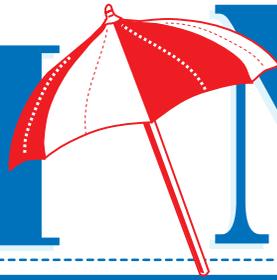


BEACH NEWS



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FOR THE WEEKS OF
AUGUST 17-23, 2006

**FREE
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Beach
Children's
Festival
Wraps Up.**

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SEE PAGE 2B



**Breaking
new
ground**

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PLUS...

AREA EVENTS

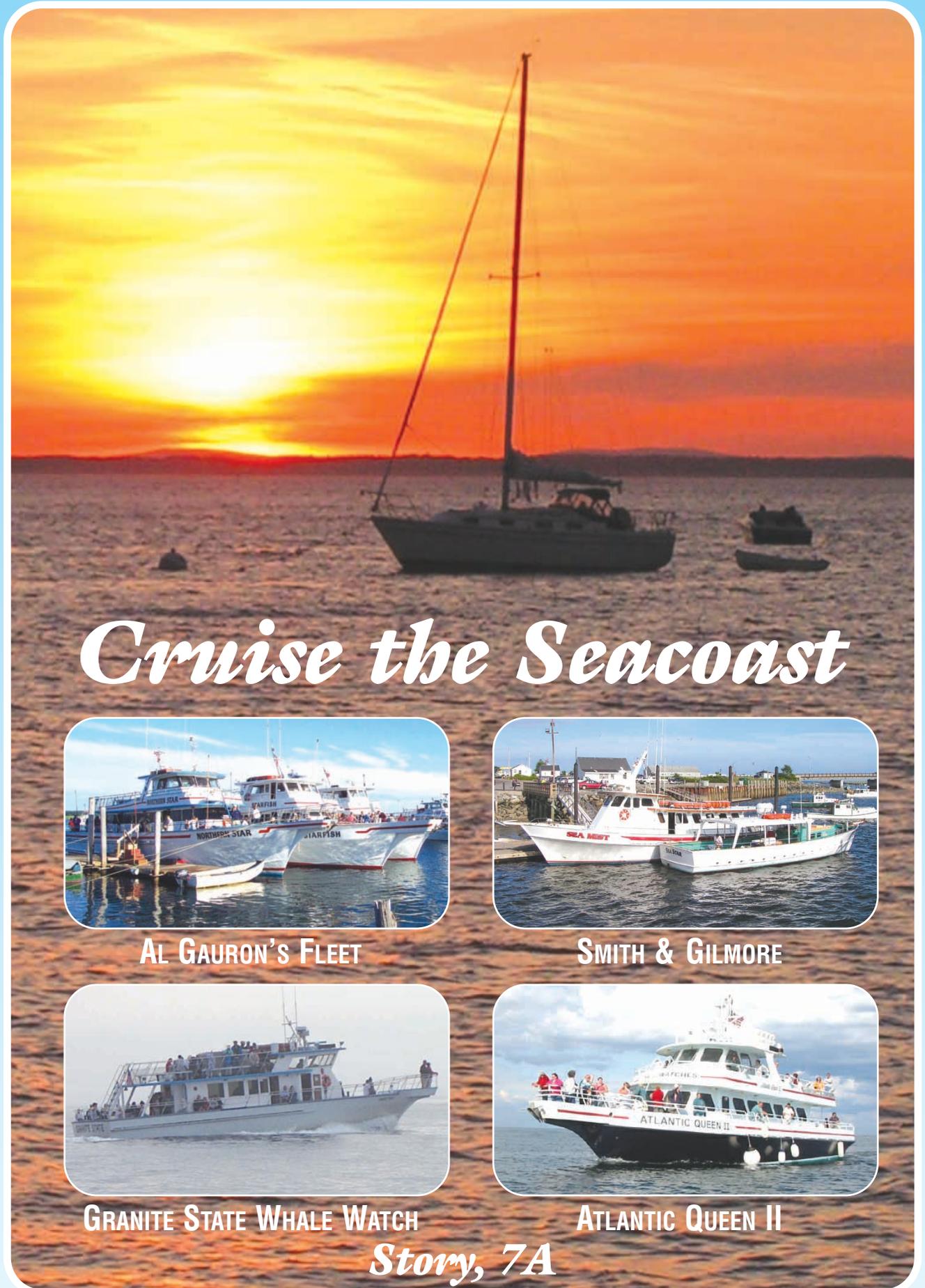
CONCERT SCHEDULES

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

POINTS OF INTEREST

DIVERSIONS

AND MORE!



Cruise the Seacoast



AL GAURON'S FLEET



SMITH & GILMORE



GRANITE STATE WHALE WATCH



ATLANTIC QUEEN II

Story, 7A

WHERE TO GO...
WHAT TO DO...
WHERE TO SHOP...

THE BEST ON THE SEACOAST





Cruise the Seacoast

By JOHN HIRTLE
BEACH NEWS STAFF WRITER

Between Seabrook, Hampton and Rye harbors there are plenty of ways for you to explore the high seas or visit the hidden corners of the Seacoast region on a tour of your choosing. For your convenience, we have rounded up some of the best ways to cruise the Seacoast as it was meant to be done – on the water.

WHALE WATCHING

Without a doubt, whale watching is one of the best ways to spend a day at sea in search of those mighty mammals that dwell in the dark deep ocean. A major reason that whales return to New Hampshire's Seacoast year after year is because of the fertile feeding grounds along Jafferries Ledge, an enormous shallow underwater region just off the coastline.

Local whale watching



boats offer an ideal platform to view whales from, with plenty of rail space and a second level to view these giant yet elusive animals. For those who might get tired of the fresh salty air, these fine vessels offer an interior cabin to sit down in for a spell. Food, snacks and beverages are also offered on all these vessels

A naturalist is usually on hand to identify the Humpback, Finback, Minke and

other whale species that you will see during your cruise.

Out of Rye Harbor, the Granite State Whale Watch lays claim to the title of "New Hampshire's only full time whale watch" as they offer two whale watch cruises a day, departing at 8:30 a.m. in the morning, and at 1:30 p.m. in the afternoon. To make reservations, please call 603) 964-5545, or toll free at 1-800-964-5545, or visit

them online at www.granitestatewhalewatch.com.

Rye Harbor's other whale watching boat, Atlantic Queen II offers a single afternoon whale watch cruise, which departs daily at 1:00 p.m. To make reservations or find out more information, please call them at (603) 964-5220, 1-800-whalenh, or visit them online at www.atlanticwhalewatch.com.

In Hampton Harbor, one of the boats in Al Gauron's Fleet sets sail to watch for whales seven days a week at 1:30 p.m. from the State Pier near the bridge. To make reservations or find out more information, please call them at (603) 926-2469, 1-800-905-7820, or visit them at www.algauron.com.

FISHING

They say that the best tasting fish is the one that you catch yourself. Cod, haddock, pollock, mackerel and bluefish are among the many fish in the sea



CRUISING — One of Al Gauron's boats approaches Star Island at the Isles of Shoals before returning to view the Hampton Beach Fireworks on Wednesday night.

— Beach News Photo by John Hirtle • www.ElseWhenStudio.com

you might catch on one of these fishing cruises. You can find out yourself by taking a deep sea fishing cruise and hook your own catch of the day. Bait is included, and rods and reels can be rented in case you left yours at home. In addition, the crew can fillet your catch at sea, so it's ready to cook as soon as you step off the boat.

In addition to the great fishing, there's always a chance to see whales on some of the longer deep sea fishing cruises.



Al Gauron's Fleet at the State Pier in Hampton Harbor offers a large variety of daily deep sea fishing cruises. Their

two hour, half-day, and all day cruises leave from the state pier in Hampton Harbor daily during the summer season. On Mondays, a special 12 hour marathon fishing cruise takes you even further out on the high seas. To make reservations or find out more information, please call them at (603) 926-2469, 1-800-905-7820, or visit them at www.algauron.com.

The Smith & Gilmore Deep Sea Fishing offers a variety daily fishing trips from the State Pier in Hampton Harbor. Their cruises can last two hours, half a day, three fourths of a day, and all day, along with a 12 hour 'Marathon Monday' fishing cruise. For more information, or to make reservations, please call 1-877-272-4005 or (603) 926-3503, or visit them on line at www.smithandgilmore.com.

Rye Harbor's 'big blue boat', the Atlantic Queen II sets sail for a half day of fishing at 8:00 a.m. every morning throughout the summer. To make reservations or find out more information, please call them at (603) 964-5220, 1-800-whalenh, or visit them online at www.atlanticwhalewatch.com.

FIREWORKS & ISLAND CRUISES.

It is no secret that Hampton Beach offers fantastic fireworks every Wednesday night during the summer season. What is less well known perhaps is that you can view the fireworks at sea – and see one of the overlooked features of the Seacoast area, the Isles of Shoals.

CRUISE Continued on 9A

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CRUISE FROM 7A

Available from July through August, these cruises depart at 7:00 in the evening to go out around these scenic islands, where a lighthouse, a Victorian era hotel and ghosts of the vanished fishing community of Gosport can be guessed at as the sun slowly sets, casting the islands in brilliant hues. Your tour boat then makes a run to Hampton Beach, and arrives in time for those famous fireworks to light up the night.

Al Gaaron's Fleet at the State Pier in Hampton Harbor offers this cruise until the end of August, allowing you to admire the islands and fireworks before returning to the night life at Hampton Beach. To make reservations or find out more information, please call them at (603) 926-2469, 1-800-905-7820, or visit them at www.algaaron.com.

The Granite State Whale Watch out of Rye Harbor offers a slightly longer cruise, and arrives at the Shoals earlier, since Rye Harbor is the nearest port of call to those isolated islands. To make reservations, please call (603) 964-5545, or toll free at 1-800-964-5545, or visit them online at www.granitestatewhale-watch.com.

UNIQUE CRUISES

For those seeking a more unique view of the Seacoast, there is nothing more unique than a visit to the Isles of Shoals. In recent years, as the Isles of Shoals Steamship Company has dropped its ferry service to the island, access has become even more exclusive for someone seeking to spend a few hours out on these picturesque islands.

One can visit Star Island for the day, or for a few hours by taking Island Cruises' Uncle Oscar out of Rye Harbor during the summer season. The Uncle Oscar also offers the only "lobster tour" on the Seacoast, a short one hour cruise that is an ideal outing for young

children who want to see the creepy critters fresh from the deep. For more information or to make reservations, please call (603) 964-6446 or visit them online at www.uncleoscar.com.

Appledore Island, which is home to the Shoals Marine Laboratory, is less accessible, with only a limited Wednesday tour to visit



the lovingly restored garden of Celia Thaxter, the Seacoast's most celebrated poet. A short tour of the island is included with the trip, and the proceeds from the tour go to the

Shoals Marine Laboratory scholarship fund. For more information or to make reservations, please call (607) 254-2900, (607) 255-3717, or visit online at <http://www.sml.cornell.edu/garden/pg-home.htm> or www.appledorearbor.com.

ON YOUR OWN

While the wide open seas offers a wide variety of scenery to see, there is a maze of hidden waterways winding through the salt marshes on the Seacoast. If you have a boat of your own, you can explore them at your own pace. Just be aware that the tide may leave you high and dry if you're not careful, and that the salt marshes are no wake zones.

Boat launches can be found at the Salisbury Beach State Reservation, at the Hampton Harbor State Pier, the Rye Harbor Marina, and at Pierce Island in Portsmouth.



A launch suitable for smaller boats is also available at the northern entrance of Odiome Point State Park.

If you don't have a boat with you, or just want to give boating a try, be sure to visit Seacoast Kayak on Route 1A on Seabrook Harbor. In addition to

selling kayaks, they offer affordable half and full day kayak rentals so you can try before you buy. For more information, please call (603) 474-1025 or visit them online at www.seacoastkayak.com.

ATLANTIC NEWS



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'mezh(e)rebel \ adj.

1 Something to show the amount.

2 The Atlantic News.

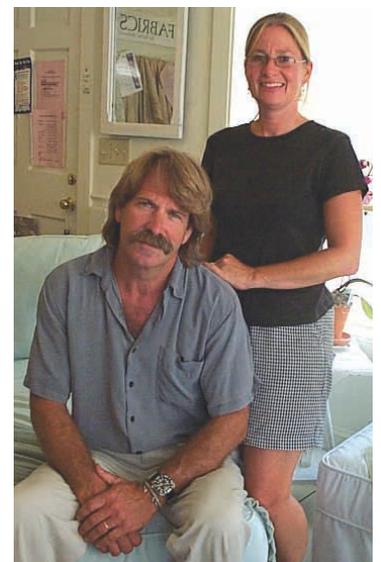
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The first and last defense in New Hampshire

By JOHN HIRTLE
BEACH NEWS STAFF WRITER

Strangely enough, the last of the many forts built on the Seacoast sits upon the remains of the very first one built.

The remains of this fort, Fort Dearborn, sit at the northern end of Scenic Route 1A in Rye on the New Hampshire Seacoast, an easy commute from the busy shores of Hampton Beach. And it is a trip well worth taking, for this is one of the crown jewels of the Seacoast, where history, learning, recreation and outdoor fun come together in one spot. Today, the site is more often referred to as Odiorne Point or the Seacoast Science Center, rather than Fort Dearborn.

The area was first known as Pannaway Plantation, for it was here, not in Portsmouth or Dover that the first European settlers arrived in 1623. As with any settlement in the untamed wilderness, fortifications were built, but these have vanished into the mists of history, as many records

from those turbulent early years were lost, and any archeological evidence was obliterated long ago. The settlement itself was abandoned in favor of a better anchorage on the shores of Portsmouth, thus leaving the city of Dover with the claim of being the oldest continually occupied site in New Hampshire.

Odiorne Point was used for farming, and eventually became home to summer cottages and a hotel before the United States was thrust into the Second World War.

With the situation looking grim, the need for the rebuilding of coastal defenses became a priority, lest another surprise seaborne attack hinder the war effort. Portsmouth, with its Naval Shipyard became one of those places where improved fortifications were needed. On the Maine side of the harbor, Fort Foster was expanded, but on the New Hampshire side, there was no room around existing forts for the enormous sixteen inch coastal defense guns which

were planned. So in 1942 the government purchased almost 265 acres of land between Odiorne Point and Frost Point, giving residents thirty days to remove their belongings. Since many of these homes were summer residences, and the notices were sent out to the Rye addresses, many residents were unaware of the seizure of their property. Just as bad, this portion of Scenic Route 1A, which takes you from Hampton Beach to Portsmouth was closed to the public for the duration of the war.

The first guns placed at Fort Dearborn were four 155 mm guns set up on 'Panama Mounts' on the southernmost area of the modern park. Three of the filled-in concrete rings survive to this day, near the seashore.

The more obvious gun position, Battery #204, also known as Battery M.H. Barry is right at the park's main gate, where a huge mound of grass-covered earth conceals a bunker which once serviced

two six inch guns. At the summit sits the battery commander's station, which you can climb up to via stairs, and take in the sights of the park below. The guns themselves once sat outside the east and west doors. Between the battery and the seashore sits the Seacoast Science Center, in the Sugden House, the only home left behind after the government took over the land.

Battery Seaman, where the sixteen inch guns were eventually mounted is in the northern section of the park, at Frost Point. The trek to it provides one with an excellent walk along dirt trails and roads which take you past some of the still standing stone walls of the lost estates which populated the point. Almost all traces of the camp, which included quarters for enlisted men and officers, a chapel, commissary and TNT storage have vanished.

Battery Seaman's bunkers are buried under a huge mound of earth. Until recently, the gun positions were



BIG GUNS — Two huge bunkers where 16 inch guns once stood lie hidden under artificial hills deep within Odiorne Point State Park.

— Beach News Photo by John Hirtle

filled in with heaps of earth, but now you can walk through the two massive portals from the seaward side to the landward side. The bunkers which linked the two massive guns are only open to the public for special tours sponsored by the Seacoast Science Center. Sadly, the bunker has been a target of vandals in the past. Even so, the massive semi-circular roof which partially protected the massive guns conveys the sense that America was facing a mighty foe. Atop the hill lies another battery commander's station.

Due to the anticipated shock of these guns firing, the plotting room bunker was built elsewhere behind the battery.

As work rushed ahead on building these massive fortifications, the tide of war was turning in favor of the Allies. The batteries were finally finished in 1944, and test-fired, if only to prove they worked. By then, the war was firmly on the offensive, and materials and manpower which ran the coastal forts were diverted to the more urgent task of defeating the Axis. Battery

DEFENSE Continued on 7B

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DEFENSE FROM 6B

Seaman, whose blasts shattered windows as far away as Portsmouth was put on caretaker status. Battery M.H. Barry was one of the few large gun positions surrounding Portsmouth to remain active for the rest of the war, until it was deactivated in 1946, the same year the local section of scenic Route 1A was reopened to the public.

With the incredible power of nuclear weapons, it was clear coastal defenses such as Fort Dearborn were as obsolete as armored knights on a modern battlefield. Fort Dearborn would be deactivated in 1948, and all the guns were removed. The Seavey Creek side returned to the hands of private owners, while the seaward side occupied by the park became the Rye Air Station, which was used as a radar site for the Pease Air Force Base in Newington (today the Pease International Tradeport). The former fort was used by the National Guard and Civil Defense during the 1950's.

The land on which the park sits was transferred to New Hampshire in 1961, and the park was opened in 1962. Since then, it has slowly become a one of the must-see spots of the Seacoast, provid-

ing education and recreational opportunities for local residents and visitors to the Seacoast. The southern main gate provides access to the Seacoast Science Center, as well as a picnic area, a playground and restroom facilities. The northern gate (which is sometimes closed) provides access to a small boat launch on Seavey's Creek and a path which will take you to a splendid sheltered sandy beach on

the shores of Little Harbor. However, there are no permanent restroom facilities at this end of the park.

Admission to the park is \$3.00 per person, and an additional \$1.00 per person for the Seacoast Science Center. As the southernmost of the former forts to protect Portsmouth Harbor, it is also the easiest to get to from Hampton Beach by driving North on Scenic Route 1A.



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