



The Rucksack

Newsletter of the Friends of McNabs Island Society

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Summer 2023

Friends of McNabs Island Society Beach Cleanup 2023

by Jacqueline Halsey

Due to the extreme forest fire risk that closed Nova Scotia Provincial Parks in early June, the annual Beach Cleanup had to be rescheduled. On June 25th, 130 volunteers picked up approximately 250 bags of garbage. Although the number of lobster traps collected was down this year, lobster bands, tags, bait bags, broken fish crates, and fisheries debris continue to be a significant part of the garbage collected.

This year along with the usual tires, styrofoam and plastics, some weathered money and a silver spoon was found.

A huge thank you to teams from McInnes Cooper, CBCL, Butterfield Support Services, Halifax and Hammonds Plains Pathfinders, the ALNASS Community Association and the many individuals and families who came out to help us keep McNabs Island looking its best.

Financial support for this year's cleanup came from Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Ghost Gear Fund.



Ghost gear loaded on a boat
and headed for disposal
Photo Credit: Jacqueline Halsey

Friends of McNabs Island Society
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We welcome contributions,
ideas and feedback.

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Membership Appreciation for 2023

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.

Recipients of the 10 years pin this year are:

Vanessa Smith - family

Brian & Cathy Phelan – family

Barbara Henderson - Individual

—•••••—
Cathy McCarthy presents Denyse Contrasty with the Special Friend of McNabs Island Award at the 2023 AGM

Photo Credit: Tricia Stewart

A New Partnership this Summer

by Dachia Joudrey

For many years, due to high transportation costs, some youth groups in the Halifax-Dartmouth area couldn't bring their participants to McNabs Island. This year FOMIS wanted to alleviate this and offer a subsidy to these groups so that all young people could have a chance to experience what the park has to offer. Sponsorships were sought from several businesses in the HRM area. We are very pleased and grateful that accounting firm, Butterfield Support Services and MacInnes Cooper provided funds to sponsor youth groups to go to the island for a fun-filled adventure day this summer.

In consultation with the Boys and Girls Club of Halifax-Dartmouth, FOMIS was able to offer subsidies to this group for three trips to the island. On July 13 & July 21, these groups enjoyed a very active day exploring Fort McNab, learning the island's history, collecting shells and sea glass on Maughers Beach, taking part in a treasure hunt and visiting the newly restored Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre. The August 18th trip was postponed due to rain.

The Boys and Girls Club commented that "from identifying local flora and fauna to learning about the island's rich history, our kids had an absolute blast. The smiles on their faces were priceless and the memories made will last a lifetime."

The Club extended thanks to the Friends "for their incredible support and for running engaging activities that made our trip even more memorable. Your dedication to fostering a love for nature in our children is truly inspiring."



Children enjoying activities at the breach area of Maughers Beach
Photo credit: Dachia Joudrey

Teahouse Outdoor Education Center (OEC) Update

by Tineke Weld

Since accessing funding provided by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Teahouse interior is nearly complete. New additions include bookcases from Lake City Woodworkers and a beautiful coffee table inlaid with a map of McNabs Island. The Outdoor Education Committee is developing movable informational panels and other interactive elements, and continuing to furnish and develop the interior of the building.

On the deck of the OEC, our volunteers have installed an information panel highlighting the history and use of the Teahouse. We are also considering installing some interactive activity modules in the woods near the Centre, specifically aimed at youth, but also to engage program participants and passers-by alike.



Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre work party May 20 2023
Photo credit: Unknown

In addition to our long-running Heritage and Nature Tours, the Outdoor Education Committee is developing specialized tours for youth and other groups with particular interests. Over the winter, we hope to start contacting groups and organizations who we think might have an interest in one of our programs or running their program through the Teahouse with the Friends facilitating. If your organization or someone you know may be interested in learning more, please reach out to us at:

info@mcnabsisland.ca

Ocean's Day Event by Jacqueline Halsey

Once again, The Friends of McNabs Island Society took part in the Maritime Museum's annual celebration of World Oceans Day on June 2nd this year. They joined 30 exhibitors from across the Province in creating displays exploring the ocean's role in the lives of Maritimers. Our two-table display attracted a lot of attention.

Younger visitors played with colourful felt fish and looked at the insect display. Older visitors were interested in our Heritage tours, the newly finished Teahouse Education Centre and the continuing "Ghost Gear" project. Thank you to Davlyn and Brianna, our returning Summer Staff, for setting up the display and to Board member volunteers who made the day so successful.

Sarah Frost's McNabs Island Memories

by Jason Kirker

On warm summer nights, my memory takes me back to wonderful moments on McNabs Island. It was a cherished time for me on an island that was able to bring out the best in my family as we laughed, explored and appreciated the simple things that made life beautiful.

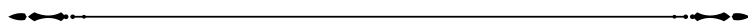
Many, many years ago I was a young girl growing up in the village of Ferguson's Cove, just outside the city of Halifax. We could see McNabs Island from the high bluffs overlooking the entrance to Halifax Harbour. For my mother and little sister and I, McNabs Island was a place of adventure that brought peace and happiness to our family during the sunny summer holidays.

Life wasn't easy most of the time and my father was burdened with many challenges. He was a proud Newfoundlander who had a commanding voice and a stern temperament that was amplified when he was drinking. My mother worked tirelessly as a waitress at the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron. It didn't pay a lot so she needed to work both day and night. It was tough getting by through the autumn, winter and spring seasons however, in the summer my family had a bit of respite.

My father loved piloting his boat on the water. This was where he felt most at peace. Motoring and fishing allowed him to shine like the mackerel and cod he would catch. He would let out a booming laugh as he heard people call him the "cod father" and hearing his laugh would make mom and us kids laugh, too. We loved to see dad happy because those moments were rare.

On summer weekends, my father would take us on wonderful adventures to McNabs Island. It was a mysterious place filled with love, laughter and most importantly, peace. From the boat we swam to the crystalline sandy beaches of McNabs and spent the day beachcombing as a family. In the evenings, my father would anchor the boat in Wreck Cove for the night and we would sleep to the sounds of waves lapping the boat's hull. We would wake to the smell of salty air and Dad frying breakfast. I remember my father's radio playing Frank Sinatra and it makes me smile. These were magical times for me because just for a little while we were a perfect family.

As time passed and I became an adult, my memories of my family and my father were of our best times. It may be raining or snowing in Halifax, but when I look at McNabs Island from those Ferguson's Cove hills, I only see the happy summer days from times long ago when we could all laugh and smile.

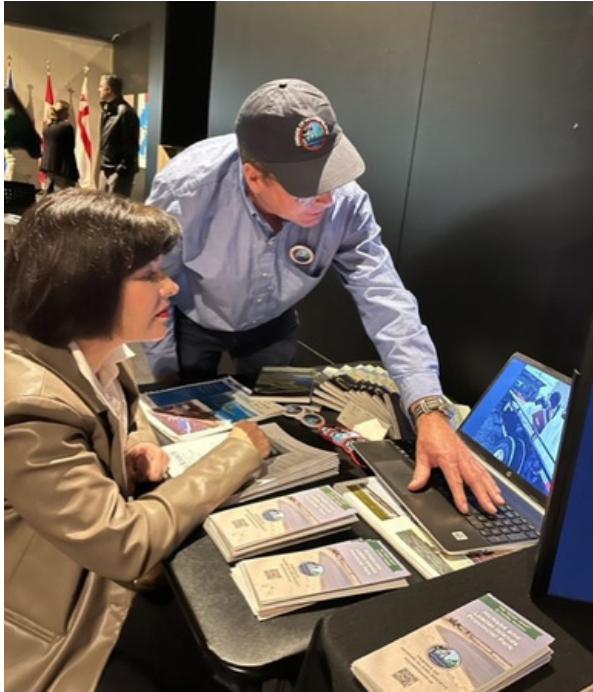


A pleasure boat prepares to depart for McNabs Island
Photo credit: Theresa RolletMcWilliams



Tourism Relief Fund by Jacqueline Halsey

On May 24th at the Natural History Museum in Halifax, the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, then Minister responsible for Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA),



announced fifty more grants from the Tourism Relief Fund. This fund is designed to reinvigorate the economy by boosting tourism, an industry decimated by the pandemic. To a crowded room of politicians and tourism providers, she talked about supporting diverse, innovative tourism ventures. She gave six examples, one of them being the Friends of McNabs re-purposed Teahouse Outdoor Education Centre. The Society will use the grant money to develop interpretive and resource materials for the Centre. A display table, set up and staffed by Tricia, Davlyn, Royce and Jackie drew a great deal of interest. Minister Petitpas was so impressed she planned on visiting the Island this summer.

Royce Walker showing the Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor the important work being done by the Society. Photo credit: Tricia Stewart

Join the Friends of McNabs Island Society for our annual Fall Foliage Tours of McNabs Island Provincial Park on Sunday, October 15th.

The rain date is the following Sunday, October 22nd.

We offer a variety of tours at the McNabs Island Fall Foliage Tours. There are two **Heritage tours** - one to Fort Ives and the North End of McNabs Island and the other to Fort McNab National Historic Site and the South End of the island; a **Nature Tour**; an **Adventure Tour** to Thrumcap suitable for hikers over 16 years of age, a **Family Tour** for parents/guardians with children 12 years and under, and the **Hangman's Beach Tour** based on the characters and setting from Thomas Raddall's historical fiction.

Travel to McNabs Island with Ambassatours (Murphy's on the Water) from Cable Wharf, 1751 Lower Water Street on the Halifax Waterfront departing at 9:30 AM Sunday, October 15, 2023. Departure from McNabs Island is at 4:00 with the return to Halifax by 5:00 PM.

Everyone must get their tickets in advance via Eventbrite!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mcnabs-island-fall-foliage-tours-october-15-2023-halifax-departure-930am-tickets-562628164987?aff=oddtcreator>

Ticket costs: \$40 (Adults who are not members of Friends of McNabs Island), \$20 (children/youth under 16), and \$30 (Friends of McNabs Island members).

Children 4 years or younger are FREE but still need a ticket.

Garrison Pier has Withstood the Test of Time

By Catherine McCarthy

Garrison Pier provided 125 years of service through two world wars, the Halifax Explosion, and several hurricanes. It was slated for demolition in the early 1990s but the Friends of McNabs Island petitioned then Minister of National Defence, Kim Campbell, to save it for the island park.

Today, there is a lot of uncertainty over the future of Garrison Pier. Nova Scotia Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR), the government department responsible for provincial parks, told us in the spring that they planned to tear it down. They planned to replace it with a new pier in Timmonds Cove on the Shearwater side of the island. Building a new wharf in Timmonds Cove would be cheaper because the cove is deeper and in a more sheltered location.

We have been advocating for a new wharf on the Eastern Passage/Shearwater side of the island ever since DNRR tore down the old dilapidated Range Pier nearly 20 years ago. But we never imagined that the government would eliminate access to the island from the Halifax side altogether.

The Friends of McNabs Island and many other organizations are opposed to the idea of accessing the island park from just Timmonds Cove. Recently, DNRR awarded a contract to Group ATN, part of the M-5 Communications group, to do public consultations. The government has also awarded another contract for a Coastal Study. We were not provided with any details except that both consultants' reports are due in November.

McNabs Island is already financially inaccessible for many people because of the high cost of transportation to get to the island. If this plan to relocate the main access pier to Timmonds Cove goes ahead, the island will become even more inaccessible, except for avid hikers who can make the long 6 km round trip trek to Fort McNab National Historic Site or the shorter 4 km round trip to Maughers Beach – two of the most remarkable features of interest that draw visitors to McNab Island.



2x4 barricade on Garrison Pier deters people from walking on that side of the pier because one of the pilings has given way
Photo Credit: Cathy McCarthy





W.W.L. Lyttleton and his sons, date unknown.
Photo credit: private collection P.G. Proctor.

Genealogy Corner

Westcote Whitechurch Lewis Lyttleton was born in Sri Lanka in 1818. In 1840, Captain Lyttleton and his regiment arrived in Halifax. He married Joanna McNab, granddaughter of Peter McNab II and Joanna Culliton in 1842. He was posted back to England in 1845 and upon retirement returned to McNabs Island. He purchased the southern part of the island from his father-in-law, James McNab, and lived in the McNab Family homestead overlooking McNabs Pond. He moved to Tasmania in 1867 and eventually returned to England. He died in 1886.

Lyttleton was an amateur topographical artist. His paintings of McNabs Island are stored in the Nova Scotia Archives.

For more family history, check out his profile on the McNabs genealogy site:

<https://mcnabsislandgenealogy.ca/getperson.php?personID=167&tree=mcnabs>



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 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:

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

send a cheque payable to:

The Friends of McNabs Island Society
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CCRA Number 88 474 194 RR0001

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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
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