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# Tidings

Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands

September 26, 2011

Find us on Facebook 

or on our web page [FBHI.ORG](http://FBHI.ORG)

**Dear Stephanie,**

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Hello Friends! Can you believe **SNOW** is forecast for Western Mass tomorrow night? Summer is apparently long past us, and Fall is without a doubt in full-swing. While many of the summer activities of the Friends are over, future planning is underway.

We have also received some exciting news - the Friends have been informed by the **University of Massachusetts** that they will create a **special archives collection** of materials provided to them by the Friends. Further details are to be determined, but this is wonderful news as the Friends have received numerous documents and photos over the years that need a safe and secure home. Once the collection is established, the items will be available to the public for research.

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We have a sale on new items just-in-time for the holidays! These items are made-to-order, and take some time for production and shipping. Please take a moment and check out the new items. Sale prices (on Cafe Press items) will last only until November 30th at which time the prices will rise.

Please note while these items are available from our partners at Cafe Press, **we still have our other items** (books, clothes, cards, etc) available through our existing web page at <http://www.fbhi.org/friendsorderformbookshelf09.pdf>

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Planning will begin in the coming months for our booth at the New England Boat Show, more information regarding the show and our booth will be in future editions of Tidings.

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We also have a re-print of a recent article (below) about living on the islands from 1891-1940, results from the survey in September, as well as some information about Peddocks Island and the construction project that is ongoing there.

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Snuggle up with a friend, some hot cider perhaps, and enjoy reading!  
Thank you, and have a wonderful November!

Walter Hope, Co-Chair  
PO Box 121020, Boston MA 02112 for personal notes, and stories...

***Just in time for the Holidays***  
***NEW Items for sale***  
***help support the Friends!***

We have a number of new items for sale. Please click on the links below to go to the FBHI Cafe Press Website. Prices listed are SPECIAL and will increase after November 30th.

New items include:

- Coffee Mugs
- Cold Drink Glasses
- Drink coasters
- Travel Bottle (Hot drinks)
- Sports Bottle
- Messenger Bags
- Tailgating blankets
- Note cards
- Chefs apron... and more!

in addition to these items, we have the SAME items also available without the FBHI information on them.

**NEW!**

Perhaps you like lighthouses and ducks, but without FBHI 'advertising' on them? We understand... so check out the specific section "**no-logo**" for the same items.

Purchases are via the web site ONLY, items are made-to-order just for you. Order 'soon' for the holidays, production and shipping takes 3-6 weeks.

**[CLICK HERE to see the Friends NEW ITEMS for Purchase!](#)**





Tile coasters



Coffee Mugs



Glasses

Stadium Blankets

*and more!*

## **A GOOD AGE: Four generations on Boston Harbor Islands**

*(reprinted with permission of the author)*

I'd like to be in Laura Jones' shoes. I'd like to have her sense of place, of being rooted. When Jones, 53, steps onto her front porch in North Weymouth, she enjoys a view shared by four generations of her family. She looks out on a storied past - stories she has put together in a far-ranging book six years in the making.

"Generations: 1891-1940: Living on the Islands of Boston Harbor" was published this month by AuthorHouse. The 248-page work is rich in the kinds of intimate or quirky details you hear around holiday dinner tables. It also has a wealth of old family photographs, documents, receipts and colorful period postcards. It's sure to be a resource for others interested in Boston history and the harbor islands made famous by the late Edward Rowe Snow of Marshfield. Snow interviewed Jones' family members.



Heartfelt and homespun, this is mainly a book about family, starting with Jones' great-grandfather August Reekast, who emigrated from Prussia in 1891, married Christina Mckinnon from Nova Scotia, had eight children, and became a lobster fisherman on Outer Brewster. He was also captain for actress

Julia Arthur, who lived in a mansion on Calf Island with her husband, Benjamin P. Cheney.

"I'm very, very proud of my family," Jones said. "I did it because of their struggle. They came from different worlds, like we all did, and they built their lives. They worked very hard, they got money, bought a home in Chelsea, then lost everything in the Chelsea Fire in 1908.

"My great-grandfather brought all eight children out to the islands. That man took his family and rebuilt his life, twice, moving to North Weymouth in the 1920s.

"They should be known, not because they were heroes, but because they believed in the American Dream. To honor them, that's why I did it." The Reekasts' son, Gus, was also a fisherman and caretaker on Calf Island. Their daughter, Ida, grew up on Calf and Brewster islands, married Edmund Knoll, from Germany, and moved to North Weymouth in the 1930s. But when the Depression came, the Knolls brought their two daughters, Christine Walsh and Rosemary Thibodeau, both of Weymouth, to live on Great Brewster.

Walsh and Thibodeau, who is Jones' mother, recall playing on the islands. Jones is part of the first generation that has not worked and lived on the harbor islands, but she has been camping on them since the 1990s with her husband, Chuck, and family.

The book started as a family history. "At the beginning, I was learning about people you only talked about at Christmas. Then others in the neighborhood were impressed. How many men could row from outer harbor to Boston and back once a week, plying a trade?" Her father, Larry, gave an early manuscript his stamp of approval: "Laura this is thunderous."

He passed away in 2008, three months after her sister, Suzanne, also died at age 52, Her brother Brian died at age 30 in 1998.

Working on the book has helped to feel closer to them: "They inspired me," she said.

## **Harvest Festival Day at Webb State Park**

- FBHI volunteers assisted the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) for the second year of a Harvest Festival at Webb State Park - "Worlds End". DCR staff offered cider making and candle making demonstrations and a visit from the DCR horses. FBHI staffed a table selling harbor books and maps and gave away planting kits from the MWRA containing "Bay State's Own" fertilizer made at the Quincy Shipyard.

- Nessralla Farm in Halifax donated pumpkins for the children's crafts at the event.

- A wonderful day was had by the many families and friends that attended.

- Big "thanks" to Nesrella Farms for their contribution for the second year in a row they have the 4th largest corn maze in the state and petting zoo for kids

KIDS.  
**NESSRALLA FARMS**



FBHI member and volunteer **David Skill** who is a radio broadcaster on WATD in Marshfield has completed a series on the Boston harbor islands. [CLICK HERE FOR RADIO SERIES](#) to see photos and hear the audio interviews on Bumpkin, Grape, Rainsford, Peddocks, and Great Brewster Islands.



## "Sip of Winthrop" Friday November 4

Winthrop's 2011 Wine Fest will feature more wines than ever! Savor tastes of vineyards from across the globe, along with samples of beer and cider from local microbreweries. Also enjoy live jazz and delicious hors d'oeuvres. Tickets are on sale now for \$35 at Swett's Liquors, the Chamber office and [CLICK HERE FOR TICKETS](#)

Don't miss this fun night out on Friday, November 4 at the Cottage Park Yacht Club from 7:00-9:00 pm (jacket required). Only 21+ admitted. *Proceeds benefit the Winthrop Chamber of Commerce Beautification Program, FBHI is a member of the Chamber.*



## For Boaters

A member and boater called the office recently asking about boat access (public launch ramps) in the Boston Area. They were correct in their concern that there are very few - [CLICK HERE FOR BOAT RAMPS](#)



[CLICK HERE FOR BOAT RATES](#)

While there are few boat ramps, there are some relatively new docks in the Seaport/South Boston area:

The new **Liberty Wharf** complex has a dock that is very pricy at \$20/hour (no matter how big your boat is). They won't take reservations, and it is frequently packed with boats of all sizes. [\*\*LIBERTY WHARF MARINA\*\*](#)

An alternative is the **Fan Pier Marina**, which is open from May 1st through October 31st and does accept transient customers. They allow free touch and go access for all dockage under 15 minutes. Dockage rates then increase to \$20-\$30/ hr based on the size of the vessel. After 3 hours, the daily transient rate of \$5/foot applies. [\*\*FAN PIER MARINA\*\*](#)



## Survey Results

In September we surveyed to find out some information about boaters, and asked for suggestions for programming. 12 responses were received - thank you! The results are below:

More seasonal activities (outside of the usual summer programs). Fall harvest/Hallowe'en, winter (Christmas and Valentine's Day), etc. More monthly events would be nice--even if indoors and of the "traveling road show variety" (to schools and libraries).

Continue your usual island trips. Especially Great Brewster twice a year. I was unable to attend any trips this year due to work. My schedule is fixed by the end of October for the following year. When will the 2012 schedule be out? You all do a great job year after year. Thankyou. Can we explore any new islands in the future?

More Saturday trips to the outer islands-including Calf, Middle Brewster, narrated historical tours of Peddocks & Lovells, grape & bumpkin. Maybe a trip combining all the small Hingham harbor islands. Is there anything on Snake Island to see? More education about fort independence and Castle island. A volunteer appreciation day with cookout and kayaks, volleyball etc on Spectacle at end of season would be great! Just some thoughts JL

So far, I have really enjoyed the offerings you do have, such as the Northern Lighthouse Tour - FABULOUS! I also appreciate the regular service to Boston Light and the FBHI's role in making that happen. Of course, being on the water for any reason is great. Ideas: I enjoy hearing the history of human use of the islands over time. Certainly in the last 4 centuries, the history of the US is told through episodes on the islands. I also think a program on the geologic forces (glacier mostly) that led to the islands, harbor and adjacent topography is a great story to tell. Was a grad student at Harvard recently who completed some good research. Being out on a boat and discussing that while looking around you would be pretty cool.

A trip to Calf would be fantastic - it's been at least 15 years since we went there on a

A trip to Calf would be fantastic - it's been at least 15 years since we went there on a special trip...

Just more trips to islands that aren't accessible by public transportation.

Cater to transient boat owners - add more moorings and stop being so rigid about what islands to use/not use. [**editors note:** FBHI does not control the moorings, or which islands can or cannot be used, the Island Alliance and NPS control this, but we can certainly advocate for more boating access]

Boston Light

No--the programs you're currently running are great!

Return to Calf; Continue to visit the less accessible islands. Is Middle Brewster worthwhile seeing?

Address the needs of boaters in the harbor, dockage, pump-out, moorings, access to the islands. [**editors note:** see the note above]

## PEDDOCKS ISLAND (East Head) Update:

Since last Spring 2011 the Island Alliance's & DCR's contractor Consigli has been hard at work demolishing and 'mothballing' buildings on Peddocks Island. Many of us have spent time on Peddocks (myself included). This photo is of the OTIS elevator in the industrial building (*back in the mid-80's I remember stepping into the elevator!*). For more information about the project and many-many photos and videos,

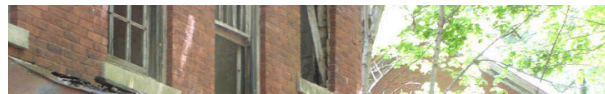
[CLICK HERE FOR PEDDOCKS CONSTRUCTION INFO](#)



Elevator in the industrial building  
(photos from the Consigli Construction web page)



Barging equipment to the island  
(photos from the Consigli Construction web page)





Peddocks Island Church  
*(Photos of the Church and of Officers Row on Peddocks, by Walter Hope 2010)*

Funds for the project have come from the Natural Gas Mitigation Fund and the State DCR.

On October Harbor Partnership Operations and Transportation Committee had a meeting where one of the topics was Peddocks. For the Spring of 2012 DCR and the Alliance anticipate opening a new campground with a number of 6-person Urts (with electricity), water in the campground, restroom facilities in the guardhouse building. A composting toilet facility is also anticipated to be installed as well. A wonderful article was printed in the Boston Globe in February 2011 about the island

[\*\*BOSTON GLOBE ARTICLE\*\*](#)

Reservations will be handled by the **Reserve America** Web page as reservations have been handled for Bumpkin, Grape and Lovells in the past years.

[\*\*RESERVE AMERICA WEB PAGE\*\*](#)

**RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR DONATE TO THE FRIENDS  
ONLINE WITH A CLICK OF YOUR FINGERS**

If you haven't renewed your membership you can do it via the FBHI web site and PayPal by clicking here.

Please consider donating to the Friends. Please click here.

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