

STEWARDS OF ST ANN'S HARBOUR ASSOCIATION

March 2010

Newsletter Twenty-One

www.stannstewards.org

e-mail: info@stannstewards.org

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The ninth Annual General Meeting was held in the South Haven Community Hall on Thursday, August 20 at 7:00 pm. We were very pleased with the excellent attendance and the continued interest and support of our membership and the community.

Our biggest achievement this year was the publication of "Harbour Voices", an educational, illustrated handbook of St Ann's Harbour.

The annual general meeting confirmed the following slate of officers for 2010:

Executive:

Chair: Donna Montgomery-Frizzell - 929-2673

Vice-Chair: Shirley MacDonald 929-2370

Past Chair: Dan Coffin 567-6737

Secretary: Barb Tower 929-2037

Treasurer: Daniel MacAulay 295-1547

HARBOUR VOICES

Harbour Voices is available locally at Piper Pewter at Indian Brook, the St. Ann's Capsite at the Gaelic College, and the Bras d'Or Preservation Foundation (Old Post Office - Baddeck). The books are selling for \$15.00 (tax incl.) If you would like a copy mailed to you the cost is \$20.00. If you would like to purchase the book as a gift for family or friends, we would be happy to forward it directly to them with a card identifying you as the giver. Sales of the handbook have been very good and will be used to support our dive monitoring program. Monitoring and policing the massive operation in the harbour continues to be a priority for our association and to ensure the proponents are abiding by the terms and conditions of the Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP).

MEMBERSHIP

Yearly memberships are due in January.

Membership dues remain at \$10.00 per person for a one year membership (January to December) If you have not yet renewed your annual membership, please forward to: The Stewards of St. Ann's Harbour Association, P.O.

1. Carrying Capacity
2. Monitoring of Invasive species
3. Producing a certification for mussels - proof of

Box 345 Baddeck, Nova Scotia, B0E 1B0. We would like to remind you that your continued support and your membership renewals go a long way in helping us to monitor this project.

MONITORING PROGRAM

The beach monitoring project will continue starting in May 2010. The 3 beach monitoring locations are: Goose Cove, Englishtown and Jersey Cove. If you are interested or can help out please contact one of the association executive.

The Association executive have consulted Dr. Lise Chapman regarding the dive monitoring program for 2010. It was agreed that a dive program in 2011 would be a good objective. This will allow sufficient time for planning and fund-raising. We have 3 years worth of sample data information collected from dives completed in 2005, 2006 and 2007 so we are confident that we have an excellent baseline.

COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

The Community Liaison/Stakeholder Committee met in December, 2009.

The signage project has made significant steps forward however, we still do not have a final draft..

DFO sample testing results conducted in 2008 are not yet available. Since this meeting we have contacted the DFO scientist who is directly responsible for the report and he has indicated that it will be available to us soon. We will continue to pursue this report.

Robin Stuart who was in attendance at the stakeholder meeting indicated that financial funding of approximately \$160,000 has been obtained for a "Sustainable Aquaculture" research project in St. Ann's Harbour. 5M Aqua Farms is a sponsor for this project. The project has several components and is to be completed by the end of 2010.

- sustainable practices
4. Monitor Habitat destruction
5. Multitropic Aquaculture

6. Shelf life of mussels and the storage of mussels.
7. Meat yields
8. Relationship of depth to mussel growth
9. Digital mapping of the farm
10. Inventory Management System

We have been able to determine that Projects Funded Under the Aquaculture Innovation and Market Access Program (AIMAP) in Atlantic Canada for 2009-2010" states funding as follows:

5M Aquafarms Limited has received \$15,000 for sustainable mussel farming. The Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation (ECBC) is providing \$50,000 to the project. The province of Nova Scotia also contributed \$70,060.

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/back-fiche/2010/mar01-eng.htm>

Bounty Bay Shellfish has received \$15,000 for sustainable aquaculture.

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/sustainable-durable/projects-2009-10-projets-eng.htm>

NOVA SCOTIA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT - AQUACULTURE INITIATIVE

In late fall of 2009 we were contacted by Chuck McKenna, Chair for the CLC/Stakeholder forum in regards to a provincial aquacultural initiative. The provincial government had hired an independent consultant company (LURA Consulting) to conduct community meetings across the province. The Terms of Reference for the project states as follows:

"For the purposes of this contract the desired outcome or behaviour is:

Increased public confidence in aquaculture which translates into greater support for and less resistance to existing aquaculture operations, changes to existing operations and new applications."

Mr. Ken Donnelly (LURA Consulting) conducted the meetings. Mr. Donnelly hired a separate agency to randomly select 8 to 10 community members for each meeting. He also requested a meeting with the Stewards of St. Ann's Harbour Association. Our association sent 5 representatives to meet with Mr. Donnelly and we presented a very detailed history of how mussel aquaculture was introduced in St Ann's Harbour. It was agreed that Mr. Donnelly was a

very attentive and objective listener but ultimately his mandate is to recommend to the government how to promote and sell the industry. He promised that we will have access to a copy of his completed report.

NEW WEBSITE DESIGN

Belinda Adams (WiNiTh.ca) has revised and updated our web site. Please check it out at www.stanstewards.org

It is greatly improved! We want to express appreciation to Belinda for the generous donation of her time and skills to assist the Stewards of St Ann's Harbour Association in making our Associations' information available to everyone. Thank You Belinda!

Written reports from the proponents are attached below.

5M Aqua Farms Update December 14, 2009

- We spent the summer months at the usual pursuits of "double socking" and "buoying up".
- We "planted" approximately 34,000 socks this fall. The mussel spat came from Darrell MacLeod of Cape North Mussels.
- We harvested some 775,000 pounds of product this year to date. We hope to resume harvesting after Christmas.
- Our product was processed by PEI Mussel King (1994) Ltd. of Morell. We spoke to a local processor and there appears to be some demand for Cape Breton mussels in Nova Scotia. The MSX positive status of St Ann's Harbour makes it difficult to use facilities in MSX-free areas.
- We are sponsoring Robin Stuart's study of Sustainable Mussel Farming practices for St Ann's. The study began this fall and will be ongoing throughout 2010. Robin has enlisted marine scientists from several Maritime universities to assist in his work. We are anxious to grow mussels in St Ann's in a manner that will provide employment while respecting the natural environment.
- Currently, weather permitting, we are removing buoys from harvested lines on Lease #1187 to lines on Lease #1186 that are sinking from the increased weight of our mussels. We are employing four young men from the local area. We are always interested in receiving resumes from anyone who might like to join our team.

Bounty Bay Update, December 14, 2009

Submitted by: Scott Dockendorff

Bounty Bay Shellfish introduced a new site manager to St. Ann's Harbour this year. With 20 years of industry experience, Tom Lesperance was an important addition to the Bounty Bay team. In addition to Tom, Bounty Bay maintained a crew of 12 for most of the year, operating three vessels in the Harbour.

Farm activities in 2009 were similar to those in previous seasons:

- Harvesting: In addition to the spring (pre-spawning) harvest, Bounty Bay also harvested mussels in the late summer and fall. This extended harvest season gave the company an opportunity to clean up some old inventory and, in particular, partial lines and sections.
- Buoying: Buoys were added to growing mussels. Due to very good growth rates in the Harbour, some lines required buoying 2 or 3 times over the course of the season. Additional buoys were added on site 0277 and 0148 to raise lines higher in the water column.
- Double-socking: The majority of the 2007 year class was double-socked to prevent loss of product prior to harvesting. Also socks in the 2008 year class were washed to remove light fouling and small mussel spat. This activity significantly increased the strength of byssus threads and the mussels' adhesion to the socks.
- Line Maintenance: Particular attention was paid to line maintenance and repair this season. The crews cleaned and tightened hundreds of lines and repaired or replaced lines where required.
- Re-stocking: In October, approximately 65,000 socks were filled and placed on sites 0148, 1188, and 1189.

The work described above began the last week of April and was wound up by the end of November. It is expected that some harvesting activities will resume in the Harbour after Christmas (weather permitting).

Overall 2009 was a very successful season. The combination of good weather, a motivated workforce, and experienced leadership resulted in a great deal being accomplished. Bounty Bay's sites are in very good condition ending the year, and the work done this season will facilitate the management of the leases going forward. Most notable in 2009, there has been an exceptional improvement in growth and meat yields.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The tenth Annual General Meeting was held in the South Haven Community Hall on Thursday, September 30th at 7:00 pm. The meeting was well attended and several important issues concerning the membership were discussed.

The annual general meeting confirmed the following slate of officers for 2011:

Executive:

Chair: Shirley MacDonald - 929-2370

Vice-Chair: Donna Montgomery-Frizzell - 929-2673

Past Chair: Donna Montgomery-Frizzell

Secretary: Barb Tower 929-2037

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HARBOUR VOICES

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MONITORING PROGRAM

The beach monitoring project continued over

the summer of 2010. The 3 beach monitoring locations are: Goose Cove, Englishtown and Jersey Cove. This program provides an important opportunity for members to become involved and will provide crucial information in our ongoing monitoring efforts. If you are interested or can help out please contact one of the association executive.

COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

The Community Liaison/Stakeholder Committee met in November, 2010.

Written updates were presented and reviewed by John MacAskill of 5M Aqua and Scott Dockendorff of Bounty Bay. These reports are attached to this newsletter.

At the time of this meeting the DFO sample testing results conducted in 2008 were not yet available. We will continue to pursue this report.

Robin Stuart spoke at length about the "Sustainable Aquaculture" research project in St. Ann's Harbour, but was unable to supply any specific results. The 5M Aqua Farms were the primary sponsor for this project and they had not yet had time to completely review the report. Once the 5M group have reviewed the report Robin will contact us at a later date to arrange a presentation to our association.

Chuck McKenna queried the farm representatives about the possibility of processing St. Ann's mussels within the province. Scott Dockendorff of Bounty Bay indicated that Bounty Bay had acquired a 3.75 acre waterfront property in Englishtown, however, the initial intention is to develop this land as a shore base to support the activities on the Harbour and it is not economically feasible to build a processing plant at this time.

Since this meeting we have learned that 5M Aqua Farm has obtained funding, to conduct a study to determine the economic feasibility of a mussel processing facility. See press release at: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20101022014> and

secb.gc.ca/projects/e/content/search_results.asp

In response to our repeated requests, Josh Blakeney, a representative from the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture presented a draft of the signage project. This would provide those using the Harbour with a diagram showing the location of the leases and the navigational corridors that can be used to traverse the leases. According to the Environmental Management Plan for the operation of the Bounty Bay and 5M aquaculture farms in St. Ann's, it is the responsibility of the proponents to maintain navigational and local access corridors during site operation and provide site schematic identifying these corridors.

Trudy Spooner, a representative from the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture presented a brief overview of the aquaculture public confidence initiatives conducted by Lura Consulting in the fall of 2009. The full report is not yet available to the public but it is evident to us that the mandate of this report is to make recommendations to government on how to promote and sell the industry.

Written reports from the proponents are attached below.

5M Aqua Farms Update November 4, 2010

It has been business as usual since our last update, 3 1/2 months ago. Much of July and August were spent "double socking" and adding buoys to our lines. Our mussel crop is presently recovering from spawning with meat yields currently in the low 30% range.

In October we "planted" approximately 40,000 socks of mussel spat. The new socks were introduced to Leases 1186 and 1187. Most of that product came from Darrell MacLeod of Cape North Mussels.

Currently we have 5 gentlemen working for us from Englishtown, North River and Baddeck.
5M Aqua Farms Update November 4, 2010.

Robin Stuart recently completed his Sustainable Mussel Farming study for us. Robin has collected much interesting data regarding growth rates, shelf life of product, positive impacts of the farms, polyculture, the threat of invasive species (especially tunicates), the possibility of collecting seed, carrying

capacity, etc. He had the assistance of several PhD's from Dalhousie and CBU. We are reviewing his work and will share it with the members of the CLC. We hope his findings and recommendations will be of interest to all and guide us in our efforts to farm in an effective and environmentally responsible manner. We thank Robin for undertaking this endeavour and for his ongoing support for our farm.

Bounty Bay Update, November 4, 2010

Bounty Bay crews spent the summer of 2010 undertaking usual maintenance work. All 2008 mussels socks were "double-socked" - meaning that a large diameter mesh tube is pulled over each sock to prevent product loss as the mussels reach commercial size.

Buoys were added to lines of both 2008 and 2009 socks as the mussels grew heavier throughout the season. Good growth rates have been observed in all areas in the Harbour.

Employees enjoyed a well-deserved break during the month of August; most had worked all winter.

Much of September was spent maintaining empty lines and getting them ready for new socks. About 75,000 2010 socks were introduced to the leases during the month of October. The spat for most of Bounty Bay's socks came from Tatamagouche Bay and were filled at Malagash Harbour. The north shore of Nova Scotia has historically been an excellent source of mussel spat and collector lines in Tatamagouche Bay performed very well.

A few loads of mussels have been harvested already this fall. Meat yields are very high considering the time of year with a 40:60 meat to shell ratio. Bounty Bay's commercial crop is relatively small compared to last year and it is expected that the remaining 200S mussels will be harvested prior to freeze-up.

Tom Lesperance continues to provide onsite direction to a staff of twelve. Aside from harvesting, Tom expects that the regular work on the leases will be wrapped up by November 19.

As a postscript, Bounty Bay did acquire a waterfront property in Englishtown this summer. Plans for the 3.75-acre lot are still tentative; however, the initial intention is to develop this land as a shore base to support the activities on the Harbour.

Submitted by,
Scott Dockendorff