



Friends of Merrymeeting Bay (FOMB) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our mission is to preserve, protect, and improve the unique ecosystems of the Bay through:

Education

Conservation & Stewardship

Research & Advocacy

Member Events

Support comes from members' tax-deductible donations and gifts.

Merrymeeting News is published seasonally and is sent to FOMB members and other friends of the Bay.

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GET KIDS OUTSIDE

"In Wildness is the preservation of the world." H.D. Thoreau

Recently on National Public Radio's On Point, there was an interview with How to Raise a Wild Child author Scott Sampson stating this shocking statistic; kids today spend only four to seven minutes a day playing outdoors.

Yes, you read that correctly; children spend only 4-7 minutes a day playing outside.

That simple number is packed with a generation's worth of exponentially intensifying problems [see below to touch on just a few].

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay put forth this concern 20 years ago when we started Bay Day. We saw even then, children starved for that which the outdoors brings to our quality of life and health, not just for the children but for the entirety of the environment.

It strains reason to think we can protect and live in balance with the planet when we have little or no relationship, understanding or experience of her, preferably first hand.

FOMB is passionate about planting holistic environmental seeds with children and, more importantly, feeding the starving psyche of all those beautiful kids who, from what we can see, need that nourishment more than they realize.



It is now the subject of scientists and researchers; no child left inside, teaching our kids to be wild children, etc., the problems arising from our emotional, spiritual and physical break from the very earth island that sustains us all. These are things we [FOMB] didn't need stats on! It is intuitively obvious. Often once we start studying things like this, we are already so far down the [wrong] path considerable damage is, by now, done and righting the ship that much more difficult.

So here we are with our version of preventative medicine in the Merrymeeting Bay area.

Bay Day gets kids away from their desks, health deadening florescent lights and the plethora of devices now dividing and diminishing their attention. We do this with the consistent, passionate dedication of over 50 volunteers [x twice a year] bringing their joy and expertise to a holistic approach broadening our kid's ability to feel, think, learn, reason, problem solve...things not learned effectively sitting at a desk with an electronic device.

GET KIDS OUTSIDE (CONTINUED)

We believe this approach critical to the whole child, and to the surfeit of problems we all face as the earth shifts balance. To embrace and resolve, in multifaceted ways, the issues we face environmentally as well as economically, socially and spiritually are essential to our future on this planet. Getting our hands [literally] dirty and having a relationship with the very thing sustaining us [the earth], without the filter of electronics...outside in the sun, wind, hot, cold, grass, dirt, water is an important start.

Seeing the kids before and after their time at Bay Day, and getting the thank you letters and cards tells us we're on the right track.

FOMB thanks all the incredible School Outreach and other FOMB volunteers over the years for their devotion. We'd like to especially thank Anne Hammond for her decades of educational service to the children of the Bay area. Anne passed away unexpectedly this summer and will be deeply missed. For many years Anne brought her enthusiasm to Bay Days helping connect children to the plants, trees and ecology of Merrymeeting Bay. FOMB was privileged to have her participation and expertise and through Anne Hammond we have 3 generations: Anne, her daughter Tina Goodman and granddaughter Hannah all volunteering to expand the educational/learning experience for kids.

Thank you Anne, the Hammond family and all the incredible volunteers for your service to our children and the earth.

- Kathleen McGee

ANNE HAMMOND: A VIKING SEND-OFF

Long time FOMB member and volunteer Anne Hammond, 76, died unexpectedly of an infection, July 9, 2016. On July 30, after some kind words were said on Carleton Pt. in Woolwich about ¼ mile north of the Bath Bridge, two adult eagles flying in about 50' over the crowd initiated the launching of Anne's ashes atop the deck of her empty kayak headed down the Kennebec to sea. Many of us realized this was living proof of a Viking presence as far south as the Kennebec.



When I think of Anne it is her endless curiosity and sense of joy-filled wonder that comes to mind. A Bay Day volunteer for many years [a role in recent years taken over by her daughter Tina and granddaughter Hannah], Anne delighted not only in showing 4th graders the delights of nature but in introducing them to scientific methods with which to observe and quantify what they saw. She also led paddling trips for us in the summer, introducing people to the river and Bay she so loved. Remembering us before she died, Anne generously requested in lieu of flowers, donations be made to FOMB in support of our research, advocacy, land conservation and of course education efforts.

Anne was an avid kayaker on the Kennebec River, a sailor, a poet, a hiker and photographer for the ME butterfly and bee surveys. She was passionate about saving natural properties for future generations and introducing children to "the wilds" and will be very much missed. Our thoughts are with her family.

- Ed Friedman

The following people have thus far donated to FOMB in memory of Anne Hammond. Thank you very much.

Hannah Trowbridge, Robert & Avis Meade, Maria & Richard McElman, Shirley & Donald Kenney, Sally Joy, Scott Shaffer [Makita USA], Sarah Redfield, Lorraine Norton, Kathie Weibal, Peter Fessenden, E. Ahlquist Chadbourne, Dot & Dan Erickson, Judith & Robert Mansfield, Ed Friedman & Kathleen McGee

On June 11, 2015, the Bangor Daily New published a wonderful article written by Julia Bayly entitled Chance Encounters Lead to Mussels, Butterflies, New Friends. It is reprinted on pages 3 & 4 with permission and in honor of Anne.

CHANCE ENCOUNTER LEADS TO MUSSELS, BUTTERFLIES, NEW FRIENDS

FORT KENT, Maine — This is a story about how covering a school budget ended up in a butterfly hunt.

Any journalist will tell you the best part of the job is its unpredictability. Sure, it can be a bit stressful at times, but overall I enjoy the randomness that is my life. Things got wonderfully random earlier this week, when I was on my way to town to get a quick photo to illustrate a story on the School Administrative District 27 budget referendum. Not far from the house, I saw a camper van pulled over and what appeared to be two people looking a tad lost. Knowing that lost feeling all too well, I stopped to ask if they needed directions. That is how I met Anne and Stephen Hammond, butterfly hunters from Woolwich. Well, actually, Anne, 75, is the hunter. Stephen, 74, is her driver, support staff and pit crew. One thing led to another, and by the time I was back on the road to get my photo, the Hammonds were making a U-turn back to Rusty Metal Farm, where I invited them to park their camper van for the night.

That evening, over some amazing steamed garlicky mussels — compliments of Anne and Stephen — and a bottle of white wine I purchased on a recent trip to Quebec, I learned that in addition to it being their 47th wedding anniversary, I was the first dinner guest ever in the camper. To say the retired couple had the cool factor going on is an understatement.

That evening, I learned that Stephen bicycled up the Alaskan Highway in the 1950s on a three-speed bike and as a lad drove through South America with his parents; that Anne was an English literature major from Peekskill, New York; and that they met more than four decades earlier, when a group sailing trip had been canceled and they had to pile into one car.

“I ended up on Stephen’s lap,” Anne said. “The rest was history,” her husband laughed.

The two eventually moved to the Bath area, where they began a successful hardware business [Bath Industrial] that now mostly is in the hands of their children, leaving them time for things such as butterfly hunting. Five years ago, after seeing a story in the newspaper, Anne joined the Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Butterfly Survey, [see article in Merrymeeting News Spring 2015 on butterfly, bumble bee and dragonfly surveys] and she has been on the prowl ever since. “I used to collect insects as a little girl,” she told me. “I collected all kinds of butterflies in my area around Peekskill.” Anne learned about the various species of Maine butterflies, their relationship to the Maine environment and economy and the various methods of locating and collecting them. “They give you a net,” she said. “But I did have to buy my own [guide] book.”

Net and book in hand, Anne tramps the woods and fields around the state, from April to September, locating, identifying and documenting every butterfly she comes across. This week, she was on a sort of grail quest looking for the elusive early hair-streak, or *Erora laeta*, which has not been documented in Maine for at least 60 years, she said. It was tracking the hairstreak that brought the Hammonds to northern Maine.



Photo credit - Ed Friedman

Early hairstreaks, Anne said, live their brief two-week adult life in the tops of healthy beech trees eating beech nuts. The couple had been looking for beech trees when I met them on the road. I told them I was fairly certain there were beech trees on Rusty Metal Farm that had not fallen to the beech bark disease, which has wiped out most of the species in Maine. The best chance at seeing the hairstreak is on sunny days, from May 15 to June 15, when they come down from the tree tops to sip water and minerals in open, rocky areas such as dirt roads or driveways. Unfortunately, not only was it pouring rain the entire time the Hammonds were here, but my beech trees proved to be as elusive as the early hairstreaks. “I know there are some here,” I kept saying as we trudged along muddy trails, getting slapped in the face by wet branches and swatting mosquitos. “At least, I think there are.”

I did not have a huge amount of time to explore and Anne was a remarkably good sport about the whole thing. She said she is getting used to coming up empty when it comes to the early hairstreak. The couple already spent some time at Trafton Park in Limestone hanging out near a huge beech tree. “It’s a fabulous tree that is not infected at all,” Anne said. “I was out there with my camera, but the weather and butterflies did not cooperate.”

She did get lucky on a trip a while back to Mount Greylock in Massachusetts when she joined nine other butterfly enthusiasts looking for the hairstreak.

“There were 10 of us toting our cameras down a trail to this beech tree,” she said. “We saw one hairstreak, and we all just surrounded it pointing our cameras at it.”

I am hoping she has similar or better luck when she and Stephen continue to explore northern Maine looking for pockets of healthy beech trees. We were able to find one Fort Kent resident who said he had a stand that looked promising, and I last saw Anne and Stephen heading in that direction with plans to continue on to Allagash and into the North Maine Woods.

Anne would love to hear about any healthy beech in Maine, so if you know of any please email me here at the paper and I can pass along the information to her. In the meantime, if you spot a brown camper van with a high lift jack hooked to the front grill, give the couple inside a wave. Take it from me: It's a great way to add some randomness to your life.

Julia Bayly of Fort Kent is an award winning writer and photographer, who writes part time for Bangor Daily News. Her column appears here every other Friday. She can be reached by email at jbayly@bangordailynews.com.

THE PROPULSION OF CROSS-RIVER FERRIES IN 19TH CENTURY MAINE *

Historical Context: Virtually every type of transportation media used in Maine has been studied and pictured in historical and research reports, except, apparently, cross-river ferries propelled manually or by the wind or water currents. In recently established (1820) Maine, a law was passed in 1830 to deal with the rapidly growing numbers of cross-river ferries. The legislature was evidently too busy to deal with such minor matters so it assigned the power to license them to the counties, provided that they not allow propulsion by



Cable crossing type ferry, Pentwater, MI

steam or horse power. The state reserved the right to directly license ferries running up and down rivers and at their mouths and off shore. In addition, they reserved the right to exempt any location from these county prohibitions by appeal to the state legislature. In the same session as this law was approved, two towns asked for and were allowed to operate horse ferries, Bath and Hallowell. There are accounts of both in operation but no pictures or descriptions. One other, in Bucksport, is said to have functioned later but again with hardly any detail. In most of the state therefore, cross-river ferries employed a range of legal and “natural” technologies apart from rowing and poling and manually pulling on cables.

The most extreme device was never verified to function adequately. In Sidney around 1870 a farmhand mounted a windmill on a barge linked to a propeller made of junked farm machinery. A caustic news report from Bangor doubted that it could possibly work against a headwind. The best systems appeared to ‘sail the current’ by angling the hull and often side boards against the current supplemented by pulling on the cable or poling when the current was not strong enough. However, the means of propulsion was rarely discussed so we are left, in most cases, to speculate based on what can be made out from available pictures. Beyond town histories, diaries of travelers may turn out to be the best source of information but this one has yet to be explored.

FERRIES (CONTINUED)

Operation: We wish to explore the mechanics of operating cross river ferries, however propelled. The number of variables is daunting. Each crossing had its unique set of headlands, depths in crossing, obstructions, landing areas—depending on varying river depths, current speeds, floating obstructions such as ice cakes and logs as well as longitudinal (up and down river) ferries and other craft. There were no approved or even recommended designs for hulls or other boat features and no regulations about tying vehicles and animals down nor any known texts to assist builders except in the case of the prohibited horse ferries (at least known or cited in Maine). We do have an idea of the dimensions of some ferries from photographs either by explicit mention (quite rare) or analytic guess work from the sizes of vehicles and people on board. Most were sized to carry one or two wagons and a few foot passengers. (40-60 ft in length and 12-20 ft beams, not including the landing ramps and a number were smaller).

The majority utilized a “cable” of rope or steel to free them from the extra effort needed not only to cross the river but to counter its downstream flow. Steel cables probably began to be used in Maine soon after the Civil War and their availability presumably opened up a wider range of suitable sites. Some crossings, however, were either too wide for cables (weight and cost), or were subject to regular longitudinal ferries such as Sidney, which faced a Waterville to Augusta steam boat line for some years. (As soon as it ceased operation they restored their cable). Cable-less, they “often had trouble making their desired landing spot”. (Perhaps, like some early trolley passengers near Bath faced with inadequate electric power as they approached a hill at the end of their run, they had to get out in the shallows and push their craft to the desired landing area.)

Legal powering systems in general use in Maine:

1. Sailing (used largely where cables were not allowed or feasible due to excessive width or cost)
2. Rowing or poling
3. Manual pulling or pushing on-deck mounted cables by means of “grab handles”- poles with a notch permitting quick release and an angle parallel to the deck. The operator would walk from bow to stern holding this pole, then release it and repeat. The cable passed over two pulley wheels at the extreme ends of the ferry leaving as much ‘power walking space’ as possible.
4. “Sailing the current” by angling the craft with the stern let out down stream with the bow “close to the wind” in sailing terminology. [ed. note: whitewater boaters use this maneuver all the time to cross currents while maintaining longitudinal position in a stream, referred to as “ferrying.”] Supplementing this strategy, many ferries also used from one to three side (“lee” in sailing language) boards to grab more force from the current. (Sailors’ lee boards are, in ferry terms, down stream while ferries had to position their boards upstream to get the best leverage) The best of these “current sailers” used a double wheeled “trolley” running the full length of the barge on the overhead cable with separate adjustable lines to the bow and stern. Generally this system was supplemented by direct manual efforts on the cable, (except, of course, for out-of- reach overhead cables) and perhaps rowing or poling when the current was slack.
5. Hypothetically one can imagine many other systems and then look for any use of them. For example: Using draft animals on each shore to raise a weight on a pole high enough to pull the craft across the river like a clock weight! Or having an animal on either side pull on a cable running in a continuous loop around a drum on its side with two lines each the width of the river. As it pulled the ferry across from the other side —running out one line—it would also be winding up the line which would effect the return trip. Also why not use a winch on board with a continuous loop?

Collecting accidents as a research strategy: Another theme to be developed in my research is accidents. Many features of these cross river ferries would be best exposed when things went wrong. Fortunately one of our set of pictures included an over loaded truck falling off the Westport Island ferry in 1952. Better yet two of the participants are still with us. A building supply truck from nearby Wiscasset tried to board the ferry when it was not securely fastened to the shore. The front wheels started pushing the ferry off shore before the rear wheels were on board. Gunning the motor in desperation, thinking that surely the ferry’s grip on the shore would soon take hold, the driver accelerated his problem resulting in the loss of most of his load of cement bags into the ocean. A somewhat related problem was described on a current river ferry in Montana which boarded a truck full of cows resulting in an unstable high center of gravity, which anyone today walking on a small float buoyed up by thick Styrofoam blocks- would also find very tippy. The truck emptied all the cows into the Missouri River. It turned out that all of the cows could swim contrary to expectations.

- David Chaplin

FOMB OUTSIDE!

Our summer Outside! Series provides a great chance to see some local sites (and sights!) generally in the company of experts in their outing subject. All too soon our 20th Winter Speaker Series will begin in October so enjoy the summer and fall while still here. Many thanks to guides and attendees! Some images and notes from some of this season's outings follow:

Twenty-one people attended Will Broussard's bird sound walk on July 9th where 31 species were seen and or heard in Bowdoinham's Merrymeeting Bay Wildlife Management Area:

Red-eyed Vireo, Prairie Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Black-throated Green Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Pine Warbler, Mourning Dove, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Black-capped Chickadee, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Great-crested Flycatcher, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Tree Swallow, Red-winged Blackbird, Bobolink, Northern Cardinal, Cedar Waxwing, American Robin, American Goldfinch, Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven and Chimney Swift. *(image left)*



On July 17th Cathy Reynolds led a Forest Insect walk in Topsham's Baxter Forest. Fifteen participants look forward here to finding out who lives under the bark of this deadfall. It wasn't brown-tail moth, a prime topic of conversation. *(image right)*

President of the Maine Mycological Society, Michaeline Mulvey soldiered through our summer drought leading a mushroom walk at the Dresden Falls Archaeological and Wildlife Preserve August 18th. Twenty-five participants had a bit more luck seeking out specimens than did one pair of eyes on a reconnaissance walk a couple of days previous. FOMB spent about 6 years meeting our successful goal of protecting this site from an 8-home subdivision. It is considered the most important prehistoric archaeological site in the state being a seasonal fishing camp from 4,500-9,000 years ago. It also hosts the largest stand of rare mud plant spongy arrowhead on the Bay. Upon completion of our protection campaign we donated the site to The Archaeological Conservancy. It is open for passive recreational use. *(image below)*



Warren Whitney and Betsy Ham led a dozen paddlers in a circumnavigation of Little Swan Island. This trip on August 23 was blessed with a break in the hot weather making a delightful evening on the water under the watchful eyes of several juvenile eagles and a couple of osprey. The wild rice was in full bloom as were bright red cardinal flowers [Lobelia cardinalis], pink Joe-Pye weed [Eutrochium purpureum], and white turtlehead [Chelone glabra] all happily 90% submerged in the high tide. *(image on page 7)*

Photo credits - Ed Friedman



WE NEED YOU! PLEASE SUPPORT OUR IMPORTANT WORK

FOMB Leadership

Our accomplishments are due to the hard work of dedicated volunteers, especially those who serve on our committees. If you want to get involved and serve, please contact the committee chair or Kathleen McGee. We always welcome member input and we'd love for you to join us!

Steering Committee

Ed Friedman, Chair (Bowdoinham)
Nate Gray, Treasurer (Freeport)
Tom Walling, Secretary (Bowdoinham)
Steve Musica (Richmond)

Education Committee

Betsy Steen, Co-Chair, 666-3468
Tom Walling, Co-Chair, 666-5837

Conservation and Stewardship Committee

Chair Vacancy

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Nate Gray, Chair, 446-8870

Research and Advocacy Committee

Ed Friedman, Chair, 666-3372

Coordinator/Organizer

Kathleen McGee, 666-1118

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Membership Levels

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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000+ Sturgeon | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Striped Bass | <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Smelt |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Wild Salmon | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Alewife | |

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal | <input type="checkbox"/> Send information about volunteer opportunities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Member | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like a sticker |

\$7 Enclosed (optional) for a copy of *Conservation Options: A Guide for Maine Land Owners* [\$5 for book, \$2 for postage].



Thanks to Will Zell and Zellous.org for newsletter layout.



Photo credit - Ed Friedman



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HEY KIDS! GO OUTSIDE, ALREADY

by Tom Ashbrook

(From his introduction to the NPR *OnPoint* program referenced on page 1)

In the space of a generation, American children have been largely pulled out of nature. By one study, the average American boy or girl now spends, on average, just four to seven minutes a day outdoors. We hear a new call to raise the “wild child.”

There are all kinds of reasons, but at heart it's a lifestyle change. More screens, more protectiveness, more scheduled lives. American kids under what some call “house arrest.” My guest today says that childhood divorced from nature is costing us, and our children, dearly in physical and mental health and more. This hour On Point: getting the kids back to nature. Raising the “wild child.” See: FOMB website: Homepage/ What's New/Education http://www.friendsofmerrymeetingbay.org/fombnew/pages/what_we_do/education/playing_outside.htm
or: <https://onpoint.wbur.org/2015/03/26/natural-education-parenting-playing-outside>

SURPRISING FACT: This generation of kids may be the first to have a life expectancy that is less than that of their parents!

HEALTH of OUR KIDS: It matters because we're impoverishing the growth of children if we don't give them that outdoor connection. We know that unstructured play in the outdoors is critical for kids growing up—for their brains, their bodies—it helps with motor skills, agility, balance, brain power, creativity, imagination, problem solving. Even bullying tends to be reduced in natural settings.

HEALTH of the ENVIRONMENT: Every generation makes the decision about preserving public lands, state parks, national parks, etc., and if kids aren't connecting with nature where they live, why are they going to protect these places when they grow up? We know that conservation will depend on having a generation that cares about the natural world. So, connecting kids with nature is an issue not just for the health of kids, but for the health of where they live.