FERRY BEACH

Discovery

•5 Boardwalk Dr. Saco, ME 04072 • ferrybeach.org •207-282-4489

CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF FERRY BEACH!

A Quasquicentennical Celebration!

Welcome to Ferry Beach's Quasquicentennial (125th) Celebration: a special weekend honoring this truly magnificent place and community of people. We will we come together in community, to celebrate and honor the 125 years of history at Ferry Beach, our beloved home! Please join us Friday, October 9 through Monday, October 12, 2026, the weekend of indigenous peoples' for a weekend unlike any other. You are a part of this special community and this celebration wouldn't be the same without you! An outline of all the excitement can be found below.

FRIDAY — Welcome Day

3:00 - 6:00 PM — Arrival & Check-In
6:00 - 7:00 PM — Welcome Dinner- The 125th Anniversary Edition
7:15 - 9:00 PM — Fireside Gathering in the Grove: Storytelling, Sing Alongs & S'mores (bring your own instrument)

SATURDAY — Celebration Day

8:00 - 9:00 AM — Breakfast
9:30 - 11:30 AM — Chili/Chowder Cook-off Set-up & Porch Socializing
12:00 - 4:30 PM — The Grove Festival & Chili/Chowder Cook-off
6:00 - 7:00 PM - Dinner
7:15 - 10:00 PM — Anniversary Dance Party - Mash-up of favorite music and costumes from the last 12 1/2 decades!

SUNDAY — Community Day

8:00 - 9:00 AM — Breakfast
9:30 -10:30 AM – Chapel in the Grove: Celebrating 125 years!
12:00 - 1:00 PM - Lunch
1:30 - 4:30 PM — Ferry Beach Heritage Experience ~ A variety of activities celebrating the past 125 years.
6:00 - 7:00 PM - Dinner
7:00 - 9:00 PM — Coffeehouse/Open Mic (Talent/No-Talent Show)

MONDAY — Closing Day

8:00 – 9:00 AM — Breakfast
9:00 – 9:30 AM — Closing Circle (Modern Tent Revival): Celebrating universal love today, tomorrow and for the next 125 years.
10:00 AM — Check-Out
12:00 PM — Lunch

IN THIS DISCOVERY

① A Quasquicentennical Celebration!
② Revisiting, Where it all Began.
③ The Water's Edge & Our Nervous System
④ Recovery at Ferry Beach!
⑤ Ferry Beach Programming...
AND MORE!

Now Seeking Teams! Want to Enter?

We are looking for those who want to participate in the chili/chowder cook-off competition! Anyone is welcome to join; Ferry Beach conference groups, small teams of attendees, local businesses or individuals in the community.

Have fun networking and collaborating while competing for prizes (such as for best chili overall, best chowder overall, most innovative chili, most innovative chowder, best vegetarian chili & best vegetarian chowder).

Each team will have a table and access to electricity, a couple of chairs and 4 passes to the event. You will need: a crock pot or instapot; your recipe, ingredients for your creation, (a poster about your organization/business or for Ferry Beachers the activity/program you participate in, if you wish).

Team Entry Fee: $25 (minimum donation)

Build your team & register at: ferrybeach.org/125th-weekend

UPCOMING EVENTS:

September 5 (4-8 PM)

Labor Day Weekend Cookout
Get ready for an evening of fun; enjoy BBQ food, lobster, live music, family games, cornhole and more! This year's entertainment is The Zoot Jumpers, a fabulous Maine-based band that playing hot jump blues & cool swing.

September 18 (5:30-7:30 PM)

September Community Dinner
Our first community dinner of the season is Friday, September 18! Join us as Phaedra Bond, Chaplin with Portland police shares how we can build a network to protect democracy.

October 10 (12 - 4 PM)

Chili / Chowder Cook Off & Grove Festival
Join us for the 1st Annual Cook Off & Festival! Enjoy an afternoon of fun; sampling various delights, voting for your favorite dish and partaking in the various other festival activities. More details to be announced soon!

Register & Learn More at: ferrybeach.org/2026

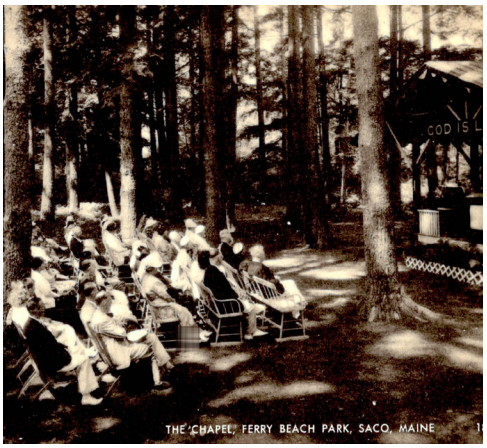
Revisiting, Where it all Began...

The Ferry Beach story really begins in 1882, when the first national Universalist grove meeting was held in Lake Winnipesaukee, New Hampshire under the leadership of Dr. Quillen Shinn. These grove meetings were very popular at the time and not just among Universalists.

By 1897, the meetings had grown too large to continue in its current place, so Dr. Shinn began his search for a new home for these meetings. In late August of 1900, Dr. Shinn, while visiting in Ocean Park heard of a grove two miles south. On coming to the entrance to the grove, Dr. Shinn removed his hat and said, "something tells me it shall be here".

On August 1st, 1901, the 20th annual summer meeting was held in the grove. 410 people attended the meeting. It was the largest gathering of the Universalist Annual Meeting up to that point in time. With so many in attendance, they needed to find hotels down the road in Ocean Park, Kennebunk and even Portland. If meetings were going to continue, more space was needed. In 1902, steps were taken to purchase the Ferry Beach House/Hotel (now known as Quillen).

In the years that followed, Ferry Beach Park was purchased from the Boston & Maine Railroad, a permanent place along the beautiful sandy shores of Saco, Maine. And that's where our story begins.



The Water's Edge and Our Nervous System

By: Cathy Stackpole

The increasing use of technology impairs our ability as humans to self-regulate. We see it in people who come to Ferry Beach in the summer for a conference. Early on in a conferee's stay, there are many challenges and people are quick to jump on a problem. With the magic of the ocean waves, being by the water and time away from social media, those challenges wane.

What is it that time by the ocean does for our nervous system? The beach, and any water, is considered a "blue space" which is the restorative psychological and physiological vitality experienced when humans are near natural aquatic environments like oceans, rivers, and lakes" (Conservation Law Foundation).

We see that time near the water creates a Nervous System Reset. The proximity to water activates the parasympathetic nervous system, quickly lowering cortisol and reducing heart rate.

The gentle, repetitive movement and sound of waves or flowing streams ease cognitive fatigue caused by constant digital stimulation.

We experience a Neurochemical Shift. Being near water helps stimulate feel-good neurochemicals like dopamine and oxytocin, encouraging mental calm and relaxation.

The next time someone says where should we book our conference or workshop, remind them of the amazing properties of the ocean and particularly of Ferry Beach, with our 1000 feet of beachfront. Conferences, workshops or day long meetings will have better outcomes when the conferees are able to plug into the properties of Blue Space.

Starting in the fall, Ferry Beach also has openings during the week for groups or families to visit. Our lodging in Cross, Kelly, Rowland, Morris and Metz is all available throughout the year. Most of our weekends are booked throughout the year, but if you are a small group, we may be able to fit you in for a weekend. During the week stays are welcomed and available! Sunday through Wednesday or Thursday stays might be just what you need to immerse yourself in Blue Space!

Ferry Beach Programming this Fall!

Healing Qigong " NEW"
Classes start October 14th and are offered every Wednesday at 7:30am!
Sheng Zhen Healing Qigong is a gentle form that brings healing qi into the body, it works to calm the mind and open the heart. Healing qigong is practiced seated in a chair. Qigong consists of 3 parts, each having 10 movements. In part one, movements help gather qi and bring it into the body, part two is 'process' the qi in the body to support healing. Part 3: Is described as "the alchemy frees the source within." Instructor Lisa Paterson, has been practicing Sheng Zhen qigong for 24 years. Her primary teacher, Dr. Don Leathers, has been a student of Master Li's for over 35 years. Over the years, Lisa has studied several forms directly with Master Li. Come calm your mind, open your heart and heal your body! Learn more at: ferrybeach.org/qigong .

Yoga Classes
Yoga classes will continue through the winter, every Saturday at 8am. Once it becomes too cool to be outside, classes will be moved inside. Our yoga flow class invites you to move with intention, synchronizing breath with seamless, flowing movement to create a deeply connected mind-body experience. The fluid nature of this practice allows every transition to feel natural and intuitive, honoring where your body is today. This class is suitable for all abilities; beginners or seasoned yoga practitioners. Yoga master, Oldriska grew up training as a ballerina, an experience that laid the foundation for her deep connection to the body and its capacity for expression and healing. She was drawn to yoga teacher training to deepen her own practice. Yoga offered not just a path back to movement, but a more holistic way of living, one that's grounded, nourishing, and awake. Classes are $15. All are welcome! ferrybeach.org/beach-yoga

Sourdough Classes
Our beloved sourdough classes return! If you've always wanted to learn how to make your own homemade sourdough bread, now is your chance! You'll leave this class with knowledge of the sourdough process, your own bread, recipes for starter, and your own sourdough tool kit to continue making bread at home. Classes are limited to 10 people and sell out fast; there are still a few slots left in each of these following sessions. Classes are $55 per person. Info at: ferrybeach.org/sourdough-bread-class
Upcoming sessions:
Tues. September 15 (9am-12pm) & Wed. September 16 (9-11am)
Wed. November 4 (4:30-7:30pm) & Thurs. November 5 (5-7:30pm)
Fri. December 11 (4-7pm) & Sat. December 12 (10am-12pm)

Moon Rituals
New and full moons represent inspiring opportunities to connect with our beautiful world and appreciate the energetic blessings of the lunar cycle. We will gather on the beach for full and new moon rituals (if weather is bad, we will celebrate indoors). During new moons we will celebrate with reflection, intention setting, and community connection. During full moons, we gather for culmination, illumination, to release and to harvest your goals and shed what no longer serves you. There is also an optional Spiritual Artistic Meditation Workshop that follows for an hour right after each of the moon ritual. Learn more at: ferrybeach.org/moon-rituals
Full Moon Ritual Dates: Sat. Sept. 26 (6pm), Mon. Oct. 26 (5:20pm)
New Moon Ritual Dates: Thurs. Sept 10 (6:30pm), Sat. Oct. 10 (6:30pm)

Recovery at Ferry Beach

Many not for profit organizations are finding it hard to completely recover from the challenges of the pandemic and the ongoing missteps of the federal government. Food costs, utilities and labor costs continue to skyrocket. Though the pandemic was officially "over" since 2022, the additional challenges have strained Ferry Beach's cash flow.

Building back, while also continuing our reputation for addressing capital needs has led to a little bit of juggling and a lot of affirmations! We are so grateful for the support of Bangor Savings Bank, the American Society of the Dowsers, and the GAYLA conference for their help in providing all the funds we needed to add a ramp onto the front of Rowland Hall and create a ramp on Morris Cottage.

Bangor Savings, Saco Biddeford Savings and a large gift from Eileen Cummings helped install an EV charger in the Grove. This has helped us lock down electricity on the outside of buildings.

The Metz Family continues to support a maintenance fund for the Metz Village that now is close to $144,000. These funds are earmarked for addressing ongoing capital needs of the three cabins and large porch that many guests love. Thank you Elizabeth McNab and Margaret Monroe!

A loan from the Small Business Administration after the storms of 2024 were critical to addressing serious challenges in Quillen and in Underwood, two dormitory style buildings that provide the bulk of our housing in the summer and shoulder seasons. This work is now completed, and we will be paying back those dollars.

A FEMA grant was helpful during that same time frame and for those same storms. Renovations of the Rose Pavilion and reconstructing our board walk because of the storm, picking up debris, including sand and downed trees were all part of a recovery grant we received. All those efforts are also now complete. The boardwalk still needs to be placed in its new platform.

This past year we were able to pick up an additional stove and oven from another not for profit, helping us increase our capacity and ability in the kitchen. Routine and ongoing maintenance that Ferry Beach used to put off, occur regularly now as we are open year-round.

We appreciate all the people who have been sustainers of Ferry Beach, giving monthly which helps our cash flow as well as provide for our capital needs. Buildings and grounds at the beach are always in need of upkeep!! Thank you so much!

SUMMER THROWBACKS

1935

1940

1989

1996

2001

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AUGUST 2026

Ferry Beach Park Association
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LABOR DAY WEEKEND COOKOUT

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2026 (4-8 PM)

- Live Music - BBQ Food - Lobster - Games - & More