

DHBA NEWSLETTER

Spring 2023



Small Camas (Camassia quamash)

Notes from the BOT:

Hello DHBA Members! I hope you are all enjoying the spring as it starts to warm up. This winter brought very high tides, some flooding and lots and lots of debris clean up as you'll see in the pictures below. I hope everyone takes the chance to thank Seth and Anita for all of the hard and difficult work they put in to keep the Head running and get it cleaned up throughout the winter. Thank you Seth and Anita! In addition to all of that, they were able to accomplish several improvements including fiber optic internet to each cabin, new fire rings and benches, and a new fireplace insert in cabin 1. Also, thanks to Jeff Garfield, Reservations Chair, for all of his hard work getting the primetime draw completed.

As we look forward to another great primetime season, please remember to be good stewards of the property and environment, be respectful to one another and the caretakers, and follow the rules that help ensure all of our enjoyment of this place we all love so much.

Thanks and have a great summer!

-John Mannetti
DHBA President

Notes from the Caretakers

Spring is slowly but surely making its way to Decatur Head. On our cover is a picture taken outside our cabin on the Head. Small Camas and its bright purple color welcome in the much needed sunshine and warmth! Our garden this year will have plenty of Swiss Chard, chives, parsley, oregano, thyme, rosemary, pole beans and early tomatoes to share. I will offer if I see you but don't hesitate to ask! Up at the tennis court there is more lavender and rosemary.

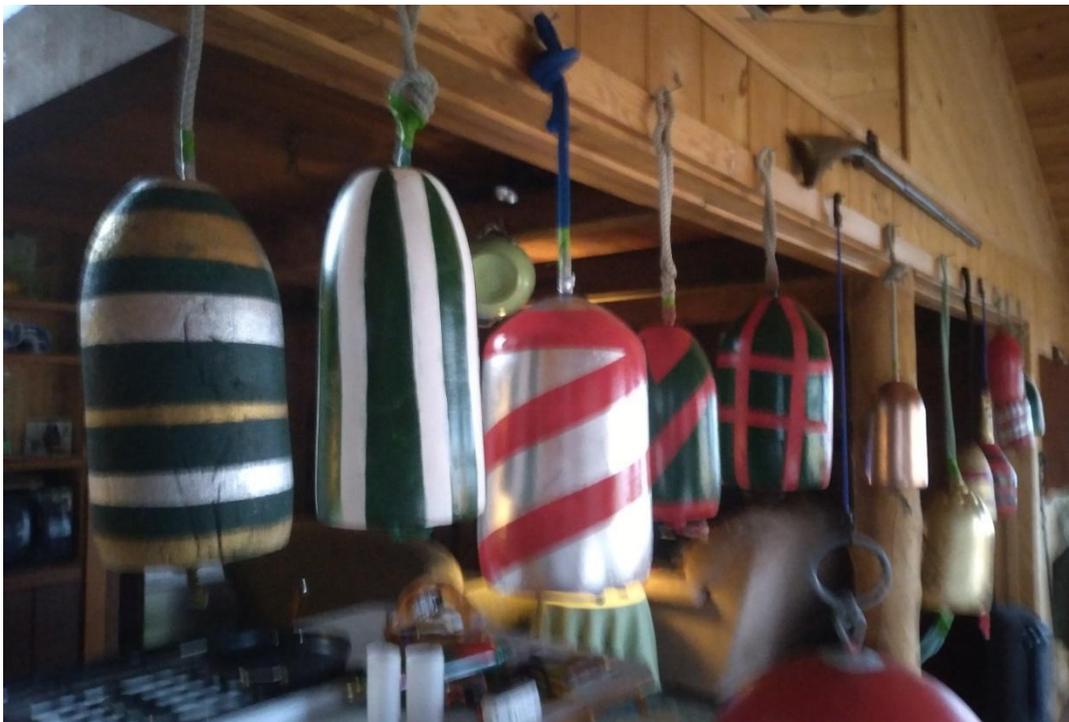


Before the storms hit we came up with a project to use all the old buoys that washed up. A little paint and voila!

Photo courtesy of the Hoerleins.



Large buoy ball that washed up



A little tape
and a little
paint and
there you
have-

Christmas ornaments!

A few more reminders from Seth and Anita:

- Caretaker new hours as of last October – 8-4 (Thursday-Monday)
- Extra serving bowls are available, in a container, on the shelf above the freezers. Please clean and replace if needed.
- Should you realize that you are missing some baking supplies, please ask us. We have plenty.
- If you should move furniture in the cabins, please replace back in the original position.
- Please do not pour grease down the sinks-it is bad for the pipes and the septic tanks.
- Please do not dry sleeping bags in our dryers. Our residential dryers are not large enough. In addition, the sleeping bag cords can get wrapped up which can cause the melting of the material.
- When burning in the outside fire pits please use driftwood-not the firewood in the woodsheds.

Winter

December was a challenging time this year. We had storms and a King tide that coincided to give us this...



The water did not get into any of the cabins. However, it flooded our backyard about a foot and was under cabins 3-8. Our drive was impassable for almost 2 weeks waiting for the waters to recede. The office steps were all-except the top one- under water. You will see the before and after pictures on the pages following:



Cabin 7 road
before and
after



Skiffs during flooding and the aftermath





Skiffs after moving back into place-Thanks go to Sam Schell (Son of Sharon and Steve Schell) and his friends.

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Flooding all the way back to the rock, note logs in front of the porch on #4 are missing



The logs were located and moved back in place with our friend's backhoe

Maintenance Updates



Gravel for drive this year

We had a combination of 10 yards $\frac{3}{4}$ " minus, 5 yards 4", 5 yards 2" drain rock and 5 yards 6" rip rap delivered by Dupar Construction. Our friend Paul Johnson and his trusty backhoe help us out every year. He has brought down from the shop area many large boulders, set them in place and graded around. We managed to rise the road bed up over a foot! These rocks will anchor future deliveries of gravel to be spread out in order to continue this process. In addition some of the rocks needed to be placed around the dock pier to shore up against the wave action in winter. Paul also helped us clear the logs from our drive.



Driveway after



Seth has built new fire pit benches, and fire rings, replacing some that were practically non-existent. Now Cabin's 5, 6 & 7 have actual fire pits with angled benches. We will be placing beach rock around the fire pits that are surrounded by grass.

Cabin 5 roof is complete!



We have a new (re-furbished) salt-ease container to replace the damaged barrel. UV rays made it brittle and prone to breakage. In addition, we have installed a crane and pulley system. This should make it much easier to lift your skiff motors when doing your final rinse before departing.



New fireplace insert in cabin #1 with blower.



New Fiber Optic modems. One in each cabin with 100 mbps. Passwords and access are on the mantles.



Newly built driftwood railing. This should make it easier to haul your gear up the ramp at low tides. The ramp has been coated with sand paint.

For a more detailed description of maintenance completed please visit this link on our webpage. <https://www.decatourhead.org/updatesfaqs/>

Around the Island

Fire training:

Fire training has not been scheduled yet this year. When the event is scheduled I will reach out to members who are staying at the Head at that time.

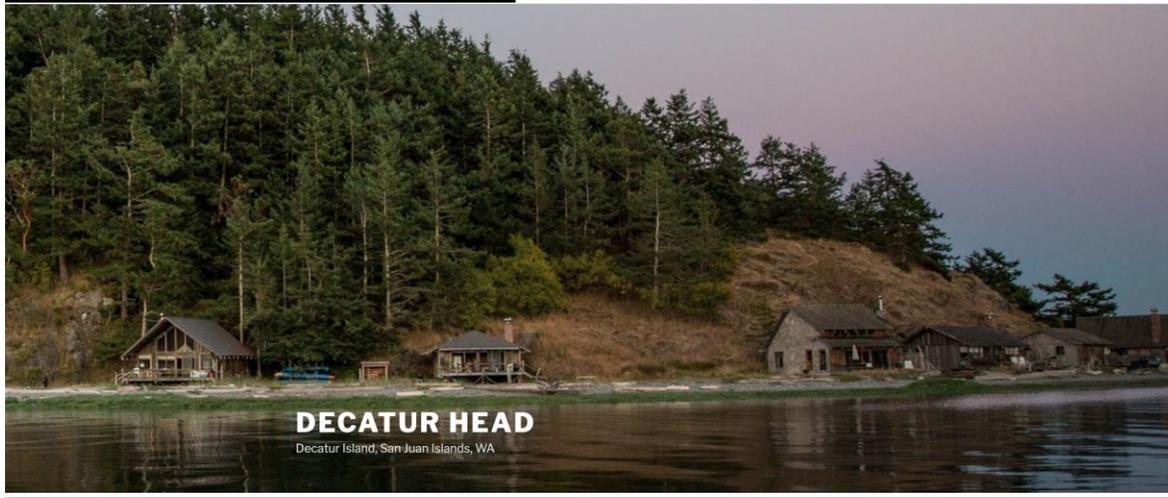
Decatur Island Store:

The store has a pending offer! Fingers crossed we will see it open this summer!

Dust

San Juan County has been coating our island main roads. This coating is a bi-product of the sugar cane/making process. This should help with the dust this summer.

Committee updates:



Lighting Upgrades- Progress Report

Last fall members voted their approval and support to engage the services of a consultant to deliver a comprehensive plan to upgrade task and ambient lighting in all 7 cabins.

Here is a quick snapshot of our progress-to-date:

February The BOT was pleased to engage the services of an experienced and qualified lighting consultant. (Gwen Demombynes, Moonbeam Lighting)

March Gwen conducted a thorough onsite survey, taking countless cabin measurements and photos. She had the opportunity to experience first-hand the beauty of the Head, the unique cabin architecture, cabin siting and natural light patterns.

April We have a preliminary report and are now beginning the process of working through the comprehensive assessment, recommendations and options.

Fall 2023 Implementation is targeted for Cabin 1 and Cabin 4.

Huge thanks to the many hands at work on this big project! As always, Seth and Anita have been generous with their time and energy to facilitate the survey and site visit. We are grateful to Chris White and Steve Schell for surveying and measuring each cabin so that Chris could produce an accurate set of as-built drawings for our consultant to use. These as-builts will be an asset for future cabin projects.

Thank you for your support and looking forward to keeping you updated!

Cabin Committee (Christi Price, Debbie Claus, Stephen Schell, Sharon Schell)

Please note: Bags and shovels will be provided. However, members will need to either burn the weeds, or take the bags with them when they depart.

Invasive Thistle Removal

by Charlie Davis

For the past three summers, Nancy Stevens and I have been working on removing two species of Class C invasive thistles from the Head: Canada thistles and Bull thistles, both very spiny and pokey plants. Once established they can spread quickly and totally overrun open areas. They are fairly widespread on other parts of the island, but due to the Head's geographical isolation, we believe we can successfully control them on the Head.

When we first started, there were large areas of Canada thistles between cabins 6 and 7, to the west of the pirate ship, and all along the lagoon side of the road. Bull thistles were scattered throughout areas between and behind cabins and there was a large group of them on a grassy outcrop on the east side of the head.

Over the last three years, we have removed over 50 wheelbarrows of thistles. Each summer there are dramatically fewer and with continued effort and ongoing monitoring, we are optimistic that we can keep the Head clear of them.



Since an important piece of the strategy is to pull plants BEFORE they bloom, we would welcome the help of other members, or members' adult children, in this ongoing task who would be willing to spend a couple hours when they are here in the summer pulling thistles. It just takes a long-sleeve shirt and a good pair of gloves as they mostly pull pretty easily. We can provide you all the training you will need via a Zoom phone call. Nancy and I find it to be good exercise, generally enjoyable, and satisfying work. If you're interested, please email Nancy (ngstevens52@gmail.com) or me (cfDavis52@gmail.com).

And, by the way, due to the wet, cool spring, I think there will be an abundance of wildflowers blooming on the Head soon. There look to be many camas, paintbrush, and others getting ready to bloom. If you're here in the next few weeks, there should be quite a show!



Canada thistles, left, spread quickly underground. Pulling them or cutting them just before blooming saps their energy and, over several years, can eliminate them. <https://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/canada-thistle>

Bull thistle, right, has a single tall stalk and multiple blooms. It is a biennial plant and relatively easily controlled by digging or cutting before it flowers. <https://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/bull-thistle>



Dinghy Sharing Plan

The Dinghy Sharing Plan (DSP) is in its second year after a successful debut last year. We will have 4 dinghies with matching oars available to members during their stay. There will be 1 dinghy always in the water and the others can be launched anytime from the shore. At the end of your stay or use, please replace the dinghy and oars in the condition you found them. Besides all members being able to use a well maintained dinghy during your stay, another goal is to reduce the number of skiffs on the beach. If you would like to donate your skiff to the DSP or otherwise remove/dispose of it, please let Seth and Anita know and they will help coordinate. All skiffs should be kept on the south side of the dock.

DHBA Dinghies:

Boat Type	Color
12 ft Sea Nymph	Silver
8 ft Livingston Calypso	White/orange
8 ft Walker Bay	White w/wheel
12 ft Harborcraft	Blue

Special thanks go to:

Bill and Sandy Ekse for watching the Head while we are on vacation. Sandy checks the email and updates the calendar and Bill is familiar with the infrastructure and possible issues.

Also, thanks again to Bill Ekse for cleaning up the debris left behind after the log removal between cabins 7 and 8.

Thanks to Billy Ekse, our resident fire fighter! He does an annual inspection of our water pumps for fire safety.

Thanks to Grant Ramaley for helping Seth with round retrieval from site on island and moving split wood to cabins

