

The Rucksack



Newsletter of **The Friends of McNabs Island Society**

Volume Eleven, Issue Three

Autumn/Winter 2002

McNabs Island declared provincial park

Insert photo of McNabs Island Society members in front of new sign.

From l to r: Doug Bowes, Carolyn Gallagher, Victor Dingle, Barry Edwards, Colin Stewart, Catherine McCarthy, Carolyn Mont and Royce Walker. Photo: Dusan Soudek

By Catherine McCarthy

On November 4, Premier John Hamm and Natural Resources Minister Tim Olive announced the official designation of McNabs and Lawlor Islands as a provincial park.

About 100 people stood in the sunshine outside Boondocks Restaurant in Eastern Passage and watched as Premier Hamm made the announcement and unveiled a new McNabs and Lawlor Islands Provincial Park sign.

Premier Hamm told the crowd that his government "made a commitment to Nova Scotians to preserve and protect our

environment for future generations" and that, "Today's announcement is another example of our government keeping its word."

The Premier went on to tell the crowd how significant the islands were to the provincial park system noting the historical and natural features that the Friends of McNabs have come to know and appreciate. Later, I asked the Premier and Minister Olive if they had visited the islands. Neither of them had.

Many familiar "Friends" were in the crowd, but noticeably missing was Brian Kinsman, the senior park planner, who has

Park continued on Page 2

(Park, continued from Page 1)

worked on McNabs and Lawlor Island planning issues for over a decade.

Brian, who facilitated the park advisory committee meetings for the past two years, was called out of town on other department business. The Friends of McNabs Island thank Brian for his tireless work over the years in supporting the vision of McNabs and Lawlor Islands Provincial Park.

The draft management plan for McNabs and Lawlor Islands prepared by the McNabs and Lawlor Islands Provincial Park Advisory Committee and DNR staff was released in August. Around 150 people attended the open houses held in Halifax, Dartmouth and Eastern Passage

during October. DNR received 30 public comment submissions by the Nov. 15th deadline. Some of these suggestions, if appropriate, will be incorporated into the final plan.

The Friends support most of the principles outlined in the plan and made a submission, which is available on the our website, www.mcnabsisland.ca. One of our chief concerns about the plan is the lack of public funding for the new park. The government is looking toward community groups and businesses to develop and manage the provincially-owned park.

The draft management plan is available on-line at:
www.gov.ns.ca/natr/parks/mcnabs.

Paddle and Clean-up

By Dusan Soudek

Eight canoeists and sea kayakers took part in the 5th annual McNabs Island Paddle and Clean-up, co-sponsored by The Friends and by Canoe Kayak Nova Scotia, on a sunny and calm September 14. Again, we put-in near Dooks Wharf on the mainland, and made our way along the forested western coast of McNabs Island, stopping here and there at narrow shingle beaches to collect litter.

We made our way to Back (Wreck) Cove where we paused for lunch and for a walk along the portage across the island to McNabs Pond. As there was no interest among the sea kayakers to carry our boats to the pond and then to circumnavigate the northern portion of the island, we continued towards Lawlor Island. Here we cleaned-up a sheltered cove and several strips of

Insert picture of canoes & garbage bags.

Above: Paddlers and their successful haul. Photo: Dusan Soudek
beach.

A full circumnavigation of Lawlor Island followed. We were impressed by the eroding clay cliffs at the outer ends of the two islands, and by an unexpectedly large and breaking swell in the shoals off the tip of Lawlor Island.

Despite the leisurely pace of the outing, Mike Tilley of the McNabs Island Ferry Company reports that we collected an incredible total of 62 garbage bags of litter! All local kayakers and canoeists are invited for next year's paddle. We will be back!

Dal students visit island

By Carolyn Mont

Every fall in Halifax marks the arrival of new university students to the city. Many of them take part in orientation programs that include on and off campus activities. This year, the School of Planning at Dalhousie University had a new twist on orientation.

In an effort to help the students in the graduate program to familiarise themselves with more than just the downtown areas of Halifax, Susan Guppy of the School of Planning, arranged for the students to spend a day on McNabs Island. Other staff members who were involved in the excursion were Patricia Manuel, John Zuck and Jill Grant. On Saturday, September 14, Catherine McCarthy and Carolyn Mont, of the Friends of McNabs Island Society, were there to lead more than fifty students and their friends on tours of McNabs, learning the history of the island while hiking along various trails.

The day was sunny and crisp. Not only did the students have an enjoyable hike; they also got to know one another better through the experience. As their year progresses, it is expected that they will have project work which will bring them back to McNabs.

Insert cropped photo of Premier Hamm here.

Notices

Dinner and Silent Auction

Our Annual Dinner and Silent Auction will again be held at RA Park, on Saturday, February 23, 2003. This event will feature a return of Dennis Williams on the piano. Seats are limited. Book early by calling Victor Dingle (463-4761) for reservations.

Discover McNabs Island

Do you have that hard-to-buy-for on your Christmas list? Why not consider a copy of our book Discover McNabs Island? It is available for \$10.00, at local bookstores or by calling Carolyn at 477-0187.

McNabs Island Poster

We are currently in the process of having our poster updated. The new version should be ready early in the New Year. Watch this spot for more information.

Wildlife Fest

On Sunday, Sept. 15, Eastern Passage hosted a Wildlife Fest. A variety of organizations, whose focus is 'our great outdoors', set up information booths at Fisherman's Cove. It was a great opportunity to meet like-minded people and the event was a success. The Friends of McNabs Island Society's booth received a lot of attention, with many people stopping by for information and a chat.

Our booth was attended by Victor Dingle and Barry Edwards, with assistance from long time Friend, Doris Shrader. We hope to return to next year's Wildlife Fest.

Left: Premier John Hamm at Fisherman's Cove helps unveil the new McNabs Island sign designating it as a provincial park on November 4, 2002. Photo: Dusan Soudek.

**Mail Me! THE FRIENDS OF MCNABS ISLAND SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION and RENEWAL FORM**

new membership renewal
I enclose \$_____ for:
 donation supporting membership (\$50)
 individual membership (\$15) sustaining membership (\$100)
 family membership (\$20) newsletter only (\$15)

Name: _____

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Willing to help out? _____

Annual membership to the Friends of McNabs Island Society starts on the date of payment of dues and includes a year's subscription to the society's quarterly newsletter, The Rucksack. We thank you for your continued support, and welcome your interest! Send money or cheque, payable to **The Friends of McNabs Island Society** to: PO Box 31240, Gladstone RPO, Halifax, NS, B3K 5Y1 or phone Carolyn Mont at 477-0187 for membership inquiries.

Fall Foliage Tour

By Carolyn Mont

Every fall, the Friends of McNabs Island Society hosts a fall tour on the island. This year it was held on Sunday, October 20. We were very fortunate with the weather. The day was sunny but windy, a great day for a hike.

A total of 150 people gathered at Murphy's Wharf in Halifax. At Garrison Pier the group split into several directions. Mike Crowell headed to the south with those who were interested in learning about the flora and fauna on McNabs. Mike, who wrote the chapter on vegetation in Discover McNabs Island, has extensive knowledge of McNabs, its plants, animals and where they are found. His guided tour was well-received.

Another group set off with Royce Walker, longtime member of the Society and history buff. Royce has frequently offered his services in leading a historic walking tour, heading off toward the north of the island. He had pictures of some of the former inhabitants and their homes. These come complete with interesting stories that make the history come alive.

A number of people chose not to join either organized walk but to wander the island on their own. Most people eventually made their way to the two homes on the north end of the island. The Matthew Lynch house and the Conrad-Davis house, both currently owned by the province, are open to the public just one day a year, for the Fall Foliage Tour. They are a big attraction for those who come to this event.

It is interesting for the organizers of the Fall Foliage Tour that most of the people who come are not members of the Friends of McNabs Island Society. Many of them are people who have never been to the island before and learned about the tour as a result of our advertising. If you are one of those members who has never been on the fall tour, I recommend it as a great fall outing. The walks are not strenuous and the houses are well worth the visit.

The Rucksack is published by the Friends of McNabs Island Society. Contributions, ideas and feedback are welcome.

Visit our website at:

www.mcnabsisland.ca

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