



Photo by Julie Goodblood Clark

## 2016 Schoodic Ferry Annual Report

Dear Community Members,

It is our pleasure and honor to share the Schoodic Ferry's 2016 Annual Report with you. As always, we thank you for your generous support.

2016 was a formative year for the Schoodic Ferry. In January, Frenchman Bay Research Boating board members identified the vessel that would become our iconic yellow ferry, and in March Executive Director Kaitlyn Mullen and husband Jonathan Mullen set out for Florida to purchase and bring the Katie Grace home to Maine. Joined by full-time deckhand Sarah Jackson in North Carolina in early April, it was an adventure that took the crew 3 weeks, and resulted in stories we have enjoyed sharing with many of you all season.

After spending the remainder of April and May in the boat yard, and undergoing the extensive regional U.S. Coast Guard passenger vessel transfer process, the Katie Grace launched in May with a new coat of bright yellow paint, much cleaner bilges, navigational upgrades, safety systems and tools upgrades, and the hopes and dreams of all of us riding with her. The Schoodic Ferry began its first season of operations on Memorial Day, partnering with Downeast Transportation's Island Explorer bus system to make public transportation between the Schoodic Peninsula and Mount Desert Island as comfortable, affordable, and efficient as possible.

Like all new projects, the Schoodic Ferry also presented challenging moments. Unfortunate vandalism incidents occurred in early and mid-June, resulting in significant damage. The Schoodic Ferry's crew learned from the experience, setting the Katie Grace to rights as quickly as possible, and maintaining excellent service reliability through September. The Schoodic Ferry completed its first operating season in October, a few days ahead of schedule due to some of the long-term effects of that vandalism. While waiting to be hauled out, the vessel slipped its brand new mooring. Rather than being daunted by seeing their vessel beached in Bar Harbor, the Schoodic Ferry crew took immediate action, literally swimming to the boat to refloat her with the rising tide in the middle of strong northwest winds and seas. As a result, the Katie Grace will have stories to tell for seasons to come.

While this first season has been full of challenges, it has also been full of joys as well. This report will highlight how each of you have helped launch a ferry service committed to affordable, sustainable public transportation combined with baseline environmental monitoring research that has had immediate and measurable impacts on our community. We hope you share our joy as you learn how the Schoodic Ferry has increased cross-bay passenger and bicycle traffic, connected affordable housing to higher paying seasonal jobs for low to mid income commuters, providing field trip opportunities for over 100 4<sup>th</sup> grade Maine students, assisted local scientists in gathering vital baseline monitoring data about the health and well-being of Frenchman Bay and its inhabitants, and created a new platform where individuals can be become inspired and fascinated by the Frenchman Bay environment.

Thanks for your generous support, and your warm welcome as the Schoodic Ferry sets out to change the very definition of what a ferry is, and how much value a ferry can offer, to its port communities.

Kaitlyn Mullen, Executive Director

Whitey Carpenter, Chairman

# Mission

Frenchman Bay Research Boating is a 501(c)(3) organization committed to providing affordable, sustainable, reliable ferry services that simultaneously add value to the communities we serve by helping local researchers monitor the health and well being of Frenchman Bay and its inhabitants en route. The Schoodic Ferry is our first ferry service.

Perhaps most importantly, Frenchman Bay Research Boating endeavors for our ferry services to act as invisible “bridges across the Bay,” creating the kind of passenger experience that connects people and communities in new and different ways. Fostering economic growth, increasing access to affordable housing, developing and supporting new and sustainable environmental monitoring programs, encouraging visitors to explore Acadia National Park via bike or foot, and fostering curiosity and awareness of our marine environment, particularly in younger passengers, are all organizational priorities.

# Staff

Our staff expanded by leaps and bounds in 2016! The Schoodic Ferry is staffed by a remarkable crew, including Captains Kaitlyn Mullen and Stuart Siddons, Deckhands Sarah Jackson, Sarah Markwood, Jonathan Barnes, Taylor Thomas-Marsh, Elija “Lulu” Bates, Jacqueline Rosa, and ticket sales staff Patsy Allen and Wolf Mullen.

# Volunteers

To build a great organization, you need great people. The Schoodic Ferry enjoyed a plethora of dedicated volunteers in 2016. Thanks so much to Jon and Irene Archer, Russell & Patsy Allen, Levi Carpenter, Greg Noble, Megan McOsker, Jane @@@@, Steve Burns, David Spear, Cate Bowman, Dianne Crosson for assisting with tasks that would otherwise have gone undone. Without your help, the Schoodic Ferry would not have launched in 2016.



Photo by Kaitlyn Mullen

# Program Development

As a new organization, we spent the early portions of 2016 purchasing, delivering and altering the Schoodic Ferry's first vessel, the Katie Grace, for service in Maine.



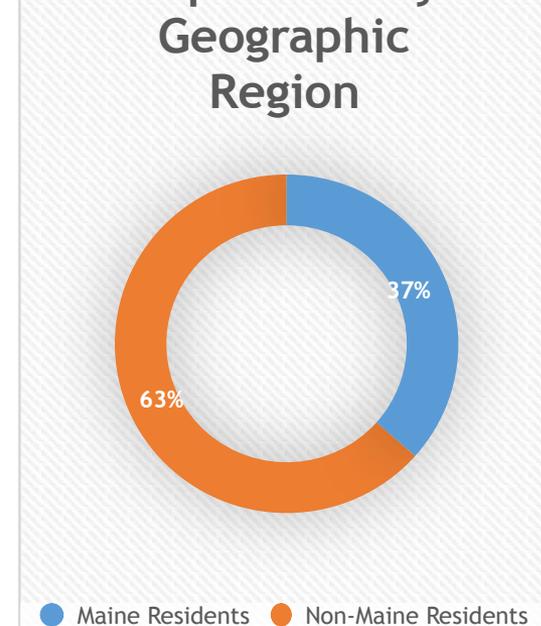
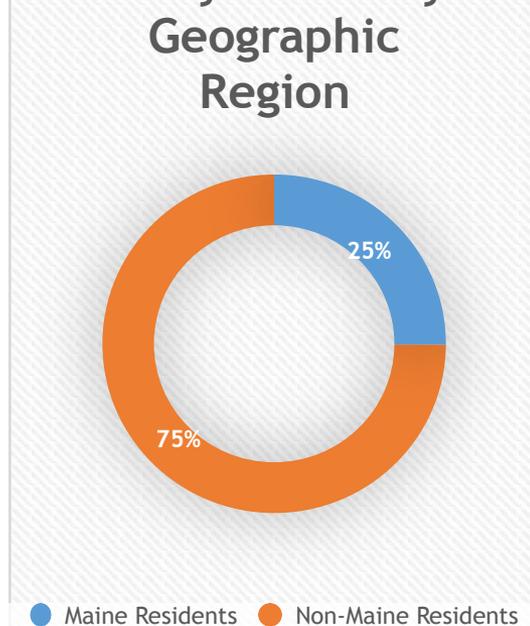
Photo by Kaitlyn Mullen

## Schoodic Ferry Service

On Saturday May 28, 2016 the Schoodic Ferry began connecting passengers, their bicycles, and their leashed pets between the two largest sections of Acadia National Park. Making four to six round trips daily between the ports of Bar Harbor and Winter Harbor, the Schoodic Ferry transported 6,606 one-way passengers and 1,286 one-way bicycles across Frenchman-Bay by offering affordable, reliable, convenient service to visitors and local commuters alike.

To foster financial stability, and thus long-term sustainability, for this new ferry service, the Schoodic Ferry also hosted local marine science and sustainable engineering researchers onboard during our 2016 season.

Partnerships with local research programs that are transect-based or that require stopping the Schoodic Ferry for five minutes or less at specified locations along our route were developed to provide the communities we serve consistent data about the health and well being of Frenchman Bay and its inhabitants. Frenchman Bay is a high-profile multi-use marine environment, critical to the value of our local economies. Home to Acadia National Park, parts of the Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Nature Conservancy islands, a healthy lobster fishery, traditional shellfish and finfish fisheries, shellfish and finfish aquaculture facilities, world famous yacht and commercial boat building industry, and a robust tourism industry, the vast majority of jobs in Bar Harbor and Winter Harbor are intrinsically linked to the Bay. As communities around the bay continue to grow and develop new human-uses for this environment, the long term environmental monitoring programs conducted aboard the Schoodic Ferry will provide our citizens with the data necessary to understand how and when physical conditions in the Bay change and how those changes affect Frenchman Bay's inhabitants, helping to keep Frenchman Bay a sustainable, functional portion of our community and economy for future generations.



## Who rides the Schoodic Ferry?

In 2016, the Schoodic Ferry transported 6,606 one-way passengers carrying 1,286 one-way bicycles between Winter Harbor and Bar Harbor. Twenty-five percent (1,652) of all passengers riding the Schoodic Ferry were Maine residents. In addition, while out of state visitors accounted for the majority of overall 2016 Schoodic Ferry passengers (4,954) and repeat Schoodic Ferry passengers (436), Maine residents (251) were nearly twice as likely as their visitor counterparts to ride the Schoodic Ferry more than one round trip in a season (15.3 % of Maine residents rode 2+ times vs. 8.8% of out of state visitors). In addition, the majority of Maine residents who rode the Schoodic Ferry multiple times in 2016 also took more than two round trips; indicative of local traffic. Finally, at least 12 Maine residents utilized the Schoodic Ferry to commute between homes on the Schoodic Peninsula and jobs on Mount Desert Island, or 4.7% of all Maine residents riding multiple trips in 2016.

In addition, while out of state visitors accounted for 58% of all bicycles transported aboard the Schoodic Ferry in 2016, Maine residents were more than twice as likely to transport bicycles aboard the Schoodic Ferry, with 37.9% of Maine riders transporting a bicycle compared to 17.6% of out of state visitors.

Finally, nearly one-sixth of all Schoodic Ferry passengers chose to ride the Schoodic Ferry only one-way in a twenty-four hour period, suggesting that the Schoodic Ferry may have encouraged overnight cross-Bay visitation between ports.

# Unique Experiences Offered Aboard the Schoodic Ferry

While transporting passengers across Frenchman Bay on 4-6 roundtrips daily, we had the good fortune to offer unique opportunities aboard the Schoodic Ferry this season. Thanks so much to generous support from the Unity Foundation's Opportunity Grants program, the Stroud Fund, our corporate sponsors, our donors, our volunteers, and our port communities for helping us explore how many ways a ferry can serve its community.



## Maine 4<sup>th</sup> Graders Aboard

In 2016, Frenchman Bay Research Boating partnered with Acadia National Park to provide a cross-Bay transportation platform for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in Maine to explore both the ocean and land habitats within the Park. Four Maine schools held class field trips aboard the Schoodic Ferry, totaling 119 student round trips. Of these students, most were from underserved schools, and many indicated this was their first time visiting Acadia National Park and/or their first time riding a boat.

Thanks so much to the National Park Service's 4<sup>th</sup> Graders in the Parks Program for supporting this unique opportunity!



## College-Level Marine Research

In September 2016, the Schoodic Ferry hosted Bowdoin's College of Natural Sciences aboard, assisting their undergraduate and graduate students in collecting physical oceanographic and geological data in Frenchman Bay. Thanks so much to Bowdoin College for helping bring research aboard the Schoodic Ferry to new and exciting levels.

# Marine Mammal Monitoring

In partnership with volunteer marine mammalogist Rosemary Seton of Allied Whale, the Schoodic Ferry developed its first baseline monitoring program in 2016. Schoodic Ferry staff and interns were trained under Executive Director/Captain Dr. Kaitlyn Mullen, an internationally certified Marine Mammal Observer and Passive Acoustic Monitoring Operator, to conduct visual marine mammal surveys twice weekly aboard the Schoodic Ferry, while the boat was transiting its regular route. Data from this survey can be downloaded for free at [www.frenchmanbayresearchboating.org](http://www.frenchmanbayresearchboating.org).

In the course of that work, the Schoodic Ferry assisted Allied Whale in identifying minke whales, harbor porpoise, harbor seals and gray seals, as well as their approximate ages, locations and behaviors, across Frenchman Bay. Comparative data collected in future seasons will help Allied Whale and other marine mammalogists accurately assess how marine mammal habitat use is shifting over time, and how habitat use may vary by species, food availability, and age class.



*Intern Sarah Markwood logging a harbor seal sighting, July 2016.*



## Baseline Environmental Monitoring Programs

University groups, like the Earth & Oceanographic Sciences Department of Bowdoin College, also utilized the Schoodic Ferry to provide a unique, hands-on learning opportunity for their undergraduate and graduate students. Physical oceanographic data and plankton data was collected aboard the Schoodic Ferry in 2016, a project which is leading to a more formal data collection partnership between Bowdoin College and the Schoodic Ferry in 2017.

# Science/Student Mentoring

Thanks to direct support from the Unity Foundation's Opportunity Grants program, the Schoodic Ferry was able to match nine Schoodic Peninsula and Mount Desert Island 4<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> grade students with volunteer scientist mentors. The students had the opportunity to participate in visual marine mammal surveys, visual pelagic bird surveys, physical oceanographic surveys, and plankton identification surveys while asking questions in a unique one-on-one experience.

In addition, students had the opportunity to interact with passengers after completing the data collection portion of their mentor programs, and ask why others thought marine science and the Gulf of Maine ecosystem were important to Frenchman Bay and its human inhabitants. This unique shared learning experience is something the Schoodic Ferry hopes to continue in 2017.



*Marine mammalogist Rosemary Seton mentoring a local 4<sup>th</sup> grade student during a marine mammal transect.*



## Community Events

The Schoodic Ferry was proud to call Winter Harbor, Maine its home port in 2016, and truly thrilled to be able to offer the residents of Winter Harbor Maine a July 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks Cruise. A sold-out boat of 30 passengers, 27 of whom had purchased Maine resident event tickets, departed Winter Harbor and proceeded by Mark Island Lighthouse and Egg Rock Lighthouse on their way to watch the Bar Harbor fireworks from the safety and comfort of a town mooring - truly a front row seat!

This event was such a success, we anticipate adding a Lobster Boat Races Cruise in 2017!

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# Statement of Activities for the Year Ended December 31, 2016

	<u>2016 Total</u>	<u>2015 Total</u>
Revenue:		
Federal and state support	\$ -	\$ -
Private grants	\$ 18,250	\$ -
Contributions	\$ 13,295	\$ 20,791
Program revenue	\$ 80,225	\$ -
In-kind donations	\$ 4,901	\$ -
Interest income	\$ 6	\$ 1
Special events income	\$ -	\$ -
Total Revenue	\$ 116,667	\$20,792
Expenses:		
Program	\$ 152,246	\$ 2,020
General and administrative	\$ 13,440	\$ 1,230
Fundraising	\$ 270	\$ 98
Vessel Acquisition	\$ 17,488	\$ 8,000
Vessel repairs	<u>\$ 18,018</u>	<u>\$ - -</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 201,462	\$ 11,348
Change in net assets	\$( 84,795)	\$ 9,444
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	<u>\$ 9,444</u>	<u>\$ - -</u>
Net Assets, End of Year	<u>\$ (75,351)</u>	<u>\$ 9,444</u>



## 2016 Board of Directors

(left to right)

**Gary Fagan, Vice Chairman**

**Kerianne Conlon, Treasurer**

**Kaitlyn Mullen, Secretary/Executive Director**

**Whitey Carpenter, Chairman**



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[www.schoodicferry.com](http://www.schoodicferry.com)

