



The Rucksack

Newsletter of the Friends of McNabs Island Society

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Volume 30 Issue 2

Summer 2021

2020 Annual Report by Cathy McCarthy

In 2020, the Friends of McNabs Island Society did not celebrate our 30th anniversary due to the pandemic. We organized guided heritage tours in the summer and fall, a beach cleanup of Lawlor Island and held several work parties to restore the Teahouse once it was safe to do so.

Beach Clean-ups

The annual McNabs Island Cleanup, traditionally held in June, was cancelled. Instead we organized a limited cleanup of Lawlor Island on September 27th collecting about 400 bags of garbage from the island. Most of the garbage was fishing related debris (ghost gear) including dozens of lobster pots and a considerable amount of rope. There was also a lot of municipal garbage and materials that should be recycled.

Because of the pandemic, we didn't promote the Lawlor Island cleanup. Instead we recruited our members, the Shearwater Yacht Club, and the team from McInnes Cooper who help us every year with the McNabs Island cleanup. About 50 people participated with half of the volunteers paddling over to the island and the rest travelling with Taylor Made Tours from Eastern Passage.

Since 1991, the Friends have collected over 14,500 bags of garbage from the beaches of McNabs and Lawlor Islands Provincial Park - making the cleanup effort the largest and longest running beach cleanup in the Maritimes.

Island Projects & Activities

In 2020, we continued the renovations to the abandoned Teahouse transforming it into an Outdoor Education Centre. Work was halted by the pandemic but started up again in the summer. Pandemic protocols were followed and volunteers, spearheaded by Royce Walker, kept the project going. We received some funding from NS Communities, Culture and Heritage, Councillor Bill Karsten, Oceans North, donations from our members and raised funds from book and note card sales to continue the work on the Teahouse.

Brian and Cathy Phelan and volunteers continued the restoration work on the Victorian Gardens trying to keep the Japanese knotweed under control. At the end of the year, through an agreement with Dept of Fisheries and Oceans, our volunteers cleared out the path to the site of the Rear Range McNabs Island Lighthouse off Old Military Road. This was the home of Faye (Cleveland) Power who grew up there. The lighthouse was torn down in the 1970s and replaced by range lights – skeleton towers. The old lighthouse site is a popular spot on our guided tours.

The Friends 30th Annual General Meeting was delayed due to the pandemic but finally held via Zoom on June 10, 2020. We held a business meeting only with no guest speaker.

Friends of McNabs Island Society

The Rucksack

Included with membership

Web address: <http://www.mcnabsisland.ca>

Contact Address:

The Friends of McNabs Island
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Halifax, NS B3K 5Y1

We welcome contributions, ideas and feedback.

DISCLAIMER: The articles contained in this newsletter are the property of the authors and no portion may be duplicated without permission from the author/editor. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Society. We cannot vouch for groups, businesses or activities described in this newsletter.

Content is for members' interest only.

Friends of McNabs Island Board 2020–2021

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- Cathy McCarthy

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- Brian Phelan
- Dachia Joudrey (2nd VP)

Secretary

- Denyse Contrasty

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- Cathy Phelan

Membership

- Cathy McKenzie

Newsletter Editor

- Marilyn Forrest

Trails Committee Chair

- Brian Phelan

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- Faye Power
- Jackie Halsey
- Tricia Stewart
- Ian Smith

Last summer we hired three summer staff, Cassandra Curtis, Tineke Weld and Iain Crowell, through the Canada Summer Jobs program. They were all recent graduates who led guided tours for us all summer. In addition they worked on several projects including a Recreation Plan for the island, an inventory of the island flora, adding stakes with the names of the introduced species in the English Gardens and starting an Archives Committee to catalogue and archive the Barry Edwards fonds donated to the society by Barry and his family. As well during 2020, we continued to work on our on-line interactive map that will be launched in 2021.

In 2020, all school trips to the island were cancelled. In the summer we began our guided Heritage and Nature Tours each Sunday. These proved to be very popular and sold out quickly. In addition, there were a few private guided tours for groups and other organizations.

Our Fall Foliage tours were held on October 18th, but with reduced numbers due to the 40% capacity limit on the Murphy's boat Harbour Queen during the pandemic. This event sold out quickly.

All our meetings during the pandemic moved online. In 2020, we started a Genealogy Committee to organize all the information we receive about island descendants. A separate website will be launched in 2021. We met with government officials in an effort to work out agreements for the Teahouse/Outdoor Education Centre, and trail maintenance and repairs.

In 2020, HRM finally introduced a recreational trail funding program that we had been advocating for for years. However again, McNabs Island has been excluded from funding because HRM says the island trails don't connect to the mainland trails and that the island trails are not on HRM lands. HRM doesn't recognize that Halifax Harbour has been a connecting waterway route for centuries.

There has been no update on when Develop Nova Scotia (formerly Waterfront Development) plans to release their draft Visitor Strategy for the Harbour Islands that they presented to us in March 2019. Their draft plan faced criticism for not complying with the principles of the Park Management Plan and ignoring half of the island.

The society published three newsletters in 2020 (Vol. 29:1, 29:2 and 29:3). We have 250 members; renewals have been slow during the pandemic. Only 167 members paid their dues last year and 26 are new members. We are active on Facebook with 4,500 followers, our Twitter account has 2,800 followers and our Instagram account has 1000 followers.

For the past 31 years the Friends have been the voice of McNabs Island – answering numerous requests for information from local residents and people around the world – fundraising to improve the trails, park facilities and to transform the island teahouse into an outdoor education centre – all of this to make McNabs Island a welcoming natural environment park for everyone.

Prepared by:

Catherine McCarthy

Friends of McNabs Island Society – April 14, 2021

Discover McNabs Island On A Guided Heritage Or Nature Tour This Summer!

Discover McNabs Island this summer by joining the Friends of McNabs Island on guided Heritage and Nature tours of McNabs Island. Tours will be held every Sunday throughout July and August. July 5, 11, 18, 25, and August 8, 15, 22 and 29. All Nova Scotia Public Health guidelines are followed for all our events.

Hike through Canadian history on a 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. Discover where Bill Lynch, the Midway King, got his start in the fairground business. Learn the tragic story of the SS England, stricken with cholera and quarantined off McNabs Island in 1866. Visit the Victorian Gardens and the ruins of the A.J. Davis Soda Pop Factory.

On a Nature Tour, you'll watch Nova Scotia's provincial bird, the osprey, fish in the island's coves; see where the endangered barn swallows live and learn about coastal plants and island animal habitats. Observe the ebb and flow of the tide in McNabs Pond, and maybe even go for a swim at sandy Maugers Beach.

Our Hangman's Beach Tour will not happen this year and we look forward to it next year.

Departure: Eastern Passage with A&M Sea Charters, 87 Government Wharf Rd, Fisherman's Cove. Cost: \$25 (members); \$15 (youth under 16); \$35 (non-members); babies/ toddlers under 3 are free. Times: 10:00-3:30 and 11:00-4:30 Space is limited to 25 people per trip to ensure social distancing.

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

For more information: <https://mcnabsisland.ca/events> or info@mcnabsisland.ca .

<https://www.facebook.com/McNabsIsland>

<https://twitter.com/McNabsIsland>

<https://www.instagram.com/friendsofmcnabsisland/>

Welcome To The McNabs Island Genealogy Website

by Cathy McKenzie

In the last issue of the Rucksack, you were introduced to the new genealogy website that was under development (<https://mcnabsisland.ca/sites/default/files/Rucksack-March-21.pdf>).

Today we are advising members that the website is going live with Phase I and you can access the site at: www.mcnabsislandgenealogy.ca Take your time to become familiar with how it works. The front page is your entry to a comprehensive genealogical database with the usual data collected by family historians. Read the notes and histories for more in-depth information. Phase I began with Peter McNab I and Susannah Kuhn. If any of your ancestors were those who married into these families, try the search and see if they are in the database. Some of the surnames you will find include Ross, Bissett, Howe, Bullock, Brown and Browne, Cassels, Cook, Evans, Lyttleton, Hugonin, Knowles and many more!

While Phase I is, of course, an ongoing piece of work we will begin preparations for Phase II throughout the summer.

Beginning with early European settlers who were on McNabs Island, we will start researching, for example, the individuals and families who may appear on early Census and poll tax records for the island. Some of these can be viewed at the Nova Scotia Archives: <https://archives.novascotia.ca/census/results/?Search=mcnabs>

Have you been a family history researcher for a while and would love to be part of this genealogy project? Get in touch with us to see what it is all about. Our email address is info@mcnabsislandgenealogy.ca

Enjoy The New Genealogy Website !

Peggy Homans Chapman –Lead Researcher

Sandi Corbin – Researcher

Allan Wands – Research Assistant

Iain McLeod – Website Tech

Cathy McKenzie – Organizer



Scan this code with your smartphone



Tour restarting after lunch
North End of the island near Hugonin Point
Photo Credit: Zachary MacMillan-Kenny

Meet McNabs Island 2021 Summer Interpreters

By Zachary MacMillan-Kenny

Nikko was born in Halifax, but lived in Alberta for the last 14 years and just moved back home! She has a degree in ecotourism and outdoor leadership from Mount Royal University, and she has been working in the outdoor field for 8 years. Her last guiding job was as an interpretive raft guide, she is a certified canoe constructor, and the last time she worked on an island was in Dominica where she did her practicum with an ecovilla. She is excited to use her outdoor experience to help the Friends of McNabs Island Society promote recreation and active living.

Zach was born in Moncton, and grew up combing the beach at his family cottage. He has an honours degree in marine biology with a minor in ocean sciences and a certificate in aquaculture from Dalhousie. He will be pursuing his master's degree at Memorial University of Newfoundland which will focus on seafloor ecology. His last summer job was as a mosquito control technician where he monitored the mosquito population in the greater Moncton area. He is a scuba diver, photographer, and videographer and has a passion for marine life. Zach is excited to use the knowledge he has gained throughout his education in addition to his artistic abilities to demonstrate the coastal impacts McNabs island has endured and/or will endure in the coming years due to the effects of climate change.

Kirstin was born in Halifax, and grew up on the eastern shore of NS. She has a degree in biology with a minor in French and a certificate in animal behaviour from Dalhousie and recently completed her education degree at St. Francis Xavier. Last summer Kirstin worked with the Nova Scotia department of Lands and Forestry where she developed outreach and educational material. She is an avid birder and has a passion for ornithology. She is looking forward to working with the Friends of McNabs this summer to promote Nova Scotia's unique biodiversity by bringing her perspective into educational programming on the island.



Photo: L to R Nikko; Zach; Kirstin
Ives Cove
Credit: Cathy McCarthy

Get to Know Your Board Member

Hi! I am Cathy McKenzie. I am Membership Secretary for Friends of McNabs Island Society.

I worked in the insurance industry for 40 years and am now retired. I volunteer for a seniors, home, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, United Way, on the Board for Friends of McNabs Island Society and this year became Membership Secretary for the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society. I have sponsored a child for World Vision since 2006. Retired from the insurance industry since June 2016, I now work part-time as an after school leader and a lunch time monitor. I LOVE both jobs as I love working with kids.



Cathy McKenzie enjoying the island

My free time includes crafts, knitting, puzzles, sewing, swimming and travelling with my husband. I love family events because family is very important to me.

I got involved with Friends of McNabs Island Society with the Annual Beach Clean Up in 2011 and was captivated by the island.

My Role as a Board Member with Friends of McNabs Island Society is as Membership Secretary. My involvement includes: mailing out the newsletter, setting up new committees, taking care of the Inventory, selling our books to retailers, and organizer/ facilitator of our monthly Board zoom meetings. I also am a member of the Archive Committee and I facilitate the Genealogy Project (mentioned elsewhere in this edition).

We visited Wreck Cove in our boat for almost 7 years, walking around that area; and we love to visit Maugers Beach too.

I enjoy the work I do for Friends of McNab's Island Society and I love this beautiful island.

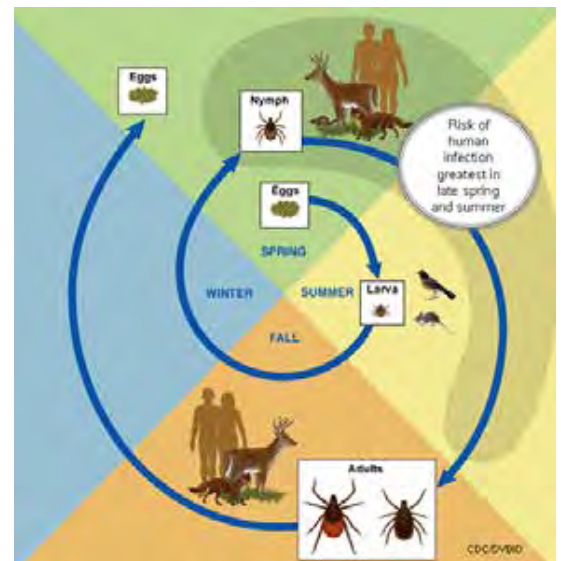
TICKS – A Challenge in the Outdoors

by Jacqueline Halsey

Nova Scotia is a hot spot for ticks. That's a fact. And the best way of staying "tick" safe outdoors is by being informed and by taking some basic precautions. To this end, Halifax Field Naturalists recently hosted a Webinar on ticks with local expert Andrew Hebda.

The following are some of the main points of Hebda's talk.

- Ticks are members of the spider family. There are several species in Nova Scotia but the Black legged Deer tick is the one to be most concerned about as it can carry bacteria and the virus associated with Lyme disease.
- A tick's life span has three stages – larva, nymph, and adult. Ticks over-winter as adults which means every season is tick season but they are most prolific in late spring and summer. The nymphs are no bigger than a poppy seed.



Tick life cycle from Centre for Disease Control

- Ticks are prevalent in wooded and grassy areas.
- Unlike mosquitoes and black fly, ticks choose one host and do not go from person to person. You will not hear them or feel their bite.
- The best protection is: a good bug-spray; light coloured clothing; pants tucked into socks and most importantly a thorough inspection of your body when you get home. This includes all your body's cracks and crevices, which are favorite places for ticks.
- If you find a tick on you, don't panic. It takes at least twenty four hours for a tick to latch on and do any harm. You can tell how long it's been feeding by the size of its body.
- Remove the tick with a tick key or tweezers. Take a picture, note the date you were bitten and watch for symptoms, just in case. <https://etick.ca/> is an excellent site for identification and information.
- Avoid folk remedies. Coating the tick with Vaseline will shock it into disgorging its stomach contents into the host. Running a finger round and round to make it dizzy won't work either, as ticks do not have a head or inner ear. They just have an eating apparatus.

For more information, check out the really good Nova Scotia government site on ticks. <https://novascotia.ca/ticksafeCared>

Cared For The Ponies

[Extracted from original clipping of Dartmouth Diary column.]

In a column from the MAIL-STAR, dated October 29, 1979, titled Dartmouth Diary, Bill McCall talks to Will Marks (also referred to in the article as Bill Marks) about his connection to McNabs Island. The article, pictured here but not readable, shares that Mr. Marks was 81 years old at the time of the interview and lived in Eastern Passage.

Will Marks shares that his fondest memories are of the 12 years he spent on McNabs Island caring for the Shetland ponies of the Bill Lynch Shows.

“He occupied a comfortable bungalow on the island, rent free. And his job was to play nursemaid, year round, to about 10 ponies stabled there in a barn. He spent 12 years on the Island with the ponies, losing only 2 of the animals by misfortune. One pony got tangled up in a wire fence and the other was shot by a passage hunter who had mistaken the pony for a deer. Those Shetland ponies were favorites for years in the Bill Lynch Shows around the Maritimes.”

Mr. and Mrs. R.A. Conrod (Gladys Lynch) and Joe Brown are mentioned as friends from the island. Joe Brown is identified as a caretaker on the Royal Canadian Navy portion of the Island.

The writer goes on to share his own experiences spending his summer vacations on McNabs Island in the early 1920s. His father's company, the 6 Field Coy, Royal Canadian Engineers, did summer training exercises at McNabs. They arrived on the Island via “Duty Boats” and stayed in camp huts not far from the rifle range and near Strawberry Hill. Mr. McCall goes on to say he roamed the island with “the Tufts boys” and members of the Harcourt family.

(Editor: I was unable to locate any more information on this story with a basic internet search. If any of our readers would like to add to the story, please contact us at info@mcnabsisland.ca)



Original newspaper clipping provided by Faye Power

***Support our work by buying
Friends of McNabs Island merchandise as gifts.***

Our note cards feature a sketch of the Teahouse by artist Emma FitzGerald and our Discover McNabs Island book tells you nearly everything you need to know about the island. Our crests and pins are popular with youth and collectors.



**Friends of McNabs
\$20.00**

**Notecards
\$15.00 for 5-pack**

**Crest
\$5.00**

**Pin
\$2.00**

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

As a member, you will be supporting 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
or 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**

**Visit our website or contact us info@mcnabsisland.ca or mcnabsisland.ca/contact
Cathy (902-434-2254).**

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If you are already a member, invite your friends to join you. Talk to coworkers. As more people become aware of and support the island, the better we will be able, together, to take care of it.