

On the Water in Harpswell – Stories About Harpswell & Its Working Waterfront

Maya Morduch-Toubman, Class of 2018

This project was inspired by Russ Rymer's Writing About the Coast class as part of the Bowdoin Marine Science Semester (BMSS) in the fall of 2016. During BMSS, we spent every day at the Bowdoin Coastal Studies Center on Orr's Island in Harpswell, but we did not get a chance to interact with other parts of the town. This summer, I wanted to learn more about residents of Harpswell and how they use the coast for their businesses.

I interviewed eight people from around Harpswell and wrote stories that profile each of them and their lives. I also visited many additional spots in the coastal town then wrote about my own impressions and experiences. I started with a day boating around to several small islands off the coast with the Maine Island Trail Association. On Sebascodegan (Great) Island, I interviewed Frankie Bichrest, an 80-year-old lobsterman, Chris Johnson, a fiberglass boat builder, and Scott Moody, a shellfish seller. I wrote about three businesses around the Cribstone Bridge between Orr's and Bailey Islands: Cathy Piffath, a sea kayaker at H2Outfitters, Sheldon & Kathy Morse at Morse's Cribstone Grill restaurant, and Bethany McNelly-Davis & Perry Davis on the schooner ALERT. Finally, I spent a full day starting at 4 o'clock in the morning catching lobster out in Casco Bay with Bruce Dyer out of Basin Point on Harpswell Neck.

The goal of my writing was not necessarily to collect exact facts about Harpswell, but rather people's experiences, memories, and perceptions of the town and the water. I then compiled this writing along with pictures and sketches onto a website which can be easily shared. My hope is that this project will allow many people to get a taste for how lobstering as well as other types of boating and fishing make up the coastal town of Harpswell. You can find all my work at onthewaterinharpswell.weebly.com.

[Onthewaterinharpswell.weebly.com](http://onthewaterinharpswell.weebly.com)

Faculty Mentor: Sarah McMahon
Funded by the Rusack Coastal Studies Fellowship