

Merrymeeting News

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My Dear Friends,

On one of those long, hot, muggy days that we had plenty of last summer, I took my family out on that same leaky skiff I told you about last month. We were trying to get some relief from the heat and were just basically rowing around and relaxing.

This was very enjoyable for the adults. As you might have experienced with your own children - or even someone else's - periods of quiet and tranquility last about five minutes for a five-year-old, but thankfully increase with the age of the child.

So anyway, we were forced to land on the nearest mud flat by our increasingly mutinous crew. Heaven, to young children - at least mine - is being allowed to romp, roam, and explore a world new to them. Eventually, after the pent-up energies of a prolonged boat ride (five minutes) were spent, the inevitable questions started spewing forth:

"Daddy, why is there so much sawdust under the mud?"

"Why can't we find any clams?"

"Are there any fish down there?"

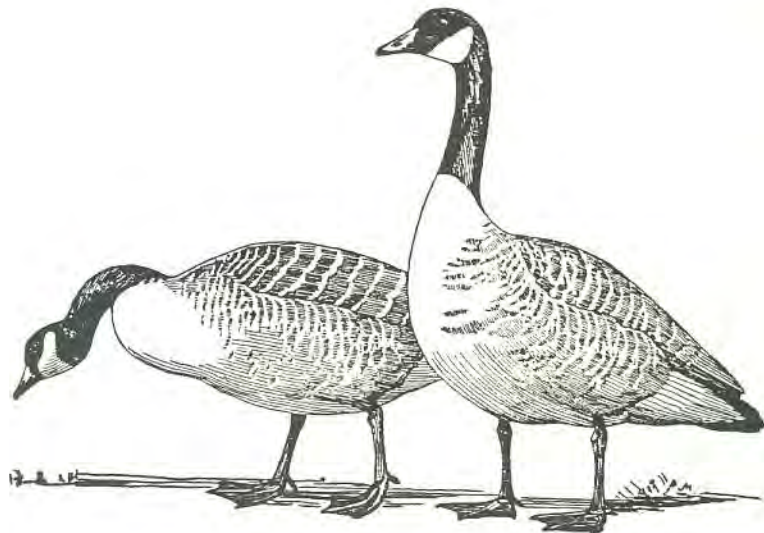
"Will this black goo hurt us?"

I could answer the one about the sawdust; it probably came from the ice houses which used sawdust as insulating material. The point of this little story is that I realize I have many questions about the Bay and maybe other people do as well.

Consequently, I have decided to start a reader/member service designed to answer your questions about the Bay. Whether it pertains to the ecosystem, history, geography or anything at all about our special place in Maine, please send your questions to me at Box 233, Richmond, Maine, 04357.

Yours on the Bay,

Kurt



QUESTIONS...

We know that the planet Pluto is a zillion miles from the sun, which at that distance sheds as much light as a medium-sized street light one hundred yards away. We know that Saturn has rings and that one of its moons has an active volcano.

What do we know about the very area right in our laps that many of us ride by everyday but hardly see?

Merrymeeting Bay, Swan Island, The Great Flyway, a center of cultures long gone, a hub of our own history, a meeting of nations, of people, of rivers, of wildlife - what do we know about all of this?

How many of us can name the rivers that feed the Bay, the towns that border it, or some of its contribution to our colonial development? Can we identify "wild rice," mallards, teal, geese or puddle ducks? Why do some birds dig in the mud flats? How does the tide affect the Bay?

What about the present and past wildlife of Swan Island? How much of the island's history do we know? What is this area's possible future?

We need information on many topics. We need scientific data. We need informal information such as old family records, letters, and diaries. We need so much support and good will. What will happen to Swan Island and the Merrymeeting Bay area?

Wilber A. Cooper, Southard House Museum, Richmond, Maine 04357

Wilber Cooper is a long time resident of Richmond and would appreciate any and all information on the Bay.

UPDATE...

Steering Committee We have been meeting regularly, and I mean to tell you, what a bunch of rabid people! I mean that in a positive way. Each and every member is vehemently outspoken. As of our last meeting on October 2nd, we defined the overall mission of our group and are working feverishly on the long term goals. We are truly going to be friends of the Bay.

Swan Island Race This years' race was semi-successful. By that I mean we had good participation, but the wind gave out on us at the southern end of Swan Island. After all was said and done, \$40.00 was given to FOMB by the Swan Island Race Committee.

COMING EVENTS...

Fundraising Dance Nellie Blagden has offered to organize and host a dance at her house in the beginning of December. Nellie has contacted a band and completed all of the preliminary work. She now needs help with ticket sales, etc. We need a committee of six people to assist her in this effort. Please call Nellie at 737-8539.

Swan Island Tour A members only tour of Swan Island will be on October 26th. The group will meet at 7:00 a.m. at the State Landing. This tour will be limited to twenty-five people and it is free of charge. Bring coffee, tea, or whatever and a snack. Contact Bob Greeley at 353-8446.

IN CONCLUSION...

If the *Steering Committee* is a reflection of the *general membership*, and I think it is, then indeed we have a *dynamic organization*. Since this is the case, I ask that each and every member actively enlist your friends, neighbors, or whomever to join our group. If you do not have membership forms, just get their name and address along with one dollar and send it in. The more members we have, the more grassroots we are, the broader our support - the more active we become.

FIRST ANNUAL MEMBERS ONLY TOUR OF SWAN ISLAND

October 26 at 7am
State Landing in Richmond
Limited to 25 on a first come basis

Call Bob Greeley at 353-8446



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