

ACADIA

The Friends of Acadia Journal WINTER/SPRING 2023



**IN THE
DRIVER'S SEAT**
ISLAND EXPLORER DRIVERS

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THREE DECADES OF
SCHOODIC EDUCATION ADVENTURE

**COLD WATER
CAMARADERIE**
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COURTESY ALISON RICHARDSON

ACADIA

The Friends of Acadia Journal

WINTER/SPRING 2023

Volume 28 No.1

A Magazine about Acadia National Park
and Surrounding Communities

Friends of Acadia preserves, protects, and promotes stewardship of the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and distinctive cultural resources of Acadia National Park and surrounding communities for the inspiration and enjoyment of current and future generations.

Acadia is published three times a year. Submissions and letters are welcome.

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EDITOR

Lori Schaefer

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Shannon Bryan

PHOTO EDITOR

Julia Walker Thomas

DESIGN

Lisa Williams/Indigo Art Design

PRINTING

Penmor Lithographers

PUBLISHER

Eric Stiles



Members of a local cold water dipping group enjoy the waters of Long Pond at Pond's End. Read the full story of community and connection to Acadia on page 8.

JULIA WALKER THOMAS/FOA



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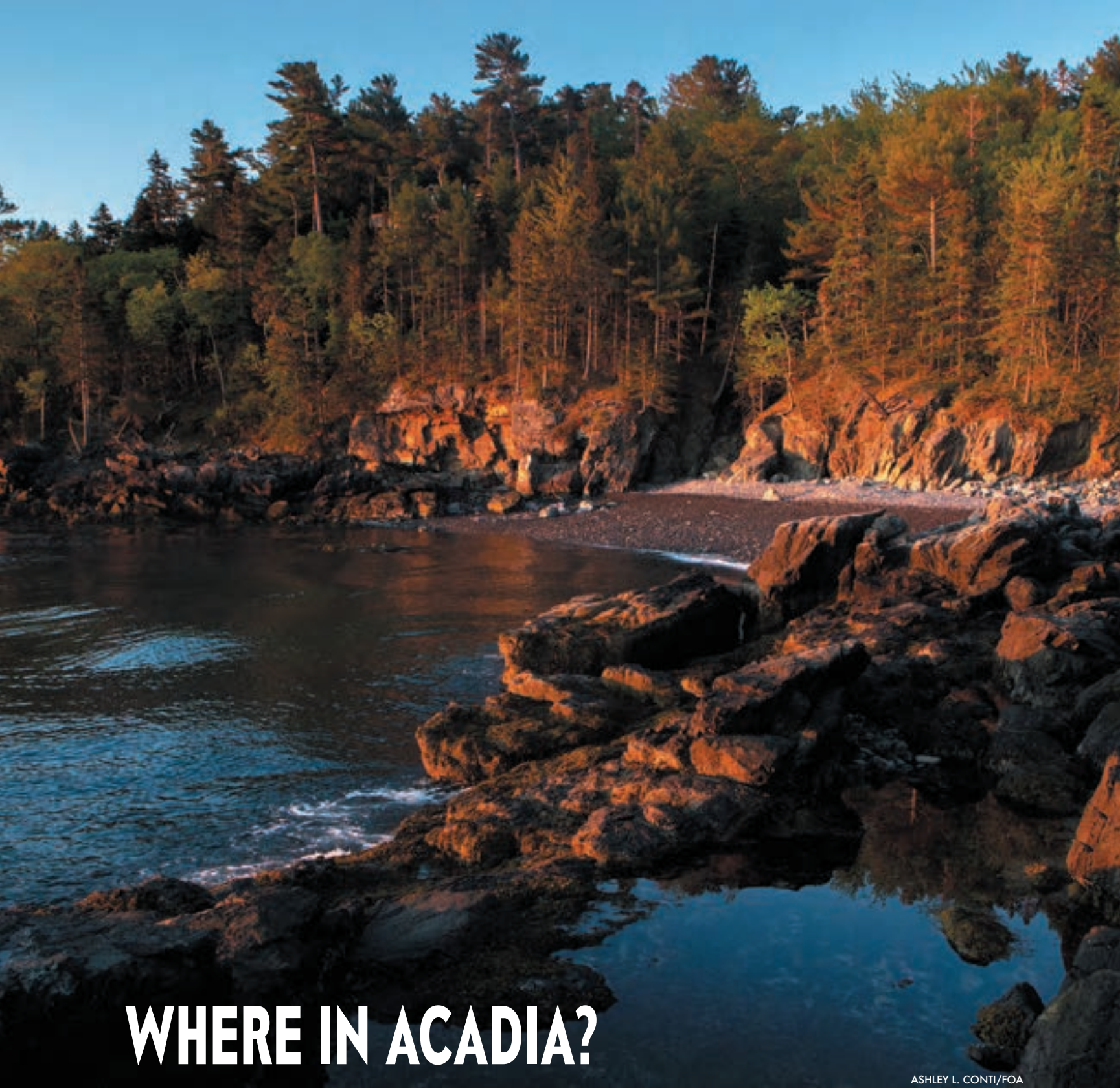
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WHERE IN ACADIA?

ASHLEY L. CONTI/FOA

A flat walk not far from the village, through the woods and past a farm reveals a beautiful stony cove. A favorite place of one of the fathers of Acadia, you too can take in the sights of Acadia's most famous group of rodents. Where is it?

If you think you can identify the location of this scene, email us at editor@friendsofacadia.org and include a personal story or memory with your answer. We'll print our favorite responses in the next issue of Acadia and send a Friends of Acadia cap to a randomly selected correct respondent.

READERS RESPOND TO "WHERE IN ACADIA?"



ASHLEY L. CONTI/FOA

Hadlock Falls from Waterfall Bridge

Thanks to the readers who responded to our “Where in Acadia?” question in the fall magazine and correctly identified the location as Hadlock Falls from Waterfall Bridge. This is a popular stop for park visitors as they walk, ride, or ski on the Around the Mountain carriage road—particularly in the spring when the water is really rushing!

Below are a few of the correct responses that we received from members.

In each issue of *Acadia* magazine, we post a photo and clues to help readers identify the location. If you think you can correctly identify the location of the photo, email editor@friendsofacadia.org.

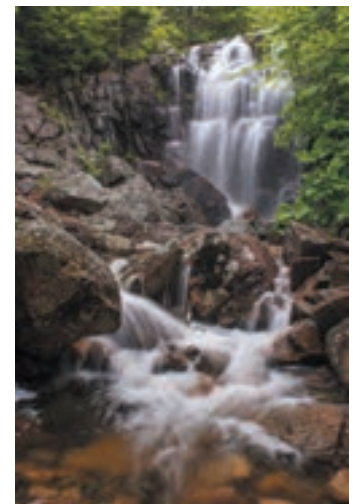
We’ll run a few of the correct responses in the forthcoming issue, and we love it when you send photos and stories to accompany your answers. Thanks to all of our readers who play along!

This is a spot in the park we think of visiting whenever it rains. We never tire of seeing the cascading water and listening to its wonderful sound. The trail beneath the Waterfall Bridge reveals another vantage point of the flowing water. Whether we walk in or stop while on a bike ride, it is always worth the visit.

— Joanne and Scott Hemenway, Rochester, NY

Hadlock Falls, as seen from the Waterfall Bridge. My favorite walk in Acadia National Park...one mile from the Parkman Mountain parking area along a beautiful carriage road and two of the Rockefeller bridges. I have done this walk twice in one day to catch the lighting conditions at sunrise and sunset. In autumn, a nice mix of colorful hardwoods and conifers. For me, a quiet time and only rarely other photographers.

— Bob Stone, Cohoes NY



COURTESY SCOTT HEMENWAY



COURTESY VALERIE SALSGIVER

I think the “Where in Acadia” feature in the Fall 2022 edition of the Friends of Acadia Journal is Hadlock Brook Falls off the Around the Mountain carriage road. Although I’ve never been sure if that is the actual name of the waterfall, it is one of my favorite stops when riding

my bike along the carriage roads, as I start my final ascent up, up, and up to the height of the road. As the caption mentions, I’ve seen it at full flow during the spring and fall months, barely a trickle in late summer, yet equally beautiful year-round.

— Valerie Salsgiver, Lamoine, ME

This is a view of the Hadlock Brook Waterfall from the bridge over Hadlock Brook on the Around the Mountain carriage road, which when one starts at the Brown Mountain Gatehouse parking lot, is about a mile up the carriage road. I walk and bike there often and feel so sorry for the people who have walked up there to see the waterfall, only to find a trickle in the summer. I usually have my iPhone with me so I show them the video I have so they can see what it looks like when it’s in full blast mode! It’s impressive!

— Mazzie Gogolak, Northeast Harbor, ME and Naples, FL

Addressing the Affordable Workforce Housing Crisis in Acadia

It has been an incredible first six months as Friends of Acadia's President! Thank you, members and friends, for all you do for Acadia, and for showing me first-hand the power of this amazing community.

I've spent a good chunk of time these past months doing a deep dive into the work of the Friends of Acadia Seasonal Housing Committee and learning more about the extent of the housing crisis on Mount Desert Island (MDI). "Crisis" is not too strong a word for the severe shortage of workforce housing on MDI and its surrounding communities.

The lack of adequate workforce housing leads to a reduced seasonal workforce, which in turn impacts the park's ability to provide a quality visitor experience, care for Acadia's cultural and natural resources, make progress on diversity and inclusion initiatives, and advance other priorities.

Acadia National Park relies on seasonal employees to conduct its operations between May and November. While permanent, year-round staff is important for park planning, operations, and leadership, another 165 seasonal staff members are needed, including trail workers, lifeguards, interpretive specialists, rangers, janitors, research biologists, and visitor use assistants.

In 2022, the park attempted to hire approximately 165 seasonal positions and could only fill 116, including only about half of the needed trail crew. This was in large part due to lack of affordable housing.

Partner and nonprofit organizations essential to the park face similar challenges. Downeast Transportation needed 120 bus drivers to operate the Island Explorer but could only hire 92. In addition, the Island Explorer bus service had to end summer service early and combine bus routes as drivers began to return to their fall/winter jobs as school bus drivers.

Friends of Acadia is committed to working with the National Park Service and other partners to provide affordable seasonal workforce housing. This will help advance our strategic priorities and ensure that the park is able to protect park resources and provide for visitor enjoyment.

It will also help ensure that Acadia is for all. Our national parks belong to everyone, and we want to make jobs in Acadia accessible to all the talent of America. Most graduates today leave college with an immense amount of debt, and they can't afford expensive housing costs as they enter the workforce. Providing safe, affordable seasonal housing will reduce this barrier.

Friends of Acadia has a goal to help provide the 130 new beds needed. We're working closely with the NPS to implement a multi-pronged strategy that involves short-term, mid-term, and long-term actions. While the ultimate solution is to construct new housing units on NPS land that will be of minimal impact to natural resources or the visiting public, more immediate and interim measures like adding bedrooms to existing Acadia-managed homes and purchasing offsite housing units are needed. It will take more time to raise funds, and plan, design, and build new housing facilities at Acadia.

I'm proud to work with our dedicated board members on the Seasonal Housing Committee, as well as with staff and consultants such as former Friends of Acadia President David MacDonald on this important issue. I'm also excited to begin to engage more of you in being part of the solution.

If you have questions and want to discuss it further or explore strategies for how you can help, I encourage you to reach out and send me an email at eric@friendsofacadia.org.



—Eric Stiles

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



"In 2022, the park attempted to hire approximately 165 seasonal positions and could only fill 116, including only about half of the needed trail crew."



FROZEN HADLOCK FALLS
near the Waterfall
Bridge off the Hadlock
Brook Trail.

ASHLEY L. CONTI/FOA

Acadia's Proposed Entrance Fee Increase Will Help Fund Critical Projects



A park visitor shows their park pass at the Sand Beach entrance station in Acadia National Park.

BY SHANNON BRYAN AND LORI SCHAEFER

Acadia National Park has proposed increasing visitor entrance fees this year by \$5 for 7-day private vehicle, motorcycle, and individual passes, and \$15 for the park’s annual pass.

The park will still offer free passes to select groups, including: military veterans, people with permanent disabilities, fourth grade students, and park volunteers. There are also several fee-free days annually.

Friends of Acadia supports the proposed increase because it will fund critically needed transportation and infrastructure projects, including expanding environmentally friendly access to the park by the fare-free, propane-powered Island Explorer buses.

In the last few years, entrance fee revenue has funded hiking trail projects—including the installation of bog walk on Upper Hadlock Pond and Jordan Pond trails, the rehabilitation of Great Head and Parkman Mountains trails, and the replacement of trail bridges throughout the park.

Entrance fees also helped improve park facilities, including repairs to the historic carriage road gatehouses,

removal of hazardous trees along park roads and powerlines, repairs to campground restrooms, and the replacement of damaged park road gates.

Acadia’s entrance fees fund 60-70 percent of the annual operation of the Island Explorer bus system to provide fare-free service to hundreds of thousands of park visitors each year, reducing traffic congestion in the park and improving all visitors’ experiences.

Expanding transportation services is even more critical as park visitation rises. The proposed entrance fee increase will help fund the expansion of the Island Explorer, including more frequent service to the Acadia Gateway Center once construction is completed.

In addition to the repair, maintenance, and enhancement of visitor facilities, the park is prioritizing fee revenue to provide seasonal ranger presence and maintenance personnel across the park.

Fee on Par with Other Popular Parks

Acadia last raised its entrance fee in 2018; the proposed increase would bring Acadia's fees in line with other iconic national parks around the country, including Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Grand Teton, Yosemite, and Zion National Parks.

Acadia belongs among such good company. It experiences a comparable number of visits as those popular parks—a record-setting 4 million visits in 2021 and more than 3.9 million in 2022, making the last two years the busiest ever. That’s about 14 percent above the pre-pandemic record in 2018.

Compare Acadia’s 4 million visits in 2021 with Grand Teton’s 3.9 million visits and Grand Canyon’s 4.5 million the same year. It’s worth noting that Acadia is a great deal smaller than those sister parks, and the concentration of visitors amplifies their impact.

National parks belong to all of us, and Friends of Acadia wants the park to be accessible and enjoyed by all for generations to come. But increased visitation presents added challenges for park staff and additional stress on the park’s

continued on page 37

Pass Type	Former Cost	New Cost
Private Vehicle (7 days)	\$30	\$35
Motorcycle (7 days)	\$25	\$30
Individual (7 days)	\$15	\$20
Acadia Annual Pass	\$55	\$70
Entrance Pass Fees That Are Not Changing		
Interagency Annual Pass	\$80	\$80
Lifetime Senior Pass	\$80	\$80
Military Pass	\$0	\$0
4th Grade Pass	\$0	\$0
Access Pass	\$0	\$0
Commercial Tour Vehicles	Varies – no changes	Varies – no changes

NOTE: Visitors under 16 years of age are exempt from paying an entrance fee.

Project Planning for Acadia's Future

While visitor activity in Acadia National Park quiets greatly in the winter, the workload for those of us working in the park keeps us busy!

The “off season” is an active period focused on project planning for Acadia's future. In the fall, we develop major projects to be submitted for the National Park Service's (NPS) annual funding call. In addition to our base operating budget, we compete annually with other national parks for “soft funds”—funds for specific projects that tackle high-priority needs. We also develop projects to spend our entrance fee revenue, which is prioritized for deferred maintenance.

Projects must be submitted typically in December or January, and since our funding cycles are for five years, we are often developing projects that are three to five years out. At the same time, we're in various stages of execution for projects that have already been approved and funded.

The complexity that goes into developing any one project—from an initial idea, to obtaining funding, to design, and then construction—is significant and requires a team of engineers, architects, landscape architects, resource experts, and project managers for its success.

To hire a general contractor or a design firm, we need to go through our federal contracting process. This requires our project managers to write extensive scopes of work, prepare independent government estimates, and work with a contracting officer to put jobs out for bid.

Our natural resource and cultural resource teams are needed to review projects, both in the design and construction phases, to minimize their impact on the park's fundamental resources and values. This often takes a substantial investment of their time. And we must make sure we comply with various environmental laws,

which require review and documentation of a project's impacts.

I'm proud to say that our project management team at Acadia has grown during my tenure, from a single person in 2016 to three project managers today. We also work closely with project managers from the NPS' Denver Service Center, which is like our own nationwide project management entity that can help boost our horsepower, especially with more complex projects.

With the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, and a general increase in soft funding available for major facility projects, including funding from Friends of Acadia, we're better able to tackle Acadia's deferred maintenance backlog, which paves the way for better facilities for our visitors and enhanced protection of the park's natural and cultural resources.

It also means an increasing (and increasingly complex) workload.

We're responding to this by adding a NEW senior Chief of Project Management who will oversee this project workload and be a member of the park's senior leadership team. This new position is a big investment and will allow us to execute projects more effectively from design to construction. It will also significantly help us take advantage of funding that Friends of Acadia may provide. With any luck, we should have the position hired and onboarded before our busy summer 2023 season.

Hopefully, the next time you see a road under construction in the park, or a building getting renovated, or a wastewater system being fixed, you will have a refreshed understanding of all that it took to make this happen!

—Kevin Schneider

SUPERINTENDENT'S VIEW



“The new Chief of Project Management position will allow us to execute projects more effectively from design to construction.”



PROMISE OF SPRING
visible from South Bubble
looking down on Eagle
Lake.

EMMA FORTHOFFER/FOA



COLD WATER CAMARADERIE

BY SHANNON BRYAN

STANDING IN THEIR SNOW BOOTS AT ACADIA'S SAND BEACH on a frigid winter morning, the lapping Atlantic waves don't feel very enticing to most off-season park visitors. While swimmers abound here in the summer, most admire the coastline from dry land in the cold months, ideally while wearing a reliable parka and mittens to stave off the brisk wind. But there are those who seek out the cold water on and around Mount Desert Island (MDI), including an increasingly popular group of intrepid local dippers known as *Cold T*ts, Warm Hearts*.

Local Swim Group Creates Community and a Deeper Connection to Acadia

Lured by the invigorating effects of cold-water immersion, or perhaps out of sheer curiosity, the group's members gather near the water's edge at different locations around the island—sometimes the salty coast, sometimes the icy shore of a frozen lake.

There they shake themselves out of bulky coats and shed warm layers, peeling down to swimsuits and neoprene booties and gloves—to protect sensitive fingers and toes. Then off they go, moving slowly and purposefully into the water.

"All the leading up to it is the hardest part," said Anne Woodman, a jewelry maker, life coach, and member of the group who lives in Seal Harbor. "Taking your clothes off is hard because it's really cold outside, and you're like, 'I'm cold, why am I doing this?' After I go in, it just gets better."

Wading into the 40-degree waters of the Atlantic in the winter is an act that appears simultaneously brave and blissful, and puzzling to the casual onlooker. But for members of this group, it's about so much more than cold water. These swims are a place to find community and connection with themselves, each other, and the stunning landscapes of MDI and Acadia National Park.

"My favorite sensation is when you're absolutely freezing cold, but you can taste the saltwater on your lips. There's such

cognitive dissonance there," said Lilly Anderson, who lives in Town Hill and works as a park ranger during the summer and coordinates clean air campaigns in the winter. "For me, that's really what it's all about, falling in love with winter, embracing all that the season has to offer."

Cold-water swimming has been practiced in Nordic and eastern European countries for more than a century, in some cases hundreds of years. On MDI, this group was informally started in the fall of 2020 by locals Gail Gladstone, Alison Richardson, and Mariah Reading, who were all open-water swimmers and wanted to keep swimming outside, even as air temperatures dropped and snow began to fall.

But those organized gatherings turned out to have additional benefits. It was the first year of the pandemic, and the swims offered a chance to socialize, to revel in nature, and to feel purposeful and empowered at a time when so much of life felt uncertain and challenging.

"It's been a way to get outside, to get what little sunlight we have and really embrace the natural environment here in the winter," said Puranjot Kaur of Bar Harbor, an ultra-marathon open water swimmer, cold-water enthusiast, and member of the

Opposite Page: Joy O'Shaughnessy, Mariah Reading, and Sarah Levine swim at Compass Harbor after a heavy snowfall in January.
This Page: Members of Cold T*ts, Warm Hearts "dip" at Ponds End in Long Pond after cutting a hole in the ice with a saw and sledgehammers.



group. “We’re in such an amazing and blessed place for it, to have all these opportunities and places to get in the water.”

Every swim is an invitation to better know all the marvelous nooks and crannies around MDI and Acadia, while bringing people together in remarkable ways.

“You’re having to support each other through this kind of uncomfortable experience that you’re having for a little bit while you adjust (to the cold water). And that is somehow bonding,” said Heidi Turner.

“It made me connected to this community on this island and with women I feel like I can count on in the water and out of the water,” added group member Rachel D’Angell.

It doesn’t hurt that swims sometimes include cookies and tea or a celebratory birthday cake—or that they might happen under a new moon when it’s easier to see the bioluminescence sparkle in the water.

The group has created a pressure-free environment that welcomes newcomers, too, whether you end up neck-deep in the water or not. “You can go in up to your ankles and leave and people will still cheer you,” said Melissa Ossanna, a clinical research scientist and outdoor adventurer who lives in Town Hill.

That sense of welcoming and community has a ripple effect away from the water, too. For the last two years, the group has organized a fundraiser for a local nonprofit. They raised close to \$15,000 for the Acadia Family Center in March 2021 and close to \$10,000 for the Domestic Violence Project in March 2022.

This March, they’re raising money for the Beth Wright Cancer Center in Ellsworth, in honor of a fellow cold-water swimmer and her husband, who are both in cancer treatment.

The group is open to all, although its members are mostly women, and the regular swims bring together cold-water lovers from around the island: year-round and summer residents, 20-something seasonal workers and retirees, as well as staff from the park and Friends of Acadia.

“Part of the beauty of this group is that there’s a wide range of ages, life experience, comfort with cold, comfort with water,” said Sue Aripotch of Northeast Harbor, a jeweler, painter, illustrator, and dancer.

While the group swims take place all year, the winter dips are particularly special.

“Many of us in this group really embrace the winter and long for it,” said Kaur. “People are like, ‘When is winter going to get here? I just want snow. I want slushy ocean swims.’”

And let’s face it, it’s also just a very cool way to immerse yourself in the beauty of MDI and its winter community. ■

SHANNON BRYAN is Friends of Acadia’s Content and Website Manager.



Courtesy Gin Majka

Right: Members of Cold T*ts, Warm Hearts disrobe before a dip at Compass Harbor. Below left: Alison Richardson plunges below the icy surface at Echo Lake. Right middle: Members dip in an ice hole at Somes Pond. Right bottom: Members walk back to change after dipping at Ship Harbor.



Courtesy Alison Richardson



JULIA WALKER THOMAS/FOA



JULIA WALKER THOMAS/FOA

Editor’s Note: Cold-water swimming has risks. As the Outdoor Swimming Society notes: get expert medical advice before winter swimming if you have a heart condition, high blood pressure, asthma, or are pregnant. Seek out experienced cold-water swimmers who can guide you and make recommendations on proper safety measures, such as neoprene booties and gloves, as well as an awareness of environmental conditions and your own body’s response. Never cold-water swim alone.

www.instagram.com/coldtitswarmhearts



Acadia's WINTRY ALLURE

Ellen Church, *Up the Frozen Marsh*, 2010. Watercolor, 14 by 21 inches.

THREE ARTISTS SHARE THOUGHTS ON PAINTING A SNOWBOUND ISLAND

BY CARL LITTLE

“Winter is coming.”

While some of us might whisper that famous dark-and-dire *Game of Thrones* line to ourselves in, say, mid-October, others take a more positive view of the snow-and-ice time ahead. In fact, to certain artists, Acadia in winter is the “on” season when the park, sans crowds, provides a special beauty—chilly, yes, but glorious.

The work and words of three year-round painter-islanders—Ellen Church of Bass Harbor, Robert Pollien of Town Hill, and Emily Bracale of Bar Harbor—help make the argument for turning to the sketchbook and easel when the snows arrive. These are their stories.

Ellen Church’s Winter Watercolors

Church first visited Acadia on a honeymoon camping trip in 1965. Over the years, she returned to visit family, then housesat for a friend in Bass Harbor for three winters. In 1992 she purchased the property and became a full-time resident of Mount Desert Island.

The winter rapture began when Church painted the western mountains while house-sitting her future home. She relished the quiet solitude and the uninterrupted time to work and loved the way snow transformed well-known landscapes. She could traverse frozen lakes and ponds on cross-country skis to access new views.

Watercolor, Church’s primary medium, is especially suited to snowy motifs. “The bright white of the paper lends itself to winter scenery and helps to define the dark contrasting shapes of the mountains, trees, and shorelines,” she writes. Freezing watercolors keep her from painting outdoors, but she has sketched while standing on skis on the carriage roads or on a frozen marsh.

Church has gravitated to parts of the park in her neck of the island—Wonderland Trail, Ship Harbor, Bass Harbor Marsh. A pitch pine decked out in white, a snow-flecked view of the sea, a frozen marsh zigzagging into the distance: this is the lyric landscape she has found irresistible.



Robert Pollien, Plein Air Painter

Pollien first beheld Acadia on a 1986 trip to camp on some friends' land in Sullivan. During his visit, he painted at Schoodic and made a small study on Ocean Drive near Monument Cove. Returning to MDI in 1994 to live year-round, he began in earnest his winter ramblings.

Like Church, Pollien appreciates the quiet: "I can be alone in a landscape that sees millions of annual visitors," he writes. At the same time, "the cold enforces focus."

Primarily a plein air painter, Pollien welcomes the "challenging conditions, beautiful light and solitude [that] combine to make winter painting feel very vital, testing one's commitment to the task." He notes that the light changes very quickly in winter with the shadow colors "vivid on sunny days." When there's snow, he avers, "the fun really starts."

Great Head is a favorite spot, "an anonymous little bowl" that is somewhat protected from the wind. Pollien will

Robert Pollien, *Spruces on Great Head, Mount Desert Island*, 2014. Oil on panel, 24 by 36 inches. Courtesy of Dowling Walsh Gallery, Rockland, Maine. Right: Robert Pollien and Captain Waffles on Great Head.

snowshoe there after big storms and set up to paint. "There's just something about the way the trees sit, something about the geometry of the scene that I respond to," he explains.

In recent years, Pollien has had a new companion, Captain Waffles, an Australian Shepherd dog. "Waffles is a good sport," the painter reports, "but he has a two-hour time limit when the weather is very cold," adding, "he isn't shy about letting me know that he's had enough."



Courtesy Robert Pollien

Emily Bracale “Dans l’Auto”

Emily Bracale’s introduction to Acadia came on a visit to College of the Atlantic (COA) in the summer of 1984. She returned as a visiting student for winter term 1987, then fully transferred from Amherst to COA later that year.

Bracale wasted no time responding to winter, starting with simple pen-and-ink sketches of the island. Car-less, she explored by foot, spending “a lot of time on the Shore Path and walking from the campus to Bar Island.”

As she explained in a blog post in 2019, Bracale enjoys plein air painting in Acadia from the comfort of her car. “Maybe that’s cheating,” she writes, “but it’s certainly easier to draw and paint when my fingers are not frozen stiff!” She wears fingerless gloves and “may turn on the engine a few times to warm up a bit.”

That’s how Bracale came to paint her late winter view of Champlain with its dusting of snow “outlining every cliff” on the mountainside. She taped a large piece of watercolor

paper to heavy cardboard and leaned it against the dashboard. Seated in the front passenger’s seat, the left-handed painter placed brushes, paints, and a couple of colored pencils on the driver’s side, with empty yogurt container for paint water secure in the cup holder. The painting, she reports, was mostly finished “on site ‘dans l’auto.”

Bracale and Pollien have both shared their love of painting Acadia through workshops and outings in the park; information about their offerings can be found on their websites. Church supports the Southwest Harbor Library through sales of notecards of her Acadia watercolors. All three artists are devoted to their island community and the wintry world that inspires them. ■

CARL LITTLE of Somesville recently received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his art writing from the Dorothea and Leo Rabkin Foundation.

Emily Bracale, *Late Snowfall, Champlain Mountain*, 2007. Watercolor, pencil, pastel, oil pastel, 29½ by 21¼ inches.





INDIGENIZING ARCHAEOLOGY AT ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

BY CATHERINE SCHMITT

On a small point of land on the shore of the Schoodic Peninsula, rocky shore gives way to softer sediment. Waves lap at the foot of small bluffs, moving sand and broken shell onto a beach strewn with dried seaweed and frayed fishing rope.

A few apple trees hint at past human presence, but there is deeper history here: along the edge, piles of clam shells mark a space where, between one and two thousand years ago, ancestors of the Wabanaki people came together to harvest and share food, to interact and relate, to live.

At least 24 Indigenous archaeological sites have been documented within the boundaries of what is now Acadia National Park; only few have been studied.

In 1978, a team of archaeologists from the University of Maine—including a student named Rebecca Cole-Will—excavated the Schoodic site. They catalogued and numbered the artifacts, carefully packed them into blue-gray cardboard boxes, and put them on a shelf in park archives.

And there they sat for 40 years until 2020, when a different team of archaeologists from the University of Maine pulled the boxes off the shelf. Dr. Bonnie Newsom, assistant professor with the University of Maine's Anthropology Department and Climate Change Institute, along with graduate students Natalie Dana Lolar and Isaac St. John, carefully removed stone pieces, bone splinters, and baked clay fragments from their special archival plastic bags and spread them out on a table. They paused for a moment.

Newsom, Lolar, and St. John are trained archaeologists and members of different Wabanaki tribes. They were the first Wabanaki people to see the objects since those who created them more than a thousand years ago.

Where previous archaeologists believed “the ethnographic record in Maine is poorly adapted to providing useful clues

for past human behavior,” Newsom, Lolar, and St. John bring Indigenous meaning and purpose to their science.

“Our work is designed to connect the past to the present by approaching our material analyses from a place of Indigeneity, placing our deep time relationships at the center of our inquiry,” said Newsom.

A sense of urgency also underlies the work. Rising seas and intensifying storms have already eroded away many archaeological sites in Acadia.

“These sites have value for strengthening our culture,” said Newsom. “Climate change is adding another dimension to our cultural loss.”

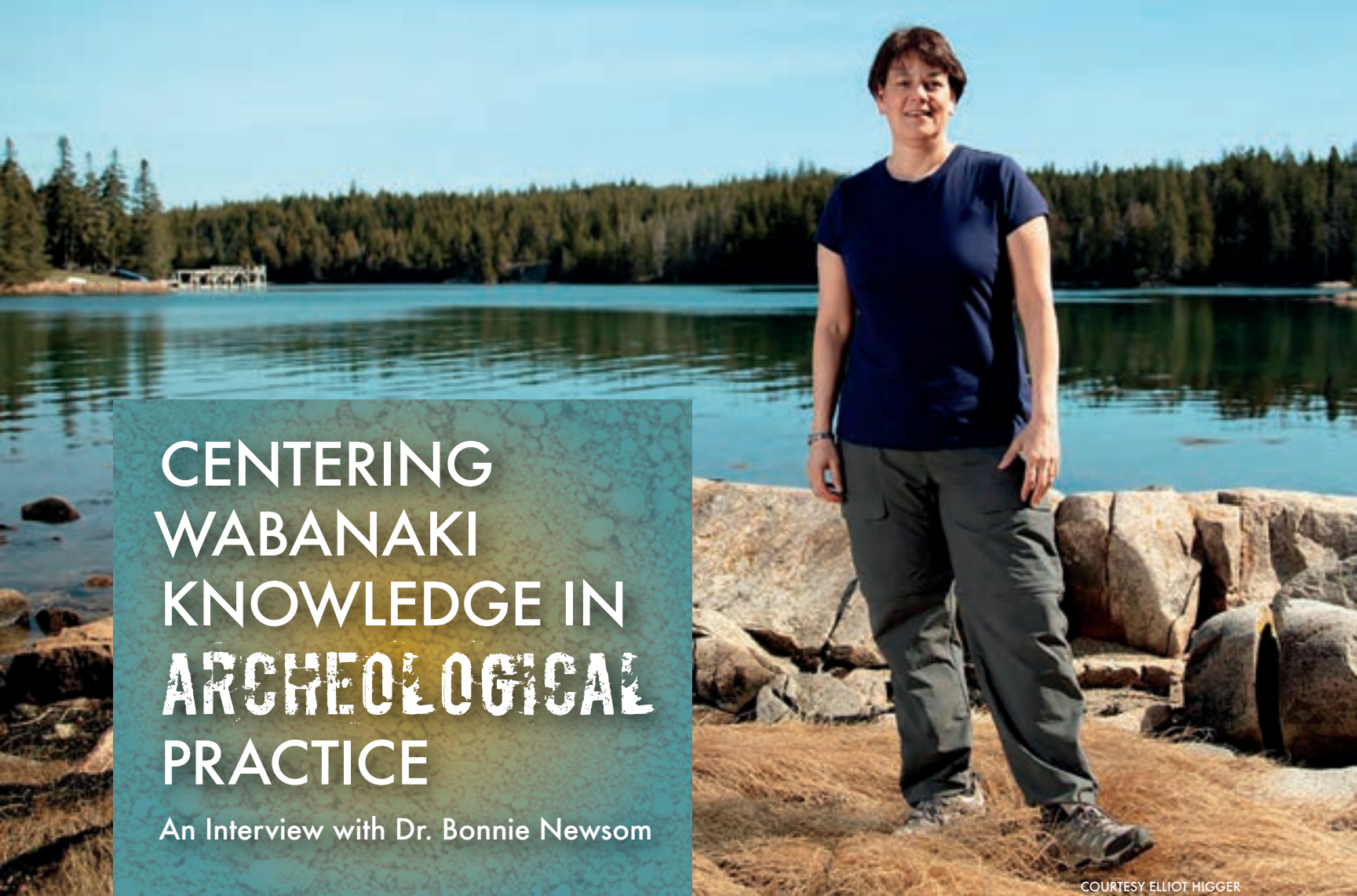
The team is working closely with the National Park Service to interpret and preserve the collections. The National Park Service must consult with federally recognized Indian Tribes on a government-to-government basis.

“However, the work we are doing here at Acadia, I hope, extends the meaning of consultation by recognizing the inherent right of descendant communities to have access to, and intellectual control of, knowledge about heritage cultural resources and how they are managed,” said Rebecca Cole-Will, who is now the Chief of Resource Management at Acadia National Park.

As Newsom, Lolar, and St. John draft plans to relate their findings to their communities, they are, at the same time, transforming stewardship of land and water in Acadia. ■

CATHERINE SCHMITT is the Science Communications Specialist at Schoodic Institute.

Editor’s Note: This article was excerpted from the Acadia National Park website. Read full article here: tinyurl.com/acadianewsom



CENTERING WABANAKI KNOWLEDGE IN ARCHEOLOGICAL PRACTICE

An Interview with Dr. Bonnie Newsom

COURTESY ELLIOT HIGGER

BY REBECCA COLE-WILL

Indigenous archeologist Dr. Bonnie Newsom is determined to reconnect Wabanaki communities with their archeological heritage.

A citizen of the Penobscot Nation, Dr. Newsom is assistant professor of anthropology and faculty associate at the Climate Change Institute, University of Maine. She's currently leading work in Acadia National Park to bring an Indigenous perspective to understanding archeological cultural heritage landscapes within the park.

Dr. Newsom serves on numerous national and state boards concerning cultural heritage preservation, and she is the mother of four and grandmother to three.

Her work is important and groundbreaking. It is also underscored by a sense of urgency as rising seas and intensifying storms have already eroded away many archeological sites in Acadia.

I've had the honor to know her for 25 years and to collaborate on her work for the last three. I recently

interviewed Dr. Newsom about how climate change influences her work in Acadia and her eye toward bringing Indigenous knowledge and Western science together in archaeological research.

Rebecca: What was the “spark” that led you to the work you do now?

Dr. Newsom: As an undergraduate at UMaine, I was a little lost in terms of what I wanted to do with my career. I had dabbled with various career paths, but I hadn't found something that fit well. That changed when I enrolled in an anthropology class with Dr. Cynthia Mahmood [former professor of Anthropology at the University of Maine]. Dr. Mahmood focused her research on the Sikhs. She was very inspirational because she worked to give a voice to the Sikhs in order to help the world understand their experiences and perspectives. It was a different kind of anthropology, and she really inspired me pursue an anthropology degree.



COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

Kristin Sobolik, a former archaeology professor at UMaine, was influential as well. I asked her about archaeology and anthropology, and she said, “If you’re going into this career field and you want to be an archaeologist, you probably need field school [experience], to find out if you actually like it.”

I took her advice and applied for the Abbe Museum field school, was accepted, and spent a week excavating at an Indigenous archaeology site on the Maine coast. [Side note: this is where I met Dr. Newsom. I was archeologist at the Abbe and, with my husband, Rick, leading field schools at coastal shell mound sites.]

While I was there, a couple of things struck me. One was that there were no other Indigenous people participating, and that was one of the reasons why Dr. Mahmood encouraged me to move in this direction. At that time, there were very, very few Indigenous archaeologists nationwide.

The other thing that really inspired me was having the opportunity to connect with my heritage and ancestors through their material world. I encountered a lot of special items [artifacts] and exciting things during my first field school, but there was one drilled bear tooth that was particularly inspirational. I think it was in a hearth feature, and it was broken. But I was just so excited to find it because that one special item took the material culture out of the realm of function and made it personal. It was a piece of personal adornment that was different from the pottery sherds or stone tools in my excavation unit. I began to think about who wore it and my connections to that person. And so it was at that moment that I realized that my ancestors have a special story to tell.

I wanted to help tell that story. And I wanted to reconnect with my ancestors. I think archaeology can provide a pathway for other people in our community to reconnect, because there’s some distance there.

That’s my spark. I guess it’s having that opportunity to connect, and to connect others as well. We can honor those

connections by maintaining some of those philosophies that guided our ancestors.

Rebecca: So, you were taking anthropology classes, but interested in archaeology? Or did you come to archeology because you wanted to do something that was important for your community?

Dr. Newsom: I was in anthropology, and I like cultural anthropology. I still do, but I felt there were more opportunities for me as an Indigenous archaeologist to fill a gap than with a cultural anthropology focus.

There are a lot of cultural anthropology aspects to my work. I consult ethnohistoric resources and engage with community to broaden my approach to archaeological interpretation. But I really think that [archeological resources] need our attention. They’re very fragile. We’re going to lose them. These material remains are gifts, our ancestors’ gifts.

I also find archaeology to be a tactile and physical experience that I really like. I enjoy the physical aspect of archaeology and to be the first Wabanaki person to hold an object that hasn’t been held by Wabanaki people in thousands of years—that’s very powerful.

Rebecca: Tell us about your approach to science, and incorporating and using two-eyed seeing in your work?

Dr. Newsom: Two-eyed seeing is a term coined by Albert Marshall, who was a Mi’kmaq elder, and it’s been in the literature since about 2012. It’s a process that brings Indigenous knowledge and Western science together for the benefit of all.

How that works for me is bringing the people together and putting Indigenous knowledge and Western science on an equal footing.

I think a lot of times what happens is Indigenous knowledge gets marginalized. It gets tacked on. And we’ve done ourselves a disservice in science by not making space for those other ways of knowing.

Language is really the key to understanding Indigenous science and scientific views of the world. I try to bring students, and fluent [Native] speakers, and cultural knowledge together to help scientists think differently... to help archeologists think differently, particularly about language and culture as a part of people’s lives in the past.

Archaeologists are already at a disservice because we’re not seeing the whole suite of material culture, anyway. And then [archeologists] neglect the Indigenous world view by applying a Western science perspective to the archaeological record. So, I think bringing back that Indigenous world view through language gets us closer to how people may have viewed those materials. We have to remember that Native peoples had a different sort of relationship with material goods.



Left to right: Dr. Newsom poses with National Park Service Director Chuck Sams, and Chief of Resource Management for Acadia National Park Rebecca Cole-Will during Sams' visit to Acadia in 2022.

One of the things that I like to remind people of is that language is essential to archaeological interpretation. It brings in knowledge that's rooted in how people engaged with their material culture and with each other.

Rebecca: Climate change is a huge issue. How do you think about your work in relationship to what we are dealing with and what we understand about climate change?

Dr. Newsom: Well, you know, I'm coming at it through the lens of an archaeologist primarily. And so, of course, we know that climate change is destroying sites.

I'm a little frustrated by climate change in part because it's not our doing. We [Indigenous peoples] didn't cause this.

There's this movement to draw on ecological knowledge of Indigenous peoples or other kinds of knowledge to clean up this mess.

And that is frustrating as an Indigenous person, and thinking about where we are today, and where we might have been without colonization. And how it might have been different for us globally. I try and put that aside and work toward solutions.

We're going to lose our heritage [coastal shell mound sites] and there may be nothing that we can do to prevent that in some situations.

Acting swiftly and keeping the momentum up for connecting people to their heritage spaces and the gifts that our ancestors left us is certainly a priority for me.

Our grandchildren, and then great grandchildren, will not have access to the same things that we have because of

climate change. I see it as a responsibility to try and retain what we can in terms of heritage spaces and cultural materials before they're gone.

That's me as an archaeologist trying to think about what we can do about climate change. As a human and an Indigenous person, I believe strongly that we have got to change our philosophies. We have to look to the people who were able to do this successfully—to live sustainably.

Listen. Listen to the people. The Western view distinguishes humans from other living beings, like we're disconnected.

If you think about us sharing the same energy or life force with all other living beings or non-human relatives, you might think differently about what and how much you consume. There's a great quote by

architect Carl Elefante, where he says, "The greenest building is the one that's already built."

I have this old house. It's not the prettiest, but if you think about the trees that went into it as living beings, they've served us for 200 years as humans and we should be very appreciative of that.

That's the kind of philosophy Wabanaki ancestors lived by and archaeology helps guide us in incorporating those philosophies into our contemporary lives.

Rebecca: I'm grateful for the work that you're doing here, and the chance to be involved. This work is leading a revolution in the National Park Service. Thank you.

Dr. Newsom: I love my relationship with Acadia and the work that we've done together. I'm very proud of this work and I hope that we can continue to carry this forward, and whoever steps in after us. ■

REBECCA COLE-WILL is the Chief of Resource Management for Acadia National Park.

To learn more about Newsom's work at Acadia National Park, visit:

Newsom, Bonnie, Natalie Dana Lolar, and Isaac St. John. 2021. *In Conversation with the Ancestors: Indigenizing Archaeological Narratives at Acadia National Park, Maine*. *Genealogy* 5: 96. tinyurl.com/indigenizingarchaeological

Schmitt, Catherine. 2022. *Gathering Sweetgrass and Renewing the Past: How Science at Acadia Is Making a Course Correction*. tinyurl.com/renewingthepast



SEEING ACADIA THROUGH THE EYES OF ISLAND EXPLORER BUS DRIVERS

BY LYNN FANTOM

If you have ever observed Island Explorer bus drivers staffing the Bar Harbor Village Green information center or driving one of 11 routes around Acadia and Mount Desert Island (MDI), you must have wondered how they can be so cheerful answering the same question again and again or how they know where to stop exactly at an unmarked spot requested only as a trailhead.

These drivers, some 120 strong, are the well-trained employees of Downeast Transportation, who are valued as much for their people skills as their ability to safely maneuver a bus just shy of 26,000 pounds (13 tons). Though some have driven for as many as 30 years, others are in Maine for the first time as work-camper nomads who are supplementing their bank accounts as they see the country.

The Island Explorer has carried more than 8.7 million passengers since it began as a fare-free service in 1999. By linking park destinations, local communities, and the regional airport, it has prevented an estimated 3.35 million private-vehicle trips, making a big dent in greenhouse gas emissions. That, along with reducing traffic congestion, are why L.L. Bean and Friends of Acadia have been such consistent supporters.

But a shortage of drivers—a nationwide problem—made it necessary last season to switch to a reduced fall schedule earlier than planned and also reconfigure some routes. Many of the summer-season drivers went back to their fall jobs driving school buses.

Still, Jodi Moore, operations manager at Downeast Transportation, is upbeat as she discusses her 2023 recruiting package of higher hourly rates, bonuses, weekly commitment options, flexible time off, and paid training. This year, she expects to hire around 20 new drivers, primarily because of turnover resulting from the affordable housing shortage in the area.

“We have about a 90 percent return rate,” says Moore. “These people are the best billboard to get others to drive here.” They include retired teachers, former reporters, even an ex-FBI agent. Just under half are women and many are older. During an interview call, one candidate said to Moore, “I’m going to start by telling you I’m 70. Is that a problem?” She laughed and replied, “No, you’ll fit right in.”

Moore herself was a driver. When she moved to Maine, she couldn’t find a job in her specialty in the medical field and

TOP REASONS TO BECOME AN ISLAND EXPLORER BUS DRIVER

BY JODI MOORE

- 1. You will be part of a family.** Most of our drivers have been with Island Explorer for more than five years—some as many as 30 years! We truly enjoy each other's company, and there is always room for members to join the fun.
- 2. Acadia is your office!** Acadia National Park and the surrounding communities on Mount Desert Island are beautiful, with mountains, ocean, lakes, picturesque towns and villages, and much more.
- 3. A state-of-the-art fleet.** The Island Explorer has a state-of-the-art, green facility and the majority of our fleet is less than four years old.
- 4. Team members are more than just drivers.** You would be an ambassador for Downeast Transportation/Island Explorer, Acadia National Park, and the state of Maine. Our team members are a part of the Acadia visitor experience.
- 5. Flexibility with time to explore.** Downeast Transportation offers flexible hours and a set schedule for the season, which allows you to explore when you're not working. Watch the sunrise, hike a mountain, visit gardens, go on a whale watch, go on a carriage ride through the park, attend a concert, or simply enjoy the star-filled night sky.
- 6. A chance to help save our planet.** You would be helping to lower the carbon footprint of hundreds of thousands of visitors in Acadia National Park by driving our propane-powered buses. In 2019, we transported more than 550,000 passengers (that means way fewer vehicles).
- 7. Benefit the community.** Not only does Downeast Transportation/Island Explorer provide much-needed transportation for local residents to get to work, shop, and attend medical appointments, but our Christmas in July food drive to benefit the Bar Harbor Food Pantry donated 400 pounds of food and other needed items, as well as \$600.
- 8. The local cuisine!** We have excellent food in Maine, some of the best local restaurants on MDI, and the best lobster in the world. (Most Mainers will tell you that the only way to eat a lobster roll is with butter.)
- 9. Part of a team.** As a driver for Downeast Transportation/Island Explorer, you would be part of a team that provides award-winning service to Acadia National Park and the surrounding communities.
- 10. Pedestrians – and wildlife! – have the right of way.** Our team of professional drivers is excellent at upholding the Maine state law that gives pedestrians the right of way when crossing the street. For us, that includes two- and four-legged pedestrians.

TO APPLY

If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Jodi Moore at 207-667-5796 or jodi.moore@exploreacadia.com for more information.



Opposite: Paul Bolduc, an Island Explorer bus driver, takes visitors from the Jordan Pond House to the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. Above: Jodi Moore, operations manager at Downeast Transportation. Bottom L-R: Clark Stecher, Jodi Moore, Buddy Mills, Tiffany Lister, and Sutt Jacobs pose for a photo.

began working as a school bus driver. During the summer when school was out, she took Island Explorer shifts.

The thought of “moving that giant vehicle” was intimidating at first, Moore admits. “But then you do it and it’s such an empowering feeling.” At 4 feet, 11 inches, she confides, “The guys used to tease me and ask if I needed a booster seat.”

All drivers must have at least a Class C commercial license with a passenger endorsement. If job candidates are from Maine, Downeast Transportation can help them obtain it.

Nancy Mills, a former accountant from New Jersey who now lives in Florida, has been driving since 2017. She and her husband are RVers who “fell in love with Maine” on vacation and then decided to sign up. Her first day driving, Nancy thought, “I am here in probably one of the most beautiful places in the world, in the national park, and I’m getting paid to do this with people who love being here.”

A strong esprit de corps exists among the drivers. “We do feel like we’re a family up there. I have forged great friendships,” Mills adds.

Maybe there’s something in the homemade soup that has become a staple at the annual end-of-season gathering of drivers and their families. Maybe it’s an effect of the gratitude expressed during driver appreciation week each August, when every driver gets a small gift and passengers get involved in celebrating the drivers. These traditions, along with a weekly newsletter, bottled water and snacks for the taking, a Secret Santa program in July, and an opportunity to support the Bar Harbor Food Pantry, help Moore convey the role she believes these drivers play.

As Mills puts it, “When I’m driving that bus, I’m the face of Acadia National Park. I’m the face of Maine. I’m the face of maybe the United States. I take this very seriously. I know that’s crazy—this is my retirement job. But I just love it because I want people to enjoy their time here.” ■

LYNN FANTOM is a former New York advertising executive who has embraced her second career as a freelance writer in Maine.



COURTESY DOWNEAST TRANSPORTATION

JOE PHILIPSON/FOA

Top L-R: Nancy Mills and Bob Chaplin have a seat on an Island Explorer bus; Chris Gray, Nanci Foster, Donna Loving, Phyllicia Jordan, Patricia Philbrook, and Stacy Potter line up together; Cliff Mills, Bill Ross, Johanna Austin, Ray Brown, and Bob Chaplin have a little fun in front of the camera. Bottom: An Island Explorer bus crosses the Duck Brook Bridge.

ACADIA GATEWAY CENTER MOVING FORWARD

Construction Bids Solicited and Groundbreaking Planned for Spring



CONCEPT ILLUSTRATION COURTESY MAINEDOT

BY STEPHANIE CLEMENT

The long-awaited Acadia Gateway Center took a big step forward recently when the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) released a contract prospectus for construction. Bids closed in February and MaineDOT will select a contractor, with groundbreaking planned for this spring! The goal is to complete construction in May 2025.

The Gateway Center will be located on the west side of Route 3 in Trenton in front of the existing maintenance facilities and offices for Downeast Transportation. The Center will serve as a location where visitors can plan their trips through Acadia, purchase park entrance passes, and board the Island Explorer. The building will also feature a Maine State Visitor Information Center where visitors can learn about other destinations in Downeast Maine.

Acadia Gateway Center Has Been a Long-Time Priority

The project has been a priority for Friends of Acadia since 2004 when the organization purchased an option on 369 acres in Trenton—the future site of the Gateway Center—while MaineDOT completed an Environmental Assessment. Friends of Acadia then purchased the property in 2007 and sold the easternmost 152 acres bordering Route 3 to MaineDOT for the purpose of developing the Center and mitigating associated wetland losses.

Friends of Acadia retained the remaining 217 acres in tree-growth tax status and built the Trenton Community Trail with technical expertise provided by the National Park Service's Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program. We then granted a conservation easement to Maine Coast Heritage

Trust on the remaining land and donated the parcel to the Town of Trenton. MaineDOT and partners inaugurated the Island Explorer maintenance facility and Downeast Transportation offices on-site in 2012.

The design of the upcoming visitor center and transit hub went through several revisions over the years to improve efficiency, lower construction costs, and incorporate new technologies. The majority of the estimated construction costs will come from the Federal Transit Administration. The National Park Service (NPS) has contributed \$4 million in Centennial Challenge funds, matched and exceeded by transportation bonds and other funds provided by MaineDOT. Friends of Acadia has pledged \$1 million from the Acadia Experience portion of funds raised as part of the Acadia Second Century campaign. We have also pledged up to \$225K for solar panels on the building to reduce environmental impact, as well as the long-term operational costs.

Many Friends of Acadia members have helped make the Acadia Gateway Center possible—from those who supported the initial purchase of the land to those who helped the Island Explorer expand, as well as those who contributed to the Greening Acadia Fund at the 2021 Benefit Auction that will help with the purchase of solar panels.

It's truly time for a collective cheer as this long-lived project to improve visitor information and access to transit services comes to fruition! ■

STEPHANIE CLEMENT is Friends of Acadia's Vice President of Conservation.



PHOTOS BY LILY LAREGINA/FOA

ACADIA: A Place for All?

LOOKING AT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION THROUGH A PERSONAL LENS

BY LILY LAREGINA

As a former Acadia Digital Media Team member, I've often described the team's work as visually documenting and sharing Acadia National Park. This includes showing how the park manages its resources and visitation, and, of course, taking beautiful photographs of visitors out enjoying it.

Through photography and videography, we showcase the efforts to protect and preserve the land and resources that millions care about deeply, which helps bring visitors in and keeps them coming back.

But I also wanted my work to include a project that focused not just on what people love about Acadia but why, for some, Acadia does not yet feel like a welcoming or accessible destination. Acadia has seen record visitation numbers in the last few years, but there are still people for whom lack of representation, socioeconomic disparities, lack of outdoor experience, and opportunity gaps prevent them from being included in those visits.

As an Asian-American woman, I find myself in the minority in several predominantly white-cisgender-heterosexual-male-dominated spheres that are my career choice (photography) and hobbies (hiking). That is also true of Acadia National Park and Friends of Acadia staffs.

So, in developing and mapping out a project on diversity, I sought to interview other employees of Acadia and its partner

organizations who share this minority space and who could advocate for increased diversity. Diversity is a topic with many facets. It seemed like the best way to approach this in a short-term project was to look at how diversity may be increased in the park's interpretation and education division.

I first interviewed **SEIKOU SANNEH**, Acadia's first Untold Histories Research Assistant, whose research was intended to diversify the historical material referenced by interpretive staff when constructing their public programs. For Sanneh, researching untold histories meant looking into historical accounts of communities, including people in and around Acadia who lacked the wealth, influence, race, and gender-based privileges of Acadia's well-known figures like Charles Eliot, George Dorr, and John D. Rockefeller Jr.

NOLAN ALTVATER, Curator of Education at the Abbe Museum, was my next interview. Although not directly involved with Acadia National Park's interpretation programming, as a Passamaquoddy citizen and education professional, they spoke about what visitors can gain from more exposure to the Wabanaki people's past and continued relationship with the island, specifically how that relationship has changed with settler colonialism.

ZOË SMIAROWSKI, a former Acadia Women in Parks intern and Friends of Acadia Summit Steward and



Lily LaRegina, as a Acadia Digital Media Team member, pauses on the Beehive Trail to take in the view of Frenchman Bay at dawn, while hiking towards the summit for sunrise. Opposite page (L-R): Seikou Sanneh, Nolan Altvater, Zoë Smiarowski, Lilly Anderson, and Eric Michelena.

Stewardship Coordinator, spoke about the contributions of women in the founding of Acadia and the timeline of women’s employment in the National Park Service.

Public-facing interpretive rangers **LILLY ANDERSON** and **ERIC MICHELENA** discussed the increased inclusivity they’ve seen in recent years within the park’s interpretive staff and the changes they’ve personally championed. Anderson talked about Acadia’s steps to better support the queer community. She led Acadia’s first year of involvement in Bar Harbor Pride in 2022 and heads the new seasonal staff diversity, equity, and inclusion work group.

Michelena adapted an existing ranger program into a program called “Whose Acadia: Navigating Narratives,” in which he walks visitors through the history of Acadia’s founding, disclosing both the achievements of park founding figures and their involvements in social injustices, fostering conversation and thought about the park’s history and the effect of said history on the present.

All five of my interviewees aligned on what would make the biggest difference in improving the park experience for an increasingly diverse visitor population: emphasis on hiring a more diverse park staff. And that the way to do that is to reduce barriers to employment such as affordable housing, transportation, knowledge of the U.S.A. Jobs

application system, and to provide more inclusive networking opportunities.

Echoing one of Altvater’s insights on the nature of diversity efforts, my hope is that this project isn’t “just a checkbox” that Friends of Acadia or the National Park Service can tick off on their list of diversity and inclusion initiatives. Rather, I hope this project is just one piece in the continuous effort to be more inclusive and diverse so that everyone can love and enjoy Acadia as I do. ■

To view Lily’s Acadia for All? diversity video, produced while she was a member of the 2022 Acadia Digital Media Team, visit friendsofacadia.org/diversity or scan the QR code on your phone.



LILLY LAREGINA was a member of the Acadia Digital Media Team (2021, 2022). She recently graduated from Penn State University with a degree in photojournalism and now works for the Green Mountain Club as Communications Coordinator.

Years at SEA

Schoodic Education
Adventure has
connected middle-
school students to
Acadia's forests
and coastline for
three decades

BY SHANNON BRYAN

During the Schoodic Education Adventure (SEA) program, middle-school students spend their days investigating marine life in tidepools and examining layers of soil. They plot data-collection sites, scout for crabs, and get acquainted with Acadia's geologic history. At night, they hike under the stars, share stories around a campfire, and fall asleep in a bed away from home—perhaps for their first time.

By the end of the immersive, three-day field trip on Acadia National Park's Schoodic Peninsula, the middle schoolers depart with inter-tidal mud on their clothes, sensory-packed memories, and, hopefully, a deeper understanding of the natural environment and their role in it.

"They're learning how to see and observe" said Director of Schoodic Education Adventure Alexa Pezzano. "When they see it and get hands on, it makes for more meaningful connections."

Last summer marked SEA's 30th anniversary—a tenure that speaks to the program's adaptability and impact. In the last two decades since the program launched at the Schoodic Education and Research Center, a former Navy base on the Schoodic Peninsula and now home to the Schoodic Institute, more than 5,000 students have completed upwards of 111,000 hours of the hands-on, feet-in environmental education curriculum.

Through that work, which Friends of Acadia has helped fund with support from L.L.Bean since 2006, students develop a sense of

stewardship for the environment and they learn about conservation science and the protection of natural and cultural resources.

"It has the same appeal now as it did 30 years ago," said Acadia National Park Education Coordinator Kate Petrie. "Learning to be comfortable in nature, it stays with them. They develop a sense of pride and confidence being outdoors."

The program is taught by national park rangers as well as SEA staff, so students get to interact with folks in the gray and green, which is rare for overnight programs in national parks.

SEA's roots go back to 1992 and the shores of Echo Lake in Southwest Harbor. Known as the Natural Resources Camp, the first multi-day environmental education program was developed in partnership with the Appalachian Mountain Club. Open to sixth graders, the program ran each fall for four to five weeks. Curriculum included map and compass, water cycle exploration, Leave No Trace, and a night hike to learn about nocturnal adaptations.

The program ran at Echo Lake for 10 years—being renamed Acadia Camp in 1999—before moving to the Schoodic Peninsula in 2002. At the time, the National Park Service was still working out plans for adapting or reusing the former Navy base's facilities, but some enterprising park staff converted two Navy buildings into classrooms and dorm space in preparation for students.

The first Schoodic Education Adventure program was piloted



Students from around Maine participate in residential outdoor science programming with the Schoodic Education Adventure (SEA) program at the Schoodic Institute. PHOTOS BY ASHLEY L. CONTI & LILY LAREGINA/FOA

with two schools from Mount Desert Island. The new location had some incredible assets, including easy access to the intertidal zone, hiking trails, and intriguing geological features—and the program’s curriculum expanded to take advantage.

Since then, Schoodic Education Adventure continues to adapt to the changing needs of students and teachers—and the changing environment.

“The program is so unique and robust,” said Friends of Acadia’s Conservation Projects Manager Paige Steele. “I think it’s so successful because staff are always building relationships with teachers and adapting to current needs and curriculum requests.”

SEA offers 22 programs for teachers to choose from, enabling those teachers to mesh what students are studying in Acadia with what they’re studying back at home. In recent years, said Pezzano, more teachers are requesting climate change curriculum. Programs are based in science literacy and citizen science but incorporate a wide array of subject areas.

The students also learn how to use modern technology in relevant ways.

“We integrate technology that connects students to resources, like iPads for photojournalism,” said Pezzano. They also use the same tools and techniques used by researchers to capture and record weather data, identify trees, and more.

And the data those students gather really matters.

“The citizen science is actually contributing to research data being utilized,” said Pezzano, such as the bio-inventory of Acadia through an iNaturalist project.

Also notable: in September 2019, a middle-school class was exploring at the edge of Acadia’s Little Moose Island during a Marine Investigations program with SEA. One of the students discovered the molted shell of an Asian shore crab. The crab is an invasive species, and the find was among the first confirmed reports of the species in Acadia National Park.

While finding a before-unseen species in the park isn’t likely for most students, every student can discover a devotion to the environment.

“Whether they come to SEA once or multiple times, or come on field trips or virtual programs, they build upon these experiences and become local stewards of our shared lands and waters,” said Steele. “They feel comfortable in the outdoors and they know how to interact with the park, to leave it as they found it, or even better than they found it.” ■

SHANNON BRYAN is Friends of Acadia’s Content and Website Manager.

Editor’s Note: Some of the details for this story were gleaned from a presentation by Acadia National Park Education Coordinator Kate Petrie: “History of the Schoodic Education Adventure.”

2022 VISITATION

Second Highest on

RECORD for Acadia



How did we get here and where are we headed?

SAM MALLON/FOA

BY ADAM GIBSON

The COVID pandemic impacted national parks in numerous ways. It disrupted conservation research, derailed many park management plans, and altered strategies for public engagement. It also dramatically affected visitation to parks, making trends more volatile.

One lingering pandemic-related question is whether the post-2020 changes in visitation trends will continue and establish a new normal.

2022 Acadia National Park visitation was 3,970,201 visits, which is about a 2 percent decline from 2021 (4,069,098 visits). However, when compared to pre-pandemic visitation levels (2015-2019), visitation for 2022 was up about 20 percent. This suggests we're still very much in a post-COVID visitation boom.

How people enter Acadia appears to be different after 2020 as well. In 2019, a record number of people visited the park via the fare-free Island Explorer bus system, and commercial buses. And still about 91 percent of visits were from people in cars.

In 2022, about 95 percent of visits were from people in cars. For context, 99.5 percent of visits came from cars in 2020, when Island Explorer operations were suspended due to the COVID pandemic, and 97 percent of visits via cars in 2021, when a reduced Island Explorer system resumed. While a difference of 4-6 percent does not sound like a lot, remember we're talking about very large numbers.

With respect to travel mode, if people visited Acadia the same way in 2022 as they did in 2019, there would have been about 54,000 fewer cars in the park over the course of the year. This could have meant as many as 11,000 fewer cars for the month of August. Not an insignificant number when considering parking at Sand Beach, Jordan Pond, or Bass Harbor Head Light Station.

VISITATION TRENDS

So, what does this mean for future visitation trends? Visitation to Acadia does not appear to be cooling down. In 2022, visitation for May, July, September, and December were all the highest on record for those months using the current visitation calculation method established in 1990.

The numbers present challenges for park staff responsible for ensuring that visitors have a high-quality experience, especially during a period of significant understaffing.

The upshot is that the park transportation plan (approved in 2019) is now more important than ever. But the broad-sweeping plan, containing goals the park has had in sight since the formation of the 1992 General Management Plan (the last full-scale general management plan), is no small undertaking. Park and regional staff, the public, and partners such as Friends of Acadia will all need to work in concert if we hope preserve Acadia National Park the way it truly deserves.

Potential Adjustment to the Visitation Calculation Method Coming for Acadia National Park

WHAT CONSTITUTES A PARK “VISIT”?

Current data indicates Acadia had about 3,970,201 visits in 2022. Not VISITORS as in people, but visits.

The National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Use Statistics program defines a visit as, “The entry of a person onto lands or waters administered by the NPS except for non-reportable and non-recreation visits... The applicable rule is that one entrance per individual per day may be counted.” Reentries on the same day, as well as entries to a detached portion on the same day, are considered a single visit.

COUNTING CHALLENGES

For anyone with a cursory knowledge of Acadia, counting park visits appears problematic. There are really only two formalized entrances (the Sand Beach entrance station and the Cadillac Mountain entrance station) where a visitor might encounter a ranger, pay the necessary fee, and obtain a map and park information.

For better or worse, visitors can and often do enter and exit the park multiple times a day and have no idea they are doing so. How do we keep track of all these entries and exits to count visitation then? Well, the secret is, we don’t. Visitation to Acadia National Park is not a count, it is a calculation; an estimate if you prefer. But it is not one we take lightly. A great deal of work and effort goes into making sure we get it right.

REVISITING COUNTING METHODOLOGY

Acadia National Park has visitation records going back to 1919 when Acadia was still known as Lafayette National Park (the renaming to Acadia came in 1929), and different methods were employed over the decades.

In 1990, researchers from the University of Vermont (Dr. Robert Manning and others) helped to dramatically alter the visitation calculation method. After an exhaustive study of visitors using interviews and surveys, the research team developed a set of monthly multipliers that represented the

relationship between entries at the Sand Beach entrance station and entries to the remainder of the park on Mount Desert Island (Schoodic and Isle au Haut were treated separately). In other words, they determined that for every car entering the Sand Beach entrance, there were, depending on the season, between two and four other cars entering the rest of the park on Mount Desert Island.

The 1990 visitation calculation method received slight adjustments every few years, but being more than 30 years old, it was overdue for a critical review. In 2021 Acadia National Park contracted with an outside consultant to replicate the 1990 visitation calculation method using modern visitor use modeling technology (Bluetooth and Wi-Fi with GIS modeling and analysis) to determine whether the current counting method was still valid. Furthermore, we wanted to know how the calculation might need to be adjusted.

Results from the study were finalized in 2022 and are still being reviewed internally, but surprisingly the changes suggested by the research group would result in past visitation estimates that differ by less than 4 percent of overall visitation estimates.

The purpose of tracking visitor use statistics is to prove a statistically valid, reliable, and replicable method for collecting and reporting visitor use data for the park, and Acadia works hard to support regular data collection, timely publication, and interpretation of these data.

Deciding to revisit a 30-year-old visitation calculation method was an easy decision to make, and the fact that it’s held up so well all these years indicates both the quality of the original work and the consistency of visitor behavior.

If you would like to know exactly how Acadia or any NPS unit calculates visitation, you can do so by visiting the Integrated Resource Management Applications (IRMA) portal at (Irma.nps.gov). ■

DR. ADAM GIBSON manages the Social Science program at Acadia National Park.



Just Call Him Acadia's "Fixer"

Deputy Superintendent Brandon Bies Thrives On Solving Problems, Both Big And Small

BY LORI SCHAEFER



When Brandon Bies started his career with the National Park Service (NPS) as a young archaeologist, he didn't envision himself as deputy superintendent of one of the most popular national parks in the country. Yet almost everything Bies has accomplished in his impressive two-decade career has prepared him for exactly this. And he loves it!

Bies has worked at the park, regional, and national levels, in congressional affairs, as a park manager, and as a cultural resource specialist and archeologist. This diverse set of experiences combined with his energy, passion, and love of "fixing" things, are just some of the assets that Bies brings to Acadia.

Bies was named Deputy Superintendent of Acadia National Park and St. Croix International Historic Site in October 2021. He, his wife Laura, and their two young sons, Sam (age 11) and Josh (age 8), relocated to Mount Desert Island in December 2021.

Bies recently marked his one-year anniversary with Acadia and I sat down with him to discuss his role and learn more about what prompted him to put Acadia on a short list of parks where he would be willing to relocate.

Q: Tell us about your job. What portions of the park do you manage?

A: Acadia has about 100 permanent employees and 165 seasonal positions (when we can fill them all). The park is organized by function currently into five divisions: Administration, Maintenance, Resource Management, Visitor Experience and Education, Visitor Resource and Protection. And we're soon to add a sixth division, Project Management (see Superintendent's Column, page 7).

As Deputy Superintendent, I oversee the operations of the park and all six division chiefs report to me. I also oversee the park's safety program and the St. Croix Island International Historic Site up on the Canadian border.

On any given day, I might work with Superintendent Kevin Schneider on a big issue like what housing at Acadia looks like five or 10 years from now, and later that day I'm problem solving how to get a missing form processed by HR so we can hire a person...and everything in between.

Q: How did your background prepare you for the job? Was this always your career path?

A: I started as an archeologist with the NPS 20 years ago. My background and interests were in archeology, history, and historic preservation. That's what I thought I wanted to do, and it's still a huge part of what I do.

After a few years in the field, I wanted to try leadership positions. I managed a couple of stand-alone units of the NPS—Great Falls Park in Virginia and Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery.

My next stop was a detail assignment in Legislative and Congressional Affairs in D.C., and from there I moved to a permanent position handling congressional affairs for the National Capitol Region office of the park service for four years.

After that, I was the superintendent of Manassas National Battlefield Park in Virginia. It was the perfect first superintendency for me as it was a smaller park with about 700,000 visitors per year and a staff of 30, and it was a historical site.

I absolutely loved leading a park! At Manassas, I was a reformed archeologist implementing programs to preserve

historic landscape and the natural habitat, and I loved that. I had no plans to do anything else.

In March 2020, I got a call from the Deputy Director of the NPS asking me to coordinate the park service's response to COVID. I really didn't want to do it. I was happy where I was. But, when the NPS leadership calls and asks, you do it. I served as the NPS Director's Deputy Chief of Staff, coordinating the agency's COVID-19 response. I got to work with people at the highest levels across the park service, and it was one of the times I worked with Acadia Superintendent Kevin Schneider.

Q: How did you get from a top staff job in Washington D.C. during COVID to Acadia?

A: After 10 months in that position, my wife and I started talking about the future. Given the age of our kids, we knew if we were going to make a move out of D.C., this was the time to do it. And we knew that if we could survive raising two very active sons in the city during COVID for 1.5 years with no school, we were resilient!

We pulled together a short list of places that I would want to work and where we wanted to raise our family. Acadia was on that list. When this job opened up, I jumped at the chance to apply.

Q: What do you enjoy most about the job?

A: I like being “the fixer”—the problem solver. I enjoy talking through the issues with the division chiefs and other key staff to get their perspectives and ideas, thinking through all aspects of an issue or a problem, and then making a well-informed, deliberate decision.

I don't make a lot of snap decisions. I want to make sure that everybody in the room has had an opportunity to give their perspective. That was modeled for me early in my park service career by former Acting NPS Director David Vela when he served as my superintendent. It's something I have always appreciated and tried to model. I've found that at Acadia we can do that in a productive, cordial, and respectful way.

Q: What are some of the best parts of your job at Acadia?

A: On a personal level—we love it here! We love the lifestyle, the climate, and the people. It's a lot less intense than living in a major urban area. Everyone is welcoming, friendly, and so supportive. We're thriving.

From a career perspective, I'm learning so much. Until now, I'd never managed a large campground operation, a large bus transportation system, or worked with a super heavy-hitting philanthropic partner like Friends of Acadia. It's a totally different scale.



COURTESY BRANDON BIES

Brandon Bies and his family stop to take a selfie during a hike in Acadia.

The other thing that's incredibly rewarding is the dedication of Acadia's staff. Our park employees—no matter what role they're in—do such a good job, maintain a positive attitude, and are committed to the mission of preserving and protecting Acadia as a natural resource. They take pride in their work and in the mission. They are some of the most dedicated to the mission that I've ever experienced.

Q: Do you have any fun facts you want to share as we get to know you?

A: My wife Laura and I were born 10 hours apart in the same Delaware hospital and we didn't know each other until later in life. She is the eldest and her birthday is July 5, while mine is July 6.

Q: What do you want our readers to know about 2023 and the park moving forward?

A: I'm the operations guy, so what excites me may not be true for everyone. I'm excited about new pavement on most of Park Loop Road and new pavement and culverts on Cadillac Mountain. I'm looking forward to finally breaking ground on the new maintenance facility. It's been a long time coming and it's one of the shining examples of the Great American Outdoors Act in action. I'm also really excited about tackling the housing challenge in a meaningful way with Friends of Acadia's partnership. So many things, big and small! ■

Learn more about Acadia's Deputy Superintendent Brandon Bies by scanning the QR code and reading the full story on our website at friendsofacadia.org/bies.



LORI SCHAEFER is Friends of Acadia's Vice President of Communications.

A LITTLE *ICE* WOULD BE *NICE*

This article is part of a series highlighting the Jordan Pond Water Quality Project and the monitoring buoy that continuously records physical and chemical conditions in the pond. Read the full series at friendsofacadia.org/buoy

BILL GAWLEY/NPS

BY BILL GAWLEY

On its surface, ice matters a great deal to winter skaters, people who ice fish, and wildlife that appreciates a winter shortcut from one side of the pond to the next. But ice cover on a lake or pond impacts the ecosystems and water quality underneath, too.

Acadia's Jordan Pond is typically covered with ice from early January to early April, but there has been considerable variation in the timing and duration over the past 30 years.

The earliest day Jordan Pond froze for the winter was December 18, 1989. The longest period of ice cover was 115 days, in 1992, when the first day of fully open water was April 26. In 2013 the lake never fully froze over!

In recent years, warmer winters have led to shorter seasons of ice cover and earlier open-water dates. These changes can affect Jordan Pond's water temperature throughout the year, allowing it to warm faster with earlier exposure to sunlight, while spring winds mix this warmed surface water into the cooler, deeper water. In turn, temperature affects almost every aspect of lake-water chemistry, physical properties, and ecosystems.

Warmer water can increase algae growth, including certain species that cause harmful algal blooms, which can have

severe impacts on water quality, human health, and aquatic ecosystems and increase the need for drinking water treatment.

Many freshwater animal and plant species can only survive in certain water-temperature ranges, so as temperature rises, cold- and cool-water fish may be replaced by other species better adapted to warmer water, including invasive species.

To better understand and anticipate such threats, Acadia National Park resource managers are keenly interested in learning how quickly and to what extent water temperatures in the park's lakes are changing. The continuous monitoring buoy maintained by the Jordan Pond Water Quality Project is providing some of this crucial information.

Prior to deploying the buoy in 2013, park staff measured water temperature at each meter of Jordan Pond's water column only once a month. But the water temperature changes significantly throughout the month, so these single measurements were mere snapshots of conditions during the monitoring visit. The monitoring buoy collects temperature (and other) measurements every 15 minutes throughout its 6-month deployment and provides a far more complete picture of how water temperature changes from the lake surface down to the lowest sensor at about 50 feet. The

graphs below show the contrast between the two monitoring methods over a 5-year period.

So how is Jordan Pond’s water temperature changing? That depends on where and when you measure. The lake’s surface water temperature, down to about 35 feet, varies drastically throughout the season as it is influenced by air temperature, but annual averages have remained surprisingly stable according to the past 9 years of data from the buoy.

The story is slightly different when you look at individual months — average August surface layer temperatures have increased by close to 2 degrees Celsius since 2013. The deeper layer of lake water —from about 50 feet to the bottom at 150 feet — has much smaller temperature fluctuations throughout the year, but annual average temperatures have increased by almost 2 degrees. This is significant, because the deeper layer constitutes up to two-thirds of the total volume of Jordan Pond.

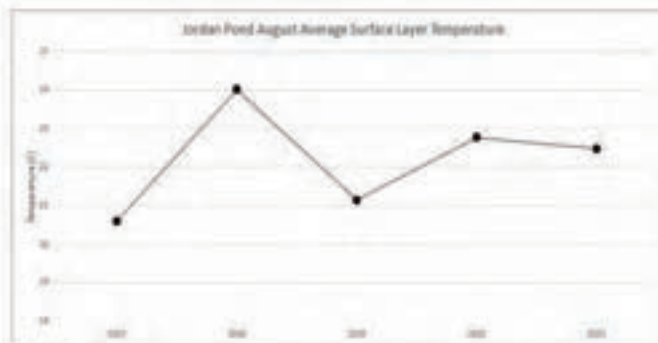
Is this a cause for concern? Thankfully, Jordan Pond’s otherwise outstanding water quality makes it more resilient to many of the detrimental effects caused by warming temperatures in more impaired lakes. However, awareness that these changes are occurring makes it more important that we continue monitoring and researching efforts to fully understand the threats and strengthen our stewardship activities in order to better protect this iconic resource. ■

BILL GAWLEY manages the Air and Water Resources program at Acadia National Park and has been monitoring Acadia’s air and water quality since 1993.

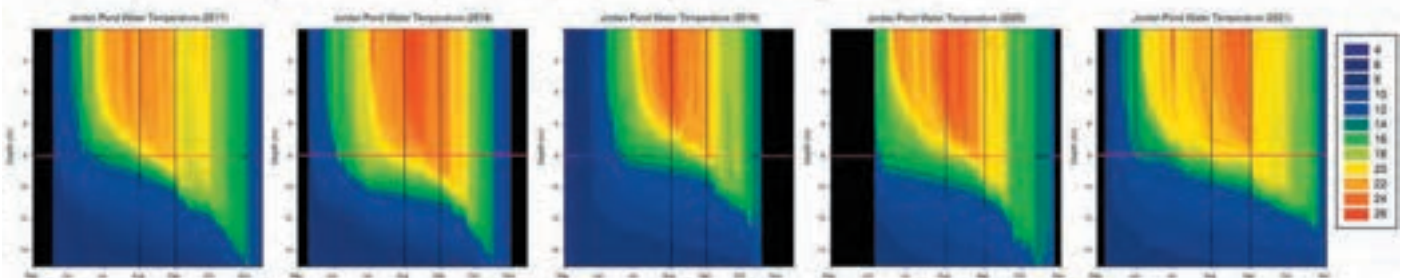


JUDY HAZEN-CONNERY/NPS

Rebecca Cole-Will and Bill Gawley install the datalogger that stores high-resolution water quality data in the Jordan Pond buoy. Below: Graphs of monthly water temperature measurements collected by Acadia National Park staff and thermal plots of Jordan Pond water temperature generated from high-resolution buoy data, recorded every 15 minutes.



Above: Temperature and depth of warm surface layer of Jordan Pond, from monthly water monitoring measurements.



Above: Annual thermal plots of Jordan Pond, from continuous buoy measurements.

Save the Date

Our Friends of Acadia
34th Annual Benefit is
Saturday, August 12, 2023

Let's come together to celebrate and support our beloved Acadia National Park!

BY MARISA MARINELLI

While spring is just arriving in Acadia National Park, we're enthusiastically looking ahead to a lively summer evening under the tent at the Asticou Inn.

Friends of Acadia's 34th Annual Benefit will be held on Saturday, August 12, 2023, at the Asticou Inn in Northeast Harbor, Maine.

Together we'll raise critical funds for Acadia through a Live Auction, Silent Auction, and Paddle Raise. The evening will also be filled with live music, dancing, and a celebration of the park we all love so much.

It felt fabulous to be back in person for our Annual Benefit last year, and it's thanks to our Presenting Sponsor, Chilton Trust

Company, our amazing Benefit Committee, and all of you for making it such a huge success. This year, we are grateful for the continued generosity of all the volunteers, auction donors, patrons, businesses, and attendees. This passionate community of supporters has made the Benefit a wonderful summer tradition and an important fundraiser for Acadia National Park.

This year's Benefit Committee, led by Laura Katona and Kathleen McIntyre, is already hard at work planning what we know will be a memorable night. We can't wait! ■

MARISA MARINELLI is Friends of Acadia's Senior Development Officer for Major Gifts and Events.

Join us!

Friends of Acadia's 34th Annual Benefit

August 12, 2023

Asticou Inn, Northeast Harbor, Maine

Featuring a Silent Auction, Live Auction, and Paddle Raise. The 2023 Paddle Raise will support the acquisition of an urgently needed replacement boat for Acadia National Park. Monitoring, safety, protection, and maintenance departments will all be improved with the modern boat.

If you have any questions about the Annual Benefit or would like to donate to the silent or live auction, please contact Marisa Marinelli at marisa@friendsofacadia.org or 207-370-4935.

Stay apprised of Annual Benefit info: friendsofacadia.org/annualbenefit



FRIENDS OF
ACADIA
34th ANNUAL BENEFIT

WILL GREENE/FOA

The John G. and Jean R. Gosnell Foundation Carries on Jean and Jack's Tradition of Giving

BY LISA HORSCH CLARK



Courtesy Gosnell Family

Jean and Jack Gosnell in Southwest Harbor.

The first thing Tyler and Drew Doggett did when they visited their grandma and granddad—Jean and Jack Gosnell—was to climb Flying Mountain. It was tradition.

The weeklong visit to their grandparents in Southwest Harbor each summer was full of tradition. They hiked, ate blueberries, explored, ate lobster, played cards at the house, and went to bed—waking the next day to do it all again. Sometimes they'd include boat adventures up Somes Sound, tide pooling, canoeing, and visits to the Jordan Pond House among their daily activities. It was the same thing every year,

but the boys, now men with families of their own, said it never got old.

Tyler and Drew loved visiting Jean and Jack with their mother Terry Gosnell Doggett each year, and that Acadia experience early in their lives created a significant passion for nature and national parks. That love for national parks born in Acadia inspired them years later to take a 14,000-mile trip across the country to visit national and state parks and other natural areas. They were amazed by the diversity of protected areas, and it made them appreciate even more those special experiences they had with family in Acadia.

Though years have passed since they visited Acadia as a family, their memories of the mountain landscapes—far different from where they grew up in Maryland outside of Washington D.C.—are still crisp. Drew still talks about the fresh air, beautiful moss, and cool breezes coming through the window at night, and how he felt like all his senses were coming alive when visiting Mount Desert Island. He considers it the gold standard of living and wants his children to have similar experiences in Acadia and with nature.

The Doggett family also wants others far beyond their family to experience the simple pleasures they had at Acadia. In 1997, the John G. and Jean R. Gosnell Foundation was established to carry on Jean and Jack's tradition of giving and to honor their legacy. The foundation is focused on ensuring present and future generations have access to educational opportunities and experiences in nature, particularly addressing the most vulnerable natural environments that are at risk.

For the last six years, through grants made by the Gosnell Foundation, the family has supported an array of programs at Friends of Acadia, including the volunteer program, Friends of Acadia operations, greening the equipment at Acadia, and seasonal workforce housing.

These investments in Friends of Acadia will ensure Acadia has the staff, volunteers, and resources that it needs to be protected for many generations to come. The board and staff at Friends of Acadia appreciate the longtime support of the Gosnell Foundation and all it has accomplished to preserve Acadia now and far into the future. ■

LISA HORSCH CLARK is Vice President of Development and Donor Relations.

FRONT & CENTER

In this series, we're spotlighting the talented and dedicated staff of Acadia National Park who deliver an incredible visitor experience day after day. Whether working directly with park visitors or behind the scenes, seasonally or year-round, these are the people who make the park hum. They work hard and wear many hats, keeping the park in incredible shape, keeping park visitors safe, and rising to the occasion as visitation has reached peak levels in recent years. We at Friends of Acadia appreciate the work they do, we appreciate them. Thank you!

Thank you!



MEET SCOUT CUTLER RECREATION FEE CLERK AT ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

BY SHANNON BRYAN

Last summer, Scout Cutler woke up before dawn and made her way to the fee booths at the base of Cadillac Summit Road. Most mornings, cars were already lined up at the gate—eager park visitors waiting to drive up Cadillac to watch the sunrise.

During the summer, the recreation fee clerks work a 3 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. sunrise shift at Cadillac. For Cutler, those early starts are a perk.

“I really liked the weird hours,” she said. “I loved to have the afternoon off to go do stuff in the park.”

There’s no easing into the day on a sunrise shift—work kicks off in a rush. Cutler checked in car after car, sold park passes, and welcomed a parade of visitors before daylight even arrived.

Cutler’s role at the Cadillac Summit Road is a relatively new one. Up until a couple of years ago, no reservations were needed to drive up to the Cadillac summit. Witnessing the sunrise from Cadillac has long been popular, but the increasingly heavy traffic congestion was challenging park resources and visitor safety (emergency vehicles couldn’t always get up the road when it was backed up).

In 2021, the National Park Service implemented a reservation system to reduce traffic and illegal parking, which also improved the experience for visitors who came to enjoy the vista, not sit in a bottleneck of automobiles.

The role of a recreation fee clerk at Cadillac is a fine balance of customer service and efficiency. The sunrise waits for no one, and the visitors in that long line don’t want to miss it. At the same time, many visitors have

questions or don’t realize they needed a park entrance pass in addition to their Cadillac reservation. Maybe they showed up without a reservation at all or on the wrong day.

It was Cutler’s job to provide answers, explain things, and issue park passes (recreation fee clerks cannot make reservations, but they do sell entrance passes). She also had to turn people away if they didn’t have a reservation. While a necessary part of the job, it was a challenge some days. “We were turning around 300 cars a day,” she said. And turned-away visitors were sometimes frustrated.

In her off time, she also got a glimpse into other possibilities within the park. She once went on a ride-along with a law enforcement ranger and immediately felt like it might be something she’d like to pursue. “Environmental law and protecting nature—I feel strongly about that,” she said.

She was also able to pursue another passion: search and rescue. Cutler’s been a member of a backcountry rescue team since she was 13. Last summer in Acadia, she was able to assist with more than a dozen search-and-rescue calls. “I love it, it’s what I live on,” she said. “And it gave me an outlet over the summer.”

Her role as a recreational fee clerk is a “great foot in the door,” she said. “It’s been great for building experience, networking, and knowing how things work.”

“It’s not glamorous, but it’s an important job,” Cutler added. “I would choose Cadillac again.” ■

SHANNON BRYAN is Friends of Acadia’s Content and Website Manager.



ASHLEY L. CONTI/FOA



ASHLEY L. CONTI/FOA

Opposite page: Scout Cutler, Acadia National Park recreation fee clerk and technician, lays out cones at the Sand Beach entrance station. Top: Cutler checks park passes for visitors at the Sand Beach entrance station. Bottom: Cutler gears up in her search and rescue attire at Sand Beach.

5 WAYS PARK VISITORS CAN EASE THE BURDEN ON HARDWORKING PARK STAFF

1 Make a Reservation to Drive Up Cadillac – Sunrise or Daytime

Advanced reservations are required for all vehicles to drive up the Cadillac Summit Road during the busy season (for 2023, reservations are required from May 24 through October 22). Reservations are made online at [recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov). Park staff cannot make reservations for you, and they can't be made at the fee stations. Sunrise reservations fill up the fastest, so you'll need to book early.

2 Check all Details Online

Making a reservation is like making a reservation for dinner: you need to be on time or you'll lose your spot. If your reservation is for Tuesday from 8-10 a.m., that means Tuesday from 8-10 a.m. is your window. Arriving on another day or at a different time won't work, so double-check the details.

3 Research and Modify

Take the time to research what to expect at the summit. Acadia has no shortage of stand-out views that don't require a reservation. If you're really excited to get up there, but the forecast is calling for rain the day you're going, know you can modify your reservation up to 10 minutes beforehand. Choose any other date or time that's open. (Sunrise is so popular, you might not find another sunrise opening, but there are often open daytime slots.)

4 Purchase Your Park Entrance Pass

Be sure to have your park entrance pass. If you forget to buy your park pass before arriving for your reserved drive-up time on Cadillac, you can purchase one at the fee station.

5 Consider Other Sunrise-Viewing Locations

While Cadillac Mountain gets a good deal of attention, there are plenty of places to watch the sunrise – or simply enjoy the view any time of day. Dorr Mountain is a sunrise option for hikers. Schooner Head overlook and Otter Cliffs offer stellar sunrise and daytime views.

NEW MEMBERS

September 1 – December 31, 2022

Karen and John Abel
Barbara Acosta
Kathleen Adleman
Cheryl Alexis
Claire Allen
Peter Allen
Beverly Anderson
Leila and Chris Bacho
Marcia Jane Bailey
John Baker
Traci Barnes
Diana Beaudoin
Lia Benoit
Laura and Brandon Bies
Susan Blauert
Jennifer Bloxom
Amy Borne
Timothy Bowdoin
Sarah Boyle
Marisa Bradley
Jessica Brigman
Cara Broadbelt
Catharine Broderick
Elizabeth Bryce Bell
Heidi Budsock
Claire Bullard
Anna Bunz
Christopher Busick
Hamish Caldwell
Serena Caperoni
Noah Casey
Catherine Casmirri
Linda Chambers
Barbara Charlebois
Keith Chudyk
Jessica Cichalski
Christine Clarke
Joanna Cline
Kathleen Coleman
Jody Comart
William Cunningham
David Cwiertniewicz
Ellen Daffron
Cindy Dame-Van Horn
Danielle Day
Mary Delcuze
Dan Dellmyer
Lauren Dethloff
Caroline Devereux
Julie Dimmock
Rebecca Dinsmore
Mary Dodds
Patricia Doiron
Elaine Donald
Barbara Thatcher
Donaldson and Alan Peabody Donaldson
Sheldon Dority
Claire Dorwart
Matt Doubleday
Don Doyle
Robert C. Dutton*
Krista and Daniel Earley
Kristen Eberlin
Zak Eckel
Madeline Eckenrode
Emily Ellis

Cathy Hunter and Laurie Estes
John Evans
Vicki Evans
Joanne and Paul Farrell
Sarah Fonder-Kristy
Debra Ford
Catherine and James Foster
Claire Fox and Peter Scott
Alex Fram
Keller Freeman
David Frey
Charles Friedman
Brenda and Jack Frost
Anne Gibbons
Megan Giles
Coni Gilman
Pat and Walter Goetz
Nancy Gomes and Jarod Kohr
Paul Goodof
Angelo Gordon and Brian Sigman
Bradford Graves
Stephanie Greenfield
April Gremillion
Carol Grey
Henry Griffen
Eleanor Guerriero
Louann and Robert Gwynn
Eva and Stephen Hachey
Jane Haines
Donna Halpern
Brenda Harp
Ellen and Fred Harris
Charlotte Harrison
Christa and Jeff Hawkins
Claire and William Hawkins
Elise Henricks
William Hickey
Debra and David Housworth
Rosemary Huber
Mary Humphrey
Gregory Hutchins
Sofia Hyatt
Melanie Jasina
Katena Jensen
Regina Jensen
Carlson John
Howard Jones
Stephanie Joslyn
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Proposed Entrance Fee Increase

continued from page 6

resources: crowding, congestion, and wear-and-tear to Acadia's trails, roads, and facilities.

Federal Funding has Not Kept Up

Like all national parks, Acadia receives federal funding, although the base appropriation has certainly not kept pace with inflation over the last 20 years.

While visitation grows and associated resource challenges increase, base federal funding remains stagnant relative to the cost of living. And those funds mostly pay for staff, leaving entrance fees to try to cover the costs of a swelling list of park infrastructure projects.

It's a troublesome scenario. There is no question that our national parks, including Acadia, need more financial support at this time of growing interest and expectations. Friends of Acadia will continue to provide philanthropic financial assistance, and work with the Maine congressional delegation to advocate for increased federal funding.

What Next?

In a public comment period from Nov. 29-Dec. 29, 2022, the park received 115 comments with 70 percent of those being supportive. Some asked for reduced fees for local residents.

The National Park Service had not yet approved the fee increase at the time this magazine went to print. A decision is expected this spring, and it will take some time to implement.

Acadia belongs to us all. Entrance fees help keep it safe, accessible, and beautiful for future generations. ■

IN MEMORIAM

September 1 – December 31, 2022

We gratefully acknowledge gifts received in memory of:

Bill and Gerry Albert	Rosemary A. Gurysh	Peter O. Rees
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The Acadia Family Lost Two Influential Members Last Fall

BY STEPHANIE CLEMENT

HOWARD SOLOMON a True Champion of Friends of Acadia



Howard Solomon was a Friends of Acadia board member from 2002-2011 and trustee from 2011 until his death in 2022. He and his late wife, Dee, joined the Friends of Acadia family by volunteering on the trails and

carriage roads. They became Volunteer Crew Leaders and developed deep, lasting friendships with their fellow volunteers. Friends of Acadia awarded them the Excellence in Volunteerism award at the 2002 Annual Meeting.

Howard was an avid cyclist and a great supporter of the Island Explorer bus service. He advocated for park funding in Washington, D.C., served as a community ambassador during the Acadia Centennial celebrations, and worked on helpful projects, such as researching and mapping all bike rack locations in Bar Harbor to encourage more people to travel without their cars.

Howard was also an outstanding champion for Acadia through song. He could often be heard sharing his talents on the piano at the lounge at the Balance Rock Inn, where he would donate his tips to Friends of Acadia. Howard served as a drummer with the “Imprecision Drill Team” of Stewardship volunteers in the 4th of July and Quightside Festival parades. He also sang to special volunteer groups, such as the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, that traveled to Acadia for work trips. Howard and fellow volunteer, Charlie Edwards, would adapt the lyrics of songs and invite everyone to join:

Excerpts of “The Brushy Side of the Trail” sung to the tune of “The Sunny Side of the Street” written by Dorothy Fields and composed by Jimmy McHugh:

Grab your t-shirt, get your cap
Don't forget the gloves and water
Time to get your tail
To the brushy part of the trail

Don't you hear the click and clack
Of those loppers right beside you
You should never fail
To get out there clearing the trail

“Catching up with Howard was always fun,” said former Friends of Acadia Board Member Bill Zoellick. “He combined compassion, intelligence, generosity, engagement, and an upbeat attitude in a way that was unique. Oh, and good stories too. He made the world—and FOA—a better place.”

Former Deputy Superintendent LEN BOBINCHOCK Helped Initiate the Island Explorer



Len Bobinchock had a 43-year career with the National Park Service that included service at Fire Island National Seashore and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, as well as law enforcement training at the FBI Academy. Len completed his career at Acadia National Park where he served

as Deputy Superintendent for 25 years, including time as Acting Superintendent.

As Deputy Superintendent, Len often had to tackle budget and personnel issues, visits from dignitaries, and communications about emergencies. He served as the park's representative to the MDI League of Towns, an affiliation of the Town Managers across Mount Desert Island, Trenton, Lamoine, and the offshore islands. And

he did it all with a calm, graceful presence that enabled partners to move forward in unity on large projects.

Perhaps the greatest example of this was Len's work to initiate and support the Island Explorer bus service. Len was often credited with the smart decision to design the Island Explorer to connect to hotels and campgrounds—convenient places where visitors already had parking spaces. He was instrumental in the decision to utilize cleaner fuels, as well as in the integration of technology. He was a master at maximizing funding sources—finding ways to match federal fund sources with state, local, and philanthropic funding. He helped the Island Explorer grow and was a great proponent of the Acadia Gateway Center.

Ken Olson, Trustee Emeritus for Friends of Acadia and President and CEO from 1995-2006, remarked, "Len was a great person, a quiet, effective leader and partner. He always kept an even keel and was focused on the goal. He was a fine professional and a good friend."

Friends of Acadia awarded Len the Marianne Edwards award in 2008, and the Board passed a resolution upon Len's retirement in 2014 acknowledging his "extraordinary public service... outstanding spirit of partnership and collaborative problem solving... and his remarkable track record of achievement in successfully implementing ambitious projects with generational impact....".

Howard and Len combined the heart, the knowledge, and the dedication to help Acadia. Friends of Acadia is grateful for their service. They will be missed. ■

STEPHANIE CLEMENT is Friends of Acadia's Vice President of Conservation.

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Membership volunteers in training at the Friends of Acadia office prior to the start of the 2022 season.

BRINGING NEW MEMBERS TO THE TABLE

BY SHANNON BRYAN

Friends of Acadia has staffed a membership information table in Acadia near Jordan Pond House since 2007. Membership table volunteers “put a face on Friends of Acadia.”

While a brochure is an efficient way to highlight all the ways Friends of Acadia helps to protect Acadia National Park, an in-person conversation with a volunteer who treasures the park and understands our work goes a whole lot farther.

Georgia Munsell first fell in love with Acadia more than 20 years ago during a visit to the park with her husband. It was during that visit she learned about Friends of Acadia, and immediately became a member.

“I care so much about Acadia – its awesome beauty, the well-maintained trails and carriage roads,” said Munsell. “And who is doing the most to protect and preserve this park? Friends of Acadia.”

So when the idea of a membership table was first brought forth as a way to solicit new members, encourage volunteerism, and raise awareness of all the work Friends of Acadia does, Munsell was the first person to sign up as a volunteer. She remains one of Friends of Acadia’s longest-serving volunteers.

“Georgia is an amazing force, and we’re so lucky to have her,” said Development Officer Lee McWilliams. “Throughout the years, she’s also helped train and mentor new volunteers at the membership table, passing on her expertise and showing volunteers the ropes. She’s a great ambassador for the park and Friends of Acadia.”

During weekdays from June to September, volunteers staff a table at Jordan Pond House, helping spread the word about Friends of Acadia. They engage with a lot of visitors in the park, starting conversations with the multitude of hikers and cyclists and folks stepping off an Island Explorer bus to explore or enjoy a popover at Jordan Pond House.

“This is not an opportunity to sit behind the table and give park information,” said Munsell. “Rather it is standing and approaching visitors to engage them and tell them about Friends of Acadia and asking them to join.”

Volunteers sign up an average of 500 new members during the season when the membership table is in full swing.

That just goes to show how personal contact, particularly while visitors are enjoying all Acadia has to offer, gives park visitors a chance to learn more about Friends of Acadia and to get involved as a member or volunteer. ■

VOLUNTEER AT FRIENDS OF ACADIA'S MEMBERSHIP TABLE

Interested in becoming a Membership Table volunteer this season? We always welcome new volunteers, and training is provided.

To learn more or sign up as a volunteer, reach out to Friends of Acadia Development Officer Lee McWilliams at lee@friendsofacadia.org or 207-370-2912.



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Updates



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Sydney Schneider (from left), Rose Hearn, Connor Schneider, Cate Schneider, and Sue Sheehan participated the 21st Annual Friends of Acadia Earth Day Roadside Cleanup in April 2022.

Help Keep Acadia Trash-Free During the 22nd Annual Earth Day Roadside Cleanup

It's nearly time for a spring cleaning in the communities around Acadia National Park. Mark your calendars for Friends of Acadia's Annual Earth Day Roadside Cleanup on April 29, 2023 from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

As early spring begins to warm the air and melt the snow on Mount Desert Island, it also reveals a long season's worth of debris.

Roadside snowbanks are particularly adept at collecting wind-blown trash, stowing it away all winter. When they inevitably recede, that trash and debris remains.

Each April for the last 22 years, volunteers rally on the roadsides of Mount Desert Island and Trenton to clean up what the winter left behind, putting that trash where it belongs and keeping the communities debris-free.

"Friends of Acadia's Annual Earth Day Roadside Clean Up is one of my favorite events of the year," said Friends of Acadia Stewardship Coordinator Nikki Burtis. "It is so awesome to see everyone out in their safety vests working together to make sure

MDI is as beautiful as it can be. We hope to see you there!"

Registration is required and opens the first week of April, so gather your family, friends, coworkers, or any other roadside-cleaning enthusiasts you know—or feel free to join us on your own. Prior to the Roadside Cleanup date, we'll be in touch with your section assignment and meet-up location for the day. (You're welcome to request a preferred section assignment, too. We'll do our best to accommodate.)

On the day of, bring your positive attitude, a reusable water bottle, closed toed shoes, and appropriate clothing for the weather. Section leaders will bring trash bags, safety vests, gloves, water, and a light snack.

Registration closes on Friday, April 21. If you have a group that is larger than 10 participants, you want to be a section leader (that'd be excellent!), or you have any other questions, please contact Friends of Acadia Stewardship Coordinator Nikki Burtis at 207-288-3934 or nikki@friendsofacadia.org.

Updates

Welcome to Friends of Acadia's New Board Members

Please join us in welcoming Justin Bennett and Curtis Simard to the Friends of Acadia Board of Directors.



JUSTIN BENNETT is an attorney and the manager of the Ellsworth law firm of Hale and Hamlin. Justin

is also the Clerk of the Blue Hill Country Club and a Patron of the Oli Bennett Charitable Trust (United Kingdom). His previous work on nonprofit boards includes service as a director (and term as President) of the Bay School in Blue Hill. Justin is a longstanding resident of Blue Hill and has two children, Chris and Robbie.

CURTIS C. SIMARD



serves as the President & CEO of Bar Harbor Bank shares and its subsidiary, Bar Harbor Bank & Trust. He has served on many nonprofit boards, including the Smithsonian affiliated Abbe Museum, New Hampshire Business & Industry, Seal Cove Auto Museum, Northern Light Maine Coast Memorial Hospital, and the Ellsworth Economic Development Corporation. A native of Saco, Maine, Curtis lives with his wife, Laurel, and daughters, Lexi and Emma, in Somesville on Mount Desert Island.

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Conversation Advocacy in Action

Friends of Acadia prioritizes advocacy as one of the best ways we can help protect Acadia. Thanks to member support, strategic partnerships, and the dedication of federal and state legislators, Friends of Acadia and partners have achieved great success, and we are excited about new initiatives to come.

Perhaps the biggest threat to Acadia in recent years was American Aquafarms' proposal to lease two 60-acre sites for industrial-sized salmon farms in Frenchman Bay. Friends of Acadia strategized with other conservation non-profits and supported Frenchman Bay United's work with scientists who demonstrated that the environmental impact would be highly damaging.

Fortunately, this crisis was ended by the Maine Department of Marine Resources, which terminated consideration of the farms on the grounds that American Aquafarms had not found an acceptable brood stock.

Now the challenge is to develop standards for ocean-based finfish farms going forward. Aquaculture is important to Maine's economy and will grow in importance in the future. Friends of Acadia is supporting efforts in the Maine legislature to establish reasonable standards for future ocean-based finfish projects to protect Maine's water quality, marine habitats, and native species.

At the federal level, Friends of Acadia has consistently advocated for funding necessary to preserve and protect the beauty and sustainability of our national parks and to simultaneously enhance the visitor experience. The result of public advocacy has been the enactment of several pieces of federal legislation that significantly increased support for our national parks and other public lands.

In 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) was enacted, providing funds for five years for the parks to tackle the estimated \$22.3 billion backlog in deferred maintenance and repairs. At Acadia,

the GAOA has funded two significant projects to rehabilitate the water and wastewater systems at Schoodic Point and to replace the structurally unsound maintenance building at Park Headquarters. We are hopeful that Congress will reauthorize GAOA and fund additional projects, including the rehabilitation of Schoodic Shores housing.

Three other significant bills helped national parks in 2022. The Inflation Reduction Act provided \$500 million to the National Park Service through FY 2030 to catch up with hiring positions left vacant due to lagging resources. It also allocated funds for deferred maintenance, conservation, and habitat restoration projects.

The Omnibus Appropriations bill incorporated bills sponsored by U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King to increase use of native plants in national parks and assist Acadia and local communities in addressing housing issues that hamper their ability to hire year-round staff for emergency services, resource management, and visitor outreach.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) helped national parks by providing funds for ecosystem restoration, transportation, and other environmental concerns. At Acadia, BIL funds have augmented the philanthropic contributions of Friends of Acadia and the Schoodic Institute for the climate-focused restoration of the Great Meadow and Bass Harbor Marsh.

These record-breaking federal investments in conservation will help our national parks adapt as the climate changes and visitation increases.

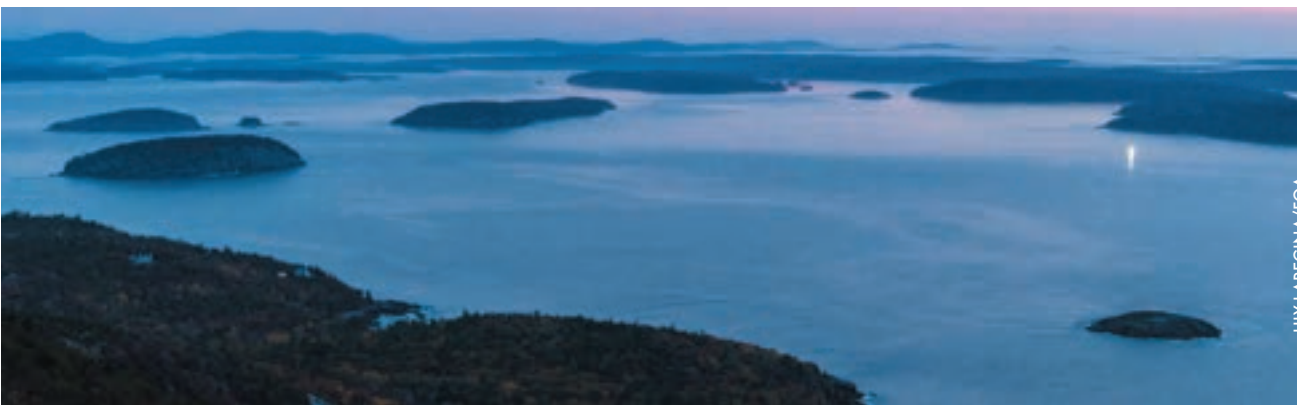
Friends of Acadia will continue to advocate for state and federal legislation to benefit Acadia, and we are committed to working on addressing barriers, such as affordable employee housing, that may challenge the park's ability to accomplish necessary projects. Thank you for your support!

— Hannah Sistare Clark, Vice Chair of the Board and Advocacy Committee Chair and Stephanie Clement, Vice President of Conservation

FROM THE VICE CHAIR



"Perhaps the biggest threat to Acadia in recent years was American Aquafarms' proposal to lease two 60-acre sites for industrial-sized salmon farms in Frenchman Bay."



SUNRISE OVER Frenchman Bay viewed from the Precipice Trail.

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Federal Funding for Acadia and Key Initiatives

BY STEPHANIE CLEMENT

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 brought about several good things for Acadia and the National Park Service. Not only did the bill avoid a December government shutdown, but it also increased appropriations for the operations of the National Park Service by approximately \$156 million—that's a 5.7 percent increase to the enacted operational budget of FY 2022.

While it is not clear how this funding will be distributed among national parks, it will start to address some of the staffing shortfalls across the parks. Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of Friends of Acadia and the Schoodic Institute, the bill did not contain the \$1 million increase in operating funds for Acadia's research and learning center at Schoodic. Friends of Acadia will continue to lobby in favor of this in future appropriations bills.

The omnibus appropriations bill also incorporated the Native Plant Species Pilot Program Act of 2022, a bill championed by U.S. Senator Susan Collins to establish pilot programs using native plants in geographically diverse units of the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management. Friends of Acadia supported this bill, recognizing the value of native plants and invasive plant removal in helping Acadia's natural resources be resilient to the effects of climate change.

The omnibus appropriations bill will also help Acadia National Park

and the surrounding communities address the need for workforce housing. In 1986, when Congress passed Acadia's boundary legislation, a 55-acre parcel owned by the National Park Service in Town Hill was designated to be transferred to the Town of Bar Harbor for development of a solid waste transfer facility.

U.S. Senator Angus King sponsored legislation, co-sponsored by Senator Collins and incorporated into the omnibus bill, to change that designation to affordable workforce housing benefiting the towns on Mount Desert Island. The language also allowed the National Park Service to retain 15 acres for housing and administrative facilities.

Friends of Acadia is grateful to the Maine congressional delegation for their continued support of Acadia National Park and for passage of this important legislation. ■

STEPHANIE CLEMENT is Friends of Acadia's Vice President of Conservation.



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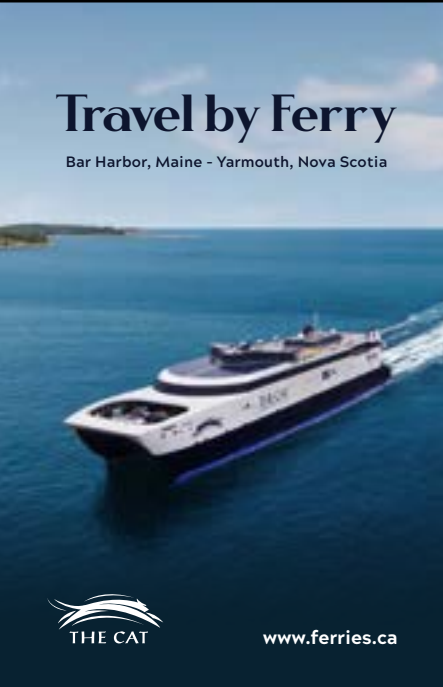


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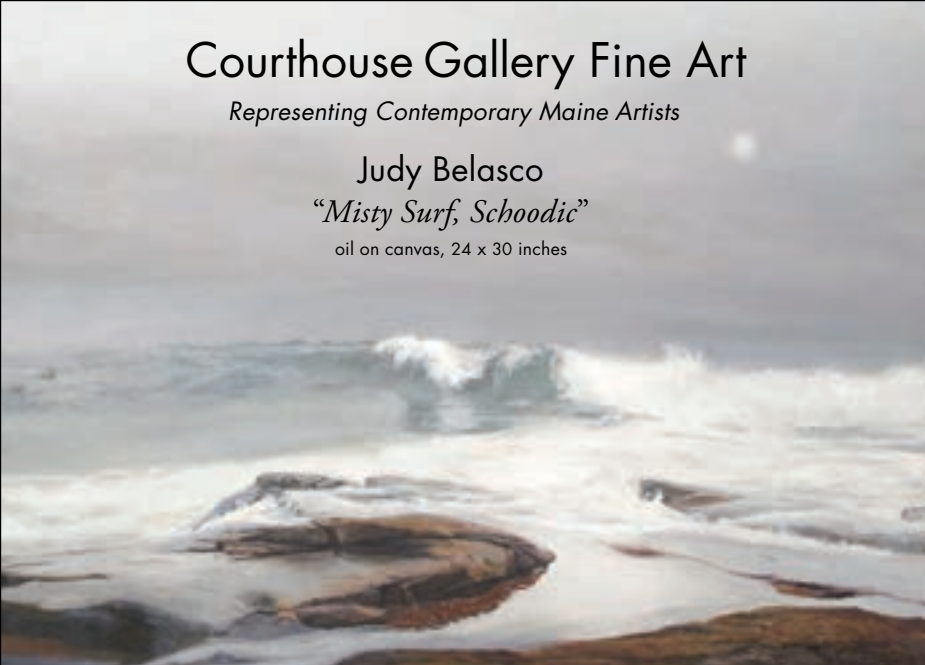
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Acadia Quest Adds New Stops for "Storytellers of Acadia" Edition

Acadia Quest is a fun and interactive way for families to explore Acadia National Park and meet park rangers. Now in its 14th edition, the experiential scavenger hunt expands this year to include "Storytellers of Acadia," featuring six additional activities guided by interpretive rangers, education interns, and Summit Stewards.

Questing families download the free Acadia Quest app and adventure their way to interesting corners of the park, where they'll uncover the stories intertwined with these special places. They'll visit Pretty Marsh Picnic Area in the summer to see swimming seals or climb Jordan Cliffs Trail in the fall to enjoy incredible scenery and maybe a glimpse of a peregrine falcon. Other new sites include Connors Nubble, Jesup Path, Ship Harbor, and the Valley Trail.

The Acadia Quest program is free and open to all, but teams will need a park pass to participate. The quest officially begins during National Park Week on Saturday, April 22.

The mobile Acadia Quest app is developed for iOS and Android platforms and will operate on smartphones, tablets, and desktops. Check out the new app by searching the app store for "Friends of Acadia" or "Acadia Quest," then download to your device. You may also use the QR code or visit:



Acadia Quest

www.friendsofacadia.oncell.com



COURTESY JENNIFER BRITZ



COURTESY JOANNA STONESIFER



COURTESY MELISSA HAAS

Families share photos of their Acadia Quest adventures throughout Acadia National Park.



2022 Acadia Quest Stats

- 19 teams completed the full quest of doing 6 activities or more
- 6 teams completed the speed quest of doing 3 activities or more
- 96 teams registered

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MISSION Friends of Acadia preserves, protects, and promotes stewardship of the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and distinctive cultural resources of Acadia National Park and surrounding communities for the inspiration and enjoyment of current and future generations.

BLACK-THROATED
GREEN WARBLER
perched in a tree
near Bubble Pond.



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