



Grand Manan Trails Newsletter 2015

Trails Update - 2015

by Bob Stone

Another year has come and almost gone. Thanks to Anne and Jessie for the usual excellent maintenance. With the weather cooperating, they finished well ahead of schedule. Many thanks also to Susan Price, who accompanied Anne and Jessie when they were clearing a number of the trails and who pitched in when she could, without getting in the way of either the chain saw or the machete. Our trail adopters continued their fine work in keeping the trails clear during the summer, when they begin to fill in with grass and brambles.



Pandora's Heads Head, from above

We are most fortunate this year to have such acclaimed authors as Nadine McInnis and Alison Deming agree to write articles for our newsletter. Not only do they love to write, but

they also love to hike. Nadine and her husband Tim Fairbairn are both trail adopters, and Alison, as well as being a regular participant in the Monday morning hikes, took over the leadership when Judy was away in August. The Monday morning hikes continue to be well attended, with one round the island excursion giving us the opportunity to view trails from below.

In late July, Judy and I were asked by Tourism NB to lead a group of nine tour operators on a hike. The tour companies were here as part of an exploration of the Fundy region as a potential destination for future treks. They were on a very tight timeline, so we were given an hour and a half to present to them the magnificence of our trails. We took the route from Southwest Head to the Lower Flock of Sheep, and I must say they were impressed. We emphasized that we had barely scratched the surface. I suspect that we may see more of them on the trails in the future.

More thanks to Laura Buckley, who continues to host our annual fund raising dinner. It is a major source of funds for us, so that we can continue to maintain the trails. And many thanks to you for your support. We couldn't continue the maintenance without you.



Pandora's Head, from the water

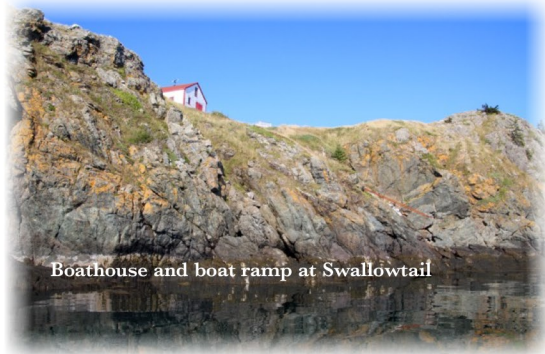


Land Hikers Take to the Sea

by Nadine McInnis

On August 24, 16 members of the Monday morning hikers, and two lucky travellers from Ontario who discovered the outing online, enjoyed a trip around the island with Russell Ingalls and his brother David in Russell's boat *Island Bound*. After almost a month of fog produced by the extreme heat on the mainland, the skies cleared and gave us perfect viewing conditions for the trip.

Our first decision was whether to head north from Seal Cove, visiting the populated and familiar parts of the island, or south, which would bring us more quickly to the back of the island and its spectacular cliffs. Russell suggested that we go north so that we would be able to enjoy the sunset as we rounded Southwest Head five hours later. This route also offered the possibility of waving to many people, both familiar and unknown, as well as checking out all the renovations and new home construction along the shore. This ship to shore interaction continued as various people were texted from the boat and asked to look out for us.



Bryn's friend Lisa even flashed a pizza pan in the sun from her yard on the Thoroughfare Road. Our morse code wasn't up to snuff so we happily waved back and disappeared behind Ross Island.

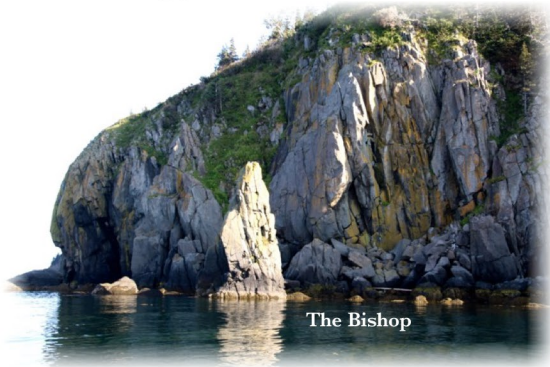
The tide was such that we were able to completely circle Ross Island with its many deserted coves and a local favourite, Secret Beach, as beautiful with its soft white sand from the water view as it is when arrived at on foot at low tide. We viewed Great Duck Island, Low and High Duck Islands, as well as the beautifully lush Nantucket Island. We got a good look at the wreckage of the once beautiful Fish Fluke Point Lighthouse that fell finally during an early winter storm in 2013. Russell steered us skillfully through the shallows that just a few hours later would be passable by foot. We were happy to see a school of herring, hoping that the weirs would become more active in the near future.



At least one of us was working during the trip. Long-time summer resident Alison Deming was viewing the sites of old herring weirs as part of a writing project supported by her Guggenheim Fellowship. Russell slowed and explained each site, some completely abandoned, others with stakes only and some still fully functional with netting: all of them colourfully named. We slowed to take a closer look at the "Turnip Patch," still functional near the Anchorage.



Then we were on to Flagg Cove with its mini hole-in-the-wall formation and Pettes Cove where Russell stopped to tell us the history of the ramp below Swallowtail Lighthouse. The real



The Bishop

hole-in-the-wall got all our cameras clicking, and then we all sat awed and quiet as Seven Days Work rose from Whale Cove. That layered line of cliffs is aptly named and reminded us of how geological time dwarfs us. Judy and Bob Stone had an additional goal as we followed along this rugged coastline: They checked with binoculars to see if any of the trails were dangerously undermined, something that can't be determined during a hike on land. The trail looked safe in their current locations.

Once we rounded Ashburton Head, we discovered

that the wind had shifted and that the back of the island was shrouded in thick fog. For some, this was welcome, after the intensity of the sun on calm water, conditions which made it hard to keep hydrated but now we were able to absorb moisture through our pores – at least it felt that way. The fog offered its own beauty, including being followed by “fogbows,” arcs of white light that seemed to travel with us. Because of the still conditions, the fog lay on the surface of the water, held in place by the high cliffs. Just above our heads, all was clear and we had impressive views of the cliffs rising out of the fog: in sunlight above, and obscured below a defined line. And every time we pulled into a cove of interest, such as Indian Beach, Money Cove, and Dark Harbour, the fog seemed to part so we could see everything clearly. Then it would be back out into the fog.



Dark Harbour

The sun started to set when we were close to Bradford Cove, making for heavily reflective silver



waves in a misty rose-grey sky. Then we emerged from the fog completely near Southwest Head, which was reddish in the fading sunlight, with many people there to watch the sun go down. Judy reminisced about the time their son Bill climbed down those cliffs to retrieve something in one of the coves, glad that he and Grand Mananers who might have had to rescue him survived unscathed. Russell steered the boat into his family weir at Pat's Cove so that Alison could have a close-up view of the interior. The way he was able to maneuver in such a confined space, and pick up the skiff on the way out emphasized for us that we had been in safe hands throughout the day. The full moon was high by this time and the journey inside the weir was one of the high points of a full day. By the time we started to head up the island towards Seal Cove, the glacial erratics at Flock of Sheep were just pale shapes along the dark shore. Our trip turned out to be seven hours, and we all thanked Russell for his generosity with his time and his knowledge of the birds, sea life, islands, storms and history of Grand Manan.



Hay Point

By Alison Deming

Having hiked Grand Manan trails since I was a child, I am always hard pressed to choose a favorite one. My father had cut trails in the woods behind our house in rural Connecticut, where



I grew up, but these were private trails with no history and no markers. Through my child's eyes the Red Trail, following the coastline on Grand Manan with red blazes painted on rocks and red tincan lids nailed to trees, seemed as magical as a trail marked with bread crumbs in a fairy tale to keep children safe who wandered far into the wilds. The breathtaking beauty of forest and sea as they meet in a ceaseless dance along the

rocky cliffs kept me wonderstruck. Rachel Carson wrote about this sense of wonder, wishing it to be a gift to each child, "a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years." I was such a fortunate child. And now, coming perilously close to the edge of seventy, I am still that child, excited by the feeling of discovery and meaning felt in places that speak louder than words.

Hay Point sits on a grassy promontory on the unsettled western shore of the island. If you approach from the north, the trail offers a cliffside view of the Bradford Cove Weir, which has been rebuilt this summer and looks downright elegant with its bright white birch saplings lashed on for top poles. You pass through a forest that slopes down toward basaltic cliffs where several stands of strikingly old birch trees have managed to survive both weather and logging. These trees look like they've suffered a fair amount of erosion, wind and even the discomfort of another tree falling across their arms. They might be a hundred years old—about as old as a white or yellow birch ever gets—and how they have managed to escape a century of logging is beyond me. But here they are, broad giants, their white bark long gone into a coarser mottled gray, some with trunks that lean almost to horizontal, then change their minds about collapsing into the ground and shoot back up straight toward to the sky. Poet Robinson Jeffers once described the giant old California redwoods as having "trunks by age made holy." It's hard not to feel that there is something sacred about this life force that keeps such masterful beings going against all odds, reinventing their shapes year after year after year in celebration of light and life.





If you approach from the south, the trail tracks out of weather-beaten Gull Heath along precipitous columnar basalt cliffs, always in a state of slow crumbling but majestic nonetheless, with dizzying views down into the green churn of the Grand Manan Channel. Along this route stands a reminder of the original purpose of the trail system, which was for lifesaving due to the dangerous shoals, ledges and

currents that surround this island for which working on the water has been the primary industry for two-hundred years. A sign marks the spot where on February 26, 1963, Vernon Bagley heroically rescued a man whose vessel had foundered on the rocks below, hauling him up the two-hundred-foot high cliffs to safety. The spot is a sobering reminder of the hard work, sacrifice and wisdom of those who came before us in this place, a reminder that the bounty of the sea can both give and take away.

The trail is very steep getting down to Hay Point—and steeper going back up. But the labour is worth the prize to perch on the outcrop of monumental rock, hay meadow dotted with young spruces behind you and before you tidal waters sashaying through the rockweed, perhaps a seal or two, perhaps a family of otters revealing themselves amidst their errands. Eagle, crow, kingfisher, guillemot—all are equally likely to swoop by and check you out while you sit and stare across the watery distance. You might put off leaving the place, knowing the steep climb that faces you when you depart. But something other than dread may hold you, sitting on the rocks or lying on the grass or just standing in the maritime breeze to contemplate the day. Something deep and quiet opens in the imagination at such places, something we don't really have words for but know when we feel it. The age-old questions about who we are and why we are here and how we should go about living our lives seem just as natural as anything else in the scene, nothing to be troubled by, for the moment. We linger and attend to the place and somehow the place seems to attend to us. Hay Point is a place for such lingering, a place for contemplation, staring dumbly into space and sharing that joy with others. I think this feeling must be very much like what the gliding seabirds and swimming otters feel, what even the grass taking in the sunlight and the rocks slowly eroding to the sea's laving feel. We exist and that is a sacred gift. This is why the ancients turned such places into temples and shrines and cathedrals. But I'm happy with a slightly battered picnic table and the company of others who sigh into beauty for a few minutes before going about whatever labours the day holds for them back at the end of the trail.





Benches

This summer two new benches were added to those that spring up (mysteriously, or otherwise) in spots especially enticing to those who like to sit and absorb the setting.

Unfortunately, over the past years two have disappeared (also mysteriously) from Southern Head and we decided not to place another one in that location, too accessible to trucks and A.T.V.s. The memorial bench,



In front of Harrington Cove Cottages

donated by the family of a long time summer visitor to Harrington Cove Cottages, stayed in place along the trail from the lighthouse to Flocks of Sheep for two years. However, it was gone by last spring.

Thanks to Ken Ingersoll, who took time out from his labours of love at Swallowtail, that memorial is now available on the bluff at Harrington Cove. It is much appreciated by everyone who stops by for tea or just to take advantage of a rest with a gorgeous view. Since Cecilia and her guests are



Jessie, Tim Stone, and Noah Cohen on Gull Heath

avid supporters of the trails, it seemed appropriate. Thanks Ce for your generosity!

Another "thank-you" goes to Joan Fellows who donated one of Bob Demaline's last projects to the Friends of Grand Manan Trails. This bench was carried by a crew of young recruits to the headland above Southern Cross. If you are heading to Hay Point, follow the detour down the hill to that spot and take time to look north toward the lighthouse and south to the cliffs along that side of the island. Joan, we are grateful to you for celebrating Bob's enthusiasm and dedication to all the trails, especially the one to Big Head which you two maintained for many years.



Bob's bench in position



Red Point and its own Hole in the Wall

Red Point is best known for the fault line that separates the older fine grained argillate from the younger basalt that covers much of the island. This Red Point Fault extends under the soil north to Whale Cove, and out under the sea in both directions. A detailed explanation of the geology can be found in the booklet "Grand Manan Geology, Excursions in Natural History" by Greg McHone. There is a fine display of the geology of the island in the Grand Manan Museum,, set up by Greg.



Another more recent feature at Red Point is its own Hole in the Wall. It can be easily visited at low tide by walking the beach north towards the Anchorage until you come below the large fir trees on the bluff above. You will find an ourcropping with a hole large enough to walk through while crouching. It will be interesting to see what happens to this section of softer rock over the next few years



A letter from two hikers...(written when spring maintenance was partially completed)

My husband and I have had the great pleasure of hiking on Grand Manan for several seasons. This past weekend we headed out for a few days of back packing. Laura Buckley had mentioned concerns for trail conditions after our epic winter, and that any reporting of trail status would be greatly appreciated. We hiked from Southern Head to Little Dark Harbour and return. The area from Southern Head to Bradford Cove was in very good condition. It looked like some fir limbs had been recently cut around Hay Point over to Bradford Cove. From Bradford Cove to Pandora Head we counted around 4 blow downs. We navigated around them without problems and found the trail again. From Pandora Head to Little Dark Harbour there were additional downed trees, but felt many were probably from our big summer storm intermixed with winter activity. All in all we felt eveything was in amazingly good shape. We were so appreciative of all the trail marks.

We've mentioned making a donation for some time and we apologize for not doing so sooner. Our great thanks to you and all those who work so thoughtfully to keep the Grand Manan trail system going. It is a spectacular place. This check is in US dollars. If there is any issue in cashing it, please let us know and we'll get the funds to you differently. (editors' note- there was no problem, and we appreciated greatly the donation!)....



Grand Manan Trails Adopters, 2015

Net Point - Joanne and Mike Ingalls and family
Hole in the Wall to Whale Cove- Marilyn and Peter Cronk
Whale Cove to Eel Brook Beach- Adele Peacock, Janice and Allison Naves, Walter Schenkel and Deborah Harrison
Whistle Rd. (Blue Trail) to Eel Brook Falls (Red)- Alexis Phillips and John Edwards
Ashburton Head to the Whistle- Bill and Liz Edgar, John Ritchie, Will Ballantyne-Rice
The Whistle to Indian Beach- Susan Price
Tatton's Corner to Money Cove (Yellow Trail)- Marilyn and Peter Cronk
Above Dark Harbour- Megan Greenlaw and Pam Cronk
Dark Harbour to Western Head- Debbie Charters
Bradford Cove to Bradford Pond- Cecilia Bowden, Peter Hoffman
Bradford Pond to South West Head- Sheldon and Shirley Cook, Judy and Bob Stone
South West Head to Lower Flock of Sheep- Maude Hunter, Susan Ballantyne, Ken Bird, John and Dianna Bastable
Lower Flock of Sheep to Frames' property- Alec and Dyanne Frame
Frames' property to end of trail- Janice and Ed David
Ross Island- Nils and Linda Kling
At large: Joel Frantzman, Nadine McInnis, Tim Fairbairn, Philman Green, John Ritchie
Overall trails maintenance- Anne Mitchell and Jessie James
Markers- Susan Price
Signs- Carmen Roberts
Driftwood Collection- Kay Toma
Newsletter-Judy and Bob Stone

Donations received Oct. 1, 2014 to Oct. 1, 2015

Ballantyne, Susan & Bird, Ken
Bartlett, Paula and Tom
Beachfront Cottages
Beresford, Doris
Brewer, Gene and Karen
Buckley, Laura
Burgess, Scott and Leona
Campbell, Mary Lou
Chudleigh, Anne
Cohen, Carl
David, Ed and Janice
Davis, Debbie
Duchin, Linda
Faulkner, Nicole
Grant, Bridget and Dick

Hancock, Greg & Ann
Hawkins, Mary
Hodge, Frances
Home Hardware, Allison Ingalls
Hunter, Maude
MacGregor, Katie and Furth, Alan
McCready, Chris & O'Keefe, Erin
McMillan, Allan & Donna
McMurtry, Margaret and John
Meehan, Lynn
Morse, Sonia
Parsons, Nancy
Price, Susan

Shaffelburg, Hilda
Shoemaker, Helen
Squires, Priscilla
Stevens, John and Sue
Stone, Bill
Thompson, Carolyn
Thompson, Colleen
Turner, Mel and Sandy
Vetterlein, Sue
Wheeler, Roy & Kathy
Wylie, Mary
Zocchi, John and Jane

Total \$2735

Thank you

Friends of Grand Manan Trails is completely self-supporting, through the sale of the trails booklets, an annual fundraising dinner, the sale of pins, and donations. If you would like to support the trails financially, please make out your cheque to "Friends of Grand Manan Trails", and send to Bob Stone, 51 Red Point Rd., Grand Manan NB, E5G4J1. All contributions are gratefully received, and put to good use.