

2016 Grand Openings by Aaron Dority

In celebration of our newest additions to Frenchman Bay Conservancy's preserve network, we formally opened not one but three new preserves, including Taft Point, Schoodic Connector Trail, and Bean Island.



PHOTOS EILEEN HALL



Hawk Henries plays the flute at the Taft Point Preserve grand opening. People exploring the shore on Bean Island.

TAFT POINT

Last winter, a hard working group of twenty volunteers converged on Taft Point on one of the coldest mornings of December. Together we cut trails, cleared downed trees, trimmed branches and began crafting the meandering paths we have today. At both that late fall trail work party and the summer grand opening, there was a palpable reverence for the land and respect for Jeremy Strater who gave that land to Frenchman Bay Conservancy for all to enjoy forever.

Six months later, the morning of June 25th was warm and sunny, a lovely start to the summer. As FBC's staff, board members and local volunteers like Garry and Rosemary Levin and Jay and Nancy Horshak set up our check-in table and directed incoming vehicles to park in the newly created lot, the crowd began to grow. By the time we started hiking the north loop trail, we had over 80 people in attendance.

Turning left on the trail, hikers followed the path to the Point as the spruce/pine canopy gave way to oak, across a driveway that leads to a private cottage now owned by Jeremy's daughter and ultimately toward the beach. Conversations hushed mid-sentence as if walking into a church service when people began to hear the lilting, pleasant

sounds of Hawk Henry's flute. As the crowd began to gather on the beach, Flanders Bay provided a refreshing breath of salt air and a chance to collect one's thoughts and admire the music.

Chris Sockalexix took the stage to share tribal history, culture and information about the archaeological excavation that had occurred on site and nearby. The "stage" in this case happened to be one of the numerous shell middens that dot Frenchman Bay's shores. The dark humus flecked with countless ancient clamshell fragments contrasted the surrounding stone and sand. Chris' talk was fascinating, and one couldn't help but marvel at a culture that flourished in this spectacular place under sun, wind, rain and heavy snow, procuring every element of their sustenance from the land and sea.

continued on page 4

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President's Column

Hello again! I have recently agreed to take on chairing the FBC board, a position that I held several years ago. Some of you might well ask why I am willing to serve again. I can say that FBC is a wonderful land trust and that I love the lands that we protect and open for public use. And that is true, but my reasons are older and more exciting than that. By “older” I mean that love of the outdoors in the Frenchman Bay region is part of my heritage. My grandfather and my mother shared their deep love of this area that had them out exploring, making trails and hiking as much as they could. Even as very young children we were often taken hiking, preferably a hike that entailed a swim in a lake! You might say that the exposure to their love “took,” as it has become my love as well.

The “more exciting” reasons for my interest in the work of FBC have to do with opportunities that the land trust has at hand. One is to secure a wildlife corridor from Schoodic Point to Schoodic Mountain, while another involves helping Ellsworth to dream of, plan for and develop a connected system of walk-able and bike-able areas. The first is about the wildlife, ecology and wilderness of our region. The second is about community transformation. Thank you for continuing your support for FBC as we take on these broader projects together.

— Lisa Heyward
President, FBC

Stewardship Update from Jake Manning

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered on FBC's trails this summer! We wouldn't have been able to accomplish all that we did without your help. I started with FBC as a Maine Conservation Corps

Environmental Steward on June 6th at FBC, and together we've done a lot since then. One of the more noticeable changes is the addition of kiosks at Corea Heath, Mariaville Falls, Schoodic Bog, Taft Point, and most recently a new parking lot just before Baker Hill that is designated for hikers completing the entire Schoodic Connector Trail. These kiosks provide maps and a sign-in log to leave comments, and will serve

June 22nd and October 20th we held our weekly volunteer work days. Throughout that time I had the opportunity to work with many people of all ages and experience levels. During those 4 months, 41 different people volunteered with us, working a combined total of 294 hours on our trails. We improved blazing, bog bridging, and signage. I will continue working through our trail stewardship check list until my



PHOTO JAKE MANNING

A new Hiker Box at the Frances B Wood Preserve

During those 4 months, 41 different people volunteered with us, working a combined total of 294 hours on our trails.

as a place to advertise upcoming events. You will also begin to notice hiker boxes at our preserves that do not have a kiosk, which will also include maps and sign-in logs.

Our many great volunteers and I have also been busy this summer maintaining our hiking trails. Over time, vegetation begins to encroach on the trails, and so we have been busy brushing several miles of trail since June. On Wednesday between

Maine Conservation Corps term comes to an end on November 18th. Thanks again for all that you've done—it's been a pleasure working with FBC and all of you! ❖

Jake has accepted a County Program Technician position with the USDA Farm Service Agency in Xenia, Ohio. Jake and his wife Marilyn will be moving back to the area in Ohio where Jake is from originally at the end of November.

People of the First Light by Aaron Dority

Taft Point is one of those places along Maine's coast where part of the archeological record still exists.

As the “people from the land where the sun rises,” Wabanaki oral histories tell of human habitation of the Frenchman Bay region since life began. A creation story describes how Koluskap, the culture hero fired an arrow at a brown ash tree, and

and Research at the Abbe Museum in Bar Harbor, joined us during a Fall Hike Series event on September 24.

Visitors who attended our September event at Taft Point learned from Ms. Gray about the history of archaeological research in the Taft

years ago) and the Ceramic Period (the most recent 3,000 years).

One of the most remarkable finds was the skull of a pilot whale, an animal that can weigh between 360 to 900 pounds and reach a length of 16 feet, and is still found in the Gulf of Maine today. Other animal bones unearthed belonged to swordfish, sturgeon, wolf, harbor seal, moose, and the Great Auk, a large bird that was driven to extinction during colonial times.

Artifacts found at Taft Point were similar to those found in Northern Labrador, Nova Scotia, and in other middens along along the northeastern coast of North America. Some of the agate scrapers from Taft Point were made from a material found at Wolfville, Nova Scotia and not found in Maine, a product of the inter-tribal trading that took place along the coast of New England and the Canadian Maritimes.

We are thankful Chris Sockalexis and Julia Gray were able to join us for this year's events, and we're glad to have these opportunities to begin to learn about the Native people who have lived around Frenchman Bay since long before the arrival of European settlers. ❖



PHOTO IRIS SIMON

Julia Gray presents artifacts during a guided hike at Taft Point.

then the first Wabanaki people emerged from the opening. The archaeological record tells of the first people arriving in Maine following the retreat of the Laurentide Ice Sheet, and the colonization of the land by modern plants and animals thirteen thousand years ago

Shell middens are some of the most enlightening clues to precontact native peoples' culture, diet and community, and several of them can be found on FBC preserves. Middens are old refuse heaps that indicate human settlement. This summer, two local experts chronicled some of the lessons that have been learned from local archaeological excavations of middens and surrounding grounds. Penobscot Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Chris Sockalexis, joined FBC at our Taft Point Preserve grand opening on June 25, and Julia Gray, the Director of Collections

Point area, and had the chance to see and touch artifacts made thousands of years ago on the shores of Jones Cove. They also talked about how fragile these coastal cultural resources are, threatened by sea level rise and fierce winter storms, and shared ideas of how the Wabanaki tribes, FBC, and the Abbe Museum could work together to preserve and interpret coastal archaeological sites around Frenchman Bay.

Taft Point is one of the places along Maine's coast where part of the archaeological record still exists. In 1939, archeologist Wendell Hadlock reported on his excavation of a site about a quarter mile from Taft Point proper, on privately owned land adjacent to FBC's preserve. He found tools, beads and ornamentation, pottery and animal bones. Artifacts were dated to both the late Archaic Period (between 5,000 to 3,000



Spear points collected around Frenchman Bay.

PHOTO AARON DORITY



Attendees enjoying a picnic on Bean Island at the FBC Annual Meeting.

PHOTO EILEEN HALL

Openings *continued from page 1*

Under the warm sunshine, several people shared some poignant, personal stories of their time with Jeremy. Erik Horshak spoke of a chance meeting that led to a lasting friendship as Jeremy, the elder musician, encouraged and nurtured the younger musician's energy and talent on stringed instruments. Friends and neighbors shared stories of their time with Jeremy, describing his selflessness, modesty, humility and his love of music, art, the outdoors, and his community.

We wrapped up the morning celebration with a hike along the west-facing shore. The views were striking, from Schoodic Mountain, Schieffelin Point, numerous Frenchman Bay islands and finally south and west to Mount Desert Island. Following a short scramble up the bank and over the roots of an old pine, we re-entered the forest. After a short walk uphill, we finished the hike the way that we started, mingling around the parking area enjoying conversations with friends.

Schoodic Connector Trail

Readers will recall our capital campaign in 2014–15 to raise the funds to purchase the Schoodic Connector Trail from Erik Tjebbes and the incredible support that we received from hundreds of people to secure this property and build the

connector trail (see earlier articles, including “Schoodic Trail Connector Campaign Succeeds” in issue #62). Here’s a quick recap of the decade and a half of land conservation that made this trail possible:

In the early 2000s, local residents, with the blessing of timberland owner Prentiss and Carlyle, blazed



PHOTO EILEEN HALL

Hikers enjoy the Schoodic Connector Trail

and maintained hiking trails across the forest management company's lands. Local conservation received a huge boost in 2005 when FBC purchased the Schoodic Bog, now totaling over 600 acres, with state and federal grant support.

The next year, Rick Beckjord generously donated an easement on his 58 acres in Sullivan. With these north and south anchors, FBC began to imagine a connector trail, but blazing a trail along either the east side or the west side of Long Pond proved challenging. One route had fragmented ownership and the other was owned and managed by a large timber company.

The solution came in 2009, when FBC purchased 250 acres from Prentiss and Carlyle. Long Ledges Preserve was established, though at that time significantly smaller than it is today.

Phil Dunbar sold another 65 acres to FBC in 2013, completing “Long Ledges II.”

Finally, beginning in 2014, over 210 stalwart supporters conserved the last piece—the figurative keystone in the arch of conserved lands stretching around Long Pond. This beautiful culmination of the work of numerous people over nearly 15 years has now conserved the land and its trails for generations to come.

This year, on the drizzly morning of July 9th, twenty five of FBC's faithful joined in our grand opening celebration of the Schoodic Connector Trail. This path links our trail network in Sullivan to the summit of Schoodic Mountain. In the shadow of the mountain, we chatted and

sipped coffee while admiring Jake Manning's newly built trail kiosk. After a few welcoming remarks, we set off into the woods. One of the nice things about a new trail is that the moss and detritus on the forest floor hasn't yet been compacted or washed away—the trail still feels spongy. Several people commented on that point as red squirrels chattered overhead on spruce limbs. The trail meandered around rocky outcroppings and across mossy slopes. At the junction, the group divided in two, as some people chose to explore the beaver pond to the south and others chose the northerly route with views of Schoodic Mountain. Twenty minutes later, as the overcast sky had foreshadowed, it began to rain lightly and the groups turned back, later converging again at the parking area.

Bean Island

At one of our biggest events of the year, and one that required moving one hundred people across open water at the mercy of the weather, we couldn't have asked for a better day. August 7th was both the grand opening of our Bean Island Preserve, and our annual meeting, an event that we have held at Schoodic Institute in past years. This year, given the chance to celebrate Lisa Heyward's donation of this beloved 27 acre island in upper Frenchman Bay, we chose to combine the events and celebrate outdoors.

With the help of our board and many volunteers, the event was a blast. Attendees met at the Hancock wharf in the morning to catch one of the three boats that we had lined up to bring people over to the island. FBC's Eileen Hall had meticulously determined how many trips would be needed based on our RSVP list, as well as which boats had to also meet a smaller dinghy to take them from the first boat to the beach. All of the coordination paid off as people landed on the northwest side of the island, on a beach with probably one of the greatest con-

centrations of periwinkle shells that anyone has ever seen. This end of the island has a lovely oak canopy with an open understory. If you're reading this, but couldn't be there, just imagine panoramic views from Sorrento, with Schoodic Mountain in the distance, past Hancock Point and south to the rounded peaks of Mount Desert Island—with an azure blue sky and water and lots of sunshine. It's hard to imagine a more beautiful setting!

While attendees sat scattered among the oak trees enjoying picnic lunches, FBC's outgoing Board President, Randy Ewins conducted our official business, recognizing the valued service of our outgoing board members. Board member Jack Frost introduced our new board members with a warm welcome from the audience. Our Volunteer of the Year award was then presented to... Lisa Heyward. She has served on our Board since 1992, and has been active with conservation

National Park, spoke briefly about the great conservation work being done around the Frenchman Bay region, including on MDI as part of the Park's centennial celebration this year. His stories of perseverance paying off sounded very familiar to FBC's staff, board and membership who are by now quite familiar with the time, energy and patience often required for some of our best conservation work.

Many people then walked the trail around the island's perimeter before we boarded the flotilla of small boats to return to the Hancock shore. We couldn't have asked for better weather or better company.

Thank you to the local businesses that supported our grand opening events, including John Edwards Market in Ellsworth for snack bars and to Gerrish's Restaurant in Winter Harbor for light breakfast fare. Thanks also to our small army of volunteers, including Jock Crothers, Henry & Julie Sharpe, Terry Towne,



Kayaks on the shore at Bean Island

PHOTO EILEEN HALL

organizations since she worked for MCHT in the 1970's. She hikes nearly every single day on FBC's preserves, and we all would be hard pressed to imagine an event or program that has not benefited from her active involvement.

Our guest, Kevin Schneider, the newest Superintendent of Acadia

Bob DeForrest, Charlotte Stetson, Lee & Eleanor Fairbanks, Charlie & Margaret Robinson, Clayton Nowell, Christa & Rich Brey, Randy Ewins, and Tom Welch who captained boats to shuttle visitors out to Bean Island. ❖

Note from the Director Aaron Dority

Frenchman Bay Conservancy will celebrate 30 years in 2017.

Unless you're talking about trees, or rocks, or some other enduring feature of our landscape, thirty years is a long time. Downeast Maine was a different place thirty years ago. Think of the changes in technology—from how we harvest trees or blueberries to the cars that we drive and the ways that we communicate with one another. Think of the conservation success stories—bald eagles are everywhere now!—And the persistent challenges such as climate change. Thirty years is the birthday Frenchman Bay Conservancy will celebrate in 2017.

Some of the people who came together to found this organization are no longer with us, though their passion for Maine's lands and waters remains the mission of this land trust—to conserve distinctive ecosystems and landscapes for the benefit of all... Of course, none of what we have accomplished in these 30 years would be possible without the nearly 3,000 people (all of you and many more!) who believed that land conservation is critical to the health and vibrancy of our communities.

This belief is as strong as ever today, as we celebrate new preserves, welcome new members, and join friends and family on hikes in the woods. FBC is taking stock and looking forward with the help of some trusted friends this winter as we finalize our latest strategic plan. We'll be asking all of you to reflect on our work soon as part of this process. Your ideas and comments strengthen FBC—stay tuned for more on this project next year.

Reflecting on our accomplishments in 2016, I'm inspired by all of your enthusiasm. So many of you joined us for events from the Lobster Dinner and Monday Music to bird walks and trips to Bean Island, you were there. Let's keep it up! Success begets success, and your enthusiasm is a key ingredient to our ability to

conserve distinctive ecosystems and landscapes. Let us know what drives your passion for Maine's outdoors. 'Like' us on Facebook and encourage your friends to as well. Gift a gift of membership this holiday season. Join us—for events, online, or just drop by to say hello. We're looking forward to celebrating 30 years with you next year. There's a lot to celebrate! ❖



PHOTO IRIS SIMON

Welcome new Board Members!

A sincere thank you our board members who have stepped off the board this year, including: Ken Cline and David Sanderson. David is an adept facilitator, a skill that was very helpful when we began planning the revitalization of our Tidal Falls Preserve. Ken has been a sharp legal mind and an advocate for conservation in the Union River watershed. Both have taken their skills to pursue other goals, and they will be missed.

We welcome three new members: Henry Sharpe, Mary Brennan, and Steve Gurin. Henry has been an avid conservationist for many years, a passion that was nurtured along Maine's rocky coast. He is a product designer, engineer and entrepreneur. He has been an adjunct professor at University of Rhode Island's Department of Ocean Engineering. He's served on both nonprofit and for profit boards and is an inveterate maker of things.

Mary has been a Hancock resident since 2005. Previously, she and her

husband lived and raised a family on Mt. Desert Island. She has been actively involved in numerous community organizations and currently serves on the board of Hancock Point Library, WERU Community Radio, Friends of Nosara, a non-profit fundraising organization for partner community organizations in Costa Rica, and SIBU Wildlife Sanctuary in Costa Rica. She and her husband currently split their time between Costa Rica and Hancock.

Steve is a lifelong summer resident of Sorrento who finally made the transition to year-round resident in 2014. The Gurin family has been engaged in our community since the 1940's and, like his parents and grand-parents before him, Steve has a commitment to preserving the natural resources of our region. He grew up thinking of Frenchman's Bay and the surrounding lands, lakes and ponds as his playground.

Today, he and his wife Ann, and two of their three children live on Mt. Desert Island and still take advantage of all of the outdoor activities available. Professionally, Steve is a Senior Vice President in the business banking division of Bar Harbor Bank & Trust. ❖

Honorary Gifts

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Katie Osborn

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Join us TODAY!

Your membership and donations help us protect and preserve the character of this very special region. We welcome donations of all levels. Members receive a free decal, our bi-annual newsletter, and opportunities to volunteer.

BLUE HERON SOCIETY

If possible, we urge you to consider joining the Blue Heron Society by making a commitment to give \$1000 or more each year for general operating support. You can also support the Conservancy through a bequest. Remember us in your will or explore other estate planning options with your lawyer.

YES! I want to join Frenchman Bay Conservancy.

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- My check, payable to FBC, is enclosed.
- I prefer to remain anonymous in public membership lists.

Please remit form and check to: Frenchman Bay Conservancy
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To pay by credit card, visit our website www.frenchmanbay.org

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Thank you!

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Frenchman Bay Conservancy

Frenchman Bay Conservancy's mission is to conserve distinctive ecosystems and landscapes for the benefit of all, from the Union River and Frenchman Bay watersheds east to the Hancock County line.

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For more information on the Conservancy, please visit our office at Tidal Falls, or contact us by mail, phone, or e-mail:

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2016 Autumn Trail Race

Runners enjoyed the trails and views. Volunteers made the whole event seamless.

With the new Schoodic Connector Trail, this year's Autumn Trail Race runners had the option of running a new 8 mile course, or the usual 4.2 mile course. The second event in the Downeast Double Trouble Trail Race series, the race was another successful event—our fifth so far! Runners enjoyed the trails and views. Volunteers made the whole event seamless. And—the chili and cookies following the race were delicious. The first of the two-race series, Great Pond Mountain's Wildlands Trail Run was held the prior

weekend, and many of the runners from that event also ran in FBC's race.

Andy Goupee of Dedham and Jennifer VanDongen of Bar Harbor defended their winning titles again this year, finishing in 33:21 and 37:16, respectively. One of the day's highlights was the energetic pack of youngsters from the cross country teams of Blue Hill's Bay School and the Peninsula School in Gouldsboro. Sol Lorio won the 12 year old and under age group in a remarkable 41:32. Skye Howard won in the 13-19 age category, completing the four mile course in 58:15.



Women's 4 mile winner, Jennifer VanDongen, and men's 4 mile winner, Andy Goupee.



A group of runners at the Autumn Trail Race.



Jerome and Georgia Lawther.

What about that new, 8 mile course? First place male runner, Brendan O'Keefe finished that race in 1:01:57, and first place female finisher Barbara Daggett finished in 1:27:41. Roughly 50 percent more people ran FBC's race this year than last. Let's keep building on this successful event—help us spread the word to friends and family and come join us at next year's race. The 2016 Autumn Trail Race results are posted on FBC's website. ❖

PHOTOS HANS KRICHELS