

Merrymeeting News

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

WINTER 1998

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

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Support comes from members, tax-deductible donations and grants.

Education

Hands Around the Bay, speaker series, field trips.

Conservation & Stewardship

Protecting traditional conservation resources through private and public ownership, easements and stewardship.

Membership Events

Swan Island picnic, paddle tours of the Bay, field trips, conservation meetings, potluck suppers and shoreline clean-ups.

Research and Advocacy

Water quality, data collection, toxics, fisheries restoration.

1997 Steering Committee

Frank Burroughs, Bowdoinham
Dana Cary, Topsham
Susan Fides, Brunswick
Ed Friedman, Bowdoinham
Steve Hammond, Bath
Kathleen Kenny, Dresden
Esther Lacognata, Topsham
Bob Lenna, Bowdoinham
Don and Joan Lipfert, Woolwich
Pat Maloney, Topsham
Tenley Meara, Topsham
Jay Robbins, Richmond
Karin Tilberg, Bowdoinham
Warren Whitney, Bowdoinham

Executive Director

Betsy Ham, Bowdoinham

Web Site

<http://www.cokk12.me.us/mmb/>

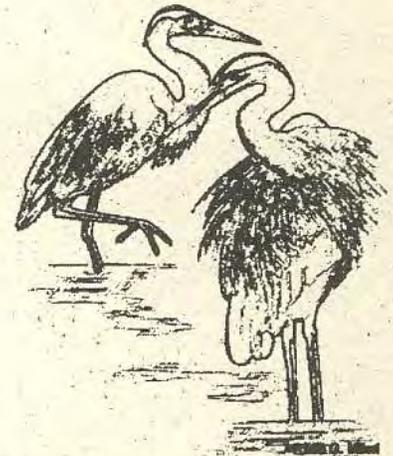
1997 IN REVIEW

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

WOW, WHAT A GREAT YEAR for your organization as it has continued to effectively work for Merrymeeting Bay. In November I received a really wonderful letter from former FOMB chair Nancy Churchill who noted "... While I haven't been an active participant for the past couple of years, I've kept an eye on what's been going on. I've seen all the informational seminars you've held, the jointly sponsored local initiatives, the get togethers and the fact that FOMB has quite obviously become a stable, integrated, community organization... It's not just the volume of initiatives that the group has been engaged in, it's the tone and community flavor of what you've done..."

This is wonderful to hear and as I look back at 1997 I indeed see many accomplishments that we can all be proud of. I will touch on just some highlights here.

Our land conservation program has protected another approximately 50 acres of high value habitat around the Bay (see article bottom page 1). We still



have over 200 acres of easements in the pipeline and I am extremely grateful for the vision and generosity these donors have shown.

We have placed a priority on water quality research and protection this year. Consultant ecologist Anne Hayden was hired in March to work on an assessment of water quality in the Bay and provide recommendations for the future. This work "Merrymeeting Bay: An Environmental Review" (as well as an annotated bibliography) is hot off the press (see *continued on page 2*)

EASEMENTS OBTAINED ON THE ABAGADASSET AND EASTERN RIVER

1700 FEET OF SHORELINE PROTECTED ON THE ABAGADASSET RIVER

A BLUE HERON stands on the ice just below the mill pond at head of tide on the Abagadasset. Underneath this ice and snow unseen by us but recently documented by the Nature Conservancy in a survey of the area lie rare and endangered mud plants including Estuary Bur-Marigold, Pygmyweed and Estuary Monkey Flower. These plants coupled with the fact that this area is rated as highest value habitat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service makes this shoreline particularly valuable.

John Detweiler and Fran Leyman wished to protect their valuable shoreline from development and to that end

they have generously allowed Friends of Merrymeeting Bay to obtain an easement on their 40 acres at the head of tide on the Abagadasset River protecting 1700 feet of shoreline forever. The easement will allow for one house to be built on a part of the property far away from the river and the rest will remain forever wild.

In obtaining this easement Friends of Merrymeeting Bay received technical, legal, and financial assistance from The Nature Conservancy. We are particularly grateful to Will Brune, Land Protection Specialist for the Conservancy, who worked with us throughout the project.

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1997 IN REVIEW

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ticle page 5). It is available on request and will find its way onto our web site in due time. As an active participant in the Coalition for a Dioxin Free Maine's battle to enact totally chlorine free bleaching requirements for Maine's pulp mills we lost the battle to Governor King's legislation. There is a good chance however that the Governor's legislation would not have been introduced had ours not already been so. As we heard from around the country the level of nationwide debate over the discharge of dioxin and its health effects has been elevated tremendously by our efforts here in Maine. Our fish consumption advisories posted in August received excellent publicity including articles picked up by the Associated press.

As a long time active supporter of the Kennebec Coalition we were ecstatic late in the year to hear that the Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission (FERC) had recommended the dismantling of Edwards Dam. While appeals from the hydro industry are likely, most all the powers that be in the state support removal. Coalition partners the Natural Resource Council of Maine, Atlantic Salmon Federation, Trout Unlimited and American Rivers deserve our

deepest thanks for years of effort and reams of testimony.

We have been working hard this year in the area of education. Our speaker series has continued to be a success with standing room only at a couple of the presentations. Word seems to be spreading that these are very interesting evenings. Many thanks are due both to Bowdoin College Environmental Studies Program and Patagonia in Freeport for continued support. Our Hands Around the Bay program produced a Resource Directory (a human resource guide for teachers) and a Site Directory with information on public areas around the Bay including suggested student activities. Many volunteers have almost completed transforming the important 1975 Reed and D'Andrea baseline Study "Merrymeeting Bay", long out of print, into digital format for publication on our web site.

We had another successful spring clean up with the Maine Island Trail Association (MITA) yielding about 4600 lbs. of debris showing progress from the previous year. Don't forget to join us for this years clean up to be held in May.

We could not have been as successful this year without forming partnerships with many groups. Some I've mentioned above but others include: The State Planning Office, Maine Division of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Bowdoinham Community School, and the Community of Learners. It takes many partnerships to make positive change and I believe we are successfully creating some enduring relationships to this end.

Financially we have again closed out the year in excellent shape (see treasurers report page 3). This year would not have been possible without good working relationships between myself, Betsy Ham who has completed her first year doing a wonderful job as Executive Di-

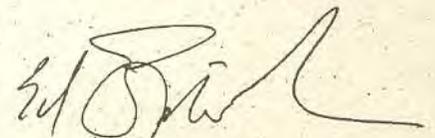
rector, our Steering Committee and all of you who participated in many ways. Lets all pat ourselves on the back.

Let me sign off with two important challenges to you:

1. If you have any interest in protecting your land around the Bay now is the time to talk to us and make a commitment. In April of this year, the Maine Wetland Coalition of which we are a partner will be applying for land protection monies for Merrymeeting Bay through the federal North American Waterfowl Management Plan grant. If successful, funding will be received equal to the value of both conservation easements held now, and those commitments for (near) future easements. If you act now Merrymeeting Bay will in effect benefit twice from your generous gift of a conservation easement, once by protection of your land and again by the use of the value of that easement as a match to protect future land. Please call Betsy now for more information.

2. Membership makes us stronger helping us fulfill our mission in a more able fashion. We've set a goal of 300 members for 1998. If you agree with me that we offer great value for the money (paddle tours, cleanups, speaker series, Swan Island overnight, curriculum guides, newsletters, Auction etc.), are doing a great job as sole advocate for the Bay, and are expert at doing a lot with a little, then ask your friends and neighbors to join us or consider a gift membership to those interested friends and relatives. I thank you all for your continued support.

Respectfully Yours,



Ed Friedman

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Merrymeeting News

is the newsletter of **Friends of Merrymeeting Bay**, P.O. Box 233, Richmond, Maine 04357, and is published seasonally.

Merrymeeting News is sent to FOMB members and other friends of the Bay. For information call Betsy Ham, Executive Director 666-3376.

TIDINGS/WINTER

WHEREVER THEY OCCUR, **EAGLES** have always been recognized as the king of birds, the supreme avian predator. This is partly because of their position on the food chain, and partly because they are by their nature so conspicuous. They don't hunt from ambush or under the cover of darkness; their way of doing business commands attention.

To see what this bird has meant to the human imagination, you only have to look at coins and stamps and national insignia and tribal totems. The Roman legions subdued Europe under its aegis; the armies of Napoleon appropriated the same emblem for the same purpose. We all know how in this country, Benjamin Franklin argued that the eagle was too imperial in its associations and its actual behavior to represent a utopian democracy. He did not admire the way the eagle, like an aristocratic overlord, robbed the honest, laboring osprey of its catch; he did not like the towering arrogance of its flight, beneath which lesser birds quailed in terror.

In Greek and Roman mythology, the eagle had been the mascot of Jove, the god whose reign brought on the Iron Age, and gave humankind the technology to achieve an unprecedented power over nature at the cost of an unprecedented alienation from it. What we think of as history began then, according to the myths, and it was a story of crimes and reprisals, wars and revolutions, tyrannies and usurpations, in an escalating and apparently unending cycle. Franklin, like many of our Founding Fathers, hoped that America could live innocent and apart from that terrible history, but of course the hope was naive, antiquated even before he conceived it.

In our time, most Americans have never seen our national symbol in the flesh, and know it chiefly through its representation on the ubiquitous and omnipotent dollar bill. But those of us who are lucky enough and smart enough to hang out around the Bay see it quite regularly. The sight never becomes routine; it's hard to pay much attention to anything else when there is an eagle in the offing. In recent winters, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has occasionally put a road-killed deer out on the ice, and then you may see as many as five or six congregated around it, most

of them dark, ominous-looking immature birds. As winter passes on into what is nominally spring... the prenuptial flight of an adult pair is not to be missed—a game of mock combat and aerial tag between two enormous birds, just above the treetops. What this spectacle will produce, if all goes according to plan, is eggs.

And if all continues to go according to plan, by August you will be watching a big, surly, dark-all-over young bird, full-fledged and full-grown, crouching on a limb near the nest and yelping piteously whenever an adult shows up, an alewife or a small striper in its talons. The adult perches in an adjacent tree and cocks its head, eyeing first the young bird and then the fish it holds pinned against the branch.

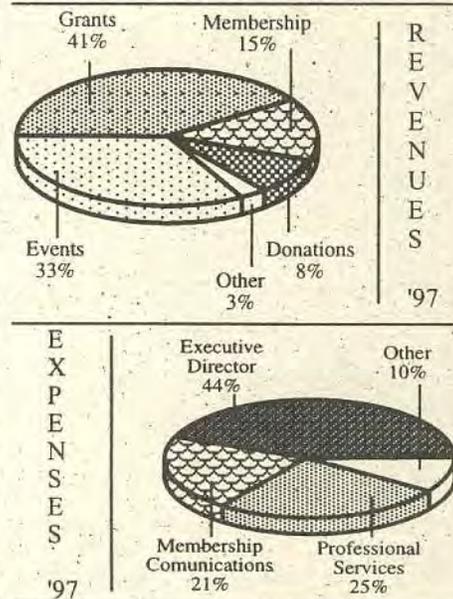
The eagles and the fish are what we can see. What we cannot see are toxins—mercury, PCBs, and dioxin - that have shown up alarmingly in recent years. They are concentrated in the alewife, further concentrated in the striper, and have reached levels of unprecedented concentration in the eagles and eaglets. Some of these toxins are traceable in their origin; but many are apparently airborne, arriving from distant centers of population and industry. They are thus an epiphenomenon of the American economy and the way we live. They last a long time in the rivers and soil, enter the food chain, and accumulate exponentially as they ascend it.

And thus the bird so long associated with the iron realities of human history regards its clumsy, pleading offspring, hesitates between conflicting instincts, then bends down and tears at the small striper, bolts it down greedily. In this way the iron realities of history are ingested into it, working within its processes of metabolism and pro-creation, and against their purposes.

We have always looked admiringly and longingly, and yet with a certain kind of fear, at the eagle, and associated it with all that our frightening power is capable of. We now need to look at it in a more comprehensive way, which will recognize that the bird we have claimed as an emblem of our dominion, our capacities, and our aspirations also carries within it a message that we have planted there. It is a message of our common vulnerability.

By Frank Burroughs

FOMB TREASURERS REPORT 1997



OUR LATEST YEAR was a remarkable year of financial expansion with revenues up 43% from 1996, record levels of grant funds received, a two fold increase in membership revenue and the most successful year of special events in our history.

Major grants received in 1997 came from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (land protection efforts), the John Merck Fund (toxics education) and the Frick Foundation (in support of the Executive Director).

Membership revenue reflects greater generosity from our constituents. We thank our members for this vote of support and confidence in FOMB. Our 1997 events were well supported by members and volunteers and included our auction which exceeded \$10,000 in revenues.

Our most substantial expenses were wage costs for our Executive Director (the first full year of this expense), expenditures related to a water quality study supported by funding from a prior period grant, and the cost of newsletters and other member communication (a total of \$4,400 was spent in printing, postage, and supplies mostly related to member communication).

We ended the year with a surplus of \$11,000. These funds will be used in upcoming periods to pursue the study of and protection of the Bay area.

Thanks to all of you for your continued financial support and for your interest in Merrymeeting Bay.

By Dana Cary

ANNUAL AUCTION RAISES \$10,000

OUR ANNUAL AUCTION EXCEEDED ALL EXPECTATIONS by raising over \$10,000. The week before the auction was to take place an anonymous donor agreed to match up to \$10,000 of what was raised at the auction thus doubling our success!

The evening began with a potluck supper and silent auction with bids on everything from horse manure to fine art. We were serenaded by Windy Ridge with musicians Jimmy Chard, Britt Long, and Beth Revells generously volunteering their time. Once the live auction began, auctioneer Phill McIntyre encouraged, teased and cajoled us into bidding high and often. In all over 100 people partici-

pated in the auction. While they were having fun they also greatly increased F.O.M.B.'s ability to continue programs that benefit the Bay and surrounding communities. Thank you to all who contributed.

This auction would not have been a success without a tremendous amount of volunteer effort and donor generosity. A special thanks is due to all of our donors, the Steering Committee of FOMB, and all who volunteered to make this event a success.

I hope to see you at our 1998 Auction!

Betsy Ham



THANKS TO ALL OF YOU!

THANK YOU TO OUR AUCTION DONORS, our Steering Committee and the many other volunteers that made 1997 a productive and successful year including: A-1 Diner, Albert Hansen, Alex Poliakoff, Amy & Randy Miller, Androscoggin Animal Hospital, Angus King, Anne Kilham, Bath Cycle & Ski, Bath Industrial Sales, Bath Iron Works, Bay View Plants, Bayberry Landscaping, Becky Koulouris & Ed Hawes, Ben & Jerry's of Freeport, Bethel Point B&B, Brunswick, BFC Marine, Bill Milam, Bob & Carol Lenna, Bob & Helen Fox, Bombay Mahal, Bookland Cook's Corner, Bowdoin Outing Club, Bowdoinham Antiques, Brook's Feed, Bud & Betty Reed, Casco Bay Lines, Chase Tavern Farm Alpacas, Chestnut Hill Farm, CHR Realty, Corsican Restaurant, Dana Cary, Darcy Thirlwall, Dave Berry, David Hunt & Kathleen Kenny, David Shiah, DeLorme Mapping, Don & Joan Lipfert, Doris C. Safford, Doug Richmond Merrymeeting Rowing Club, Dragonworks, Ed Friedman & Mellie, Elisabeth Webster, Elizabeth Bergstrom & John Dimmer, Enterprise Farms, Equality Quilts, Esther Lacognata, Eveningstar Cinema, First Wok, Fore Street Restaurant, Franklin Burroughs, Gallery Framing, Glassworks, Gulf of Maine Books, Halcyon Yarn, Hardy Boat

Cruises, Harraseeket Inn, Harry Prout-Prince of Parsnips, Helen Boynton, Hugo's Bistro, Huntington Theater Company, Jean & Bill Fawcett, Jean Blanchard Interiors, Jean McKenna, Jean Parker, Jim Lentz, Jim's Smelt Camps, Just Framing, Karin Tilberg, Katherine Berney, L.L. Bean, Laura Valentine, L'Ermitage, Leslie Mills, Linwood Rideout, Lucretia and Mike Woodruff, Macky Bennett, Main Street Dairy Treats, Main Street Fuel, Maine Maritime Museum, Marilyn Nulman-Books Repaired & Rebound, Matt & Dave's Video Store, Merrymeeting Aviation, Merrymeeting Farms, Micucci Wholesale Foods, Mitchell & Savage, Morning Glory Natural Foods, Mt. Pleasant Canoe & Kayak, New Meadows Marine Service, Newcastle Chrysler Plymouth, O'Farrell Gallery, Old Haven Engineering, Patagonia, Patchwork Organic Gardens, Paul's Marina, Portland Greengrocer, Prout's Farm, Robbins Historical Research, Inc., Robinhood Free Meetinghouse, Robinhood Marina, Rocky Ridge Orchard, Ruth Ferrara, RVI, Sally Butcher, Sarah & Allen Findley, Sheepscoot Ridge, Skolfield's Carpet Service, Small Point B&B, Smith's Smelt Camps, Stephen Pelletier, Steve & Anne Hammond, Steve Brooke, Street & Co., Susan Fides Sewing, Swango Farm, TCBY-Brunswick, The

Cannery, The Pepper Club, The Picture Framer, The Rugged Bear, The Theater Project, The Town Landing, Tidelines, Inc., Tom Power, Treats, Triangle Farm, Two Designing Women, Vance Stephenson, Jim Chard, Beth Revells, Britt Long, Phill McIntyre, Jim Welch, Bowdoinham Community School, SAD 75, Mike Haskell, John Ferdico, Clancy Cummins, Jean Bailey, Jinger Howell Martin, Steve Sandau, Reed Party and Paper, Ben and Jerry's of Freeport, Joe Kelley, The Frick Foundation, The Dayton Foundation Depository, two anonymous donors, Leo Redfern, Carol Jack, Tim and Sue Shepard, Steven Cox, Betsy Steen, Rich Konrad, Anne Hayden, Kate and Andy Cutko, Malcolm and Lucille Jewell, Steve Taylor, Kathleen McGee, Michael Herz, Anne Hagstrom, Fran Rudolph, Tom Squires, Peter Washburn, John Sowles, Nick Bennett, Barry Mower, Mike Milam, Dory Keistner, Linda Welch, Steve Mierzykowski, Pat Corr, Sam Butcher, Henri Gaudet, Lois Winter, Gene Dumont, Charlie Todd, Will Brune, John Detweiler, Fran Leyman, Rupert Neily, Tomlin Coggeshall, Community of Learners, Jim Moulton, Luke Mitchell, Michelle Kearns, Nancy Oden, John Dieffenbacher-Krall, Bob Houston, Cindy Sinclair, Bowdoin Central School, Dierdre Fohlin, Ed Gilfillah.

THE HEALTH OF THE BAY EXAMINED IN NEW REPORT

MERRYMEETING BAY, AN ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW, commissioned by FOMB and funded by a grant from the Davis Conservation Foundation, has recently been completed. FOMB will use the report to identify what should and can be done to protect and improve the health of the Bay.

A review of the information available on the Bay revealed that relatively little quantitative data exist to shed light on the health of the Bay ecosystem. Home to endangered species, critical to tens of thousands of migrating and resident waterfowl, habitat for recovering populations of anadromous fish, and a rare ecosystem, it is stunning that so little information on this remarkable water body exists. This may be because, as an unusual form of aquatic ecosystem, Merrymeeting Bay is not often studied by researchers familiar with more common forms such as estuaries or lakes. Also, tides and currents make it difficult to get a research vessel into the Bay to collect samples and data.

The report begins with a description of the Merrymeeting Bay ecosystem. Called "tidal riverine" and "an inland delta", the Bay is neither river, lake nor estuary, but a hybrid of ecosystem types that is quite unusual. At the convergence of two great rivers, it is much more like a freshwater river than a bay, but with two significant differences: 1) it is partially impounded by the constriction known as the Chops and 2) it is subject to the action of the tides. Unlike most rivers, the Bay has vast, vegetated intertidal flats which support a very productive and diverse biological community. Because the Bay is shallow, the relatively large volume of water flowing through the Bay combines with the effect of the tides to limit the stratification of the water column that characterizes most bays (as well as lakes). Finally, although subject to the action of the tides (undoubtedly the source of its identification as a "bay"), the Bay is essentially freshwater in nature with little of the biological community associated with marine and estuarine ecosystems.

The unusual nature of the Bay is thus a function of physical forces: two vast watersheds (9,320 square miles, more than one third of the state of Maine) re-

lease a large flow of freshwater and attendant sediments into the Bay; geology constrains the movement of water and sediment from the Bay to the lower Kennebec estuary, and significant tidal forces further affect sediment and water movement.

Plant growth is the basis of the Bay's food chain. The high degree of flushing in the Bay prevents phytoplankton from contributing significantly to plant growth. However, rooted aquatic plants, such as wild rice, flourish here and sustain high levels of plant production. Although there are no data on the net productivity of the Bay, it is likely that it is a net exporter of productivity, supporting ecosystems to which it is connected. In this and other ways, the Bay is integrally connected with other ecosystems.

While little information exists describing the Merrymeeting Bay ecosystem, even fewer quantitative data are available on the environmental quality of the Bay.

Ongoing oceanographic research in Merrymeeting Bay, the lower Kennebec River and nearby estuaries, indicates that the Bay is a "surprisingly strong" source of organic material and nutrients. It is unknown how much of this source is due to pollution. Clearly, the Bay is subject to much less organic pollution than it was thirty years ago. Construction of sewage treatment plants, restriction of industrial dumping and elimination of log drives have greatly reduced the amount of organic matter reaching the Bay. Even at its worst, Merrymeeting Bay probably fared better than other water bodies subject to organic enrichment. Rapid flushing of the Bay most likely removed a large percentage of material imported to the Bay. Tidal currents contributed to the rapid decomposition of remaining organic matter through aeration of sediments and the water column.

The distribution of toxic contaminants in Merrymeeting Bay most likely reflects

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WINTER SIGHTINGS

THIS JANUARY AS THE RAIN FELL and the power failed I looked out at the ice covered apple tree to see ... a flock of robins?!! I have received several sightings from people around the Bay of large flocks of 50 or more robins. Did they, like some of our members, think it would be a mild winter this year and stay here instead of heading further South?

Other sightings near the Androscoggin include a red tailed hawk, coopers hawk, sharp shin hawks, northern harrier and a kestrel, a shrike, a flock of 80 cedar waxwings and 20 redpolls. Near the Muddy a barred owl, three bald eagles, a flock of 30 evening grosbeaks and a pileated woodpecker were seen. Flocks of snow buntings are back near the Kennebec and bald eagles were sighted soaring overhead. A barrows golden-eye duck was



seen on the Kennebec in Bath. One great blue heron was sighted in a snow storm in November on the Androscoggin and another was seen fishing off the ice of the Abagadasset in December. In Dresden and all around the Bay great activity was reported at the bird feeders

with bluejays, doves, nuthatches, chickadees, cardinals and goldfinches and many kinds of sparrows all partaking.

Thank you to Carol Jack, Marilyn Cary, Inge Foster and others who reported sightings for us this Fall and Winter. Our next

newsletter will be published in the Spring just in time to report all the interesting migratory birds you see. Please let Joan Lipfert in Woolwich at 443-8751 or Betsy Ham know about your Spring sightings by May first for the Spring issue of Merrymeeting News. We love to hear from you.

THE HEALTH OF THE BAY EXAMINED IN NEW REPORT*continued from page 5*

the distribution of muddy sediments. The location of these sediments is known only in a general sense; they occur in the backwaters and eddies of the Bay where currents are slowest and where aquatic vegetation is concentrated. Unfortunately, these areas are not very accessible by boat, the standard means of collecting sediment samples for analysis of toxic contamination. Sediments from the more accessible parts of the Bay have been analyzed for some toxic contaminants. With some exceptions, toxics do not appear to have accumulated to threatening levels in these areas. However, more research is needed on toxic levels in muddy areas. It is possible that flushing also protects the Bay from excessive accumulation of toxics; depositional areas below the Bay should be studied carefully.

Data on contaminants in eagle eggs are very disturbing. One egg from a nest in Bowdoinham exhibited the highest concentration of dioxin ever measured in any biological sample, over 2000 times the level considered to be safe by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Because the source of eagle prey is not well understood, it is unclear what role the health of the Bay plays in eagle contamination.

In summary, environmental data from Merrymeeting Bay are inconclusive in determining the health of the Bay. The status of anadromous fish and waterfowl populations is of concern; however, these species spend part of their life cycle or part of each year outside of Merrymeeting Bay where they may be subject to environmental stresses not found in the Bay. Eagles and ospreys

have made a dramatic recovery in Merrymeeting Bay and, yet, we know that at least the eagles are still heavily contaminated. Research on nutrient levels indicates that the Bay is moderately enriched. Rapid flushing of the Bay may minimize the ill effects from such enrichment. Finally, there is insufficient data to adequately characterize sediment or biotic contamination in the Bay.

The report concludes with a series of recommendations for continued protection and restoration of Merrymeeting Bay. These recommendations anticipate a three stage process: characterization of the structure and function of the Bay ecosystem, assessment of human impacts and threats, and effective management.

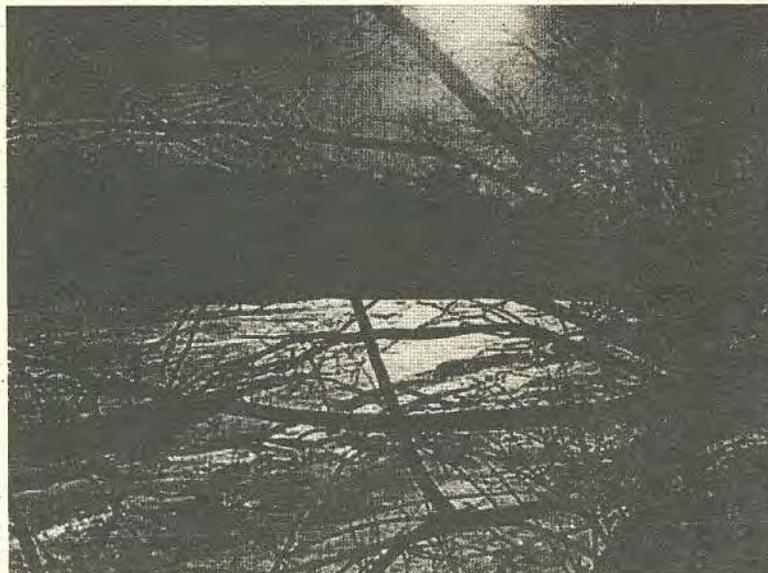
Anne Hayden

EASEMENTS OBTAINED ON THE ABAGADASSET AND EASTERN RIVER**EASTERN RIVER EASEMENT EXPANDED**

It is a pleasant October day as I stand on Tim and Sue Shepard's property near the mouth of the Eastern on Rt. 128 and look out over the Bay at Swan Island. Tim is describing his duck hunting successes of the year when we look up to see a very fat porky pine high in an old pine tree busy at work making a new hole. The dog pays no attention, perhaps he's learned from experience.

I have the pleasure of Tim's company because Tim and Sue Shepard are generously donating an additional eight acres to their already existing easement on the Eastern River. This new addition has frontage on Rt. 128 and views of Swan Island and the Bay. It further protects shore frontage on the Eastern by increasing the distance of a no build, restrictive cut, buffer zone from

the River to nearly 500 feet. This area also contains and buffers highest value habitat of national importance accord-



ing to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We are grateful to Tim and Sue and John and Fran for their generosity. We

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have relied on the continued support and assistance from Maine Wetlands Coalition partners to complete both of these easements. The funding we received from the Outdoor Heritage Fund grant passed through to us by Inland Fisheries and Wildlife also assisted us in obtaining these easements.

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay hopes that these key parcels will provide an example and incentive for other landowners to protect their own key parcels of land on the Eastern and other parts of the Bay. As Ed Friedman noted in his year end review, this is a particularly good time to donate easements as we may be able to use the value of these easements to obtain federal funding to protect more land around the Bay.

Betsy Ham

WINTER SPEAKER SERIES

Our Winter Speakers Series has gotten off to a good start with informative speakers addressing issues of importance to the Bay including the geology and archeology of the Bay, Edwards Dam and conservation easements. Word of these informative evenings has spread with anywhere from 50-100 people in attendance to hear the December and January speakers. If you haven't had a chance to join us yet this year there are still some great speakers yet to come. Programs are free and open to the public. They take place on the third Wednesday of every month (see schedule pg 8). Join us and bring a friend!

ATTENTION: ARTISTS

FOMB would like to feature drawings and sketches of local flora, fauna, and landscapes. Anyone wishing to submit a drawing may do so by sending it (along with pre-paid return envelope) to:

David Hansen
564 Cathance Rd.
Topsham, ME 04086

Any artwork sent with pre-paid return envelope will be promptly returned, and used with the understanding that such artwork is to be used only for the purposes of this newsletter.

FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY

STEERING COMMITTEE

- Frank Burroughs, 81 Wallentine Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 666-5979
- Dana Cary, 1052 Foreside Rd., Topsham 04086 Treasurer 729-4945
- Susan Fides, 152 McKean St., Apt A-3, Brunswick 04011 721-9764
- Ed Friedman 42 Stevens Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 Chairman 666-3372
- Steve Hammond, 1 Grove St., Bath 04530 442-8535
- Kathleen Kenny, 30 Dogleg Lane, Dresden 04342 737-2511
- Esther Lacognata, 19 Elm St., Topsham 04086 729-4088
- Don and Joan Lipfert, RR 1, Box 650, Woolwich 04579 443-8751
- Robert Lenna, P.O. Box 185, Bowdoinham 04008 666-8421
- Pat Maloney, 31 Bridge St., Topsham 04086 729-8941
- Tenley Meara, RR 1 Box 96, Topsham 04086 Vice Chairman 725-2738
- Jay Robbins, P.O. Box 9, Richmond 04357 737-2239
- Karin Tilberg, 9 Main St., Bowdoinham 04008 666-5902
- Warren Whitney, 145 Pork Pt. Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 Secretary 666-3376

CONSERVATION & STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR:

- Karin Tilberg, (see above) 666-5902

HANDS AROUND THE BAY COORDINATOR:

- Pat Maloney (see above) 729-8941

SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR:

- Jean Parker, Hockomock Island, RR 1 Box 1785, Woolwich 04579 ... 442-0982

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

- Betsy Ham, 145 Pork Point Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 666-3376

GOOD LUCK TO CLANCY

If our grammar is off and a few words miss spelled you will have to forgive us. Clancy Cummins our newsletter editor has not been feeling well and was unable to help us with this addition. All of us at Friends of Merrymeeting Bay wish

Clancy good luck and a speedy recovery. Us needs you (real bad).

Thank you to: Josephine Mussomeli and David Hansen for designing this issue of MMNews.

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

ANNUAL DUES \$15.00 Renewal

- \$15.00 enclosed for individual membership. \$20 Family
- \$30 Contributing \$50 Supporting \$100 Sponsoring \$250 Sustaining \$500+ Benefactor
- \$ _____ enclosed as an additional tax-deductible donation.

NAME _____
 RR# OR STREET ADDRESS _____
 TOWN / STATE/ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____

\$6.00 enclosed for a copy of **Conservation Options: A Guide for Maine Landowners.** (\$5 for the book, \$1 for postage)

OTHER EVENTS

March 20 - 22

A Peoples Energy Quilt for the 21st Century-an energy conference sponsored by The Katahdin Center for Education and Research to be held at Chewonki Foundation in Wiscasset call 737-2488 for more information and registration materials.

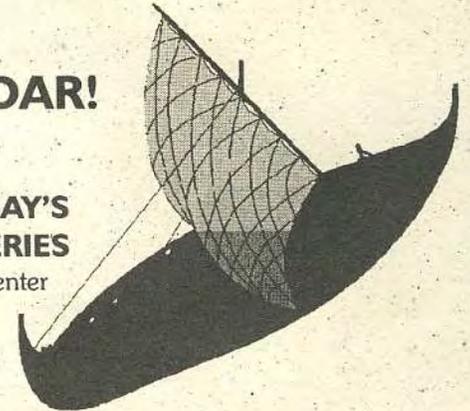
April 18 and May 2

Habitat for Wildlife, a two-part workshop (April 18 class room, May 2 in the field) from 8:30 AM - 3 PM for landowners, land trusts, conservation commissions and others interested in enhancing habitat for wildlife. The program will take place in the Bath area, preregistration is required, call Nancy Coverstone, U. of Maine Cooperative Extension, at 1-800-287-1458. Cost for both sessions is \$10.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY'S
1997-1998 WINTER SPEAKER SERIES**

7:00 P.M.. Beam Classroom, Visual Arts Center
Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine
(exceptions noted)



- March 18** **Shipbuilding and Shipping in Merrymeeting Bay**
Nathan Lipfert, Maine Maritime Museum
- April 15** **Dioxin in our Environment**
Nick Bennett, Staff Scientist, NRCM
- May 20** **Birds of Merrymeeting Bay**
Peter Vickery, Ornithologist (Location TBA in Richmond)



**FRIENDS of
MERRYMEETING BAY.**

P.O. Box 233, Richmond, ME 04357
Return Service Requested

1997 IN REVIEW

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