



Faye & Eileen at the Lighthouse Remains
Photo Credit: Dachia Joudrey



Yoga on the Beach Photo Credit: Ian Smith

After visiting the National Historic Site, we made a dash for Lighthouse Road, where Karen offered to lead the group in an impromptu yoga session. Everybody jumped at the opportunity, and it added a really fun element to the day. From there we broke onto the shoreline (and back into the wind), and continued our way south along the cobblestone, grass, and seaweed. At Thrumcap we found a spot out of the wind to have lunch.



McNabs Island Teahouse Project Update

by Royce Walker



The Teahouse team returned to the island Saturday March 26th for our first workday of 2022 to continue the physical transformation of the building into our Outdoor Education Center.

By December 2021, several aspects of the project had been completed including the new outdoor deck on the north side of the building, the solar power system, the skylight screens, and the carpentry repairs on the inside of the building. The work remaining to complete this phase of our project is to install the remaining window shutters and to complete the refurbishment the gable ends.

In 2021 we encountered a few issues with the fit up of the window shutters. Installing the metal shutters in the existing building stone walls posed a few challenges which needed to be thought through and solutions created. By the fall we had sorted out the problems, and installation was progressing more smoothly by December. At the end of our March 26th trip, we had three sets of shutters installed, with two more windows to do. We hope to complete these on our next trip.

We also started the outside repairs to the north gable end. Some work had been completed earlier on the gable framing from the inside of the building. The team was able to clean up the existing patchwork of windows and plywood from the original construction and sheath over the gable with new plywood. We applied Tyvek wrap in preparation for the board and batten siding, which should be completed on our next trip. The south gable had some work done in past years, but once the north gable is finished, we will return to install board and batten on that end as well.

Another important project milestone was met in March during the Friends meeting with DNRR Parks and Operations, when it was confirmed the repairs and construction at the Teahouse had met the expectations of DNRR to allow the Teahouse to be used by the Friends for public events.

The final steps to be completed before we can begin programs is the signing of a new Park Management Agreement. This will include use of the Teahouse
(cont. page 6)



Workers taking a break at the Teahouse
Photo Credit: Joanna Webber

(Teahouse Project Update cont. from page 5)

and the creation of a document outlining Teahouse Operating Procedures covering such things as, securing the building and building & grounds maintenance. Both efforts are underway and not expected to delay use of the building this season.

Now there are new opportunities for 2022. In terms of construction work, our next goal is to complete masonry work to repair cracks in the mortar of the stone walls and chimney and replace a couple missing stones in the walls. In addition, our plan is to refurbish the fireplace and install a wood burning insert and replace the cement floor with flagstone.

The second opportunity is the start of Outdoor Education programming, which we believe will begin a new range of activities and attract new visitors to McNabs Island. Watch for more information about programs later in the season.

The physical renovation work at the Teahouse began in the summer of 2019 with the goal of securing the building envelope and making it available to the Friends as the hub of our island activities. It feels we are getting within sight of finishing this first phase of the work in early 2022.



Teahouse comparing present to past photo
Photo Credit: John van Gorp

There have been several challenges and opportunities along the way, including the COVID-19 experience, but through it all our volunteer team has always stepped up to solve problems and push the work along. We have also had immense help from our regular partners A&M Sea Charters and DNRR, NSCC, suppliers and other supporters who see the value of our Teahouse vision. Our thanks to everyone who has made the Teahouse project progress with success.

There will be a slide show presentation during the 32nd Annual General Meeting on April 19th, 2022 to showcase all the hard work volunteers have done to bring this piece of history back to life and make the structure usable for future programming.



32nd Annual General Meeting Friends of McNabs Island Society

Tuesday April 19th, 2022

Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History
auditorium at 7 PM

Meeting will be in person with a Zoom
meeting occurring simultaneously for
those who prefer to enjoy at home.
(registration & link will be provided later).

Premiere of the film *Ghost Gear*

There will also be a slide show on the
transformation of the Teahouse.

Upcoming Events

31st McNabs Island Beach Cleanup

Sunday June 5th

rain date Sunday June 12th

Registration via Eventbrite later this
spring.

Heritage and Nature Tours

every Sunday throughout July and
August

First date: July 3rd

Tickets will be available later this spring.

If you want to become a tour guide,
please get in touch!



Summer Student Nikko
untangling rope found on
McNabs Island. A fraction of the
thousands of pounds of ghost
gear cleared from the island.



Volunteer engulfed in rope and
carrying traps recovered from the
shores of McNabs Island.
Animals die from entanglement
every single day.



Ghost Gear of McNabs Island

Finding Local Solutions to a Global Problem

is a film by Jerry Lockett
and was funded by the Ghost Gear
Fund of Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

This film will premiere at the 32nd
Annual General Meeting
April 19th, 2022

2021 WATERWAYS STEWARDSHIP AWARD

Cathy McCarthy is this year's recipient of the Canoe Kayak Nova Scotia's Waterways Stewardship Award presented on December 11th at their annual meeting.

Cathy was nominated for her tireless efforts on behalf of McNabs and Lawlor Islands. I nominate her for organizing & participating in 30 annual shore cleanups of McNabs Island.

The latest cleanup on Sept. 19th, 2021, resulted in the removal of about 800 bags of beach trash and 80 derelict lobster traps. Clean ups, cumulatively, cleared about 16 000 bags of garbage since 1991!



Cathy McCarthy with her Award
Photo Credit: Sarah d'Apollonia

Cathy has been president of the Friends of McNabs for many years & is one of its founding members. She spearheaded the production of a map of the island, development & maintenance of trails, the erection of outhouses & a kiosk. In addition she organized & edited the publication of two editions of "Discover McNabs Island".

Thanks to her and her colleagues, the entire Lawlor Island and most of McNabs Island were designated as a provincial park in 2002, securing the islands' undisturbed future.

Cathy McCarthy is a stellar example of effective volunteerism. She fully deserves this award!

Nominated and article written by Dusan Soudek on October 17, 2021

Annual membership to the Friends of McNabs Island Society runs on the calendar year, includes a year's subscription to the society's Rucksack newsletter and offers discounts for our events.

Members support the ongoing care and appropriate development of this 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 well-being 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

directly via our website: mcnabsisland.ca/membership-application

send a cheque payable to:

The Friends of McNabs Island Society

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If you are already a member, invite your friends and coworkers to join.

As more people become aware of and support these gems,
the better we will be able to take care of them.

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