

Isles of Shoals Historical and Research Association

Our mission is to locate, collect, organize, preserve, expand and make available information and knowledge relating to the natural and human history of the Isles of Shoals

Architecture on Star Island

Will be explored in our Spring Meeting Program

New Date- Tuesday April 12, 2011 -New Date

Guest Speaker Robert Cook

The study of Star Island architecture is a recently acquired interest for Robert Cook, presenting him with the opportunity for a rewarding search to uncover forgotten lore and to learn about the settlement of the island and its development as a tourist and retreat destination in the 19th Century. He will share some of his discoveries and insights with us at our April meeting—expanding on his slide presentation and walkabout tour with Sarah O'Connor, at last June's ISHRA Conference—relating some of the stories behind the existing buildings, others long gone and some yet to be built.

Come to the spring meeting to hear what a winter's worth of research has uncovered!

Robert Cook has been a resident of Portsmouth for over 10 years. He is trained as an architect and currently is a principal in AdaptDesign, a full service architecture studio here in Portsmouth. This firm seeks to help clients rethink and adapt their needs into sensible long term designs.

Robert has an abiding interest in architecture and history, dating from high school and during that time he sketched and visited a variety of New England architectural subjects. Since then he has traveled widely to strengthen his understanding of how architecture reflects our collective living patterns. He first visited the Isles of Shoals in 1990 and since then has returned many times to sketch and explore the islands' beauty.

Since moving to Portsmouth, Robert has served as a trustee of the Portsmouth Historical Society and was for five years the chair of the building and grounds committee. He led the survey of the Purcell House (aka John Paul Jones House) in an exercise to

document and identify the potential for its development to be used as a museum. He also designed and supervised the service wing renovations of the museum for the exhibit on the Russo-Japanese Peace Treaty. He has been a docent at both Frank Lloyd Wright's Zimmerman House and three Historic New England houses in Newbury and Lincoln Mass.

Robert holds a Masters of Architecture from the Savannah College of Art and Design and a BA in history from Plymouth State College, now university. He lives in Portsmouth with his wife Bonita and two children.



Photo: Robert Cook

“Architecture is a combination of materials that are both physical creations and the stuff of good stories. Have you ever wondered why the Oceanic hotel looks like a series of different buildings arranged in a row? Why are some island buildings constructed of wood and others stone? Why do these buildings look different, yet together they so pleasingly suit the island, complementing the unique atmosphere that stays with us even when we are far from this place.”

Robert Cook

A Note From Your President



Three Chances to Step Back in Time

Shoals history enthusiasts will have three chances this summer to journey into the past, with a new six-night August conference joining the roster alongside our traditional four-night June conference and two-night September weekend. While June and September will continue to be adult conferences, Star Island's new August conference welcomes children and families as well.

So now there's something for everyone, no matter what length of stay or time of year you prefer. Please help us plan ahead by registering now, and please spread the word to family and friends about the special experience of staying on the Isles of Shoals.

Complete details and a registration form are at starisland.org, where you'll also find a new slideshow and video that are perfect for showing potential New Shoalers a glimpse of island life.

JUNE 25 - 29

Architectural historian Bob Cook and I will co-chair the ISHRA June conference with a focus on the resort hotel era of the 19th century. It's called, "We Did Come Back! But why did we come here in the first place?" We'll look at the grand hotels of the seacoast, how they were built, what their guests experienced, and how some families stayed for weeks at a time.

Bob Cook will offer a foretaste of the conference at our Tuesday evening, April 12 meeting at the Seacoast Science Center in Rye, where he'll be our guest speaker. Don't miss it!



The original Oceanic Hotel in 1873

AUG. 27 - SEPT. 2 "Fashioning Travel Memories" is the theme of the first-ever *Historic Star* conference, presented by Star Island Corporation in association with ISHRA. Scrapbooking, photography and journaling workshops will help conferees capture their own travel memories, while speakers will explore memories left behind by Shoals visitors of centuries gone by.

ISHRA past president Ann Beattie serves as planning chair for *Historic Star*; while ISHRA vice president and Vaughn curator Sarah O'Connor will be a workshop leader. There are options to register for the full six-night conference or just the first or second half.

SEPT. 9 - 11 "Picture This! How we see the world around us" is the theme of the ISHRA September weekend, to be chaired again this year by Gary Bashline. Photographer and Star Island winter caretaker Alexandra de Steiguer will talk about her experiences, including the island winters most of us can only imagine.

The weekend will also feature casual activities including social events, nature strolls and a candlelight service in the chapel. Cameras optional.

COME ONE, COME ALL Don't forget that if you bring New Shoalers this year, they can each receive a 10% discount off room and

board and you can receive up to a 50% discount for bringing up to five newcomers. (People who have not been conferees since 2006 qualify. Deadline two weeks in advance; see details at starisland.org.)

With so many options to choose from, I hope I'll be seeing you as a fellow time traveler at the Shoals this summer.

Joel Plagenz, ISHRA President
plagenz@comcast.net



ISHRA Media Contacts

Cassie Durette
ISHRA Webmaster
webmaster@ishra.org

Richard Stanley
ISHRA Newsletter Editor
rsg@frets.me

Star Island Regatta

The Star Island Regatta (Formerly The Gosport Regatta) will be held on Saturday June 11.
For details contact Star Island by phone - 603-430-6272
Or visit: starisland.org



Photo: Portsmouth Athenaeum

ISHRA Historic Photo Project

This historic photo of the turnstile on Star Island is one of several that ISHRA will present this summer for permanent display on the islands. Each of the durable mounted prints will be accompanied by a placard describing the scene. The photos and their stories will help new visitors to the Shoals connect with the islands' history.

You can see the mounted prints on display at ISHRA's April 12 meeting at Seacoast Science Center, before they are installed in Shoals buildings this summer. Prints of some of the images are available for purchase from the Athenaeum website at:

portsmouthathenaeum.org/shop.html

Historic Star Conference Fashioning Travel Memories

Speakers and workshops will guide conferees in investigating travel memories from visitors to the Isles of Shoals in bygone centuries and in creatively preserving their own memories of their own time on enchanting Star Island. Activities include scrapbooking, digital photography and nature sketching workshops along with sessions on travel writing, journaling and historical ephemera. Participants will investigate the fascinating history of the Isles of Shoals while learning how to vividly capture their own travel memories in images and prose that reflect a distinct sense of the world around them.

The Historic Star Conference will take place from Saturday, August 27 to Friday, September 2, 2011 (with the option of attending the first or last four days). For more information please visit starisland.org or email:

historicstar@comcast.net.



ISHRA History Docents

Docents enjoy the opportunity to meet new people and introduce them to the Shoals, while developing their individual approach, giving voice to the islands' unique history. Use your creativity and personal knowledge to create tours that will leave a lasting impression on visitors. Tours are conducted every Sunday and some Wednesdays and Fridays June–September between 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM. For details contact Maryann Stacy at:

207-450-0407 or mstacy@townofogunquit.org



A scrapbooking page ca. 1895. Scrapbooking then and now will be featured at the Historic Star Conference

Hiding in Plain Sight!

by
Jean M. Stefanik

“That looks like a different type of dock,” I thought as I came back to the Rutledge Marine Lab last July. I’ve walked that path to the water for decades, usually in June, and never noticed the plant before. So I picked one stem from thirty or more on the plant and carried it back to key it out in the Lab’s botanical books.

Touchdown! It was *Rumex pallidus* or Seaside Dock.

As a Naturalist, I enjoy looking for rare plants. William Nichols, a botanist with the New Hampshire Heritage Bureau, and I chatted in July about endangered plants historically on The Shoals. Among them, *Rumex pallidus*, Seaside or White Dock, was listed as “historic”—the only population in the State of NH

was last positively documented in 1968. I was unfamiliar with the plant, but knew how it differed from the very common, non-native *Rumex crispus*, Curly Dock, whose upright growth and dark brown seeds are unmistakable in the fall.

Rumex pallidus is native, common in Newfoundland and Labrador, and not globally rare, even in Maine. It is rare farther south in New England, and the habitat is specific – the upper rocky area between the highest high tide line, and the grassy or shrubby area more inland. It is a big plant, sprawling along the rocks, with twenty to thirty stems which turn red if in bright sun. Flowers are white, found in clusters at the ends. Seed pods begin developing mid summer and are a medium milk-chocolate brown color.

Seaside Dock is documented in Richard Howard’s *Flowers of Star Island* published in 1968, but it doesn’t say *where* it was located on Star. In June 2004, I chaired an ISHRA/BSA botanical conference during

which we looked for Seaside Dock without success, perhaps because it was so early in the season. William and Virginia Nichols, surveying for rare plants in 2004 and 2006, were also unable to locate any examples on Star. They did, however, document many other plants which were added to listings in a 2008 edition of *Rhodora*, the quarterly journal of the New England Botanical Club. In that comprehensive document, it is listed as “historic” for New Hampshire, at the time found only on Appledore in Maine.

After I found the first few plants in the rocky area of inner Gosport Harbor, I learned that Seaside, or Sea Beach Dock, was photographed on Star Island by

Howard Lightfoot sometime in the late '80s or early '90s and a photo of one stem—not the whole plant—appears on his CD which is available in the Star Island bookstore. However, he didn’t publish where the plant grew. His daughter (also a Jean and a long-time Shoaler) and I did a bit of sleuthing in an elusive Property Standards

report and noticed that in there he had mentioned seeing Sea Beach Dock in the inner harbor.

In August, Rutledge Marine Lab Pelican Callen Miracle and I did locate another dozen specimens of *Rumex*, mostly in the inner harbor area. Each plant was large, healthy and sprawling, finishing its flowering and full of seeds. I found one plant on Smuttynose in September—there are probably more since I only searched a small portion of the potential habitat.

Vicky Hardy, CEO of the Star Island Corporation, and I took a walk to see the plant. She commented, “One of the truly special aspects of Star Island is that the isolation from the mainland over the centuries can produce some surprises; witness the re-discovery of the Seaside Dock. We also have policies in place for protection of the natural habitats, which improves the likelihood of rare species renewal.”

(cont. on page 5)



Photo: Jean Stefanik

The distinctive brown seed pods of Seaside Dock

Hiding in Plain Sight! (cont.)

Rare plants are being marked on Star by clearly visible but discreet signs. Some are rare in NH, others common in NH but rare on the Shoals. Because of its location and history, an amazing mix of flora, native and non-native, deliberately introduced, cultivated, and invasive all exist together on the Shoals. There are always more wonders simply waiting to be discovered—or, in this case, re-discovered!

Jean M. Stefanik is an Educator/Naturalist, SIC Member and volunteer, active in ISHRA, and is a Smuttynose Steward currently residing in Manchester, NH.



Photo: Jean Stefanik

Seaside Dock is a sprawling low-growing plant

A Day at Appledore House in 1872

from

“Quaker Friends on Appledore” published in the 1872 *Philadelphia Friends*

How did visitors to the fashionable Shoals hotels spend their days before the modern conference era of dawn-to-midnight activities? A pair of guests at the Appledore House in 1872 wrote:

“We rise in time to breakfast at half past seven. The long, well-lighted dining-room is punctually filled with animated groups around the bountiful tables, discussing their plans for the day’s occupation as they sip their tea or coffee. The morning goes by in sailing, fishing, walking and gathering bouquets or shells and sea-weeds, reading, sketching, fancy-work or croquet. Dinner is at one, and then we write, nap, or spend the time in some other unaccountable way till an early tea at six. The evening is the chief time for social intercourse, for strolling, rowing, or sitting on the rocks to watch the sunsets and their phenomena. One night we had fire-works from a rock lying a little way out to sea.”

“The music-room opens on all sides into the breezy piazzas. These form the grand promenade, where one is entertained with noting the variety of characters drawn together in this unique resort. Here come a father and daughter in deep mourning; a group of fashionable young ladies follows; then a husband and wife. A troop of girls in white frocks, pink and blue sashes, and long curls, step joyously along, occasionally teased by some genial grey-beard. Young men away from college labors or escaped from mercantile pursuits have thrown off their fishing costume and come out for an evening’s social pleasure. Here, too, are artists, making sketches of maritime scenery for use in their city studios; poets, drinking inspiration from nature; orators, renewing their exhausted powers; and naturalists, collecting treasures from cliff and cove.”

Thanks to Lois Williams for suggesting this and to Dennis Robinson/SeacoastNH for sourcing.



Photo: Wm. Davis

The Appledore House ca. 1865 before the South Pavilion was added in 1871

Chair Caning and Repair Volunteers Needed

Star Island's dear old fleet of rocking chairs is constantly in need of re-caning and repair. Join in this volunteer opportunity to repair and re-cane the seats and backs of some of the beloved rockers on the Star Island Porch. It's not difficult to learn, but is time consuming to complete. Please contact Jean Stefanik if you are interested, and we'll try to set up several small-group opportunities, both on the mainland and Shoals, this season.

Contact Jean Stefanik at Jeango4it@aol.com or 603-647-1063 for more information.



Dig Back in History! Shoals Marine Laboratory Field Archaeology Courses

Join Drs. Nathan Hamilton and Robin Seeley to explore the history of human settlement at The Shoals from the late 16th through the 19th centuries and participate in ongoing research on Smuttynose Island.

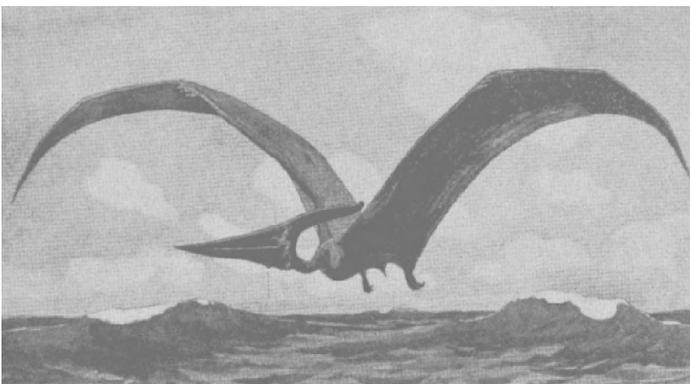
Students will get real hands-on experience in excavation techniques, literally digging through layers of history while learning professional methods of documentation and reporting on architectural, historic and prehistoric site work.

Six one-to-three-week courses are offered from May 30th through June 20th, 2011. No previous experience is required for participation in this non-credit program.

For more information visit:

http://www.sml.cornell.edu/sml_cc_islandarch.html

Dig deep enough with the SML Archaeology Project and you might find one of these!



Pteranodon - Late Cretaceous



Waiting for you to arrive:
The Oceanic porch in September.

ISHRA September Weekend

Picture This!

Photography will be in the spotlight for ISHRA's September weekend conference this fall. Cameras are optional, but conferees are encouraged to bring a favorite photo and talk about the who, what, when, where and why of the story it tells.

Photographer Alexandra de Steiguer, who is also the winter caretaker on Star Island, will show images of the island in winter and walk with conferees to visit the spots where they were taken. We also will join with the New Hampshire Society of Photographic Artists for a talk by National Geographic photographer Todd Gipstein, who in his 40 years of traveling the world has amassed an archive of approximately 300,000 images. And photographer Richard Moore, author of *Odiorne Point: Twice-Seen*, will show how he captures both past and present views in a single frame.

Conference registrar Rose Schlegel will present a reenactment of Celia Thaxter, welcoming the conferees as her guests, and a bead artist will offer a workshop on creating beaded keepsakes. Social events, nature strolls and a candlelight service in Gosport Chapel will round out the weekend, chaired again this year by Gary Bashline.

The conference runs from Friday afternoon, September 9, through Sunday afternoon, September 11. The registration fee is \$60, and room and board (including round-trip ferry) is \$260 and up, depending on the type of room. Full details and a registration form are in the conference listings at starisland.org.

Membership

ISHRA Membership Includes:

- A subscription to our newsletter, published twice a year. Access to the Members Corner of our website at ISHRA.org which includes past newsletters, speaker details and other Shoals resources.
- An opportunity to attend our meeting programs on the 2nd Tuesday of April and November, conferences on Star Island and day-trips.
- Fellowship with people who share your interest and enthusiasm for the history of the Isles of Shoals.
- An invitation to work on Isles of Shoals historical research projects as well as our newsletter, website content, and list of archived Shoals materials.

To become a member (or to renew your membership—please check the mailing label for expiration date), please mail the form below (or make changes to the address label on the reverse side) with your dues to:

ISHRA Membership

PO BOX 705 | Portsmouth NH 03802

I have enclosed my dues for membership:

Yearly Dues (June 1-May 31):

\$10 for Individual

\$5 for Junior (18 and younger)

\$25 for Family, Group, or Institution

\$100 for Lifetime

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

I would like to give the gift of membership and have included the proper dues and name and address on a separate sheet of paper.

For more information, please contact
Cassie Durette, Membership Chair:
membership@ishra.org 603-667-3306

Summer Activities on The Shoals

Shoals Marine Laboratory - Appledore Island

Celia Thaxter's Garden Tours

Fridays and Saturdays June 24 – August 5

Adult & Family Education & Workshops

Whales, Seals & Sharks: Marine Vertebrates of the Gulf of Maine. Introduction to biology and conservation of marine vertebrates.

Field Ornithology: Immerse yourself in the amazing world of birds. View the diverse and abundant birds of The Isles of Shoals.

Field Archaeology: Become acquainted with the history of human settlement at The Shoals from the 17th through the 19th centuries.

Gulls of Appledore: Spring Banding Program
Become a citizen scientist assisting in long-term seabird ecology research.

For more information about SML activities contact:

Pam Boutilier at 603-430-5220 or

www.sml.cornell.edu/sml_publiced_adultandfamily.html

Star Island Conference Center

Artist Workshops: Star Arts Conference

Morning workshops in music, writing, theater, photography, dance or painting.

Farm to Fork: Natural History Conference

Sink your teeth into finding health, community and sustainability through food.

Rejuvenating America: What will it take?

All Star I Family Conference

A week of great kids' activities and interesting adult lectures, conversations and fun.

Simplicity by Design: All Star II Family Conference

How can we simplify in the face of the 21st Century's complex challenges?

More information about the many programs offered during the 2011 conference season can be found at:
starisland.org/conferences/2011-listings





Photo: Richard Stanley

Boon Island 10nm NE from Smuttynose Island

Officers and Directors

Joel Plagenz, President
Sarah O'Connor, Vice-President
Alice Gordan, Secretary
John Diamond, Treasurer
Gary and Kate Bashline

Laury Bussey
Amy Cook
Cassie Durette
Maryann Stacy
Richard Stanley
Jean Stefanik
Ann Beattie, ex-officio



ISHRA Membership Meeting
New Date Tuesday, April 12, 2011 **New Date**
Refreshments at 6:30pm, Meeting at 7:00pm
Seacoast Science Center, Rye, NH
Please Bring Refreshments!

Inside this Issue:

Architecture on Star Island Guest Speaker Robert Cook	p. 1
A Note From Your President	p. 2
ISHRA Photo Project Historic Star Conference	p. 3
Hiding in Plain Sight - Seaside Dock Rediscovered	p. 4
A Day at Appledore House in 1872	p. 5
Field Archaeology with SML ISHRA September Weekend	p. 6
Summer Activities on The Shoals ISHRA Membership	p. 7



Star Island Headland - Harper's Weekly ca. 1883