

Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands

Forty years of public service
on land and sea



The background features a historical map of Massachusetts Bay, showing various islands and geographical features. A prominent compass rose is located in the upper right corner. The map includes labels such as 'A Muddy', 'Shoal Dry at', 'Pulping Point', 'THOMPSONS ISLAND', 'SQUANETS NECK', 'TASCKET', 'GRAPES ISLAND', and 'Eastern Neck'.

A Celebration of FBHI on its Fortieth Anniversary

All of us together,
Members and Volunteers,
In fair or stormy weather
Have soldiered through the years.

How lovely are the sunsets
In Massachusetts Bay —
How widely do we cast our nets
To save our heritage each day!

Faithful FRIENDS of our harbor islands,
As sentinels we stand
To guard these low-slung highlands
That grace our native land.

We cherish every living thing —
The flowers and the birds,
The green isles, rocks and sands that sing
A song that needs no words.

The islands speak to us in prayer,
In soft and pleading tone:
Remember us and tend with care
The seeds your hands have sown.

The fruits of all our labors
Are plainly to be seen
In all our island neighbors —
They flourish, fresh and green.

The FRIENDS have earned an honored
place;
Our noble cause raise high!
We are the islands' saving grace —
Long may our banner fly!

– Phyllis Iva Meserlian

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About this 40th Anniversary booklet

No one booklet can adequately summarize the 40-year experience of the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands. What you hold in your hands is an effort to capture some of the highlights of the remarkable organization that has tirelessly worked to promote, protect, preserve and advocate for the 34 islands and peninsulas that dot Boston Harbor. In these pages you will read about the beginnings of the Friends as a fledging volunteer group and how the organization has grown over the decades. You will read about the Friends' many projects – from revegetation efforts to living history programs to boat trips and the Library Legacy

project to advocacy. We have included poignant and funny memories provided by our members, plus numerous photos that are a visual document of the Friends and the Islands from the 1980s to the present day.

The Friends archives of organizational and program materials is vast. It consists of boxes of paper, slides, photographs and DVDs. This booklet can present only the tip of the iceberg. It has been a daunting project to review and cull from 40 years of *Tidings* newsletters. All of this material will be available in the UMass Boston Archives Friends of the Boston Harbor

Islands special collection. One of our goals is to have all of the *Tidings* uploaded to be available online.

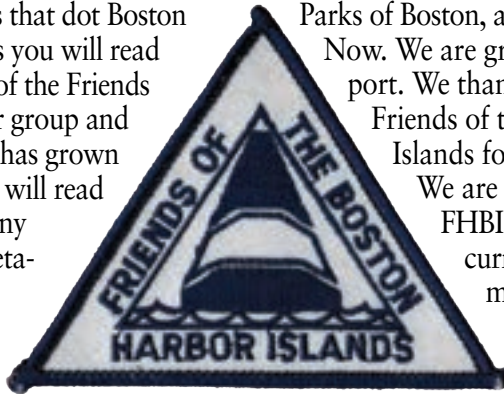
We could not have done this project without the help of generous supporters: the Boston Marine Society, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, National Parks of Boston, and Boston Harbor Now. We are grateful for their support. We thank the Board of the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands for its encouragement.

We are also grateful to the FBHI members, former and current, who shared their memories and photos with us.

This booklet could not have

been possible without the tireless energy and determination of FBHI founder and mega-volunteer Suzanne Gall Marsh. She dug through the Friends archives, wrote copy and solicited memories and photos from numerous island voices to capture this history. Copy editor Marguerite Krupp's eagle eyes deserve special praise. Thanks to Stephanie Schorow who served as the project coordinator and to Patricia Dacey for her design work.

We hope you enjoy this time-travel journey with the Friends, past, present and future.



Cover photo credit: Massachusetts Water Authority.

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Marguerite Krupp, Rab Sherman, Pat and Paul Leary pose with the special cake made by Montilio’s Bakery for the May 5th FBHI 40th Anniversary Cruise.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Boston National Historical Park
Charlestown Navy Yard
Boston, Massachusetts 02129-4543

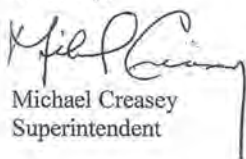
March 25, 2019

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Founder
Walter Hope, Chairman
Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands
30 Shipyard Drive #202
Hingham, MA 02043

Dear Suzanne and Walter:

On behalf of the park, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Friends of Boston Harbor Islands for the support that they have provided to this national park area. In this 40-year anniversary, we are celebrating a legacy of stewardship. Started as a volunteer corps, this organization has stayed true to its mission; providing year-round services to our local community and visitors alike through harbor cruises, library programs, and island tours. In 2002, Friends of Boston Harbor Islands was formally recognized by the National Park Service as a recipient of the George and Helen Hartzog Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service. With hundreds of thousands of volunteers donating their time to parks across the country each year, this award is reserved for the most exceptional volunteers. Friends of Boston Harbor Islands continues to meet that exceptional standard, consistently providing programs and services beyond what park partners could accomplish on our own. As we celebrate this important milestone, we look forward to working together to promote the enduring legacy of stewardship for Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park Area.

Sincerely,



Michael Creasey
Superintendent





MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY

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March 1, 2019

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Founder
Walter Hope, Chairman
Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands
30 Shipyard Drive #202
Hingham, MA 02043

Dear Suzanne and Walter:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, I am delighted to offer our congratulations on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands.

Forty years ago, who could have imagined that Boston Harbor, then the dirtiest harbor in America, would today be the glittering jewel of the city and the surrounding islands such an important recreational resource for residents and tourists alike.

We are pleased to help the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands produce a commemorative booklet that will highlight the history of the islands and the rebirth of Boston Harbor.

Congratulations again and best wishes for your continued success.

Sincerely,



Frederick A. Laskey
Executive Director





My Story with “Our” Islands *By Walter Hope*

As Sophia from “Golden Girls” would say, “Picture this, the year was 1983...” That seems like just a few years ago when I was in my final years at Northeastern University. I’d been in Boston for three years and due to the Northeastern Co-op system, I was working or in school year-round and had spare time on the weekends. I spotted a tiny notice in the *Boston Phoenix* (a once-upon-a-time “alternative” newspaper). The ad said that there were volunteer opportunities on Boston’s Harbor Islands. I was a suburban guy from Rhode Island, and had not really even heard of the Boston Harbor Islands, and certainly had no idea at that point that they were a park or anything about their amazing history.

I joined up and for the next three summers volunteered for overnight camping on Grape Island. I remember orientation one year where a gentleman named Jamie had a key ring with 50 plus keys, and he opened doors at Georges Island, and with old-school incandescent flash lights in hand, we gingerly walked into areas of Georges that are now off limits. Our imaginations may have run away with us as we learned of the Lady

in Black and the many soldiers who were stationed and/or imprisoned on Georges. On Grape, we would greet the *Irene*, a very old (even then) wooden ferry boat that would do the inter-island shuttle from Georges to Peddocks, Bumpkin and Grape. While Grape itself was a calm and peaceful island, we could see the brown haze of air pollution over Boston, and I appreciated the cleaner air. Little did I know that my career would be working for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

On one memorable weekend we jumped aboard the *Irene* and putt-putted over to Peddocks – the seas were too rough, and the captain dropped us on Peddocks – no Grape for that weekend. The other passengers were from a Boy Scout troop. After setting camp, we explored Peddocks, entering into boarded-up officers’ homes, climbing the wooden stairs past the peeling paint and collapsing plaster walls up to the attics. I remember an octagonal window that still had glass in the panes – the view was of Boston far in the distance. On this trip and many others I fell in love with our islands.

(continued on page 8)

Up to Now

By Suzanne Gall Marsh

Discovering the Boston Harbor Islands in 1978 was a turning point in my life. I spent the summer and fall of that year exploring the “fair emeralds in the sapphire sea” and was fortunate to meet Edward Rowe Snow and his cadre of devotees. He would ask me for reports on my island-hopping adventures via the inter-island shuttle.

As I traveled among the islands I met the Island Managers who were always very busy greeting the boats, giving island tours, assisting campers and being friendly to everyone. I thought, “What a great job,” and I wondered if they could use some assistance on the busy weekends.

Then one day I was at the National Park Service Visitor Center at 15 State Street when EUREKA! I spotted a bright orange “VIP” Volunteers in Parks brochure. My immediate thought was, “...if the Feds could have volunteers in national parks, why couldn't we at the Boston Harbor Islands State Park?”

Remember, forty years ago the waters of Boston Harbor were an environmental nightmare. Spectacle Island was being used as a trash dumpsite; it would break into flames and was leaching into the harbor. Flounder and other fish had tumors. Deer Island was home to an antiquated waste treatment plant and a dilapidated prison. The Boston waterfront was practically hidden by the Southeast Expressway, and where the Marriott Hotel is today on Long Wharf was a giant parking lot.

Simultaneously, while starting the journey of developing a volunteer program for the Islands, I decided I wanted to be an Island Manager the following year. I really wanted to be on Gallops Island. I applied



to the Environmental Intern Program and the fates were with me. I was selected along with a team of fresh-faced college graduates. (I was the elder of the group at the ripe age of 29).

I lived on Gallops Island in the summer of 1979 along with Kathy Abbott. (Here we are 40 years later, each of us still working on behalf of our beloved Islands.) When Edward Rowe Snow heard that I was going to be living on Gallops, he gave me a buck knife and a stern warning “to watch out for nefarious characters.” Every weekend as the morning *BayState* ferry boat passed Nixes Mate and Gallops Island, we would hear Mr. Snow’s melodious voice wafting across the harbor.

(continued on page 9)

As time went on with the Friends, I served as a Team Captain for Grape Island and on the Board for a time. In the mid-80's I stopped by Boston Harbor Cruises (BHC) and asked Rick Nolan if they were hiring. I'd just come from my day job and was dressed in office clothes. Rick hired me on the spot and I was sent down to the pier to work on the *Abigail Adams*, and then later on the *Martha Washington*, and I remember working on the *Frederick Nolan* and the *Fort Independence* when they were brand new. Steering the *Fort Warren* was always a challenge, zigzagging across the harbor. Volunteering on the islands and working for BHC had me both on and around the islands, steeped in them when the harbor was less than ideal for steeping.

Thankfully the harbor has been cleaned up, and since about 2004 my husband and I have lived on a boat at Constitution Marina in Charlestown. Living on our boats has allowed us unusual access to the islands (compared to most), many trips to Rainsford, Long, Calf, Outer and Great Brewster, as well as Peddocks. Our favorite anchorage is at Great Brewster – the sunsets and sunrises are spectacular – and the sweeping beacon of light from Boston Light can be haunting, as it shows itself crossing Middle Brewster between Great Brewster and Calf.

The past several years serving on the Board and as Chairman have been satisfying and have further cemented my love

for the islands. Our work at the New England Boat Show continues to show a need an opportunity to inform the public of our amazing resource – our islands. We've rebuilt our web page, modernized to electronic online ticketing, tried online auctions and online book sales. We're doing Facebook and Twitter postings and continuing to build relationships with other like-minded groups.

When I started with the Friends, we were one of the few groups providing tours, volunteers, and advocacy. The harbor was filthy, we were the only on-island volunteer group, and tours of the harbor

were few and far between. The Friends and other groups supported the cleanup and have been involved with the various committees and countless meetings over the years supporting the park management. We've helped to preserve Nixes Mate, a nursery on Long

Island for native trees, and now we have launched a project to preserve and protect the Oil House on Lovells Island.

As much as things have changed and improved, there is always room for more improvement. These are our islands – your islands – a public resource with an amazing history – meant to be used, explored and enjoyed by all. Get out there and perhaps you'll fall in love with them as I did.

Walter Hope
 Chairman, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands



In 1979 my inspiration for a Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps became a reality with the pilot program of overnight volunteers. What a thrill to meet everyone and see them in action on their islands. Dreams do come true, and this was just the beginning of my journey with the islands and with what would become the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands. For more than half my life I have been deeply involved with the Harbor Islands, wearing many hats including being a National Park Service ranger/interpreter for twelve years.

The communication technology of today was non-existent in the formative years of the Friends. Imagine, the only way to connect with people was either in person or by a landline telephone. Fax machines were just coming out and the Internet was nonexistent. There was no email to reach out to members and volunteers. But somehow we managed and succeeded in building a thriving organization.

The Friends have experienced the classic Non-profit Organizational Life Cycle: Grass Roots/Invention; Start-Up/Incubation; Adolescent/Growing; Mature/Sustainability; Stagnation and Renewal; and now, as I like to say, planning for change. The Friends have been pioneers

in our on-island volunteer stewardship, public education programs, boat trips and advocacy efforts. Many of our programs and services have either been copied or absorbed by Park partners, and become integral parts of park activity – meaning they will continue – like the Boston Light trips and the VIP programs. We have come full circle from the inspirational Volunteers in Parks orange brochure to the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park.

The personal connections over the years mean so much to me and to the many, many people who volunteer their time and talents for Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands. We have made lifetime friends. We have sweated, laughed and cried together. We remember with gratitude and affection the volunteers in the “Heavenly Branch.”

We will continue to meet people from all over the world and all walks of life and make new friends.

Aloha!

Suzanne Gall Marsh is the founder of the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands Inc., and has served as the president and a Board member and today serves as a director emerita and treasurer.

(Page 8) FBHI tee shirts
quilt - queen size!

(This page) Bumpkin
Island made birthday
cake and card for
Edward Rowe Snow
Day 1981: Marion
Kirschen, Ann Prince,
Suzanne Gall.





Friends Volunteers on Nixes Mate.

The Boston Harbor Islands Beckon

Boston Harbor and the Boston Harbor Islands have called out to those on the mainland for centuries. The harbor has been a draw for its strategic location, resources, and beauty. The islands have offered refuge and safety to some and captivity and terrifying struggles to others. They have been the sites of forts, lighthouses, prisons, hospitals, schools, mansions, summer homes, and shacks. In recent years, they have become a spot for recreation – camping, picnicking, exploring, and, sometimes, just meditation on the sea and sky. The Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands (FBHI) have played a role in the history of these island gems and Boston Harbor itself.

People have joined the Friends as volunteers to either make a connection with some aspect of harbor history or share their own interest and knowledge of the harbor with others. They visit the Islands to be in the places where former generations have worked, served, or fought to survive. For some, sharing an account of indigent boys learning to build a new life for themselves, or detained Native Americans fighting to stay alive imprisoned on an outer harbor island helps them with their own life difficulties. Friends have planted native trees, aiming to restore the islands to their green state before the Colonial period. And they have worked with city, state, and federal officials to

ensure that the Islands remain a national treasure to be enjoyed by all.

There is neither the space nor the budget to write a complete, detailed chronological account of all Friends activities in this chapter, so the authors have included the highlights of the many and significant FBHI accomplishments. The Timeline (see next page) provides an overview of FBHI activities and the development of what is now called the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park.

FBHI Board members, staff, and volunteers have been visionaries and pioneers in developing public education programs, innovative community outreach, and advocacy for the Islands. The core of the Friends activities are three “P’s” — passion, purpose, and persistence — combined with enthusiasm and hard work. In the upcoming chapters, you will learn about the countless dedicated volunteers and their efforts on behalf of the Islands and the creation of the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area.



How It All Began

The Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands owes its existence to an extraordinary woman, who for 40 years has worked to protect, preserve and promote the Islands. Suzanne Gall, later Suzanne Gall Marsh, moved to Boston in 1976. The Boston Harbor Islands had become a state park in 1970, and Suzanne found out about

the Islands in 1978 when she saw a map on an office wall at Action for Boston Community Development. The map featured proposed water transportation routes and was from the 1972 Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) Boston Harbor Islands Comprehensive Plan Summary. This was her introduction to the Islands, and it whetted her curiosity to learn how to visit them.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s several boat companies provided service to Georges Island. Imagine, the round-trip ferry ticket cost \$3 and \$4! When you arrived at Georges Island, you could transfer to what was then called a water taxi. More islands were accessible then, including Gallops and Great Brewster along with Lovells, Bumpkin, and Grape. A friendly Island Manager would be on the dock to

welcome visitors and lead tours.

In 1978 Suzanne Gall spent her summer weekends island hopping – visiting a different island every weekend. Gallops Island soon became her favorite island, and she returned often. During her first summer visiting the islands, she met Edward Rowe Snow, the famed historian, who inspired her with his tales of the Islands and the people who lived and died there.

In the fall of 1978 while visiting the then National Park Service Visitor Center at 15 State Street in Boston, Suzanne Gall picked up the bright orange *Volunteers in Parks* brochure. “It inspired me to think that if the ‘Feds’ could have volunteers, why couldn’t we do the same thing for the Boston Harbor Islands State Park?” she recalls. This idea percolated in her brain.

Friends and Park Highlights Through The Years

1979: Suzanne Gall Marsh forms the Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps (BHIVC) with others from the Sierra Club and Appalachian Mountain Club to supplement programs of the Boston Harbor Islands State Park staff. The first year is a pilot program with overnight Volunteers on Gallops and Bumpkin.

1980s – through 2000s: Day trips travel to Gallops, Peddocks, Great Brewster, Long, Rainsford, Thompson, Little Brewster, Calf, Bumpkin and Grape Islands.

1980s and 1990s: Friends create Living History programs for Great Brewster, Bumpkin, Gallops, Lovells, Peddocks, Grape, Little Brewster, Georges, and Thompson Islands.

1980: “Year of the Coast.” The first annual New Year’s Day trip to Thompson Island begins. The trip has taken place nearly every year since.

The first “Edward Rowe Snow Day” is held on Georges Island.

1980-1981: Day Volunteer opportunities expand to Georges and Thompson Islands. Overnight Volunteers continue.



1982: The BHI Volunteer Corps incorporates as the Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands Inc. The mission is to provide direct service to the park, public education programs, boat trips, and advocacy.

1983: “Harbor Islands Artists,” an exhibit by FBHI at UMass Boston’s Arlington Street and Harbor Galleries, as well as the Boston Children’s Museum during Harborfest.

The Island Sunset Series of evening cruises to the islands commences and continues for 35 years.

1985: Governor Michael S. Dukakis visits Georges Island with agencies’ staff and Volunteers.

1986: FBHI tours to Boston Light on Little Brewster Island established. They ran 6-10 times a year through 1999. The trips are the origins of today’s National Park Service lighthouse tours.

“Boston Harbor Islands State Park Master Plan” by MA Department of Environmental Management is released. Governor Michael S. Dukakis visits the Islands to announce the publication.

1988: FBHI South Shore branch opens in Hewitt’s Cove, Hingham. Today it is the Friends primary office.

A centennial edition of the 1888 edition of the King’s Handbook of Boston Harbor is reprinted by FBHI.

Seeing the VIP brochure was the inspiration and catalyst for what would become the Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps (1979-1981) and the Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands Inc. (1982-present).

Later that fall, Suzanne contacted the Sierra Club, New England Chapter, to find out how the club was involved with the Harbor Islands. Marsha Rockefeller, the staff person, presented her with a box about the Greater Boston Group's involvement during the 1970s through its Boston Harbor Island (BHI) Task Force. The club had been deeply involved in advocating for the Islands and the creation of the state park in 1970. In the mid to late 1970s, club volunteers were focused on the raising awareness of and remediating the degradation and pollution of Boston Harbor.



Onboard the *BayState* ferry wearing our new FBHI tee shirts.

Suzanne joined the club and began meeting people and sharing ideas for how volunteers could become active in helping the park. In December, she attended a special meeting of the two agencies that managed the Park: the Metropolitan District

1988-1989: "Save Boston Light" campaign begins after U.S. Coast Guard announces plans to automate the light. Senator Edward Kennedy visits Little Brewster. In December 1989 Federal legislation was signed into law that the Light would be manned in perpetuity.

1990: The "Lighthouse Families Reunion" on Little Brewster gathers elders whose fathers were keepers at Boston Light.

1991: "Preserving the Boston Harbor Islands" exhibit created and installed by FBHI in the Shawmut Bank HQ windows on the corner of Federal and Milk Streets.

Annual "Fall Foliage and Lighthouse Extravaganza Cruise" established and operates through 2009.

1992: The Friends co-sponsor "Your Islands in Transition" exhibit and public forum with workshops at Boston Public Library. The focus is on Spectacle, Long, Peddocks and Little Brewster Islands.

"Treasured Islands" summer program developed for the MA

Department of Social Services. The program operated through 1995.

Boston Harbor Islands Revegetation Project is created. The "Reveg" program established a native species nursery on Long Island and did a wide-variety of projects on numerous islands through 2007.

1993: Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, visits Georges Island to announce the beginning of a "Special Resource Study" of the Islands by the National Park Service. FBHI Volunteers were active participants in the public outreach and legislative process to create the national park.

Centennial of the Metropolitan Park System. Governor William F. Weld appoints the Green Ribbon Commission to "recommend a plan for its future. . . ." FBHI representatives participate in many Park advocates' meetings. In 1996 the Final Report and Recommendations of the Green Ribbon Commission – "Enhancing the Future of the Metropolitan Park System" was released.

1994: "Boston Harbor Islands: Report of a Special Resource Study" released by the National Park Service North Atlantic Region.

1996: Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-333) is passed by Congress, designating the 34 harbor islands as a National Recreation Area under the National Park Service.

Chevron-Times Mirror Magazine "Conservation Award" to FBHI.

1997-1999: "March for Parks" co-sponsored by FBHI with the National Parks Conservation Association on Georges and Peddocks Islands.

1997: The Boston Harbor Islands Partnership has its first meeting.

1998: Long Wharf Information Kiosk opens staffed by Park agencies and FBHI Volunteers.

The Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council has its first official meeting after two years of community outreach to select the 28-member Council.

Commission (MDC) and Department of Environmental Management (DEM). She presented her ideas, and a decision was made to move forward with a pilot program for 1979. Nelson Obus, Supervisor of Interpretive Services for DEM Forests and Parks, was also an Appalachian Mountain Club member.

It was decided that the Sierra Club (SC) and the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) would be the co-sponsors of this pilot program. During the winter and early spring of 1979, Suzanne Gall and Marsha Rockefeller of the Sierra Club worked with AMC volunteer Christina Peterson and Andrea Lukens, DEM Forests and Parks assistant supervisor of Interpretive Services, to plan the first season. There would only be overnight volunteers. A June training session was held at Wompatuck State Park,

where DEM Director of Forests and Parks, Gilbert Bliss, and BHI Park Supervisor, Ron Clough, welcomed the volunteers. Diane Cameron Lawrence served as supervisor of the Island Managers.

DEM, in conjunction with Massachusetts Audubon Society's Environmental Intern Program (EIP), placed teams of interns on Gallops, Grape, Bumpkin, Calf, and Great Brewster Islands during the summer. The interns, called Island Managers, lived on the islands. The volunteers would camp overnight on weekends to assist as Volunteer Visitor Information Specialists.

The roots of the Friends were intertwined with the Sierra Club during these formative years. Abigail Avery, New England Chapter Chair, was an enormous supporter of the fledgling program. She

1999-2000: Edward Rowe Snow Memorial Pavilion dedicated on Georges Island.

1999: Massachusetts Water Resources Authority begins public tours of the (new) Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Facility. The 2.6-mile perimeter park is dedicated in 2002.

Tenth annual "Halloween on the Harbor" at Fort Warren, Georges Island.

2000: Tall Ships viewing on Gallops Island... then Gallops is closed and remains closed today due to trace asbestos in the soil.

2001: Great Brewster re-opens after 10 years of being closed due to the dock being wiped out in the "no name" storm. A major cleanup effort is done by the Department of Environmental Management. Public boat service provided during the summer.

2001-2004: "Save Nixes Mate" Preservation Project begins after the U.S. Coast Guard announces plans to replace the deteriorating structure.

It is officially designated on the National Register of Historic Places in March 2004. A major restoration of the structure is commissioned by the Coast Guard, Group Boston.



2002: "Boston Harbor Islands A National Park Area" General Management Plan released after years of public input. Prepared by the Boston Support Office of the Northeast Region, National Park Service for the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership.

2003: The National Park Service presents the first George and Helen Hartzog Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service Award for "Outstanding Volunteers in Parks

Program (2002)" to FBHI; and the National Association of State Park Directors also recognize FBHI with their "President's Award."

2004: Reorganization and merger of Department of Environmental Management and Metropolitan District Commission to form the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

Northern and Southern Lighthouse Cruises begin and run through 2011.

2005: "Save the Brewsters" coalition is formed after an LNG (Liquified Natural Gas) storage facility is proposed for Outer Brewster Island.

2006: Roger G. Kennedy, former director of the National Park Service, gives a talk at the Boston Public Library, "Landscapes and Seascapes: The Wildland/Urban/Wildwater Interface," hosted by the Friends.

2006-2010: Several varied gardening and farming projects are done on Long Island with Volunteers and students. FBHI and members of the Native American community plant a "Three Sisters Garden."

encouraged Sierra Club members to attend regional meetings for “Year of the Coast,” a national education campaign, and to apply for scholarships to the National City Cares convention sponsored by the Sierra Club, Environmental Protection Agency, and Urban League. Volunteers created displays about the Boston Harbor Islands for City Cares and attended the April event in Detroit in 1979.

The first Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps (BHIVC) assisted visitors with exploration of the Islands and helped them to discover the significance of the islands’ history. Volunteers described the Islands as a resource to be valued, protected, and preserved.

The early Corps uniform was a red T-shirt with “Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps” emblazoned on the



Georges Island Info booth - Stacie Madden, Don Swann, Kathy McMahan and Jamie O’Day.

front. A red and white baseball cap was added and then a red and white mid sleeve shirt, affectionately referred to as the baseball shirt. Alas, these were not practical. After a few washings the red lettering ran on the white shirt. Blue short-sleeve uniform shirts with a blue windbreaker jacket

2007: DCR Park Stewards Conference for Friends and Partners of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

2008: Reunion of Great Brewster Islanders recorded for “Island Voices” project.

2009: FBHI 30th anniversary – the Library Legacy program is created. From this year to the present harbor-related books are distributed free of charge around Greater Boston, as well as exhibits displayed and presentations given by Volunteers. An exhibit is created and installed on Georges Island showcasing 30 years of FBHI history. An April celebratory free cruise was held and a children’s coloring book published.

2010: A tribute exhibit to the late Edward Rowe Snow of Marshfield, legendary author and storyteller, opens at Fort Warren on Georges Island.

2011: Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion opens on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. Staffed by Park agencies and Volunteers. Today it is known as the “Park Welcome Center.”

Friends co-sponsor the Boston Harbor Islands Mass Memories Road Show with the UMass Boston Healy Library Archives. These public records contain stories, photographs and videos in a permanent online archive.



2015-2016: “A Lighthouse Family” by Harold Jennings is reprinted. “King’s Handbook of Boston Harbor” is reprinted with an updated Park information section. Both books continue to be distributed free of charge through the FBHI Library Legacy program.

2016: 300th anniversary of the lighting of Boston Light, 100th anniversary of the National Park

Service, 30th anniversary MWRA, 20th anniversary of the Boston Harbor Islands becoming part of the National Park system, and 10th anniversary of Spectacle Island opening to the public. FBHI co-sponsors with Old South Meetinghouse a fall series: “Beacons of Beantown: 300 Years of Boston Lights.”

2017: Tall Ships return to Boston. FBHI viewing tours aboard the MV Columbia Point.

2018: Lovells Island Oilhouse project with the Department of Conservation and Recreation is accepted for the DCR Partnership Matching Funds Program. This is an ongoing 40th anniversary legacy project.

2019: Friends celebrate 40th anniversary with a free public cruise on May 5. A 40th anniversary commemorative booklet is published. A fall series co-presented with Old South Meeting House and co-sponsored with Boston Harbor Now on “Boston Harbor Islands: Resilience and Change.”

Nixes Mate: Symbol of the Friends

One of the more distinctive landmarks of the Boston Harbor Islands is Nixes Mate – a black and white pyramid close to Lovells and Gallops Island. Visitors to the islands also see dozens of little Nixes Mates on the shirts of FBHI volunteers; the image of Nixes Mate is used as the FBHI official logo. How this happened is itself a story.

Nixes Mate was once an 11-acre island. As early as 1636, this locality was known as Nixes Island. After pirates were hanged on either Bird Island flats or Boston Common,

their lifeless remains were transported to Nixes Mate and displayed to deter other buccaneers. The remaining rocky outcropping of Nixes Mate now holds a pyramid day marker perched

on a granite base erected in 1805 by the Boston Marine Society. Once painted black, the wooden pyramid, standing about twenty feet high, is now marked in distinctive black and white. This Aid to Navigation is maintained by the U.S. Coast Guard.

After incorporating in 1982, a logo competition was held to decide what the Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, Inc., symbol would be. There were many artistic submissions to review with views of the city skyline and sumac leaves. A photograph from the Islands of Boston Harbor showing Nixes Mate looming over Edward Rowe Snow.

U.S. Coast Guard CDR. Kenneth Black and Bob Kennedy were the catalyst for the decision to choose Nixes Mate. Olga K-Pastuhiv and Lynne George created the first version of the Friends logo. The original design has been updated over the years and printed on volunteer uniforms, clothing and books sold by the Friends.

In 2001 the U.S. Coast Guard announced that due to its deteriorated condition, the day marker at Nixes Mate would be removed and replaced with a new navigational marker. After objections

were raised by the FBHI and local history buffs, the Coast Guard decided to restore the marker instead.

The \$240,000 overhaul began in October 2003 by Atlantic Mechanical.

They repaired the

wall and stabilized the day marker with a new foundation. It was then jacked up 24 to 20 inches to a vertical position. The structure was sealed up permanently and received a new paint job. Work was completed in 2004. Simultaneously, the Friends began the process of applying for National Register of Historic Places designation of Nixes Mate. Edward Gordon was hired to do the lengthy application process. Thanks to the efforts of the Friends, U.S. Coast Guard and the Massachusetts Historical Commission, Nixes Mate was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 18, 2004.



were then selected. Eventually the FBHI logo patch was sewn on the shirt and jacket, and every volunteer was given a blue FBHI nametag. Uniform caps evolved too. Once blue became the uniform color, the volunteers wore baseball caps with white and blue lettering. Today, volunteers wear navy baseball (all cotton) caps with the logo on the front and “Volunteer” on the back.

The Early Years

January 1, 1980, began a National “Year of the Coast” public education campaign. BHIVC volunteers hosted a “Toast the Coast” day trip to Thompson Island, which was covered by WCVB-TV Channel 5 and was a feature story in *The Boston Globe* on January 2. “Spring on the Coast” boat trips to Lovells, Peddocks and Thompson Islands were organized. In June BHIVC volunteers and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council co-sponsored a display about the Islands in Boston City Hall.

Later in the month, for “Jubilee 350 Boston,” the Sierra Club with assistance from the Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps. sponsored the first “Edward Rowe Snow Day” to honor the legendary historian. The event was held on Georges Island and has been held there ever since. John Sears, Boston City Councilor and former MDC Commissioner, read an official proclamation and the Boston Fire Boat sprayed a salute during the boat ride. A sizeable crowd cheered and showed their love for the famed raconteur with his distinctive voice and his imposing thatch of white hair.

The year 1980 was a trend-setting second year for the Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps. Off-season (May and September) overnight coverage was established on the islands owned by the DEM. A pilot program was organized for guides

on Thompson Island. For the first time, day volunteers worked with the MDC on Georges Island and on the water taxi, *Dolphin III*. Kathy Abbott and Andrea Lukens (DEM staff) continued working with the Volunteers for the second season.

The Boston Harbor Islands Festival, held August 2 to 9, was part of the Year of the Coast week, with multiple activities held on the islands. In the fall, a public meeting was held on Thompson Island with a number of state park officials and Thompson Island staff to review the season. A summer ’81 committee was formed, and goals were drafted for the next season.



On November 23, 1980, the Massachusetts Conservation Council recognized the Boston Harbor Island Volunteer Corps at its annual awards dinner held at the New England Aquarium. The award was for “the most valuable service to conservation through education.”

Edward Rowe Snow

The Beloved Storyteller of the Boston Harbor Islands

More than any other single person, Edward Rowe Snow helped to preserve the Boston Harbor Islands for years to come. A descendant of sea captains, he worked as a teacher and coach and had been a reconnaissance photographer during World War II. His 1935 book, *The Islands of Boston Harbor*, was followed by dozens more on such topics as pirates, shipwrecks, storms and lighthouses. In the 1950s, Snow had his own radio show named “Six Bells.” He wrote a column for the *Quincy Patriot Ledger* and other newspapers. He also carried on the tradition of a “Flying Santa.” For forty years he flew in small planes and helicopters to lighthouses throughout New England, dropping off holiday packages for the isolated keepers and their families.

Snow was a tireless advocate for the Islands. Thanks to the efforts of Snow and others, the federal General Services Administration agreed to turn over Georges Island to the Metropolitan District Commission, the forerunner of today’s DCR. After restoration efforts, Fort Warren was opened to the public in the summer of 1961. For years, Snow led group tours of the fort; contemporaries remember his deep voice and white mane of hair as he wowed children with tales of the Civil War and, more tellingly, of the Lady in Black.

Suzanne Gall Marsh recalls:

“During my first summer visiting the islands, I met Edward Rowe Snow. He would narrate on the weekend on the 10 a.m. BayState boat to Georges Island. Upon arriving at the island, he immediately led visitors to the Fort Warren chapel to see the murals of Civil War soldiers



Edward Rowe and Anna Myrle Snow on Georges Island for ERS Day.

working and singing ‘John Brown’s Body.’ Mr. Snow was a gifted storyteller and his audiences were always spellbound. After the indoor session he would lead visitors to a variety of places in Fort Warren. Before bringing the group into the Corridor of Dungeons, Mr. Snow would secretly recruit a visitor to go ahead and jump into an in ground hole with a cover on it. After telling the legend of the ‘Lady in Black.’ Mr. Snow would open the cover to the hole and the person yelled and scared the visitors.”

In 1980, the Friends created the first Edward Rowe Snow Day to honor this amazing storyteller. It has been held in August on Georges Island since then, most often with Snow family members on hand to cut a decorated cake for visitors and share stories. When weather permits, the Friends of the Flying Santa bring the Jolly Old Elf himself by helicopter to Georges to hand out candy canes.

From 1980-1981 Steering Committee members for the BHI Volunteer Corps included Abigail Avery, Martha Curtis, Donna Baden, Ann Prince, Karen O'Donnell, James Comeau, Wendy Krauss, Gary Hall, Kathleen Gill, Dana Rowan, John Lewis, Kathleen Gill and Suzanne Gall (Chair).

The Committee planned a variety of activities for 1981, including open houses for recruiting volunteers, the first "Spring Cleanup and Greenup" of Thompson Island, Sierra Club boat trips to the islands (tickets \$10), and orientation/training sessions for Thompson Island and all BHI volunteers. The inter-island shuttle began on Memorial Day and overnight volunteers worked on pre-season weekends.

Kathy Abbott was the DEM Island Manager Supervisor, and Tom O'Brien was the MDC Lovells Island Manager and liaison with the Steering Committee. Andrea Lukens of the DEM was in her third season working with the Volunteers. Four former Island Managers, Sarah Blodgett, Bumpkin and Lovells '79; Ann Prince, Bumpkin '80; and Jim Comeau and Karen O'Donnell; Gallops '80, became BHI Volunteer Corps members and remained involved for many years.

The original year of the Corps was as a pilot project with overnight volunteers to see how non-profit groups (the Sierra Club and Appalachian Mountain Club) could work with the state in providing interpretive services for the Boston Harbor Islands State Park. This test of a state agency's (DEM) ability to work with non-profit organizations in a cooperative effort was more successful than anyone had even hoped. The second season's program expanded to both day and overnight volunteers. A volunteer's primary role was to provide visitor information, work as assistant to the island managers during the

season (June to September) and act as volunteer park staff in the off-season months (May to mid-June and September to October). The volunteers acted as guides to educate visitors about the ecology and history of the Islands, and as a result, increase the public's awareness of the total harbor environment.

The problem of insufficient park staff and limited budget resources, which limited paid staff, was addressed by the Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps. During the 1980 season, volunteers contributed 2,500 hours of onsite service. The Department of Environmental Management requested that the Volunteer Corps double its people power on the DEM-managed islands in 1981.

The Peddocks Island Trust secured a Memorandum of Understanding with the MDC in 1981 and seasonal boat service to Peddocks began. In 1981, BHIVC members assisted staff on Peddocks. On May 10, 1981, MDC Historian Al Schroeder led a public island tour with the BHIVC. A fall boat trip and Living History program was held on Peddocks on October 31, 1982.

In 1981, an Appalachian Mountain Club executive contacted Suzanne Gall with an offer to fund the fledgling Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps. The AMC was very interested in becoming more involved with "urban parks." This offer was the catalyst for the BHIVC Steering Committee decision to form an independent public entity.

The Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands Inc. became a Massachusetts non-profit corporation in 1982. The name was chosen to acknowledge two distinct categories – those who wanted to be active volunteers and those who cared about the islands and wanted to support the work of the volunteers. (Of course, you could be both, and volunteers

were asked to pay membership dues.) Ultimately the Board voted to file a D/B/A certificate as Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands Inc. David Dann was elected President, Donna Baden, Vice-president, Andy Grad, Treasurer and Jim Comeau, Clerk.

After the organization incorporated, a logo competition was held to decide what the symbol would be for the new group.

There were many artistic submissions to review, with views of the city skyline and sumac leaves. A photograph from the Islands of Boston Harbor showing Nixes Mate looming over Edward Rowe Snow, U.S. Coast Guard CDR. Kenneth Black and Bob Kennedy was the inspiration for the decision to choose Nixes Mate.

Graphic artist, Lynne George, designed the first logo. (See page 16.)

In the spring of 1982, "informational open houses" were held in Boston and on Georges Island. The flyer "Volunteers needed for Boston Harbor Islands State Park" was distributed, and FBHI had a table at the New England Environmental Network Conference. The first membership brochure was created with discounts for members offered by Bay State & Provincetown Cruises, A.C. Cruise Lines, Mass Bay Lines, and Thompson Island Education Center.

Building on the success of the first three years of the Volunteer Corps, the FBHI Board presented a proposal to both the Department of Environmental Management and the Metropolitan District Commission to contract for the delivery of (volunteer) educational and

management services. As the first of its kind, this contract created a precedent for other non-profit groups in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Park agencies would pay for the delivery of the services but not pay the volunteers. The salaried Coordinator of Volunteers would manage the recruitment, orientation, training and scheduling of the volunteers, working closely with DEM and MDC. Suzanne Gall was initially hired for the position. She had managed the BHIVC from 1979-1981 as a volunteer (herself), and this made for a smooth transition.

Volunteers served as support staff between July and September and as the sole program staff on weekends after Labor

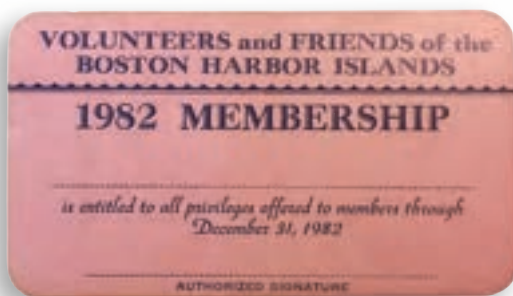
Day. A total of 40 volunteers provided 1,820 hours of program services to the Park.

Both the MDC and DEM recognized the importance of the volunteer program.

James Gillespie of

the MDC called the season "very successful," while Andrea Lukens of the DEM cited the benefits: "It enhances our staffing and monitoring capabilities....and allows much greater flexibility in presenting interpretive programming. Finally, it provides an excellent opportunity for the public to learn about and be involved in the park."

The year 1983 marked the Friends' fifth season. After four years of working with the Sierra Club and AMC at the organizations' 3 Joy Street offices, the Friends moved to the North End Union, 20 Parmenter Street in Boston's North End. David Dann was the Executive Director of the North End Union and arranged for free office space for the



FBHI. This included a large auditorium where FBHI events and meetings were held. Edith Bradford came onboard as the Coordinator of Volunteers in 1983. Forty-seven volunteers contributed 3,100 hours of service to the Park.

This year also marked the beginning of the Friends' work in publishing books about the Harbor Islands. Herman Publishing put the rights to *All About the Boston Harbor Islands* by Emily and David Kales up for bid and George Coulter, the Georges Island concessioner, purchased them. He contracted with FBHI to update the guidebook. A group of volunteers worked on the revisions during the winter. The revisions triggered heated discussions about commas, but the committee succeeded, and the book was published in April 1983 with the new FBHI logo of Nixes Mate on the back cover.

Many other "firsts" occurred during 1983. The Seafarers Island Holiday boat trip to Thompson Island delighted visitors with the first FBHI Living History program, created by Ann Prince. The first sunset cruises to the islands began, sponsored with Boston Harbor Cruises, which allowed visitors to see Great Brewster, Gallops, Thompson, and Lovells Islands in the light of a setting sun. Tickets cost \$7, with a four-trips pass for \$20.

FBHI volunteers designed an exhibition of art and artifacts that accompanied park displays for the "Boston's Best Kept Secret" show at the University of Massachusetts Boston, Park Square, and at the harbor campus from April 13 to May 6. The show then moved to the Children's Museum lobby from June 20 to July 6.

For Harborfest '83, the Friends hosted a three-day performance of "The Deep Blue" on Georges Island. Artists of The Blue C set up a giant blue fabric wave

alongside Fort Warren. They created plant, animal and fish forms/characters that moved to live music. Cynthia Thompson was the producer.



Janet Burgermeister and Kathy Gill on Grape Island.

On November 12 and 13, FBHI members gathered on Thompson Island for a two-day retreat. Besides brainstorming and planning for the future, members also had time to enjoy the fall beauty of the island.

That month the DEM and MDC held public hearings about the Boston Harbor Islands Master Plan process, then being conducted by Wallace Floyd Associates.

In the 1980s, a regular newsletter was established for the Boston Harbor Island Volunteer Corps. From 1983 to 1986, the newsletter featured the FBHI Nixes Mate logo. A naming contest for the newsletter was held in summer of 1986, and Paul Nyren's suggestion of "Tidings" was adopted. *Tidings* was published quarterly from the 1980s through the 2000s. In February 2007, an E-Tidings was established in a digital format. Both E-Tidings and an occasional print *Tidings* continue to be published.

The symbol of the Friends, Nixes Mate, inspired a Friends folk singing group. The idea was an inspiration of



(Left) Nix's Mates on an FBHI Sunset Cruise: Don Hovey, Barbara Graham, Phyllis Meserlian, Robert Scenna.

(Page 23) FBHI exhibit crew on Georges Island: Chris Ahern, Stephanie Schorow, Sean Gallagher, Karen O'Donnell (2009).

Nancy Martin and it was organized by Robert Scenna and Donald Hovey in 1987. Members included Phyllis Meserlian, Barbara Graham, and other singers from time to time. These traveling troubadours serenaded both at Friends events and special park programs over the years.

They developed a repertoire that mostly consisted of sea shanties and sea related songs. Regular practice sessions were held at Phyllis's home and at the Scenna home. Robert's wife, Wynelle has fond memories when they would practice at the Scenna house. A very young Matthew would fall asleep on the sofa listening to the group play guitar and sing, while Wynelle would bake a dessert. Then, after rehearsal, everyone would sit around and eat and talk.

Nix's Mates (this is the original spelling of the day marker) performed on many FBHI boat trips and at annual meetings, among other venues. Their fans spread the word and got them performances at other events including an hour-long concert at Webb State Park, a fashion show, and on the main stage at Chesapeake Bay's annual Bay Days celebration in Virginia.

Nix's Mates also performed in living history presentations on Great Brewster and Little Brewster islands where they were joined by Elizabeth Waagen.

Don and Phyllis pulled together some impressive Civil War sets and performed many living history presentations on Georges Island.

"It has been said that music creates memories of its own. This is so true of our time with Nix's Mates and the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands. Those were very special times," says Wynelle Scenna.

Grassroots Excitement Through the 1990s

During the organization's formative years, the excitement of building a grass roots organization was contagious. More and more people found out about the Friends and the opportunity to volunteer their skills and time either on the islands or behind the scenes. The sky seemed to be the limit with new ideas and projects. Some became reality, and others remained dreams.

FBHI Board Chair Jim Bennette worked with the MBTA to develop a marketing outreach program promoting the Park that included giant posters on the subway platforms, subway car cards, and a seasonal discount to all T pass holders. His vision became a reality, and thousands of T-riders learned how they could go island hopping.

The Georges Island Gift Shop Committee developed a proposal for a Friends-managed gift shop that would generate revenue for the Park and the FBHI. The Exhibit Committee worked

with the National Park Service to develop the “Urban Isles” exhibit that would be located in the NPS 15 State Street Visitor Center. FBHI, the Island Alliance, (a non-profit created with the establishment of the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area in 1996, now known as Boston Harbor Now) and UMass Urban Harbors Institute proposed renovating and using some of the Middle Head cottages after the Peddocks Island Advisory Committee Report was made public. Years later, FBHI submitted several more proposals to the Department of Conservation and Recreation for Partnership Matching Funds to rehab a Middle Head cottage as a Visitor Contact Station. Today, their idea is reflected in the Park’s Peddocks Island Vision Plan. (The DEM and the MDC consolidated in 2004 to form the DCR.)

The 1990s were also a time of growth for the Friends as Volunteers tackled a range of projects – both educational and ecological. A key program was the Boston Harbor Islands Revegetation Project. The “Reveg” program established a native species nursery on Long Island and carried out a wide variety of projects on numerous islands through 2007. Many volunteers speak fondly of their efforts planting native trees and returning year after to year to see how their “babies” grew. Today, those native species have become part of the landscape of the Islands, which have been slowly returning to the forested condition they were before the Colonists and others cut down trees. (See Revegetation, page 50).

The Friends were intensely involved in advocating for the Islands. (See Chapter 3.) Friends members were active participants in the public outreach and legislative process to create the national park and they participated in many Park advocates meetings. That hard

work paid off in November 1996, when Congress designated the 34 harbor islands a National Recreation Area, a new unit of the National Park System. Over the years the common name was changed to a National Park Area. Today it is known as the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park. It is now part of National Parks of Boston, which is an organizational framework that includes Boston African American National Historic Site and the Boston National Historical Park.



A “speakers bureau” was organized by Friends Volunteers to respond to requests from libraries, yacht clubs, and whoever called the office to request a talk about the Islands. Members photographed the islands, prepared slide shows (now Power Point presentations), and sharpened their public speaking skills. FBHI has sponsored a variety of talks and panels with experts held at the Boston Public Library. Topics included the Central Artery Third Harbor Tunnel Project, and the Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Mass Water Resources Authority. The former director of the National Park Service, Roger Kennedy, spoke on the “Wildland/Urban/Wildwater Interface.” FBHI has also co-sponsored several “*Middays at the*

Meetinghouse” series with Old South Meetinghouse. A series, “Boston Harbor Islands – Resilience and Change,” is planned for fall 2019.

Into the New Century

A growing stream of visitors continued to visit the new national and state park and be welcomed by FBHI Volunteers in distinctive blue shirts at several locations: the Park’s Long Wharf kiosk, the Spectacle Island Visitor Center, and the Welcome Center on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. The organization continued advocacy efforts during the Park planning process to develop a General Management Plan, which was published in 2002, and a strategic plan in 2009. Park meetings were held all around the Greater Boston area, which allowed broad public participation.

Friends sprang into action in 2005, when an LNG (Liquified Natural Gas) storage facility was proposed for Outer Brewster Island. The plan was eventually dropped. The Friends were also involved in efforts to preserve the history of the islands, launching the Island Voices Project, Library Legacy program, and sponsoring the Boston Harbor Islands Mass Memories Road Show with the UMass Boston Archives, where the public brought photos and recorded memories to be preserved online, which can be accessed at openarchives@umb.edu.

In 2016 the Friends published another reprint of the *King’s Handbook of Boston Harbor* with an updated Park information section, and in 2015, reprinted *A Lighthouse Family* by Harold Jennings, an autobiography that tells the story of a boy growing up on Lovells Island. For more information on Friends publishing projects see Chapter Four.

Bumpkin Island buddies: Tom Schindler, Joan Hall and Tom Loring.

Looking to the Future

Like so many non-profit organizations, the Friends have had to adjust to changing times. Communication is now done via e-mail and visitors to the Islands snap photos on their mobile devices. Many of our long-time Volunteers have joined “The Heavenly Branch” (See page 69), and yet so many Volunteers are still going strong after 30 years with the organization. For the 40th anniversary, the Friends have embarked on even more projects – such as the fall lecture series co-sponsored with Old South Meeting House and a project to preserve the Lovells Island oil house. (See page 72)

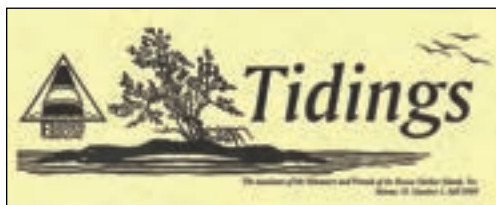
The UMass Boston Archives has established a Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands special collection as part of the Boston Harbor Islands special collection that enables researchers and interested people to review the organization’s efforts and accomplishments over the years. Plans are in the works to have some of this information available in digital format as well.

As we look to the future, we are encouraged by all the young people who have become increasingly interested in environmental issues as they will be the generation that will have to cope with climate change. We look forward to welcoming the next generation of Friends



volunteers who will tell visitors about the islands and how they are a resource to be valued, protected and preserved. See page 73 for how you can join the Friends.

The Friends Board of Directors and Volunteers continue to endeavor to build on the foundation that has been created and endures today. We are appreciative and thankful for the multitude of Park agencies' leadership and staff who have worked with the Friends over the years – “the layers of players.”



And now, a word from our Presidents

Over the years, the FBHI newsletter *Tidings* has been used as a platform for FBHI presidents and Board Chairs to report on the state of the organization and comment on the Harbor Islands. Below are excerpts from articles by past Presidents.

AUTUMN 1985

Looking Ahead By George Marsh

This year, we have significantly expanded the On-Island Volunteer program to include Peddocks Island, as well as, targeted community outreach to educate and recruit volunteers from previously underrepresented groups. These efforts are being made as a result of planning by the Friends and in response to a request by the Metropolitan District Commission to expand our services to the Park. Becky Stevens was hired to coordinate the out-

reach program this summer.

We are very excited about the Friends' acceptance into the Antioch Graduate School's Management Institute. We were chosen as one of six New England environmental organizations to participate in a six-month series of intensive workshops and consultations with experts in management of non-profit organizations.

Without the dedication and energy of our numerous Volunteers and continued support of a concerned and informed membership, the Friends would not be the dynamic, effective advocate for the conservation and appreciation of the Harbor Islands that we are today. Let's all look to the future and help make it a bright one for the Friends, the Islands, and the Park.

FALL 1989

President's Column By Suzanne Gall Marsh

This special 10th anniversary newsletter features articles and highlights about the 1989 On Island Volunteer Program. Although we celebrate a decade of public service, we are actually completing the eleventh season of volunteer activities. (Georges Island volunteers work through October).

The On-Island Volunteer Program is the roots of the Friends organization. During the past decade, the tree of the Friends organization has grown many branches and produced fruitful efforts and activities.

While we celebrate our 10th anniversary, it is important to reflect on the past as we plan for the future. Whatever does our second decade hold in store? By 1999, when we celebrate our 20th anniversary, the 21st century will be around the corner!

We have established a tradition of public service that is having an impact on

future generations. Our legacy is to continue this tradition.

Enjoy the autumn season, especially on the islands.

HOLIDAY 1993

Letter from the President

By Barbara Feeney Powers, PhD.

As the organization enters its 16th year, the Friends have grown from a small initial nucleus to a membership of over five hundred strong. Along the way, the organization has gathered experience, wisdom, and a valuable network that make the Friends the premier organization in the field and a true "voice for the islands." The Friends have launched regular and continuing programs in direct island service carried out by volunteers, a living history group which performs on the islands and provides historically appropriate music, and knowledgeable volunteers who offer expert information on flora and fauna, geology, astronomy, archeology, Native American lore, history, legend and seamanship.

In addition, in the past two years, the Friends have launched two pilot programs of substantial significance. The first program is a youth day camp, planned in cooperation with the Department of Social Services, which has given a rewarding and enriching day on the islands to hundreds of children. The second program is unique and of special significance, as it involves the revegetation of the Islands and native plants. This program is currently conducting a two-year demonstration project with a matching grant from the Mass Bays/EPA program. It has included such activities as the rescue of dozens of plants from Spectacle Island, the creation of a nursery on Long Island and the testing of indigenous trees through direct planting on the Islands.

The stewardship of environmental and cultural resources, preserving the natural beauty of the Islands for future generations to enjoy, is at the heart of the Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands' objectives.

SPRING 1995

On the Horizon

By James D. Bennette, Chair

As your Chairman, I am reporting to you to say that all's well as we prepare for an exciting year in the Harbor, on the Islands, and with the Friends.

In the Harbor: As the water in the harbor clears, so clears a vision of Boston Harbor. A Boston Harbor that may well be a symbol for the environment in the 21st century. A harbor rich in history and alive with possibility. A harbor that's home to a wide range of returning wild life from the harbor porpoises to oyster catchers.

On the Islands: We begin 1995 with an extended boat season running from May to October and Peddocks Island reopening. This news alone is cause for celebration. Exciting as that news may be, it's equally my pleasure to report that we have, in place, a team of first-class veterans on the islands. The calendar is set with open houses and training for new volunteers, always full of promise. Our children's educational programs will be expanded, and plans for island revegetation are well under way. We are developing trips and events that are affordable and enjoyable for all, including several excursions to Boston Light.

With the Friends: As with the return of the spring flowers that adorn our Islands, so too will return the warm and welcoming smiles of our friends. So, let us all welcome our returning old friends and

help aboard all new members, extending a hand of friendship.

Enjoy this year, the gifts and treasures we've been entrusted with, and prepare for a time of awareness, reason, and cooperation just out on the horizon.

1996 HOLIDAY ISSUE

Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area

By Karen O'Donnell, Chair

Our Boston Harbor Islands State Park will now take its place among the treasures of this nation and the world as the new Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area. It is a new park for the National Park Service, under Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, who is no stranger to the Islands or to the Friends. From Capitol Hill to Beacon Hill, the news of inclusion is exciting. Thanks to Congressmen Gerry Studds, Joseph Moakley and the support of our bipartisan Massachusetts delegation, the dream of federal support for our Islands Park is now a reality.

Where will the Friends fit in this new partnership park? For eighteen seasons we have provided education and assistance in the Park to enhance the visitors' enjoyment and understanding of our unique Islands park with its historical and environmental significance. We plan to continue doing so for a long time.

SPRING 2000

Chairman's Message

By Richard Silverman, Chair

As the Boston Harbor Island National Park Area continues to build and solidify, the FBHI follows the same pathway. Our Volunteer force has grown to meet the expanding need, and their qualifications have been enhanced. Volunteer activities have expanded to meet the needs, including manning the National Park Service



Bill and Gloria Fitzpatrick as Colonel Justin E. Dimick and Mrs. Dimick on Georges Island.

Information Kiosk on Long Wharf and assisting in the new availability of Little Brewster Island and Boston Light to the public. The scheduled openings of Long and Spectacle Islands in 2002 plus additional plans for the Park, will cause us to move ahead still further in our ability to provide Volunteer Services.

We need

Volunteers with your passion for the islands. We have so many types of Volunteer opportunities, on and off the islands, for the Friends and for the Park.

Note: In October 1999 FBHI held, "A Symposium: The Next Twenty Years" to chart the course of the organization for the short term and the long haul. Participants included Park staff, past and present volunteers and members, and representatives from the Partnership. With twenty years of commitment and experience on the Islands, the Friends are going to be called on to help meet these increasing needs.

Anticipating 30th Anniversary Celebrations

By Steve Marcus, Chair

Here it comes again; another season on the Boston Harbor Islands. Our spirits and energy rise as we await our return to the islands. With that energy we also renew our resolve to serve park visitors and workers, and to support informed and gentle access to the park's unique cultural and environmental resources.

We are embarking on our 30th year as an organization serving the Boston Harbor Islands. You, our members are our strength, especially those of you who become volunteers. We thank you, and we pledge to make this year of service, education, friendship and celebration. Please celebrate with us.

In celebration of our thirtieth year, we are committed to offering more service to the community and more support and activities for our members. Keep your eyes open for programs that bring books about the harbor to schools and libraries near you; storytelling programs on the islands; more social events for members; talks to inform community groups about FBHI and the Park; displays in the park featuring the Friends; expanded Edward Rowe Snow day; and exciting new auction items. Add in boat tours, walking tours, campground monitoring and our regular set of activities. Our thirtieth year stands to become our most dynamic. It can be a huge success if you roll up your sleeves as a volunteer, roll out your wallet as a donor, and send out the news of the good works we have wrought.

A Report of the New England Boat Show

By Walter Hope, Chair

According to the producer of the New England Boat Show, 51,725 attendees came out to see the huge selection of boats, boat hardware and accessories; and groups like the FBHI, the Mass Environmental Trust, Community Boat Building and New England Aquarium. We spoke to hundreds of attendees and vendors and sold our books, memberships, and t-shirts. We had a wonderful sign provided by Boston Harbor Now.

An enormous amount of volunteers' time was spent at the show, and our goal was to continue to spread the word about the Park and the Islands. This year we also spread the word that moorings will be available! Hundreds of postcards announcing the moorings were passed out. The moorings will allow recreational boaters to securely tie up and enjoy the Islands without worrying about their anchors dragging. The boaters with a dinghy can make their way to land without worry. Reservations will be completed using DockWa.

Our Boat Show volunteers were led by Rab Sherman, who was on the scene every day, and included: Walter Hope, Pat Leary, Paul Federico, Ann Marie Allen, David Dingley, Kathy Abbott, Lenny Alberts, Lee Ann McDonough, Kevin Rogers, Denise Kidd, John Meurling, Robert, Anna and Arthur Sheridan, and Anne Kelly.

Note: 2019 was the tenth year that the Friends had a table at the New England Boat Show.

Volunteers: The Lifeblood of the Friends

The Friends volunteer program dates to the beginning of the organization when the organization was called the Boston Harbor Island Volunteer Corps to assist the staff of the evolving park.

The goal for volunteers was two-fold – get volunteers out to enjoy the islands, where they would help others enjoy the islands. Many people started out as visitors and ended up as volunteers and members, with the goal of making the islands accessible to a wide range of people.

Volunteers have been the lifeblood of FBHI, performing a myriad of duties and tasks over the past 40 years. They staff visitor stations on the islands, particularly Georges, and answer questions. They have led visitors on tours of the Islands, patiently answering

questions from young and old. Volunteers have also camped on the islands to be there as a reassuring presence – along with Park Rangers – to help with visitors' questions and concerns. Volunteers pick up trash, report problems, and serve on boat trips.

David Dingley, a long-time volunteer, says, "I volunteer because of the happiness it brings me, knowing that I have helped people get to know the islands better and develop a relationship with the islands."

Nancy Martin and Carol Fithian have served as volunteer coordinators for the Friends, helping to orient them to all the many requirements for wearing a blue shirt

that identifies them as a Friends volunteer.

Nancy Martin, who has been a member of the Friends for some 33 years, was a member when she applied for, and got, the job of Coordinator of Volunteers. "It was the best job that I have ever had," she recalls.

Carol Fithian has also seen many volunteers during her 26 years with the FBHI and her years as the Coordinator of Volunteers.

"Individuals join The Friends to either make a connection with some aspect of harbor history, or share their own interest and knowledge of the harbor with others," she says. "They have told me that they find some healing for their own life struggles just by being on a particular island. They come seeking, and the

harbor has its own way of giving back.

"Through my own observations of Volunteers over the years I would always tell them that the harbor volunteer experience would make them different," Carol says. "When Volunteers would grow into their role, they all would find a special island or location on the harbor where they would find their niche and they would tell me that although in the beginning they really did not believe me about the difference, that in fact that I had been right about the difference. I usually say that it is the chief mystery of the harbor that makes it happen"



Carol Fithian, cookie baker extraordinaire.

Volunteer Memories

In 2019, we asked volunteers and members of the Friends to share some of their memories. Here are some responses. (You'll find others throughout this booklet)

Was it the Lady in Black?

By Nancy Jeanne Martin

I've been a member of the Friends for some 33 years. I was a member when I applied, and got, the job of Coordinator of Volunteers. I was new to camping, but excited to start. I spent the summers camping each weekend on a different island.



At my first campout on Georges Island, I heard rustling around my tent that night. I was sure it was the Lady in Black, and I was NOT venturing out of my tent! Come morning, I found that someone had been adding a blue tarp to their tent. Another summer, I was with the Volunteers on Lovells Island. There was a big storm coming in and we were encouraged to take shelter over on Georges Island. They let us stay in the Hospital Room, sheltered from the storm. This was when cell phones first came out, and that proved very useful. It turned out no one knew we were on the Island, and we had to call and get a special boat to take us off.

I was able to help put together the Sunset Cruises and other boat trips. I always liked to put Georges Island last, so that the earlier sunset would make for better ghost stories. Charlie Boyer was a

great storyteller and I learned a lot from him so that I can continue to tell those tales. I also enjoyed the singing group, Nixes Mates. They sang at many events and at some funeral services of some wonderful volunteers.

Speaking of past volunteers, there are many that remain dear to me and I pray they rest in peace. Some of them include: Donna Harvey, Fred Johnsen, Carol Pooler, Gertrude Lutz, John Forbes, Joe Kolb, Charlie Boyer, Charles Stellberger, and John Hannaway. I'm sure there are more that I can't recall right now but would if someone mentioned them. I've met so many people over these 33 years.

Today I find I can't get around as well or get in and out of a tent easily. Thankfully, Georges Island is handicap accessible! I take my 4-wheel handicap scooter out there often. I particularly enjoy riding up to people having picnics. I remind them to beware of the stealthy seagulls that like to steal food. That usually breaks the ice, and I find I have had wonderful conversations with people from all around the world.

I still get out for the New Year's Day Trips. I love going to Thompson Island. Seeing the Islands at different seasons is a treat. When I can't be out there, I work on my many scrapbooks of the islands.



(Left column) Grape Island volunteers enjoy a rainy day.

(Above) John Forbes and Charlie Boyer.

Rising Tide

By Phyllis Meserlian

Nancy Martin and I, as FBHI Volunteers, were assigned weekend duty on Great Brewster Island. One Sunday, the rangers asked us to carry the island radio to Little Brewster, site of Boston Light, to recharge the batteries. This was prior to cellphones, the radio being the only means of emergency communication with the harbor police. It was possible at low tide, so we were told, to walk dry shod on a narrow, rocky pathway between these two islands.

Boston Light, not yet automated, was maintained by the U.S. Coast Guard. We were instructed to start walking 20 minutes before dead low tide, giving us more than 40 minutes for the few minutes' walk over, recharge the batteries and then walk back. We set out on time, both of us wearing Friends volunteer shirts, shorts and sneakers, picking our way carefully over the slippery rocks. I carried the precious radio.

All too soon, we noticed that the tide was rising, not falling, rather rapidly – first to our ankles, then knees and hips. At this point, I was balancing the radio on

my head with one hand as the current swirled around us threateningly. We were ready to abandon the radio and swim for it, but managed to scramble ashore onto Little Brewster.

The Coast Guard staff informed us that we had arrived during a “neap” tide, which behaves differently, with a narrower tidal range that does not ebb as much as normal low tide. They recharged the batteries and transported us by launch back to Great Brewster, accompanied by Farah, their beloved island dog.

Phyllis Meserlian served as vice president of the Friends, volunteered on Grape, Calf and Lovells Islands, was Team Captain for Little Brewster and the Lighthouse trips, acted in the Living History Program, and was a member of the singing group Nix's Mate.

Boston Light

By Ken Stein and Charlotte Knox

A trip to Boston Light became an adventure for FBHI volunteers Ken and Charlotte on Sunday, August 5, 2008. The day started out well: An enthusiastic group was on time and ready at Fan Pier for the morning trip out to Little Brewster aboard the *Culebra*. Park Rangers Suzanne and Don were on board, and we had a smooth ride out to the island. Disembarking on the beach brought no banged heads or twisted ankles. Likewise, leaving the island went smoothly, except for one tourist almost forgetting her bag in the boat house.

Lunch break is really magical on the island, the hectic atmosphere of helping 40 or so visitors appreciate their stay is replaced with the calm and quiet of a small island. A leisurely lunch, perhaps a brief catnap, a chance to take a few photos, conversation with the volunteers, rangers, and Coast Guard Auxiliaries.

Father and Daughter

By Rob Sheridan

One of my favorite memories is collecting recyclable trash from the islands to bring home and put out with home recycling. It's fun to clean up while enjoying the beauty. My daughter Anna helped with the activity a few years ago on Lovells Island.





Charlotte Knox and Ken Stein.

All this was “rudely” interrupted by Lighthouse Keeper Sally Snowman at 1:30 p.m., with news that the *Culebra* had broken down on its return to Fan Pier, and the afternoon boat trip back to Boston Light had been cancelled. No Coast Guard Auxiliary boat was at the island, and the weather forecast was for thunderstorms.

I will tell you a secret, if you promise not to tell Sally. Since Charlotte and I are not members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, the idea of spending a night on the island was intriguing, to say the least. However, I doubt that Ranger Don was equally “intrigued.”

Anyway, Sally and Jay came through. They were able to arrange for two fellow Auxiliary members to bring the boat over to rescue us. That was the good news. The bad news was that we would have to climb down the ladder at the end of the dock to board the boat. Sally’s description of how the ladder had been damaged, and how one had to climb down, keeping your feet towards the outside edge of the ladder did not give me confidence.

The boat arrived about an hour later, and needless to say, the climb down the ladder was not as bad as I feared. The storms had not arrived, and the high-speed run from Little Brewster to Georges was exciting. As we were arriving at Georges, we saw that the ferry to Long Wharf was

about the leave. A few blasts on the boat horn, and some arm waving by our crew, convinced the ferry captain to wait for us. With no time to spare, we made the boat.

On arrival at Long Wharf, it was clear that the T-storm was nearby. Our race back to Fan Pier where our car was parked was interrupted by the downpour, which trapped us at Rowes Wharf for 45 minutes to wait out the heavy rain.

Who says that FBHI volunteering isn’t exciting!

Island Camping and Volunteer Work projects

By George Marsh

Some of my fondest memories on the Boston Harbor Islands are of several day camping adventures on Lovells, Grape, Great Brewster, and Peddocks Islands. Some were organized by the Friends as volunteer orientations for the summer park season. I recall two years when a large group of us had the privilege of setting up camp on the parade ground inside Fort Warren and exploring the fort at night. We split up and went to our chosen islands to camp the second night to meet our island



Jay Stapleton, George Marsh and Maggi Brown.

resident staff and continue training. Several times, a large crew of volunteers camped in the group campsite on Grape Island surrounded by a thick grove of birch trees.

This island has some of the prettiest paths and woodlands on any of the islands.

I was fortunate to spend a couple of seasons as an Overnight Volunteer on Great Brewster Island when the state park pier was still standing. I loved being so far out in the harbor, so close to Little Brewster and Boston Light (when it was still manned by the Coast Guard). The views from the top of the Drumlin were spectacular in all directions. Calf Island with the ruins of Julia Arthur's home was right across the channel, below the high, eroded bluff. Graves Light was easily visible past several small rocky outcroppings, as were Middle and Outer Brewster Islands. Our campsite was off the path going up the hill, and we looked directly across the rocky spit connecting with Little Brewster, to the Light Station with its constant activity. At low tide, another long serpentine spit extended from the southern end of the island out into the main ship channel. It was a special thrill to walk its entire length and back without getting wet, while feeling I was in the middle of the harbor. It gave me a very different perspective of the nearby islands.

I have special memories of a Volunteer Work Project on Peddocks Island's Fort Andrews in July 1985. Over a hundred volunteers from the Friends and the AMC worked in several groups to clear

overgrown vegetation from several areas of the old fort and trails. I worked in a crew which included my father, brother and a friend. We were tasked with clearing out many trees that had grown up around the old hospital building and along the adjacent roadway. My father had brought his truck and chainsaws to do the cutting while we all cleared away the debris and piled it up for later disposal. It was a hot day and the work was strenuous and dangerous. We worked together as a team and accomplished a good deal without any mishaps. My family stayed overnight and we did some further clearing work the next day. I have several photos of our work at the hospital, and of my father and I enjoying the view of the harbor and islands from the bluff past the large Quartermaster's storehouse after our work was done. (This was the last time I worked beside my father – he was diagnosed with brain cancer the following month.)

*George Marsh, Vice President and Island Volunteer 1983
President 1984-1987 and Island Volunteer
Advocacy Committee 1983-1999
(Co-Chair EPA CAC Wastewater Treatment
Facility Siting 1985-1988)
Treasurer 1988-1990, '92, '93, 2004-2008
Revegetation Volunteer 1992-2009
Spectacle Island Parkland Advisory
Committee 2000-2005
Admin. Volunteer 2011-2019*



Volunteer end-season thank you party with DEM and MDC staff (1990 or 1991).



In 1996, following the Chevron Conservation Awards presentation in Washington D.C. Mass. Senator Edward Kennedy (left photo) with George Marsh, Marsha Bach, Suzanne Gall Marsh, Karen O'Donnell. In the photo below with Senator John Kerry.



Park opening day, Long Wharf, 1997 with George Marsh, Karen O'Donnell, Congressman Gerry Studds, Suzanne Gall Marsh, Carol Fithian.



Boston Harbor Islands State Park Master Plan released, 1985: Back row: MDC Commissioner Bill Geary, Mass. Gov. Michael Dukakis, DEM Commissioner James Gutensohn, George Marsh. Front row: Suzanne Gall Marsh, Blossom Hoag, Lillian Beauvais.



Carol Fithian, Suzanne Gall Marsh, Kelly Fellner, Karen O'Donnell, Marsha Bach, Steve Marcus, George Price in Washington D.C., 2003 Hartzog Award.



A Watchful Eye

The FBHI as Advocates for the Islands

The Friends were organized to serve the Boston Harbor Islands State Park (BHISP) through volunteer assistance. But another primary purpose was to advocate for conservation and preservation of the unique natural and cultural resources of the islands and harbor environment.

Friends volunteers and leaders have first-hand experience working on the islands, interacting with Park staff and visitors. We put that knowledge to use by playing an active role in the early years in planning for Boston Harbor and in projects to improve overall water quality and facilities to clean up and promote wise uses of the harbor. We became informed about the many policy issues and planning efforts relating to the Boston Harbor clean-up and BHI State Park improvements in programming and infrastructure. The 1980s were an active period for all kinds of environmental protection initiatives. As a young organization, the Friends were very committed and energized to participate actively with government and other community groups to improve the Harbor and Islands for all. Many of us were influenced by the activism of the 1960s and 1970s and carried that legacy of idealism and civic participation forward in our activities as Friends.

In April 1984, a month-long program “The Islands - A Series of Explorations of the Boston Harbor Islands” was co-sponsored by the Friends and UMass Boston in celebration of the University’s 20th anniversary. A series of four Thursday evening symposia highlighting topics of ongoing research and public interest drew standing room-only crowds.

A cruise to Lovells Island with a Living History program and island walks conducted by volunteers, concluded this special series.

The FBHI were active participants on several Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC) mandated by the court-ordered remediation of Boston Harbor water quality. Plans for a new and improved regional wastewater treatment facility were reviewed, and where it would be sited was a major debate. FBHI President George Marsh and Boston Environment Department Head Lorraine Downey co-chaired the EPA CAC, which had representatives of environmental, municipal, neighborhood, and harbor-user groups. We worked to keep the extensive treatment facilities off of Long Island and Spectacle Island, which was covered by the former Boston garbage landfill. These islands were hoped to become part of the BHI State Park in future. An old County Prison on Deer Island needed to be replaced, along with the failing Wastewater Treatment Plant located there. The practical decision was eventually made to relocate a new Prison to South Bay in Boston, which opened up more area to build the new expanded Treatment Plant, with new publicly accessible parkland around the perimeter of what was once the largest island in the Harbor.

A second major planning and facility siting process was carried out for the wastewater residuals to produce fertilizer as byproduct. Another CAC for Residuals Facility Siting was engaged to help find a viable location. Again, Spectacle Island was considered for this intensive use, but

another idea was being proposed for covering the old landfill with fill and dredge material from the Central Artery/Tunnel project. The decision was made to build the facility at the former Quincy Shipyard.

Long Island, owned by the City of Boston and once home to a chronic disease hospital and several residential treatment programs, was also being studied for future public park use. The Department of Environmental Management and Metropolitan District Commission) were developing a Master Plan for the BHI State Park and Deer, Spectacle, and Long Island were all being studied for possible future park uses. The FBHI actively participated in public meetings and provided input to agency planners during this process.

Several board members joined Governor Michael S. Dukakis, DEM Commissioner James Gutensohn, and MDC Commissioner William Geary and staff on a tour of Georges Island in 1985 and for the release of the BHISP Master Plan in June 1986. This report called for significant state investments to expand access to and improve facilities for the BHI state park. This included creating a presence for information about the islands at Long Wharf in Boston and Hewitts Cove in Hingham (site of BHISP headquarters). DEM began discussions with the FBHI to locate an office in the park building at the Hingham shipyard. Several years later, in spring 1988, we proudly opened our newly furnished office in the park headquarters in Hingham.

During this period, the Friends were co-sponsors of the New England Environmental Conference at Tufts University each spring. We staffed an information table/display about the Park and promoted volunteer training opportunities. We presented workshops on Boston Harbor Islands issues and related concerns. We worked with the MDC to expand our volunteer program to Peddocks Island when public ferry access was reinstated. An effort was made to reach out to underserved communities around the Harbor, to inform and encourage Park use.

The Friends had been providing public tours of Boston Light since 1986, and in 1988 the Coast Guard announced that Boston Light would be automated in several years, as other lighthouses around the country were being converted. There was a question whether the Boston Light station would continue to be manned as well. The FBHI mounted a petition and a public awareness campaign to “Save Boston Light.” We advocated for maintaining the historic light and buildings with an on-site caretaker for security. After a successful advocacy effort, in 1989 the Coast Guard agreed to study the future management of Little Brewster with the DEM and a citizen advisory group. Again, the FBHI played a role in these critical deliberations.

On October 23, 1989, Senator Edward Kennedy visited Boston Light and made a legislative commitment to ensure its future. In the meantime Historic



Boston, Inc. and MA DEM worked with David Dixon & Associates, Nancy Lurie Salzman, and the Boston Light CAC to develop the “Boston Light: Preservation Guidelines and Stewardship Plan,” which was released in September 1990. Major recommendations included adding Boston Light and Little Brewster Island to the BHISP with a caretaker and increased public access.

The Friends have consistently supported adequate Park funding and staffing levels through several periods of economic downturns and state budget decreases. In 1989-90, we worked closely with Park agencies to provide additional volunteer coverage on the islands, even when our state service funding was reduced/delayed. We advocated for restoring park agency funding in 1991, and the '92 state budget did provide some more funding for parks. At the same time, several of the piers on the harbor islands were in poor condition and required capital improvements. Because of this, public boat access was unavailable to some of them. In 1995, the park season was extended and Peddocks Island reopened with a new ferry pier.

The early 1990s continued as a very active period for Boston Harbor and BHISP planning and major public projects. The Friends organized a public Harbor Islands Forum with agency leaders to showcase issues of Spectacle remediation, Boston Light preservation, and Long Island public park use. The Friends actively participated in the Environmental Impact Statement regulatory process for the historic Central Artery/Tunnel project.

A critical aspect was the agreement to create the Spectacle Island Parkland Advisory Committee (SIPAC) in 1991; FBHI was a formal member of the committee. This group had participants from the Central Artery Third Harbor Tunnel

Project (CA/T), City and state DEM (island owners) and community and environmental groups. SIPAC met numerous times over many years and reviewed many design and park program elements as Spectacle Island was being transformed into new parkland for the BHISP. In 1992 excavated material from the CA/T project began being brought to Spectacle Island where it was used to cover the old trash landfill. Construction was ongoing on a new seawall around the base of the island drumlins to protect from wave erosion.

In the spring of 1992, the Friends organized and presented a major educational program, “Your Islands in Transition,”



Rab Sherman on Great Brewster.

an exhibit and public forum of panels and workshops at the Boston Public Library. The focus was on Spectacle, Long, Peddocks and Little Brewster Islands. Park staff, government officials and citizens came to together to collaborate on ideas for the future of the islands.

At this time, two Friends directors developed a new initiative to research and implement a project to restore native plant/tree species onto the Harbor Islands. The Boston Harbor Islands Garden Project became the BHI Revegetation Project (BHIRP) with the awarding of a two-year grant from the Mass Bays Program and U.S. EPA. Project co-managers Marsha Bach and Janet Powers oversaw the creation of plant demonstration plots on Bumpkin Island, and a native species plant

nursery started on Long Island near the hospital campus. This project involved many Friends volunteers over two decades, who helped establish plantings of nursery-raised trees on Bumpkin, Long, Lovells, Thompson, and Georges Islands.

During 1993 the FBHI worked with other Greater Boston parks groups in the MetroParks Coalition to support and advocate for adequate staffing, improved facilities and public programs during the Centennial year of the MDC. We also participated on the Board of the Boston GreenSpace Alliance, which included a broad group of community park advocates.

In 1993 Governor William Weld appointed the Green Ribbon Commission to study and make recommendations for strengthening the Metropolitan Parks System in its Centennial year. The Report was presented on Mass Parks Day at the Boston State House in 1996.

In August 1993, on Moon Island, part of the drumlin hill was being excavated by heavy equipment to enlarge the existing Boston Police shooting range. The FBHI became aware of this and was immediately very concerned about this dramatic earthwork without public notice or prior deliberation. The nearby harbor-front community of Squantum was up

in arms, and the Seaside Environmental Alliance (SEA) fought the excavation legally with FBHI and support from other community leaders. In early 1994, the state ruled the City of Boston must file an ENF (public notice) and produce an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for this project. The work had been stopped while SEA and FBHI appealed for state review. The Friends Advocacy committee was renamed Environmental Stewardship/Public Policy (ESPPC) in recognition of the broad areas of our active participation around the Harbor and Metro area.

Also in August the National Park Service (North Atlantic Region) began the process for a “Special Resource Study” of the BHI. The Friends were actively involved with advocacy efforts to support the Study. Volunteers and leaders participated on numerous boat trips and island visits with park and governmental officials, politicians and their staff, as well as, citizen and non-profit organizations. The Friends reviewed and provided input to the draft report. The NPS released the BHI Special Resource Study in June 1994. It confirmed the Harbor Islands were nationally significant and recommended their inclusion in the national park system. Friends advocacy work continued through 1996, when



DCR Commissioner Leo Roy, Walter Hope, Kate Rivera, Suzanne Gall Marsh, Ann Marie Allen and Paul Federico at DCR Partnership Matching Funds presentation 2019.

the federal park legislation passed on November 6, creating the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area. It was signed into law by President Clinton on November 12, 1996.

In May 1996, the Friends received the Chevron-Times Mirror Conservation Award for “advocacy that enabled measures to protect the islands from misuse. FBHI efforts in alliance with public agencies have opened the islands to everyone in the community.” The award was presented at a gala dinner held in Washington D.C. Friends members Marsha Bach, George Butterworth, Karen O’Donnell, Blossom and Ethan Hoag, Suzanne Gall Marsh and George Marsh attended the event to receive their recognition. The next day they met with Senators Ted Kennedy and John Kerry and Congressman Gerry Studds to discuss the impending Harbor Islands Legislation and to do photo shoots with the Conservation Award plaque.

Advocacy efforts continued full tilt after the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area legislation passed in November 1996. In early 1997 George Price, Jr. became the first Superintendent and along with NPS Park staff began the herculean task of coordinating Partnership and Committees structure and establishing the public process to create the Advisory Council. The first official meeting of the Advisory Council was March 4, 1998. The Friends representative to the Advisory Council was Suzanne Gall Marsh, who was elected vice-chair. Jack Wiggin from the Urban Harbors Institute at UMass Boston was elected chairman. They served as officers for three years and continued on the Council when their terms were completed. The Friends provided input and review of the draft Park General Management and Strategic plans at public

meetings and through participation on several committees of the Advisory Council from 1999 through 2002, when the General Management Plan was released.

In spring 1997 the Friends participated in the national event “March for Parks” to publicize and raise funds to support local and national parks across the country. This series of public events was sponsored by the



FBHI tour of Long Island Head Light.

National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). FBHI organized special boat trips to Georges Island to promote and support the BHI state and new national park. In 1998 and 1999 the boat tour and walk was held on Peddocks island around the time of Earth Day.

Early in 2001 the U.S. Coast Guard proposed to replace the deteriorating Nixes Mate navigational marker with a new steel tower and sign. The FBHI Board voted to research National Register designation and preservation of this historic structure. In August the U.S.C.G. agreed to restore the Nixes Mate day marker, and



Giles Parker (former NPS Superintendent) with FBHI volunteers at the Boston Light 300th Birthday Celebration 2016.

the Friends formed a committee to pursue National Register status. A consultant was hired to prepare the extensive application and solicit support from local and state agencies. Our Save Nixes Mate campaign was successful when the navigational marker was restored and added to the National Register of Historic Places in March 2004.

Meanwhile major Boston Harbor construction projects were continuing on Deer and Spectacle Islands. Significant new public park amenities were completed around the perimeter of the new Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. A dedication ceremony was held in early June 2002 to kick off the summer season in the Park. Spectacle Island was being

transformed into new parkland as well, with a marina, visitor center and maintenance building, swimming beach, trails and picnic areas. This major addition to the Park was officially opened for the summer season in 2006.

The city of Boston also released its “Limited Access Master Plan” for Long Island in 2002 to provide for some public park use in future. Construction of a new public pier at the head of the island below the lighthouse was proposed, and work completed several years later.

The Friends were recognized for their long-standing service to the Islands and Park and advocacy efforts for their protection by the National Park Service in early 2003. The George and Helen Hartzog Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service was given for the “Outstanding Volunteers in Parks” program, and presented to a contingent of Friends leaders at a gala luncheon in Washington DC.

In 2004 after months of deliberation and planning, the two Massachusetts Parks agencies (the DEM and MDC) were consolidated to become the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The new agency was intended to combine the strengths and cultures of the urban and



Atlantic Mechanical Inc. restoring Nixes Mate, 2003.

rural parks, and improve coordination and resource protection. The FBHI shared the vision of an improved and unified state parks agency and supported additional funding for the Harbor Islands.

In early 2005, a bill was introduced in the state legislature which proposed that a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facility be sited and built on Outer Brewster Island near Boston Light. The FBHI joined with other environmental and community groups to form a coalition to stop any development on the island. The campaign to “Save the Brewsters” (with a website) was waged over the next two years, until May 2007, when the LNG terminal plan was withdrawn by the proponents.

In 2009 the Park Partnership released the updated Strategic Plan for the Park. Friends participated on working committees that reviewed the first ten years of the Partnership and the Park, and identified needs and priorities for the next ten years.

The Friends celebrated 30 years of service and advocacy for the Boston Harbor Islands with boat tours, lectures and a well attended Annual Meeting of members and park partners.

The Friends have had representatives on many official committees: the EPA Citizen Advisory Committee for the siting of the Deer Island Treatment Plant, the MWRA Citizen Advisory Committee for Residuals (sludge treatment), Spectacle Island Parkland Advisory Committee, Metropolitan Parks Coalition, Seaside Environmental Alliance, Peddocks Island Advisory Committee, the public task force for the consolidation of the former Department of Environmental Management with the Metropolitan District Commission; the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park Advisory Council and the Boston Light 300th

Committee. They also had representatives on the boards of the Boston GreenSpace Alliance and The Boston Harbor Association.

FBHI has had a representative on the BHI Advisory Council since its inception in 1997 – until 2017, when Department of Interior was ordered to suspended over 200 advisory boards, committees, and subcommittees to ensure compliance with an executive order signed by the Trump administration.



Lovells Island oilhouse inspection.

FBHI Advocacy work continues to this day. Members will remain as citizen watchdogs to ensure the Islands flourish and continue to be enjoyed by the public.

As this 40th booklet goes to press, current park issues are: the Peddocks Island Redevelopment - Vision Plan, with an ongoing community outreach effort by Boston Harbor Now; rebuilding of the Long Island bridge and public access for parkland use of the Island; Gallops Island environmental remediation efforts to remove trace asbestos and eventual re-opening of the Island. The Friends have also launched an effort to preserve the historic Lovells Island oil house.

The Friends have long advocated for an extended park season and water transportation and will continue to do so.

Congratulations to Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands on your 40th Anniversary

By George Price

Many changes and successes have happened to the Harbor Islands since my nine years as the first National Park Service Superintendent. The Federal bill designating the 34 islands over 50 square miles of Boston Harbor as a unit of the National Park System as a National Recreation Area.

The NPS was not slated to own any of the property. Many of the islands were owned by two different State Park Agencies since the 1970's State Park. The other properties were owned by cities, towns, other state agencies, the USCG and non-profits. This was an over-the-top partnership venture which directed a 13-member Partnership Board and a 28-member Advisory Commission.

During my time we learned about the positive and negative stories the islands have to tell. We all can take pride in the Islands role in defending our country during times of war. We became aware of the devastating stories of Native American containment camps during the 1670's King Phillip's War. We also observed the awe in the eyes of locals and visitors from afar when they experienced the views of the outer harbor at all times of year.

The Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands contributed their time, skill and resources to assist the agencies and provide services to visitors, including their famous Winter Cruises.

Since my time, two state agencies have combined, non-profit organizations have merged and tremendous facilities have been constructed to support visitor services. It is good to know that the same mission prevails to protect resources and serve visitors which will allow this nationally significant resource to be enjoyed for future generations.

George Price
NPS Superintendent, 1996 – 2005

The Programs



*Anchors away!
Bon Voyage!
Sailing, Sailing
and Away We Go!*

Over the past four decades, the Friends have run a wide variety of programs – on land and sea and for young and old – that have enhanced the experience of visitors or promoted education about Boston Harbor. FBHI boat trips have brought visitors out to Islands not served by ferry; historical re-enactors have brought the past alive. The Friends have also sought to preserve the history of people who lived or worked on these Islands and have made sure that readers can experience that history without ever leaving land. In this chapter you will read about five key Friends programs.

PART ONE

Aboard the Friends Boat Trips

From 1979 to 1982, the Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps co-sponsored

trips with the Sierra Club GBG (Greater Boston Group) to Gallops, Great Brewster, Peddocks and Thompson. The Friends incorporated as a non-profit in 1982 and has continued sponsoring all types of trips working with various boat companies through the years.

There have been many memorable Friends Boat Trips over the decades. Spring, summer, fall and New Year's Day find the Friends cruising the harbor and exploring the islands. The organization was a pioneer for public access, promoting public ferry services, as well as their own trips. The FBHI Boat Trips Committee was responsible for the logistics and program planning for all trips, along with coordinating volunteer narrators, island guides and merchandise sales volunteers. Thousands of visitors have enjoyed the countless Friends cruises and trips to the Islands.

In recent years, the focus of Friends boat trips has been to islands without docks, such as Rainsford, Great Brewster and Calf. Only three beach landing vessels have been available to charter: the *Knotts Island*, *Culebra* and the *Beachcat*. They are no longer in service, which is why the FBHI boat trips are on hiatus.



New Year's Day Thompson Island Tradition.

Boat trips highlights:

The type, route, and content of the boat trips have varied from year-to-year. Some have had specific themes, and some have been simply opportunities to explore the islands. For example:

- Beginning in 1980, the Friends have hosted the annual “Seafarers Island Holiday” trip to either Thompson or Spectacle Islands on New Year's Day. The tradition continues.
- Beginning in 1983 and running through 2017, the Friends have hosted Island Sunset Cruises, which introduced passengers to twilight walks and spectacular sunsets on the islands.
- In 1986 the Friends initiated the trips to Little Brewster and Boston Light in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard. There were from six to ten trips a year departing from both Boston and Hingham, both in the daytime and in the evening. In 1999, the National

Park Service, working with the Friends, incorporated Boston Light trips into their programs. FBHI continued to lead summer solstice and special trips out to Little Brewster until the island was closed for public access in 2018 due to winter storm damage. When Boston Light trips were halted due to on-island access issues, the Friends hosted daytime and evening Lighthouse Cruises around Little Brewster and Graves Light. Today, the National Park Service and Boston Harbor Now co-sponsor (and manage) these trips, and the Auxiliaries and Friends continue to assist. Friends members receive a discount on the Park lighthouse cruises.

- Music and Dance Cruises with the J.Q. Stevens Jazz Trio – September 26, 1986, and June 26, 1990. Jim Stevens was an FBHI Board member, volunteer narrator and jazz musician.
- In 1991, Fall Foliage-Lighthouse Extravaganza Cruises commenced and were popular through 2009.
- Plymouth and Cape Cod Lighthouse Cruises began in 1997 and operated through 2006.
- The 1997, 1998, and 1999 March for Parks, co-sponsored with the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and Metropolitan District Commission, was a fundraiser cruise and walk around Georges and Peddocks islands.
- The 2004-2011 Northern and Southern Lighthouse Cruises were co-sponsored with Boston Harbor Cruises and operated from springtime through fall.
- 2017 Tall Ships Cruises were held aboard the UMass Boston *M/V Columbia Point* and sunset Lighthouse Tours.

The Friends have hosted some very special boat trips over the years. One was on March 22, 1986, when Halley's Comet was making its flyby of the earth. Here is an excerpt from the Summer Tidings about the experience.

March Comet Cruise a Great Success

By David Cordeiro

At 4:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 22, the magic words were heard by 161 weary but expectant passengers aboard the *M/V Frederick L. Nolan, Jr.*: "All right folks, we've got a comet out there!" So the climax of this long but unique nocturnal cruise to Stellwagen Bank was finally at hand. For the first and probably last time, passengers aboard the *Nolan* and the nearby *M/V Fort Independence* would glimpse Comet Halley, that most famous of comets.

Matthew Stein and Darrell Davis, senior lecturers at the Hayden Planetarium, accepted our cruise invitations. Around midnight, the two boats departed Long Wharf carrying 282 passengers. It was a three-hour journey out to the Bank.

By 4:00 a.m., the full moon had set and the sky was totally dark, spangled with innumerable stars—and one comet. Low in the southeastern sky, it appeared

faint and fuzzy to unaided eyes. When the rocking of the boat in the heavy swells permitted, binoculars showed a beautiful vista: a small diffuse head like a fuzzy sun. Trailing straight behind was a small fan-shaped gossamer tail, glowing with faint dust streaks. At the sight, people sent forth a steady chorus of oohs and aahs. It appeared as one of the swords of heaven. All gazed long and intently upon it, knowing that all too soon the sun would rise to obliterate this once-in-a-lifetime spectacle from our entranced eyes.

I am sure glad I thought up this cruise. If I'm around at the Comet's next return in 2061, I'll do it again.

Here is a story of a boat trip gone awry from Tidings.

October 14, 1989, Grounding of the *M/V Abigail Adams* at Boston Light

By Suzanne Gall Marsh

Over a hundred visitors had scattered across Little Brewster Island and were climbing up in the lighthouse tower. Little did they know that the FBHI boat trip organizer had just been told by Captain John Parker that it was an extreme low tide and that they would have to leave immediately. It was 3:30. Everyone was



*Onboard the *MV Edward Rowe Snow*.*



Liz Carella, photo historian on Rainsford Island.

notified and boarded the boat. We were about to cast off when we heard the sound of crunching. The boat listed and we were aground.

The crew helped everyone safely disembark the vessel. The Boston Light Coast Guard team and the captain conferred. It was decided that we would wait until dead low tide – 5:30 and then walk across the sand spit between Little Brewster and Great Brewster Island. There was a dock at Great Brewster Island, and Boston Harbor Cruises would send another vessel to pick us up. The grounded boat was stuck until high tide.

The time arrived to begin the cross-islands trek. This was no ordinary sand spit. It was more of a mussel-shell one. We took our time, and as everyone began arriving at Great Brewster, we turned to gaze at Little Brewster and the remarkable rainbow that glimmered across “Lighthouse Island.”

We had a little time to explore Great Brewster before the Boston Harbor Cruises vessel arrived from Boston to take us home. Skip Empey recorded some

of the adventure on video. One thing I remember so clearly is the volunteers carrying the bags of merchandise and books across the sand spit. There has never been a Friends trip like this one.

Here is another excerpt from Tidings from Spring 1999.

Fall Foliage and Lighthouse Extravaganza Cruises

By John Forbes

Last October (1998), the Friends sponsored an extensive Lighthouse Cruise. Five hundred adventurers on two Mass Bay Lines ships traveled from Boston to Gloucester. This was the largest cruise of this kind ever run by any group anywhere in the country (or world).

Our two narrators, Doug Bingham and Nancy Martin did outstanding jobs sharing their encyclopedic knowledge of the various lights and coastal history. Our guests came from the length and breadth of our great land. Folks from Oregon and Washington State planned their trip so they could attend. One gentleman flew up from Maryland in the morning and flew back in the evening. We could not have reached all those people without the invaluable help of Tim Harrison and his Lighthouse Digest.

PART TWO

Living History: Bringing the Past Alive with “Real” People

During the 1983 and 1984 New Year’s Day trips to Thompson Island, visitors encountered a group of former island residents and locals from centuries past. David and Amias Thompson; Squanto, a Native American; Nathaniel Hawthorne; and Sir Fernando Gorges. As the group’s visit came to an end, Thomas Morton of

Merrymount led everyone in a Maypole Dance in celebration of the new year.

The characters were brought to life by Ann Prince, George Marsh, Kathy Gill, Chris Keyes, Gary McKnight, Karen O'Donnell, Don Swann and John Hannaway as part of a special FBHI program called "Living History."

On April 28, 1984, a Lovells Island trip was held as the culmination of the UMass Boton's 20th anniversary symposia, co-sponsored with FBHI. Upon arriving at the island, visitors divided into three groups, and multiple presentations of "Histories and Mysteries of the Boston Harbor Islands" began. The Lady (Ladies, actually) in Black led people on a time travel walk where they met Julia Arthur, actress of Calf Island fame (Donna Harvey); Augustus Russ, a summer resident of Middle Brewster (Warren Eggly); Edgar Allen Poe (Joe Kolb); and Elder William Rainsford (John Hannaway) -- to name just a few. The Lady in Black was performed by Ann Prince, Kathy Gill and Karen O'Donnell. Other presenters were Don Swann, Ed Alley, Gary McKnight. It was a more than memorable occasion.

Thus, the FBHI "Living History Troupe" was born. It continued through the late 1980s with both group performances and individual presentations. On March 9, 1986, Peddocks Island came alive with characters developed by Donna Harvey and Ann Prince. Visitors met a colonial Puritan, Leonard Peddock, a bootlegger, a fisherman's wife, and a waitress from the Island Inn.

FBHI volunteers researched the Islands' natural, social, military histories, Native American lore and private ownership. This information was used to develop characters and productions. Living history is one of the ways visitors learn what life was like and how the islands had

changed over the years.

In 1989, Bill and Gloria Fitzpatrick began to portray Colonel Justin Dimmick and Mrs. Dimmick on Georges Island, and the following year, the "Bird Dogs" were organized. Volunteers delved into research about their characters and "bird dogged" the background information. There was a team of Georges Island living history characters.

Over the years the Metropolitan District Commission guidelines for living history programs evolved. There were intense discussions about "edutainment and entertainment." Criteria for performances became more stringent. In 1991, FBHI were recipients of a "Preservation Services Fund" grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to strengthen the Living History Program.



Phyllis Meserlian and Don Hovey.

FBHI volunteers continued to do living history on the Department of Environmental Management Islands. The on-island volunteers created characters based on their research. On Bumpkin Island, Paul Nyren portrayed a Navy man and Diana Griffiths a nurse from the Children's Hospital, and Barbara Coleran, a farmer's wife. Gallops Island had Mary Eaton, Kathy Savage (Peggy

of Peggy's Point fame) and Rick Savage (Dr. Sweeney). A Confederate soldier was portrayed by Walter Hope. Carol Reed and George Marsh were the couple of "Lovers Rock" on Lovells Island. On Grape Island, Ed Alley, Don Swann, and John Hannaway did informal skits. On "Lighthouse Island" – Little Brewster – a variety of presentations have been done over the years.

The Friends Living History Program was the origin of today's portrayals of historical figures by Park staff.

PART THREE

The Voices of the Islands: Preserved for the Future

There are countless personal stories of living and working on the Boston Harbor islands. The Friends have worked to preserve these stories. Over the years the Friends have recorded and filmed numerous oral histories, many in a project called "Island Voices." They have invited former islanders or children of islanders to participate in Friends public tours to share their stories and lead island walks.

A major oral history project focuses on Lovells Island. In 1989, Harold and Hattie Jennings contacted the Friends about Harold's book, *A Lighthouse Family*, which tells his story of living on Lovells Island between 1920 and 1940, as well as his parents' background with the Lighthouse Service.

Prior to moving to Lovells Island to be the sole keeper, Captain Charles Jennings, Harold's father, was the head keeper at Boston Light (1916-1919). He was on duty for

Boston Light's 200th anniversary, and there is a photo of this historic event in Harold's book. When Harold's book went out of print, Friends re-issued it in 2015.

In 1990 the Friends submitted a grant to the National Trust for Historic Preservation to produce a video documentary: "Boston Light: Past, Present and Future." Jeremy D'Entremont, who produced an Edward Rowe Snow series for Winthrop Cable Access, was the videographer, and Nancy Lurie Salzman, a lighthouse historian, was a consultant working with Suzanne Gall Marsh, the project coordinator. The finished product was released to the public in 1992 in video format. Several years ago, the UMass Boston Media Department transferred it to a DVD format.

On October 6, 1990, a reunion of three lighthouse families – Jennings, Norwood, and Babcock – was held during a Friends trip to Little Brewster Island. These "elders" had been children on the islands when their fathers were the lighthouse keepers.

Josephine Norwood's husband, Ralph, was the assistant keeper at Boston Light from 1929-1941, and was then promoted to keeper, 1941-1945. They raised nine children. She attended the reunion with four of her daughters and grandson Willie Emerson. Emerson's book: *First*

Gerry McVey was a child
on Great Brewster.



Light - Reminiscences of Storm Child and Growing Up on a Lighthouse was a testament to lighthouse life. Emerson participated in a 1988 Friends Little Brewster trip in which he autographed copies of his book and shared stories, to the delight of all.

Three grown children of Maurice Babcock Sr., keeper of Boston Light from 1926-1941, were present: Hazel, Helen, and Maurice Babcock Jr. Their interviews and stories were sometimes hilarious. These people had known each other as children on the islands and their back-and-forth memories swapping held everyone spellbound.

On September 13, 2008, the Friends sponsored a Great Brewster Islanders reunion during a Friends trip the island. A summer community flourished on Great Brewster from the late 1800s until 1941. Up to fifteen families lived on the island and paid a \$5 annual fee to the U.S. Government. Francis Perry and Gerry McVey had been children on the island in the 1930s, and three descendants of the Pederson Family were interviewed; all with different stories. Tom Hayden, whose uncle was the U.S. Army caretaker in 1950-1951, was another interviewee. The participants brought photographs to share with the visitors and afterwards shared scanned images on a CD for the Friends to include in this oral history project.

The interviews were taped by FBHI volunteers Marguerite Krupp, and Kristen Wyman, along with two young Island Ambassadors, Stephanie and Irving. Editing and creation of a 45-minute DVD, "Island Voices of Great Brewster," was

done by Suzanne Gall Marsh with assistance from John Mazzarella at the UMass Boston's Digital Learning Center.

Between 2008 and 2009, the Peddocks Island "collecting stories" project was funded by the NPS. Dan Knapp was the videographer, and Suzanne Gall Marsh (a Peddocks Islander at the time), conducted the interviews. As of 2019, these remain in a raw format.



Beatrice Nicholas, Mabel Pinto (Mayor of Peddocks Island) and Ann Prince.

Mary Frazier and her family have shared the Rainsford Island story of her late mother, Josephine Costello Small who grew up on Rainsford Island. Elizabeth Carella, photo historian, and Ellen Berkland, archaeologist, have led walks on FBHI trips to Rainsford Island, sharing the history of its many centuries of institutional use.

On September 17, 2011, after nearly a year of planning, FBHI members and volunteers joined UMass Boston Archives staff for the Boston Harbor Islands Mass. Memories Road Show. Volunteer "roadies" assisted visitors in copying and documenting their photos of activities on the islands. The stories and photographs are available to the public online. To access

this material, go to <https://openarchives.umb.edu>. Click Mass. Memories Show. Then click Boston Harbor Islands.

The UMass Boston Archives has established a Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands Special Collection. Interim Dean of Libraries Joanne Riley said, “We are delighted to accept records of the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands. The history, activities and resources of the FBHI constitute a wealth of information that will be of great interest to faculty, students, researchers worldwide and also to the general public.”

PART FOUR

The Boston Harbor Islands Revegetation Project

The Early Years

By Marsha Bach

The Boston Harbor Islands were once thickly covered with native trees as well as other plant life. During the Colonial period, most of the islands were stripped of their trees for building materials, firewood or even an unrestricted view. Eventually, trees grew back, but native species were often crowded out by invasive species that had migrated to New England with European settlers.

The Boston Harbor Islands Revegetation Project (BHIRP) was conceived in the early 1990s as a grass-roots initiative to restore and revitalize the native vegetation on the islands, particularly more tree diversity.

The motivation for such an ambitious endeavor was multi-pronged: first to rectify the historical practice of clear-cutting trees. Second, Friends wanted to emphasize and promote native plants. Third, Spectacle Island was undergoing a massive metamorphosis – from abandoned, derelict,

municipal dump to a future public park with major facilities.

As a result of the Spectacle Island Parkland Advisory Committee (SIPAC), all of the islands were being scrutinized by many levels of the government, and by non-governmental for-profit and not-for-profit groups. The opportunity was there to make the islands the very finest of places for the residents and visitors of greater Boston.

We initially attempted to have the Revegetation Project accepted for the new park site on Spectacle Island, but the project was too far along in the planning process. The SIPAC heard our request for native plant materials, and the landscape architects intentionally included them in the final planting plan. The Revegetation Project would have to find another way to make its presence known on the Islands.

Mass Bays and the Environmental Protection Agency had a number of grants available for protection and restoration projects around Massachusetts Bay. After a considerable effort in grant writing, a proposal for the Revegetation Project was accepted. In August 1992, we were granted \$15,000 in matching funds to conduct a two-year study of the appropriateness and survivability of upland tree and coastal grass species, and to start a low-maintenance nursery with locally collected seeds.

Janet Powers and I became Co- Coordinators of the Boston Harbor Islands Revegetation Project. Janet would handle the technical/botanical aspects, and I would handle the administrative/financial tasks.

As we were finalizing our work plan for the grant, a representative from the City of Boston’s Environment Department graciously offered us the use of a site on Long Island for our no/low maintenance nursery. Located at the site of an old

greenhouse, the foundation remained, but the interior was full of broken glass and had to be shoveled out. A large growing space adjacent to it was tilled and cleared of sod. As a bonus, there was a magnificent view of Boston Harbor and a water hose connection a mere 200 feet away.

We had an opportunity just at that moment to conduct a plant rescue from Spectacle Island, which was about to undergo construction. It was our first gathering of volunteers, about 30 of us – all delighted to spend a warm fall day on Spectacle collecting plants that would be brought to our new nursery for a

temporary stay. A short boat trip, a long workday, and about 100 plants would be gathered and transplanted to the new nursery site.

To say that preparing the nursery site was hard work would be an understatement. It took hundreds of volunteer hours that summer to transform fallow, trash-strewn land into soil that would grow seeds and rescued plant stock.

Ann Sinclair, a colleague of Janet's from college, became our chief field person. She was the main caretaker of the nursery and the coordinator of the many volunteers who offered their spare time there and at the test sites.

In an effort to find funding and working partners, we enlisted help and advice from all comers: governmental and non-governmental, public and private,

individuals and groups.

One such partnership was the Women's Correctional Facility in Framingham, where Janet worked with a few of the inmates to grow tree seedlings that would later be transplanted to the islands. We also were grateful to have Boy and Girl Scouts, community and corporate groups, State Park Rangers, and individual Friends volunteers to help move this project along day after day.

Janet's study was designed to test the survival of select native tree species to be planted on an upland site on Bumpkin Island. Using archeological



Colorful Garden of Eden - Long Island nursery.

information to determine what trees had grown there in pre-settlement times, she chose oak, maple and pine. Because the existing conditions varied among open, semi-open, and sheltered, three planting conditions were selected. None of the sites would receive fertilizer, mulch or water. This was to be a test of reality; that is, a no-maintenance

situation. Volunteers would spend four weekends on Bumpkin just preparing sites and planting some 1200 seedlings for that study.

Janet also designed a much smaller study to test survival of select native grasses on a coastal edge in an effort to stall erosion. The study site was on the lee side of Long Island. It took a group of some 15 volunteers one long day to prepare and plant the site. No rip rap, reused tires or

other mechanical devices were employed in the study.

In 1993 Adaela McLaughlin had joined the project as a horticulture student and she really put her heart into it. Not only did she take charge of the seedling study; she also conducted a scientific inventory of sample plants on Bumpkin and produced a slide show that was used to introduce the BHIRP project to potential funding/working partners.

After Janet and I departed from the project and the Boston area, Adaela took over the reins and persisted in moving it forward with loyal volunteer assistance.

A garden is often used as a metaphor for continuum and for change. Frederick Law Olmsted, when he visited the Boston Harbor Islands in the late 1800s, envisioned the magnificent foliage, as it had been like 100 years before. Our volunteers could see a similar vision of perhaps 100 years hence.

We as stewards of this land are an integral and necessary component in its history. We are here at the right time, and our labors are not folly; they are the future.

Marsha Bach was on the FBHI Board of Directors and Chair of the Advocacy/Environmental Stewardship Committee and FBHI representative on the Spectacle Island Parkland Advisory Committee

Growth that Endures *By Adaela McLaughlin*

It was a beautiful, sunny day and about seven Boston Harbor Island Revegetation Project (BHIRP) volunteers, affectionately known as BHIRPees, gathered around a picnic table on Gallops Island to continue our inventory of island vegetation. I had

made a key to identifying trees, and the undaunted volunteers were learning how to use it. We laughed and enjoyed one another's company that day in this heaven-on-earth island landscape.

Over a few years, we mapped every tree on four islands so we could understand better where to establish native vegetation areas.

I had come to the project in 1993, and soon after, the leaders left, and I continued in their stead for ten years. We tended our tree nursery on Long Island, gathering



Tired but happy Revegetation volunteers on Long Island.

twenty-five species of native tree seeds from local areas for future planting out on the islands.

And plant out we did. When an island owner was amenable and had a boat, we took hundreds of bare-root trees packed in wet peat, shovels, and all the water we could hand-carry out to a planting site in the early spring or late fall. The cold, wet days didn't deter the intrepid BHIRPees.

In the spring of 1997, the BHIRP program volunteers with the guidance of Adaela McLaughlin and the MDC Forester, Peter Davis, planted over 100 young trees on Lovells Island near Lover's Rock. These trees were transplanted from

the native plant nursery on Long Island where they had been growing for 4-5 years. As the trees grew over the following years, they were monitored and pruned to help their survival. An informational sign was installed to describe the project and ask visitors to respect its purpose to improve the diversity of the forest for future park users. Volunteers also helped conduct systematic tree inventories on several park islands between 1998 and 2002, to identify possible sites for future native plantings. In the spring of 2000, 25 American Chestnut trees were planted on Thompson Island to study their survival rates. In 2004, a few trees from the Long Island nursery were planted on Georges Island in the newly expanded picnic area east of the Administration building.

The Friends were awarded a \$10,000 Urban Forest Planning and Education grant funded by DEM and U.S. Forest Service in 2000. A consultant was tasked to demonstrate the merits of native forests to the BOHA Park Partners and staff. The goal was to increase understanding, acceptance and enthusiasm for native forests on the Harbor Islands.

We were able to establish native area overstory trees in several places. More than 15 years later, the overstory trees are still waiting for their understory mates – shrubs, grasses and forbs (herbs other than grass).

Change may overtake the islands and our native plant areas, but the precious volunteers and resplendent vistas will always remain in my heart.

Adaela McLaughlin participated in the Boston Harbor Islands Revegetation Project from 1993-2003. She is a former FBHI Board member.

An Inspiring Sight

By Marc Albert

When I first arrived to the Boston Harbor Islands as part of the National Park Service team in 2005, initially there did not seem to be any active efforts to enhance the biodiversity of the park. Then I learned of the Friends “BHIRP” (Boston Harbor Islands Revegetation Project), which began in the early ‘90s, and aimed to restore native species among various habitats on multiple islands.

I saw the remnant plots on Thompson, Lovells, Long and Bumpkin Islands, and delighted to see that some native trees had survived. Much later I saw the extensive files associated with what was a huge and deeply thoughtful effort, long before the current generation of resource managers and volunteers began similar work.

Equally important as the physical effort, it is inspiring to know that so many Friends have been out on the islands for decades, carefully observing and helping to take care of our treasured public lands!

Marc Albert is Manager of Natural Resource Partnerships, National Parks of Boston



BHIRP tree shelters on Lovells Island. (Look for Lovers Rock in the background.)



(Left) Andy Pearson, NPS ranger on Spectacle Island.

(Right) Kevin Rogers giving books to a happy librarian after setting up a Park display.

PART FIVE

Kids and the Islands

The Children's Crafts Program *By Carol Fithian, Coordinator of Volunteers (current)*

FBHI has always recognized the importance of conveying the value of the harbor and the islands to future generations. The FBHI Children's Craft program was developed and managed by volunteer Ann Marie Moore and spanned almost a decade. On many weekends, she could be found surrounded by curious groups of children learning to make island-related crafts and treasures to take home.

Ann Marie would design various crafts and bring out the supplies for the program. The children made flying fish, kites, "sailor's valentines" and adornments to celebrate patriotic events. She would design special games and activities for special agency program days such as Apple Fest and Halloween on the Harbor. The children would make potato print stamps, apple-head dolls, Halloween spiders and flying bats while enjoying related stories and songs. They would make caramel apples with assistance from Friends Volunteers and paint or carve small pumpkins to decorate a haunted fort

for Halloween event. She and her assistant volunteer helper, Dorothy Mixer, would patiently help each child learn to make the crafts while listening to a story related to island and sea life.

The program continued with Irene Dygas and other Volunteers for several years after Ann Marie's health prevented her from coming out to the islands. The program enhanced the island experience for the children and made their time on Georges Island fun and celebratory. The program fostered the hope that the childhood memories of Georges Island would encourage them to return with their own family or friends to enjoy and take pride in the harbor and all of our National Parks.

Edited excerpt from Tidings, Fall 1992

The Treasured Island Children's Program, 1992-1995

By Nancy Martin

The Friends planned and ran a pilot program working with children from the Department of Social Service (DSS) for six Mondays. Approximately 40 children, ages 7-12, and their caseworkers arrived at Long Wharf for the 10 a.m. boat. The





children were divided into four groups with the names of Whales, Dolphins, Seals, and Gulls. Volunteers were assigned to the different groups.

Upon arrival at Georges Island, we split the kids into two groups. One group went off for a tour of Fort Warren while the other group played games. After switching, they came back to a circle of picnic tables to regroup before going on a beach walk to find treasures. Meanwhile, some of the volunteers had hidden four old bottles on the beach, each with a piece of Captain Nix's map (an old sail with wonderful pictures and an outline of Gallops Island drawn by our Director, Jim Bennette). The four groups brought their map pieces back to the tables to piece together. The Georges Island snack bar provided lunch. After lunch, the kids created pet rocks with googly eyes and yarn.

Then we were off on the water taxi for Gallops Island. Each piece of the map had a clue and the groups dispersed once again to discover the clues. With the clues put together we all headed for the Doctor's House where we were met by "Captain Nix" (a Gallops Island Manager). He led the kids to the house and they spent a few minutes frantically searching until they discovered a huge box hidden behind some sumac branches. The captain then told them to go to the water's edge and read the Oath of Nixes Mate

before opening the box. Each child received a gift from the treasure chest, donated by the Christmas Tree Shop.

The main focus was to give the children a good time, introduce the islands to them, and all of us. FBHI member Mimi Holmes composed the "Oath of Nixes Mate."

Oath of Nixes Mate

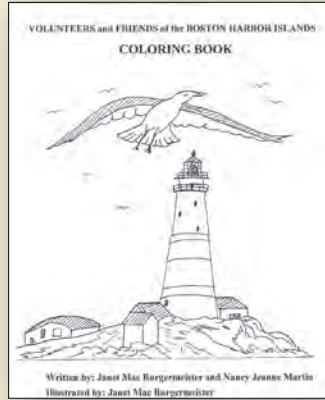
*In spirit we're with Nixes Mate
We learn to love and not to hate.
Aye mates, we'll vow before the mast
that friendships made will always last.
In memory of this bright day,
and we won't let them wash away.
As shipmates we sail back to land
to end injustice if it be
to human, beast, or bird or tree.
And keep our islands as they are,
So all may come, it's not that far.
The treasure that we found today?
Our group of islands in the Bay.*

PART SIX

Publications and the Library Legacy Program

The best way to visit the Boston Harbor Islands is in person. But there are other ways to experience the islands and one of them is through the pages of a book. FBHI members recognized that the "literary" trips to the islands are an important aspect of educating the public about the history and beauty of Boston Harbor.

This inspired the Friends' first publication project. *All About the Boston Harbor Islands* by David and Emily Kales was published in 1976. The rights to the book were sold in the 1980s to Captain George's Inc. and the new publisher



The Friends have had an active publication program, including the above.

contacted FBHI to update the book. Revisions were done and the book was re-published in 1983 – with the new FBHI logo on the back cover. In 1989 FBHI did a second revision for Hewitt’s Cove Publishing.

In 1988, the Friends, in association with Applewood books, reprinted *The King’s Handbook of Boston Harbor* by M.F. Sweetser. This classic history of Boston Harbor was first published in 1882, with several editions following. The Friends opted to reprint the 1888 Third Edition to coincide with the book’s centennial anniversary. The original hardcover version had become a collector’s item, selling for up to \$100.00. The new FBHI paperback edition was now available to a wider audience and featured Notes to the Contemporary Traveler pages.

Moses Foster Sweetser (1848-1897) was the author of 19 New England guidebooks as well as other publications. The 302 pages, which describe the Islands and harbor environs from Hull to Nantasket to Dorchester, included gorgeous illustrations of landmarks (some of which have now disappeared) and intriguing historical facts. Did you know

you could travel around the Islands by steamboat for only 10 cents? The book is a fascinating snapshot of the Islands as they were more than 100 years ago.

In 2016, the Friends reprinted the handbook again with Union Park Press, as the Centennial edition had sold out. The year 2016 was a celebration of multiple Park anniversaries: the 300th of the lighting of Boston Light, the 100th of the National Park Service, 30th of the MWRA, 20th of the creation of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park and 10th of the opening of Spectacle Island. A new introduction by author Stephanie Schorow and updated Park information was added. “Much of what Sweetser described has long vanished. Yet what is remarkable is that so many things remain,” Schorow writes.

Another significant Friends publication project was a re-print of *A Lighthouse Family* by Harold Jennings in 2015. It tells the story of a boy growing up on Lovell Island. Jennings had first published the book in 1989, but it was long out of print. So the Friends decided to ensure that new generations would enjoy this unique family history, written by the son of the Lovells

lighthouse keeper. The narrative and photos provide a charming snapshot of life on the island from the 1920s to the 1940s with evocative photos – including one of the fire that destroyed the famed Bug Light marker in 1929 and one of 17th century coins that Harold dug up from his family’s garden, evidence of a long-ago shipwreck. This edition has a new introduction by author Christopher Klein, who notes “Peel back the pages of this book, and Harold continues to charm and entertain you as you travel back to the miniature world of Lovells Island nearly a century ago.”

A Lighthouse Family is a significant artifact of Island history and provides a background on why the Friends have launched a campaign to preserve the oil house on Lovells -- the only remaining structure from the days that the twin range lights on Lovells were a valuable navigation aid. See page 72.

The Friends did not ignore young readers. For the organization’s 30th anniversary in 2009, the Friends published a Coloring Book written by members Janet Mae Burgermeister and Nancy Jeanne Martin and illustrated by Burgermeister. The illustrations take young readers on a trip to the Islands, from the past to the present.

The Friends went a step further with their publication program – they sought to get books into the hands of readers.

To mark their 30th Anniversary, the FBHI launched the Library Legacy project in 2009. FBHI donated copies of four books to neighborhood libraries and to the libraries of the schools whose students visited the islands with the Harbor Connections Program. The books included the reprints of the *King’s Handbook; Chestnuts, Galls, and Dandelion Wine*, by William D. Perkins, about the plants of the Islands; *Discovering the Boston Harbor Islands*,

by Christopher Klein; and *East of Boston: Notes from the Harbor Islands*, by Stephanie Schorow. Park brochures and maps were also given to each library. The effort ensures that information about the Boston Harbor Islands is available for young and old seeking to find out more about the Islands’ amazing history.

The program evolved into the Library Legacy Community Outreach Program spearheaded by Kevin Rogers. Over the years, a team of Friends Volunteers set up exhibits and displays at more than 100 libraries, from Abington to Winthrop, throughout eastern Massachusetts, providing visual representations of the Islands intended to encourage families to take a trip to the harbor. Many of the libraries also offered the 2-for-1 boat passes provided through Boston Harbor Now. These passes continue to be available to library patrons. FBHI Volunteers also gave talks and illustrated presentations to many libraries and community groups.

In 2013, Kevin Rogers received the “Boston Harbor Islands Superintendent’s Award,” and in 2014, he was awarded a “Points of Light Award.” Both honors were for his outstanding efforts on behalf of the Library Legacy Community Outreach Program. The Friends continue to donate books to Libraries that have not yet received them. Contact FBHI and let us know if your library would like a set.

As Christopher Klein wrote in his introduction to *A Lighthouse Family*, “The Friends have worked tirelessly to keep the stories and the cultural history of this urban oasis alive.”

Thanks for the Memories

The Islands Changed My Life

By *Don Swann*

I became an Island Manager on Grape Island in 1983, and it changed my life. I had grown up listening to the stories of Edward Rowe Snow and had visited the Boston Harbor Islands as a Boy Scout. So I already loved the islands, and when I got a job on Grape Island, I was in heaven. I later worked on Calf Island, and Georges Island for three years.

Spending 10 days in a row on Grape Island was magical, and every hitch was different from the one before. I started each day with the sound of seagulls and ended it watching the sunset over the distant city. Some days, no one visited, so I cleaned the outhouses and wrote for the Island Manager newsletter.

Other days were completely chaotic, with hundreds of visitors and the continuous roar of motorboats.

The Friends sent us great volunteers, young and old, who camped on the island and helped entertain the visitors and me. I am too old to remember all their names, but I'll never forget the great fun we had creating both serious and goofy interpretive programs for the volunteers. One day I bought a huge tarp and used about a dozen permanent markers to make a map of the harbor. We pulled together historically inappropriate costumes, and each volunteer read a short first-person poem about the figures for whom their island

was named, such as John Gallop and William Brewster.

The one volunteer I will never forget was John Hannaway. John was painfully shy and moved very slowly due to his weight and a variety of physical ailments. But he made it up by the obvious joy that the islands brought to his life. Although

John also volunteered on Georges Island, Grape Island was so much his favorite that he had a bunch of grapes embroidered on his blue Friends volunteer shirt, as well as having them made for the other Grape Island Volunteers



Maggi Brown and Don Swann.

The Islands History Detective

By *Jack Zeletsky*

I first learned of FBHI's existence in the mid-1980's when I called the Friend's office to sign up for a Boston Light trip.

The person I spoke with asked whether I might want to attend an FBHI "open house." Having lived along the shore of Dorchester Bay all my life the invitation offered a strong attraction.

At the open house, Nancy Martin and a core of seasoned volunteers presented a slide show of the adventures the Friends experienced in the harbor. I scheduled a follow-up interview with Nancy, and after attending a training session I joined FBHI as a Georges Island volunteer. Little did I realize that this simple act would fuel a journey of discovery that has lasted half a lifetime!

As I traveled onboard the open-deck excursion boats of Boston Harbor Cruises or the old Bay State Cruise Company, enough salt spray worked into my veins that I started looking for anything I could find on Boston Harbor history. I started by reading the books written by Edward Rowe Snow. As all good story tellers do, he teased the reader into wanting more by not giving away the entire plot in a single book. What next?

After reading a biography of Simon Buckner, a Confederate general who was a prisoner of war at Fort Warren, a muse emerged to insist there was much more to be found. And, indeed there, was.

The Massachusetts National Guard Archives held an amazing collection of original Civil War-era documents and letter-books; the State House Arts Collection included statues of the Union generals for whom two gun batteries at Fort Warren were named. Images of the Regimental Flags carried by the Army units that trained at the Fort were also found there. Boston's renowned Brattle Book Shop offered a trove of hundreds of out-of-print books on maritime and Civil War history. Several of them ended up in my bookcase. I even met descendants of Confederate prisoners while volunteering at the Fort, and they shared copies of family papers with me.

The late Al Schroeder, MDC's Chief Photographer, regularly rode the ferry to Fort Warren. He introduced me to a handful of World War II veterans who served at some of the harbor's forts. They generously shared many details of their military service in Boston harbor before passing on. Al also introduced me to Bill Stokinger, MDC's former archaeologist. Bill became a great friend and mentor in my research. With his help, I started "connecting the dots" as I looked into

what had accumulated in the net I'd been dragging around.

Ultimately a simple decision to volunteer with FBHI launched a 30-year adventure as a Boston Harbor history detective; the path was not unlike the one followed by Edward Rowe Snow many years ago. I'm glad to know that some of the human-interest stories I uncovered are now woven into the fabric that rangers use on interpretive tours at Fort Warren.



Georges Island info booth - water taxi central: Dodie Captiva and Jack Zeletsky.

The greatest treasures I discovered were the friendships I enjoyed during the journey. Many of the folks I met have remained among my best friends even though most are no longer active "blue shirt" volunteers.

In this milestone year, I'm happy to join other supporters of FBHI in shouting "Happy Anniversary." And I offer a heart-felt "Thank You" to those who have made my journey as a volunteer the great treasure hunt that it has been.

Jack Zeletsky
Georges Island Volunteer, 1987-1991,
2016-present
Member, On-Island Volunteer Committee
1987-1990
Georges Island Team Captain - 1988

Backyard as the Harbor

By Wynelle Scenna

When I moved to Boston in 1980, I was so excited to be near the ocean. However, this was pre-Harbor Walk days and I found I couldn't actually get to the water. There were dilapidated piers and bulky dark structures all along the waterfront. Then I discover the Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands! Not only did I get out on the ocean, but I got an education. We had training; workshops; private tours; and lectures about birds, plants, tide pools, water quality, military history, Boston's history, public speaking, merchandising, and more. We had exclusive, behind the scenes, tours of Deer Island, Fort Dawes, Georges Island, the Aquarium, and special boat trips. We learned how to write bylaws, how the park system works, how to deal with the public, how to narrate tours, and how to camp on an island.

My husband, Robert, learned very early in our relationship that FBHI would be part of our lives. Before we bought our home, the harbor was our backyard. Our son, Matt, became a volunteer before he was born and instantly found he loved the islands. Committee work involved several meetings a month. My husband and I took on editing and mailing the newsletter, *Tidings*, and published it quarterly for 18 years. All the people who helped on committees became my family. My friends wondered, as every T-shirt, sweatshirt, and hat that I owned had an FBHI logo on it. As I got to know other volunteers, I discovered they all possessed the same two qualities. They all were eager to learn, and they all had a heart of gold. Today I find that my closest friends all have been a part of FBHI at some time.

As I look back over the last 40 years,

I am impressed by how much of my life was centered around the Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands. I am so grateful for every minute of it.

Commitment to the Islands

By David Dingley

It all started on August 14, 1999. My wife Janice and our children Heather and Andrew gave me a special birthday gift: a trip to the Boston Lighthouse. While on the boat, I picked up a brochure about the Friends of Boston Harbor Islands. I signed up for membership and became an active volunteer in 2001.

With veteran volunteer John Forbes as my mentor, I became familiar with the Boston Harbor Islands and acquired some basic public relations skills for greeting island visitors and conducting tours.

Since then I've been privileged to serve as a guide for island tours and lighthouse trips. Islands have included the familiar Georges and Spectacle Islands as well as the more inaccessible ones such as Calf and Rainsford. Lighthouse cruises have included trips from Boston Harbor to the Thacher Island Twin Lights on the North Shore and Plymouth's Gurnet Light on the South Shore.



David Dingley.

I've helped provide special FBHI displays for libraries and assisted with major events such as the annual FBHI meeting. The annual New Year's Day trip to Thompson Island continues to be a delight. My latest venture has been assisting with visitor services on Spectacle Island. Since 2014, I've served as secretary for the FBHI Board of Directors.

As the years have gone by, FBHI has enabled me to acquire much knowledge of and many enriched experiences on the islands. With these, I've been able to expand my personal commitment to the care and preservation of the islands and to improve their accessibility to visitors. I hope to keep this commitment for many years to come.

Among his many positions, David Dingley has served as secretary of the FBHI board for two non-consecutive terms (including the present), a volunteer guide on Little Brewster, and manager for FBHI seasonal cruises (2004-2005).

A 40th Birthday to Celebrate *By Maggi Brown*

I have so many fond and fun memories of my time working at the Boston Harbor Islands State Park. My, how far this park has come in 40 years!

My park career began in the summer of 1983 with the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), working as the Information Specialist on Georges Island, a DEM employee on an MDC island, but all part of one solid team. I was known as: Georges Island "Miss Information"! I shared that small wooden info booth with many great volunteers during that season. We had so many devoted volunteers assisting on Georges Island, and across the harbor, over the years.

The following spring, I was hired as

the Island Manager Supervisor, supporting the Island Managers, then staffing on Georges, Bumpkin, Peddocks, Gallops, Lovells, Georges and Great Brewster. As always, the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands volunteers were nearby, greeting visitors, helping to orient campers, and sharing the wonders of the islands. In that day, the managers lived in primitive camp settings in canvas wall tents with a solar-powered battery for light and radio operations. Island managers worked ten days on and four days off. Building 55, one of the rundown military buildings in the old Hingham Shipyard, provided a rustic home for days off island – the "Harbor Hilton," we called it affectionately.



Nixes Mate with Tall Ship Kruzenshtern.

I witnessed some of the most dedicated public service and met some of my dearest friends during my four years on the Boston Harbor Islands State Park. The Islands have been a tremendous proving ground for so many park professionals, now working and serving across the state, the country, and beyond. The Park Supervisors and operations staff, the boat operators, and island managers and a tireless team of committed volunteers all worked together to lay a solid foundation for this amazing, world-class park.

We are all Harbor Islands Friends, in the true sense of the word, with a shared passion for public service and kind support

and respect of one another. Thank you, Dear Friends. Keep the good works alive.

May you continue to rise with every tide, today and always.

Maggi Brown

Class of 1983-1986

What the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands Mean to Me

By Kathleen "Kathy" M. Gill, PhD

When I moved to the Boston area in 1979, my goal, having been a previous volunteer outings chair for the Jacksonville, Florida, Sierra Club was to explore and preserve natural areas in my new home. I met some other like-minded folks on the local ExComm board, but I tired of hearing about sludge week after week – and I wanted to get outside and do something about it. I followed FBHI founder Suzanne Gall to the original group, the Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps – and we got to visit and camp and welcome and educate the public with our signature red shirts.

It was so exciting and uplifting cruising the harbor, getting to know people from many agencies committed to caring for the Islands, getting to know the history and natural history of each, picking our favorites (mine was always lovely, peacefully quiet Grape), watching the Islands and the water quality grow ever more clean and scenic and sharing the love of the place with the visitors. A great deal of laughter and some questionable ingredients went into the Island Edibles projects (no fatalities!), and life-long friendships were formed. I was an active volunteer trail guide from the very start until moving to upstate New York in 1999, and I remain a member and supporter from afar!

Ear-to-Ear Smile

By James Comeau

Looking back on the early years of the Friends I find myself with an ear-to-ear smile (all the fun) and a warm heart (so many truly nice people).

A few of those truly nice people come to mind.

Suzanne (no last name is needed), with all of her tireless energy, set the tone for the rest of us. Her vision, energy, determination and if I may say it... her spunk... launched a volunteer program that grew by leaps and bounds during the early 1980's, soon becoming an institution. Suzanne showed, and still shows, the world that dreams do come true when you pour your heart and soul into something that you love as much as life itself.



MV Irene - Captain Richie Sutherland and crew - the best!

Mary Eaton, who volunteered every weekend on Gallops Island in 1980, continues to be a role model for me. Quiet, kind and resourceful, Mary always had a smile, always saw the good in everyone, and always was the first one to volunteer to help.

Karen O'Donnell, my fellow Gallops Island Manager, who loved the islands and enjoyed sharing that love with every-

one. While her time on this earth was too short, she sure packed a lot in while she was with us.

Of course, there were countless others, all of whom shared the best of themselves. We were an extended family, filled with idealism, always ready and willing to pitch in to help the organization grow.

In many ways my involvement with the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands launched what became a 35+ year career in state service. For that, I'll always be grateful. Parks make us better; they create memories that nurture us long after our visits end. Now more than ever, our parks need you... as volunteers, as advocates, and as supporters.

My thanks to everyone who has helped the organization grow over these past forty years. The Harbor Islands are a special place and the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands are a big part of the reason why.

James Comeau

My Hat

By Steve Marcus

I experienced the friendly, cooperative spirit of Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands a couple summers ago. I was standing on the bow of the Boston Harbor Island Ferry that would take visitors to Boston Harbor Island National Park. I was watching people coming on board, when a gust of wind grabbed the FBHI hat I was wearing off my head and it executed a perfect double flip. Unfortunately, it landed in the murky water beside the docking area. I told the boat crew to let it go. I could not do much to save the hat.

However, the Friends members on board leapt to retrieve the hat. George Marsh grabbed the gaffing hook and dragged the hat on board and handed it to a friend who scrubbed the hat free of the residue of harbor pollution. They passed

the hat to Richie Sutherland (captain of the *Irene*, one of the ferry boats). He set it beside a space heater that was always on during cold days.

When I got back from my day's activities, my hat was cleaner and in better shape than before. It's not important in



Steve Marcus with Red Sox World Series trophy.

the larger picture, but it is a fine example of the friendliness of the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands.

The Real Threat on the Harbor

By Steve Marcus

The Friends were looking forward to the annual New Year's boat trip. We are a hardy bunch, but the weather had turned bitter and was cold enough to put the customers at risk had the trip continued. We had to pretend to be grownups and cancel.

It was a shame to miss island features like smoke on the water and ice on the shore. I'm also continually concerned by how many among us seem desperately concerned about the dangers of harbor travel while minimizing, the seemingly far more virulent health threat.

They appeared to ignore a much more credible and growing threat to the wellbeing of boat travelers under our care: YOGA. We had planned to do yoga on the beach. What was so wrong with snowshoe walks, rare bird counts, bonfires on the beach below the water line? Those seem a lot safer to me.

However, I don't think you want to see me in my blueberry spandex to find out.

Steve Marcus was a Peddocks Island volunteer for many years and FBHI Board Chair from 2003-2011.

When the Lobsters Did Not Cooperate

By Marguerite Krupp

One Sunday morning, one of the park rangers came rowing in to the beach on Calf Island in the little orange tender that they used to go between islands. It seemed that this was supposed to be “Lobster Pot Day” on Calf Island, when the ranger was going to demonstrate to the visitors how lobsters are caught. He had set out a lobster pot and a buoy, but no lobsters had crawled into his trap! Ever resourceful, he'd rowed out to a lobsterman and bought three small ones and put them into the trap (with the yellow rubber



Marguerite Krupp.

bands still on their claws). I think he was mostly afraid that they would climb out of the trap before showtime.

I suggested that, for authenticity, he should take the rubber bands off, but he said, “NO WAY!” I suspect those lobsters

were guests of honor at dinner that night, though we didn't stick around to find out.

Marguerite Krupp

FBHI Member since 1987

On-Island Volunteer, 1987-1998 and 2008-present

On Calf, Lovell's Great Brewster, Grape, Peddocks, Little Brewster Islands

Board Member, 2017-2019

Office Volunteer/Database Project Manager, 2017-present

Visiting the “edge” of the Harbor: Tours of Boston Light on Little Brewster

By Sally Snowman

Little Brewster Island, the home of Historic Boston Light, is noted for being the first established lighthouse station in colonial America in 1716. Because of this, it remains the last “manned” U.S. Coast Guard Light Station in the country.

Although the island is only one-mile from the mainland, it is on the edge of the “outer harbor” with an ocean view to the northeast that stretches all the way to Portugal. Above the high-tide line, the island is approximately 1½ acres, the size of many ships that traverse the harbor. On calm days, the seas give a sense of tranquility with the sunlight dancing with tiny wavelets that look like trillions of diamonds.

The Friends of Boston Harbor Islands have had a legacy of providing seasonal public tours to Boston Light since 1979, prior to the establishment of the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area in 1996. In 2000, the Boston Light Historical Interpretive Program was created to train Coast Guard Auxiliary and Friends volunteers in assisting park rangers with Boston Light tours co-sponsored by the National Park Service and the Boston Harbor Islands Alliance, the predecessor

organization of Boston Harbor Now.

With their experience, FBHI volunteers also participate as historical interpreters with Auxiliarists. FBHI and the Auxiliarists assist park rangers in meeting and greeting the passengers at the Boston Harbor Islands Welcome Center and accompany them onboard UMass Boston's chartered vessel, *Columbia Point*.

Upon arrival at Boston Light, the volunteers engage in conversation with passengers sharing their stories and knowledge of the lighthouse, the island, and the harbor. Each season, an average of 14 FBHI historical interpreters contribute approximately 650 hours per year at Boston Light.



FBHI fall and sunset trips to Boston Light.

This is an example of the harbor islands "partnership" in action among the NPS, BHN, USCG, Boston Light, CG Auxiliary, and the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands.

It has been gratifying for me, as I have been the Keeper on Little Brewster for the last 15 years. It has been 15 years of living a dream that has come true, as well as being challenging, mind-boggling, and totally amazing.

During storms, heavy seas roar into the shoreline with such a physical pounding upon the rocks that while lying in bed, in the keeper's house feels like a vibrating



mattress. Then, there are the moderate seas that are mesmerizing to watch as the waves crest over themselves, creating individually sculptured whitecaps shaped by the wind.

I love to listen to the cawing of the gulls and watch them soaring on the wind currents. What I miss the most when on the mainland is the sense of the expansiveness that I feel when on the island: sunrises and sunsets unobstructed by urban/suburban developments; fresh-salty air; sounds of the lobster and fishing boats and the fog signal during times of limited visibility. All of these give me a profound sense of connectedness of my soul to the soul of the earth and the cosmos.

I love sharing all this with the visitors to Little Brewster. It's an opportunity begun by FBHI back in the 1980s.

Sally Snowman, Ph.D.

U.S. Coast Guard

Keeper of Boston Light 2003-present

Three Cheers for FBHI Volunteers

By Kelly Fellner

Congratulations on your 40th Anniversary! Over my tenure at Boston Harbor Islands as the NPS manager for visitor services and youth programs, FBHI was there to build and support new programs and services with NPS, DCR, and all the partners. From the Boston Light tour program, to the evolution of visitor kiosks and contact stations in Boston, and the development and opening of Spectacle Island, the Friends have been there every step of the way.

It was fitting that the FBHI was recognized nationally in 2003, being awarded the first George and Helen Hartzog Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service in the National Park Service. Thank you for your service and for keeping visitors from near and far connected to the nature and history of the Boston Harbor Islands.

So three cheers, or as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow described of a visit in May 1867:

“Went with the girls down the harbor in the steam revenue cutter Pawtuxet, to the outer light, and the outer islands – the Brewsters. Professors Peirce, Agassiz, and Goodwin were of the party; Judge Russell the Collector, and Captain Hockley, of the China, the English steamer. Returning, we stopped near the school-ship, which was crowded with boys, all singing an evening hymn. Then they manned the yards and gave us three cheers, which we returned. A very striking sight...”

Kelly Fellner
National Park Service
BOHA, Visitor Services and Youth Program
Manager, 2001-2011
Superintendent, Springfield Armory
National Historic Site 2019



Robert Scenna, Wynelle Scenna, Paul Nyren and Blossom Hoag at Volunteer Appreciation Day on Georges Island.

My Family Life on Spectacle

By Kate Rivera

I was a friend of the Harbor Islands long before I knew of the *Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands* and I plan to be a “Friend” as long as I am able. Let me tell you about my connection to the harbor.

“But, *nobody* lived on Spectacle Island.” I sometimes think if I could count the number of times I’ve heard that phrase, it would match the pieces of sea glass on the island’s beach.

The first time was in the early 1990s at a meeting of Spectacle Island Citizen Advisory Committee (SIPAC), an advisory board overseeing the island’s renovation. The last time was a week ago - spoken by a Quincy resident sitting in a café overlooking Spectacle and other harbor islands.

There are many stories about Spectacle, but we hear little of the men, like my grandfather, and their families who lived and worked here between 1922 and 1955. This is their story.

Like many urban islands, Spectacle has had a complex relationship with its shoreline neighbors; appreciated, scorned,

often utilized; and occasionally praised. Its uses have varied greatly: at times a popular destination for picnics and boating; at other times, activities considered necessary, but unwanted on the mainland, were consigned to the island.



Kate Rivera sharing Spectacle stories.

This happened in 1921, when part of the Northern Drumlins was chosen as a disposal area for Boston's waste. This material was processed on the island until 1955, when the city's incinerator was closed. With the plant closed, and electricity no longer available, my grandparents, who had lived and worked on Spectacle since 1929 moved to the mainland.

But long before that happened, my father, his siblings and the other worker's children had quite an interesting childhood. "What was it like to live out here?" I once asked him. "Well, honey, I was 12 when we moved to the island. There were ponies and tugboats; we swam, fished,

**Karen O'Donnell on
Great Brewster Island 2008.**

played around in boats, and skied and skated in the winter, what do you think it was like? For me, it was like heaven."

I didn't get to spend my teen years on the island (that's what we called it, just "the island") but the time I did spend on Spectacle was wonderful.

I have sweet memories of my grandfather coming home from work for lunch; with the factory close by, that was easy to do, but for me and my siblings, it was special; it made work seem like just another part of life. And for him, at that time, I think it was. But there was another time, the Great Depression of 1929 when for my grandfather and for so many people, suddenly there was no work, no way to support a family. Luckily for him and some others, there was work to be had on Spectacle and that was life changing.

Yes, people lived on Spectacle, and worked, played, cried, and laughed. And now, people are back on this sturdy little island; and that's a good thing.

Kate Rivera is a Board member of the Friends and often acts as a volunteer and tour guide on Spectacle Island.



The Days on Gallops Island

By *Kathy Abbott*

It seems like yesterday but it was in 1979 that Suzanne Gall (not yet Marsh) and I were Island Managers together on Gallops Island. When Suzanne wasn't working as an Island Manager, she was spending her free time on the islands working with Karen O'Donnell and others continuing the start up the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands.



Kathy Abbott on Gallops Island 1979.

In those days we had volunteers joining us on the islands to help clean up the beach, welcome and support the visitors and lead walks and tours. They were an enthusiastic group of island aficionados. Many had learned to love the islands at the knee of Edward Rowe Snow. No one led a tour of Fort Warren or spoke to the history of Little Brewster and all the islands better than Mr. Snow. He was a renowned writer and story teller whom the Friends have continued to honor throughout their history.

Another long time tradition of the Friends has been the First Day Hike on Thompson (or Spectacle) Islands that go back to the beginning and help to make the

point that the islands and the Harbor are a year-around resource.

The Friends of the Harbor Islands have given hundreds of thousands of hours continuing to support the Island Managers and the visitors and been recognized with the National Park Service's well deserved highest honor for a volunteer organization. Today, we couldn't operate the Welcome Center without them.

In addition to The Friends important work in the field and on the front lines, they have served as tireless advocates participating in many of the Harbor's most important initiatives. These include: the EPA Citizens Advisory Committee for the siting of the Deer Island Treatment Plant; Spectacle Island Parkland Advisory Committee, Seaside Environmental Alliance, Peddocks Island Advisory Committee, the MDC Green Ribbon Commission; the public task force for the consolidation of the former Department of Environmental Management with the Metropolitan District Commission; the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park Advisory Council and the Boston Light 300th Committee.

I am proud to have been there in the early years and look forward to continuing to support and grow the cadre of committed volunteers on the Harbor.

*Katherine F. Abbott
President and CEO
Boston Harbor Now*



The “HEAVENLY BRANCH”

By Jack Zeletsky

The people who served as FBHI Island volunteers over the past forty years came from diverse backgrounds. From young adults to grandparents, men and women of any number of ages donned blue shirts and caps with a Nixes Mate logo to welcome thousands of visitors to the Boston Harbor Islands through good times and challenging times.

Our volunteer corps comprised working people and retirees from many walks of life: teachers, college admissions officers, MBTA support staff, engineers, veterans, musicians, utility company employees, medical personnel and state and federal civil servants. Each person came with his or her special talents and shared them generously in the endeavors undertaken to serve the visiting public and to protect the impressive natural and cultural resources found on our harbor islands.

Many of the islands’ volunteers forged enduring friendships with each other and with the harbor support staff we met along the way. Our trip down memory lane would not be complete without calling to mind those volunteers who shared that journey with us for a short while and then passed on. Their legacy lives on in the service of today’s volunteers.

Lillian Beauvais, *Board member and Georges Island volunteer*

Charlie Boyer, *Georges Island and Hingham office*

Peg Bragole, *Revegetation*

George Butterworth, *Board member*

Dodie Captiva, *Gallops Island volunteer and board member*

Dorothy Carney, *Office volunteer (Beacon House)*

Flora Colson, *Gallops Island volunteer*

Mary Corcoran, *Long Wharf kiosk*

Eleanor Cutting, *Georges Island volunteer and Hingham office*

Mary Eaton, *Gallops Island volunteer and Living History*

Warren Eggly, *Grape Island and Board*

Ray “Skip” Empey, *Boston Light volunteer, Library Legacy outreach, Lighthouse Boat Tours*

Gloria Fitzpatrick, *Bird Dogs-Living History*
 Ellen Folan, *Georges Island volunteer*
 John Forbes, *Boston Light and Lovells Island*
(team captain)
 Barbara Graham, *Georges Island and Nixes*
Mates singing group
 John Hannaway, *Grape Island and Living*
History
 Donna Harvey, *Georges Island (team captain),*
Living History and children's arts and crafts
 Brandt Henderson, *Director*
 Ethan Hoag, *Revegetation*
 Emily Homonoff, *Bumpkin Island volunteer*
 Maureen Jackson, *Lovells, Revegetation,*
Boston Light
 Harold Jennings, *Lovells Island*
 Fred Johnson, *Bumpkin Island volunteer*
 Gilbert Jones, *Gallops Island special projects*
 Paul King, *Board, Advisory Council,*
Revegetation, overnight Grape volunteer
 Joseph (Joe) Kolb, *Living History and*
Edward Rowe Snow Day
 Margaret (Peg) Lambert, *Board and Georges*
Island volunteer
 Pearl Lang, *Revegetation and Park*
Stewardship
 Claire Lewis, *Georges Island (team captain)*
 John Lochhead, *Historical research and*
"Johnny Appleseed" to the islands
 Joseph LoPiccolo, *Long Wharf kiosk*
 Gertrude Lutze, *office at Beacon House*
 John McHugh, *Revegetation and Park*
Stewardship

Anne Marie Moore, *Little Brewster,*
children's arts and crafts
 Ted Nalwalk, *Gallops Island volunteer*
 Linda Nelson, *Georges Island volunteer*
 Josh Nove, *Lovells Island volunteer*
 Paul Nyren, *Board, overnight, Bumpkin*
volunteer, Living History
 Karen O'Donnell, *Board chair and overnight*
on-island everywhere
 Eleanor O'Sullivan, *Boston Light and*
Treasured Islands Program
 Edward Owen, *Long Wharf kiosk*
 Carol Pooler, *Georges Island (team captain)*
 Barbara Powers, *Board chair*
 Bruce Renaud, *Georges Island*
 Robert (Bob) Salvatore, *Georges Island*
 Alfred Schroeder, *MDC Historian and E.R.*
Snow photographer
 Richard "Dick" Silverman, *Board chair*
 Edward Rowe Snow
 Claude Solana, *Overnight volunteer -1982*
 Lovell Spaulding, *Lovells Island volunteer*
 Charlie Stellberger Jr., *Board, treasurer and*
Lovells
 Ozzie Stewart, *Georges Island*
 Mary Anne Sunegren, *Office*
 Philip Thayer Sr., *Georges Island volunteer*
 Jerome Walsh, *Georges Island volunteer*
 Dan Zoll, *overnight volunteer*

If we have missed anyone, we apologize; know that all of you are alive in our hearts.



Awards

1979: Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, "Environmental Leadership Award" to the Boston Harbor Islands Volunteer Corps

1986: Outside Magazine – The Outsider of the Year Awards for "Ten More Who Made A Difference" to Suzanne Gall Marsh, Founder, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands

1996: Chevron-Times Mirror Magazine Conservation Award to the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands

2000: George Washington Honor Medal from the Bay State Chapter of the Freedom Foundation to the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands for "Passionate Stewardship of the Boston Harbor Islands"

2000: Governor's Award for Leadership from the Island Alliance presented to Suzanne Gall Marsh, Founder, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands.

2003: National Park Service, The recipient of the George and Helen Hartzog Awards for Outstanding Volunteers in Parks Program to Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands.

2003: National Association of State Park Directors President's Award to Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands.

2004: The Boston Harbor Association "Lydia Goodhue Public Service Award" to Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands.

2009: Boston Harbor Islands Partnership May 19th meeting featured a presentation of an award- plaque to FBHI representatives Steven Marcus and Suzanne Gall Marsh. It reads, "The Boston Harbor Islands Partnership congratulates and thanks FBHI for 30 years of service to the islands."

2016: Posthumously to Charlie Boyer presented to his family on November 12 on Georges Island during the Veterans Day Ceremony the (NPS) George and Helen Hartzog Regional Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service and the Presidential Service Award

FBHI Presidents and Staff

Past FBHI Presidents/Chairs

David Dann, 1982

Suzanne Gall, 1983

George Marsh, 1984-1988

Suzanne Gall Marsh, 1988-1992

Patricia Smith, 1992-1993

Barbara Powers, 1993-1994

James Bennette, 1994-1995

Karen O'Donnell, 1996-1999 and September 2000-February 2003

Richard Silverman, 1999-September 2000

Steven Marcus, March 2003-April 2011

Walter Hope, May 2011-present

Directors

Brandt Henderson, 1990-1991

James Bennette, 1992

Office Managers

Fran Dragon, 1989-1990

Patti Muldoon, 1991-1992

Roma Hertel, 2000-2013

Kathy Dever, 2014-2015

Coordinator of Volunteers

Suzanne Gall, 1979-1982

Edythe Bradford, 1983

Karen Wolkoff, 1984-1985

Nancy Martin, 1986-1988, 1995-1999

Carol Fithian, 2000-present

Current Board

Walter Hope, Chairman

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Emerita and Treasurer

Robert "Rab" Sherman, Clerk

David Dingley, Recording Secretary

Ann Marie Allen

Paul Federico

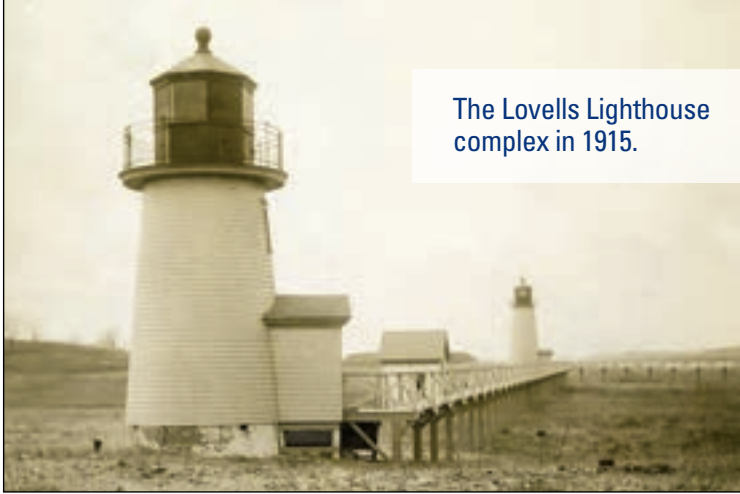
Charlotte Knox

Pat Leary

Steven Marcus

Kate Rivera

Ken Stein



The Lovells Lighthouse complex in 1915.

Preserving the Lovells Oil House: The FBHI Looks Ahead

By Stephanie Schorow

Author of *East of Boston: Notes from the Boston Harbor Islands*

The Lovells Oil House began my relationship with the Boston Harbor Islands in 1999 on my first boat trip into Boston Harbor. Like lots of great affairs, it was love at first sight. One glimpse of this stalwart structure and I was intrigued.

I learned it was the only structure remaining from a lighthouse complex that dates to the beginning of the last century. Here was the spot where range lights guided ships into the harbor. Here's where the Charles Jennings family lived and kept the light burning. And it still stands, a beacon of a prior era. But it is succumbing to time.

The Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands are working with the Massachusetts DCR and the National Park Service on a multi-year project to save the Lovells Island Oil House. The FBHI will raise the necessary funds, which will be matched 2:1 through the DCR Partnership Matching Funds Program. The architectural survey and design work have been completed. Cost projections to relocate the oil house to higher ground were estimated at \$390,000. This is cost prohibitive for both FBHI and DCR. The second option was to stabilize the oil house as a historic ruin. This was estimated to cost \$50,000-\$75,000. A third option, and the one chosen, is to create high-quality interpretive signage at the site and the island dock area. Go to www.fbhi.org to find out more.



Remains of the Oil House.

It is fitting that the last story in this booklet is a look ahead to what the Friends are continuing to do to preserve, protect and promote the Boston Harbor Islands for future generations.

Join the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands

Friends memberships are the core funding for the FBHI programs and services. FBHI leaders advocate for the park and its visitors. Educational programs on land, sea and the islands serve people of all ages.

Joining gives you the satisfaction of supporting a grassroots organization and receiving membership benefits including:

- Discounts with Classic Harbor Line, Mass Bay Lines, Boston Harbor Cruises on Harbor Islands, Salem and Provincetown ferries, Whale Watch, and Inner Harbor tours. Buy tickets online with FBHI discount code or at the ticket window with your membership card.
- Invitations to Friends events, lectures and social gatherings.
- Discounts on Friends boat trips and harbor books.
- Quarterly newsletter *Tidings*.

Membership categories

Student	\$20	Individual	\$25
Family/Dual	\$40	Sustaining	\$75
Patron	\$150	Donor	\$250
Benefactor	\$500		

For more information and to join the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands visit www.fbhi.org, where you can join online, or call 781-740-4290 or email info@fbhi.org.

For park information and ferry schedules visit www.BostonHarborIslands.org or call 617-223-8666.

Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands
30 Shipyard Drive #202
Hingham MA 02043-1601
Phone: 781-740-4290

CREDITS:

The booklet was written by Suzanne Gall Marsh, with contributions from George Marsh, Carol Fithian, Nancy Martin, and Stephanie Schorow. Sincere thanks to the many FBHI volunteers, members, and supporters who shared stories and photos.

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The City of Boston



CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

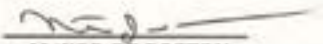
presented to

Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, Inc.

*In honor of your 40th anniversary
and in appreciation of your service to the residents
of the City of Boston and all who visit the
Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park.*

*We celebrate with you a legacy of stewardship through
volunteerism, public education, and advocacy efforts
that are crucial to the fabric of our City.*

*On behalf of the City of Boston,
congratulations and best wishes for your service
and stewardship in the years to come.*


MAYOR OF BOSTON

May 5, 2019