

# MICA Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

June 2003

## Welcome to the Mahone Islands Conservation Association

Our initial public meeting was held on March 29, 2003, at the St. James Anglican Parish Hall in Mahone Bay.

Approximately 200 people packed the hall to hear presentations from the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Kingsburg Coastal Conservancy, and to express their opinions on the future of the Mahone Bay Islands.

We now have 90 members! The executive would like to welcome each and every new member and thank you for your support. We urge you to contact any board member (listed inside) and become involved at any level you desire.

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Our Mission : To protect and conserve the natural environment of the shoreline and islands of Mahone Bay, and the traditional social and recreational opportunities valued by its various communities.

Mahone  
Islands  
Conservation  
Association



## MICA Board of Directors

### Executive

|               |            |          |
|---------------|------------|----------|
| Michael Ernst | Chair      | 624-8864 |
| Ron Myer      | Vice-Chair | 624-9308 |
| Gord Tate     | Secretary  | 624-8864 |
| Nicole Ernst  | Treasurer  | 624-8864 |

### Directors

|                   |                                  |          |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
| John Meisner      | Resource Documentation Committee | 624-9645 |
| Bob Cocks         | Government Legislation Committee | 624-9243 |
| George Ernst      | Finance Committee                | 624-6133 |
| Sherrill Harrison | Education Committee              | 624-9676 |
| Dale Rafuse       | Conservation Committee           | 624-1555 |

## Chairman's Remarks

***The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the second BEST time is now.***

Should our Association have started years ago? The interest was certainly there! People have used the islands recreationally since the 1800's. In the 1980's and 1990's many people knew that the Mahone Islands were ripe for potential development. If we had been active in 1992, we could have bought half of Strum Island for \$33,000. Three years ago we could have had the whole island for \$200,000. At both times, had we been able to raise the funds, the natural beauty of this highly visible piece of real estate could have been retained. Our Association, however, just started this year, so, are we too late? Certainly it is for Strum Island, but what about the many others? It may be the second best time, but it is certainly better than waiting another 5 years.

If natural beauty of the Mahone Bay is to be preserved, then we still have time to act. By working together we can influence this very special area in a positive way. If we can establish a balance between development and the environment we can insure that a large part of the natural landscape can remain unchanged for future

generations to appreciate. If some islands can be brought into public ownership, then the public can go on enjoying them.

The conservation work our Association will do is comprised of many sub tasks. Fundraising, data collection, documentation, education, liaison with similar groups, meeting with government and publicity are just some areas where we have started working. One common element for much of this work is the limited time scale in which the work must be completed. The Mahone islands are changing so quickly, that the pressure is on to act now, before we lose what we value most.

Our major resource is the dedicated volunteer commitment that has gone into this organization. Many hours have been already spent getting to our current stage. We are, however, convinced that this task is one worth doing well.

Your support by becoming a member of the Mahone Islands Conservation Association is very welcome and is an endorsement for its work. Your membership reinforces our vision and will contribute to making conservation of the islands possible. May this opportunity therefore, be used to say thank you from all the Directors of The Mahone Islands Conservation Association.

Michael Ernst, Chair

### **Minutes of MICA Directors' Meeting with Michael Baker, MLA**

MICA Directors met with Michael Baker, MLA on May 26<sup>th</sup>. The purpose was twofold – to give him an overview of MICA, its mission, committee structure & progress to date; and to gather further information from him that would assist MICA in achieving its mission/objectives.

Mr. Baker provided advice regarding our Memorandum of Association so that MICA meets the requirement of a charitable organization for tax purposes. In answer to our questions, he clarified existing legislation e.g. the Beaches Protection Act , the Endangered Species Act, the Protected Places Protection Act and how they can serve the Association's objectives.

Because Government funds are limited, he provided MICA with a critical path in seeking direct Government support and told us our next steps should be to prioritize what we want to do, and then form partnerships with national and provincial conservation groups and with business.

Both Directors and Mr. Baker concurred on the time-sensitiveness and urgency of moving on MICA's agenda.

## MICA PUBLIC MEETING

PLACE LUNENBURG YACHT CLUB  
TIME 7:00 PM  
DATE **JULY 16**

**This is an open meeting providing an important update to the public meeting of March 29<sup>th</sup>. All concerned, members and summer residents are welcome.**

### **Data Bank Request**

We are gathering historical data on the islands and shoreline. If you have stories to tell, old photos or maps we can copy, please let us know. Contact the Documentation Committee chair, John Meisner, at 624-9645

### **Island Trivia Contest**

What names are currently used on Chart 4381 for these islands?

- |              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| a. Mosher    | e. Ham      |
| b. Black     | f. Chase    |
| c. Ruby      | g. Payzant  |
| d. Varling's | h. Trappean |

Entries please to: [sailmahonebay@auracom.com](mailto:sailmahonebay@auracom.com)

Winner will receive a Mahone Islands Memento

## **Conservation Area Project Announcement**

**The Directors of the Mahone Islands Conservation Association have set the goal of establishing a conservation area in the Southwest area of Mahone Bay.**

**Ideally, this area would comprise a number of islands that would be under a management plan, allowing recreation access to certain areas, yet providing undeveloped natural spaces for wildlife. Essentially, what we envisage is little change to the landscape that we currently appreciate and value.**

**The establishment of this conservation area is going to require commitment from individuals, organizations, and government. The Mahone Islands Conservation Association is, therefore, trying to assess what part each can play.**

**Any of the following will help us reach our goal:**

- Membership in MICA; the more more members we have, the more important our voice.**
- Letters of support for our objectives**
- Contributions to MICA in time or kind**
- Conservation easements**
- Pledges of financial support**

**At the end of August we will be submitting a proposal to the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources on the Mahone Islands Conservation Area. The larger our membership and the greater the support from the community, the stronger our proposal will be.**

**This is an opportunity for us to conserve part of this very special area, let's not lose it.**

## **Resource Documentation Committee Report**

The Mandate of the Resource Documentation Committee is: a) Document marine lands including information such as name, location, size, flora and fauna, history, ownership, development and the like. b) Priorize marine lands in order of importance for intervention for protection and conservation. To this end the committee, currently consisting of Heather Olivella (634-9586), Peter Darnell (624-9931), Mike Ernst (634-8864), Georg Ernst(521-1140) and John Meisner (Chair)(624-9645), are beginning to compile information on the Islands.

The group is very fortunate in that BACAP has already developed a lot of this information and has made it available to MICA. Work ahead for the committee includes conducting interviews for historical and oral documentation in addition to gathering and developing information to support fundraising and promotional activities. Many members of MICA have expressed interest and have offered their talents in the work of this committee. Thank you, we will be requiring assistance as time goes on. If any MICA members have information on the Islands they would care to make available or pass on, please contact any of the above committee members. Thank you, John Meisner, Chair, RD Committee

## **Nova Scotia Nature Trust Meeting**

The Nova Scotia Nature Trust will have a meeting at the Chester Yacht Club on August 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM. The guest speaker will be Bob Bancroft. His talk will focus on the characteristics, management, and preservation of island forests and natural shoreline vegetation.

We are looking for new members to join our association. Please circulate this newsletter to your friends and family. This is "a call to action", as time may be short to save some of our islands.

Please, think about someone who might need a substantial tax break. The purchase and subsequent donation of an island may be the answer. This could be an individual or an estate. Do you know of someone who owns an island that may consider working with us?

These are some of the issues we need to communicate to our community. Please help. Thank you!

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**Membership Application**

I would like to become a member of the Mahone Islands Conservation Association. Here is my annual \$10 membership fee.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/town \_\_\_\_\_ Prov/State \_\_\_\_\_

PostalCode/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (W) \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to donate an additional amount toward MICA's efforts.

Amount \_\_\_\_\_

**A charitable tax receipt will be issued by the Nature Conservancy of Canada for all donations of \$100 or greater. Please make cheque payable to "The Nature Conservancy of Canada" with a memo stating "in support of the Mahone Islands Conservation Association." Once MICA obtains it's own charitable status, we will be able to issue tax receipts for donations less than \$100.**

**Please mail to : MICA, 189 Hirtle Cove Rd, Oakland, Mahone Bay, B0J 2E0**

Thank you for becoming a member of MICA! We believe that when many passionate people work together, we can indeed protect the things we cherish.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

