

Annual Meeting Provides a Preview Of Summer Themes

By **Harriet McCready**

Two of the most dramatic and terrifying events in the history of the Parrsboro Shore will be twin themes for Ottawa House Museum in the upcoming season. One hundred sixty years ago this year, the Saxby Gale swept in with apocalyptic force, reshaping communities and changing the region forever.

One hundred years ago, against the back-drop of the horrors of war, the thunderous roar of mighty engines echoed from above as an enormous bomber prepared for an emergency landing in Parrsboro.

An overview of these significant events was delivered at the April 6th Annual

General meeting of the Parrsborough Shore Historical Society.

Historian Ed Gilbert gave an account of the Saxby Gale of October 4-5th 1869, a major storm which ravaged the coastal areas of New England and the Maritime provinces, especially the Bay of Fundy. Many coastal communities experienced damage to property, livestock and dykes and even suffered loss of life. Predicted more than a year earlier by amateur astronomer Lt. S.M. Saxby of the Royal Navy, the storm coincided with unusually high tides and planetary alignment, which accounted for its severity.

The World War II bomber

'Handley Page 'Atlantic' was damaged during an emergency landing in Parrsboro on July 5th, 1919. Rosemary Rowntree not only provided a synopsis of the event, which kept air crew and repair personnel in the community for several weeks, but also described the social and economic conditions of the post-war Parrsboro into which the plane dropped.

Many activities are planned around these two events, not only by the Parrsborough Shore Historical Society, but also by the local Legion and the Handley Page Air Cadet Squadron.

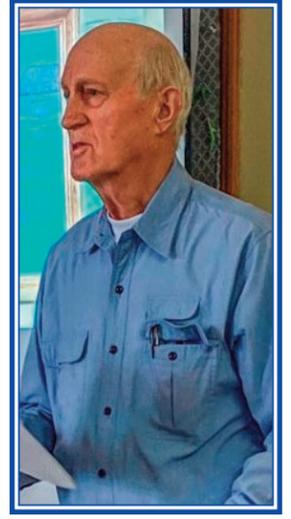
In other business, President Harriet McCready reviewed results of major

goals established in the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan. Nearly all the goals and objectives were either achieved or had significant progress, and remaining items were carried into the next five-year plan currently development.

Society members received the report of a very successful 2018 season, which focused primarily on the last train run between Springhill and Parrsboro. A proposed budget for 2019 was approved and directors were elected for the coming year.



Rosemary Rowntree



Ed Gilbert

PHOTO FEATURE

Spring Duties

When out looking for the next great photo, Lawrence Nicoll noticed activity around several beehives on Kirks Hill. He wrote: First sign of spring is gathering sap for Maple Syrup, and now the second sign, Bee Keepers checking how their bees overwintered, getting ready for the flowering season and distribution to the blueberry fields. (Lawrence R Nicoll Photos)



Isle Haute is eight Km from Cape Chignecto. (Lawrence R Nicoll Photo)

Isle Haute Designation Important to Area

By **Maurice Rees**

Isle Haute has been designated as a wilderness preserve by the Department of Environment and Climate Change. The push for designation has been an 18 year mission for Bill Casey, MP, who in 2001 noticed the small island just eight kilometres from Cape Chignecto near Advocate Harbour was being sold by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

His immediate efforts got the sale stopped, and the long process began.

Now that it's been designated as a wilderness reserve the pristine island, located eight kilometres from the shores of Cape Chignecto in Cumberland County, will be preserved as habitat for several species including the great cor-

morant, the great blue heron and the leach's storm petrel.

The island is about three kilometres long and half a kilometre wide. Its soaring cliffs are nearly 100 metres high. Peregrine falcons are also known to nest at Isle Haute. Evidence of tool-making by Mi'kmaw ancestors has been discovered there.

The island was referenced by French explorer Samuel de Champlain in 1604. The island boasted a manned lighthouse until it was destroyed by fire in the 1950s. An unmanned beacon remains.

Casey said last Tuesday's announcement and designation comes at a perfect time as there is an application before UNESCO for the creation of the Cliffs of Fundy Aspiring GeoPark.

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