

# Merrymeeting News

The Newsletter of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay • P.O. Box 233 • Richmond Maine 04357

SUMMER 1993

## To Preserve, Protect and Improve the Natural Ecosystems of Merrymeeting Bay.

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay was formed in 1975 for people who care about the Bay's future. FOMB was revitalized in 1991 and re-incorporated as a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. FOMB's interests are diverse: scientific, educational, literary and historical. FOMB is also a Land Trust that accepts donations of land and provides stewardship for conservation easements. FOMB depends upon on volunteers and an active membership.

### FOMB COMMITTEES:

#### Water Quality Monitoring

Ed Benedikt, Brunswick  
Tulle Fraser, Woolwich

#### Wildlife & Fisheries

Marilyn Cole, Bath  
Steve Pelletier, Richmond

#### Property Protection & Stewardship

Nancy Churchill, Dresden  
Joe Trafton, Topsham

#### Membership, Fundraising & Endowment

Tad Hunter, Topsham  
Bill Jewell, Woolwich

#### Special Events

Jean Parker, Woolwich

#### Newsletter & Publicity

Tim Nason, Dresden  
Nancy Churchill, Dresden



## INTRODUCING "SIGHTINGS"

**S**IGHTINGS IS AN EASY, FUN WAY for members of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay to tally nature observations and share them with others. All new, current and renewing members who live anywhere within the Merrymeeting Bay watershed are encouraged to contribute!

Over the course of a year, participants mail in their observations for compilation. **Participants are free to contribute as much or as little as they want.** Send us a daily checklist, drop us a monthly postcard, or send us a letter once a year. This is a no-pressure project to let members contribute information to FOMB in a direct way. **Amateurs wanted!** You don't have to be a scientist to participate (though scientists are welcome, too, of course).

Sightings can include birds, plants and wildflowers, mammals, amphibians, fish, reptiles, bugs .... Record them on postcards, on a checklist or in an annual Sightings logbook. Send us photos, if you like. Send us reminiscences of sightings in the past, send us notes about potential trail sites or places that should be protected. Tell us about yourself.

Through Sightings, we will be able to produce informative press releases and features about Merrymeeting Bay that will help everyone learn more about its natural resources. We will also sponsor informal meetings of participants to help with identification problems, and we'll arrange one or two larger public presentations about the Bay per year, given by qualified speakers.

So, sign up for Sightings and "watch what happens." (See related article on page 3)

## SPECIAL EVENTS BOOTH

FOMB will have its booth at each of the following events this year:

**Bath Heritage Days, July 3, 4, 5; Richmond Days, July 24; Topsham Fair, 1st week in August; Common Ground Fair, September 24, 25, 26**

At least ten people will be needed during each event to work at the booth, answering questions and encouraging visitors to become members. Our **Sightings project** will be prominently displayed, and membership flyers, conservation handouts, posters and other materials will be on hand.

*WE NEED VOLUNTEERS AT THE BOOTH, the more the merrier! Working at these special events is FUN. Come and enjoy! Call me to schedule the time you can volunteer at the booth.*  
—Jean Parker, Woolwich (see page 6)

### Some Sightings this Year

#### THWINGS POINT, WOOLWICH:

**Jan:** bluejays, chickadees, sparrows, mourning doves, red squirrel, snow deep and soft.

**Feb:** hawk owl in swamp.

**Mar:** grouse crossed road, slate-colored juncos returned to feeder, gray squirrels, brown-headed cowbirds, eagles, crows

**Apr:** mole emerged from snow, first geese flying north, raccoon under bird feeder, black ducks & mallards at Chops, two teal by Rte. 1, coyote.

**May:** deer, eagles, partridge, rabbit, purple finch, gold finches, Baltimore oriole, rose-breasted grosbeak, fox.

#### WEST CHOPS POINT, BATH:

**Mar:** eagles, fox, crows, fishers, long animal seen at dusk with luxurious reddish coat and long brown tail—can you help us identify this animal?

## FOMB "EXECUTIVE SECRETARY" HIRED

Tim Nason, Dresden

RECOGNIZING that FOMB has completed much of its basic structural work, including the outlines of committee goals and strategies for the coming years (see *Goals & Strategies*), I felt that it was time to propose that FOMB hire a paid coordinator to work with committee members to achieve those goals.

I proposed to the Steering Committee that FOMB hire me for a period of one year at a salary of \$500 per month, specifically to accomplish a short list of projects that would bring immediate benefits to FOMB. These benefits, in addition to the start-up of the projects themselves, include increased membership in FOMB, active member involvement, and increased awareness of Merrymeeting Bay and the role FOMB would like to play in its protection.

On June 7, 1993, the Steering Committee voted, with one opposed and one abstention, that I be hired to do this work at a rate of \$400 per month, but for a three-month period. A review of the position, FOMB's finances and project progress will be taken by the committee at the end of three months.

My first objectives were to help with planning and start-up of the **Sightings** project (see articles), and gather and produce educational hand-outs for the **Booth** (page 1).

SUMMER 1993  
VOL. 3, NO. 2



### *Merrymeeting News*

is the tri-annual newsletter of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, P.O. Box 233, Richmond, Maine 04357, published in the winter, summer and autumn. *Merrymeeting News* is sent to all FOMB members (\$10 annually). 1993 coordinator is Tim Nason, Dresden. FOMB welcomes donations and grants to help pay for the cost of production and mailing.



Green-winged Teal

## FOMB RECEIVES "PARTNERS IN PHILANTHROPY" GRANT

IN JUNE, 1993, FOMB received a \$500 grant from students at Wiscasset Middle School. The grant was half the amount administered by the students under a program of the Maine Community Foundation (MCF) called Partners in Philanthropy. The award was given for general conservation activities involving kids. Students expressed enthusiasm for FOMB's development of nature trails and the Sightings project.

The Maine Community Foundation distributed \$1,000 to each of ten school groups throughout Maine under the Partners in Philanthropy program. This program was one portion of a \$500,000 grant given to the MCF by the Ford Foundation, other parts of which are being used by young people for AIDS education, family mediation and environmental monitoring. — TN

## MESSAGE TO SPORTSMEN

WE HAVE RECEIVED a number of questions from sportsmen as to whether FOMB advocates land use regulation or the restriction of hunting and fishing in Merrymeeting Bay.

FOMB intends to work with all groups to achieve our mutual ends. I think it's safe to say that sportsmen are one of our greatest assets since they have such a strong interest in the health of Merrymeeting Bay and its natural resources. We hope those of you who are sportsmen will pass the word.

As for land use regulation, FOMB has no policy on land use regulation, either official or unofficial. It is our practice, however, to work with *willing* landowners to achieve mutual goals. Again, our intent is to work collaboratively for the benefit of all. That means assisting landowners in achieving their own goals.

— Nancy Churchill  
FOMB Chairman

## FOMB ANNUAL MEETING: ARCHAEOLOGY ON MERRYMEETING BAY

Approximately 175 of FOMB's 200 members missed a fascinating slide presentation given by archaeologist Steve Cox on April 3, at FOMB's annual meeting held at Bowdoin College.

Steve Cox is a research associate with the Maine State Museum who has been surveying and investigating prehistoric sites in Topsham since 1988.

The slide-illustrated presentation covered the entire span of known inhabitants of the Merrymeeting Bay area, starting 11,000 years ago in the Paleo Indian period, whose population lived in an open, park-like environment and hunted caribou, mammoths and mastodons. This was followed by the Archaic and Holocene periods, whose population reckoned with a forested environment, hunting deer and catching fish.

The first coastal culture we know much about occurred 5,000 years ago, familiar to us all as the Small Stem Point Culture.

This was closely followed by the mysterious Red Paint People, also known as the Morehead Phase, who specialized in red ochre burials, slate points and bayonets, effigies, woodworking gouges for building dugout boats, and points made of rare stones imported from Labrador and Vermont. The Red Paint People also used harpoons, fish hooks and plummetts for nets and fishing lines. A brief culture, the Red Paint People lasted 200 years.

Then came the Susquehanna Culture, makers of drills and axes (not gouges!). These were a strictly deer-hunting people from away, South Carolina and Georgia, whose techniques included driving deer herds onto the points of islands. This people seems to have lasted from 3,800 years ago to 3,400 years ago.

The Ceramic Period begins 2,800 years ago, a period that lasted until the Europeans arrived. This period was sustained by horticulture, hunting and fishing. Early artifacts found include scrapers for boats or skins, pottery, pipes, knives, and decorative collars, called gorgets.

With the arrival of Europeans in the 1500s, large-scale trading began involving furs, beads and implements made of copper and baubles cut from bottle glass.

One of the most phenomenal archaeological digs in Maine is on FOMB member Tad Hunter's farm in Topsham. The

site offers a perfectly stratified sequence that had been consistently lived upon over a 3,400-year period. Among the finds so far have been a huge hearth and a clay pot that shows the imprint of the woven twine fabric the pot was made in.

Cox said that current town set-back and archaeological survey ordinances should be sufficient to protect Maine digs, if they are obeyed. He pointed out that archaeologists could help biologists assess ancient wildlife occupations in Merrymeeting Bay and elsewhere. — *TN*

Grebe chicks



## MORE DETAILS ABOUT SIGHTINGS

**F**OMB MEMBERS who enroll in the Sightings project will receive a package of 12 FOMB-addressed postcards to fill out and mail back to us. A flyer about the project will be sent to each participant. As the project moves along we will have more sophisticated Sightings report forms. We also plan to offer an annual FOMB Logbook that could be sent to us for compilation, or be excerpted from.

Those of you that contributed to the Maine Amphibian & Reptile Atlas Project or are enrolled in similar projects through Maine Audubon or the National Audubon Society are encouraged to please also join Sightings.

As participation grows, we will ask for specific information that pertains to FOMB's mission and programs. These might include queries as to landing sites, possible water monitoring stations, mapping information, observation plots and locations of non-point source pollution.

We might ask if photos you send us could be used at our booth or be printed in *Merrymeeting News*.

We would like to encourage members to also write about themselves. Tell us family yams and reminiscences, even a tall tale or two.

Members interested in working on Sightings are invited to call Marilyn Cole. We want your helpful suggestions, too.

We are hopeful that Sightings will lead to a great many long-term friendships throughout the Bay.

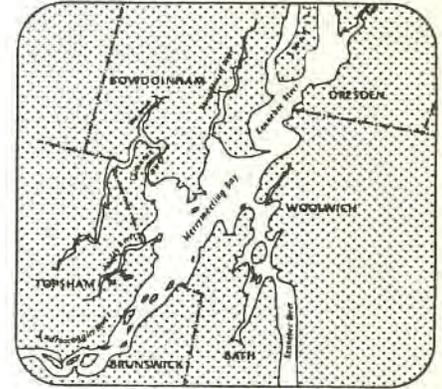
— *Marilyn Cole, Bath (443-9675)*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

**S**UMMER IS UPON US. As you will see from the contents of this newsletter, much work is in process. Of this work, I see expanding our membership as the most critical. It's not for the dues that memberships bring, although the financial assistance of our members is critical to our ability to preserve, protect and improve Merrymeeting Bay. Our members have been most generous and their financial contributions have enabled every single project in one way or another.

My reason for targeting an increased membership is that we need to continue to build awareness of and involvement in projects that serve Merrymeeting Bay. The best way to achieve this goal is through knowledgeable, informed members who can help spread the word.

For example, this newsletter



will reach approximately 150 members. We serve over 8,000 residents in the north end of Merrymeeting Bay. That number increases to over 30,000 when residents in the south end of the Bay are included. Unfortunately, many do not know of the importance of Merrymeeting Bay nor the work being done for all our benefits.

I ask, then, that as a member you make a special effort in the next two months to spread the word about FOMB. By building a stronger organization we can accomplish even more.

— *Nancy Churchill, Dresden*

Canada Geese



## MERRYMEETING BAY TO BE WETLANDS COALITION FOCUS

**A**T ITS MAY 1993 meeting, the Wetlands Coalition agreed to designate Merrymeeting Bay as a focus area. All participating groups will coordinate their efforts to identify and protect key natural resources.

The Wetlands Coalition is a multi-agency group whose intent is to work

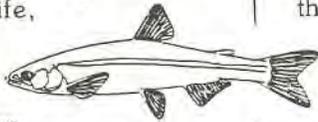
cooperatively for the preservation of critical natural resource areas in Maine. Represented are Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, State Planning Office, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, The Nature Conservancy, local land trusts and other federal, state, local and non-profit agencies. To date, the group has managed an excellent protection plan in Cobscook Bay, protecting many significant tracts of land.

FOMB is an integral part of this group. Our task is to continue to work with landowners around the Bay. We hope to assist those who are conservation minded to develop protection plans which meet their needs. The Eastern River project discussed under the Property Protection article in this newsletter is where we plan to spend our energies this year.

— *Nancy Churchill*

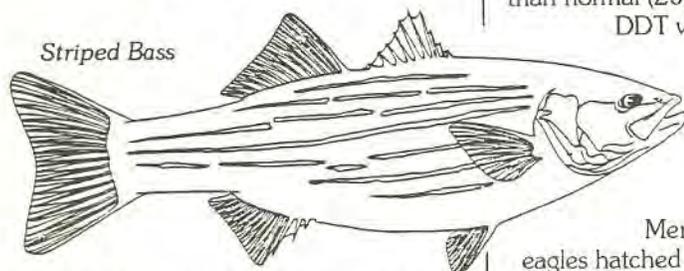
## FISH & WILDLIFE OF THE EASTERN RIVER

ON MARCH 23, Lewis Flagg of the Dept. of Marine Resources and Eugene Dumont, of the Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, spoke to nearly 100 people in Dresden about the importance of the Eastern River as a spawning area for anadromous fish and as habitat for eagles, ducks and wading birds.



Rainbow Smelt

Flagg presented slides and overhead projections showing the large amount of fish that spawn in the Eastern River. These include American Shad, Rainbow Smelt and Striped Bass. Prior to the 1920s, Merrymeeting rivers supported large commercial fisheries for these species. Between the 1920s and early 1970s, striped bass disappeared and commercial fisheries for shad and smelt were lost due to pollution. Abatement efforts in the 1970s began to restore the quality of the water. From 1982-1991, over 260,000 juvenile striped bass of Hudson River origin were stocked in the Merrymeeting river system.



Striped Bass

Flagg also presented eye-opening information about the potential for fisheries enhancement in the Kennebec River if the Edwards Dam in Augusta were to be removed. Removal of the

For information about removal of the Edwards Dam in Augusta, contact the **Kennebec Coalition, c/o Natural Resources Council of Maine, 271 State St., Augusta, ME 04330 (622-3101)**

Also, copies of **Kennebec River Resource Plan: Balancing Hydropower Generation and Other Uses** may still be available from the State Planning Office for \$7.25. SPO, Station #38, Augusta, ME 04333 (289-3261)

dam, originally built in 1837, would re-create a seventeen-mile stretch of rapids, providing ideal spawning conditions for shad, smelt, river herring (alewives), striped bass, Atlantic sturgeon (a fish that can attain an age of 60 years and a length of 7 feet), shortnose sturgeon (on the federal endangered species list), and the Atlantic salmon.

Flagg said that large sturgeon currently enter the Eastern River. Dumont's presentation included dramatic history about the return of eagles to Merrymeeting Bay. Many in the audience were probably not aware that eagles hit an all-time low in the early 1970s.

In 1974 there were only two known pairs of nesting eagles. Compounding the problem was that any eggs produced were too thin-shelled. That same year, an eagle egg from Merrymeeting Bay was discovered to have the highest concentration of DDT yet encountered in eagles' eggs in the United States. Eagle egg shells in the area were 28% thinner than normal (20% was considered fatal).

DDT was widely used for black-fly and mosquito control and in agriculture.

From 1968 through 1974, no eagles were reproduced naturally in

Merrymeeting Bay. All

eagles hatched were from eggs transplanted from healthy parents in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Hatchlings were also put into nests. Now, twenty years later, our eagles appear to be healthy, but because of their high place on the food-chain, they are always at risk.

Dumont also discussed Great Blue Herons, another common sight along the Eastern River, whose numbers were once imperiled because they, too, live high on the food chain, consuming fish, amphibians, crustaceans, insects and even small mammals.

Dumont closed his remarks with a warning that eagles, herons and other breeding wildlife need a rather large buffer zone around them. He pointed out that this buffer is effectively eliminated when development occurs in the center of an otherwise undisturbed area.

— TN

## FIRE AND ICE — AND DEAD DUCKS

OVER THE WEEKEND OF MARCH 26-29, 63,000 gallons of fuel used for P-3 aircraft leaked out of storage tanks at the Brunswick Naval Air Station and ran into a 21-acre snow- and ice-bound marsh lying between Rte. 1 and the Androscoggin River. This potentially worst-case scenario was mitigated by the fact that much of the fuel collected in puddles in the marsh and remained largely on the surface of melting snow. The

fuel was further contained by a series of special dams and was quickly removed by vacuum pumps and controlled burning.

Some fuel apparently did leak under the ice at the river and enter the water.

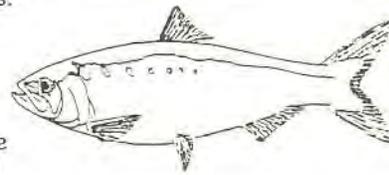
Some fish, ducks and muskrats were killed outright by the fuel.

Navy officials speculated that snow falling off a roof of the storage facility opened the valves. The leak remained undetected over a three day period because it apparently began on a Friday after a routine check and the valves weren't checked again until Monday morning. Curiously, the storage tanks are only fifteen feet from a storm drain that empties into a tributary of the Androscoggin. Base officials said that the valves were designed without dikes or containment systems because the Navy never expected the valves to be left open for long periods of time.

Joe Trafton, representing FOMB, attended news conferences about the spill. Trafton was irritated with the Navy's denial that the fuel leak presented any threat to drinking water, fish and wildlife, and so, on behalf of FOMB, wrote a letter to Capt. Rachor detailing his concerns. These included long-term effects on the marsh ecosystem, on the eels that are found at that time of year in the mud near the mouth of the tributary the fuel leaked into (eels are fished commercially), on striped bass in the river, and on eagles that eat any fish killed by the fuel.

Bowdoin College's Environmental Studies Department, led by Ed Laine, has begun a study of the long-term effects of the spill on the marsh.

— TN, with thanks to Ed Benedikt, Joe Trafton, The (Lewiston) Sun-Journal and The (Brunswick) Times Record



American Shad

## K.A.R.E. DORMANT, NOT GONE FOREVER

FOMB HAS LEARNED from Peter Larsen of Bigelow Laboratories in West Boothbay, that Kennebec Area Research Endowment (K.A.R.E.) is far from dead, that it is merely dormant, awaiting a renewed season of funding.

In 1991, with Peter Larsen as principal investigator, K.A.R.E. began researching the long-term effect of industry and natural causes on two of Maine's major "industrial" rivers, the Kennebec and the Androscoggin. The essential element of this research consists of taking deep core samples of river sediment, through which Larsen and his staff can analyze 100 years or more of river sediment contamination, primarily by heavy metals.

## STURGEON AT A POTENTIAL BYPASS

THE MAINE TIMES reported in late May or early June that the Maine Dept. of Marine Resources had netted more than 250 shortnose sturgeon from the Androscoggin River near the proposed site of a bypass bridge linking Rte. 1 and I-95 at Brunswick. DMR biologists radio-tagged six of the fish to observe their movements. It was feared that the bypass might interfere with the fish and their ability to spawn and feed in the area. The shortnose sturgeon is on the Federal Endangered Species List.

It has since been discovered that the sturgeon were just passing by, so the bypass can be constructed as planned.

Thanks to Maine Times and  
Thomas Squires of the DMR

Industries were supposed to play a major role in funding this research effort. The project attracted much interest nation-wide as a model for environmental research. Bath Iron Works was the principal funding source.

Then, two things happened: the director of Bigelow Labs left his position for other employment, and Bill Haggett left Bath Iron Works, where his persuasive efforts had led to BIW support. BIW funding has since been withdrawn.

Peter Larsen has persevered through these ups and downs, and has a modest slate of K.A.R.E. activities lined up.

He is sending out a manuscript for peer review based on interim study results. The report is called *A Trace Metal Survey of MidCoast Maine—Casco Bay to Boothbay*.

During the summer, follow-up core sampling will be done at the more "interesting sites," particularly around Richmond, using divers or sampling from the shore at low tide.

Through the auspices of K.A.R.E., Larsen will provide support this summer for University of New Hampshire graduate student Dennis Luken to do sampling and specialized data analysis. Luken's master's thesis is Trace Metals in the Kennebec River, Merrymeeting Bay and Lower Kennebec Estuary.

Larsen may have a volunteer PhD available to do a literature review.

In addition, the far-reaching Gulf of Maine project, based at the State Planning Office, will use Larsen's K.A.R.E. work as the basis for a 10-page fact sheet (available later in the year).

Larsen is ever hopeful that BIW will show renewed interest in K.A.R.E..

*[Editor's Comment: It seems ironic that Kennebec Area Research Endowment should be dependent upon a single major funding source. FOMB mem-*

*bers could help ensure that long-term projects, such as K.A.R.E., do indeed have a "research endowment." — TN*

## THE DIOXIN RUNAROUND

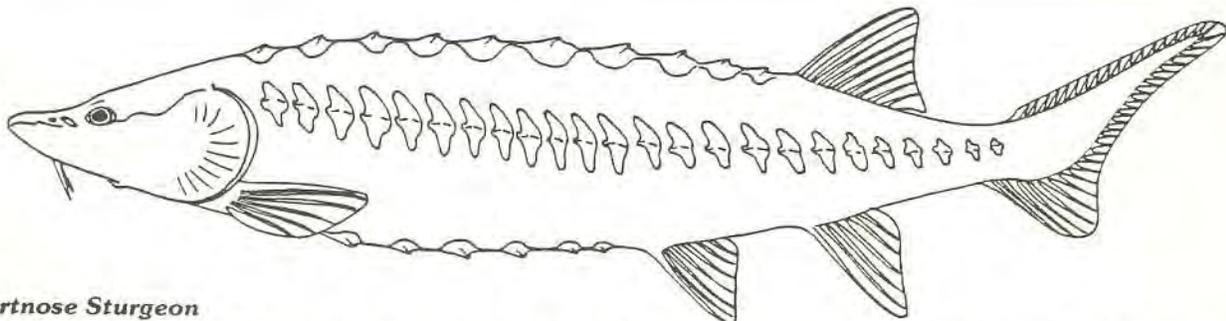
MUCH ATTENTION was given last year as to precisely how much deadly dioxin was allowable in Merrymeeting rivers. Earlier this year, the Maine state toxicologist quit after having his warnings about dioxin consumption overridden by the Governor's office. In April, legislation was introduced to require the Bureau of Health to annually assess the threat of eating fish caught in Maine. If a threat existed, uncensored warnings would be printed on fishing licenses.

Dioxin is a by-product of the chlorine bleaching process used in paper production. The process is being phased out nationally, and is illegal in many European countries. No company in Maine produces chlorine- or dioxin-free paper.

FOMB has found a Maryland source of chlorine-free paper suitable for copies and plain-paper laser output.

## THE AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES OF MAINE

THIS MODESTLY TITLED 188-page soft-cover book is an absolute gold mine of information about snakes, turtles, salamanders, frogs and toads. FOMB members would do well to purchase this book, especially for informed participation in the Sightings project. Send a check for \$9.95 (made out to Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund) to Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, State House Station #41, Augusta, Maine 04333.



**Shortnose Sturgeon**

Drawings on pages 4 & 5 by Peter Thompson, from *Discover the Kennebec, the Fisheries Resources of the Kennebec River*, published by the Kennebec River Council, Harry Vanderweide, Study Chairman, Kennebec Co. Cooperative Extension Service. Thanks to Tom Squires of Marine Resources for briefly lending us his only copy!

## PROPERTY PROTECTION & STEWARDSHIP

THE PROPERTY PROTECTION and Stewardship Committee has continued to work on the Eastern River project. The Eastern River project is a multifaceted effort. First, has been to build awareness of the importance of the Eastern River to the health of Merrymeeting Bay. Early this spring an informational meeting was held at Dresden Elementary School. Lew Flagg, of the Department of Marine Resources, and Gene Dumont, of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, both donated their time to tell a compelling story about the Eastern River. Almost 100 people attended this meeting and shared their questions, thoughts and ideas. (see article page 4)

Our follow-up meeting was held June 10 at Bridge Academy in Dresden. This meeting targeted local landowners who might have conservation interests. Ms. Carol

Linker, a financial advisor, volunteered to speak to the group about the problems of estate taxes and how these problems can best be resolved. For landowners who are interested in preserving their family lands, Ms. Linker's presentation is extremely helpful.

We are especially grateful to Lew Flagg, Gene Dumont and Carol Linker for taking time out of their very busy schedules to help us.

— Nancy Churchill, Dresden

## FOMB WILDLIFE & FISHERIES REPORT

WE HAVE TWO major wildlife & fisheries projects under way, one called Sightings, and another, more scientific in nature, involving established observation plots to study flora and fauna of the area. For this project, we will need persons interested in a long-term commitment, and the appropriate background and knowledge to do the job.

Observation plots will be determined

through the use of aerial photos of the Bay. The plots will need to be observed frequently and on a prescribed schedule, rain or shine. Information gathered will be systematically recorded and charted.

Coordinators of this project are Steve Pelletier and Don Gleason. For information, write to FOMB, describing your interest in the project and qualifications.



Pickerel Frog

## GRANTS & GIFTS

NON-PROFIT GROUPS with an agenda as large as FOMB's require at least two things. The first is an active membership willing to do a thousand-and-one things. The second thing is money.

If you are interested in supporting FOMB through a donation, grant or gift—of any size, large or small—we ask you to invite our Chairman, Nancy Churchill, or any of our other officers, or our Executive Secretary, Tim Nason, to your home or office to discuss the agenda that FOMB has developed for wildlife & fisheries research, water quality monitoring, property protection, stewardship, endowments, education, and membership participation.

We are ready to do serious work. With your generous support, we can roll up our sleeves and get started.

## BY THE WAY, HAVE YOU RENEWED FOR 1993?

WE have the sneaky feeling that many of our members have not paid their dues in 1993. We absolutely need each of our members to contribute to the organization. This starts with the annual dues of \$10. When our projects begin in earnest, we will need volunteers to do various activities. We will also need grants, gifts .... Right now, though, today, we need the dues from every member of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay.

Actually, while paying your dues for 1993, why not pay dues for three-years or longer to save on your bookkeeping?

## FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY

The FOMB Steering Committee is a dedicated core group of individuals from Bath, Brunswick, Topsham, Bowdoinham, Woolwich and Dresden, each of whom is assigned to a particular Standing Committee. The Steering Committee members appear below, listed beneath the Standing Committee they serve on. *We have some vacancies on our Steering Committee—PLEASE JOIN US!* If you see a committee that you would like to be a part of, please call the person(s) listed; **all committees need members.**

### PROPERTY PROTECTION & STEWARDSHIP

Nancy Churchill, RR 1 Box 77, Dresden 04342 ..... 737-2005  
Joe Trafton, Pleasant Point, Topsham 04086 ..... 729-1734

**Chair**  
**Vice Chair**

### WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Ed Benedikt, 5559 Harding Rd. Ext., Brunswick 04011 442-0445  
Tulle Frazer, PO Box 475, Woolwich 04579 ..... 443-8656

### WILDLIFE/FISHERIES MONITORING & ISSUES

Marilyn Cole, 8 Eagle Pt. Rd., Bath 04530 ..... 443-9675  
Steve Pelletier, RR 1 Box 385, Richmond 04357 ..... 737-8407  
Tom Cole, 8 Eagle Pt. Rd., Bath 04530 ..... 443-9675  
Don Gleason, RR 1 Box 12, Dresden 04342 ..... 737-2817

**Treasurer**

### MEMBERSHIP, FUND RAISING & ENDOWMENT

Tad Hunter, Foreside Rd., Topsham 04086 ..... 729-1544  
Bill Jewell, RR 1 Box 475, Woolwich 04579 ..... 443-6520

### NEWSLETTER & PUBLICITY

Tim Nason, 15 Alexander Rd., Dresden 04342 ..... 737-4282  
Nancy Churchill (above) ..... 737-2005

**Secretary**

### SPECIAL EVENTS

Jean Parker, Hockomock Is., Woolwich 04579 ..... 442-0982

## MERRYMEETING BAY MAP

FOMB HAS FORMED a small group to work with Janet Parker, a map-maker at DeLorme Publishing in Freeport, to produce a definitive map of the Merrymeeting Bay area. Since there is currently no single inclusive map of the entire Bay (to our knowledge), we thought a map would be 1. useful, 2. a good fund-raising tool. Please call Tim Nason 737-4282 (days) if you would like to join the "Map Committee."

## FOMB ANNUAL MEETING: SOME NEW OFFICERS

At FOMB's annual meeting in April, Nancy Churchill of Dresden was re-elected as Chairman, Joe Trafton of Topsham was re-elected as Vice Chairman, Tim Nason of Dresden was elected as Secretary, and Don Gleason, also of Dresden, was elected as Treasurer.

## FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY MISSION STATEMENT & LONG TERM GOALS

*The mission of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay shall be to act for the preservation, protection and improvement of the natural ecosystems of the Bay. The boundary for the Bay is defined as all fresh water tidal rivers above Thorne's Head.*

### Our Long Term Goals:

- Liaison with such agencies and organizations as federal, state, conservation groups, public and private organizations, towns and cities.
- Develop an effective and efficient administrative structure.
- Work for the continuing improvement of the water quality of the Bay.
- Land Use: Encourage municipalities, state and federal governments in the watershed area to adopt land use policies for the preservation, protection and improvement of its natural ecosystems and to work with private property owners for voluntary measures for the protection of the Bay.
- Wildlife & Fisheries: Improve the habitat for the fisheries and wildlife populations in and immediately adjacent to the Bay.
- Education: Encourage a broad-based education program.



Pintail

*Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, P.O. Box 233, Richmond, Maine 04357*

ANNUAL DUES \$10.00 (tax exempt).

**Yes, I would like to join Friends of Merrymeeting Bay.**

Renewal     Gift Membership

I enclose \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to cover membership for \_\_\_\_\_ year(s).

In addition, I enclose \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a tax-exempt donation.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

RR#/STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN / STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SEASONAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

*I would like to participate in the **Sightings** project.*

*I am interested in helping to set up an FOMB chapter for Swan Island, other islands, the Androscoggin River, Kennebec R., Eastern R., Abagadasset R., Cathance R. or other area: \_\_\_\_\_ . Please call me.*

### Can We Help You?

- Information on Conservation Easements
- Information about Merrymeeting Bay

### How Can You Help Us?

- Water Quality Monitoring
- Wildlife & Fisheries Survey
- Sightings
- Property Protection & Stewardship
- Water Routes & Nature Trails
- Membership & Fundraising
- Newsletter & Publicity
- Special Events Booth
- Other

## MERRYMEETING BAY NATURE TRAILS

**M**ONEY IS NOW available for nature trails in the Merrymeeting Bay area through the Maine Bureau of Parks & Recreation (who in turn got the money from the National Recreational Trails Fund, part of the Symms Act, a new law that diverts money from federal gasoline taxes, to be used locally for alternative transportation systems).

Trails bring many benefits to a community. These include public (plus disabled) access to natural areas, exercise, community gathering places, low-impact economic development, non-motorized links to schools, villages, historic places and natural areas, and partnerships among individuals, businesses, and conservation, historical and cultural groups.

Cities and large towns are taking the lead in developing paved walkways and bicycle paths. Portland residents have plans to link neighborhoods that have been cut off from one another by highways with a network of trails, culminating

in a northerly spur to Mackworth Island. The Androscoggin Land Trust is planning a 40-mile trail system that will run along both sides of the river and tie together historical and cultural sites in Lewiston and Auburn. Stowe, Vermont's Recreation Path put the town on the map as a year-round walker's mecca.

Closer to home, interest has been expressed over the years in very low-impact nature trails along the Cathance River in Topsham/Bowdoinham, and in Dresden along undeveloped stretches of the Eastern River.

Trails are usually made possible via easements granted by landowners.

## AN ISLAND OPPORTUNITY

**P**UBLIC USE of private property, when allowed, usually remains contingent on the respect offered; to the land and toward the owner(s). It is unfortunate that many campers that have used Merrymeeting Bay islands have failed to do this.

An opportunity has been offered to FOMB. Mark Robinson, a member from Provincetown, Mass., whose family has long held property on Merrymeeting Bay, is willing to make a challenge: clean up the existing campsite(s) on Freyes Island (in the Androscoggin River) and design, develop and maintain an environmentally sound and aesthetically pleasing campsite.

Freyes Island is about a mile north-northeast of the old Bay Bridge. It's about 10 acres in size and commands sweeping views of the bay and river. A more suitable location for a show-place campsite could hardly be found.

If Friends of Merrymeeting Bay is looking to establish a water trail network, foster positive relationships with the public and property owners, here is the chance. For those who have been offering to help the Bay and FOMB and have not had a project, this may be it.

Once Mr. Robinson has approved our plans, we hope work will get under way at once. Requests for volunteers will then be made.

— Joe Trafton  
*Pleasant Point, Topsham*



FRIENDS of  
MERRYMEETING BAY

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*Forwarding and address  
correction requested.*

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