



# TIDINGS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE BOSTON HARBOR ISLANDS

V O L . 4 , N O . 3

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## BHI State Park Master Plan

Calling the Boston Harbor Islands "an environmental treasure that we should preserve and protect for future generations of Massachusetts residents," Governor Michael S. Dukakis unveiled on June 28, 1986 a blueprint to enhance and preserve the Boston Harbor Islands while making them more accessible to the public.

Dukakis was joined by City and State officials, environmentalists, a contingent from the Friends, businesswomen and men, and Park visitors. The Master Plan was presented on George's Island after a cruise on the sparkling seas of the harbor.

Over the next decade some \$45 million in proposed improvements will be made to the harbor islands system including the development and expansion of historic, educational, and recreational attractions.

In addition, with construction of new gateways at Long Wharf and Hingham and the extensive network of water taxis, Boston's harbor islands will become more accessible than ever. In 1984, 140,000 people visited the islands. This year, nearly 250,000 people are expected to make their way among the islands. By the year 2000, some 600,000 people are expected to visit.

The Friends certainly have their work cut out for them in the years ahead! The Master Plan projections and plans are being incorporated into the work of the FBHI Long Range Planning committee.

There are copies of the 1986 Master Plan available to anyone who is interested in what the future holds - pick up one at the FBHI office.

## Musical Boat Trip

Save September 26th for an evening cruise with live music and dancing. This dance is a fund raiser for the Friends.

## Fall Foliage Cruise to Peddock's Island

This year's annual autumn outing will take place on Sunday, October 19, rain or shine. Peddocks Island, with its wonder of trees, will be the destination. The boat departs at 10:00 AM from Boston Harbor Cruises, One Long Wharf, Boston, and returns at 5:00 PM. Bring lunch - refreshments are available on board and there is water on Peddock's Island.

The Fund Raising Committee is sponsoring the trip. Tickets will be sold dockside the day of the trip. They can be purchased in advance through the FBHI by mail; send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the office. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for children and \$7 for Friends. Senior-student-group rates are available. Contact Mary Jane Warren, Boat Trip Coordinator, at the FBHI office 523-8386 for information. Flyers will be mailed to members in the fall.



## Armchair Tour of the Boston Harbor Islands

We have an interesting new slide show about the Boston Harbor Islands and the Volunteer Program. If you are a member of a group that is looking for presentations during the fall and winter I will be happy to come and share our slides with you. The presentation will include a narration geared to your organization's interests. On a cold snowy evening what could be nicer than warm summer pictures of the islands. Please call Nancy Martin at the office to schedule your organizations presentation.



## Notes from Nancy's Diary

All of the Volunteers, new and old are doing a wonderful job on the islands this summer. I appreciate all the advice I have been receiving from the experienced volunteers and new volunteers always bring a fresh outlook to the program. I have had a chance to experience the islands in rain storms, fog, cool clear days, and hot muggy days, and I love them all.

The orientations were very successful, each meeting the needs of the volunteers in that area. It was damp on the day spent on George's Island. Stacie Madden, Team Captain, gave us a working tour and explained procedures for day volunteers, with the help of the Park Staff.

Thompson Island orientation day was a beautiful day, the morning was spent with the Thompson Island staff and our Team Captain, Blossom Hoag. After a wonderful lunch, provided by Thompson Island, we had a three hour tour by Naturalist Bill Perkins. All of our senses were used as we listened to the birds, tasted, smelled, and felt the wildflowers and watched the monarch butterflys as they fluttered from bush to bush.

Overnight volunteers began orientation on George's Island, where we enjoyed the longest day of the year and a beautiful full moon both nights. A Friday night tour of George's Island with living history characters was effective. The legends came alive as we explored the fort by moonlight. All was quiet, even the Lady in Black did not disturb our sleep. We spent Saturday morning on George's in group orientation with the Team Captains; Mary Eaton, David Carey, John Nove, George and Pat O'Brien, Paul Nyren, John Hannaway, Ed Alley, and Volunteer Chairman, Walter Hope, each promoting the uniqueness of their island. The Park Staff talked about the Island Managers and the rules and regulations on the Islands. We all left on the water taxi for our individual islands. Every volunteer had an opportunity to explore the island they would be working on, to meet the Island Managers, and to schedule their volunteer time.



Harbor Island Volunteers are all ages, 18 to 72, both sexes, married or single, sometimes with spouse and children, sometimes alone. Any person who enjoys the outdoors and would like to help preserve the unique resource these Islands give to the City of Boston are welcome to join the Volunteer corps.

We had a wonderful time at the Seafood Festival July 26 & 27. Thanks to Robert & Wynelle Scenna, Fred Johnsen, Paul Nyren, Bill Connell, Janet Burgermeister, Rich & Priscilla Williams, and Suzanne & George Marsh information about the Friends was given to all who walked by. A piece of the islands in the form of rocks, sea glass, or shells were given to interested people.

We saw some new faces on the Sunset Cruise to Bumpkin Island. As part of our outreach to all people in the area we invited staff and people from a variety of agencies in the city. As promoters of these Island Parks we are responsible for sharing it with everyone.

I hope all the volunteers enjoyed the mid-summer party we had at the Beacon House. Again I would like to say thank you for all the help you have given me.

--Nancy Martin, Coordinator  
Volunteers & Membership



### Edward Rowe Snow Day

A commemoration ceremony and special legends program by the George's Island staff will take place on August 24, on George's Island. There will also be a morning boat trip to a special harbor island yet to be announced. Call the Friend's office for information.



### Thompson Retreat Excuses Refuted

Never Heard of it - Our October weekend trip to Thompson Island is now an annual event and has always been a success.

I Don't Know Anyone - Great! All the more people to meet. Most of us came the first time without knowing anyone, but left with many friends.

I'm too Busy - What better reason to plan now to treat yourself to a quiet weekend October 25 and 26. There is a phone, but only for emergencies so no one from the mainland can bother you there.

I Don't Want to Camp - We stay in warm dorms with beds and linens provided.

I Don't Really Know Anything About the Friends - We usually have some kind of participatory brainstorming session to get our members input as to where we should go next. This is the best way to see how we work and ask questions, or just observe.

It Costs too Much - I haven't given you a price yet. However, it will run about \$50 for the weekend, much the same as most Bed and Breakfast places in New England AND here we get Saturday dinner, Sunday breakfast and Sunday lunch with your bed. There is also a Halloween party Saturday night where you are welcome to bring instruments, costumes, food, and games.

Where Are the Details? - Well, they aren't finalized as of this writing but we'll send you a flyer soon. Advance registration is required and space is limited so mark it on your calendar now and look for the flyer.

--Wynelle Scenna  
Membership Committee Co-Chair



### Tidings

We received a very good response to our newsletter naming contest. Many thanks to all who entered! Although the judging became surprisingly complicated, we managed to extricate the winner from all the great entries. Paul Nyren submitted "Tidings" which now graces the top of page one. Well done Paul!



### New DEM Interpretive Services Supervisor

Andrea Lukens is leaving her position with the DEM to pursue a graduate program at Yale. She has been with the program seven years and was instrumental in helping the Friends get started, particularly in contract negotiations. We will miss her and thank her for her help. Her replacement is Karl Honkonen and we look forward to a continuing great relationship between the DEM and the Friends.



### Membership Survey Results

Thirteen percent of the Friends (39 people) responded by mail to the Issues Opinion Survey that was published in the summer Newsletter. The top three vote getters are:

- \* Cleaning up Boston Harbor
- \* Opening up Long Island as a park
- \* Shoreline development/public access

The results of this survey will be incorporated into the strategic planning efforts being done by the Long Range Planning Committee. Members of the Committee are: George Marsh, president; Karen O'Donnell, vice-president; Judith Wolfe, Clerk; and Board members Diane Greaney, John Stevens, and Suzanne Gall Marsh.

By year's end the Board of Directors expects to adopt a program blueprint - a long range plan for the Friends organization. Members are invited to participate in this discussion and offer their ideas at the annual autumn retreat on Thompson Island (see Thompson Island article) and/or contact George Marsh with your ideas and energy.





## A Great Horned Owl on Lovell's Island

My first encounter with the Great Horned Owl on Lovell's took place last summer on a warm August night under the light of a full moon. It was close to midnight, and as Sarah and I walked along the path near the top of the drumlin a large, silent, moth-like shape glided past, not much higher than ten feet above our heads. Signs of the owl had been found earlier that summer: 'whitewash' was found on several trees where the owl had roosted, and pellets (the regurgitated indigestible parts of it's prey neatly compacted into gray lozenges several inches long) were sprinkled along the path behind Battery Burbeck-Morris. Other pellets were found at the base of an old keel that had washed ashore on the back beach east of the marsh. All the pellets we found were made up primarily of rat bones and fur, with an occasional rabbit vertebra or leg bone; rarest were small fragments of mussel shells.

Last winter, during a Harbor-wide owl-scouting expedition, a Barn Owl was unexpectedly encountered in Battery Terrill at the north end of Lovell's. On a return trip several months later, the carcass of a Barn Owl was found in the same area. On the same trip, the Great Horned Owl was observed in the vicinity of Burbeck-Morris. (See Mark Primack's article "Owl Obit" in the July-August issue of SANCTUARY for a more detailed account of the Harbor's Barn Owl population.)

In mid-April of this year, during Harbor Clean-up Weekend, nearly two dozen pellets were found in the area behind Burbeck-Morris, as was a single feather. The owl itself was flushed out of the top of a spruce in the same area. Throughout May and June the owl was regularly seen in this same area, and when disturbed and flushed, north seemed to be its most common direction of flight. On one occasion, as it flew over the marsh, it was mobbed by Herring Gulls; on another occasion, crows followed in pursuit. Both these times it sought refuge in the trees to the left of the entrance to Battery Terrill.

Another day, after being flushed from the spruces, Josh found it perched in the large apple tree beyond Lovers' Rock. That



same week Greg heard it hooting near the Interpreters' campsite, and a week later, a middle-of-the-night unzipping of my tent elicited several soft hoots. It was earlier that same evening that I had my closest look at the owl: it was the 'evening of the strange sky' -- full of mysteriously illuminated clouds ("mammati-form clouds" the weather book said). Susan and I were walking across one of the gun emplacements at Burbeck-Morris when the owl flew overhead, transiting from one side of the emplacement to the other. The red-orange light of dusk accentuated the rich brown color of its feathers as it flew. It perched across from us on a railing, watched us for about a minute, then sprang into the air and flew silently toward the north.

Great Horned Owls cannot be readily sexed in the field, and to date no evidence of a second owl, a nest, or owlets has been found on Lovell's. A reasonable hypothesis is that the bird is an adolescent which, within the next year or two, will attract or be attracted to a mate, and that the pair will nest on the island. Since owls usually court and mate late in the winter, the rearing of young owlets can take place during a time of the year when the pressures that come with human contact are not as frequent.

--John Nove

Illustration by Joshua Nove





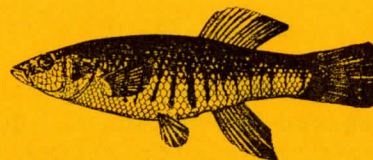
## The Edward Rowe Snow Memorial

A \$7,500 grant has been awarded by the Browne Fund to both the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, Inc. and Save Our Shores for the development of a design for an Edward Rowe Snow memorial. Mr. Snow was the author of more than ninety books and a beloved story teller and harbor historian. He was a "mega volunteer" for the Park and a champion for the islands during his lifetime. His tours of Fort Warren on George's Island were enjoyed by thousands of people.

The will of Boston Trust Attorney Edward I. Browne, written in 1892, directed that one-third of his estate be used for "adornment and benefit of Boston by the erection of statues, monuments, fountains for men and beasts and for the ornament of its streets, ways, squares and parks in such manner as will promote the pleasure, comfort, education, patriotism and good taste of its citizens." This bequest, Mr. Browne explained, was to be treated as a special fund to be "forever held, managed, invested and reinvested" by the City. The money became available to the City in 1974.

Members of the Friends who have been involved in the application process and progress on this project are: Carol Reed, Peg Hamilton, Mark Primack, George and Suzanne Marsh, and Karen O'Donnell. Presently a committee is being formed to be involved with this project which is expected to take several years.

If the location is Long Wharf, the design will need to be developed taking into account current (design) plans for Long Wharf being worked on by the DEM and BRA. Therefore, in addition to being approved by a number of authorities and commissions, the choice of a design would involve the DEM and the BRA in addition to the City Art Commission (the CAC works closely with Browne Fund Projects).



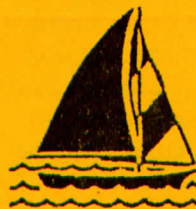
## Volunteering on a Rainy Weekend

Have you ever wondered what to do when it rains on the weekend you are volunteering? As a new volunteer I packed my gear and headed out to Bumpkin Island in the warm sun on a Friday afternoon. The campfire and sunset made the first evening a great experience.

Saturday morning I was snug in my tent listening to the rain, little realizing it was to continue the rest of the weekend. The large blue tarpaulin which belongs to the Friends was a lifesaver. I was able to use my Sterno stove and heat food for all of my meals. My raincoat, rainpants, and rubbers meant that I kept my clothes dry while moving around the island. The Island Managers and I talked with visitors and between rain squalls we had a chance to explore. Rainy weekends are unique, they give you a chance to spend more time with your Island Managers and visitors.

My tent and gear stayed reasonably dry. Volunteering on a rainy weekend is a challenge and you can derive a lot of satisfaction from it. The secret is "Be Prepared".

--Fred Johnsen



## Newsletter Contributions

Do you have something you'd like to share with our members? We are looking for articles, graphics, poems, ideas, and anything else you can think of. Send all contributions to Robert Scenna, Newsletter Editor, 24 Piedmont St., Arlington, MA 02174. Questions? Call me at 643-8279 (Home). The next deadline is November 1.



### Gotta Chair?

HELP!!!!!! My secretary's chair has been repossessed by the donor. If you have a secretary's chair with wheels you would like to donate to the Friends office it would be greatly appreciated. I can arrange to pick it up. Please call Nancy at 523-8386.

### Nominating Committee Wrap-up

This Nominating Committee was activated following the September 1985 Board Meeting when its members were appointed. The first endeavor was a brainstorming session, when we set down the many questions we had, thereby setting the agenda for our ensuing meetings. The subject matter fell into four general categories: a) clarifying officers' roles; b) reaching out to potential directors; c) setting up reasonable and fair procedures for nominations and elections; and d) resolving other issues related to the structure of the FBHI.

For the February Board meeting, ballots were prepared and a brief resume for each candidate for office was distributed to the directors present. Each candidate was allowed to speak and then the four officers were elected.

The committee concluded its assigned tasks with the preparation of a final report. In addition, the committee submitted some related recommendations for the Board of Directors, the Bylaw Committee, and the Personnel Committee. Guidelines were prepared for future nominating committees to simplify their work. These documents were directed to the Executive Committee for their further action.

The Nominating Committee members wish to express their appreciation to the concerned members of the Friends who showed their valued support for the organization by participating as candidates for election to the Board or to an office.

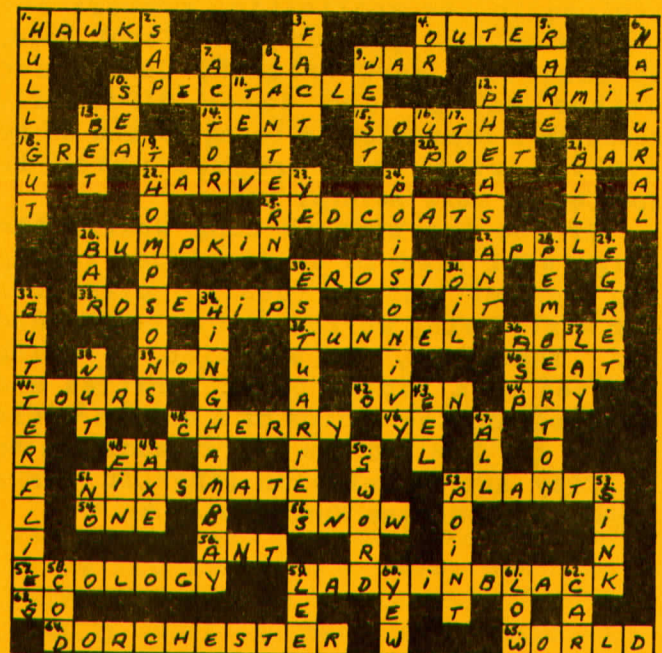
We feel that we have been able to achieve our goals of getting more people involved, to spread the work out more, and to broaden the overall perspective of the leadership of the Friends.

--Paul Nyren

### So You Forgot Your Razor

Razor Clams, also called Jackknife Clams, are some of the common kinds of "wildlife" found on the Boston Harbor Islands. They grow 5 to 7" inches in length. Their shells are often found washed up on these beaches, but a live specimen is hardly ever found. Why? Because these critters can move! They live in sandy bottom areas at the low tide line and become active at high tide. Razor clams bury themselves long ways up and feed at high tide by drawing in particle-rich water through a siphon. At the slightest vibration (a footstep) they retreat rapidly down two or three feet, faster than most people can dig. They do this with their muscular foot pulling the shell down out of harms way. When out of their burrow, they can leap several inches with a flick of their foot, or swim backwards by means of their siphon. Because they move so fast, it isn't profitable to fish commercially for them. However, when caught in non-polluted waters, they reportedly make excellent eating.

--Wynelle Scenna



Here are the answers to the crossword puzzle printed in the summer Newsletter. You did get them all didn't you?





## MEMBERSHIP FORM

We believe that our members belong to the Friends because they wish to protect the islands while also promoting the enjoyment that is felt by being involved with this unique environment. We are following an old American custom of banding together to magnify our individual efforts to better our way of life. Our diverse membership provides assistance to the Greater Boston community and the Boston Harbor Islands State Park through volunteers, interpretative services, and public education.

Part of our dues goes to maintaining the organization and the rest helps support our mission for the Harbor Park: to encourage public use, balanced with an awareness of the need to protect this fragile ecosystem and historic environment.

Your membership entitles you to:

- boat ticket discounts
- FBHI newsletters
- island volunteering
- act in a Living History performance
- learn more about the islands
- opportunities to make new friends
- special activities
- discounts on items sold by FBHI

It is only through your support and active presence that the FBHI will succeed in reaching its goals in this, our eighth year. Send your check made out to the Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, Inc., today--we'll send you your red 1986 membership card by return mail. Check with your company's personnel office to see if they will match your tax deductible donation.

"Bring a friend to the Friends"

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (please print)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ day  
evening  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

#### TYPES OF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP AVAILABLE

Note: Memberships and donations are tax deductible

Economy \$6 \_\_\_\_\_  
Individual \$15 \_\_\_\_\_  
Family \$28 \_\_\_\_\_  
Sustaining \$50 \_\_\_\_\_  
Patron \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

We will send you a membership card.

New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

#### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

(please check)

\_\_\_\_\_ Island Overnight weekends (June-September)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Island Daytime (June-September)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Living History programs  
\_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter/Writing skills  
\_\_\_\_\_ Membership Activities/Clerical  
\_\_\_\_\_ Finance  
\_\_\_\_\_ Fund Raising/Cruises  
\_\_\_\_\_ Exhibit preparation/Art skills  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Tax Deductible Gift \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
How did you find out about us?

Please mail application with check payable to:  
Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, Inc.  
PO Box 9025  
Boston, MA 02114

Calendar of Events



- September 6 - Deer Island Tour (reservations required)
- September 8 - Sunset Cruise to Peddock's Island
- September - Bird lecture (see flyer for date & time)
- September 20 - October 13 Coastweek (month)
- September 26 - Musical Boat Trip
- October 19 - Fall Foliage Trip
- October 25 and 26 - Thompson Island Retreat
- November 1 - Newsletter Deadline

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