

In With the Tide

The Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association Newsletter

Polar Bears Welcome 2019 With Quite a Splash

By Anna-Marie MacKenzie Kelly



Our Fundy-Our Future

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Oh, the weather in the early morning of 1 January 2019 was not good- lots of rain and an easterly wind causing for an unusual surf in St. Mary's Bay. Many were optimistic because the temperature was +1°C, substantially warmer than last year's -14°C. But, last year, there was no wind and the sun was shining. Give me the colder temperature and sunshine any day!

With high tide at about 7:30 am, this year, we had to schedule the 18th Digby Neck Polar Bear Dip for 9:30 am- an early start.

Thanks to a great team of volunteers, the bonfire was roaring well before the dip and definitely an encouraging sight. And, the enthusiasm of the dippers was, as always, infectious.

12 dippers took the plunge with one brave one insisting on jumping in from a boat at the wharf. Me, I prefer running in and knowing my feet are on the ground! As we huddled around the fire after the dip, the rain ended and the clouds

began to thin- sure wish the rain had stopped an hour earlier but we welcomed the change.

It wasn't long before everyone gathered in Little River and the sun emerged. All dippers and their fans (32 in all) enjoyed the warmth of the woodstove, the amazing amount of chowder, chili, vegetables, cheeses, desserts, and more brought together by many hands and musical entertainment by members and friends of the Digby Ukulele Strummers.

As a postscript, I always have to have a little chuckle thinking that in 2002, I was awarded a prize for being the oldest dipper...



Creature of the Cove: American Kestrel (*Falco Sparverius*)

By Roger Outhouse

This past September to November there were fascinating views of many migratory species making their way to their southern homes for winter. It was a windy day in the Neck and Islands areas when I awoke to a memorable view. Two eastern Bluebirds, ten Common Flickers, two Turkey Vultures, two Merlin Falcons and even a majestic Bald Eagle appeared near my house on Lovers Lane. While this would be a joy to anyone interested in observing birds it was the nine American Kestrels that were perched on posts, the Freeport Baptist Church and swooping around my house that caught my attention. This species is not actually a kestrel as the name suggests; rather it is actually a falcon. While I recall seeing them quite frequently in the 70's and 80's perched on roadside wires and swooping through fields they have been less frequent in later years. They remained around my property for several hours and I was intrigued by their graceful long tapered wings in flight. I never once noted any attack on other small birds in the air or feeding on the ground but was constantly observing repeated dives to the ground for something from their perch or hovering above the field.

Further investigation reveals that this bird most frequently feeds on insects and that was what they were feasting on that day. Their desire to use insects and similar creatures as a major source of prey and protein has allowed them to reside throughout North America south of the northern tree line to Mexico.

The menu includes grasshoppers, scorpions, spiders, cicadas, dragonflies, beetles, moths and butterflies. Add some side orders to the list including moles, mice, shrews, bats, small lizards, frogs, snakes, and small birds and there you have the "breakfast of champions". Their emphasis on invertebrates as a mainstay may seem odd for these birds of prey. It is ironic that this dependence has likely led to a decrease in numbers due to pesticides used in fighting agricultural crop pests. Loss of natural habitats to human development and draining wetlands, have also added pressures to this species. It is always sad to consider that we often eliminate nature's creatures when they are some of the best at keeping a healthy balance.

American Kestrels are monogamous solitary nesters. When courting, couples may exchange gifts of food (male usually feeds the female) and then comes the serious work. Nesting sites include old tree holes made by woodpeckers, nooks in building structures, tree hollows and rock crevices. The male acts as the real estate professional by seeking out prime locations and escorting the female to inspect and select the appropriate home. Once completed, 4-5 eggs are laid and the couple takes turns incubating the eggs for about 20 days with the females doing most of those duties. Once hatched the young stay in the nest and are fed by the hunting

female. It should be stated that sometimes the adults have to fight off would be invaders like small squirrels, Northern Flickers, bluebirds and other creatures who want to take the nest site for themselves.

The beautiful coloration of this winged wonder is exceptional with grey to blue head, dark facial bars, reddish back and spotted buffy breast. The male has dark blue wings. This bird is easy to identify and incredible to watch! Remember, only 13% of American Kestrels breed in Canada. Let's hope we see them more often!



This female American Kestrel posed nicely on top of my bird house. It may be small but is a feisty hunter. Falconers have successfully trained this species for sport hunting to take small birds such as Starlings.

Hiking With the Fundy Erratics

By Jonathan Riley

The Fundy Erratics have planned a fun and varied year of hiking for 2019. Different from other years, the Erratics held a special planning party in early January and a half-dozen hikers brainstormed out the schedule together.

The schedule is varied with short and easy hikes, and some longer more challenging adventures.

Most of the hikes are new for the Erratics: we'll be going to some waterfalls the group has never been to as a group. Some of the hikes are a return to places we've been before, but with a twist. For example, we're going back to the Chickenbone but from the west instead of the east this time. The Chickenbone is a crazy rock formation on the Fundy shore which looks like a chicken bone but big enough you can crawl under. We'll be going

back to Gullivers too, but to a look off with a view you've never seen before.

In September, we are breaking with a long-standing tradition and not heading out to the shipwreck monument at Point Prim – at least not for our main monthly hike – instead we are planning a bit of an explore into the Tobeatic, walking on an esker from Big Lake to Frozen Ocean in Keji.

Some of our schedule is just roughed in awaiting our final decisions and some of it can only be decided by Mother Nature. For example, Larry Goodwin of Hillgrove will be watching the sap and inviting hikers to visit his trails and his Sugar Shack sometime in February or March.

For our next hike on Feb. 23, we have hired some Digby Neck

guides to take us along the Old Post Road from Centreville to the western end of Lake Midway. It's about an 8k trip over gently rolling terrain. The hike is on wide mostly clear woods road and offers surprising views of Red Head on St. Mary's Bay and also, even more surprising, of the Bay of Fundy. We're hoping for a big dump of snow before for fluffy white scenery and a chance to use our snowshoes. There is talk of a scavenger hunt... We'll be meeting at 10:45 a.m. in Centreville across the 217 from Walkers for an 11 a.m. start. The walk should take until about 2 p.m. There is also talk of a bonfire in a sheltered spot on the shore of Lake Midway at the end of the hike.

For more details on this hike and the rest of the schedule, join the hiking conversation over at www.facebook.com/groups/fundyerratics.

Fundy Erratics 2019 DRAFT Hiking Schedule

19 January: Full Moon Hike at Acacia Valley (4 km) Tupper's Deadwater and bonfire at Picnic Rock
 23 February: Digby Neck Old Post Road (8 km) Centreville to Lake Midway, bonfire at Lake
 23 March: Crystal Falls- heading up the valley for a waterfall- frozen or flowing?
 13 April: Victoria Beach Waterfalls- a short hike on a rough, rocky shore for spectacular waterfalls
 11 May: Ellison Lake from Acacia Valley (13 km)- a big walk through a beautiful woods which may be cut soon
 22 June: Tommy's Beach sunset hike- short but steep hike with best sunsets in the world!
 July: Redhead- beach and sandstone cliffs- instead of April, we're going when it is warm, hopefully
 August: new route to the Chickenbone, crazy rock formations on the Bay of Fundy
 September: Into the Tobeatic on an esker between Big Lake and Frozen Ocean in Kejimkujik Park
 October: Gullivers Cove fall colours from a lookoff the Erratics have never seen before!
 November: Keji?
 December: to be organized by the president of our Lunenburg Division, Nancy Veinot

There could be more adventures in between these, and some that pop up last minute when the weather says, we must go! Always best to check in on our Facebook page (see address above)

On the Search for New Erratics Trails

By Anna-Marie MacKenzie Kelly

What does one do when it is a beautiful, sunny, crisp winter day? Get out of the house, of course! Friday 18 January was such a day and with very little planning, 4 Erratics and two trusty dogs scouted the route for our February hike.



I cannot say too much because you will have to come out and

experience this beautiful route. I can safely say, the 8 km of Old Post Road from Centreville to the lower end of Lake Midway is an easy trek of gently rolling hills, breathtaking views and interesting finds.

There was little snow on the day we hiked it but in my view (yes, I do enjoy lots of snow) it would be wonderful to snowshoe or cross-country ski the route. So, if you are like me, hope for snow and bring your snowshoes!

We hope to enjoy a warm fire at the end of the hike. See you soon!



January super high tide in Little River. Photos taken 1.5 hours after high tide!



From Our Readers:

Hello,
Once again, I have stayed at the computer reading "In With the Tide" from cover to cover. This is an excellent online publication! The articles are well written and so interesting. The photos are great. The layout encourages one to read on. Congratulations to all involved. I really appreciate receiving it.

Best wishes to all,
Margaret Rockwell

Great issue of "In With the Tide"!! Congrats to all the volunteers! Glad to see Bear Cove has been cleaned up...kudos to the people who did the grunt work! Is there parking at Sandy Hill? I am waiting for a new knee...looking forward to being able to hike over there...

Have a great Winter!
Lawna Stewart

Fundy Flakes

By Jonathan Riley

Fundy flakes is the local name for the effect of cold air blowing over the relatively warm Bay of Fundy, picking up moisture and then dumping it in the form of snow flurries when it hits the cold shore of Nova Scotia.

It is the exact same phenomenon that brings lake-effect snow to Ontario when cold winds blow across the Great Lakes.

The last few years, this bay-effect snow has brought a fair amount of white stuff to the Digby area. I've always believed in interpreting weather forecasts with the added help of local knowledge – and when I see strong north-westerlies or westerlies with flurries in the forecast, I've learned that is a recipe for a few more centimetres than the meteorologists are giving.

It usually also means we're getting snow down here in southwest Nova when Halifax isn't.

Fundy flakes are my favourite kind of snow – rarely do they add up to be too much, but they usually come down as Mary Oliver wrote, like "soft glitter falling through the air" and they add that extra little dash of white, that splash of freshness to the scenery. If we're really lucky, they make the difference for being able to ski or toboggan.

By times, those Fundy flakes do really add up and turn Digby County into a veritable winter wonderland, creating some extremely photogenic landscapes. We want you to share those beautiful Fundy Flake scenes. Please share your photos on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter with the hashtag #fundyflakes. What other local weather knowledge do you use to help interpret the weather forecast for the Digby area? Let me know jriley@municipality.digby.ns.ca

Much to Do and See on Digby Neck and Islands

By Jeff White

In September a small group of birders planned to spend a quiet weekend on an island research station in Shelburne County. When our plans to get there were cancelled, last minute, what could we do? Where could we go?

Knowing our area better than my friends, I spent a little time on the phone with them, and sold them on the idea of exploring Digby Neck, Long Island, and Brier Island. They were not disappointed. Each of us is interested in more than the birds: we enjoy everything. And everything the Neck and Islands have to offer was plentiful.

After a beautiful walk to Tommy's Beach to catch the sunset, we spent the night in a Little River cabin. Day one: Digby Neck. The morning fog over Saint Mary's Bay broke over the land, and we overlooked a beautiful sight in the sunlight. We set out to explore old trails and woodlands, bogs and beaches. The first foggy bog we visited presented us a beautiful landscape.

But it was the finer details my friends and I especially enjoyed: the many plants, in flower or not. Some late-blooming bog asters spotted the grassy areas, and the spent flower stalks of the rare Golden Crest stood above the vegetation with white, fuzzy stalks. It is many of the tiniest things growing that fascinate my friends and me, such as the little-noticed Curly Grass Fern. Just a few centimeters tall, the spore-bearing stalks look like little clenched fists on thin, wiry arms. At ground level, among the peat moss, tiny, curled, green leaves give the tiny fern its name.

In another lakeside bog we sought and found the rare and

special Mountain Avens, whose little flowers were all gone by mid-September. The glossy leaves look like they might be evergreen. You see the emblem of its five-petaled flowers in several places on the Neck and Islands.

As you can tell, our birding weekend became a botany trip. I led my friends next on a seaside hike at Long Beach. The barrier beach that surrounds a tidal lagoon, the weathered driftwood, the tough seaside plants, and the cliff-side basalt columns make for as spectacular a scene as, dare I say it, the Balancing Rock.

Curly Grass Fern



Day Two: we explored Brier Island. My three companions had all spent time there in years past, birding and botanizing. It was nice, familiar territory. Early on, we came upon a great birding friend who reported what had been seen on the Island lately. We even picnicked later on the veranda of his cottage, sharing stories of nature. The love of things living can be an automatic connection and the doorway to new friendships.

Day Three: Long Island. In my years in Digby County, I have spent less time here than on the

Neck or on Brier. At one point, we explored Flour Cove, and walked the shoreline, southwest to the Provincial Picnic Park. For some time, a couple of whales were going the same direction, spouting and showing themselves regularly. On the rocky shore of the park, we lingered for some time; it was a beautiful day. We kept seeing - and hearing - a few whales offshore. Just at the time we decided to head away from the beach, along the park's trail, a whale jumped up and breached! Then the other did the same. We were thrilled. They continued for a few minutes, then proceeded to wave their flukes for a while before they continued on their journey in the Bay. It was a great show, all seen from the rocky shore of the Park.

With an appreciation for nature, some curiosity, and some hiking experience, one can find many simple delights on our Neck and Islands. The friends I talked into using their free weekend here were not disappointed at all.

Long Beach



Visitors and “The Neck”

By Jonathan White

We moved to Little River in February 2018, never having been here before. We didn't know what to expect but found much more than we could have imagined. The gently rolling tree-covered hills, open meadows and fields, the beaches, coves and little harbours, the sturdy old houses, the distinct seasons, the history, the families that can trace their generations back centuries, all these and more contribute to make this little part of the planet, this well-kept secret, so inviting.



We soon discovered that, even though it's off the beaten track, Digby Neck & Islands attracts thousands of visitors over the 'season'. Mostly they come for the thrill of being close to the whales and while doing so, discover a unique little world that many wish they had allocated more time to explore. And there is much to offer those who may briefly come here just once in their lifetime. Galleries, walks and hikes, bird life, fishing villages out of the past, many old churches, friendly and welcoming people and more.

While it's true that much of the economy of the peninsula relies on lobster fishing and other ocean resources, there is another sector that is necessary to keep the economy here relatively strong and vibrant. It is the few dozen

businesses owned by locals that rely on the tourists for their income. The whale-watching boats, hotels, AirBnB's, restaurants (more needed, or maybe a pub!), camp sites, artists and all their employees who wouldn't have work without them.

After we moved here, we decided that our house would make a perfect B&B and opened last August (so much for retirement!). We met interesting and diverse people from Venezuela, Brazil, Europe and other parts of Canada, some of whom we stay in touch with. And all of them came for the whale-watching, contributing to the local economy on several levels. And they will continue to come, probably in slightly larger numbers each year. One reason is that a video of three whales breaching last summer made international news and the other is it is projected that more international travellers will choose to visit Canada this year.

Naturally, in a place like this where families have lived relatively unchanged lives for generations, there may be some who would prefer that only locals be here and may resist the small changes that are happening. Yes, it's annoying to be stuck behind lumbering RV's when you need to get to Digby to shop. And there's certainly more visitors and more garbage. But a few of these visitors will instantly fall in love with this area and some will buy those old houses before they collapse. They will inject more money into the economy, allowing others to remain. They may open a small business, they may be artists, musicians, creative people of all kinds who will weave their lives into the tapestry of The Neck. But it must be balanced so that

this special place remains so...

There is already a dedicated group of volunteers doing many things to improve the quality of life here, the Digby Neck Collective. There are projects like the new parking area at Sandy Cove Beach, community beach clean-up and grants for enterprises that would benefit the area.

My perspective is that of a relative newcomer, one who appreciates the beauty and uniqueness of this area and also understands that in order for it to survive and thrive for generations to come, the tourists should be welcomed and invited to come back...

Jonathan White (and Joell) own The Mermaid House BnB in Little River. Jonathan is an author and Joell is a published artist.



View of Little River from the lookoff (J White photo)

*Hello In With the Tide Readers!
I am working with a new version of Microsoft Office and not doing very well navigating through all the changes. Inserting photos is not to my liking and inserting rows in the index table, well... I welcome anyone who can help my old brain...please?
Anna-Marie, editor*

O Christmas Tree

Stories by Christina Prime and Teri Chace

Is the wonderful scent of the fir tree still lingering in your home, or at least in your memory? There is no scent that can carry me back in time like the smell of a fir tree, with the heady scent that says Christmas. I can smell it in the air in the middle of summer, when the wind is right, walking along the roadside and there I am, thinking of Christmas in July. I remember those walks in the snow-filled woods looking for that perfect tree, going to a Christmas tree farm with family and finding just the right tree, or going to a tree lot and finding the tree that will make this Christmas a very memorable one.

There are also the times that a certain tree can stick in your mind because, just perhaps, it's not the tree you thought it should be, but it makes that year stay with you, because the scent stays with you, for another reason.

When I was attending Islands Consolidated School, there was the year that the tree put up in the (multi-purpose room), I am sure it was still the gym at the time, was a cat spruce. I will always remember that one, almost like it was yesterday, for as everyone who has heard about cat spruce, they will know of the aroma that permeates from this noted tree. (It's also called white spruce, and skunk spruce.)

I am sure I must not be the only student at that time, who, decades later, still remember that tree.

Roger Outhouse, a teacher at ICS at the time, said that a group of students were sent to the woods to find that year's tree. They came back with the tree, it was set up and decorated. Later, when you were close to the tree, you could smell it. He said that the smell was not too strong and the tree was left up for the season and was a beautiful tree.

Now, I am not saying that people are going to rush out and start putting up cat spruce because the smell was (not too strong), but it can still work out.

Of course, if you are like my family, and have turned to artificial trees, then you will only know the smell of a Christmas tree, in the past, but if you do like a real tree, then we are listing some native trees at the end of this article. Which one you pick as your perfect tree, is, of course, up to you.

Teri: Discovering Halifax in Boston

Long ago and far away, I was a young editor working at a (gardening) magazine in Boston. The office was right on Boylston Street, a major thoroughfare through the heart of the city. We were located on the 5th floor. My office-mates and I looked out (to the left) over the beautiful Boston Public Library building and (to the right) the Prudential Tower plaza.

Every year in early December, we'd crowd around our windows to watch when a long flatbed truck pulled up in front of the plaza with a huge Christmas tree trussed to it. The street was partially blocked off with police cars and traffic routed around the area while a big crane helped take the tree off the truck and turn it upright and set it in the middle of the plaza. It was an awesome sight and, some years, a nail-biter when the tree slipped and swung loose and had to be corralled back into position.

After the big truck departed and the street re-opened, we'd go downstairs and walk over—cupping hot cocoa or coffee from the adjacent Dunkin' Donuts (the States' version of Tim Horton's) in our mittened hands. We'd watch as a crew using a smaller crane festooned the tree with colorful lights. From the street, looking up, the tree looked so tall and magnificent. We knew it was from Canada, but ... that was all we knew.

Of course, down in the States, it's not unusual to see Christmas-tree lots full of spruces and firs "from Canada" or "from Maine." This was just the biggest, tallest one ever.

Fast forward decades later, the summer of 2013, when my husband Al and I visited the beautiful city of Halifax for the first time.

Walking around, I commented that it appeared to be about as old as Boston. But, I puzzled, "where is the historic charm? This neighborhood looks much newer." Luckily for me, my husband is a history teacher and immediately launched into the terrible tale of the 1917 Halifax Explosion and how it leveled so much of the city, which is why the older buildings I had been expecting were not present.

It's embarrassing to be an American and not know such an important true story from our near neighbor to the north. I have yet to meet a Canadian who doesn't know it! But I was glad to finally learn it and then I realized WHY the big tree comes down to Boston each year—it's a thank-you gift to Boston for being the first, and generous, responders to the horrible disaster and the misery that followed. Boston got a relief train to Halifax within 48 hours, a truly remarkable feat considering the times (these days, supplies and medical personnel would be air-lifted within hours I'm sure).

There are other connections between our two cities, including shaking off British rule and a lot of shared maritime history. But the perennial gift of the Christmas tree is touching and wondrous.

I've made it my business to tell all my Boston friends and to send them the link to the "Tree for Boston" tracker so they can follow its journey down. Nowadays, Boston seems a little more in-tune to it. The tree now goes to the beautiful Boston Common, not far from the iconic swan-boats pond where people ice-skate in winter (the Prudential Plaza was renovated and was no longer an ideal spot) and its arrival is broadcast live on TV. Still, its selection and its journey seem much more avidly followed by Canadians—because they know the tree's story. It makes me think that whenever we are on the receiving end of any wonderful gift, we ought to take a moment to find out or ponder why that person gave it to us. Merry Christmas and thank you, Canadian friends!

Native Trees

Yes, we sure do have our share of nice evergreen trees around here. For classic Christmas-tree fragrance, it's hard to beat the balsam fir, but on the other hand you could instead cut these others on your own land or a neighbor's or buy one pre-cut.

The difference between pine trees and the rest = pines have long needles, generally speaking up to 5 inches long, carried in bundles of 2, 3, or 5. Spruces, firs, and hemlocks all have very short (up to an inch long) needles densely clustered on their stems. Pines don't tend to make good Christmas trees because their needles are too soft and flexible and their branches not strong, so they can't support ornaments as well as the other choices. A possible exception is Scot's pine, with its shorter (up to 3") needles.

It can be hard to tell the following conifers apart by just their needles; I tend to look around for a cone, either on the tree or on the ground below it. Cones are really distinctive from one type of tree to another. Bear in mind, too, that some of these species can cross with each other and if you are having a lot of trouble identifying a tree, perhaps it's a natural hybrid.

Balsam fir = *Abies balsamea*. Needles have whitish/silvery lines on the undersides; fragrance is great. Cones are usually 2-3" long and 1" in diameter; during the winter, the cone scales fall off, leaving only a central stalk.

Black spruce = *Picea mariana*. Needles are bluish-green and blunt-pointed; no fragrance. Cones are short and nearly round, up to 1" long.

Cat spruce (white spruce, skunk spruce)

= *Picea glauca*. This is the one Chris is talking about. Needles are bluish-green; odor, especially when crushed, is pungent. Cones are up to 2" long. Twigs are orange-brown, and smooth (unlike other spruces, which are downy).

Hemlock = *Tsuga canadensis*. Needles are flat and dark green (with two white lines on the undersides), and can be up to 1/2 inch long; no fragrance. The cute little almost-papery cones are 1/2 inch long or smaller.

Red spruce = *Picea rubens*. Hard to tell from black. Needles are dark yellowish-green; no fragrance. Cones are reddish brown and larger and more oval-ish than those of the black spruce, up to 2" long.

BITS Report

Brier Island Trails Society (BITS) has had a very busy year. We started the year with little more than a plan and in September we saw the grand opening of the first section of the Big Meadow Bog Boardwalk. Between January and September came a lot of organizing, research, design work and good old-fashioned hard labour.

BITS would like to extend thanks to all of our members and others who volunteered their time and effort to help us achieve our goal.

All the research and survey work done by Mike Parker and Andy Sharpe of East Coast Aquatics was much appreciated. Their work along with the planning and insight of Dr Nick Hill was the inspiration that kept the project moving along.

Of course without the cooperation of landowners Danny and Theresa Kenney and, Floyd and Viki Graham the project could not have gone forward at all.

Thanks as well to the O2 class from ICS who helped tremendously with the actual construction project, David Tudor who represented our project with the Municipality and Brian Bowerman who was our link with the Village of Westport.

Balin Tudor designed our facebook page and worked together with Jane Zadansky and Jaqueline Journay on the first annual Brier Island Lighthouse Run. Thank you also to the Westport Fire Dept and EHS for their support with the Run.

Thank you one and all for all your support in 2018, but our work is not finished yet. We are still raising money for signage which we hope to have in place before the summer tourist season. So join us in February for a Lobster Chowder Supper at the Westport Fire Hall. Check the February Passages for more details.



Brier Island Trail Society is pleased to host a Chilli & Chowder supper.

Enjoy a delicious bowl of lobster chowder or rich meaty chilli. Spaghetti and vegetarian option available with lots of desserts.



March 2nd at the Westport Firehall
Start time 5:15pm



Freewill offering in support of the bog trail betterment, including signage at the location and phase 2 construction.

Please see boardwalk photos on page 10

Gotta Love Story Hour
By Anna-Marie MacKenzie Kelly

Remember all the wonderful adventures you enjoyed as a child while a parent, grandparent or teacher read aloud? Oh, the images that popped up in your head- positively magical, right?

Thanks to the Digby Neck Collective, you can bring back those memories and engage in some wonderful escapades during "Story Hour for Adults".

In October and November, Story Hour was held at the Eldridge

Memorial Library in Sandy Cove with readings from Jonathan White and Tony Kelly.

December's story hour with Gwen Wilson reading **A Child's Christmas in Wales** by Dylan Thomas was held at the Schoolhouse Café.

Don't miss out on these wonderful times, the next Story Hour will be in May and weather permitting, back in the Eldridge Memorial Library.



Improvement Along Our Fundy

At Sandy Cove Beach
By Gwen Wilson

Over a number of weeks, vast improvements were made to the parking area at the Bay of Fundy Beach in Sandy Cove. This project was initiated by local Sandy Cove residents and was a joint effort of community residents and the Municipality of Digby. The resulting improvements will provide better parking and access to all those who enjoy this beautiful beach.



At the Centreville Wharf
Photos by Karla Kelly

Have you been wondering where all the humungous rocks are going every time you meet a truck load heading down the Neck?



News from the Freeport Community Development Association (FCDA)
By Monica Stark

2018 was an exciting year for the Freeport Community Development Association. You might be wondering, "What is the FCDA?". Well, we are a dedicated group of volunteers who are working on a variety of community projects for the Islands.

We are coming up on 20 years of printing this newsletter you're reading. Every month, volunteers write, edit, proofread, mail out subscriptions, and deliver to stores the latest issue of Passages. This year we made the switch from printing it ourselves to outsourcing the printing to Digby Print and Promo. That saves on some of our volunteer time, and also saves us a little bit of money. Another project the FCDA oversees is the annual Breaking Waves Music and Film Festival. This year we celebrated our third year of music and film with a bang. Every year the festival grows - this summer the festival was held over four days. The opening of Gallery 217 in Freeport was on Thursday, the film festival was on Friday in Tiverton, the music festival was all day Saturday in the ballfield in Freeport, and then to cap things off on Sunday there was Cuban music at the Brier Island Lodge in Westport. It's almost time to start planning 2019's festival!

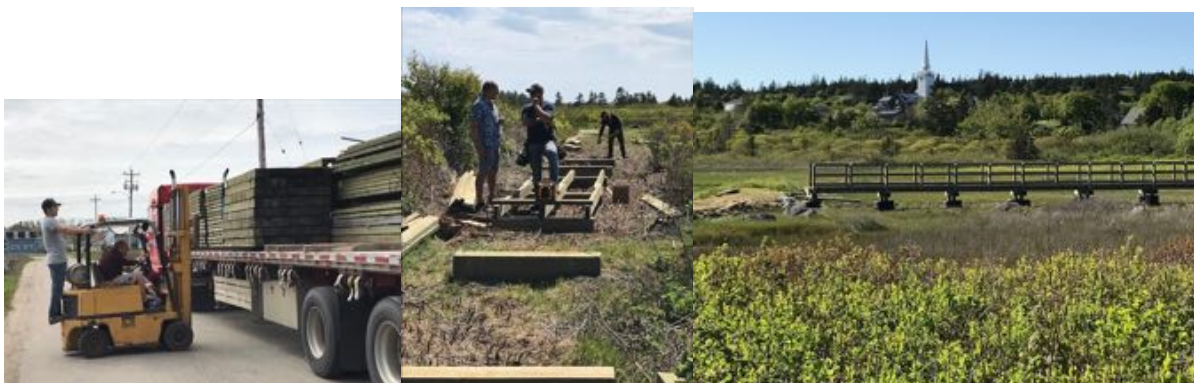
The FCDA oversees the operation of the construction waste dumpster that is located in Kelly Pyne's yard in Tiverton. We believe that this project has kept a lot of waste off of our shores and out of our woods, and so is a very important project for the environmental health of our Islands. If you have construction waste to drop off, it is \$50 for each half-ton truckload of waste. Please phone Kelly at (902)247-3216 or message him on Facebook to arrange a time.

The FCDA maintains the beautiful trail that is located behind the museum in Freeport. New picnic tables were added to Loyalist Park at the trailhead this summer, making it a great spot for visitors in the area - they can park once and visit the gallery, the museum, have a picnic lunch, and enjoy the trail and look off platforms.

Gallery 217 is the FCDA's newest project. Housed in the Freeport Development Centre (the former Scotiabank building), we have created a beautiful spot to showcase the amazing artistic talent our area has to offer. It has quickly become a popular and successful venture, with over \$15,000 in sales in August, September, and December of this year alone. We'll be having some workshops and events at the

gallery this winter and spring, before re-opening full time for the summer in June. Another project the FCDA is working on is the Overcove Project. For the past two summers, we have been renting out the Warner House "around the Cove" as an AirBnB. The goal in renting out the house is to make enough money to be able to turn the property into an artist's retreat. Generous funding from the Municipality of Digby and the Village of Freeport means that we will be able to improve the lighting in the attached barn and create an artist's studio where artists in residence will be able to create.

And lastly, the FCDA is involved in the ongoing planning for the Ferry Dock project - a multi-million dollar plan to improve the ferry docks at East Ferry, Tiverton, Freeport, and Westport. We're planning some exciting new projects for 2019, and we're always looking for more volunteers to help out. If you're interested in checking out what we do, or in volunteering for any of our ongoing projects, our next meeting is on January 23rd at 6:45 pm at the Freeport Development Centre (Gallery 217). Even though "Freeport" is in our organization's name, we really aim to improve life in all villages on the Islands, and gladly welcome anyone who would like to help. We're always happy to have new faces, new ideas, and new energy!



Working on the Boardwalk on Brier Island

Measure, Measure and Measure Again!

By Jonathan Riley

This year's cold temperatures have made it possible to do some wild skating, take short cuts on skis or just get out and play where normally only ducks dare go. It's important to measure and keep measuring: look for **15cm of ice for one person, 20cm for a group and 25cm for a snowmobile**. Ice thickness can vary a lot in different parts of the lake and from lake to lake so be prepared to measure many times. Ice is often thinner where currents run, in narrows stretches, near rocks and shore – wind directions as lakes freeze can also have an impact.

Best practice is to take several measurements and mark off a safe zone and stick to that area. Further exploring requires more experience, more measuring plus more planning and safety equipment.

Ever heard of ice picks or claws? Sharp little tools (some people use short screw drivers) to keep handy (like around your neck) for help crawling out of the water in case the worst happens. People also carry rescue rope in throw bags.

I hate to mention the F-word but there is a new, informative and inspiring group on Facebook

called Nor'Easter Natural Ice where members are posting measurements, conditions and photos from lake trips around Nova Scotia. They also provide links to a lot of great safety information and videos.

With a little learning and forethought, there's lots of fun to be had on the frozen lakes but please do measure and measure often.

Jonathan Riley
Trail and Open Spaces
Coordinator
Municipality of the District of Digby
Phone: 902-245-2861

Marching, Marching, Marching for Women

By Anna-Marie MacKenzie Kelly

The Sandy Cove Women's March on 19 January 2019 joined similar marches around the world with a focus on just and equal rights for women. This year, the National Women's Association of Canada asked participants to wear red to raise awareness regarding violence against indigenous girls and women in Canada.



Three years ago, news of the small group of 15 marchers in Sandy Cove went viral around

the globe and showed that even in the smallest of communities, people are aware of women's struggles and feel a need to make their voices heard.



This year, 50 marchers from many communities came together donning red scarves, red and pink hats, red and pink jackets, etc. We marched through wind and snow squalls- perhaps a sign of the struggles many women face, daily. We returned to the school under bright sunshine- hopefully a sign of a better future for women.



There is a long road ahead for women to achieve equal rights and to end the violence against women and girls and especially indigenous women and girls in Canada. Continue to help make their voices heard. Everyone has a responsibility to work towards that goal.



Our Fundy-Our Future

Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association Board of Directors for 2018-19

- Anna-Marie MacKenzie Kelly (Chair)
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Bonnie MacLachlan
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- The Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association is currently looking for a treasurer. If you are interested in joining our team or you know someone who would enjoy working with us, please let us know.
We continue to welcome new members. Please consider joining our Islands and continue to make this a wonderful place to live and visit.
We want your stories and photos. Please let us know what you are enjoying along our beautiful Bay of Fundy. Please send your stories, photos and dates of upcoming projects to anna-marie.mackenzie-kelly@mail.mcgill.ca

The Bay of Fundy Discovery Center Association

PO Box 66
Freeport, NS
B0V 1B0

righthouse51@gmail.com



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