A New Beginning!

We begin the new year with a new name and a redefined mission.

The last annual meeting of the Casco Bay Island Development Association was held on September 13, 2017 at Diamond Cove on Great Diamond Island. On that day the membership voted to change the legal name of the Association to the Casco Bay Islands Alliance, a designation that more accurately describes our bay-wide organization.

The CBIA’s mission remains focused on enhancing and protecting the quality of island life and island community in Casco Bay. Since its inception in 1954 CBIDA took the lead in helping the islands develop into the vibrant communities that we enjoy today. Now, more than ever, we, the year round and seasonal island residents, must work together to preserve and sustain our way of life and our unique communities. CBIA is poised to once again take the lead in this important work.

A large percentage of these visitors have not spent time on an island and are blissfully unaware of island culture, traditions, and way of life. Some have been heard to say, “It’s an island. There’s no rules.” How to deal with this problem?

Your Steering Committee created a Welcome to Casco Bay poster listing tips on what to expect when visiting the islands. Long Islander Judy Paolini volunteered her considerable graphic design skills to format the poster. Printing costs were covered by the Peaks Island Council. Casco Bay Lines graciously allowed posters to be placed in strategic locations on all of the ferries.

The poster project is the first of what we expect to be on-going collaborative initiatives that will benefit the islands. In the coming year CBIA will continue to focus on crowd control at the ferry terminal and the rise of tick borne diseases on the islands. Another issue to address is the shortage of mainland parking for island residents, both year round and seasonal.

Please consider assisting your Steering Committee in its efforts to address these challenges facing your fellow islanders!

Meeting participants included folks from Peaks, Long, Cliff, Chebeague and the Diamond Islands.

One of the major challenges facing island residents is the ever-increasing number of seasonal “daytrippers” gracing our shores. Ferries are overcrowded. Most islands have few if any amenities (e.g. public restrooms, restaurants etc.). Even Peaks with its handful of restaurants, museums and art galleries can’t meet the demands of so many visitors.

Thanks to Jane Laughlin for the photographs seen above.
“Snippets” from Around the Bay…

A Well Deserved Retirement
After 44 years of loyal service Captain Larry Legere retired from Casco Bay Lines in November 2017. Larry’s introduction to CBL and Casco Bay began with his dad, Ed Legere, who worked at CBL many years ago. Larry often accompanied him to work learning to “read” the Bay through all types of weather. He started working as a deckhand in 1973 but quickly earned his Captain’s license. Over the years he has piloted every ferry in the fleet. For the past several years he has been an Operations Agent supervising all aspects of shoreside operations. Larry is also known as the “unofficial” historian of Casco Bay Lines. Having worked there for so long, he has deep knowledge of CBL and other transportation services in the Bay. Have a question? Just ask Larry!

Congratulations on a job well done!

Peaks Library Expansion
Renovation and expansion of the Peaks Branch of the Portland Public Library has begun. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the City of Portland, Portland Public Library, and Friends of the Peaks Island Library funds are in hand to cover the estimated construction cost. However, fundraising is still on-going to raise an additional $148,000 to purchase furnishings and other finishing touches. The library has been relocated to a classroom at the Peaks Island School accessed by a newly built ramp and entrance door separate from the entrance to the school. Open hours remain the same. Closing the library has resulted in closing the community room where Portland Parks and Recreation activities occur. These programs have been moved to the community room at St. Christopher’s Church for the duration of the construction process.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Hundreds of Peaks residents are able to realize savings on their winter heating bills as a result of their participation in the Window Dressers insulating window insert program. Window Dressers is an all volunteer, non-profit that provides materials to fabricate thermal window inserts with pine frames wrapped on both sides with crystal clear polyolefin. When installed on the inside of the window a dead airspace is created between the insert and the window. Weatherstripping is applied to the edges of the insert to block heat loss and air leaks. Over the past 6 years over 2500 inserts have been created for Peaks homes. This year’s effort was coordinated by Bob Vilforth. 52 volunteers assisted in building the inserts over a four day period at Brackett Memorial Church’s Fellowship Hall. With proper care the inserts should last for several years. For more information about this program, please contact Window Dressers at www.windowdressers.org.

Steering Committee

2017 – 2018

President: vacant
Vice-President: vacant
Treasurer: Kathleen Hayward
Peaks
Recording Secretary: Nancy Noble
Long
Corresponding Secretary: Kim MacIsaac
Peaks
Ann Caliandro - Long
Faith Boudreau - Diamond Cove
Jon Kelso - Peaks
Lynn LaMontagne - Long
Jane Laughlin - Great Diamond
Beth Marchak - Long
Tim “Murph” Murphy – Peaks
Marcia Sharp - Cliff

Our Mission
Casco Bay Island Development Association (CBIDA) is the sole bay-wide organization focused on enhancing and protecting the quality of island life and island community in Casco Bay.

Our Vision
CBIDA envisions that the Casco Bay islands will thrive and lead as sustainable communities of natural grandeur, with rich and unique cultures and histories separate from, but interconnected with, their mainland neighbors.
What Makes a Community?

The people who live there, of course. And the organizations they create to enhance and enrich all aspects of community life. Here in Casco Bay our islands are blessed with a multitude of volunteer non-profit groups working to keep our communities vibrant, environment friendly, and welcoming to all. There are nearly 20 non-profit groups on Peaks alone. Chebeague, Cliff, Long and the Diamonds have their share as well.

CBIA supports the work of all of these organizations by providing several small grants each year that help to underwrite the costs of a variety of programs that address the environment, education, public safety, historic preservation, and quality of life in our island communities and Casco Bay. Past grants have supported food sustainability projects such as maple sugaring and apple cider pressing on Long Island, preservation of island history on Peaks, and educating islanders about the detrimental effects of using pesticides on lawns and gardens. Other grant funded projects include restoration efforts at Fort Lyons on Cow Island and assisting the Island Transportation System on Peaks (i.e. the Taxi).

In 2017 grants were awarded to these worthy island non-profits:

- Peaks Island Library digitization of historical materials
- VOA/Fay Garman House (Peaks Island) vegetable and flower garden project
- Fort McKinley Museum (Great Diamond Island) PastPerfect software to catalogue their growing collection
- Chebeague Island Commons toward new bench and lamps for their community space
- Aging in Place (Long Island) to purchase camera and monitor for their telemedicine initiative
- Long Island School/4-H to replace greenhouse destroyed by windstorm

Organizations requesting grants must be designated a 501(c)3 non-profit by the IRS or be sponsored by a fiscal agent that is a 501(c)3. Grant amounts have ranged from a few hundred dollars to $2500 with most awards in the $1500 range. CBIA is currently reviewing its grant program. Information will be posted on the CBIA website later this year. For more information check our website www.cbialliance.org or contact Grant Chairperson, Kim MacIsaac at ramseyroost@maine.rr.com.

CBIA grants have helped to raise the visibility of the organization while supporting many worthy projects that benefit the islands. Your Steering Committee is looking back and looking ahead.

Abraham Schechter, archivist at the Portland Room of the Portland Public Library, accepted the grant to fund digitization of the Peaks Island history collection at the Peaks branch of the library. (Jane Laughlin photo)

Amy Tierney discusses Long Island’s Telehealth Project which will expand medical care services to islanders and allow them to “Age in Place” in their island homes. (Jane Laughlin photo)
The Chebeague Island Historical Society had a very busy 2017. More than 2000 folks visited the Museum of Chebeague History to learn more about Chebeague’s built landscape. The exhibit focused on more than 140 houses built between the 1780s and 1890 and included more than 200 images. A diorama of Chebeague built by Michael Hamilton depicted the location of all 140 buildings, which were numbered and color-coded. A chart that included the names of the original and current owners as well as the estimated date of construction accompanied the diorama.

Like many islands, Chebeague was settled in a pattern of family hamlets. Over the generations large tracts of land were subdivided creating multigenerational neighborhoods. The Thompson-Littlefield Hamlet section of the exhibit traced the built landscape of the area of Chebeague from the middle of the island to the southeast shore. The architectural style changed from generation to generation and reflected national trends.

2017 was the inaugural season of the Ellsworth Miller Memorial Summer Lecture Series. Established by Cap Leonard, the first season comprised lectures by Joseph Joseph Conforti, Ron Romano, Gerry Wiles and Donna Miller Damon. Topics included Conforti’s study of Maine island writer, Ruth Moore; Romano’s research of local gravestone makers; Wiles’ discussion of the story behind “Amazing Grace”; and Damon’s compilation of in and out century migration on Chebeague during the early 20th century.

The CIHS also received a grant from the Recompense Foundation to fund internships for Chebeague high school and college students to scan photographs and digitize VHS tapes. The grant serves the dual purpose of preserving primary resources, while engaging the island’s youth in the study of island history.

The 2018 exhibit will focus Chebeague’s marine enterprises. Currently under construction, the exhibit will include a retrospective focusing on marine construction, transportation, fishing, and related industries.

The Historical Society’s museum is housed in the restored Chebeague Island high school. For more information about the Society, its programs and publications; email chebeaguehistory@gmail.com; visit www.chebeaguehistory.com or call 846-5237.

Thanks to Donna Damon for this update

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Windstorm Wreaks Havoc on Islands

Early in the morning of October 30th the wind picked up and the lights went out. The wind kept up through the next day so CMP crews couldn’t do anything. Here on Long Island many trees came down, especially on the East End, where trees knocked down transformers and blocked roadways. On Wednesday the community soup lunch was held in Long Island Learning Center (school and library), which has a generator. Apparently many of the island cooks were able to create delicious soups, either through wood stoves or home generators, and the room was filled. The power returned that that evening, for the night, and went out the next morning. By evening, though, it was back on, and stayed on. But on the East End of the island, and other areas including Stepping Stones Lane and Leavitt Street, the power didn’t come back on until the following weekend. The last house got their power back Monday, November 6th Portland (trick-or-treating) was November 4th in 2017! Definitely a memorable week for all of us.

storm damage on Long Island

(Anne Caliandro photo)

Neighboring islands were not spared from the fury of the storm. Many trees and powerlines came down throughout the bay. For some Peaks residents lights came back on late on the evening of October 30th only to go out again two days later for a day. For others, especially in the Upper A Street and upper Brackett Avenue areas, power was out for nearly a week. At least two homes were struck by fallen trees but the damage was minimal. Many people were prepared with generators and propane stoves; others made it through with woodstoves and gas grills. One family had closed their summer cottage a week prior to the storm but returned and stayed until power was restored at their winter home in Harpswell – over a week later! Not the way they planned to end the season.

submitted by Nancy Noble and Kim MacIsaac
Membership Rules!

A non-profit’s members are its most important component for without members the organization could not exist. Nor could it fulfill its stated mission and reach its goals. That is as true of CBIA as of any non-profit anywhere. CBIA relies on its members for their donations of time, talent and money.

At the annual meeting in September 2017 the need to increase CBIA’s membership base as well as its need for additional revenue to fund its activities was discussed. To that end the membership unanimously voted to increase annual dues from $7 and $10 to a flat $15 per family. Dues had not been increased in nearly twenty years but, thanks to inflation, costs to run the organization have.

The membership year begins on January 1st. All who paid dues in 2017 are encouraged to continue their support in 2018 by completing the form below and returning it with a check. Members are also encouraged to invite friends, neighbors, and family members to become members.

The membership committee is now finalizing plans to reach out to past members and the general public for financial support and volunteer help. The Steering Committee meets the first Wednesday of each month at 4 pm at Casco Bay Lines. All members are welcome to attend. Committee members listed on page 2 are happy to speak with anyone about CBIA. Comments and questions may also be emailed to info@cbialliance.org.

Some of Our Past Successes

- Led the legal and legislative battle to gain public control of Casco Bay Lines thus creating Casco Bay Island Transit District. This prevented the liquidation of the Casco Bay Lines and saved public transportation for the islands.
- Created Oceanside Trust to accept gifts of conservation land.
- Purchased the WWII Peaks Island Military Reservation, placing conservation easements on most of the area.
- Advocated for responsible development of Fort McKinley on Great Diamond Island and the WWII Navy depot on Long Island.
- Contributed money to the Cumberland Island Trust to help buy Stockman Island, thus ensuring that the island be preserved in its natural state.
- CBIDA worked for passage of the State overboard discharge law.
- CBIDA encouraged building a sewage disposal plant on Peaks Island.

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**PLEASE SEND US YOUR CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Casco Bay Islands Alliance, Inc.
P.O. Box 7662
Portland, Maine 04112

Name: ____________________________

Winter Address: ____________________________

Summer Address: ____________________________

Telephone: ____________________________

Email: ____________________________

Island Affiliation: ____________________________

I would like to make an additional tax deductible donation of ____________________________
So, What about Mainland Parking for Island Residents?

For a while back at the start of the summer there was a flurry of activity, leading an optimist to perhaps believe that the Portland City Council was going to get around to addressing the need for mainland parking for island residents, i.e. those living on islands dependent on Casco Bay Lines for their daily commutes and other of life’s necessities that exist only on the mainland.

At its June 19th meeting, the Portland City Council charged its Sustainability and Transportation Committee with the task of studying long-term options for providing island resident parking. Well, that report is now complete and can be accessed on the City’s website www.portland.gov/DocumentCenter/View/18261. The study, City of Portland Parking Study for Downtown, The Old Port, and The Eastern Waterfront, was prepared by Fort Hill Infrastructure of Boston. The study can best be considered as a work in progress. There are at present no specific plans for the Council or its committees, to publicly consider the study’s recommendations. Sections G.2 and K.2.3 address island resident parking.

Read from the perspective of island residents in search of short-term parking options, there is one major take away in the study – that parking for island residents would be designated in unspecified remote lots to which islanders would be shuttled back and forth from the CBL terminal by a service yet to be created. While the study recommends continuation of the island resident parking zone 11 along Hancock, Thames and Fore Streets, island residents would be given financial incentives to help pay for their shuttle trips in exchange for turning in their island resident parking permits.

As frustrating as all this is, there seems to be a very quick, low-cost measure that could benefit about 100 island residents willing and able to pay for monthly parking. A Master Plan for Redevelopment of the Eastern Waterfront, prepared in 2002 by the City of Portland Planning Office, includes the recommendation that as new parking is created in the Eastern Waterfront, the non-island residents parking in Casco Bay Garage be moved to the newly created parking facilities, making room in Casco Bay Garage for island residents.

According to City officials back in September, of the 418 parking spots in the garage, 103 are rented by non-island residents. Also, we are told by the City that “almost all” the 213 people now on the waiting list are “islanders”. This seems like a no-cost to the city, no-brainer. Not a complete solution certainly, but a step in the right direction for some of us.

Submitted by Randy Schaeffer of the Peaks Island Council