

A joint newsletter from
The Friends of Crescent Beach,
Green Bay and Area Society &
the LaHave Islands Marine
Museum

CHANGING TIDES

www.crescentbeach.ca

www.lahaveislandsmarinemuseum.ca

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Got something to say?
Everyone is encouraged to
voice their opinions and
share their stories, book
reviews and observations.
Simply send your
submissions to the editor at
wordbyword@eastlink.ca.



Historic postcard from Crescent Beach, West Dublin, N.S., circa 1910



Note the cost of the postage in 1910 – one cent

A Little Bit About the History of Crescent Beach

This area of the South Shore was originally part of the Sloan Grant. One section was Rieser's Beach (note original spelling), and the second area was Romkey's Beach. John Jacob Romkey came from the Five Houses area near Riverport, acquired part of the grant, and built his first house here in 1820. It was insulated with eel grass and birch bark and was not electrified until the 1950's. His descendant, Frances Romkey, still lives in the house.

I visited her recently and she told me many stories about the area. Across the street from her house the family had its own workshop, and some of the furniture still in the house today was made in that shop. The family was self-sustaining, even growing their own flax which could be spun and woven into cloth.

At one point a descendant of John Jacob sold Romkey's Beach to Mr. F.B. Wade, who in turn sold it to Judge Paton in 1937. The name had been changed to Crescent Beach in 1890. In 1951, Victor Romkey purchased the beach back and, not wishing to be liable for any problems arising on the beach or the road behind the dunes, gave it to the Crown (the Province). In the 1970s, when Risser's Beach Provincial Park was being developed, Mike Delorey, the MLA at the time, tried to get the name of the beach changed back to Romkey's Beach. But as the name had been established in provincial records as "Crescent," it has remained that way.

In the postcard shown here, circa 1910, it is referred to as "Crescent Beach at West Dublin." Crescent Beach was considered to be "the country" outside West Dublin. All the churches, the school, and the stores were in West Dublin. It is interesting to note that the postcard was mailed for one cent to the USA in September of 1910.

The hills rising above the shore at the front of Crescent Beach are still referred to as the Romkey Hills, but some of them used to be known as the "Ram Cat Hills." The Romkeys were referred to as "Ram Cats" because the first members of the family who arrived in Lunenburg were mercenaries. Frances Romkey says that older people living on the LaHave Islands remember sledding in the winter time on the Ram Cat Hills.

As with most areas on the South Shore, the original road ran much closer to the shore. It is now overgrown in many areas, but in some places it has become a driveway to a particular property.

At the corner of the Crescent Beach Road leading to the LaHave Islands stands an old house built by another of John Jacob's descendants and until recently owned by Andrew Kimball. This was the Post House where horses were changed if one was traveling to villages beyond, such as Cherry Hill or perhaps Liverpool. It also served as the post office and as an Inn and was referred to by the "locals" as "The Inn House." The horses were actually housed in a barn across the street where Ian Kimball's house stands today.

Jean McHarg

The Lion King

Burpee Meisner, one of the founding members of the *Friends of Crescent Beach*, was recently given the International Melvin Jones Award by the Dartmouth Lion's Club. This outstanding award is the club's highest honour and is awarded in recognition of a commitment to humanitarian work. Created in 1973, the fellowship is named for the founder of Lion's Club International, Melvin Jones. In the citation, the Lion's Club recognizes the recipient's special qualities: generosity, compassion, and concern for the less fortunate.

Burpee's daughter, Sharri, is especially proud of her father's work. "Beyond serving as a board member for the FOCB, Dad has been a member of Lion's International for 50 years," she explains. "Dad also participates in the Adopt-a-Highway program with the Seabreeze Campers Association, who clean a stretch of highway along Route 10." Burpee Meisner worked tirelessly for the Lion's Club in Bridgewater, Kentville, and Dartmouth.



All Fellowship recipients receive a wall plaque in honour of their commitment to others (see photo above). Burpee Meisner was also honoured at a special celebratory dinner this past September hosted by the Lion's Club. His fellow Board members congratulate him for his good service and well-deserved acknowledgement.

Chair Report

Autumn is in the air. As this is being written, we've had several glorious bright fall days in a row and a change from the much more variable weather of the past summer. Since post-tropical storm Noel and over the summer, the beach has seen significant recovery with good levels of sand deposition. Sand is also building against some of the areas of armour rock. In fact, it would be a blessing if this would occur along the whole dune!

In an experiment to encourage the deposition of wind-borne sand, *Friends* volunteers have installed low-height snow fencing along part of the dune. We'll wait to see how this works. The rather wet summer has also meant a good crop of vegetation, the natural dune protector! And the roses planted by *Friends* continue to prosper. Hurricane Kyle essentially passed us by with minimum effect on the beach. Now, the beach must be "put to bed": the portapotties have already been removed, soon the recycling bins will be closed for the season, and some of the signs will be put into storage out of harm's way. The doggie-poo bags will continue to be supplied to help keep the beach a clean and healthy place to visit.

The board continues to monitor happenings at the beach. Although requested to do so, the government has yet to remove even the hazardous parts of the cribwork damaged by last year's post-tropical storm Noel. As previously reported, *Friends* did a beach sweep in June. Nita Eisenhower and other *Friends* who "sweep" the beach daily have now found a new source of funding: the recovered recyclables are redeemed for cash! Our volunteers continue to contribute to beach maintenance in other ways by repairing damage caused by vandals and by participating in the TD Canada Trust Shore Cleanup project in which students from Petite Riviere Elementary School provide much of the required "manpower."

The Crescent Beach website (www.crescentbeach.ca) operated by Gordon Prince continues to be a place where you can keep up with *Friends* activities and gain knowledge on how the beach is “performing” with up-to-date photographs of all the happenings.

The Annual General Meeting in August was a success although, for a while, it looked as though it would have to be postponed due to the disastrous fire that destroyed the hall’s immediate neighbour, Covey Island Boat Works. At the meeting, Bob Taylor of the Geological Survey of Canada presented information on the way beaches “operate.” Through his good offices, a projection screen was presented to the Petite Riviere Fire Hall in partial thanks for our use of the hall over the years. Our thanks go to retiring members Anne Greer, Neiff Joseph, and Gordon Whynacht for their work on the board over the years. We now welcome new board members Paul Langlais, Brenda Chance, and Tim Chance.

With Christmas coming on, now is the time to think of *Friends* merchandise, either T-shirts or painting reproductions, as gifts. For more details on the paintings, please contact Jim Sewell by email at jimsewell@eastlink.ca, or by phone at 688-1739. Or visit Dennison’s Custom Framing in Bridgewater. For details about T-shirts, and some even some new long-sleeved T-shirts and sweatshirts, please contact Andra White at 688-1505.

Once again, my thanks go to the volunteers for all their efforts in carrying out the mission of the *Friends of Crescent Beach, Green Bay and Area Society*. On behalf of the Board Members may I wish everyone a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season.

Bruce Raymond
Chairman

The Beach: A Living Thing!

As we watch Crescent Beach over the years, we see it change. On calm summer days, it is a broad gentle play area, while at other times it is strewn with seaweed and, in winter, buried in snow. Due to the movement of sand, at times the dune and the cribwork appear to have grown in height, while at other times, they seem to be lower.

To help to understand how these changes occur, I find that Silver Donald Cameron’s book *The Living Beach* (Macmillan Canada, 1998) is a good resource. It provides a very readable description of the physical and man-made forces at play here and on beaches elsewhere.

The book covers many aspects of beach lore: how waves and the wind form and sculpt what we know as a beach, how waves develop, and what humans have done both to help develop and to destroy beaches. It also covers many aspects of the what, why, and wherefore of things we find on beaches in Nova Scotia and around the world. Hurricanes are discussed, including reference to those that touched Nova Scotia before Hurricanes Juan and Kyle.

Cameron draws on various authorities including Bob Taylor of the Geological Survey of Canada, our guest speaker at the 2008 Annual General Meeting. As with Bob Taylor, the author has provided easily accessible information about the dynamics of our Crescent Beach. If you want to know about beaches, check out *The Living Beach*. It’s a book well worth reading!

Bruce Raymond

Did You Know...

- * Nita Eisenhauer, Jean McHarg and Kiki Nichols generously collect trash left behind by beach-goers while they walk along the shore of Crescent Beach each day.
- * Almost forty years ago, Kiki Nichols, Burpee Meisner, Rita Meisner, Barry Meisner, and Shari (Meisner) Bush started this tradition.
- * For your convenience, *Friends of Crescent Beach* provide garbage sorting bins at the beach entrance.
- * The majority of the items found on the beach are fast-food packaging and liquor bottles. One of the strangest items picked up was a three-seat sofa!
- * Refundables, which include cans and bottles totalling \$110.00, have been collected in recent months.
- * Pet owners who walk the beach with their dogs have used 2000 clean-up bags this year.
- * Pete West of Petite Riviere was an early advocate of the dog bag dispensers.
- * Clean-up bags have been donated by Pharmasave and can usually be found in the box at the entrance to the beach. Unfortunately, that box was stolen this past September. Although it was immediately replaced, there has been a rash of vandalism at the beach and the newest box has also been destroyed. **A replacement will not be erected until next spring. In the interim, we ask you to bring your own doggy-poo bags when you walk the beach.**

Evelina Langlais

Bric a Brac:

- * For those of you who are interested in having your telephone number placed on Canada's recently created "Do Not Call" list (which prohibits many telemarketers from contacting you), please either go to <http://www.LNTE-DNCL.gc.ca> or call 1-866-580-3625 (DNCL) to register.
- * Our thanks again to Bob Taylor for his informative and interesting presentation at this year's FOCB AGM. Mr. Taylor politely declined an honorarium for his services. As an alternative gesture, the FOCB Board has designated that those funds be donated to the Mi'maq Burial Ground Restoration Association for their work in Petite Riviere.
- * We would like to thank Aliant, Jean McHarg, Bob & Mary Fulleman, and Random House Canada for their generous donation of the many wonderful door prizes awarded at this year's AGM.
- * Many of our members have recently been assigned new postal codes and **we need to update our list with your revised coordinates**. Please email any changes to our membership coordinators, Tim and Brenda Chance, at chanceharbour@eastlink.ca or by snail mail to the FOCB address on this newsletter.
- * At every special occasion (including our AGM), Anne Greer very kindly feeds us her wonderful oatcakes. Although she has departed as a member of our Board, she has kindly left us with the treasured recipe:

Telegraph House Scottish Oatcakes

1 ¼ cups sugar
2 cups small rolled oats; additional oats for rolling out
2 cups flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
2 cups bran flakes
1 tsp. baking soda mixed with ½ cup boiling water
1 1/4 cups shortening

Mix dry ingredients. Cut in shortening. Add water and soda. Roll out between two sheets of waxed paper sprinkled with oats. Cut in pieces. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes until slightly brown on the edges. Enjoy!

TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup a Great Success!

On Friday, October 3, the students of Petite Riviere Elementary School took part in a cross-Canada environment clean-up program. Thanks to teacher Nick Jeffrey and fifteen of his students, we successfully removed debris from Crescent Beach, including the beach road and the salt marsh.

Five bags of recycling garbage and five of trash were collected. As well as the expected items such as discarded plastic bags and food wrappers, some of the more unusual items included many shotgun shells, a diaper, a condom, and a pop bottle full of a mysterious yellowish liquid!

The weather was perfect, the students worked really hard, and we all had a great time. Seven members of Friends participated, and we were assisted by Sally Steele from the Recycling Facility at Whynotts Settlement. She not only helped with the pick-up but also brought a truck and took away all the bags we collected.

The Shoreline Cleanup program involved thousands of volunteers from coast to coast. Many thanks to Nick and his class for putting Crescent Beach on the map!

Jim Sewell

Christmas is Coming!

A reminder to everyone that *Friends of Crescent Beach* fundraising T-shirts and memberships make fantastic gifts for friends and family at holiday time. To purchase a gift membership, or to select from our vast array of fundraising shirts (featuring wonderful local birds by artist Don Pentz), please contact Andra White at whitewood@eastlink.ca.

Please also remember that *Friends* memberships are renewable annually at the end of each May. If your dues are not up-to-date or you are unsure of the status of your membership, please contact our new membership team, Tim and Brenda Chance, at chanceharbour@eastlink.ca or via the regular *Friends* mailing address on the front panel of this newsletter.

From the LaHave Islands Marine Museum



June 2 to Sept 1, 2008 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

VISITATION:

Overall, our visitor numbers remained approximately the same as last year, even though June traffic was lower than usual. We had more local visitors, with many returning several times to see the Quilt Display at the Museum and to follow our progress on the restoration of our Double-Ender/Bush Island boat.

SUMMER STAFF

Our summer students Emma Bell, Alyssa Peeler, and Leslie Young did an excellent job documenting, rearranging, and re-labeling all display items. We redesigned and updated our website. Check out the impressive results at www.lahaveislandsmarinemuseum.ca and let us know at limms@auracom.com what you think, or provide us with any additional material you would like to see added.

MUSEUM REPAIRS

As a result of a \$10,000.00 grant from the Province of Nova Scotia, we were able to make major improvements to our museum. Rotted sections of the Bell Tower were replaced, new corner boards were installed, and the building received a complete paint job. A special thanks is extended to Rick Bode of LaHave, who did a great job on the painting and also helping volunteers with the repairs.

VERA MAE RESTORATION

Jim Rhodenizer of West LaHave led our project on restoring our 27-foot Double- Ender/Bush Island Boat and he took no shortcuts. First a new oak keel was carved out and installed. Next all rotted sections of the hull were re-planked. New washboards and water boards were made and the boat was repainted. Finally, the engine was installed. Jim's expertise was the driving force on bringing the boat back to her original self.



ANNUAL FISHERMAN'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

Rev. Neil McEwen, Rev. David Phillips, and Rev. Bob Seaman participated in this year's Fisherman's Memorial Service held at St. John's Anglican Church, Bell Island. The names of 30 men from the LaHave Islands who were lost at sea were read. Following the service the congregation proceeded to the shoreline where a memorial wreath was deposited into the sea in their honour.

THANK YOU

"A BIG THANK YOU" to all members and friends who helped us with our summer events by baking, giving donations, and offering their time to help. Ways & Means people and their friends put on a **huge** effort, which is greatly appreciated by the Ways & Means Committee.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR for an Evening of Fun!

On November 10, 2008, at 7 pm in the Marine Museum Hall, Bell Island

Everyone is welcome to attend. After our short Annual meeting, we will have an early Christmas Party featuring a blind auction, followed by food and refreshments.

MEMBERS AND INTERESTED PERSONS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF OUR SOCIETY

Membership renewals for 2009 are now due. Dues are \$5.00 per person per year (Oct 1 - Sept 30) and can be paid to Edith Berrigan (688-2170), or mail your cheque to the LaHave Islands Marine Museum at PO Box 69, LaHave, NS, B0R 1C0. New members should also include their address, telephone number and email (if applicable).

QUILT EXHIBIT

Our Museum exhibit this summer was about local quilts that were made on the LaHave Islands or from a family that had connections to the Islands. Some of the quilts were “well loved” (well worn), while others were made and just put away. Most of the quilts were made before the 1940’s. We also had 2 signature quilts – one which was more than 100 years old!



RADIO CLUB

The Halifax Amateur Radio Club (Public Service Communications since 1933) was on Museum grounds this summer with all their equipment to participate in a 24-hour International Communication Competition “Islands on the Air” around the world to see how many people they could contact. They were using Morse Code and a Ham Radio. They had 991 contacts from all over the globe, including Russia and the Far East. They mentioned that this was a very good site for transmitting messages.



PICNIC GROUNDS

We now have picnic tables on our site, which looks over the water. We had lots of positive feedback in regards to improvements on the property.