

# Five Islands Provincial Park Receiving Upgrades



Joining Karen Casey, MLA when she announced \$600,000 in upgrades to Five Islands Provincial Park are (L-R): Earle MacAloney, Ronnie Ellis, Jean Marsh, Mark Saywood, Chris MacIntyre, Minister Karen Casey, Mike LeBlanc, Frank MacNeil and Daton Pearl. (Submitted)

By Maurice Rees

On Friday, October 7th, Karen Casey MLA on behalf of Natural Resources Minister, Lloyd Hines announced the Five Islands Provincial Park will receive an investment of \$600,000 in upgrades. The upgrades are part of a multi-year parks improvement plan and include a group-use building, road improvements, electrical upgrades and new signs.

Tourism Nova Scotia lists Five Islands Provincial Park as one of Nova Scotia's premiere outdoor destinations. Rising majestically from the shores of the Bay of Fundy, the park attracted approximately 56% more visitors in 2016 during its open period from June 10th to Thanksgiving weekend. Although there are no facilities or services offered in

the winter months, the park is open for winter recreational activities. The park road is normally plowed to the parking lot near the start of the Economy Mountain Trail.

This year, the provincial park saw about 3,000 campsite bookings, an increase of 1,051 campers or 56 per cent over 2015. The park has 87 open and wooded campsites, including 26 pull throughs (un-serviced). Group sites are available.

"It's been an exceptional year for Five Islands and all of Nova Scotia's provincial parks," said Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Karen Casey, on behalf of Natural Resources Minister Lloyd Hines. "We are committed to creating a better park experi-

ence for Nova Scotia families and individuals who use our parks, and for visitors who come from out of province."

The park features 90 metre (300 ft.) sea cliffs overlooking the world's highest tides, a spectacular setting for camping or any of the many opportunities that abound for hiking, beachcombing, rock collecting and clam digging and other outdoor activities.

Visitors are always reminded to check tide times before walking on the mud flats as the Fundy tides rise very quickly. Attracting a clientele interested in the Bay of Fundy tides, the park has become a hub because of its proximity to Joggins Fossil Cliffs, Cape d'Or Look-off, Fundy Geological Museum, Ottawa House, The Ship's Company

Theatre (Parrsboro), and Cobequid Interpretive Centre (Economy).

A renewed Red Head Trail, re-opened in 2012, offers four of the best views of the islands and the basin. Enjoy hiking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing on the west side of Economy Mountain with 6.5 km (4 mi) of tracked trails, which are marked and mapped.

Park amenities include: flush toilets, showers, disposal station, playground, two picnic areas (one close to the highway, the other by the Minas Basin shore), an unsupervised beach, trails, fire grills, wood, and ice. Avid campers who prefer parks with ratings, are attracted to Five Islands Provincial Park because it is a Campground Host park, where leashed pets are permitted.

Provincial parks enjoyed record participation this year. About 70,000 campsite bookings have been made in provincial parks this year, a 24 per cent increase over 2015. Five Islands park fared much better with a 56% increase in overnight visitors in 2016. Nova Scotia has 130 camping, day-use, and beach parks. More information about provincial parks is available at <http://parks.novascotia.ca>

# Photo Essay

Bass River Fire Brigade held its annual fund raising auction on Saturday, October 8th and raised approximately \$6,000, slightly ahead of previous years.



Bass River Fire Brigade held its annual fall auction on October 8th. Shown above is some of the additional items stored outside awaiting for the auctioneer to say "Sold". (Rees Photo)



More merchandise sitting outside at the Bass River Fire Hall awaiting for the auctioneer to call it up. (Rees Photo)



Greg Muise, Chief at Onslow-Belmont left his brigade's open house to drive over to Bass River to be guest auctioneer for Bass River Fire Brigade's fund raising auction. (Rees Photo)



It was early and the crowd hadn't built to capacity at the annual Bass River Fire Brigade fund raising auction on Saturday, October 8th. (Rees Photo)

# Bass River Auction nets \$6,000

By Maurice Rees

Every year fire brigades throughout the province, out of necessity, engage in a variety of fundraising activities to keep the brigade functioning at a level to protect local property. The Bass River Fire Brigade is no exception and held its annual fall fundraising auction on Saturday, October 8th.

Alfred Grue, chief said the day's proceeds were approximately \$6,000 which is slightly above the results from the previous year. "We are very appreciative of the support from the community, whether it be for those donating to the auction, or coming out enjoying the social time and more importantly participating by making purchases", he said.

Grue expressed his appreciation from members who volunteered time to assist with the auction by collecting donations and helping throughout the

event. "More important is the time they spend away from friends and families for ongoing training and responding to calls throughout the year", he concluded.

When asked what the brigade needs he said new members are always needed as several are getting older, and we are always recruiting. The other need is a new truck.

He anticipated the members will start planning to acquire a new truck to update equipment. A totally new vehicle would cost in excess of \$300,000, but the brigade is hoping it might be able to find a used one that might be taken out of service by a larger department. He projected that a used vehicle suitable for their needs would probably cost around \$100,000.

Regardless of which way they go, it will require a lot of fundraising, through larger auctions, dances and other initiatives.

# Old Wentworth Valley Schoolhouse Annual Reunion

By Hope Bridgewater

Friends of the Old Wentworth Valley Schoolhouse held another annual reunion. The Friends arranged a three hour hike up to High Head and back starting off the reunion at 10 am. Led by Norah Topping, interested hikers Debi Atkinson, Lillian Campbell, Mel Clark and Andy Hunt, got to the top for a splendid view where on a fine day one can see over the land to the Northumberland Strait.

Just outside on the grounds of this Heritage One-Room School was an auction with a large white canopy with seating and a long table

with the items for sale. The items were gathered because the admission to the event required each person bring something for the auction. The volunteer auctioneer, Bob Lafrance, sold all the items with skill, diplomacy, and humour, thus raising money for the Restoration Fund of the Heritage Schoolhouse. Bob Lafrance had a career that made for a good auctioneer: he spent time in the navy, worked for CNR, had a taxidermy studio and school, and taught English in Mexico.

When the auction finished, there was time to look outside and inside of this

Heritage School, play games or see how the theme of this reunion was celebrating 21 years of restoring the Old Wentworth Valley Schoolhouse. Inside the building, the history of the one-room school was instantly shown by the teacher's desk, the desks for seating two students, two blackboards, and a wood stove. Even more amazing were the photo and text displays created by Carol Hyslop on the walls showing the restoration of this Heritage School for the last 21 years from 1994 to 2016 by volunteer workers.

Stepping back in history to the 1870's, the school on this location was called the Wentworth Station School, section No. 14. Then after a meeting in 1902, the school was ordered to be torn down to be replaced for \$540 by Alexander Munroe in 1903 and called by the name Wentworth Valley School, section No.14. It was a one-room school for grades 1 to 11 until in 1958 when it was closed due to the amalgamation of all six Wentworth area schools. The closed Valley school became a Rifle Club and a Ski Club until taken over by Friends of the Old Wentworth Valley Schoolhouse. The Friends successful restoration of the school building resulted in it being named a Heritage School, representative of the one-room schools that dotted the province.

In the display Carol Hyslop shows the hard work involved in restoration: new well and water system; new septic system; a wheelchair accessible ramp; a storage shed; new foundation; new floor; erosion protection from the nearby brook; new steps; new wood stove; a kitchen addition with refrig-

erator, stove, sinks, cupboards, toilets and storage room; forest clearing; landscaping; grass mowing; snow plowing; stacking wood; painting; door repairs; general cleaning and other maintenance chores that appear.

The Friends of the Old Wentworth Valley Schoolhouse, Debbie and Harold Barclay, Ernest and Wavey Wood, Bobbie and Francie Hunt, Butch and Debbie Atkinson, Howard Waugh, Andy Hunt, Shannon Letcher, Chris and Norah Topping, and Carol Hyslop, deserve praise and admiration for their continuing work in the restoration of this Heritage School and for "sustaining the dream" of more restoration and beneficial programs in the future.

After the food had been served entertainment began with a very talented trio of guitar players and singers featuring most of the songs: Shannon Letcher, Terry Keiver and Gordon Moore. At times three others helped this splendid concert: pianist Geri Letcher, drummer Dianne Ring, and singer Janice Letcher. At times Carol Hyslop would wave a stop to their music to give out prizes. Winners of the prizes were: 50/50 won by Tim Rushton, and mini-affle 1st prize basket of local products won by Margie Langille, 2nd prize won by Kathy Little, and 3rd prize won by Pearl Crowley. Several door prizes. What a fun time that was!

Many words of thanks go to the following sponsors: Thompson Berries, Bentley's Maple, Tatamagouche Foodland, Truro Ron's Hair Care, Meeting Water Coffee, Tatamagouche Brewery, Masstown Market, Patsy's Diner and Wentworth Market.



Bob Lafrance, auctioneer at the Old Wentworth Valley Schoolhouse, sold all the items on the auction table and raised money for the Restoration Fund of this heritage schoolhouse. (Hope Bridgewater Photo)