FERRY BEACH

Discovery

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CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF FERRY BEACH!

A Home on the Coastline for 125 Years!

By Cathy Stackpole

Ferry Beach has been in this home for 125 years.

But did you know that for 20 years, the Universalists who eventually came here, our ancestors, had a week at Lake Winnipesaukee in a United Methodist camp? Each week there were other denominations including the northern Baptists who later settled into Ocean Park and the Unitarians who never looked for or established a camp anywhere after their weeks at the United Methodists camp.

We credit Quillen Shinn, as the founder of Ferry Beach as he was the person that led them to this location, but he probably was not the original person who led them to Winnipesaukee. There is a good chance that the Universalists who first came to Ferry Beach heard about this place from the Baptists who had preceded the Universalists in their week at Winnipesaukee.

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That first retreat, in August of 1901 had more than 400 people come to the weekend. Unlike the United Methodist camp that they left, Ferry Beach had no running water, no toilets, no dining room, no organized food. People lodged in neighboring towns and cities including Kennebunk, Portland and Old Orchard.

You may have heard of the Hero's Journey, made famous by the work of Joseph Campbell. If you have ever seen a Disney movie, you know a bit about the mythical story line of the Hero's Journey. The hero takes a journey, slays many imaginary dragons on a trip through the underworld and eventually finds their way back as a changed person.

• Thinking about that metaphor, Ferry Beach as an organization had its own Hero's Journey in establishing this place. The first step in the Hero's journey is to "hear the call."

• The Universalists in the northeastern U.S. heard the call to find a place, a permanent home to establish themselves. They probably asked their friends up the road, who they may have met through their overlapping experiences at the United Methodist camp at Lake Winnipesauke and were led to this spot owned by the railroad. *Continued on page 4...*

How Ferry Beach Can Help Your Organization!

Many organizations, particularly those that are regional or statewide often find venues that provide meeting space. The costs associated with meeting space, food and technology are often quite expensive. As a not-for-profit organization ourselves, we strive to keep down costs as well as partner with organizations that share a similar mission and vision for a better world.

At Ferry Beach, we are here to help you grow your organization as well as provide an exciting attraction for your event. Beach front conference centers are often very expensive, have limited space or do not share your mission, vision and values. Meet Ferry Beach!

With 32 acres and a thousand feet of beachfront, lodging for over 120 (in season) in a variety of types and price points, a 150 seat auditorium and 5 breakout rooms, Ferry Beach provides a welcoming and exciting venue to have a conference. Our Dining Room serves, scratch cooking with attention to the details of food allergies. Our menu includes gluten free and dairy free options. We are small enough to help address some of the diet challenges that arise.

An example is of a not for profit organization we took from a small conference to more than 220 people for a long weekend. The conference had been up north for many years at a hotel convention center, under 100 guests consistently. The first year it moved, over 150 people walked into the conference. Within 2 years the conference had tripled the number of guests who came. What was once a conference for one state (Maine), by the last few years we were hosting, they had 15 different states represented.

Depending upon the number of individuals who want to camp, Ferry Beach can accommodate upwards to 250 for the weekend. Our larger conferences often have people who walk in for the day or two days and stay in housing in the area or in the campground. We are proud of our efforts to help not for profits grow their organizations. If you are interested, give us a call.

New Tax Benefits for Charitable Giving in 2026

New tax legislation passed in 2025, regarding how gifts can be deducted on your tax bill goes into effect for the 2026 tax year. People who do not itemize deductions can take up to a $1,000 deduction for their charitable gifts this year. In the past, you generally only received a tax benefit for donating if you itemized your deductions. Starting in the 2026 tax year, that is no longer the case. If you take the standard deduction, you can now claim a deduction for charitable contributions - up to $1,000 for single filers and $2,000 for married couples filing jointly. The deduction only applies to donations made directly to certain qualified charitable organizations, 501(c)(3) charities. Ferry Beach is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. To learn more about the changes, click **here**.

Charitable giving is a meaningful way to support causes you care about; transforming lives, uplifting communities, and creating positive change in the world. Your generosity helps sustain Ferry Beach, preserve its mission, and ensure that future generations can experience the connection, community, and inspiration that make this place so special. As you consider your charitable giving this year, we invite you to consider Ferry Beach in your plans. Every gift helps carry our mission forward.

What's Happening at Ferry Beach?!

VIRTUAL OFFERINGS:

Thoughtful Tending Meditation is an ONLINE opportunity, occurring every Tuesday at 8:30 AM EST on Zoom from October through December 22. You can attend just a few or all! Each meditation session is 30-minutes serving as designated time to slow down and consider where in our being/life some extra tender love and care is needed. Let this be one of many ways you choose to take care of yourself, to keep building universal love by tending to your own heart, so more love can be shared in this world. To learn more or join, visit: ferrybeach.org/thoughtful-tending-meditation.

ON CAMPUS GATHERINGS:

Community Dinner on Tuesday, November 17, 2026 at 5:30 PM.

November's community dinner features a special collaboration with a growing new food hub in York County! This evening of gratitude will bring insight about food insecurity in York County and the brand new "Hub" based in Biddeford, that will begin to serve food pantries in York County this fall! Come learn about what's happening in our area, the ongoing efforts to make a difference, all while enjoying a delicious meal among friends and the community!

Winter Craft Fair on Sunday, November 22, 2026 from 9 AM -2 PM.

Our annual Winter Craft Fair is a few weeks earlier this year! Come kickstart your holiday shopping and get some delicious treats for your Thanksgiving table! There will be over 40 local artisans selling an incredible array of items; person self-care, paper goods, fiber arts, pottery, jewelry, accessories, holiday decor, home decor, locally sourced treats and so much more! A list of vendors and products can be found on our website: ferrybeach.org/winter-craft-fair . We will also have our traditional bake sale to support Ferry Beach during the event. We'll do the baking for Thanksgiving so you don't have to, come grab a variety of tasty treats; pies, sourdough breads, cupcakes, cookies and so much more.

Holiday Community Dinner on Thursday, December 3, 2026 at 5:30 PM.

Last December we hosted a special holiday community dinner and The Ocean Park Ukesters are back to join us again this December! Their music has brought much joy to the community over the years. In a special evening at Ferry Beach, they will bring beloved holiday classics to life with their signature ukulele music and joyful singing. During this season of gratitude, we are reminded of the importance in coming together, caring for one another, and togetherness as a community. With lively music, comforting food, and the simple joy of being together, we invite everyone to share in the warmth and spirit of the holiday season with us on December 3 from 5:30-7:30pm. Tickets are now available!

Winter Solstice Ceremony on Monday, December 21, 2026 at 6:00 PM.

Our beloved Winter Solstice tradition around the bonfire continues! Join us as we commemorate Ferry Beach's 125th Anniversary with an evening of singing, reflection and community. Inspired by traditions shared across cultures and generations, this meaningful year-end ritual invites us to pause, honor the year behind us, and welcome the possibilities ahead. Let's welcome the new year with open hearts and renewed hope.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS:

Healing Qigong Sessions: Offered EVERY Wednesday from 8:30-9:30 AM.

Experience healing, calm the mind and open your heart! Healing Qigong is a brand new offering suitable for all ages and abilities, (Qigong is practiced seated on a chair). Each session offers a gentle series of movement that brings qi into the body to support healing! This class focuses on Part 1 and Part 2 of this 3 part form, each having about 10 movements. Part 1 gathers qi into the body and part 2 through gentle movement processes it to support healing. Come try a class, no commitment is needed. You can come once, to a few sessions or attend regularly for continuous healing.

Vinyasa Yoga Classes: Offered EVERY Sunday from 8:00-9:00 AM.

While yoga on the beach might have paused for the cooler weather, yoga classes are still happening every week inside our Cross Building! Each class is 60 minutes and suitable for all ages and abilities (accommodations in movement can be made to suit your needs). Each class is thoughtfully sequenced to guide you through a continuous, graceful journey; building strength, cultivating flexibility, and fostering a sense of ease that carries both on and off the mat. Don't wait till January 1st to embark on your health goals, there's an opportunity to start now! Bring a mat if you have one and if you forget, we have plenty of spares! Invest in your health for just $15 a class.

To learn more about these offerings & other upcoming opportunities, visit: **ferrybeach.org/schedule**

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• Many say these were indigenous lands as well. At the mouth of the Saco River, there were several developments that were inhabited many years prior by indigenous people, including around the Long Pond as well as the river.

Then after that first summer meeting, in August of 1901, they had what Campbell calls in the Hero's Journey, the "refusal of the call." The hero, realizing what they are getting into, may decide to back off from saying "yes" to the journey. The Universalists found this place, but:

- It was rather rough and establishment of a place like this was a bit daunting.
- Unlike the Baptists, who had many people buying property in and around the few common buildings,
- FB had a campground and one individual, Shinn, who used his own money to buy the Ferry Park hotel near the beach.

Their models were different, perhaps reflecting the energy of the two differing beliefs.

- Universalists were ok with creating a camp in the woods, while the Free Will Baptists succeeded in creating a village of homes and families at Ocean Park.
- They too had and still have some community space in the little village we today consider Ocean Park.
- Other religious groups also followed the Baptists to southern Maine: the Catholics founded a Chatauqua and the Salvation Army also had and still has, a place near Ocean Park. Both are close to the area of Ocean Park in Old Orchard but are now considered part of the town of Old Orchard.

Saco, originally owned both the land of Old Orchard and Ocean Park.

To continue reading all about the history through the years, click here or visit: ferrybeach.org/discovery

Seeking Board Members

Ferry Beach is recruiting for board members.

As a not for profit organization, Ferry Beach is required to have a mission and like all not for profits must adhere to its mission or risk losing their not for profit status. Ferry Beach has as its mission to awaken hearts to explore, grow and renew the spirit of universal love.

We are grateful for all the people who come to Ferry Beach throughout the year, some for a conference or workshop, still others for a community event or activity or helping us build our capacity through activities provided to our immediate community.

Every not for profit shares an interest in mapping its stakeholders, these are people who might be members, conference goers, funders, neighbors, community leaders and others who may share in the care and feeding a not for profit. Ferry Beach is in a unique situation in that we have both internal and external stakeholders that are not bound by geographical location:

Our internal stakeholders include staff, board, volunteers.

External Stakeholders include:

- Conference goers, many of whom have a long history of coming to Ferry Beach through their organization or because they attend a longstanding conference of FB
- Members who care about the organization and invest in its success each year. This includes neighbors, friends, people who may or may not attend a conference, workshop or activity.
- Neighbors who want to have a say in how the organization is running.
- Political leaders who support not for profits in their community.
- Funders, Government organization and agencies.
- Vendors, media
- Community partners which may include other not for profits.

As a board member, we are looking for people who may represent one or more of those stakeholders who may have some board experience. Boards of not for profits are here to help us build relationships, raise money and oversee the policy and governance of our organization. Since we are a regional organization, with people really from all over the world who come to Ferry Beach, we are looking for people who have a variety of experiences that includes volunteering on a local, regional or national board. Is that you? If so, visit: ferrybeach.org/board-interest .

IMPORTANT: ARE YOU RECEIVING OUR EMAILS?

A few months ago, we changed email providers. Some have since expressed that they are no longer receiving our emails. If you have not received an email from us recently, please check your spam folder. If you find our emails in there, you can then select "report not spam" and emails should filter back into your inbox. For some Gmail users, emails may be filtering into the "Promotions" category, you can choose to move those into your inbox and designate that as the intended future location. If you are still not receiving emails, please reach out here: ***https://forms.gle/1jESB9ZHVMcmrsYW6*** and we can investigate it further for you. Emails are our most important method of communication, from communicating information about your stay, announcing discounts, new events, and all Ferry Beach News. We want to be able to continue to communicate with all of you!

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OCTOBER 2026

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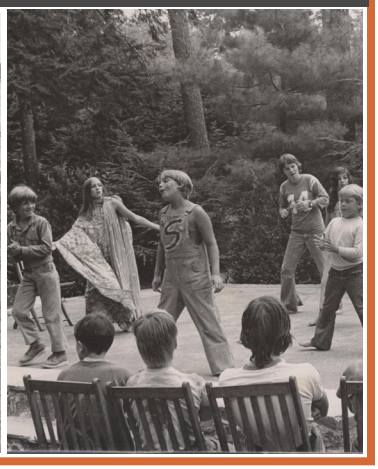
Celebrating 125 Years of Ferry Beach!