

RESOURCE TRANSCRIPT

Title: Mason Presents: Fritz Wetherbee on The Isles of Shoals

Caption: Fritz Wetherbee explains how the Isles of Shoals changed over time from the center of the fishing industry to a center of arts and literature.

Credit: New Hampshire Historical Society

Fritz Wetherbee: Captain John Smith of Pocahontas fame was the first to map the islands. He called them "Smith's Isles," but he was not the first to visit. In the 1500s, fishermen had named them the Isles of Shoals, after the schooling or shoaling fish in the waters around them. And in fact in the late 1600s, the Isles of Shoals was the center of the fishing industry in America. In the 1800s, Thomas Loughton, the lighthouse keeper, opened Appledore House on Hog Island, and the tourists came. The poet Celia Loughton Thaxter, who grew up on the islands, attracted writers, artists, and musicians. Each summer, they came to Appledore Island for her celebrated gardens and warm hospitality. Among her guests were John Greenleaf Whittier, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Edward MacDowell. And thus, the first artist colony in the United States was formed, out in the ocean, off the coast of New Hampshire.