

Partridge Island Now Protected Forever



Partridge Island has become a protected conservation area as part of NS Nature Truro. Pictured above (L-R) are: Gerald Gloade, Rochelle Owen, Landowners Sharon Taylor and Mary MacVicar, associate vice president finance and treasurer, Acadia University and Sharon Taylor signing the conservation easement, Bonnie Sutherland, Nature Trust Executive Director. (Lawrence R. Nicoll Photo)

By Maurice Rees

Ottawa House Museum, Parrsboro was the scene of a special community celebration on Sunday, August 21st by The Nature Trust to welcome Partridge Island to the trust as a protected property. Following the celebration, the Nature Trust and guides lead a hike exploring the ecology, geology and Mi'kmaq stories of the newly protected Partridge Island.

On August 15th it was announced the generosity of several land owners has resulted in Partridge Island becoming part of the Nova Scotia Nature Trust and will be protected forever. Partridge Island, often referred to as one of Nova Scotia's cherished island gems, is assured this natural, historic and cultural landmark is preserved, though a conservation easement agreement with the Nature Trust following the actions of several generous island owners who have come together to make it happen.

Situated in the narrow passage between the Minas Basin's north shore and Cape Blomidon, the 21 hectare Partridge Island is a unique and highly significant place. Ringed by steep cliffs rising to 50 meters above the sea, its hiking trail and look-offs provide spectacular views of the surrounding land and seascapes. Known as wa'so'q or "Heaven" by the Mi'kmaq, Partridge Island was a traditional place for gathering the sacred stone, amethyst. It is also the home of the Mi'kmaq god-giant Glooscap's grandmother. Generations of local families and visitors alike have enjoyed visiting the island, hiking, bird-watching, rock-hounding or searching for the next big fossil find.

One of only a few islands in the Bay of Fundy (actually connected to the mainland by a narrow beach), Partridge Island is ecologically significant in several ways. It supports a rich coastal hardwood forest, rare in Nova Scotia, particularly on islands. The tidal flats, salt marsh, steep cliffs and forests provide important habitat for 48 species of shorebirds, songbirds and raptors, including endangered species, and refuge for many spring and fall

migrants. The island and surrounding beaches and cliffs are also internationally recognized for their diversity of gemstones, minerals and fossils.

Gregor Wilson, a Nature Trust Board member and supporter, with family roots in the area said, "It's amazing to see Partridge Island protected. Many people assumed it was protected, just because it hadn't been developed, and people have been visiting the island for generations," he added. "But there was no protection. Things could have changed here drastically if the Nature Trust hadn't stepped in."

The story of its protection began with a historic conservation agreement between the Nature Trust and Acadia University. The agreement commits Acadia to legally and permanently protect several ecologically important lands owned by the University.

"Environmental sustainability is one of the fundamental underpinnings of an Acadia education and if Acadia is going to do more than talk, we decided the responsible thing to do was ensure all of the ecologically sensitive properties we own are protected, in perpetuity," says Acadia's Dr. Tom Herman.

In 2012, the Nature Trust and Acadia signed Canada's first conservation easement protecting University-owned land. Both Bon Portage Island and Hemeon's Head (both on Nova Scotia's south shore) have now been protected through this agreement.

While working to complete a conservation easement on Partridge Island, it was discovered that Acadia actually shared ownership with other landowners. Most of the island was once owned by the late Morley Taylor. His land was bequeathed jointly to Acadia and Dalhousie Universities, Sharon Taylor and another owner who wishes to remain anonymous. All four recognized the significance of the island, and the wonderful opportunity that its preservation offered, and have subsequently generously agreed to protect their land.

"The conservation easement, covering over 95% of the island, ensures that the island's unique natural values are pro-

tected, in perpetuity," noted Dr. Herman. "It also ensures that generations to come can continue to explore, enjoy and learn from this unique place." Both Acadia and Dalhousie have retained the right to continue to use the island as an outdoor classroom, research and learning site for their students and faculty.

Sharon Taylor, another of the island owners, is delighted to see the island protected. "Morley Taylor was very proud to own Partridge Island. I believe a wonderful man is looking down on all this excitement with a big smile - I know he would be so pleased."

The Nature Trust is extremely grateful to the island owners, Acadia University, Dalhousie University, Sharon Taylor and an anonymous owner, for so generously agreeing to protect their land, for the benefit of nature, and for generations to come.

Protection of Partridge Island was also possible thanks to generous donations from the Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust, the Wilson Merriam Foundation, Gregor Wilson, Dave Wilson, Mary O'Regan, and Stephen and Suzanne O'Regan.

"Partridge Island is one of Mother Nature's real gems, and one enjoyed by so many people, including my own 13 grandchildren," said Stephen O'Regan, an enthusiastic project supporter. "It is such a great place for children to explore and enjoy nature. To realize it will be protected for future generations is a very comforting thing for me. I'm pleased to be a part of it."

Tax-receipted charitable donations to support the long-term stewardship of Partridge Island can be made at www.nsnt.ca or by calling the Nature Trust at 902-425-LAND. Volunteers interested in helping to care for the island are also welcome.



Dr. Tom Herman, Acadia University speaking to the large crowd at the Ottawa House by the Sea Museum ceremony, when Partridge Island become a protected conservation area. (Lawrence R. Nicoll Photo)



Being a noted Landscape photographer, Parrsboro based Lawrence R. Nicoll captured this scenic shot showing Cape Split from Partridge Island. (Lawrence R. Nicoll Photo)

Blacksmithing - Old Job - 21ST Century Art

By Oralee O'Byrne

Michael Tennyson may not yet be well known in this area, but he and his craft are making an impact!

Michael was trained as a blacksmith from an early age by master Blacksmith William Senseney of W i l l i a m s t o w n Massachusetts. Michael has over 15 years' experience, he has taught classes at Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, been involved with various reenactments, and has become proficient in historical iron restoration. Michael was a major player in the restoration of the main gate at Fort Ticonderoga in Ticonderoga New York.

So how did he wind up here? Michael married a "shore" girl and began to spend summer vacations in Port Greville. On one of these vacations he and his wife Skyla Visited the Age of Sail museum. "It's hard to say who was more excited" recalls Curator Oralee O'Byrne "Michael for finding a working forge or me to find an interested blacksmith!"

Michael started coming and demonstrating at the museum for a few days every summer voluntarily during his vacation.

Two years ago Michael and Skyla made a permanent move to Nova Scotia. "All I can say is that of all places I've travelled in my life, I've never found a place that has accepted me and left judgment aside. I've never found a place that made me feel that home feeling, until I met the people at the Age of Sail. That place a huge role in our decision to move to Nova

Scotia," Michael commented.

Now living in Halifax, Michael has dedicated a minimum of one day a month to volunteering in the blacksmith shop during the museum's season and is creating workshops to teach others the craft. Though small, due to the size of the shop, the courses have been well attended and are becoming quite popular. Albert A had this to say about his time in the beginner's blacksmith course in July. "Mike is an inspired teacher who has the ability to both embolden the novice and encourage the beginner."

Along with the courses Michael still continues to drop in here and there for demo days to support the museum. "Michael will be here the first weekend in September demoing and doing a course and has a knife making course set up for the first of October."

O'Byrne said "We are just so pleased with our partnership with Michael and with our partnership with Creative Parrsboro who is helping to market the courses for us. Michael is more than a volunteer. He is part of our museum family!"

For those interested in finding out more about the blacksmithing contact the Age of Sail at gbsmsageofsail@yahoo.com or look for them on facebook. You can also sign up for the courses and find other creative art courses on the Creative Parrsboro Cultural Campus <https://www.parrsborocreative.com/cultural-campus/course-listings/>



It takes a lot of hammering on the large anvil to form and shape metal into a knife. A course will be held at the Age of Sail in early October. (O'Byrne Photo)

SALVAGE *your money!*

- Boosting & unlocking service
- Tire changing service
- Buyer of cars, trucks & metals
- Used Auto Parts
- Unwanted appliance removal
- Yard clean ups and disposal
- Compact tractor service
- Light and medium duty towing

Yorke's Garage and Auto Salvage
590 Two Islands Rd, Parrsboro, NS B0M 1S0
To sell please call 902-397-0941.
All other inquiries call
902-254-3291
E-MAIL: yorkesgarageandautosalvage@gmail.com

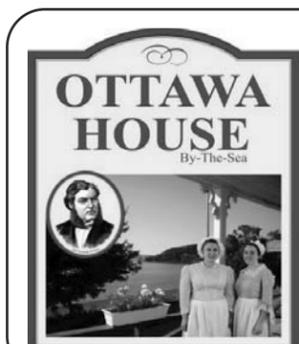
Third Annual Guy Brown Bursary Dinner

Tuesday, September 13, 2016

Royal Canadian Legion, Springhill, N.S.
6:00 p.m. Happy Hour • 7:00 p.m. Dinner

Speakers Bill Casey M.P.
and Terry Farrell M.L.A.

FOR INFORMATION: Gary Brown 902-546-2525



Museum & Historic Site—Genealogy & Archives

Open Daily 10am to 6pm, 902-254-2376

ottawa.house@ns.sympatico.ca & checkout our Facebook

www.parrsboroughshorehistoricalsociety.ca

